

Biography of Joseph "J. J." Thomson



- Born on December 18, 1856 in Cheetham Hill, England.

- Died on August 30, 1940 in Cambridgeshire, England.

- Family: Wife, son, and daughter

- His son, George Paget Thomson, discovered wave-like diffraction of electrons in 1927 and won the Nobel Prize.

- In 1915, during WWI, Joseph Thomson was awarded Presidency of the Royal Society placing on him responsibilities of the Society's contribution to the war. He died in early part of WWII.

- Education:

Thomson's father wanted him to explore an education in engineering, however, his father died when Thomson was 16 years old, increasing financial strain on his family and preventing him from obtaining an apprenticeship with an engineer. He went to Owen's College at 14 years old where he became interested in experimental physics.

- Thomson's father's death made it difficult to stay in college. He got through from efforts of family and scholarships.

- He transferred to Trinity College on a math scholarship and got his bachelor's degree in math in 1880. He later received his master's degree in 1883; however Thomson never earned his PhD.

- At the age of 41, Thomson proposed his explanation of "discovering" the electron.

- In 1906 he was awarded a Nobel Prize.