

Carl Friedrich Gauss



(1777-1855)

He was one of the greatest mathematicians of all time. He combined scientific theory and practice like no other before him, or since. His *Disquisitiones arithmeticae*, published in 1801, stands to this day as a true masterpiece of scientific investigation. In the same year, Gauss gained fame in wider circles for his prediction, using very few observations, of when and where the asteroid Ceres would next appear. The method of least squares, developed by Gauss as an aid in his mapping of the state of Hannover, is still an indispensable tool for analyzing data. His sextant is pictured on the last series of German 10-Mark notes, honoring his considerable contributions to surveying. Another interesting note, during his time duels were considered acceptable way to resolve intense arguments. Gauss won 13 consecutive duels with pistols. At a certain point in his life, many didn't argue with him for fear of being challenged to a duel.