

Holmboe, Bernt Michael | Encyclopedia.com

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(*b* Vang, Norway, 23 March 1795; *d.* christiania [now Oslo], Norway, 28 March 1850)

mathematics.

Holmboe was the son of a minister. After graduating from the Cathedral School in Christiania, he joined the student volunteer corps for service in the brief conflict with Sweden in 1814. In 1815 he became assistant to Christopher Hansteen, professor of astronomy at the newly created University of Christiania. He was appointed teacher at the Cathedral School in 1818; here he made his greatest contribution to mathematics by discovering and nurturing the genius of his pupil [Niels Henrik Abel](#). Together they explored the whole mathematical literature in a quest in which the pupil soon became the leader.

In 1826 Holmboe was appointed lecturer in mathematics at the university, a move which was later criticized because it blocked the possibility of a position for Abel. Nevertheless, the friendship between the two remained undisturbed.

After Abel's death Holmboe edited his works at the request of the government; otherwise his own mathematical contributions were undistinguished. he published a number of [elementary school](#) texts which appeared in several editions. A later, more advanced calculus text was evidently influenced by Abel's research.

Holmboe was lecturer at the military academy in Christiania from 1826 until his death; during Hansteen's absence in 1828–1830 on a geomagnetic expedition to Siberia, Holmboe gave his lectures in astronomy. In 1834 he became professor of pure mathematics at the university.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Holmboe edited Abel's writings as *Oeuvres complètes de N. H. Abel, mathématicien, avec des notes et développements* (Christiania, 1839). His advanced calculus text is *Laerebog i den høiere matematik* (Christiania, 1849).

Oystein Ore