Carsten Niebuhr Encyclopedia Article

Carsten Niebuhr

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1733-1815

German explorer who was the only survivor of the 1761 Danish expedition to Arabia. While in Egypt, he was the first person to make an accurate copy of hieroglyphics, and in Persia his work led to the deciphering of cuneiform writing. His many maps and calculations were all remarkably precise. He returned to Denmark in 1767, then married and lived quietly as a council clerk in Germany for the remainder of his life.