Friedrich Gerhard Rohlfs Encyclopedia Article

Friedrich Gerhard Rohlfs

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Contents

Friedrich Gerhard Rohlfs Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Friedrich Gerhard Rohlfs.....3

Friedrich Gerhard Rohlfs

1831-1896

German explorer who became the first European to make a complete Trans-Sahara journey from the Mediterranean to the Gulf of Guinea (1865-1866). In the 1860s, Rohlfs used his extensive knowledge of Arabic to explore North Africa disguised as an Arab, compiling geographical data and acquiring valuable information about Trans-Sahara trade routes. In 1876, he was selected to represent Germany at a conference in Brussels of African geographers and explorers. In 1885, Rohlfs was appointed German Consul-General in Zanzibar.