Henry Draper Encyclopedia Article

Henry Draper

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Henry Draper

1837-1882

American astronomer and professor of medicine who took the first photographs of the Orion nebula (1880) and the spectrum of a star (Vega, 1872). He built the instruments he used for these and other photographs, including images of the moon and the spectra of several planets, the sun, and a comet. His widow established a memorial fund that financed the Henry Draper star catalogues produced at Harvard College Observatory, which remain among the most cross-referenced tools for astronomers.