Horace Bénédict De Saussure Encyclopedia Article

Horace Bénédict De Saussure

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Horace Bénédict De Saussure

1740-1799

Swiss geologist remembered for his extensive alpine investigations chronicled in his *Voyages dans les Alpes* (1779-96) and theories regarding the formation of the Alps derived therefrom. Saussure made careful meteorological measurements, developed an improved thermometer and atmometer, and invented the hair hygrometer for measuring humidity (1781). He is recognized as the first experimental petrologist for his work on fusing granites and porphyries, and he helped popularize the term "geology," which replaced "geognosy" in the late eighteenth century.