Jean De Hautefeuille Encyclopedia Article

Jean De Hautefeuille

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Contents

Jean De Hautefeuille Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Jean De Hautefeuille.....3

Jean De Hautefeuille

1647-1724

French physicist and watchmaker who made significant advances in the development of timepieces and invented the forerunner of the internal-combustion engine. Hautefeuille was fascinated by mechanics as a youth. He focused much of his attention on watches, to which he made many improvements, most notably replacing the pendulum used at the time with a spiral spring. Hautefeuille also invented a thalassameter, which was used to register the movement of tides, and was credited with inventing the first internal-combustion engine, which was designed to operate a pump.