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The History of the Barometer

By W. E. Knowles Middleton

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New. Paperback. 511 pages. Dimensions: 8.5in. x 6.7in. x

1.3in. For two centuries the barometer has been an

indispensable laboratory instrument. Yet, despite its

revolutionary influence on science, W. E. Knowles Middleton

here offers the first complete history of the barometer as a

scientific tool. Middleton relies on research from Western

European documents and manuscripts of the seventeenth and

eighteenth centuries. He begins his story with a pre-history of

the barometer, the Torricellian experiment, the subsequent

experiments and controversies in the 1640s, and the

barometric experiments during the remainder of the century.

Later chapters are concerned with the mercury barometer as a

scientific instrument, discussing the efforts to expand the scale

to render the instrument portable, and to attain greater

accuracy. These chapters follow accounts of mercury

barographs, the history of the corrections to the barometer,

the history of the mercury barometer in North America, and

the luminescence that appears when a barometer is moved in

the dark. The final chapters discuss barometers other than

those using the weight of a column of mercury. A large

number of the more interesting barometers seen by the author

in his extensive travels appears in the appendix....



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