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Medical Anniversary

CLAUDE BERNARD, 12 July 1813

Claude Bernard (1813–78) was born at St Julien in the wine-producing Beaujolais area of France, where his parents toiled in the vineyards. He qualified in medicine in Paris (1839) and became a professor at the Collège de France and Hôtel Dieu, succeeding professor of anatomy Magendie.

Claude wrote voluminously on biology and physiology, particularly on gastric juice in nutrition, curare, carbohydrate metabolism, the pancreas and the liver, and he isolated glycogen in 1857. Ill-health forced him to spend much time at his old home St Julien, where he had bought the manor house where his parents' employer had lived. He became president of the Académie Française, and was the first French scientist to receive a national funeral in 1878. – *DG James*