

Robert Burton Encyclopedia Article

Robert Burton

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1577-1640

British clergyman, author, and Oxford dean of divinity best known for his astute observations and descriptions of depressive disorders in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621). This treatise, which influenced English writing, outlined the causes, symptoms, and cures of depression, although some of the etiologies were attributed to myth rather than fact. Similar in tone to Augustine's *Confessions*, Burton's self-reflective point of view provides insight into his own melancholia.