

Robert Norman Encyclopedia Article

Robert Norman

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fl. late 1500s

English instrument maker whose treatise *The Newe Attractive* (1581), which was one of the first systematic treatises in experimental physics, announced his discovery of the dip of compass needles. Norman measured the deviation from the horizontal of compass needles at London and speculated on whether or not the effect varied over Earth's surface. He also suggested compass needle orientation was due to turning toward, rather than attraction to, a particular point.