Cornelius Drebbel Encyclopedia Article

Cornelius Drebbel

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Cornelius Drebbel

1572-1633

Dutch instrument maker best known as one of the possible inventors of the thermometer. His famous perpetual-motion clock—actually an astronomical clock—operated on the same principles as the air thermometer, which Drebbel certainly could have constructed first. An expert lens grinder, he produced compound microscopes as early as 1619. Drebbel also invented thermostats for regulating oven and furnace temperatures, a diving-bell-like submarine, and discovered a tin mordant for dying scarlet with cochineal.