

Vannoccio Biringuccio Encyclopedia Article

Vannoccio Biringuccio

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Contents

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Vannoccio Biringuccio Encyclopedia Article..... | 1 |
| Contents..... | 2 |
| Vannoccio Biringuccio..... | 3 |

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1480-c. 1539

Italian engineer and metallurgist who produced *De la Pirotechnia* (1540)—the first comprehensive account of mining practices. *Pirotechnia* describes mining of metallic ores and semimetals. Also described are furnaces and methods for smelting and alloying, various casting techniques, and the manufacture of canons and gunpowder. Biringuccio's descriptions are based on his experiences running an iron mine and forge for the tyrant of Siene, casting canons for Venice, and heading the papal foundry and arsenal.