

Mariano Di Jacopo Taccola

Encyclopedia Article

Mariano Di Jacopo Taccola

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Contents

Mariano Di Jacopo Taccola Encyclopedia Article.....	1
Contents.....	2
Mariano Di Jacopo Taccola.....	3



Mariano Di Jacopo Taccola

1382-c. 1453

Italian inventor responsible for the keel-breaker, a security device for ships, and the trebuchet, a siege engine. As an early figure of the Renaissance, Taccola saw himself as one helping to restore the knowledge of the ancients, and he came to be known as the "Archimedes of Siena." His keel breaker, intended to discourage pirates from stealing ships, was designed to render a vessel useless by piercing its hull if anyone attempted to seize the craft without first disengaging the trigger mechanism. The trebuchet was a wood and iron catapult for pummeling an enemy city's walls with stones.