Giovanni Da Fontana Encyclopedia Article

Giovanni Da Fontana

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Giovanni Da Fontana

fl. 1410-1449

Venetian engineer who wrote several works, including an encyclopedia of philosophy and science based on Aristotle's organization, but more importantly a work on the use of instrumentation for earth sciences. The *Metrologum de pisce cane et volacre*, loosely translated as "Methods of measuring plane surfaces, depths of water, and altitudes of air by mechanical and pyrotechnical animals aided by clocks," was an ingenious work on more accurate types of clocks used to time the ascent of rockets to determine atmospheric height and the descent and rise of submerged floats to determine water body depths. He also had futuristic ideas about flying with wings and walking on the bottom of the sea.