Vincenzo Cascariolo Encyclopedia Article

Vincenzo Cascariolo

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Vincenzo Cascariolo

fl. early 1600s

Italian alchemist who created the first synthetically luminiscent material (c. 1603). A cobbler by profession in Bologna, Cascariolo heated a mixture of barium sulfide with coal and found that the powder thereby obtained exhibited a temporary bluish glow at night that could be restored by exposure to sunlight. The material was called *lapis solaris* or sunstone because it was hoped it could be used for transforming base metals into gold (the symbol for gold being the Sun).