



# DE RE METALLICA [TRANSLATED FROM THE FIRST LATIN EDITION OF 1556]

*GEORGIUS AGRICOLA*

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Very rare. Bermannus, sive De Re Metallica Dialogus is Agricola's first published work in relation to mining. The text of this work is in the form of a dialogue between "Bermannus," who is described as a miner, mineralogist, poet, and student of mathematics, and "Nicolaus Ancon" and "Johannes Neavius," both scholars and physicians. The main theme of the dialogue is the correlation of minerals mentioned by the ancient authors and those found in the Saxon mines. The three conversationalists wonder through the mines and discuss matters that come to their attention. There is no systematic or logical arrangement to the text, therefore. Occassionally, statements of historical or technical interest are included. The mineralogical part, while of importance for giving the first description of several minerals such as bismuth, is much improved in *De Natura Fossilium* (1st ed., Basileæ, 1546).

Written by Georgius Agricola, the "father of mineralogy", in 1556, this book is the seminal work on the science of mining, refining, and smelting metals. It remained unsurpassed in depth and detail for hundreds of years after its publication. Agricola's studies took place in a town so renowned for its silver mines that its name became the root word for the term "dollar".

In addition to a translation into English, this edition adds extensive footnotes describing the sources and references used by Agricola and providing commentary on the original text and historical changes since the initial publication.

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