University teaching of double entry bookkeeping generally treats accounting as a mechanical exercise, emphasizing the duality control feature of transaction entries. Rote learning of the rules for processing transactions usually dominates. Not surprisingly, most students are less than enthused by this experience. Accompanying the focus on control has been a misplaced emphasis on the origins of DEB, rather than the context in which it was forged. In contrast with the notion of double entry being popularized in an intellectual vacuum, this paper argues that it was indeed part of a fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century social and intellectual movement in Europe. The paper seeks to breathe life and excitement into teaching and researching DEB. Like Sangster (2010) we seek to use ‘accounting history and Luca Pacioli to put relevance into the teaching of double entry’. This work adds to the recent resurgence in research understanding more deeply the practice and teaching of DEB. By emphasizing DEB’s recourse to the idea of proportion, harmony and balance in the courts of Renaissance Italy, Renaissance accounting can be understood within that intellectual and social movement. This is also important as accountability is currently the missing dimension in the teaching of, and research about, DEB. A major complaint in the aftermath of the GFC levelled at the likes of Northern Rock and (say) Bradford and Bingley in the UK, and at Lehmann Brothers, Bear Stearns, AIG, Countrywide, Wachovia, Washington Mutual and their likes in the US, is that their accounting failed to tell it how it was. The companies were unaccountable. The ‘morality’ of accounting and the lack of corporate accountability of the type Soll (2014) refers to, namely its recourse to truth, balance, proportionality of the kind the renaissance players sought, was absent during the GFC.