

CONTENTS

MEDIEVAL RULERS AND NOTABLES	4
READING LIST	6
JUSTINIAN I	7
THEODORA	11
CHARLEMAGNE	15
LEIF ERIKSSON	19
WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR	23
RICHARD THE LIONHEART	27
GENGHIS KHAN	31
FRANCIS OF ASSISI	35
MARCO POLO	39
JOAN OF ARC	43
MAKE A MOVING FIGURE	47
ABOUT THE AUTHOR	48

MEDIEVAL RULERS AND NOTABLES

Justinian I was the nephew of Emperor Justin I. He became Justin's most trusted advisor and his successor. Justinian's greatest desire was to bring back the glory of Rome and reconquer the lost western half of the empire. He was successful in accomplishing much of what he set out to do.

Justinian expanded the boundaries of his land to nearly match those of the former Roman Empire, with additions in Africa, Persia, Italy, Spain, and the Frankish Kingdom, through peace treaties, battles, and invasions. He and his architects constructed magnificent structures throughout his empire, including the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. This church was the center of Eastern Orthodox Christianity for centuries. Justinian's *Corpus Juris Civilis* was a testimony to his leadership and organizational skill. Along with hundreds of scholars, he gathered the laws of those who ruled before him and organized them into a legal code. Every citizen could easily research the laws on any subject.



Theodora, Empress of the Byzantine Empire, came from a family of performers. When her father died, she became an actress to earn a living. When she grew older, she became a Christian and gave up her career as an actress to lead a quiet life spinning wool.

Theodora met Justinian while he was in the army. Because of her low social standing, Justinian modified the law so they could be married. She was named his co-regent when he was crowned emperor in 527. Justinian considered Theodora his most trusted advisor and always consulted her about important decisions. She influenced many of the laws that were put into place during his rule. During the Nika riots, Theodora helped Justinian save the empire through her courage and steadfastness. While Justinian and his officials prepared to flee the rioters, she convinced them to stay and fight courageously. Justinian was always thankful for her vision and leadership that saved his reign.



Charlemagne was the greatest king to rule the Franks. He ruled for 47 years and spent over 30 years fighting to expand his kingdom and to prevent the Franks from becoming barbarians. To strengthen his empire, he built roads, bridges, churches, and a new palace in Aachen. He brought the greatest scholars of his day to his court and established new schools and libraries, revived the arts, and copied ancient writings. He especially did not want his citizens to forget about Christianity, so he hired monks to copy manuscripts of the Bible.



Because Charlemagne had brought peace and prosperity to his kingdom as it was in the Roman times, he was crowned Emperor of the Romans by Pope Leo III on Christmas day in 800. Charlemagne was the founder of the Holy Roman Empire and the leader of the Carolingian Renaissance.



Leif Eriksson was one of the first Europeans to discover North America, almost 500 years before Christopher Columbus. He was born in Iceland and was the son of Erik the Red, who discovered Greenland. Leif heard many stories about exciting new lands from

travelers who met with his father. During a trip he led to Norway bringing gifts to King Olaf I, he became interested in Christianity and was baptized.

After returning to Greenland, Eriksson took a boat and set out with 35 men to search for the lands he had heard about as a boy. They first landed on what was possibly Baffin Island, then traveled further south to the eastern coast of Canada. After sailing southeast, they came to a rich land full of salmon, forests, grasslands, and grapes. They built shelters for the winter and returned home in the spring. They named the country Vinland, and today it is called Newfoundland.

