



**St Hilda:** Bede describes Hilda as a woman of great energy, who was a skilled administrator and teacher. She gained such a reputation for wisdom that even kings and princes sought her advice, but she also had a concern for ordinary folk like Caedmon. He was a cowherd at the monastery, who was inspired in a dream to sing verses in praise of God. Hilda recognised his gift and encouraged him to develop it. Although Hilda must have had a strong character, she inspired affection. As Bede writes, "All who knew her, called her mother, because of her outstanding devotion and grace."

St Hilda is generally depicted with a pastoral staff and carrying an abbey church. Often, there are ammonites at her feet. It is not known where Hilda was born, but we learn from Bede that her birth took place in the year 614. She was the second daughter of Hereric, great nephew of King Edwin of Northumbria, and his wife Breguswith. Her elder sister Hereswith, married the King of East Anglia. Hilda's noble status is important in understanding her, but it did not mean she had an easy life.

When she was still an infant, her father was murdered by poisoning while in exile at the court of the British King of Elmet, (in what is now West Yorkshire). It is generally assumed that she was brought up at King Edwin's court in Northumbria. In 627 King Edwin took the momentous step of accepting the Christian faith. He was baptised on Easter Day 12 April, in a small wooden church, hastily constructed for the occasion, near the site of the present York Minster. The ceremony was performed by the monk-bishop Paulinus, who had come from Rome with Augustine. He accompanied Ethelburga, a Christian princess, when she came North from Kent to marry King Edwin. As Queen, she continued to practise her Christianity and, no doubt, influenced her husband's thinking.

Hilda was among the nobles and courtiers who were baptised with Edwin. This means that as a girl she must have been aware of the traditions of the Church in Rome and of the existence of monastic life.

From 627 to 647 there is nothing documented about Hilda. It seems likely that when King Edwin was killed in battle in 633 she went to live with her sister at the East Anglian court.



**Bram Stoker** visited the English coastal town of Whitby in 1890, and that visit is said to be part of the inspiration for Dracula. He began writing novels while working as manager for Henry Irving and secretary and director of London's Lyceum Theatre, beginning with The Snake's Pass in 1890 and Dracula in 1897. During this period, Stoker was part of the literary staff of The Daily Telegraph in London, and he wrote other fiction, including the horror novels The Lady of the Shroud (1909) and The Lair of the White Worm (1911). He published his Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving in 1906, after Irving's death, which proved successful, and managed productions at the Prince of Wales Theatre.

Before writing Dracula, Stoker met Ármin Vámbéry, a Hungarian writer and traveller. Dracula likely emerged from Vámbéry's dark stories of the Carpathian mountains. Stoker then spent several years researching European folklore and mythological stories of vampires.

The 1972 book In Search of Dracula by Radu Florescu and Raymond McNally claimed that the Count in Stoker's novel was based on Vlad III Dracula. At most however, Stoker borrowed only the name and "scraps of miscellaneous information" about Romanian history, according to one expert, Elizabeth Miller; as well, and there are no comments about Vlad III in the author's working notes.

Dracula is an epistolary novel, written as a collection of realistic but completely fictional diary entries, telegrams, letters, ship's logs, and newspaper clippings, all of which added a level of detailed realism to the story, a skill which Stoker had developed as a newspaper writer. At the time of its publication, Dracula was considered a "straightforward horror novel" based on imaginary creations of supernatural life."It gave form to a universal fantasy . . . and became a part of popular culture.



Based on the East European legends of "vampirism", one of the undead who gains life through the sucking of human blood, "Dracula" and the tales from Vlad Tepes, are the most powerful creations of terror ever conceived. Bram Stoker.



**Sir Hugh Cholmeley** 1st Baronet was an English landowner and Member of Parliament who sat in the House of Commons at various times between 1624 and 1643. He was initially a Parliamentarian but later a Royalist leader during the English Civil War. His name is sometimes spelled Cholmley.

Cholmeley was born at Thornton-le-Dale, Yorkshire, the son of Sir Richard Cholmeley and his first wife Susanna Legard daughter of John Legard of Ganton, Yorkshire. He was educated at Beverley Free School and Jesus College, Cambridge. In 1624 he was elected one of the members of parliament for Scarborough and was re-elected in 1625 and 1626. He was knighted in 1626. In 1628 he was re-elected a member for Scarborough and sat until 1629, when King Charles I began to rule without parliament for eleven years.

During the years when Charles I ruled without Parliament, Cholmeley became, together with Sir John Hotham, one of the leaders of resistance among the Yorkshire gentry. He organised a number of petitions and protests, and in 1639 he refused to pay ship money. As a result, he was dismissed from all his posts and was summoned before the Council of State, the King reportedly telling Hotham and Cholmeley that if they interfered again he would hang them both.

In April 1640 Cholmeley was again elected a member for Scarborough in the Short Parliament. He was re-elected for Scarborough for the Long Parliament in November 1640 and was made a baronet in 1641. Initially a Parliamentarian when the civil war broke out, Cholmeley was one of the parliamentary commissioners sent to negotiate with the King in May 1642; he raised a regiment for the Parliamentary army which fought at the Battle of Edgehill and later joined Fairfax in his campaign against the royalist garrison at York. However, when the Queen landed in Yorkshire, returning from the Netherlands where she had been attempting to raise money and troops, Cholmeley declared for the King, and Newcastle put him in command of all maritime affairs along the northern half of the Yorkshire coast. He was disabled from sitting in parliament in 1643. After the Royalist defeat at the Battle of Marston Moor, Cholmeley refused to flee the country, holding Scarborough for the king during its Great Siege, until he was forced to surrender on 22 July 1645.