

GLOSSARY

THE CHINTAMANI – BOOK 4 OF THE MAQLÛ

Real places, people, and history in the book.

“Truth would quickly cease to become stranger than fiction, once we got as used to it.”

Henry Louis Mencken

Blending truth and fiction in *The Chintamani* has been fun. But some of the facts are so bizarre that I thought the reader might wonder what is fantasy and what is fact in this book. Below are some of the more interesting facts and history I’ve incorporated. Enjoy.

Afterlife - my book’s afterlife is loosely based on ancient Greek mythology’s afterlife, which had four levels:

- The first ‘level’ is the Entrance to the Underworld. In Greek mythology, a soul must cross either the river Acheron or the more well-known Styx by paying the ferryman Charon with a gold coin. Once they cross the river, they are judged and sent to one of three places:
- Tartarus was the lowest and darkest where those who had been evil, cruel, or offended the gods went.
- The Plains of Asphodel were for those who had been ordinary people. It wasn’t as nice as living, but neither was it as bad as Tartarus.
- The Plains of Elysium were for heroes and those who had pleased the gods.

Alex’s Journey takes him across part of the North Atlantic. Some of the places mentioned in his travels are:

- **Hebrides Islands** is an island group off the west coast of Scotland. They are often talked about as two groups – the Inner Hebrides are those closest to the Scottish mainland, while the Outer Hebrides lie on the edge of the North Atlantic.
 - o **Isle of Lewis** is the northern part of the Isle of Lewis and Harris – the largest and most northern island in the Outer Hebrides. It would be the first island a seafarer would see coming out of the North Atlantic if they were coming down the west coast of England.
- **Iceland** is the most sparsely populated country in Europe, with a population of almost 400,000. It lies between the North Atlantic Ocean and the Arctic Ocean. One of the notable features of Iceland is its active volcanoes, that sometimes cause air traffic problems.

- **Shetland Islands** lie about 100 miles northeast of the Scottish mainland and mark the boundary between the North Atlantic Ocean and the North Sea. The Shetland Islands are a part of Scotland and are near the right-most yellow coloring. Just over 20,000 people live on the islands, although only about 16 of the 100 or so islands are inhabited.

Ankh is the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic character for life. Its first known use was about 5,000 years ago. The Egyptians believed that living was only part of life and that the ankh symbolized our mortal existence and the afterlife.

Antonine Wall is north of Hadrian's Wall and stretches from the Firth of Forth to the Firth of Clyde. The Romans built the turf wall twenty years after they'd finished Hadrian's Wall. When it was garrisoned it represented the northernmost part of the Roman Empire.

221B Baker Street is the residence of the fictional detective Sherlock Holmes, written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Berwick-upon-Tweed is a town of about 12,000 people near the Scottish border on the River Tweed and the shores of the North Sea. Because of its location, it was at the center of border wars between England and Scotland for hundreds of years.

Broaching is an abrupt loss of control of a ship due to wind and/or wave action.

Castle Keep is what's left of a medieval fortress built almost a thousand years ago, giving the city its name – Newcastle. Castle Keep and the Black Gate are the only two buildings left of the original complex.

Chintamani is a wish-fulfilling jewel in Hindu and Buddhist traditions. It's the equivalent of the philosopher's stone in Western alchemy

Coronation Chair is a 700-year-old wooden throne (built during King Edward I's reign) used by British monarchs during their coronations. It was designed to have the Stone of Destiny lie underneath the seat. It stays in Westminster Abbey.

Daeboreum is a Korean holiday that celebrates the first full moon of the new year

Delphi was an ancient religious sanctuary dedicated to the Greek god Apollo on Mt. Parnassus. It was home to the Oracle of Delphi and the priestess Pythia, who was famed throughout the ancient world for divining the future and was consulted before all major undertakings. The ancient Greeks considered Delphi to be the center of the world, marked by a stone monument known as the omphalos. It's now a UNESCO site.

Durham is a city in northeast England and home to Durham Cathedral and Castle, a UNESCO site. The cathedral is the largest Norman-style cathedral in the world and an architectural wonder when it was built. Durham Castle is now part of Durham University.

- **Palace Green** is a small green between the cathedral in Durham and the castle.

Druids Very little is known about the ancient Druids, but they are believed to have been the educated professional class (religious and judicial leaders) among the Celtic peoples during the Iron Age (roughly 1200 BCE to 1 BCE). Unlike most cultures, female Druids held prominent roles in Celtic society. Unfortunately, the Romans wiped out their culture. Some of the key terms associated with the Druids in this book are:

- **Bandruí** is an Irish word for Female Druids.
- **The Five Elements** were believed to be the most fundamental parts on which everything is based but varied by belief and tradition. Four are common among most traditions (Earth, wind/air, fire, and water). The fifth element varies (e.g., aether, wood, metal, spirit).
- **Gaia** Many pagans (modern and ancient) worship Gaia as the spiritual embodiment of the Earth.
- **Groves** are how Druids organize themselves (just like Wiccans organize by covens). Since the ancient Druids were closely linked to nature, many of their meetings took place in groves of trees.
- **Scrying** is a method of divination that can take many forms (crystal balls and silver dishes being the most common. In my books, it's a secure communication method for the Druids, similar to Skype.

Edinburgh lies on the Firth of Forth, is the capital of Scotland, and it's second most populous city with 600,000 people. Some of its most famous landmarks are:

- **Calton Hill** is also known as Edinburgh's Acropolis because of its dominating views of the surrounding area and major landmarks, including Nelson's Memorial and the National Monument (inspired by the Parthenon but unfinished).
- **Dreich** is a Scottish word that means dreary.
- **Edinburgh Castle** dominates the skyline of the city of Edinburgh, Scotland. It sits atop Castle Rock, part of an ancient volcano. The views from the castle are stunning as you can see some of the volcanic islands in the Firth of Forth, all of the old town, Calton Hill, the surrounding hills, and even the hills beyond the Firth.
 - o **David's Tower** is a part of the castle and used to be the residence of the Scottish kings.
- **Firth of Forth** is a fjord where several Scottish rivers, including the River Forth, pour into the North Sea in the southeast corner of Scotland.
- **Royal Mile** is the main thoroughfare (includes side streets) in the old town of Edinburgh. It starts at Holyrood Palace and ends at Edinburgh Castle. It gets its name from being the

traditional procession route for Scotland's monarchs. It's approximately one 'old Scottish' mile (about 1.8 km.)

- **Arthur's Seat** is the largest of three parts of an ancient volcano and sits just outside of downtown Edinburgh near Holyrood Palace (the other parts of the volcano are Calton Hill and Castle Rock).
 - o **Salisbury Crag** is a spur off of Arthur's Seat with a stunning cliff face overlooking Edinburgh.

Falkirk is a city of 30,000 in the central lowlands of Scotland. Among other things, it's famous for:

- **Battle of Falkirk** was fought in 1298. It was where Edward's army defeated Wallace's and caused Wallace to step down as Guardian of Scotland.
- **Callendar Park** is a 14th-century French-style chateau and grounds outside of Falkirk. It's built on a section of Antonine's Wall, the northernmost Roman wall in Britain, and a UNESCO site.
- **Falkirk Wheel** is the only rotary canal connector in the world
- **Kelpies** are a pair of 100-foot-tall metal sculptures depicting kelpies (shape-shifting water spirits). They are a monument to horses and are situated near Falkirk, Scotland.

Fjords are long, narrow inlets with steep sides or cliffs created by glaciers. Although North America has many fjords in the Pacific Northwest, the most famous place is Norway.

Gilgamesh was a king of Uruk, Mesopotamia, who lived between 2800 and 2500 BCE. The *Epic of Gilgamesh* is considered the first great piece of literature. It was carved onto stone tablets long before the Old Testament but had some of the same stories and themes (e.g., the great flood garden of Eden).

Gorse is a yellow flowering shrub common to Scotland, sometimes covering entire hillsides.

Greyfriars was a church in southwest Scotland where Robert the Bruce ambushed John Comyn and killed him, thus removing a claimant to the Scottish throne. It

Gurkhas are soldiers with a reputation for their fierceness, native to Nepal and northeast India. They serve in the Nepalese, Indian, and British armies. They still carry their traditional weapon - an 18-inch long curved knife known as the kukri.

Hadrian's Wall was a defensive fortification begun nearly two thousand years ago during the reign of the Roman Emperor Hadrian. It ran from the banks of the River Tyne near the North Sea to the Solway Firth on the Irish Sea and was the northern limit of the Roman Empire until Antonine's Wall was built further north (across Scotland). It was mostly a stone wall, although

there are some portions of earthen walls, with a fort about every five Roman miles (usually a little less than an English mile). Interestingly, it's not known what the wall's exact purpose was because it is a relatively low wall. Much of the wall has been dismantled, and the stones used for construction.

Cup of Jamshid in Persian mythology is a divination cup.

Kew Gardens in southwest London has the world's largest and most diverse botanical gardens and a UNESCO site.

London is the capital and largest city in England (population nine million) on the River Thames. It's a major tourist destination with such attractions as:

- **The British Museum** is one of the largest museums in the world. It's especially known for its Egyptian collection and the Rosetta Stone.
 - o **Rosetta Stone** was made in 196 BC in Memphis, Egypt. It is a governmental decree written in three languages (two Egyptian and ancient Greek). It was the key to understanding ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs.
- **Buckingham Palace** is the London residence and administrative headquarters of the reigning monarch of the United Kingdom. It is also where the famous 'Changing of the Guards' takes place.
- **Changing of the Guards** is a ceremony where the old guard responsible for guarding Buckingham Palace is replaced by the new guard. The Horse Guards, bands, and soldiers start from different places (St. James, Wellington Barracks, the Horse Guards) and converge on Buckingham.
- **Kensington Gardens & Hyde Park** are major parks in central London (similar to Central Park in New York City). They link Kensington Palace and Buckingham Palace.
- **MI6** is the foreign intelligence service of the United Kingdom.
- **National Gallery** is a large art museum on Trafalgar Square.
- **St. James Palace** is the most senior royal palace in the United Kingdom and one of several palaces in London. It is no longer the monarch's principal residence but is a residence for some of the royal family and one of the starting points for the Changing of the Guard ceremony.
- **River Thames** is the longest river in England and cuts through the center of London. In London, it used to be a major port but now is used mainly for recreation and rarely sees major ships anymore. The level of the river ebbs and flows with the tide coming in from the North Sea.

- **Serpentine Bridge** crosses The Long Lake and marks the boundary between Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park.
- **Trafalgar Square** is a public square in the center of London, formerly known as Charing Cross. It commemorates Britain's triumph at the Battle of Trafalgar.
- **Victoria Memorial** is situated outside Buckingham Palace (where Alex spotted his grandmother).
- **Palace of Westminster** (Parliament Building) is situated on the north bank of the River Thames and houses both the House of Commons and House of Lords. At the north end of the building sits the Elizabeth Tower, commonly known as Big Ben.
- **Westminster Abbey** is a thousand-year-old building located a short distance to the north of the Parliament Building. It's where the kings and queens of England are coronated and where the Stone of Destiny used to sit full-time. Many famous people are buried underneath the building, including many of the kings of England, Sir Isaac Newton, Charles Darwin, Charles Dickens, and George Fredric Handel.
- **Waterloo** is one of the main train stations in London, situated just south of the London Eye and across the river from Westminster.

Longships were shallow-drafted, wide-beamed boats with symmetrical ends used for commerce, exploration, and warfare. They were clinker-built (overlapping planks riveted together), propelled by both wind (a single sail) and rowing, and could carry up to 60 people. Storage was below the main deck, accessed by lifting loose deck planks. Although most people associate the longships with Vikings, other nationalities (Dutch, English, German, and French) used them too.

Since the boats were constantly exposed to the elements, the Vikings had to pump or bail water from the bilge. Since the Vikings often sailed in the cold and rough North Atlantic, they used clothing to protect themselves from the elements – mainly wool which can keep a person warm even when it's wet, as well as furs and sealskin clothing, which keeps the water out.

Magic can be anything from extraordinary supernatural powers to illusion, certain religious practices, and advanced technology. The word magic comes from the Persian word maguš (magician). In many ancient Mesopotamian societies, magic was an everyday event used for a wide array of purposes, from understanding omens to protecting oneself against spells cast by some witch. It was not only accepted; it was embraced. The concept of magic started taking on negative connotations in Greece, where it was thought to be used mostly by frauds. It wasn't until the Christian churches began preaching that magic was the work of demons and such that witchcraft became a hazardous occupation.

Marduk was the Babylonian king of the gods. His famous ziggurat temple is considered the model for the biblical Tower of Babel.

Merychippus was a small horse in North America over six million years ago.

Naglfar is the largest ship in Norse mythology. It was known as the Ship of the Dead and was made of Viking toe and fingernails. The god Loki, two mythological giants, and the army of the dead were to use it to sail into Ragnarök (the final battle of the gods to cleanse the world)

Loch Ness is a large, frigid, deep freshwater lake in the Scottish Highlands. It is, of course, most famous for being home to ‘Nessie’ – the Loch Ness Monster. Interestingly, it is not the largest lake in surface area in Scotland, but it has more water than all the lakes in England and Wales combined due to its great depth (over 750 feet deep at one point).

- The lake lies at an angle with Inverness downstream from the Loch at the far northeastern end and Fort Augustus at the southwest end.

Nessie is a famous creature from Scottish folklore who is supposed to inhabit Loch Ness’s depths. The first sighting of a ‘beast’ in the vicinity of the lake was in the 6th century. Most descriptions picture it as an Elasmosaurus, a type of Plesiosaur. Although there have been many searches for Nessie, some quite comprehensive, no one has ever found proof of Nessie’s existence.

Newcastle is a city with an urban population of nearly 1 million people. It sits next to the River Tyne and was a major city during the Industrial Revolution.

Poppy Girl legend has it that she is the ghost of a flower girl sent to prison because she owed some people money. While in prison, she was killed by male prisoners. She is often seen on the stairs of Castle Keep. It is said that when she is nearby, a whiff of flowers is present in the air.

Porlock is a town in southwest England on the southern shore of the Bristol Channel. Among other things, it’s noted for its salt marsh nature reserve, created when the sea breached the sea wall (during Hurricane Lili in 1996).

The Pythia was also known as the Oracle of Delphi (the most prestigious and authoritative oracle among the Greeks). The Pythia was always a woman and had to give up their family life, if they had one, to become the Pythia.

Supplicants had to pay for the opportunity to ask the Oracle a question. The Oracle would then answer, often in a frenzied state, possibly due to the vapors rising into the temple or perhaps because the priestess used a poppy leaf (opium) on the fire to help induce a dazed state for both the priestess and the supplicants. They were also believed to use a network of spies to gather information on the supplicants, making their predictions seem more real.

Rapeseed is a yellow flowering plant whose seeds can be processed into Canola Oil. It’s a common crop in England and is in full bloom in early May.

Ryujin is one of the eight dragon kings in Japanese mythology and the sea god.

Sangreal (also known as Saint Graal or Holy Grail) in Arthurian legends is believed to be Christ's cup from the Last Supper (Holy Chalice). It was said to have been carried by Joseph of Arimathea to Britain and kept safe by a special group of guardians.

The quest for the Holy Grail was not an original part of the Arthurian tales but came along several centuries after the first tales were told. Even then, it started as a wonderous, but not holy, object. Its name also changed, eventually becoming the Holy Grail after much telling and retelling of the tales.

- **Alain** is the son of Bron and also became a Grail Keeper. In the Grail legend, Alain is appointed Guardian of the Grail and keeps it in Corbenic castle. In some legends, he is the father of Percival – one of the people who was said to have seen the Grail but didn't recognize it. In other tales, Alain is the Fisher King.
- **Anfortas** is also known as the Grail King. Failing his sacred obligations, he is wounded by a spear point that can only be healed when questioned by his nephew Sir Percival. Kept alive by the Grail, he lives in constant torment and pain. On Parzival's first visit to the castle, he fails to ask any questions, and Anfortas remains near death. After having learned compassion on his quest, Parzival, upon returning, inquires of the wound, and Anfortas is healed.
- **According to the Bible, Joseph of Arimathea** was the man responsible for burying Jesus. In many legends, he also was believed to have brought the Grail to Britain.
- **Arthurian Legend** is the tale of the legendary King Arthur, who was believed to have united Briton in post-Roman times. The legend includes stories of daring knights' quests, dragons, magic, love, and betrayal. One of the better-known parts of the lore is the quest for the Holy Grail. The tales may have been based on an actual Briton who lived around 500 CE.
- **Avalon** is a legendary island and the place where King Arthur's sword Excalibur was forged. Later it was where Arthur was taken after the Battle of Camlann – his last battle. Avalon was associated from an early date with mystical practices and figures such as Arthur's sorceress half-sister Morgan le Fay, who is commonly believed to have ruled the island. There are many beliefs/claims about where Avalon is located – from the Mediterranean to France to England. The most commonly identified place is Glastonbury Tor in England.
- **Bron** (also known as Hebron) is the brother-in-law of Joseph and succeeded Joseph as the Grail Keeper. He might be related to Bran the Blessed
- **Sir Bors** (the younger) is always portrayed as one of the finest and most virtuous Knights of the Round Table. In later legends, he beheld the Grail along with Sir Galahad and Sir Percival.

- **Corbenic Castle**, according to legend, is where the Grail was kept. It is a place of great marvels, with the ability to move to different locations.
- **Fisher King**, in Arthurian legend, was the last in a long line of British kings tasked with guarding the Holy Grail.
- **Sir Galahad** was one of the three knights of the round table that found the Holy Grail.
- **Merlin** is a legendary wizard who helped Arthur become King and continued to advise him afterwards. His demise (or enchanted sleep) was at the hands of a sorceress (variously named Nimue, Morgan, Viviane...).
- **Lady Niniane** is one of the many names for The Lady of the Lake. She is a sorceress who, in some tales, gave Excalibur to King Arthur, raised Lancelot, and enchanted Merlin.
- **Sir Percival** is one of the legendary Knights of the Round Table. In the early legends, it was Percival who first found the Grail. Later legends changed it to Sir Galahad.

Sassenach means a foreigner, typically an Englishman. However, it takes on derogatory connotations when used by Scottish or Irish people.

Scone Abbey was a small priory (a building housing monks or nuns) built around 1100 by Augustinians (a Catholic Order). Because of its location, close to the Stone of Destiny, it was later designated an Abbey. It is best known for housing the Stone of Destiny, where Scottish Kings and Queens were crowned until Edward I stole it. Scone Palace now stands where the Abbey once stood after Protestants burnt it down in the 1500s, incited by John Knox's inflammatory preaching of hatred against Catholics.

Segedunum is an old Roman Fort, and UNESCO site, at the east end of Hadrian's Wall in Wallsend, a short train ride from Newcastle, near the banks of the River Tyne.

Sharur in Sumerian mythology it's Ninurta's (Mesopotamian god associated with farming, healing, hunting, law, scribes, and war) mace. It's a powerful weapon that can fly over vast distances and communicate with its wielder.

Stirling is a city of about 40,000 people situated approximately halfway between Glasgow and Edinburgh. It's known for:

- **Stirling Castle** is one of the largest and most important castles in Scotland. It is surrounded on three sides by cliffs, giving it a strong defensive position. Views from the castle and monument are spectacular.
- **National Wallace Monument** overlooks the Battle of Stirling Bridge site and is a monument to Scotland's greatest hero. The memorial sits on top of Abbey Craig.

- **Battle of Stirling Bridge** was a key battle in the First War for Scottish Independence, fought in 1297. Wallace's forces defeated the English, who got trapped after crossing a small bridge.

Stone of Destiny (also known as the Stone of Scone) is an oblong piece of red sandstone where, historically, Scottish Kings would be crowned. It stayed at Scone Abbey until Edward I's army took it back to England, where it remained until only a few decades ago. One legend says that it is the Biblical Jacob's Pillow. Another legend says that the monks of Scone Abbey replaced the real Stone of Destiny with a fake. The stone now resides in Edinburgh Castle alongside the crown jewels.

In 1950 four students from the University of Glasgow broke into Westminster Palace and stole the stone. The stone is now kept in Edinburgh Castle near the Crown Jewels, except for British Monarch coronations.

Stonehenge is a prehistoric monument and one of the most famous landmarks in the world. It consists of a long cursus (avenue), a scattering of barrows (burial mounds), and two rings of standing stones, each standing stone around 13 feet and weighing around 25 tons. Archaeologists believe it was built in several phases from about 3000 BCE (late stone age) to 2000 BCE (the start of the Bronze Age). Archeologists still debate how it was constructed and what its purpose was.

Tay River Bridge Disaster about 70 people died in a train accident when the renowned Tay River Bridge collapsed into the river in gale-force winds in December 1879, taking the train with it (the designers did not account for wind load). Strangely, the engine was recovered and reused, eventually even running on the new Tay River Bridge. Some people say that the train still runs the tracks in Scotland on its way to Dundee before it plunges into the Tay River.

Tiamat in Mesopotamian mythology, she was a goddess of the sea and one of the creators, creating both younger gods and the cosmos. She was considered by some as a sea serpent and creator of chaos.

Tilley Hat is a versatile and durable hat made in Canada. They enjoy a cult-like following among some people.

Time Dilation is the difference in elapsed time, as measured by two clocks, due to a relative velocity between them (special relativity). Could also be due to differences in gravitation (general relativity).

Tower of London is a famous thousand-year-old set of several buildings set within two concentric rings of defensive walls and a moat on the Thames River. It has played a prominent role in English history, serving as an armory, a treasury, an exotic animal menagerie, the home of the Royal Mint, a public record office, royal residence, and home of the Crown Jewels of England. The castle was used as a prison in the 16th and 17th centuries and held notable prisoners such as Elizabeth I, before she became queen, Sir Walter Raleigh, 2 of King Henry VIII's wives, a queen, and some of Henry's advisors. Despite its reputation as a place of torture

and death, only seven people were executed within the Tower before the 20th century. Most executions were held on the notorious Tower Hill to the north of the castle.

- **Traitor's Gate** was originally built during King Edward I's reign as a waterway entrance to the Tower of London. It later became one of the primary entrances for prisoners.
- **Beefeater** (Yeoman Warders) are the ceremonial guardians of the Tower of London. They are perhaps best known for their distinctive uniforms, especially their red and gold Tudor state dress.

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) is an agency of the United Nations aimed at promoting world peace and security through international cooperation in education, arts, sciences and culture. World Heritage Sites are those sites considered to be of outstanding value to humanity.

Urquhart Castle is a castle on the shores of Scotland's Loch Ness. It was a key fortress during the War for Scottish Independence, changing hands several times between the English and Scots.

Ute Indians are an American Indian tribe that historically lived in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado and Utah but hunted over a much broader area. They currently have three reservations in southwestern Colorado and northeastern Utah.

Valhalla in Norse mythology is a majestic, enormous hall in Asgard ruled over by the god Odin.

Vikings is the modern name given to seafaring people from Scandinavia (present-day Denmark, Norway, and Sweden). They raided, traded, and settled throughout Europe and as far as the Middle East and North America from the late 8th to the late 11th centuries. The popular image of Vikings with horns on their helmets is not accurate. Some of the notable Vikings I've mentioned in this book are:

- **Leif Erikson** (c. 970 – c. 1020), son of Erik the Red was a Norse explorer from Iceland. He was the first known European to have landed on continental North America, about five hundred years before Christopher Columbus. Leif's first landings in North America were possibly at Baffin Island and Labrador. He established a settlement at Vinland, possibly at L'Anse aux Meadows on the northern tip of Newfoundland in modern-day Canada.
- **Thorfinn Karlsefni** (980 – after 1007 CE) was an early Viking explorer. He led an expedition of over 120 people to colonize Vinland (somewhere between Labrador and New England) several years after Leif Erickson made the same trip. His son Snorri Thorfinnsson was the first European born in North America.
- **Niorun** is believed to be the goddess of dreams in Scandinavian mythology.
- **Norðweg** means 'The Northern Way.' It was what the Vikings called Norway a thousand years ago.

- **Odin** is a widely revered god in Germanic paganism. He rules Valhalla and is the husband of the goddess Frigg. In Old English he's known as Wōden. Only in Scandinavian mythology is he the supreme god.
 - **Sigrid Storrada** is a Scandinavian Queen in many of the Viking sagas, although there is some question as to whether she existed. Legend has it that she was to marry Olaf Tryggvason, the King of Norway, but refused when he demanded she convert to Christianity. The king slapped her, whereupon she told him it could result in his death. Sigrid eventually decided to marry the King of Denmark, and together they formed a military alliance that defeated and killed Tryggvason in the Battle of Svolder.
- Snorri Thorfinnsson** (c. 1005 – 1090) was the son of Thorfinn Karlsefni and believed to be the first European born in North America. He became a leader in Christianizing Iceland.
- **Thorkell** was Leif Erikson's second son. Little is known about him except that he became Chieftain of Greenland after his father died.
 - **Vinland** was an area of eastern coastal Canada explored by the Vikings starting around 1000 CE.

Vlad Tepes III (c.1428 - 1477) was voivode (or prince) of Wallachia three times and the son of Vlad Dracul. As a young teenager, he and his brother were held hostage by the Ottomans to secure their father's loyalty. During that time, it's believed that Vlad rebelled against his hostage situation while his brother, Radu, embraced it and later became an Ottoman general.

Much of his life was spent trying to gain leadership of Wallachia or retain it. Most people think of him as a blood-thirsty madman, but many Romanians think of him as a hero who defended his country with brutal methods (such as impalement).

Even though it's commonly assumed that Bram Stoker used Vlad Tepes as the model for his vampire in *Dracula*, it's unclear whether he was even aware of him. The evidence also suggests that he did not use any of Vlad's castles for inspiration for his fictional character Dracula. Instead, he relied on Romanian folklore of the wild Transylvania region and his imagination to create Dracula.

William Wallace (c. 1270 - 1305) was a Scottish knight who became one of the foremost Scottish leaders during the Wars of Scottish Independence and is a national hero. Wallace's army defeated the English army in several battles and was successful enough that his army invaded England – something that was thought to be undoable. He was appointed Guardian of Scotland and served until his defeat at the Battle of Falkirk in 1298. He was eventually betrayed by other Scots and handed over to King Edward I of England, who had him hanged, drawn, and quartered for high treason. His body was sent to the 'four corners of England' (his head was tarred and put on a spike in London, his right arm was hung in Newcastle, his left arm in Stirling, his right leg in Berwick, and his left leg in Perth).

To the Scottish people, Wallace was the exemplification of undying patriotism to the cause of that country's independence. His desire for peace and freedom brought the clans together while it struck fear into his enemies. Importantly, he continually defied the invading king, Edward 'Longshanks' Plantagenet I of England, when all others had given up. As a result, he is considered Scotland's greatest hero by most. He was said to be a giant of a man, with some estimates saying he was 6' 7" tall. His sword is displayed in the Wallace Monument in Stirling, Scotland is 5' 4" high – a huge sword.

From the English perspective, Wallace was an outlaw, a murderer, a perpetrator of atrocities, and a traitor.

Note: many of the stories Wallace tells Alex are true – including being thrown out on the trash heap.

Some of the key people in his life are:

- **Mariod Braidfute** (c. 1274 – 1297) may or may not have lived and may or may not have married William Wallace. Legends have it that the Sheriff of Lanark killed her, thus fueling Wallace's rage against the English.
- **Robert the Bruce** (1274 – 1329) ruled Scotland from 1306 to 1329. After Wallace's death, he led Scotland during the rest of the First War of Scottish Independence. He's revered as a national hero in Scotland for his defeat of the English, even though he did swear allegiance at one time to Edward I and fought other Scottish noblemen for the right to the crown.
- **John Comyn** (1279-1306 CE), also known as Red Comyn, was a prominent and wealthy Scottish Nobleman during the War for Scottish Independence and Guardian of Scotland after Wallace gave up the Office. He fought for the Scottish (against the English) and the English (against the French). His participation at Falkirk is uncertain. Some accounts say he fled, some that he never showed up. The kinder accounts say that the Scottish cavalry was outmanned by the heavier and more numerous English cavalry. He was killed by Robert the Bruce and his friends at Greyfriars Church.
- **Edward I** (1239 – 1307) was King of England from 1272 to 1307. He was a very tall man, like his adversary William Wallace, thus his nickname of Edward Longshanks. Most remember him for his nearly continuous campaigns in France, Wales, and Scotland, but he also reformed much of the English legal system.
- **Kerly** very little is known of him. He was Wallace's servant and was killed the night Wallace was captured.
- **William de Lamberton** (? – 1328) was a Catholic Bishop best known for his role in the Wars of Scottish Independence. His association with William Wallace had a big part in his appointment as Bishop. He was Scottish Ambassador to the French Court and to the Pope.

- **Sir John de Menteith** (1275 – 1329) was a Scottish noble and supposed friend of Wallace, although he betrayed Wallace and turned him over to the English. He was awarded an Earldom by Edward but later fought with Robert the Bruce against the English.
- **Sir John de Seagrave** (1276 – 1325 CE) was an English commander who fought for Edward I in both the Wales campaigns and the First War of Scottish Independence. He's more famous for his involvement with the execution of William Wallace, acting as both his jailer and as the person responsible for carrying Wallace's quarters to their destinations in Scotland. He died a wealthy man.

Wormholes (also called Einstein-Rosen bridges) is another aspect of the theory of relativity. They theoretically link two different points in space-time via a 'shortcut.'