



Historians believe that the artist Pisanello (1395-1455) created this portrait of Sigismund of Luxembourg (1369-1437) circa 1432-33. The original work - tempera-on-vellum fastened on a wooden panel - is maintained by the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna.

Sigismund was the Holy Roman Emperor between 1433 and 1437. Before that, he was also King of:

- Hungary and Croatia (1387);
- The Romans (in 1410);
- Bohemia (in 1419).

He was, in short, a traveling King with a far-flung Empire to manage. He was the son of the Emperor Charles IV and his fourth wife, Elizabeth of Pomerania.

Among the people Sigismund could count on was a Prince from Wallachia named Vlad. In 1431, the Emperor gave Vlad two great honors:

- He was inducted into the prestigious *Order of the Dragon* (an Order of Knights which Sigismund founded);
- He was made Prince of Wallachia.

The Romanian word for "Dragon" is *Dracul*. After Vlad's induction into the Order of the Dragon, he was thereafter known as "Vlad Dracul" (for Vlad the Dragon). His young son Vlad was known as "Vlad Dracula" (for Vlad, son of the Dragon).

Thus it was that Sigismund of Luxembourg effectively gave the real "Dracula" his still-popular name.

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Sigismund of Luxembourg Names Dracula

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