1. Joan of Arc, also known as Jeanne d'Arc, was born in Domrémy, France, in 1412. She was a peasant girl who played a significant role in the Hundred Years' War between France and England.
2. At the age of 17, Joan claimed to have received visions and divine guidance from saints, including Saint Michael the Archangel. She believed she had a divine mission to help the Dauphin (heir to the French throne), Charles VII, reclaim his kingdom from English control.
3. Joan convinced Charles VII to allow her to lead the French army against the English. Dressed in armor, she rallied troops, boosted morale, and led them to several victories, including the lifting of the siege of Orléans in 1429.
4. Joan's leadership and military successes had a profound impact on the course of the war. She became a symbol of French resistance and inspired patriotism among the French people.
5. Despite her military achievements, Joan's success was short-lived. In 1430, she was captured by the Burgundians, allies of the English, and sold to the English for a hefty sum.
6. The English put Joan on trial for charges of heresy and witchcraft. Her trial was politically motivated, aiming to discredit her and undermine her influence. She was subjected to intense questioning and faced biased judges.
7. Joan's trial transcript provides valuable insights into her character. Despite her lack of formal education, she displayed intelligence, wit, and unwavering faith in her visions and mission.
8. Ultimately, Joan was found guilty and sentenced to death. On May 30, 1431, at the age of 19, she was burned at the stake in Rouen, France. Her execution was intended to eliminate her as a threat and discourage further support for the French cause.
9. Joan's trial was later reexamined, and in 1456, she was posthumously declared innocent of all charges. She was canonized as a saint by the Catholic Church in 1920, becoming one of the most celebrated and revered figures in French history.
10. Joan of Arc's legacy transcends time and borders. She symbolizes courage, resilience, and unwavering faith. Her story has inspired countless works of literature, art, and film, cementing her status as an iconic figure in history.