

**ALL THOSE
TERRIFYING HISTORIES SERIES**

Kenneth Cavalcanti (ed.)

**Who Is Dracula?
Pages from the Unknown
Romanian Chronicles**

ffeat. Vlad the Impaler, Elizabeth Bathory,
Bram Stoker, Adolf Hitler

*Horror Stories
You Don't Want to Read About*

INTEGRAL

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#3

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From the Fiction of Bram Stoker to the Historical Facts

Abraham "Bram" Stoker (November 8, 1847 – April 20, 1912) was an Irish author, best known today for his 1897 Gothic horror novel *Dracula*. During his lifetime, he was better known as the personal assistant of actor Sir Henry Irving and business manager of the Lyceum Theatre, which Irving owned.

Stoker was born on November 8, 1847, at 15 Marino Crescent, Clontarf, on the northside of Dublin, Ireland. His parents were Abraham Stoker (1799–1876) from Dublin and Charlotte Mathilda Blake Thornley (1818–1901), who was raised in County Sligo. Stoker was the third of seven children, the eldest of whom was Sir Thornley Stoker, 1st Bt. Abraham and Charlotte were members of the Church of Ireland Parish of Clontarf and attended the parish church with their children, who were baptised there, and Abraham was a senior civil servant.

Stoker was bedridden with an unknown illness until he started school at the age of seven, when he made a complete recovery. Of this time, Stoker wrote, "I was naturally thoughtful, and the leisure of long illness gave opportunity for many thoughts which were fruitful according to their kind in later years." He was educated in a private school run by the Rev. William Woods.

After his recovery, he grew up without further serious illnesses, even excelling as an athlete (he was named University Athlete, participating in multiple sports) at Trinity College, Dublin, which he attended from 1864 to 1870. He graduated with a BA in 1870, and pursued his MA in 1875. Though he later in life recalled graduating "with honours in mathematics," this appears to have been a mistake. He was auditor of the College Historical Society (*the Hist*) and president of the University Philosophical Society, where his first paper was on *Sensationalism in Fiction and Society*.

Stoker became interested in the theatre while a student through his friend Dr. Maunsell. While working for the Irish Civil Service, he became the theatre critic for the *Dublin Evening Mail*, which was co-owned by Sheridan Le Fanu, an author of Gothic tales. Theatre critics were held in low esteem, but he attracted notice by the quality of his reviews. In December 1876, he gave a favourable review of Henry Irving's *Hamlet* at the Theatre Royal in Dublin. Irving invited Stoker for dinner at the Shelbourne Hotel where he was staying, and they became friends. Stoker also wrote stories, and "The Crystal Cup" was published by the London Society in 1872, followed by "The Chain of Destiny" in four parts in *The Shamrock*. In 1876 while a civil servant in Dublin, Stoker wrote the non-fiction book *The Duties of Clerks of Petty Sessions in Ireland* (published 1879) which remained a standard work. Furthermore, he possessed an interest in art, and was a founder of the Dublin Sketching Club in 1879.

In 1878 Stoker married Florence Balcombe, daughter of Lieutenant-Colonel James Balcombe of 1 Marino Crescent. She was a celebrated beauty whose former suitor had been Oscar Wilde. Stoker had known Wilde from his student days, having proposed him for membership of the university's Philosophical Society while he was president. Wilde was upset at

Florence's decision, but Stoker later resumed the acquaintanceship, and after Wilde's fall visited him on the Continent.

The Stokers moved to London, where Stoker became acting manager and then business manager of Irving's Lyceum Theatre, London, a post he held for 27 years. On 31 December 1879, Bram and Florence's only child was born, a son whom they christened Irving Noel Thornley Stoker. The collaboration with Henry Irving was important for Stoker and through him he became involved in London's high society, where he met James Abbott McNeill Whistler and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (to whom he was distantly related). Working for Irving, the most famous actor of his time, and managing one of the most successful theatres in London made Stoker a notable if busy man. He was dedicated to Irving and his memoirs show he idolised him. In London, Stoker also met Hall Caine, who became one of his closest friends – he dedicated *Dracula* to him.

In the course of Irving's tours, Stoker travelled the world, although he never visited Eastern Europe, a setting for his most famous novel. Stoker enjoyed the United States, where Irving was popular. With Irving he was invited twice to the White House, and knew William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt. Stoker set two of his novels in America, and used Americans as characters, the most notable being Quincey Morris. He also met one of his literary idols, Walt Whitman.

Stoker was a regular visitor to Cruden Bay in Scotland between 1893 and 1910. His month-long holidays to the Aberdeenshire coastal village provided a large portion of available time for writing his books. Two novels were set in Cruden Bay: *The Watter's Mou'* (1895) and *The Mystery of the Sea* (1902). He started writing *Dracula* here in 1895 while in residence at the Kilmarnock Arms Hotel. The guest book with his signatures from 1894 and 1895 still survives. The nearby Slains Castle (also known as New Slains Castle) is linked with Bram Stoker and plausibly provided the visual palette for the descriptions of Castle Dracula during the writing phase. A distinctive room in Slains Castle, the octagonal hall, matches the description of the octagonal room in Castle Dracula.

Stoker visited the English coastal town of Whitby in 1890, and that visit was 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-Jewish writer and traveller (born in Szent-György, Kingdom of Hungary, now Svätý Jur, Slovakia). *Dracula* likely emerged from Vámbéry's dark stories of the Carpathian mountains. Stoker then spent several years researching Central and East European folklore and mythological stories of vampires.

Ármin Vámbéry, also known as *Arminius Vámbéry* (19 March 1832 – 15 September 1913), was a Hungarian Turkologist and traveller. Vámbéry was born as *Hermann Wamberger* into a poor Jewish family. According to Ernst Pawel, a biographer of Theodor Herzl, as well as Tom Reiss, a biographer of Kurban Said, Vámbéry's original last name was *Wamberger* rather than *Bamberger*. He was raised Jewish, but later became an atheist. Vámbéry was 1 year old

when his father died and the family moved to Dunaszerdahely (now Dunajská Streda in Slovakia). He attended the local school until the age of 12 and showed a remarkable aptitude for learning languages. He was forced to walk with crutches because of a congenital disorder and eventually had to leave school due to difficult financial circumstances. He worked briefly as a tailor's assistant, but after becoming tutor to the son of the village innkeeper, he was enabled by his friends to enter the "Untergymnasium" of Szentgyörgy.

By the age of sixteen, he had a good knowledge of Hungarian, Hebrew, Latin, French, and German. He was also rapidly acquiring English, the Scandinavian languages, Russian, Serbian and naturally other Slavic languages.

In 1846, he went to Pressburg (today Bratislava, Hungarian: Pozsony), where he remained three years. Later he studied at Vienna, Kecskemét, and Budapest.

Vámbéry was especially attracted by the literature and culture of the Ottoman Empire including Turkey. By the age of twenty, Vámbéry had learned enough Ottoman Turkish to enable him to go, through the assistance of Baron Joseph Eötvös, to Istanbul and establish himself as a private tutor of European languages. He became a tutor in the house of Huseyin Daim *Pasha*, and, under the influence of his friend and instructor, Ahmet Efendi, became a full Osmanli, serving as secretary to Fuat Pasha. About this time he was elected a corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in recognition of his translations of Ottoman historians.

After spending about a year in Constantinople, he published a German-Turkish dictionary in 1858. Later, he also published various other linguistic works. He also learned some twenty other Turkish languages and dialects. Returning to Budapest in 1861, he received a stipend of a thousand florins from the academy, and in the autumn of the same year, disguised as a Sunni *dervish*, and under the name of Reshit Efendi, he set out from Constantinople. His route lay from Trebizond on the Black Sea to Tehran in Persia, where he joined a band of pilgrims returning from Mecca, spending several months with them traveling across Central Iran (Tabriz, Zanjan, and Kazvin). He then went to Shiraz, through Ispahan, and in June, 1863, he reached Khorezm (Central Asia). Throughout this time, he succeeded in maintaining his disguise as "Reshit Efendi," so that upon his arrival at the Khanate of Khiva he managed to keep up appearances during interviews with Khan Sayyid Muhammad. Together with his band of travelers, he then crossed Bokhara and arrived at Samarkand. Initially, he aroused the suspicions of the local ruler, who kept him in an audience for a full half-hour. Vámbéry managed to maintain his pretences, and left the audience laden with gifts. Upon leaving Samarkand, Vámbéry began making his way back to Constantinople, traveling by way of Herat. There he took leave of the band of dervishes and joined a caravan to Tehran, and from there, via Trebizond and Erzurum, to Constantinople, arriving there in March 1864.

This was the first successful journey of its kind undertaken by a European; and since it was necessary to avoid suspicion, Vámbéry could not take even fragmentary notes, except by stealth. After a long and perilous journey he arrived back at Pest in May 1864. He went to London to arrange the English language publication of his book about the travels. *Travels in Central Asia* and its Hungarian counterpart "Közép-ázsiai utazás" were published in 1865. Thanks to his travels Vámbéry became an internationally renowned writer and celebrity. He became acquainted with members of British social elite. The Ambassador of Austria in London gave him a letter of recommendation to the Emperor, who received him in an

audience and rewarded Vámbéry's international success by granting him professorship in the Royal University of Pest.

Vámbéry became known also as a publicist, zealously defending British policy in the East as against that of the Russians. He was widely celebrated at his 70th birthday in March 1902, receiving greetings from academic institutions all over Europe. The British King Edward VII appointed him an Honorary Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, his house order, followed by a letter where Vámbéry was appreciated as "*so good and constant a friend to England*". In 2005 the National Archives at Kew, Surrey, made files accessible to the public, and it was revealed that Vámbéry had been employed by the British Foreign Office as an agent and spy whose task it was to combat Russian attempts at gaining ground in Central Asia and threatening the British position on the Indian sub-continent.

He advocated the theory of close Turkic-Hungarian linguistic and ethnic relationship, and his publications on the subject provoked a harsh scientific and public debate in Hungary, remembered as the "Ugric-Turk War". Vámbéry argued that the large number of similarities between Turkic languages and Hungarian pointed to a shared origin of these languages and peoples in Northern Asia. His strongest evidences were the large corpus of ancient Turkish words in Hungarian word-stock (300-400 for a minimum and even more with good alternative Turkic etymologies) and the strong typological similarity of Hungarian and Turkic languages. In his opinion, Hungarian is a contact language, more precisely a mixed language, and a fruit of the intermingling of early Hungarians with Turkic peoples; as a result of this merger, the Hungarian language got a unique, distinctly dual (Ugric and Turkic) character. (The intriguing problem of Turkic-Hungarian language relations is far from settled even after centuries of research.) Vámbéry was not the first to suggest such mixed origin; the German linguist and orientalist Wilhelm Schott (1802-1889) was a proponent of Finn-Turk-Hungarian kinship, and considered the Hungarians (and their language) a mixture of Turkic and Hyperborean / i.e. Saami, Samoyed etc. / elements. Nonetheless, Vámbéry's theory was opposed by proponents of the Finno-Ugric theory of the origins of Hungarian, who gradually triumphed in Hungary but not in Turkey. In Turkey, Hungarian and Turkish are still considered as two branches of the same language family, the Ural–Altaic.

Vámbéry was acquainted with Bram Stoker, during a stay in London, and Stoker claimed him as his consultant, and inspirator of main antagonist character Dracula and, of course, the book's title. The character of Professor Van Helsing in Stoker's novel, *Dracula*, is sometimes said to be based on Vámbéry, though Stoker was likely inspired by Sheridan Le Fanu's Dr. Hesselius. In the novel (chapters 18 and 23) Van Helsing refers to his "friend Arminius, of Buda-Pesth University". His son, Rusztem Vambéry, briefly served as Hungary's ambassador to the United States after World War II.

Dracula is an 1897 Gothic horror novel by Irish author Bram Stoker, introduced the character of Count Dracula and established many conventions of subsequent vampire fantasy. The novel tells the story of Dracula's attempt to move from Transylvania to England so that he may find new blood and spread the undead curse, and of the battle between Dracula and a small group of people led by Professor Abraham Van Helsing.

Dracula has been assigned to many literary genres including vampire literature, horror fiction, gothic fiction, and invasion literature. The novel has spawned numerous theatrical, film, and television interpretations.

The story is told in an epistolary format, as a series of letters, diary entries, newspaper articles, and ships' log entries, whose narrators are the novel's protagonists, and occasionally supplemented with newspaper clippings relating events not directly witnessed. The events portrayed in the novel take place chronologically and largely in England and Transylvania within the same year between May 3 and November 6. A short note at the end of the final chapter is written seven years after the events outlined in the novel.

The tale begins with Jonathan Harker, a newly qualified English solicitor, visiting Count Dracula at his castle in the Carpathian Mountains on the border of Transylvania, Bukovina and Moldavia, to provide legal support for a real estate transaction overseen by Harker's employer, Mr. Peter Hawkins of Exeter. Initially impressed by Dracula's gracious manners, Harker soon realizes that he is Dracula's prisoner. Wandering the Count's castle against Dracula's admonition, Harker encounters three vampire sisters, from whom he is rescued by Dracula. Harker soon realizes that Dracula himself is also a vampire. After the preparations are made, Dracula leaves Transylvania and abandons Harker to the sisters. Harker barely escapes from the castle with his life.

Dracula boards a Russian ship, the *Demeter*, taking with him boxes of Transylvanian soil, which he requires in order to regain his strength. The ship weighs anchor at Varna and eventually runs aground on the shores of Whitby in north-east England. The captain's log narrates the gradual disappearance of the entire crew, until the captain alone remained, himself bound to the helm to maintain course. An animal resembling "a large dog" is seen leaping ashore. It is later learned that Dracula successfully purchased multiple estates under the alias "Count De Ville" throughout London and devised to distribute the boxes to each of them utilizing transportation services as well as moving them himself. He does this to secure for himself lairs and the boxes of earth would be used as his graves which would grant safety and rest during times of feeding and replenishing his strength.

Harker's fiancée, Mina Murray, is staying with her friend Lucy Westenra, who is holidaying in Whitby. Lucy receives three marriage proposals from Dr. John Seward, Quincey Morris and Arthur Holmwood (the son of Lord Godalming who later succeeds to the title himself). Lucy accepts Holmwood's proposal while turning down Seward and Morris, but all remain friends. Dracula communicates with Seward's patient, Renfield, an insane man who wishes to consume insects, spiders, birds, and rats to absorb their life force. Renfield is able to detect Dracula's presence and supplies clues accordingly.

Soon Dracula is indirectly shown to be stalking Lucy. As time passes she begins to suffer from episodes of sleepwalking and dementia, as witnessed by Mina. When Lucy begins to waste away suspiciously, Seward invites his old teacher, Abraham Van Helsing, who immediately determines the true cause of Lucy's condition. He refuses to disclose it but diagnoses her with acute blood-loss. Van Helsing prescribes numerous blood transfusions to which he, Seward, Quincey, and Arthur all contribute over time. Van Helsing also prescribes garlic flowers to be placed throughout her room and weaves a necklace of withered garlic blossoms for her to wear. However she continues to waste away – appearing to lose blood every night.

Van Helsing attempts to protect Lucy with garlic but fate thwarts him each night, whether Lucy's mother removes the garlic from her room, or Lucy herself does so in her restless sleep. While both doctors are absent, Lucy and her mother are attacked by a wolf and Mrs Westenra, who has a heart condition, dies of fright. The doctors find two small puncture

marks about Lucy's neck, which Dr Seward is at a loss to understand. After Lucy also dies, Van Helsing places a golden crucifix over her mouth, ostensibly to delay or prevent Lucy's vampiric conversion. Fate conspires against him again when Van Helsing finds the crucifix in the possession of one of the servants who stole it off Lucy's corpse.

Following Lucy's death and burial, the newspapers report children being stalked in the night by a "bloofer lady" (i.e., "beautiful lady"). Van Helsing, knowing Lucy has become a vampire, confides in Arthur, Seward and Morris. The suitors and Van Helsing track her down and, after a confrontation with her, stake her heart, behead her, and fill her mouth with garlic. Around the same time, Jonathan Harker arrives from Budapest, where Mina marries him after his escape, and he and Mina join the campaign against Dracula.

The vampire hunters stay at Dr. Seward's residence, holding nightly meetings and providing reports based on each of their various tasks. Mina discovers that each of their journals and letters collectively contain clues through which they can track Dracula down. She tasks herself with collecting them, researching newspaper clippings, fitting the most relevant entries into chronological order and typing out copies to distribute to each of the party which they are to study. Jonathan Harker tracks down the shipments of boxed graves and the estates which Dracula has purchased in order to store them.

Van Helsing conducts research along with Dr. Seward to analyze the behaviour of their patient Renfield who they learn is directly influenced by Dracula. They also research historical events, folklore, and superstitions from various cultures to understand Dracula's powers and weaknesses. Van Helsing also establishes a criminal profile on Dracula in order to better understand his actions and predict his movements. Arthur Holmwood's fortune assists in funding the entire operation.

As they discover the various properties Dracula had purchased, the male protagonists team up to raid each property and are several times confronted by Dracula. Locating each of the boxed graves scattered throughout London, they pry them open to place and seal wafers of sacramental bread within. This act renders the boxes of earth completely useless to Dracula as he is unable to open, enter or further transport them.

After Dracula learns of the group's plot against him, he attacks Mina on three occasions, and feeds Mina his own blood to control her. This curses Mina with vampirism and changes her but does not completely turn her into a vampire. Van Helsing attempts to bless Mina through prayer and by placing a wafer of sacrament against her forehead, but it burns her upon contact leaving a wretched scar. Under this curse, Mina oscillates from consciousness to a semi-trance during which she perceives Dracula's surroundings and actions. Van Helsing is able to use hypnotism twice a day, at dawn and at sunset, to put her into this trance to further track Dracula's movements. Mina, afraid of Dracula's link with her, urges the team not to tell her their plans out of fear that Dracula will be listening. After the protagonists discover and sterilize 49 boxes found throughout his lairs in London, they learn that Dracula has fled with the missing 50th box back to his castle in Transylvania. They pursue him under the guidance of Mina.

They split up into teams once they reach Europe; Van Helsing and Mina go to Dracula's castle, while the others attempt to ambush the boat Dracula is using to reach his home. Van Helsing raids the castle and destroys the vampire sisters. Upon discovering Dracula being transported by Gypsies, the three teams converge and attack the caravan carrying Dracula in the 50th box of earth. After dispatching many Gypsies who were sworn to protect the Count,

Harker shears Dracula through the throat with a kukri knife, while the mortally wounded Quincey stabs the Count in the heart with a Bowie knife. Dracula crumbles to dust, and Mina is freed from her curse of vampirism, as the scar on her forehead disappears. Soon after, Quincey dies from his wounds.

The book closes with a note left by Jonathan Harker seven years after the events of the novel, detailing his married life with Mina and the birth of their son, whom they name after all four members of the party, but address as Quincey. Young Quincey is depicted sitting on the knee of Van Helsing as they recount their adventure. Seward and Arthur have each gotten married.

A small section was removed from a draft of the final chapter, in which Dracula's castle falls apart as he dies, hiding the fact that vampires were ever there.^[4]

As we looked there came a terrible convulsion of the earth so that we seemed to rock to and fro and fell to our knees. At the same moment with a roar which seemed to shake the very heavens the whole castle and the rock and even the hill on which it stood seemed to rise into the air and scatter in fragments while a mighty cloud of black and yellow smoke volume on volume in rolling grandeur was shot upwards with inconceivable rapidity.

Then there was a stillness in nature as the echoes of that thunderous report seemed to come as with the hollow boom of a thunder-clap – the long reverberating roll which seems as though the floors of heaven shook. Then down in a mighty ruin falling whence they rose came the fragments that had been tossed skywards in the cataclysm.

”From where we stood it seemed as though the one fierce volcano burst had satisfied the need of nature and that the castle and the structure of the hill had sunk again into the void. We were so appalled with the suddenness and the grandeur that we forgot to think of ourselves” — *Deleted excerpt from the original Dracula manuscript*

The main characters in the novel are:

Count Dracula: A Transylvanian noble who has purchased a house in London.

Jonathan Harker: A solicitor sent to do business with Count Dracula; Mina's fiancé and prisoner in Dracula's castle.

Wilhelmina "Mina" Harker (née Murray): A schoolteacher and Jonathan Harker's fiancée (later his wife).

Arthur Holmwood: Lucy's suitor and later fiancé. He inherits the title of Lord Godalming upon his father's death.

Quincey Morris: An American cowboy and explorer; and one of Lucy's suitors.

Renfield: A patient at Seward's insane asylum who has come under the influence of Dracula.

John Seward: A doctor; one of Lucy's suitors and a former student of Van Helsing.

Abraham Van Helsing: A Dutch doctor, lawyer and professor; John Seward's teacher.