The London Editions of Polidori's "The Vampyre"
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The London Editions of Polidori's

*The Vampyre*

*By Henry R. Viets, M.D.*

On 1 April 1819 there was published in London a short story entitled "The Vampyre; a Tale by Lord Byron." This rather pallid extravaganza was written by John William Polidori, M.D., in Switzerland, while acting as traveling physician with Lord Byron in 1816. When printed in the *New Monthly Magazine*, the story appeared to be relatively innocuous, but with Byron as the presumptive author the reaction in the highly sensitive literary world of the time was electric. Although he had left England three years before, Byron was the most widely acclaimed author in the British Empire. Indeed, John Murray, his publisher, wrote to him in Venice on 19 March 1819: "Believe me, there is no Character talked of in this Country as yours is; it is the constant theme of all classes, and your portrait is engraved, and painted, and sold in every town throughout the Kingdom." Not only was Byron's portrait sold, but every line he wrote was devoured by an eager public.

Although Polidori's story was inconsequential and the author inconspicuous, the name of Byron was neither. The publisher of the *New Monthly Magazine*, moreover, when he inserted Byron's name in place of Polidori's, was using a shoddy fabrication to promote the sale of his magazine and ultimately of the book, which followed almost immediately. In an attempt to wriggle out of the dilemma, Henry Colburn, the original publisher, and his associates juggled the names on the title pages of four subsequent editions. The subeditor of the *New Monthly Magazine* resigned in protest because of Colburn's ma-

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manipulations; Byron denied that he was the author; Polidori rather uncertainly asserted his rights, and amid the uproar, *The Vampyre* became so popular with the public that five London editions were called for in a few months. In addition, the tale was promptly issued in Paris in English, translated into French and Italian, soon became an acceptable play on the stages of both Paris and London, and formed the basis for an opera, produced in German, English, Russian, French, and Dutch. But Polidori got little credit; it was Byron's name, as Henry Colburn in London had clearly seen, that made the achievement of widespread popularity possible. Polidori, in spite of his vaulting ambition, was left stranded and almost forgotten.

The *New Monthly Magazine and Universal Register* had been established in London by Henry Colburn in 1814. By 1819, when *The Vampyre* was first published, the magazine was already firmly grounded and gave substance to Colburn's even more successful venture, the *Literary Gazette*, begun in 1817, a weekly newspaper devoted to literature, sciences, and the arts. Both quickly obtained repute and authority. Colburn's position in London publishing was, moreover, augmented by his bringing out the first edition of Evelyn's *Diary* in 1818, so that by 1819, when the Polidori-Byron incident occurred, he was recognized as a self-made man, energetic and rapidly pushing forward but something of a speculator and opportunist. His previous training had been largely as a bookseller and manager of a circulating library.

Colburn chose for his editor a nonconformist minister and miscellaneous writer, John Watkins, L.L.D., whose *Universal Biographical and Historical Dictionary* (1800) had passed through several editions. He was better known a few years later for his *Memoirs of Sheridan* (1816), a prolix but popular biography, and for the *Memoirs of Queen Sophia Charlotte* (1819). When Colburn made him editor he had been in London some twenty years. Watkins, however, seems not to have taken an active part in editing, leaving the daily tasks to his subeditor Alaric Watts, who virtually served as editor-in-chief.

Alaric Alexander Watts was only twenty-two when he became subeditor in 1819. He had already made a name for himself as a teacher in well-established schools and there had followed a period of tutor-
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ing in the family of the Royal dentist, Bartolomeo Ruspini. Ruspini, who was socially prominent in London, must undoubtedly have known Polidori's father, a distinguished teacher of Italian who had translated Horace Walpole's The Castle of Otranto into that language. Watts was closely associated also with C. R. Maturin, the Irish novelist and writer of Gothic tales. He had directed the production of Maturin's unsuccessful tragedy Fredolfo, and met the famous Quakers "The Brothers Witten," whose sister he was later to marry. As subeditor, it was into his hands that Polidori's manuscript of The Vamfyre fell, with disastrous consequences for both of them.

Although there is some uncertainty as to the exact method used in transmitting the manuscript of Polidori's The Vamfyre from Switzerland, where it was written in 1816, to the editorial rooms of the New Monthly Magazine in London in 1819, no doubt exists about the date and place of composition. It is indisputable, moreover, that the idea of a tale of terror bordering on the supernatural arose not in Polidori's mind but in Byron's fertile imagination. As Polidori wrote later: "Though the groundwork is certainly Lord Byron's, its development is mine." The date Polidori began his story was, as recorded in his Diary, in the summer of 1816; the place, Byron's Villa Diodati at Cologny. The tale was completed the same summer at Genthod, also on Lake Leman.

During a few days of rainy weather, five young persons spent their "evenings crowded around a blazing woodfire" in the salon of the Villa. It was a pleasant room surrounded by a balcony and in good weather opened on an extensive view of Lake Leman, a short distance away, and across the water the snowy caps of the Jura. But in June 1816, Byron wrote: "How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea, and

5 Chevalier Bartolomeo Ruspini was a fantastic figure in social London in 1819, patronized by many of the great personages of the kingdom and by the royal family. A philanthropist, he also founded the Freemason's School for Female Children. His book A Treatise on the Teeth, first published in 1768, went through ten editions, and Ruspini became the leading teacher of dentistry of his day.

4 John W. Polidori to the editor of the New Monthly Magazine. Undated letter, but published in the magazine, II, 1 May 1819, 332.

5 The Diary of Dr. John William Polidori, 1816, relating to Byron, Shelley, etc. Edited and elucidated by William Michael Rossetti, London 1911. (Hereafter referred to as Diary.)
the big rain comes dancing to the earth!" Mary Shelley, one of the five, found the "wet, ungenial summer, and incessant rain" depressing and felt at first "that blank incapability of invention which is the greatest misery of authorship." Byron expressed it rather differently. He felt that the confinement would lead them to "find room and food for meditation, nor pass by much, that may give us pause, if pondered fittingly." He at least seems to have found the interlude mildly stimulating and it was he who suggested that each of those present write a ghost story.

For dinner at five, Byron usually invited Shelley, who had taken a house within walking distance. Not infrequently his brother poet and Shelley’s guests spent the night at the Villa Diodati, as they did during the period of boisterous weather when it was dangerous to walk home on a dark rainy night. Indeed Polidori, Byron’s physician-in-residence, had turned his ankle on the slippery path and was partially incapacitated at the time.

The Shelley visitors consisted of the poet, his second wife, Mary, only nineteen, and "Claire" Clairmont, Mary’s step-sister and Byron’s former mistress, a girl of eighteen. Byron, of course, was host and he and Shelley “pondered fittingly” the food for meditation that gave them pause. Mary Shelley and Polidori listened, both very closely, for it was they who reaped the main benefits from these gloomy evenings. The best account of the proceedings came from Mary Shelley, when in 1831 she wrote a new preface for a revised edition of Frankenstein, the story she began at the Villa Diodati in June 1816. “I was a devout but nearly silent listener” to “the many and long conversations” between Lord Byron and Shelley." The two sensitive poets, who had suffered much psychic trauma themselves, were no doubt finding some relief in exploring the unknown and discussing “the principle of life,” but for Mary Shelley it meant, with “a vividness far beyond the usual bounds of reverie,” a picture of a “hideous phantasm of a man” who mocked “the stupendous mechanism of the Creator of the world.” Thus Frankenstein evolved.

Among the others present in the salon sessions, Shelley started a

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6 Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage, canto three, xciii.
8 Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage, canto three, xcvi.
9 Ref. 7.
story, but soon lost interest and nothing came of it. "Claire" also defaulted. Byron began his tale of terror and wrote out the introductory paragraphs, published in 1819 at the end of *Mazeppa*. This "Fragment" is dated 17 June 1816. It contains a slight suggestion of the plot that Polidori incorporated into *The Vampyre*, but the final development of his story is entirely Polidori's. Byron apparently read the fragment aloud and then outlined the unwritten portion to the entire company. Mary Shelley thought it "very dramatic and striking." Polidori wrote nothing at the time, but he must have listened carefully for on this foundation he built his own tale. He wrote three years later in his introduction to his novel *Ernestus Berchtold* that he sketched out Byron's story to a lady "who denied the possibility of such a groundwork forming the outline of a tale which should bear the slightest appearance of probability." But Polidori thought it could be made likely and "in the course of three mornings, I produced that tale, and left it with her." This was just before he left Cologny on 16 September 1816.

While with Byron, the socially minded doctor spent ten weeks, mostly away from the Villa Diodati, visiting the charming houses that stud the north shore of Lake Leman. During this period he gave up keeping his *Diary* on 2 July and did not resume until 5 September. Many of his visits were made to the "Countess Breuss," who maintained a hospitable estate at Genthod where Polidori was lavishly entertained. The neighboring families met once a week at her villa for dancing, music, charades, and amateur theatricals. Polidori took an active part in the plays, acting as a Pantalone in the Venetian style, a character particularly suitable for him. He was an adept comedian and won much applause. It was to the Countess that the story of *The Vampyre* was first told. He probably wrote the final draft of his tale at her home, leaving the manuscript with her when he left Byron's service and started on his walking tour from Switzerland to Italy. In the next few years, according to Rossetti, Polidori "thought little or no more about it."

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12 *Diary*, p. 152.
13 Ibid., Introduction by William Michael Rossetti, p. 12.
It is now believed that the name "Countess Breuss" resulted from an erroneous transcription of his manuscript by Polidori's sister Charlotte. As she destroyed the manuscript after making her copy, the exact cause of the error cannot now be ascertained. Whatever interpretations she made of Polidori's handwriting were carried over by Rossetti when he came to edit the *Diary* in 1911.

There lived in Genthod from 1815 to 1822 a Countess Catherine Bruce. Born in St. Petersburg, she is thought to have been the last descendant of Count James Daniel Bruce (1670-1735), the grandmaster of artillery for Peter the Great. Her father may have been James Alexander Bruce, a collateral relative of James Daniel, who was commander in chief at St. Petersburg and Moscow and whose wife was a confidant of Catherine II.

The Countess Bruce lived in the Maison D'Abraham Gallatin in Genthod, a superb villa where Polidori spent so much of his time. The house was bought in 1824, shortly after the Polidori episode, by John Jacob Astor (1763-1848) as a present for his youngest daughter. Catherine Bruce had married Count Basil Moucin-Puchkin of St. Petersburg, from whom she was separated. She was using her maiden name in 1816 when Polidori knew her.

The manuscript of *The Vampyre* apparently lay in the villa of the "Countess Breuss" in Genthod from September 1816 until the autumn of 1818, when it reached London. During the intervening years Polidori had returned to England in the spring of 1817, tried unsuccessfully to practice medicine at Norwich, fallen in love with Elizabeth Martineau, suffered a severe concussion of the brain, and returned to his father's house in London. He then gave up medicine as a profession and began to study law.

In the meantime, during the latter part of 1818, a manuscript and other documents were sent to Henry Colburn, by "a friend travelling on the Continent." Colburn's correspondent presumably got his information from some resident of Geneva and the manuscripts from the "Countess Breuss," or from her family, in Genthod. With the various

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15 Possibly from someone settling the estate of Louis Odier, a distinguished public health official and lecturer, who had died in 1817. The wealthy physician became a close
items sent to Colburn was an explanatory letter mentioning that the sender was forwarding "the outline" of the stories by Lord Byron, Polidori, and Mrs. Shelley. These "outlines," if such they were, must have included notes on the story told by Byron in the Diodati salon and also notes for Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, the basis of which she had recounted to Byron and his guests at about the same time. The latter was no doubt a short version, later expanded into a book at her husband's request. But nothing is said in the letter about *The Vampyre*, although it must have been included with the other papers.

In a footnote to the article Colburn wrote: "We have in our possession the Tale of Dr. ———, as well as the outline of that of Miss Godwin." He noted that *Frankenstein* (1818) had already been published. Mary Shelley's book had been issued anonymously in three volumes, the preface being dated Marlow, September 1817. Without further explanation, Colburn published *The Vampyre* as "A tale by Lord Byron."

The appearance in print of his tale took Polidori completely by surprise. He had left the manuscript with the "Countess Breuss" in Genthod in 1816, and now in 1819 called it "an almost forgotten trifle of my own." Polidori set to work on the evening of 2 April to rectify the error by writing three letters: one to Henry Colburn, another to Sherwood, Neely, and Jones, the publishers of the book, and a third to the editor of the *Morning Chronicle*. Only the letter to Henry Colburn is known: the other two were possibly withdrawn or discarded. The first letter, however, survived among his personal papers and was reproduced by his nephew, William Michael Rossetti, in the edition of Polidori's *Diary*. A similar, although shorter and more formal, letter

friend of Polidori's in Geneva in 1816, and Polidori spent many evenings at his house talking about somnambulism and similar topics. Like Polidori he had graduated M.D. from Edinburgh, and they had common interests.

Count P. L. E. Rossi almost certainly settled the Odier estate. He had come to Geneva in 1815, after the death of Murat in Italy, to practice law. In 1816 he looked after Byron's legal affairs. Polidori wrote in his *Diary* on 14 June: "Dined with Rossi, who came to us; shrewd, quick, manly-minded fellow; I like him very much."

16 This obscure reference appears not to indicate *The Vampyre*, but Polidori's other Gothic tale, *Ernestus Berchtold; or, the modern Oedipus. A tale*, published over Polidori's name by Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown in London (1819). The story was written, at least in part, at the Villa Diodati in 1816 and apparently Colburn had the manuscript under consideration. If, indeed, Colburn did consult "with its author," the work must have been withdrawn by Polidori. It was published by another firm.

17 *Diary*, introduction, p. 18.
was sent later to Colburn for publication in the *New Monthly Magazine* for 1 May 1819.\textsuperscript{18}

On 5 April, "the publishers of the magazine called upon me," Polidori wrote, "and promised it [The Vampyre] should be instantly announced as mine. . . . When I came to claim my share in the profits, I was offered £30, instead of nearly £300. . . ."\textsuperscript{19} Colburn, prodded by Polidori, attempted to make partial amends. He could not change the title already used in the magazine or on the title page of the Sherwood, Neely, and Jones edition, for both were in print on 1 April, but he did modify the ascription in his own edition, changing it to *The Vampyre: a tale related by Lord Byron to Dr. Polidori*. At the same time he induced Sherwood, Neely, and Jones to omit Byron's name from their title page. The last act must have pleased Polidori, for he bought a copy of the anonymous edition and signed it on 8 April. Finally, Polidori was paid "a small sum," much less than he had hoped for, particularly as he soon became aware of the popularity of the work both in England and abroad, edition after edition being called for by an eager public of Byron readers.

Colburn's subeditor Alaric Watts gave Colburn's reason for publishing over Byron's name when he called on John Murray, Byron's publisher, on 27 April 1819 "to exculpate himself from the baseness of the transaction."\textsuperscript{20} Murray wrote to Byron the same day, enclosing a copy of the book "which Mr. Colburn has had the temerity to publish with your name as its author."\textsuperscript{21} Watts stated to Murray in this important interview "that he received it from Dr. Polidori for a small sum, Polidori averring that the whole plan of it was yours [Byron's], and that it was merely written out by him [Polidori]." Murray then explained that the editor inserted "a short statement to this effect; but to his astonishment Colburn canceled the leaf on the day previous to its publication, and contrary to, and in direct hostility to his [Watts's]
positive order, fearing that this statement would prevent the sale of this work in a separate form, which was subsequently done."

The subeditor felt the baseness of Colburn’s substitution of Byron’s name for Polidori’s in the New Monthly Magazine and was so incensed by the act that he resigned from his position. His son, writing a memoir of his father in 1884, states: “He [Watts] was always rather reticent on the subject of this ‘Vampyre’ business, and I incline, on the whole, to follow his example, having indeed nothing certain or definite to record about it.” That Watts disapproved, however, of Colburn’s interference cannot be gainsaid.

Watts was much more emphatic in his estimate of Colburn when he wrote to William Blackwood, the Edinburgh publisher, in 1821. He called the canceling of the first page of The Vampyre a “foolish and malignant attempt on the part of that paltry person [Colburn] to excuse his own unprincipled quackery by implicating me in his miserable system of deception and chicanery.” Watts showed Blackwood “a letter of Colburn’s which if his impudent statements had not borne the lie upon the face of them, would have set the question entirely at rest.” He mentioned this letter as having been received “two or three years ago,” presumably at the time Watts resigned in 1819, and shown to Blackwood then.

That Colburn also canceled the first leaf of the story in the magazine there is no doubt. Each copy of the New Monthly Magazine for 1 April 1819 shows the new leaf on a stub. Watts’s preliminary note, indicating authorship by Polidori, is thus missing.

In the editorial office of the New Monthly Magazine in the last two weeks of March 1819 both the senior editor John Watkins and his subeditor Alaric Alexander Watts were well aware of the deception being practiced by Henry Colburn. Watkins was less actively engaged in running the magazine than was Watts and he may not have been so fully informed of the details, but he had no hesitation a few years later in making his position clear when he wrote a life of Byron pub-
lished anonymously in 1822. In his book he stated in no uncertain terms but without mentioning names that “some persons in London, for the sake of a little temporary profit, contrived to get up, in his [Byron's] name, a tale in prose, with the title of 'The Vampyre.' This performance had all the success that the parties concerned in the fabrication could well hope for; since, owing to the absence of the noble lord, there was little probability of the appearance of a formal exposure of the fraud, till the whole impression [of the magazine] should have been sold.”\(^{24}\) Watkins then notes that the publisher of his lordship's works [John Murray] “ventured to assert in print that it was an imposture.”

(i) Polidori’s explanation. As soon as *The Vampyre* appeared in the *New Monthly Magazine* and in the Sherwood, Neely, and Jones edition, Polidori wrote to Henry Colburn. His response was prompt, for he addressed his letter to Colburn on the second of April, the day after the magazine was published. The story, he wrote, “is not Lord Byron’s, but was written entirely by me.”\(^{25}\) He asked to have his letter published: “I desire, therefore, that you will positively contradict your statement in the next number, by the insertion of this note.”

More important to Polidori than the periodical publication was the issue of his tale in book form. The magazine was not copyrighted and thus republication of an article was open to all, without any profit accruing to the author. But from a book the author would expect some royalty, and this aspect of the matter seems to have disturbed Polidori most. By 2 April he had been able to buy a copy of the Sherwood, Neely, and Jones edition and to note on the title page that the book had been entered at Stationers' Hall on Saturday, 27 March. These enterprising publishers, having acquired the original sheets as printed by Gillet for Colburn, devised a new title page and had the volume on the market a few days later. Polidori demanded of Colburn either compensation or suppression of the book, but his pleas were not answered. The book was not suppressed.

A similar letter by Polidori was also sent to the *Morning Chronicle*. This letter has not survived, but it is clear from subsequent correspon-


\(^{25}\) *Diary*, pp. 15-17.
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dence that the editor was the first person to whom he wrote. The letter
was addressed to James Perry, the founder of the European Magazine in 1782 but by 1819 the somewhat radical head of a leading Whig
newspaper. Polidori who always considered himself a “foreigner” in England was no doubt sympathetic with Perry’s views.

Polidori wrote a second and more detailed letter to the Morning
Chronicle.26 The date is not given but since it refers to Byron’s letter in Galignani’s Messenger, written 27 April in Venice and reported to have
been widely circulated in British newspapers shortly after, it could not
have been written until after the end of April. The same day Byron
wrote from Venice, Watts told his side of the story to John Murray in
London, and also wrote it out in the form of a letter, which Murray
sent to Hobhouse, “who will probably see the said Doctor and then
forward the Letter to you.”27 Hobhouse carried out his assignment
promptly.

From this second letter it is clear that Polidori knew of the notice by
Watts, the subeditor of the New Monthly Magazine, planned as an
introduction to The Vampyre, before the page was canceled by Colburn.
Watts had written: “We also present to our readers [a tale] without
pledging ourselves for its authenticity as the production of Lord
Byron” and continued: “We should suppose it to have been committed
to paper rather from the recital of a third person.”28 Polidori’s name
was not mentioned by Watts, but the second statement would appear
to refer to the Colburn edition, second state, containing on the title
page the line: “A tale related by Lord Byron to Dr. Polidori.” This is
strong evidence that Watts knew of Polidori as the author and inci-
dentally suggests that the Colburn book was in print before the state-
ment by Watts in the magazine was canceled on the day before publi-
cation. If Thursday, 1 April was actually the publication date of the
journal, then Watts must have seen the Colburn edition and noted its
ascription. Thus the Colburn edition must have been the first to gain
an open market and not the Sherwood, Neely, and Jones edition, first
issue or the second issue, the last being the one usually assigned as the
“first edition.”

26 Ibid., pp. 17-19.
27 L. and J., iv, 286, note.
28 Diary, p. 18.
Hobhouse steps in. Byron’s closest friend, John Cam Hobhouse, had not been favorably impressed with Polidori, either in London before Byron left for Europe or a few months later at the Villa Diodati. When Polidori was discharged as Byron’s traveling physician in September 1816 Hobhouse wrote: “He [Polidori] is anything but an amiable man, and has a most unmeasured ambition, as well as inordinate vanity; the true ingredients of misery.” But in October, a month later, when Polidori and Hobhouse met in Italy, the older man had mellowed enough to try to get Polidori appointed as physician to the Princess of Wales, Caroline of Brunswick, while she was living at the Villa d’Este.

His more immediate concern with Polidori came, however, in April 1819 after Watts had reported to John Murray. The interview took place on 27 April in Murray’s office, and the same day Murray sent a report of the matter, written by Watts, to Hobhouse. Hobhouse interviewed Polidori at once and on 29 April reported to Murray that he had written to Byron on that day giving a full report of the meeting. Hobhouse’s letter to Byron has not survived but Murray reported that Hobhouse “has taken Polidori in hand with equal propriety and judgment.”

As the result of Hobhouse’s intervention, Polidori modified but did not essentially change his position. A letter reasserting his rights was printed in the New Monthly Magazine for 1 May, Polidori having withdrawn his previous communication. By that time, however, interest in Colburn’s deception, Polidori’s reaction to it, and everything except Byron’s response had died down. A fresh number of the Monthly had come out and the previous issue had been largely forgotten by the reading public.

Byron’s denial. In Venice, Byron received his first news of The Vampyre through notices in Galignani’s Messenger. He wrote a letter of protest to the editor in Paris on 27 April, the same day Murray was writing him from London on the subject. “I am not the author, and have never heard of the work in question until now.” The date of the

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30 L. and J., IV, 286, note.
31 Ibid., pp. 286-88. The letter was published in facsimile in The Works of Lord Byron, including his suppressed poems. Complete in one volume, Paris, A. and W. Galignani, 1827,
issues of the *Messenger* seen by Byron is not known, but they presumably contained advertisements of the first Galignani editions printed in Paris shortly after the tale had appeared in London. The work was so popular that three printings were published by Galignani in rapid succession in Paris, all dated 1819 and all by "The Right Honourable Lord Byron." In format they follow exactly the style set by the first issue of the Sherwood, Neely, and Jones edition and presumably were taken from it. Byron also noted the account of his residence in the island of Mitylene, "where I should have no objection to reside, but where I have never yet resided."

When *The Vampyre* was being set in type in March 1819 for the 1 April number of the *New Monthly Magazine*, arrangements were made at the same time to publish the story in book form. The printer of the magazine was J. Gillet, and Colburn also employed him for the book. Although no copy of the first printing over Colburn's name in its first state (No. O) has survived, it presumably did not differ from the copy of the second state (No. I), with the canceled title page. It seems unlikely, moreover, that the book in its first state was ever issued for sale. When Colburn canceled the title leaf of the magazine article the day before publication, he did so to eliminate all evidence of Polidori's authorship. But having been willing to disregard the advice of Watts, his subeditor, on the magazine article, he may have hesitated, being a reputable publisher and bookseller of note, to use a form of falsification in the book. Knowing that Polidori wrote the tale, he must have had some qualms about publishing a book without having Polidori's name on the title page. He therefore compromised, canceling the leaf of the first printing and adding Polidori's to Byron's name on the title page. By this means he kept Byron's name as the principal author but not the sole author, as in the case of the magazine article. Both positions were false and Colburn must have known that they were unwarranted. Polidori, however, could have had no part in these manipulations. They were purely a publisher's tricky device.

Polidori did not send his sharp letter of protest to Colburn until attached after the title page and so perfectly reproduced that it gives the appearance of an original letter. The letter is discussed by T. G. Steffan in *viii*, no. 2 (Spring 1966) and *viii*, no. 3 (Spring 1967) of the University of Texas Library Chronicle.
2 April, the day after the magazine containing *The Vampyre* reached the public. But Colburn had begun to wash his hands of the unsavory matter even before 1 April, for he turned over the sheets of the book as set up by Gillet to another London publisher, Sherwood, Neely, and Jones, in time for them to enter it at Stationers’ Hall on 27 March. He of course retained his own title pages but the rest of the book was left intact. Thus the same printed text is found in the three issues by Sherwood, Neely, and Jones, (Nos. II, III, and IV) except for the revised preliminaries in the third issue (No. IV), as appeared in the second state of the Colburn book.

When Sherwood, Neely, and Jones began to issue the first of their three printings, they had at hand all the text and the preliminaries, as printed for Colburn by Gillet, except the title page. For their first issue (No. II) they chose to use an expansion of the author line and made the title: “The Vampyre; a tale, by The Right Honourable Lord Byron,” but omitting Polidori’s name. To this they added: “Entered at Stationers’ Hall, March 27, 1819.” The text, of course, having already been printed for Colburn, retained the error on page 36. This elaborate deception of using Byron’s name in the title, however, was soon suppressed and a second issue (No. III) was published, omitting Byron’s name altogether. As in the case of Colburn’s second state, only one copy of the Sherwood, Neely, and Jones first issue seems to have survived, now in the Library of the British Museum. The second issue is more common and was the one widely distributed for review. A copy, signed by Polidori on 8 April 1819, is now in the Harvard College Library. The book sold for 4s., 6d., sewed.

A third issue (No. IV) was also put out by Sherwood, Neely, and Jones. The title page remained unchanged, but the preliminary leaves were completely reset. The text was left as in the previous issue. It was this third issue that Polidori used for his corrections for a proposed second edition. These corrections, in his handwriting, are contained in a copy of the third issue, now in the Harvard College Library.

All the deletions in this third issue occur in the “Extract of a letter from Geneva,” a portion of the book not written by Polidori but by Henry Colburn, who called himself “The Editor,” although in fact he was the publisher. This letter occurs intact in the magazine article,
in the two printings over Colburn's name (No. O and No. I) and in two of the books issued by Sherwood, Neely, and Jones (No. II and No. III). The slur on Mary Godwin and Jane Clermont is omitted from the third issue. The incident is contained in the imputation on Lord Byron "of having in his house two sisters as the partakers of his revels." Although this charge was considered by the writer of the letter as "entirely destitute of truth," the whole paragraph was omitted in the third issue. Also deleted was the specific reference to Frankenstein, a book attributed to Mary Godwin.

As the type is unchanged in the revised portion of the third issue from that used by Gillet for the previous printings and the identical watermarked paper is found in the changed preliminary leaves, it is inferred that Gillet set up the revisions, probably for Colburn himself, who seems to have kept control of the book, using Sherwood, Neely, and Jones only as his selling and distribution agent. The error in the text on page 36 was not corrected and the same sheets used for the third issue as the second.

As the contents of the New Monthly Magazine were not copyrighted in 1819, anyone was free to publish the contents without permission of the owner. John Miller of London took advantage of this lack of protection by printing an edition of The Vampyre, independent of Henry Colburn or Sherwood, Neely, and Jones. As it was printed by J. Johnson from the magazine article, it carried the author line: "By Lord Byron." The text only was reset, omitting all the preliminaries and the appendix found in all other editions printed in London the same year. The spelling error on page 36, found in all the other London editions, was at last corrected on page 18. The edition was an attractive one, nicely produced. But without the letters to give spice to the tale, this edition could not have been popular.

With Byron's name on the title page, The Vampyre was certain to go many miles beyond promise or expectancy. Although five editions of the book were quickly published in London, they did not exhaust the demands for further printing. Even as late as 1840, William Hazlitt found it a useful addition to The Romancist, and Novelist's Library: The Best Works of the Best Authors, published as a weekly pamphlet.
In America the book was promptly issued in three separate editions, based on the text from the *New Monthly Magazine*. The order of printing is not known, but *The Vampyre: A tale. By Lord Byron*, was printed independently in New York, Philadelphia, and Albany. None of these American editions, in small pamphlet form, was distinguished, having been run off hastily as soon as the 1 April issue of the *New Monthly Magazine* reached the printing house.

The energetic Galignani brothers lost no time in producing *The Vampyre* in English in Paris and the book was so popular that three editions were called for in 1819. In each the book was ascribed to “The Right Honourable Lord Byron.” The various printings made handsome volumes, well up to the high standards set by John Anthony and William Galignani in their many publications in French, English, Italian, German, and Spanish. The second and third editions were so designated on the title page of each. Another Paris edition, in English, was published by F. Louis in 1821.

But the editions in English, although they may have satisfied the British residents in Paris who frequented Galignani’s “den,” were not sufficient to supply the need for the Continental admirers of Byron. Translations were needed and they were soon forthcoming.

First in the field was the rendering into French by Henri Faber in 1819. Another edition was published in Paris in 1820, translated by A.-E. de Chastopalli, a joint pseudonym for Eusèbe François Salle and Amédée Pichot. Although by 1820 Byron had denied authorship, the French publishers, like their British colleagues in London, could hardly have been expected to omit Byron’s name on the title page, so they compromised by stating that *Le Vampire* was “attribué à Lord Byron.” In a preface, Ladvocat, the publisher, noted Polidori’s claim as the author. The same publisher also included *Le Vampire* in his twelve-volume first edition of *Œuvres de Lord Byron* (1819-21), but had to omit Polidori’s tale, much to his disgust, when he issued a second edition (1820-22). In Paris an imitation of *Le Vampire* was written by Cyprien Bérard, entitled *Lord Ruthven ou les Vampires*, and published under the auspices of Charles Nodier in 1820. The Chastopalli trans-
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lation was possibly republished by Ladvocat in 1825 and Amédée Pinchot also translated the work for a Paris edition of 1830. Finally Le Vampire, par Byron was included in Histoires Fantastiques, published by Chaillot in Avignon in 1864, twenty-five years after the first French translation in 1819.

A Leipzig publisher was quick to have the book translated into German in 1819, using one of the London editions containing the notes on a visit to the island of Mitylene, which did not appear in the New Monthly Magazine. The name of the translator is not known. Der Vampyr, translated by J. V. Adrian, was also published in Byron’s collected works (Frankfurt 1820) and in the Zwickau edition of 1821, translated by Christian Karl Meissner. Adrian used as a title Der Blutsuger.

Furthermore, The Vampyre was translated into Swedish from the German edition of 1821 and published in Upsala in 1827; into Italian in 1826 in Naples and in 1829 in Paris by the Libreria Americana; and twice into Spanish (Paris 1829 and Madrid 1843).

But the astounding success of The Vampyre was to come not from the book but on the Paris stage. In the summer of 1820 at the Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin the play, translated by Charles Nodier, took Paris by storm. The play-book, published by Barba, had an immense circulation and every morning he had to add a large pile of fresh stock to his counter which rapidly diminished during the day. Other Paris theaters were soon running condensed or abbreviated versions and during 1820 there were on Paris stages at least six other plays based on variations of Polidori’s book. The Nodier translation was again revived in 1823 and was similarly popular. Finally Alexandre Dumas wrote an adaptation in 1851, having seen the Nodier original in 1823. The Vampyre was also dramatized in German and published in Brunswick in 1822.

With the great success of Le Vampire as a melodrama, London soon caught up with the popular trend. James Robinson Planché, ever alert, made a free translation from Nodier’s French version, using the background of the Scottish Isles and called it The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles. The acting version was published in London in 1820, with a close friend of Amédée Pichot in Paris. Bérard’s novel was popular and a second edition was called for in July, L. A. Bisson. Amédée Pichot, a Romantic Prometheus, Oxford [1942], p. 107, note.
description of the costumes used at Theatres Royal and illustrated by an engraving of a delightful drawing by Robert Cruikshank. It was produced at the Lyceum, then called the English Opera House, 9 August 1820, and had a long run to packed houses. For this play, the celebrated "vampire trap" was invented, with its india-rubber flaps, so that the vampire could disappear almost instantly. The play was produced in America in 1820 in Baltimore and again in 1830, in Paris, in English, in 1825, at the Porte-Saint-Martin theatre, where the French version had had such a remarkable success in 1820. Adaptations were given in London in 1826 and another by Dion Boucicault, called The Phantom, in 1852 at the Princess’s Theatre. The play is still in stock today.

Finally, The Vampyre reached the opera. It seems to have been tried out by Marten Joseph Mengals as a comic operetta in one act in 1826 in Ghent but the first full opera came in 1828, when one was produced in Leipzig on 28 March. The libretto was by Wilhelm August Wohlrbrück and the music by Heinrich August Marschner, his brother-in-law. Der Vampyr was based on Nodier’s French version of 1820, but the scene was changed from Scotland to Hungary. The Marschner-Wohlrbrück opera had an enormous success and it is still occasionally performed. Planché put the opera into English and produced it at the Lyceum Theatre in London, 25 August 1829. He wrote a new libretto, using the Hungarian settings, with Magyar and Wallachian costumes. The opera ran at Lyceum for sixty nights.

Der Vampyr has also been given in Russian, French, and Dutch. The overture is sometimes heard today and occasionally the complete opera.

Still another German opera was staged in Stuttgart in 1828, the libretto by C. M. Heigel and the music by Peter Joseph von Lindpainter. This version, although remarkably successful when first produced, has not lasted so well as the Marschner-Wohlrbrück adoption. It was last revived in 1856, while the Leipzig opera has lasted into the mid-twentieth century. Both famous operas follow the Nodier pattern, set in Paris in 1820, based on Polidori’s book.

The London Editions of Polidori's "The Vampyre"

BIBLIOGRAPHY

O. COLBURN EDITION: FIRST STATE [8°]. [1819].

Title: [The vampyre; a tale by Lord Byron. London: Colburn and Co.; publishers, Great Marlborough Street.]

Notes: No copy of the first state is recorded. The title, noted above, is based on the wording used in the original article as printed in the New Monthly Magazine for 1 April 1819 and on the canceled leaf, which forms the title page of the second state. The half title, the other preliminary leaves, and the text were presumably the same as set by the printer, J. Gillet, and recorded in the description of the second state. Gillet was also the printer of the New Monthly Magazine, published by Colburn, so he would have had "copy" readily available for use in book form.

I. COLBURN EDITION: SECOND STATE 8°. [1819].

Title: The | vampyre; | a tale | related by Lord Byron | to Dr. Polidori. | London: | Colburn and Co., publishers, | Great Marlborough Street.

Signatures: [A]8 B-E8 F2. 42 leaves.


Copy: CLO; BM.

Notes: The half title (p. [i]) reads: The | vampyre; | a tale. The title on stub (p. [iii]): The first divisional title (p. [v]): Extract | of | a | letter to the editor. Title (p. [vii]): Extract of a letter | from Geneva. | [rule] | Second divisional title (p. [xvii]): The vampyre. Title (p. [xxi]): Introduction. | [double rule]. Title (p. [xxii]): The vampyre. | [double rule]. Third divisional title (p. [xxiii]): Extract of a letter, | containing | an account | of | Lord Byron's residence | in the | Island of Mitylene. Title (p. [xxv]): Account | of | Lord Byron's residence, | &c. | [rule] | [motto] | Two lines. Tailine (p. 84): [rule] | Gillet, printer, Crown-court, Fleet-street. In the last line on p. 36 "almost" is misspelled "immost."

A copy of this edition was offered for sale by Elkin Mathews, Ltd., as No. 567 in their Catalogue 28 for January 1930. The book was described as an unrecorded edition in the "original wrappers, uncut, in a cloth case." This is presumably the copy purchased from Scribner's in New York, 13 Dec. 1935, by E. T. Guymon, Jr., and given to the Occidental College Library, Los Angeles, California, in 1963 as part of the Guymon Collection of Detective and Mystery Fiction.

Another copy was listed by Elkin Mathews as No. 30 in Catalogue 149 for December 1958. This is now in the British Museum, acquired 15 Dec. 1958.

In both copies the title page is mounted on a stub.

The book is printed on wove paper, watermarked, 1818.

The motto (p. [xxv]) is a paraphrase from Paradise Lost, bk. xii, lines 618-19: "The world was all before them, where to choose | Their place of rest, and Providence their guide."

II. SHERWOOD, NEELY, AND JONES EDITION: FIRST ISSUE. 8°. 1819.

Title: The | vampyre; | a tale, | by | The Right Honourable | Lord Byron. | [rule] | London: | printed for Sherwood, Neely, and Jones, | Paternoster-Row. | [rule] | 1819. | [Entered at Stationers' Hall, March 27, 1819.]

Signatures: Same as No. I. 42 leaves.
III. SHERWOOD, NEELY, AND JONES EDITION: SECOND ISSUE. 8°. 1819.

Title: The vampyre; a tale. [rule] London: printed for Sherwood, Neely, and Jones, Paternoster-Row. [rule] 1819. [Entered at Stationers' Hall, March 27, 1819.]

Signatures: Same as No. I. 42 leaves.

Pagination: Same as No. I. 84 pages.

Copies: V, MH (2).

Notes: The half title reads: The vampyre; a tale. Only the half title and the title are reset, omitting Byron's name. One of the copies in the Harvard College Library is signed by Polidori, 8 April 1819. Price, 4s, 6d, sewed.

IV. SHERWOOD, NEELY, AND JONES: THIRD ISSUE. 8°. 1819.

Title: The vampyre; a tale. [rule] London: printed for Sherwood, Neely, and Jones, Paternoster-Row. [rule] 1819. [Entered at Stationers' Hall, March 27, 1819.]

Signatures: Same as No. I. 42 leaves.

Pagination: Same as No. I. 84 pages.

Copies: V, MH (2).

Notes: The preliminary leaves (pages [i]-xvi) are completely reset. The text (pages [xvii]-84) is unchanged.

In the revised pages of all of gathering A the following changes occur: (1). Each page is set in twenty-three lines instead of twenty-four as in No. III. (2). The bottom lines of the verso pages are carried over to the recto page of the following leaf in various amounts from two lines to eight. Thus, the bottom two lines of page [vii] are carried over to the top of page viii and the bottom three lines of page viii appear at the top of page ix. On subsequent pages, four to eight lines are carried over to the next page. (3). The pagination remains unchanged because of the following omission and substitutions: (a). Twenty-one lines are omitted, except for two words, on pages xiv-xv as follows: "I must, however, free him [Shelley] from one imputation . . . which is here positively denied." This refers to Shelley's "having in his house two sisters as the partakers of his revels," (b). The opening lines of the next paragraph (page xv) are changed from: "Among other things which the lady, from whom I procured these anecdotes, related to me; she mentioned the outline of a ghost story by Lord Byron," to "Among other particulars mentioned, was the outline of a ghost story by Lord Byron." (c). In place of the words (page xvi) "...and Miss M. W. Godwin.* My friend, the lady above referred to, had in her possession the outline of these stories"; the words "one of the ladies before mentioned" are substituted on page xv of No. V. The asterisk refers to a footnote on page xvi of No. IV: *Since published under the title of "Frankenstein; or The Modern Prometheus." This too is omitted. (4). The error on page 36 is not corrected.

One of the Harvard College Library's copies has been bound with interleaves and contains corrections by Polidori for a presumed second edition, which was never published. The alterations are largely typographical, consisting of changes in punctuation and occasionally in words. A few phrases are added, but the sense is rarely changed.
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V. MILLER EDITION. 4°. 1819.


Signatures: [A]4, B-F4, 24 leaves.


Copies: V, MH.

Notes: The half title (p. [1]) reads: The vampyre; title; printer (p. [4]): [rule] | Printed by J. Johnson, | Fleet-street; headlines (p. [5]): The vampyre; | a tale, | by Lord Byron. | [ornamental rule]; [end of "introduction"] (p. 10); THE END (p. 46).

The book is completely reset, with deletion of the "Letters," but with the "Introduction" retained, without separate designation. The page lines are omitted. The laid paper is watermarked, 1816.

The motto on the title page is a misquotation from Southey's Thalaba the Destroyer (1801). It should read:

... through the vampire corpse
He thrust his lance; it fell,
And howling with the wound,
Its fiendish tenant fled. (pp. 280-81).