

# IUN

## International Upire News

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Edited by Josep Fígols



[www.cercle-v.org](http://www.cercle-v.org)

[contacte@cercle-v.org](mailto:contacte@cercle-v.org)

**Catalunya (Catalonia)**

*Països Catalans (Catalan Nations)*

## Vampires come alive at garth's

Wooden Case; Blomberg label; crossbow; wooden bolts with silver-colored tips, stake, cross, tin, syringe; seven glass bottles, 10 1/4 inches by 13 1/4 inches sold for \$10,063. Photo courtesy of Garth's. In the murky lands beyond the forest bloodthirsty Count Dracula wanders. When the clock strikes twelve evil creatures like him are at their most powerful. If you must travel on, then for your mother's sake--wear a crucifix.

Transylvania, Dracula's home, is a place of beauty as well as mystery. If imagination is a window to the soul then Bram Stoker's 1897 vampire novel is a dark passageway.

Dracula was not so much a character out of Stoker's imagination as he was a living, breathing Prince of Darkness for those of us who poured over his tales as children.

At the time of the original story, Transylvania was part of Austria-Hungary. Today, it's in northwestern Romania.

Transylvania's dense forests were a perfect refuge for Stoker's tales of darkness. Even today, local villagers say the forces of good and evil do battle there. They place crosses by the roadside to protect fields and travelers.

Stoker's Dracula wasn't even a monster-like character. He was handsome, a nobleman. But this nobleman enjoyed sinking his teeth into the necks of beautiful, young women and sucking out their blood in his exotic kiss of death.

It was love at first bite.

"Yes, I am Dracula. Welcome to my house. Enter freely and of your own will," he says.

Vampires in earlier folklore weren't so choosy about their victims as Count Dracula. They jumped on the chests of pigs, cows and people smothering them to death.

The real Dracula, Vlad V of Wallachia (1431-1476) was known for his cruelty. It was Stoker who transformed him into a vampire. Blending fact and folklore makes the tale all the more interesting.

Want to double-check to see if someone you know is a vampire? Hold up a mirror. If the person has no reflection, run.

At the turn-of-the-century, in response to Stoker's 'Dracula' novel, vampire killing kits were supposedly sold to curiosity seekers and tourists in upper class European hotels and exhibitions. Kits were also popular among nervous Brits headed to Eastern Europe and looking for ways to fend off vampires.

Many of the kits bear labels with what appears to be a fictitious person named 'Professor Ernst Blomberg.'

Blomberg reportedly assembled the kits in the 19th century. Many experts say the kits were actually assembled in the early-20th century.

There are more vampire killing kits around than you might expect. Some are fitted in a red velvet box complete with ivory veneered crucifix, wooden stake, powdered garlic, pistol, canister of gun powder, and silver-colored bullets marked with crosses.

They sure look like they could handle vampires. They're puzzles of sorts. In fact, some are expensively-made puzzles.

Maybe vampire killing kits were tie-in products to Stoker's book? Maybe they were part of the patent medicine schemes of the day? It's anybody's guess.

One thing for sure, they're unusual and attention-grabbing when they come up for auction. On Sept. 1-2 Garth's auction in Delaware, Ohio, featured a selection of vampire killing kits in its Arts & Antiques auction. Here are some current values.

## Vampire Killing Kits

Book-shaped Box; covered with red and marbled paper; Blomberg label, cross, brass-barreled flintlock pistol, powder flask, wood stake, silver-colored bullets; bullet mold; vials including Vampirism, Tincture of Jalap, etc., 10 1/2 inches by 13 inches; \$5,463.

Fitted Box; lined in red velvet, Blomberg label, ivory veneered, cross-shaped firearm that fires silver-colored bullets, powder flask, wooden stake, vial and bullet mold, 6 inches by 10 inches; \$1,898.

Wooden Case; lined in purple velvet, Blomberg label, includes small crossbow with ebonized checkered wooden handle, bowstring and four wooden bolts with silver-colored tips, wooden stake, cross, tin, syringe and seven glass bottles, 10 1/4 inches by 13 1/4 inches; \$10,063.

www.liveauctiontalk.com, 17 Nov. de 2006

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### [News about the “vampire of Borox”]

In 2003, the *Journal of Dracula Studies* published «The Journey of the Damned Coffin», a work about a legend or telling of vampires in Spain. According to this story a coffin arrived at the port of Cartagena (Murcia) and was moved by road to A Coruña (Galicia), making intermediate stops at several towns where a few days afterwards, a number of vampiric events took place. Recently, Jordi Ardanuy, member of the TSD Canadian Chapter, with Martí Flò and Valentí Ferran found that the origin of this narration is the fictional Spanish Book *La noches lugubres* (lugubrious nights) by Alfonso Sastre. The finding concludes with a lot of speculations, mistakes and hoax about the pretended affair. Whole information, in Catalan, at <<http://www.cercle-v.org/Pdf/upir9p.pdf>>.

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