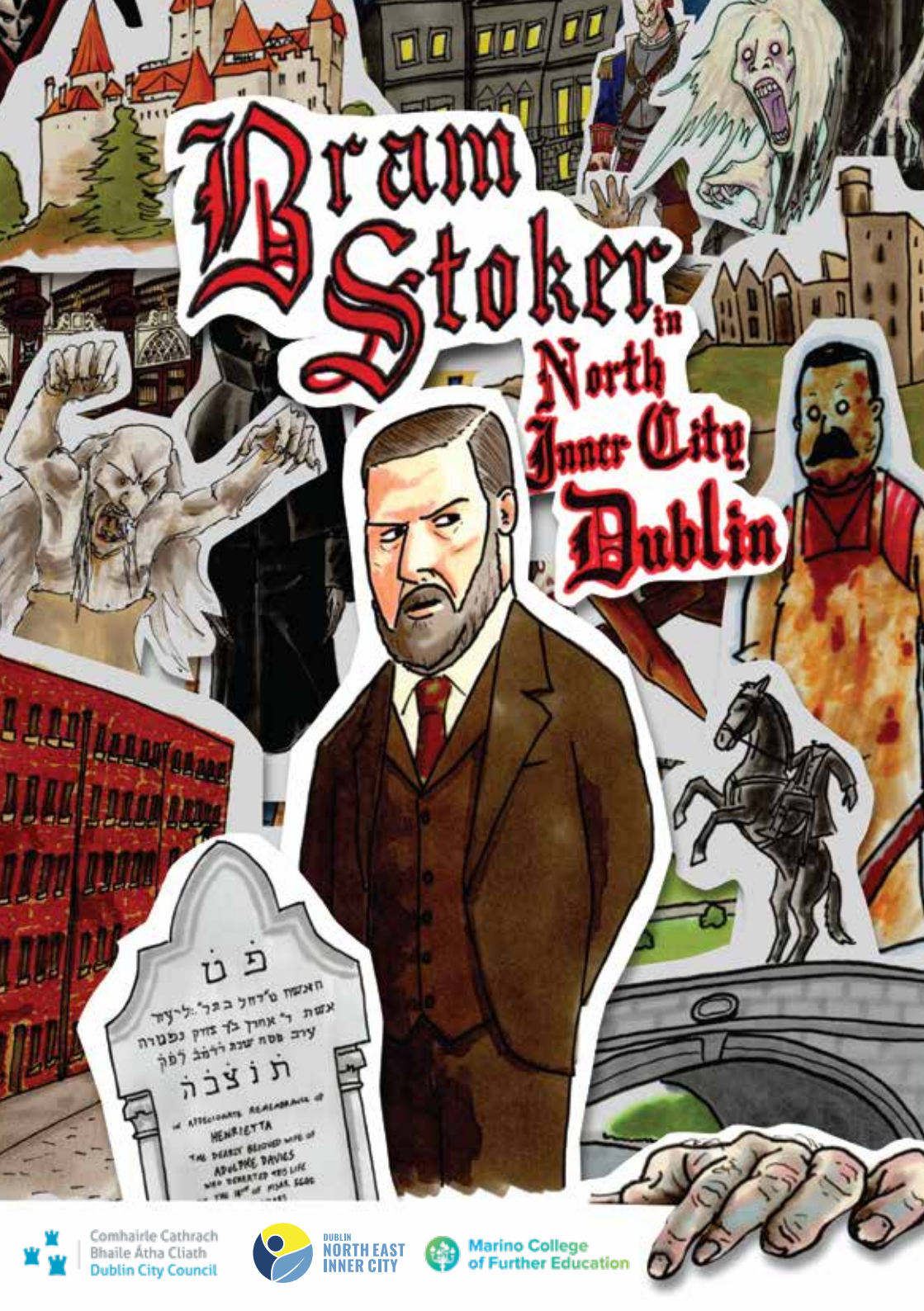


Comhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

DUBLIN NORTH EAST INNER CITY

Marino College of Further Education

Foreword by Dacre Stoker

My first visit to Dublin was in 2009 for the One City, One Book Festival, put on by the Dublin City Libraries and Dublin City Council. I was thrilled to meet many Irish Stoker relatives for the first time and also to experience how my great grand uncle Bram Stoker was respected in his native Dublin. I was however surprised at the lack of permanent "markers" in either Clontarf or Dublin in honour of Bram which could function as a focal point for tourists and locals alike to remember Bram's writing of Dracula (1897) a very significant contribution to Gothic Literature.

In the years since my first visit I am proud to say that many others must have felt the same way that I did, as now there are a number of wonderful tangible items appropriately recognizing Bram in and around Dublin. There is a plaque honouring Bram outside the building where Bram worked in Dublin Castle, a portrait of Bram by Aiden Hickey commemorating Bram as a founding member of the Dublin Painting and Sketching Club, and a bronze bust of Bram on display in the Dublin Writers Museum. There is an additional bust at St Anne's Church created by Beatrice Stewart a cousin of the Dublin Stokers.

The Central Bank of Ireland issued in 2018 a commemorative coin honouring Bram and the Irish Post Office issued a series of lovely stamps in 2012 on the anniversary of Bram's death, the images on both items were drawn by local artist David Rooney.

I am thrilled that the Bram Stoker Festival is going strong as is the Northside's "Big Scream" Halloween event started in 2018, both of these are family friendly events which continue to remind participants of the influence that Bram Stoker's novel Dracula has had on popular culture, few novels can claim such widespread appeal throughout the world.

This very informative pamphlet by Hugo McGuinness traces Bram's beginnings and the possible influences on his writing of many of his short stories and novels to the different neighbourhoods that Bram and his family lived, worked and went to school in. Together with

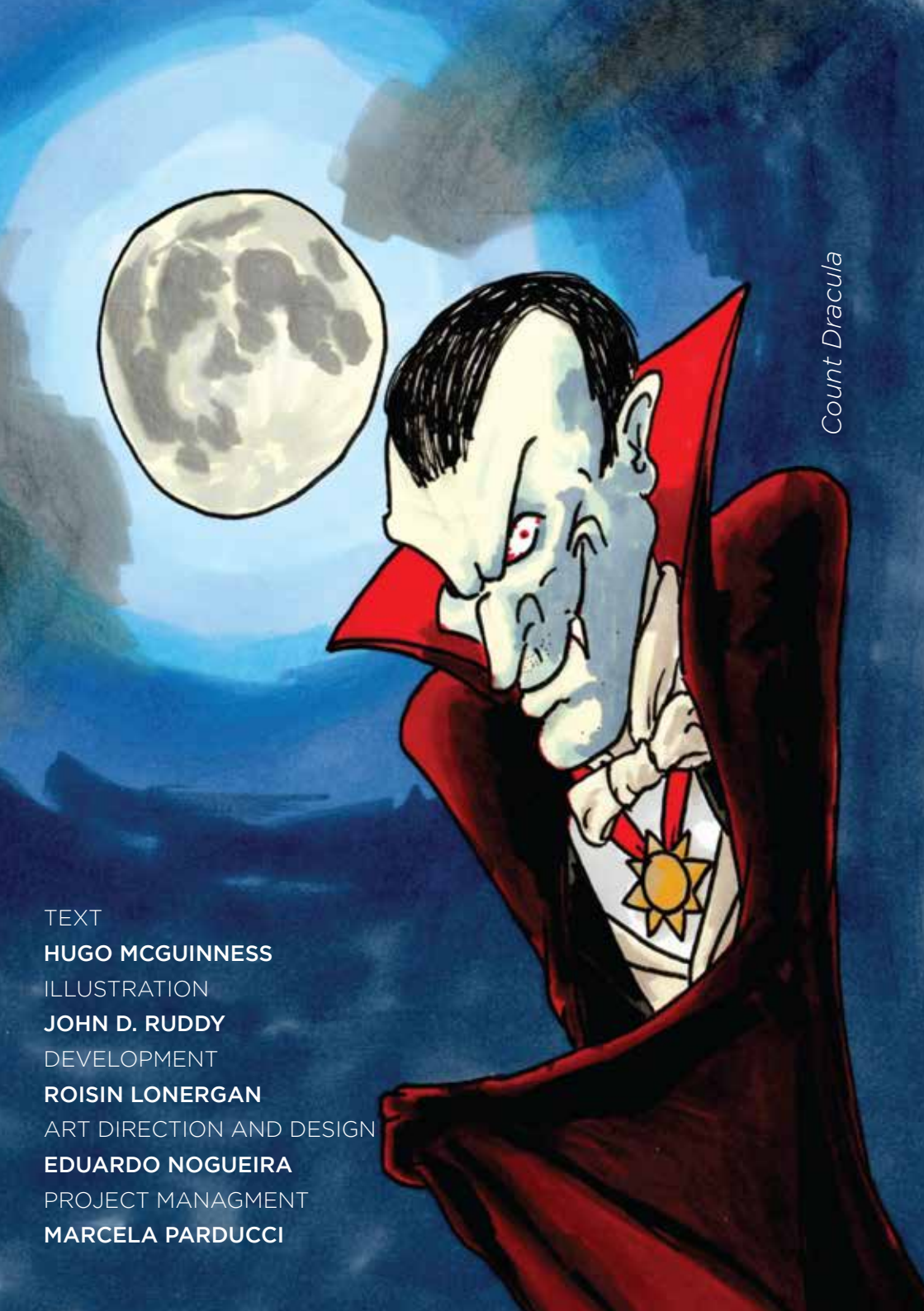
the Dracula mural and the wooden plaque honouring Bram Stoker on Buckingham street this worthy effort continues the trend to establish places where people are reminded of the presence of Bram and his legacy in literature and popular culture.

I am convinced that Bram was a very sensitive person, a person very keenly aware of everything going on around him. He recorded many observations in his journal of what might be considered by others as insignificant sights, sounds, and feelings which he experienced in various locations between the years 1871 and 1878. Some of these entries he used in stories later in his life.

In addition to detailed research in Marsh's Library, London Library and the British Museum, I think Bram was always on the lookout for good story material from locals. When in Whitby in Yorkshire and Cruden Bay, Scotland, Bram used to spend time with local fishermen and members of the coastguard to glean the latest tales of rescue or adventure, it is natural to assume that he would have sought similar insight for his writing in his own neighborhoods. Just as Bram appears to have taken bits of Slains Castle in Scotland and Bran Castle in Southern Transylvania to create the desired atmosphere for his Castle Dracula in the Calimani National Park near the Borgo Pass in Northern Transylvania, it appears to me that the Northside of Dublin provided plenty of macabre material for Bram's fertile sense of imagination to use in Dracula and his other stories.

Dacre Stoker

September 14th 2019



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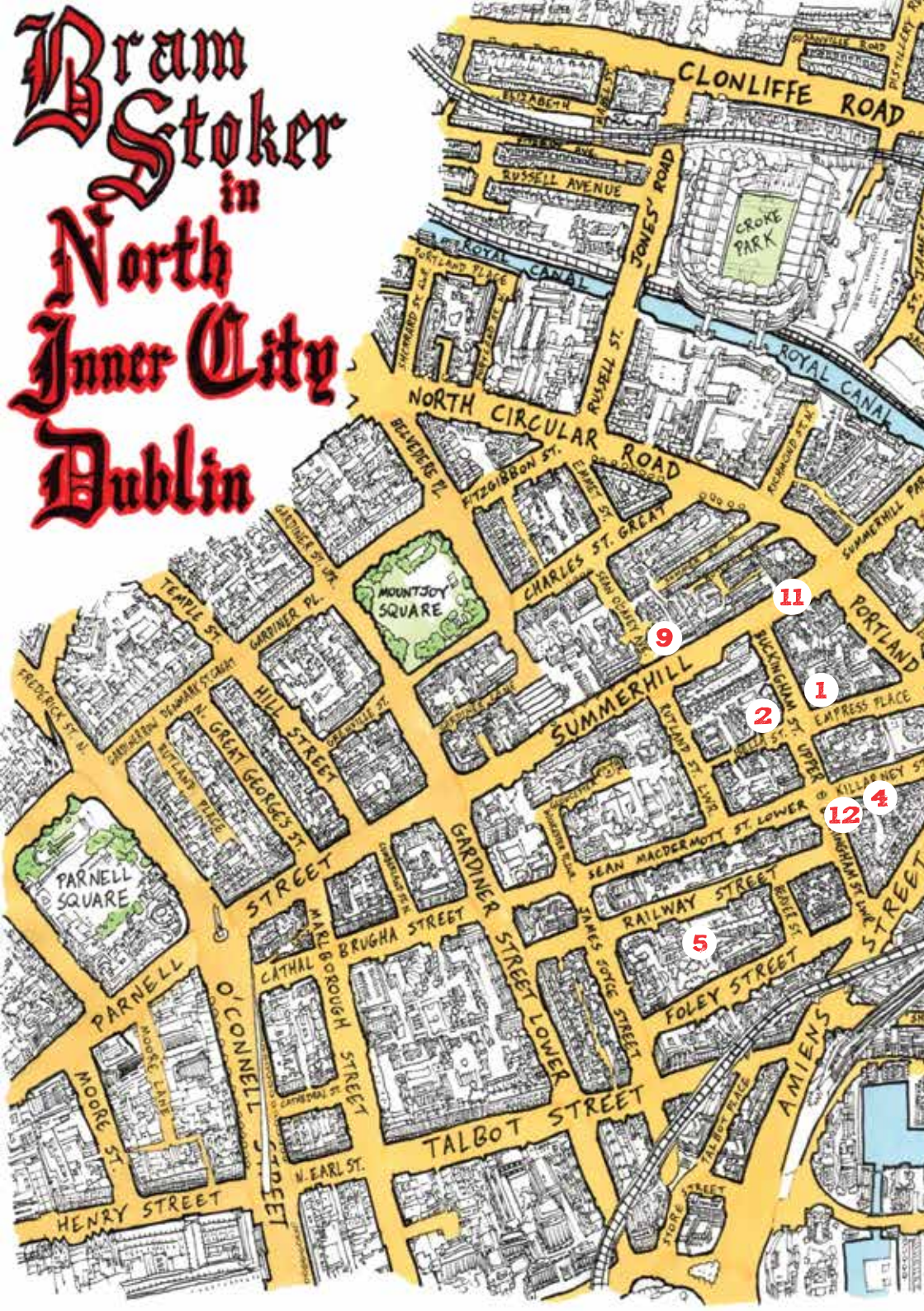
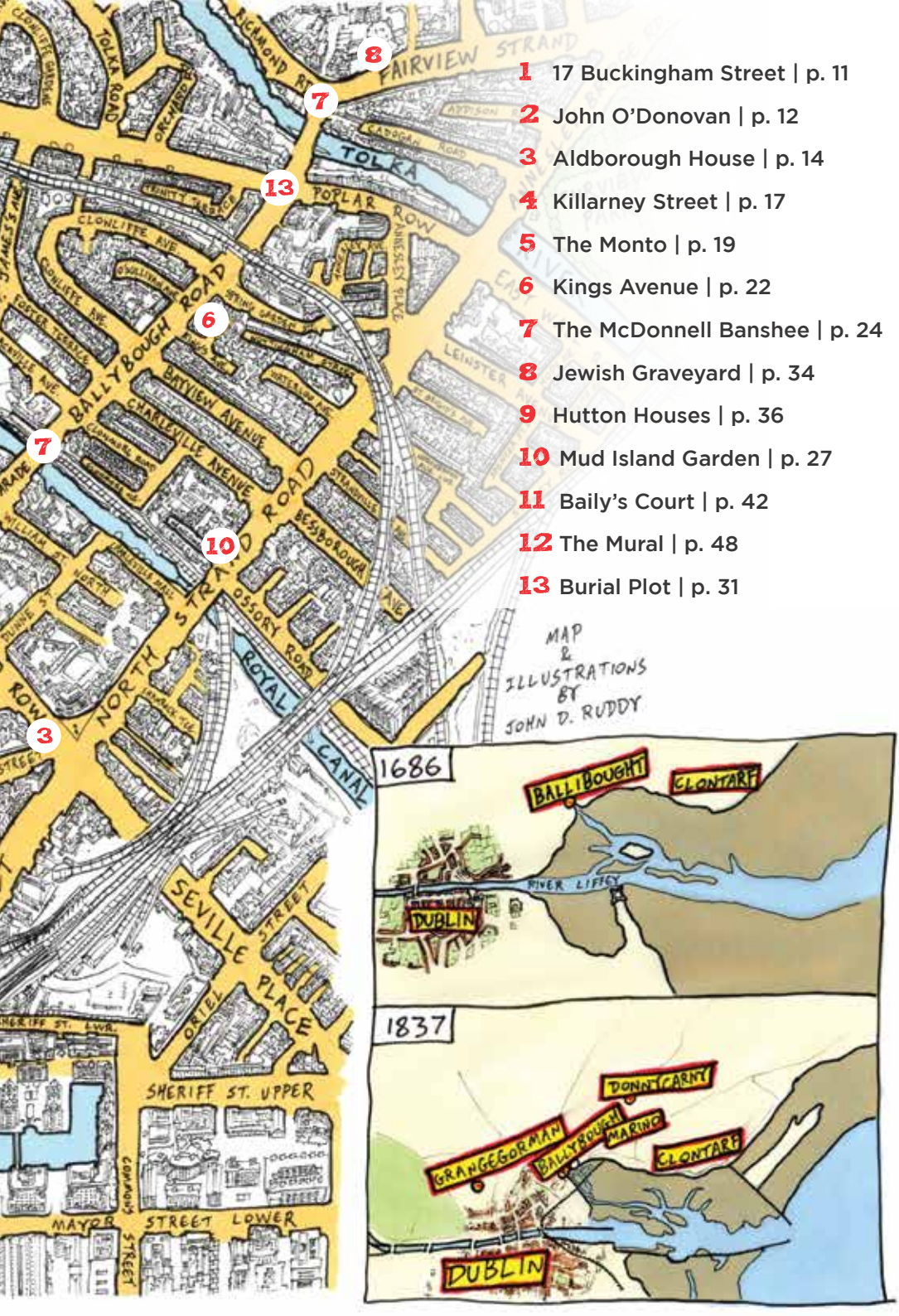
Bram Stoker in North Inner City Dublin




1 17 Buckingham Street | p. 11
2 John O'Donovan | p. 12
3 Aldborough House | p. 14
4 Killarney Street | p. 17
5 The Monto | p. 19
6 Kings Avenue | p. 22
7 The McDonnell Banshee | p. 24
8 Jewish Graveyard | p. 34
9 Hutton Houses | p. 36
10 Mud Island Garden | p. 27
11 Baily's Court | p. 42
12 The Mural | p. 48
13 Burial Plot | p. 31
MAP & ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOHN D. RUDDY
1686
BALLIBOUGHT
CLONTARF
RIVER LIFFEY
DUBLIN
1837
DONNYCARNY
GRANGEGORMAN
BALLYBOUGH
MARINO
CLONTARF
DUBLIN
TOLKA
FAIRVIEW STRAND
POPLAR ROW
BALLYBOUGH ROAD
CHARLEVILLE AVENUE
NORTH STRAND ROAD
ROYAL CANAL
SEVILLE PLACE
SHERIFF ST. UPPER
MAYOR STREET LOWER

Bram Stoker

Bram Stoker doesn't make life easy. Even 100 years after his death, and despite the rediscovery and publication of his notes for Dracula (2008), and his Lost Dublin Journal (2012), he still guards many of the sources of his inspiration closely, creating an almost industrial level of speculation as to who inspired Dracula and where exactly his castle was.

Like many Dubliner's my limited knowledge of Bram Stoker told me that he was born and grew up at 15 The Crescent in Clontarf. Later, he would marry the girl next door (actually 14 doors away), live for a time on Kildare Street, and then move to London. The rest is history as they say. Except it wasn't quite like that. It's been suggested that his parents, Abraham and Charlotte Stoker, may have lived for a time in North William Street in Ballybough after their marriage in 1844. If they did it was only briefly as the following year their first son William Thornley was born at 15 the Crescent, Clontarf. This was a once fine brick-fronted Regency terrace sandwiched between the Malahide and Howth Roads and surrounded by the wooded estates of Lord Charlemont and the Vernon family. The Stokers had leased the house from a Miss Charlotte Downes who owned several properties on the street. Most were in poor repair and the rents were low, and it was only after the Stokers left and a new proprietor took over the properties, that the houses were put in order with front gardens added and the fronts cement rendered and painted, while what is now Bram Stoker Park was developed after the realignment of the Clontarf Road. Although set in the countryside it was far from isolated as the Great Northern Railway had opened a station just around the corner on the Howth Road in May 1844 which would make it easy for Abraham Snr. to commute to the city. Bram Stoker was born here on 8th November 1847.

By August 1849 the Stokers had moved a short distance up the Howth Road to Killester probably due to the pending sale of the properties at the Crescent. The exact location of their home is

unclear and although this area was more isolated than the Crescent there had been a railway station nearby from October 1845. Then in 1853 the Stoker family moved once more to Artane Lodge in Donnycarney near the present-day entrance to Collins Park and across the road from Kitty Kiernan's pub. This was a large detached house located down a country lane which was accessed by a series of small country roads. However, it was only a 10 or 15 minute walk to Killester Railway Station so it would still have been convenient for Abraham Stoker's daily commute to Dublin Castle.

By 1854 Bram Stoker seems to have recovered from the mysterious illness which had seem him bedridden for most of his young life. Then four years later the Stokers moved to No.17 Buckingham Street in the heart of Dublin's North Inner City. For Abraham Snr, now a Senior Clerk at Dublin Castle, there would have been a degree of convenience in living so close to his place of employment. For his third child Bram, having spent most of his life bedridden among the quiet isolation of the countryside, this must have been a complete culture shock. He was eleven years old and over the next six years he would absorb this new environment like a sponge.

What's in the Water?

It seems remarkable that four of the great and influential exponents of the late 19th century Gothic were either born or grew up within a mile of each other in Dublin's North Inner City.

Joseph Sheridan LeFanu was born at 45 Lower Dominic Street in 1814. As well as being a writer he was owner/editor of several magazines and a partner in the Dublin Evening Mail Newspaper. By Bram Stoker's time LeFanu had become withdrawn and was a virtual recluse so it was his partner, Henry Maunsell, who employed him to write Theatre Reviews in the newspaper. Sheridan LeFanu's Gothic fiction, such as "The House by the Churchyard" and "Uncle Silas", remain classics of the genre, and his "Camilla" is a hugely influential tale which has inspired a number of films. Much of his early inspiration derived from childhood stories of Irish myths and folk tales heard on holidays in County Limerick. His collection of short stories," In a Glass Darkly", was among the books in Bram Stokers library auctioned off after his

death.

Dion Boucicault was born in 1820 at 47 Lower Gardiner Street, within sight of Dublin's Customs House. As a actor, manager, and playwright, he was enormously successful and influenced future Irish Writers such as Wilde, Shaw, Yeats, O'Casey, and Bram Stoker. His Irish plays such as "The Shaughraun" and "The Colleen Bawn" influenced the plotlines of Stoker's novels "The Watters Mou'", and "The Snakes Pass". However, his mastery of the Sensational Drama, particularly in his 1852 play The Vampire, (retitled The Phantom for American audiences in 1856), was not only known to Stoker but he attempted to have the Lyceum Theatre in London produce the play. Despite the title, the storyline bears little similarity to Stoker's most famous creation so it's unlikely to have been much of an influence. Nonetheless Stoker first met Boucicault at the Theatre Royal in Dublin in 1872 and would later be influential in the Lyceum Theatre producing a number of Boucicault's plays in London.

Today No.47 is a small hotel with a plaque to Boucicault outside and a mini museum in the hotel reception.

Patrick Lefcardio Hearne was born in Greece in 1850 and at the age of two was sent to live with an Aunt at No. 48 Lower Gardiner Street, next door to the Boucicault House. Here his imagination was fired by his nurse who told him stories of Irish myths and legends which would inform his exploration of Japanese Culture when he moved there in 1890. Under the name Koizumi Yakumo he compiled and translated Japanese Ghost Stories, Fairy Tales, and Supernatural Stories in influential collections such as the "Kwaidan", "Shadowings", and "In Ghostly Japan."

There is a commemorative plaque outside the house. And, of course, Bram Stoker, live at 17 Upper Buckingham Street between the ages of eleven and seventeen.

The area from Ballybough to Gardiner Street is one steeped in Gothic lore and tradition. Summerhill and nearby Mountjoy Square still provides a happy hunting ground for psychic researchers with numerous sightings of phantom hands, wrists, and arms,

or strange, unexplainable touching being reported from many of the houses there. A maiden Aunt Betty was said to haunt one house, while a grisly murder which saw the victim cut up into pieces is said to be the source of the supernatural body parts. Several suicides and numerous slayings add to this list (which in some traditions are prime candidates to come back as vampires). This writer possesses a postcard from a British Army Officer to his sister in 1902 telling her she will enjoy Dublin but not to stay with their relatives as their house in Mountjoy Square is haunted and she will never get a decent night's sleep. Many of these tales were first recorded in London published journals in the late 19th and early 20th century. However, they were current in oral tradition long before then and a popular form of family entertainment during long evenings and at wakes. A particularly rich and largely unrecorded and unexplored folklore exists in relation to manifestations around the historic area of Mud Island.

These were the streets Bram Stoker passed on his way to school every day and it's highly likely that some of these stories were recounted during winter evenings in the Stoker household as after-dinner entertainment or overheard being discussed on street corners by an observant young Bram. From his Dublin Journal we know this was a favourite pastime of his. A plotline from his Notes, but not used in Dracula, has thirteen characters sitting around a table improvising ghost stories which culminates in the Entrance of Dracula. That number is symbolic in terms of the nature of the story which Stoker would have enhanced with great dramatic effect. Nonetheless, this is the way many Irish families would have entertained and amused themselves up to recent times and almost certainly the circumstances under which the Stoker family first heard Charlotte's tales of the 1832 Cholera outbreak in Sligo which so thrilled Bram that he persuaded her to write it down for him.

Until the publication of a Stoker family timeline in the Lost Journal in 2012 few people would have had any idea that Bram Stoker had lived some of his most formative childhood years in Dublin's North Inner City. Even authoritative biographies such as David Skal's "Something in the Blood", while mentioning the address, fails to explore its possibilities. But to be fair the distinctive history, heritage, and culture of Mud Island, Ballybough, Summerhill, and even the Monto is little known, even among those who live there today. So, this little publication is an attempt to redress that by looking at the North Inner City as it would have been experienced and observed by Bram Stoker and seeking its reflection and influence in his twelve novels, numerous short stories, and fairy tales.

17 Upper Buckingham Street.

Buckingham Street was laid out in 1788 to join the growing Georgian districts of Summerhill with Lower Gloucester Street. The development started as Edward Stratford, 1st Earl of Aldborough, began to plan a new suburb, the centrepiece of which would be his own remarkable town house. Building on the eastern side of the street began around 1790, the largest house, No. 9, being built in 1800 by John Beresford. Dublin would have much to be grateful to Beresford for, but he will forever be remembered for converting his riding stables in Marlborough Street into a torture chamber during the 1798 Rebellion. The results were gruesomely illustrated in the pages of Watty Cox's Irish Magazine cementing Beresford's reputation for posterity. He was said to have made a pact with his wife that whichever of them died first would come back to provide evidence of an afterlife. Beresford died in 1846 and true to his word is said to have visited his wife at Gill Hall in County Down. In order to assure her he was real he touched her after which Lady Beresford found the sinews of her arm were scarred and completely withered as if that part of her had died. Apparently, she always wore a black ribbon tied tightly around the scar for the rest of her life.

Summerhill, as with much of Dublin's Northern Georgian Quarter was constructed by the Gardiner/Mountjoy family. In 1798, whether due to temporary financial difficulties or an attempt to block Aldborough's project, they disposed of several sites between Buckingham Street and Lower Rutland Street to John Beatty. Beatty constructed working-class cottages along Bella Street causing Aldborough to have the eastern side's name changed to Meredyth Place (later Empress Place). This, combined with Aldborough's untimely death in 1801, was responsible for slowing down development of Buckingham Street with many building plots unused up to the 1880s. An upturn in the economy in the mid-nineteenth century saw a resumption of work on the western side of the street. However, this development, (built 1830 – 60), was less ambitious and largely consisted of pretty two-story middle-class houses.

This was the world the Stokers moved into in 1858. It was a street of Clergymen, Civil Servants, merchants, spinsters, widows, and some military officers. It was cobbled and paved with fine stone slabs, gravelled and well-lit by gas lamps, and still aspired towards what a writer in 1790 described as, "as elegant as anything in London." The Stoker's home, two doors away from Meredyth Place, was a three bay four story house over a basement with the smallest garden on the terrace. There was a stable for a carriage accessed from a wide laneway off Meredyth Place but it's unlikely the Stokers could either afford or had use for one. They liked to walk.

Bram's school on Parnell Square was a short distance away while the Theatre Royal, much loved by the Stokers, was just the other side of the river about

ten minutes from their house. Summerhill (at the top of the street) had a good range of shops and although much of the shopping would have been undertaken by servants there was a book and stationary shop around the corner which Bram probably frequented regularly. This new populous world would provide exciting opportunities for exploration and it's likely that young Bram Stoker grabbed these opportunities as they were presented.

The Myths and Legends of John O'Donovan.

Directly across the road from the Stokers at No. 36 was the home of John O'Donovan, author and Gaelic scholar, whose work published in the Miscellany of the Irish Archaeological Society along with his masterpiece, a translation of the Annals of the Four Masters (published from 1846-51), did much to bring the Folklore and Mythology of Gaelic Ireland to a non-Irish speaking world. O'Donovan had worked for the Ordinance Survey between 1834 and 1841 and led a major project in recording place-names, their meaning, historic sites, and much of the myths and folklore of Ireland which would have been lost otherwise. It was through his researches that the stories of Abhertach and the Dearg Dhuill, a vampire-like creature from Derry, or the Dreach Fhoula (literally meaning Bad Blood), a shape-shifting tribe of blood drinkers from Kerry, first became widely known. O'Donovan died in 1861 and his funeral on 1st December was a major affair as dozens of carriages led a procession from the Royal Irish Academy on Dawson Street across the city to Buckingham Street where several hundred had already assembled before proceeding to Glasnevin Cemetery. Such a major event must have seriously aroused the curiosity and inquisitiveness of young Bram Stoker as its unlikely he would have seen such a major public occasion on that scale before. It may even have confirmed for him that there was something more to his mother's wondrous tales than people gave her credit for.

Charlotte Stoker was an O'Blathnhaic, of Gaelic origin rather than of the Cadell/LeBlaca Norman family, both of which are from Galway and translate into English as Blake. Her Great-Grandmother, on her Mother's side, was one of O'Donnell Clan of Newport in County Mayo, who had acquired the 6th century Cathach of St. Columba, from a French Branch of their Family in 1806. This effectively made them the hereditary keepers of the Cathach, the oldest surviving Gaelic manuscript with its ornate container the Cumdach. It also confirmed under Gaelic genealogy, that the O'Donnell's of Newport were Chiefs of the Name or one of the primary Royal Families of the old Gaelic world. The family then presented it to the Royal Irish Academy for future preservation and

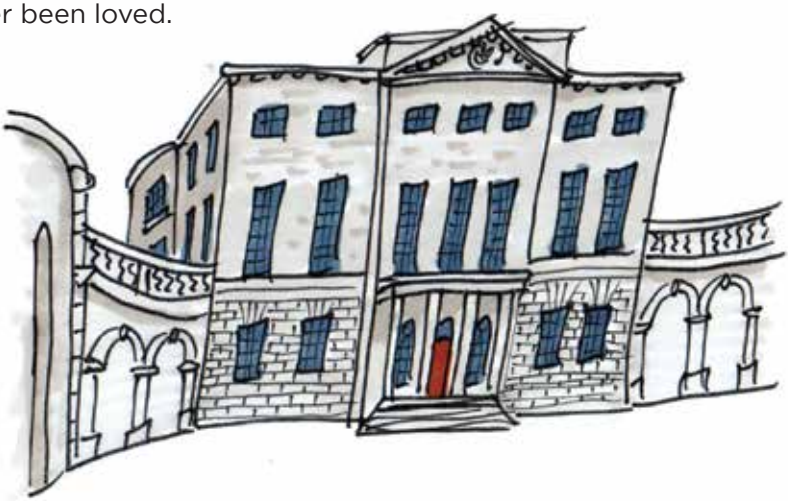
study. Charlotte, who remained in contact with her O'Donnell relatives would have known this and probably informed her son about it leading some to speculate that this is why Bram Stoker made a note on Dracula, that he was "only moved by relics older than his own real self."

Charlotte was no doubt aware of O'Donovan and his work with ancient Gaelic manuscripts and it would be interesting to know if she encouraged Bram to explore that Gaelic world while a student at Trinity College. Trinity Professors such as James Henthorn Todd also contributed to the Irish Archaeological Society Publications and is known for his translation of the "War of the Gael and the Gall", the epic tale of Brian Boru, which culminates with the Battle of Clontarf which had been fought around Ballybough Bridge. (In a pre-archaeology age, skeletons of ancient vintage uncovered during building in the area were usually classified as probably being combatants from the Battle fought in 1014.) Most of these works were accessible in the College Library which possessed first editions of most of O'Donovan's works at the time Bram Stoker was a student there. It's said that her stories were wild and fanciful but given her sons future writings it's probably worth noting that there were ancient vampire-like traditions in Sligo and the oldest vampire burials in Europe were found a few years ago in a graveyard in Kilteshan in nearby County Roscommon.

Stoker claimed that the Irish myths and folklore of his mother were his greatest influence. How much of this he pursued in published material is unknown. However, it did awaken an interest in world folklore in general and from the list of books he read at Marsh's Library between 1866-7 we can see that his interest in ancient world cultures was far ranging. One of those, Peter Heylan's Cosmographie, (1682) would provide his first encounter with the historic character Vlad Dracula. Given this it would be surprising if he hadn't taken an interest in the stories which abounded right at his own doorstep during the family's residence at 17 Upper Buckingham Street.

Aldborough House - The Castle of the King?

Aldborough house was built by Edward Stratford, 1st Earl of Aldborough, between 1792 and 1800. It was to be a statement house around which Aldborough would drive the development of an elegant suburb to rival anything then under construction in the city. Strangely, Aldborough built what was in effect a country house leading to his brother accusing him of madness and warning that he would not only have neighbours looking over his garden wall but would have "a pent-up air dangerous to yourself, Lady Aldborough, and family". He then suggested building streets of shops without overhead accommodation to retain their privacy. Aldborough died in 1801 followed shortly afterwards by his wife so that the last great townhouse of Dublin's Georgian Era was never occupied and over the years since has rarely ever been loved.



In 1812 the building became a school, The Feinaiglian Institute, which operated up to 1838 after which it was briefly vacant until taken over by the Royal Irish Constabulary for musketry training. A number of the policemen ended up wounding each other so the project was shut down until the army turned it into a barracks in 1843 to prevent Daniel O'Connell holding a monster meeting at Clontarf. For several years, regiments passed through it until 1850 when the Army Commissariat took possession and the history of the building and the area surrounding it began to decline. More importantly Aldborough's vision for this part of the North Inner City would never be realised as the house increasingly became an anomaly within the district. Not surprisingly Stoker would write "houses had grown up close round the palace and in some of these dwelt many persons who could only afford to pay for part of a house" in a veiled reference to the former mansion. Cottages and tenements had been built all around Aldborough House and its once impressive gardens were now resounding to the sounds of construction as the army began the process of building numerous sheds, warehouses, and other buildings within a few feet of the Stokers home.

The House provides the template for “Scarp” a house owned by the Trevor family in Stoker’s 1875 novella “Chain of Destiny” serialised in The Shamrock magazine. It’s a,

“stately edifice seemingly of great age … so old that it must have any number of legends, but it is so long since it was inhabited that no one … remembers them.”

The narrator is told by a servant that it had just become “forgotten in people’s thoughts” and while there is plenty of “invention” among the village folk all the “genuine history” is now gone. During the house’s time as a school the numerous statues which had been purchased at great expense to adorn the gardens were removed, as being nudes, they were considered “not decent” and stored in a basement room out of view. Over time this developed into “queer tales” about “Bluebeard’s Chambers” and other sensational stories which were of course untrue. However, Stoker’s description is interesting as many of today’s Ballybough and North Inner City residents know the house as The Post Office Building in reference to its time under the control of the Post & Telegraphs. It would seem by the mid-nineteenth century its original purpose had been lost and long forgotten.

A remarkable woodcut published in the New Picture of Dublin in 1821 shows Aldborough House from the rear, precisely the view Bram Stoker would have seen from the back windows of his home. The gardens are overgrown and not unlike a scene from a gothic horror movie. One can easily imagine the fertile mind of Bram Stoker improvising an adventure through this overgrowth which would eventually manifest itself in the heroic journey taken to “The Castle of the King” which appeared in the “Under the Sunset” collection of 1887. William Fitzgerald’s startling illustration for that story depicts a tall building with two wings with a skull-like entrance for dramatic effect. It is situated in a suitable gothic swamp-like landscape. If we discount the skull, the castle’s bears a remarkable resemblance to the Aldborough House that Stoker would have seen as a child which dominated his skyline. He and Fitzgerald were friends so it’s likely that Stoker had input into the image. A country house in the city, Aldborough had designed two near symmetrical wings on either side only one of which survives complete today. These had been adorned with ornate stone carvings, urns, and animals, many of which had been removed by the time of the Stoker’s arrival. Several of these had been dispersed around the city as architectural salvage. Others suffer badly from salt damage due to the house’s original proximity to the sea not unlike the worn carvings Jonathan Harker notices in Dracula’s Castle.

From the publication of Horace Walpole’s “Castle of Otranto” in 1764, the Castle or Big House has been a staple of Gothic Fiction. It’s attractive but

perilous and once entered danger beckons and although we know it's coming, we still cannot avoid entering. Curiously Stoker never really outlines the Castles or Houses in his stories. In his notes for Dracula he reminds himself to "describe" Dracula's Castle, but instead, as with the "Castle of the King" he gives us the atmosphere on the approach and can remember little of the outside. However, Jonathan Harker does tell us,

"complete darkness from the rolling clouds obscured the moon. Suddenly I became aware of a vast ruined castle from whose tall blank windows came no ray of light and whose broken battlements show a jagged line against the sky."

Aldborough was a place he could see from his window but could never get really close to, so as a child he just made up stories and adventures about it in order to understand it better. Much of its adornments had gone and others were in the process of being removed by the military during Stoker's childhood. As with Dracula's Castle it was,

"A remarkable place of considerable size ... it perhaps seemed bigger than it really is ... with Carved stone ... much worn by time and the weather."

Aldborough House is not quite Dracula's Castle but its DNA runs through it. For nearly six years Bram Stoker, like the depiction in William Fitzgerald's illustration, looked out of his window every morning and evening to see this towering building which dominated all around it within a few feet from his house. It had a history which seemed forgotten to time and its former grandeur was slowly being eaten away as the army expanded their operations. It must have seemed close enough to touch, yet the walls of the barracks and the soldiers in residence meant he would never reach it and so in his youthful visualizations it created atmospheres and sensations which his imagination would interpret and which could be revisited each time he needed a big house. Like a Bank Depository he could draw these out, possibly even subconsciously, as required.

The Street that ate Children and Rivers of Blood.

One of the positives of the army's presence at Aldborough House was that they stabilised the perimeter footpath along what is now Killarney Street (formerly Lower Gloucester Street). As late as 1848 complaints were being made about an "open ditch or drain" running down the western side of Buckingham Street and turning the corner at a right angle along the perimeter of Aldborough Hose along Gloucester Street. The water was stagnant and full of "putrid matter" with many of the drains from local streets emptying into it. This was a street that literally "ate" children and probably, along with the sinking of Clontarf Island in 1844 and the drowning of Christopher Cromwell and his son in their own house on the island, (after Mud Islanders undermined its foundations whilst illicitly digging sand), provided inspiration for the shifting bog plot in Stoker's Irish Novel, "The Snake's Pass."

These streets were criss-crossed with a subterranean network of tunnels some of which can be explained as old coal bunkers and storage areas of former houses or drainage culverts built during the reclamation of much of the land to allow water drain off when the area was flooded. One tunnel, discovered some years ago during redevelopment on Railway Street, was described by a Dublin City Council worker as "large enough to ride a cavalry regiment through." However, there were others, not so easily explained, suggesting former streets of the old city built near the river, had simple been demolished to the first-floor, roofed over, and then the street level had been raised. A network of these can be found beneath Molloy's Pub on Talbot Street where the windows and doorways of former houses are easily recognizable among the extensive tunnels which are believed to run down into the Docklands. The writer William Carleton recalled coming to Dublin in 1818 and staying in lodgings which resemble these tunnels which he described as like the entrance to Dante's Inferno. According to Carleton the poorest of the poor lived here, beggars without limbs, or those suffering from "scrofulous neck swellings." Between 1841 and 1857, 2205 such establishments were closed down although many survived into the 1870s.

Such tunnels when used for drainage tended to collapse and the area around present day Killarney Street could easily turn to swamp sucking unfortunate children playing in the area into its mire. Such an incident was documented in 1824 when a young boy names Fagan was playing with a stick near a small pool which had emerged at the side of Aldborough House. Leaning too far he unbalanced and fell through the thin crust of the footpath to become submerged in thick black mud. Panicked workmen nearby immediately rushed to the incident, but it took some time to find the unfortunate child. Eventually, rescued from the mud, he was rushed to a nearby hospital but expired before the doctors could revive him. He was not the first child to

meet such a fate and up to 1848 residents were complaining of the disgraceful state of this street which was described as an open sewer. It had been suggested to the Parish Vestry of St. Thomas during the Cholera outbreak of 1832 that a new drainage system be built from Buckingham Street to Amiens Street and on to the Docklands to safeguard the health of the neighbourhood, but their Board of Health Secretary, Edward Livingstone, replied that they regretted, but that they simply didn't have the funds available.

In early 1863 the Stoker's and their neighbours were made aware of stirring behind the walls of the former garden at Aldborough House. The army was clearing the area and the construction of a new perimeter wall was already commenced. Curious observers noticed regular air- holes being incorporated into the lower part of the wall and given that many of the area's residents were government employees, questions began to be asked in the right circles as to what was going on.

It was found that the Army Commissariat intended centralising food production and distribution. Along with building an enormous bakery, they planned to construct the largest slaughterhouse ever seen in Dublin. Beside this would be a large area of pens and stables for the various animals to be processed. If they weren't enough to alarm the neighbourhood it was discovered that the air-holes in the lower part of the new Barracks walls were for expelling the blood from the slaughtered animals. This would be flushed, river-like, onto the footpath flowing all the way down to Amiens Street. For residents living under the threat of a cholera outbreak, and with a community memory of the previous ones in 1832 and 1847, this was like a declaration of war. People would also have been mindful that the City Registrar had announced that smallpox had engulfed Mecklenburg Street and warned of regular outbreaks of fever and scrofula in nearby Purdon Street, Ring Court, and White's Court due to the collecting and storing of manure there.

However, the main issue facing the clergymen, civil servants, and even the army officers in residence on Upper Buckingham Street, was the fact that the army was above civil law and required neither permits nor permission from the Corporation. Rivers of blood and their avoidance would now become a part of the breakfast and after dinner conversation of the residents on Upper Buckingham Street as they sought a means of bringing the army to some sense regarding their plight.

Among those living at Upper Buckingham Street were John French, a Town Councillor who lived in No. 18 on the corner with Meridyth Place. French's two brothers, who also resided at the address, were senior officers in the army. He came up with a strategy of persuading Dublin Corporation's No. 1 Committee, which issued licenses for slaughterhouses and looked after health matters, to act as if it had jurisdiction, and so a lengthy public debate began in the Council in the hope that by creating enough publicity the army would be forced by public opinion to back down.

Finally, in October, after a campaign of almost a year, the army realised they were facing a PR disaster and changed their plans announcing that they would only go ahead with the construction of the Bakery. It was a victory for local politics, but a letter written by a local resident, John Martin, gives us some idea into their real concerns. Given the myriad of fevers and diseases prone to break out in the Inner City there was a real fear that this expelled blood or "disgusting effluvia of the shambles" as Martin described it, could "corrupt and seriously injure the health of the inhabitants." We don't know exactly how this was discussed in the Stoker household but given the future role blood would play in Dracula, we can assume it must have been lively. It may also have increased Bram's contemplation and speculation on this mystery house across the road which dominated their lives and the potential dangers (and adventure) which might lurk within there.

Montgomery Street and the Secret Worlds of Bram Stoker.

Charlotte Stoker supported numerous charities during the family's residence at Buckingham Street. The Society for the Training and Employment of Women, The Orphan Refuge for destitute Children, The Queens Institute for training and employing Educated Women, The Ragged School Breakfast Fund, The Dublin Society for the Employment of Women, and The Sick and Indigent Room Keepers Society are just some of them. It is probably his mother that Stoker is drawing on in his description in "Chain of Destiny" of Mrs Trevor who visited the poor "like an Angel" bringing comfort where she could. She knew how to treat them with dignity and respect something many North Inner City Charities of that period and later would be accused of lacking. Charlotte "always helped them materially but never offended their

feelings in doing so."
This was most likely Bram's entrance to what he would call "The Secret Worlds" which surrounded their home. The term "Gorgeous Mask" was coined to describe the hidden life of late Georgian Dublin and it's an appropriate description of the Stokers North Inner City Streetscape.

Upper and Lower Buckingham Street was intersected by Lower Gloucester Street (now Killarney Street and Sean McDermott Street). On the face of things Lower Gloucester Street still had an appearance of gentility, but by the time of the Stoker's arrival in the neighbourhood many of the once fine 3 and 4 story houses had been converted to multiple occupancy as the properties were hoovered up by landlords such as Sylvester Moore. Some housed between seven and ten families with up to 100 occupants. Past this intersection on the way to Amiens Street was Mecklenburg Street (now Railway Street), entrance to the infamous Monto district, which although it was some years away from employing 1600 prostitutes was already a thriving area for illicit sex even before the arrival of the army at Aldborough House. In 1836 Fr. John Lapham, Director of the Catholic Female Penitentiary Retreat, had moved that institution to larger premises at No.19 Mecklenburg Street to meet the growing problem of juvenile prostitutes. In 1860 they acquired additional lands which would eventually see them expand onto the undeveloped building plots beside the Presbyterian Church on Lower Gloucester Street in 1868.

Between 1672 and 1821 Ireland had a Hearth Tax, while in 1798 a Window Tax was introduced which remained on the books up to 1851. Unscrupulous landlords, to avoid the taxes, simple blocked up fireplaces and windows and after the reforms never unblocked or reinstated them. Mecklenburg Street was narrow, dirty, and poorly paved, and had numerous 3-4 storey houses in poor repair. It was popular with artists, but many of the basements and ground floors were taken over by Spirit Dealers and Huckster's Shops. Montgomery Street (now Foley Street) from which the

Monto would take its name, had once had fine 2 and 3 storey houses which had been converted to multiple use with 4-6 families per house. In the Stoker's day the street had been reduced to the homes of Carters, Jarvey Drivers, Spirit Dealers, and the destitute poor.

Between these two streets, in places such as Purdon Street, (home of the Institute for Worms caught by the Poor), Beaver Street, Mabbot Street, Brew-house Yard, Bottle-house Yard, and Ring Court, the streets were narrow and dirty, with poor lighting and paving. The few houses still in good repair were surrounded by "inferior" properties rapidly falling into decay and populated by poor tradesmen, working mechanics, fruit and vegetable sellers, and "great numbers of destitute poor and desperate characters of both sexes." Shortly after the opening of the Barracks at Aldborough House letters appeared in the newspapers horrified at the spill-over of prostitutes from these streets onto Lower Gloucester Street to attract business from the barracks. Curiously the objections were less on moral grounds than on their ultimate effect on house prices and the recommencement of building in the area.

This hidden world, behind the "gorgeous mask", was described by Bram Stoker in "The Invisible Giant" short story, as the places where people who couldn't afford a house lived stacked on top of each other so that

"the higher you went up the great steep stairs the poorer were the people that lived there, so that the garrets had some who were so poor that when the morning came they did not know whether they should have anything to eat the whole day long."

Stoker then says that "gentle children would have wept if they had seen their pain," suggesting it was something he had personally experienced on childhood visits through the district which had deeply affected him.

People would have warned Stoker of crossing Clarke's Bridge into Ballybough. In the Stoker's day some semblance of gentility had reach the area insofar as new developments such as Edward Terrace, Sackville Gardens, Bayview Avenue, and Nottingham Street were now populated by low grade civil servants, marine workers, music teachers, and professionals. However, in between these, King's Lane, Newcomen Avenue and Court, Clarke's Bridge, Clinch's Court, Love Lane and even Ballybough Road were largely tightly packed rows of small cottages, often in multiple occupancy, and houses set out in Tenements. This was the infamous Mud Island of recent memory and which for many Dubliners would have been a place to avoid.

A vivid illustration for "The Invisible Giant" by William Fitzgerald shows a young boy at the top of a house (rather like 17 Upper Buckingham Street)

gazing out at these secret worlds over which a giant Banshee-like creature presides. These tightly packed houses are probably the rows of cottages in Mud Island a place which would run through many of Bram Stoker's stories. Whatever apprehensions his parents might have had about these surroundings for young Bram, with his fertile imagination, this must have been like arriving at a Gothic Disneyland.

King's Avenue and the Chiefs of the Name.

According to legend, following the Plantation of Ulster in 1605, three brothers of the McDonnell family made their way towards Dublin, one settling at Turvey near the coastal village of Rush while the others settled on the outskirts of the city at Ballybough. One of these, Randal McDonnell, opened a tavern close to where the Royal Canal flows under Newcomen Bridge today which became known as The Red House. Although this area was within the city jurisdiction and from 1749 part of the Civil Parish of St. Thomas, it was effectively the countryside and avoided by the Parish Watchmen which effectively meant it was lawless.

Much of the land had been reclaimed following the channelling of the river Liffey but in many ways it was still treacherous mudflats, where deceptive banks such as that known as "the Little Sea" could be used to entrap unfortunate coastal traders sailing along the coast to Dublin. For those in the know, after the building of Annesley Bridge, it became a safe haven for landing contraband after dark. In 1727 a disastrous attempt had been made to build a culvert which would drain the land between here and the new wall built to channel the river Liffey, which one critic described as "engineering idiocy" the main result of which was the creation of the Little Sea. This allied to a protracted legal battle between the 'Corporation and the Vernon Family over sand gathering rights brought much of that work to a halt allowing a type of no-man's-land to develop which the McDonnell's basically claimed squatter's rights and turned into an "Independent Kingdom" known as Mud Island.

As late as the 1850s lands around Spring Garden Street and Clonliffe Road were largely in orchards or used as grazing for horses. A number of Dairies in the area provided further employment, however the majority of those who settled at Mud Island made their living gathering sand and gravel to supply the fast-growing building industry creating the Georgian City. Rush, a small village in the northern county was one of the few without a resident proprietor landlord. Because of this a major smuggling industry developed there in the Eighteenth Century bringing in contraband from France with many of their boats being armed with small cannon. It is likely that the Turvey branch of the McDonnells were involved with this and used their cousins at Mud Island as their distribution centre for Dublin.

The Spring Gardens had been a popular eighteenth century tea rooms near the coast and much of its tea, no doubt, came from Mud Island smugglers. Legendary taverns sprung up near Ballybough Bridge such as The Big Gun and The Cockle Hall, and the infamous Paddy Readypenny's, opened in 1722. They were renowned for serving up famous cockle stews to rich and poor as long as they had the coin to pay for it. These taverns would also act as distribution points for smugglers and highwaymen, and it's even been suggested that Readypenny may have been a fence for much of the goods stolen from ships trapped in "the little sea" or unfortunate travellers on the Ballybough Road. Readypenny operated a considerable smuggling operation from the little sea with ships waiting out in the bay until dark when the Mud Islanders would assist in transferring the cargo to his tavern. Tradition has it that much of the alcohol sold in these establishments was either smuggled or manufactured locally out of the sight of the Revenue Officers.

The McDonnell's oversaw all of this as Kings of Mud Island and their word was the only rule of law. Apart from a brief interlude in the 1750s McDonnells reigned continuously, whether male or female, the last of whom to be recorded in the area was Queen Bess who was alive in 1908. But Mud Island had long reached its heyday by the time the Stoker's lived in the neighbourhood with the first attempt of a history of the area published in The Dublin University Magazine in 1852. This was followed by substantial histories published in the 1870s with numerous memoirs and recollections following over the next forty years. It was even celebrated in a popular song "The Mud Island Fusiliers."

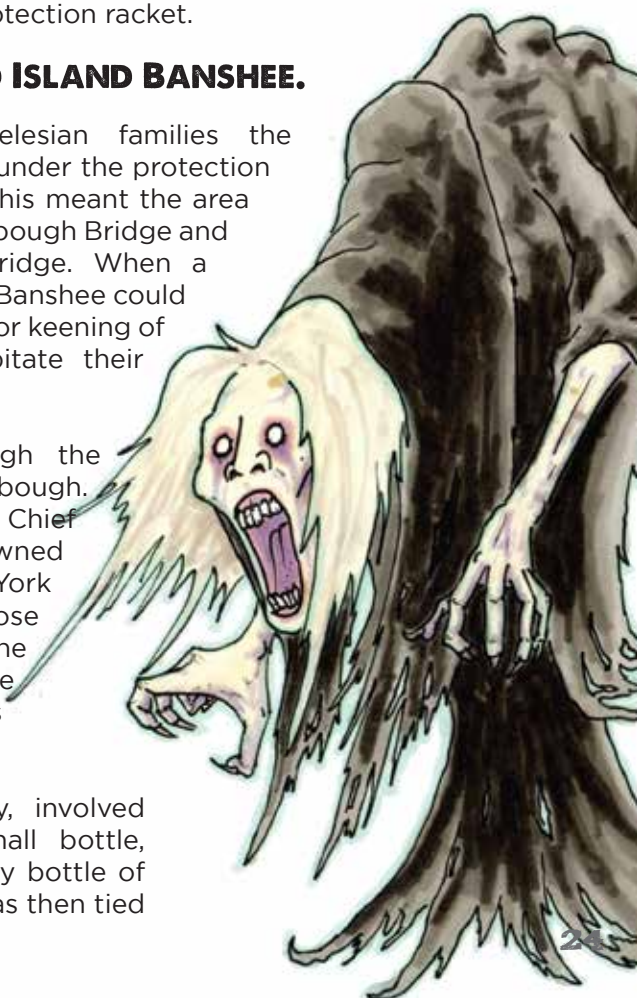
In 1824 Pierce Egan, the actor and journalist, published his book "Real Life in Ireland" which is remarkable for its omission of Mud Island as one of the wild places where you might have a really good time. He was well aware of the place through his friendship with Jack Langan, the Mud Island Boxing Champion, and had written about it in relation to its sporting excellence, so unless he didn't wish to offend his friend it would seem that Mud Island had quietened down considerable by that time.

Luke McDonnell whose reign spanned the 18th and 19th Centuries, and his son Christopher, who followed, were the last great leaders. Luke lived on what is now King's Avenue, and Christopher at a tavern, later renowned as Keegan's Grocers and Off License at the corner of Bayview Avenue and the Ballybough Road. This is reputed to be the oldest house in the district. They seem to have had a real sense of responsibility towards their "subjects" although their business sense was wanting, and they were often left unable to pay the wages of those who gathered sand for them. They operated at a time when smuggling wasn't really seen as a great crime and even the wealthy were happy to turn a blind eye if there was a bargain to be had.

Because a blind eye was shown to much of their activities not surprisingly it attracted thieves, gunmen, and highwaymen. One of the cleverest of these, Collier, described as an aristocrat of the professional Highwaymen, retired by concluding a deal with all the top hotels not to rob their guests along the Belfast Road and to ensure no other Highwaymen would attack them either. The hotels agreed and paid him an annual fee which must be an early modern example of a very successful protection racket.

The Mud Island Banshee.

As one of the original Melesian families the McDonnell's were said to come under the protection of the Banshee. In Ballybough this meant the area between the Tolka River at Ballybough Bridge and the Royal Canal at Clark's Bridge. When a McDonnell was about to die the Banshee could be heard singing the Ceol Sidhe or keening of the dead which would precipitate their journey into the otherworld.



Banshees loom large through the culture and heritage of Ballybough. The American musicologist, Chief Francis O'Neill, recalled a renowned fiddler in late 19th century New York named William McMahon whose signature tune was the self-composed "Song of the Banshee." McMahon was originally from Ballybough. An old tradition in the area, common up to quite recently, involved keeping Holy Water in a small bottle, usually a naggin or small whisky bottle of about two full measures. This was then tied

with string to a nail in the wall of the house. The explanation for this was always given as to protect against the Banshee.

During the bombing of the North Strand by the Luftwaffe in 1941 one young boy recalled trying to get his mother to leave the house but she refused until she obtained her bottle of Holy Water hidden in a trunk under the bed. Her husband didn't believe in superstitions, so she had hidden it there. She claimed to have heard the howl of the Banshee all day and she refused to leave the house without protection in case they came for her. Well into the 1960s Dublin City Council maintenance staff were often left speechless by the number of complaints made by elderly residents in complexes such as Ballybough House on the banks of the Tolka who claimed to have been kept awake by the Banshee's howl. The reports were usually followed by news of a death in the area.

Through Charlotte, Bram Stoker was well acquainted with the Banshee. She claimed to have heard her mother being keened by a Banshee at her death, in keeping with her status as one of the O'Donnells of Newport or of the Chief Royal Families of Gaelic Ireland. It's known that Stoker read Edmund Spencer's Faery Queen, in July 1866 at Marsh's Library. Based on the story of the mythical Gaelic Queen Maebh it's interesting that a number of scholars interpret her as a Queen of Banshee's. It would be interesting to know if he read Thomas Crofton Croker's Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland, three separate editions of which were in Trinity Library when he studied there. Croker gives quite a comprehensive account of the Banshee in Munster tradition.

In a number of works Stoker uses dual Banshee-like figures such as in "The Angels of the Portal" who protect The Castle of the King. While some see William Fitzgerald's macabre spectre which overlooks the village in Under the Sunset as a representation of cholera it is in all probability a Banshee forewarning of the upcoming deaths. Fitzgerald was a Limerickman whose illustration career was cut short when he took holy orders and became a rector in his home county. However, his work, particularly in books such as "The Talk of the Road", shows a keen

observation of Irish country life and superstitions.

According to custom only those about to die or from Royal Gaelic Families can see the Banshees. But anyone can hear their keening or lament. In Dracula, Stoker uses wolves to provide a similar function as Jonathan Harker approaches Dracula's Castle. Initially they are clearly heard but not seen which is consistent with most reports of Banshee appearances.

A wild howling began which seemed to come from all over the country as far as the imagination could grasp it through the gloom of the night.

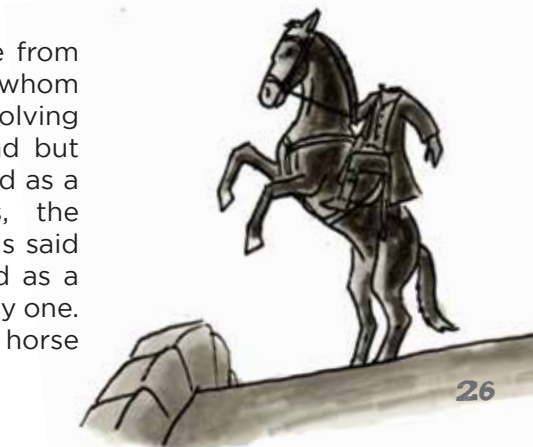
Even when surrounded by the wolves, Jonathan Harker fails to realise that the wolves are acting as Banshees and are not there to harm but to warn him.

White teeth and lolling round tongues, with long sharp, sinewy limbs and shaggy hair, they were a hundred times more terrible in the grim silence which held them than even when they howled. I felt a paralysis of fear. It is only when a man feels himself face to face with such horror that he can understand its true import.

Even his description of the wolves is interesting as it closely resembles Badhb one of the three forms of the Mor-Rioghain, a sometimes shape-shifting Banshee who could take on other forms and warns of imminent death. She sometimes appeared as an old hag. In Jonathan Harker's case the reason the wolves/banshees hold back is because Harker has now entered the carriage of Count Dracula driven by a man whose face he barely sees and who can calm the wolves to do his bidding.

The coach is a kind of Coiste Bodhar or Death Coach, which once it enters the world of the living cannot return empty and so means death for the occupant. This is what the Banshee warns against and is the role played by the wolves in the scene. The driver is the Dullahan and if he calls out your name you will die. He vanishes once he has delivered Harker to Count Dracula as his job is done.

Curiously the Dullahan is said to derive from the Ancient Celtic God Crom Dubh to whom human sacrifices were made involving decapitation. The Dullahan has no head but has supernatural sight and is often found as a headless horseman. Frederick Jones, the Theatre proprietor from Clonliffe Road is said to ride that street and Whitworth Road as a Headless Horseman. But he is not the only one. Sass Bollan or Boland was from a noted horse



dealing family who sold cavalry horses across Europe. His headless escapades are recorded in Ballads and songs. Sass rides the other side of the North Strand Road and his activity is remembered on a plaque on Johnny Cullen's Hill near the Luas Stop at Spencer Dock.

Watters Mou' and other Mud Islands.

Stoker's 1895 novel, "The Watters Mou' "is set in Cruden Bay, to the north of Aberdeen, Scotland, where a small river is believed to have once flowed into the sea at a point known as the Waters Mouth. In chapter III Stoker gives a detailed description of the village suggesting he had something like a Bradshaw's Guide beside him as he wrote. However, Mud Island looms large throughout the story providing the prototype for the smugglers lair. The villagers here survive from fishing or alternatively work cutting rocks from the nearby quarry for builders, not unlike Mud Islanders who dig out sand and gravel from their pits. The waters at the village are treacherous which is only visible at low tide much like the mud-banks of The Little Sea at Mud Island.

Curiously, Stoker, for a man who wrote The Duties of Clerks of Petty Sessions in Ireland, paints a sympathetic portrait of the villagers whose engagement in smuggling is motivated by their need to pay off crippling debts to a moneylender. Stoker's O'Donnell ancestors had been smugglers in Mayo bringing in wines and spirits from France and Spain so he may have felt some affinity.

In 1824 Christopher McDonnell, King of Mud Island, had petitioned the government for a loan of £2000 to expand the gravel pits in order to increase employment for between 150-200 people at Mud Island which was refused due to lack of funds. Ironically this came against a backdrop of a major crime-wave in Richmond and Drumcondra in which one householder claimed that all his neighbours had had the lead stolen from their roofs by the Mud Islanders and residents from as far away as Clontarf were petitioning for a police station at Ballybough Bridge to keep them under control. If there is no work, people, just like Stoker's Scottish villagers, find alternative means of income.

The Red Stockade and the Legend of Art Granger.

It was said that Art Granger arrived on a ship from Cardiff in the mid-1750s. Although his accent was strange it was not discernibly Welsh however he was said to have lived in the most notorious quarter of the Welsh capital for some years. Significantly taller than average, he had the strength of two men and was fearsome and capable of great violence. Granger and his companions, described as "vicious cut-throats" descended on a Dublin tavern and after a week's carousing, murdered and robbed the landlord. Soon enough they found the Parish Watch on their trail. Aware that once they crossed into what was then known as Ballybough Lane that they would be in the clear, they then made for Mud Island and the sanctuary which the village afforded. Within a short time, Granger made his move on the McDonnell Chieftain of the village and having defeated him by right of Challenge was proclaimed King of Mud Island.

It would be the only time that someone outside of the McDonnell Family would reign as monarch, but Granger's tenure would be infamous and responsible for much of the reputation of the location for the next hundred years. Hold ups along the Ballybough Road escalated as did muggings in both the Parishes of St. Thomas and St. Mary. Even the distant highway of Drumcondra Road became unsafe as more and more nefarious characters were attracted to Granger's gang. In many of these cases the Watch gave chase as far as Ballybough Parade but wisely withdrew once that threshold was crossed. A number of watchmen were killed in the line of duty at this period but in only a few instances was the perpetrator caught and hanged.

Granger began to take control of the smuggling operation at the village quickly escalating operations to an industrial level. Whereas the Islanders had used "the little sea" to protect themselves from the Revenue-men, Granger turned it into a trap, developing the Mud Island "Lighthouse" to entice small coastal crafts sailing into Dublin onto the mud banks where they became easy

pickings for his infamous band.

The Revenue police were soon on his trail to little effect. Stephen Draper, a Revenue Officer who had seized a consignment of tea in 1758, promptly found himself assaulted and the contraband retrieved as he attempted to lodge it in the Customs House. St. Mary's Parish Watch, whose territory had originally encompassed Ballybough and Mud Island before the founding of St. Thomas' Parish, came under particular pressure to provide assistance being better resourced. In 1757 their Constable, John Shanly, having beaten off a number of would be thieves dropped dead later in the day in Abbey Street. Some months later four Watchmen from St. Mary's were so badly beaten up that it was questioned whether they would recover. John Cook found guilty of those assaults was whipped through the streets of Dublin in September 1758. However, as their job increasingly involved violence and danger many Watch, and Revenue men, simply drew an invisibly line over which they would not proceed. For those who did, the newspapers of the time carried their obituaries as they failed to make any headway in their attacks and ended up victims strewn across the Ballybough Road. The difficulty for the Revenue men was that Mud Island being effectively located between marsh and sand, and surrounded by treacherous pools and mud-banks, made an attack from the Ballybough Road difficult while negotiating an attack from the coastal side required such care that any effort at a surprise attack would be lost and the advantage handed to Granger and his crew.

"The Red Stockade – A story told by the Old Coastguard" is a stirring adventurous short story by Bram Stoker first published in the September 1894 edition of the American Cosmopolitan Magazine. For an exotic touch Stoker sets events in the South China Sea and tells the tale of an attempt to defeat a village of pirates who live in a stockade set in a marsh by the sea which is impossible to attack successfully. The crew of a 35 gun coastguard ship take on the task and with a feigned frontal attack allied to an assault from the sea, they overwhelm the bandits and win the day.

This is a clever retelling by Stoker of the attack by the Revenue-men on Granger and his gang which finally put them out of business. Interestingly the George Ranger is the name of the Coastguard's ship and is practically a synonym for Art Granger something Stoker was known to use on occasions when naming characters in his stories.

In both cases a feigned frontal attack is used to engage the enemy in their "fortress" allowing the real attack from the sea to succeed. In Granger's case many of the Revenue-men who came for him in 1759 claimed to have shot him and seen him fall. Sixteen of his cohorts were taken prisoner, but in the aftermath of the battle as they frantically searched for his body only pools of blood could be found in the location where Ganger had fought.

Several weeks later two fishermen who operated a boat near Mud Island were fishing in the area when close to dusk they noticed a giant figure shouting and waving his arms in the air in a threatening way. His voice was like thunder, and terrified, the fishermen quickly rowed towards the safety of Howth. On retelling their tale to friend, they were told that it was probably the ghost of Art Granger.

They would not be the last to encounter the wrath of the supernatural bandit with regular sighting being made along the Ballybough Road over the next century. It was said that the development of Ballybough and Fairview in the 1880s brought these sightings to a close and Granger was seen no more.

At the corner of King's Avenue, near the present day Blind Ref Pub, is where Laurence Blight opened a tavern in the early 19th century. Blight had literary aspirations and gathered a crowd around him which included Laurence Tighe and the unfortunate James Clarence Mangan and on occasions they were joined by William Carleton for picnics at Summerhill. The would-be poets would drink and listen to the fearful stories of the Mud Island customers which they would then improvise into poetry and submit for publication as written at Mud Island near the Bog.

Mangan is known today for his poems "Dark Rosaleen" and "Visions of Connaught" but much of his "Mud Island" works are dark and bleak and explore the Gothic. One in particular, written in 1816 is worth noticing. "The Vampire" borrows its title from John Polidori's novel, The Vampyr, of the previous year. In it Mangan describes an encounter with a fearsome being which he had obviously head being discussed in the tavern,

"Of Stature more than a man was he
All clad in robes of deepest black,
Save where the shrinking eye might see
A blood-red ribbon round his neck."

This is a description of a sighting of Art Granger whose ghost was seen regularly on the Ballybough Road up to the late 19th century as the area became built up. Whether Vampire-like activity was associated with him is unknown. However, it's interesting that another writer with Clontarf/Summerhill associations, William Carleton, who often joined Mangan's literary group, wrote a short story in 1846 titled The Black Prophet in which one character Sarah McGowan, unable to stab her Mother-in-Law with a knife,

"becomes a beautiful vampire that was ravening the blood of its awakened victim." She then bites her victim and shouts, "I've tasted your blood and I like it!"

In the 1970s a young apprentice carpenter named Tommy Maguire while working on a house in Summerhill entered a room where he encountered a strange, tall, well built, figure in a black cloak. As he was busy Tommy continued his work in another part of the building but the following day, he saw the same figure who smiled at him. Tommy recalled a menace in his smile which terrified him and so he fled from the building. He claimed the spectre was like some ancient warrior due to his muscular build and what seemed to be a breast-plate partly concealed under his heavy cloak. It would appear that Art Granger may still be out there.

The Ballybough Burial Plot.

The law of Felo de Se or Self Murder evolved in English Common Law and was first recorded in the 13th Century by the Jurist Henry De Bracton. Under this law all of a perpetrators moveable goods were confiscated, and their bodies buried in un-consecrated ground at a crossroads if found guilty. A stake was then driven through their hearts to prevent them further troubling the living. The law was practiced in Ireland from at least the fifteenth century and in Dublin there were two locations for Felo De Se burials, The Long Meadow near the banks of the River Liffey, (where burials took place at high tide), and at Clonliffe, near the old medieval Bridge of Ballybough, where four roads connect. Similar sites existed throughout Ireland's towns and villages known as Cillin or Killeen. The Long Meadow quickly faded from memory after the law was finally reformed in 1886. However, the Ballybough site remains in local consciousness and lore up to the present day.
Clonliffe Road, which provides one side of the present plot, had hanging trees at either end, one at the Drumcondra Road and the other near the present day Clonliffe House Pub. Highwaymen and other criminals executed there were then buried unceremoniously at the plot by the crossroads. One of these, Larry Clinch, had organised to raid the Red House, home of Frederick Jones, a Theatre Manager and Justice of the Peace, in 1806. Being made aware of the plot Jones ambushed Clinch and his gang, and after trying

them, hanged them at the crossroads and buried them in the plot. Jones life spiralled downwards thereafter as he lost his considerable fortune and livelihood and ended up living in a pauper's cottage by the Royal Canal. He died penniless and was buried in an unmarked grave in his family plot at Little St. George's Chapel in Hill Street. It is claimed he rides a horse on Clonliffe Road past the Suicide Plot as a Headless Horseman after dark. Curiously, Jones gave his name to Jones Road location to the main entrance to Croke Park Stadium, while Clinch gave his name to the entrance to what is now the Mud Island Community Garden.

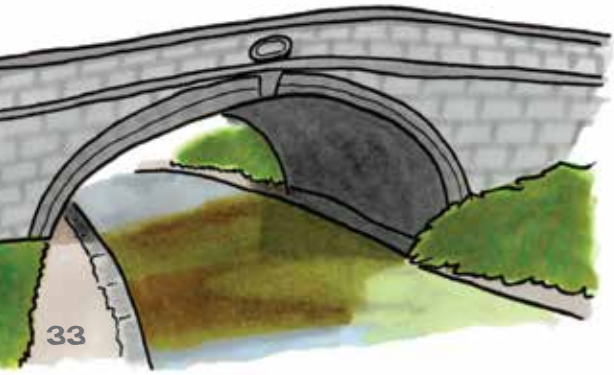
There is much debate and speculation about Bram Stokers awareness of this Ballybough site. During his childhood on Dublin's Northside the road was said to be "superior to any other in the country" particularly in comparison to the road along the North Strand so it's likely the family chose this route when travelling to Dublin. This part of Ballybough was open countryside, (the construction of the houses on Clonliffe Road didn't commence until the 1880s), and it's said that Charlotte Stoker brought Bram to play here as a child. Her keen sense of the Gothic and interest in Folklore suggests it may well have been something she would have enjoyed. Stoker himself would recall being take to grassy locations as a young child and placed on cushions if the weather was fine. Either way it seems likely that he would have heard the stories relating to the Plot and may well have investigated on his own behalf.

The last known burial at the plot was Catherine Kenny, an unfortunate Dairy Maid who being deserted by her lover took her own life at her place of work at Mud Island in 1821. Found some hours later the coroner was called and after issuing his verdict announced that the sentence should "be carried out in the usual place in the usual way." However, there is also a tradition that many victims of the 1832

Cholera epidemic were buried in the plot, not all of whom are believed to have been dead at the time.
Numerous ghostly manifestations have been recorded around the area with the Folklorist, Weston St. John Joyce recalling in 1921 that in the nineteenth century many locals "would have gone a considerable round rather than pass the unhallowed spot after nightfall." Former Dublin Lord Mayor Niall Ring remembers being warned as a child by his father to avoid the place at night followed by lectures on the terrifying spectres which might await him, while older residents of Trinity Terrace, to the rear of the plot, remember similarly lurid childhood stories. For many years a local saying was "tis a wise man never saw a dead one." As late as 1990, the former TD, John Stafford, informed Dail Eireann about the Ballybough Plot and stated that "it is said that spirits are still in the park beside the Luke Kelly Bridge." Interestingly the Stafford's business is still as the Local Undertakers. Significantly, the corner location has never been built on probably due to the ever-present superstition of the site. Numerous attempts have been made to open businesses beside the location all of which have failed and explained by locals as being due to the plot's dark history.

While the Ballybough Burial Plot is often seen as inspiring Stoker to use a stake through the heart to kill Dracula, the process of Felo de Se would prove equally inspiring and amazingly enough Stoker found himself participating in a Felo de Se enquiry after moving to London in 1882 when he attempted to save an old soldier who drowned himself in the river Thames. Stoker promptly found a Felo de Se enquiry taking place in his living room with the corpse laid out on his dining table. He wife, Florence, promptly decided they were moving home.

Stoker made notes on a possible suicide for a story in his Dublin Journal in 1875. Ultimately this would manifest itself in another Ballybough influenced story The Primrose Path. However, in the posthumously published Dracula's Guest, an unnamed hero discusses "the old custom of burying suicides at a crossroad without ceremony and with a stake through the heart." His carriage driver then goes on to describe a village, (not unlike Mud Island), whose inhabitants had died of some strange disease and being buried in the suicide plot were later found to be "undead" and their countenance "rosey with life and their mouths red with blood". Such stories were common around Ballybough from the time when James Clarence Mangan was a regular at Laurence Bligh's Tavern listening in to the stories of the locals about the burial plot



a short distance away. Among Bram Stoker's notes for Dracula is a learned story from the New York World in 1896 which "scientifically" discusses this phenomenon in some detail.

In 2017 Dublin City Council had the corner site landscaped and a number of park benches have been placed there for weary travellers. However, given the sensitive nature of the site, a more sympathetic memorial to mark the location is still under consideration.

Ballybough Cemetery.

Given its location there has always been speculation that Bram Stoker may have drawn inspiration from Ballybough Cemetery on the banks of the River Tolka. This is a Jewish Graveyard founded on 28th October 1718 by the dramatically named Alexander Felix De Castro, Jacopo DePorto, and David Machato de Sequeria. These were wealthy merchants and speculators who operated globally and sought to stabilise a Jewish community in Dublin to support their long term activities. Thirty years later the graveyard was in financial trouble with outstanding debts and unpaid rent so a man named Michael Philips raised the money to buy the graveyard outright and would later establish a Jewish village at nearby Annadale on the street now called after him, Phillipsburg Avenue. As part of the settlement on the site anyone of Jewish Faith could be buried in the plot and there was no charge.

The graveyard had been a largely open plot of ground with the result that many of the finely carved gravestones were stolen and it wasn't uncommon for freshly buried bodies to be robbed for the anatomists. It seems to have been a side-line of some Mud Island residents. Many of the exotically carved gravestones would end up being used in the building of local houses. A member of the Cohen family would recall visiting gentile friends in nearby Drumcondra and finding his fathers gravestone built into the hearth of the fireplace.

Because of these problems the

Jewish Community began building a high protective wall around the cemetery in 1857, (the year before the Stokers arrived in Buckingham Street), with a distinctive Caretakers house come mortuary which had the extraordinary plaque stating it was built in 5618 which has baffled and intrigued local residents ever since.

It's unknown if Stoker ever visited the place or was aware of it. However, given the ignorance and superstitions surrounding religions at the time and the exotic nature of the site, it's not surprising that a rich folklore tradition built up around the Graveyard much of which is now lost. James Joyce, while living in the area, was fascinated by the place, so Stoker may have been equally intrigued.

Of the remaining 148 tombstones the earliest, Jacob Frenchman's, dates of 1777, although in Stokers day there would have been many from a much earlier time. All are inscribed in Hebrew script some such as the Cohan families have distinctive iconography in respect of their genealogy, which has captivated numerous writers and commentators and its exotic, indecipherable script fascinates. Might this have motivated Stoker, with his interest in Irish Myths and Folklore, to explore other world cultures? His activity in Marsh's Library suggests he had this curiosity by the time he entered Trinity College.

The most curious grave is of someone Stoker would have encountered even if they were not actually acquainted, and that is Nathan Lazarus Ben Mohel. Born in Berlin to a distinguished line of Jewish scholars and Rabbis, Ben Mohel came to Ireland in 1829 to study and later teach at Trinity College Dublin. He would become the first Jew to obtain a Degree from a British University which would become a prize exhibit at the Anglo Jewish Exhibition at the Albert Hall in 1883. He would spend most of the rest of his life trawling through the texts and books of the University Library. He gained an international reputation for his work on translating ancient languages and texts and was consulted widely by scholars throughout Europe. Interestingly, at one time he had also taught a number of languages, science, and the Classics at The Feinaglian Institute (Aldborough House) in a course geared towards the entrance exam at Trinity. On his death in 1869 the Jewish community refused to allow him to be buried in the cemetery at Ballybough as they could never remember seeing him at a Synagogue or at any other Jewish meeting or ritual. After much pleading by his sister in law it was acceded to, as his brother had been President of the Dublin Congregation, however he is buried in a corner well away from all other graves.

Ballybough Graveyard closed in 1900 and recently passed into the care of Dublin City Council. It is currently undergoing remedial work and will open as a local amenity at some future date,

Pat Conway and the Primrose Path.

The term The Primrose Path comes from Shakespeare's Hamlet and refers to the pursuit of pleasure with disastrous consequences. This would provide the title for Stoker's first novel serialized in the Shamrock magazine during 1875. The basic plotline concerns the tragic story of Gerry O'Sullivan, a jobbing Carpenter in Dublin, who is offered work at a Theatre in London and heads for the bright lights to improve his fortune leaving his wife and children behind. Gerry quickly falls in with a bad crowd and becomes addicted to drink and gets into fights. As the drinking turns to paranoia Gerry, who has now been joined by his wife, begins to argue with her, kills her, and then in a fit of despair takes his own life with his own Carpenters chisel.

Given the number of charities his mother was involved in and his fascination with what he termed "the secret worlds" which surrounded Buckingham Street, it is likely that Bram Stoker had plenty of exposure to the damages wrought by alcohol and its ensuing domestic violence during visitations in the surrounding districts with his mother. The streets which would soon gain infamy as the Monto Red Lights area such as Beaver Street and Montgomery Street (now Foley Street) proliferated with cheap spirit shops and gin houses during his time, rapidly increasing with the growth of the army barracks at Aldborough House. However, in 1863 an unfortunate tale unfolded on Summerhill right along the path Bram Stoker would have taken to school in Parnell Square which would provide much of the plot for this first novel.

Pat Conway live at No 17 Summerhill. Collectively Nos 16-18 were known locally as The Hutton Houses as they were owned by the

carriage manufacturing family of that name whose premises were nearby. Psychic manifestations were recorded here from the time Annie Hutton lived in one of them and numerous hauntings were reported concerning all three buildings. Pat was a butcher from County Meath who had brought his wife and family to Dublin to improve his fortune. Life seems to have been good for them, but ambition got the better of him and soon Pat was looking around for schemes and opportunities to get rich quick. One of these involved a business deal at Glasgow in 1861 and so Pat began travelling over with his Brother-in-Law who knew that city rather well. They quickly fell in with the wrong company, began frequenting back street shebeens, at one of which a fight broke out in which Pat's brother-in-law was killed. Pat may also have lost a considerable amount of money because shortly after returning to Dublin he got involved in passing base coin for which he was arrested and was facing a long jail sentence in 1862. In a fit of despair Pat took his own life, slitting his throat with his own butcher's knife.

The Hutton Houses were often cited as among the most haunted houses in Ireland. International psychic researches such as the New York presenter of the Ghost Hunter TV Show, Hans Holzer, visited the houses in the 1950s and 60s to carry out investigations. Tenement dwellers at No.16 remembered how the caretaker's flat at the top of the house could turn ice cold during stiflingly hot summers, and strange noises, scratching, and banging were common. Many would cite the strange atmospheric changes which took place as you ascended the building. Not surprisingly sightings of Pat Conway became regular shortly after his death and for the next hundred years those walking along Summerhill would speed up and run as they came along the same side of the road as No. 16, while on the other side crowds would stop and gather looking for a sight of Pat in his red and white Butchers apron. Bram Stoker would almost certainly have experienced this on his way to Bective House School in Parnell Square as this was the quickest route from his home in Buckingham Street.

Nos 116-117 were demolished in the early 1960s and No.118 was set to be taken down in January 1966 leading to what was probably the largest psychic event ever seen in Ireland. Workmen engaged in the demolition soon found themselves encountering Pat Conway, dressed in his Red and White Butchers Uniform, and looking agitated. It seems as his own house was demolished, he simply took up residence next door. At first strange shadows on the wall acting independent of anyone in the room were observed by a workman named Joseph Smith. (His description is not unlike Stoker's short story "The Shadow Builder" from Under the Sunset). Then three others, Thomas Kearney, William McGregor, and Noel Power, all had separate sightings in different rooms.

The main contractor, Christopher McGregor, on investigating the incident

was then confronted by Pat and went into a faint. Pat began to run through different rooms through which there was no direct access. He was simple walking through the walls. The workmen promptly downed tools and refused to continue until the ghost was dealt with. Meanwhile a large crowd of people assembled, many holding candles and crucifixes, in search of a sight of Pat Conway and soon the story was making headlines in the newspapers. The building was finally demolished after the workmen agreed to only work in the same room at the same time, and Pat Conway hasn't been seen since.

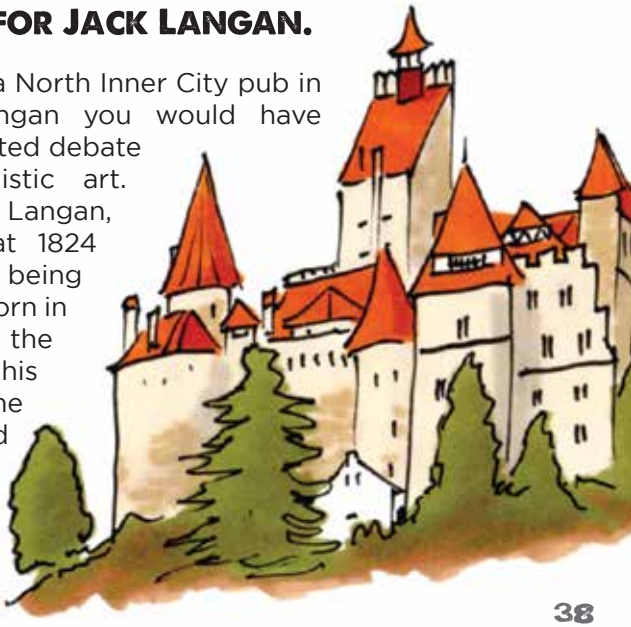
Paddy Cullen's 1961 play, The Dalers, which explored moneylending in Dublin's North Inner City draws on his time as caretaker at 116 Summerhill. Paddy remembers occasions when he heard slow, deliberate, distinctive knocks on his door which chilled him. He was also convinced that the basement was haunted.

Sybil Leek, the British Witch and Astrologer, visited the site after demolition and felt the presence of a 17th Century Ghost and believed a Coaching Inn had once been located on the spot. Something had happened and much blood had been shed but if was difficult for her to be more precise as the building was gone. But she felt other presences which she suggested might have been of more recent vintage.

Recorded interviews with some of those who witnessed Pat Conway's last manifestation are held at the North Inner City Folklore Project. The site of Nos.116-118 Summerhill is now part of the Sean O'Casey Avenue housing estate.

A COFFIN FOR JACK LANGAN.

Eighty years ago if you entered a North Inner City pub in Dublin and shouted Jack Langan you would have promptly found yourself in a heated debate on the greats of the pugilistic art. Memorabilia involving Langan, particularly from his two great 1824 fights with Tom Spring, was still being produced in the 1950s. He was born in Clondalkin in 1798 just as the Rebellion was breaking out and his family quickly moved across the city to the safety of Mud Island where his father earned a living as a renowned Poteen-maker. Langan's prowess with his fists were first noticed as a nine



year old and his first professional bout took place four years later near the banks of the Royal Canal (where the community garden is today) where he defeated an eighteen year old opponent. In a later bout at the same location against a boxer named Savage, Langan killed him with a single punch. At the following celebration come wake, the dead pugilist suddenly jumped up from the table where he was laid out shouting "what the hell happened" (and possibly provided James Joyce with a storyline for his final book).

In 1824 Langan fought two fights against Tom Spring for the British Championship. It's said that the King of Mud Island was involved in organizing these fights and although everyone felt the King, Grid Iron McDonnell, was the man who should have taken the fight, he discounted himself for the less experienced Langan who he proclaimed, "the coming man." The first fight was attended by 30,000 and lasted 77 rounds over 1 ½ hours. Spring won but most thought it was a draw, so a rematch was held. This was Ireland versus England and the country heavily backed Langan to restore National pride. Betting was brisk with the Mud Islander's mortal enemies the Ormond Boys "putting their shirts" on Langan. The fight went to 76 rounds before Spring was confirmed as Champion. Irish losses were heavy and soon rumours abounded that Langan had been paid to throw the fight by the Mud Island King and "sold out auld Ireland". Having lost their shirts, the Ormond Boys, made up from butchers' assistants, slaughterhouse porters, Smithfield cattle drovers, stable boys, and drunken vagabonds, were bent on revenge.

Langan was unable to return to Ireland fearing for his life. But his father was easily found and attacked and almost killed by the gang in early 1825. Word reached Langan that his father was dying, and an elaborate plot was devised by the Mud Islanders to smuggle him back into Dublin as a "live-corpse" inside a coffin. This would be the only way Langan could ever return to the land of his birth for the rest of his life.

Given Stoker's interest in sport it's inconceivable that he was unaware of the exploits of one of Ireland's greatest sporting heroes who was connected with the streets which adjoined his boyhood home. During one of Henry Irving's early visits to Dublin,

Stoker took him to an illegal wrestling match at the Phoenix Park which so thrilled them both, the Irving put up extra prize money.

This is the most likely source for Stoker getting the idea of "transporting" Dracula into Whitby in a coffin although in that novel it is a large heavy box containing the soil of Transylvania. When Langan died in Liverpool in 1846 there were many, particularly in the North Inner City, who felt that he should be brought home and buried with honours in Glasnevin Cemetery. Then it was announced that Langan's corpse would actually be coming home and a major wake was organized in a local pub. A heavy coffin arrived from England and was laid out in state for several days so the Northside could pay their respects. The lid was never opened, and some curious revellers decided to investigate. It was found to be filled with clay and it seems the proprietor of the pub was just using the opportunity to increase business.

Curiously A novel serialised in the Weekly Freeman in 1916 but claiming to draw on unpublished traditions of Mud Island, suggests that the secret smuggling of "live bodies" into Mud Island in coffins may have been a regular occurrence.

The Walk of the Soul Gatherer.

In the 1960s Patricia Smyth was around 12 years old the evening she decided to go to the takeaway on Ballybough Road from her home on Leinster Avenue. She followed her usual route cutting through the cottages on Taaffe's Place to get to the shop. This was part of the original Mud Island settlement and many of the small cottages were in poor repair or simply derelict. As she was passing a vacant space where a local pitch and toss school often gathered she realised someone was behind her and carefully trying to get a glimpse of him she notice that he was elegantly dressed in a long greatcoat of ancient vintage and wore a large hat which obscured his face. Then suddenly, as if from nowhere, he was in front of her as if in a flash, but her view of him was obscured by a line of cars. So, she began to follow him, trying to catch a glimpse of his face but it was obscured by his raised collar and

his hat being pulled down. As a gap appeared in the line of cars she looked down having been attracted by his strange movement which she describes as almost floating, suddenly she realized that he didn't seem to have any legs under the coat, But before she could react he had gone through a wall at a derelict house on the street and had vanished.

A decade before that Bridget Murphy and her friends were playing on the stairs of the old Corporation Buildings which is now Liberty Park. They too noticed the same figure, dressed in exactly the same elegant but out of fashion way, on the stairwell. As they spoke to him, he smiled and it was terrifying, one of them stating that she was traumatised afterwards. His face was twisted and deformed, and they promptly went into shock. Death followed in his wake in the Buildings that night. There are other sightings which have been told to this writer and in almost all cases the witnesses have been young women and the incident was usually followed by the death of someone they knew or were acquainted with.

The most spine-chilling encounter was recorded by Legion of Mary Founder, Frank Duff, in the 1920s. In that case The Digger, a notorious and violent pimp and husband of one of the madams of the Monto was dying in a house in Purdon Street. A number of the girls who worked the house had gathered around the bed drinking and getting ready for the wake. The Soul Gatherer entered the room and took up position in a vacant corner. The girls paid little attention to him and continued their drinking. Despite the location well dress gentlemen were not unusual in the Monto so the women continued with their vigil and consuming more cheap alcohol. As nobody knew who he was or why he was there, one of them decided to question him and see what he was up to. Although he was expensively dressed his long coat and hat seemed of a great age and none of them could see his face clearly. Suddenly, the girl who had gone to investigate this visitor in the corner, turned around terrified and was unable to speak and could only point her finger. Then they noticed his face was strange and contorted under the hat but as the other women followed the direction that she was pointing in they claimed to have seen cloven hooves under his coat. They soon felt that they had met death himself and he had come for The Digger who expired soon after. Duff explained the story as being a case of excessive consumption of the cheap home-made alcohol sold

in the Monto's Kip Houses. However, he then added that some of the women were so scared that the following day they called to the Magdalen Laundry in Gloucester Street and signed themselves in seeking salvation.

There are elements in all the stories, particularly in the difficulties all the young girls had in seeing the deadly figures face, which suggest it might be some form of Dullahan type spectre although there have been no recorded sightings involving a horse. When The Shamrock published The Primrose Path in 1875 an extraordinary set of illustrations accompanied them. While the images are unsigned it is believed that Bram Stoker's Trinity friend, William Fitzgerald was the artist. This would suggest that Stoker had a significant input into their design. The title illustration shows Grinnel the death-like barman in a long greatcoat and large hat covering much of his face as he rides a horse with a monster on his back. If Stoker had heard stories about the Soul Gatherer it is just possible that he attempted to get Fitzgerald to draw the figure which had either been described or whose activities he had overheard being discussed. If he had heard of the spectre's strange rapid floating movement, and deathlike appearance, then it is just possible that part of the beginnings of Dracula's DNA belongs to a Mud Island Spectre who for all we know may still out there.

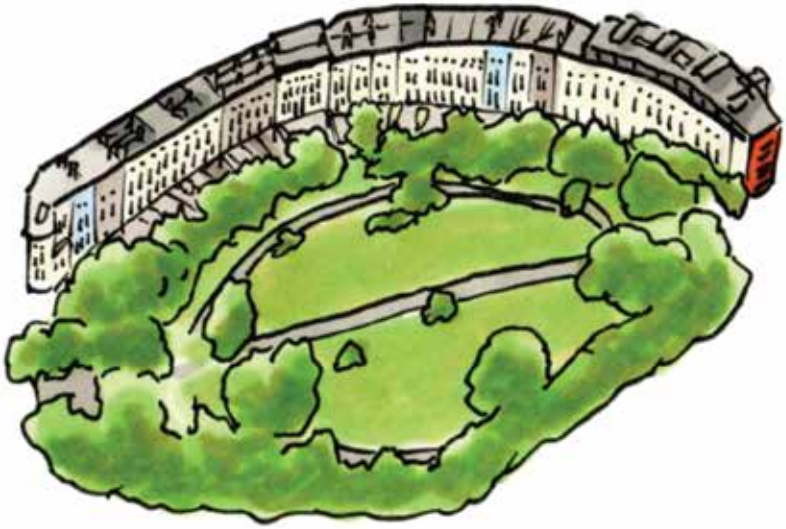
Bridget Morgan, Baily's Row, and the Cholera Epidemic of 1832.

In 1866, after years of predictions and discussions, Cholera revisited Dublin. It had been carried over from Liverpool by a woman name Magee who died at 22 City Quay on the southside of the river Liffey from where it spread throughout the city. By the time it had run its course 1193 people had died in Dublin. For the period that the Stokers lived in Ballybough, Cholera was very much on people minds with Irish Newspapers carrying an average of 1100 cholera related stories each year from 1860-65. This rose to over 16,000 following the outbreak in 1866. So much was written about the preparations or lack of them that for many there must have been a relief when the disease finally arrived. As the writer Gerald Griffin noted in relation to the 1832 epidemic in Ireland there was a fear of cholera together with the fear of being afraid of it, and that "between the two fears a person is almost frightened to death by it."

Not surprisingly Cholera loomed large in the after-dinner conversation in the Stoker household. Charlotte told frightening stories of her own childhood experiences in Sligo and many of those stories are paralleled in the events which unfolded the same year in the North Inner City. There had been a previous outbreak in 1848 during the Famine years in Dublin killing nearly 6000 people but of particular interest is the fact that the 1832 Cholera epidemic broke out in Baileys Row literally over the back wall of the Stokers

garden and the legacy of that outbreak would have been discussed and disseminated as talk of a future outbreak became reality. 1100 Cholera stories in the newspapers annually would have guaranteed that.

Bram was fascinated by his mother's stories and persuaded her to commit them to paper for posterity. As much as they are an important source of the outbreak in Sligo, it is also important to realise that they originated as a type of after dinner entertainment. If Charlotte told her stories it is likely that the servants and neighbours did too. Shopkeepers such as Gavin's Grocers at the top of Buckingham Street, or Ellen Grace's Book and Stationary Shop around the corner in Summerhill, would have been prime locations where the Cholera was discussed by customers. Bram would have heard stories at every street corner and from his Journal we know he was a good listener. While it is unknown how much Bram Stoker learned of the traditions of the 1832 outbreak in Summerhill and Ballybough it is worth looking at it as it unfolded, in conjunction with Charlotte's story, as many similar themes emerge which would be used by Bram in his writings.



Baily's Row was a narrow dirty laneway of dilapidated two-story house, mostly set in multiple occupancy, and small poorly built cottages. These were so tightly packed that in some cases entrance to upper storeys was by ladder and as there was no fireplace the only heat was as one writer described it "the unwholesome warmth of human carcasses." In the hallways and cellars pigs and poultry were kept. Many of these would be demolished in the aftermath of the outbreak to create St. Joseph's Asylum for Aged and Virtuous Single Women in 1838. At its end it connected with Stratford Row the continuation of which across Portland Row was St. Catherine's Court. On 17th March 1832 James Freeny of Baily's Row took ill. Exactly what his

relationship was with Bridget Morgan is unclear, but the result was that Bridget also took ill. Neighbours fearful for Bridget's life called in Fr. John Lapham that morning who immediately suspected Cholera and left to inform the authorities. Bridget, probably with the assistance of friends, fled the flat on Baily's Row taking shelter at St. Catherine's Court where she died at 10.00pm that evening. The ensuing wake was organized by John Clarke and his wife, and both of them together with Bridget McGrath of Stratford Row caught the disease and were dead within twenty-four hours. It was Virulent Asiatic Cholera. St. Catherine's Court would later be demolished and incorporated into the side entrance of the Sisters of Charity Convent and School on North William Street in 1860.

There had been a suspected outbreak some weeks earlier when a heavily pregnant woman died in the North Inner City. She was attended by Dr. John Ferguson of Rutland Street, but the results were inconclusive. Soon after, the authorities were informed that a number of parishes would be unable to cope with a Cholera outbreak and would need assistance to appoint Officers of Health. These included St. George, St. Thomas, Clontarf, and Finglas, the first two encompassing most of the North Inner City. The following day the government was officially notified of Bridget Morgan's death and the immediate reaction was to manager the situation by denying it through the newspapers.

By the 30th March the authorities were forced to admit that Bridget Morgan had actually succumbed to Cholera, but they sought to downplay things by suggesting that this was an isolated outbreak. Others knew different. Betty Monks from Bailys Row who had been involved in washing the body of her friend also fell a victim to the disease. Within days the virus had spread to other residents throughout Baileys Row, Stratford Row, and St. Catherine's Court. But worse was to follow. By the time of the official announcement of Bridget Morgan's death, three more women in Baily's Court (off Bailey's Row) and 3 from North William Street (which St. Catherine's Court ran off) were dead. Then things took a turn and as Baily's Row struggled with a full-blown epidemic the disease hit the Monto District though a number of carmen living there in Purdon Street, Mabbot Street, and Mecklenburg Street. This was followed by the deaths of Michael Kennedy, the Turnpike Gatekeeper at Ballybough Bridge on the 23rd April, and 14 year old George McGrath, son of the Royal Canal Lock-keeper at Clarke's Bridge on the 29th. Geographically the Cholera had now spread through to the boundaries of Mud Island an area normally prone to disease and where few outsiders had any interest or resources to help.

One of the real issues now was that Doctors now being employed by all the parishes with little experience of dealing with the fever, bled patients five or even six times. Charles Orpen, a Doctor at the House of Industry, while he

believed in blood-letting, suggested that while this was possible with people of good health, for the poor it was injurious, as their health couldn't stand it. They slowly being bled to death.

In a remarkable example of the ignorance and indifference of the times, a plan was put forward to remove the City Dump from Grangorman which it had been decided would become the epicentre for treating the epidemic, and so plans were in discussion to create a new dump near Newcomen Bridge on the Royal Canal. This was defeated but a new site was offered by an opportunistic landlord just further back at Love Lane also beside the Royal Canal. This was the main source of water for Mud Islanders and the plan would have almost certainly contributed to a massive death toll. A memorial signed by 69 residents is still extant stating that 1600 of the poorer classes live in the district and that the "noxious effluvia" would disseminate the disease amongst those most susceptible to Cholera. Francis Baker, Secretary of the Board of Health for Ireland agreed claiming it would be "calculated to injure the health of that neighbourhood" and recommended refraining from it "until the extension of a severe epidemic is apprehended." Interestingly the local petitioners also sited their concerns on the effect the dump would have on property values.

Barker had brought the Governments attention to the fact that the Roman Catholic Archbishop of London had brought out a circular letter later printed in The Times which prohibited Catholics from attending wakes and ordering cooperation with the prompt burying of corpses suffering from the disease. Barker stated that it was desirable that this took place in the garden of the Penitentiary near the House of Industry at Grangegorman and requested that special carts and handlers be provided. T.N. Edgeworth, Governor of The House of Industry, felt this was ridiculous and would do little to stop the practice of wakes and the carriage of bodies through the city to places of burial. However, the government was alarmed as numbers of victims grew. For most Catholic poor, Bully's Acre in Kilmainham, was one of the few viable options for a decent burial, and Sir Hussey Vivien expressed alarm at the numbers being buried there. He called for quick lime to be provided and suggested it should be given to every churchyard and every mass-grave dug for cholera victims before Dublin turned into "one great charnel-house." The Government decided to contact Daniel Murray, The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin for assistance.

Murray prepared a long largely scriptural based pastoral which was circulated among his clergy for delivery at Sunday Mass on 22nd April 1832. For Catholic North Inner City Dwellers whose Parish Church was the pro Cathedral, Murray's own church, they would get it from the "horse's mouth" so to speak. After a long preamble Murray got to the point. It was forceful and dramatic and probably designed to frighten his flock into complying. If they attended a wake and caught cholera thy were guilty of killing

themselves or Felo de Se; if they held a wake and others caught cholera they were guilty of murdering the victims; either way they were damned for eternity with no absolution or assistance from a priest to help them on their way and no possibility of salvation. That evening the carts came around Summerhill. There was a rumour that they were collecting the bodies for the anatomists at the College of Surgeons. There was also a growing belief that Inspectors were not checking bodies properly and that many victims who should have gone for treatment were simply buried alive in the mass graves. Scuffles broke out and the cavalry were called out as back-up. They were immediately attacked by bombs described as a type of homemade Greek Fire. At the banks of the Tolka was a Vitriol Factory and local workers had obviously brought home some takaways in preparation. The effect was devastating and the cavalry and cartmen withdrew. The message was simple; bodies would not be given up easily and in the North Inner City they would have some kind of a send-off into the afterlife. This is probably where the tradition developed of cholera burials in the Burial Plot at Clonliffe Road. By 25th April Murray was writing to the Government Undersecretary expressing the failure of his efforts "to disabuse the public of their unjust prejudices" and informing that he had written to the papers condemning the events in Summerhill.

The streets began to resemble what Gerald Griffin would describe as "Christmas in June" as slack-lime was spread to protect against the spread of disease. Buckingham Street, with plenty of ratepayers, and Summerhill, would have resembled this, but past Clark's Bridge, there were few ratepayers, so they would have been left to fend for themselves. Thomas Oldham, a Buckingham Street resident wrote to the Dublin Castle Administration warning of the dangers of allowing crowds of "the lowest grade" to "congregate in crowds" with others questioning whether it was wise to allow open access to the Quay areas where ships, likely to carry the Cholera, were moored.

On the 7th May, Michael Brady, an 18-year-old servant from Mecklenburg Lane, was diagnosed with Blue Cholera, and this would now spread through the Monto. With Blue Cholera the body dehydrates at an alarming rate of up to 20 litres in a single day. Victims take on a pale gaunt complexion looking almost like walking dead. Remarkably Brady recovered. Others would not be so lucky. An extraordinary number of young women with Monto addresses and no listed profession or status succumbed to it. This lack of information was often used as a diplomatic way of denoting prostitutes. There were a number of Cooperages workshops in the Monto and five members of the profession died in early May. They were promptly followed by a similar number of Cooper's wives. Glass Blowers, Builders, Fruit Sellers, Upholsterers, Porters, Bakers, Slaters, Rag Women, Maids, Servants, Blacksmiths, Publicans, and ordinary Labourers with their spouses and children all fell victims in the Monto and surrounding District. Those like 29 year old John Roth of the North

Strand, described as a gentleman, tended to be the exceptions rather than the rule.

A sense of us and them quickly spread between the middle-class occupiers of streets like Buckingham Street and their servants from The Monto, Mud Island, and Summerhill. They could take every precaution, but the servants were their weak link. Catherine Galvin, a servant living at No. 12 Buckingham Street, died from cholera and may have been responsible for passing the disease onto 3 year old Hugh Fitzpatrick of No. 15 who was one of the last victims. On 10th May a wet-nurse looking after 3 year old Patrick Byrne at 16 Summerhill Parade (now Lowry's Pub) took ill. This was a fine two storey house over a shop. By the time the Cholera Cart arrived the wet-nurse was dead, and the cart-men refused to handle the body.

The Catholic Church had scored something of an own-goal with Archbishop Murray's Pastoral, but their reputation was about to be restored. Fr. Patrick Woods had been giving the last rights to the unfortunate woman and seeing the debacle developing on the street he volunteers to re-enter the house and carry the woman down to the cart. Woods was a slightly built man, and it took some time and it was carried out with great difficulty as even the Byrne family refused to assist, but he was determined that the woman should have some dignity in her last moments. He was an educated man but, in this instance, all he had was his crucifix and his faith but for him it was enough. The story caused a sensation appearing in numerous newspapers, particularly as it was learned that he had been involved in at least five similar incidents that day. Woods lived in the heart of the Monto and these were his people. He would continue to confront the Cholera with his crucifix for the remainder of the outbreak. For him everything else had failed.

Woods was later translated as Parish Priest to Celbridge in County Kildare where he served dutifully for many years. Then, with his health failing and in need of medical attention he returned to live in The Monto to administer among the working girls and the poor while receiving treatment. On his death in 1852 a massive procession, led by the Bishop of Calcutta, India, followed by four other Bishops, led thousands from his house at 37 Upper Mecklenburg street to the Pro Cathedral, where he is buried in its vaults. In his obituary it stated that to his last breath he surrendered himself "with perfect resignation to the will of God, and with unbounded confidence in the all atoning blood and merits of his merciful redeemer."

Bram Stoker's mother in her Sligo narrative recalled a number of instances when Catholic Priests, like Woods armed only with their Crucifix and Faith, took the Cholera on, searching through piles of bodies to prevent the living being buried alive. Abraham Von Helsing has this blind faith and for all of his scientific reasoning it is what he falls back on when all else fails. Stoker

suggested it was based on a real person, which is probably true but that faith, which sees him boldly go forward with his crucifix is drawn from the priests who fought the Cholera in 1832. Like Fr. Patrick Woods who was long-remembered in the North Inner City and whose devotion would have been widely discussed as the next epidemic was set to break in 1866.

By the time the pandemic was over of the estimated 3200 recorded burials, 585, were from the North Inner City. A major campaign was undertaken, financed by donations, to clean up Dublin. Tenements were de-tenanted, houses disinfected, refuse removed from the back streets, walls white-washed and the city was left, according to one government report, in "an admirable state of cleanliness". Remarkably, few in Mud Island suffered from 1832 or indeed the 1848 epidemics compared to “more salubrious locations” due, it was claimed, to the Vitriol Works whose chemical properties apparently protected it from the spread of the epidemic. Of course, some might say it was the protection of the McDonnell Banshees who brought them through the crisis.

Dracula - The Mural.

An Irish reviewer of Under the Sunset recalled visiting a house in Dublin and entering a room to find numerous children crowded round Bram Stoker, who held them spellbound as he weaved extraordinary tales as if from an endless fountain of imagination. Stoker’s son Noel told similar stories improvised around Irish Myths and Fairies.

From early childhood Stoker had been collecting the foundation blocks for these whether through the imagined landscapes of Clontarf, Killester, or Donnycarney, fed through the fanciful stories of his mother, into the myths, stories, and experiences of the North Inner City, all bankable until required. Stoker could then pull them out, almost childlike, and retell them with suitable style and embellishments. The key to understanding this, I believe, is William Fitzgerald’s illustration for Stokers Fairy Tale of The Invisible Giant.

It’s unfortunate that Stoker only began keeping a Journal some years after he left Buckingham Street. Even a cursory glance through his “Lost Journal” teases us as to what might have been found if he had only started it ten years earlier. While many have quite rightly picked up on the entry on the man who kept flies as the “birth” of Renfield, the methodology evident throughout its pages suggests that the youthful Bram Stoker must have travelled the North Inner City Streets of Dublin soaking up the stories and characters. We know from his notes in the Lost Journal, (kept after his move to Harcourt Street between 1871-8) that he revelled in the ordinary people’s conversation and antics and had developed a keen ear for accents. He just wasn’t quite sure what to do with them at that time.

Dracula may not be a true “Northsider”, but it is certainly his place of conception as many of the building blocks from which Stoker would evolve that character, are rooted in its folktales of the likes of Art Granger and the Soul Gatherer. Stoker’s brilliance elevates them into one of the most recognizable fictional characters in the world. Dracula is complex and draws on a vast array of elements making it impossible to simply assign his origins to a single source. But the North Inner City runs throughout his DNA.

In 2018 as part of a new Halloween Festival titled The Big Scream it was decided to celebrate Bram Stoker and his Dracula Character as part of its theme. Given the discovery that Stoker lived on Buckingham Street it seemed appropriate to mark the spot. As No. 17 was demolished many years ago and is now part of the Sean Treacy House Apartment Complex, it was decided to place a mural “at the Crossroads” on the gable wall of a house and erect a plaque in honour of Stoker. The original design was to emphasize Stoker’s Irishness, but time constraints meant it was only partially completed with the central Dracula figure placed in the unusually coffin shaped side door of the house. A temporary wooden plaque completed the project and now receives so many daily visitors that it is unlikely that the design will change.

DUBLIN
NORTH EAST
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CREATING A BRIGHTER FUTURE

Dublin's North East Inner City
is a vibrant and hard-working community.

The North East Inner City Programme Implementation Board is working to implement the actions of the Mulvey Report to help make the area a safe, attractive and vibrant living and working environment for the community and its families with opportunities for all to lead full lives.

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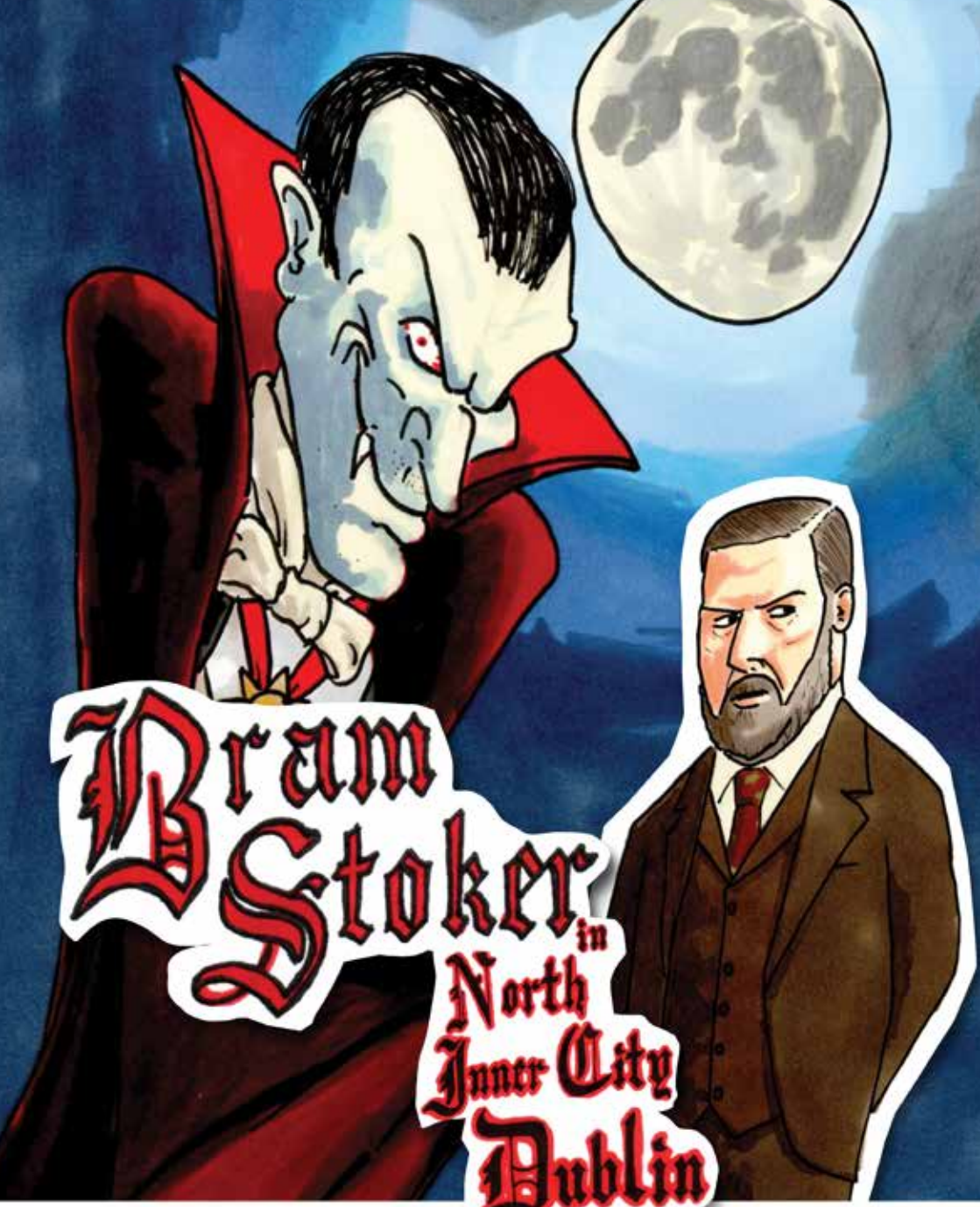

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