Plan against page

Bram's working notes and the finished novel | Studying Dracula | Version 2 | November 2026

Bram's surviving working notes trace *Dracula* from 1890 to publication in 1897: plans, cast lists, chronologies, extracts from his reading and medical observations. The originals are in the Rosenbach Museum and Library in Philadelphia. Read beside the published text, they show a writer choosing, cutting and transforming, not simply copying a legend. This sheet asks you to compare three pages of the notes, and one of his sources, with the novel.

Three pages of Bram's working notes (cast list; transcription from Emily Gerard's "Transylvanian Superstitions"; skull-fracture sketch) can be viewed on What inspired Dracula: bramstokerestate.com/resources/what-inspired-dracula#inside-the-working-notes. Originals: The Rosenbach, Philadelphia, EL3 .S874d MS.

1. The cast list

Read the names on the cast list page as far as you can. Some handwriting is hard to read: mark uncertain words with a question mark rather than guessing.

- Which characters appear in the finished novel under the same name or role?
- Which do not appear at all? What kind of character were they?
- What might the novel have lost or gained by cutting them?

2. From a source to a sentence

Bram never visited Transylvania. In 1885 Emily Gerard published "Transylvanian Superstitions" in The Nineteenth Century; the linked manuscript page is his transcription from it. In Chapter 1, the landlady at Bistritz warns Harker:

> "It is the eve of St. George's Day. Do you not know that to-night, when the clock strikes midnight, all the evil things in the world will have full sway?" (Chapter 1)

- What does the novel keep from the folklore, and what does it add?
- Why does Bram give the information to a frightened landlady rather than to Harker's own reading?

3. From a medical note to a scene

The third page sketches a depressed fracture of the skull. In Chapter 21, Dr Seward examines Renfield after he is found injured:

> "The wounds of the face was superficial; the real injury was a depressed fracture of the skull, extending right up through the motor area." (Chapter 21)

- What does the medical precision do for the scene?
- Medicine was part of Bram's family world: his brother Thornley was a surgeon. How far can a note like this tell us where Bram's information came from?

4. The name

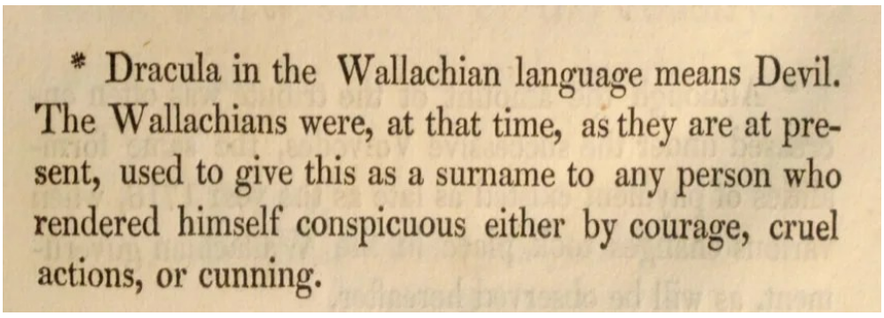
Bram found the name in William Wilkinson's *An Account of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia* (1820), which he read in Whitby in 1890.

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* Dracula in the Wallachian language means Devil. The Wallachians were, at that time, as they are at present, used to give this as a surname to any person who rendered himself conspicuous either by courage, cruel actions, or cunning.

Wilkinson's footnote: "Dracula in the Wallachian language means Devil". Courtesy of the Bram Stoker Estate.

- What does the footnote give Bram, and what does it not give him?
- The typescript sent to the publisher was titled *The Un-Dead*. Which title would you have chosen in 1897, and why?

Your comparison

In the notes or source	In the novel (chapter)	Kept, changed or cut?	Why might Bram have made this choice?

What the notes show about how the novel was made

Further reading: What inspired Dracula, on the Estate website; Robert Eighteen-Bisang and Elizabeth Miller (eds), *Bram Stoker's Notes for Dracula: A Facsimile Edition* (McFarland, 2008).

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