

“The Tomb of Sarah” F.G. Loring 1900

The author presents this story as a portion of his father’s diary (we find out only his first name, Harry), written approximately 60 years before the date of publication. In turn, it refers to Countess Sarah Kenyon, rumored to be a cruel witch and entombed in a marble sepulcher upon her 1630 murder. The diarist, a church restorer, unseals the tomb during his work on a church in Hagarstone “in the wilds of the West Country.” Shortly thereafter, he finds out why you never send a witchfinder to do a vampire hunter’s job.

We are told that the risen Sarah can only take the form of a large dog, attacking sheep found close by, until she rejuvenates from 200 years of torpor. This is fortunate for the diarist, who opens the occupied tomb three times before finally dispatching the vampire. In preparation for the deed, Harry relies on mortar mixed with the Host, fresh garlic, stakes and knives, dog roses, a “Holy Circle” drawn on the ground, and the church rector. The latter (Peter Grant) performs a Burial Service over the staked vampire, sending her to her final reward – while leaving unsaid what, given her poor reputation while living, that truly means.

Disinformation: The hunters watch the corpse disintegrate before removing “every trace” of their actions. The tomb is resealed, but the workers are told – and surprised – that the body had disappeared. In the final entry Harry notes that a young girl may have been Sarah’s first human victim, although her wounds heal quickly. Since “it is only those who die of the Vampire’s embrace that become Vampires at death in their turn,” readers are reassured that there is no further danger in Hagarstone.

Frederick Loring was an officer from a family with a long naval tradition; as a lieutenant, he served on Her Majesty’s yacht in 1891. Given the multitude of connections between EDOM and the Royal Navy, he could easily assume Stoker’s place as the group’s font of misdirection.

Alternatively, what if someone other than EDOM wanted this story told? There’s no reason to assume that only Grant had trouble resisting her mental attack. Perhaps the Countess persuaded Harry to write “The Tomb of Sarah” to cover her second life.

A Deeper Look: In 1841, Countess Kenyon’s ruined castle is three miles from the (fictional) town, “on the road to Bristol.” If that city lies at the northeast terminus of the main route bisecting the West Country, Exeter is at the other end (*Director’s Handbook*, p. 167). As her earldom went extinct in the tumultuous decade before the English Civil war, **History** suggests that the Kenyons were neither favored by Charles I nor particularly beloved by their subjects. Her story is recorded in 1632’s *Testimonie given during the Trials of the Haggerstowne Witches* – one of many similar accounts written across the island in the era (including the *Daemonologie* written by James I in 1697). While this also chronicles the prosecution and punishment of two other women, Kenyon was removed from her prison by the mob and strangled by a “mad peasant woman” before receiving official justice. A reader spending 1 point of **Vampirology** sifts the truth from the myth to obtain a 3-point pool for dealing with Sarah. Copies may reside in the library of Ring (*DH*, p. 172).

By 1977, the government had somewhat anachronistically classified Hagarstone as a Deserted Medieval Village. **Research** or **Bureaucracy** at the National Record of the Historic Environment

accesses this proceeding (possibly begun, or signed off by, EDOM – check the signatures for cleartext names) and the location of any structures. Today, Grant’s church is in even greater need of restoration, and the ruins of Castle Kenyon are barely recognizable as such. At the former, use **Archaeology** or **Outdoor Survival** to locate Sarah’s overgrown tomb, along with the black marble slab bearing an ominous inscription and her likeness. Agents who need non-photographic identification of the reawakened countess can rely on a rubbing of her countenance.

Since Loring’s father was a prominent admiral, the story’s protagonist can be nearly anyone. The real Harry – or his man Somers, mentioned in the text – may be an ancestor of the Church Scavenger (*EDOM Field Manual*, p. 98).

Cool: Sarah’s sepulcher is still sealed today, but as the diary reveals, its erstwhile occupant is not. Even if the Countess survived her disinterment, fifty years passed before the events of Dracula. Examination of the mortar with **Geology** may reveal how the Host was blended in to become effective.

Warm: The heroes of the story are dead by 1900 – which is probably the case just a few years earlier, when Dracula arrives in England. There’s no reason to assume this in the 1870s, however, when the founders of EDOM have the authority to send agents to Turkey (*The Edom Files*, p. 11). And if a firsthand account of a native vampire wasn’t persuasive enough, perhaps her remains were. The countess’ dust may even be the original source of what becomes the Seward Serum, and when this runs out, EDOM resolves to find more.

And we have only Harry and Rector Grant’s word that Sarah Kenyon was permanently put to rest. If they left her whole, she may lie dormant for decades – forgotten to the world, or under the eye of an EDOM sexton. A vampire active in England before Dracula could be a test subject for early attempts at countermeasures. A friendlier EDOM may regard her more favorably than a vampiric Lord Godalming (*DH*, p. 36): Arthur Holmwood is likely a viscount, one step below Sarah in the ranks of British peerage (since the location is off, and none of his potential lineages lapse in 1630, it’s unlikely he’s a distant relative). Finally, at the Director’s whim she may have arisen to join EDOM as a Duke, or D herself.

Dracula never wanders into Kenyon lands, and the story appears in public after the novel, so it’s difficult to forge a connection here. Sarah can still play a part similar to, but lesser than, an independent Elizabeth Bathory (*DH*, p. 65) in post-novel campaign. Perhaps he will renew her noble title if she joins the Satanic Cult of Dracula (*DH*, p. 55)?

If Kenyon was not destroyed, her sole documented victim is in the same danger as Mina Harker. To be safe, EDOM located and monitored the girl. Her only descendant to survive the Great War may have been one of the unfortunate residents of the St. George Orphanage (*The Hawkins Papers* #20).

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Owing to her background as a witch, Countess Sarah Kenyon is most likely a supernatural or damned vampire (although it is tempting to consider a telluric origin involving the Witch of

Wookey Hole, which might not be far from Hagarstone). If she is newly awakened from at least fifty years' torpor, use the lowest Aberrance and Health scores on her first active night, and the middle values on her second. Her improvement also assumes she feeds on the blood of a large mammal soon after emerging. Her mist form – which she uses to enter and exit her sealed tomb – will “scintillate and sparkle” before she takes human shape.

Kenyon is versed in the cunning woman magic of the English countryside. A charm costs 2 Aberrance to raise or lower a difficulty number by 1; A curse costs 3 points to drain 1 die from an agent's General ability pool (to a minimum of zero).

Statistics after the slash apply to Sarah in her dog form. She may be accompanied by her dog familiar as well (treat as a wolf).

General Abilities: Aberrance 26(-21-17), Athletics 10 (Wolf Form), Hand-to-Hand 11, Health 18 (-14-11), Weapons/Fighting 8

Hit Threshold: 6/4

Alertness Modifier: +1/+3

Stealth Modifier: +2 or 0 (mist form)/+1

Damage Modifier: +1 (extended canines), -1 (knife), or +0 (fist, choke, kick)/+1 (paw rake) or +0 (bite plus worry)

Armor: -1 (tough skin/fur)

Free Powers: Drain, Infravision, No Reflection, Regeneration (all damage from physical weapons regenerates at the next sunset; can regrow limbs or eyes in a year), Unfeeling

Other Powers: Addictive Bite, Dominance, Infection (drained dead rise as vampires), Magic, Mental Attack (eye contact), Mesmerism (voice, single or multiple targets), Strength, Summoning (dog familiar), Turn to Creature (large dog), Turn to Mist, Vampiric Speed

Banes: last rites, stake to the heart

Blocks: holy circle (absolute; mark on the floor/ground and spend 1 point of **Human Terrain** or **Occult** per occupant), sunlight (negates all vampiric powers),

Compulsions: must feed twice after prolonged sleep to regain full power (see text)

Dreads: crucifixes and holy objects, garlic, wild roses

Requirements: drink blood, must return to her grave each night