The Diary of Dr. John William Polidori, 1816

John William Polidori (1795–1821) was, for a brief period, the personal physician to Lord Byron. Half Italian, he was the uncle of the Rossetti siblings, and it was William Michael Rossetti, in his role as family recorder, who published Polidori’s manuscript diary after nearly a century, in 1911. This account of his time with Byron (which ended two months later when they quarrelled and parted company) is the only contemporary account of the few weeks, crucial to the development of the Romantic movement, during which Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* arose from a storytelling competition at the Villa Diodati. Polidori’s later career as a physician and writer was hampered by a severe accident in 1817 which left him with brain damage. His most famous work, *The Vampyre*, was published in 1819, but attributed to Byron, leading both men to threaten the publisher with lawsuits. Polidori died (probably a suicide) two years later.
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Relating to Byron, Shelley, Etc.

Edited by William Michael Rossetti
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Dr. John William Polidori
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1816
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Edited and Elucidated by
William Michael Rossetti

“Mi fur mostrati gli spiriti magni
Che del vederli in me stesso n’esalto.”—Dante.

LONDON
ELKIN MATHEWS
VIGO STREET
MCMXII
DEDICATED

TO MY TWO DAUGHTERS

HELEN AND MARY

WHO WITH MY LITTLE GRAND-DAUGHTER IMOGENE

KEEP THE HOME OF MY CLOSING YEARS

STILL IN GOOD CHEER