The Evolution of the Vampiric figure in Literature.

Characters and their transformations
The literary vampire first appeared in 18th-century poetry, before becoming one of the stock figures of gothic fiction with the publication of Polidori's *The Vampyre* (1819), which was inspired by the life and legend of Lord Byron.
Later influential works include the penny dreadful *Varney the Vampire* (1847); Sheridan Le Fanu's tale of a lesbian vampire, *Carmilla* (1872) and the masterpiece of the genre: Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897).
In the meantime some authors created a more "sympathetic vampire" and in particular Anne Rice's novel *Interview with the Vampire* has received recognition as a turning point.

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More recently the genre has been blended with science fiction motifs like aliens. Moreover, some modern vampires even feed on energy, rather than blood.
The first mention of vampires in English literature appears in Robert Southey's monumental oriental epic poem *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1797), where the main character Thalaba's deceased beloved Oneiza turns into a vampire, although that occurrence is actually marginal to the story.
It has been argued that Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poem *Christabel* (written between 1797 and 1801, but not published until 1816) has influenced the development of vampire fiction.
Christabel

*Christabel* is a long narrative poem in two parts. The first part was reputedly written in 1797, and the second in 1800.

It was published in a pamphlet in 1816.
The story of Christabel concerns a central female character of the same name and her encounter with a stranger called Geraldine, who claims to have been abducted from her home by a band of rough men.
Christabel

Christabel pities her and takes her home with her; supernatural signs (a dog barking, a mysterious flame on a dead fire) seem to indicate that all is not well.
They spend the night together, but while Geraldine undresses, she shows a terrible but undefined mark: "Behold! her bosom and half her side— / A sight to dream of, not to tell! / And she is to sleep by Christabel" (246–48). Her father, Sir Leoline, becomes enchanted with Geraldine, ordering a grand procession to announce her rescue. The unfinished poem ends here.
It has been argued that Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's 1872 novel *Carmilla* is a homage or adaptation of *Christabel*. 
Christabel

Le Fanu's antagonist Carmilla has certain similarities with Christabel's Geraldine; for instance, she cannot cross the threshold of a house, and seems to be stronger at night.
Likewise, the heroines of the two works are similar, both Christabel and Laura are the children of deceased mothers currently in the charge of their widowed fathers.
Geraldine's presence gives Christabel similar symptoms as Carmilla's does to Laura; both heroines experience troubled sleep and weakness in the morning after spending the night with their guest.
The poem is the inspiration for the song *Cristabel*, by Texan singer and songwriter Robert Earl Keen, which appeared on his 1984 album *No Kinda Dancer*. 
In a passage in his epic poem *The Giaour* (1813), Lord Byron alludes to the traditional folkloric conception of the vampire as a being damned to suck the blood and destroy the life of its nearest relations.
"Giaour" (Turkish: Gâvur) is an offensive Turkish word for infidel or non-believer
The Giaour

After telling how the giaour killed Hassan, the Ottoman narrator predicts that in punishment for his crime, the giaour will be condemned to become a vampire after his death and kill his own dear ones by drinking their blood, to his own frightful torment as well as theirs. Byron became acquainted with the concept of vampires while on his Grand Tour during 1810 and 1811, which he undertook with his friend John Cam Hobhouse.
The Grand Tour was the traditional trip of Europe undertaken by mainly upper-class European young men of means, or those of more humble origin who could find a sponsor.
Byron also composed an enigmatic fragmentary story concerning the mysterious fate of an aristocrat named Augustus Darvell whilst journeying in the Orient — as his contribution to the famous ghost story competition at the Villa Diodati by Lake Geneva in the summer of 1816,
The Villa Diodati is a mansion in the village of Cologny near Lake Geneva in Switzerland, notable because Lord Byron rented it and stayed there with John Polidori in the summer of 1816. Mary Shelley and Percy Bysshe Shelley, who had rented a house nearby, were frequent visitors.
Because of poor weather, in June 1816 the group famously spent three days together inside the house creating stories to tell each other, two of which were developed into landmark works of the Gothic horror genre: *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley and *The Vampyre*, the first modern vampire story, by Polidori.
John William Polidori (7 September 1795 – 24 August 1821) was an English writer and physician. He is known for his associations with the Romantic movement and credited by some as the creator of the vampire genre of fantasy fiction.

His most successful work was the short story "The Vampyre" (1819), the first published modern vampire story. Although originally and erroneously accredited to Lord Byron, both Byron and Polidori affirmed that the story is Polidori's
"Fragment of a Novel" is an unfinished 1819 vampire horror story written by Lord Byron. The story, also known as "A Fragment" and "The Burial: A Fragment", was one of the first in English to feature a vampire theme.

The main character was Augustus Darvell. John William Polidori based his novella The Vampyre (1819) on the Byron fragment.
Byron on Vampirism

The Vampire superstition is still general in the Levant. Honest Tournefort tells a long story about these 'Vroucolachas', as he calls them. The Romaic term is 'Vardoulacha'. I recollect a whole family being terrified by the scream of a child, which they imagined must proceed from such a visitation.
Byron on Vampirism

The Greeks never mention the word without horror. I find that 'Broucolokas' is an old legitimate Hellenic appellation—the moderns, however, use the word I mention. The stories told in Hungary and Greece of these foul feeders are singular, and some of them most incredibly attested. ... I have a personal dislike to Vampires, and the little acquaintance I have with them would by no means induce me to reveal their secrets.
The work is often viewed as the progenitor of the romantic vampire genre of fantasy fiction.[1] The work is described by Christopher Frayling as "the first story successfully to fuse the disparate elements of vampirism into a coherent literary genre."
The Vampyre

The story was an immediate popular success, partly because of the Byron attribution and partly because it exploited the gothic horror predilections of the public.

Polidori transformed the vampire from a character in folklore into the form that is recognized today—an aristocratic fiend who preys among high society.
The Vampyre

Themes in Polidori's tale would continue to influence Bram Stoker's Dracula and eventually the whole vampire genre.
An important later example of 19th-century Vampire fiction is the penny dreadful epic *Varney the Vampire* (1847) featuring Sir Francis Varney as the Vampire.

In this story we have the first example of the standard trope in which the vampire comes through the window at night and attacks a maiden as she lies sleeping.
Penny dreadful is a pejorative term used to refer to cheap popular serial literature produced during the nineteenth century in the United Kingdom.
Varney the Vampire; or, the Feast of Blood is a Victorian era serialized gothic horror story by James Malcolm Rymer and Thomas Peckett Prest.

It first appeared in 1845–47 as a series of weekly cheap pamphlets of the kind then known as "penny dreadfuls".
The story was published in book form in 1847. It is of epic length: the original edition ran to 876 double-columned pages and 232 chapters. Altogether it totals nearly 667,000 words.

It is the tale of the vampire Sir Francis Varney, and introduced many of the tropes present in vampire fiction recognizable to modern audiences.
Over the course of the book, Varney is presented with increasing sympathy as a victim of circumstances.

He tries to save himself, but is unable to do so. He ultimately commits suicide by throwing himself into Mount Vesuvius, after having left a written account of his origin with a sympathetic priest.
According to Varney, he was cursed with vampirism after he betrayed a royalist to Oliver Cromwell, and subsequently killed his own son accidentally in a fit of anger.
Varney was a major influence on later vampire fiction, including the renowned novel Dracula (1897) by Bram Stoker.

Many of today's standard vampire tropes originated in Varney: Varney has fangs, leaves two puncture wounds on the necks of his victims, has hypnotic powers, and has superhuman strength.
Unlike later fictional vampires, he is able to go about in daylight and has no particular fear of either crosses or garlic. He can eat and drink in human fashion as a form of disguise, but he points out that human food and drink do not agree with him.

His vampirism seems to be a fit that comes on him when his vital energy begins to run low; he is a regular, normally functioning person between feedings.
This is also the first example of the "sympathetic vampire," a vampire who despises his condition but is nonetheless a slave to it.
*Carmilla*

*Carmilla* is a Gothic novella by Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu.

The story is narrated by a young woman preyed upon by a female vampire named Carmilla, later revealed to be Mircalla, Countess Karnstein (Carmilla is an anagram of Mircalla).