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DIANA LOSES GUN FIGHT



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YOUR STARS FOR '87 ★ *Exciting news about next week's Sunday colour magazine-Page 13*

PRINCESS DRACULA

KIDNAP SAM'S AGONY CALLS TO MOTHER



Michael is descended from blood-lust Count

PRINCESS Michael is a direct descendant of bloodthirsty Vlad the Impaler, on whose life Count Dracula is based.

The pushy Royal's stake in the medieval warlord's family tree was revealed last night by world-renowned expert Hugh Peskett.

He said that Vlad, who reputedly killed 40,000 by impaling them on wooden poles, was the Princess's ancestor 17 generations back on her mother's side.

Dracula, the fictional vampire, was the brainchild of Victorian novelist Bram Stoker. He created the Count after reading of Vlad's

EXCLUSIVE
By STUART COLLIER

reign of terror in 15th-century Rumania.

Mr Peskett said: "Vlad, whose second name was Dracul, was very horrible. He ruled Dracula's territory of Transylvania."

"Princess Michael's line of descent from him is through



MICHAEL: Bloodsoaked ancestor

FULL STORY - Pages 2 and 3

TURN TO CENTRE PAGES



Exclusive: The inside stories of the



ALONE AT CHRISTMAS: Princess Michael, complete with cape, takes a stroll at Windsor during the Royals' celebrations

OUR VAL THE IMPALER

FROM PAGE ONE

a family of Transylvanian noblemen. Vlad's birth date is not known, but he died in 1476.

"He was called the Impaler because he had thousands of people impaled on wooden spikes. Their crimes would have been opposing him or not paying taxes.

"He was a brother of

the king of Wallachia, one of the kingdoms later included in Rumania."

Does the 41-year-old Princess—nicknamed Our Val by the Royal Family—know of her connection to the fanged, blood-drinking Count portrayed in horror films by Christopher Lee?

"I don't know," said genealogist Mr Peskett. "She may have closed her ears to the discovery.

People don't always want to hear things like that."

Mr Peskett, 54, who has worked for top people's directories Debrett's and Burke's Peerage, came across the Dracula link while updating the Austrian-born Princess's history.

Princess Michael's more recent ancestors included Count Frederic Szapary, an Austro-Hungarian ambassador to Russia, who married Germany's Princess Hedwig.

Their daughter was Princess Michael's mother, Countess Anna Maria Szapary, who married the Princess's father Baron Gunther von Reibnitz.

Writhing on poles

Mr Peskett said: "It's been proved beyond doubt—Princess Michael is linked with Vlad Dracula, who the notorious Dracula was based upon."

But the Impaler isn't the only skeleton in Princess Michael's cupboard.

Vlad was a great grandson seven generations removed of Genghis Khan, 13th-century conqueror of half Asia with his Mongol hordes.

"Naturally the Princess

Dracula, Count The central character of Bram Stoker's gothic novel *Dracula* (1897) and of many horror films, a Transylvanian "vampire." The name, meaning "demon," was applied to Vlad IV the Impaler, a 15th-century Walachian prince who was the prototype of the fictional character.

SPELLED OUT: Vlad was Dracula's "prototype"

is linked with him as well," said Mr Peskett.

Records show Vlad enjoyed killing so much that he had dinner tables set up in front of his victims who were impaled through their backsides. Said Mr Peskett:

"Vlad got interested in impaling while he was a prisoner in Turkey. He got a kick out of people writhing on poles.

While locked in his cell, he used to catch mice and impale them. He was a really nasty chap. Surprisingly, he was a Christian.

When the Turkish army entered his capital in 1462, they found 20,000 corpses on poles. The soldiers just turned and ran.

Mr Peskett pooh-poohs Princess Michael's claim that she is "more royal than the Royals" and has a better pedigree than Princess Diana or Fergie.

He reveals that her late father Baron von Reibnitz—exposed as a war-

time Nazi—was only a "jumped up" aristocrat.

Before his promotion, he farmed in Poland.

"He got his title from the King of Prussia when lots of titles were being handed out willy-nilly," said Mr Peskett.

"The Princess's mother is from better breeding, but that's only half an aristocracy."

He also slams claims that the Princess is from a good Catholic family.

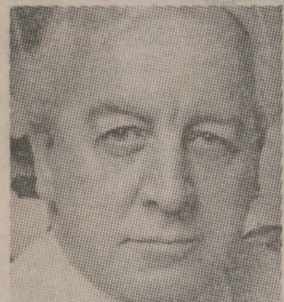
Divorced 3 times

"Her father only joined the Catholic Church at his first marriage," said Mr Peskett.

"He was then divorced three times, which doesn't exactly fit in with the Catholic faith."

Mr Peskett is regarded as one of Britain's finest genealogists. He now works freelance.

While at Burke's, he unearthed President Rea-



RESEARCHER: Peskett

gan's links with the Irish village of Ballyporeen.

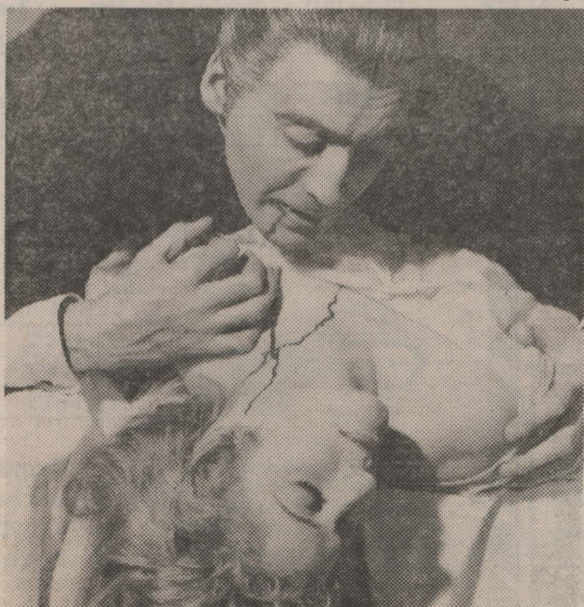
And he discovered that Labour MP Tony Benn's great grandfather, a church minister, was murdered by his son.

The lad smashed his dad over the head with a chamber pot.

THE QUEEN and Princess Michael got together yesterday for some plain talking in private.

The pair were 90 minutes late joining other Royals for a shoot at Windsor. They finally turned up in a Land-Rover—with the Queen at the wheel.

But when the family headed back to the castle, Princess Michael was left to make her own way in a separate car.



FILM FIEND: Christopher Lee as Count Dracula

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The Royals with a taste for blood!



CHARLES OUTGUNS DIANA



BIG SHOT: Prince Charles sticks to his guns



BLOOD sports fan Prince Charles has won the biggest shoot-out of his marriage by defying Diana and taking up his guns again.

And the Princess has at last conceded defeat in her battle to change her husband's lifestyle.

Yesterday she toed the line as she joined Charles at Windsor Great Park where he and the rest of the Royal Family spent the day shooting.

She is especially upset that Charles is even taking little Prince William on shoots.

But Charles's New Year resolution is to prove beyond doubt that he is no longer under his wife's thumb.

He has: **TOLD** friends he is back as the boss in his own home.

SPELLED OUT to Diana that he is determined to bring up his sons in his own way.

RESISTED her attempts to give him a trendier image.

RETURNED to the circle of friends he had before his marriage.

Salt into the wounds

TOMORROW Charles and his brothers Prince Andrew and Prince Edward will join their father Prince Philip for a six-week shooting holiday at Sandringham.

The Royals expect to bag 5,000 pheasants.

Last week Charles rubbed the salt into Diana's wounds by going both hunting AND shooting.

His decision has also

By CLIVE GOODMAN

upset his closest friend and mentor, ageing guru Sir Laurens Van Der Post.

It was Van Der Post who influenced the Prince into becoming a near-vegetarian—and he is a godfather to Prince William.

Asked about Charles's hunting, shooting and fishing, Van Der Post said: "It's the one thing we never talk about, for various complicated reasons."

Two years ago it looked as if the magic of Diana had worked on Charles.

He even gave away to Prince Andrew his prized pair of matched Purdey guns, a gift to him from King George the Sixth.

Now Charles, a constant irritation to Prince Philip when he was going through his non-shooting stage, is very much back in favour with his father.

And though his sister Princess Anne once branded Charles a "wimp" for not being able to control his wife, he has been slowly but surely moulding Diana into the wife he wants.

One of his friends said: "Charles is actually a very strong person."

Royal expert Hugo Vickers, author of the Debut book on the couple's wedding, said:

Prince is ruling the roost again

"Charles possesses a quiet obstinacy—a bit like the Queen."

Once when Diana tired of his tried and tested dinner jacket, she ordered a new expensive mohair one as a surprise for him.

But he was so horrified at the price that he sent it straight back.

Charles has won, too, the battle over his friends. Now ALL the couple's friends are those he had before his marriage—such as the Constantines, the Spaniards, the Mountbatten Romseys.

Even his closest female pal Lady Dale "Kanga" Tryon—banned from the wedding breakfast by Diana—now lunches with her.

Closer to the Queen

AND Charles spends hours chatting to Kanga on the phone as he did in the old days.

The couple are increasingly leading separate lives.

In the early days Diana would fret if Charles was not by her side. Even when he was gardening she would watch him through her binoculars. Now she is even happy for him to take private trips abroad.

Next year he is off to Africa on his own. Meanwhile, Diana is

throwing herself into her public duties. Often her workload is heavier than Charles's.

And her dedication to duty, rather than just being a fashion plate, has led to a new closeness between the Princess and the Queen.

At one time there was almost an estrangement between Diana and her mother-in-law.

The Queen rarely visited Kensington Palace, and hardly ever popped into Highgrove, whereas she often went to see Anne at Gatcombe just a few miles away.

The Queen was often infuriated by Diana constantly grabbing the spotlight from both her and Charles.

Now, though, the Queen has nothing but praise for the way the Princess is coping.

She has come back to the fold, as one member of the family put it.

But Diana, often excruciatingly nervous with the Queen, will never enjoy the relaxed intimacy which Fergie achieved immediately.

Unlike Fergie, she cannot share the Queen's passion for horses and dogs.

She is not too keen on either, and that will always be a barrier.

Fergie, meanwhile, goes out riding with the Queen and carriage driving with Prince Philip, who is even instructing her and buying her a carriage of her own.

Vlad Dracul the Impaler (died 1476)

Radu the Great (died 1508)

Mircea the Shepherd (died 1560)

Stanca, married John Norocza

Zamphira, married Peter Racz de Galgo

Adam Racz de Galgo (died 1609)

Peter Racz de Galgo


Christina, married Nicholas Kuon de Osdola

Here follows 200 years of the Osdola family. Descended from them was...

Count Tibor Szapary, married Princess Hedwig of Windisch-Graetz in Germany

Countess Anna Maria Szapary, married Baron Gunther von Reibnitz (divorced 1946).

Princess Michael



BLOOD TIES: Val's descent from Vlad, top right

TV WRITE

WALLY OF THE

PEERING at Yawnwood's from behind the sofa, I shrug Robbins's impression of Lin sister who escaped from the

A triumph to add to her Black and Sarah Brightman wood's Cliff Richard). He wear exactly the wrong shirt, slashed at the hefty shape.

What detail! The freckly by the plunging neck look jell's ears. But Blimey O Linda Nolan herself! Our Christmas Pudding!

I'd Wally myself for cackling on Telly Addicts had it not been for Kate's go at me.

Loved the wig, I admire her cheek, but it was not from the heart. More, I imagine, from Yawnwood's spleen...

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