

**THE INVERNESS COURIER
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“LORD BOLESKINE.”

DIVORCE ACTION IN COURT OF SESSION.

CURIOUS EVIDENCE.

Lord Salvesen heard proof on Wednesday in an undefended action of divorce by Rose Edith Kelly or Skerrett or Crowley, residing at The Vicarage, Camberwell, London, against Alister Macgregor Crowley, formerly called Edward Alexander Crowley, of Boleskine, Foyers, Inverness-shire. The pursuer (35) said, in reply to Mr Jameson, she was a daughter of Rev. F. F. Kelly, vicar of Camberwell, London, and was married in 1897 to Captain Frederick Thomas Skerrett, who died two years later. In 1902 she was staying in Paris with her brother, Mr Gerald Kelly, an artist, and there made the acquaintance of the defender.

Was he then calling himself Alister Crowley?—No; he was then Count Skellet.

She knew, however, that his real name was Alexander Edward Crowley. Later he called himself Macgregor, in order to identify himself more with Scotland. In July 1903 she went to Strathpeffer, and, while there, she again met the defender. He was then calling himself Alister Crowley Macgregor. She knew he bought Boleskine before 1900, and that his home was there, the only home he ever had. He was very much attached to Scotland, and to identify himself with it as much as possible he used to wear the kilt and all that sort of thing, and always gave himself out as a Scotsman at Strathpeffer. On August 11, 1903, he asked her to marry him, and she consented, and they were married the next day in Scottish fashion, because he told her he was a Scotsman. The marriage was registered in the usual way. In the marriage certificate he gave his name as Edward Crowley. They went abroad for the honeymoon, and subsequently resided at Boleskine, which was a large house, with two or three farms on the property. Shortly after the marriage the defender assumed the title of Lord Boleskine. He

gave out that he did so because the people of Scotland took the name of their estates. The defender was a little eccentric. In June 1904 the first child was born at Boleskine, but she died in infancy. For a year they travelled in the East together, and in 1906 they were in Hong-Kong together. He left her to return home by America, telling her to go straight home to England to be confined. She was rather annoyed at the way he left her. At her father's house at Camberwell she was confined in September 1906, and she asked for custody of the child. They then lived at Chislehurst for two years, and in March 1908 went to stay at Warwick Road, where the house was taken in her name, as the defender wished to avoid responsibility for the rent. He was becoming a little impecunious. She left him there on July 21 last. Before that he had been frequently abusing her, and on that date she consulted her solicitor about his conduct. On August 5 she learned from the charwoman that the defender had had a woman in the house the night before. Further evidence of infidelity having been given.

Gerald Festus Kelly, artist, said he was the brother of the pursuer. He became acquainted with Alister Crowley at Cambridge during his (witness's) first term, about August 1897. They were both undergraduates. Since then they had been intimately acquainted. After leaving Cambridge, about 1900, the witness went to Paris to study art, and the defender was a frequent visitor at his studio. For two years the defender was travelling round the world. When he came back he stopped with witness in Paris. That was in 1903, and it was then that pursuer met him. The defender was very proud of having Scottish blood in his veins, as he thought, and in 1900 or 1901 bought Boleskine to be his permanent home. He had no home, and he bought this place to live in. He had curious ideas of how to fit up a house. He put mirrors round the room, and called it a temple. He had invented a new sort of religion. He was a Cabalist, and studied ancient manuscripts. He took Boleskine in order to suit his own tastes. Abroad and in London he lived in hotels, and Boleskine was the only home he had. When he got to Boleskine he took the name of Macgregor, to identify himself with Scotland. While he was travelling abroad the defender sometimes signed himself Crowley and sometimes Macgregor. He changed his name from Alexander to Alister, because it was Scottish, but he retained the name of Alister Crowley for literary work. The defender got some mark of distinction from some Indian chief, and he thereupon called himself Lord Boleskine.

Mr Jameson—That is the history of how he became a peer.

Continuing, the witness said there was a lot of land around Boleskine, but it was perpendicular, most of it. The witness was staying with the defender there in 1903. When the witnesses' mother was taking the cure at Strathpeffer, witness and the defender went to Strathpeffer to see her, and the latter again met the pursuer there. At that time the defender was appearing in the complete Highland costume, and the Macgregor tartan was very bright.

Lord Salveson—Personally I never could get up any admiration for the Macgregor tartan from an artistic point of view, although its associations are rather romantic.

Continuing, the witness said the defender had all his possessions at Boleskine. He bought a lot of things when he was going round the world, and they were all at Boleskine. In reply to his Lordship, the witness said he knew very little about the defender's people. He was very secretive. The witness believed that his father was an eminent Plymouth Brother. The defender had a lot of money, which the witness thought came to him from his father. The witness did not know what Boleskine cost. He understood it was about £4000, and from a friend he learned that the defender had paid for it about twice what it was worth. He was a very stupid man about money affairs. The defender wrote poetry.

Does he make anything by it?—Certainly not.

Lord Salveson said he thought he might assume that the defender's domicile had become Scottish, and the marriage took place in Scotland. He would grant decree of divorce, with the custody of the child to the pursuer, with aliment at the rate of £1 weekly.