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“LORD BOLESKINE.”

**UNDERGRADUATE BECOMES
SELF-CREATED PEER.**

**TEMPLE OF MIRRORS IN
ECCENTRIC'S ABODE.**

He was “Count Skerrett” when the lady who was to become his wife met, in Paris, a somewhat eccentric individual with artistic tastes, and a strong desire to be a Scotsman. His real name was Alexander Edward Crowley, but later he called himself MacGregor, to identify him with the country of his ideals. To carry out the part with greater success, he donned the kilt, bought a Scottish estate, and became “Lord Boleskine.” Many extraordinary details concerning his career were made public before Lord Salvesen in the Court of Session, Edinburgh. His wife, Rose Edith Kelly, or Skerrett, or Crowley, residing at the vicarage, Camberwell, brought an undefended action, for divorce against her husband, Alister [*sic*] Crowley, formerly called Edward Alexander Crowley, of Boleskine, Foyers, Inverness-shire, and residing at Warwick Road, Earl’s Court. Petitioner, who is 35, said she was the daughter of the Rev. F. F. Kelly, vicar of Camberwell. She was married in 1897 to Captain Frederick Thomas Skerrett, who died in August, 1899. In 1902 she was staying in Paris with her brother, Mr. Gerald Kelly, an artist, and there made the acquaintance of respondent. Was he then calling himself Alister Crowley?—No; he was then Count Skerrett. I knew, however, his real name was Alexander Edward Crowley. Later he called himself MacGregor, in order to identify himself with Scotland. In July, 1903, she went to Strathpeffer, and while there she met Mr. Crowley. 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 much attached to Scotland, and tried 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 he asked her to marry him, and she consented. They were married 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 MacGregor, but his father's name was given as Edward Crowley. After the marriage they went to stay at Boleskine, which was a large house, with two or three farms on the property. Shortly after the marriage respondent assumed the name of Lord Boleskine, That was, he said, because people in Scotland took the names of the property. Counsel: I take it he is a little eccentric?—Oh, yes. In July, 1904, a child was born, who died 21 months later. For a year

THEY TRAVELLED ABOUT IN THE EAST

Together, and in 1906 she and her husband were at Hongkong. Her husband left her there to return home by America, telling her to go straight home. She was very annoyed at being left in her condition. She came back to England and joined her father in June, 1906. At her father's house a baby was born in September, 1906, and she was suing for the custody of that child. They then lived at Chislehurst for two years, and in March, 1908. She went to stay at Warwick Road, where the house was taken in her name, respondent wishing to avoid responsibility for the rent, as he was becoming a little impecunious. They stayed there until the summer of this year, and she left because her husband had been treating her cruelly. He had frequently bruised her. She left him on July 21. On August 5 she learned from the charwoman that her husband had a woman staying with him the previous night. Some time before respondent had asked her to take care of a child for one of his most intimate friends, and from what he said she thought it was a friend's child. She, however, accidentally opened a letter addressed to respondent, which gave the address of the mother, a Miss Zweek, and petitioner went to see her. She learned that respondent was the father of the child, and she thereupon raised that action. Charles Randle, of Chelsea, chauffeur, said Miss Zweek, who was a friend of his wife, boarded with them. Respondent, whose portrait he identified, frequently visited her. Lord Salvesen (looking at the photograph): He looks as if he belonged to the stage. Counsel: He is a literary character; he rather affects the artistic. Gerald Festus Kelly, artist, said he was the petitioner's brother. He became acquainted with Alister

Crowley in Cambridge during witness' first term, about August, 1897. They were both undergraduates. Since then they had been intimately acquainted. The year after leaving Cambridge he went to Paris to study art, and respondent was a frequent visitor at his studio, where he met witness' sister. Respondent was very proud of having

SCOTTISH BLOOD IN HIS VEINS

as he thought, and in 1900 or 1901 he bought Boleskine to be his permanent home. He had curious ideas of how to fit up the house. He had a room covered with mirrors, which he called a temple. He was a Cabalist, studied ancient MSS., and invented a new religion. 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 respondent sometimes signed himself Crowley and sometimes MacGregor. He changed his name from Alexander to Alister because it was Scottish. Respondent got some mark of distinction from an Indian chief, and he announced his intention of calling himself "Lord Boleskine." Mr. Jameson: That is the history of how he became a peer? In every way he tried to identify himself with Scotland. He took his title from Scotland, and Boleskine is a good estate?—Oh, yes. There is a good deal of land about it? Yes; but it is perpendicular most of it. (Laughter.) Witness said Boleskine was a big house, and respondent's many objects of art were stored in it. He added that when he went to Strathpeffer in 1903 respondent was appearing in complete Highland costume, and the MacGregor tartan was very bright.

Lord Salvesen thought the domicile had become Scottish whatever it was originally, and seeing also that the marriage took place in Scotland, he thought there was sufficient ground for granting a decree. Accordingly his lordship granted a decree with custody of the child to petitioner with alimony at the rate of £1 per week.