

THE SUNDERLAND ECHO  
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**WROTE AGAINST OWN COUNTRY  
DURING THE WAR**

**"PROUD OF IT," SAYS AUTHOR**

**Wanted to Turn German Propaganda  
Into "Absolute Nonsense"**

**LIBLE ACTION ADMISSIONS**

**Occasion When People Were  
Attacked By Unseen Assailants**

An admission that he wrote against his own country during the War, "and I am proud of it," was made by Aleister Crowley, the author, in the King's Bench Division to-day in the libel action he has brought against Miss Nina Hamnett, the authoress.

*He explained that what he wanted to do was to overbalance the sanity of German propaganda in America by turning it into absolute nonsense.*

Questioned about black and white magic he said that he had once walked in the street in Mexico in a scarlet robe, and with a jewelled crown, without anyone seeing him.

**JUDGE'S STERN WARNING**

Mr. Crowley alleges that in her book "Laughing Torso" Miss Hamnett imputes that he practised "black magic."

Other defendants are Constable and Co., Ltd., publishers, and Charles Whittingham and Briggs, printers, the defence being a plea of justification.

Mr. Malcolm Hilbery, K.C., for the printers and publishers, in cross-examination, read an extract from an article which Mr. Crowley said he contributed to a Chicago magazine before

America came into the War and asked, "Did you write that against your own country?"

Mr. Crowley: I did, and I am proud of it.

Mr. Hilbury: Was it part of the German propaganda in America?—Yes.

Mr. Crowley explained that what he wanted to do was to overbalance the sanity of German propaganda by turning it into absolute nonsense.

Mr. Hilbury: That is your explanation after the Allied cause is safe and no longer in danger?—Lots of people knew it at the time.

### **"DEAD FOR YEARS"**

#### **Work of an Imaginary Author**

Mr. Hilbery read a poem from the book, "Clouds Without Water" and asked Mr. Crowley: "Is it filth."

Mr. Crowley: You read it as if it were magnificent poetry. I congratulate you.

Later Mr. Crowley remarked: "I should like to be universally hailed as the greatest living poet. The truth will out, you know."

Asked about another poem, Mr. Crowley said that the author of those words had been "dead for years."

Mr. Hilbery: Is the Aleister Crowley who wrote that dead?

Mr. Crowley: Do I look like it? It is not Aleister Crowley who wrote that. It is an imaginary figure in a drama—I created the drama.

"I created this work of an imaginary author," Mr. Crowley added.

Still another poem was mentioned by Mr. Hilbery who asked: "Is that anything but disgusting and infamous?"

Mr. Crowley: It means, if I may say so, that even the vilest of women can through the influence of love, become a refining and inspiring influence in a man's life.

### **CLEAR COURT THREAT**

Mr. Crowley agreed that he wrote "The Diary of a Drug Fiend," which was assailed in the Press.

He agreed, too, that in a newspaper article he had written "I have been shot at with broad arrows. They have called me the worst man in the world."

Mr. Hilbery: Did you say "Horatio Bottomley branded me as a dirty degenerate cannibal"?—Yes.

There was some laughter at this, and Mr. Justice Swift sternly intimated that a repetition of the laughter would cause him to have the court cleared.

"I also had the reputation of being the best man in the world," declared Mr. Crowley a few moments later.

He agreed that he had been depicted with his thumbs in a position representing the horns of a ram.

In a London flat—which he once had—was "a hall of mirrors, the function of which was to concentrate the invoked forces."

On one occasion he invoked the forces with the result that some people were attacked by unseen assailants.

Mr. Hilbery was that your black magic or your white magic?—It is white magic in which you protect yourself from such things.

Mr. Crowley said that because of his magic he had once walked in the street in Mexico in a scarlet robe and with a jewelled crown without anyone seeing him.

### **"DON'T APPROVE**

Mr. Hilbery: As a part of your magic you do believe in a practice of bloody sacrifice? I believe in its efficacy, but I do not approve it at all.

Don't approve it! You say—in his book on magic—"for nearly all purposes human sacrifice is best!"—Yes, it is.

Mr. Justice Swift: Do you say that you don't approve it?—Yes.

Mr. Crowley said that at the villa at Cefalu there was "a sort of square box" used as an altar. On it were a book purporting to contain the laws and candles for ceremonial purposes.

Incense, a dagger, and a sword were used and he wore an appropriate robe.

Mr. Hilbery: In some of the ceremonies were you endeavouring to get concentrated spiritual ecstasy?—Yes.

Did you keep hasheesh and other drugs at Cefalu?—There was no hasheesh, but there was opium and strychnine.

Are you skilled to administer hasheesh?—I can get the desired results in ten minutes.

## **MAGIC CIRCLE RITUAL**

Mr. Hilbery, referring to the "abbey" in Sicily asked: "With your approval an inmate had a razor or knife with which to cut himself if he stumbled into using a forbidden word whatever it was?"

Mr. Crowley: They were not gashes but minute cuts. You can see marks of them on my own arm.

Asked if heroin was used there he said that it had been prescribed for him for asthma.

Questioned about the ritual of his magic circle Mr. Crowley said that he walked round the room in "a sort of three-fold step which resembles the waltz.

"The pace resembled the pace of the tiger stalking the deer," he added.

He had never performed a ceremony naked in the presence of another person.

## **NOT TRYING SHELLEY**

Mr. Hilbery referred to articles in which Mr. Crowley was described as "The King of Depravity," "The Wickedest Man in the World," "The Man we would like to Hang," "Another Traitor Trounced," and "The Notorious Aleister Crowley."

Mr. Justice Swift: It is said of you "It is hard to say whether he is man or beast."

Mr. Crowley: It was said of Shelley that he was sent from hell.

Mr. Justice Swift: I am not trying Shelley: I am only trying your case. When that was said in the public Press did you take any steps to clear your character?—I was 1,500 miles away. I was ill and I was penniless. I wrote to my solicitors.