

**THE DAILY EXPRESS
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**Aleister Crowley's
Temple of Magic
In London**

**STORY OF PEOPLE ATTACKED
BY UNSEEN ASSAILANTS**



MR. ALEISTER CROWLEY . . .
"I should like to be universally
hailed as the greatest living poet

A strange story of a temple of magic in the City, and of people who were attacked there by unseen assailants, was told by Mr. Aleister Crowley in the King's Bench Division yesterday, when his action for alleged libel against Miss Nina Hamnett, the authoress, was continued.

He told also of his belief in magic, but declared emphatically that he never approved it.

Mr. Crowley contends that he is libeled in Miss Hamnett's book, "Laughing Torso."

Other defendants are Constable and Co., Ltd., the publishers of the book, and Charles Whittingham and Briggs, the printers.

The defence is justification.

Resuming his cross-examination, Mr. Malcolm Hilbery, K.C. (for the publishers), asked Mr. Crowley if it were not a fact that his book "Clouds Without Water" built up his reputation.

"My literary reputation, yes," replied Mr. Crowley.

Mr. Hilbery then read a poem from the book, and asked, "Is that not filth?"

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

Later he said that Mr. Hilbery had read the poem out of its context, "as he did everything."

A WAR ARTICLE

Replying to another question, he remarked: "I regret my reputation is not much wider than it is."

"I should like," he said, "to be universally hailed as the greatest living poet. The truth will out, you know."

Mr. Hilbery: Before America came into the war, when the affairs of the Allies were in great jeopardy, did you contribute to a Chicago magazine?—I did.

Counsel read an extract from an article in the magazine.

"Did you write that against your own country?" he asked.

"I did, and I am proud of it," replied Mr. Crowley. "I suggest that you should understand a little of the context and why I wrote it."

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

And written as such?—I endeavoured successfully to have it accepted as such. What I wanted to do was to over-balance the sanity of German propaganda, which was being very well done, by turning it into absolute nonsense. How I got Mr. _____ to publish that rubbish I cannot think. He must have been in his dotage.

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

Mr. Hilbery (reading a newspaper article by Mr. Crowley): "They have accused me of doing everything from murdering women and throwing their bodies in the Seine." Is that true?—I hear a canard about me every week. Any man of any distinction has rumours about him.

Mr. Hilbery: You never took any action against the people who wrote and published those things about you?—No.

But because this silly little paragraph in this book appeared, you run to your lawyer to bring an action for the injury to your

reputation—that reputation being that you are "the worst man in the world"?—I also had the reputation of being the best man in the world.

Did you have a flat in your early days in Chancery-lane?—Yes.

Did you have two temples in that flat?—Yes, but one wasn't really a temple. It was just a lobby, which was not used. You said: "I constructed a temple in the flat. It was a hall of mirrors, the function of which was to concentrate the invoked forces"?—Yes.

Mr. Crowley agreed that, in an article, he referred to an occasion when he invoked the forces, with the result that some people there were attacked by unseen assailants.

MADE BLUNDERS

Mr. Hilbery: Was that the result of the spirits which your magic had brought to the place?—That is the theory of certain people.

"I had not the experience to control the forces then," added Mr. Crowley. "I was trying to learn how to do something, and made a lot of blunders, as beginners always do."

Was that your black magic or your white magic?—It is white magic, in which you protect yourself from such things.

Then it is white magic which becomes black isn't it?—No, it is not. It is white magic making the wound antiseptic.

Mr. Crowley agreed that in his "Confessions," he had said that once in Mexico he walked in the street in a scarlet robe and with a jeweled crown without any one seeing him.

Mr. Hilbery: Was that because of your magic?—Yes.

Mr. Hilbery: As a part of your magic, you do believe in a practice of bloody sacrifice, do you?—I believe in its efficacy.

If you believe in its efficacy, you would believe in it being practised and say it could be practised without impropriety?—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.

NOT TRYING SHELLEY!

Further questions were put to Mr. Crowley about descriptions of him in newspaper articles, and the judge remarked:—

"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.

The judge: 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.

The judge: I didn't ask you about the state of your health. Did you take any steps to clear your character?—I wrote to my solicitors, and then it was impossible.

The answer is that you took no steps to clear your character?—Yes.

The judge: Were you not in prison in America?—I was not in prison there or at any other place or time in the whole of my life.

Were you deported from Canada?—No.

What happened there?—I ate, drank, slept, saw my friends and went on my way.

Mr. Crowley explained that he did not take any action with reference to the earlier articles because he was advised that his action would last fourteen days and that he would have to find £10,000 to fight it.

"SEES VISIONS"

The judge: Now you see how absurd that advice was, because this case won't take anything like fourteen days. It has now taken two whole days and it will probably take the whole of to-morrow. It may go into Friday, though I am not sure about that. It won't last more than four days. I imagine you have not found £10,000 have you?—No.

So you see how foolish the advice was which has left you resting under the stigma of these attacks for fourteen years.

Cross-examining for Miss Hamnett. Mr. Martin O'Connor suggested to Mr. Crowley that he was a "man who sees visions?" Mr. Crowley agreed.

Mr. O'Connor: You are a "master magician"?—Yes, go on.

And a person with supernatural powers?

"No," replied Mr. Crowley, with some heat.

Mr. O'Connor: What is the good of being a master magician without having any more power than your learned counsel or I have got?—There is no such thing as supernatural power. There is nothing outside or beyond nature.

How have you been living?—Virtuously.

The hearing was adjourned until to-day.