

**THE COURIER AND ADVERTISER
DUNDEE SCOTLAND
13 APRIL 1934**

ASKED TO SHOW "HIS MAGIC"

MR. CROWLEY REFUSES COURT INVITATION

DENIAL OF CEREMONY OF CAT'S BLOOD

"Beast 666," otherwise Aleister Crowley, the author, was invited in Mr. Justice Swift's Court in the King's Bench Division yesterday to try "his magic" on counsel. But he refused to do so. Mr. Crowley is claiming damages against Miss Nina Hamnett, author of a book, "Laughing Torso," and Messrs. Constable & Co., Ltd., publishers, and Messrs. Charles Whittingham & Briggs, printers. He complains that the book imputed that he practised "black magic," and he said this was a libel upon him. The defence is a plea of justification.

At the material time Mr. Crowley had a villa on the mountain side at Cefalu, Sicily, which was known as the "Abbey of Thelema." He denied that he practised "black magic" there. In evidence he admitted that he called himself "Beast 666" and "The Master Therium"—the great wild beast—references from the Book of Revelation.

Miss Hamnett was once a student of his, but he denied that he supplied any of the information on which she based the statements in her book of which he complained. He also denied that a baby mysteriously disappeared, as the defence alleged, from the "Abbey of Thelema."

Invitation Refused

Mr. Martin O'Connor (for Miss Hamnett), resuming his cross-examination to-day, invited Mr. Crowley to try his magic in court.

You stated yesterday, Mr. O'Connor said that as the result of early experiments you invoked certain forces with the result that some people were attacked by unseen assailants. Try your magic now on my learned friend—pointing to Mr. Hilbery—I am sure he will not object.

I would not attack anyone, replied Mr. Crowley, I have never wilfully done harm to any human being.

Mr. Martin O'Connor—Try your magic now. I am sure my learned friend will consent to you doing so.

Mr. Crowley—I absolutely refuse.

Mr. Justice Swift: We cannot turn this court into a temple, Mr. O'Connor.

"An Imposter"

Mr. O'Connor then said to Mr. Crowley—"On a later occasion, you said you succeeded in rendering yourself invisible. Would you like to try that on now for, if you don't, I shall pronounce you an imposter."

"You can ask me to do anything you like," Mr. Crowley replied. "It won't alter the truth."

Mr. O'Connor then dealt with the ritual observed in the ceremonies at the villa at Cefalu.

Mr. Crowley denied that a cat was killed in the ceremony and that part of the cat's blood was drunk by a person taking part. There was no cat, no animal, no blood, and no drinking, he said.

Mr. Crowley, in reply to his counsel, Mr. J. P. Eddy, agreed that he had studied black magic, though only as a student. He had never practised black magic and had always written about it in terms of strongest condemnation.

Magic, said Mr. Crowley, is the science of the art of causing change to occur in conformity with the will. White magic is if the will is righteous, and black magic is if the will is perverse.

Mr. Justice Swift: Does it involve the invocation of spirits?

It may do so, Mr. Crowley replied. It does involve the invocation of the holy guardian angel who is appointed by Almighty God to watch over each of us.

Chapter of Nonsense

Opening the defence of the publishers and the printers, Mr. Malcolm Hilbery said the question for the jury was whether the passages in "Laughing Torso," of which complaint was made, would be read by any reasonable person as worsening the character of Mr. Crowley.

What right had a man to complain of injury to a reputation which he had described himself as being that of the worst man in the world?

Mr. Hilbery asked the jury to say that the whole chapter in the book referring to Mr. Crowley was nonsense, written in no unkindly spirit and without malice.

The hearing was adjourned.