

**THE DAILY HERALD
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"Black Magic" Libel Action

MR. CROWLEY LOSES CASE

Judge on "Abominable Horrible Evil"

**ALLEGED THEFT OF DEFENCE LETTERS:
KEPT IN COURT CUSTODY**



Mrs. Sedgwick

A King's Bench Division jury stopped the libel action brought by Mr. Aleister Crowley, finding he had not been libeled.

Judgment with costs was awarded to Miss Nina Hamnett, authoress of "Laughing Torso" (which, Mr. Crowley alleged, libelled him by imputing to him the practice of "black magic"), and the publishers and printers of the book.

"I have nothing but this to say about the facts of the case," commented Mr. Justice Swift. "I have been over 40 years engaged in the administration of the law in one capacity or another. I thought that I knew of every conceivable form of wickedness.

"I thought that everything which was vicious and bad had been produced at some time or another before me.

"ABOMINABLE STUFF"

"I have learned in this case that we can always learn something more if we live long enough.

"I have never heard such dreadful, horrible, blasphemous and abominable stuff as that which has been produced by the man who describes himself to you as the greatest living poet."

He refused a stay of execution.

Earlier in the proceedings Mr. J. P. Eddy (for Mr. Crowley) resumed his cross-examination of Mrs. Betty Sedgwick, formerly the wife of the late Mr. Frederick Charles (Raoul) Love-day, both of whom visited Mr. Crowley's villa in Cefalu, Sicily.

She alleged that correspondence between her and the solicitors for the printers and publishers had been stolen.

Mr. Eddy: Did you authorize anyone to extract those letters from your case and give them to Mr. Crowley?—No.

Mr. Justice Swift: Are these produced by Mr. Crowley?—Yes.

Do you know how Mr. Crowley got possession of your letters?—I can't imagine how he got them.

Mr. Hilbery (for Miss Hamnett): Were there other letters in the case?—Yes, everything was taken from the case. The contents were all stolen.

Until they were produced here with the suggestion that it was documentary evidence that your evidence had been 'bought,' did you know they had got into Crowley's possession?—I didn't know at all.

Mr. Justice Swift: Where were they stolen from?—From my cottage or from the hotel when I was in London. I always took the case about with me everywhere.

Mr. Hilbery called on Mr. Eddy to produce a letter of February 24, 1933, from the defendant's solicitors to Mrs. Sedgwick.

Mr. Justice Swift: He clearly has no right to have it. Whoever has possession of those letters is in possession, according to this lady's evidence, of stolen property.

Mr. Hilbery: The witness says she has been permanently deprived of the possession of the letters against her will.

Mr. Justice Swift: I don't see why we should not use the good old English word "stolen" if the facts warrant it. We shall never know in this case how, because we shall have no opportunity of finding out, but it would be very interesting to know how Mr. Crowley came into possession of these letters.

At the close of the case the judge referred again to the matter.

"We will keep the letters in court," he said to counsel for the defence, "and we shall certainly have them in proper custody if you take them to another court."