

**UNKNOWN NEWSPAPER  
14 April 1934**

**"MAGICIAN" CASE**

**JURY'S VERDICT FOR DEFENDANTS**

**COMMENTS BY JUDGE.**

**CROWLEY'S BLASPHEMOUS WRITINGS.**

**A verdict for the defendants was returned by the jury this afternoon in the "Black Magic" libel action brought by Mr. Aleister Crowley.**

**The jury stopped the case after the Judge had addressed them following Mr. Eddy's speech for Crowley.**

The judge said:

I have nothing to say about the facts except this: I have been more than 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 one time or another before me.

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.

When Mrs. Sedgwick was re-examined, during her evidence she said she had never made a condition that she should be paid to give evidence. She had received nothing except sums to cover her expenses.

Mr. Hilbery said that was all his evidence. He wished, however, to refute any suggestion that the solicitors instructing him

had been a party to purchasing any evidence.

Mr. Eddy: My suggestion was, is, and will be, that money explains the presence of Miss Betty May (Mrs. Sedgwick) in the witness-box. I do not make any sort of imputation upon the solicitors. I suggest they were put in the position by the attitude taken by the witness.

Mr. Justice Swift: Does not money play a very important part in producing in the witness-box most witnesses who have no interest whatever in the case? They all expect to get their expenses.

Mr. Eddy: I am not prepared for a single moment to assume that the money paid this woman really represented expenses. My position is that she was, in fact demanding money and getting it.

Reference to Challenge.

Mr. Martin O'Connor (for Miss Hamnett), referring to Mr. Crowley's refusal to accept his challenge to try his magic in court, said it was appalling that "in this enlightened age a court should be investigating magic which is arch-humbug practiced by arch-roguers to rob weak-minded people."

"I hope this action," he added, "will end for all time the activities of this hypocritical rascal."

Mr. O'Connor suggested to the jury that the point had been reached at which they should stop the case.

"The question," he said, "is whether you can believe that Crowley has suffered any damage. At the end of my speech I suggest you should consult among yourselves and say you have had enough of Crowley and return a verdict for the defendants."

### **Jury Intervene.**

Later, seeing two jurymen talking together, Mr. Justice Swift stopped Mr. O'Connor in his address.

One of the jurors said: "The jury wish to know whether this is a correct time for us to intervene."

Mr. Justice Swift: You cannot stop the case as against the defendants. You may stop it against the plaintiff when Mr. Eddy has said everything he wants to say.

Mr. Eddy then made his final submissions to the jury. He submitted that no reasonable jury could do otherwise than find a verdict in favour of Mr. Crowley, notwithstanding the view that had been indicated. The law of libel was available to everybody, whether he was of good or of bad character.

At the end of Mr. Eddy's speech, Mr. Justice Swift asked the jury if they were of the same mind as intimated earlier.

"If you think that the plaintiff fails on the ground that he was never libeled, or that his reputation was never damaged, or if you think the defendants have justified what was written, then your verdict should be for the defendants," he said.

After making the remarks quoted above the Judge asked: "Are you of the same opinion still?" If there was any doubt about the matter the case must go on.

The foreman said the jury were unanimous. They found a verdict for the defendants.

Judgment was entered for all the defendants, with costs.

Mr. Justice Swift said there was no reflection upon the solicitor for the publishers and printers.

After argument, a stay of execution was refused, the Judge remarking: "It was a plain question of fact for the jury."

As to the documents in his custody the judge told the defence: "We will keep the letters in court and we shall have them in proper custody if you take them to another."