

THE SHIELDS GAZETTE
SOUTH SHIELDS, DURHAM, ENGLAND
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(page 1)

"BLACK MAGIC" LIBEL ACTION

Counsel's Question about Poem

The hearing was resumed before Mr. Justice Swift and a special jury in the King's Bench Division to-day, of the libel action by Aleister Crowley, the author, against Miss Nina Hamnett, authoress of a book entitled "Laughing Torso," which he alleged imputed he practised "black magic."

Other defendants were Constable and Company., Ltd., publishers, and Charles Whittingham and Briggs, printers, the defence being 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 Telema [*sic*]." He denied that he practised "black magic" there.

In his cross-examination yesterday Mr. Crowley agreed that he assumed the designation of "Beast 666," and "The Master Therion" (the Great Wild Beast).

"666 is the number of the sun, and you can call me "Little Sunshine," he added.

He also said he had the distinguishing marks of a Buddha at birth, and still had some of them.

He claimed to be a "master magician," saying that he took a degree which conferred that title.

IMAGINARY FIGURE

Mr. Malcolm Hilbery, L.C., for the printers and publishers, in cross-examination to-day, read a poem from the book "Clouds Without Water," and asked Mr. Crowley, "Is that not 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.