

**THE MILWAUKEE JOURNAL
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN
8 SEPTEMBER 1931
(pages 1-2)**

**Did Crowley, Writer, Magician, Cultist,
Commit or Fake Suicide to Sell Books?**

**Plotted to Dazzle World With Death Fraud;
Told Another Writer in Paris.**

"Do what thou wilt is the whole of the law."

How many thousands of gullible people have listened and been fascinated by this and other fine sounding phrases from the lips of Aleister Crowley.

He presents probably the strangest figure in English letters. Among modern writers he is in a class by himself. Poet, with almost a genius for putting on paper the haunting word, whom even the staid Athenium has listed as among the great ones of this century.

Novelist of bizarre trend. Author of books of magic which English magistrates have ordered burned and American police have destroyed. Writer of an autobiography ranking as among the strangest of this type of work. Mountain climber of note who thrice assailed Kangchenjunga. Leader of strange religious cult that brought him banishment from the United States, Italy and France. A world wanderer and a man of mystery. All these things has been Aleister Crowley, writes Francis Dickie in the Boston Globe.

Almost a Suicide.

But that night in 1929 when I first met him upon the Boulevard Montparnasse in Paris, I knew nothing of this man, though great was his notoriety and widely spread. We started across the boulevard from the Café du Donne to Le Select. Suddenly Crowley stepped right in the path of a big touring car traveling at high speed. But French drivers are amazingly dexterous. In the nick of time the chauffeur swerved the car. The flange of the wheels grazed the curb, the car rocked, steadied, went on

while a string of curses from the driver floated back momentarily upon our ears. Crowley heaved a vast sigh.

"You see, they won't hit me. I've tried it 20 times this last week, and they always miss me." There was dreadful resignation in his voice.

"I wish I were dead," he went on, "and then perhaps my books would be in demand, and men would call me great."

We entered the Select.

To Create a Market.

He wore a brick red coat, plus fours to match and a golfing cap that shrieked its yellow brightness to heaven. When he took it off he revealed a closely cropped head of black hair with a bald streak running across it like a furrow.

He made to me the most amazing proposition, the strangest I have had in 20 years as a newspaper man.

"You see," he went on, "I am rather well known in England and America. A number of my books have been published. At present I have a thousand copies stored away in London. My books are fairly scarce and are listed at good prices in the catalogs of the booksellers.

"But a man's books always increase in value after he is dead. Now if it could be made to appear that I had died, or committed suicide under mysterious circumstances, my books would leap up in value. That is what I propose to do, and I want an experienced newspaper man to write up this disappearance and spread it to all the papers possible.

"Then I will have the thousand copies of my books offered to various old book dealers."

"Yet No One Saw Me."

Crowley as a young man inherited a large fortune and at an early age took up the study of black magic. Astounding as it may seem, black magic has a large number of followers in this twentieth century.

While in Paris early in 1919 he took me to see a moving picture show based on a book by Somerset Maugham called "The Magician of which Crowley was the hero. Crowley claimed the power of making himself invisible.

"The secret of invisibility," Crowley said, "is not concerned with the law of optics. It is to acquire a certain mental state—a peculiar variety of mental self-absorption. This distracts

people's attention from one automatically. Thus once in Mexico City I was able to take a walk in the street in a golden crown and a scarlet robe, yet no one saw me."

Next to an absorbing ambition to write great poetry and be a master of magic, Crowley desired to climb the highest peak in the Himalayas. Between the years 1900 and 1906 he was part of three expeditions, two of which reached a height of 25,000 feet.

The two most successful took so terrible a toll of life from hardship and insanity that Crowley turned to other things.

Fighting Magic With Magic.

In 1905 Crowley and his wife had returned to their manor of Boleskine, in Scotland. A war had broken out among a secret order of magicians, and the greatest of these "made magic" against Crowley in Scotland.

"I had a pack of bloodhounds," Crowley related. "But he killed them all. The servants were made ill. The house had a plague of beetles sent upon it. They were about half an inch long, with a single horn nearly as long. I sent a specimen to London, but the experts declared it to be a hitherto unknown species,

"I at once set about counter magical work, employing the talismans from the 'Sacred Book of Magic,' evoking Belzebub and his 49 servitors, including Nimorup, a stunted dwarf, and Nominon, a large, red, spongy jellyfish, and Holastri, an enormous pink bug. In this way the attacks were overcome, and ceased from that time."

All of which sounds quite absurd coming from the lips of a fat, heavy shouldered, middle aged man in plus fours. Yet thousands have been impressed by it; and lost money and reputations have marked the wake of Crowley's wanderings.

His "Bible" Banned as Immoral.

At the outbreak of the war Crowley was in New York. He soon attracted attention for his German sympathies. The publication of violent articles against the allies in certain periodicals made him highly unpopular. Yet this apparent pro-Germanism was only a cloak to hide his true identity as a counter spy working in the interest of England. He succeeded in gaining the confidence of German workers and proved highly valuable.

In 1918 Crowley and an assistant priest arrived in Detroit, Mich., and founded a new religious order called the Order of the Temple of the Orient. Some of the city's most prominent citizens became members. The motto of the cult was the famous saying of Crowley's: "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law," a saying which in all truth Crowley had lived up to during his life.

His "bible" a large blue bound volume stamped in gold with the mystic numbers, was put on sale in book stores. Then the federal authorities stopped the sale on the grounds that it was immoral. Crowley disappeared. Several men in high places went bankrupt. Many divorces took place among prominent people who had been initiated into the cult.

Crowley went to Italy and formed another colony. The suicide of one of its members attracted the attention of the police and Crowley was escorted into France, that home of all exiles. In 1929 the French police deported him.

In the late autumn of 1930, nearly two years after his amazing proposal to me, the Portuguese papers in Lisbon announced the finding of a note on the mouth of the "Bocade Inferno," a dangerous piece of eater beneath a cliff celebrated as a place for suicides. It was signed by the name Tu Li Yu, which later was found to be Crowley's "mystic name."

Police investigation developed that Crowley had arrived there being deported from France. The note purported to be a farewell one to a lady, in which he declared he was committing suicide for love.

Whether the great charlatan had grown tired of his magic making and the ecstasy of life or whether this was merely the carrying out of the scheme at last which he had proposed to me nearly two years earlier to make his books command a higher price so he could unload an extra thousand volumes on the old book dealers, I do not know.

Yawning at Life.

Apropos of his passing, if such is the truth, a line from his book of poetry, the "The Winged Beetle":

"And yet in a sense you have won—for you played
All the beauty and passion and wit of a maid.
You are damned; that is great! You drained life to the lees!
And I—I shall yawn at the end, I'm afraid."

I wonder if that was Crowley's fate—to yawn at life. After having done all things, seen most of the world, known all possible ecstasies of the flesh, to finally be bored with life. Dreadful fate! Well, if that was the case, perhaps he may have committed suicide. In any case it has not created any rising market for his writings in the world of books.