

**DERBY EVENING TELEGRAPH  
DERBY, ENGLAND  
13 APRIL 1934**

**JUDGE STIGMATISES "GREATEST LIVING POET"**

**"MOST ABOMINABLE STUFF"**

**VERDICT FOR DEFENDANTS IN LIBEL ACTION**

**"TIGER WOMAN" WITNESS**

Judgment, with costs, for the authoress, publishers, and printers sued by Mr. Aleister Crowley, an author and poet, in the "black magic" libel action, was given by the jury in the King's Bench Division to-day.

Mr. Justice Swift said to the jury: "Never have I heard such dreadful, horrible, blasphemous, abominable stuff as that produced by a man describing himself as the greatest living poet."

The Judge added that he had thought that everything which was vicious and bad had been produced at one time or another before him, but he learned in this case that "we can always learn something more if we live long enough."

**DENIAL OF "FAST LIVING"**

Miss Nina Hamnett is the author of the book, "Laughing Torso," in which Mr. Crowley alleged "black magic" was imputed to him, and Messrs. Constable and Company, Limited, publishers, and Messrs. Charles Whittingham and Briggs, printers, were joined with her as defendants.

The defence was a plea of justification.

Mrs. Betty Sedgwick, whose former husband, Raoul Loveday, died at the Cefalu villa in Sicily, where Mr. Crowley was stated to have a "community," was asked by Mr. J. P. Eddy (for Mr. Crowley) to-day.

"Immediately before your marriage to Raoul Loveday, would your life be fairly described as drink, drugs, and immorality?"

"No," replied Mrs. Sedgwick, who said that she had not drugged herself for years.

## CAT SACRIFICE

She denied that she was living "a very fast life" in London.

"I was a model, and I sat to keep both of us," she added.

Asked if there was a word of truth in her evidence about the "terrible sacrifice of a cat," she replied: "Absolutely true—everything about the cat is true."

She was turned out of the abbey at Cefalu a few days before her husband's death, she alleged.

Mr. Eddy: What was he suffering from?

Mrs. Sedgwick: I have no idea. I thought it was laudanum poisoning.

Mr. Eddy pointed out that in her book Mrs. Sedgwick said that he was suffering from enteric.

## TOLD THE "YARD"

"That is true," Mrs. Sedgwick explained. "After he drank the cat's blood he was violently sick, and Mr. Crowley gave him laudanum—a lot of it—as medicine. I told Scotland Yard I thought it was laudanum poisoning at the time."

Mr. Eddy quoted from "Tiger Woman" (Mrs. Sedgwick's book) in which the fourth husband's mother said: "You foul, wicked woman. You are killing my son."

Mr. Eddy: Are you "Tiger Woman"?—Yes.

Why?—Because I am rather feline in looks. I thought perhaps it was rather a good name for me.

Mrs. Sedgwick said that she slapped her fourth husband's mother because she annoyed her.

## "STOLEN" LETTERS

Questions about certain letters were asked, and Mr. Justice Swift asked Mrs. Sedgwick: "Do you know how Mr. Crowley got possession of your letters?"

She replied: "I can't imagine how he got them," and later declared that all the contents of her case were stolen from her cottage or from a London hotel.

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.

Later, Mr. Justice Swift remarked: "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 to be in possession of these letters."

### **COPIES KEPT**

When some of the copies of the missing letters were produced, he agreed that they should remain in the custody of the Court.

"Then remind me to discuss them again, please," he told the Associate.

Mr. Hilbery said that he wished 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.

After judgment had been entered, Mr. Justice Swift said that there was no reflection upon the solicitor for the publishers and printers.