

THE WEEKLY TELEGRAPH
21 APRIL 1934
(page 9)

"HORRIBLE STUFF."

AUTHOR LOSES LIBEL ACTION.

JUDGE'S SCATHING ATTACK.

"DREADFUL AND BLASPHEMOUS."

The "black magic" libel action ended suddenly in the King's Bench Division, London, on Friday, with a verdict against Mr. Aleister Crowley, who has described himself as "Beast 666."

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

So declared Mr. Justice Swift addressing the jury, who found for the defendants, with costs, without leaving the box.

In the case Mr. Crowley sued Miss Nina Hamnett, authoress of "Laughing Torso," her publishers, Messrs. Constable, and the printers, complaining that Miss Hamnett alleged he practised "black magic."

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

"I have nothing to say about the facts except this, I have been over 40 years engaged in the administration of the law in one capacity or another. I thought that I knew 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 learnt in this case that we can always learn something more if we live long enough."

The Foreman said that the jury were unanimous.

Mr. Eddy (for Mr. Crowley) asked for a stay of execution.

Mr. Justice Swift—No, Mr. Eddy, it was a plain question of fact for the jury.

Mr. Eddy—I was desirous of pointing out before the jury gave their decision exactly what had to be done before a verdict could be returned at all. It is no use my doing it now, but I would desire to call your attention to the form of the summing-up to be administered, particularly the need of calling attention to the cross-examination and so forth.