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**This Man Chose Evil, Glorified in His Title of
THE BEAST 666,
and Practised
SEX-MAGIC AND WITCHCRAFT**

By Jenny Nicholson

Drug addict, megalomaniac, would-be traitor, master of a harem of Scarlet Women, magician, Satanist—that was Aleister Crowley. Poet, philosopher, courageous mountaineer, father of two children who began their letters to him, “Dear Beast”—that also was Aleister Crowley.

The man who sold his soul to the devil is still being talked about, written about, a subject for horrified surmise though he died eight years ago. In Cefalu, Sicily, a young American of an inquisitive turn of mind is now scraping whitewash from the walls to show the world Crowley’s obscene paintings of intermingled sex and magical practices.

During his lifetime, British and American newspapers headlined Crowley and his work ‘The Wickedest Man in the World’, ‘The Man We’d Like to Hang’, ‘A Cannibal at Large’, ‘King of Depravity’, ‘Do-Whatever-You-Want Religion Reveals Wicked Rituals Carried on by its High Priest and His Worshippers’ and on the death of a disciple, ‘Driven to Suicide by Devil Worshippers’.

Even Hitler was hardly called the wickedest man in the world with such conviction—or for so many years. The public instinctively felt the difference between Hitler, who was lunatically convinced that he did what he did for the good of the world, and Crowley, who deliberately chose evil—consciously setting out to destroy the accepted social rules of behavior and to replace them with his own.

Crowley was not a poor, superficially lettered little house-painter with no sex appeal. He was well off—his father made a fortune out of the family brewery, and left him £40,000—brilliant, courageous and generally irresistible to women.

He wrote 107 books—mostly on poetry and magic. Of his poetry, C. R. Cammell, one of his enthusiastic biographers, wrote, "Poets there are among his contemporaries who have composed verses as beautiful as Crowley's best. But no poet in our time has conquered thus mightily so vast a realm of poetic theme and meditation."

Many serious critics agreed with Cammell. Even *John Bull*, the first to accuse Crowley of being the wickedest man in the world, reviewing one of his books on poetry, declaimed, ". . . as lord of language, he runs Swinburne pretty close."

A Great Mountaineer

One of the greatest mountaineers of his age Crowley, at 27 in 1902 led the first expedition up the Himalayan peak K2, seven years before the Duke of Abruzzi the Italian climber attempted it. Crowley and mountaineer Oscar Eckenstein almost literally sprinted up the 17,000ft Mexican mountain, Popocatepetl.

Dr. Tom Longstaff, ex-President of the Alpine Club, says, "Crowley was a fine climber . . . I have seen him go up the dangerous and difficult right side of the great icefall of the *Mer de Glace* . . . alone, just for a *promenade*. Probably the first and only time this mad, dangerous and difficult route had been taken."

When the men of his fearful and superstitious Himalayan expedition refused to go any further up Kanchenjunga, Crowley demonstrated his courage by rolling fast down a steep slope, and stopping himself on the edge of a precipice.

There was nothing idle about Crowley. Before going to India on his mountain assault he walked across the North African and Sahara deserts, and took four months to cross China, accompanied by a wife and sick child.

It was also true of him that he could play two games of chess at the same time against experts, who called their moves while he, without glancing at the board, was courting a woman and casting her horoscope. Crowley won the chess and the woman.

It is anybody's guess why Crowley took up magic. His mother and father were pious Plymouth Brethren, and preached eternal damnation. When Crowley was 12 he was publicly ostracised at school, for attempting to corrupt another boy.

Unable or unwilling to defy his desires, Crowley instead defied his household gods—his parents. He deliberately identified

himself with such characters as the Indian mutiny leader, Nana Sahib, and the Devil his father warned the family about every morning at their prayers.

To prove whether it had nine lives he caught a cat, dosed it with arsenic, chloroformed it, hanged it above the gas jet to burn it, stabbed it, cut its throat, smashed its skull, drowned it, and threw it out of the window. According to him it was his mother who gave him the title which stuck, "The Beast".

The Self-styled Ogre

It is possible that Mrs. Crowley, as many mothers do, called him "a little beast"—which he clearly was—whereupon he dramatically promoted himself to one of his parents' favorite ogres, the beast of the Apocalypse (*Revelations, Chapter 13*) whose number according to the prophecy is 666.

Thus began a long record of his self-promotions. He was born on October 12, 1875, at Leamington, and was christened Edward Alexander, but gave himself the more poetic name of Aleister.

At 20 he set himself up as Count Vladimir Svaroff. When he bought Boleskine—a house and two acres beside Loch Ness, Scotland, he called himself Laird of Boleskine, and put a coronet on his writing paper. Later he knighted himself as "Sir Alastor de Kerval". At one time he called himself Prince Chioa Khan.

In 1912, he promoted himself in the magical hierarchy from Supreme and Holy King of Ireland, Iona and All the Britains that are in the Sanctuary of Gnosis, to be King Baphomet. The first title was bestowed on him by the German magic practitioner Theodor Reuss, of the Oriental Templars, because Crowley had discovered the secret of the IXth Degree.

The only promotion Crowley did not organize himself was when the British Press elevated him from "The Wickedest Man in the Britain" to calling him the "Wickedest Man in the World".

Lust for Experience

For someone as poetically imaginative, and anxious to revenge and amuse himself, as Crowley, magic was an irresistible pursuit. He lusted for every physical and mental experience. He wanted to climb higher and sink lower, than anyone else.

His body was aggressively male, his hands feminine. He wanted to be both man and woman, poet and money-maker, lover and killer, frivolous wit and jealous god.

As a way of achieving all this, Crowley decided to adopt magic, which has been defined as “the control of the forces of nature by word, mind or gesture”. Crowley had the brain to see that magic can be a very dangerous business, but he also had the courage to risk the consequences.

Besides, it was specially attractive to him that the practice of sex is essential to the performance of many forms of magic.

Serious Magic Studies

In his usual manner Crowley studied magic seriously—from the Yogis in India, the Buddhists in Tibet and from the works of Dr. John Dee, astrologer to Queen Elizabeth I, which form the basis of all European magic and include the talisman with which Dr. Dee claimed to have destroyed the Spanish Armada in 1588.

According to fellow magicians, his disciples and his victims, Crowley had a natural talent for it.

It is difficult to take any man seriously who outwardly behaves like a ludicrous charlatan. Crowley wore flamboyant tourist-European clothes, make-up and scent to draw attention to himself. With whimsical deviltry he took a troupe of chorus girls to Moscow and while the *Ragged Ragtime Girls* danced for his supper, he lurked in the wings of the theatre writing *A Hymn to Pan*.

In 1915, on a visit to the US he became an ineffectual traitor by making an anti-British speech at the foot of the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor standing in a hired motor boat with “four other debauched persons” and a girl with a violin.

At American dinner parties he talked magical shop in a plummy drawl, and privately and expensively sold his Elixir of Life (“made from a substance of my own body”), Sex Appeal Ointment, and his course of Rejuvenation, which he called Amrita.

For cheap success he wrote, *The Complete Exposure of a Drug Fiend*. He had experimented with all known, and little-known drugs—from backdoor to magic—and became a heroin addict to get the facts about drugs.

When he set up as a painter in New York (“I am an Old Master, because I mostly paint dead souls”) this is how he advertised for models:

WANTED: Dwarfs, Hunchbacks, Tattooed Women, Harrison Fishergirls, Freaks of all sorts. Colored woman only if exceptionally ugly or deformed . . .

Typical entries in his Magical Record, such as “The Dog (his current mistress) was lying quietly smoking her opium pipe when all at once she annoyingly started to have visions,” are humorlessly funny. And there is something pathetically unconvincing about an initiation ritual being solemnly performed in a back room in Chancery Lane, or Sex Magic in Victoria Street.

The trouble was that Crowley—whatever explanation is given to his acts—was an effective, destructive force. He had made a solemn pact with the Devil. He was a practicing and, from his point of view, successful Satanist. He preached, “My Master is Satan,” and “Resist not Evil”.

Conjuring Up Demons

According to John Symonds, who wrote *The Great Beast*, when Crowley first seriously started practicing magic and began conjuring up demons at his castle at Boleskine, :his coachman, hitherto a teetotaler, fell into delirium tremens; a clairvoyant whom he had brought from London returned there and became a prostitute; his housekeeper, unable to bear the eeriness of the place, vanished, and a madness settled upon one of the workmen employed on the estate, and he tried to kill the noble Laird of Boleskine.

“Even the butcher,” Symonds wrote, “down in the village came in for his quota of bad luck through Crowley’s casually jotting down on one of his bills the names of Elerion and Maba-kiel, two demons which mean respectively ‘laughter’ and ‘lamentation’. Conjointly, these two words signify ‘unlooked-for sorrow suddenly descending upon happiness’.

“In the butcher’s case, it seems it was only too true, for while cutting up a joint for a customer, he accidentally severed his own femoral artery and died.”

Crowley married for the first time in 1903. His bride, with whom he was united in the now illegal Scottish ceremony in which a man and a woman have merely to declare their willingness to marry before a sheriff, was Rose Kelly, sister of one of Crowley’s disciples.

A Night in a Pyramid

They went on a honeymoon around the world and he persuaded her to spend a night with him in the King’s Chamber of the Great Pyramid, in Egypt, and help him invoke Thoth, the ibis-headed god of wisdom.

After their return to Boleskine Rose gave birth to a daughter who was named Lola Zaza. The Crowleys were divorced in 1909 and in 1911 Rose was put in an insane asylum.

In Leipzig, Germany, in 1929, Crowley took a second wife, a Nicaraguan named Maria Theresa Ferrari de Miramar, who had been married and divorced once or twice before, and had a child.

Maria drank heavily, made scenes, and accused Aleister and his friends of trying to poison her. Within a few weeks Crowley regretted the marriage, and they lived together uneasily in England and Germany for only a few weeks at a time.

At odd times he would leave her, though she usually tracked him down but after she had threatened suicide a number of times she also was certified insane and removed to an asylum.

Before, during and after his two marriages Crowley associated with literally hundreds of women. His sexuality appears to have been insatiable. The ones who lasted longest as his companions were called the Scarlet Women, and were regarded, or were supposed to be regarded, nearly as highly by his disciples as he was himself. Dozens of children were born of these liaisons.

During the 1930's Crowley wandered about England, often dressing in flowered waistcoats, wearing enormous rings, sometimes in loud-checked plus fours. When in London he haunted two Soho inns, the Marquis of Granby and the Fitzroy Tavern, where homosexuals and lesbians congregated as well as merely eccentrics.

One of the eccentrics, Betty May, known as Tiger Woman was involved with Crowley through her husband, Raoul Loveday.

There are extraordinary accounts by "eye-witnesses" of Crowley's magical ability. For instance, he walked through Mexico City wearing a scarlet cloak and a golden and jeweled crown, and nobody noticed him; he walked out of his "abbey" in Sicily—through the squad of police who had come to arrest him. It is claimed he foretold the date of both world wars, the death of his first legitimate child, the child of one of his mistresses, of his mother and father, of his disciples Norman Mudd (by drowning), of Raoul Loveday (from drinking bad water), of his Himalayan servant on Kanchenjunga, and of many of his Scarlet Women.

One day he made all the books vanish from the shelves of a bookshop in Charing Cross Rd., London. But this was all small stuff.

Symonds, his biographer, writes, "His ambition was to replace dying Christianity with insurgent Crowleyanity."

First of His Temples

From his own point of view, Crowley succeeded. He evolved the magic religion of Thelema. Its law was, "Do What Thou Wilt shall be the whole of the Law. Love is the Law. Love under Will".

Crowley wrote his "bible", which is called the *Book of The Law*, built himself the first temple to Thelema in Cefalu, Sicily and initiated what he called the "New Aeon of Crowleyanity" by "banishing the dying God".

This involved christening a frog Jesus of Nazareth and ritually stabbing it in the heart with the "Dagger of Art" after "Mocking Upon the Cross" and chanting, "I the Great Beast slay Thee, Jesus of Nazareth, the slave-God . . ."

There were many of these rituals—and Sex Magic accompanied most of them. Although Crowley said, "Women should be brought round to the back door, like milk," his need for them was insatiable, and the supply of women who gladly allowed themselves to be painfully branded with the Mark of the Beast, and to have goats ritually murdered on their stomachs, was never exhausted.

Any man or woman associating with Crowley had to be spiritually well-armed to resist him, for if anyone he wanted seemed unwilling, he had a strange ability to compel them.

Such were his hypnotic powers that one day in Piccadilly he hypnotized a happily married young woman who was gazing innocently into a shop window, so that, under his spell, she accompanied him, a perfect stranger, to a hotel, where they stayed for more than a week.

Soon afterwards she was being sued for divorce, her life was ruined, and Crowley had dropped her. It seems extraordinary that no woman publicly resented his Serpent's Kiss, which was to seize the wrist of a woman to whom he was being introduced and bite until it bled.

Although blood of animals flowed freely on his altars, English, French, Italian and German police were never able to prove that Crowley sacrificed humans.

Though he insisted he dealt with angels and not demons, the police recognized his influence was transparently evil and he was expelled from one country after another.

Crowleyism in Sydney

Crowley died drearily in an English boarding-house in 1947. But he had launched his "religion" (which still has disciples in America) and left an evil and turbulent spirit behind which it is difficult to lay.

Late last year a form of Crowleyism turned up in King's Cross, a bohemian section of Sydney, where several residents posed for newspaper pictures wearing robes and masks similar, in a crude way, to those used by Crowley and his associates in his Abbey of Thelema, at Cefalu, Sicily.

Publicity for the Kings Cross brand of magic was sparked by the arrest of a New Zealand girl, Anna Hoffman, on a charge of vagrancy.

A detective told the court that while he was patrolling in the Cross Anna approached him and said, "I can't stand this life any more. I have got no money and to eat I have to give my body to their animal lusts. Please vag me while I am still sane . . . I have been to a black mass . . . I want to stop before it is too late."

Black Magic in a Villa

According to the detective he asked Anna what she meant by a black mass.

"Sex orgies and practices at Rowie's . . . she's the witch of Kings Cross." Anna later identified Rowie as Rosaleen Norton, an artist already famed for her eccentricity. She lives in a house in Brougham (pronounced *broom*) St., one door of which bears a sign: Welcome to the haunts of Ghosts, Goblins, Werewolves, Vampires, Witches, Wizards and Poltergeists.

At the end of World War I, Crowley established what he called his Abbey, devoted to practicing magic and worshipping evil, at Cefalu, a Sicilian fishing village.

It was formally a villa almost hidden in orange groves not far from the village. Crowley named it Thelema after Rabelais' fantastic community. Among those who went with him to the Abbey were Ninette Shumway, whom he had named Cypris and her child whom he called Hermes. There was also his own child by one of his mistresses whom he called The Ape. He called her child Dionysius. It was Hermes and Dionysus who, in later letters to him, addressed him "Dear Beast".

Other adherents with him at the Abbey were Betty May and her husband Raoul Loveday. The latter died at the Abbey from

an attack of enteric fever caused by polluted water, though the villagers of Cefalu said it was from drinking cat's blood.

Loveday made Betty May cook and keep house for Crowley and himself.

The house had five rooms, one of which was a sanctum sanctorum with an altar, a throne for Crowley and one for the current Scarlet Woman. On the temple walls, and those of other rooms of the Abbey, Crowley painted every kind of sexual act in every conceivable position. He did it, he said, to induce indifference to sex through familiarity.

Until a few weeks ago, it was popularly supposed that the Abbey at Cefalu was destroyed by the Italian police when they expelled Crowley from Sicily following the death of Loveday.

But Kenneth Anger, a young American who has already made one film about *The Beast*, has re-discovered the Abbey while looking for locations for another film dealing with Crowley's doings at Cefalu.

Anger's first film was called *The Dome of Pleasure* and was shown during the Festival of Britain.

When Anger went to Sicily recently he located the old farmhouse, once known as the Abbey, in an olive grove a mile or more outside the town.

It is still the single-storeyed building, now abandoned and dilapidated, and hardly the sort of place one would associate with the headquarters of the magical "religion" Crowley intended would succeed Christianity.

Many Staring Eyes

Anger managed to get into the villa but hesitated in the half-light of one of the empty rooms because he felt he was being stared at from the walls by many eyes.

He stood there, waiting for something to happen, asking himself was magic still alive here.

Was Crowley playing some posthumous joke? But nothing happened.

The eyes went on staring steadily, eerily, until Anger suddenly realized these must be the magical and pornographic paintings with which Crowley had covered the doors and walls of his Abbey. The Italian police had merely whitewashed them, and now, after 37 years, the whitewash was flaking off.

Anger realized that all he would have to do for his film would be to rent the villa and remove the whitewash.

It may be superstition or prejudice, or a lot of nonsense; but it seems that nothing connected with Crowley, dead or alive, is as easy as that.

For instance, Crowley's original landlord, since dead, left the house to his daughters, who had also died and left it to their husbands—one a retired colonel living in Palermo and the other a local lawyer.

These two beneficiaries dislike each other intensely, and had divided the villa with a wall which cleaved the main room in two.

While Kenneth Anger was entreating the kindly lawyer to rent his half of the farmhouse for a pittance, a band of workmen came singing through the olive grove, to make the colonel's half of the house "habitable for summer visitors", as they said.

The House of Ghosts

This was the sort of thing that has happened in other ways with things connected with Crowley. The villa, except for a few months after Crowley's expulsion when the landlord had lived there himself, had been unoccupied for more than 30 years. It was known locally as the House of Ghosts and, even with the acute housing shortage in the district, no local would dream of living in it.

It was a piece of perversity that just as Anger made the discovery of the drawings and was about to use them in his film, one of the half-owners should decide to let his half of the farmhouse for holiday visitors.

Even while Anger watched the workmen began destroying a large area of the walls in the colonel's side of the house. To have this work stopped Anger had to disclose that the drawings on the walls—just discernable in most parts—were scientifically interesting and should be preserved.

This of course, made the joint owners realize that their primitive little villa without light or water or even the most primitive convenience, had suddenly become a valuable property. But at the price they began to ask for it, Anger found he couldn't afford to rent it (but he didn't say so).

While keeping the co-operative lawyer and avaricious colonel waiting for his decision, Anger began scraping the walls, night and day, cleaning them with hydrochloric acid.

When he uncovered the demons, the colonel was so disgusted, he threw Anger out and locked the door, but the lawyer still allowed him to work in the other half of the house.

This was the situation when a semi-official party arrived in Cefalu to record Anger's find.

The party arrived from Palermo before dawn. The only Cefaluns not asleep were the sardine fishermen using their lights on the deathly calm sea. The moon was rising reluctantly and owls called from the heights of the rock which dominates Cefalu.

Bats in the Cemetery

Bats whimpered above the ornate tombs in the cemetery where Loveday is buried and then the Abbey appeared unexpectedly before them in the feeble moonlight—almost as if it had come down to meet them.

When they entered the front door, the torchlight revealed an exaggeratedly cobwebbed kitchen. Cobwebs of every design and texture festooned the pestles and mortars and the rusted implements of alchemy which Crowley had used for mixing magic potions and preparing drugs, and shrouded the ancient charcoal stove where Betty May (Loveday's wife and the sculptor Epstein's model) cooked unwillingly for Crowley and his disciples.

Next, the torch-beam fell on a face from the past—Leah, the Beast's favorite Scarlet Woman, painted naked in thick, brilliant oils by Crowley.

Anger held the oil lamp to the other revelations of his patient scraping—portraits of naked disciples performing nameless things with each other, with symbols of sex magic and with a goat.

Anger told the party that "elementals" had kept him company at night. Between 1.30 and 4.00 in the morning he heard heavy footsteps on the roof, he said.

Next morning Anger also said a man named Domenico, son of a local farmer, had described how on a fine, beautiful day, in the middle of the morning, he saw a white beast the size of a donkey, cropping the grass around the villa.

He Saw an Apparition

"Did you see anything else, Domenico?" Anger had asked him.

"Yes. Later I saw a man leaning on a gate down there by the main road. He was wearing a black coat and a black hat and in this hand he carried a flower, and in his other hand a sword. 'Come here! Come here!' he called to me. Of course I

didn't answer. If you talk to an apparition you die," Domenico said.

During the day the party met several people old enough to remember Crowley as a "fine gentleman". Although local belief was that he had murdered Loveday for some obscure reason of his own, and that when he left he had abandoned one of his women (who was forced to prostitute herself), and his children (who begged in the streets of Cefalu), this did not diminish their respect for him.

"By Bacchus!" said an old man, named Galluazzi, admiringly, "You have to be a man to content so many women."

A man named Franco, had, as a little boy, played with the two children at the Abbey, Dionysius and Hermes. Lurking in the olive grove, he had watched a sacrifice of a cat.

"They were all wearing clothes. The Englishman (Crowley) was wearing a robe and a turban. There was a scarlet cover on the altar . . ." Franco told the party.

Crowley had expected a stream of eager disciples at Cefalu, but few came.

The greatest living authority on Crowley, and incidentally one of the few authorities on magic in England, an admirer but non-disciple of Crowley's, explains the murals. "His pictures were half jokes—but were also to show new disciples. If they were shocked, they were no good and he would expel them."

Magic, Drugs and Poetry

With nine or 10 Thelemites living at close quarters, in magical competition on an income of only £3 a week (all that there was left of Crowley's fortune) relations were often strained. Crowley worked at magic, experimented with drugs, and wrote poetry against terrific domestic odds.

He often had to banish his women to the top of a small, rocky tor behind the Abbey for quarrelling with each other. From the doorstep, now overgrown with wild mint, he would signal to them with a mirror when they were forgiven, and could come down.

When he needed to escape from the cries of the children and the sulks of his disciples, Crowley climbed to meditate in the Temple of Diana, also on the rocks above the villa. He had a macabre sense of humor. He meant to shock when he jokingly summed up Loveday's death, "He lit my cigar and then he went out."

So far as anyone knows, Crowley never made human sacrifice. He sacrificed living things only five times in his life—five sparrows in connection with an invocation of Mercury; a pigeon in North Africa, to invoke a demon, and crucified and consumed a toad in the United States.

At Cefalu the sacrifice of a cat (which had been carefully anaesthetised first), and a goat on the stomach of the Scarlet Woman were both done to amuse visitors.

Towards the end of the Abbey era at Cefalu things went from dreary to disastrous. Sister Cypris got ulcers; The Beast got boils; Poupee, the Scarlet Woman's child, died, and then, to finish them all off, Raoul Loveday drank bad water and died of enteritis.

Crowley had been notorious for so long newspaper readers found it easy to believe he had murdered Loveday. The Cefalu period ended in the ignominious expulsion from Italy of The Beast 666.

An Action for Slander

In 1934, Crowley was in the public eye again when he brought an action for slander against William Constable, publishers of *Laughing Torso*, the autobiography of Nina Hamnett, the sculptress who had been The Beast's friend for 20 years.

Counsel for Crowley asked him to find among his acquaintances two friends who would testify to his good character. But none was willing to step into court.

Constable pleaded justification and the trial of the publishers and the author soon turned into a trial of Aleister Crowley, for leading an immoral life.

The defence put Betty May Loveday in the box and she described the lurid scenes she had witnessed at the Abbey.

On the fourth day of the case Mr. Justice Swift, who was on the Bench, said to the jury:—

"I thought I knew every conceivable form of wickedness. I thought 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. I have never heard such dreadful, horrible, blasphemous stuff as that which has been produced by the man who describes himself to you as the greatest living poet."

Not Always Diabolical

“Do you want the case to go on?” he asked them.

The jury soon brought in a verdict for the publishers.

As Crowley strode from the court, even his arrogant spirit temporarily humbled, a girl rushed up to him and said, “This is the wickedest thing since the Crucifixion. Is there anything I could do to help? Can I be the mother of your child?”

Nine months later she got her wish.

Perhaps Crowley was not always as diabolical as he painted himself on the doors of the Abbey at Cefalu. He once cured a woman of drink; and he married Maria de Miramar, against all advice of his friends, because he considered it his duty to get her into England from which she was debarred except as the wife of an Englishman. She was forbidden to live in France and had no money.

Crowley made a point of never being nice without being nasty and vice versa. In a book of devout hymns to the Virgin Mary there was, for bad measure, one which was a complicated anagramic blasphemy.

Even his best friends, when he blackguarded and sued them (he once issued a writ against his literary-agent friend for £15,000, which he claimed he would have gained if his friend had handled his literary affairs properly), had often to remind themselves what a good companion (and cook) he was, how freely the good talk and brandy flowed, how physically courageous he was, how genuinely he was adored by his women and his children.

To the normal public he was anti-social. He was bad about paying his debts. He was a drug addict and a megalomaniac. It was natural they should assume that if he dedicated himself to magic it was bound to be black. True, Black Magic can only be conducted by a renegade priest. All correct magical communications, according to the cult, are through the archangels.

: If you conjure up a devil without first invoking a guardian angel, if you conjure up an evil spirit without a good agency, you can't control it, and you deserve all you get,” one of England's few authorities on magic explained.

Satanic Inspiration

It is possible Crowley got his magic wrong, and his guardian angel was really a demon. Certainly the Christian view would be that Crowley was Satanically inspired.

Recently, Dr. Kinsley, the famous sexologist, examined the sex-magic oil paintings with which Crowley had covered his Abbey walls and doors, and from which Kenneth Anger, the young American film-maker, has painstakingly removed the white-wash slapped on 37 years ago by the order of the Italian police.

"I know nothing about the magic side of it," remarked Dr. Kinsey, "but I am interested in the sex angle. I have interviewed several people who knew Crowley when he was in America and I have his books in my library. The amazing thing is that Crowley lived a life that would not normally have been tolerated in the most primitive parts of darkest Africa. He thought he could get away with blatant sex practices and, in fact, he did get away with them for many years.

"With his aptitude for sex, his knowledge of magical tradition and technique, and his acquaintanceship with the East, Crowley had worked out for himself the secret of sexual magic. Believing it had died out in the West, he was proud of rediscovering it. His paintings in the Abbey were merely tactics for his students. He liked shocking people."

First dictionary of magical terms—the first comprehensible guide to yoga, and a major contribution to the techniques of magic—called *Magic in Theory and Practice*, was produced by Crowley.

He was taken seriously until he attempted to make a religion out of a symposium of various western and oriental forms of magic. Then he quarreled with most of his friends and admirers, because they would not take his religion of Thelema seriously. All serious magicians are agreed that magic is inferior to religion. "Any recognized religious symbols," they tell you, "such as the Sign of the Cross, are proof against it."

Crowley was a false Messiah. In 1917 he had founded his new religion based on the *Book of the Law* (dictated to him by his angel) after ceremonially killing Christianity. He had no disciples of any caliber for his religion in his lifetime. None has yet appeared; and it is unlikely that any will.

He tried to become a spiritual adviser to Stalin, to Hitler (who quotes from the *Book of the Law* in his conversations with Rauschnig on the subject of white and black magic), to the British War Office, Henry Ford and King George V. He tried to "benefit" mankind with his law "Do what thou wilt."

History shows it usual for the Devil to get the false Messiahs.

Ronald Matthews, in his *English Messiahs*, records the end of "Naylor on his tragic ride through the autumn downpour;

Joanna dying, racked by doubts, in the glare of publicity; Brothers thundering of 'divine vengeance' from behind the madhouse bars; Tom leading his deluded followers to imprisonment and death; Prince and Smyth-Pigott founding, in the Somerset Hills, a new ark to save a remnant of mankind."

Heroin for His Asthma

And Crowley ended his days in a Hastings, England, boarding-house, taking heroin supplied by the National Health Scheme for his asthma.

His funeral wasn't at all as he had romantically willed it. "I direct my executor to take the necessary steps to ensure my body is embalmed in the ancient Egyptian fashion . . . my body to be dressed in white Tau robe with Abramelin red and gold tunic and girdle, and the crown and wand. Also the big red sword. Bury all magical jewels with me," he had written in his last will.

His urn was to be placed "either on (a) the broad ledge of the cliff behind Boleskine House, Scotland; (b) the top of the rock at Cefalu, Sicily, about the Bath of Diana; or in (c) Westminster Abbey."

In fact, he was cremated in the dismal non-denominational chapel in the Brighton cemetery (his ashes were forwarded later to disciples in America).

A congregation of scandalized newspapermen, and amused old friends, attended the macabre burial service.

The sound of someone quoting from the *Book of the Law* and declaiming Crowley's *Hymn to Pan* ricocheted off the tombstones in the dreary Brighton graveyard and echoed through the Christian world:

"And I rave, and I rape and I rip and I rend
Everlasting world without end . . ."