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FOR THE THELEMITES

ROSE AND ALEISTER CROWLEY'S STAY IN EGYPT IN 1904

A STUDY OF THE CAIRO WORKING
AND WHAT IT LED TO

BY
PERDURABO ST



FRATER PERDURABO, to whom this revelation was made with so many signs and wonders, was himself unconvinced. He struggled against it for years. Not until the completion of His own initiation at the end of 1909 did He understand how perfectly He was bound to carry out this work. (Indeed, it was not until his word became conterminous with Himself and His Universe that all alien ideas lost their meaning for him). Again and again He turned away from it, took it up for a few days or hours, then laid it aside. He even attempted to destroy its value, to nullify the result. Again and again the unsleeping might of the Watchers drove Him back to the work; and it was at the very moment when He thought Himself to have escaped that He found Himself fixed for ever with no possibility of again turning aside for the fraction of a second from the path.

The history of this must one day be told by a more vivid voice. Properly considered, it is a history of continuous miracle.

THE EQUINOX OF THE GODS, 1936 E.V.

As regards the publication of the MS. etc. as laid upon him in *Liber L vel Legis*, I think that Crowley now at the age of fifty-three begins to worry. Therefore we find him trying to complete this task by including it in another project which he had been working on for some years. Crowley had started writing his memoirs around 1922 E.V. – at first referred to by him as “*The Hag*” and later on publication titled:

*THE SPIRIT OF SOLITUDE | An Autohagiography | Subsequently re-Antichristened | THE CONFESSIONS OF | ALEISTER CROWLEY.*³⁵⁹¹

As publisher he had found The Mandrake Press – the firm that in 1930 E.V. also distributed the four “*French*” sections of *Magick in Theory and Practice* for him.³⁵⁹² The Mandrake Press was founded in 1929 E.V. and located at 41 Museum Street in the Bloomsbury area of London. It was ran by the Australian writer, publisher, editor, and literary agent Percy Reginald Stephensen (1901-1965), and financed by Edward Goldston (1892-1953), a rich antiquarian bookseller and publisher who had a bookshop, Edward Goldston Ltd., Oriental and Foreign Bookseller, at 25 Museum Street.³⁵⁹³ P. R. Stephensen was born at Maryborough, Queensland, on November 20, 1901.³⁵⁹⁴ In 1922 E.V. he graduated with a B.A. from the University of Brisbane, and went as a Rhodes Scholar to Oxford University from 1924-1927 E.V. From 1927 E.V. he was manager of Fanfrolico Press in London, and from 1929-1930 E.V. Director of the Mandrake Press, and a few years later he returned to Australia. Regarding Edward Goldston, he had in 1925 E.V. made headlines when he purchased a copy of the *Gutenberg Bible*, completed about 1455, for £10,000 – some £600,000 in today’s money.³⁵⁹⁵ Besides publishing Crowley’s books the Mandrake Press published, among other things, works by D. H. Lawrence and Liam O’Flaherty.³⁵⁹⁶ As to D. H. Lawrence and Aleister Crowley, there are two incidents worth mentioning. In 1910 E.V. the England-based French-American singer and Actress Grace Inez Crawford (1889-1977), had lent D. H. Lawrence the newly published *Ambergris; A Selection from the Poems of Aleister Crowley* to read. Lawrence did not like the book and wrote to Grace Crawford:

*If ambergris smells like ‘Crowley’ it is pretty bad. Civet cats and sperm whales – ugh!*³⁵⁹⁷

³⁵⁹¹ *Aleister Crowley*. *The Spirit of Solitude, An Autohagiography Subsequently re-Antichristened The Confessions of Aleister Crowley*. 2 vols. London, UK: The Mandrake Press, 1929. • For the abridged 1-vol. ed. of *The Confessions of Aleister Crowley – An Autohagiography*, quoted in this book as “*Confessions*”, see note 4 above.

³⁵⁹² *The Master Therion [Aleister Crowley]*. *Magick in Theory and Practice (Being Part III of Book 4)*; By The Master Therion. 4 vols. (Sections). Printed: Paris, France: Privately printed at The Lecram Press, nd [1929/30]. Distributed in wrappers: [London, UK: Mandrake Press Ltd., 1930]. • Distributed as a one-volume hardcover Subscriber’s Edition: Np [London, UK: Mandrake Press Ltd.] PUBLISHED FOR SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, 1929 [but 1930].

³⁵⁹³ For the history of the Mandrake Press, see: *Richard Fotheringham*. *Expatriate Publishing: P. R. Stephensen and the Mandrake Press*. • *Meanjin Quarterly: A Review of Arts and Letters*. Melbourne, Australia: The University of Melbourne, Vol. 31, No. 2, June 1972, pp. 183-8.

³⁵⁹⁴ See: *Rhodes Scholarships; Record of Past Scholars Elected Between the Years 1903 and 1927 Inclusive*. Oxford, UK: Oxford [Printed at the Vincent Works] 1931, p. 338. (*SCHOLARS ELECTED FOR 1924; QUEENSLAND. 1212 P. R. Stephensen*, p. 338.)

³⁵⁹⁵ *Dundee Evening Telegraph*. Angus, Scotland. • Wednesday, July 22, 1925, p. 8. (*BOOKSELLER’S £10,000 COPY OF GUTENBERG BIBLE; Owner Anxious for It to Stay in This Country*, p. 8.)

³⁵⁹⁶ David Herbert Lawrence (1885-1930). English novelist, storywriter, critic, poet and painter. • Liam O’Flaherty (1896-1984). Irish novelist and short story writer.

³⁵⁹⁷ *D. H. Lawrence*. *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*. Edited by James T. Boulton, et al. 7 vols. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge

Fourteen years later D. H. Lawrence started contributing to a new English weekly *The Adelphi* edited by the English writer John Middleton Murry (1889-1957), and in February 1924 E.V. Lawrence's essay "On Being Religious"³⁵⁹⁸ appeared, which made the weekly magazine *The Spectator* edited by the British journalist John St. Loe Strachey (1860-1927), write on describing the content of the February issue of *The Adelphi*:

*The interest of this number is confined to three items. [...] Mr. D. H. Lawrence shows how close he can come to the style of Mr. Aleister Crowley.*³⁵⁹⁹

I shall return in detail to the publication of Crowley's "Autohagiography".

Ambergris; A Selection from the Poems of Aleister Crowley was published by Elkin Mathews in 1910 E.V. It was announced as forthcoming in the Spring Season of 1910 E.V. in *The Publishers' Circular and Booksellers' Record*, March 5, 1910 E.V.³⁶⁰⁰, and *The Standard* had it on its list of "NEW BOOKS", April 29, 1910 E.V.³⁶⁰¹ As to its name 'Ambergris', Austin Harrison's *The English Review* reviewed the book in December the same year and started by stating:

It is perhaps not uncharacteristic of the poet of these verses that he should give them a title which has really but little connection with them. A certain perverseness or wilfulness is manifest in much of his work, and surprise and paradox are effects which seem dear to him. For these poems are of Grecian rather than of

University Press, 1979-93. ♦ Volume I; 1901-13., p. 169. (165. To Grace Crawford, 9 July 1910, pp. 168-9.) ♦ D. H. Lawrence to Grace Crawford, 24 July, 1910: "[...] I return Crowley: didn't like it." ♦ Ibid., p.171. (167. To Grace Crawford, 24 July 1910, pp. 170-1.)

³⁵⁹⁸ *The Adelphi*. Edited by John Middleton Murry. London, UK: British Periodicals Limited. ♦ Vol. I., No. 9., February 1924, pp. 791-9. (*On Being Religious; By D. H. Lawrence*, pp. 791-9.)

³⁵⁹⁹ *The Spectator; A Weekly Review of Politics, Literature, Theology, Drama, and Art*. London, UK: The Spectator. ♦ No. 4,990. *The Spectator for the Week ending Saturday, February 16, 1924*, p. 254. (*The February Magazines; The Adelphi*, pp. 253-5.)

³⁶⁰⁰ *The Publishers' Circular And Booksellers' Record*. London, UK: The Publishers' Circular. ♦ Vol. XCII, No. 2279, Saturday, March 5, 1910, p. 317. ("**Mr. Elkin Mathews; Mr. Elkin Mathews' New Books for the Spring Season include: – [...] POETRY AND DRAMA [...] Ambergris: A Selection from the Poems of Aleister Crowley.**") ♦ The Academy and Literature. London, UK: The Academy. ♦ Vol. LXXVIII, No. 1976, March 19, 1910, p. 281. ("**Ambergris: A Selection from the Poems of Aleister Crowley. With Portrait. 3s. 6d. net.**")(*SPRING ANNOUNCEMENTS – II; ELKIN MATHEWS*, p. 281.) ♦ The Publishers' Circular And Booksellers' Record. London, UK: The Publishers' Circular. ♦ Vol. XCII, No. 2283, Saturday, April 2, 1910, p. 439. ("**Selections from Mr. Aleister Crowley's works, entitled "Ambergris" will be published shortly by Mr. Elkin Mathews.**")(*Notes and Announcements*, p. 439.)

³⁶⁰¹ *The Standard*. London, UK: The Standard. ♦ Friday, April 29, 1910, p. 5. ("**AMBERGRIS. A Selection from the poems of Aleister Crowley. (Elkin Mathews. 3s. 6d. net.)**")(*NEW BOOKS*, p. 5.) ♦ *The Daily News*. London, England: Daily News. ♦ Wednesday, May 4, 1910, p. 4. ("**Ambergris. "A Selection from the Poems of Aleister Crowley. Pp. 198. Elkin Mathews. 3s. 6d. net.**")(*LITERATURE; BOOKS RECEIVED; POETRY*, p. 4.) ♦ *The Globe and Traveller*. London, England: The Globe. ♦ Wednesday Evening, May 4, 1910, p. 8. ("**AMBERGRIS, by A. Crowley, 3s. 6d.; [...] (Elkin Mathews.)**")(*BOOKS RECEIVED; MISCELLANEOUS*, p. 8.) ♦ *The Bookseller; A Weekly Newspaper of British and Foreign Literature*. London, UK: J. Whitaker & Sons, Limited. ♦ Vol. LIV, No. 71, New Series, Friday, May 6, 1910, p. 553. ("**AMBERGRIS. A Selection from the Poems of Aleister Crowley. Frontispiece. Cr. 8vo, pp. viii-198. E. Mathews net 3/6**")(*Notices of Books – Poetry and the Drama*, p. 553.) ♦ *Labour Leader*. London, England: Labour Leader. ♦ May 13, 1910, p. 291. ("**Ambergris. "By Aleister Crowley, 3s. 6d. net. ELKIN MATHEWS.**")(*VIEWS AND REVIEWS; BOOKS RECEIVED*, p. 291.) ♦ *The Bookman*. London, UK: Hodder and Stoughton. ♦ Vol. XXXVIII, No. 225, June, 1910, p. 141. ("**CROWLEY, ALEISTER. – Ambergris. 3s. 6d. net. (Elkin Mathews)**"", p. 141.) ♦ *Aleister Crowley. Ambergris; A Selection from the Poems of Aleister Crowley*. London, UK: Elkin Mathews, MCMX (1910).

Arabian or Persian origin, and the fragrance of Ambergris is a much lighter and more spiritual thing than the rich and arrogant perfume of Arabia. Maybe Mr. Crowley so entitled his poems, as one christens a child Rose or Wilhelmina or Théophile, without any descriptive or moral intentions at the back of one's mind. Maybe, he just fell a victim to the charms of a pretty word, as any susceptible poet might, and made her forthwith the doorkeeper of his poetic seraglio.

Perhaps it was not worth writing, since he who can afford to be vain can afford to forego the demands of his vanity, yet there it is, and of itself it would make one wonder if the author of *Ambergris* and some thirty other volumes had any right to be piqued because he is not as well known and as well acknowledged as he would like to be.³⁶⁰²

The review was written by the English writer, translator, and poet Edward (Augustine) Storer (1880-1944), who had contributed a short story to the fourth number of *The Equinox*, September 1910 E.V.³⁶⁰³, and the year before, in the autumn of 1909 E.V., he had published *The Ballad of the Mad Bird and other Poems* and had prefaced the book with a quotation from a verse by Crowley.³⁶⁰⁴ However, I notice that Crowley in *The Mother's Tragedy and Other Poems* in 1901 wrote about the female Reaper, in a stanza that was included in *Ambergris*, that "The perfume of her skin was ambergris":

³⁶⁰² The English Review. London, UK: The English Review. ♦ Vol. VII, No. 1, December, 1910, p. 216. (Review of "Ambergris: Selected Poems of Aleister Crowley. Elkin Mathews. 3s. 6d. net." signed "EDWARD STORER.") (BOOK NOTICES; POETRY AND DRAMA, pp. 216-9.) • For the rest of the review, see note³⁷³² below.

³⁶⁰³ The fourth number of *The Equinox*, September, 1910 E.V., had a short story by Edward Storer, "The Three Worms", and the same number contained a review by "Caligula II [i.e. Aleister Crowley] of Storer's book *Peter the Cruel: The Life of the Notorious Don Pedro of Castile together with an account of his relationship with the famous Maria de Padilla* (London, UK: John Lane The Bodley Head, and New York, NY: John Lane Company, MCMXI (1911)). • The March, 1918 E.V., issue of *The International*, edited by Crowley, also contained a translation from Greek by Edward Storer, "WINDFLOWERS OF ASKLEPIADES." • [Aleister Crowley, et al.] *The Equinox*. Vol. I, No. IV. London, UK: Printed for Aleister Crowley and published by him at the office of the Equinox, September MCMX o.s. (1910 E.V.), pp. 317-24. (*The Three Worms*. By Edward Storer, pp. 317-24) • Ibid., p. 329. (Review of "Peter the Cruel. By Edward Storer. John Lane." By "Caligula II [i.e. Aleister Crowley]", p. 329.) (THE BIG STICK, pp. 327-45.) • The International: A Review of Two Worlds. New York City, NY: International Monthly, Inc. ♦ Vol. XII, No. 3, March, 1918, p. 91. (WINDFLOWERS OF ASKLEPIADES. Translated from the Greek by EDWARD STORER, p. 91.) • After the war, in 1920 E.V., appeared *The Windflower's of Asklepiades and the Poems of Poseidippos*, translated by Edward Storer. In 1916 E.V. Edward Storer had moved to Italy and he lived in Rome from 1917 E.V. to 1941 E.V. • The Windflowers of Asklepiades and the Poems of Poseidippos. Translated by Edward Storer. (The Poets' Translation Series, Second Set: No. 5.) London, UK: The Egoist Press, 1920.

³⁶⁰⁴ Edward Storer. *The Ballad of the Mad Bird, and other Poems*. Hampstead: The Priory Press, 1909. • The Bookman. London, UK: Hodder and Stoughton. ♦ Vol. XXXVII, No. 218, November, 1909, p. 112. ("STORER, EDWARD. – *The Ballad of the Mad Bird, and other Poems*. 1s. net (Priory Press, Hampstead)") (New Books of the Month. From September 10 to October 10. – Poetry, Music, and the Drama, p. 112.)

THE REAPER.

*In middle music of Apollo's corn
She stood, the reaper, challenging a kiss;
The lips of her were fresher than the morn,
The perfume of her skin was ambergris;
The sun had kissed her body into brown;
Ripe breasts thrown forward to the summer breeze;
Warm tints of red lead fancy to the crown,
Her coils of chestnut, in abundant ease,
That bound the stately head. What joy of youth
Lifted her nostril to respire the wind?
What pride of being? What triumphal truth
Acclaimed her queen to her imperial mind?³⁶⁰⁵*

Hidden in the stanzas of "The Reaper" are, apart from mythology, magic symbolism! For instance, a look into *Liber 777* will reveal that ambergris corresponds both to the first Sephira, Kether, and to the 29th path attributed to the Hebrew letter ק, Qoph, and the ATU XVIII, The Moon!³⁶⁰⁶ Crowley writes interestingly in his notes to the Column:

Ambergris has comparatively little perfume of its own, but it has a virtue of bringing out the best of any others with which it may be mixed. In the same way, Kether cannot be said to have any intrinsic qualities, but its influence brings out the highest faculties of those ideas which it illuminates.³⁶⁰⁷

It is the magician and the perfume-maker speaking at the same time. I notice that Crowley also mentioned ambergris in one of the stanzas of "The Garden of Janus", which he published in the second number of *The Equinox*, September 1909 E.V.:

³⁶⁰⁵ Aleister Crowley. *Ambergris; A Selection from the Poems of Aleister Crowley*. London, UK: Elkin Mathews, MCMX (1910), p. 54. (*FROM THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY GHOST; The Reaper*, pp. 54-5.) • First published in: Aleister Crowley. *The Mother's Tragedy and Other Poems*. N.p. [London, UK]: Privately printed, 1901, p. 94. (*The Reaper*, pp. 94-6.) • Facsimile reprint: First Impressions Series, Vol. 6. Essex House, Thame, Oxon, UK: Mandrake Press Ltd and Edmonds, WA, USA: Holmes Publishing Group 1992. • For the publication of *The Mother's Tragedy*, see note¹⁸⁵⁰ above. • "The Reaper" appeared as one of the "other poems" in *The Mother's Tragedy and Other Poems* in 1901, however, as stated in a note in the first volume of the *Collected Works* where the poem appeared in *The Temple of the Holy Ghost* (1901) in "The Gate of the Sanctuary", *The Temple of the Holy Ghost* was at the publisher's suggestion split up into *The Soul of Osiris* and *The Mother's Tragedy*, and that its original design of the poet now was restored. • Aleister Crowley. *The Collected Works of Aleister Crowley*. Foyers, Inverness, Scotland: Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth, Volume I, 1905, p. 193. (*The Temple of the Holy Ghost; II. The Gate of the Sanctuary; The Reaper*, p. 193.) • Ibid., p. 166, note*. • See also note¹⁸⁴⁷ above.

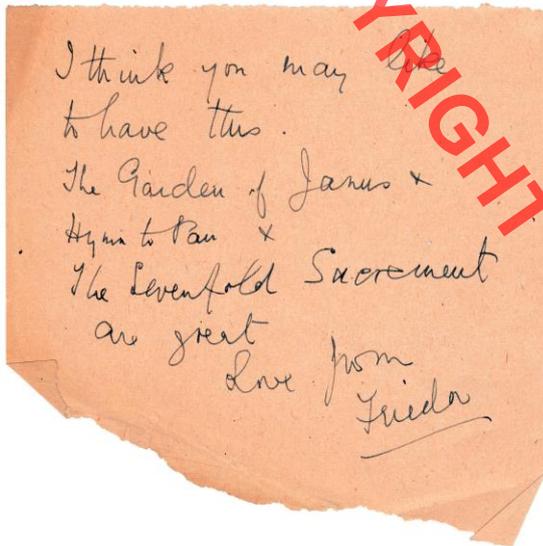
³⁶⁰⁶ [Aleister Crowley, et al.] 777 vel Prolegomena Symbolica ad Systemam Sceptico-Mysticae Viae Explicandae, Fundamentum Hieroglyphicum Sanctissimorum Scientiae Summae. London and Felling-on-Tyne: The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., 1909, Table III; XIV; XLII. (*TABLE OF CORRESPONDENCES*, pp. 1-36.)

³⁶⁰⁷ Aleister Crowley. 777 Revised vel Prolegomena Symbolica ad Systemam Sceptico-Mysticae Viae Explicandae, Fundamentum Hieroglyphicum Sanctissimorum Scientiae Summae. A reprint off 777 with much additional matter by the late Aleister Crowley. London: The Neptune Press, 1955, p. 113. (*EXPLANATIONS OF THE ATTRIBUTIONS IN THE MORE IMPORTANT COLUMNS OF TABLES I – VI; COLUMN XLII. PERFUMES*, pp. 113-121.)

For the Thelemites

So then I caught that goat up in a kiss,
And cried Io Pan! Io Pan! Io Pan!
Then all this body's wealth of ambergris,
(Narcissus-scented flesh of man!)
I burnt before him in the sacrifice;
For he was sure –
Being the Doubt of Things, the one thing to endure!³⁶⁰⁸

The poem was not included in *Ambergris* but chosen for *The Winged Beetle*, which appeared privately printed the same year, and here the thirty-two stanza poem was dedicated "To V. B. Neuburg".³⁶⁰⁹ Crowley also chose "The Garden of Janus" for *OLLA* in 1946 E.V., and here he had added



the information that the poem was written on "Da'leh-ad-din, (A mountain near Bou-Saada.)," however, since the poem was printed in the second number of *The Equinox*, September 1909 E.V., it could not have been written there since he and V. B. Neuburg first left for Algeria in November 1909 E.V.³⁶¹⁰ Nevertheless, Crowley mentioned its writing, which apparently took place in the first part of 1909 E.V. in *Confessions*.³⁶¹¹

With regard to "The Garden of Janus", I have in my possession a copy of *OLLA* (one of the 500 copies printed on machine-made paper and bound in cloth) which at one time must have belonged to Frieda Harris since a handwritten note on a scrap of paper laid-in states:

I think you may like to have this.
The Garden of Janus & Hymn to Pan & The Sevenfold Sacrament are great
Love from Frieda³⁶¹²

³⁶⁰⁸ [Aleister Crowley, et al.] *The Equinox*. Vol. I., No. II. London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co., September MCMIX o.s. (1909 E.V.), p. 99, Stanza XIX. (*THE GARDEN OF JANUS; BY ALEISTER CROWLEY*, pp. [91]-103.) • For the writing of "The Garden of Janus", see note³⁶¹¹ below.

³⁶⁰⁹ Aleister Crowley. *The Winged Beetle*. N.p. [London, UK]: Privately printed, MCMX, p. 40. (*THE GARDEN OF JANUS*, pp. 35-44.) • A facsimile edition with an introduction by Martin P. Starr was published by The Teitan Press in 1992 E.V. • Aleister Crowley. *The Winged Beetle*. A Facsimile Edition; With an Introduction by Martin P. Starr. Chicago, IL: The Teitan Press, 1992.

³⁶¹⁰ *OLLA*. An Anthology of Sixty Years of Songs by Aleister Crowley. London: Published by the O.T.O., An Ixx. Sol in 0° Capricornus. Dec. 22, 10.54 A.M. [1946 E.V.], pp. 120-6. (*THE GARDEN OF JANUS*, pp. 120-6.) • Reprinted in facsimile: Essex House, Thame, Oxon, UK: Mandrake Press Ltd and Edmonds, WA, USA: Holmes Publishing Group, 1992. (*First Impressions Series*, Vol. No. 2) • For Aleister Crowley and V. B. Neuburg's journey to Algeria in 1909 E.V., see the text to Figure 38. and Figure 39. in this work.

³⁶¹¹ "My time was in fact very fully taken up with the preparation of *The Equinox*. [...] Besides this, I was writing a good deal of poetry. Some of my most important work belongs to this period. 'The Wizard Way', 'The Garden of Janus', 'After Judgement' and 'Bathyllus' are especially notable." • *Confessions*, p. 594.

³⁶¹² For a review of *OLLA* in Crowley's local paper, the *Hastings & St. Leonards Observer*, see note³⁸⁵⁵ below.

For the Thelemites

Her words are a kind of review of the content of a book whose dust-jacket – a portrait of Crowley done by her – she had designed. I discovered another smaller scrap of paper laying between the pages of the book which on one side had the signature of "Louis Wilkinson" and on the other side had five page numbers written – Frieda Harris obviously gave the book with her note to Louis Wilkinson. The first of these page numbers is "p. 30", and this scrap of paper was placed at this page. On page 30 is printed the poem "PRAYER AT SUNSET | To the Hon. Ralph Shirley":

*God, who hast sent me forth to be the priest
Of Thine immortal fire,
Grant me to kindle one new torch at least
Ere mine expire!*

*Christ, who hast chosen me to bear the Cross,
To pay the infinite price,
Let save one soul from everlasting loss
My sacrifice!*

*Spirit, who has filled me with the sacred strife
That brings the eternal peace,
Let my breath quicken one dead soul to life
Before it cease!*

Tali Fu.³⁶¹³

The next is "p. 103" whereon is printed the "LOGOS" – a poem written by Crowley at "Netherwood, The Ridge, Hastings. 1946", his last address, written in the same year as the book was published:

*Out of the night forth flamed a star – mine own!
Now seventy light-years nearer as I urge
Constant mine heart through the abyss unknown,
Its glory my sole guide while spaces surge
About me. Seventy light-years! As I near
That gate of light that men call death, its cold
Pale gleam begins to pulse, a throbbing sphere,
Systole and diastole of eager gold,
New life immortal, warmth of passion bleed
Till night's black velvet burn to crimson. Hark!
It is Thy voice, Thy word, the secret seed
Of rapture that admonishes the dark.
Swift! By necessity most righteous drawn,
Hermes, authentic augur of the dawn!³⁶¹⁴*

³⁶¹³ OLLA. An Anthology of Sixty Years of Songs by Aleister Crowley. London: Published by the O.T.O., An Ixx. Sol in 0° Capricornus. Dec. 22, 10.54 A.M. [1946 E.V.], p. 30. (PRAYER AT SUNSET, p. 30.)

³⁶¹⁴ Ibid., p. 103. (LOGOS, p. 103.)

For the Thelemites

Next follows p. "104", "THE BABOON," written at Tolga, and p. "105", "THE CAMEL," written at Rawal Pindi, and finally p. "119", "THANATOS BASILEOS" [Θάνατος βασιλῆος, Death of King], also, as "THE LOGOS," written in "Netherwood, The Ridge, Hastings. 1946":

*The Serpent dips his head beneath the sea
His mother, source of all the energy
Eternal, thence to draw the strength he needs
On earth to do indomitable deeds
Once more; and they, who saw but understood
Naught of his nature of beatitude
Were awed: they murmured with abated breath;
Alas the Master; so he sinks in death.
But whoso knows the mystery of man
Sees life and death as curves of one same plan.³⁶¹⁵*

Crowley is here speaking of his own death which came the year after its writing. It appears as if Louis Wilkinson has chosen this selection in order to recite them at a special occasion, perhaps originally Aleister Crowley's funeral, or the dinner at an Indian restaurant which on Crowley's request took place to the day after his death, a memorial dinner organised by Frieda Harris. It is very interesting that Wilkinson in the *Seven Friends* (1953 E.V.) also mentions the two poems written in Hastings in 1946 E.V.:

An anthology should be made of Crowley's poems, for those that really are poems, his best ones, among which I would doubt if those published in The Oxford Book of Mystical Verse should be included, would fill a fair-sized volume. The anthology, Olla, that he made himself and had printed shortly before his death, was planned so as to represent the varieties of his verse-writing: there are good poems in it – notably two that he wrote at the end of his life – but there are many too many inferior poems as well. Crowley wouldn't take my advice about Olla. He always thought I failed to appreciate him as a poet. After reading a book of mine in which I laid perhaps too much stress upon his remarkable gifts for cooking, he wrote these lines on the fly-leaf: "On Crowley the Immortals ironically look, He sought fame as a poet and he found it as a cook."

Well, I could not understand most of his mystical poetry, though I could respond to some of it – to such lines (I quote from memory) as:

³⁶¹⁵ Ibid., p. 119. (THANATOS BASILEOS, p. 119.)

For the Thelemites

*The Universe I measured with my rod,
The blacks were even with the whites.
Satan dropped down as uprose God,
Whores danced and played with anchorites.
So in my Book the even matched the odd.
No word therein I wrote,
But signed it with the Sigil of the Goat.³⁶¹⁶*

The stanza is the second last stanza of *The Garden of Janus*, here in Crowley's original:

*The universe I measured with my rod.
The blacks were balanced with the whites;
Satan dropped down even as up soared God;
Whores prayed and danced with anchorites.
So in my book the even matched the odd;
No word I wrote
Therein, but sealed it with the signet of the goat.³⁶¹⁷*

Wilkinson's scrap of paper is also a kind of review of OLLA!

Aleister Crowley had written in his last will on June 19, 1947 E.V., some five and a half month before his death:

No religious service.

*I should like either Capt. Gerald Yorke of 5 Montague Square,
W.1, or Dr. Louis Wilkinson to read at an appropriate moment,
first the Hymn of [sic] Pan, secondly The Book of the Law, thirdly
the Collects from the Gnostic Mass (pp. 353 and 354). Finally,
the Anthem at the bottom of p. 357 to top of page 359.³⁶¹⁸*

Wilkinson read at Crowley's funeral, in accordance with his wish: the "HYMN TO PAN"; but only forty-two verses "FROM THE BOOK OF THE LAW", verses presumably chosen by Wilkinson; the "COLLECTS OF THE GNOSTIC MASS", but again only extracts; and the "GNOSTIC ANTHEM", but omitting the last few lines – this according to *THE LAST RITUAL*, the booklet published by Frieda Harris commemorating Aleister Crowley's funeral, which had as frontispiece a tipped-in photograph of an art work signed "Frida Harris del.[ineavit, i.e. 'Frida Harris drew (it)']" in the style of the Thoth tarot, and printed beneath it was the last three lines of "THANATOS BASILEOS"!

³⁶¹⁶ Louis Marlow [Louis Umfreville Wilkinson]. Seven Friends. London, UK: The Richards Press, 1953, pp. 44-5. (ALEISTER CROWLEY, pp. 39-64)

³⁶¹⁷ OLLA. An Anthology of Sixty Years of Songs by Aleister Crowley. London: Published by the O.T.O., An Ixx. Sol in 0° Capricornus. Dec. 22, 10.54 A.M. [1946 E.V.], p. 126. (*THE GARDEN OF JANUS*, pp. 120-6.)

³⁶¹⁸ Quoted from: IN THE CONTINUUM. Oroville, CA: The College of Thelema. ♦ Vol. II, No. 2, An. LXXIV, 1978 e.v. Sun in 0° Cancer, p. 7. ("Copy "THIS IS THE LAST WILL of me EDWARD ALEXANDER CROWLEY commonly known as Aleister Crowley of "Netherwood", the Ridge, Hastings, Sussex, England. [...] IN WITNESS whereof I have hereunto set my hand this nineteenth day of June, one thousand nine hundred and forty-seven. [...] OBSEQUIES 1. No religious service. [...]"", pp. 6-7.)

For the Thelemites

On this drawing the 'Mark of the Beast' is seen emanating thirty-six beams (666 = Σ (1–36), the number of the ☉) in the upper left corner, and it is facing the right way, unlike on the upper cover of *OLLA* where the binder had turned it upside down although the title page had it facing the right way!³⁶¹⁹ The title page of *THE LAST RITUAL* stated:

*Do what thou wilt shall be the
whole of the Law*

**ALEISTER
CROWLEY**

October 18th [sic, but 12th], 1875 - December 1st, 1947

THE LAST RITUAL

*Read from his own works, according to his
wish, on December 5th, 1947, at Brighton.*

*Love is the law, love under will.*³⁶²⁰

It seems natural that Gerald Yorke should have abstained from reading at Crowley's funeral since he, as mentioned, could not accept the Law of Thelema nor its book.³⁶²¹ Wilkinson wrote later in *Seven Friends*:

*In the Crowley circle, as in the Wilde circle, I have one aspect only: that of "the man who read the Hymn of [sic] Pan at the Beast's Funeral."*³⁶²²

One of the reporters present at Crowley's funeral was the reporter from the Odhams Press published (!) the *Daily Herald*³⁶²³, who under the headings: "**CREMATING "GREAT BEAST""; "Black magic funeral at Brighton"**", wrote in his paper the day after, Saturday, December 6:

Without religious ceremony, but with a reading of the strange wild words from his writings on magic, self-styled "Great Wild Beast" Aleister Crowley was cremated at Brighton yesterday in the presence of his disciples.

Crowley, who died at Hastings, aged 72, shocked the world of the early thirties [sic] with stories of his "black magic" practices and orgies in his "Abbey" in Italy.

³⁶¹⁹ For the 'Mark of the Beast', see note⁴¹⁴⁶ below.

³⁶²⁰ *Aleister Crowley*; [Frieda Harris]. *Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law*. ALEISTER CROWLEY; October 18th [sic], 1875 – December 1st, 1947; *THE LAST RITUAL*; *Read from his own works, according to his wish, on December 5th, 1947, at Brighton*. *Love is the law, love under will*. [Brecon, Wales, UK: Privately published, 1947]
• A true Second Edition ("*FACSIMILE EDITION*") of the booklet was produced from the original 1947 E.V. printing materials by Empress Earth Mysteries Press in 1989 E.V. • *Ibid.*, Brecon, UK: Empress Earth Mysteries Press, 1989.

³⁶²¹ See note¹²¹ above.

³⁶²² *Louis Marlow* [Louis Umfreville Wilkinson]. *Seven Friends*. London, UK: The Richards Press, 1953, p. 42. (ALEISTER CROWLEY, pp. 39-64)

³⁶²³ The chairman of the Odhams Press, Ltd., the Rt. Hon. Viscount Southwood of Fernhurst, Julius Salter Elias, had died at the age of seventy-three the year before on April 10, 1946 E.V. • For Julius Salter Elias, see note²⁴⁰⁴ above.



I notice that the English poet and novelist Kenneth Hopkins (1914-1988), who was a friend of Louis Wilkinson, attended Crowley's funeral. He wrote in 1954 E.V. in his autobiography *The Corruption of a Poet* about the funeral:

"I was one of the "long-haired devotes" described in the press as present at Crowley's funeral. In fact I had the longest hair of them all. But I wasn't technically a devotee. I simply wanted to hear Louis Marlow read Crowley's Hymn to Pan, which he did superbly. The wild and barbaric words echoed round the Crematorium, "Io, Pan! Pan!" until I for one expected that ancient God to rise up through the floor. Afterwards we walked back into Brighton and Gerald Yorke gently pulled the reporters' legs. "Mr. Yorke, did you ever actually see Mr. Crowley perform magic?" "Oh, yes, countless times!" "What did he do?" "Oh, well, he was very fond of turning himself into a pillar of salt." Crowley got a very good press for his obsequies."

[Kenneth Hopkins. *The Corruption of a Poet, An Autobiography*. London, UK: James Barrie, 1954, p. 211. (30. *General Character and Disgusting Habits*, pp. 209-13.)]

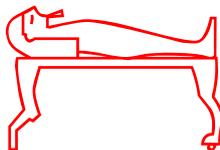
**Edward Alexander Crowley, a.k.a.
Aleister Crowley, was born at 30 Clarendon Square,
Leamington, Warwickshire, England, on October 12, 1875, at 10.50 P.M.**

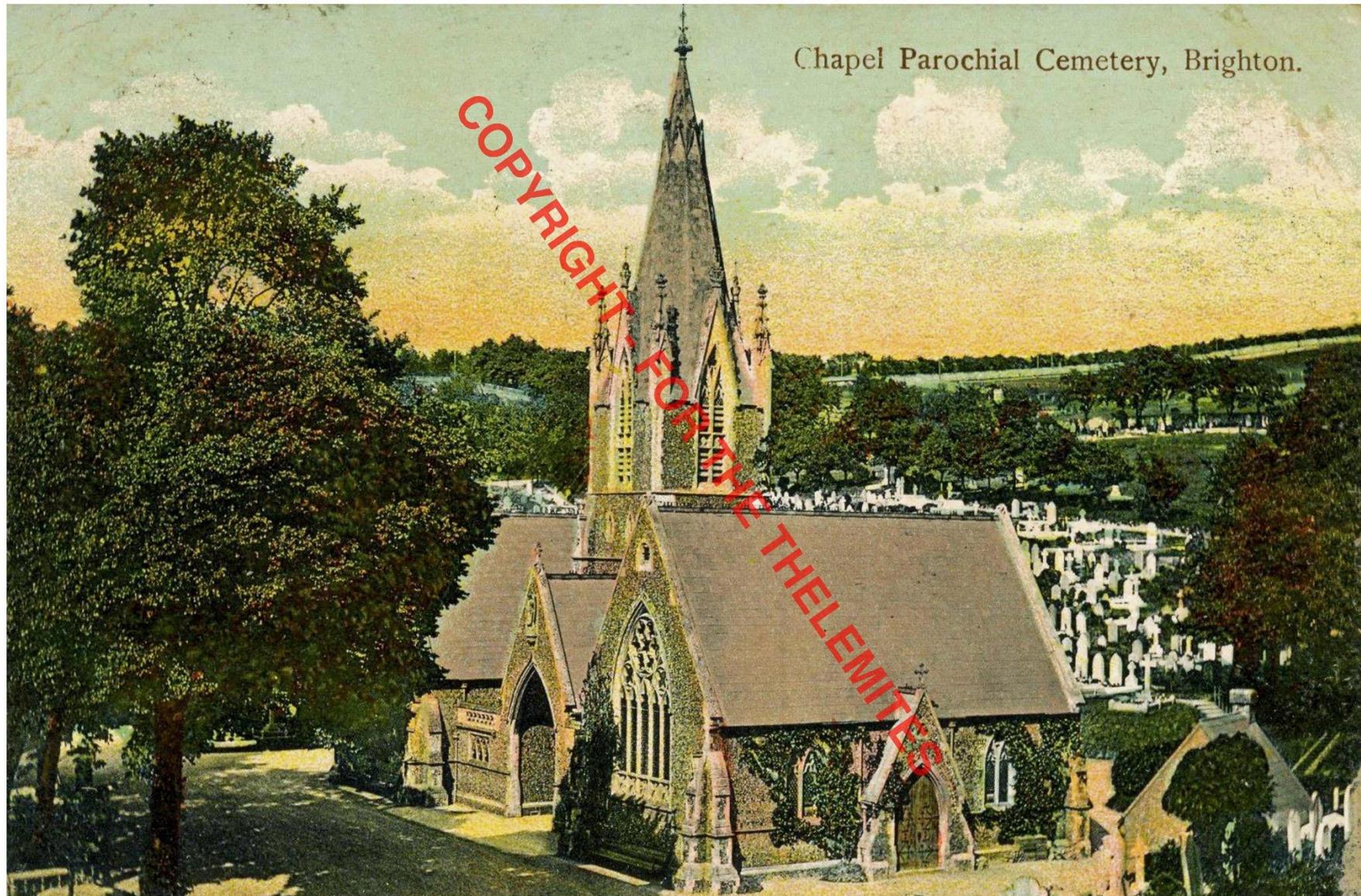


**Aleister Crowley died at the age of 72 in the guest-house 'Netherwood',
The Ridge, Hastings, Sussex, England, on Monday,
December 1, 1947 E.V., at 11.30 A.M.**



In his lifetime the sun rose 26.347 times and set 26.346 times!





1900s postcard showing the Chapel Parochial Cemetery in Brighton, England, (now Woodvale Cemetery, Lewes Road) where Aleister Crowley's funeral and cremation took place on December 5, 1947 E.V. The crematorium, which was added to the chapels in 1930 E.V. was located behind the Nonconformist chapel (in the front on the picture).

Twenty mourners, including five women, stood with bowed heads – one of the women in tears – as Mr. Louis Wilkinson (Louis Marlowe, the novelist) recited for 20 minutes.

In the dusk

He was meeting the dead man's wishes by giving extracts from "Hymn to Pan," "Collects from the Gnostic Mass," and "Book of the Law."

The first two came from Crowley's works, "Magick in Theory and Practice," the last named, he had claimed, was written at the dictation of a "supernatural being."

Any impressiveness the passages possessed was only gained by the speaker's fine delivery and the sincerity he put into the task.

Out of the torrent of words could be heard: "Satan has come on a milk-white ass. ... Oh Pan, Pan, Pan. ... I seem to have got in the grip of the snake. ... I am born to death on the horns of the Unicorn. ... Be not animal: refine thy raptures ... love one another with burning hearts. ..."

Carnations

The mourners – men with long hair, women of all ages – listened intently and as the coffin disappeared into the furnace, Mrs. Hilda Johnson, of Leicester, ran forward and placed a spray of pink carnations on the lid.

Mr. Wilkinson told me he was not a disciple of Crowley's but carried out his wish because of 40 years' friendship.

As I left the chapel one man said to me: "Be careful what you write about this. Crowley may strike at you from wherever he is."³⁶²⁴

The mentioned "Mrs. Hilda Johnson, of Leicester", had apparently not given her true name to the journalist. According to a statement by Wilkinson in *Seven Friends*: "Carnations were thrown by a beautiful girl upon the coffin as it slid downwards.", this 'beautiful girl' must of course have been Deirdre (Patricia) (Maureen) MacAlpine, née Doherty (1915-1992), the mother of Aleister Crowley's son, Randall Gair Doherty (1937-2002), a boy born on May 2, 1937 E.V., at Newcastle upon Tyne, and whom Crowley had nicknamed Aleister Atatürk.³⁶²⁵ Note the heading "*In the*

³⁶²⁴ Daily Herald. London, England: Daily Herald. ♦ Saturday, December 6, 1947, p. 3. (CREMATING "GREAT BEAST" | Black magic funeral at Brighton | "DAILY HERALD" REPORTER, p. 3.)

³⁶²⁵ Louis Marlow [Louis Umfrville Wilkinson]. *Seven Friends*. London, UK: The Richards Press, 1953, p. 42. (ALEISTER CROWLEY, pp. 39-64) • Deirdre Patricia Maureen Doherty was born on March 16, 1915 E.V., at Wheal Betsy, a house at the top of Chywoone Hill, near the village of Newlyn in Cornwall, as daughter of the Irish mining engineer Richard Edward Ernest Biggs Doherty, known as "Patrick Doherty", (1882-1918), and Phyllis Marian Doherty, née Gotch (1882-1992), only child of the two English painters Thomas Cooper Gotch (1854-1931), and Caroline Burland Gotch, née Yates (1854-1945). • English Birth and Death Records; Irish Birth and Death Records. • For Aleister Atatürk, his mother, her father and mother and her family, see: *Thomas Cooper Gotch; Pamela Lomax. The Golden Dream: A Biography of Thomas Cooper Gotch*. Bristol, UK: Sansom & Co., 2004. • *The Cornishman and Cornish Telegraph*. Penzance, Cornwall, England: The Cornishman and Cornish Telegraph. ♦ Wednesday, September 18, 1918, p. 3. (DEATH OF MR. PATRICK DOHERTY; FORMER CAMBORNE STUDENT AND MINING ENGINEER'S CAREER IN SOUTH AFRICA [Lieutenant Patrick E. Doherty died in South Africa on September 2, 1918 E.V., aged 35], p. 3.) • *Martin Booth. A Magick Life: The Biography of Aleister Crowley*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2000, p. 458f. (*The Man Who Laughs Last ...*, pp. [457]-86.) • *Richard Kaczynski. PERDURABO: THE LIFE OF ALEISTER CROWLEY*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2010, pp. 496; 658, note 30.

dusk", the sunset in Brighton that day, sixteen days before the December Solstice, took place at 3:56 pm – the moon, which was in the third quarter, had set at 1:16 pm. Most of the obituaries in the newspapers – including the one in the *Daily Herald*, December 2, headed "World's worst man' dies"³⁶²⁶ – were rather inflated, however, the Hastings paper *Hastings & St. Leonards Observer* wrote, Saturday, December 6, under the heading: "Aleister Crowley Dies at Hastings":

Mr. Edward Alexander (Aleister) Crowley, the writer and poet, who was well known for his interest in magic, died suddenly on Monday [December 1st] at Netherwood, The Ridge, Hastings, where he had been living for the past two years. He was 73 [sic, but 72] and a widower.

He published his latest book, "60 Years of Song," early this year. He had also done a number of futuristic paintings while at Netherwood, but, although people came to see him from all parts of the country, his interest in magic seemed to have waned and he seldom even mentioned the subject. On one occasion, however, he consented to give a lecture on the subject to a week-end conference at Netherwood.

*Cremation was arranged to take place yesterday [Friday, December 5th] at Brighton.*³⁶²⁷

– regarding Crowley's "futuristic paintings", as mentioned in another chapter James Laver who was a distinguished art critic and Keeper of Prints, Drawings and Paintings for the Victoria and Albert Museum visited Crowley in Hastings in 1947 E.V., and he was evidently interested in Crowley's paintings since after Laver's death six paintings by Crowley belonging to Laver were sold at auction in the early 1980s.³⁶²⁸ The London *Daily Mirror* wrote, December 2, 1947 E.V.:

Weird paintings of what seem to be totem poles are hanging in the boarding house where Aleister Crowley, 72, sensational dabbler in magic in the nineteen-twenties, died suddenly yesterday.

A fellow boarder at Hastings, Sussex, said last night:

"No one can guess what the paintings mean.

"They look like Peruvian totem poles with queer faces and grotesque shapes."

*Twenty-five years ago Crowley, self-styled "The Beast 666," was accused of presiding at disgusting orgies under cover of a "free love" cult.*³⁶²⁹

April 2, 1948 E.V., nearly four months after Crowley's cremation the *Daily Mirror* wrote the following:

'Black magic' in town's chapel: Protests to council

Protests at "black-magic ritual" at the cremation of Edward Alexander ("Aleister") Crowley, who called himself "the worst man in the world," were made to Brighton Corporation yesterday.

³⁶²⁶ Daily Herald. London, England: Daily Herald. ♦ Tuesday, December 2, 1947, p. 3. ('World's worst man' dies, p. 3)

³⁶²⁷ Hastings & St. Leonards Observer. Hastings, East Sussex, England: Hastings & St. Leonards Observer. ♦ Saturday, December 6, 1947, p. 2. (*Aleister Crowley Dies at Hastings*, p. 2.)

³⁶²⁸ See: Antiquarian Book Monthly Review; A Monthly Magazine of International Antiquarian Bookselling, Collecting and Bibliography. Oxford, UK: A.B.M.R. Publications. ♦ Vol. IX, Number 1, Issue 93, January 1982, p. 25. ("Bonham's sale of the 25th was largely devoted to the manuscripts of the late James Laver, [...] six dreary [sic] Crowley paintings all sold, one called "The Friends" for as much as £340.") • See note⁸⁹⁸ above. • For Crowley's paintings, see note³⁸²⁵ below.

³⁶²⁹ The Daily Mirror. London, England: The Daily Mirror. ♦ Tuesday, December 2, 1947, p. 3. ("Worst man in the world" dies, leaves weird pictures", p. 3.)

Councillor Joe Sherrott said, "This man boasted that he had practised black magic, and the service held in the chapel [of the corporation crematorium] was a black-magic ritual."

Councillor Tom Cullen asked the cemetery sub-committee to see that any services at the crematorium were orthodox.

"Whatever we are – agnostic, atheist, or Christian – we do not like to see consecrated ground so desecrated." He said.

It was last December that Crowley, 72, who had died in a Hastings boarding house, was cremated.

About twenty people, including five well-dressed women, sat in the chapel as the coffin was slid into the furnace.

Secrecy Pledge

All were pledged to secrecy about rites.

It was stated that extracts from Crowley's book "Magick in Theory and Practice," read at the service, included a hymn to the pagan god Pan and "Collects" from the "Gnostic Mass."³⁶³⁰

Crowley's friend the English dramatist and poet Clifford Bax (1886-1962), writes in his book *Some I Knew Well* (1951 E.V.) that he had invited Crowley to dine at the Royal Automobile Club in the summer of 1937 E.V., and that Crowley here met Frieda Harris who became a close friend:

*I invited him [...] to dinner, at the Royal Automobile Club. At the last moment, as it were, Lady (Frieda) Harris joined us. In order to excite Crowley I introduced Mrs Blanche [sic, but Blanch] as 'la Comtesse de Roussy de Sales', but he was not deceived, and out of that meeting came the fine collaboration in The Tarot Cards, of Crowley and Lady Harris.*³⁶³¹

However, Crowley apparently some time after this meeting with the English writer, traveller, and painter Lesley (Stewart) Blanch (1904-2007), became a lodger at her and her mother's house – after that her mother Martha Mabel Blanch, née Thorpe (1875-1968), had become a widow and had to take in lodgers – 57 Petersham Road (No. 3 The Paragon), Richmond upon Thames, a house of three storeys and basement located near the River Thames.³⁶³² Crowley was in fact living in the house in September 1939 E.V. according to the 1939 Register, dubbed 'The Wartime Domesday Book' – the Second World War had just broken out (on September 3, 1939 E.V.) when the register was made by 65,000 enumerators who visited every house in England and Wales to take stock of the civil population. In the 1939 Register we discover: "CROWLEY EDWARD A [...] AUTHOR PSYCHIATRIST", together with a note stating: "Emergency List N. I.D" – it was wartime and since he had stated that he was a psychiatrist he was apparently put on an Emergency List!³⁶³³ Apart from

³⁶³⁰ Ibid. ♦ Friday, April 2, 1948, p. 3. ('Black magic' in town's chapel: Protests to council, p. 3.)

³⁶³¹ Clifford Bax. *Some I Knew Well*. London, UK: Phoenix House, 1951, p. 54. (5. *Aleister Crowley; Black Magician*, pp. 51-5.) ♦ Clifford Bax calls her "Leslie Blanche", however, it was Lesley Blanch.

³⁶³² *Lesley Blanch; Georgia de Chamberet*. On the Wilder Shores of Love: A Bohemian Life. Edited by Georgia de Chamberet. London, UK: Virago Press, 2015, pp. 158; 160. ("Lesley's father [Walter Blanch] died in November 1933, aged seventy-three. Her mother [Martha Mabel Blanch] had to take in lodgers [at the Paragon]. At some point between 1936 and 1938, one of them was the occultist, mystic and sorcerer Aleister Crowley, who claimed to be the Beast from the Book of Revelation. Lesley would come home to find strange markings and insignia all over the kitchen floor. Apparently he adored Martha, and enjoyed nothing better than talk, tea and crumpets.", p. 160.) (12. *A London Life – Georgia de Chamberet*, pp. [150]-62.) ♦ GRO Birth and Death Registers.

³⁶³³ The 1939 Register for the address: 57 Petersham Road, Richmond, London. ("CROWLEY EDWARD A")

Martha Mabel Blanch and Aleister Crowley four other persons were living in the house: “BICKNELL LESLEY B”, Martha Mabel Blanch’s daughter, Lesley Blanch, “CHIEF FEATURE WRITER. VOGUE JOURNALIST FEATURE EDITOR”; a male journalist from the Scotsman; a male Italian refugee, formerly teacher in Italy; and a woman who took part in the domestic duties.³⁶³⁴

Lesley Blanch and Frieda Harris had in 1934 E.V. together created the scenery for the Ballets Russes's London Premier of ‘Les Imaginaires’, a new ballet by the Russian-American ballet dancer and choreographer, David Lichine (1910-1977).³⁶³⁵ As to the artist Frieda Harris, a newspaper had in November 1935 E.V. a small notice headed “Election Art” which mentioned Lady Harris and her work for her husband and the Liberal in South-West Bethnal Green, but also that she exhibited her art at West End galleries under the name of J. Chutney:

Most of the candidates’ wives are helping them in canvassing and speaking, but Lady Harris, the wife of Sir Percy Harris, who is standing again as a Liberal for South-West Bethnal Green, is probably alone in designing the posters and painting the committee rooms.

The central committee room in Bethnal Green-road, formerly a public-house, has brilliantly coloured notices outside it to-day, the work yesterday of Lady Harris, while inside she has done wall paintings showing scenes from Bethnal Green streets. She designs a fresh poster every day. Lady Harris is an artist who shows at West End galleries under the name of J. Chutney, and her son, Mr. Nicholas Harris, is also an artist.³⁶³⁶

(Thomas) Nicholas (Robinson) Harris (1908-2007), had studied architecture at Cambridge and went on to the Slade School of Art. Like his mother he was a water colour artist. Around 1970 E.V. he founded the Far Eastern Painting Society for all interested in oriental art and particularly for artists engaged in Chinese brush painting.³⁶³⁷ As to the pseudonym “J. Chutney” *The Midland Daily Telegraph* had together with other newspapers in November 1932 E.V. under the heading ““J. Chutney” Revealed” printed the following by a London correspondent:

For some time “J. Chutney” has been sending in modernist paintings to exhibitions and has met with considerable success. I have just discovered on visiting the Wertheim Galleries that she was the wife of a Liberal M.P. Lady Harris, it transpires, has a theory that it is necessary to be eccentric to succeed in art, and since she has given up her fantastic pseudonym she is choosing strange subjects. She finds beauty evil

³⁶³⁴ Ibid. • Lesley Blanch married in 1930 E.V. advertising agent Robert Alan Wimberley Bicknell (1893-1966), and they were divorced in 1941 E.V.

³⁶³⁵ See: Vicente García-Márquez. *The Ballets Russes: Colonel de Basil's Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo, 1932-1952*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990, p. 123. (MAY 1934 – May 1935; *Les Imaginaires*, pp. 120-3.) • *The Scotsman*. Midlothian, Scotland: The Scotsman. ♦ Wednesday, August 1, 1934, p. 10. (BALLETS RUSSES; “*Les Imaginaires*” at Covent Garden; [From *Our London Music Critic*], p. 10.) • A portrait of Miss Lesley Blanch painted by Frieda Harris appeared in *The Sketch* December 6, 1933 E.V. • *The Sketch – A Journal of Art and Actuality*. London, UK: The Illustrated London News and Sketch Limited. ♦ Vol. CLXIV, No. 2132, Wednesday, December 6, 1933, p. 415. (“MISS LESLEY BLANCH; by Frieda Harris. Miss Lesley Blanch is a clever theatrical designer, Frieda Harris, the artist, is the wife of Sir Percy Harris, M.P.”)(“MRS. AND MISS 1933”: *CELEBRITIES OF THREE ARTS*, p. 415.)

³⁶³⁶ *Birmingham Gazette*. Birmingham, West Midlands, England: Birmingham Gazette. ♦ Saturday, 9 November, 1935, p. 6. (OUR LONDON LETTER; *Election Art*, p. 6.)

³⁶³⁷ See: *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society*. London, UK: The Society. ♦ Volume 70. 2005-2006, p. xvii. (*Obituary; Nicholas Harris; 1908-2007; By Helen Espir*, p. xvii.)



“The most magical pencil which I have ever watched was that of Mrs. Lesley Blanch, a wicked being who abandoned drawing for journalism.”

Clifford Bax



I have for several years known about the friendship between Frieda Harris and Lesley Blanch. I was surprised to learn that nobody seemed to be aware of their friendship, and that they had worked together. Frieda was in fact much older than Lesley – about twenty-seven years. That nobody has come across the friendship between the two, and their life together in Richmond, probably is due to a tragedy. In 1994 E.V. the now 90 years old Lesley was living in a house in Garavan, a tiny village in the south of France, near the Italian frontier, when her house burnt down, and she lost all her possessions:

*In 1994 her house was burnt down in a fire. It happened in the middle of the night and engulfed the whole building in flames within minutes, “like a huge torch,” she said. She escaped with her beloved cats, but everything else was destroyed. She was disconsolate about the loss of her library – bookshelves covered every wall in the house, including her kitchen and bathroom. It contained priceless books, many first editions or signed by authors and previous owners, notably about Russia and the Orient. [From Obituary of ‘Lesley Blanch – Writer and traveller’ by Shusha Guppy, *The Independent*, May 8, 2007.]*

When Clifford Bax wrote about his 1937 E.V. dinner with Crowley at the Royal Automobile Club:

*[actress] Meum Stewart and Leslie Blanche [sic, but Lesley Blanch], that brilliant artist, told me that their education was far from finished until they met the Worst Man in the World: so, naturally, I invited him and them to dinner, at the Royal Automobile Club. At the last moment, as it were, Lady (Frieda) Harris joined us. In order to excite Crowley I introduced Mrs Blanche [sic] as ‘la Comtesse Roussy de Sales’, but he was not deceived, and out of that meeting came the fine collaboration in *The Tarot Cards*, of Crowley and Lady Harris. [Clifford Bax. *Some I Knew Well*. London, UK: Phoenix House, 1951, pp. 53-4.]*

then his mentioning of Lesley as “Mrs Blanche” clearly hide the story about the two for many years, but in my opinion also that Bax perhaps had learned that Crowley was thinking of creating a ‘new’ set of Tarot cards, and when we find Bax stating in *The Tatler* in 1946 E.V.:

The most magical pencil which I have ever watched was that of Mrs. Lesley Blanch, a wicked being who abandoned drawing for journalism. [The Tatler and Bystander. London, England: The Tatler and Bystander. ♦ Vol. CLXXIX, No. 2367. Wednesday, November 6, 1946, p. 168. (Self-Profile; Clifford Bax; By Clifford Bax, p. 168.)]

then I think that he probably had thought about Lesley Blanch and her artistic gifts, and therefore introduced her to Crowley – Lesley Blanch who in 1936 E.V., the year before the dinner, had created a set of playing cards: “*Abdication Grab 1936 Series of painted playing cards. Spoof on the romance of the King and Mrs Simpson.*”! [See: <https://lesleyblanch.com/art-theatre/art/> (Picture No. 3.)] However, it is clear that Frieda Harris’s style and abilities made her the natural choice for an artist.

Clifford Bax had like Lesley Blanch studied Art at the Slade School, London, but also at Munich. He had a strong interest in Astrology, and had in 1909 E.V. translated a book by Rudolf Steiner from German into English, *Initiation and its Results*. Like Lesley Blanch he had abandoned art, and instead concentrated on literary and dramatic work. Bax probably met Frieda Harris through Lesley Blanch.

For the Thelemites

*humour in radiators and wash-basins, celestial chickens, and a pawnbroker's paradise. Judging from the favourable comments I heard around me, the visitors to the private view did so, too.*³⁶³⁸

The Wertheim Galleries at 3-5 Burlington Gardens, Mayfair, London, was ran by the English art dealer and collector Lucy Carrington Wertheim (1883-1971). As mentioned by a paper, a London picture exhibited at the Wertheim Galleries in August 1933 E.V. was a view from Lady Harris's Hertford-street flat with a dilapidated building in the foreground which at one time had belonged to a mistress of King Charles II of England, actress Nell Gwyn (1650-1687).³⁶³⁹ In January 1934 E.V. the weekly newspaper *The Sphere* printed a reproduction of a funny picture entitled "*Dix-sept Personnes* ['Seventeen People']" together with the following explanation:

*A HOAX IN THE ART WORLD: This freak picture of a lady and gentleman reclining on a fish stall is entitled "Dix-sept Personnes" and has been exhibited at the Warren Art Gallery as the work of Rognon de la Flèche. The artist is now revealed as Lady Harris, who painted the picture as a joke. Several critics have been trapped into giving the work their serious attention.*³⁶⁴⁰



Sir Percy Harris and Lady Harris in the beginning of the 1930s

³⁶³⁸ The Midland Daily Telegraph. Warwickshire, England: The Midland Daily Telegraph. ♦ Wednesday, November 30, 1932, p. 3. ("*J. Chutney*" Revealed"; *London Gossip & News*, p. 3.)

³⁶³⁹ The Nottingham Journal. Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, UK: Nottingham Journal. ♦ Saturday, August 12, 1933, p. 5. (*Success in the 'Teens.; From "Chutney's" Window.*, p. 5.)

³⁶⁴⁰ The Sphere; The Empire's Illustrated Weekly. London, UK: London Illustrated Newspapers Ltd. ♦ Vol. CXXXVI, No. 1774, January 20, 1934, p. 95. (*ART NEWS OF THE WEEK*, p. 95.) ♦ Warren Art Gallery, 39A Maddox Street, London, was owned by Dorothy Cecil Wynter Trotter, née Warren (1896-1954), art dealer and architectural designer.



'Lady Frieda Harris' fined £2

As to Frieda Harris's use of various pseudonyms, she was like Aleister Crowley a joker. She could not be called 'Lady Frieda Harris', since she then had to be the daughter of a peer, which she was not, however, she probably sometimes used this name. But in newspapers etc., she always, as far as I know, appeared as 'Lady Harris', except on one occasion! In the end of January, 1937 E.V., "Lady Frieda Harris" was fined £1 for having exceeded the speed limit, and furthermore £1 for not having a driving licence! A newspaper wrote January 29, 1937 E.V.: "*Lady Frieda Harris, of Petersham-road, Richmond, was fined £1 with endorsement for having exceeded the speed limit, and £1 for not having a driving licence.*" 'Lady Frieda Harris' was not living at Petersham-road, Richmond, but her studio was apparently located in Richmond at that time, and furthermore, her friend and fellow artist, Lesley (Stewart) Blanch was living on Petersham-road! Frieda Harris had probably been at her studio, or, visited Lesley Blanch in Richmond on the day when she was fined!

The above quote is from: North Wilts Herald. Wiltshire, England: North Wilts Herald. ♦ Friday, 29 January, 1937, p. 11. (*TOO MUCH SPEED*, p. 11.)

LADY HARRIS

HUSBAND AND DUAL PERSONALITY

"Suicide while of unsound mind" was the verdict at the inquest at Westminster yesterday on Lady Harris (65), wife of Sir Henry Percy Harris, Gloucester-terrace, W., who was killed by a train at Bond-street Tube station on Sunday evening.

Sir Henry Harris said his wife had influenza and pneumonia in January, 1932, which left her very weak. She had also been under treatment for diabetes.

"She was evidently a plucky woman," said Mr. Ingleby Oddie, in recording his verdict, "and kept her troubles to herself, preserving a cheerful demeanour though suffering a great deal."

Regarding Lady Harris's use as artist of 'Frieda Harris' – together with perhaps 'Lady Frieda Harris' instead of 'Lady Harris' – there was in fact another 'Lady Harris' in London, who, furthermore, also was married to a 'Percy Harris', who also happened to be a Member of Parliament, and this 'Lady Harris' was also an artist! Her name was Ethel Alice Harris, née Chivers Bower (1867-1933), medallist and sculptor, the wife of Sir Henry Percy Harris (1856-1941), Barrister and Conservative Member of Parliament for Paddington South from 1910-22 E.V. However, in February 1933 E.V. she committed suicide at the Bond-street Tube Station where she had lay down on the track in front of a train. For 18 years Lady Harris had been chairman of the Paddington School for Mothers, and she was also the authoress of the book *Portrait Medals of a Generation*.

News Chronicle (Daily News). London, England. ♦ Wednesday, February 15, 1933, p. 5. (*Lady Harris; Husband and Dual Personality*, p. 5.)(*LAW AND POLICE*, p. 5.) • Also: Ibid. Monday, February 13, 1933, p. 1. (*Lady Henry Harris; Killed by Tube Train*, p. 1.)

Frieda Harris had obviously tried to find a new pseudonym!

In 1937 E.V. Percy and Frieda Harris moved into a house in Chiswick Mall, "Morton House". The house had previously been the home of the English artist and sculptor Eric (Henri) Kennington (1888-1960). The *Belfast Telegraph* mentioned the new house in a notice on April 8, 1938 E.V.:

Sir Percy Harris, who will lead the Liberal Party in the absence of Sir Archibals Sinclair, has recently bought a new house in Chiswick Mall. [...]

One of the attractions of the house was that the garden contains a torso sculpted by Mr. Alan [sic, but Eric] Kennington, who previously owned it.

*Sir Percy and Lady Harris are, of course, keen lovers of art, and Lady Harris has been so successful that two of the posters which she has designed appeared in all the stations of the L.P.T.B. and are familiar to every traveller in London.*³⁶⁴¹

The house was – as we are informed by the British scholar and military officer T.(homas) E.(dward) Lawrence (1888-1935), byname Lawrence of Arabia – 1 Riverside, Chiswick Mall.³⁶⁴² Kennington made the illustrations to T. E. Lawrence's autobiographical account of his experiences while serving as a liaison officer with rebel forces during the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Turks of 1916 E.V. to 1918 E.V., *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* published in 1926 E.V.³⁶⁴³ After Sir Percy Harris's death the house was bought by a physician to the West London Hospital, Dr. Maurice (Elgie) Shaw, DM, FRCP (1894-1977).

Later, among other things, Frieda Harris made the décor for the ballet 'The Legend of the Taj Mahal' presented with the Ram Gopal Indian Ballet in Edinburgh and London in the autumn of 1956 E.V.³⁶⁴⁴

Frieda Harris (Lady Harris), née Marguerite Frieda Bloxam (1877-1962), the artist of the magnificent, beautiful Thoth tarot deck, was born in Saint George Hanover Square, London, on August 13, 1877³⁶⁴⁵, as the younger daughter of the English surgeon John Astley Bloxam, F.R.C.S. (1843-1926), and Jessie Findlay Bloxam, née Porter (1851-?1926). Her parents had been married in August 1874.³⁶⁴⁶ However, probably due to sickness in the family (Jessie Findlay Bloxam) Frieda

³⁶⁴¹ *Belfast Telegraph*. Antrim, Northern Ireland: *Belfast Telegraph*. ♦ Friday, April 8, 1938, p. 12. (*London Day By Day; Sir Percy Harris's New House*, p. 12.)

³⁶⁴² *Thomas Edward Lawrence*. *The Letters of T. E. Lawrence*. New York, NY: Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., MCMXXXIX (1939), p. 370. ("His address is, Eric Kennington Esq., 1 Riverside, Chiswick Mall, London")(T. E. Lawrence to S. F. Newcombe; 15. X. 22., pp. 369-70.)

³⁶⁴³ *T. E. Lawrence*. *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. London: NP. ND. [For the Author by Manning Pike and H. J. Hodgson, 1926] (The privately printed first edition ran to a mere 170 complete copies.)

³⁶⁴⁴ See: *The Stage*. London, England: *The Stage*. ♦ Thursday, September 13, 1956, p. 10. (*NEW RAM GOPAL BALLET AT EDINBURGH FESTIVAL*, p. 10.) ♦ "The Stage" Year Book 1957. London, UK: Carson & Comerford, Ltd., 1957, p. 117. (*Ballets of the Year*, p. 117.)

³⁶⁴⁵ GRO – Copy of her Birth Certificate.

³⁶⁴⁶ *London Evening Standard*. London, UK: *Evening Standard*. ♦ Friday, August 7, 1874, p. 7. ("MARRIAGES. [...] BLOXAM–PORTER. – 4th, at Winchester, John Astley Bloxam, F.R.C.S., of George-street, Hanover-square, to Jessie Findlay, youngest daughter of the late Richard Porter [Warehouseman, White Hall, Hornsey Lane, St Mary, Islington, London].") ♦ *The Daily News*. London, England: *The Daily News*. ♦ Friday, August 7, 1874, p. 1. ("MARRIAGES. [...] BLOXAM–PORTER. – August 4, from the Rev. G. Richardson's at St. Michael's, Winchester, J. A. Bloxam, F.R.C.S., of George-street, Hanover-square, to Jessie Findlay, daughter of the late R. Porter, White Hall, Highgate.") ♦ For Richard Porter, see: *Census of England*, 1861, for the address: White Hall, Hornsey Lane, St Mary,

and an older sister, Florence Mary, were apparently not living with their parents in London during their childhood. In the 1881 Census of England the three years old Frieda and her five years old sister Florence Mary are registered in a house in Cookham, Berkshire, England, together with a nurse and a housekeeper, and in the 1891 Census of England the now thirteen years old Frieda is registered as pupil at Valetta House, St. Peters Road, Broadstairs – a coastal town on the Isle of Thanet in the Thanet district of east Kent. Valetta House was a girl's boarding school whose proprietress was named Maud B. Osmond.³⁶⁴⁷ The school had in 1891 eight pupils. Frieda also had a little brother, Owen Astley (b. 1887), but he was apparently living together with his parents. At the age of twenty-three Frieda Bloxam married on April 2, 1901, the later baronet and Liberal M.P., Percy (Alfred) Harris (1876-1952).³⁶⁴⁸ As explained by Ronald Decker and Michael Dummett in *A History of the Occult Tarot 1870-1970*, she could therefore in January 1932 E.V. when her husband became Sir Percy Harris be called "Lady Harris" since the wife of a baronet, but not "Lady Frieda Harris", which would indicate that she was the daughter of a peer.³⁶⁴⁹ 'Lady Frieda Harris' is several times found in printed works, and often on the internet, and seems to have originated in Gareth Knight's *A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism* in 1965 E.V.³⁶⁵⁰, and some years later, in 1973 E.V., it was also used by Robert George Torrens in *The Secret Rituals of the Golden Dawn*.³⁶⁵¹ Its construction was probably owing to "Lady (Frieda) Harris" used in 1951 E.V. by both Clifford Bax in *Some I Knew Well*³⁶⁵² and by John Symonds in *The Great Beast: The Life of Aleister Crowley*.³⁶⁵³

Frieda Harris's tarot paintings, watercolour paintings which measure 10.5" × 16.5" (26.67 cm × 41.91 cm), are today at the Warburg Institute, University of London. They were donated by

Islington, London & Middlesex, England.

³⁶⁴⁷ Census of England, 1881: Civil Parish of Cookham, Berkshire, England, p. 14. – No. of Schedule: 98, Boulters Lock, "Florence M. Bloxam"; "Marguerite F. Bloxam" • Census of England, 1891: Civil Parish of St. Peters, Broadstairs, Kent, England, p. 8. – No. of Schedule: 56, St. Peters Road, Valetta House, "Marguerite F. Bloxam | Pupil"

³⁶⁴⁸ See: The Bucks Herald. Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, England: George Turner de Fraine. ♦ Saturday, April 13, 1901, p. 8. ("HARRIS-BLOXAM. – On the 2nd inst. [i.e. Tuesday, April 2, 1901], PERCY ALFRED, younger son of WOLF HARRIS, of 197, Queen's-gate, S.W., to MARGUERITE FRIEDA, younger daughter of J. ASTLEY BLOXAM, F.R.C.S., of 75, Grosvenor-street, Grosvenor-square, and Vine Leigh, Bourne End.") (BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, & DEATHS. MARRIAGES, p. 8.) • Frieda Harris's father had inherited a small estate, Vine Leigh, Bourne End, Buckinghamshire, where he was living after his retirement.

³⁶⁴⁹ Ronald Decker and Michael Dummett. *A History of the Occult Tarot, 1870-1970*. London: Duckworth, 2002, p. 153, note 52, on p. 339. (CHAPTER 9. *The Secret Chiefs and the Crowley-Harris Tarot: The Thoth Tarot*, pp. 152-6.)

³⁶⁵⁰ Gareth Knight. *A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism*. 2 vols. Cheltenham, UK: Helios Book Service, 1965. ♦ Vol. II, pp. 37; 225. ("Lady Frieda Harris") (SECTION ONE; THE LESSER MYSTERIES. *The Path of the Personality. PART I; The Ways to and from Physical Being; The 31st Path; Malkuth – Hod; Notes on the Design of Trump XX*, p. 37) (SECTION FOUR; THE TAROT. PART I; *The Greater Arcana*, p. 225.)

³⁶⁵¹ Robert George Torrens. *The Secret Rituals of the Golden Dawn*. Denington Estate, Wellingborough, Northants, UK: Aquarian Press and New York, NY: Samuel Weiser Inc., 1973, pp. 18; 47. ("Lady Frieda Harris") (CHAPTER ONE; THE CULT CEASES TO BE OCCULT, pp. 15-22.) (CHAPTER FIVE; THE TWENTY-TWO PATHS, pp. 45-48.) • Also in an 1978 E.V. publication of the Thoth tarot deck by U.S. Games Systems. ♦ Aleister Crowley Thoth Deck. Designed by: Aleister Crowley. Painted by: Lady Frieda Harris [sic]. New York, N.Y.: U.S. Games Systems, Inc. Publishers, 1978. ♦ Instructions For Aleister Crowley's Thoth Tarot Deck By James Wasserman; Plus two essays written by Lady Frieda Harris [sic] with commentary and footnotes by Stuart R. Kaplan. New York, NY: U. S. Games Systems, Inc. Publishers, 1978.

³⁶⁵² Clifford Bax. *Some I Knew Well*. London, UK: Phoenix House, 1951, p. 54. ("Lady (Frieda) Harris") (5. *Aleister Crowley; Black Magician*, pp. 51-5.)

³⁶⁵³ John Symonds. *The Great Beast: The Life of Aleister Crowley*. London, UK: Rider & Co., 1951, p. 8. ("Lady (Frieda) Harris") (ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, p. 8.)



Frieda Harris had joined the A.:A.: in 1938 E.V., taking as her motto Tzba, the Hebrew צבא, 'Host'.

Gerald Yorke. When the exhibition of Lady Harris's Tarot paintings was held in July 1942 E.V. at the Berkeley Galleries, 20 Davies Street, London, *The Birmingham Post* wrote, July 16:

*Each century has produced its own version of the tarots; and now Lady Harris, wife of Sir Percy Harris, M.P., has sought to show how the symbols of the ancient tarots have a much higher aspect – the mystic relationship of man to the universe. She is exhibiting her seventy-eight designs at the Berkeley Galleries in Davies Street. Using the original Egyptian symbols, combined with others more scientific and modern in conception, she has expressed the inner meaning of each card in designs that are full of movement – to suggest time – and beautiful in pattern and colour. She hopes these designs will eventually be reproduced as the twentieth-century tarot pack.*³⁶⁵⁴

Not a word about Aleister Crowley! The first exhibition of the cards should have been held in June the year before at the Nicholson Gallery in Oxford, and a twenty pages exhibition booklet/catalogue had been printed³⁶⁵⁵, however, the exhibition was, according to Richard Kaczynski, cancelled by the gallery with no warning when they found out that Aleister Crowley was involved.³⁶⁵⁶ Frieda Harris instead quickly rented the largest room at the Randolph Hotel down the street and exhibited the cards there attracting, as she wrote in a letter: "so many people that I had to leave the gallery open at night in Oxford to allow the undergraduates to look at them."³⁶⁵⁷ The 1941 E.V. exhibition catalogue had on the upper wrapper a reproduction in colour of an early design of "The Magician". When the cards later were printed the title was changed to "The Magus" and a new design was used. Some of the original 1941 E.V. catalogues were reused at later exhibitions, probably also at the exhibition held in London in 1942 E.V., although a new catalogue had been printed for this exhibition – the lower half of the title page which bore the details of the Oxford exhibition was cut out and removed. Frieda Harris's hopes that the designs would end up being 'the twentieth-century tarot pack' came true!

Frieda Harris's husband Sir Percy (Alfred) Harris, M.P. for Bethnal Green, London, and chief Liberal whip, was born in Kensington, London, on March 6, 1876, as son of Wolf Harris (1834-1926), an Austria-born New Zealand Merchant, and New Zealand-born Elizabeth Harris, née Nathan (c. 1850-1928).³⁶⁵⁸ He died in Kensington aged 76 on June 28, 1952 E.V. Some years later Frieda Harris moved to Srinagar, Kashmir, India, where she died at the age of eighty-five on November 5, 1962 E.V.³⁶⁵⁹, and was buried at the European cemetery in Srinagar. She was survived by her two sons who died respectively in 2007 E.V. and 2009 E.V.

³⁶⁵⁴ The Birmingham Post. West Midlands, England: The Birmingham Post and Journal. ♦ Thursday, July 16, 1942, p. 2. (LONDON LETTER; *The Tarot Cards*, p. 2.) • In the 1940s the Berkeley Galleries also held exhibitions of Chinese Art; Primitive Art; Ancient American Art; and Tibetan Art.

³⁶⁵⁵ [Aleister Crowley; Frieda Harris (Lady Harris)]. EXHIBITION OF PLAYING CARDS; THE TAROT (BOOK OF THOTH); 78 PAINTINGS ACCORDING TO THE INITIATED TRADITION AND MODERN SCIENTIFIC THOUGHT WITH OTHER OCCULT AND ALCHEMICAL DESIGNS TO BE SHOWN AT THE NICHOLSON GALLERY (NICHOLSON & VENN) At 46 HIGH STREET OXFORD; From JUNE 7 to JUNE 21, 1941 e.v. Np.

³⁶⁵⁶ Richard Kaczynski. PERDURABO: THE LIFE OF ALEISTER CROWLEY. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2010, pp. 514-5. (CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE; *The Book of Thoth*, pp. 500-23.)

³⁶⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 515, note 62, p. 661: "Harris to Alexander Watt, 3 Aug 1954, OTO Archives."

³⁶⁵⁸ GRO – 1881 England Census for the address "197 Queens Gate, Kensington, London, Middlesex, England." • Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. ♦ "Harris, Sir Percy Alfred, first baronet (1876-1952)"

³⁶⁵⁹ See: Charles Mosley (Editor). Burke's Peerage, Baronetage & Knightage, 107th edition. 3 vols. Wilmington, DE: Burke's Peerage and Gentry LLC, 2003. • Vol. 2, p. 1798.



Houseboats on the lake Dal, Srinagar, Kashmir, India. 1960s photograph.

Some years after her husband's death Frieda Harris moved to Srinagar, the summer capital of Kashmir, India, where she lived on a houseboat on a lake - to all appearances the urban lake Dal (Dal in Kashmiri means lake). In the summertime it was a most beautiful and pleasant place to live, however, during the winter season the lake often froze over, and it must have been a cold and unpleasant place to be, especially for a European woman in her eighties living on an uninsulated houseboat. Frieda Harris died at the age of eighty-five on Gay Fawkes Day, November 5, 1962 E.V. (and not as mostly stated on May 11), and was buried in Srinagar at the European cemetery at the Sheikh Bagh - a Christian cemetery on the banks of the Jhelum River.



I notice that the late Eileen Hewson FRGS, a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, London, who had travelled to the remote areas of the Himalaya for over 40 years, in 2008 E.V. published the book *Graveyards in Kashmir, India* (Kabristan Archives, 2008.), and here she mentioned Frieda Harris's grave [the grave is in New Plot Central, Srinagar Cemetery]:

"HARRIS

(Grave 58. Inscription. British Christian)

MARGUERITE FRIEDA HARRIS died November 5th 1962.

Fear no more the heat

Of the sun

The winter's furious

Rages.

LADY FRIEDA HARRIS died aged 86 years."*

Note that it is stated that she "died aged 86 years", however, she was born on August 13, 1877 (according to the Register of Births), and died on November 5, 1962 E.V., thus at the age of 85. The verse is apparently inspired by these words from William Shakespeare's play *Cymbeline* (Act. IV.; Scene II. – Before the cave. Song.):

*Fear no more the heat o'the sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages;*

It seems that Frieda Harris's family sometime after her death placed the stone on her grave.



Frieda Harris (Lady Harris), née Marguerite Frieda Bloxam (1877-1962)

* Eileen Hewson. *Graveyards in Kashmir, India*. Wem, Shropshire, England: Kabristan Archives, 2008, p. 73.

Frieda Harris and Politics



Englishwoman Proposes Boycott by Housewives Against Italian Goods

London – (UP) – An effort to impose a boycott on Italian goods by means of chain letters among British housewives has been started by Lady Harris, wife of Sir Percy Alfred Harris, Liberal member of the House of Commons, it was learned today.

The move coincides with a demand by Liberals all over the country that the government prevent the threatened Italian-Ethiopian war and in any event remove at once its ban against export of arms to Ethiopia.

In her letter, Lady Harris wrote:

“Will you join in an effort to prevent the outbreak of war in any country? This can be done by women and very simply too. They are the world’s customers and they would be very powerful if they would decide to refuse to buy anything from a country that threatens to go to war.

“Now each individual woman can refuse to buy goods coming from Italy and can inquire when she is shopping whether her purchases are Italian produce. If this is done in the next few months in many countries, Italy might realize how her conduct is regarded.”

Lady Harris asks each recipient to forward copies of the letter to friends.

The Manchester Guardian and the News Chronicle of London, organ of the Liberal Party, two of the most influential newspapers, are leading a fight against the arms ban on Ethiopia, pointing out that though the ban nominal includes Italy, Italy does not need to buy munitions abroad:

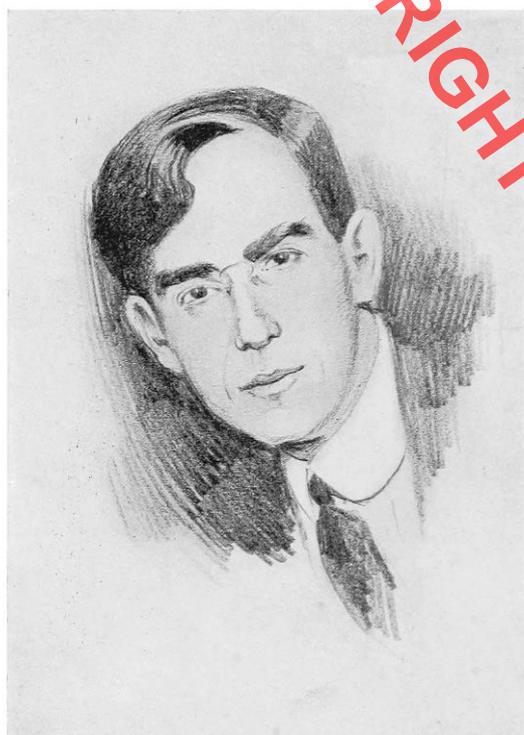
“Unless the ban is raised immediately Great Britain, France and every other country that follows their example risks the charge of having aided an aggressor while they hindered the victim; by having assisted the guilty while they hampered the innocent.”

The News Chronicle calls the embargo “offensive to the ordinary sense of fair play, and so far as this country is concerned a definite breach of faith.”

I notice that the late English novelist, writer, poet and broadcaster Glyn Hughes (1933-2011), in a memorial article on William Holt (1897-1977), English writer and traveller who knew both Crowley and Frieda Harris, mentioned that Holt went to India with Frieda Harris to sell her paintings.³⁶⁶⁰

I have briefly mentioned Crowley's long-time close friend Louis (Umfreville) Wilkinson M.A., D.Litt., F.R.S.L., who became one of his Literary Executors, in another chapter. Louis Wilkinson writes in *Seven Friends* (1953 E.V.) that "Crowley was important in my life from 1907 or 1908 until he died at the end of 1947."³⁶⁶¹ and furthermore:

Some years more will have to pass before this man can be seen as a whole in true perspective. Such a view is always especially hard to take of anyone of whom adoration and vilification have both been carried to extremes. The difficulty is increased in Crowley's case because of the variety and the contradictoriness of the



1910s drawing of Louis Wilkinson

*elements in his composition. I do not profess to be able to solve the enigma of his character and his actions. I am glad that he was himself and that I knew him. My chief feeling about him is one of personal gratitude, for I have known very few who, as persons, have impressed me more or rewarded me more than he did. It is true that those who are notable for personality are not always notable for achievement; but this truth seems to me to be better illustrated by Frank Harris than by Aleister Crowley.*³⁶⁶²

Louis (Umfreville) Wilkinson was born at Aldeburgh, Plomesgate, Suffolk, England, on December 17, 1881, as the only son of the Rev. Walter George Wilkinson (1829-1906), Principal of Aldeburgh Preparatory School, and Charlotte Elizabeth Wilkinson, née Emra (1842-1926).³⁶⁶³ Wilkinson wrote his first novel *The Puppets' Dallying*³⁶⁶⁴ in 1905 E.V. and before this he had attended Oxford University but had been "sent down" for blasphemousness in 1901.³⁶⁶⁵ He then went to St. John's College, Cambridge, and took his degree there. Wilkinson was for many years staff lecturer to the

³⁶⁶⁰ The Illustrated London News. London, UK: The Illustrated London News & Sketch Ltd. ♦ Number 6987, Volume 268, October 1980, p. 44. (*Remembering William Holt by Glyn Hughes*, pp. 43-4.) • It seems that William Holt travelled to India and Pakistan in the end of February 1961 E.V.: "Mr. Holt expects to be away at least three months. During his tour of India and Pakistan he will visit mills, and he also plans to stay with Lady Frieda Harris, the painter and writer, who lives on a houseboat on a lake in Kashmir." • Halifax Daily Courier & Guardian. Yorkshire, England: Halifax Daily Courier & Guardian. ♦ Thursday, February 23, 1961, p. 6. (*To India and Pakistan*, p. 6.)

³⁶⁶¹ *Louis Marlow [Louis Umfreville Wilkinson]*. *Seven Friends*. London, UK: The Richards Press, 1953, p. 39. (ALEISTER CROWLEY, pp. 39-64)

³⁶⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 63-4.

³⁶⁶³ Copy of the Birth Certificate of Louis Umfreville Wilkinson.

³⁶⁶⁴ *Louis Marlow [Louis Umfreville Wilkinson]*. *The Puppets Dallying*. London, UK: Greening & Co., 1905.

³⁶⁶⁵ For Crowley's description of this, see: *Confessions*, pp. 168-9. • For Louis Wilkinson, see also note¹⁶²⁶ above.

University Extension Lectures Committee, a highly respected lecturer on literature, politics, and historical persons. Crowley and Wilkinson met in America during WW1 where Wilkinson was a lecturer on English literature – in New York, and, for instance, also at Meridith College, Raleigh, North Carolina, and Wilkinson cofounded the University Lecturers Association in New York. Louis Wilkinson was in 1918 E.V. living in Ulster, New York, with his wife, the American literary author Frances Josefa Wilkinson, née Gregg (1885-1941)³⁶⁶⁶ – the couple had been married in April 1912 E.V. in Philadelphia. Aleister Crowley appeared as one of the seven friends in Wilkinson's *Seven Friends*, published in the spring of 1953 E.V., and where Wilkinson in a chapter of 26 pages devoted to Aleister Crowley, among other things, gave his account of presiding over Crowley's funeral.³⁶⁶⁷ The year before Crowley's death, in 1946 E.V., he had also published the satirical work *Forth, Beast!* which had many references to Crowley.³⁶⁶⁸ Crowley had, in fact, entrusted Wilkinson with the task of editing his commentaries to *The Book of the Law*, producing a popular abridged edition of the commentaries, as Wilkinson wrote in *Seven Friends*:

He [Crowley] wanted to appeal to the general reader but he never could because he knew nothing about him. Like Robert Browning (whom he much admired), he assumed that he was a specialist. For this reason even if Crowley's works had all been published, and published effectively, it is improbable that they would have had large sales. In his lighter writing there is often this same baulking erudition, there are references and words that most people would find unintelligible and therefore irritating. When I told him so, he said, "But they can always use dictionaries," not seeming to realize at all that if you write only for people who expect to have to use dictionaries when they read you, you are not likely to have many readers. Crowley, however, could no more imagine a reader without reference books at his elbow than he could imagine him without a shirt to his back. He had no sort of flair for what puts the reader off or for what puts him on; he knew none of the practical tricks of the literary trade. In planning with me a "popular" edition of his Commentary on The Book of the Law he suggested that a second Commentary, from another hand, should be included.³⁶⁶⁹

As seen today, Aleister Crowley wrote for the future and its generations! – perhaps people of today are better educated, or, the new Aeon has struck root. Owing to Crowley's death in 1947 E.V. the 'Commentary on The Book of the Law' was not published, and it was first after Crowley's death that the two men's project became known! Luckily, the work was published posthumous in 1996 E.V. as *The Law is for All*.³⁶⁷⁰ As to Wilkinson's interest in subjects like mysticism and occultism, etc., I notice that the British surrealist painter Eileen Agar (1899-1991), who was married to the

³⁶⁶⁶ WWI Draft Registration Card – Louis Umfreville Wilkinson, Sep. 12, 1918.

³⁶⁶⁷ *Louis Marlow [Louis Umfreville Wilkinson]*. *Seven Friends*. London, UK: The Richards Press, 1953. • The book contains portraits of Oscar Wilde, Frank Harris, Aleister Crowley, John Cowper Powys, T. F. Powys, Llewelyn Powys, and William Somerset Maugham. • Republished as: *Louis Marlow [Louis Umfreville Wilkinson]; Oliver Marlow Wilkinson; Anthony Naylor*. *Seven Friends*. Introduction by Oliver Marlow Wilkinson and edited by Anthony Naylor. Thame, Oxfordshire, UK: Mandrake Press, 1992. • For Louis Wilkinson, see also Frank Harris's *Contemporary Portraits; (Third Series): Frank Harris [James Thomas Harris]*. *Contemporary Portraits. (Third Series)*. New York, NY: Published by the Author, 1920, pp. 131-41. (*LOUIS WILKINSON*, pp. 131-41.)

³⁶⁶⁸ *Louis Marlow [Louis Umfreville Wilkinson]*. *Forth, Beast!* London, UK: Faber & Faber, 1946.

³⁶⁶⁹ *Louis Marlow [Louis Umfreville Wilkinson]*. *Seven Friends*. London, UK: The Richards Press, 1953, pp. 56-7. (*ALEISTER CROWLEY*, pp. 39-64)

³⁶⁷⁰ *Aleister Crowley*. *The Law is for All. The Authorized Popular Commentary on Liber AL vel Legis sub figura CCXX, The Book of the Law*. Edited by Louis Wilkinson and Hymenaeus Beta. Tempe, AZ: New Falcon Publications, 1996.

Hungarian writer Joseph Bard, née József Diamant, (1892-1975), in 1988 E.V. wrote in *A Look at My Life* about her husband's first meeting with Louis Wilkinson:

*One of Joseph's new acquaintances was Louis Wilkinson, the friend and biographer of the Powys brothers (John Cowper, Theodore and Llewelyn), whose spell he alternately admitted and fought. Joseph first met him on the council of the Royal Society of Literature and was struck both by his Rosicrucian cufflinks (a present from Aleister Crowley) and his unusual openness in admitting the mysterious and occult as parts of the natural order.*³⁶⁷¹

In the winter of 1946 E.V. Wilkinson gave a lecture on the Brothers Powys to the Royal Society of Literature in London.³⁶⁷² Regarding Wilkinson, interestingly, he wrote in the August 1917 E.V. issue of *The International* an article headed "*The International Forum – A Plea For Better Morals*", an answer to the critics of his 1916 E.V. American published novel, published under his real name, *The Buffoon*³⁶⁷³, an article having an introduction probably written by Aleister Crowley:

*The appearance of Mr. Wilkinson's remarkable novel, "The Buffoon," has created of the Comstocks and the Grundys. This daring work powerfully exploits those vital sexual and spiritual phases in the life of man which the United Spinster (both sexes) of the World have tabooed and interdicted. We herewith publish the English novelist's answer to his critics. We are anxious to know what our readers think of the controversy and welcome all comment on the subject. In our next issue we shall publish letters for and against the contentions of Mr. Wilkinson.*³⁶⁷⁴

In the article we find Wilkinson stating about Crowley's *Clouds Without Water*:

*It is scarcely unimportant that the most tremendous and the most real love-poem since Shakespeare's Sonnets – "Clouds Without Water" – should have to be restricted to a private printing: scarcely unimportant that unless an author is content to give an utterly superficial and false idea of the sex-passion, he can gain no general recognition, but that if he is clever and unscrupulous enough to fall into close line with Sir James Barrie and the Sunday newspaper fiction he will be popular at once. The supreme convention of the taboo is that everything connected with the sex-impulse shall be either sentimentalized or vulgarized, with the result that we are choked by a welter of crude phantasy and vile coarseness alike intolerable to the healthy spirit.*³⁶⁷⁵

³⁶⁷¹ Eileen Agar; Andrew Lambirth. *A Look at My Life*. London, UK: Methuen Publishing Ltd., 1988, p. 175. (CHAPTER SEVEN; *Colour Comes Back into My World*, pp. 165-87.)

³⁶⁷² The lecture was published in America the year after: *The Powys Brothers, Louis Umfreville Wilkinson*. The Brothers Powys. N.P. [Cincinnati, OH (but printed at the press of John Wesley Clay, Winston-Salem, NC)]: The [Lloyd Siberell's] Auburncrest Library, 1946 [but 1947].

³⁶⁷³ *Louis U. Wilkinson*. *The Buffoon*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1916. • *Louis V. [sic] Wilkinson*. *The Buffoon*. London, UK: Village Press, 1975.

³⁶⁷⁴ *The International: A Review of Two Worlds*. New York City, NY: International Monthly, Inc. ♦ Vol. XI, No. 8, August 1917, p. 252. (*The International Forum – A Plea For Better Morals; Louis U. Wilkinson Answers His Critics*, pp. 252-4.)

³⁶⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 252-3. • For *Clouds Without Water*, see note¹⁹³⁶ above.

– Wilkinson had in New York in 1916 E.V. also published *Blasphemy and Religion; A Dialogue About John Cowper Powys' "Wood And Stone" And Theodore Powys' "The Soliloquy of a Hermit"*.³⁶⁷⁶ Crowley later wrote in *Confessions*:

*At least I have not died without the joy of knowing that no less a lover of literature than the world-famous Shakespearian lecturer, Dr. Louis Umfraville Wilkinson, has dared to confess publicly that Clouds without Water is 'the most tremendous and the most real love poem since Shakespeare's sonnets' in the famous essay 'A Plea for Better Morals'.*³⁶⁷⁷

The issue of *The International* which published Wilkinson's article also contained the first part of "The Revival of Magick" by The Master Therion.³⁶⁷⁸ One of the reviews of *The Buffoon* was in *The Yale Literary Magazine* of June 1917 E.V., a review introduced by the words:

*"The Buffoon" is such a clever, nasty book that it kindles a wild desire in the heart of the unfortunate reviewer to manufacture an infinity of clever, nasty things to say about it. This being – alas! – impossible, [...]*³⁶⁷⁹

The review, which was signed "S. V. B.", was apparently written by the American poet, novelist, and writer of short stories, Stephen Vincent Benét (1898-1943).³⁶⁸⁰ Louis Wilkinson died at the age of eighty-four at Westcot Barton, West Oxfordshire, England, on September 12, 1966 E.V. He married four times and upon his death he had two surviving children.³⁶⁸¹

Just an observation – when Frank Harris died of asthma in Nice on August 26, 1931 E.V., *The New York Times* had a 1¼ column obituary with photo the day after, which mentioned him as internationally famous critic, noted author, biographer and playwright, who had a life full of turmoil.³⁶⁸² Sixteen years later when Aleister Crowley died *The New York Times* had a small thirty-six words notice inside the paper the day after announcing that Edward Alexander Crowley, better known as Aleister Crowley, author and poet, and alleged practitioner of "black magic" and blood sacrifice had died December 1 in Hastings at the age of 72.³⁶⁸³ However, the Associated Press (AP) wrote December 1 under the heading "Mystic Dies at 72, 'True Elixir' Fails" – [The Fortean Society had "doubt" about the cause of Aleister Crowley's death but thought that it was caused by swimming the Channel] here quoted from the front page of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, December 2:

³⁶⁷⁶ Louis Wilkinson; Francis Theodore Powys; John Cowper Powys. *Blasphemy And Religion; A Dialogue About John Cowper Powys' "Wood And Stone" And Theodore Powys' "The Soliloquy of a Hermit"*. New York, NY: G. Arnold Shaw, [1916].

³⁶⁷⁷ *Confessions*, pp. 345-6.

³⁶⁷⁸ *The International: A Review of Two Worlds*. New York City, NY: International Monthly, Inc. ♦ Vol. XI, No. 8, August 1917, pp. 247-8. (*The Revival of Magick*. By The Master Therion, pp. 247-8.)

³⁶⁷⁹ *The Yale Literary Magazine*. New Haven, Conn: The Yale Literary Magazine. ♦ Vol. LXXXII, No. 9 [Whole No. 735], June, 1917, p. 340. (Review of "The Buffoon. By Louis U. Wilkinson. (B. W. Heusch, New York: 1917. Prize, \$1.50.)" signed "S. V. B." [Apparently 'Stephen Vincent Benét'], pp. 340-1.) (*BOOK REVIEWS*, pp. 340-1.)

³⁶⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁸¹ One of these children was the English actor, director, playwright, and lecturer, Oliver Marlow Wilkinson (1915-1999), founder of the Iona Theatre.

³⁶⁸² *The New York Times*. New York, NY: New York Times. ♦ Thursday, August 27, 1931, p 13. (*Frank Harris Died in France, Age 75.*)

³⁶⁸³ *Ibid.*, Tuesday, December 2, 1947, p. 29. (*Aleister Crowley*, 29.)

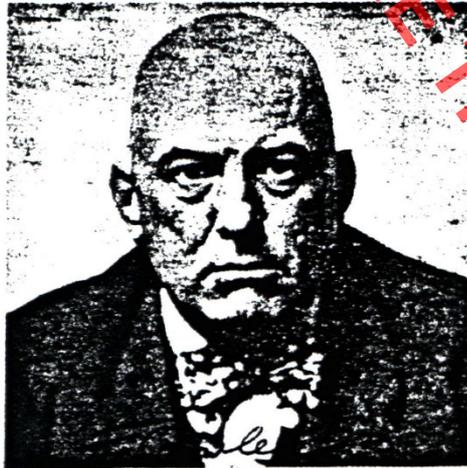
DARK SIDE

The new Fortean ascendancy was not achieved without loss. We had just discovered that Aleister Crowley was *not* dead, as he had been reported, but living in Hastings (our letter from him is dated 13th November), when old 666, the Beast of Revelation, did die in fact . . . December 1.

No cause of death is stated in our accounts, but a datum of 8-24-47 old style, from Kerr, indicates that swimming the Channel may explain it. The datum concerns "the nude satyr of wantes" who was being sought by armed posses. He had "invaded a girls' religious institute Tuesday night, but was frightened away while attempting to strangle the mother superior". That was not YS, so if it wasn't Crowley, who was it? Ambrose Small?

We had hoped that finding 666 after so many years would bring us some exciting Forteana. Perhaps it will. At least we are able to offer *Olla*, An Anthology of Sixty Years of Song, by Aleister Crowley, on book list #6. Ask for it.

Crowley was 72 . . . Other deaths of interest to members are — Arthur Machen, 12-15-47 old style, at 84, and Max Planck, 10-3-47, at 89.



666
R. L. P.

Mentioning of the death of Aleister Crowley in *Doubt; Fortean Society Magazine*. (*Doubt; Fortean Society Magazine*. New York City, NY: Fortean Society. ♦ No. 20, ND [?1948 E.V.], pp. 298-9; 305.)

For the Thelemites

Aleister Crowley, magician and mystic, claimed that when he was 40 he had distilled and drunk the true elixir of life supposed to prolong life forever. Tonight, at 72 [XXXII paths later, An Ixxi!], he died.

Crowley, center of fantastic stories, once said of himself, "they have called me 'the worst man in the world.' They have accused me of doing everything from murdering women and throwing their bodies into the Seine to drug peddling...."

"We magicians are misunderstood," he added.

Eighteen years ago, when he was refused the right to live in France, Crowley denied practicing black magic.³⁶⁸⁴

The American amusement weekly *The Billboard* also mentioned Crowley's death, however, they thought that he was an illusionist and shortly mentioned his passing in the magazine's "The Final Curtain" among obituaries of comedians, actors, and musicians:

CROWLEY – Aleister, 72, magician, December 1 in Hastings, Eng.³⁶⁸⁵

In spite of the words in *The New York Times* about Frank Harris he had many bitter enemies and the American weekly newsmagazine *TIME* wrote in an obituary, among other things, about him:

He returned to the U. S. at the outbreak of the War, which he loudly and persistently dammed. A badly dressed little man with a Hohenzollern mustache and a bawdy tongue, he found little to praise in America: "Oh, I say, what a dreadful country! What dreadful people! I say, Nellie [his third wife], bring out the whisky."³⁶⁸⁶



Éliphas Lévi

Frank Harris is almost forgotten today while a search on the internet for 'Aleister Crowley', at the time of writing, returns some 1.100.000 results!

Some seventy-two and a half years before Aleister Crowley's death *The Jersey Independent* had, Saturday, June 12, 1875, written:

PARIS, June 4. – In Paris there are a number of men whose brains have become disordered by over study, the process of cramming to which they have been subjected, or the continual train of thought into which their minds have been led by the consideration of some curious theories. There are, perhaps, in this city as many different schools of philosophy where abstruse questions are argued as existed in olden times. The more curious and uncommon the idea the more readily does it seem to be accepted by those who seek to realise the day dreams of the master to whom they listen. The head of one of the most eccentric of these schools, a great magician, a student of Albertus Magnus, Zoroaster, Cagliostro,

³⁶⁸⁴ The Philadelphia Inquirer. Philadelphia, PENN: The Philadelphia Inquirer. ♦ Tuesday Morning, December 2, 1947, front page. ("**Mystic Dies at 72, 'True Elixir' Fails** | HASTINGS, England, Dec. 1 (AP).")

³⁶⁸⁵ The Billboard; The World's Foremost Amusement Weekly. New York, NY: The Billboard. ♦ Vol. 59, No. 50, December 13, 1947, p. 48. (*THE FINAL CURTAIN*, p. 48.)

³⁶⁸⁶ TIME; The Weekly Newsmagazine. Chicago, IL: TIME, Inc. ♦ Vol. XVIII, No. 10, September 7, 1931, p. 33. (*MILESTONES – Died. Frank Harris, 75, author, editor and critic*, p. 33.)

*&c., known by the name of Eliphaz Lévy, has just died suddenly. He was found dead on the ground in his laboratory, in the midst of stuffed alligators, bottled serpents, retorts, and all the paraphernalia of the modern magician. The high priest of the new sect, by repute Eliphaz Lévy, was at one time known as the Abbé Constant. Born of humble parents, brought up at a clerical college, learned, studious, gifted with a rare memory, and a love for the miraculous, he often wandered, giving full rein for his imagination, beyond the limit the Church has put to human theory. [...]*³⁶⁸⁷

Alphonse Louis Constant, a.k.a. Éliphas Lévi (1810-1875), was born in Paris on February 8, 1810, and died in Paris on May 31, 1875. Crowley made the discovery that he in his last incarnation was Éliphas Lévi.³⁶⁸⁸ He wrote about it in a letter to a female student, later published in *Magick Without Tears*:

*What do I mean when I say that I think I was Eliphaz [sic] Lévi? No more than that I possess some of his most essential characteristics, and that some of the incidents in his life are remembered by me as my own. There doesn't seem any impossibility about these bundles of Sankhara being shared by two or more persons. We certainly do not know enough of what actually takes place to speak positively on any such point. Don't lose any sleep over it.*³⁶⁸⁹

Returning to the anthology *Ambergris; A Selection from the Poems of Aleister Crowley*, it is now proper to ask the question: What is ambergris? Its history and its use, especially in medicine and as a spice, are now forgotten, so let us take a profound look at ambergris! Zoologists now know for certain that the solid waxy substance ambergris – French: ambregis, 'gray amber' – originates in the intestine of the enigmatic sperm whale, the cachalot, the largest of the toothed whales, that also has been called spermacet whale, pot-whale, and sea-gaut, but apparently not ambergris whale, although the Chief Justice of the British colony of Massachusetts and author of several essays on natural history, Paul Dudley, F.R.S. (1675-1752), in 1725 wrote in an essay on the natural history of whales and ambergris in the *Philosophical Transactions, of the Royal Society of London*:

*[...] that Species or Kind of Whale, which our People call the Sperma Ceti, but, in my Opinion, much rather deserves the Name of the Ambergris Whale.*³⁶⁹⁰ [Written with modern typography.]

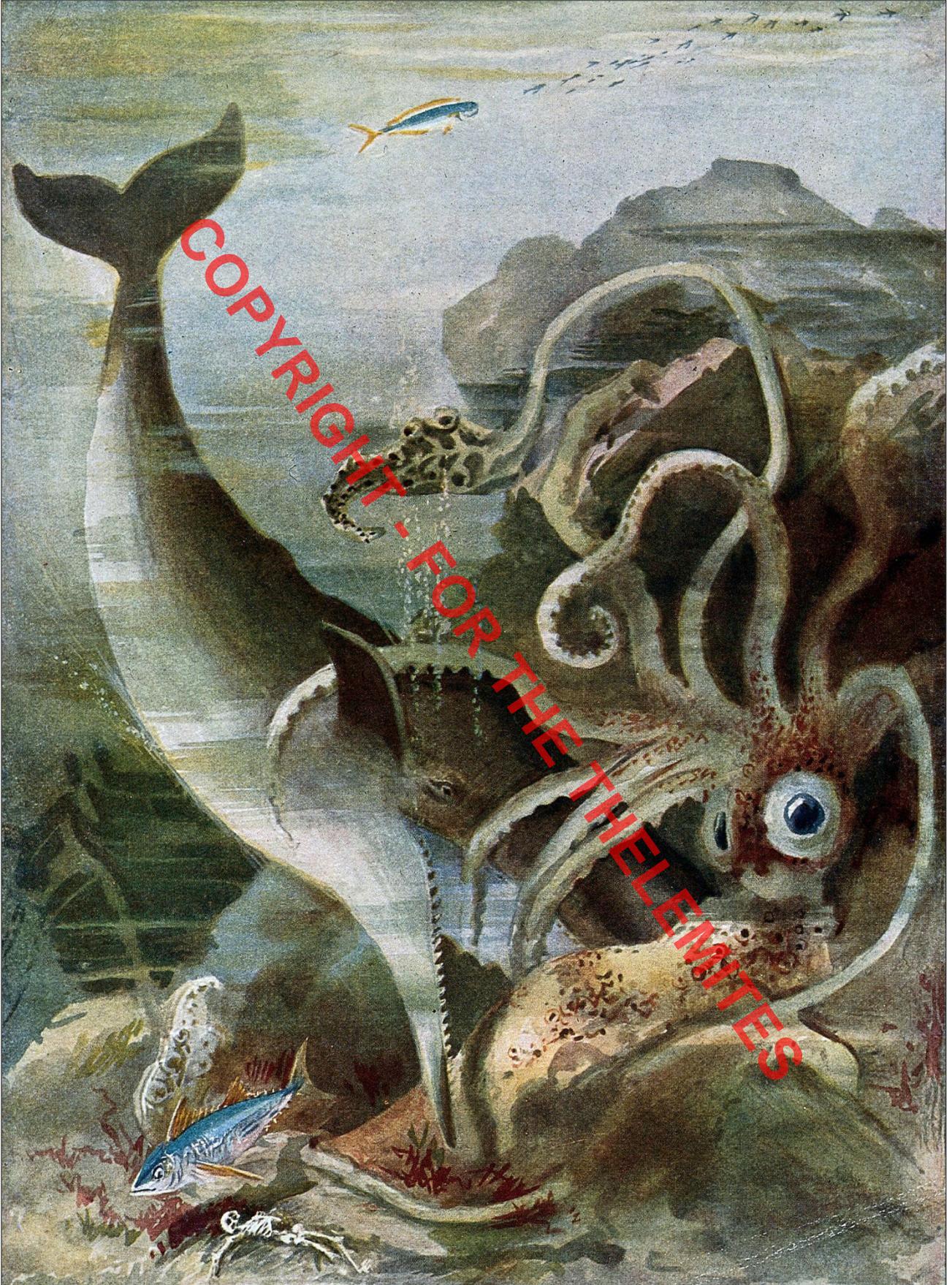
The sperm whale's Latin name *Physeter macrocephalus* means 'large-headed blower', and the whale's huge head (40% of the body length) contains the largest known brain of any animal, living or extinct. The sperm whale received its name from the spermaceti organ in its head, an organ that contains an immense amount of high quality oil, and which old-time whalers used to believe produced sperm. This oil was formerly, among other things, used in the making of fine

³⁶⁸⁷ Supplement To The Jersey Independent; With Which Is Incorporated The Jersey Weekly Press. Jersey: Jersey Independent. ♦ Vol. XIX., No. 50, Saturday Morning June 12, 1875, p. 1. (*FOREIGN AFFAIRS. – PARIS GOSSIP*, p. 1.)

³⁶⁸⁸ Confessions, p. 190.

³⁶⁸⁹ Crowley. *Magick Without Tears*. Ed. Karl J. Germer. Hampton, NJ: Thelema Publishing Co., 1954, p. 168. (*CHAPTER XXXVII: Death – Fear – "Magical Memory"*) ♦ Also as: Aleister Crowley. *Magick Without Tears*. Abridge Edition. Edited by Israel Regardie. St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 1973, p. 246. (*37. Death – Fear – Magickal Memory*)

³⁶⁹⁰ *Philosophical Transactions, of the Royal Society of London*. London: Printed for S. Smith and B. Walford, Printers to The Royal Society. ♦ Vol. 33, Part 2, No. 387, For the Months of March and April, 1725, p. 256. (*II. An Essay upon the Natural History of Whales, with a particular Account of the Ambergris found in Sperma Ceti Whale. In a letter to the Publisher, from the Honourable Paul Dudley, Esq; F. R. S., pp. 256-69.*)



A sperm whale attacks a giant squid. Colour line block after A. Twidle. Credit: Wellcome Collection.

spermaceti-wax candles. Large volumes of literature, good and bad, have been written in the light from spermaceti-wax candles! The English encyclopaedist Ephraim Chambers (c. 1680-1740), wrote in 1738 in the second edition of his *Cyclopædia, or a Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences* about the candles:

*Sperma-ceti candles, are of modern manufacture: they are made smooth, with a fine gloss, free from rings and scars, superior to the finest wax-candles in colour and lustre; and, when genuine, leave no spot or stain on the finest silk, cloth, or linen.*³⁶⁹¹ [Written with modern typography.]

The first edition of his two-volume folio *Cyclopædia* published in 1728 had not mentioned the candles! The sperm whales, whose males can attain a length of some 19 metres (62ft), feed on, among other things, giant squids (Architeuthis species) in the dark depths of the oceans. Some of the giant squids can measure up to 13 metres (43 ft) in length, and it has the largest eye of any living animal (diameter of up to c. 27 cm or 11 in). The sperm whale can dive to depths of 400 metres (1300 ft) or more. The indigestible part of the sperm whale's food, mainly squid beaks and pens, is vomited since the whale's intestine and rectum can only deal with liquid faeces.³⁶⁹² When talking about vomiting whales, one comes to think on Jonah of the Bible who was swallowed by a great fish (whales were called fishes at that time!) in whose belly he spend three days and three nights and then on God's command was spewed out.³⁶⁹³ Note that יוֹנָה, Jonah, means 'dove'! And some will know that the Septuagint spelling of Jonah, Ἰωνᾶς, happens to have the same numerical value as Ἀπόλλων, Apollon, or, Apollo!³⁶⁹⁴ As to Apollo who also is mentioned in "The Reaper", in classical mythology Apollo was the son of Zeus and Leto, but all scholars are agreed that in his origin the god is non-Hellenic! One group of scholars maintain that he came from the interior of Asia Minor. Other scholars affirm that he was originally a god of shepherds in the wild regions of the north. However, in my opinion he is one of the most interesting gods of the classical world, and connected with him are profound secrets that one day will be revealed! (This has nothing to do with Jonah.)

Not many years ago the value of lumps of ambergris, which were found on shores or floating on the seas or in the stomachs of whales, were worth approximately its weight in gold.³⁶⁹⁵ The Canadian educator, writer, lecturer, and adventurer Agnes Deans Cameron (1863-1912), even writes in her 1909 E.V. book *The New North: Being an Account of a Woman's Journey Through Canada to the Arctic* about ambergris:

*Most valuable of all whale-products, the costliest commodity on this earth ounce for ounce with the one exception of radium, is ambergris.*³⁶⁹⁶

³⁶⁹¹ CYCLOPÆDIA: Or, An UNIVERSAL DICTIONARY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES; &c, &c. By E. Chambers, F. R. S. The Second Edition, Corrected and Amended. 2 vols. London: D. Midwinter, J. Senex, R. Gosling, W. Innys, &c, &c, MDCCXXXVIII (1738). ♦ Vol. II, SPERMA-CETI [unpaged]. (*SPERMA-CETI*; *Sperma-ceti candles*)

³⁶⁹² The Latin American Journal of Aquatic Mammals (LAJAM). Rio de Janeiro: SOLAMAC. ♦ Vol. 5, No. 1, June 2006, pp. 1; 18. (*THE ORIGIN OF AMBERGRIS*; By Robert Clarke, pp. 7-21.)

³⁶⁹³ *The Book of Jonah*, Chapter One, Verse 17 - Chapter Two, Verse 10.

³⁶⁹⁴ $I(10) + \omega(800) + \nu(50) + \alpha(1) + \zeta(200) = 1061 = \Lambda(1) + \pi(80) + \acute{o}(70) + \lambda(30) + \lambda(30) + \omega(800) + \nu(50)$

³⁶⁹⁵ See: Department of Commerce; Bureau of Fisheries. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1918. ♦ Economic Circular No. 38; Issued November 6, 1918. Whales and Porpoises as Food. With Thirty-Two Recipes, p. 1.

³⁶⁹⁶ *Agnes Deans Cameron*. *The New North: Being Some Account of a Woman's Journey Through Canada to the Arctic*. New York, NY: D. Appleton and Company, 1910, p. 299. (*CHAPTER XVI; THE TALE OF A WHALE*, pp. 281-302.)

The radioactive radium had been discovered by the Curies in the end of 1898, and the costly 'magical substance' was soon recommended as a cure for, among other things, depression and rheumatism, and it also found its way into toothpaste, facial packs, salves, mineral water, and even food, causing serious adverse health effects.³⁶⁹⁷

Ambergris was famed in the Orient where it was used in perfumes, in medicine, and as an aphrodisiac, and it was the second most important aromatic in early medieval Islamicate perfumery after musk. However, there is no evidence for the use of animal perfumes, such as ambergris, civet, or musk, in ancient Egypt. Ambergris was one of the perfumes that were an important part of the East-West trade in the Crusader period.³⁶⁹⁸ An 1890's textbook on perfumery states about ambergris and its use in Western perfumery:

*This is a substance whose origin is still doubtful; many facts indicate that it is a secretion – whether normal or morbid may be left undecided – of the largest living mammal [sic], namely, of the pot-whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*). Ambergris is found in the intestines of this animal or, more frequently, floating about in the sea; the shores of the continents bordering the Indian Ocean furnish the largest amount of this peculiar substance. Ambergris is a grayish-white fatty substance which occurs in commerce in pieces of various sizes – those as large as a fist are rare – of a penetrating, decidedly disagreeable odor. It is soluble in alcohol, and when properly diluted the odor becomes pleasant and it is so permanent that a piece of linen moistened with it smells of it even after being washed with soap. By itself, ambergris is not much used; it finds its chief application in combination with other odors or as an addition to some perfumes in order to make them lasting.*³⁶⁹⁹

A very popular Parisian perfume was called *Extrait d'Ambre*, Extract of Ambergris, and it was made of essence of roses, tincture of ambergris, essence of musk, and extract of vanilla.³⁷⁰⁰ If fresh ambergris is kept for a year or two in air tight containers it loses its excrementitious odor and acquires the characteristic perfume for which it is valued – it can then be treated with heated alcohol and the solution filtered.³⁷⁰¹ The French alchemist and nobleman Harcouet de Longeville

³⁶⁹⁷ For the mentioning of its use for immersion in drinking and bathing water and in the preparation of facial packs, toothpaste and salves, see: Bulletin of State School of Mines, Mineral Resources Survey of New Mexico. Socorro, NM: The School. ♦ Bulletin No. 7, 1918. *The Metal Resources of New Mexico and Their Economic Features*; By Samuel G. Lasky and Thomas Peltier Wootton, p. 67. (PART III. *Grant County; Tyrose District; White Signal District*, p. 67.)

³⁶⁹⁸ See: *Efraim Lev; Zohar Amar. Practical Materia Medica of the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean According to the Cairo Genizah*. Leiden: Brill, 2008, p. 333. (PART C. CHAPTER SEVEN; MATERIA MEDICA: CONCISE ITEMS, pp. [325]-508.)

³⁶⁹⁹ *George William Askinson, Dr. Chem.; Isidor Furst. Perfumes And Their Preparation, &c., &c.* Translated from the Third German Edition by Isidor Furst. New York, NY: N. W. Henley & Co., 1892, pp. 57-8. (CHAPTER V. *The Animal Substances Used in Perfumery; AMBERGRIS*, pp. 57-8.)

³⁷⁰⁰ **EXTRAIT D'AMBRE**

<i>Esprit de rose triple</i>	0,28	litre.
<i>Teinture d'ambre gris</i>	0,56	–
<i>Essence de musc</i>	0,14	–
<i>Extrait de vanille</i>	56	grammes.

• *George William Septimus Piesse; Henri Massignon; F. Chardin-Hadancourt. Des odeurs des parfums et des cosmétiques, &c, &c.* Par S. PIESSE. Seconde édition française. Paris: Librairie J.-B. Baillière et Fils, 1877, p. 215. (VI. *HISTOIRE NATURELLE DES PARFUMS D'ORIGINE ANIMALE. AMBRE GRIS*, pp. 212-6.)

³⁷⁰¹ For this, see: *The Dispensatory of the United States of America*; By Dr. Geo. B. Wood and Dr. Franklin Bache. Nineteenth Edition. Philadelphia and London: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1907, p. 1379. (PART II; *DRUGS AND*

(1660-1720), published in 1715 the book *Histoire des personnes qui ont vécu plusieurs siècles et qui ont rajeuni* – a book translated into English in 1722 as *A Curious History of Such Perfons of both Sexes who have liv'd several Ages, and grown Young again*, by the English writer, translator, and freemason, Robert Samber (bap. 1682 - c. 1745) – and where Harcouet de Longeville stated about ambergris:

*La quintessence de l'ambre gris pour la santé (& non pour les parfums) laquelle augmente nôtre chaleur sans l'enflammer, & la fomente sans la résoudre; elle releve les forces abattues des vieillards par l'esprit universel dont elle est remplie.*³⁷⁰² [Written with modern typography.]

[here in Robert Samber's English translation] The Quintessence of Ambergris for Health (not for Perfumes) which augments our natural Heat without inflaming, and foment it without resolving it; it restores the lost Strength of old Persons, by the universal Spirit with which it is replete.³⁷⁰³ [Written with modern typography.] Robert Samber adopted the Welsh alchemist and mystic Thomas Vaughan's (1622-1665) pseudonym 'Eugenius Philalethes', adding "Jun. F.R.S" to it. Robert Samber, who was raised as a Roman Catholic and educated in France, became a so-called 'Grub-Street hack'³⁷⁰⁴ (in Cripplegate Ward, London) and in the employ of the English bookseller and publisher Edmund Curll (1675-1747), who became known for his unauthorized publication of other publishers' works. Robert Samber translated many works into English from Latin, French, and Italian, and, among other things, translated the fairy tales "Red Riding Hood"; "The Sleeping Beauty"; and "Hop o' my Thumb, Little Thumb" from French into English, however, when he translated Harcouet de Longeville's book he dedicated it to his Masonic brethren but he and his publisher forgot to state who its author was, and for several years it was thought in England that Robert Samber was its author!³⁷⁰⁵

MEDICINES NOT OFFICIAL; **Ambergris**. *Ambra grisea (cinerea)*, p. 1379.)

³⁷⁰² Harcouet de Longeville; Arnauld de Villeneuve. HISTOIRE DES PERSONNES QUI ONT VECU PLUSIEURS SIECLES, ET QUI ONT RAJEUNI: AVEC LE SECRET DU RAJEUNISSEMENT, Tiré d'Arnauld de Villeneuve. A Paris, Chez la Veuve Charpentier, MDCCXV (1715), pp. 295-6. (CHAPITRE XXIII. *Des choses qui peuvent prolonger nôtre vie*, pp. 286-310.)

³⁷⁰³ [Harcouet de Longeville]; Arnoldus de Villa Nova; [Translated and introduced by] Brother Eugenius Philalethes, Jun., F.R.S. [Pseud. of Robert Samber]. LONG LIVERS: A Curious History of Such Perfons of both Sexes who have liv'd several Ages, and grown Young again: With the rare Secret of Rejuvenescency of Arnoldus de Villa Nova, And a great many approv'd and invaluable Rules to prolong Life: as also, How to prepare the Universal Medicine. London: Printed for J. Holland and L. Stokoe, 1722, pp. 176-7. (Chap. XXIII. *Of things which may prolong Life*, pp. 171-8.)

³⁷⁰⁴ Samuel Johnson writes in *A Dictionary of the English Language*, 1755, about "GRU'BSTREET": "Originally the name of a street in Moorfields in London, much inhabited by writers of small histories, dictionaries, and temporary poems; whence any mean production is called grubstreet." [Written with modern typography.] • Samuel Johnson. *A Dictionary of the English Language: In which the Words are deduced from their Originals, &c. &c.* In Two Volumes. London: Printed by W. Strahan, For J. and P. Knapton; T. and T. Longman; C. Hitch, &c, &c, MDCCCLV (1755). • Vol. I, "GRU'BSTREET" • Grubstreet was later re-named Milton Street.

³⁷⁰⁵ See, for instance, an article in *The London Encyclopaedia* in 1829 where it is stated: "[...] though one Robert Samber says, in his work entitled *Long Livers*," • *The London Encyclopædia, or Universal Dictionary of Science, Art, Literature, And Practical Mechanics, &c, &c, &c.* 22 vols. London: Printed for Thomas Tegg, 1829. • Vol. XVI, p. 614. (PARR (Thomas), p. 614.) • Also in *The History of Freemasonry* in 1885: "The author of "Long Livers" was Robert Samber, a prolific writer, but who seems to have made his greatest mark as a translator." • *The History of Freemasonry; Its Antiquities, Symbols, Constitutions, Customs, Etc.* 4 vols. New York, NY: John C. Yorston & Co., Publishers, 1885-9. • Vol. II (1885), p. 250. (CHAPTER XIII. EARLY BRITISH FREEMASONRY. England. – II. THE CABBALA – MYSTICISM – THE ROSICRUCIANS – ELIAS ASHMOLE, pp. 184-263.)

As seen in an 1840s medical textbook on sterility in the male and female ambergris was used medical in the treatment of sterility and impotence³⁷⁰⁶, and *The Dispensatory of the United States of America* of 1907 E.V. states that ambergris was long regarded as a cordial and antispasmodic, somewhat analogous to musk, and useful in typhoid fevers, and various nervous diseases.³⁷⁰⁷ Pigs are used in the search for the black gold, truffles, and it has been stated that foxes are very fond of ambergris, and that they come down to the coasts in search of it, eat it and return it in the same state as they swallowed it with regards to its perfume, but altered in colour.³⁷⁰⁸ Very interestingly, the 1860s French/English work on Medical Zoology *Elements of Medical Zoology* where this is found even states that the above propensity is supposed to account for the existence of pieces of whitish ambergris which were found at some distance from the sea on the Landes of Aquitaine (in South West France) and which the inhabitants termed Fox amber.³⁷⁰⁹ That ambergris was costly can be learnt, for instance, from a notice headed "Big Money in Ambergris", which appeared in the weekly journal *Scientific American* in June 1894:

The Sydney Bulletin is responsible for the following ambergris story: Two years ago one of Macgregor's (Tasmania) whaling captains, having cut the blubber from a whale, was about to cast the rest of it adrift, when there came alongside two Hobart fishermen – "Portuguese Joe" and his mate, an African negro. The Portuguese begged to be given the carcass, so that they might tow it ashore and make what they could out of it. "All right," said the skipper, with the generosity of a satisfied exploiter who knew the blubber business to its omega. Joe, having got the leviathan's framework on the beach, began to search for ambergris, which drug was quoted at that time in the current price lists at somewhere about \$65 per ounce. He found 174 pounds. Many people interviewed him, and wanted to give him \$25,000 to \$45,000 for the lot; but the man understood the luck of his find.

*Meanwhile the ambergris was lodged in a bank, which was presently served with an injunction on behalf of the Macgregor firm to restrain the sale of the precious prize pending a discussion on the ownership. But these legal fireworks fizzled out, and the ambergris is still being realized in London, the two fishermen having already received thousand pounds apiece.*³⁷¹⁰

Since very costly ambergris was counterfeited or adulterated, as mentioned by the German/Polish chemist and apothecary Casper Neumann (1683-1737):

Ambergris is counterfeited or adulterated with Wax, Resin, Storax, Benzoine, Amber, Labdanum, Musk, Civet, Aloes-wood, old decayed Ash-wood, Rice Meal, Tree Moss, and other like substances. These

³⁷⁰⁶ On Sterility in the Male and Female, Its Causes and Treatment. By The Chevalier V. Mondat, D. M. P. Translated from the Fifth French Edition. New York, NY: J. S. Redfield, 1844, p. 99f.

³⁷⁰⁷ The Dispensatory of the United States of America; By Dr. Geo. B. Wood and Dr. Franklin Bache. Nineteenth Edition. Philadelphia and London: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1907, p. 1379. (PART II; DRUGS AND MEDICINES NOT OFFICIAL, **Ambergris**. *Ambra grisea (cinerea)*, p. 1379.)

³⁷⁰⁸ A. Moquin-Tandon. Elements of Medical Zoology. Translated and edited by Robert Thomas Hulme, M.R.C.S.E., F.L.S., &c. London: H. Baillière, Publisher, 1861, p. 127. (CHAPTER II. MUSK; § V. Ambergris; 2. AMBERGRIS (*ambra cinerea*), pp. 126-27.)

³⁷⁰⁹ Ibid.

³⁷¹⁰ Scientific American. A Weekly Journal of Practical Information, Art, Science, Mechanics, Chemistry, and Manufactures. New York, NY: Munn & Co. ♦ Vol. LXX, No. 25, June 23, 1894, p. 394. (*Big Money in Ambergris*, p. 394.)

*abuses are easily detected. [...] The former commonly soften sooner in the warm hand, and never have the true Ambergris smell, no art being able to perfectly imitate this.*³⁷¹¹ [Written with modern typography.]

As to the adulteration of ambergris, I notice that an anonymous author of a treatise on Indian perfumery published in Calcutta in 1943 E.V. stated about the use of ambergris in the perfumery industry in India at that time:

*Due to the high price of genuine ambergris it is very frequently, if not nearly always, adulterated.*³⁷¹²

Luckily, for the sake of the whales, ambergris is nowadays (at least in the West) replaced in perfumery by a synthetic product.

The *Pharmacopæia Londinensis*, 1685, states, among other things, about "Ambergrise", which at that time was considered a mineral, and a good preservative against the Plague:

*It is a Marine Sulphur, found at the Sea-shore, chiefly in the Indies, which breaks from Fountains and Caverns of the Sea, It is either natural or factitious. [...] It is hot and dry, an excellent corroberative, it is discutient, resolute, alexipharmick and analeptick; it strengthens the heart and brain, revives and recreates the spirit natural, vital and animal: Its sweet Sulphur is an excellent Perfume; it is a good preservative against the Plague, and preserves the Spirits from infection;*³⁷¹³ [Written with modern typography.]

– twenty years before the book's publication the Great Plague of London had in 1665 killed around 100,000 people. As to the statement that ambergris was a mineral, the French pharmacist Pierre Pomet (1658-1699), chief druggist to the French King Lewis XIV, stated in his *Histoire générale des drogues*, published in 1694, and in 1712 translated into English as *A Compleat History of Druggs*, that ambergris was:

nothing else but a Mass of Honey-Combs, that fall from the Rocks into the Sea, torn off by the Waves of the Sea, the Violence of the Winds, or otherwise: [...] Many Persons will be surpriz'd at what I advance, that Ambergrise, whose Nature hath been hitherto so little known, comes from nothing but Bees Wax, [...] And for further Confirmation, when the Ambergrise is dissolv'd in Spirit of Wine tartariz'd, there remains at last a Substance entirely like Honey. And to make it appear that Ambergrise is nothing else but the Product of the Honey-Comb, observe the great Quantities that are sometimes found of it; not in Pieces of

³⁷¹¹ Casper Neumann; William Lewis. *The Chemical Works of Caspar Neumann, M.D. &c. Abridged and Methodized. With large Additions, Containing the later Discoveries and Improvements made in Chemistry and the Arts depending thereon, By William Lewis, M.B. &c.* London: Printed for W. Johnston, &c., &c., MDCCLIX (1759), p. 240. (SECT. IV. BITUMINOUS SUBSTANCES; II. AMBERGRIS, pp. 239-42.) • Caspar Neumanns. *Prælectiones Chemicæ, Seu Chemia Medico-Pharmaceutica Experimentalis & Rationalis, Oder Gründlicher Unterricht der Chemie, &c, &c, &c.* Berlin: Johann Andreas Rüdiger, 1740, pp. 1372-1431. (PARS V. DE REGNO MINERALI; Caput II.; De Ambra Gryfea, pp. 1372-1431. • See also note³⁷²⁰ below.

³⁷¹² *Indian Perfumes, Essences and Hair Oils. A Treatise revealing possibilities and secrets of the perfumery industry. By A Specialist (Of 40 Years Experience).* Calcutta: Keshub Bhaban, 1943, p. 21. (SECTION ONE; THE PERFUMERY INDUSTRY. CHAPTER III; *Perfumery Materials*, pp. [16]-28.)

³⁷¹³ *Pharmacopæia Londinensis. Or, the New London Dispensatory. In VI. Books. The Third Edition corrected and amended. By William Salmon, Profellor of Phylick; &c.* London, Printed for Thomas Dawks, Tho. Balfett, and Richard Chifwell, 1685, pp. 398-9. (LIBER III. OF MINERALS; CAP. XII. Of SULPHURS. III. Of AMBERGRISE, pp. 398-400.)

three hundred Weight, as some have writ, but thirty or fourty Pounds are sufficient.³⁷¹⁴ [Written with modern typography.]

And there was not a word about whales and ambergris! However, a 1703 medical work *Opera Medica* by the Dutch physician Johann Broen (1663-1703), stated that "*ambra gryfe*" was 'of the sea' or 'sea born'.³⁷¹⁵ But what about the knowledge that ambergris was formed in whales? Something happened when whale fishermen started killing sperm whales in New England, and in the last quarter of 1724 appeared in the *Philosophical Transactions, of the Royal Society of London* a short communication headed: "Ambergris found in Whales", written by a Dr. Boylston of Boston, New England. This physician was Zabdiel Boylston (1679-1766), who became known as the first to introduce the practise of inoculation for smallpox in America.³⁷¹⁶ The communication stated:

The most learned Part of Mankind are still at a loss about many Things, even in medical Use; and, particularly, were so in what is called Ambergris, until our Whale Fishermen of Nantucket, in New-England, some three or four Years past, made the Discovery. Their Accounts to me is this.

Cutting up a Spermaceti Bull Whale, they found accidentally in him, about twenty Pounds Weight, more or less, of that Drug. After which, they, and other such Fishermen, became very curious in searching all such Whales they kill'd; and it has been since found in lesser Quantities, in several Male Whales of that Kind, and in no other, and that scarcely in one of an Hundred of them. They add further, that it is contained in a Cyst, or Bag, without any inlet or outlet to it, and that they have sometimes found the Bag empty, and yet entire.

The Bag is no where to be found, but near the Genital Parts of the Fish. The Ambergris is, when first taken out, moist, and of an exceeding strong and offensive smell.

*Whether or not (from the Account above) the Ambergris be naturally, or accidentally produced in that Fish, I leave to the Learned to determine.*³⁷¹⁷ [Written with modern typography.]

It is important to notice that a whale at that time was called a fish and not considered a mammal! Some three months after Dr. Boylston's notice had been printed appeared in the *Philosophical Transactions, of the Royal Society of London* an essay from Paul Dudley F.R.S., the Chief Justice of the British colony of Massachusetts, whom I already have introduced above together with the essay,

³⁷¹⁴ A Compleat History of Druggs, Written in French By Monfieur Pomet, &c., to which is added what is further observable on the fame Subject, from Mellin^s. Lemery, and Tournefort. Done into English from the Originals. London: Printed for R. Bonwicke, William Freeman, Timothy Goodwin, Matthew Wotton, &c, &c. 1712, pp. 272-3. (Vol. II. *General History of Druggs. Book I. Of Animals; 26. Of Ambergrife*, pp. 272-4.) • *Histoire générale des drogues, traitant des plantes, des animaux et des minéraux, &c, &c.* Parle Sieur Pierre Pomet. Paris: J.-B. Loyson et A. Pillon, MDCXCIV (1694), pp. 57-60. (*HISTOIRE GENERALE DES DROGUES. SECONDE PARTIE. LIVRE PREMIER. DES ANIMAUX; CHAPITRE XXVI. De l'Ambre gris*, pp. 57-60.)

³⁷¹⁵ *Joannis Broen. Opera Medica.* Roterodami [Rotterdam]: Bernardum Bos, MDCCIII (1703), p. 280. (*EXERCITATIONES THEORETICO-PRACTICÆ, DE OPERATIONIBUS MEDICAMENTORUM. LIBER POSTUMUS; CAPUT IV; De Medicamentis attenuantibus, five præparantibus, & digeftivis; Marina*, p. 160.)

³⁷¹⁶ For Zabdiel Boylston, see: *Ralph H. Major. A History of Medicine.* 2 vols. Springfield, ILL: Charles C Thomas · Publisher, 1954. ♦ Volume Two, p. 765. (1679-1766 – *Zabdiel Boylston*)(*Biographical Addenda; The Rise of American Medicine*, p. 765.)

³⁷¹⁷ *Philosophical Transactions, of the Royal Society of London.* London: Sold by Lockyer Davis, and Peter Flmsly, Printers to The Royal Society. ♦ Vol. 33, No. 385, For the Months of October, November, and December, 1724, p. 193. (XI. *Ambergris found in Whales. Communicated by Dr. Boylfton of Bofton in New-England*, p. 193.)

which was headed: "*An Effay upon the Natural Hiftory of Whales, with a particular Account of the Ambergris found in Sperma Ceti Whale*", and which stated about ambergris:

The best and most exact Account of Ambergris, that I have been able to procure (and I may truly say, I have taken a great deal of Pains for it) I very lately received from one Mr. Atkins, now an Inhabitant at Boston in New England, who used the Whale Fishery, for ten or twelve Years together, and was one of the first that went out a fishing for the Sperma Ceti Whales, about the year 1720, and then began to discover the Ambergris; and being a sober ingenious Man, what he says may safely be depended on; tho', for Substance, I have had it from several of the Whale-men.

His Relation, which was taken a few Days since from his own Mouth, is as follow:

*"The Ambergris is found only in the Sperma Ceti Whales, and consists of Balls or globular Bodies, of various Sizes, from about three Inches to twelve Inches Diameter, and will weigh from a Pound and an Half to twenty two Pounds, lying loose in a large oval Bag or Bladder of three or four Foot long, and two or three Foot deep and wide [...]"*³⁷¹⁸ [Written with modern typography.]

The German/Polish chemist and apothecary Casper Neumann, mentioned above, was also a member of the Royal Society of London, and in 1736, the year before his death, he translated Zabdiel Boylston's letter and Paul Dudley's essay into German in the book *Disquisitio De Ambra Grysea*³⁷¹⁹, Inquiry concerning Ambergris, however, he maintained his view that ambergris was not an animal product at all, but a species of bitumen that had exuded from the earth into the sea and then had been swallowed by the whales.³⁷²⁰ Throughout history ambergris had also been thought of as a gum-resin, a sort of camphor, a submarine fungus, and an excremental product of the crocodile or of certain birds, &c.³⁷²¹

Ambergris was well-known in England in the seventeenth century, as seen, for instance, in the play "*The Custom of the Country*", a tragicomedy written c. 1619 by the English Jacobean dramatist John Fletcher (1579-1625), and the English Jacobean and Caroline playwright Philip Massinger (1583-1639/40), in a scene where a banquet is being prepared:

³⁷¹⁸ Ibid. ♦ Vol. 33, Part 2, No. 387, For the Months of March and April, 1725, p. 267. (*II. An Effay upon the Natural Hiftory of Whales, with a particular Account of the Ambergris found in Sperma Ceti Whale. In a letter to the Publifher, from the Honourable Paul Dudley, Esq; F. R. S.*, pp. 256-69.)

³⁷¹⁹ Caspar Neumann; Zabdiel Boylston; Paul Dudley, et al. DISQUISITIO DE AMBRA GRYSEA. Sammt einem Kurtzen Vorbericht solcher Memoire halber, Anietzo, weil wenigen Personen die Engländische Transactiones Philosophicæ vorkommen, in deutscher Sprache publiciret, von Einem Liebhaber der Historiæ Naturalis. Dressden: bey Gottlob Christian Hilschern, 1736.

³⁷²⁰ Casper Neumann; William Lewis. The Chemical Works of Caspar Neumann, M.D. &c. Abridged and Methodized. With large Additions, Containing the later Discoveries and Improvements made in Chemistry and the Arts depending thereon, By William Lewis, M.B. &c. London: Printed for W. Johnston, &c., &c., MDCCLIX (1759), pp. 239-42. (SECT. IV. BITUMINOUS SUBSTANCES; II. AMBERGRIS, pp. 239-42.) • Caspar Neumanns. Prælectiones Chemicæ, Seu Chemia Medico-Pharmaceutica Experimentalis & Rationalis, Oder Gründlicher Unterricht der Chemie, &c, &c, &c. Berlin: Johann Andreas Rüdiger, 1740, pp. 1372-1431. (PARS V. DE REGNO MINERALI; Caput II.; De Ambra Grysea, pp. 1372-1431.) • See also note³⁷¹¹ above.

³⁷²¹ New Homœopathic Pharmacopœia & Posology; or the Mode of Preparing Homœopathic Medicines, and the Administration of Doses. Compiled and Translated from the German Works of Buchner and Gruner, and the French Work of Jahr. With Original Contributions by Charles J. Hempel, M.D. New York, NY: William Radde, 1850, p. 84. (CHAPTER II. ANIMAL KINGDOM. OF THE PREPARATION OF ANIMAL SUBSTANCES. B) Animal substances; 3. AMBRA GRISEA SAU AMBROSIACA, Ambra vera seu maritima; Fr., Ambre gris; Ger. Grauer ambra; Eng., Ambergris, p. 84-5.)

For the Thelemites

Zab[ulon]. *Be quick, be quick, out with the Banquet there,
These Scents are dull; cast richer on, and fuller;
Scent every Place: Where have you plac'd the Musick?*

[1st] **Ser[vant].** *Here they stand ready, Sir. Zab[ulon]. 'Tis well, be sure
The Wines be lusty, high, and full of Spirit,
And Amber'd all. [1st] Ser[vant]. They are.*³⁷²²

[Written with modern typography.]

(Notice the "k" in "Musick" (Mufick)!) The favourite dish of Charles II (1630-1685), King of England, Scotland, and Ireland, is said to have been "eggs and ambergrease"!³⁷²³ And the English poet John Milton (1608-1674) wrote in 1671 in *Paradise Regain'd. A Poem. In IV Books* – a sequel to his *Paradise Lost* (1667) – a poem dealing with the temptation of Christ in the wilderness:

*A Table richly spred, in regal mode,
With dishes pill'd, and meats of nobelest sort
And savour, Beasts of chase, or Fowl of game,
In pastry built, or from the spit, or boyl'd,
Gris-amber-steam'd; all Fish from Sea or Shore,
Freshet, or purling Brook, of shell or fin,
And exquisitest name, for which was drain'd
Pontus and Lucrine Bay, and Afric Coast.*³⁷²⁴

[Written with modern typography.]

The Austrian-born physician François-Xavier Swediaur (1748-1824)³⁷²⁵ published in 1783 an interesting paper on ambergris in the *Philosophical Transactions, of the Royal Society of London*, where he wrote about the use of ambergris, or "ambergrise" as it also was spelled at that time:

In Asia and part of Africa ambergrise is not only used as a medicine and as a perfume, but great use is also made of it in cookery, by adding it to several dishes as a spice; a great quantity of it is also constantly bought by the Pilgrims who travel to Mecca, probably to offer it there, and make use of it in fumigations, in the same manner as frankincense is used in Catholic countries. The Turks make use of it as an aphrodisiac. Our perfumers add it to scented pillars, candles, balls or bottles, gloves, and hair-powder; and its essence is

³⁷²² *The Custom of the Country*. Written by Mr. Francis Beaumont, and Mr. John Fletcher. London: Printed for J. T. And Sold by J Brown at the Black Swan without Temple-Bar, 1717, p. 29. (ACT III. SCENE II. Enter Zabulon and Servants, pp. 29-34.) • *The Custom of the Country* was first printed in the first Beaumont and Fletcher folio, 1647.

³⁷²³ *Thomas Babington Macaulay*. *The History of England From The Accession of James II*. 5 vols. London: Printed for Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1849-61. (Vol. V: London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1861.) • Vol. I, (1849), p. 442. (CHAPTER IV, pp. 428-523.)

³⁷²⁴ *John Milton*. *Paradise Regain'd. A Poem. In IV Books*. To which is added *Samson Agonistes*. London: Printed by J. M. for John Starkey, MDCLXXI (1671), Book II, line 340-347. • Facsimile edition (A Scholar Press Facsimile): Menston, UK: Scholar Press, 1968.

³⁷²⁵ For François-Xavier Swediaur, and the many variations of his name, see: *Archives of Dermatology and Syphilology*. Chicago, ILL: American Medical Association. • Vol. 29, No. 1, January 1934, 80-91. (*François-Xavier Swediaur | 1748-1824; By John E. Lane, M.D., New Haven, Conn., pp. 80-91.*)

*mixed with pomatums for the face and hands, either alone or mixed with musk, &c. though its smell is to some persons extremely offensive.*³⁷²⁶ [Written with modern typography.]

Dr. Swediaur stated that embedded in all the ambergris that he had examined were the horny beaks of the squids, *Sepia octopodia* [Linnaeus, 1758] [but now called the lesser octopus, *Eledone cirrhosa* (Lamarck, 1798)], which he had learned was the principal food of the whales:

The beak of the Sepia is a black horny substance, and therefore passes undigested through the stomach into the intestinal canal, where it is mixed with the faeces; after which it is either evacuated with them, or if these latter be preternaturally retained, forms concretions with them, which render the animal sick and torpid, and produce an obstipation, which ends either in an abscess of the abdomen, as has been frequently observed, or becomes fatal to the animal; whence in both the cases, on the bursting of its belly, that hardened substance, known under the name of ambergrise, is found swimming on the sea, or thrown upon the coast.

*From the preceding account, and my having constantly found the above-mentioned beaks of the Sepia in all pieces of ambergrise of any considerable size, I think we may venture to conclude, that all ambergrise is generated in the bowels of the Physeter Macrocephalus, or spermaceti-whale, and there mixed with the beaks of the Sepia Octopodia, which is the principal food of that whale; and we may therefore define ambergrise to be the preternaturally hardened dung or faeces of the Physeter Macrocephalus, mixed with some indigestible relics of its food.*³⁷²⁷ [Written with modern typography.]

In 2006 E.V., 223 years after Dr. Swediaur's paper had appeared, the late British oceanographer Dr. Robert (Henry) Clarke (1919-2011), hypothesized about the formation of ambergris in an article in *The Latin American Journal of Aquatic Mammals* (LAJAM), writing:

Now once in the Antarctic in 1948 on board Fl. F. Southern Harvester I examined a sperm whale whose cylindrical last stomach was entirely filled with a compacted mass of squid beaks, squid pens and nematode worms. The mass was 1.2m in length and 0.4m in diameter. This last stomach is normally empty except for a few small beaks, pens and nematode cuticles.

We have only to imagine an imperfect valve, a leaky sphincter between this last stomach and the intestine, when all conditions are set for a train of events which should result in ambergris.

[...]

Suppose some quantity of tangled, indigestible material leaks into the intestine in this way. The wash of the fluid contents of the intestine carries the stuff down to the rectum. The stuff becomes saturated with faeces but it is not excreted at the anus because the sphincter muscle cannot adapt itself, relax sufficiently perhaps, to allow the expulsion of solid material. This mass, now clogged with faecal material, becomes an obstruction in the rectum and the liquid faeces are dammed against it. The whale now reacts to the stoppage in such a way that the flow of faeces can eventually be resumed. This reaction might be a local increase in the water-absorbing capacity of the rectum. It will be recalled that the walls of the rectum around the 155kg boulder were congested and slightly thickened, suggesting increased physiological activity in this region. With absorption of water the faeces impregnating the mass become a cement binding the material together and smoothing the tangled periphery of the mass. Once it has become plastic the to-and-fro movements of

³⁷²⁶ Philosophical Transactions, of the Royal Society of London. London: Sold by Lockyer Davis, and Peter Flmsly, Printers to The Royal Society. ♦ Vol. LXXIII. For the Year 1783, Part I., p. 240. (XV. *An Account of Ambergrife*, by Dr. Schwediawer; presented by Sir Joseph Banks, P. R. S., pp. 226-41.)

³⁷²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 237-8.

peristalsis help to smooth and shape it. The total effect is to isolate the mass as a concretion. When the whale stools again the faeces can flow, as through an annulus, between the concretion and the walls of the rectum. But these faeces bring further detritus which again would dam the faecal flow, were it not that water is again absorbed so as to impaste and embed the newly arrived materials onto the surface of the concretion. By this intermittent process the concretion is built in layers or strata around the nonstratified core, the original obstructing mass. Such is the architecture of ambergris.

The concretion grows and grows, it may be for many years, but the faeces are able to pass and the whale remains healthy. However, there comes a time when the walls of the rectum become so distended that they rupture and the whale dies when the ambergris is released into the sea.

So the gut reacts to the threat of obstructing indigestible matter by building this matter into a concretion (which becomes ambergris) so that the flow of the liquid faeces is maintained, although at the expense of accretionary growth in size of the coprolith.

Response processes in the whale are constructional. The biochemical processes which transform the coprolith into ambergris are merely consequential upon its incubation over a long period in the peculiar environment of the rectum teeming with bacteria.³⁷²⁸

The largest piece of ambergris so far recorded (2006 E.V.) was found off the coast of Australia in the end of 1913 E.V. and weighed 455 kg. – it was sold in London in 1914 E.V. for £23,000 sterling [around £2,500,000 in today's money].³⁷²⁹

³⁷²⁸ The Latin American Journal of Aquatic Mammals (LAJAM). Rio de Janeiro: SOLAMAC. ♦ Vol. 5, No. 1, June 2006, p. 18. (*THE ORIGIN OF AMBERGRIS*; By Robert Clarke, pp. 7-21.)

³⁷²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.