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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.



FIGURE 18. *Cairo – “Two Gorgeous Runners”*

“We [Rose and Aleister Crowley] landed at Port Said on Monday, February the eighth [1904], and went to Cairo on the following day. It was part of the plan of the gods that my romantic passion and pride, the intoxicated infatuation of my hymeneal happiness, should have induced me to play a puerile part on the world’s stage. I had called myself Count Svareff and Aleister MacGregor for quite definite and legitimate reasons; but I had never made a deliberate fool of myself by assuming an absurd alias. I was not for a moment deceived by my own pretext that I wanted to study Mohammedism, and in particular the mysticism of the fakir, the Darwesh and the Sufi, from within, when I proposed to pass myself off in Egypt for a Persian prince with a beautiful English wife. I wanted to swagger about in a turban with a diamond aigrette and sweeping silken robes or a coat of cloth of gold, with a jewelled talwar by my side, and two gorgeous runners to clear the way for my carriage through the streets of Cairo. [...] Having to choose a Persian name, I made it Chioa Khan (pronounced Hiwa Khan) being the Hebrew for The Beast. (Khan [Pers. خان] khān, prince, nobleman, lord] is one of the numerous honorifics common in Asia.) I had no conscious magical intention in doing so. (Let me here mention that I usually called my wife Ouarda [Arab. وردة ouarda, a rose], one of the many Arabic words for Rose.)” – The Confessions of Aleister Crowley (1969 E.V.) • Real photo postcard from around the time of the Crowleys visit to Cairo, 1904 E.V. • LE CAIRE. – Saïs courant. – LL. [Léon & Lévy – Paris.] © From the author’s collection.

Back to the honeymoon. Crowley wrote in *Confessions* about their departure for Egypt:

*We left Colombo for Aden, Suez and Port said on [Thursday,] January 28th, intending to see a little of the season in Cairo,*¹⁷⁸

In Colombo, Ceylon, they stayed at the Galle Face Hotel (Figure 13) overlooking the Indian Ocean. The hotel, a colossal building in a Victorian style built in 1864, is the oldest hotel east of the Suez. A 1904 E.V. advertisement for the Galle Face Hotel states, among other things:

*By the sea. The healthiest position in Colombo. Five minutes drive from Harbour and Railway Terminus. Electric Lights throughout. Fans. Passenger lift Day and Night. Ladies' and Gents' Sea Water Swimming Bath. [...] Patronised by the Elite of Society. The most complete Hotel Fitted with all the latest modern appliances for health, elegance, and comfort. [...] J. Hoffer, Manager, Late of the Cecil Hotel, London.*¹⁷⁹

Crowley does not mention the name of the steamer that brought them back to Egypt, but according to the London *Times'* Lloyd's Lists, which were published six times a week¹⁸⁰, it can only have been the S.S. Himalaya [II], Sydney for London, that arrived Colombo on Wednesday, January 27, and left for Port Said on Friday, January 29, where it arrived ten days later on Monday, February 8.¹⁸¹ Crowley likely writes that he and Rose left Colombo on January 28th since they entered the anchored steamer on this date. The first-class mail steamer the Himalaya (Figure 14) was owned by the British P. & O. Company – Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company. The large 466 ft. (142 metres) long steel steamer, with a Gross tonnage of 6,898 and a speed of 18 knots per hour, was launched in 1892.¹⁸² About the voyage to Port Said Crowley

¹⁷⁸ *Confessions*, p. 385.

¹⁷⁹ Handbook Of Information For Passengers & Shippers By the Steamers Of the Nippon Yusen Kaisha. (Japan Mail S.S. Co., Ltd.) [No place, no publisher], 37th Year of Meiji (1904), Advertisements, p. 37. ("*Galle Face Hotel, Colombo, Ceylon.*") (Advertisements, pp. 1-37.)

¹⁸⁰ The information found in the *Times'* Lloyd's Lists (as well as in other newspapers) could also be found in the *Shipping Gazette and Lloyd's List* which was a journal published daily (except Sundays) in London.

¹⁸¹ The Times. London, UK: Published by George Edward Wright at the Times Office. ♦ Thursday, January 28, 1904, p. 4. (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence, (From Lloyd's, &c.),* p. 4.) ♦ "*Himalaya, Sydney for London, arrived Colombo yesterday* [i.e. Wednesday, January 27]." ♦ Ibid. ♦ Saturday, January 30, 1904, p. 12. (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence, (From Lloyd's, &c.),* p. 12.) ♦ "*Himalaya, for London, left Colombo yesterday morning* [i.e. Friday, January 29]." ♦ Ibid. ♦ Tuesday, February 9, 1904, p. 10. (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence, (From Lloyd's, &c.),* p. 10.) ♦ "*Himalaya, Sydney for London, left Port Said yesterday.* [i.e. Monday, February 8]." ♦ See also note⁸⁶⁸ below.

¹⁸² The Marine Engineer; A Monthly Journal of Marine Engineering, Shipbuilding, Steam Navigation & Electrical Engineering. Edited by William George Neal. London, UK: Office For Advertisements And Publication. ♦ Vol. XIV, April 1, 1892, p. 31. (*Launches And Trial Trips. Launches – English; Himalaya*, pp. 30-4.) ♦ *Boyd Cable. A Hundred Year History of the P. & O.; Peninsular And Oriental Steam Navigation Company; 1837-1937.* London, UK: Ivor Nicholson and Watson Limited, 1937, p. 246. (*Appendix I. Peninsular & Oriental Company's Past and Present Fleet*, pp. 243-9.)

writes in *Confessions* that they met the pioneering British psychiatrist and philosopher Henry Maudsley, MD, LLD, FRCP (1835-1918)¹⁸³:

*The voyage was as uneventful as most similar voyages are. The one item of interest is that one of our fellow passengers was Dr Henry Maudsley. This man, besides being one of the three greatest alienists in England, was a profound philosopher of the school which went rather further than Spencer in the direction of mechanical automatism. He fitted in exactly. He was the very man I wanted. We talked about Dhyana. I was quite sure that the attainment of this state, and a fortiori of Samadhi, meant that they remove the inhibitions which repress the manifestations of genius, or (practically the same thing in other words) enable one to tap the energy of the universe.*¹⁸⁴

It was also the Himalaya that brought Rose back to England in June 1906 E.V. after Nuith Ma Ahathoor Hecate Sappho Jezebel Lilith's tragic death of typhoid in Rangoon en route to India, Rose and Aleister Crowley's daughter born on July 28, 1904 E.V.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸³ For Maudsley, see: *Psychological Medicine*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. ♦ Vol. 18, Issue 03, August 1988, pp. 551-74. (*Henry Maudsley – psychiatrist, philosopher and entrepreneur*; By Trevor Turner, pp. 551-74.)

¹⁸⁴ *Confessions*, pp. 385-6.

¹⁸⁵ Crowley wrote in his diary June 7th, 1906 E.V.: "Went to Plymouth by 6.30. Arrived 12.05"; and June 8th, 1906 E.V.: "Joined Rose on S.S. Himalaya..."; ... As I supposed, I broke down a good deal." ♦ See: *Aleister Crowley and Marcelo Motta*. Sex and Religion. The Equinox. Vol. V, No. 4. March MCMLXXXI o.s. Nashville, TE: Thelema Publishing Company, 1981 E.V., p. 88. ("June 7th" & "June 8th.") (*The 1906 E.V. Diary*, pp. 71-105.) ♦ The London Times, Saturday, June 9, 1906 wrote: "P. and O.-s. [...] HIMALAYA, Sydney for London, arrived Plymouth yesterday [i.e. Friday, June 8], and proceeded." ♦ The Times. London, UK: Published by George Edward Wright. ♦ Saturday, June 9, 1906, p. 12. (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence, (From Lloyd's, &c.)*, p. 12.) ♦ Crowley wrote in his 1906 E.V. diary, published in "The Temple of Solomon the King" in the eight number of *The Equinox*, September 1912 E.V.: "[April] 3. A ∴ mediocre (left Hongkong per ss. Nippon Maru). (He had sent his wife and child directly by steamer to England.)" ♦ [*Aleister Crowley, et al.*] *The Equinox*. Vol. I., No. VIII. London: Wieland & Co., September MCMXII o.s. [1912 E.V.], p. 17. (*The Temple of Solomon the King; The Babe*, pp. 5-48.) ♦ Rose and her daughter had most likely boarded the P. & O. S.S. Mazagon, Kobe for Bombay that left Hongkong on Monday, April 2, 1906 E.V. ♦ The Times. London, UK: Published by George Edward Wright. ♦ Wednesday, April 4, 1906, p. 10. ("P. and O.-s. [...] MAZAGON, Kobe for Bombay, left Hong-kong Monday evening [i.e. April 2].") (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence, (From Lloyd's, &c.)*, p. 10.) ♦ As stated above, Rose Crowley arrived at Plymouth on board the S.S. Himalaya Friday, June 8, 1906 E.V. The Himalaya had left Colombo Thursday, May 17. ♦ The Times. London, UK: Published by George Edward Wright. ♦ Friday, May 18, 1906, p. 5. ("P. and O.-s. [...] HIMALAYA, Sydney for London, with the Australian mails, left Colombo yesterday [i.e. Thursday, May 17].") (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence, (From Lloyd's, &c.)*, p. 5.) ♦ For Nuith Ma Ahathoor Hecate Sappho Jezebel Lilith Crowley, see note⁷⁸⁶ below.



**Rose Edith Crowley, née
Kelly (1874-1932)**

Feb. 7. Suez.

[The work on the modern Suez Canal was begun in April 1859 headed by the French diplomat Viscomte Ferdinand Maria de Lesseps (1805-1894), and the canal was opened to navigation ten years after, on November 17, 1869. The Suez Canal reduced the distance between western Europe and India by nearly 8000 kilometers. There had, in fact, been earlier canals, and a boat canal from the Nile to the Red Sea was constructed about 1300 B.C. in the Nineteenth Dynasty during the time of Sety I and Ramesses II. The total length of the modern Suez Canal is nearly 170 kilometers, including channels for the harbors. The average time of transit through the canal was decreased from three days in the opening year 1869 to 36 hours in 1886 and to 18 hours around the time of the Crowleys travel with the Himalaya. A new canal constructed next to the old was inaugurated on August 6, 2015 E.V. The average time of transit has been halved and is now 11 hours.]

Feb. 8. Landed at Port Said.^[186]

[As mentioned above, the Crowleys landed at Port Said in Egypt on Monday, February 8th, and to all appearances with the Himalaya.^{187]}

Feb. 9. To Cairo.

[On Thursday, February 11, 1904, *The Egyptian Gazette*¹⁸⁸ had the following on their Lists of Visitors at hotels:

*Visitors' Lists. – Grand Continental. [...] Lord and Lady Baleskine [sic].*¹⁸⁹

To find references in literature to a hotel in Cairo named “Grand Continental” is not easy, and this naming and its relationship to Hotel Continental and (Grand) New Hotel, the old Cairo hotel which was preferred by the Khedive, is often misunderstood, or, not fully explained. However, the hotel was originally situated in the upper part of Sharia Kasr en-Nil as the Hotel Continental, but had moved in 1899 to the large building of the New Hotel on Sharia Kamel at Place de l’Opéra, almost next door to Shepherd’s Hotel. It was renamed the Grand Continental after the building had been rebuilt and modernized, and its new name arched high above the main entrance (see Figure 16). Later it changed its name to the Continental Savoy. However, the name “Grand Continental” was not adopted by travel writers who in guides and books continued referring to the hotel by its original name, the Hotel Continental. The Grand Continental is in a 1905 E.V. advertisement mentioned as:

Grand Continental. Open all the Year. This First-Class Hotel, newly built and situated in the finest and healthiest part of the Ismailia Quarter, patronized by Royalties and the élite of English Society, offers at moderate terms every modern and home comfort. Two Large Verandahs, Winter Garden, Drawing and Ladies Saloons, Reading, Smoking, and Billiard Rooms. Twenty-four Private Suites, with separate staircase to each. Excellent Cuisine. French

^[186] *Port Said* was named after Khedive (Viceroy) Mohammed Said Pasha (1854-63). For Port Said and Suez, see below.

¹⁸⁷ See note¹⁸¹ above.

¹⁸⁸ The first to draw attention to the mentioning of A.C. & Rose in *The Egyptian Gazette*’s Hotel Visitors’ Lists and Personal News from 1904 was, to the best of my knowledge, the Australian Colin S. McLeod on his informative homepage once found at www.duaut.net, where he also discussed Crowley’s mention of The Boulak Museum. (See also note1 above) • British travel writer E. A. Reynolds-Ball writes in his 1905 E.V. edition of *Cairo of To-Day: A practical Guide to Cairo and the Nile*, that *The Egyptian Gazette*, published daily at Alexandria, is the only English daily newspaper published in Egypt. He also mentions two English weeklies: “An English Society weekly, called the *Sphinx*, was started in 1893, price 2p. Very full society information. Another English weekly, called *Cairo Evening News*, has recently been started.” There might be something of interest in these two weeklies if they can be located. The Egyptian Gazette was founded in Alexandria in the beginning of 1880 and is still published, now in Cairo. • E. A. Reynolds-Ball. *Cairo of To-Day: A practical Guide to Cairo and the Nile*. Fourth Edition. Revised to date and Enlarged. London, UK: Adam and Charles Black, 1905, p. 20. (Hereinafter cited as “*Reynolds-Ball1905*”) • Eustace Alfred Reynolds-Ball (1858-1928). British traveller and author. Barrister-at-Law, but never practised.

¹⁸⁹ The Egyptian Gazette. Alexandria: The Egyptian Gazette. ♦ Thursday, February 11, 1904, p. 5.



Cairo street scene at the Grand Continental Hotel from around the time of the Crowleys visit to Cairo in 1904 E.V.

*restaurant and Grill Room. Hydraulic Lift. Electric Light throughout. Most modern and officially approved Sanitary Arrangements*¹⁹⁰

Why did Crowley not stay at Shepherd's Hotel which he knew and had enjoyed back in 1902? Maybe he needed something new. In *To-day on the Nile*, from 1905 E.V., the author says concerning the Grand Continental, which he mentions by its old name, that:

*The Savoy is the best and most fashionable hotel. Those who go to Cairo for the winter and who wish to participate in the social events of the season establish themselves here. [...] The Continental Hotel best meets the requirements of the tourist whose stay is short and who comes to see Cairo and Egypt.*¹⁹¹

Douglas Sladen, who in 1908 E.V. also refers to the hotel by its old name, adds:

*"Hotel Continental" has a continental clientele. The continents of Asia and Africa, as well as the continents of Europe and America, are represented, and the Jews are prominent. Its terrace – a sort of human zoological gardens – is the sunniest spot in Cairo, and there are seasons in which this is an advantage.*¹⁹²

The luxurious hotel was located on Sharia Kamel at Place de l'Opéra overlooking both the square and the Ezbekieh Gardens.¹⁹³ The octagonal Ezbekiyeh Gardens was a large park covering 20 ½ acres. It had been laid out in 1870 and had a variety of rare trees and shrubs and a large pond, together with several cafés, a restaurant and a summer theatre.¹⁹⁴ The Place de l'Opéra which was bordering the Ezbekiyeh Gardens was named after the Khedivial Opera House built there. It was inaugurated in 1869, and in 1871 Giuseppe Verdi's opera "*Aida*" had first performance. The opera which takes place in Ancient Egypt was commissioned by Ismail Pasha, and Auguste Mariette had created the original plot, sets, and costumes.¹⁹⁵ The house burned down in 1971 E.V., but the square is still called Midan el-Opera.

Place de l'Opéra and the Ezbekiyeh Gardens were a centre of the Europeans and their social life, and on the evening of the day where *The Egyptian Gazette* announced the Boleskines' stay at the Grand Continental the hotel held a ball, and just opposite in the Khedivial Opera House, a French operetta company performed Jacques Offenbach's 1867 operetta *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein* (The Grand Duchess of

¹⁹⁰ *Reynolds-Ball 1905*. Advertisement facing title page.

¹⁹¹ *Harry Westbrook Dunning*. *To-day on the Nile*. New York: James Pott & Company, 1905, p. 260.

¹⁹² *Douglas Sladen*. *Egypt and the English, showing British public opinion in Egypt upon the Egyptian question: with chapters on the success of the Sudan and the delights of travel in Egypt and the Sudan*. London, UK: Hurst and Blackett, Ltd., 1908, p. 515.

¹⁹³ *Karl Baedeker*. *Egypt. Handbook for Travellers*. Fourth remodelled Edition, Leipsic: Karl Baedeker, Publisher, 1898, p. 23.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

¹⁹⁵ For the history of the opera, see: Verdi's *Aida*: The History of an Opera in Letters and Documents. Collected and translated by Hans Busch. Minneapolis, MI: University of Minnesota Press, 1978.

Gerolstein).¹⁹⁶ I note that the choice of this satiric, anti-military operetta is very suggestive of two reasons. In the first place, the Russo-Japanese War had begun on February 8, and the war was much discussed in Egypt owing to the Suez Canal and the Egyptian ports. Secondly, at that time the operetta was apparently not produced owing to its satirical critique of unthinking militarism, which had resulted in that it had been banned by the French after their defeat in the Franco-Prussian War which broke out soon after its debut!¹⁹⁷ As mentioned, the Russo-Japanese War broke out on the same day as the Crowleys disembarked in Port Said, and soon the Egyptian Government restricted either belligerent's use of Egyptian ports and territorial waters other than the Suez Canal.¹⁹⁸ But Crowley does not mention the war then, or, later, in connection with the Equinox of the Gods and the receiving of *The Book of the Law*. This seems very strange in the light of his stay in St. Petersburg in the summer of 1897 and his later writings on the publications of *The Book of the Law* and wars.¹⁹⁹ Russian warships navigated the Suez Canal and, among other things, a British liner was boarded by a Russian destroyer in the Red Sea in late February²⁰⁰, and on May 4, 1904 E.V., shortly after the Crowleys had arrived in France on their way home to Scotland, the P. & O. express steamer the S.S. Osiris (Figure 29), sailing between Port Said and Brindisi (Italy), was stopped by a Russian gunboat, as the *London Times* wrote, May 5, under the headline "A British Liner Stopped" (Port Said, May 4.):

[...] when nine hours out from Brindisi, the Russian coast defence ironclad *Khrabry* stopped her by firing a blank shot, and detained her for two hours, during which time the mails were sorted. She was then allowed to proceed. The Japanese mails were demanded, but were untouched as they were at the bottom.²⁰¹

However, the *London Times's* correspondent at Lloyd's reported later that the *Osiris* had no Japanese mails!²⁰² That Crowley makes no mention of these matters again

¹⁹⁶ The Egyptian Gazette. Alexandria: The Egyptian Gazette. ♦ Thursday, February 11, 1904, p. 5. (*Calendar of Coming Events. Cairo. February. Thurs. 11., p. 5.*) ♦ Jacques Offenbach (1819-1880), German born French conductor and composer of operettas. The words of the operetta were by the French author and playwright Ludovic Halévy (1834-1908), and the French dramatist and opera librettist Henri Meilhac (1831-1897).

¹⁹⁷ The next day (February 12) the French operetta company performed Jules Massenet's opera *Werther* (1887) based on Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's novel from 1774, *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (The Sorrow of Young Werther) in Zizinia Theatre in Alexandria. And unlike *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein* so was *Werther* a popular opera. However, in recent years *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein* has become a popular work. ♦ The Egyptian Gazette. Alexandria, Egypt. Thursday, February 11, 1904, p. 5.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., Thursday, March 3, 1904, p. 3. ♦ The war lasted from 1904-5.

¹⁹⁹ On the publication of *The book of the Law* and wars, see: Aleister Crowley. *Magick Without Tears*. Ed. Karl J. Germer. Hampton, NJ: Thelema Publishing Co., 1954, pp. 189-90. (*CHAPTER XXXIX: Prophecy*) ♦ Also as: Aleister Crowley. *Magick Without Tears*. Abridge Edition. Edited by Israel Regardie. St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 1973, pp. 263-4. (39. *Prophecy*)

²⁰⁰ The Egyptian Gazette. Alexandria: The Egyptian Gazette. ♦ Saturday, February 27, 1904, p. 3. (*British Steamer Boarded by Russians.*)

²⁰¹ The Times. London, UK: Published by George Edward Wright at the Times Office. ♦ Thursday, May 5, 1904, p. 5. (*A British Liner Stopped; Port Said, May 4, p. 6.*) ♦ Also: Shipping Gazette and Lloyd's List. London, England. ♦ Wednesday, May 4, 1904, p. 8. (*RUSSIA AND JAPAN, p. 8.*) ♦ See also note⁸¹⁷ below.

²⁰² The Times. London, UK: Published by George Edward Wright at the Times Office. ♦ Thursday, May 5, 1904, p. 5. (*A British Liner Stopped; Port Said, May 4, p. 6.*)

clearly shows that he had abandoned usual practices such as writing a proper diary, and as he later stated so was his memory utterly incompetent regarding many things which took place during the stay in Egypt when he later wanted to write about them. This becomes very clear when the stay is compared with the wealth of details found in other incidents of his life as given in *Confessions*. As I shall discuss later, the S.S. Osiris was, in fact, the ship that brought the Crowleys back to Europe in April 1904 E.V.²⁰³ At the end of July 1904 E.V. twenty-three steamers had been seized and two British steamers sunk owing to the war!²⁰⁴

Surprisingly found is a new notice in *The Egyptian Gazette* on Tuesday, February 16, 1904:

*Amongst the latest arrivals at the Eastern Exchange Hotel, Port Said, are [...] Lord Boleskine, Mrs [sic] Boleskine*²⁰⁵

Either had the newspaper mixed up some information or the Boleskines had left the Grand Continental and Cairo for Port Said likely with the purpose of leaving Egypt!²⁰⁶ Port Said is located at the Suez Canal's northern entrance where travellers mainly arrived at the crowded harbour or moved on to Europe or the East. The monstrous, seven-storey Eastern Exchange Hotel (Figure 17) was situated at Rue Sultan Osman²⁰⁷ overlooking the Mediterranean and was the town's favourite hotel. If the Crowleys had planned to leave the country was it then owing to Rose's pregnancy²⁰⁸, or, was Fra. P. thinking of meeting Mathers in Paris, or, had they had enough of travelling and were on their way to England and Boleskine, or, was it in fact the war and the risk that it could escalate further and influence their return to Scotland? But if they were on their way to leave Egypt they changed their plans, or 'the Gods' changed them! Crowley does not mention whether Rose and He in fact had planned to leave Egypt in mid-February, and in *Confessions* he only says:

*We left Colombo for Aden, Suez and Port Said on January 28th, intending to see a little of the season in Cairo, of which we had the most delightful memories, and then to sail for England, home and beauty.*²⁰⁹

²⁰³ See note⁸¹⁸ below.

²⁰⁴ St. James's Gazette. London, UK: St. James's Gazette. ♦ Wednesday, July 27, 1904, p. 11. (*MORE RUSSIAN OUTRAGES; STEAMERS SEIZED OR SUNK*, p. 17.)

²⁰⁵ The Egyptian Gazette. Alexandria: The Egyptian Gazette. ♦ Tuesday, February 16, 1904, p. 3.

²⁰⁶ The steamer would have been the P. & O. S.S. Isis, which arrived at Port Said from Brindisi between 11.0 p.m. Wednesday, February 17, and 10.0 a.m. Thursday, February 18. The P. & O. S.S. Osiris had left Port Said for Brindisi Monday, February 15. ♦ See: The Standard. London, UK: The Standard. ♦ Thursday, February 18, 1904, p. 9. (*MAIL AND STEAMSHIP NEWS; (From "Lloyd's List."); THE MAILS*, p. 9.) ♦ Ibid. Tuesday, February 16, 1904, p. 9. (*MAIL AND STEAMSHIP NEWS; (From "Lloyd's List."); THE MAILS*, p. 9.) ♦ See also note¹¹⁵⁹ below.

²⁰⁷ Karl Baedeker. Baedeker's The Mediterranean: Seaports and Sea Routes Including Madeira, the Canary Islands, the Coast of Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. Handbook for Travellers. Leipzig: Karl Baedeker, 1911, p. 436.

²⁰⁸ EG. p. 115: "March 16. Tried to shew the Sylphs to Rose.¹ She was in a dazed state, stupid, possibly drunk; possibly hysterical from pregnancy."

²⁰⁹ *Confessions*, p. 385.



FIGURE 17. *Eastern Exchange Hôtel, Port Said*

The monstrous, eight-storey Eastern Exchange Hotel in Port Said where the Crowleys according to the *Egyptian Gazette* were staying around February 16, 1904. The hotel – the town's favourite – was situated at Rue Sultan Osman not far from the harbour with view of the Mediterranean. Postcard from around the Crowleys visit marked *Lichtenstern & Harari, Commissions Agents, Cairo*, (*UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE EGYPT CARTE POSTALE*). © From the author's collection.

So maybe “a little” is to be taken most literally and that they originally had planned only to stay in Egypt very short on their return from Ceylon. Crowley writes in *Confessions* that he had not kept a diary of this period. We are not informed of their doings in Egypt in November 1903 apart from that Fra. P. in connection with their visit at the Egyptian Museum in March 1904 E.V. writes that they had not visited the museum before, but their stay overnight in the King’s Chamber of the Great Pyramid in Gizeh in November 1903 where Fra. P. made his invocation is detailed described.²¹⁰

A move from a hotel in Cairo to a hotel in Port Said can only mean that the Crowleys had decided to leave Egypt. It was wartime and many tourists were probably worried, and the steamers therefore more crowded than they used to be and it was probably not easy to get a berth (on this see comment to the entry of March 25 below). If they had plans of leaving Egypt at the time of their stay at the Eastern Exchange Hotel then there were several opportunities for doing so. The fast P. & O. mail steamer S.S. Osiris left Port Said for Brindisi in Italy on Monday, February 15.²¹¹ Another possibility was the newly built P. & O. ocean liner S.S. Marmora, Bombay for London, which left Port Said on February 16.²¹² The Marmora called at Plymouth on February 25 and left for London where it arrived the next day, February 26.²¹³ But why did they change their mind and stayed in Egypt? That the Crowleys not left Egypt could be because they perhaps had planned to return to England by the Anchor Line’s S.S. Persia, Bombay for Liverpool, which arrived at Port Said on February 18 but with its cargo on fire and therefore had to stay in Port Said!²¹⁴ The Persia – iron steamship built in 1883 with large cargo capacity and accommodation for about forty passenger – arrived Liverpool in the end of March.²¹⁵ Was this the reason why they suddenly went to Helwan? – a new beginning as the ‘Chioa Khans’! In the notice in *The Egyptian Gazette* asserting their stay at the Eastern Exchange Hotel in Port Said they are mentioned – as well as before this notice – as the ‘Boleskines’, but hereafter they are called the ‘Chioa Khans’ exclusively when referred to in *The Egyptian Gazette*! More on this in my notes to the entry of Feb. 19. Finally, it shall also be mentioned that the P. &

²¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 371-3. • EG, p. 65.

²¹¹ The Leeds and Yorkshire Mercury. Yorkshire, England: Leeds and Yorkshire Mercury. • Tuesday, February 16, 1904, p. 8. (“OSIRIS, for Brindisi, left Port Said [Monday,] February 15th.”)(MAIL AND SHIPPING NEWS. (LLOYD’S TELEGRAMS.), p. 8.) • The Osiris arrived Brindisi two days later, Wednesday, February 17.

²¹² The Daily News. London, England: Daily News. • Wednesday, February 17, 1904, p. 9. (“SUEZ CANAL, [...] Marmora (P. and O.) Bombay for London, left Port Said p.m. yesterday [i.e. Tuesday, February 16].”)(MAIL AND STEAMSHIP NEWS. (FROM LLOYD’S.) THE MAILS., p. 9.)

²¹³ Ibid. • Friday, February 26, 1904, p. 11. (“PLYMOUTH. Feb. 25 – Marmora, from Bombay, arrived today, left for London.”)(MAIL AND STEAMSHIP NEWS. (FROM LLOYD’S.); THE MAILS, p. 11.) • Greenock Telegraph and Clyde Shipping Gazette. Renfrewshire, Scotland: Greenock Telegraph and Clyde Shipping Gazette. • Saturday, February 27, 1904, p. [2]. (“Marmora, s, from Bombay, at London, 26th inst [26th February]”)(THIS DAY’S SHIPPING NEWS.; P. & O. MOVEMENTS.; HOMEWARDS, p. [2].)

²¹⁴ The Globe. London, England: The Globe and Traveller. • Thursday Evening, February 18, 1904, p. 7. (“Lloyd’s agent at Port Said telegraphs at 10.30 a.m. to-day [i.e. Thursday, February 18, 1904] that the steamer Persia has arrived there with cargo on fire, the Persia is owned by the Anchor Line, and is bound from Bombay for Liverpool.”)(SHIPPING CASUALTIES, p. 7.)

²¹⁵ The Western Daily Press. Bristol, England: The Western Daily Press. • Tuesday, March 29, 1904, p. 8. (“PERSIA (Anchor Line), from Bombay, arrived at Liverpool March 28.”)(MAIL AND STEAMSHIP NEWS.; (LLOYD’S TELEGRAMS.), p. 8.)

O. had a mail steamer also with the name Persia, and in July 1904 E.V. this steamer was forcibly detained for one hour in the Red Sea by a Russian cruiser which confiscated two bags of mail addressed to Nagasaki.^{216]}

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²¹⁶ The Japan Weekly Mail. A Review of Japanese Commerce, Politics, and Art. Yokohama: H. Collins. ♦ Vol. XLII, No. 4, July 23RD, 1904, p. 103. (*“London, July 19. The P. & O. mail steamer Persia was forcibly detained for one hour in the Red Sea by the Russian Volunteer cruiser Smolensk, the latter transferring to the English steamer the mail taken from the German mail steamer Prinz Heinrich. The Smolensk confiscated two bags addressed to Nagasaki.”*) (RUSSIAN DOINGS IN THE RED SEA, p. 123.)



'The Russo-Japanese War – Russian Warship stopping a British Merchant Steamer'. The Russo-Japanese War was a war waged between Russia and Japan from February 1904 E.V. to September 1905 E.V. It ended with the surprising victory of Japan over the huge Russian Empire. The war had started with Russian expansion into territory, which Japan considered to be her sphere of influence. Britain had since 1902 had an alliance with Japan, and therefore the Russians were very interested in British ships, and especially ships carrying Japanese mails. 1900s postcard marked Raphael Tuck & Sons.

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Pages 72-180 are not part of this book preview.

Back to Egypt. The British Egyptologist E. A. Wallis Budge writes that Egypt in April 1904 E.V. was attacked by a plague of locusts and that about a quarter of a million men were called upon or rather “forced” to do the work of destroying the creatures.⁷⁹⁷ It turns out that the authorities in Egypt issued a decree for Prevention of Locusts on Tuesday, April 26, 1904 E.V., and that the attack had started around April 16.⁷⁹⁸ The correspondent of the London *Daily Mail* wrote on April 16:

**EGYPT'S GRAVE PERIL
INVASION OF LOCUSTS
FORCED LABOR TO FIGHT THEM**

From Cairo, on April 16th, the correspondent of the London “Daily Mail” writes: –

The locust plague is causing great uneasiness and the Government have decided to call out the corvee.

The corvee, or system of forced labor, is only enforced in Egypt in sudden emergencies.

There is every probability of the plague of locusts which has now descended on Egypt; proving a serious one. Great anxiety is felt for the young cotton and other crops.

The locusts first arrive in comparative small numbers, but they multiply very rapidly as soon as they reach the edge of cultivation. Within ten days the young insects, through still wingless, advance in a solid phalanx sometimes two or three feet deep and several miles in length.

It is essential that at this stage they should be destroyed, as it would be impossible to cheek the ravages of flying locusts.⁷⁹⁹

The Nottingham Evening Post wrote, May 2:

PLAGUE OF LOCUSTS IN EGYPT

A few days ago great swarms of locusts appeared in parts of Egypt. On April 23rd the flight had left the cultivated land, but on land close to the desert myriads of eggs have been found. The Ministry of the Interior is causing all the land where the eggs are deposited to be ploughed up so that the eggs may be destroyed by exposure to the sun.⁸⁰⁰

The eggs of locusts can lie up to twenty years in the ground waiting for rain and when the rain comes these eggs develop from larvae to armies of full grown flying adults. The German colonies in South-East Africa had also an attack of locusts around April 16, 1904 E.V.⁸⁰¹ It looks as if the Crowleys had left Cairo before the attack – if otherwise, Crowley likely would have mentioned it later on. Concerning the date of their departure from Egypt Fra. P. wrote in “*The Temple of Solomon the King*”:

⁷⁹⁷ E. A. Wallis Budge. *The Nile. Notes for Travellers in Egypt*. Tenth Edition. London and Cairo: Thos. Cook & Son Ltd., 1907, p. 118. (*Historical Summary; British Rule, A.D. 1904.*, pp. 92-124.)

⁷⁹⁸ Egypt. *Maslahat al-Misāhah*. Almanac for the Year 1931. Cairo: Government Press, 1931, p. 146.

⁷⁹⁹ Quote from: *West Gippsland Gazette*. Warragul, Victoria, Australia: *West Gippsland Gazette*. ♦ Tuesday June 21, 1904, p. 4. (*Egypt's Grave Peril; Invasion of Locusts; Forced Labor to Fight Them*, p. 4)

⁸⁰⁰ The Nottingham Evening Post. Nottingham, UK: Nottingham Evening Post. ♦ Monday, May 2, 1904, p. 3. (*PLAGUE OF LOCUSTS IN EGYPT*, p. 3.)

⁸⁰¹ The Standard. London, UK: The Standard. ♦ Saturday, April 16, 1904, p. 7. (*THE GERMAN COLONIES*, p. 7.)

*It was about a fortnight after the writing of Liber Legis that Fra. P. left Egypt for the grey skies of the Scottish Highlands, where, with the Seer, he began to put into practice the experiments suggested in the Book of the Law.*⁸⁰²

This information seems to suggest that they left Egypt only a few days after the locust invasion, about a fortnight after April 8, and Crowley must have forgotten all about it together with the Russo-Japanese War! In *Confessions* Crowley mentions that they met Annie Wood Besant nee Wood (1847-1933), the British social reformer and theosophist, and later second President of the Theosophical Society (1907-1933), on the ship by which they returned to Europe:

*I completely abandoned my diary. I even neglected a really first-rate opportunity for bringing The Book of the Law into public notice, for Mrs Besant was on the ship by which Ouarda and I returned to Europe, and I conversed a great deal with her about sacred subjects.*⁸⁰³

Regarding April 26th, the date when the decree for Prevention of Locusts was issued, it turns out that on this Tuesday Rose and Aleister Crowley were in Paris lunching with the English novelist and playwright (Enoch) Arnold Bennett (1867-1931), as his diary relates:

*In response to a telegram I went to lunch with Aleister Crowley and his wife (Kelly's sister) to-day at Paillard's. He had been made a 'Khan' in the East, and was wearing a heavily-jewelled red waistcoat, and the largest ring I ever saw on a human hand. I rather liked him.*⁸⁰⁴

This meeting is in the printed 1932 E.V. English first edition of the diary stated to have taken place on "Friday, April 22nd."⁸⁰⁵ However, as the next entry dated "Wednesday, April 27th." shows took the lunch at Paillard's with the Crowleys not place on Friday, April 22nd but on Tuesday, April 26th, since he starts by saying:

*Yesterday [i.e. Tuesday, April 26th] when I was in Paillard's, it occurred to me that the difference between the most excessively chic restaurant and an ordinary good one is very slight.*⁸⁰⁶

So the date "Friday, April 22nd." given to the entry dealing with this lunch is clearly incorrect. I also note that the correct date "Tuesday, April 26th" appeared in an American 1933 E.V. edition of the diary.⁸⁰⁷ The incorrectness of the date in the English 1932 E.V. first edition of the diary is also confirmed by a letter that Arnold Bennett wrote to the English science fiction author Herbert George Wells (1866-1946), dated Tuesday, April 26th:

⁸⁰² [Aleister Crowley, et al.] *The Equinox*. Vol. I., No. VIII. London: Wieland & Co., September MCMXII O.S. [1912 E.V.], p. 7. (*The Temple of Solomon the King*, pp. 5-48.) • See note³⁵¹ above and note⁸⁴¹ below. • For "the experiments", see note⁷⁸⁵ above.

⁸⁰³ *Confessions*, p. 403. • See also note⁸⁵¹ below.

⁸⁰⁴ Arnold Bennett. *The Journals of Arnold Bennett 1896-1928*. Edited by Newman Flower. 3 vols. London, UK: Cassell and Company Ltd., 1932. • Vol. I, 1896-1910, p. 168. (*Friday, April 22nd*. [1904], p. 168.)

⁸⁰⁵ *Ibid.* (*Friday, April 22nd*. [1904], p. 168.)

⁸⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 168. (*Wednesday, April 27th*. [1904], p. 168)

⁸⁰⁷ Arnold Bennett. *The Journal of Arnold Bennett, 1896-1928*. 3 vols. New York, NY: The Viking Press, 1933. • Vol. I, 1896-1910, p. 169. ("Tuesday, April 26th. [1904] *In response to a telegram I went to lunch with Aleister Crowley*", p. 169.)

[...]

I have just given a letter of introduction to you to a man I know, Aleister Crowley, who (with his wife) is coming over to England tomorrow [i.e. Wednesday, April 27th] and is stopping the night at the Metropole, Folkestone, in order that he may call on you; he wants to ask your opinion about Time. He is a poet of some parts, and a really considerable traveller. I expect he will call on you Thursday. Beneath his eastern exterior there is something in him.

Love to darlings, and homage to their mamma.

Thine

E. A. B.⁸⁰⁸

– "Time" was the apparently newly written essay "TIME; A DIALOGUE BETWEEN A BRITISH SCEPTIC AND AN INDIAN MYSTIC" which in 1906 E.V. appeared in the back of the second volume of *Collected Works*.⁸⁰⁹ Crowley had mentioned H. G. Wells in the essay where the Sceptic states:

There are several things that spring instantly into the mind. First and foremost is the wonderfully suggestive work, misnamed fiction, of our greatest novelist, H. G. Wells. This man, the John Bunyan of modern scientific thought, has repeatedly attacked the problem, or at least indicated the lines on which a successful research might be prosecuted, in many of his wonderful tales.⁸¹⁰

Paillard's, a small restaurant located on the boulevard des Italiens was one of the three best restaurants in Paris, if not the best. The entry gives the impression that it was Arnold Bennett's first visit to the restaurant, and perhaps it also was his only visit. There is no mention in the diary of Paillard's before or after this visit. The year after in March 1905 E.V. Arnold Bennett writes in his journal that he again met Crowley in Paris:

Thursday, March 9th. [1905 E.V.]

I dined at the Chat Blanc [in the rue d'Odessa, near the Gare Montparnasse]. Aleister Crowley was there with dirty hands, immense rings, presumably dyed hair, a fancy waistcoat, a fur coat, and tennis shoes. Stanlaws was saying that the indecency of the Moulin Rouge etc. "wasn't 30 cents" by the side of Coney Island. I had heard this before. He described the rag-dance, which used to be danced everywhere but was lately forbidden by the police. It appears to be a combination of a waltz and the danse du ventre. He described a number of other Coney Island contrivances for the exhibition of women's legs and under-clothes.⁸¹¹

⁸⁰⁸ Arnold Bennett and H. G. Wells: A Record of a Personal and a Literary Friendship. Edited by Harris Wilson. Urbana, IL, USA: University of Illinois Press, 1960, pp. 107-8. ("53 | BENNETT TO WELLS [Postcard]"; "4 Rue de Calais | Paris | Tuesday [26 April 1904] | MY DEAR H. G.") • For H. G. Wells's reply to Arnold Bennett a few days later, see note⁸⁴² below.

⁸⁰⁹ Aleister Crowley. The Collected Works of Aleister Crowley. Foyers, Inverness, Scotland: Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth, Volume II, 1906, pp. 267-82. (TIME; A DIALOGUE BETWEEN A BRITISH SCEPTIC AND AN INDIAN MYSTIC, pp. 267-82.)

⁸¹⁰ Ibid., p. 273.

⁸¹¹ Arnold Bennett. The Journal of Arnold Bennett, 1896-1928. 3 vols. New York, NY: The Viking Press, 1933. ♦ Vol. I, 1896-1910, p. 210. (Thursday, March 9th. [1905], p. 210.) • The mentioned Stanlaws was the 'pretty woman' painter, magazine illustrator Penrhyn Stanlaws (1877-1957), who was born as Earnest Stanley Adamson in Dundee,

The above entry did not appear in the English 1932 E.V. edition quoted from above, but in an American 1933 E.V. edition! As to Arnold Bennett's mentioning of Crowley's dirty hands then I think that it probably had to do with his heavy pipe-smoking since the handling of the black Latakia tobacco and its oily flavourings when filling his pipes would leave the impression of dirty hands. Arnold Bennett would later use his meeting with Crowley in April 1904 E.V. in a sketch in *Paris Nights and Other Impressions of Places and People* (1913 E.V.):

"By Jove!" said the violoncellist. "There's the Mahatma back again! Oh! He's seen us!"

The peering face preceded a sloping body into the café, and I was introduced to a man whose excellent poems I had read in a limited edition. He was wearing a heavily jewelled red waistcoat, and the largest ring I ever saw on a human hand. He sat down. The waiter took his order and intoned it in front of the service-bar, proving that another fellow-creature was hidden there awaiting our pleasure. When the Mahatma's glass was brought, the Scotchman suddenly demanded from the waiter the total of our modest consumption, and paid it. The Mahatma said that he had arrived that evening direct from the Himalayas, and that he had been made or ordained a "khan" in the East. Without any preface he began to talk supernaturally. As he had known Aubrey Beardsley, I referred to the rumour that Beardsley had several times been seen abroad in London after his alleged death.

"That's nothing," he said quickly. "I know a man who saw and spoke to Oscar Wilde in the Pyrenees at the very time when Oscar was in prison in England."

"Who was the man?" I inquired.

He paused. "Myself," he said, in a low tone.

"Shall we go?" The Scotchman, faintly smiling, embraced his friend and me in the question.

We went, leaving the Mahatma bent in solitude over his glass. The waiter was obviously saying to himself: "It was inevitable that they should ultimately go, and they have gone." We had sat for four hours.⁸¹²

It is interesting to notice that Arnold Bennett apparently considered some of Crowley's poetry for "excellent poems". Gerald F. Kelly had introduced Crowley to his circle of artistic friends at the restaurant Le Chat Blanc. One of these was the Canadian landscape painter James Wilson Morrice (1865-1924), whose biographer the Canadian art historian and author Donald William Buchanan (1908-1966), in his 1936 E.V. biography of Morrice wrote about the "the informal dining club" of Chat Blanc:

Undoubtedly Aleister Crowley, with his works on magic, his rare and privately distributed contributions to the literature of erotica, and his consummate vanity as expressed in such phrases to found in the Confessions as "I have never lost the child-like humility which characterizes all true great men" was the strangest member of that varied society which composed the informal dining club of the memorable Chat Blanc.⁸¹³

Scotland. He emigrated to the United States in 1907 E.V. and established a studio in New York City.

⁸¹² Arnold Bennett. *Paris Nights and Other Impressions of Places and People*. London, UK: Hodder and Stoughton, MCMXIII (1913), pp. 36-7. (*PARISH NIGHTS* (1910) [sic]; *III. EVENING WITH EXILES*, pp. 21-37.) • Aubrey Vincent Beardsley (1872-1898). English illustrator and artist. He was a leading figure in the Aesthetic movement which also included Oscar Wilde. He died in France only twenty-five years old of tuberculosis. • For Crowley's mentioning of "Paris Nights", see: *Confessions*, p. 405.

⁸¹³ Donald W. Buchanan. *James Wilson Morrice: A Biography*. Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1936, p. 74. (*CHAPTER IX*,

As to H. G. Wells and “*Time*”, ten years later, in May 1914 E.V., Wells published *The World Set Free: A Story of Mankind* which predicted the use of the “atomic bomb” – a new word used for the first time:

*His companion, a less imaginative type, sat with his legs spread wide over the long coffin-shaped box which contained in its compartments the three atomic bombs, the new bombs that would continue to explode indefinitely and which no one so far had ever seen in action.*⁸¹⁴

E. A. Reynolds-Ball writes in *Reynolds-Ball 1905* that a trip, for instance, by the British P. & O. Company's boats from Port Said to Marseilles took some one hundred hours, a little more than four days.⁸¹⁵ There were several other companies and routes and thus also a route from Port Said to Brindisi and from Alexandria to Marseilles.⁸¹⁶ E. A. Reynolds-Ball had collected the information in 1904 E.V. and he dated his introduction “November 1904 E.V.”. However, I think we must bear in mind that there was a war going on at the time of the Crowleys visit and that it possibly had influenced the timetable in the spring of 1904 E.V. – as mentioned, shortly after the Crowleys arrival in Paris the S.S. Osiris was stopped and ransacked 9 hours out of Brindisi by a Russian gunboat firing a blank shot.⁸¹⁷ Crowley, in fact, later mentioned in an undated letter to Annie Besant, now in the Warburg Institute's Gerald J. Yorke Collection and published by Martin P.(atrick) Starr (1959-), an American independent scholar of Western Esotericism and New Religious Movements, in *The Unknown God* (2003 E.V.), that the returning ship was “the “*Osiris*” in April 1904 e.v.”, i.e. the P. & O. S.S. Osiris (Figure 29).⁸¹⁸ But why did Crowley not state this in his account in *TSK 1912* and in *EG*, or in *Confessions*? Probably since it was self-evident that a journey across the Mediterranean to or from Egypt for him (and others) always was by the fastest route, namely from Brindisi to Port Said by the P. & O.'s fastest ships, the Osiris and the Isis. The 300 ft. long (91.44 metres) express dispatch-boat the S.S. Osiris had a Gross tonnage of 1,728 tons. She and her sister ship the S.S. Isis were ordered in 1898 by the P. & O. Company for an express service between Brindisi and Port Said (later Brindisi-Alexandria) carrying 70 first class passengers and first class mails and no cargo.⁸¹⁹ The voyage of nearly a thousand miles (1600 kilometres) between Port Said and Brindisi took between 48-50 hours and if the Crowleys went to Brindisi there had been a railway journey to

pp. 60-74.) • For James Wilson Morrice and Chat Blanc, see: *Confessions*, p. 348f.

⁸¹⁴ H.[erbert] G.[eorge] Wells. *The World Set Free: A Story of Mankind*. London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1914, pp. 95-6. (CHAPTER THE SECOND; THE LAST WAR. § 3, pp. 92-100.)

⁸¹⁵ E. A. Reynolds-Ball. *Cairo of To-Day: A practical Guide to Cairo and the Nile*. Fourth Edition. Revised to date and Enlarged. London, UK: Adam and Charles Black, 1905, p. 1f. (PART I. CAIRO I. – How to Reach Cairo, pp. 1-12.)

⁸¹⁶ See: Ibid.

⁸¹⁷ See note²⁰¹ above.

⁸¹⁸ Martin P. Starr. *The Unknown God: W. T. Smith and the Thelemites*. Bolingbrook, IL: Teitan Press Inc., 2003, p. 153; note 3. (“Crowley to Annie Besant, undated (ca. March 1, 1925), GJY Collection.”)(Chapter Twelve. *The end of the beginning*, pp. 151-61.)

⁸¹⁹ See: Minutes of Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers; With Other Selected And Abstracted Papers. London, UK: Published by the Institution. • Vol. CLV, 1904, p. 121. (Sect. I. – Minutes of Proceedings. 3 November, 1903; Address of Sir William H. White, President; “Cross-Channel and Coasting Steamers, pp. 119-22.) • The Osiris was renamed Osiris II in 1916 E.V., and again renamed Osiris in 1920 E.V. It was broken up in Germany in 1922 E.V. • Boyd Cable. *A Hundred Year History of the P. & O.; Peninsular And Oriental Steam Navigation Company; 1837-1937*. London, UK: Ivor Nicholson and Watson Limited, 1937, p. 247. (Appendix I. *Peninsular & Oriental Company's Past and Present Fleet*, pp. 243-9.)



FIGURE 29. *Port Said – P. & O. S.S. Osiris*

A coloured 1900's postcard showing the nearly 92 metres long British P. & O. (Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company) steamer the S.S. Osiris anchored in Port Said Harbour with the lighthouse in the background. The Osiris was the steamer that brought the Crowleys back to Europe after the Cairo Working in April 1904 E.V. The slender ship, built in 1898, was, together with its sister ship the S.S. Isis, the fastest steamer on the Mediterranean. The two express dispatch-boats were running between Brindisi in Italy and Port Said in Egypt, and they were essential links in the P. & O.'s express routes to India and Australia. Crowley does not mention the name of the steamer anywhere else than in an undated letter to the British theosophist Annie Besant, the later second President of the Theosophical Society, whom he met on the Osiris in April 1904 E.V. The Osiris, which belonged to the P. & O. fleet for twenty-four years, was broken up in 1922 E.V. Postcard marked "Ephtimios Frères, Port Said". © From the Author's collection.

Paris – in sleeping car: Brindisi-Milan-Paris, or, Brindisi-Turin-Paris.⁸²⁰ There was a special P. & O. de-luxe Brindisi express, with restaurant and sleeping cars attached between Brindisi and London, which only took 44½ hours, stated as being the fastest long-distance run in Europe.⁸²¹ The P. & O. had a daily advertisement in the London *Times* stating:

*P. & O. EXPRESS SERVICE from LONDON via BRINDISI to PORT SAID, leaving London every Friday evening, Brindisi every Sunday evening, and corresponding at Port Said with Mail Steamers to the East.*⁸²²

I notice that the London *Times* stated, Friday, April 29, 1904 E.V.:

*Osiris from Port Said, arrived Brindisi 2 30 p.m. Wednesday [April 27]. Mail train left 4 30 p.m. This ship brings the Indian mail, which may be expected in London this evening [Friday, April 29].*⁸²³

The two 20-knot express steamers, the fastest on the Mediterranean, were essential links in the P. & O. express routes to India and Australia. The S.S. Isis and the S.S. Osiris were not de-luxe boats, but fast and not very comfortable. In the year of the Osiris's building, 1898, had a young Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill (1874-1965), before he went into politics, been on board the Osiris on his way to India and very seasick written in a letter to his brother "Jack":

*This boat is an odious little vixen & wriggles fearfully. [...] I have eaten nothing for forty eight hours. This ship is a witch. Even the captain was sick. Never will I leave England on a sentimental cruise again.*⁸²⁴

Churchill who was a bad sailor and hated boats and sailing became an engaged First Lord of Admiralty in 1911 E.V. I have always had the greatest admiration for Sir Winston Churchill and his effort for a free world during World War II. The world today owes him and others a great deal of thanks. The Osiris left Brindisi for Port Said on Sunday evenings (about midnight), arriving at Port Said early on Wednesday mornings. The steamer carried the India, China, and Australian mails.

On what date did the Crowleys leave Egypt in April 1904 E.V.? As far as my research shows there are no extant passenger lists from the Osiris. P. & O. compiled lists of passengers travelling abroad its ships, but only few have survived. There are British official passenger lists but as a general rule these lists do not exist for passengers travelling to or from the UK on ships bound to or from the UK who left or joined the ship outside the UK. But Crowley has fortunately left us with

⁸²⁰ See: E. A. Reynolds-Ball. *Cairo of To-Day: A practical Guide to Cairo and the Nile*. Fourth Edition. Revised to date and Enlarged. London, UK: Adam and Charles Black, 1905, p. 7. (PART I. CAIRO I. – How to Reach Cairo; (b) Brindisi, pp. 7-9.)

⁸²¹ Ibid., p. 7; note 1. (PART I. CAIRO I. – How to Reach Cairo; (b) Brindisi, pp. 7-9.)

⁸²² The Times. London, UK: Published by George Edward Wright at the Times Office. ♦ Tuesday, March 1, 1904, p. 2. (Shipping - P. & O. advertisement, p. 2.)

⁸²³ Ibid. ♦ Friday, April 29, 1904, p. 8. (Mail & Shipping Intelligence, (From Lloyd's, &c.), p. 8.) ♦ Also found in: Shipping Gazette and Lloyd's List. London, England. ♦ Thursday, April 28, 1904, p. 7. ("BRINDISI ... arrived Osiris (s) [Apr27, 2 30 P.M.] Port Said (The mail train left at 4 30 P.M. with the Indian Mail for London, which may be expected on Friday evening)") ♦ For the Shipping Gazette and Lloyd's List, see note¹⁸⁰ above.

⁸²⁴ Randolph S. Churchill. Winston S. Churchill: Youth 1874-1900. Companion Volume I, Part 2. Boston, MA: Houghton Miffling Company, 1967, p. 994. (14. Return to India, pp. 984-1021.) ♦ ("WSC to JACK; 6 December [1898] [SS Osiris]") ♦ "Jack" was Churchill's younger brother (Major) John Strange "Jack" Spencer-Churchill (1880-1947).

enough information to figure it out! He mentions his meeting with Annie Besant on the S.S. Osiris and the lunch with Arnold Bennett in Paris, and Annie Besant, the Osiris and the lunch in Paris happen to be the key to the date of the Crowleys departure! Annie Besant had spent the entire year 1903 in India and it is known that she on April 8, 1904 E.V., departed for Europe – visiting Rome, Florence, Genoa, and Paris.⁸²⁵ If Annie Besant departed for Port Said and Europe on April 8 and Crowley met her on the Osiris in Port Said and later dined with Arnold Bennett on April 26 in Paris Annie Besant can according to the Lloyd's Lists only have been on the P. & O. steamer S.S. Oceana, Sydney for London, that departed from Colombo, Ceylon, on April 8 and arrived at Port Said eleven days later, April 19, the day before the Osiris from Brindisi arrived at Port Said⁸²⁶ The Osiris arrived at Port Said on Wednesday, April 20, very early in the morning after a voyage of some forty-eight hours.⁸²⁷ She had left Brindisi for Port Said on Sunday, April 17, at 11.30 p.m.⁸²⁸, after having arrived from Port Said on Wednesday, April 13.⁸²⁹ The day after the Osiris's arrival at Port Said, Thursday, April 21, the Isis arrived at Brindisi at 5.30 a.m.⁸³⁰ But why did Annie Besant not stay on the P. & O.'s S.S. Oceana which called at Marseilles on Saturday, April 23?⁸³¹ As mentioned she was on her way to visit several cities in Italy and first later went to Paris, and according to the Lloyd's Lists the Oceana did not call at Brindisi or other Italian ports. If the Crowleys had been able to secure a berth they could also have taken the Oceana on April 19 for Marseilles and then by train to Paris, however, as stated by Crowley they travelled on the Osiris where he happened to meet Annie Besant!

Crowley writes that they returned on the Osiris, however, normally the Osiris would first return to Brindisi after four or five days. But there was a war going on and furthermore it was at the end of the season and the Osiris in fact returned to Europe on April 20 but not to Brindisi but to Messina on Sicily and later it also arrived at Palermo! I have not found other voyages of the Osiris to Messina in 1904 E.V. In the end of March 1904 E.V. and during the whole of April the Isis

⁸²⁵ See <http://www.kurtleland.com/annie-besant-shrine/orientation/annie/41-chronology> – “CHRONOLOGY; A year-by-year list of the principal events of Annie Besant's life, specially keyed to **A Bibliography of Annie Besant (1833-1947)**,” by Kurt Leland. • The Annie Besant Centenary Book 1847-1947; Edited by James H. Cousins. Adyar, Madras, India: The Besant Centenary Celebrations Committee, 1947. • See also note⁸⁴⁴ below.

⁸²⁶ The Times. London, UK: Published by George Edward Wright at the Times Office. ♦ Saturday, April 9, 1904, p. 6. (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence, (From Lloyd's, &c.),* p. 6.) ♦ “P. and O.–s [...] Oceana, Sydney for London, left Colombo yesterday morning [i.e. April 8th].” ♦ Ibid., Tuesday, April 19, 1904, p. 4. (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence, (From Lloyd's, &c.),* p. 4.) ♦ “P. and O.–s [...] Oceana, Sydney for London, with the India, China and Australian mails, arrived Suez yesterday [i.e. April 18th].” ♦ Ibid., Wednesday, April 20, 1904, p. 11. (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence, (From Lloyd's, &c.),* p. 11.) ♦ “P. and O.–s [...] Oceana, Sydney for London, left Port Said yesterday morning [i.e. April 19th].”

⁸²⁷ Ibid. ♦ Thursday, April 21, 1904, p. 12. ♦ (“Osiris, from Brindisi, arrived Port Said Yesterday [Wednesday, April 20].”) (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence, (From Lloyd's, &c.),* p. 12.) • The Daily News. London, England: Daily News. ♦ Thursday, April 21, 1904, p. 2. (“SUEZ CANAL, April 20 – Osiris, from Brindisi, arrived Port Said.”) (*MAIL AND SHIPPING NEWS; (FROM LLOYD'S.); THE MAILS.,* p. 2.)

⁸²⁸ Ibid. ♦ Tuesday, April 19, 1904, p. 11. (“BRINDISI. April 17 – Osiris, for Port Said, with the outward Indian mail, left 11.30 p.m. to-day.”) (*MAIL AND SHIPPING NEWS; (FROM LLOYD'S.); THE MAILS.,* p. 11.)

⁸²⁹ Ibid. ♦ Friday, April 15, 1904, p. 2. (“BRINDISI. April 13 – Osiris, from Port Said, arrived at 3 p.m. to-day. This ship brings the Indian mail.”) (*MAIL AND SHIPPING NEWS; (FROM LLOYD'S.); THE MAILS.,* p. 2.)

⁸³⁰ Ibid. ♦ Friday, April 22, 1904, p. 2. (“BRINDISI. April 21 – Isis, from Port Said, arrived 5.30 a.m. to-day, with the India, China, and Australian mails.”) (*MAIL AND SHIPPING NEWS; (FROM LLOYD'S.); THE MAILS.,* p. 2.)

⁸³¹ The Belfast News-Letter, Antrim, Northern Ireland: The Belfast News-Letter. ♦ Monday, April 25, 1904, p. 11. (“MARSEILLES. Saturday [April 23, 1904 E.V.] – Oceana, from Sydney to London, arrived.”) (*MAIL AND SHIPPING NEWS, p. 11.*) • After Port Said the Oceana only called at Marseilles and Gibraltar on its way back to England.

sailed weekly between Brindisi and Port Said but the Osiris's sailing schedule during this period was very unusual and it seems that the reason was the war.⁸³² Apart from Messina and Palermo the Osiris also went to Marseilles as for instance on April 3, 1904 E.V., where the Osiris for Port Said left Brindisi on April 3 and arrived at Marseilles on April 4 and left for Port Said the same day. And on March 30, 1904 E.V., the Osiris from Port Said arrived Brindisi and continued to Marseilles where it arrived on March 31. The steamers were always crowded in April and furthermore there was a war going on and many travellers were anxious – as mentioned above the Osiris was two weeks after the Crowleys departure from Port Said stopped by a Russian warship that fired a blank shot and detained her for two hours.⁸³³ What happened was probably that so many people wanted to leave Egypt due to the ongoing war that the Osiris returned to Europe the same day she arrived at Port Said, on April 20, and probably only with passengers and not mail since her sistership had taken the mail to Brindisi. The Crowleys boarded the Osiris in Port Said on Wednesday, April 20, and after probably some fifty hours they arrived at Messina on Sicily on Friday, April 22, and the ship was cleared the same day.⁸³⁴ The information about the Osiris's arrival at Messina appeared in an additional telegram printed in the issue of the *Shipping Gazette and Lloyd's List*, Wednesday, April 27, 1904 E.V.⁸³⁵ I have not seen this information appearing in other places than the *Shipping Gazette and Lloyd's List* whose issue of April 30 also mentioned that the Osiris arrived at Palermo from Messina on April 23.⁸³⁶ Messina is located near the northeast corner of Sicily, at the Strait of Messina, and close to the mainland, and the approximate straight line distance from Messina to Brindisi is 329 kilometres (the approximate straight line distance from Messina to Cefalù is only 136 kilometres). An alternative route by train to Milano was to take the express train, which had sleeping-carriages, from Reggio to Naples, and which took 13 hours⁸³⁷, and then by train from Naples to Milano. The Milano-Paris train journey through the St.

⁸³² Here are the dates of the voyages of the **S.S. Osiris** and the **S.S. Isis** from the last part of March 1904 E.V. to the end of April 1904 E.V., as found in the published Lloyd's Lists: **Osiris** left Port Said for Brindisi, March 28. • **Osiris** from Port Said arrived Brindisi, March 30. • **Osiris** from Port Said arrived Marseilles, March 31. • **Osiris** for Port Said left Brindisi, April 3. • **Osiris** for Port Said left Marseilles, April 4. • **Osiris** from Brindisi/Marseilles arrived Port Said, April 6. • **Osiris** for Brindisi left Port Said April 11. • **Osiris** from Port Said arrived Brindisi, April 13. • **Osiris** for Port Said left Brindisi, April 17. • **Osiris from Brindisi arrived Port Said, April 20.** • **Osiris for Messina and Palermo left Port Said, April 20.** • **Osiris from Port Said arrived Messina, April 22.** • **Osiris from Messina arrived Palermo, April 23.** • [Osiris from Palermo arrived Port Said, April 25.] • **Osiris** for Brindisi left Port Said, April 25. • **Osiris** from Port Said arrived Brindisi, April 27. • **Isis** for Port Said left Brindisi, March 28. • **Isis** from Brindisi arrived Port Said, March 31. • **Isis** left Port Said for Brindisi, April 4. • **Isis** from Port Said arrived Brindisi, April 6. • **Isis** for Port Said left Brindisi, April 11. • **Isis** from Brindisi arrived Port Said, April 13. • **Isis** for Brindisi left Port Said, April 18. • **Isis** from Port Said arrived Brindisi, April 21. • **Isis** for Port Said left Brindisi, April 25. • **Isis** from Brindisi arrived Port Said, April 27.

⁸³³ See note²⁰¹ and note²⁰² above.

⁸³⁴ Today the sailing distance between Port Said and Messina is about 933 nautical miles (1728 kilometres) and with a vessel speed of 20 knots it will take about 47 hours, however, the sailing distance in 1904 E.V. was longer. • For the sailing distance today and how long it takes, see: <https://www.sea-distances.org/>

⁸³⁵ Shipping Gazette and Lloyd's List. London, England. ♦ Wednesday, April 27, 1904, p. 7. ("**MESSINA ... arrived | Osiris (s) [Apr22] [...] MESSINA ... cleared | Leopold II (s) [Apr 22] Copenhagen | Osiris (s), [...] (ADDITIONAL TELEGRAMS, &c; 20 FOREIGN PORTS, p. 7.)** • For the *Shipping Gazette and Lloyd's List*, see note¹⁸⁰ above.

⁸³⁶ Ibid. ♦ Saturday, April 30, 1904, p. 7. ("**PALERMO ... arrived | [...] Osiris (s), Cameron [(April) 23] | Messina**")

⁸³⁷ ITALY. Handbook For Travellers; By Karl Baedeker. Third Part: Southern Italy and Sicily, with Excursions to the Lipari Islands, Malta, Sardinia, Tunis, and Corfu. With 27 Maps and 24 Plans. Fourteenth Revised Edition. Leipsic: Karl Baedeker, Publisher, 1903, p. 231. (22. *From Battipaglia (Naples) along the West Coast to Reggio (Messina)*, pp. 231-6.)



Messina c. 1904 E.V.

Messina, the largest city in north-eastern Sicily, from around the time of the Crowleys arrival from Port Said on April 22, 1904 E.V., with the P. & O. S.S. Osiris. Today the sailing distance between Port Said and Messina is about 933 nautical miles (1728 kilometres), however, the sailing distance in 1904 E.V. was longer. © Black and white postcard from the Author's collection.

Gothard took only 20 hours.⁸³⁸ At Messina the Strait is only six and a half kilometres across and the passage by steamer to Reggio on the mainland took one hour.⁸³⁹ However, the Crowleys could perhaps also have travelled via Marseilles.

I think we can conclude that the Crowleys after having stayed seventy-two days in Egypt⁸⁴⁰ left Port Said on Wednesday, April 20, thus nearly a fortnight after the writing of *Liber L vel Legis* (started) like Crowley estimated in *TSK1912*.⁸⁴¹ The prophet of the new Aeon left Egypt with the Osiris, named after the lord of the old Aeon, and his thoughts and doings remained for some years the thoughts and doings of the old age! – “O prophet! Thou hast ill will to learn this writing.” (*Liber L vel Legis*, II,10.) The Crowleys arrived at Messina on Sicily on Friday, April 22, 1904 E.V., and four days later on Tuesday, April 26, they dined with Arnold Bennett in Paris – nearly sixteen years later Crowley would return to Sicily and establish the Abbey of Thelema in Cefalù.

Crowley did not use Arnold Bennett's letter of introduction to H. G. Wells who was living in the village of Sandgate near Folkestone in Kent, and Wells wrote in a letter to Bennett dated 29 April: “No little friends of yours have turned up.”⁸⁴² However, H. G. Wells was apparently not completely forgotten since Crowley in 1910 E.V. sent him an admission to the “Rite of Jupiter” (The Rites of Eleusis).⁸⁴³ As far as I know it is not known whether he turned up or not, but probably not since Crowley likely would have mentioned it. As to Annie Besant, she had in January 1904 toured India, and in February and March been in Benares (now Varanasi), and on Friday, April 8th, as mentioned, departed for Europe – the same day as the first chapter of *Liber L vel Legis* was written in Cairo.⁸⁴⁴ During her many travels to India she often seems both to have arrived and departed by one of the fast mail steamers that called at Colombo. In Europe Annie Besant visited Rome, Florence, Genoa⁸⁴⁵, and Paris, and later in London on May 8th she met Dr. Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), the Austrian-born spiritualist, lecturer, and founder of anthroposophy, and on May 10th wrote a document to all members of the Esoteric School in Germany and Austria where she appointed him as Arch-Warden of the School in Germany & the Austrian Empire.⁸⁴⁶ However,

⁸³⁸ French Poster: CHEMINS DE FER DE L'EST L'ITALIE PAR LE ST. GOTHARD, [1892]. AFFICHES · DESSINS, MARX, PARIS. (“DE LONDRES À MILAN EN 30 HEURES; Via Calais-Laon-Chaumont-Belfort ou Nancy-Belfort-Bâle” – “DE PARIS À MILAN EN 20 HEURES; Via Belfort-Bâle”) • See also note⁸²¹ above.

⁸³⁹ Ibid., p. 235.

⁸⁴⁰ They had landed at Port Said Monday, February 8, 1904. The duration between February 8, 1904 and April 20, 1904 E.V. is 72 days (including February 8 but not April 20). • For their arrival in Egypt, see note¹⁸⁶ above.

⁸⁴¹ [Aleister Crowley, et al.] *The Equinox*. Vol. I., No. VIII. London: Wieland & Co., September MCMXII O.S. [1912 E.V.], p. 7. (*The Temple of Solomon the King*, pp. 5-48.) • See note⁸⁰² above.

⁸⁴² Arnold Bennett and H. G. Wells: *A Record of a Personal and a Literary Friendship*. Edited by Harris Wilson. Urbana, IL, USA: University of Illinois Press, 1960, p. 108. (“54 | WELLS TO BENNETT”; “*Spade House | Sandgate [Kent] | 29 April 1904 | MY DEAR E. A. B. [...] Yours ever | H. G.*”) • For Arnold Bennett's letter to H. G. Wells of 26 April, 1904 E.V., see note⁸⁰⁸ above. • See also *Confessions*, p. 405.

⁸⁴³ See: *Arnold Bennett; Herbert George Wells; Harris Wilson* (Editor). *A Record of a Personal and Literary Frindship*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1960, p. 108, Note 1.

⁸⁴⁴ See <http://www.kurtleland.com/annie-besant-shrine/orientation-annie/41-chronology> – “CHRONOLOGY; A year-by-year list of the principal events of Annie Besant's life, specially keyed to **A Bibliography of Annie Besant (1833-1947)**,” by Kurt Leland. • The *Annie Besant Centenary Book 1847-1947*; Edited by James H. Cousins. Adyar, Madras, India: The Besant Centenary Celebrations Committee, 1947. • See also note⁸²⁵ above.

⁸⁴⁵ See: *The Theosophical Review*. Edited by Annie Besant and G. R. S. Mead. London, UK: The Theosophical Publishing Society. • Vol. XXXIV, No. 202, June 15, 1904, p. 372. (*FROM MANY LANDS; ITALIAN SECTION*, p. 372.)

⁸⁴⁶ For this, see: *Crispian Villeneuve*. *Rudolf Steiner in Britain: A documentation of His Ten Visits*. 2 vols. The Square, Forest Row, East Sussex, UK: Temple Lodge Publishing, 2009. • Vol. I, p. 73f. (3. *Third Visit*, pp. [69]-83.) (“31, St. James's Place, London, S.W. May 10, 1904; To all members of the E.S. in Germany and Austria [...] Annie Besant”)

Rudolf Steiner's relation with the School ended shortly after. On May 15th Annie Besant started a series of lectures in London: "*Theosophy and the New Psychology*."⁸⁴⁷ She was back in Banaras in December the same year where she founded the Central Hindu Girls' School.⁸⁴⁸ Crowley met Annie Besant on the Osiris in April 1904 E.V. and did not mention the Equinox of the Gods and *Liber L vel Legis*, however, almost prophetic the May 15, 1904 E.V., issue of *The Theosophical Review* printed the first part of a piece entitled: "*An Invocation and Vision of Horus (From the 'Book of Transformations')*"⁸⁴⁹, by the English artist and Egyptologist Marcus Worsley Blackden (1864-1934). M. W. Blackden had in 1893 together with the English civil engineer George Willoughby Fraser (1866-1923), excavated in Gebelein in Upper Egypt for the Egyptian Exploration Fund, and three years later in August 1896 he joined the Golden Dawn.

As also observed by Martin P. Starr so did Crowley use the S.S. Osiris in the story, "*The Needs of the Navy*", published in 1904 E.V. in the privately and anonymously printed *Snowdrops from a Curate's Garden* but here under the name "*H.M.S. Osiris*".⁸⁵⁰

When mentioning his meeting with Annie Besant on the Osiris in April 1904 E.V. Crowley wrote that he "*conversed a great deal with her about sacred subjects*"⁸⁵¹, however, to finish his view of Besant we have to move thirteen and a half years forward to October 1917 E.V. where Crowley as "THERION, 9°=2° A.:A.:." wrote in *The International* in New York:

⁸⁴⁷ Advertisement in *The Daily News*, Friday, May 13, 1904 E.V.: "Mrs. Annie Besant on "*THEOSOPHY AND THE NEW Psychology*" at the Small Queen's Hall, Next Sunday (May 15th) and Following Weeks." • *The Daily News*. London, England: Daily News. ♦ Friday, May 13, 1904, p. 1. (*SPECIAL NOTICES*, p. 1.)

⁸⁴⁸ See: Geoffrey West [Pseud. for Upton Sinclair]. Annie Besant. (Representative Women Series.) New York, NY: The Viking Press, MCMXXVIII (1928), pp. 125-6. (4., pp. 98-160.) • Dundee Evening Telegraph. Angus, Scotland. ♦ Wednesday, May 11, 1904, p. 7. (*MRS ANNIE BESANT'S INDIAN LABOURS. Schools and College Founded.*)

⁸⁴⁹ *The Theosophical Review*. Edited by Annie Besant and G. R. S. Mead. London, UK: The Theosophical Publishing Society. ♦ Vol. XXXIV, No. 201, May 15, 1904, pp. 260-6. (*AN INVOCATION AND VISION OF HORUS (FROM THE "BOOK OF TRANSFORMATIONS")*), pp. 260-6.) • The last part appeared in the next issue, June 15, 1904. ♦ Ibid., Vol. XXXIV, No. 202, June 15, 1904, pp. 313-9. (*AN INVOCATION AND VISION OF HORUS (FROM THE "BOOK OF TRANSFORMATIONS") (CONCLUDED FROM p. 266)*), pp. 313-9.

⁸⁵⁰ See: Aleister Crowley. *Snowdrops from a Curate's Garden*. Edited with a Prolegomenon by Martin P. Starr. Chicago, IL: The Teitan Press, Inc., 1986, p. 100; Note 1 (*Juvenilila*), p. 193. (*CHAPTER 11. JUVENILIA; I – The Needs of the Navy*, pp 99-104.) • [Aleister Crowley] *Snowdrops from a Curate's Garden*; 1881 A. D.; Cosmopoli. Paris, France: IMPRIMÉ SOUS LE MANTEAU, n.d. [1904].

⁸⁵¹ See note⁸⁰³ above.

[...] I believe that H. P. Blavatsky was a great adept. I judge her by her highest, "The Voice of the Silence," not by any mistakes that she may have made in other matters. I consider that her work has been treacherously ruined by Mrs. Besant, the street corner atheist, socialist, and advocate of abortion. Of this offense she was actually convicted. Mrs. Besant's whole object seems to have been to prevent disciples from making those bold experiments which open the gates of the higher planes. I do not believe that any man or woman can come to ultimate harm by a passionate will to seek truth. They may go insane. They may be slain. They may be damned. These are only ordeals which do them good. If they can stick it out, they will get through. Mrs. Besant wants to be like conscience, to make cowards of us all. In my first initiation I was told, "Fear is failure. Be thou therefore without fear, for in the heart of the coward virtue abideth not. Thou hast known me; pass thou on." To prevent men from confronting the unknown, to side track them with petty drivel about minor ethics, to deck them out with the stolen regalia of orders of whose secrets they are profoundly ignorant: these are the work of the Brothers of the Left Hand Path; and of these I believe Mrs. Besant to be the greatest now alive.

THERION, 9^o=2[□] A.:A.:⁸⁵²

And on publishing H. P. Blavatsky's "The Voice of the Silence" (Liber LXXI) in the 'Blue' Equinox, March 1919 E.V., Crowley as "Frater O. M. 7^o=4[□]" (Adeptus Exemptus) had written in his commentary:

For one Teacher who knows his subject at all, there are at least ten thousand who belch pious platitudes. I wish to name no names, but Annie Besant, Prentice Mulford, Troward, Ella Wheeler Wilcox, and so on, down – right down – to Arthur Edward Waite, immediately occur to the mind.⁸⁵³

Finally, a few issues relating to the honeymoon have not yet been discussed. When did Rose and Aleister Crowley arrive in Egypt in the autumn of 1903 and on board which ship? And how long did they stay in Egypt before leaving for Colombo and what was the name of their ship? Luckily, Crowley, in fact, left enough information to figure it out by help of the daily published ship information, "Mail & Shipping Intelligence", found in the London Times. This information can also be found in other papers, for instance, *The Standard*, and *The Daily Mail*, but sometimes not as detailed as found in *The Times*. At that time the British empire depended on these lists and their accurate information of ship arrivals and departures all over the world together with information on wrecks and casualties. If travellers had the money they always used the fastest, most luxurious, and most reliable ships and companies, and to Egypt and the far East it was P. & O. and their fleet. About their honeymoon Crowley wrote in *Confessions*:

As soon as the summer showed signs of waning, we started on a hypertrophied honeymoon. We pretended to ourselves that we were going big-game shooting in Ceylon and to pay a visit to Allan [Bennett] at Rangoon (where he had now removed from Akyab), but the real object was to adorn the celebration of our love by setting it in a thousand suave and sparkling backgrounds. As my poetry had petered out, so had my

⁸⁵² The International: A Review of Two Worlds. New York City, NY: International Monthly, Inc. ♦ Vol. XI, No. 10, October 1917, p. 320. (*The International Forum*, p. 320.) ♦ See also note²⁹⁷⁰ below.

⁸⁵³ [Aleister Crowley, et al.] *The Equinox*. Vol. III., No. I. Detroit, Michigan: Universal Publishing Company, March MCMXIX E.V. (1919 E.V.), pp. 78-9. (*The Seven Portals; [Fragment III]*, 2, pp. 77-132.) (*Supplement. Liber LXXI; The Voice of the Silence; The Two Paths; The Seven Portals; By Helena Petrovna Blavatsky 8^o=3[□]; With a Commentary by Frater O. M. 7^o=4[□]*, pp. [1]-132.)

Magick and my meditation. I let them go without a pang. I was supremely happy; love filled the universe; there was no room for anything else.

*I had not kept a diary. Day followed day, each a fresh facet of the diamond of delight. All I remember is that we made our preparations in London, trying and buying guns, giving dinners, and so on. We dazzled Paris for a day or two, [...]*⁸⁵⁴

*Then we swooped down to Marseilles, perched on the terrace of Bertolini's at Naples and picked up a few crumbs. Our first breathing place was Cairo. It was one of the extravagances of our passion that suggested our spending a night together in the King's Chamber of the Great Pyramid. [...]*⁸⁵⁵

*We must have had some vague idea of exploring the little known parts of China, for we had certainly intended to visit Allan in Rangoon. It was probably at Colombo that Rose made up her mind that she was pregnant; for I remember that our shooting expedition in Hambantota, in the south-eastern province of Ceylon, was *faute de mieux*. We thought we had better get back to Boleskine for the event; and yet we had to justify our journey by some definite accomplishment. So we left Colombo for Galle and thence up country. It is strange that I fail entirely to remember how we got to the jungle. But rough notes tell me that it was by coach, and that we left the base village in four bullock carts on Monday the fourteenth of December. I quote my entry of January 1st, 1904 [...]*⁸⁵⁶

*We left Colombo for Aden, Suez and Port Said on January 28th, intended to see a little of the season in Cairo, of which we had the most delightful memories, and then to sail for England, home and beauty.*⁸⁵⁷



The P. & O. S.S. Isis

The Crowleys obviously went to Naples in order to go to Brindisi, some 375 kilometres to the east of Naples, and with the purpose of taking either the Osiris or the Isis for Port Said. When Crowley writes "*Our first breathing place was Cairo*" and when he, as mentioned above, states in his diary that their night together in the Great Pyramid took place on November 22⁸⁵⁸, then the travel to Egypt

⁸⁵⁴ Confessions, p. 371.

⁸⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 372.

⁸⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 374.

⁸⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 385.

⁸⁵⁸ Magick.I-IV., p. xxxvi, Extract from "Crowley, diary, June 1903-Feb. 1904 E.V., typescript." (Note †)(Editor's

must have taken place in November 1903. We know from the London *Times* that between November 1 and November 22, 1903, there were three arrivals at Port Said by the Osiris and the Isis, namely on the 4th, 11th and 18th – on the 4th by the Osiris⁸⁵⁹, on the 11th by the Isis⁸⁶⁰, and on the 18th by the Osiris.⁸⁶¹ However, as Timothy d'Arch Smith has mentioned in *The Books of the Beast*, there is in fact a letter in Kegan Paul's archives that Crowley wrote to their manager Spencer C.(ollinson) Blackett (1858-1920), to arrange publication of his play *The Argonauts*, and this letter was written "on board ship for Cairo" and dated 11 November 1903.⁸⁶² The Crowleys must therefore have arrived at Port Said Wednesday, November 11, by the Isis⁸⁶³, which had departed from Brindisi on Monday, November 9.⁸⁶⁴ Their night together in the Great Pyramid took therefore place on their twelfth day in Egypt, Sunday, November 22.

The date of their departure from Egypt to Colombo is also easy to find since when Crowley writes about their time on Ceylon that: "we left the base village in four bullock carts on Monday the fourteenth of December"⁸⁶⁵, the ship can only have been the P. & O. Himalaya (Figure 14), which left Port Said on Wednesday, November 25, and arrived at Colombo Sunday, December 6.⁸⁶⁶ The Himalaya, London for Sydney, had left London on Friday, November 13, and Marseilles on Friday, November 20, and after eleven days travel arrived at Port Said on Tuesday, November 24⁸⁶⁷ – and

Introduction, pp. xxiii-lxxxiv.) • See note²⁸⁶ above.

⁸⁵⁹ The Times. London, UK: Published by George Edward Wright. ♦ Tuesday, November 3, 1903, p. 8. (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence*, (From Lloyd's, &c.), p. 8.) ♦ "P. and O.-s [...] Osiris, for Port Said, with Indian mails, left Brindisi 3 a.m. yesterday [i.e. Monday, November 2]." • Ibid. ♦ Thursday, November 5, 1903, p. 4. (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence*, (From Lloyd's, &c.), p. 4.) ♦ "P. and O.-s [...] Osiris, from Brindisi, with Indian mails, arrived Port Said yesterday morning [i.e. Wednesday, November 4]."

⁸⁶⁰ Ibid. ♦ Tuesday, November 10, 1903, p. 6. (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence*, (From Lloyd's, &c.), p. 6.) ♦ "P. and O.-s [...] Isis, for Port Said, with India, China, and Australian mails, left Brindisi yesterday morning [i.e. Monday, November 9]." • Ibid. ♦ Thursday, November 12, 1903, p. 4. (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence*, (From Lloyd's, &c.), p. 4.) ♦ "P. and O.-s [...] Isis, from Brindisi, with India, China, and Australian mails, arrived Port Said yesterday morning [i.e. Wednesday, November 11]."

⁸⁶¹ Ibid. ♦ Tuesday, November 17, 1903, p. 7. (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence*, (From Lloyd's, &c.), p. 7.) ♦ "P. and O.-s [...] Osiris, for Port Said, with Indian mails, left Brindisi yesterday morning [i.e. Monday, November 16]." • Ibid. ♦ Thursday, November 19, 1903, p. 7. (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence*, (From Lloyd's, &c.), p. 7.) ♦ "P. and O.-s [...] Osiris from Brindisi, with the outward Indian mails, arrived Port Said yesterday [i.e. Wednesday, November 18]."

⁸⁶² Timothy d'Arch Smith. *The Books of the Beast*. Revised and enlarged edition. Oxford, UK: Mandrake, 1991, p. 27; Note 90 on p. 124. (Note 90 on p. 124: "Letter from Crowley to Blackett, 11 November 1903, Kegan Paul archives, box 'Contracts C-D', University College London")(Notes to Chapter One, Pages 9-35, pp. 119-26.)

⁸⁶³ The Times. London, UK: Published by George Edward Wright. ♦ Thursday, November 12, 1903, p. 4. (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence*, (From Lloyd's, &c.), p. 4.) ♦ "P. and O.-s [...] Isis, from Brindisi, with India, China, and Australian mails, arrived Port Said yesterday morning [i.e. Wednesday, November 11]."

⁸⁶⁴ Ibid. ♦ Tuesday, November 10, 1903, p. 6. (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence*, (From Lloyd's, &c.), p. 6.) ♦ "P. and O.-s [...] Isis, for Port Said, with India, China, and Australian mails, left Brindisi yesterday morning [i.e. Monday, November 9]." • Ibid. ♦ Thursday, November 12, 1903, p. 4. (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence*, (From Lloyd's, &c.), p. 4.) ♦ "P. and O.-s [...] Isis, from Brindisi, with India, China, and Australian mails, arrived Port Said yesterday morning [i.e. Wednesday, November 11]."

⁸⁶⁵ Confessions, p. 374.

⁸⁶⁶ The Times. London, UK: Published by George Edward Wright. ♦ Thursday, November 26, 1903, p. 5. (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence*, (From Lloyd's, &c.), p. 5.) ♦ "P. and O.-s [...] Isis, from Brindisi, with the India, China and Austrian mail, arrived Port Said between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. yesterday [i.e. Wednesday, November 25] and the Himalaya left 5 p.m. for Sydney." • Ibid. ♦ Tuesday, December 8, 1903, p. 6. (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence*, (From Lloyd's, &c.), p. 6.) ♦ "P. and O.-s [...] Himalaya, from London, arrived Colombo Sunday morning [i.e. Sunday, December 6] and proceeded in the evening for Australia."

⁸⁶⁷ Ibid. ♦ Monday, November 23, 1903, p. 6. (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence*, (From Lloyd's, &c.), p. 6.) ♦ "P. and O.-s [...]"

as we have seen above so was it the Himalaya on its return from Sydney that brought them back to Egypt in the end of January 1904!⁸⁶⁸

About their return to Boleskine after the Cairo Working Crowley wrote in *Confessions*:

*Wandered back to Boleskine, after arranging with a doctor named Percival Bott to come and stay with us and undertake the accouchement.*⁸⁶⁹

The mentioned doctor was the Wiltshire-born Percival George Albert Bott (1877-1953), who at that time was affiliated to St. Mary's Hospital in Paddington, London, and probably a friend of Ivor Back who also stayed at Boleskine together with Crowley's Aunt Annie who presided over the household.⁸⁷⁰



Why is the last entry of Crowley's Egypt diary dated April 6? A logical explanation could be that he was busy making arrangements to leave Egypt. Rose was pregnant and there were a lot of travellers who, owing to the ongoing war, wanted to leave Egypt and it was probably not easy to secure a berth. It is very strange that Crowley not anywhere mentions the Russo-Japanese War. Was the reason that he was doing some kind of intelligence work in Egypt for the British which had to do with the Russo-Japanese War? – and did the removed pages in one of his Cairo notebooks (OS27) contain information relating to that? It could well be the case!

The Himalaya, London for Sydney, left Marseilles Friday [i.e. Friday, November 20]. • Ibid. ♦ Wednesday, November 25, 1903, p. 6. (*Mail & Shipping Intelligence, (From Lloyd's, &c.)*, p. 6.) ♦ "*P. and O.-s [...] Himalaya, London for Sydney, arrived Port Said between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. yesterday* [i.e. Tuesday, November 24]. • Ibid. ♦ Monday, November 2, 1903, p. 2. (P. & O. advertisement "*P. & O. Passenger Sailings*", p. 2.) (*Shipping*, p. 2)

⁸⁶⁸ See note¹⁸¹ above.

⁸⁶⁹ *Confessions*, p. 405.

⁸⁷⁰ Ibid. • For Ivor Back, see note²²³ above.