

## Aleister Crowley - Fact Sheet

### Based on:

Aleister Crowley, "Mystic, Magician, Prophet"

### Short bio of Crowley:

(This bio was taken from a Website devoted to Crowley, and is clearly sympathetic to his views.)

Edward Alexander (Aleister) Crowley [rhymes with "holy"] was born October 12, 1875 in Leamington Spa, England. His parents were members of the Plymouth Brethren, a strict fundamentalist Christian sect. As a result, Aleister grew up with a thorough biblical education and an equally thorough disdain of Christianity.

He attended Trinity College at Cambridge University, leaving just before completing his degree. Shortly thereafter he was introduced to George Cecil Jones, who was a member of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. The Golden Dawn was an occult society led by S.L. MacGregor Mathers which taught magick, qabalah, alchemy, tarot, astrology, and other hermetic subjects. It had many notable members (including A. E. Waite, Dion Fortune, and W. B. Yeats), and its influence on the development of modern western occultism was profound.

Crowley was initiated into the Golden Dawn in 1898, and proceeded to climb up rapidly through the grades. But in 1900 the order was shattered by schism, and Crowley left England to travel extensively throughout the East. There he learned and practiced the mental and physical disciplines of yoga, supplementing his knowledge of western-style ritual magick with the methods of Oriental mysticism.

In 1903, Crowley married Rose Kelly, and they went to Egypt on their honeymoon. After returning to Cairo in early 1904, Rose (who until this point had shown no interest or familiarity with the occult) began entering trance states and insisting to her husband that the god Horus was trying to contact him. As a test, Crowley took Rose to the Boulak Museum and asked her to point out Horus to him. She passed several well-known images of the god and led Aleister straight to a painted wooden funerary stele from the 26th dynasty, depicting Horus receiving a sacrifice from the deceased, a priest named Ankh-f-n-khonsu. Crowley was especially impressed by the fact that this piece was numbered 666 by the museum, a number with which he had identified since childhood.

The upshot was that he began to listen to Rose, and at her direction, on three successive days beginning April 8, 1904, he entered his chamber at noon and wrote down what he heard dictated from a shadowy presence behind him. The result was the three chapters of verse known as Liber AL vel Legis, or The Book of the Law. This book heralded the dawning of the new aeon of Horus, which would be governed by the Law of Thelema. "Thelema" is a Greek word meaning "will", and the Law of Thelema is often stated as: "Do what thou wilt". As the prophet of this new aeon, Crowley spent the rest of his life working to develop and establish Thelemic philosophy.

In 1906 Crowley rejoined George Cecil Jones in England, where they set about the task of creating a magical order to continue where the Golden Dawn had left off. They called this order the A.'. A.'. (Astrum Argentium or Silver Star), and it became the primary vehicle for the transmission of Crowley's mystical and magical training system based on the principles of Thelema.

Then in 1910 Crowley was contacted by Theodore Reuss, the head of an organization based in Germany called the Ordo Templi Orientis (O.T.O.). This group of high-ranking Freemasons claimed to have discovered the supreme secret of practical magick, which was taught in its highest degrees. Apparently Crowley agreed, becoming a member of O.T.O. and eventually taking over as head of the order when Reuss suffered a stroke in 1921. Crowley reformulated the rites of the O.T.O. to conform them to the Law of Thelema, and vested the organization with its main purpose of establishing Thelema in the world. The order also became independent of Freemasonry (although still based on the same patterns) and opened its membership to women and men who were not masons.

Most famous quote: *Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.*

**Other information about your character:**

You're being invited to a housewarming party in a house that has been abandoned for years...and it has such an evil reputation that even hobos refuse to sleep within its walls. Given your background, you obviously believe in the supernatural. However, you also feel that there isn't a ghost alive (so to speak) which can outwit you. You're unruffled by routine hauntings, sure that your own powers will protect you; you thus find the idea of a haunting intriguing rather than offputting.

You have a love-hate relationship with another party guest: Madame Celestine LaVeau, The Voodoo Queen of New Orleans. You admire her power and her dedication to the dark forces, but you also consider her methods primitive and untutored. You are a serious scientist and researcher, and she is a hedge-witch.

The psychic turbulence of the house might be of interest to both of you; since it's a "focus" of arcane energies, you could turn it into a research center.

In your youth, you were an unsuccessful writer.

**Helpful links:**

<http://www.cix.co.uk/~mandrake/crowley.htm>

<http://www.azstarnet.com/~jhowell/ACpage/aleister.html>

<http://www.mith.demon.co.uk/CROWLEY.htm>

<http://www.tgd.org/acf/>

<http://www.crl.com/~thelema/crowley.html>