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Secret Agent 666: Aleister Crowley and British Intelligence in America, 1914–1918

Aleister Crowley (1875–1947), who proudly proclaimed himself the Great Beast 666 incarnate, was never one to shy away from the unconventional, outrageous, or dangerous. Dubbed, among other things, the “Wickedest Man in the World,” Crowley’s quest for power and spiritual enlightenment through application of “magickal” ideas and practices earned him mostly scorn, fear, and repression in his lifetime. But today he may be regarded as one of the seminal figures of the New Age and neo-paganist movements. Crowley’s adventures in metaphysics have tended to overshadow his other attributes: mountaineer, writer, artist—and spy. While Crowley’s actual or rumored connections to intelligence, particularly British intelligence, span most of his career, most comment and controversy has centered on his activities in the United States during World War I (WWI).

Undeniably, during 1915–1918 Crowley publicly proclaimed himself an Irish nationalist at war with England, and penned virulent anti-British/anti-Allied articles for U.S. publications, most notably George Sylvester Viereck’s pro-German *The Fatherland*. Typical of these effusions were his description of King George V as an “obscene dwarf,” and a maniacal defense of unrestricted submarine warfare.¹ These were unusual actions for a born-and-bred Englishman who heretofore had shown no interest in national or political causes. Of course, as many would note, Aleister Crowley was an unusual man. British officials were aware of Crowley’s apparent treason, but made no attempt to thwart him or

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prosecute him after his return to England in 1919. Not everyone was so forgiving. The jingoistic *John Bull*, which had earlier manifested animus toward Crowley, excoriated him as a “dirty renegade” and “traitorous degenerate” and demanded his punishment by the “land he sought to defile.”² Such accusations were to dog Crowley for the rest of his life and cause him no little distress.

In his own defense, Crowley claimed to have acted under instruction of British intelligence, with the aim of undermining German efforts through absurdity and hyperbole. His writing for *The Fatherland*, he argued, was “so blatantly extravagant only a German would have believed it.”³ One who did was George Viereck, who later acknowledged Crowley’s efforts. “One of the contributors to *The Fatherland* was Aleister Crowley,” he wrote, “a British poet who has been compared to Swinburne”⁴ Even Viereck, however, dismissed Crowley’s explanation: “Crowley subsequently boasted of being in the British Secret Service, but his claims are repudiated by Sir William Wiseman.”⁵ Yet Wiseman, the mastermind of British intelligence in World War I New York, was a man whose word must be taken with much salt where such matters are concerned.

Certainly no one from official circles openly supported Crowley, and to this day, the verdict on his World War I activity remains mixed. In Crowley’s belated (1993) entry in *The Dictionary of National Biography*, Gerald Suster notes without comment the subject’s insistence that he had been employed by “British Naval Intelligence” (NID).⁶ The late espionage historian ‘Richard Deacon’ (Donald McCormick, himself an NID veteran), asserted that “it was established that [Crowley] had indeed genuinely been trying to help the Allies.”⁷ Established how and by whom he does not say. Crowley biographer John Symonds suggests that the tale of confidential service for the British Government was a “neat little legend” concocted by an egomaniac and quite likely a traitor.⁸ As recently as 1998, a writer for the *Daily Mail* wrote of unspecified evidence that proved Crowley “really was a pro-German activist.”⁹ Added to these are surmises that the self-styled “Mega Therion” was a double agent serving both British and German interests. But none of these allegations has been supported by documentary evidence.

Somewhere in the yet-sequestered files of MI6 or MI5 there may rest the full story of the Great Beast’s WWI adventures. A few of his footprints linger in the pre-1920 index to Foreign Office correspondence, but all of these files, including one focused on his anti-British propaganda efforts, were long ago “weeded” from the public domain.¹⁰ Such a thorough expurgation is unlikely to have been accidental. But newly available evidence from the

archives of the United States Army's Military Intelligence Division (MID) confirms official British knowledge and acceptance of his actions, and specifically identifies him as an employee of His Majesty's Government.

With that established, the question becomes one of determining just what service he provided. Crowley's job may have been more than a mere faux-propagandist. Because "British intelligence" in WWI America was represented by different, and sometimes conflicting, organizations, Crowley's employment by one did not rule out his being the suspect of another. Finally, the Great Beast's role can be compared to two "international spies" active in much the same quarters in wartime New York: Sidney Reilly and Ignace Timothy Trebitsch-Lincoln.

THE COUNTERFEIT TRAITOR

According to Crowley's "autohagiography," *The Confessions of Aleister Crowley* (1929), he offered his services to the British government at the outbreak of the war without success—formally at least. He did have at least one personal friend in government, subsequently posted to "intelligence," the Hon. Francis Everard Fielding.¹¹ Crowley finally accepted an "invitation," from whom it is unclear, to go to New York as a purchasing agent, a job for which he had neither experience nor talent.¹² He arrived there aboard the *Lusitania* in late October 1914, but like that ill-fated vessel, his venture was destined not to prosper, at least economically. What followed were five years of frequent penury, a good deal of travel, and scores of occult workings, mostly of the sexual variety. His record of this period is vague, to say the least. Symonds notes that "apart from outstanding events, we know little of what he was doing and with whom he was doing it."¹³ Crowley seems especially coy when it comes to his intelligence connections, emphasizing misunderstanding and rejection, but acknowledging that some degree of collaboration indeed transpired.

In *Confessions*, Crowley recounts his continuing efforts to serve the British cause in the United States. He offered to "find out exactly what the Germans were doing in America," and through the confidence he enjoyed of a "man high in the German Secret Service," to go to Germany itself.¹⁴ These offers, he argues, fell largely on deaf ears. As a result, he was forced to play "a lone hand" and infiltrated the German network in New York on his own initiative. His introduction to Viereck he attributes to a chance encounter with a stranger on a bus. While not in the least Irish, and thoroughly English in manner and appearance, Crowley could claim a plausibly Irish surname plus some past association with poet William

Butler Yeats (via the occult Golden Dawn group). According to the Beast's later explanation, this was enough to convince the gullible Viereck that he was the leader of a secret committee for the liberation of Ireland.¹⁵

There is good reason to suppose that Crowley's explanation is not the whole story. Soon after his arrival in New York he encountered John Quinn, an Irish-American lawyer, politician, and avid bibliophile. According to Crowley, Quinn helped him out of acute financial difficulty by purchasing some of his rare volumes.¹⁶ Quinn was also an important figure in the Irish movement in New York. Indeed, only a few months before Crowley's arrival, Quinn had played host to Sir Roger Casement, the nationalist firebrand soon destined to become a martyr to the cause.¹⁷ Quinn's nationalism, however, was of a more moderate variety; he favored home rule over independence and aligned himself with the Entente in the European war.¹⁸ For this he was well-received at the British consulate and likely by other entities of His Majesty's Government as well. It seems quite possible that Quinn was Crowley's intelligence "contact" in New York and perhaps his paymaster. Quinn, who knew the local political and literary scenes well, also would have been the logical person to steer the Beast in Viereck's direction.

In July 1915, Crowley garnered the attention of the *New York Times*. On the morning of the 3rd, he and nine companions cruised across New York Harbor in a small launch flying an Irish flag and dropped anchor off the Statue of Liberty. Calling themselves the "Secret Revolutionary Committee of Public Safety of the Provisional Government of the Irish Republic," the group proclaimed the independence of Ireland and declared war on England. Later, sailing past docked ships of the Hamburg-America Line, they were cheered by German seamen. Crowley was the acknowledged leader of the enterprise, which included his "scarlet woman," Leila Waddell, who offered patriotic Irish airs on her violin.

The *Times* reporter described Crowley as a "poet, philosopher, explorer, a man of mystic mind, and the leader of Irish hope." "Of nearly middle age and mild manner," the piece continued, "with the intellectual point of view colored with cabalistic interpretations, Crowley is an unusual man." What more mainstream Irish patriots thought of Crowley's bold initiative is not recorded, but the action does not seem to have provoked any outpouring of support. Crowley protested the coverage, which he thought made him and his tiny movement look silly. If so, he only added to this perception some days later in a letter to the *Times*, in which he proclaimed the Irish to be the noble descendants of ancient Egypt and

Atlantis.¹⁹ Whether these antics delighted Viereck is uncertain, but if they were not also intended to lampoon and discredit Irish separatism, they certainly should have been. As such, they suited British interests very well.

THE AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE

His Irish activities first brought Crowley to the attention of American authorities. The earliest among the MID items devoted to him is a page from a large volume of “suspects,” based on information predating U.S. entry into the war. The relevant entry properly identifies him as Edward Alexander Crowley (he adopted Aleister in 1897), but listed his nationality as Irish and his occupation, journalist. His earlier expedition to Kashmir was noted, along with his claims of travel in India, Persia, and Tibet. An interesting physical description estimated his age at 40 (he was 41 in 1916), and noted he was “athletic looking, but [with] air of effeminacy; soft, plump hands; wears many rings.”²⁰ An additional item, dated 21 January 1916, noted his involvement with the Irish “Secret Revolutionary Committee,” and an “offensive” (anti-British) article in the Chicago periodical, *Open Court*. Another entry, dated 29 January, called him a “degenerate Irish journalist, pro German,” and that British port authorities were to search him and hand him over to Scotland Yard if apprehended. Indeed, it was noted that all or most of the above information came straight from British sources, specifically MI5.

The next items in the “Crowley file” date from July–August 1917 and concern his connection to an American spiritualist, George Winslow Plummer, identified as “a representative in this country of an occult German order, the head of which is Mr. Rudolf Steiner, in Berlin.”²¹ Most disturbing to the authors of these reports was the rumor that Plummer and Crowley were able to communicate with Steiner via telepathy.²² The occult order referred to was almost certainly the Ordo Templi Orientis (OTO), an offshoot of Rosicrucianism, formed in Germany around 1900. While Steiner’s relationship with this body is a matter of some dispute, there is no doubt that another German, Theodor Reuss, was its guiding light and the very man who had inducted Crowley into the order in 1912.²³ Most importantly, Reuss had a long association with German intelligence.²⁴ Crowley had boasted of long acquaintance with someone “high in the German secret service” whose “absolute confidence” he enjoyed.²⁵

Oddly, U.S. reports on this incident seem unaware of the earlier British information linking the Mega Therion to German propaganda. Gumshoe work by the New York City police established that Crowley was an

Englishman and a “general fakir” who was “probably chased from England where he fleeced some society women out of money.”²⁶ But the investigators were unable to locate Crowley or any recent information about him. The case did reach the attention of MID chief Lt. Col. Ralph Van Deman, who ordered his New York Station, headed by Nicholas Biddle to dig further.

A year later Crowley’s name turned up again in the American reports, this time in a general summary of cases from the resident intelligence officer at West Point, New York. Crowley, who had been camping on Esopus Island in the Hudson River as part of a “magikal retreat,” had come to the attention of the office because of his connection to Madeleine George, an actress from New York City suspected of being a German spy. The investigating officer soon discovered that the Beast had already been subjected to an inquiry by the Justice Department because of his work for Viereck. As a result of this, “it was found that the British government was fully aware of the fact that Crowley was connected with this German propaganda” Moreover, “It was determined that Aleister Crowley was a employee of the British Government . . . at present in this country on official business of which the British Counsel (sic) in New York has full cognizance.” The message seemed quite clear: Crowley was “OK” and the Americans should leave him be. The Americans were not entirely satisfied, however; the report concluded that “in view of the information which has been gathered within the past two months it may be possible that Aleister Crowley is double crossing the British Government.” But there is no explanation of this suspicion. In any case, Crowley was working for the British, and contrary to his later recollections, he had official recognition and support.

THE MIIC CONNECTION

The key to sorting out this conundrum is the British consul who vouched for him, Charles Clive Bayley. Bayley, who assumed the general consul’s post in New York City in October 1915, was a career diplomat whose prior service included a stint in New York (1899–1908) and most recently in Moscow (1913–1915).²⁷ The first provided him with the acquaintance of Norman G. Thwaites, a British journalist who worked in the New York press from 1902–1911, and who returned in 1916 as one of the key British intelligence officers in the United States.²⁸ In Moscow, Bayley had the opportunity to meet Crowley, who in 1913 played manager to a troupe of British chorus girls (including Waddell) visiting the city.²⁹ It is possible, if

no more, that this sojourn too may have had some intelligence dimension. In any case, that Bayley would emerge as Crowley's "protector" in New York seems more than coincidental.

But Bayley is only part of a wider and more complicated picture. During the first two years of the war, the chief British intelligence officer in New York, and the United States as a whole, was Captain (later Admiral) Sir Guy Gaunt. Officially, Gaunt was naval attaché, but he eagerly embraced the role of spymaster, reporting primarily to the Admiralty's Director of Intelligence, Admiral Reginald "Blinker" Hall, and secondarily to MI5 counterintelligence. The problem was that he was not a very good spy. Gaunt had a large ego, and a mouth to match, with the result that his intelligence role was common knowledge to friend and foe alike. As naval attaché, his indiscretions threatened to compromise the position of the British government.³⁰

In early 1916, now-Capt. Thwaites returned to New York to join Lt. Col. Sir William Wiseman who had established there a branch of MI1c, Section V, also known as the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS, later MI6).³¹ This organization operated under the skillful hand of Commander Mansfield Smith-Cumming, who believed in keeping the secret in secret service. Wiseman, as the chief of station, camouflaged his intelligence duties under the operation of the British Purchasing Commission.³² He also had quasi-diplomatic duties, and so left much of the day-to-day running of intelligence operations to his trusted assistant Thwaites.

Outwardly the relationship of Gaunt's and Wiseman's operations was one of cooperation, but a bitter rivalry bubbled just below the surface. As a result, Gaunt was gradually squeezed from the picture until finally recalled to London in 1918. Otherwise, the MI1c office operated with almost complete autonomy. In intelligence matters Wiseman and Thwaites answered solely to "C" (Cumming), and routinely ignored or defied not only Gaunt but also MI5.³³ Consul Bayley worked closely with the Wiseman-Thwaites faction and was mistrusted by Gaunt and his deputies.³⁴ In his intervention on behalf of Crowley, Bayley likely acted as a stand-in for Wiseman et al., who had good reason to disguise any such connection from both the Americans and fellow countrymen such as Gaunt.

Gaunt has the dubious distinction of being the only British official in New York mentioned by name in *Confessions*. Crowley recounts his fruitless efforts to interest Gaunt in Viereck's operation, despite the fact that *The Fatherland* had exposed a valuable Allied agent.³⁵ For his part, Gaunt later told Symonds that he regarded Crowley as "small time traitor."³⁶ Inexplicably, Gaunt also took credit for keeping British justice off Crowley's back. Like his later claim to have been the sole chief of British

intelligence in America, this boast is hollow. Gaunt undoubtedly had a handle on Crowley's activities in New York, but he also was the obvious source of the negative information supplied to the Americans in 1915. Gaunt despised and disparaged Crowley just as he did another agent employed by the Thwaites-Wiseman team, Sidney Reilly.³⁷

Crowley later recounted that through some vague arrangement, he did "submit reports from time to time" to British officials.³⁸ Since these certainly did not go to Gaunt's hands, such reports must have been received by Wiseman's MI1c organization. Other clues connect Crowley to that sphere. The most important is the previously mentioned John Quinn. In addition to his pro-Allied stance, or because of it, Quinn was on intimate terms with both Thwaites and Wiseman.³⁹ Among other things, he provided Wiseman with a confidential evaluation of the Casement affair's impact on American opinion.⁴⁰ In short, Quinn himself was connected to MI1c. Next, there is a link between the Beast and another agent known to have been enlisted by Wiseman. This was W. Somerset Maugham, who undertook a mission to Russia on Wiseman's behalf in 1917. Maugham had known Crowley for years and used him as the model of his 1908 novel, *The Magician*. Finally, the Americans had linked Crowley to a suspected German agent, Madeleine George. He omits mention of her (and others) in *Confessions*, but in his diary, George appears as one of his "assistants" during his retreat on Esopus Island.⁴¹ Her trail led back to an assortment of demimondaines and would-be femmes fatale associated with the scandal-ridden Russian missions in New York, objects of acute interest for Wiseman's office.⁴²

The Russian Consulate and the related Supply Commission in New York, were hotbeds of German and other intrigue.⁴³ In 1917 accusations of graft and treason erupted, centering on Col. Vladimir Nekrassov, a Russian officer connected to the Supply mission. The incriminating information found its way to Gaunt's hands, but his efforts to force an investigation were stonewalled by Thwaites. The reason for this obstruction was that through the likes of Reilly—and perhaps Crowley—MI1c operated informers and double agents among the Russians to keep tabs on German machinations and to try a few of their own. Thwaites later noted the case of one of his agents (Reilly's partner Antony Jechalski) who "so involved himself by prying into German affairs that he had become suspect."⁴⁴ The same could be said of Crowley.

It is also worthy of note that Thwaites was a long-time friend of Charles Dillingham, the #2 of New York's MID head Biddle.⁴⁵ Biddle, it will be recalled, was charged by MID chief Van Deman with getting to the bottom of the Crowley matter, just as he was in the case of Reilly and his

associates. In the Reilly inquiry, Dillingham consistently deferred all questions to Thwaites, much to the annoyance of MI5; and it may be assumed that he did the same where Crowley was concerned.⁴⁶

AGENT CROWLEY

The case of Sidney Reilly is instructive because it demonstrates the willingness of Thwaites and Wiseman to employ agents of dubious reputation and to lie about it. When Gaunt's denunciation caused MID chief Van Deman to query Wiseman on Reilly, Sir William flat out denied any specific knowledge of the man and offered that he might very well be an enemy agent.⁴⁷ Yet, at the same instant, Thwaites was on the best of terms with Reilly and his cronies, and relied on them for inside knowledge of Russian and German affairs—including the Nekrassov case.⁴⁸ Only weeks later, Wiseman himself approved Reilly's enlistment in the Royal Flying Corps, and later still recommended him for a sensitive intelligence mission in Russia.⁴⁹

Thus, Wiseman's public repudiation of Crowley is no more significant than his similar treatment of Reilly. Sir William and his lieutenants had no inhibitions about utilizing rogues and rascals. Crowley was a man with unique qualities and sources of information in corners where other agents could not or would not tread. He clearly demonstrated his ability to gain the confidence of an important German propagandist and to influence his product. He also could monitor enemy currents in the occult underworld. In addition, Crowley might have provided services along the lines of H. Granville Barker, another British subject in America linked to MI1c. During his travels in the United States, Barker sent Wiseman regular reports on public mood and opinion in various locales.⁵⁰ Similarly, Crowley, ever an acute observer, visited Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New Orleans, among others.

Whatever the extent and value of his services, Crowley was a man with an unsavory reputation, and along with the normal reluctance about acknowledging agents, he was not the sort with whom anyone in official circles would wish to be connected. This pariah status was furthered by the continual abuse he suffered in the British press during the 1920s, much of it because of his wartime activities. It even affected his treatment outside Britain. In 1929, for instance, French officials ejected him from their soil on the basis that his past associations proved him a German agent.⁵¹ But did this public reviling of Crowley not conceal an ongoing connection with intelligence, a continuing cover as it were? According to his purported son Amado Crowley, such indeed was the case, but it is not a matter that can be addressed here.⁵²

To contrast British treatment of the “traitor” Crowley with the treatment handed out to former MP Trebitsch-Lincoln who also tried his hand as an anti-British propagandist in New York is interesting. Although his efforts were less outwardly offensive than Crowley’s, London wasted no time instigating Trebitsch’s arrest and extradition on trumped-up charges, and hauled him home to serve three years in prison.⁵³ The same might just as easily have been Crowley’s fate. That it was not argues for something more than simple tolerance by the powers that be.

THE LOYALTY OF A DOG

Writing about his father’s involvement with intelligence, Amado Crowley notes that “his very eccentricity ... was his cover as an agent.”⁵⁴ Whatever the merits of his other claims, this observation fits the Great Beast’s doings in WWI. Crowley is evidence that intelligence assets can come in all forms and embrace the most outlandish attitudes and behavior. His case may also say something about the reasons some accept such unrewarded and unappreciated duties. Why would a man with such evident contempt for social norms and prevailing ideas of human decency be moved to act on behalf of King and Country? Money, of course, but as Crowley supposedly noted with some bitterness, because the Germans paid him “the British Government decided to pay me less.”⁵⁵ He explained his peculiar patriotism thus:

I still think the English pot as black as the German kettle, and I am still willing to die in defense of that pot. Mine is the loyalty of Bill Sykes’ dog ... the fact that he starves me and beats me doesn’t alter the fact that I am his dog, and I love him.⁵⁶

Whatever its scope and implications, Crowley’s role as British agent by no means redeems his overall reputation. But in this case, at least, he proves to have been more honest than the likes of His Majesty’s servants Gaunt and Wiseman. Sometimes even the Devil tells the truth.

REFERENCES

- ¹ *Open Court*, Aug. 15; see www.broon.demon.co.uk/media/crowley.htm. This and most of the other articles at this site are from originals in the Yorke Collection, Warburg Institute, London.
- ² Under the direction of self-styled arch-patriot Horatio Bottomley, *John Bull* had attacked Crowley as early as 1910. See items from the 2 April and 2 May issues at www.broon.demon.co.uk/media/crowley.htm.

- ³ Aleister Crowley, *The Confessions of Aleister Crowley: An Autohagiography* (New York, 1969), pp. 752–753, and Amado Crowley, *The Secrets of Aleister Crowley* (London, 1991), p. 107.
- ⁴ George S. Viereck, *Spreading Germs of Hate* (New York, 1930), p. 51.
- ⁵ Ibid.
- ⁶ “Crowley, Edward Alexander,” C. S. Nicholls (ed.), *The Dictionary of National Biography: Missing Persons* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 162–163.
- ⁷ Richard Deacon [Donald McCormick], *The Greatest Treason: The Bizarre Story of Hollis, Liddell and Mountbatten* (London, 1989), p. 86.
- ⁸ John Symonds, *The Great Beast* (London, 1971), p. 140.
- ⁹ Glenys Roberts, “The Devil’s Disciple,” *The Daily Mail*, 5 December 1998.
- ¹⁰ Great Britain, Public Record Office, Kew (hereafter PRO), *Index to Foreign Office Correspondence, 1906–1919*. FO 371/2541 concerned Crowley’s propaganda activity. Another file likely centered on his American years was FO 371/4264, 145230, dated 1919. Other Crowley material was located in FO 371/1216.
- ¹¹ *Confessions*, pp. 744, 753, 755 (where Fielding is noted as “A.B.”) and 934n. See also, Aleister Crowley, *The Magical Record of the Beast 666: The Diaries of Aleister Crowley, 1914–1920* [edited and annotated by John Symonds and Kenneth Grant] (London, 1972), pp. 91n, 104.
- ¹² *Confessions*, p. 745.
- ¹³ Symonds, p. 135.
- ¹⁴ *Confessions*, p. 754.
- ¹⁵ *Confessions*, pp. 749–751. On Viereck’s view, see Symonds, pp. 196–197.
- ¹⁶ *Confessions*, pp. 745, 934n, and *Diaries*, pp. 5n, 9–10.
- ¹⁷ Casement subsequently sided with Germany and sought to instigate armed rebellion in Ireland. He was captured and hanged by the British in 1916.
- ¹⁸ Arthur Willert, *The Road to Safety: A Study in Anglo-American Relations* (New York, 1937), p. 75. Willert worked under Wiseman in the propapanda sphere.
- ¹⁹ *The New York Times*, 12 July 1915, p. 10.
- ²⁰ U.S. National Archives (USNA), RG 165, *Records of the Military Intelligence Division* (hereafter MID), File 9140-815/1, p. 106.
- ²¹ Plummer has been described as a “man of many connections” in the occult scene (Fraternal Melchior, “Survey of Modern Rosicrucian Groups,” www.paxprofundis.com/melchior/Rcodes.html). Also connected to this case was another British subject, Rev. Holden Simpson (Sampson).
- ²² MID, 9140-808, report from Office of Naval Intelligence, “German Suspects,” 10 July 1917.
- ²³ Crowley at various times described Steiner (the founder of Anthroposophy) as a grand master of the OTO or having some relation to it. Peter Koenig asserts, however, that there is “no evidence that Steiner ever was a member of the

- OTO.” See Koenig, “The Early O.T.O. and Its Development,” www.cyberlink.ch/~koenig/early.htm. Crowley also mentioned Reuss as the ‘Outer Head’ of the OTO in 1914: *Confessions* , pp. 709, 934n.
- ²⁴ In the 1880s, Reuss (who was half English) was expelled from the German Socialist League as a police spy and later spent years in Britain; Symonds, p. 152.
- ²⁵ *Confessions* , p. 754.
- ²⁶ MID 9140-808, Report to Commanding Officer, Bomb Squad, NYPD, 19 September, 1917.
- ²⁷ *The New York Times*, 2 October 1915, p. 3:6.
- ²⁸ For these early years, see Thwaites’ memoir, *Velvet and Vinegar* (New York, 1932), pp. 48–66.
- ²⁹ *Confessions* , pp. 711–717. Bayley is not mentioned by name, but Crowley noted frequent contact with British consular officials.
- ³⁰ Gaunt himself recounts one such incident in his *The Yield of the Years: A Story of Adventure Afloat and Ashore* (London, 1940), pp. 223–225. Typically, he attempts to cast part of the blame on Wiseman, who he portrays erroneously as a mere underling (pp. 167, 190). On Gaunt, see also Richard Popplewell, *Intelligence and Imperial Defense of the Indian Empire, 1904–1924* (London, 1995), pp. 236–241, 252.
- ³¹ Yale University, Sterling Library, *Sir William Wiseman Papers* (hereafter WWP), Folder 172, “American Section M.I.1.c., c. Oct. 1917 and Folder 175, “Memo to New York Office,” [n.d., probably 1916], wherein the relationship of Wiseman and Thwaites is spelled out. This also notes that Wiseman had initiated the MI1c branch in 1915, apparently without Grauant’s knowledge.
- ³² On Wiseman’s background activities, see W.B. Fowler, *Anglo-American Relations, 1917–1918: The Role of Sir William Wiseman* (Princeton, 1969), and *The New York Times*, obituary, 18 June 1962, p. 25:1.
- ³³ In April 1918, MI5 chief Major Vernon Kell expressed his frustration in a note to his liaison officer in America, Colonel H. E. Pakenham, that the MI1c organization was exceeding its authority in several spheres and even encroaching on the duties of U.S. authorities. See PRO, MI5 Records, KV 1/25, pp. 35–36 (#60). KV 1/25 consists of summary reports mostly from 1000/1/USA/1 and C.E. USA files. Soon after the MI5 office in Washington received “instructions not to have anything to do with [MI1c]”: WWP, Folder 171, “Memo Sent to Col. Murray for Information,” 6 September 1918. Wiseman’s connections to Cumming and even the Prime Minister are indicated in WWP, Folder 159, Browning to Wiseman, 5 March 1916 and Lloyd George to Browning, n.d. [c. March 1916].
- ³⁴ PRO, KV 1/25, 31 (#48, 1000/1/USA/1, 226604).
- ³⁵ This was the Czech-American, Emanuel Voska. See Voska and Irwin, *Spy and Counter-Spy* , pp. 99–103.
- ³⁶ Symonds, p. 199.

- ³⁷ On Reilly's activities in wartime Manhattan see the author's "Sidney Reilly in New York, 1914–1917," *Intelligence and National Security*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (January 1995), pp. 92–212.
- ³⁸ *Confessions*, p. 754.
- ³⁹ Thwaites, p. 193.
- ⁴⁰ Willert, p. 75.
- ⁴¹ Crowley, *Diaries*, p. 82. Crowley's brief notation describes her as a married woman.
- ⁴² During the same period Crowley noted intimacies with a "Russian noblewoman," Marie Lavrov-Roehling, and with the decidedly Teutonic Gerda von Kothek, *Ibid.*, pp. 72, n. 4 and 78, n. 1.
- ⁴³ Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford, Russia: Posol'stvo, U.S., File 370-12, Col. Nekrassov. See also, M. I. Gaiduk, *Utiug: Materialy i fakty o zagotovitel'noi deiatel'nosti russkikh voennykh komissii v Amerike* (New York, 1918).
- ⁴⁴ Thwaites, 182, and MID, 9140-1496, "Anthony Jechalski," pp. 86–98.
- ⁴⁵ Thwaites, pp. 176–177.
- ⁴⁶ MID 9140-6073, Dillingham to Biddle, 22 March 1918, and 13 April 1918, and Biddle to Hunt, 15 April 1918.
- ⁴⁷ MID, 9140-6073/817, Wiseman to Van Deman, 9 July 1917.
- ⁴⁸ Thwaites, p. 181. Like Wiseman, however, Thwaites told American investigators he thought Reilly a suspicious character: MID 9140-6073, Memorandum #2 to Lt. Irving, p. 4.
- ⁴⁹ USNA, Department of State, Counselor's Office, Chief Special Agent (CSA) file 215, Sharpe to Bannerman, 13 December 1924, 6, and 18 December 1924, p. 3.
- ⁵⁰ WWP, Folder 161, Barker to Wiseman, 20 November 1916.
- ⁵¹ *The New York Times*, 17 April 1929, p. 17:1.
- ⁵² Amado Crowley, p. 107. Both Deacon (p. 86) and Symonds (p. 379) note that Crowley later reported on the activities of fellow occultist Gerald Hamilton, specifically his connections to Communists and Nazis in Germany. Interestingly, Hamilton was an Irish nationalist and former confidant of Roger Casement.
- ⁵³ On Trebitsch's bizarre and turbulent career, see Bernard Wasserstein, *The Secret Lives of Trebitsch Lincoln* (New York, 1988) and David Lampe and Laszlo Szenasi, *The Self-Made Villain: A Biography of I. T. Trebitsch Lincoln* (London, 1961).
- ⁵⁴ Amado Crowley, *The Riddles of Aleister Crowley* (London, 1992), pp. 130–131.
- ⁵⁵ Amado Crowley, *Secrets*, p. 107.
- ⁵⁶ *Confessions*, p. 761.