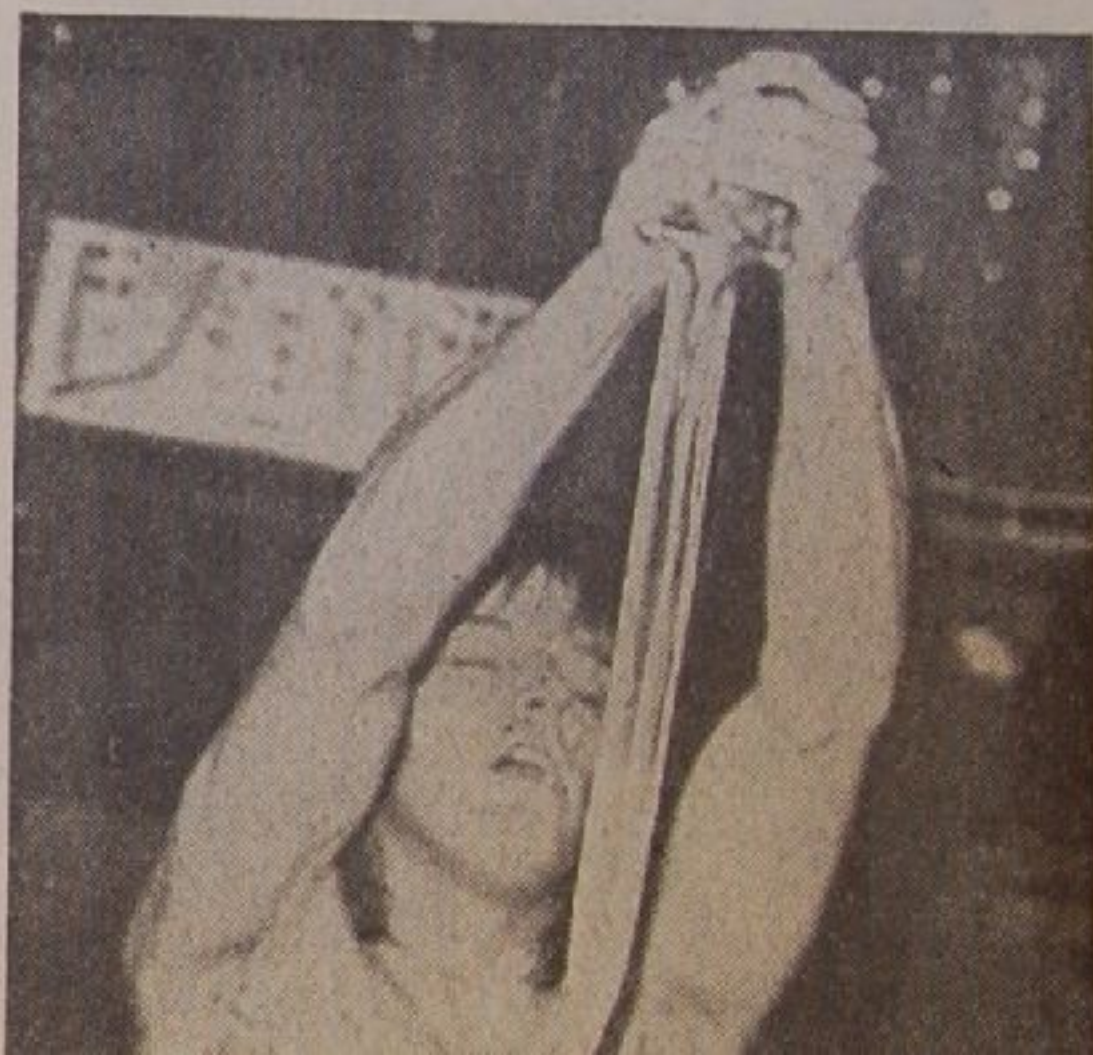




A witch
confesses

RITUAL

**They try to kill
a child—and an
evil priest dies**



THIS is Charles Pace, known to Britain's witches as Hamar-At. Millions saw him cursed on television by Alex Sanders, so-called King of the Witches. Now, the compelling story of his own experiences of black magic is continued ...

BY CHARLES PACE

WHY, in today's permissive society

WHY, in today's permissive society when anything goes, should witchcraft command such a huge following?

The answer is that witchcraft, with its hint of mystery and even danger and its ceremonial knives, masks, altars and magic circles, holds a unique thrill and exercises a profoundly disturbing effect on the impressionable.

And remember, despite its sinister aura, in Britain witchcraft is absolutely legal. But the witches' rituals are undoubtedly erotic.

Even the practice of bathing before the ceremony can be sexually stimulating. is naked, is kissed by a member of the opposite sex, also nude, on the lips, hips, chest and pelvis while incantations are intoned.

Sometimes the witches bathe together. Once I was paired off, against my will, with one of Britain's youngest witches—a girl of 11. Then there is the five-fold kiss which is part of the initiation ceremony.

The new witch, who

A curse

THOUGH sex has a part in all witchcraft ceremonies, the real orgies are reserved for the big cult circles when 20 or 30 people get together.

There are no class barriers in the covens. I know doctors, chemists and other professional men and women who are witches.

A few years ago I joined a coven led by a BBC executive at his home in a London suburb to find out what was going on. He was separated from his wife and was associating with a young female witch.

As in most ceremonies, the witches pranced round in the nude. They ate, drank and smoked in a heady atmosphere of burning incense to music from a record-player.

Nobody took drugs—very few witches do. With all the physical display that goes on, they don't need artificial stimulation.

After I left the coven I learnt that the BBC man had fallen out with some of the other witches. They put a curse on him, and he lost his job.

The late Stephen Ward dabbled in black magic. I used to meet him at a favourite haunt of occultists, near the British Museum in London.

Ward showed great interest in my mystic paintings and we became friendly. I found he knew



A MASKED witch during a weird scene of black magic rites

a little about black magic and was afraid of it. He particularly feared a woman occultist whom he believed had put the evil eye on him.

This woman took part in black magic ceremonies at some of Ward's parties.

In my opinion the real reason why some of Ward's

influential friends deserted him at his trial is that they feared the black magic rituals would be revealed.

The hidden menace of black magic can exert a powerful influence.

I know one occultist who was so fearful of a curse laid on him by his enemies that he drew a circle in his home and "consecrated" it. Then, every night for three years, he lit four candles round the circle and slept within it for protection.

Witchcraft is not dangerous in itself, but the effects it can have on the minds of the unstable can be highly perilous.

For instance, in 1965 I received three letters from officers serving in the forces who wanted to join a coven. Two were young pilots.

Can you imagine them prancing round naked, chanting mumbo-jumbo like "Eko, Eko, Azarak," then flying on a mission in a nuclear bomber? The thought filled me with horror.

Tragedy

I MADE sure their applications were turned down.

I saw another example of how witchcraft's influence on an unstable mind can lead to tragedy when a young woman came to me with an extraordinary request.

She wanted me to sum-

mon up the forces of evil to kill her husband.

Apparently she had fallen under the influence of a male witch who had become her lover. In his company she developed bizarre appetites.

She insisted that they made love often, but always by moonlight—and in a cemetery.

She wanted her husband out of the way so she could gratify her strange lusts to the full and pleaded with me to put a fatal curse on him.

I gave her a stern lecture on her depravity and told her to leave.

That woman had a powerful, if misguided and sinful, motive for trying to bring about the death of her husband. But I've known witches seek vengeance for the most trivial reasons, real or imagined.

Like the time I took a witch into a cafe for a cup of coffee and a bun. Because she couldn't get the sort of bun she wanted she became sulky and muttered to me, "I'm going to do a black ritual against the owners of this cafe."

When I met her later she told me jubilantly: "It worked. They've gone for a Burton."

She explained that she had invoked a goddess to cause mischief for the cafe people. They had since got into financial trouble and gone out of business.

I don't believe this witch's spite had anything to do with the misfortune that befell the cafe



LEGENDS and myths of the occult go back to the dawn of history. But their fascination is ageless—as a pop group found when they built an act round one old tale.

The Black Widow caused such a sensation when they introduced the performance live on stage that a record company signed them up to make an LP of it.

The story, suggested by

Clive Box, the group's drummer, is based on the 18th Century legend of Astaroth, a she-devil who put a curse on her sorcerer's mistress.

The sorcerer holds a ritual of exorcism, but makes the fatal mistake of straying outside the security of the magic circle. Only by sacrificing Astaroth's life can he save himself from Satan's wrath. Slowly he raises the knife . . .

owners. But she was convinced that it was all her own work.

So can a witch really kill or cause damage, or is it all hocus pocus? The answer, alas, is Yes, a witch can kill—if the victim is vulnerable to psychological attack, and

if the attack is mounted over a long period of time.

Witchcraft killings DO happen, but they have nothing to do with magic. They are brought about by the scientific application of suggestion and fear. By auto-suggestion, the victim



THE "Black Swan," Anna Maria Caglio, who was a witness in the sinister Montesi scandal.

SACRIFICE



A HOODED man holds a knife above bound wrists during part of a witchcraft ceremony

becomes responsible for his own destruction.

Blood sacrifices are a different matter entirely. Fortunately, they are practically unknown in this country, apart from among some coloured immigrants who offer up hens or cockerels to their voodoo gods.

The only case of which I had personal experience took place on St Valentine's Day, 1945, when Charles Walton, a hedge-cutter, aged 74, was found hacked to death on Meon Hill, near Lower Quinton, Warwickshire.

Macabre

HE was pinned to the ground with a two-pronged pitchfork, and a cross had been carved on his throat.

Various theories were put forward to account for the macabre killing. Some said it was black magic; others blamed Italian prisoners-of-war stationed nearby.

Superintendent Spooner, of Scotland Yard, revisited the scene year after year to probe the witchcraft theory.

I went to Lower Quinton with Alfred Mills, of the South Staffordshire Metaphysical Society of Research into Witchcraft and Black Magic, to try to find the solution. It was hard going. When we questioned some villagers, they shut up like clams. There seemed to be a conspiracy of silence.

However, by diligent "detective" work we established that there were

still women in the village who claimed to be able to charm away warts by witchery. And we found cases where cattle had died and crops failed for no apparent reason.

We unearthed another odd fact that seemed to link Walton's murder with witchcraft. In 1875 a yokel at nearby Compton killed 80-year-old Ann Tennant with a pitchfork and hook. At his trial her killer said: "Ann was the properest witch ever known."

I remain convinced that Walton was sacrificed by someone who believed he was a witch. His killing was an occult ritual, probably intended as a fertility rite. No other explanation fits.

Blood sacrifices are commonplace in some continental countries though only animals are used.

In France I attended a blood-drinking ceremony held by a vampire cult in the shadow of a famous church.

The midnight ceremony was stranger than any I've seen in Britain. About 20 male and female witches took part. All wore goat masks to hide their identity, and robes with nothing underneath.

A lamb was taken to the altar and its throat cut. The blood flowed into a beaker from which everyone took a drink. I was also forced to gulp down a mouthful, but it was awful.

The lamb's skin was saved to be made into

parchment for the writing of magical texts.

Everyone present, except the high priest and his two acolytes, then took part in a wild orgy.

In Hamburg, Germany, I found three Satanic cults operating. Two I dismissed as fakes carried on for the benefit of tourists who were charged £10 for admission.

The other was genuine and not much different from those held in Britain, even to a Satanic prayer. But the service did not include a sacrifice.

The most monstrous ceremony I ever attended was the black mass of Saint Secaire at Ostia de Sabat, near Rome. In 30 years of probing the occult, I've never seen anything to match it for sheer horror.

The death of a child was intended, and would have occurred but for a dramatic intervention in the ceremony.

The affair began in the spring of 1953, when a pretty girl's body was found on the beach at Ostia, a seaside resort.

She was identified as Wilma Montesi, 21-year-old daughter of a carpenter.

Investigations uncovered

a story so sinister and involving so many high-placed people that there was an international scandal.

It was not resolved until four years later when Piero Piccioni, son of a former Italian Foreign Minister, and two other men were found not guilty of Wilma's drowning by abandoning her on the beach after a wild party.

One of the chief witnesses against Piccioni was a raven-haired girl called Anna Maria Caglio, once known as the "Black Swan," who commanded the headlines day after day.

Her descriptions of orgies indulged in by Rome's Dolce Vita set were a sensation.

Parties

LATER I was in Rome with an occultist friend on our way to Egypt. We went to Ostia for a couple of days and learnt of Wilma's death.

Her father told me he was distressed by the stories of his daughter taking part in wild parties.

"Wilma was a good girl," he insisted. "She was lured into black magic, and the man responsible for her death is the high priest of a witchcraft circle in Ostia."

He swore that she died on the altar at a black mass ceremony before being dumped on the beach.

He begged me to help him bring vengeance to the priest. I was non-committal, but his story disturbed me profoundly.

When we returned to Rome the pieces began falling into place. A young Italian took me to meet a beautiful countess who talked incessantly about black magic and witchcraft.

She invited my friend and me to black mass at Ostia and, because of what Wilma's father had told me, I immediately agreed.

The ceremony was called the black mass of Saint Secaire, the only one in Europe involving the sacrifice of a human being. Traditionally, the victim is an unbaptised child.

Panic

THE countess told me it was customary to use the unwanted children of prostitutes, as they are unregistered and nobody missed them.

I felt tense and uneasy as the "priest" approached the altar on which a naked girl witch was stretched out and started to intone.

It was then that I heard a faint cry from a wicker basket beside the altar and froze with horror. So the countess's story was true. A child had been prepared for sacrifice.

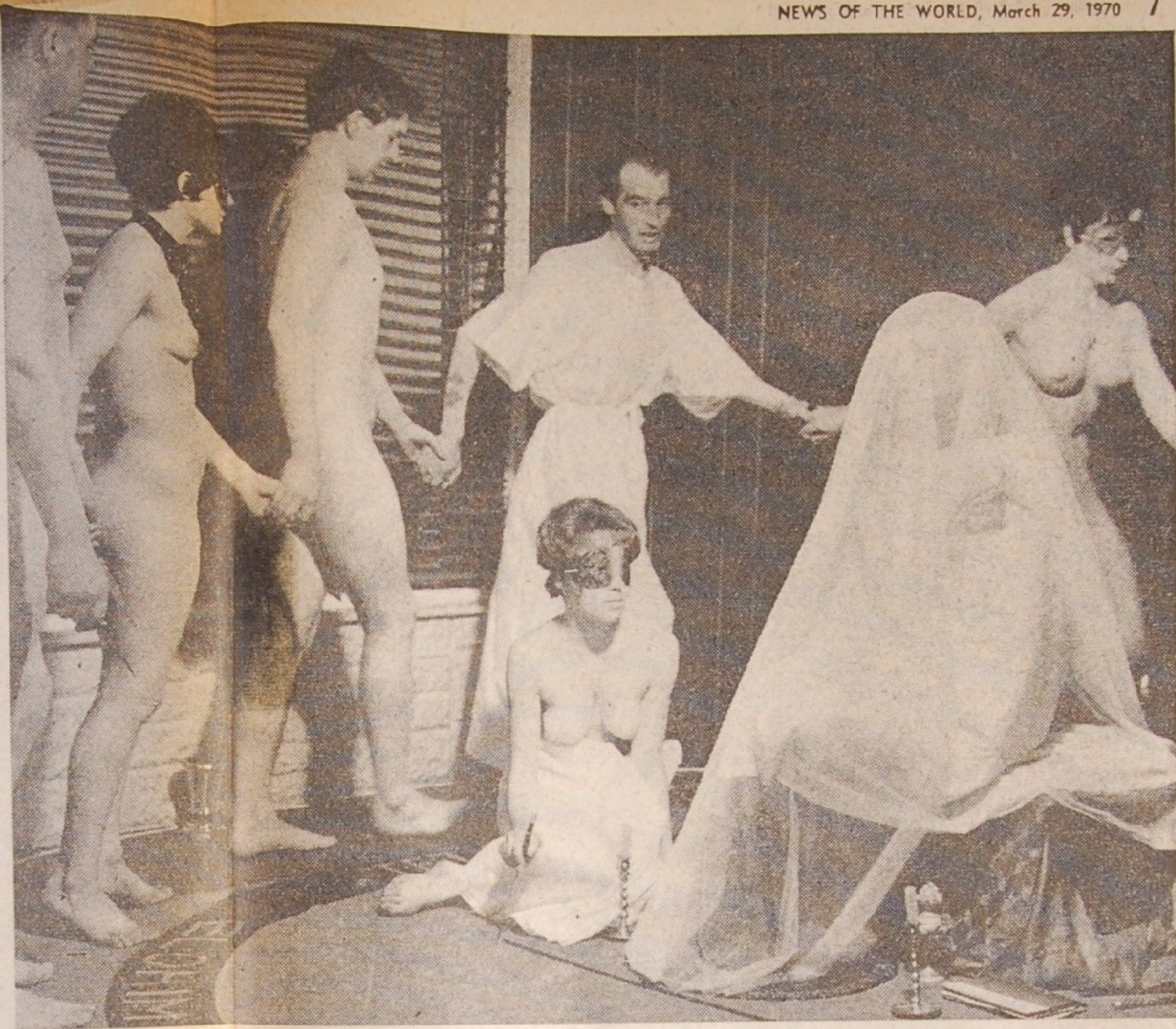
What followed was like a nightmare. Suddenly the lights went out. The woman on the altar panicked and dropped the two black candles she was holding and they spluttered out. In the confusion a shadowy figure holding aloft the ritual sword grappled with the priest.

When the lights went on the priest lay dead before the altar, blood streaming from his throat.

The coven broke up in disorder. Men and women grabbed their clothes and fled screaming into the street. I hurried away, too, and went back to Rome.

I expected a great

A COVEN
dance
round
in the
nude
while taking
part in
a witch-
craft
ceremony
held in
Britain



candal, and that the police
could question us. But
nothing happened. Day
after day I scanned the
newspapers anxiously, but
there was no mention of
the killing.

Later, the "story" was
released that the "priest"

had died of a heart attack.
Only then I realised that
among the people present
at the black mass were
some of the most influen-
tial names in Italy.

They did a good white-
wash job. The guilty
"priest" of Saint Secaire

only got what he deserved.
For it's my belief he was
not murdered, but
executed.

Who was the execu-
tioner?

WELL, I HAVE A
SHREWD IDEA. BUT I'M
NOT TELLING.

NEXT WEEK

Your views on witches