

SEPTEMBER

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Every son of Islam must gain a victory from a devil. Four victories, and the son will attain his reward.

—from *Secret Ritual*,
by Wallace D. Fard²

2001 EXPOSING FARD

Fard, who taught his followers that Allah would automatically accept the soul of any nonwhite who murdered four Christians or Caucasians,²² became *persona non grata* in Detroit after a trial stemming from one of the most bizarre homicides in American history.

On November 20, 1932, police discovered that a member of the Allah Temple of Islam had murdered one of his boarders on a makeshift altar in the living room of his home.²³ Shortly before noon, as his children and eight Black Muslim witnesses watched, Robert Karriem (like Elijah Karriem, he had received his name from Fard) ordered James Smith to lie on the altar, which was nothing more than a heavy oak table covered by a white sheet. Smith lay down, but suddenly had a change of mind. When he tried to get up, Robert Karriem pulled part of a car's axle from beneath the sheet and struck Smith in the head, rendering him unconscious. As blood flowed from Smith's wound, Robert Karriem's children yelled and screamed in horror.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1932, 60th Year,

*Held
for Killing Unbeliever*



ROBERT HARRIS.

October 2001	M T W T F S						
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November 2001	S M T W T F S						
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September 2001

DETROIT TIMES

Only Detroit Newspaper Carrying International News

EVENING

Universal Service and Complete Sport Dispatches

33D YEAR, NO. 52

DETROIT, MICHIGAN, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1932 26 PAGES

THREE CENTS



ROBERT
"This man was sacrificed at the will of Heaven," told police. (Times pictures.)

ALTAR SCENE OF HUMAN SACRIFICE

Woman Watches Mate Hit Roomer With Axle, Put Silver Knife in His Heart

One hundred followers of a negro cult leader, who is held for a human sacrifice on a crude altar in his home, were being rounded up today by police for questioning.

The self-styled king of the Order of Islam is Robert Harris, 44, of 1429 Dubois street. The victim, whom he admits bludgeoning with an automobile axle and stabbing with a silver knife through the heart, was James J. Smith, 40, negro, roomer in the Harris home.

The cult leader's wife, who watched the ghastly rite, police said, also is held.

The murdered Benny Evangelista likewise was a cult leader and police saw a mark of similarity in this "sacrifice" and the slaying of Evangelista, his wife and their four children.

BOTH WERE BEATEN

In both murders the victims were beaten to death. The Evangelista family is thought to have been slain by the leader of another fanatical religious cult, and the only clue left by the murderer was half a thumbprint on a weapon.

The print is to be compared today with those found on the silver knife. Harris' wife, Dortha, is held for investigation. He is charged with murder.

Voodoo mysticism permeated the self-crowned "king's" confession after his arrest.

"I am king of the Order of Islam," he said. "This man was sacrificed at the will of heaven. I had a visitation that said 'at 9 o'clock an infidel shall die with a knife in his heart.'"

"It was predestined 1,500 years ago that at that hour I must make a human sacrifice to my gods," he continued. "It must not be a member of the Order of Islam, but some stranger—the first person I met after leaving my home."

"ORDER OF GODS"

"Thi— how fortunate it was Smith came back at that hour! Otherwise I might not have been able to carry out the order of my gods. That knife was 1,500 years old. God help the men who removed it!"

Asked if he had been on the welfare list, the "king" replied:

"Certainly not. I am the biggest man in the world today. What need have I for food? The spirits will feed me whatever I need."

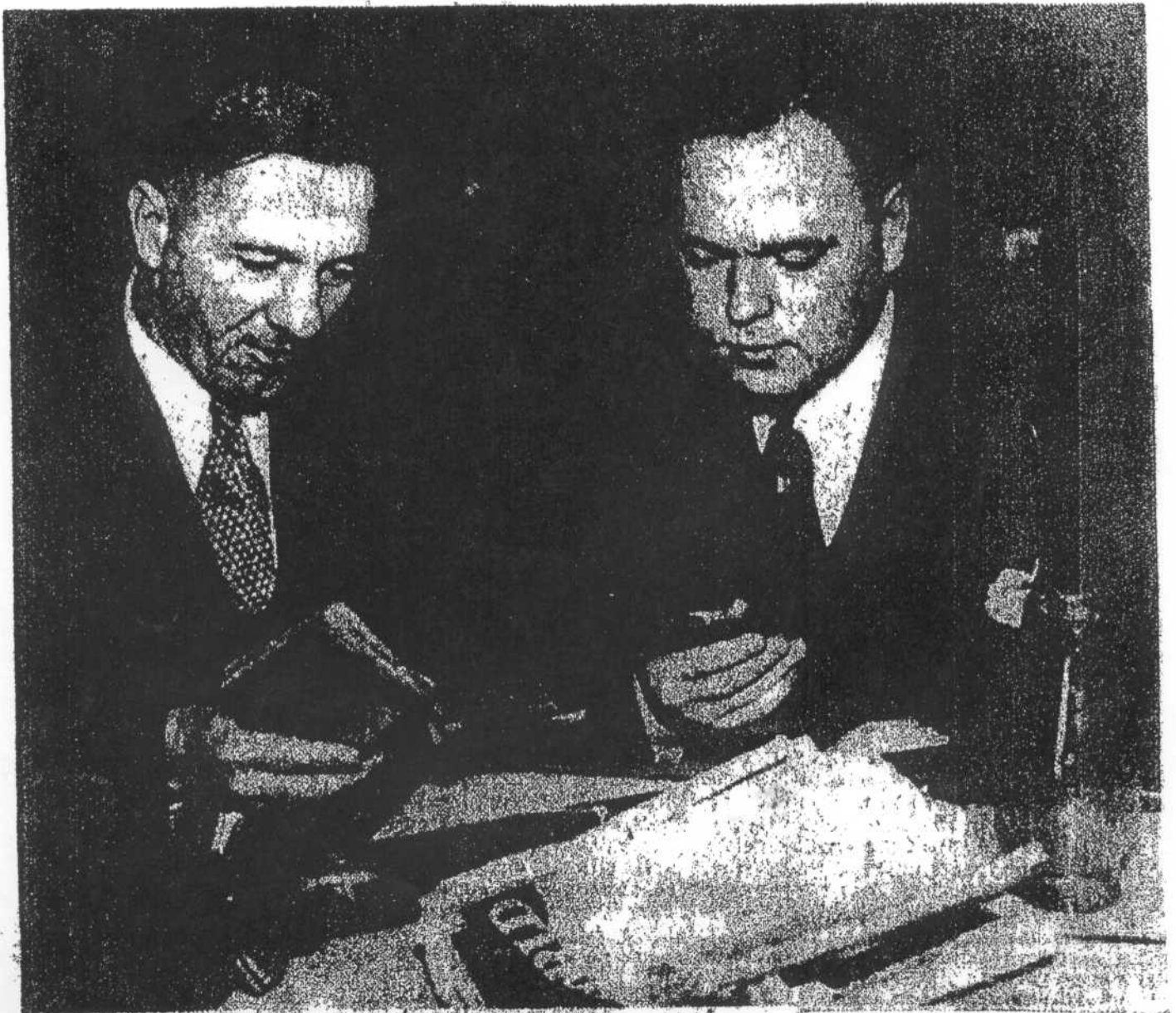
Detectives questioned him in the recent murder of William C. Alber, unemployed carpenter, found beaten to death last week, but said they were convinced he had nothing to do with it.

**NIGHT
EDITION**

1 #

CULT 'KING' KILLS MAN ON ALTAR

Cult Leader Kills Man as 'Sacrifice'



DETECTIVES EXAMINING THE KNIFE

Robert [redacted], leader of a weird cult, confessed he killed James J. Smith on a crudely improvised altar at 1428 DuBois street as a human "sacrifice." Detectives Oscar Berry and Charles W. Snyder are shown examining the knife [redacted] used and the strange Bible of the cult.

1932

Nov 21st

Marked for Death by Cult

Detroit Times

Tuesday, November 22, 1937



FANATIC PLANNED TO MURDER WOMAN RELIEF WORKER

Gladys Smith, 21-year-old welfare worker for the Elmwood station, was marked for death by Robert Harris, negro cult leader, because she cut his name from the welfare rolls, Harris' confession revealed. The girl was to have died in place of James J. Smith, who was slain on a crude altar as a human sacrifice. (This is a Times Picture.)

'ASIATIC' TREND OF NEGROES IS CITED

March of 200 on Welfare
Station Recently Laid
to Influence of 'Islam'

By James T. Trainor

An "Asiatic" trend among negro dole recipients of the Elmwood Settlement district, noted at the time as a passing whim, today came back with horror to two women welfare workers on learning the fanatical Robert Harris had intended them for human sacrifices as "infidels."

The workers are Miss Gladys Smith, 21, of 5718 Lawton avenue, and Mrs. Adele Ivey, 30, negress, of 1737 McDougall avenue, both of whom had done welfare work with the Harris family.

Wide-eyed and horror stricken, Mrs. Ivey heard Harris' statements to the police that she was a "no good Christian" and would have been sacrificed if he knew where he could have found her.

"Why should he have wanted to kill me?" the welfare worker asked. "I never did anything to him. But he must have meant me because I was the last one to investigate the Harris family for welfare aid. He always seemed pleasant, but I thought him a little unbalanced because of the way

he talked about the infidels perishing and the 'beys' taking over the country."

WROTE TO KIN

Mrs. Ivey said she visited the Harris family many times, in their one-room home at 1249 Dubois street, but saw no signs of a crude altar, such as the one on which "King" Harris of the "Order of Islam" sacrificed James J. Smith.

"We discovered the family was not in Detroit long enough to receive welfare, so I wrote to relatives in Memphis, Tenn., and asked them to care for them. The relatives told us to send the wife and children, but not Harris, because he was too much of a dude.

"Harris didn't seem to bother. He said, 'The "beys" will take care of me.' He refused to permit his family to go to Memphis."

The first signs of fanaticism became noticeable in Harris, the welfare worker said, about last Spring when he decided to change from his "slave name," Harris, to "Karrlem."

"I went to his house one day and he had four small blue cards, a star and crescent on each. He said, 'You see, we are all Moslems now. This government is not going to last and those who are not members of Islam will all perish'."

Harris, in his cell at police headquarters, wild-eyed and burning with fanaticism, was screaming to Detective Oscar Berry:

"Mrs. Ivory! It's lucky for her! That infidel Christian! She pounds a typewriter too well. She is too clever, too smart. It's lucky for her and that other one, too."

The "other one" is Miss Smith, an attractive blonde, who also attempted to bring relief to the poverty-stricken family of the "king" and "queen" of the Order of Islam.

TUESDAY

DetRiot Times

NOV 22 1932

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Detroit Times

Tuesday

~~Friday~~

Nov-22

1932

VOODOOISM WAVE

Miss Smith said she dealt with the family before Harris went "Asiatic."

She told of the wave of voodooism that recently has swept the Elmwood welfare section, of the sudden appearance of the fez on negro heads, of the wild talk of "infidels" perishing and the "faithful" being saved.

"I discovered many followers of what they called Islam," Miss Smith said.

"There was one client named Joseph Sparks who changed his name to 'Bey.' I asked him why and he said 'Sparks was my slave name. I can prove from records 1,500 years old that my free name is Joseph Bey.' He said a ship was coming from Asia to take away the faithful and all others would die in a terrible war or some other disaster.

"I asked him how he would know when the ship was coming and he said, 'Pieces of paper will fall from an airplane. It will be our warning to get ready for the coming of the ship'."

The followers of "Islam" seemed to have a childlike faith in their newly embraced religion, the welfare worker said, although she never noticed their beliefs even bordered on the violent.

Miss Smith paled on hearing she was one of the intended sacrificial offerings of "King" Harris.

"It's a good thing it happened on Sunday, ore one of us might have been a victim," she said.

2 #

The CARD
They used
In

1930 to 1934



MEMBERSHIP CARD

There is None Worthy Of Worship But ALLAH And
MUHAMMAD is His Prophet

My dear Brother or sister
ASSALAM ALAIKUM — Peace be upon you. I am glad to enlist
you as member of the American Moslem Brotherhood and give you
the Moslem Name *O Pat O Beal*

May Allah give you true Faith, Success and Happiness

AMERICAN MOSLEM BROTHERHOOD

2840 St. Antoine St. Detroit, Mich.

Muzoffar Ali, Director

Center — Mecca Sharaf, Arabia

MEMBERSHIP CARD IN MOHAMMEDAN CULT

This is the card one of the Mohammedan cults, whose power is
spreading in East Side negro districts, issues to its members.

2 #

The problem with telling a lie is that you've got to tell another lie
to conceal the first one, and another to hide the last.

—Minister Abraham X,
Nation of Islam,
St. Louis Mosque¹

DETROIT TIMES

Only Detroit Newspaper Carrying International News

EVENING

Universal Service and Complete Sport Dispatches

33D YEAR, NO. 53 DETROIT, MICHIGAN, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1932 28 PAGES THREE CENTS

ON MAYOR

Also Planned 'Sacrifice' of Two Judges and Two Girl Welfare Aides, He Says

Sacrifice of a negro roomer in his home was only the humble beginning of a series of contemplated "infidel" slayings the "king" of the "Order of Islam," revealed today.

The roster of victims for whom he had "calls," included Mayor Frank Murphy, Judge Edward J. Jeffries and Judge Arthur E. Gordon of Recorder's Court, Miss Gladys Smith, 21, and Mrs. Adele Ivey, 30, negro, welfare workers.

While police rounded up leaders and members of the strange cult of voodooism, with Oriental leanings, the self-styled "king"—Robert Harris, 1249 Dubois street—sat in his cell at police headquarters and talked freely of the "sacrifices" he planned.

BANDAGE OVER EYES

He wore a bandage over his eyes, gloves on his hands and ear muffs—so that he could "see no evil," hear no evil, and touch no evil.

After vividly describing the sacrifice of James J. Smith, negro "infidel," he added:

"The gods ordained they all should go—Mayor Murphy, Gordon and Jeffries, and those welfare workers."

MURPHY'S "ASSASSIN"

Mayor Murphy thought today he recognized Harris as the armed negro arrested in his apartment on East Jefferson avenue last Spring, after writing threatening letters to the mayor, but it developed this man is in Eloise. However, he was a member of the same strange cult, and called himself "Ahmed Abdullah." He is a Mississippi-born negro, whose real name is Henry James Moaning. He was adjudged insane by Probate Court.

Judge Jeffries said it was a "great surprise and a dubious honor" to learn he had been marked as a victim of the "king." His first intimation came through the press, he said. Judge Gordon is out of the city.

Police learned the fantastic cult is widely practised in Detroit's negro colony, although not in such

a violent form as Harris employed
HAS 1,000 MEMBERS

More than 1,000 negroes are members of the Order of Islam here and twice that number in Chicago, according to Detective Oscar Berry of the homicide squad.

The order has a headquarters at 3408 Hastings street. Harris' brother, Edward, told police. He

denied the cult practises human sacrifices as votive offerings to "the gods."

While Harris raved and refused to answer questions until Detective Barry offered to become a member of the cult, he insisted Smith was a willing victim.

PROMISED HEAVEN

"I told him I had been commanded to kill some one by the Gods of Islam," Harris said, "At first Smith didn't want to be killed, but when I showed him he would be the saviour of the world and would go to heaven right away, he said all right."

"He had to be killed at noon Sunday. I set a clock in front of the altar where every one could see it and the 'queen,' my wife, Bertha, held the clock."

"Smith was sitting in a chair in front of the altar. As noon drew near I said, 'Smith, do you still want to die?' I had to ask that because the order commanded me not to kill any one who did not want to be killed. He nodded, 'Yes.'"

"I grabbed the knife and stabbed him—like this."

SWINGS AT DETECTIVE

The "like this" was directed at Lieut. Paul Wencel of the homicide squad, posing as the sacrificial victim while Smith substituted a roll of paper for the knife.

"Smith was standing up against the altar. He groaned so I picked up a rod of iron (the section of axle weighing about 75 pounds) and struck him on the head."

The prisoner "king" revealed his wife was an unwilling witness to the sacrifice and had to be coerced into watching Smith die at her husband's fanatical hands. Harris said he "whirled her around by the feet a few times before she agreed to hold the clock."

TUESDAY
Nov 22
1932

Detroit
Times

KILLER SHOWS DETECTIVES HOW HE SLEW

Brother Terms Fanatical
Killing Act of One Who
Had Lost Mind

hold the clock."

The two Harris children, Araby, 12, and Ruby, 9, were not in the house at the time of the sacrifice. Harris had sent them to the home of their grandmother at 2729 Clinton street at 8 o'clock Sunday morning.

BROTHER TELLS OF CULT

The brother of the imprisoned "king" described some of the aims of the Order of Islam.

"It is operated by a man from Morocco, W. D. Fard, our teacher," he said. "It is educational and historical. We learn about the black race, which goes back in its culture 66 trillion years."

The "slave" name of Harris was dropped and Edward said he adopted the "free" name of Nawab Pasha and the "king" took that of Karriem when they embraced Islam. Edward said he makes a living picking up what food he can around the public markets. He is not on the welfare.

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DETROIT TIME

Detroit Newspaper Carrying International News

EVENING

Universal Service and Complete Sport

NO. 54 DETROIT, MICHIGAN, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1932

24 PAGES

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VOODOO KILLER TRIES TO FLEE FROM POLICE

Man Who Made Human Sacrifice Faces Arraignment and Court Sanity Test

Robert Harris, fanatical negro who murdered his "infidel" boarder, James J. Smith, as a human sacrifice "to appease the gods and gain immortality for Smith, will be arraigned Friday before Judge John A. Boyne on a formal murder charge.

The judge's appointment of a sanity commission to examine Harris, and the killer's ultimate removal to an asylum, is considered merely a matter of form by the homicide squad.

The self-styled "King of Islam" has been in custody since Sunday when he confessed the murder and histrionically re-enacted it at police headquarters.

Harris made two desperate efforts to escape from a room filled with detectives, while being questioned last night. A diminutive and weakened little man of 44, he is phenomenally strong, and it required four husky detectives to hold him in the room.

KINGSHIP DERIDED

The attempted escapes occurred while Harris was being confronted by Eugon Ali, 32, a negro of 3408 Hastings street. This address is headquarters of a weird religious cult of which Harris is a member and Ali general secretary.

Harris readily acknowledged Ali as secretary but denied the killer's title of "king."

"He was just an ordinary member," Ali said. "but I guess he misinterpreted our teachings. Our order will not countenance any bloodshed until 1934, when the Armageddon war will take place to determine whether the Asiatics or the Caucasians will have to get off this planet."

Both Harris and Ali agreed on the general credo of their cult. It was founded by W. F. Fard of the Traymore Hotel, Jefferson and Woodward avenue, two and one-half years ago.

1 #

EUGAN ALI
FARD'S
hand

Right
man

THE DETROIT NEWS, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1932.

HARRIS, CULT SLAYER, FACES COURT FRIDAY

2 Other Members of Society
Also Are Held.

Robert Harris, member of the Order of Islam, a Negro religious society, who has confessed, according to police, he killed James J. Smith, another Negro, in the Harris

home at 1429 Dubois street last Sunday in a "sacrificial rite," will be arraigned in Recorder's Court Friday on a warrant charging him with murder.

Two other members of the society—Wallace Fard, its leader, and Ugan Ali, secretary—are being held, Fard for the immigration authorities and Ali on a disorderly person charge. Fard said he did not know Harris. Ali and Harris' brother, Edward, told police they thought the accused man was demented.

Four others were detained for questioning when police found them early today at Lafayette avenue east and Orleans street. According

to police the men said they were looking for "the place where the society was going to hold its big meeting." The four are registered as Abe Mohammed, 539 Alfred street; Oeier Zareff, 2114 St. Antoine street; Cornelius Bey, 3112 Beaubien street, and Wallace Mohammed, 951 Mullett street.

The warrant for Harris was recommended by Miles N. Culehan, assistant prosecuting attorney. It is expected a sanity commission will be appointed to examine Harris after his arraignment.

Ali and Fard told detectives there was nothing in the teachings of the Order of Islam that countenanced

"sacrificial rites." They said the order could not be blamed for anything Harris did.

PAGE
2 #

VOODOO-SLAYER DOFFS HAT TO 'KING' BOYNE

Harris Tells Judge He Did
Killing Because It Was
Crucifixion Time, Anyway

With a regal "Okay, Your Highness," Robert Harris, "voodoo king," doffed his dirty cap with a white-gloved hand and admitted murder today before Judge John A. Boyne of Recorder's Court.

Harris was whisked from police headquarters to the court room for arraignment.

"I killed a man at 1420 Dubois street because it was crucifixion time," Harris told Judge Boyne.

The judge entered a plea of guilty for the negro and held him for examination.

When Harris appeared before the bench wearing his cap the judge asked him to remove it.
SAYS HE'S KING

"I'm a king and kings take off their hats for no one," the negro replied.

"Well," said Judge Boyne, "I'm king here and I'm asking you to take it off."

"Okay, Your Highness," answered Harris. "It's immaterial I'll take it off. You see, the kings are all brothers."

After admitting the murder, Harris cut short his court appearance

by declaring he is to make a radio address. When questioned by Judge Boyne as to the broadcasting station, he said:

"Just listen, Your Highness, and you will hear. But I've got to go now because I am hungry."

Harris has eaten nothing since his arrest, five days ago.

Five hundred negroes jammed the corridors of the court building to witness the arraignment. Most were unable to gain admittance to the already crowded courtroom.

NO DISTURBANCE

No disturbance arose despite police fears of a demonstration following appearance at police headquarters yesterday of members of "The Order of Islam." They demanded the release of their brother members.

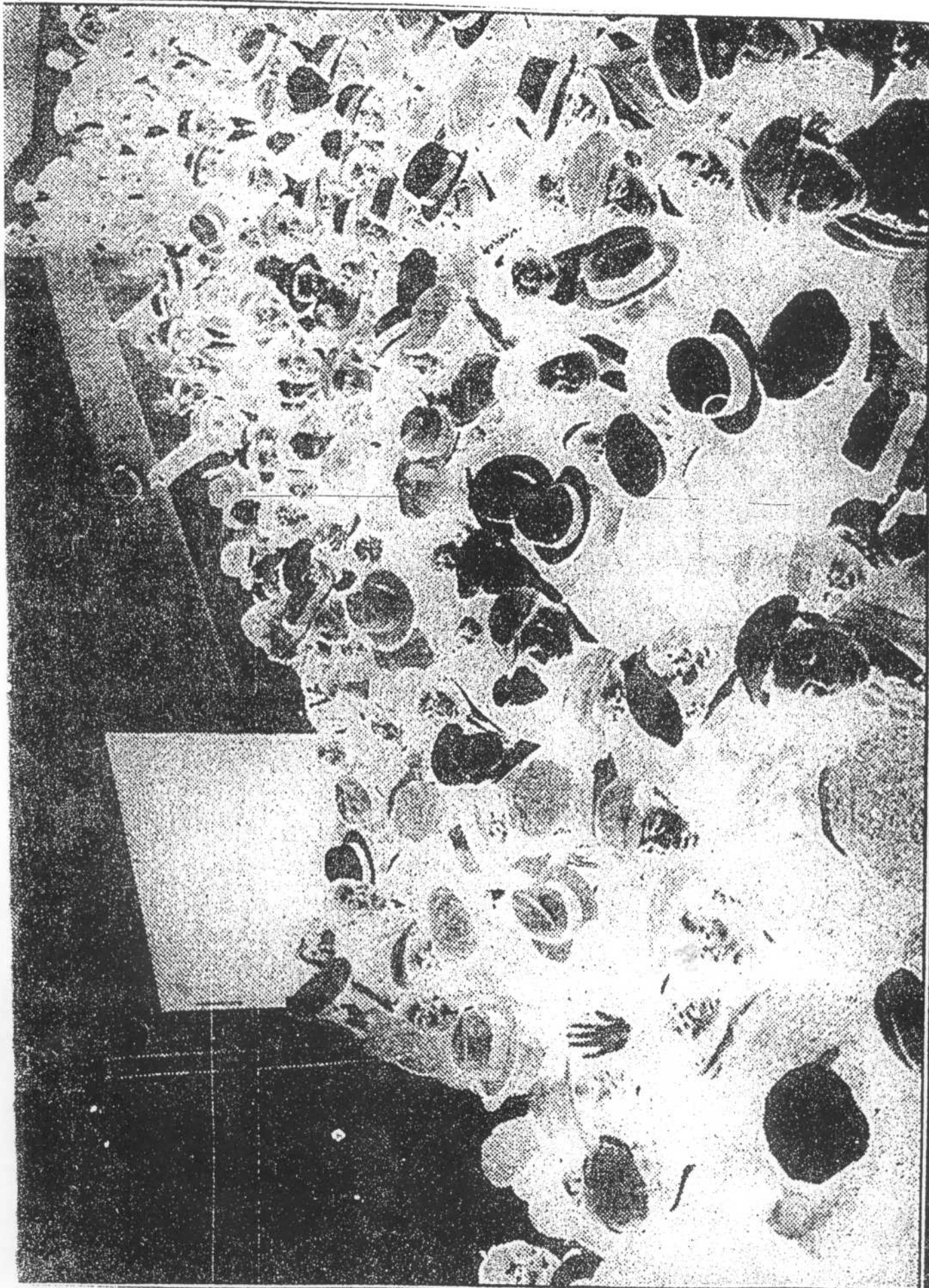
Many men in the procession wore fez caps bearing the insignia of the order. They were led by Lilly All, wife of one of the imprisoned men. Informed that her husband could not be released until his examination had been completed the woman told the desk sergeant:

"Very well, we'll come back every day until he is returned to us."

Detective Sergt. Oscar Berry head of the homicide team investigating the murder for which Harris is held, remained at home throughout the holiday. The protestors demanded his home address, but were not given it.

ON HUNGER STRIKE

Harris is charged with slugging James J. Smith, another negro, with an automobile axle and completing his death with a pocket knife—over an improvised altar. He has asserted the death was "dictated by the gods" and yesterday shook his bars and demanded release "only long enough to kill some one else." He has refused to eat since his arrest.



OVERFLOW CROWDS JAMMED into the corridor outside Recorder's Judge John A. Boyne's courtroom Friday as Robert Harris, Negro, "voodoo murderer," was arraigned for the "sacrificial" killing of another Negro.

Harris, who has named himself King of the Order of Islam, admitted killing James J. Smith in a cult rite, and a plea of guilty to first degree murder was entered.

From Press Photo

VOODOO KING'S SANITY TO BE TESTED

Slayer of Human Sacrifice Ends Hunger Strike After His Arraignment

A sanity commission was to be named today to examine Robert Harris, negro voodoo "king" and slayer of another negro as a sacrificial offering "to appease the gods."

Judge John P. Scallen of Recorder's Court, before whom the "king" stood mute yesterday on a charge of slaying James J. Smith, victim of his fanaticism, is expected to name the committee of psychiatrists this morning for the first examination of the negro mystic.

Harris probably will be sent to an asylum for the criminally insane, rather than tried for first-degree murder.

"The king is hungry," the leader of the "Order of Islam" remarked after returning to his cell from arraignment. It was the first time Harris has asked for food since he was arrested last Sunday. He has pushed aside food "prepared by devils."

HUNGER TOO GREAT

Yesterday hunger got the better of his regal disdain for the "food of devils" and he drank two cups of coffee and ate several sandwiches.

The meal seemed to revive the sagging spirits of the "king." Shortly afterward he began pacing his cell and muttering about destinies he says he is supposed to fulfill.

CASE IS STUDIED

Two psychiatrists, Dr. Louis Lipschitz, head of the psychiatry department of Receiving Hospital, and Dr. David Clark, well-known specialist, have been conducting independent studies of the fanatical Harris for the last few days.

The doctors made frequent visits to Harris' cell while he was at police headquarters and after he had been transferred to the County Jail. They refused to classify his type of mental case because of the fact Judge Scallen will appoint a commission to make studies for the court.

NOV-26-1932
DETROIT TIMES

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