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MANX STAR

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WITCHES' TREASURES WILL GO TO AMERICA

THE ENTIRE collection of witchcraft memorabilia built up by the late Dr. Gerald Brossseau Gardner and housed for the past 20 years in the Witches' Mill at Castletown has been bought by the Ripley "Believe It Or Not" organisation and is being air-freighted this week to San Francisco where it will go on exhibition.

The collection was bought for an undisclosed sum from Mrs Monique Wilson, self-styled "Queen" or "High

"Believe-it-or-not" man buys for San Francisco museum

EXCLUSIVE!

The late Dr. G. B. Gardner.

THE LATE Dr. Gerald Brossseau Gardner, who died in 1964 at the age of 80, spent a lifetime in the study of folklore and anthropology and was internationally known for his writings on witchcraft

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AMERICA

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Mr Charles Bristoll, executive vice-president of Ripley International, who came to the island to negotiate the deal.

The collection was bought for an undisclosed sum from Mrs Monique Wilson, self-styled "Queen" or "High Priestess" of witches, who inherited it from Dr. Gardner when he died at sea on his way to the Lebanon in 1964.

Negotiating the purchase was Ripley International Executive vice-president Mr Charles Bristoll, who said on Friday, "The exhibition will be housed at Fisherman's wharf in San Francisco, and we will probably set up tableaux with wax figures to incorporate the different items."

His organization became interested in the witches' collection after the National Geographic Magazine article on the Isle of Man was published last September, with details of the Witches' Mill.

They contacted their "Believe It Or Not" museum in Blackpool for more information about the

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10,000-item collection and Mr Bristoll flew from Toronto to complete the deal.

Ripley International have more than 200 gift shops, restaurants and arcades throughout America, as well as museums in California, Illinois, Tennessee, Chicago—and Blackpool. They have plans for expanding to London, Denmark, Barcelona and possibly Japan during the next two or three years.

The Castletown witches' collection will go on show in San Francisco at the beginning of July.

THE LATE Dr. Gerald Brozseau Gardner, who died in 1964 at the age of 50, spent a lifetime in the study of folklore and anthropology and was internationally known for his writings on witchcraft and his collection of curses, many of them brought home from the Far East.

His Witches' Mill exhibition was claimed to be the first of its kind in the world.

At the time of his death it included a large number of Manx hypochs, including what was said to be the only known specimen of a Manx dirk—the kind used in the ancient "Dirk Dance of the Kings of Manx," which has now been revived and is danced with wooden weapons.

Among the witchcraft

items were the instruments of ritual and ceremonial magic, magical rings and lucky charms, ranging from a craggy-mantled badger's paw to valuable astrological jewelry, and objects used ward off the "evil eye" dating from Egyptian and Phoenician to modern times.

Dr. Gardner also possessed numerous relics of witch-hunting times in Europe, including torture instruments and possessions of the notorious "Witch Finder General" Matthew Hopkins, accounts of the Manx witchcraft trials, and items of "killing magic" such as are still used in Africa.

Amongst the items most prized by Ripley International, the new owners of the collection,

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WORKERS from Common Market countries will still have to obtain work permits before they can take up employment in the Isle of Man, according to a statement issued on Friday by Employment Exchange manager Mr G. H. Woodworth, and such a permit will be issued only when there is no local worker available and suitable for the vacancy. The statement comes in the midst of a row over the admission of foreign wor-

FOREIGN WORKERS MUST STILL HAVE WORK

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The Gardner collection

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are Dr. Gardner's books, which include Rosicrucian documents and a complete set of the secret manuscripts of the "Order of the Golden Dawn", to which such diverse characters as Aleister Crowley and W. B. Yeats belonged in the early part of this century.

During his lifetime Dr. Gardner wrote of the museum: "It is my policy to show what people have believed in the past, and still do believe, about witchcraft, and what they have done and still do as a result of these beliefs—the director would like to point out that he does not necessarily share these beliefs himself ..."

In the 20 years since the museum was established in Castletown it has drawn many thousands of tourists and has been featured in numerous publications both in Britain and abroad. The strongest interest has always come from America.

THE GARDNER COLLECTION