



Modern Pagan Witchcraft

Known as **Wicca** in Europe/Scandinavia/Australia/NZ
and as **British Traditional Wicca (BTW)** in the USA/Canada

Julia Phillips PhD

Hon Senior Research Associate
University of Bristol



Context to the emergence of modern Pagan Witchcraft in the early 20th century



James George Frazer (1854-1941) was a child of Victorian Britain (1837-1901), coming of age and being educated in a period that saw many changes, including the expansion of the British Empire.

His book *The Golden Bough* was enormously influential on the emergence of modern Pagan Witchcraft.

Sir James George Frazer by Emile Antoine Bourdelle bronze bust (1925)
© National Portrait Gallery, London (used with permission)



Margaret Murray (1863-1963)

“Rarely has a historian achieved so much by being completely wrong...”

(Dr Francis Young, 2020)

Margaret Murray, supervising the public unwrapping of Khnum-Nakht, shown here with Miss Hart-Davies, Mr Standen and Mr Wilfred Jackson (May 1908).





Left: Margaret Murray, Christmas 1933

Above: Flinders Petrie in front of tomb dwelling in Giza (The Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, UCL; published in Stevenson 2012).

In her autobiography she said:

“Someone, I forget who, had once told me that witches obviously had a special form of religion, “for they danced around a black goat.” As ancient religion is my pet subject this seemed to be in my line, and during all the rest of the war I worked on witches.”



M. A. Murray
March 1915



"...witchcraft is known to its votaries as *la vecchia religione*, or the old religion, of which DIANA is the Goddess, her daughter *Aradia* (or Herodias) the female Messiah..."

Charles G Leland

Aradia: Gospel of the Witches

Grateful thanks to Geraldine Beskin of the Atlantis Bookshop, London, for allowing me to take this photo of the frontispiece of Margaret Murray's copy of *Aradia: Gospel of the Witches* (first edition, 1899).

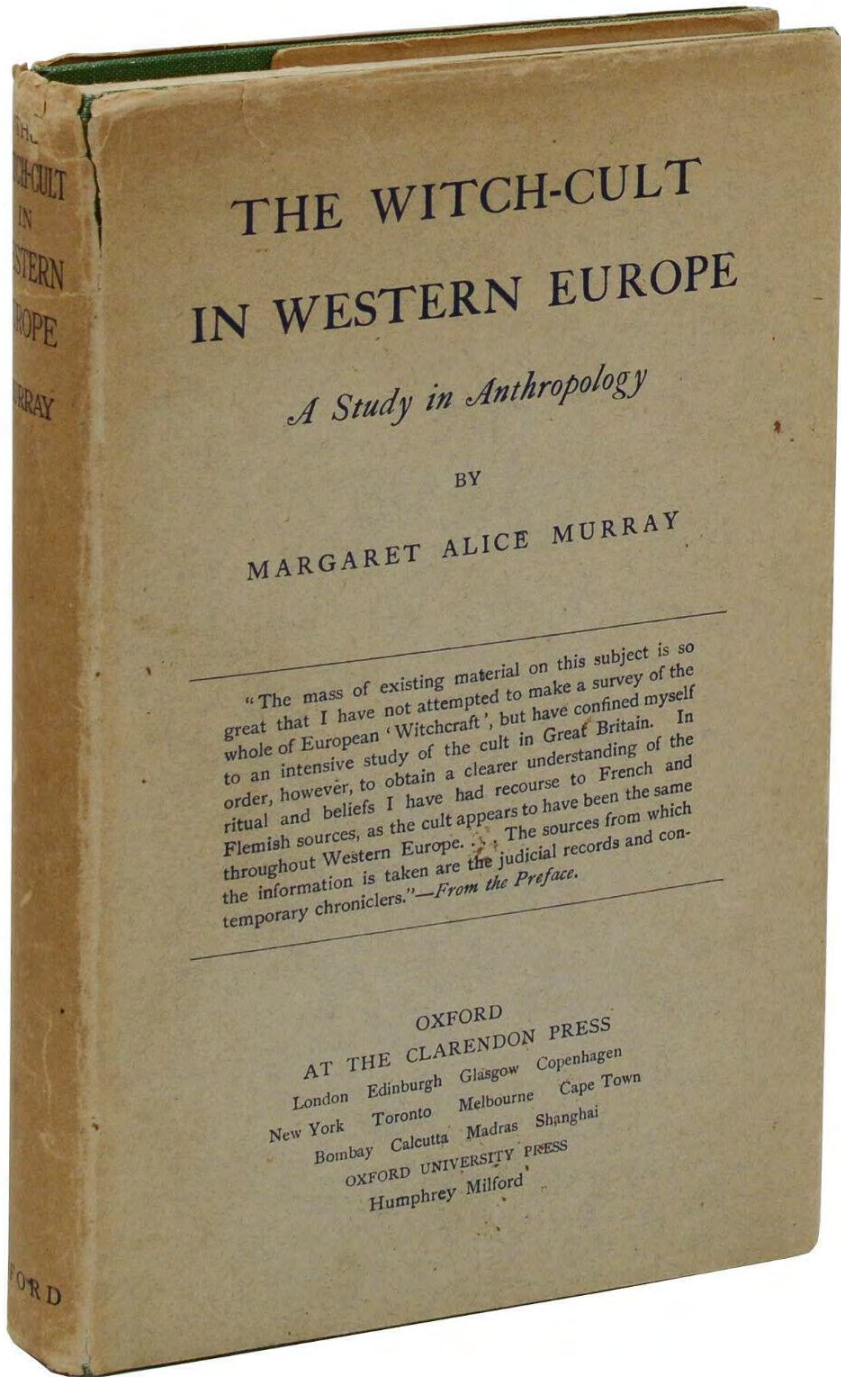
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18th, 1917.

DR. M. GASTER (VICE-PRESIDENT) IN THE CHAIR.

THE minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

Miss M. Murray read a paper entitled "Organizations of Witches in Great Britain," and in the discussion which followed Dr. Baudis, Dr. Seligman, Dr. Read, Miss Pollard, Miss Hull, Mrs. Coote Lake, and the Chairman took part.

The meeting terminated with a hearty vote of thanks to Miss Murray for her paper.



“Under Operative Witchcraft I class all charms and spells... [which are] common to every nation and country, and are practised by the priests and people of every religion. They are part of the common heritage of the human race and are therefore of no practical value in the study of any one particular cult.”

The Witch-Cult in Western Europe,
Margaret Murray, 1921.

Cecil Williamson and Gerald Gardner 1930s – 1940s

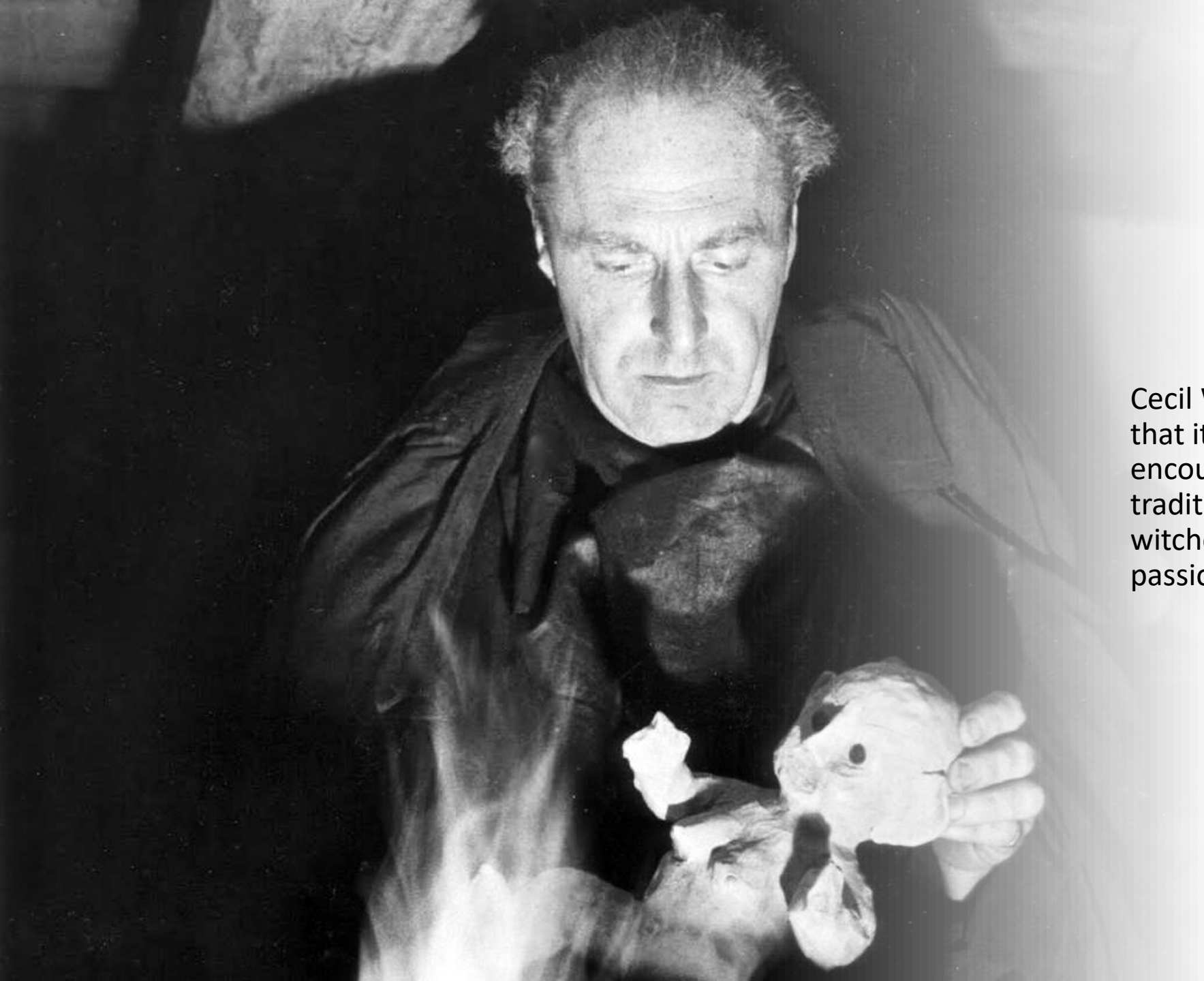




Cecil Williamson (1909-1999), Bricket Wood



Gerald Gardner (1884-1964), Isle of Man



Cecil Williamson always maintained that it was his childhood encounters with practitioners of a traditional style of English rural witchcraft that inspired his lifelong passion for witchcraft and magic.



Gerald Gardner lived most of his life overseas in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and the Federated Malay States (Malaysia), moving to England on his retirement in 1936.

He was based in London but continued to travel overseas, including Palestine, Turkey, Greece, Hungary, and Cyprus, between 1936 and 1938.

e's
NAMES AND ADDRESSES
OF WARDENS IN "C4" GROUP

Sector A (subsidiary to B Sector): W. A. Florey, "Wroxeter," Summerford Avenue; W. Wilcock, "Beitsden," Woodland Way; R. Abbott, "Lyndon," Shelley Close.

Sector B: C. Sargent, The Golf Club (sector warden); A. C. Weavers, tobacconist, Lymington Road; W. Andrews, boot shop, Lymington Road; C. Meadus, decorator, Lymington Road; P. Dimmer, grocer, Lymington Road; J. E. Wheeler, "Wei Yuen," Lymington Road; J. L. Lumb, "Elfinwood," Woodlands Way; A. Nowell, 2, The Parade.

Sector C: F. Pettiphar, "Cranmore," Station Road (sector warden); H. Spong, The Lodge, "Wolhayes," Station Road; W. Jeffries, "Seaview," Lymington Road; B. Stride, Station Cottage, Station Road; A. Wiseman, "Cranmore," Station Road.

Sector D: E. H. Fells, "Pinewood," Wortley Road (sector warden); J. W. Macfarlane, draper, Lymington Road; P. T. Tugwell, chemist, Lymington Rd.; *A. Lawrie, Glen House, Lymington Road; E. Ludwell, draper, Sea Corner; F. Hentall, 1, Gordon Road; L. Durrant, 4, Waterford Road; G. Steele, fruiterer, Lymington Road; A. Wheeler, "Colaba," Lymington Road; *R. Taylor, Clock Cafe, Lymington Road; *S. Clark, "Shootash," Waterford Road; G. Garner, "Stanton," Stanley Lane; L. Coulson, 14, Heath Road, Walkford; *C. Classen, Sunnybank, Lymington Road.

Sector E (Walkford): G. Gardner, "Southridge," Highland Avenue (sector warden); E. M. Sharp, "Waterford House," Waterford Road; *T. Hopkins, "Henseshore Cottage," Chewton Common; H. Ogden, "Little Meggs," Chewton Common; J. Harris, "Chewton Lodge," Lymington Road; H. Angell, "Lighthouse View," Chewton Common; L. Hope-Jones, "Birch Lawn," Lymington Road; F. Hope-Jones, "Birch Lawn," Lymington Road; Mrs. E. Grimes, "Avenue Cottage," Avenue Road; *E. Corner, "Boonara," Ringwood Road; E. Prestwich, "Longcroft," Ringwood Road; *I. M. Jones, "Red Gables," Chewton Way.

Sector F (Walkford): J. H. Darwin, "Sterte House," Chewton Farm Road (sector warden); F. Hudson, "Chatsworth," Solent Road; C. Thompson, "Avenue Cottage," Avenue Road; Mrs. R. Thompson, "Avenue Cottage," Avenue Road; B. Mitchell, Walkford Hotel; *H. Pearmain, "Osterley," Avenue Road; D. Yoe, "Whitbury," Walkford Road.

Head warden: H. de Dreux Coutts, "Granta," Lymington Road.

Those marked with * only appear when bombs drop very near or when specially sent for.

This gives a total of 49 wardens, 40 of which are "fully effective," and 4 of the 40 may be called up for service.

Posts.

A—Somerset Avenue.
B—Golf Club.
C—Hinton Station.
D—Ovoid, Gordon Road (head warden's post).
E—Junction Glenville and Ringwood Roads.
F—Walkford Hotel.

H/4.
To be prepared in original only.

FORM OF ENROLMENT IN THE HOME GUARD

Name GARDNERChristian Names GERALD BROSSIEAU

(Surname First in BLOCK CAPITALS.)

EDFB 2261

QUESTIONS TO BE PUT ON ENROLMENT.

1. What is your name? Gerald Brosseau Gardner
2. What is the date and year of your birth? 13 June 1884
3. What is your address? Southridge, Eppingham Rd, Highcliffe
4. (a) Are you a British subject? Yes
(b) Nationality of parents at birth? British
(c) Name, address and relationship of next of kin Mrs G. B. Gardner (Wife), Southridge, Highcliffe
5. Do you now belong to, or have you ever served in, the Armed Forces of the Crown? If so, state particulars of all engagements. from 1905 to 1910 Cyclist & Cavalry Rifles, 1910 to 1923 Malay State Police, 1923 to 1926 Indian State Police
6. Do you understand that if accepted you will become subject to military law and liable to obey such orders as may be given to you in accordance with instructions for the Home Guard issued by the Army Council, but that those instructions will require you to give part-time service only and will not require you to live away from home? Yes
7. Do you understand that your service in the Home Guard will be without pay or other emoluments? Yes
8. Do you understand that in the event of your incurring a disability attributable to your service any claim for compensation will be dealt with under the regulations for the time being in force for the purpose which provide in the case of death or after discharge for permanent disability the same terms as are applicable to private soldiers and their dependants? (There is also provision for disablement allowances during periods of temporary incapacity due to volunteer service and during the periods prior to discharge in the case of permanent incapacity) Yes
9. Do you understand that if you are accepted you will engage to serve in the Home Guard for a period not exceeding the duration of the present emergency but that during that period your service may be determined in accordance with instructions issued by the Army Council, by competent authority at any time, or at your own request by fourteen days' notice in writing given by you? Yes

Declaration.

I, G. B. Gardner do solemnly declare that the answers made by me to the foregoing questions are true and I hereby agree to serve in the Home Guard.

Signature of applicant G. B. GardnerDate 12 March 1942Signature of enrolling authority J. H. Darwin

(Company Commander)

Certificate of Acceptance.

G. B. Gardner (name) is accepted for service in the Home Guard for the following period:—

(a) the duration of the emergency

or (b) until

Date 15 4 42Signature of accepting authority J. H. Darwin

(Battalion Commander)

“OPERATION CONE OF POWER”

Witchcraft in World War II

The Lammas Ritual 1940

by Julia Phillips PhD

The Last Tuesday Society

15th May 2024

<https://www.thelasttuesdaysociety.org/event/witchcraft-during-world-war-ii-julia-phillips/>



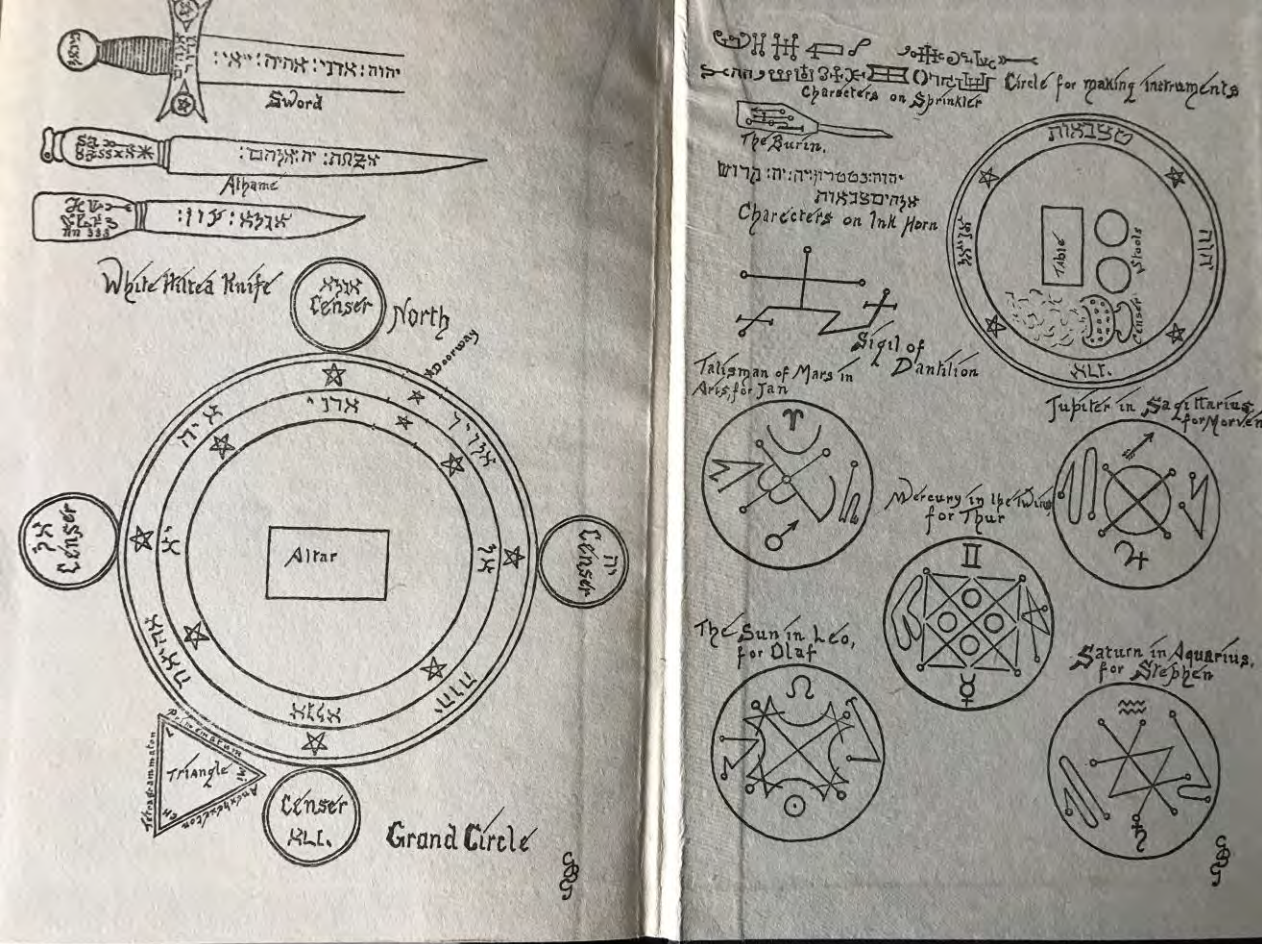
John S M Ward at the
Abbey Folk Park Museum in 1937.





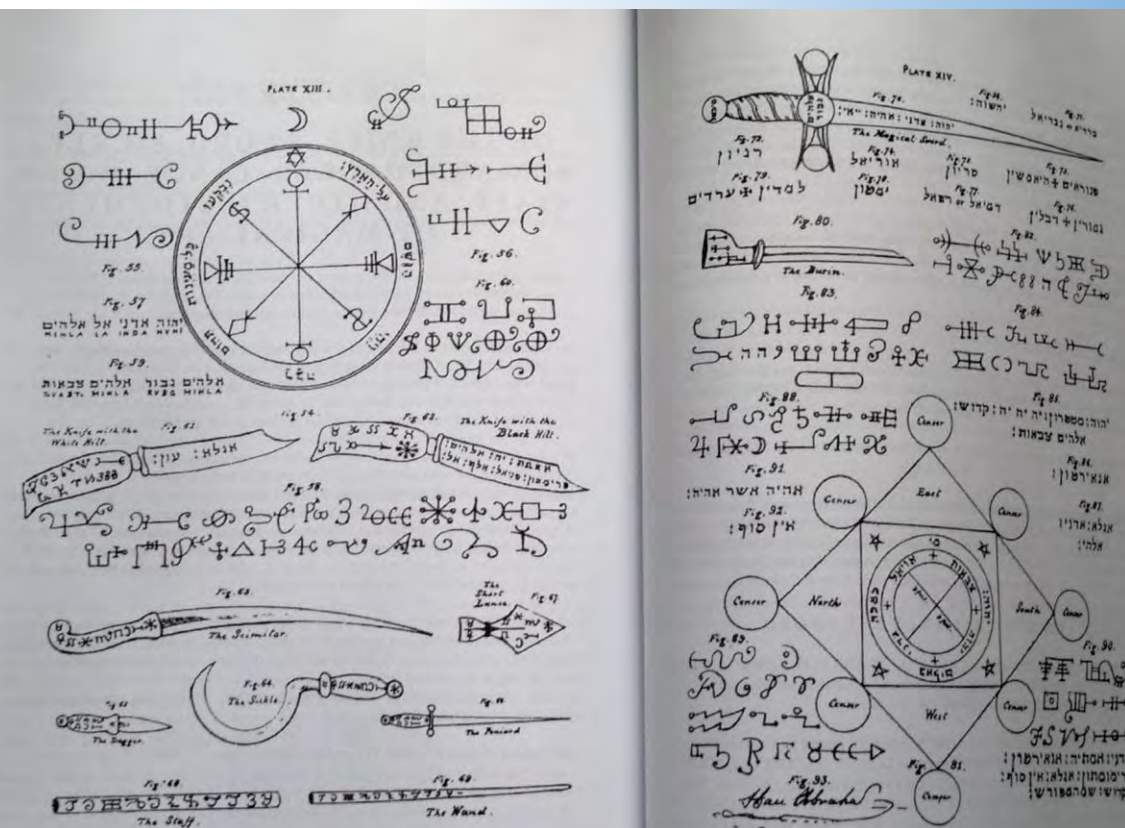


Moving back to London after the war brought Gardner into contact with the Atlantis Bookshop, whose owner, Michael Houghton, agreed to publish Gardner's novel, *High Magic's Aid*, in 1949, providing Gardner covered all the costs.



Above: front and back endpapers from *High Magic's Aid*.

Below: illustrations from the *Key of Solomon*.



Cecil Williamson and Gerald Gardner 1951 – 1954

A black and white photograph of a busy London street scene, likely Charing Cross. The street is lined with multi-story brick buildings. On the left, a shop named 'CHARRINGTON'S' is visible, with a sign for 'TOBY STOUT' above its entrance. Further down the street, a shop named 'Hamburger Products' is visible, with a sign for 'J. F. RICHARDS' below it. A vintage car is parked on the right side of the street. Several pedestrians are walking on the sidewalk. A sign for 'WARDOUR ST. W.1' is visible on the right side of the image. The overall atmosphere is that of a bustling urban environment from the mid-20th century.

March 29, 1946

Annual General

Members

H. A. Lake Barnett

E. D. Begg

M. M. Banks

G. B. Gardner

R. B. B. B. B. B.

R. Freeman

J. A. F. F. F.

W. H. Hildburgh

Convent C. C. C.

P. J. Heather

E. F. Cote Lake

A. G. G. G. G.

F/12+

1

Annual General meeting

21. Bedford Square, W.C. 1

March 20, 1946

Members

M. M. Banks

P. J. Heather

E. D. Begg

Sylvia Lloyd

H. A. Lake Barnett

E. F. Cote Lake

Edward R. Wilm

B. B. B. B. B. B.

W. H. Hildburgh

sh. B. B. B. B.

R. B. B. B. B.

Violet Deford

R. F. Freeman

C. G. G. G. G.

G. B. B. B. B.

F. L. N. N. N.

Visitors

L. M. M. M.

Lady Evelyn Dalton
Mrs. George Harcourt

Register for the Folklore Society for 1945 and 1946 showing GB Gardner as a member.

It seems unlikely that he was a member prior to the end of WWII, but the Folklore Society records for 1939 to 1945 are incomplete.

As Members of Council :

Miss B. M. Blackwood, M.A.,
B.Sc.*Mrs. H. A. Lake
Barnett, B.Sc.*Miss Estella Canziani, R.B.A.
Professor H. J. Fleure, M.A.,
D.Sc., F.R.S., F.S.A.**G. B. Gardner, M.A.**Allan Gomme
L. V. Grinsell
P. J. Heather, Ph.D.

As Hon. Treasurer—P. J. Heather, Ph.D.

As Hon. Secretary—Professor E. M. Wilson, M.A.,

As Hon. Librarian—F. M. C. Johnson

As Hon. Auditors—Allan Gomme and L. V. Grinsell

As Hon. Editor of "Folk-Lore"—The Rev. Professor E. O.
M.A., D.Litt., D.D., Ph.D., F.S.A.4. Presidential Address

The President delivered an address
The Scope of Folklore.
 A motion, proposed by the Pres.
 E. O. James and seconded by
 Hildburgh, thanking the President
 address and requesting his permission
 publication in Folk-Lore was carried
 acclamation.

Ray

As Vice-Presidents :

Mrs. M. Macleod Banks
 Professor R. M. Dawkins, M.A., D.Litt.
 Professor S. H. Hooke, M.A., B.D., F.S.A.
 Professor J. H. Hutton, C.I.E., M.A., D.Sc.
 The Rev. Professor E. O. James, M.A., D.Litt., D.D.,
 Ph.D., F.S.A.
 Professor Sir J. L. Myres, O.B.E., M.A., D.Litt., D.Sc.,
 F.B.A., F.S.A.
 L. F. Newman, M.A., F.S.A., F.R.I.C.
 Lord Raglan, F.S.A.
 Professor H. J. Rose, M.A., F.B.A.
 W. H. D. Rouse, M.A., Litt.D.

As Members of Council :

Miss B. M. Blackwood, M.A.,
B.Sc.

Miss Estella Canziani, R.B.A.

Allan Gomme

L. V. Grinsell

P. J. Heather, Ph.D.

W. L. Hildburgh, M.A., Ph.D.,
D.Litt., F.S.A.Miss E. F. Coote Lake
F. J. Norton, M.A.I. C. Peate, M.A., D.Sc.,
F.S.A.R. U. Sayce, M.A., M.Sc.
A. D. Waley

As Hon. Treasurer—P. J. Heather, Ph.D.

As Hon. Secretary—Professor E. M. Wilson, M.A., Ph.D.

As Hon. Librarian—F. M. C. Johnson

As Hon. Auditors—Allan Gomme and L. V. Grinsell

As Hon. Editor of "Folk-Lore"—The Rev. Professor E. O. James.
M.A., D.Litt., D.D., Ph.D., F.S.A.4. Harold Coote Lake Research Medal:

The medal, previously awarded to Mrs. M. M. Banks,
 was presented and she returned thanks briefly.

5. Presidential Address: The President delivered an
address on:

Far left: Gardner elected to
Council in 1947.

Left: Gardner elected
again in 1948.

FESTIVAL OF BRITAIN

1951



Trident points to
secret signs

WITCHCRAFT BACK IN THE MIDLANDS!

SUNDAY MERCURY, January 28, 1951. Page Seven

Spirits to be told of move

Mercury Staff Reporter

WITCHES and warlocks may soon be adding to the dollar drive—in Warwick. "Practising witches" have promised their help in establishing a witchcraft museum in or near the town. American tourists are expected to flock to see a 400-year-old "witches' den" full of strange instruments associated with the mystic art.

Man behind the project is the present "official custodian" of the hut, which is still used regularly by a "coven," or assembly, of witches.

He is 41-year-old Wardour Street film director, Mr. Cecil H. Williamson. "No—I'm no crank or showman—I've both feet on the ground."

With him yesterday in a wooded copse 20 miles from London, I inspected the timbered structure which by repute has always been handed down in succession to sorcerers or their associates.

The gate in the surrounding fence was locked.

"A precaution," explained Mr. Williamson. "Someone might intrude on these gatherings."

For alchemy

Stooping to enter the low, narrow doorway, I bumped my head on a stuffed alligator swinging from the ceiling.

"Oh, that? Used in alchemy," said my guide.

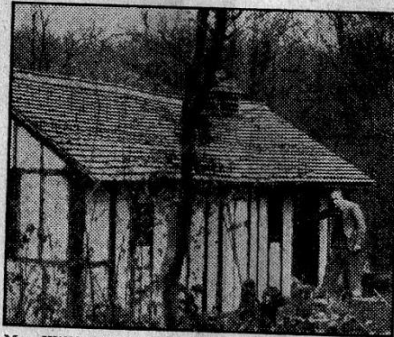
The room was covered, walls and floor, in cabalistic signs. In the centre, before the "altar," stood a witches' cauldron. There was no chimney—smoke goes through a hole in the roof.

In one corner was a four-poster bed.

"Always slept in by a witch until recent years," said Mr. Williamson.

He lifted the wooden mattress frame to disclose a hidden drawer "Where she kept her magic charms."

Against the wall stood a broomstick, a witch-mask and a "magic" wand hung on the wall.



Mr. Williamson about to enter the hut, which lies well back from the road, near St. Albans.



which has any such relics associated with magic."

Some of the instruments which he hopes to place in the collection have been loaned to him, he says, by present-day practising witches.

Why has he selected Warwickshire?

Because the county has a well-deserved reputation for witchcraft—and because here

Mr. Williamson, wearing a mask, "brewing up" at the witches' fire. These pictures are the first ever taken by a Press photographer inside the hut.—Sunday Mercury pictures.

the flame still flickers.

He will himself dismantle the hut, with the sole assistance of another connected with the occult.

"Of course, before we take it down to move it away, there will have to be a ceremony—more or less to invoke the spirits and tell them the rendezvous has moved to Warwickshire."

Mr. Williamson wants to hear from anyone who can give him first-hand information on witchcraft.

But I am even more anxious to contact any Warwickshire witches," he said.

RAILWAY TEA TO BE HER LIFE-STUDY

Mercury Staff Reporter

RAILWAY tea—strong, weak, and indifferent—is to be the life-study of a 31-year-old Midlands woman who has just been appointed first inspector of refreshment rooms and buffets for British Railways.

Laundry charges up—
"smalls" done at home

28 January 1951
Sunday Mercury

Photos of Cecil Williamson
and the Witch's Cottage at
Bricket Wood, January 1951.



Warwickshire County Council.

JOHN J. BROOKS
M.Mun.E., R.T.P.I.
CHARTERED MUNICIPAL ENGINEER
COUNTY PLANNING OFFICER
682
Telephone No. 58 (16 lines)
Extension.....11.

In Reply
Please Quote DE/22/1/112/JO.

County Planning Office,
NORTHGATE,
WARWICK.



18th January, 1951.

G.H. Williamson Esq.,
102, Central Parade,
Herne Bay,
Kent.

Dear Sir,

Proposed Folk Lore Museum in Warwickshire.

I have your letter of the 4th instant following your visit to this office.

I regret, however, that I am unable at present to suggest any definite sites where you could establish a proposal of this nature. I can only advise you to contact local agents who may be able to offer you suitable premises.

Yours faithfully,

J.J. Brooks
County Planning Officer.



Warwickshire County Council.

JOHN J. BROOKS
M.Mun.E., R.T.P.I.
CHARTERED MUNICIPAL ENGINEER
COUNTY PLANNING OFFICER
Telephone No. 58 (16 lines)
Extension.....3

In Reply
Please Quote JJB/PA

County Planning Office,
NORTHGATE,
WARWICK.



29th January, 1951.

C. H. Williamson, Esq.,
102, Central Parade,
Herne Bay,
Kent.

Dear Sir,

Establishment of a Folk Lore Museum in Warwickshire.

In reply to your letter of the 25th January, I think it would be as well if I mentioned this matter to the County Plans Sub-Committee who, no doubt, would have to consider an application if this were eventually forthcoming.

Before doing so, however, I should like to have some further information, particularly as the Assistant who interviewed you is away ill and likely to be so for another week or ten days.

The information I would like to put before the Committee is set out below:-

- Area of site required.
- Full details of the proposal.
- Is the proposal to be purely seasonal or a permanent arrangement?
- The type of buildings to be put on the site.
- The number of persons likely to be employed.

If you could let me have this information I could then obtain the Committee's reactions to the proposal.

The steps to be taken when it is decided to submit an application formally, are as follows:-

Cont'd....

The application should be submitted with the appropriate forms, to the District Council in whose area the proposal is situate. The appropriate forms, which set out details in regard to plans to be submitted, can be obtained from the offices of the Surveyor to the District Council.

Yours faithfully,

J.J. Brooks
County Planning Officer.



THE TOWER, WITCHES MILL, CASTLETOWN, ISLE OF MAN



VISIT THE
WITCHES MILL

Arbory Road, Castletown.
Telephone: Castletown 2248.

MUSEUM OF WITCHCRAFT. OLD WORLD
DANCING DAILY 10 to 11 p.m. CAFE.



THE WITCHES MILL, CASTLETOWN, I.O.M.



WITCHES ROOM



MAGICIANS ROOM

for you to see, & I think we can fake them
up. I've made the Unicorn's Crown,
& got some chain - will have to burnish
it! But your Wall & my thing will hold
it up. I couldn't arrange with a lawyer
to meet me at the White Hart. So can't
get the Crown & that yet, but I have
have a Bacon Stick of my own I'll
bury. I've made the picture for the
shrine. & I have written out a lot of
the Grimoire. Dr Dee's in Enochian Language
you know. How he evolved the Spirit is
what he said was the language of the angels
or what K. H. spoke.

I think it will look quite imposing
when its stuck up. Binding it is a
trouble but will fake up something.

It seems absolutely impossible to get a
Blank Book anywhere nowadays. My 528
Grimoire prohibited those long made, exceedingly
printed secret Books. So I got on old
paper, nice paper. But the Crown was
impossible. I'm awfully glad that they
are many at last.

Extract from a letter from Gardner to Williamson,
undated but the content confirms it is 1951.

"I've been to several more Theatrical People, but none of
them will make the sword, so I'm bringing up 2 swords for
you to see, & I think we can fake them up. I've made the
Unicorns Crown, & got some chain - will have to burnish
it... I've made the picture for the shrine, & I have written
out a lot of the grimoire. Dr Dee's in Enochian Language
you know ... I think it will look quite imposing when its
stuck up." (original spelling and punctuation).

HE PLANS A JAMBOREE FOR THE WITCHES OF THE WORLD

By BARRIE HARDING

ISLE OF MAN, Saturday.

FORTY SIX-YEAR-OLD Cecil Williamson, of Herne Bay Kent, has just arrived here to make arrangements for the year's most remarkable get-together.

His plan: An international gathering of witches, wizards, sorcerers and witch-doctors.

Are the islanders perturbed? Not particularly. After all, many Manxmen still put out pitchers of water every night to appease the fairies.

Witch Friends

MR. WILLIAMSON claims to be on speaking terms with at least a dozen witches in Britain. For twenty-five years he has studied the tricks of their trade.

Now he says, he has given up a four-figure income so that he can create a permanent Mecca for them all.

In the granary of an old windmill at Castle-town he is busy constructing a magic circle, complete with strange cabalistic signs. And he will have the magic wand which summons the spirits evil and friendly.

When it is complete, he will send out a clarion call to a coven of witches practising in the south of England.

Who are these witches? One is a woman school-teacher, another a Civil Servant.

"I know of one very attractive girl in the coven," says Mr Williamson.

This coven is concerned solely in calling on spirits who can bring good will.

But some witches lay too much stress on sex, according to Mr Williamson.

He says: "At certain times in the year they observe the fertility rituals, prancing and dancing in the nude. It is rather pathetic in a way, because some of them are quite old."

Does he believe in this mumbo-jumbo? He declares: "I know of one man who killed another, by sticking pins in his photograph—a matter of induced auto-suggestion."

Priest's Foot

MR. WILLIAMSON pays reverent respect to the mummified foot of an Egyptian priest who lived 3,000 years ago. It was used by sorcerers and he acquired it from a collector who gladly parted with it after a long string of bad luck.

Soon Mr. Williamson will be sending hundreds of letters of invitation to all parts of the world.

THE WITCHES WHO ACCEPT WILL BE ALLOWED TO PRACTISE THEIR RITUALS IN THE OLD WINDMILL WITHOUT HINDRANCE, GIVING ITS OWNER AN OPPORTUNITY OF FIRST-HAND RESEARCH.

Sunday Pictorial, 29 April 1951

This is the earliest known advertisement for the Witchcraft Museum on the Isle of Man.

At this point there is no mention of Gerald Gardner and Williamson says that some witches lay too much stress on sex, making reference to fertility rituals, with witches 'prancing and dancing in the nude.'

"Sunday Pictorial" 29-4-1951.

CALLING ALL COVENS

Castletown, I.O.M.

ANY practising witch who can rev up her broomstick in time should take off immediately for Sunday lunch in a weird old mill in this town. All witches are welcome.

They will be greeted by the resident witch, who is not a woman but a man—he says a wizard is a different cauldron of fish.

The master of magic is white-haired Dr. Gerald B. Gardner, 67, who will declare open the Folklore Centre of Superstition and Witchcraft. Then, under the same roof as a scarifying collection of bones, charms and evil eyes, lunch will be brewed.

The witch-doctor—a doctor of philosophy from Singapore and a doctor of literature from Toulouse—is a member of the Southern Coven of British Witches.

"Of course I'm a witch," he told me. "And I get great fun out of it."

13 WITCHES

A COVEN of witches normally consists of thirteen officers with a chief. They work at weekly meetings called Esbats but come together with all the other covens in the great quarterly meetings called Sabbats—the Witches' Sabbaths.

by
Allen Andrews

"Great fun," says Dr. Gardner, his eyes twinkling.

If the witches are feeling particularly festive they do not wait until "quarter day." There is generally some ritual anniversary that can be celebrated.

"Suppose you feel like a bit of a binge," said Dr. Gardner. "You just call up the others and have some fun."

They do not call each other by telepathy, or supernatural means.

"It might come off," said the doctor, "but it's much less trouble to send a telegram."

CAPERS

THE resident witch of Castletown once attended the ritual of the Winter Solstice, when the witches caper with torches round a fire on the year's shortest day, lamenting the loss of the sun. Gradually they break into a dance which grows more and more exciting as they implore the sun to return.

"A very pretty ceremony," he said. "Luckily, we found a place to do it. Because, of course, if you did it in a back garden in Tooting you'd have the police and the fire brigade on you in no time."

One of Dr. Gardner's regrets is that the tunes of the witches' dances have

not survived. "With the advance of modern science," he said ruefully, "I'm afraid we just tend to turn on a gramophone. Any music will do—Debussy's L'Après Midi d'un Faune is good."

In the Folklore Centre is a floodlit memorial to the nine million witches who were tortured and killed in Europe through the centuries, some of the torture instruments are in a case.

OOH! ER!

OTHER exhibits are the skeleton hand of a murderer, a collection of lucky charms, and a magic sign written on human skin.

A complete witches' temple has been reconstructed, with highly coloured sorcerers' designs around a magic circle—in the middle is an altar.

"We had trouble with that altar," said Mr. Cecil H. Williamson, the forty-six-year-old former film producer, who is running the Folklore Centre.

"It had to be the exact height of a witch's navel. I worked out that the average man's navel is 40in. off the ground."

The ground floor of the museum is a "Witch's Kitchen," where meals are served.

Here Mrs. Williamson will serve a special "Witch's Brew" at 3s. 6d. per potion.

"I THINK IT WILL HAVE A RUM BASIS," SHE SAID.

Telegram dated
11 Sept 1951

"To Williamson:
Confirming
afternoon boat
13th please
meet Gardner"

Charges to pay
.....s.d.
RECEIVED

POST OFFICE
TELEGRAM

No. 161
OFFICE STAMP
11 SP

At 6-25 p.m.
From 5-40 Halborn
By 5-40 Halborn

Prefix. Time handed in. Office of Origin and Service Instructions. Words

Williamson Lockport Cn 22
Castletown 20m
Confirming afternoon boat
13th please meet
Gardner

For free repetition of doubtful words telephone "TELEGRAMS ENQUIRY" or call, with this form at office of delivery. Other enquiries should be accompanied by this form, and, if possible the envelope B or C

Telegram dated
5 May 1951

"To George
Hotel: Can I have
room Tuesday
15th Gardner"

Charges to pay
.....s.d.
RECEIVED

POST OFFICE
TELEGRAM

No. 164
OFFICE STAMP
10.5

At 12.10
From RP 11/25 Halborn F
By 13

Prefix. Time handed in. Office of Origin and Service Instructions. Words

RP 11/25 Halborn F
Can I have room Tuesday 15th
Gardner

For free repetition of doubtful words telephone "TELEGRAMS ENQUIRY" or call, with this form at office of delivery. Other enquiries should be accompanied by this form, and, if possible the envelope B or C

29/5/51. 'Sunday Pictorial'

Witchcraft In Britain

by ALLEN ANDREWS



An express letter brings a copy of a curse, and a plea for advice... The black art is not dead. It has merely become hidden

CECIL WILLIAMSON, who directs the "Witches' Kitchen" at Castletown in the Isle of Man, is a witchcraft consultant. It is his full-time occupation. And when, for example, he receives an express letter imploring him to remove a spell set on the writer, he is sufficiently learned in the lore of witchcraft to compound a remedy.

A woman who wrote to him recently enclosed a malevolent scroll, written in magical characters, which she had received from a former woman friend. It implied that, because Williamson's correspondent was about to marry, an old friendship was broken. Miss accidents convinced her a spell was working and she demanded a counter-spell against the ill-wisher.

Williamson decided to make a doll, or poppet, representing the ill-wishing witch. The basis was clay from a river bed worked with water from a fall. He collected salt-water worms to represent the witch's vitals, pine gum for the essence of life, Hibber ivy berries growing in a churchyard for the eyes, and white quartz from a high cliff for the teeth and bones.

He burned the bodies of three black cats, a pregnant brown cat and a black cock on an altar to the sun. On another to the moon he burned another mixture, the most pleasant ingredient of which was herbs. The ashes were compounded into the poppet, which had life symbolically breathed into it and was passed through the elements of earth, air, fire and water.

He thrust glass splinters into the poppet, shrouded it, and dispatched it to his client. Her instructions were to bury it in a shallow unconsecrated grave near the witch's home, light a fire over it and intone a powerful, powerful counter-spell. Then the strength of the witch would be sipped and the original curse fail.

Why does Williamson go to so much trouble? His interest is partly professorial, partly

To defeat the curse in the letter, witchcraft expert Cecil Williamson passes a "poppet" image through fire

After seeing this article about Cecil Williamson and his museum on the Isle of Man in *Illustrated* magazine (27 September 1952), Doreen Valiente wrote to him to find out more about witchcraft.

Williamson passed her letter to Gerald Gardner and the rest, as they say, is history.

30 Aug 1953

My dear Cecil

Re yours of even date, I think you are confusing two things, when you speak of my demands, ~~huhhuh~~ I have not demanded anything,

The Southern Coven lent you certain things of great value to them, at my request, to try to help you, on the condition that the usual courtesy was observed, their representative came a long journey & was satisfied that this was being done. When this pact was broken without any explanation, they naturally protested, & as their continued protestations were ignored, they naturally took the only course open to them, you were quite agreeable at the time, saying you would put your own things in the case.

With regards to my collection, it was offered to you & accepted on the clear understanding that it was a collection, & would be treated with the customary courtesy, & would not be broken up, but shown as a whole, this was in Donna's presence in London. It was to show the public what Magic & witchcraft really is, & not as ignorant & interested people conspire to ~~show~~ ^{make people} think it is. You promised it would have a room to itself, with my portrait, called the Gardner room.

Yesterday you complained that the case was so empty, I suggested that you should either return the many things that were formerly in this case which were removed without my knowledge or consent, or else you should put the various magical books of mine which you have put into another case in to fill up this case & make a good show such as it formerly enjoyed. & you were not willing to do either. If you will only tell me clearly what you are aiming at, possibly I could help you. But it must be true, I will not

Letter from Gerald Gardner to Cecil Williamson
date 30 August 1953 p.1

With regards to my collection. it was offered to you & accepted on the clear understanding that it was a collection, & would be treated with the customary courtesy, & would not be broken up ... you promised it would have a room to itself, with my portrait, called the Gardner room.
(original spelling and punctuation.)

co-operate in making a Dennis Wheatly Montague Summers pack of lies.

As you long ago agreed upon, my collection is only of value if unbroken.
so I cannot sell any part. but if you wish to make up a chastity sword
as you said you did yesterday, I could get you an appropriate sword.

As you said you did not wish me to show people round the Museum
this year, I have kept away. If you wish my co-operation in future I
shall always be happy to assist you, but I must be allowed to understand
what you are intending to do, a little discussion beforehand would have
perhaps prevented this unhappy business with the Southern Coven, which
has taken away nearly all the Scientific value of your Museum.

As I said before, I will give you all the help I can, & I have
spread its fame far & wide, as a result, you have put me in a very Queer
position in the Scientific World.

I think the best thing is to meet & talk things over.

All the best

Gardner

30A

Letter from Gerald Gardner to Cecil Williamson
date 30 August 1953 p.2

As you said you did not wish me to show people
round the Museum this year, I have kept away...

... a little discussion beforehand would have
perhaps prevented this unhappy business with the
Southern Coven, which has taken away nearly all
the scientific value of your Museum ... you have
put me in a very Queer position in the Scientific
World. (Original spelling and punctuation.)

Gerald Gardner 1954 and beyond





Dr. Gerald Brosseau Gardner points to exhibits in the witchcraft museum at Witches' Mill, Castletown.

YES,

CASTLETOWN.

Wednesday Night.

IN my time I've met quite a few witches. Gold diggers and double-crossers and heart-breakers. Now I have talked with a self-professed witch—a MAN, at that.

It was a strange experience. I shall never forget his angular face, nor his piercing blue eyes. Nor the setting of the interview.

Manxland is rich in folklore about fairies and "little people" in the glens and witches. But no 20th century human being has dared to admit: "I am a witch." No one, except GERALD BROSSAU GARDNER. He says he is a Doctor of Philosophy, an honorary degree conferred on him by Singapore University 20 years ago.

The sun had gone down and it was a cold evening when I drove through the countryside, to halt at a four-roomed cottage in a narrow street here.

Wica

To the door came a six-footer. He looked like a benevolent grandee. He has a shock of white hair and a Van Dyck beard. He wore a green pull-over, open-neck shirt, check trousers and brown shoes. I said: "Dr. Gardner, I presume?" "Come in," he invited. His voice was gentle, his manner warm.

He sank back into an arm-chair and gripped its sides. I could not help noting his deep-set, piercing eyes. On the third finger of each hand was a heavy ring; a bronze bracelet rested on his wrist. I asked whether he had any other adornments. He showed his tattooed arms—a snake, an anchor, a dragon and a dagger.

Here we were, in his kitchen. Big logs lay unburned in the fireplace. Daggers, spears, and other weapons hung on the walls.

Straight away I began: "Are

you a witch?" He said: "Yes, I am." He quickly added his witch name was "S'cire," and explained that there are man and woman witches. Each is called a *wicca*.

All very interesting, I remarked, but I was not a greenhorn and I had come across countless characters. Would he object to searching questions: a provocative quiz? No, he didn't mind.

He said he was born in Scotland 70 years ago and came to live in the island four years ago. He had been a rubber and tea planter and had worked for the Johore Government as principal Customs officer.

Danced in circle

On with the quiz. For answer: "I was initiated as a witch in 1939. I went to a coven in England. Fifteen other witches were there. We danced in the circle which gives us power to cast spells."

How many covens in England? "Three," the witch replied. "We meet in houses or other places." Other forms of ritual? "I can't say anything about that." Are there any other witches in the Isle of Man? "I can't say anything about that, either. How do we communicate? By letter or telephone."

"How do we dress when we meet?" Now the witch laughed. A very human laugh, the kind you can hear from the holiday crowds parading hilariously along the prom. "Well," I persisted, "how do you dress?"

Written books

The witch tugged at his beard. The laughter subsided.

Into the kitchen came a pleasant-faced woman of medium height and graying hair. She is Mrs. DONALD THEA.

Dr. Gardner wrote this in his note-book.

I am a Witch & I believe that if I used my power to do anything evil I would have all the rest of the Witches down on me. G.B.Gardner
My Witch name is S'cire (or Scire)

I resumed my talk with the witch. I wanted to know whether I could become one. What were the qualifications? "Only that we'd have to like you," the witch said, eyeing me.

No, he could not cast a spell by himself. He'd need another witch with him. No, no witch

I AM A WITCH

Says the gentle-voiced old doctor of Castletown

written books on witchcraft, and showed a letter from a reputable London publisher who had accepted his work.

How many witches in England? For a moment or two the witch paused. "I really don't know," he said, "but I can

would dare to cast an evil spell. He or she would "have all the other witches down on him or her."

He went on: "Witchcraft is really long-range hypnotism. We only want to help people."

At which point I thought of another season.

Could the witch help anyone to win £75,000 on the pools?

His reply: "Oh no, I can't cast a spell to do a material act, though in the old days the witches in every community were able to provide good hunting and fertility of crops."

It was time to get to the lighter side of this business.

Are there any beautiful witches?—Man, from 16 onwards.

Do they have young men?—Yes.

Do they allow themselves to be kissed good-night?—Of course, if they like a man.

Can they cast a spell to make men adore them?—Yes.

Do they tell escorts they are witches?—Oh, dear, no!

might have been out with a real witch!

I stood up to leave but S'cire the witch invited me to an upstairs room. It had been part of a barn. In it were a table with two pedestals on which had been placed candlesticks. The witch agreed it was an improvised altar.

Gaily-coloured curtains covered a window set in 3ft-thick stone walls. "Do you operate here?" I pressed. Again the witch laughed. Again he replied: "I can't say anything about that."

Suddenly I saw a dagger protruding from his back pocket. He took it out slowly. He explained it was used for drawing a circle. He walked a few inches from the "altar." I followed. He showed a circle on the floor.

Witches' Mill

Just one more question to the witch. How do you live? He did not hesitate. "I get a pension from the Johore Government and have investments." He is also the owner of the Witches' Mill, to which holidaymakers go.

I bade the witch good-night. He smiled. He said he hoped I had enjoyed an interesting evening. I stepped out. The air had become nipper. The skies were dark.

I wasn't bothered nor bewildered. And certainly not bewitched!

TOMORROW

Arnold Field will be judging a bathing beauty contest today. And tomorrow he will be telling you about the glamour girls who come to Witches' Mill.

Published in the *Daily Despatch*
August 5th, 1954.

BALLALOWNA BRIDGE
(FAIRY BRIDGE)
CASTLETOWN 3.4



Witchcraft Today



by **GERALD B GARDNER**
Introduction by Dr. Margaret Murray

Published by
Rider & Co in 1954



Published by the
Aquarian Press in 1959



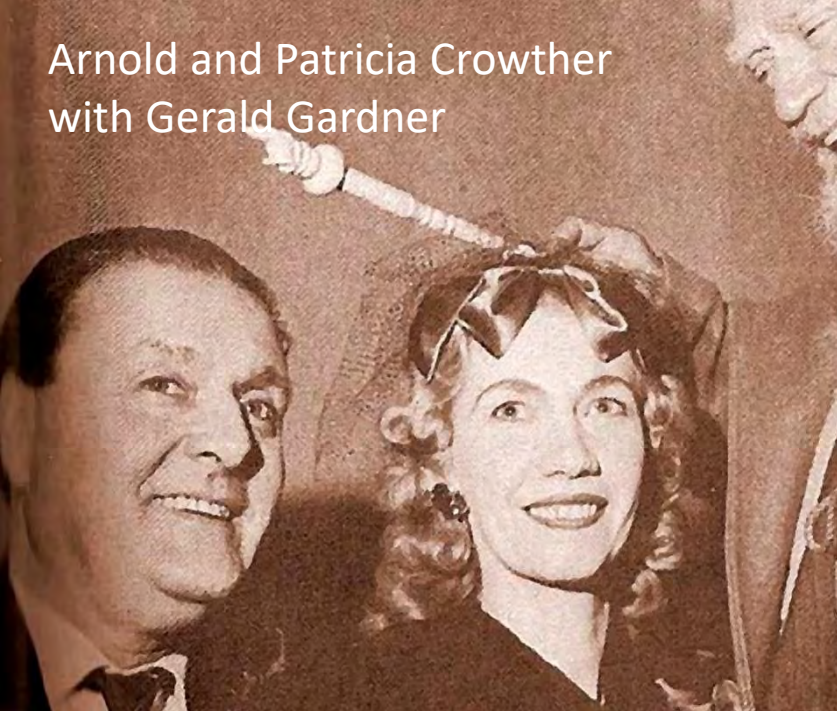
The Meaning of Witchcraft*





Doreen Valiente was initiated by Gerald Gardner in 1953. She proved to be enormously influential in the development and growth of Wicca, writing many of the traditional chants, invocations, and charges, used in the practice of the religion.

Arnold and Patricia Crowther
with Gerald Gardner



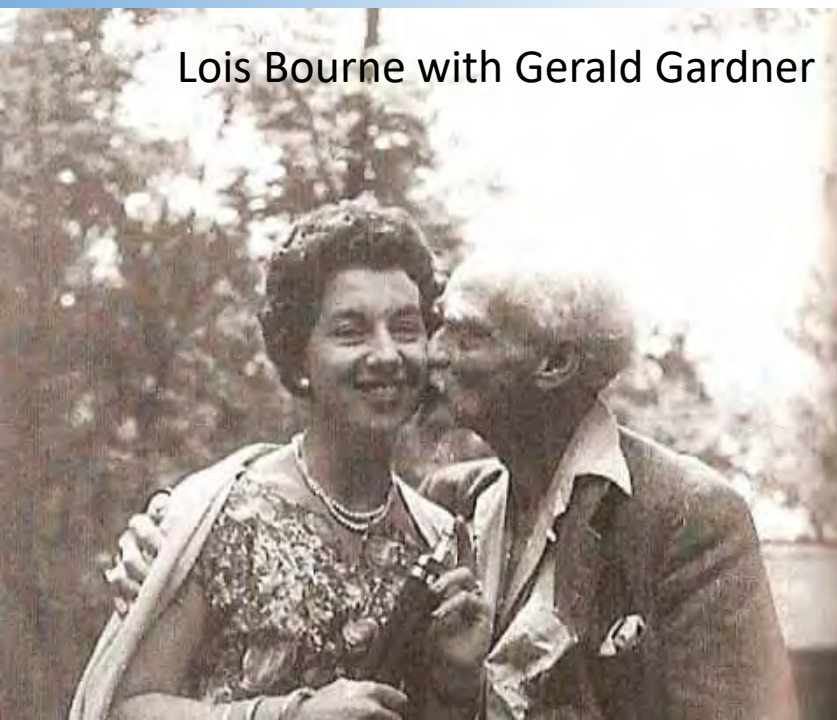
Eleanor Bone



Charles Clarke



Lois Bourne with Gerald Gardner



Jack Bracelin



Monique Wilson



S. H. H. H. H.

A COMMISSIONER FOR OATHS

Will dated 2 January 1964

THIS IS THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT of me GERALD BROSEAD GARDNER of "77" Malew Street in the Town of Castletown in the Isle of Man
I HEREBY REVOKE all Wills and testamentary dispositions heretofore made by me and DECLARE this only to be my Last Will and Testament

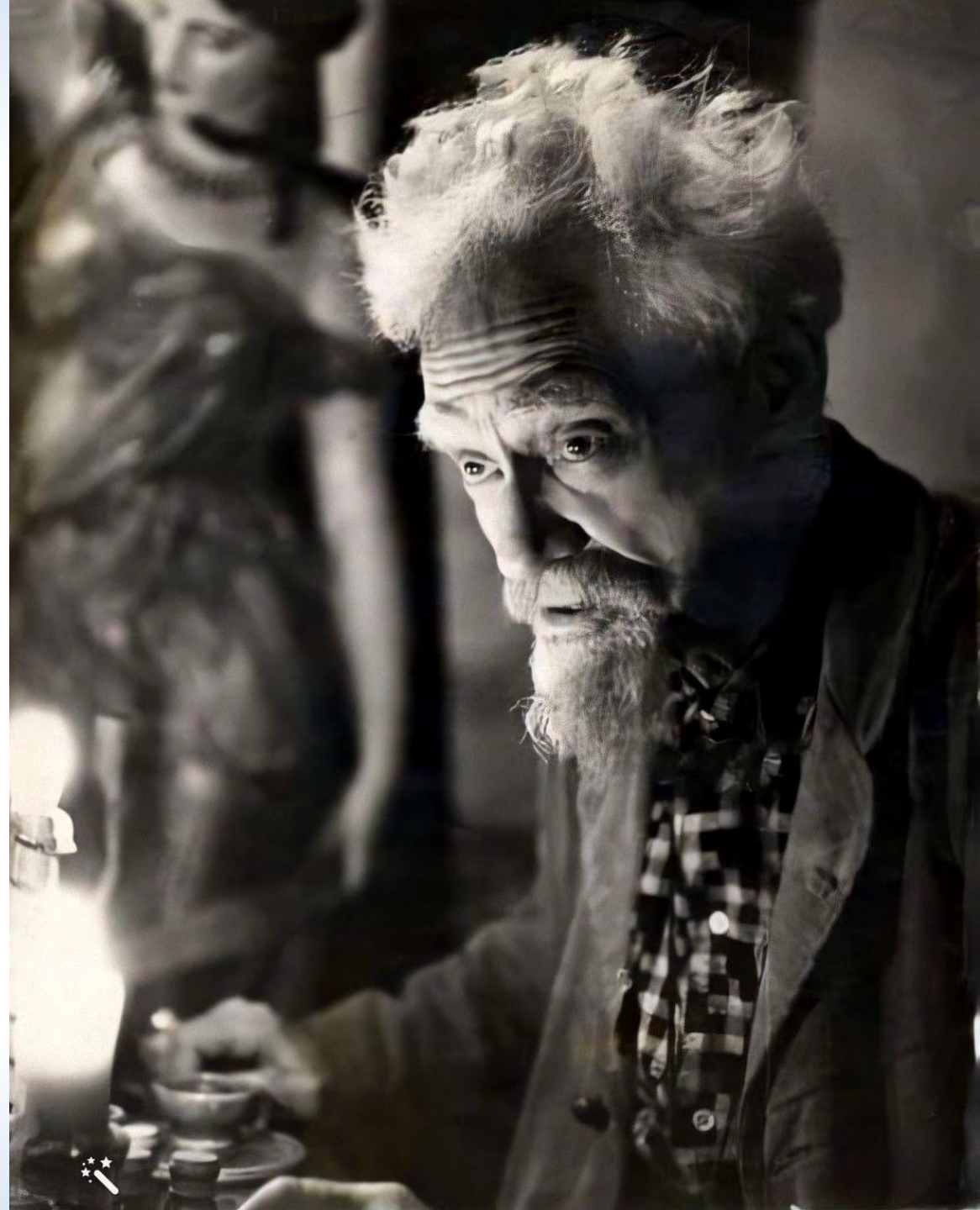
I have lived and had my usual place of residence in the Isle of Man for the past Twelve Years and I DECLARE that my domicile is in the Isle of Man and that I have no intention of changing such domicile

I APPOINT WESTMINSTER BANK EXECUTOR AND TRUSTEE COMPANY (ISLE OF MAN) LIMITED (hereinafter called "the Company") to be the Executor and Trustee of this my Will on the Company's Standard Terms and Conditions in force at the date hereof including those governing the Company's remuneration which shall be in accordance with its scale of fees in force at my death

I GIVE AND BEQUEATH the following legacies namely:-

- (1) The sum of ONE THOUSAND POUNDS (£1,000) to JACK BRACELIN of 18 Crossfield Road Hampstead London N.W. 3. and of the Five Acres Club Bricket Wood Hertfordshire absolutely
- (2) The sum of FIVE HUNDRED POUNDS (£500) to my sister-in-law Miss VICTORIA ROSEDALE of 12 Park Place Cambridge absolutely
- (3) The sum of ONE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED POUNDS (£1,500) to Mrs. E. WOODFORD GRIMES of Avenue Cottage 22 Avenue Road Highcliffe Hants absolutely
- (4) The sum of ONE THOUSAND POUNDS (£1,000) to Mrs. LOIS PEARSON of 46 Carlyle Avenue St. Albans Hertfordshire absolutely
- (5) The sum of TWO HUNDRED POUNDS (£200) to Mrs. DOREEN VALIENTE of 20 Lewes Crescent Brighton 1 absolutely
- (6) The sum of ONE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED POUNDS (£1,500) to MONIQUE MARIE MAURICETTE WILSON of 45 Nemmo Avenue Perth Scotland absolutely
- (7) The sum of THREE HUNDRED POUNDS (£300) to my housekeeper MRS. A. JONES of 145 Malew Street in the Town of Castletown Isle of Man if she is in my service at the date of my death absolutely
- (8) The sum of THREE THOUSAND POUNDS (£3,000) to Mrs. ARNOLD CROWTHER of Dover Villas 397 City Road Sheffield 2 absolutely
- (9) My shares and interest in the undertaking known as Ancient Crafts Limited which designation shall include any interest I have either in person or as a shareholder in the foregoing Company for

Commissioner for Oaths





THEIR LITTLE GIRL IN PERIL

NEWS OF THE WORLD, February 9, 1969 3

Her parents let her witness rites like these



YVETTE WILSON was initiated into witchcraft rites when she was only four years old. Now, aged 11, she witnesses rituals like those above—with the knowledge of her parents, Mr and Mrs Loic Wilson, right

When our investigators confronted Mr Bradley with their true identity, he said: "I have nothing to worry about in the (witchcraft) bit of healing work to try and help them."

"When I told a relative about it he said, 'I don't mind what you do as long as my own, not married, so obviously if I could not say my high priest would be my husband'."

"I met and talked and talked to three different men, none of whom I thought could have formed a decent working partnership."

well-known witch who had just had a nervous breakdown. "I asked them what they had had in the way of instruction, and they looked at me blankly and said 'What do

whole long word of the language, all in Latin. 'I went tearing down the British Museum looking in their library found it was a chant in black magic."

has been running the Snake-
hell Hydra for six years, told
us: "A lot of people on the
Island think we are witches,
but we always deny it."

own coven
"It is not good for business
to let too many people
know."

The Bradleys said they had
their own coven, with five
members. Clearly, they
coveted one member of the
Wilson's coven—a retired
Army officer, whose witch
came is Henry.

They said they had a friend
who was an opera singer at
Covent Garden, who was "a
very good witch and a nice
person" and lived in London.

"Her (witch) name is
Francesca," said Mrs Bradley.
"If you like we will intro-
duce you to her so that you
can become a member of her
coven."

She put through a phone
call to Francesca and after
about five minutes' conversa-
tion called me to the phone
to speak to her.

Francesca, we discovered
later, is attractive, 38-year-
old brunette Celia Penny,
who shares a flat in Poland
Street, London, W1, with two
toads and two cats.

The Bradleys also intro-
duced me to an 18-year-old
girl who lives in a flat on
the front at Port Erin and
had been initiated by the
Wilson's.

Later the Wilsons invited
a colleague and me back to
their home and Mrs Wilson

News of the World
9 February 1969

"THEIR LITTLE GIRL IN PERIL

YVETTE WILSON was initiated into witchcraft rites when she was only four years old. Now, aged 11, she witnesses rituals like those above – with the knowledge of her parents, Mr and Mrs Loic Wilson."

AMERICA

THE WITCHES collection of witchcraft memorabilia built up by the late Dr. Gerald Brosean 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.

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

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 organisation 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

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 Brosean Gardner, who died in 1964 at the age of 60, spent a lifetime in the study of folklore and anthropology and was internationally known for his writings on witchcraft and his collection of curios, 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 legends, 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

things were the instructions of ritual and ceremonial magic, magical rings and lucky charms, ranging from a crudely painted 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 rolls of witch-hunting times in Europe, including two 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,

(Continued on back page)

The Gardner collection

(Continued from page 1)
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.

COLEBOURN



HERE you can try out the most up-to-date and comprehensive HI-FI/Stereo systems in leisurely spacious surroundings on Colebourn's first floor at Victoria Street. Our expert on these matters—Mr. DOUG. JOHNSON—is there to advise you. Among the 'systems' are, of course, the

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

FOREIGN WORKERS MUST STILL HAVE WORK

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

Thank you for joining me on this fascinating journey.

Q&A

1960s Wiccan Coven meeting taking place inside the Witch's Cottage in Bricket Wood, which Gardner acquired in 1945.

