



Examples of North American beadwork and leather from Algeria, all part of Dr Bargrave's collection of curios.

# Souvenir hunter drew the line at baby's body

A UNIQUE collection of souvenirs and coins accumulated by a 17th Century traveller has gone on show to the public for the first time in the Cathedral Crypt.

The collection was made by Dr John Bargrave, who was appointed a canon in 1622 and whose uncle, Isaac Bargrave, was Dean of Canterbury. Until now, it has lain hidden in the Cathedral library, stored in three cabinets. But the Canterbury festival, with its Italian theme, has provided an ideal opportunity for its public display.

Many of the tiny and very fragile exhibits are of Italian origin and were collected by Dr Bargrave during four Grand Tours he made while acting as tutor to young noblemen. The result is a private museum which has remained almost intact since his death in 1680. It was presented to the Cathedral by his widow five years later.

by Rosemary Braithwaite

The collection provides a dating reference against which other items of the period can be set and is one of the earliest private collections of a museum character in existence.

The exhibition, mounted by Cathedral archivist Miss Anne Oakley, includes items of a macabre nature as well as more conventional curios.

On show is the shrunken finger of a Frenchman presented to Dr Bargrave on a trip to France. On this tour, he visited Franciscan vaults to see the well-preserved corpses, but declined the offer of a baby's body.

### Ransom

He also collected Italian playing cards, glass phials, a bronze phallic pendant and a bronze knuckle bone, a small bust of the Emperor Nero and many bronze figurines.

The collection also includes examples of American Indian ceremonial dress, presented to him by a grateful merchant.

The gift came after Dr Bargrave visited Algiers in 1622 as a semi-official envoy sent by the Church to ransom captured English seamen and merchants.

Dr Bargrave's connections with Canterbury extend to his family who were prosperous farmers or yeomen. His father was a mercenary who married a London heiress and built in 1615, a house called Bifrons, at Patricbourne.

The collector himself was educated at the King's School and went on to become a Fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge.

In 1643, his High Church opinions lost him his fellowship and in the last year of the Civil War, in 1646, he started his new career as travelling tutor.

The exhibition runs

until the end of October and is open on weekdays from 10.30-12.30 and from 2.30pm-4.30pm.

A lecture on the life and times of Dr Bargrave will be given by Canon Derek Ingram Hill on October 2, at 6.30pm in the Crypt.

Also on show in the Crypt are two silver gilt candlesticks which are new additions to the collection of Cathedral plate.

The candlesticks were presented to Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher and his wife as a golden wedding present from the Queen in 1967. Lady Rosamund Fisher has the Queen's permission to present them to the C



Dean Isaac Bargrave, uncle of Dr John Bargrave, whose tomb rests in the Dean's Chapel. His portrait, painted on copper, has recently been cleaned.