

The Oxford Times drops in on THE GHOST OF BAMPTON AND THEN THE STORY OF THE GREAT SHIRT RACE

THE last thing we expected to bring back from Bampton was a ghost story — which showed, of course, that we didn't know much about the village's history.

The Rev. J. A. Giles, who wrote an account of the place more than a century ago, said: "Bampton is not without its ghost stories." And he mentioned the Haunted House to the north of the church which was plagued by a prowling spirit for years until someone thought of putting a new roof on—"for ghosts like to have a decent house over their heads, as much as Christians." There

was also Cow Leas Corner, at the Clanfield-Faringdon cross-roads, where suicides were buried: their ghosts used to meet there for a chat.

But Mr. Giles didn't seem to have heard of our ghost. It may have moved into the Talbot Hotel after his time. More of that later.

'Tree Town'

Etymologists will tell you that the name Bampton is probably derived from Beamtown, meaning "Tree Town." Its old name was Bampton-in-the-Bush. We didn't see too many trees; but despite its brisk, modern atmosphere (the two antique shops thrive not on local trade but on attracting

the eye of tourists passing through) Bampton is "still an agricultural village."

Mr. Harry Pocock, chairman of the Parish Council, admitted that "But the majority of the labour in Bampton is employed outside, in Witney and Oxford," he said. "The methods of agriculture have altered so that they don't need so many men. Whereas years ago we used to employ eight men, we only employ two today. So the six others have got to find work outside. There are two building firms in Bampton which employ quite a few men, but no other industry."

Mr. Percy Sheppard, a gas works stoker for 40 years, now a smallholder, told us the same story. "There is only one flock of sheep in Bampton now," he said. "There used to be seven flocks."

Mr. Sheppard showed us a book which put the population at 1,346 in 1891. Miss Marjorie Pollard, the journalist and broadcaster who represents Bampton on Witney R.D.C. and the County Council, gave us the latest official census figure: 1,125. "I always

say 1,500 now. We have 104 council houses here, most of them built in the last six or seven years."

During working hours you will see a great deal of through traffic in Bampton ("We are on the main road to the coast and the traffic is particularly heavy at the weekends," one of the antique dealers told us), but not many local people in the streets. The workers are out of the village—as well hidden from the passer-by as much of Bampton's history.

All that remains of the Earl of Pembroke's 14th-century castle is a gatehouse, now part of Ham Court, not far from St. Mary's Church, which dates mainly from the late 13th century and is, according to the guide books, "one of the finest in the county."

At one time, the church had had his own vicarage and their homes (with the Deanery where Miss Pollard now lives) formed a cloister around the church. Not far away is the Grammar School (now a hall used for meetings by many local organisations) founded in 1635 in the will of Robert Vesey for boys in the parish.

The three-vicar period is now century-old history. But Bampton still has something to make it unique in ecclesiastical annals. Over The Eagle public house is a long room with a confessionnal screen at the rear, seats for

about 30 people and an altar. For the past 26 years that room above licensed premises has been Bampton's Roman Catholic Church.

"We have mass here at 8 a.m. on Sundays and Holy Days," said the licensee, Mrs. Lucy Martin. "The priest comes from Carterton. We get this place full, from 24 to 30 people."

Shirt Race

Mrs. Martin and her late husband were asked to make the room available by a priest who wanted to serve the Roman Catholics in Bampton.

One piece of history is brought out into the open—like Bampton's famous morris dancers—at Whitsun, when Bampton holds its Great Shirt Race. A 18th-century custom revived in 1952, the race gets its name from the fact that entrants must all wear long garments.

We were not able to meet Mr. John Quick, the man who revived the custom to raise money for Bampton's old-age pensioners' Christmas fund. But we met Mr. Paul Bovington, the local fishmonger, who is also chairman of the society for the Preservation of Ancient Junketing which organises the annual event.

"The object of the society is purely and simply to raise funds for the old-age pensioners," said Mr. Bovington. "We are able to raise about £140 to £150 a year and everybody has a lot of fun."

"We run the Shirt Race, for which entrants have to go from pub to pub drinking half-a-pint of beer. Two man teams have a conveyance—a pram or something like that—to run the course. The winners get a bowl of ale plus an inscribed tankard."

Mr. Bovington introduced us to a St. Bernard called Crackers—"nearly four and the property of the society"—who carries an S.P.A.J. collecting box where some of his breed tote brandy.

Veteran Saddler

The Shirt Race reminded us of Bampton's pubs—there are 10 of them. But before we visited one, we went to investigate a sign in the market square which advertised: "Mr. A. Chandler—saddler."

Mr. Chandler is 83, and has worked in his present premises for 50 years. He said of his work: "It is mostly riding stuff. There is not much here, but I do a lot for London and places all over the country."

He can't get the work done, he said. They have some broken harness and say: 'Where can I get this done?' and somebody says, 'There's a saddler in Bampton.'

As he talked, Mr. Chandler worked with his "clamps," a pair of giant wooden tweezers (operated by the knees) for holding the leather in place. "This is the only machine I have got," he said. "The Saddlers' Federation have a training college. But what is the good of a few months' training? Mine was seven years. I used to work for 900

horses. One farmer had 24. There was some work about. Now they have all gone. But I find enough to do one way or another."

Mr. Chandler is not the only leather-worker in Bampton. Not far away works Mr. P. O. Money: "I am a shoemaker. My work isn't confined to repairing."

Mr. Money does not make the upper part of shoes: "I do the hard work. The main work is now repairs. There wouldn't be a living in shoe making today."

Ghostly Tread

And so to the 12th-century Talbot Hotel and the ghost. The landlord, Mr. Roderick Blaine, had been there only eight weeks. Nobody told him there was a ghost in the place when he came. Then one night he and his wife were alone in the bar downstairs and they heard a man's heavy tread in the corridor above their heads. There was no-one up there.

He was telling a customer all this when we went in. The customer had heard stories about it from the previous landlord and his wife.

Mr. Blaine said that a recent guest at the hotel, not knowing about the spirit, had been so disturbed by the walking noises outside his bedroom that he had got out of bed to give the prowler a piece of his mind. There was no prowler.

Mr. Blaine is no stranger to ghosts. He had one in his last home, a flat in London. That one could be seen—in the form of a black cat. And it could be explained—a cat had been locked in a room of the flat years before and had died struggling to escape.

Being a newcomer, Mr. Blaine could not tell us the history of the Talbot ghost. Nor could anyone we met in Bampton, though a few had heard of it. Some say it spends its days in the unused room under the roof which you reach through a tiny door in one of the hotel bedrooms.

It occurred to us that it might be that heavy-treading ghost from the Haunted House, which changed its digs years ago. If so, the way to exorcise it is clear. Mr. Blaine must have a change of roof.

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[Next week The Oxford Times drops in on GARSINGTON.]



Mr. Percy Sheppard, a Bampton 'smallholder, who remembers when there were seven flocks of sheep in the village. Now there is one.



Mr. A. Chandler, the 83-year-old saddler, who still works in his shop in Bampton's market square. Repair work is sent to him from all over the country.

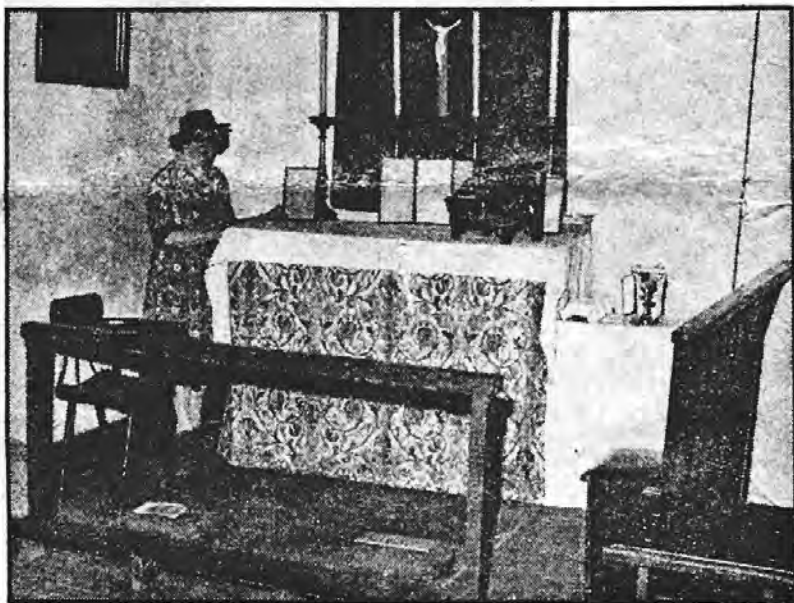


St. Mary's Church, "one of the finest in the county," which dates mainly from about 1270.



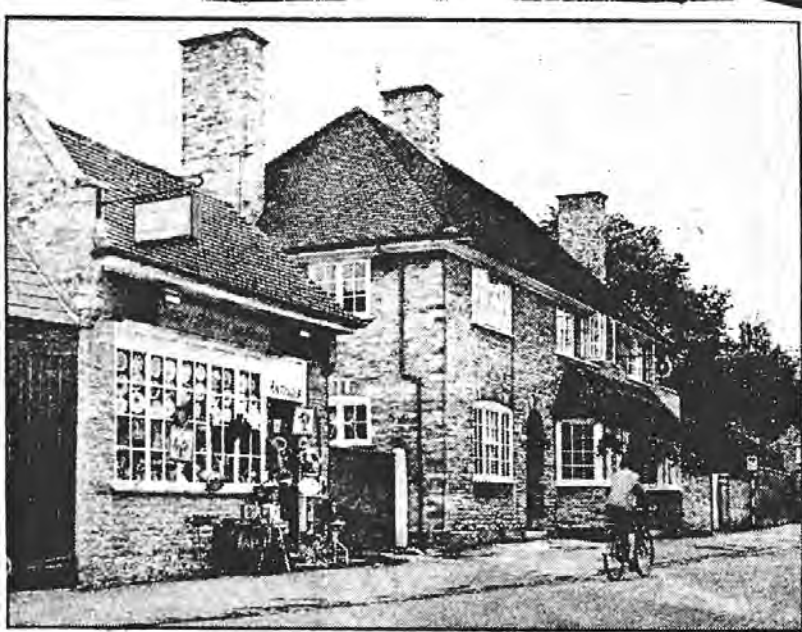
Mr. and Mrs. Blaine together in the bar where they first heard the ghost walking one night.

8.7.60



8-7-60

(Above) Mr. Paul Borington, chairman of the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Junketing, and Crackers, one of the society's collectors for old-age pensioners. (Below) The upstairs room at The Eagle public house which the licensee, Mrs. Lucy Martin, keeps free for use as Bampton's Roman Catholic Church.



One of Bampton's two antique shops, with its display aimed to catch the eye of tourists passing through.

8.7.60

WHEN BAMPTON MADE A FOOL OF ITSELF

—By J. L. H. Owens

There happens at some time or other in the history of every town and village an incident over which the inhabitants wish to draw a veil and forget as quickly as possible. So it was with Bampton in March 1900.

Of all the events of the South African War none fired the popular imagination to the same extent as Baden Powell's defence of the little town of Mafeking on the western border of the Transvaal. It is difficult to understand why. Its fate would have had little influence on the ultimate outcome of the war; there were other equally heroic incidents, while the sieges of Ladysmith and Kimberley were of far greater strategic significance. Yet it was the defence of Mafeking which found its way into the hearts of the British public.

Very early in the morning of the third Saturday in March a Bampton resident received a telegram from his son in London containing the news that Mafeking had been relieved. Bampton's response was immediate and spontaneous. Flags and bunting appeared as if by the wave of a magic wand, and the morning being fine, almost everybody poured into the streets. By mutual consent master and man declared a holiday, and the times being enlightened, the pubs opened immediately the news was made public.

It is unnecessary to say that business was brisk. Indeed, it would hardly be a venture into the realms of hyperbole to claim that in no time in history were so many toasts drunk by so few people in so short a space of time as were drunk to the gallant Baden Powell on that March morning in Bampton. And if the effects soon became apparent, well, it was a poor heart that never rejoiced. When Charley Robbins* slid under the table in the bar of the Bell common decency required that he should be carried into the backyard, and allowed to sleep things off. And if, before mid-morning Seth Smith* had to be half-dragged, half-supported home by his loving wife and devoted sister-in-law, the obvious thing to do was to look the other way. Good humoured tolerance reigned supreme in Bampton that day.

A LAW UNTO ITSELF

All the morning through a scratch band paraded the streets. Some seventy or eighty boys and young fellows furnished themselves with

musical(?) instruments ranging from tin whistles to old kettles and saucepan covers. With these they proceeded to delight the more musically inclined with what was understood to be, and certainly intended to be a selection of patriotic airs.

At the head of the procession was carried an effigy of Mrs. Kruger. One may feel a little mild curiosity as to why the wife of the Boer leader should have been singled out for such distinction. By all accounts she was a worthy old soul, more interested in her dairy cows and milk round than in politics. It would be more easily understood had it been the President himself, for even his nearest associates hardly found his personality an endearing one. But Bampton decreed that the effigy should be of Mrs. Kruger, and Bampton was ever a law unto itself.

It was a pity that one element of the little town bid fair to mar the almost universal air of jubilation. Most of the residents of High Street held themselves aloof from the celebrations, and thereby gave much offence to the rest of the townsfolk. Even the Vicar, the Rev W. K. Hampshire, was heard to declare that their attitude was 'a singularly regrettable one'. But when he taxed Dr. Oates with a distressing lack of patriotic feeling, the doctor bluntly replied that he had lived too long in Bampton to accept anything he heard in the place without a pinch of salt. When the news was confirmed he would celebrate with the rest of them.

THE GROCER — NEWSMAN

In 1900 there was no radio to provide up to the minute information about the course of the war; the telephone had not yet reached Bampton, and those few people who subscribed to daily newspapers did not receive their copies until late in the day. For the latest intelligence of the war the people of Bampton depended on the enterprise of Mr. Samuel Dutton, grocer of Bridge Street. Very early in the war Mr. Dutton, with a commendable public spiritedness, and, perhaps, no little business acumen, arranged with a London correspondent to be posted with the latest news from the southern front. Telegrams were displayed in the shop, and it soon became quite the thing in Bampton to 'run along to Dutton's to see how the war was doing.'

However, on this day no telegram arrived from the London correspondent, and as the morning passed the grocer's face grew progressively longer. What was particularly aggravating for Mr. Dutton was that some waggish fellows would persist in dropping into the shop to enquire after the latest war news. By lunch-time Mr. Dutton's patience had worn thin. A sternly-worded telegram was despatched to London asking for an explanation of the breakdown in the news service.

It was about mid-afternoon that Mr. Dutton was observed to leave the fastness of his shop to mingle with the crowds which still thronged the streets. Those who were still in a fit state to notice anything observed that the grocer no longer looked particularly crestfallen, but that his countenance wore an expression which could only be described as smug. Presently an uncomfortable rumour began to spread: a whisper to the effect that Bampton was being a little premature in its rejoicings began to grow louder and louder. Finally the awful news broke with devastating effect upon the place. Mafeking had NOT been relieved. A telegram with this authentic intelligence was posted in Dutton's window for all to see.

It would be kinder to draw a veil over the remainder of the afternoon. By tea-time the streets of Bampton were an oddly-deserted look. Most of the folk had slunk away to brood in the privacy of their homes. Alone, the musicians may, no secret of the change they felt. In a solemn requiem procession the youngsters marched down to Mill Bridge, and cast their instruments into the turbulent little stream below. Mrs. Kruger, who had been destined for a glorious funeral pyre later that evening, was likewise consigned to the waters, and presently the effigy was slipping quietly and comfortably through the water meadows on its way down to the Thames.

There were recriminations; there were bound to be. It was generally accepted that the original telegram was a hoax, and the gentleman, who received it was roundly taken to task in some quarters for neglecting to test its validity. In actual fact the telegram was sent in perfectly good faith. The sender was attending a performance at a London theatre, and while waiting for he curtain to rise, caught a snatch of conversation the purport of which was that Mafeking had been relieved. With an impetuosity pardonable in the circumstances, The young fellow left the theatre, and made a dash for the nearest post-office. There he despatched the offending telegram which was delivered to his father in Bampton early next morning.

It took a little time for Bampton to live down the unfortunate events of that day. For some weeks people in from outlying villages to do their shopping did not neglect to enquire solemnly if Mafeking had been relieved yet. Bit gradually the joke wore itself out, and Bampton was allowed to forget the day on which it made a fool of itself.

* Real names suppressed.

THE SAGA OF THE BAMPTON MORRIS

Sir, — I, for one, am deeply disturbed by the one-sided account of the Bampton Morris which appeared in the "Gazette" of November 25. By completely ignoring the team led by Mr Arnold Woodley, this did a great disservice to local Morris dancing.

The Morris can be a touchy subject in this town and for years, with a few other people, I have done my best to try to get the two opposing "sides" to co-exist harmoniously. On more than one occasion these efforts have been severely hampered by complete outsiders. Just lately it has also become noticeable that there appears to exist, in the Shergold team, an element whose main aim seems to be the "commercialisation" of the Bampton Morris tradition.

I have known Mr Francis Shergold for about twelve years and I still think his integrity is beyond question; but from certain remarks he has allegedly made in public recently, I am afraid even his good judgement is becoming affected. But even he had the decency to mention the existence of a second team.

From what I have been told of the matter — and I am more than willing to be corrected — there seems little doubt that the team led by Arnold Woodley must be considered closer to the genuine Bampton tradition, if only for the simple reason that both Mr Woodley and his Fool, Albert Townsend, are products of the old Traditional team, and have close family connections with the Morris; whereas Francis Shergold and his brother Roy are survivors of the break-away team of 1925 (which they joined about 1937), and are not even Bamptonians.

The "confusion," which Mr Shergold mentions so lightly, has been going on since Jinky Wells finally and irrevocably fell out with the Traditional team on Whit-Saturday 1925. There had been previous rows because of his "selling the Morris" to Cecil Sharo; over an incident at the Reading Regatta just before the 1914/18 war; over his teaching of the Bampton dances to a team at Alves-cot.

He incensed the team to such a pitch on one occasion at Clanfield that they smashed his fiddle. The last straw was when he tried to interfere with the arrangements which had been made for Whit Monday 1925. Luckily the ubiquitous Sam Bennett from Ilmington happened to be staying with friends in the village, and he fiddled for the team on the Monday. From 1926 onwards Bertie Clark, the Carterton postman, played for them, assisted at times by Sam.

It must be understood that Wells had a long family connection with the Morris stretching back over two centuries, and this gave him a sense of proprietorship which, unfortunately, the team did not acknowledge. He was never, in fact, the accepted leader of the team, more of a self-appointed one.

After his forced disassociation with the Traditional team, Jinky got together a team of teenagers which duly appeared on

Whit Monday, 1926. For some reason which remains a complete mystery, he taught this team quite different steps from those used by the old team. By 1928, incidentally, three of these youngsters had deserted to the Traditional team — there is photographic evidence of this.

The last war put a temporary stop to the rivalry, and in 1946 a team was formed which consisted of elements of both previous teams, with Wells fiddling.

By this time his eyesight was failing, the dancers of the different "schools" apparently did the dances the way they had been taught regardless of each other, and many strange things crept into the style of dancing, which probably went unchecked because Jinky could not see them.

Dancers tended to "pick things up" instead of being taught the dances properly. Surrounded by so many bad examples, it is hardly surprising that even Arnold Woodley, taught by the old team, now uses (and teaches) the "single steps" apparently invented by Wells.

Only Albert Townsend still habitually uses the old style "double step," although other dancers in both teams — including the Shergolds themselves — make use of the "double step" at times. What Arnold Woodley has preserved is the old-style unfussy handchief movements of the traditional team.

Mr Shergold's claim that he and his brother were primarily responsible for the Wells' team's continuation after Jinky's retirement will not, unfortunately, bear investigation. If Arnold and Frank Woodley had not sought out Bertie Clark and persuaded him to play again (which he did until his death in 1958), the team would have collapsed, not only for want of a musician, but from sheer lack of enthusiasm.

Even when Clark cycled over to Bampton, the team refused to turn up for practice. At one time Francis Shergold even gave it up altogether, but Woodley persuaded him to return. Eventually Arnold formed a team of his own.

This team — despite blatant poachings — has now blossomed into a senior and a junior team, with reserves, all very accomplished and with a fine sense of the tradition. They can even boast of a deputy-Fool and what threatens to be a glut of musicians. They are not — thank God! — at all "folky"!

FRANK PURSLOW
Secretary / Treasurer,
Bampton Traditional
Morris Dancers

CHEMISTS' ROTA

The chemist on duty in Witney after normal closing hours this week is Boots Ltd., 2 High Street.

Dispensing services will be available from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. weekdays, except Saturday, and from 12 noon to 1 p.m. on Sunday.

Week beginning Monday, December 13: Neave & Lea, 49 Market Square.

Soldiers in Ulster

Sir, — During recent weeks many members of the general public and business organisations have enquired how they might pay tribute to the British Soldier for what he is doing in Northern Ireland in the performance of his duty there under the most trying conditions — more difficult perhaps than outright hostilities, and none the less hazardous to his life. Their first thoughts, naturally, are for the families of soldiers who have been killed or severely injured.

May I, through the courtesy of your columns, inform them of the Army Benevolent Fund? This is the Army's central charity which works in partnership with regimental charitable funds and through them gives aid to both soldiers and ex-soldiers who are in need, and to their wives and families. Amongst those being helped,

still, are veterans who fought at the turn of the century in South Africa, the ex-soldiers of the 1914-1918 war, and those who fought in World War II and subsequent campaigns and, now, the widows and children of the men killed in Northern Ireland.

To those who would like to help, may I warmly commend the Army Benevolent Fund for their support. It has already received welcome financial assistance from the Northern Ireland Government, the Royal Ulster Constabulary and other organisations in Ulster. I feel confident that many others will welcome this opportunity of showing their appreciation for what the British Soldier has done, and is still doing, for us all.

Maj.-Gen. D. A. B. CLARKE
Regional Organiser,
Army Benevolent Fund.

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Smiths men to get extra redundancy pay

9.12.71

Workers at the Witney factory of Smiths Industries who take redundancy will get 50 per cent more cash than the company is obliged to pay.

A union official explained: "This means that if an employee is entitled to £500 under the Act, he will now get £750."

Even employees with less than two years service who do not qualify for payment under the Redundancy Act will get something — an extra week's pay.

The agreed scale of payments will give workers who have already left another lump sum payment.

They left with their payments under the Act, plus another 25 per cent, and will soon be getting their final payment.

Agreement on the scale of payments for redundancy have been reached after a series of meetings of the company and trade union officials. It is understood that a company statement will be issued after the unions have formally ratified the terms.

According to the company, about 250 employees have already left and about another 100 are due to leave early next year.

Smiths Industries have already announced that any re-

dundancies this year will be on a voluntary basis.

The company is going ahead with its plan to switch instrumentation work from Witney to its factory in South Wales as part of a rationalisation plan.

Although there is to be a reduction in the number of employees in the plastics division at Witney, the main reason for the cut-back is the labour force there is the expected fall in demand for car heaters, the factory's main product.

This is because British Leyland are to design and make more of their own car heaters. This work is expected to be done at Cowley, and it is understood it will start in the spring.

One union official said that the agreed scale would apply to those who have already left the factory under the redundancy programme, as well as those who are still to go. The bonus would also go to employees who were not entitled to payment under the Act.

The official said he was not aware of any of his members who had volunteered for redundancy still being employed, but added: "It has to

be realised that the programme means that there will be that number of jobs in Witney in the future."

A large number of workers who have volunteered for redundancy have been taken on in the Cowley car complex. "Leyland's recruiting has been something of a godsend," said one shop steward at the factory, adding, "Otherwise it would have been very bad for Witney."

Come to you want thumping carpet.

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latest collection of Axminster

#7/71

New Fire Station opened in Bampton

BAMPTON'S NEW Fire Station was officially opened on Tuesday evening by the vice-chairman of the Oxfordshire County Council, Alderman H. W. Howland, before a gathering of officials of many of the local authorities covered by the men from Bampton.

The new station, in New Road, gives the 13 men at Bampton, all retained firemen under the command of Sub Officer Arthur Beckley, a splendid new headquarters with adequate facilities for training, including a tower for hose training, and replaces the old fire station under Bampton Town Hall.



8-7-60

The upstairs room at The Eagle public house
which the licensee, Mrs. Lucy Martin,
keeps free for use as Bampton's
Roman Catholic Church



8-7-60

(Above) Mr. Paul Borington, chairman of the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Junketing, and Crackers, one of the society's collectors for old-age pensioners. (Below) The upstairs room at The Eagle public house which the licensee, Mrs. Lucy Martin, keeps free for use as Bampton's Roman Catholic Church.

IT WAS 4.20 p.m. In another minute or so the 46 pupils being taken home to Clanfield and Bampton from Wood Green School, Witney, would have been home. Their school bus had only another half-mile to

go.

Then as many of them were peering through the misty windows at the heavy snowstorm outside, their school special — a Hughes coach — cornered badly.

It lurched. The coach rocked crazily. As the children clung frantically to their seats, the off side was ripped away.

They had collided with another bus coming from the opposite direction — an empty City of Oxford Motor Services coach, travelling towards Brize Norton.

With their coach reduced to a twisted mass of metal and shattered glass, some of the children got on to the treacherous roadway, and stood about, dazed and shocked.

Others remained in their wrecked seats — too stunned to move.

Three Bampton doctors were among the first to arrive, an RAF ambulance crew also turned up from Brize Norton. They found two of the children had died, 14 were injured, and both drivers seriously hurt.

Bampton firemen had to release the drivers from their cabs.

One of the rescue team, Leading Fireman Raymon Green, found his daughter, Esther, aged 15, was on the coach.

She had cuts on her head and he went with her to hospital.

Walked

Many of the children who escaped serious injury walked to their homes at Bampton, or to the surgery.

From there, some were later taken by ambulance to hospital.

The children's headmaster, Mr H. W. Pooley, and other members of the staff, arranged roll calls to check who was on the bus. Later some of them helped Thames Valley Police at Witney identify the two dead boys.

One pupil who had a lucky escape from serious injury was 15-year-old Pearl Paintin, of 5 Fox Close, Bampton, daughter of Mr and Mrs R. Paintin.

Cut

Pearl said: "I remember the coach going round the bend and it went over the other side of the road.

"I was sitting on the gangway seat and my friend Rosalind Till, of Bampton, was sitting next to the window. My face was cut. I don't remember much after that and I walked home."

Her twin brother, Paul, had stayed away from school, or he, too, would have been on the coach.

The accident — on Tuesday night — happened when the coach was within half-a-mile of its destination after its six-mile trip from Witney.

The other bus was returning to Witney after having taken children from Henry Box School, Witney, to the Bampton area.

The road was closed for nearly four hours while the wreckage of the coaches was removed.



Pearl Paintin, 15, one of the pupils in the crash, is comforted by her mother, Mrs Ruby Paintin.



Bus prefect Susan got it organised

TWO 15-year-old schoolgirls — one of them a bus prefect — ignored their own cuts and bruises and helped calm the younger children after the crash. They were praised by the police for what they did.

A police spokesman said the girls, Susan Taylor, of 1 Oathurst Estate, Bampton, and Margaret Gascoigne, of 21 New Road, Bampton, had been "outstanding" and very grown-up about what they did.

One rescuer said that Susan, who was bus prefect on the school coach "showed more guts than I have ever seen before in a teenager."

'Shouting'

The two girls helped get the screaming and shouting younger children from the wreckage, made sure they did not wander away, stopped a passing motorist and told him to call for the doctor.

"After the accident everyone was shouting and screaming. The children were all shocked so Margaret and I thought someone had to do something. I ran in front of the first car that came along

'More guts than I have ever seen in a teenager'

and told the driver to get a doctor," said Susan.

Meanwhile, Margaret kept the shocked children together. "They were all complaining they were cold and wanted to go home. They started wandering off, but I knew we had to keep in a group so that a list of names could be taken," said Margaret.

Later when the children calmed down, she led them the mile to Bampton police station.

Susan stayed behind with an injured girl, Rosalind Till, of Bampton, who said she would not go anywhere without Susan.

"The policeman took us to Witney Health Centre and I

waited with Rosalind, as she had to have an X-ray."

Both girls, in the same form at Wood Green School, Witney, said they did not think they had done anything special to be heroines.

"I just did my job as bus prefect," said Susan.

"We realised someone had to keep the children in order.

Third death in snow

In another accident on Tuesday, Stuart John McGinlay, 55, of The Nurses' Home, Bradwell Grove Hospital, Burford, was killed when his Vauxhall Viva was in collision with a lorry at Signett Hill, near Burford.

The crash happened at 1.30, also in heavy snow.

The car was being driven towards Lechlade and the lorry, driven by Mr Ronald Edward Haward, of 54 East Street, Banbury, was travelling in the opposite direction.

Service at school

BEFORE lessons began at Wood Green School yesterday, the headmaster, Mr H. W. Pooley, conducted a short service for the whole school. There were special prayers for the two dead boys and for the parents of the injured in their anxiety.

One of the dead boys, Gary Gerhardt, was an early morning newspaper delivery boy for Mrs E. M. M. Papworth, of Bridge Street, Bampton.

"He was a jolly good boy, and very good at getting up in the mornings. He started his round at 6.30 each day."

Hat-trick for Bampton men

3.2.72
North Berks Premier Division
Bampton 7, Wootton and Sand-
ford 2

Wootton took the lead when a speculative cross from K. Empson sailed right over the head of D. Kyte in the Bampton goal to land in the net.

Almost immediately, Bampton struck back and levelled with a well-taken goal from Dave Hudson.

After 15 minutes Bampton went ahead with an acute-angled shot from winger R. Snook and then a muddle in the Bampton defence let J. Hutt in to score an easy goal for Wootton.

On the half hour, R. Broome scored at the third attempt to put Bampton ahead and despite good efforts by Amer, Snook and T. Siford, the Wootton goal remained intact for the remainder of the period.

The second half was all Bampton's; Graham Amer made it 4-2 and the fifth goal came following a throw from goalie Kyte.

K. Bishop picked up the ball inside the Bampton half, moved forward before sending Snook clear to score his second goal.

A combined move between Hudson, Snook and T. Siford ended with Siford finding the net and Snook was also involved in the move which set up Graham Amer for Bampton's seventh and final goal.

North Berks League Div. I
Beedon 1, Bampton Res. 2

This game gave the Reserves their 14th league victory this season, but it was no walk-over against a hard tackling Beedon side who made the league leaders fight all the way.

In fact it was Beedon who took the lead early in the game with a goal from K. Compton and this was not cancelled out until nearly half-time when Derek Bishop scored for Bampton.

Play had only been resumed for two minutes when Mick Blake scored Bampton's second goal — the final goal of the game but enough to clinch the victory and the league double.

North Berks League Div. II
Stanford 1, Bampton A 3

This game also gave another league double for Bampton with goals from G. Cotton (2) and M. Smith to give the "A" side a surprisingly comfortable success. Stanford's goal was scored just before the interval by R. Wyatt.

School coaches crash in snowstorm **TWO DIE, 16 HURT**



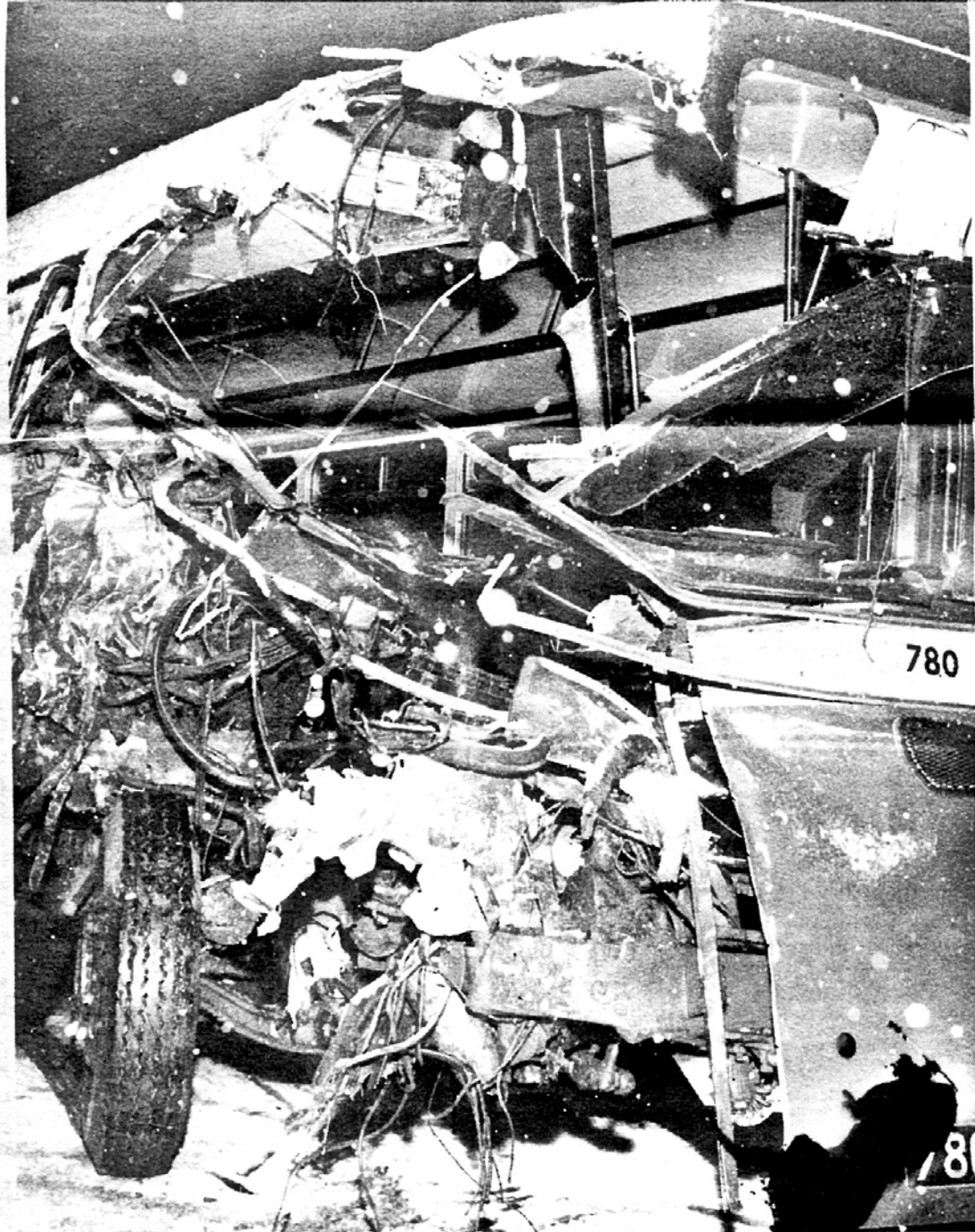
TWO BOYS from Wood Green school, Witney, died, and 14 other pupils were hurt, when their school bus crashed in a snowstorm on Tuesday night.

Their bus collided with another school bus — with no passengers — on a bend on the Bampton to Brize Norton road, near Bampton.

The boys, both aged 14, were Gary Gerhardt, of 20 New Road, Bampton, and Gary John Hawkins, of 5 Furlong Road, Clanfield.

Most of the offside of the school special, carrying 46 pupils, was ripped off.

Full story and more
pictures: Centre pages



The cab of one of the wrecked coaches

Both drivers in casualty list

The injured, who were all taken to Radcliffe Infirmary, are:

COACH DRIVERS:

Mr R. Younger, of 1 Bull Road, Aston; and Mr Kenneth Woodward, of Lechlade.

PUPILS:

Michael Richard, of 1

Friars Court, Clanfield, and from Bampton:

Rosalind Till, of 6 St. Mary's Court.

Ana Williamson, of Church View.

Gordon Walker, of 29 New Road.

Alex White, of 10 Mercury Close.

Susan Abbott, of Bridge House.

Andrew Clark, of 35 New Road.

Robert Kazmer, of Buckland Road.

Janet Harrison, of 20 Bushey Road.

David Taylor, of 26 Mercury Close.

Esther Green, of Buckland Road.

Thomas Cole, of 23 St. Mary's Court.

Barbara Kingman, of The Haven, Buckland Road.

Richard Buckingham, of Church View.

Planting their trees for '73

There was a very good turn-out of volunteers on Sunday morning for the planting of 80 trees which had been allocated to Bampton through the County Council for "Tree Planting" year.

Headed by the chairman of the Parish Council, and five members, were members of the Youth Club and a large number of parishioners.

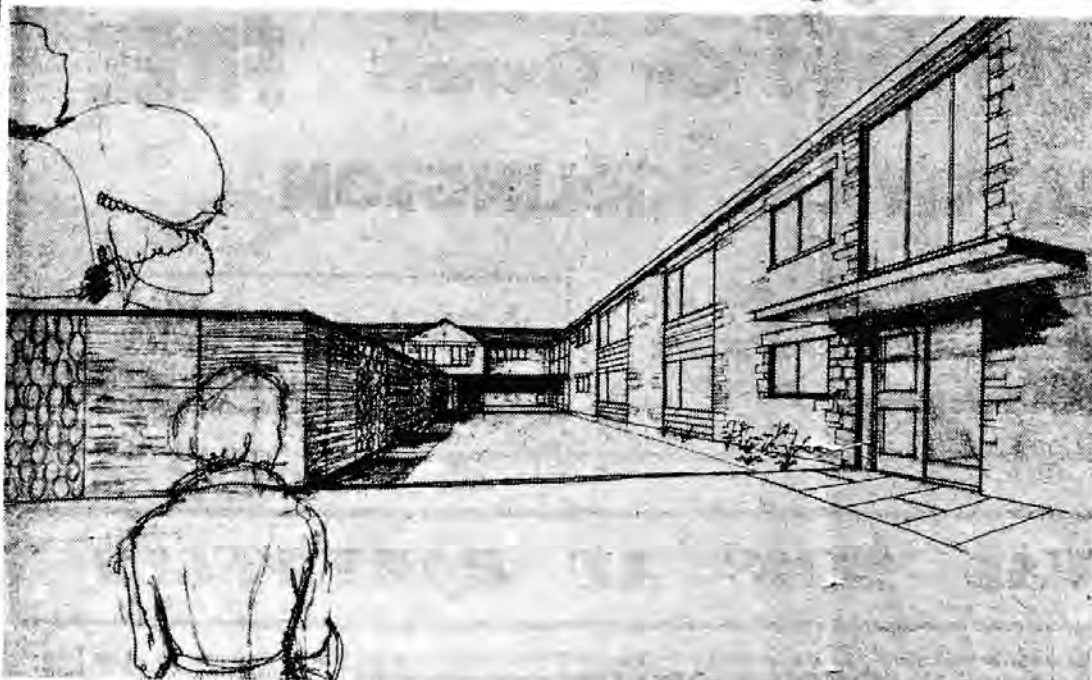
On a site in front of a lay-by near Cowleaze Corner the planting brigade found that the positioning of the trees had been marked out by a representative of the C.C. Forestry department and all that was required was the digging of the holes to plant the striplings.

There were several young children taking part in the exercise and one hopes that the day will come when they will be able to point with pride to some fine specimens of sycamore and maple, and remember the day they helped with the planting.

24. iii. 73.

PICTURED below starting the planting session is Mr. L. Hughes - Owen, chairman of the Parish Council, and assisting, left, Mr. Doug Reed, one of the project organisers.





An architect's impression of Lavender Place, Witney R.D.C.'s block of 18 flats for the elderly, which are under construction at Bampton. The building is "L" shaped and the entrance hall is in the angle of the building in the centre of the sketch. The warden's house is self contained and is the first part of the block on the right. The perforated wall on the left of the sketch shields the view from the flats of the communal drying area.

Work has started at Bampton on old people's flats: to cost £46,860

Lavender Place is the name Witney Rural District Council is giving its new block of flats for the elderly, to be built at Bampton, writes ARTHUR LARNER.

It will be the R.D.C.'s second venture in flats for the elderly. The first, Sunnyside, at Eynsham, has 12 flats. The new block will have 18—13 of the bed-sitting room type and the remainder with a bed-sitting room type and the remainder with a separate sitting room and bedroom for couples.

The site is a central one in Bampton, between Queen's Road and Bushey Row. It has easy access to shops and services, which is one of the reasons the council chose it.

Work started a few weeks ago by the builders, A. E. Hobley and Sons, of North Leigh, at a contract figure of £46,860, and is expected to be completed in 12 months. The building has been designed by Beecher Stamford Associates, chartered architects of Seacourt Tower, West Way, Botley, under the direction of Mr. D. G. Brown.

The same architects were responsible for Sunnyside, but this latest project could be described as slightly more adventurous, based on the knowledge gained from the Eynsham flats.

The flats will be under the general supervision of a warden, who will live in a two storey, three-bedroom house which will be part of the main building, yet remain self contained.

From the house, the warden will have full control of all the heating in the entire building, which is by the gas-fired warm-air system. This has lots of refinements. Not only does it obviate the work of looking after individual fireplaces; the same ducts through which the warm air passes in winter can be used to circulate cool air in summer. From a control panel, the warden will be able to tell if a particular zone in the building is too hot or too cold.

In each flat there will be an emergency bell which will give a warning in the warden's house. The fire alarm system gives a similar warning to the warden, either by means of the automatic smoke detectors or by manually operated alarms. The work has been carried out according to the County Fire Service requirements.

Of the 18 flats, there will be an equal number at ground-floor and first floor levels, and entry to them will be from corridors running from the entrance hall. Each flat will have its own small entrance hall, in which there will be cupboards for brooms and coats. The w.c.s and baths will be fitted with grab rails.

MEETING PLACE

The kitchens will be fitted with a sink unit, an electric cooker and a working top. There will be a folding door between kitchen and the bed sitting room in that type of flat. In the living room there will be a point connecting to the communal television system.

The main entrance hall has been designed on a slightly larger scale than normal so that it can be used as a meeting place by the residents, and so save the necessity of providing a common room.

Throughout the building the floors will be covered with thermoplastic tiles of a plain, neutral colour, which will be easy to keep clean.

Refinements include such things as built-in wardrobes with hanging rails, linen cupboards, ample electric points,

and — as a homely touch — a mantelpiece for a clock and bric-a-brac. There will be no fire place.

Internally, off the entrance hall, there are large communal stores in which the tenants can keep such articles as suitcases and trunks. Externally there will be a store in which bicycles or gardening tools can be kept.

There will be a garden on the south and west sides of the building overlooked from the main rooms of the flats. There will be paved areas and the residents will be easily able to walk around the open spaces. In addition, a metal window box will be provided for each flat. There will be an external drying area for washing to be hung.

A pitched tiled roof will tone with the exterior brickwork, and to add a little contrast the walls will be broken up with small white painted timber panels.

OWN DOORS

The warden and his wife will occupy the warden's house, and the wife will be at hand even though her husband may be out at work during the day. They are not meant to provide a service for the residents, but merely to give help and supervision when needed.

Thus the residents will each have their own front door and maintain their independence. But at the same time it is hoped their surroundings will encourage a communal spirit without an institutional atmosphere.

Drug sent by letter

An 18-year-old Bampton youth admitted at Witney Magistrates' Court on Friday that he sent some cannabis to a friend in a school near Shrewsbury after a fit person order was made on him.

Robert James Stephens, a labourer, of 22 New Road, pleaded guilty to possessing cannabis, and to supplying it to his friend.

The magistrates adjourned ~~the case~~ for reports. Stephens was granted bail in a sum of £20.

Insp. D. Simons said Stephens had sent the drug in a letter to the school. The master there had become suspicious and police found that the letter contained silver paper with cannabis in it.

In court, Stephens said he had bought the drug out of curiosity but was not addicted to the stuff.

He had sent the drug to his friend because he had asked him to.

"I am disgusted with myself for being here, and I am terribly sorry it happened," he added.

December 1970

Bampton people fight to keep couple in caravan



BAMPTON RESIDENTS are fighting to stop an elderly couple losing their caravan home.

Nearly 1,000 people have signed a petition appealing against a Ministry of Housing and Local Government decision which would stop Mr Wilfred "Buller" Lock, pictured with his wife, 60, living in a caravan at The Scrapyard, Station Road, which belongs to Mr Reginald Smith, of Barns Close, Brize Norton Road, Minster Lovell.

Mr Smith runs a wood and scrap metal business and allows Mr Lock to live in the caravan rent free in return for looking after the yard while he is away. Mr and Mrs Lock have been there three years.

Mr Smith said someone had lived on the site since 1910 and it was left to him by his father 19 years ago.

In 1968, Witney Rural Council told Mr Smith he needed planning permission for the caravan and at the same time served an enforcement notice telling him to remove it.

Rejected

Mr Smith appealed to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government last November on the grounds that he had valuable equipment on the site and needed someone there all the time to guard it. In July, Mr Smith heard that his appeal had been turned down and had two

months to move the caravan and the tenants from the site.

Mr Smith said: "I have no intention of chucking Mr Lock out. Where could he go if I did?"

"Anyway I need him to look after my business. If I left the yard unattended overnight, I would lose all my equipment."

'Must close'

"If I cannot have a tenant on the site, I will have to close down my business and start again."

Mr Lock said: "I have nowhere to go and no money to buy a house. I am not on the council housing list. Anyway, I have lived in a caravan all my life. I would be unhappy in a house or a flat."

A spokesman for Witney RDC said the Public Health Committee would meet on Thursday and if it was decided to enforce the Minister's decision, the case would go to court.

Mrs F. M. Henly, of Deane-ry Farm, Bampton, a neighbour of Mr and Mrs Lock appealed for help to Bampton Parish Council.

Mrs Henly said: "The council was astonished at what was happening and it will get in touch with the Oxfordshire Planning solicitor."

She said eight copies of the petition circulated in the village.

Mrs Henly said: "The people of Bampton feel the Smiths and Locks have been victimised. They are a part of rural England and should be allowed to stay."

The Beeching axe falls on Witney's rail link

BETWEEN 1862 and 1923 various attempts were made by different companies to introduce new rail links, but none of them materialised, and with them died the hope of Witney ever becoming a main line station.

Traffic on the Witney branch line during its heyday was considerable. Milk, farm produce, coal, and blankets made up much of the goods traffic, but one well-known source of passenger traffic was the annual "Witney Trip."

Annual visits were arranged from Witney to Weymouth, Liverpool, Torquay, Weston-super-Mare, Blackpool, Southampton and Hastings.

As travelling in those days, particularly on the earlier trips, was a great adventure for Witney folk "it was usual" said the Witney Gazette of July 3, 1925, "for the honorary secretary to wire Witney the safe arrival of the passengers. On the return journey Witney station was crowded with people come to greet their friends and rejoice with them on their safe return."

Many local people felt the GWR's operation of the branch line left much to be desired and the Witney Gazette's comment in 1920 was: "The GWR bought up the company but what did they do to develop the station and encourage this source of income? The goods station may have been enlarged but the passenger station remains very much what it was more than 20 years ago."

In 1886 Witney had a station staff of twelve under Mr W. J. Bagnall, to supervise 10 passenger trains a day. The staff rose to 24 in 1905. The signal porter received some 15s. a week (raised to £1 in 1904).

In 1906 the annual leave for the staff was three days after one year's service. The stationmaster in those times received £145 and a week's holiday a year. Almost all the staff put in a 10 or 11 hour day, six days a week.

In July 1906 the Witney branch was chosen for the first tests of the new system of automatic train control to be introduced eventually all over the GWR.

The first rumours of the possible closure of the Witney branch line came in April 1960. The Witney Rural District Council decided to investigate the rumour and the following month British Railways said there were no plans "at present" to close the Witney-Fairford section on the Oxford-Fairford branch line.

However by January the following year the axe had fallen and BR Western Region announced that they proposed to withdraw the passenger train service on its branch line from Oxford to Fairford and to terminate the line at Witney.

Although the pattern of the rail cuts all over the country was all too apparent, the news of the closure of the Witney line still came as a bombshell.

Many people had thought that passenger trains would continue to run between Witney and Oxford, and that the line in the other direction between Witney and the terminus at Fairford might still be used for goods traffic.

Eventually Oxfordshire County Council agreed to take up the challenge on behalf of all local authorities to present the case against closing the line to passenger traffic.



The outcome of a hearing at Witney on April 19, 1961, was that the East Midland Area of the Transport Users' Consultative Committee were to recommend the approval of the British Transport Commission's proposal to withdraw the passenger service and to use the Oxford-Witney section for freight only.

Even so further recommendations by the OCC succeeded in putting off the inevitable verdict until Saturday, June 16, 1962, the date set for the last public passenger train run between Oxford and Fairford. (The service lasted almost 100 years).

With the closing of the line at Witney, goods traffic began to increase considerably as Witney then became the centre for goods and parcels traffic for a large area of West Oxfordshire.

The service covered Filkins, Alvescot, Langford, Clanfield and as far afield as Leafield and Charlbury.

Even while workmen were still ripping up the track between Witney and Fairford

there was talk of the passenger station — then being used only for goods — being closed altogether.

Looking back on the events at Witney railway during the 1960's it is obvious that complete closure of both passenger and goods stations must have been a cut and dried affair long before all movement eventually stopped.

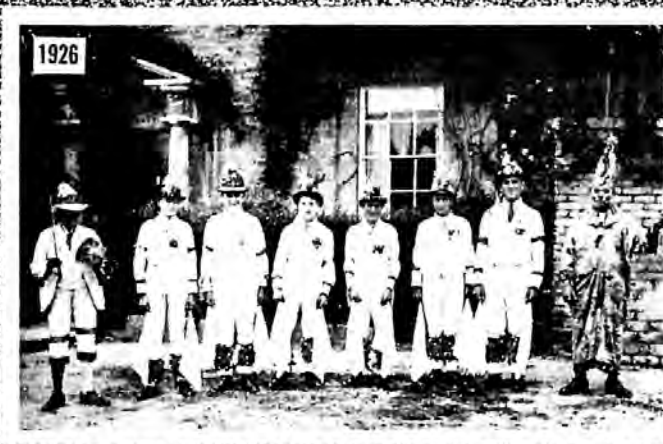
Quickly following the announcement that the passenger station would close down completely came the

news that the goods station would be closed to all freight except coal and full waggon loads.

The last nail in Witney railway's coffin was hammered home on October 31, 1970. One of the very last trains to leave Witney was another "special" loaded with railway enthusiasts. It is one of the ironies of life that when British Railways close a line because it won't pay they can always rely on a packed special for the last trip.



The "Witney Wanderer" —
the last train to travel on the
Oxford-Witney line.



The members of the 1887 team were: George (Nipper) Dixey, William (Jinky) Wells, the fool or clown, Bob (Frank) Dixey, Joey Rouse, Dick Butler, the fiddler, Charles (Cocky) Tanner, coat carrier. Front row, Philip Dewe, Harry (Sarah) Radband, cake carrier, George (Chakler) Wells, Thomas (Buscot) Tanner, squire or leader of the team.

The 1926 team were "Jinky" Wells, Bill Brown, Bill Dewe, Reg Whitlock, Barlow Wells, Bert Whitlock, Jim Buckingham and Arnold Buckingham. This was the team which broke away from the traditional team, and was led by "Jinky" Wells.

The 1929 team were Brannon Brooks, cake carrier, Arthur Dixey, Ted Lay, "Butler" Tanner, Fred Hudson, Freddie Lay, Reg Tanner, Billy Flux, Arnold Buckingham, as clown, Sam Bennett and Bert Clark, fiddlers.



The 18 Morris fics since 18 continuity DICK "JINKY" BENNET CLARK, WOODLI HALL. Ti the fiddl present teams.

Fiddl

MORRIS MEN OF BAMPTON

HIP-SHAKING, gyrating youth have established a new mode of dancing since the pop groups monopolised the discos.

But at Bampton the scene may be changing — at least as far as the lads of the village are concerned.

Having struggled at times to maintain its well-known tradition, the town is now experiencing a revival in Morris dancing — and it is the young men who are partly responsible.

Two independent teams have kept the tradition alive, relying on a minimum hard core of adult dancers. Now, both teams have a second string of junior

dancers (there are six in a team) and others are being trained.

Mr Arnold Woodley, Squire of the team he claims to be the traditional one, says "We have more than enough lads at the moment although some do drop out from time to time.

"I first started training youngsters in 1951. I put the word around and had about 30 boys turn up. I didn't know which way to turn. Naturally they thinned out and I was left with eight good dancers.

"I don't know quite what the attraction is for youngsters in Morris dancing.

My mother told me that when I was about two or three years old I used to watch the dancers, and one day I grabbed a handkerchief and tried to join in the dancing on the green."

Bampton's history of Morris dancing goes back a long, long way. Nobody knows just when or how it started but today the town's dancers are in great demand all over the country.

The Morris dancing season usually starts at Bampton at Whitsun, with dancing in the streets. This year tours are planned as far afield as Birmingham and Minehead, as well as nearer home in the Thames Valley area.



The Traditional Bampton Morris dancers in action, Whit Monday, 1971. Left to right, Robin Connaughton, Bernie Basson, Fred Scott, Colin Baithe, Andrew Carruthers, Colin Knight, Arnold Woodley,

fiddler and Squire of team, Frank Purslow, accordion. Son Townsend (fool) and Ben Tanner (cake carrier) who complete the team are not in the picture.

The list of Bampton Morris fiddlers on record since 1887, in order of continuity, are:

DICK BUTLER, "JINKY" WELLS, SAM BENNETT, BERT CLARK, ARNOLD WOODLEY and REG HALL. The last two are the fiddlers of the two present Bampton teams.

Fiddlers three



"JINKY" WELLS



SAM BENNETT



ARNOLD WOODLEY

The original Morris men ?

Sir.—Having read your report on Bampton in the Witney Gazette, I repudiate that Mr Francis Shergold and his brother Roy were primarily responsible for the continuation of the Bampton Morris Dancing.

If I had not obtained the services of Mr Bert Clark of Carterton as Fiddler, the Jingy Wells' Team could not have carried on after Jingy's retirement.

With regard to the confusion to strangers visiting Bampton on Whit Monday by the fact that there are two teams of dancers, this situation was created by Jingy himself in the mid-twenties, when he left the Traditional Team and formed a new one.

Three members of this new team happened to be my uncles, who subsequently left the Jingy Wells' Team to join the Traditionals.

The Traditionals' appearances did lapse from time to time owing to lack of dancers. There are now only two active Morris Men left from the Traditional Team: one is Albert Townsend who plays the part of Clown in my team, and myself as Fiddler.

I would like to point out that my Morris ancestors are Dick Butler (Fiddler before Jingy Wells) and Dave Edgington (Clown). These are my great-uncles and I have photographs from the 1880s to prove this.

ARNOLD WOODLEY
Square and Fiddler
of The Traditional
Bampton Morris
Dancers.

Queen Street,
Bampton.

TWO WINS AND ONE DRAW FOR 2.12.71 **BAMPTON**

As a result of games played against Woodstock Town, Buckland Reserves and Stanford-in-the-Vale, Bampton, gained one draw and two victories. It was a last-gasp goal from Graham Amer which earned Bampton the chance of a replay in the Oxfordshire Charity Cup game against senior league side Woodstock Town.

Bamptons position as league leaders was ensured with an away victory at Buckland and the "A" side gained a good two points at the expense of Stanford-in-the-Vale, after they had been two goals down at one stage.

**Oxfordshire Charity Cup
Bampton, 3; Woodstock T, 3**

There was no relaxing for Bampton in this game and on three separate occasions Woodstock took the lead. It was Woodstock who opened the scoring in the early stages, but this was levelled when centre forward Cassidy converted a Siford cross. Woodstock then restored the initiative with a in-off-the-post goal and once again Bampton equalised with a penalty spot goal from Siford.

Following a good run by their right winger, Woodstock restored their lead and it was in the dying minutes of the game that Graham Amer scored from close in to give Bampton a chance of a replay.

Bampton will have to be on top form if they hope to gain a semi-final place after their visit to Woodstock.

North Berks League Division I

Buckland Res., 2;

Bampton Res., 4

It was Buckland who took an early lead in this match with a goal from E. Illes following a through ball which completely split the Bampton defence.

After 20 minutes Bampton equalised through Roger Broome who converted a good pass from John Blake. It was Blake too who almost gave Bampton the lead for after beating two defenders and the

goalkeeper his final shot ran inches wide.

Phil Hewitson laid on a good chance for Tony Siford following a corner kick and Siford put Bampton into the lead with a good header. The same combination set up a good chance for Henry Barber (substitute for the injured Maycock) and he too made no mistake as he increased his side's lead.

Hewitson sent winger Broome clear to increase the scoreline still further; and Broome was unlucky not to score a hat-trick when later on he made a good shot from the edge of the area only to hit the post.

Bampton's offside tactics let them down when they allowed Buckland's A. Cook to break clear and add the second goal for his side, reducing the score to a final 4-2.

North Berks League Division 2

Bampton A, 4;

Stanford-in-the-Vale, 3

Inside the first half-hour, Stanford were two goals up and it was a long-range effort from Mick Smith which brought the interval score to 1-2.

Shortly after the interval, a scrambled goal from close in brought the score level and then Roger Curtis put Bampton ahead. This lead did not last, for Stanford levelled from the penalty spot.

The deserved winner was scored by wingman Cotton following a great solo run.

On Saturday, Bampton make their third defence of the Oxfordshire Junior Shield when they visit Witney League side Stonesfield.

Candidate withdraws from election

One of the 167 candidates for the first election of the new Oxfordshire County Council on April 12 has withdrawn.

He is Mr Tony Humphris, the Labour candidate in the Bampton Division. His withdrawal means that the contest will now be between two Independents — Miss Dorothy Graeme Thomson, chairman of Oxfordshire social services committee, and Mr Kenneth Mullis.

The revised line-up is: 63 Labour candidates, 62 Conservatives, 22 Liberals, 16 Independents, one Independent Conservative, one Communist and one Progressive Independent.

BAMPTON 29.3.73

Anniversary service

Members of Bampton Baptist Women's League celebrated their anniversary on Tuesday week with a service to which they invited ladies from the Cote circuit churches and members of the St Mary's Church Mothers' Union. The service was led by Mrs E Clarke. An address was given by Mrs Dyer, of Abingdon, and solos sung by Mrs Lewis, of Witney. The newly-formed Women's League Choir sang an anthem and the organist was Miss Mary Witt. The Sunday evening service at the Baptist Church was conducted by a student of Regent's Park College, Oxford, and floral arrangements were provided by Miss Rose Brooks.

A jumble sale was organised on Saturday afternoon in the WI Hall by members of the Bampton Committee for Aid for Cancer Research. The sum of £58 was raised.

BAMPTON

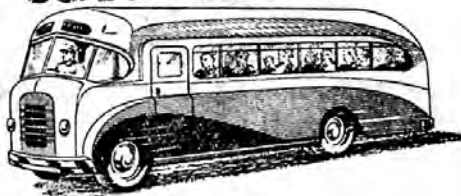
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Around the Oxford countryside with S. P. B. Mais

BAMPTON STILL HAS NIGHTLY CURFEW

Customs of its own—and big drainage grievance

BAMPTON owes a great deal to its splendid isolation, to the fact that it was formerly roadless, a region of thickets, literally Bampton-in-the-Bush.

It owes to this isolation its unbroken continuity of tradition and custom in which it is richer than any other place of its size in the country.

Every night of the year curfew is still rung from the church at 7.55, followed by the date or calendar bell which rings out the day of the month.

On Shrove Tuesday, at noon, the pancake or pudding bell is rung to remind housewives that it is pancake day.

The annual horse fair, inaugurated in the reign of Edward I. is still held on August 26.

Every year at Christmas the mummers, in their medieval dress, go from house to house reciting the ancient play of St. George and the Dragon.

The Ancient Order of Junketry turn out annually in great strength for the wheelbarrow race from one end of the town to the other, in which competitors, dressed in nightgowns, wheel their partners to each of the 11 pubs in turn and there drink a full pint of ale before they change places and continue the hazardous perambulation.

600 YEARS OF DANCING

The Bampton Morris Dancers have danced their own traditional dances every Whit Monday for over 600 years.

Francis Shergold, the head gardener at Weald Manor, showed me some of his dancing clothes.

"I am known as the Squire and bagman," he said proudly, "and my team consists of nine-six dancers, a clown or fool, an old fiddler and a collector who carries the ceremonial cake in a silver container impaled on a sword."

"If you manage to snatch a



Mr. J. L. Owens, headmaster of an exceptional school.

currant from the cake you will have good luck for a year. Originally it was not a cake, but a duck which we had the right to kill in Wychwood Forest on that day.

"We dance to 27 tunes in all, including 'The Willow Tree' and 'Green Garters,' and everybody at Bampton knows them by heart. All the same, it is difficult to get the youngsters to join."

"Our famous fiddler, 'Jinky' Wells, is dead, and his successor, Mr. Clark is over 70. We usually begin rehearsals about five weeks beforehand."

AT HOME ONCE A YEAR
"Do you only dance at Bampton?" I asked.

"We only dance at Bampton

once a year, on Whit Monday, but we go round to dance with other clubs—Abingdon, Reading, the City of Oxford and University of Oxford—during the summer.

"On Whit Monday we dance right through the streets all the morning and in the afternoon dance in the gardens of private houses."

Another ancient custom observed on the same day is the



Mr. F. Shergold, squire and bagman of the Morris dancers.

procession of garlanded children who collect withies, bend them into hoops which they decorate with wild flowers, and then march round the town from eight in the morning till noon. Bampton is certainly to be congratulated on having been able to keep up so effortlessly its many precious and picturesque ancient customs, but isolation has its disadvantages.

SANITATION SCANDAL

I was shocked to find in 1954 a community of 1,300 people in Oxfordshire still without a main drainage scheme, and stories of buckets put out on the pavement to be collected do not make pleasant reading.

Miss Marjorie Pollard, a prominent member both of the Rural District Council and of the Parish Council, was rightly indignant about this.

"I should like to wheel our sewage cart up to Whitehall and face the Ministry with it," she said. "They say something will be done in two years, but it's always 'two years,' and two years never come."

"Meantime, the estimated cost is rising. Now it's up to about £50,000. It was only about half that sum before the war."

PUBLISHER

Miss Pollard, who is a hockey and cricket international, somehow finds time, in addition to her intense practical devotion to the improvement of parochial amenities, to run a most enterprising publishing house in her beautiful Tudor home at the Deanery.

She edits and publishes a highly successful magazine, the "Women's Hockey Field," the fortnightly official journal of the A.E.W.H.A.

She showed me several pamphlets and illustrated books that she has lately published on lacrosse and hockey for girls, and her office is decorated with the multi-coloured badges of all international hockey teams.

At the other end of the town, in the study of Mr. J. L. Owens, the headmaster of the Senior School, I got another sidelight on Bampton's interest in hockey. The walls were lined with photographs of girls' hockey elevens of the last five or six years.

GREAT TRADITION

"I'm specially proud of those," said Mr. Owens. "Ours is an all-age school of 260, and our children's ages range from five to 15. We have a great tradition in hockey, and that team at which you are looking had an unbroken record that year except for a defeat by the Cheltenham Ladies' College under 15's."

"As I have only about 40 girls to choose from you can see that they are as keen as mustard. But between November and March our ground is better fitted for water polo than hockey. It's pretty well always waterlogged. Our most pressing need is for new playing fields."

"And a drainage scheme," I reminded him.

"Oh! they've told you about that," he said. "I'm chairman of the playing fields and we've already got a grant from the Playing Fields Association. But we must have a dry ground for our boys and girls to play on."

BOYS TEACH FOOTBALL

"I send my boys up to the American school at Brize Norton to teach them to play English football, and we've made good friends up there, but we want to invite them back. We must have playing fields fit to play on, both when they're at school and after they leave."

"Our men's football team are well up in the Witney and



Mr. Wesley Jones

District League, and our cricket team play Merton College Barnackes, so you can see that the sporting spirit is alive enough. We must have a dry ground."

Mr. Owens' school is decidedly go-ahead, not only in games. He showed me a copy of "The Bamptonian," a most attractive school magazine which is not only written and edited by the school, but actually printed and published by the children.

I wonder how many rural elementary schools in England have the enterprise to print and

publish their own magazine. Hockey and publishing seem to go hand-in-hand in Bampton, a most unusual partnership.

Much that I saw in Mr. Owens' school is unusual: the headmaster's study, for instance, which was entirely built by the boys. "And whenever they come to see me they take jolly good care to see that I haven't scratched the paint off the walls," he said.

He took me to see the very well furnished school library and the capacious school hall.

"This is the meeting place," he said, "of our famous debating society and of the girls' club. We also have folk dancing classes here on Wednesdays, woodwork classes, dairying and dressmaking classes, and I have just started a choral society."

"The school seems to be the focal point of all the aesthetic and cultural activities," I said. "Isn't it the obvious place?" he replied.

EXQUISITE SPIRE

From the school I went to the church. St. Mary's is a cathedral in little. Its slender, exquisitely proportioned 13th century spire rises to a height of 170ft., standing out above the tall elms, stone houses and surrounding water-meadows. At each corner of the tower are flying buttresses supporting life-size figures of saints, standing like sentinels.

It is one of the loveliest, lightest and best-kept churches that I have seen and contains, among other treasures, a 15th century Easter sepulchre, a 15th century stone rood, a Tudor iron chest and an effigy of Sir Gilbert Talbot, of Bampton Castle, who fought at Agincourt.

The Vicar, the Rev. C. C. Kelway, told me that he had already raised £1,300 of the £2,000 required to repair the roof.

"Bampton people," he said, "give readily. They have lately given £800 towards the organ and windows. Bampton is the birthplace of Leofric, first Bishop of Exeter, which explains why the living is in the gift of the Dean and Chapter of Exeter."

All religious denominations thrive here. We have a Methodist and a Baptist Chapel, and the Catholics use a room in the Eagle Inn for their services."

Mr. Kelway took a bright view of Bampton youth.

"More than 100 children," he said, "attend Sunday School, Red Cross Cadets, Scouts and



Miss Marjorie Pollard, hockey and cricket international, and the multi-coloured badges in her office.

Brownies are all active, and there is a young men's social club which meets in the old Grammar School.

"Most of our activities are held in the W.I. Hall, which holds about 100."

"They have square dances there on Fridays, whilst drives on Tuesdays, badminton on Thursdays, a cinema on Mondays, and the W.I., who have a membership of 80, meet once a month, on Wednesdays."

THE TOWN HALL

"What about the Town Hall?"

"It consists of a fire engine station, a public lavatory and a bus shelter. It's not beautiful. We're not proud of it, but it does contain a clock in the tower which keeps time."

Mr. Wesley Jones told me of another social activity of which Bampton is justly proud.

"Bampton Debating Society," he said, "was founded in 1936 and is now acknowledged to be the most flourishing society of its kind in rural England. We meet once a month in the school dining hall and attendances vary from 80 to 120."

"We get speakers from out-



St. Mary's, "a cathedral in little" with a 13th-century spire.

side and have had Americans from Brize Norton, officers of the Oxford Union, our local M.P. and leading Communists.

"This month John Cripps, Deputy Mayor of Oxford, so it is perhaps not surprising that we sometimes get as many as three coachloads of visitors from Oxford."

TWO MILES TO STATION

Mr. M. John, the station-master, explained why the station was two miles from Bampton.

"The then Lord of the Manor refused to allow a railway to run through his land, so we remained out of. Transport from Bampton is not easy."

market square every morning taking the girls to Smith's instrument factories, the Witney blanket mills, and the men to work on maintenance at Brize Norton.

"Some go to Pressed Steel and Morris's and some, of course, work in the shops."

STARS

It was while I was in the fishmonger's shop, a very up-to-date concern run by Mr. Boyington, who is also a professional bookkeeper, that I met two of Bampton's most famous worthies, Count Munster, who lives in the Manor House, and Air Marshal Sir Roderick Carr.

The New Zealander who accompanied Shackleton to the Antarctic and made the first R.A.F. long distance non-stop flight from England to Persia 27 years ago.

Bampton is also the home of Air Commodore A. S. Ellerton A.D.C. to the King until his retirement in 1949, and of Mr. Lloyd, the late chairman of Christie's.

With so many stars to pick from, one wonders why Mr. Wesley Jones ever goes outside Bampton for his debaters.

I didn't see signs of many ancient crafts but Mr. John showed me a rushwork stool made from local rushes by the W.I., who also, he told me, write poetry; and he took me to see Miss Taunt, who has been organist at the church for 40 years, following her father, who was organist for 50 years.

"My ladies of the choir," she said, "look very smart in their vivid blue gowns."

HUGE HANDKERCHIEF

She showed me some sacred pictures worked in silk and wool by her mother when she was 12, and a huge handkerchief, 3ft. square, bearing the date 1769, with picturesque prints of sedan chairs and Thames barges round the border, the body of the fabric being taken up with a table of distances between all the principal towns in the Kingdom.

I was told that the Ashmolean are very interested in this heirloom as they might well be.

Mrs. P. M. Colville, of Weald Manor, told me that Bampton still has a thatcher, Mr. Tanner, who is scarcely ever at home as he is so busy thatching all over Berkshire and Oxfordshire, that there are still excellent carpenters and stone masons, one saddler, and one shepherd, Mr. Radband, who is over 90.

Col. J. J. Powell, churchwarden, told me that the bowling club which meets on Mrs. Colville's lawn is extremely

active, winning ten matches last season, and that the badminton club is flourishing.

"I should say that we are quite a lively community for our size," he said. "The British Legion is nearly 100 strong and there is also a women's section who organise lectures and social gatherings."

The colonel turned my attention to the tunelessness of the church bells. "We have," he said, "a wonderful peal of eight bells and everybody wishes we could hear them more often."

TWO BUSES DAILY

As I stood in the market place waiting for my return bus (there are only two a day) I was struck both by the silence and the beauty. It was still afternoon, but there was scarcely any movement, just a tram being wheeled and two lorries full of sugar beet passed by.

Spying a fellow creature standing in the porch of the Talbot Inn, I wandered over and put the inevitable question.

"What is Bampton's most urgent need?" I asked.

He slowly took his pipe out of his mouth and pointed it at the grey stone building that occupies the centre of the square.

"See that?" he asked. "That, believe it or not, is our Town Hall. It ought to be blown up. We're genuine antiques at Bampton. That isn't it? It's bogus. Blow it up, I say. It's a blot on the landscape, a disgrace to the town."

Town halls don't seem to be popular in Oxfordshire.

Next Friday: Bloxham.

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This is ——— BAMPPTON

One of England's oldest towns



IT HAS often been said that Bampton is a quiet place—almost as quiet as in the days when no roads led to it and it was known as Bampton-in-the-Bush.

Fortunately the town has been able to retain its gentle character throughout the post war years of development and this, despite the increased flow of traffic on the busy A4095 which runs through the town.

Bampton also holds the distinction of being one of the oldest towns in England, antiquarians claiming for it British origin.

The existence of nearby Lew barrow gives additional weight to the opinions of those who considered Bampton to be a town of primitive inhabitants of the country.

Tree town

The name itself, (referred to in Domesday Book as Bentone) signifies in Anglo Saxon language, Tree Town.

It is highly probable that, like most marshy districts often under water, a large forest flourished in the flats around Bampton, which justified its designation of Tree Town, and doubtless gave rise to its title of "Bampton in the Bush." We are reminded of this by that part of Bampton called Weald—Weald meaning forest.

Even today this name distinguishes Bampton from towns of similar name in other parts of the country.

Bampton's label of a quiet town probably stems from its insignificant history, although many would argue that it was far from insignificant, certainly in its earlier days.

Few events have disturbed its peacefulness and regard-

ing these information is meagre, relying principally upon brief notices in the ancient chronicles. Mr I. L. Hughes-Owens, who lives at Rosemary Cottage, Bampton, has spent much time researching into Bampton's history and he confirms its singularly uneventful history through the years.

Several battles were however fought near the town. In 1142 when Queen Matilda was beleaguered in Oxford castle, she established an outpost at Bampton. A beacon was set up on the massive Norman tower of the church to give warning of the approach of her rival, Stephen.

In this vicinity a conflict also took place in the reign of Richard II between Robert de Vere, Earl of Oxford, and several of the nobility, who envied his high favour with the crown. The earl was defeated but saved his life by plunging into the river at Radcot and escaping on the opposite bank.

Bloodless battle

The royal manor of Bampton was in the hands of the Conqueror at the time of the great survey and was subsequently bestowed upon the Earl of Boulogne. On again becoming royal property in the reign of Henry III it was granted to William de Valence. His nephew, Aymer Valence was the only English commander to emerge with credit from the battle of Bannockburn (1314) and was rewarded by being given permission to crenellate his manor house into a castle.

But the fight which seriously affected the lives of the inhabitants as much as any was the one—without bloodshed—which led the enclosure of the open fields around Bampton in 1812.

During the Civil War years Bampton was frequently visited by troops on their way to and from battle. In 1645 a contingent of royalist troops were caught and contained by part of Cromwell's army which was manoeuvring in the county. The royalists occupied the old castle and prepared for a stubborn defence, but the arrival of

Cromwell in person, together with a strong artillery detachment, led the garrison to surrender unconditionally.

Reports have it that in due course Cromwell ordered the castle to be completely demolished but Mr Hughes-Owens' own theory is that the castle—at one time part of the vast Shrewsbury estates—had fallen into ruins before Cromwell came on to the scene.

Mr Owens says Cromwell in his notes on the battle, referred to the property as a house and not a castle.

Unfortunately Bampton has fallen from its early prominence. At the time of the Conquest the parish extended over a large area and had three vicars.

It also rivalled far famed Woodstock as a leather making centre but all signs of this industry has long since disappeared. In the mid 17th century Dr Plot the historian wrote of "no town in England having a trade like it" in the manufacture of leather jackets, breeches etc.

Wednesday used to be market day when a great deal of business was done around the town hall. But this trade too disappeared many years ago.

Horse fair

Another old custom that has disappeared is the horse and cattle market held annually in conjunction with a fair. One day was given over to the sale of horses and cattle, of which there was always a large show, and the second day devoted to the amusements.

Having been a town of some importance it is not surprising to come across several examples of outstanding architecture.

The Deanery, a splendid building of the 11th century, was granted by Bishop Leofric to the Dean and Chapter of Exeter. The Dean used the house as his summer residence.

There are still some remains of the castle built by Aymer de Valence at the west of the town. Valence, the Earl of Pembroke, was given permission by Edward

II to make a castle of his house at Bampton and these remains are now formed into Ham Court.

Of the castle remains the most perfect part consists of an upper room with fine groined roof reached by a spiral staircase and part of a battlemented wall. In the grounds of Ham Court is a spring which is traditionally known as Holywell or Ladywell. The story concerning the spring is that Frideswide cured a blind girl with water from the spring. And up until recent times this water was supposed to have a curative effect for sore eyes.

The old Grammar School near the church is also a picturesque building being founded in 1635 by Robert Vesey of Chimney.

The partly Norman church of St. Mary is one of the finest in Oxfordshire, dominated by a spire which is an outstanding landmark in the surrounding flat land.

Among the eminent men to have lived in Bampton was the celebrated poet John Phillips, son of Dr Stephen Phillips, Archdeacon of Salop. John Phillips was born in Bampton Vicarage in 1676.

John Phillips' death at the age of 33 was commemorated by the erection of a memorial in Westminster Abbey by Sir Simon Harcourt, later to become Lord Chancellor.

Old customs

In more recent years successful attempts have been made to revive old Bampton customs by the SPAJERS (Society for the Preservation of Ancient Janketing).

And it is at Whitsun each year that Bampton really keeps up its traditions with the past. The SPAJERS have been responsible for staging the Original Great Shirt Race each year on Whit Saturday, first held way back in 1461.

There is a delightful little tale, although of doubtful origin, that this festival piece stems from the day in 784 when Ethelred the Unready chased the burghers of Bampton through the streets of the town in an unsuccessful attempt to clothe his nakedness.

The Bampton Shirt Race has now become a well known event, and two years ago the same society came up with a sequel—the Great Chariot Race—again the result of painstaking research into the town's history. Apparently, during the Roman occupation, chariots drawn by slaves made their appearance in Bampton either in battles with the inhabitants or in peaceful competition. Both events have become very well known in the district.

It is, however, the Morris Men of Bampton who have really put the town back on the map. Just how long they have carried on this tradition is difficult to say, but they do claim to be the "originals" of the county—a claim that was disputed about the turn of the century.

'Jingy' Wells

Word had it that the Headington Morris dancers were the originals but Mr William "Jingy" Wells of Bampton refuted this most emphatically.

The Daily Mail had published a letter referring to the Headington dancers, and a Bampton gentleman had approached Mr Wells to obtain his opinion.

Their conversation went something like this: "Good morning Mr Wells. Have you read the papers this morning?"

"No sir, I haven't much time for them papers. I works on me cabbage patch nearly all day."

"Well, here is a letter in this paper from a certain Mr Sharp. Read it, Mr Wells."

"I baint much of a reader meff, sir. You read it for me."

The gentleman read the letter to Mr Wells, and emphasised the fact that the Headington Morris dancers were the only original Morris dancers in Oxfordshire.

Mr Wells said, "I knows that baint right. Never was. The Bampton Morris have danced every year for as long as I can remember and long before that."

"Would you like to write a letter to prove that Mr

Sharp is wrong?" asked the gentleman.

"I baint much of a letter writer, either, sir. You write it for me."

"Al right, Mr Wells. What shall I write?"

"Say that we be the 'originals' and say that Jingy Wells of the cabbage patch says so."

The letter was signed "Jingy Wells of the cabbage patch."

The Bampton Morris dancers make many appearances up and down the country each year as their fame grows but it is in their home town each Whit Monday that they celebrate by dancing through the streets. Often they are joined by other famous teams of Morris dancers.

It was Mr Francis Shergold with the help of his brother Roy who was primarily responsible for the continuation of the Bampton Morris. Returning to the town after the war Mr Shergold took over the team from Jingy Wells and it was his enthusiasm that carried the team to its present heights of success.

Enthusiastic

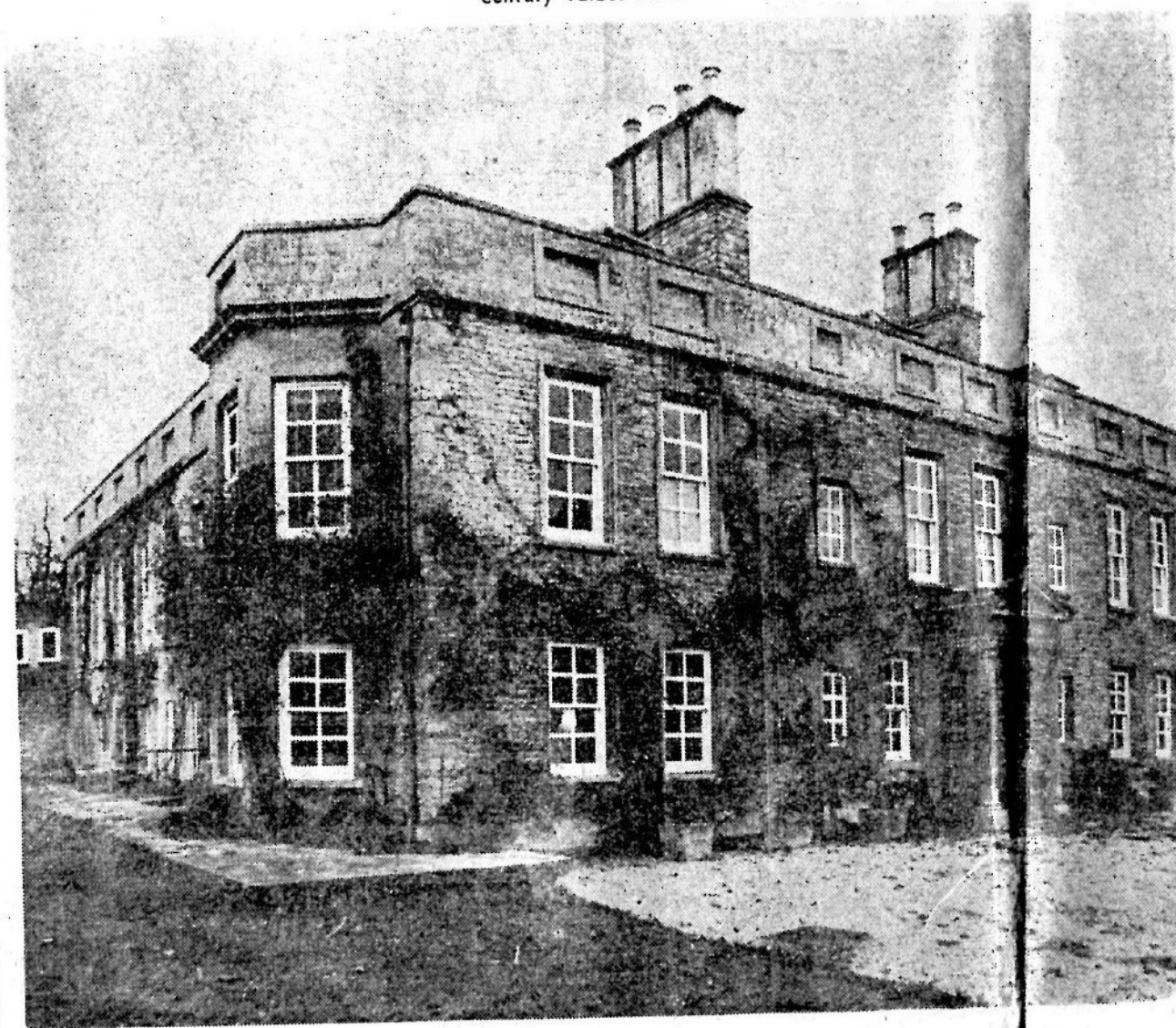
"We now have a junior team," Mr Shergold said, "as well as the senior team of six dancers, a musician, a clown and a cake holder. And we have two or three spare men ready to step into the team when necessary."

The fact that Bampton now has two teams of dancers each calling themselves the Bampton Morris dancers is rather confusing to the stranger. The other team is run by Mr Arnold Woodley. The Christmas Mummers are yet another Bampton group who have grown in popularity in recent years.

Although the post war development of housing estates has increased the size of the town considerably, the majority of the inhabitants have to find work in Witney, Swindon and Oxford. There is virtually no industry in the town, but this does not appear to unduly worry the easy-going people of Bampton.



Top left, part of the remains of Aylmer Valence's Castle, showing the battlements and the original gateway arch, now built in. Below, the 12th-century Talbot Hotel



Weald Manor, left, the home of Major R. A. Colville, is said to have been built in 1742 at a cost of £2,000.

The house probably originated as a single range late Stuart residence and was later extended to its present quadrangle form.

Weald Manor was the property of the Earls of Shrewsbury until 1811 when it was sold with other extensive holdings in Bampton.

In 1860 the house had been rented to St. Mary's College, and as such provided education for 35 boys in preparation for Universities, Army, Navy, Professional and Mercantile life.

Right, Mr Francis Shergold, the leader of the Bampton Morris Dancers.





Boys of the Royal Ballet School wearing traditional costume for a Morris dance which they will be performing during the annual Folk Festival at the Royal Albert Hall tomorrow and Saturday. The boys have received instruction from the Morris dancers of the Oxfordshire village of Bampton.

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C

*The Misses Pembrey's Establishment;
for Young Ladies,
The Elms, Bampton, Oxon.*

*The Year comprises Three Terms.
Board & Tuition in English,
Eight Guineas Per Term.*

Under Nine Years of Age Seven Guineas Per Term.

Weekly Boarders Six & a half d^s d^s d^s

Under Nine Years of Age Five & a half d^s d^s d^s

Day Boarders Three & a half d^s d^s d^s

Day Pupils One & a half d^s d^s d^s

Musical One & a half Guineas per Term.

French One Guinea d^s d^s

Drawing One d^s d^s d^s

Laundress Fifteen Shillings d^s d^s

Private Instruction in Musical, French and Drawing.

*The House and Premises are spacious and pleasantly situated
with large Gardens.*

*Each Boarder is requested to provide a Pair of Sheets, Towels, Serviettes, a
Dessert Spoon, Fork and Ivory handled Knife, which will
be returned on her leaving the School.*

*One Term's notice or an equivalent required previously to
the removal of a Pupil.*

Sir — I would be deeply grateful if you could help me to obtain information regarding the history of The Elms, Bampton, Oxfordshire.

The School for Young Ladies was run by my father's aunts, the Misses Pembrey, in, I believe, the mid or late 1800s. Photographs of The Elms show it to be a large, handsome, stone building. The present owners of the building can furnish no clues as to its history and inquiries on my behalf to the local vicar and a search of the local church records has produced no trace of the Misses Pembrey. However, I know that my father and his brother as youngsters loathed visiting the place — "All those girls!"

This prospectus, with its mention of guineas,

laundress, serviettes, ivory-handled knives, etc., appears very quaint to American eyes and information as to the history of the school would be received with great interest by descendants of the Pembreys in New York, California, Texas and Australia.

We would like to know, if possible, when the house was built and during which period it was used as a school. Can any of your readers help?

Evelyn C. Feig
(nee Pembrey-Bowl)

75 Henry Street, Box 83,
Brooklyn Heights, N.Y. 11201,
USA



Bampton has shelter from the 'Signals'

Standing in Bampton's new bus shelter are Col. Ted Winn, Commander 1st Signals Group, Army Strategic Command, and Mr. Maurice Clack, chairman of Bampton Parish Council. They are seen at the official handing over ceremony on Saturday.

Bampton residents, sheltering from the winter weather in their fine bus shelter in Broad Street will always have cause to remember the Royal Corps of Signals.

For the shelter, which was handed over to Mr. Maurice Clack, chairman of Bampton Parish Council, by Col. Ted Winn on Saturday, is a present from "The Signals" to the people of Bampton. The gift, in appreciation of 30 years' association with the town, was a farewell one, for on Monday the 3rd Squadron, 14th Regiment, Royal Corps of Signals, which has been stationed at the Weald, Bampton, handed over to No. 90 Signals Group, Royal Air Force.

Bronze plaque

The ceremony, which was held in bright sunshine outside the shelter, attracted a small crowd of townspeople. Col. Winn, Commander 1st Signals Group, Strategic Command, unveiled a bronze plaque in the shelter and thanked the people of Bampton for the kindness, hospitality and understanding throughout the years.

"The association has been a long one, for 30 years ago this month the first Royal Signals came to Bampton," he said. "To the many soldiers posted here, their stay in Bampton was a happy one — and some of them even had the good taste to marry Bampton girls."

Local bride

Winn then mentioned Mr. Albert Watterson, who came to Bampton in 1939 with the 50th Division and was the first to marry a local girl, then Miss Janet Poole. He has settled in the town and works at Smiths Industries.

Accepting the bus shelter, Mr. Clack described it as a most generous and useful gift and reminded everyone that the first "Signals" had arrived in Bampton within 48 hours of the onset of the 1939-45 war.

"Since then they have become part of the parish. We shall always remember 'Bampton Signals'," he said.

Major L. W. Prescott, Officer Commanding at Bampton, Capt. J. S. Howe and a number of the squadron members were present at the ceremony, and a Flight-Lieut. S. Hawkes, who takes over as Commanding Officer of the station for the R.A.F. and who will be living in Bampton. He was welcomed by Mr. Clack, who said that he hoped the association with the R.A.F. would be as long and as happy

as that with the unit now leaving.

Among the visitors was Brig. Sir George Walton (retired), a former Commander of the 50th Division and Air Commodore A. S. Ellerton, who lived in Bampton for 17 years before leaving two years ago.

Residents at the ceremony included Mrs. R. A. Colville and Miss D. G. Thomson, both county council and parish council members, Mrs. F. Coles and Mr. L. Hughes-Owens, Witney Rural District Council representatives, Mr. R. Rouse, vice-chairman of Bampton Parish Council, and members Mr. E. Stroud, Mr. R. L. G. Carter, Mr. John Taylor, Mr. Jack Lawrence and Mrs. A. Taylor.

The Royal Signals at Bampton have a fine record of efficiency and have played a big part in providing an excellent communications service to the Army and R.A.F.

during the past ten years, when the need for constant and reliable communications between the United Kingdom and overseas forces has been of vital importance.

Met. information

Although there has always been an R.A.F. element in residence, the primary role of the Bampton station has been that of the main Army receiving station in the United Kingdom, keeping in constant communication with Army formations throughout the world.

In addition, it has had the responsibility for receiving meteorological information and relaying it to the Meteorological Headquarters at Bracknell from stations throughout the Northern hemisphere. This service has been maintained continuously by the civilian contingent, who will continue to operate alongside their R.A.F. counterparts.



WHO LIVES
THERE THEN?

Anthony Wood

Bampton Town Hall about 1908 when the clock tower was added. A postcard Ethel Moss has in her possession.



The secret's out —Bampton's Big Ben is only 63 years old

IN THE way folk have a habit of doing they told my colleague at Witney, John Logan, that Bampton's Big Ben was 100 years old.

But in fact they need only have looked on the wall of the town hall to find out that the clock had been a landmark in the township for a mere 63 years not a century. Trees obscure it from the gaze of the passer-by.

Found again

But high up on the wall facing down the High Street there is a tablet which says: "The clock on this hall is erected to the memory of Philip Southby, Esq., by his friends and fellow-parishioners in recognition of his public spirit and liberality during a residence of more than 40 years — 1908."

Ethel Moss found it again last weekend when she revisited her birthplace and heaved a sigh of relief. She was only seven or eight when the clock was put up, but couldn't believe that her memory had been playing her tricks.

"I knew Mr Southby well," she says. "He gave me money for the installation of the church chimes and I remember they finished them in a hurry so that he could hear them ringing before he died. It was my impression that that would be about 1908."

"So when I read in the Oxford Mail that the clock was supposed to be 100 years old I knew that couldn't be

THE CLOCK ON THIS HALL
IS ERECTED TO THE MEMORY OF
PHILIP SOUTHBY ESQ^{RE}
BY HIS FRIENDS
AND FELLOW PARISHIONERS
IN RECOGNITION OF
HIS PUBLIC SPIRIT AND LIBERALITY
DURING A RESIDENCE
OF MORE THAN FORTY YEARS.
1908.

And the stone tablet which was later set in the wall.
PAUL ANTHONY climbed the scaffolding at present there to take this picture.

right because it wasn't erected until just after he died. And the tablet proves me right."

Not that it's the only evidence to the clock's antiquity. In her possession she has an undated picture postcard taken by Phil Cooper of Langford, a postmaster who dabbled a bit in photography, which bears the caption: "Town Hall and Southby Memorial Clock."

Those of you who read your Oxford Mail assiduously will know that it looked as if the clock at the centre of

Bampton from her birth in 1900 until 1934, when she married a garage proprietor herself and went to live at 30 Appleton Road, Cumnor, where she has remained ever since.

But she has always maintained close ties with Bampton partly because she has lots of friends and relatives in the township, partly because her father, O. O. Collett, was in his way as much loved and respected a figure as Mr Southby.

He was a jeweller in Broad Street, but was probably better known for his activities in the cycle and motor trade and in fact in 1901 produced the first car to be seen in Bampton. But that's another story of which I'll tell you more anon.

the township would have to go when Bampton Parish Council discovered that it would cost them another £2,000 to restore the clock tower in addition to the £6,000 it was costing them to do up the Town Hall.

But then John Taylor, whose garage in the Square faces the Town Hall, offered to buy the clock, restore it and mount it on the front of his garage where all the townfolk could continue to see it. And that in fact is what has happened.

"It looks very nice there," says Mrs Moss, who lived in

COUNTY



Examining some of the paintings on view at the new permanent art gallery at Bampton are Mr J. L. Hugh-Owens, Mrs A. Manly and Mr S. J. Pickard.

The gallery, which will be open every weekday morning, is the brainchild of Paul Saville, the Oxford artist and art tutor at Alvescot College.

The first exhibition is of 130 pictures and works by about 50 artists living within a 50 miles radius of Bamp-

ton. A number of them are members of the Oxford Arts society, Clanfield Arts Society, Eynsham Arts Association and the Bampton Arts Group, which included its sixth annual exhibition, formerly held in the window of a local shop, in the show.

The centre is on the first floor of the town hall which was recently restored by Bampton Parish Council. It is run by Alvescot College, who also plan a childrens' exhibi-

tion and a local weavers and potters show.

"The centre will be a permanent shop window for local artists," said Mr Saville.

On Friday at a private preview for the artists and the parish councils, the arts centre was officially opened by Mr H. Wilcock, principal of the West Oxfordshire Technical College, Witney, who said the centre was a happy combination of enterprise between the parish council and the college.

College and Council to negotiate use of Bampton hall

ABOUT 100 people, residents of Bampton, attended a parish meeting last Wednesday in the Town's WI Hall to discuss the immediate use of the Hall when the restoration of the shell of the building has been completed.

Members of the Parish Council circulated a newsletter to all parishioners in which details relating to finance were clearly shown, indicating that a large sum of money was required in order to furnish and equip the building for public use.

An approach has been made by the head of the Alvescot College who offered to rent the Upper part of the lower floors of the Hall for a period of 2 to 3 years for a fair rent. All parishioners were invited to attend the meeting and to vote on the question of letting the Hall to the College.

The meeting was presided over by the chairman of the Parish Council, Mr. Ray Carter, who gave an explicit account of the full cost of furnishing the Town Hall for public use, and providing the necessary equipment.

He also outlined the proposals made by the Alvescot College regarding the purposes for which the Hall would be used.

It was proposed to use it for an exhibition centre for displaying the Art work of the students, and as such would be used at regular intervals and times, for inspection by the general public.

It was also proposed that the building would be controlled by a joint committee of representatives of the Parish Council and Alvescot College and that local persons other than the college would be offered the opportunity to exhibit work provided that it conformed to the standard required by the joint committee.

INTEGRATE

Mr. Carter explained that it was hoped that students of the College would integrate and enjoy the life of a small country town. He explained that while it was the desire of all members of the Parish Council to see the Town Hall used eventually by the people of Bampton, the guaranteed income by letting for three years would help in providing a hall of which Bampton might ultimately be proud.

Most people seemed to agree that ideal use of the Town Hall was by Bampton people but a realistic view of the economic situation showed that the letting of the hall for a limited period was a sensible solution towards this end.

A counter-proposal to the motion set out by the Parish Council in the newsletter was proposed by Mr. J. Gascoigne, who proposed that there should be a delay in voting for letting the hall for a period of one year, whilst it was ascertained if the money for furnishing and equipping the building could be found, but it was defeated by a majority.

The original vote of the following motion was then taken:— 'That two of the three rooms in the Town Hall be let to a suitable tenant on a short term lease'. Voting for was 69 and against 11.

Mr. Carter thanked the parishioners for their vote of confidence in the present Parish Council and stated that negotiations would commence shortly with Alvescot College.

Bampton FC

still competing

10.6.71

Having completed the football season, members of Bampton Football Club are now directing their energies in other directions. A series of games and competitions similar to those seen in the television programme "It's a Knock-Out" have been devised and on Sunday afternoon at 2.30 p.m. teams from the surrounding area will compete with each other.

Teams from Aston, Bampton, Alvescot, Brize Norton, Langford, Napier Rovers FC, Carterton, Smith's Industries, FC, and possibly Clanfield and Freeland will compete for a trophy donated by the Aylesbury Mushroom Co. Ltd.



MRS. M. F. DAVEY, who at 84 is one of Bampton's oldest residents, officially opens Bampton Town Hall on Saturday evening after its £6,500 facelift. Also pictured are, left, Mr. Lloyd Hughes-Owens, chairman Bampton Parish Council, and centre Mr. Ray Carter, chairman of the Town Hall Management Committee.

Restored Town Hall re-opened at Bampton

THE WORK of restoring Bampton Town Hall having been completed, the building was officially opened last Saturday evening by Mrs. M. F. Davey, one of Bampton's oldest residents.

Chairman of the Parish Council, Mr. L. Hughes-Owens, welcomed the guests who included the chairman of the Rural Council, chairman of local councils, the Rev. and Mrs. Selwyn Taborn, Dr. and Mrs. J. Bullen, Mr. Tilley of Alvescot College and members of the Parish Council and their wives.

Mr. Hughes-Owens spoke of the history of the Town Hall which stood on ground inhabited by men for 2,000 years and of the time when Bampton was listed amongst the thirty more important towns of the country.

The Town Hall, which was built in the latter half of the last century, had fallen into disuse and had become so dilapidated that there was some fear for its future.

Two years ago, the chairman of the Parish Council, Mr. Maurice Clack had called a public meeting to decide what could be done about the building and the parish quickly voted their opinion that above all the Town Hall must remain.

The necessary £6,500 needed to put the building into safe order was agreed should be received from increased rate charges.

The next chairman of the Parish Council, Mr. R. Carter drew up the plans for the restoration and aided by Mr. Ian Walker who like Mr. Carter gave his services free of charge, supervised the work done.

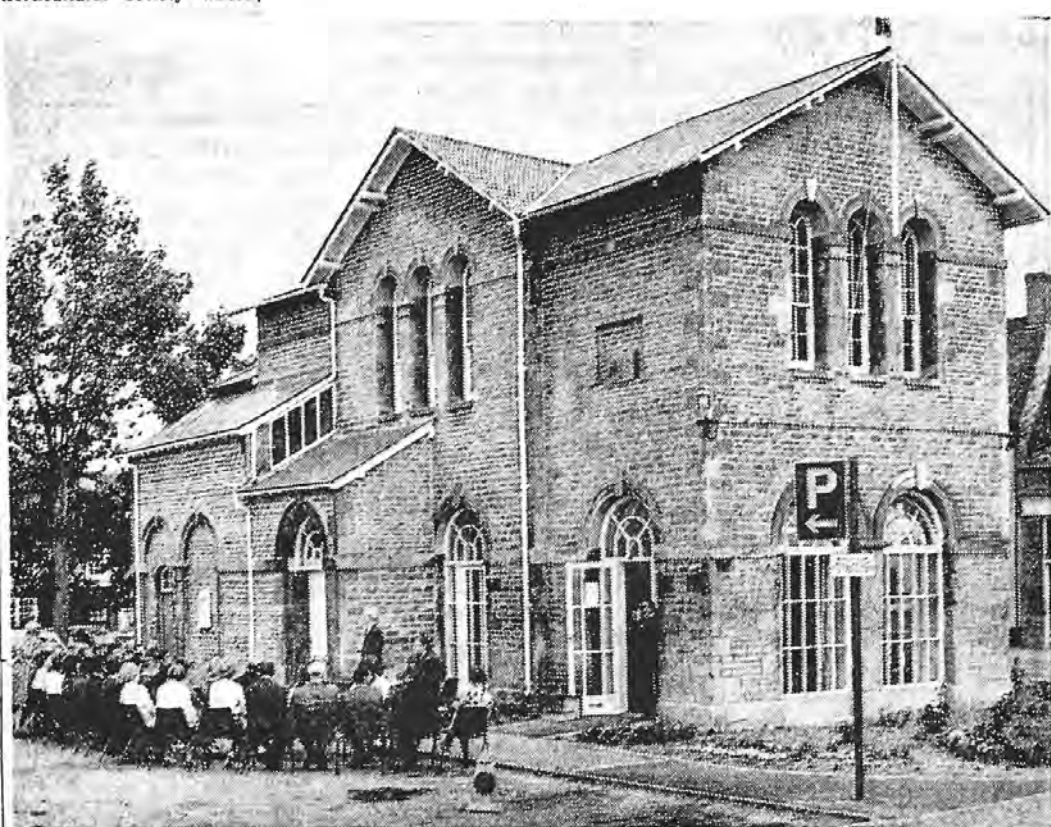
Mr. Hughes-Owens thanked the many people who had helped including the Restoration Fund Committee, the members of which had worked to provide the interior extras, the Bampton Horticultural Society whose

members had started a garden around the hall and Mr. Eric Stroud who had paid for the erection of a garden seat outside the building and which was proving very popular.

Mr. Hughes-Owens introduced Mrs. Davey, who as Miss Staples Brown had come to live in Bampton as a small child and had been an active and lively member of the parish.

Mrs. Davey remarked on the pleasure that the restored building afforded her and she recalled many of the earlier activities which had taken place inside it.

After the opening ceremony guests were invited inside to look around and enjoy refreshments which had been provided by members of the Parish Council and their wives.



AN EXTERIOR view of the hall following its renovation.

10.6.71

2

Letterbox

Ignoring the wishes of Bamptonians

Sir, — A well-attended parish meeting last year firmly rejected suggestions that Bampton Town Hall should be sold, let or pulled down. The parishioners made it clear that they wanted the building resorted for use by Bampton residents as a meeting hall and for social activities. With these purposes in mind the meeting agreed that a loan should be taken and repaid from the rates.

Now, the parish council, perhaps modelling themselves on the present Government, have chosen to ignore the wishes of the residents. Most of the money is still coming from the rates but at the council meeting last week it was agreed that, once the repairs are carried out, the hall will be let to the Anglo-American College as an art centre for students.

A remark heard in the street will probably best sum up the feelings of many parishioners:

"They are having the money from us to get it in good repair but for what use the building will be to us now it might just as well be demolished and carted away."

May I remind all newly elected councillors of the old saying "once bitten, twice shy," for I feel certain that the majority of Bamptonians will long remember this particular bite.

T. P. Govier

15 New Road,
Bampton.

June 7, 1971.

New Fire Station opened in Bampton

BAMPTON'S NEW Fire Station was officially opened on Tuesday evening by the vice-chairman of the Oxfordshire County Council, Alderman H. W. Howland, before a gathering of officials of many of the local authorities covered by the men from Bampton.

The new station, in New Road, gives the 13 men at Bampton, all retained firemen under the command of Sub Officer Arthur Beckley, a splendid new headquarters with adequate facilities for training, including a tower for hose training, and replaces the old fire station under Bampton Town Hall.

The guests were welcomed by the Chief Fire Officer for Oxfordshire, Mr. T. J. White, and he particularly welcomed two German retained firemen at present on a visit to Oxford, one from Bonn and the other from Gau-Algesheim, who had come along with other Fire Officers to the opening.

Mr. White reminded his audience that the Fire Station at Bampton covered a very wide area around the village. Last year the men had turned out 111 times to fires and road accidents, and this year had already turned out 87 times.

Opening the building by cutting a tape across the front of the fire station, Alderman Howland paid tribute to all the people who had helped build it, including the Fire Brigade Committee, the county architects and the builders who had made such a pleasant building.

TREMENDOUS ENTHUSIASM

Alderman Howland said that the opening ceremony gave him an opportunity of paying a sincere tribute to the whole of the personnel of the Fire Services in Oxfordshire. The enthusiasm they showed was tremendous, he said.

He also paid tribute to employers who allowed their men to drop everything to turn out in emergencies, as well as the men who so quickly dropped everything in their normal job to get to a fire or accident. "The record turn-out for this station, I have been told, is 1 minute 20 secs." said Alderman Howland, and this reflected great credit on the men at Bampton.

"This new Fire Station at Bampton will not increase your efficiency, as that would be impossible", Alderman Howland told the men of the station who were on parade for the opening "but it will allow you to be efficient, more easily."

The chairman of the Fire Brigade Committee, Councillor T. E. Worth thanked the ladies for providing refreshments, and after 10-year-old Sally Robinson, daughter of Divisional Officer Dennis Robinson presented a bouquet to Mrs. Worth, the company adjourned inside the station to inspect it and to enjoy refreshments.

FUTURE USE OF BAMPTON TOWN HALL

At the request of a number of parishioners, Bampton Parish Council called a public meeting recently in the Town Hall, to discuss the immediate use of the hall after the restoration of the shell of the building had been completed.

A news letter had been circulated to all parishioners giving details of finance and saying that an offer had been made by Alvescot College for the hiring of the upper and part of the lower floor of the Town Hall for a period of two to three years.

About 100 people attended the meeting and the parish council chairman, Mr Ray Cater presided.

Mr Carter gave an account of the cost of furnishing the Town Hall for public use and said Alvescot College proposed to use the Town Hall as an exhibition centre for displaying the art work of the students and as such it would be open to the people of Bampton. It had also been proposed that the building would be controlled by a joint committee of representatives of the parish council and Alvescot College and that the exhibitions would be open at regular intervals for the public, also that local persons other than the college students could exhibit at regular times providing that their work conformed to the stan-

dard required by the joint committee.

Mr Carter said if this offer from Alvescot College were accepted the guaranteed income for the next three years would enable the parish council to provide a Town Hall of which Bampton would ultimately be proud.

Most people at the meeting agreed that the ideal would be the use of the Town Hall by Bampton residents but realistic economies showed that the letting of the hall for a limited period was a sensible solution towards achieving this end.

A counter proposal to the motion set out by the parish council was proposed by Mr I. Gascoigne who asked for a delay in voting for a period of a year while it was ascertained if the money required to equip and furnish the Town Hall could be found. On a vote the counter-proposal was defeated by a very heavy majority.

The vote on the motion "That two of the three rooms in the Town Hall be let to a suitable tenant on a short term lease," was carried by 69 for and 11 against.



Fire engines at the Bakery, Bampton, on Wednesday.

Bampton bakery damaged by fire

CUSTOMERS AT Constables bakery, Market Square, Bampton, will be served with sliced loaves today instead of their usual old-fashioned loaves after fire badly damaged part of the bakery yesterday afternoon.

The sliced loaves are being brought in from the manufacturers to help the many hundreds of customers which

rely on Constables for their bread.

Fire engines from Witney, Bampton and Burford went to

the blaze which was discovered by Mr. Kenneth East, an employee who noticed thick smoke pouring out of a ventilator. "It was probably started by an oven overheating," he said.

TWO FLOORS

Firemen wearing breathing apparatus went inside the smoke filled building to tackle the flames which badly damaged part of the ground and first floors as well as the roof.

Part of the slate roof had to be torn away so firemen could kill the fire in the attic.

This is the second fire that this small firm, which was established in 1895, has suffered this year. A few weeks ago, an oven had burner trouble and started a small blaze.

Mrs. T. A. Constable, owner of the bakery, said this morning that none of the main ovens are in use at the moment but a small spare oven should be working tomorrow and things will be getting back to normal. "We have got things organised," she said.

MEETING

For the first time for many years Bampton residents were able to meet for the annual parish meeting in the Town Hall on Wednesday evening. About 35 people attended and were welcomed by the chairman of the parish council Mr. L. Hughes-Owens. He said how pleased the council were that repairs to the causeway at Mill Green had been completed after much effort and that finally some modifications to the road at the "black spot" Windmill Corner had finally been made. There were still some parts of Bampton that were in need of attention but he assured the meeting that the council would continue to press for these to be dealt with. He also stated that he had thoroughly enjoyed his year of office, particularly as he had been backed with loyal, cheerful and efficient help from the parish councillors and the clerk Mr. John Ackerman.

The statement of accounts were presented by the clerk and were approved.

In presenting the report of the parochial charities, Mrs. F. Henly said that last year in Bampton 25 married couples and 58 single persons had received vouchers for goods for £3 and £2 respectively, whilst in Aston seven vouchers had been distributed at Christmas. She explained however that re-organisation by the Charity Commission would mean that the name would be changed to the Community Charities and that next year the area would include Lew, Bampton, Aston and Shifford and that distribution would only be able to be made to needy people—not only at Christmas but at any time during the year should need arise.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Mrs. Carruthers, the appointed representative of the parish council to the Board of Managers of the Primary school gave a report of the activities of the school and informed the meeting that funds were being made available for building extensions to the new school for the year 74/75 when on completion the school Annexe in the Old School would be closed.

In her report as County Councillor, Miss D. Graeme Thomson said that she was anxious to set the minds of the council at rest and to assure them that in this year's programme provision had been made for repairs to be made to Aston road, an area which had been the subject of much correspondence between the P.C. and the County Council. It was hoped too that the footpath in Bushey Row would be completed.

REORGANISATION

Miss Thomson then outlined the reorganisation and changes which are to be made in local government when the new Oxfordshire will almost double in population. Each representative will serve a far greater area than at present. She also spoke of the large number of services given by the County Council and she stressed that if pressed for more services these could only be provided by higher rate charges.

Speaking as the R.D.C. representative, Mrs. F. Cole said that changes were to be made in the District Council from June 7 when five districts will join with the R.D.C. and the population of the new area will be almost double that of the present R.D.C. There will be 45 representatives for the new council as opposed to the 4 who serve the R.D.C. at present. Some of the main differences will be in Planning and Development control and also the general public will be encouraged to attend all council meetings and most committee meetings.

In the absence of Cllr. Mr. M. Clark, chairman of the footpaths sub-committee Mr. Mr. Pickard said that owing to lack of support this committee had now been disbanded but would be formed again if sufficient people showed interest. This sparked off some lively discussion showing that walking is not a lost pastime and that the formation of a new sub-committee should be forthcoming.

PLAYING AREA

The secretary of the Playing Field sub-committee, Mrs. H. Pickard gave a report of the work done for the playing area which included the provision of new apparatus and substantial repairs to existing equipment. A flowering shrub hedge had been provided along the roadside edge of the field to provide a pleasant but safe barrier for the children. She asked parents to urge their children to refrain from scattering litter in the field and to either use the litter bin provided or to take their rubbish home with them. The committee was greatly concerned regarding the amount

of broken glass which was scattered, particularly in the sand pit. She said that the committee were to make a mass attack on the sand pit on the next evening when they were going to remove all the debris, including dog fouling.

Several people present asked if it were an offence for dogs to use the playing field and the committee was urged to erect notices asking that dogs be kept on leads. The chairman of the P.C. promised that this matter would be investigated at the next meeting of the sub-committee.

BURIAL GROUND

Cllr. Mr. Hughes-Owens speaking on behalf of the Burial Committee said that the major change to be made during the year was that Bampton would be wholly responsible for the Burial Ground and not as previously with the R.D.C. He also said that in future the only kind of memorials permitted in the Cemetery will be headstones and that curb-stones will not be allowed. This is mainly due to the damage done to grass mowers and the heavy expenditure on constantly replacing the grass cutters.

In the "Open Session" of the meeting, there was some discussion about entering for the "Best Kept Village" competition and it was agreed that Bampton should enter but that steps should be taken to ensure that every resident played his part in keeping the village tidy.

There was a great deal of discussion regarding the future of the Town Hall now that Alvescot College no longer wishes to lease the Upper Hall. In order to maintain the fabric of the building it was necessary that a regular income be obtained from letting the available rooms and it was preferable that this should be of long term lets rather than casual nights. The meeting asked if local advertisements could be placed so that residents might have the chance of renting the Hall for local functions. This was agreed.

Ghosts

... and things that go bump in the night hereabouts

WEST Oxfordshire somehow lends itself to the supernatural.

On a bright sunny day, its honey-coloured cottages, ancient dry-stone walling and profusion of greenery is beautiful.

But come a dull wintry day, with a splattering of rain or hint of mist, and the atmosphere changes dramatically. Little imagination is needed to bring back the area's history — and its ghosts.

Rooms at the Talbot Hotel, Bampton, no longer have any keys; Horace has taken them. Normally anyone wandering along the landing and removing the keys would at least get reprimanded.

But Horace is rather special. He's the ghost of a little old man who emerges from a cupboard that was formerly an attic room.

Mrs Jean Elliott, the landlady, didn't believe in ghosts when she moved into the Talbot. It wasn't long before she changed her mind.

"He's definitely there," she said. "He just walks up and down the landing now

and occasionally knocks on one particular door.

"But he's a happy ghost. This is a very old rambling house with many nooks and crannies, but I have never once felt nervous here. Horace really is one of the family now.

Horace is no stranger at the Talbot. He's been roaming fairly inconspicuously around the hotel for very many years.

In the spring of 1958, a Major Zeigler, from the USAF base at Brize Norton, and his wife, were staying at the hotel.

In the middle of one night Mrs Zeigler suddenly awoke and saw a shadowy figure emerge from a cupboard, glide across the floor, and pass out of the room towards the landing.

She was quite convinced she had seen a figure, though she was unable to distinguish any features and it made no sound.

In the 1950s, the ghost was heard by the landlord at the time, Mr D. V. Wright. He was in the bar by himself one evening, polishing glasses,

when he heard a man's measured tread on the floor above.

He paused to listen and the steps also paused and then continued. After a while he went upstairs to investigate but found nothing.

Mr Wright heard later from a predecessor that the ghost was that of a little old man who was supposed to come from a small unused room under the roof which was reached through a tiny door in one of the hotel bedrooms.

It is interesting that at the time of Mr Wright's experience, considerable structural alterations were being made at the Talbot.

Among them was the walling-off and conversion into a bedroom of a square landing on to which the stairs from the small attic room led.

The attic was rotten, remote and unusable, and it was decided to seal off the bottom of the staircase and turn it into a cupboard for the bedroom.

It was this bedroom in which Mrs Zeigler, who knew nothing of the ghost, was staying when she saw the figure emerge from a cupboard.

Then in 1960, Mr Roderick Blaine had been landlord for about eight weeks when he and his wife, who were alone in the bar, heard the heavy tread of a man in the corridor above their heads. There was no one up there.

Before this incident, Mr and Mrs Blaine had no knowledge of the ghost at the hotel.

It was around the same time that a guest at the Talbot was so disturbed by walking noises outside his bedroom that he got out of bed to confront the prowler. There was no prowler.

Bampton it seems is — or was — rather ghost riddled. The Rev. J. A. Giles, who wrote an account of the village more than a century ago, mentioned a haunted house to the north of the church. The house was plagued by a prowling spirit

for years until someone thought of putting a new roof on the building.

He also wrote of the Cow Leas Corner, at the Clanchfield-Faringdon crossroads, where suicides were buried: their ghosts used to meet there for a chat.

A cottage at Manor Farm, Lew, near Bampton, was reputed to have a haunted room as recently as 1971, when it was occupied by American airmen and their wives.

One of the wives, Mrs J. Moretz, told a reporter: "We call Sergeant Meier's room the haunted room."

"The bell which hangs outside the door has been heard to ring for no reason, and our Alsatian dog growls whenever it is near the room."

At Chipping Norton, the tower of St. Mary's Church is supposed to house a ghost. References to the tower ghost dates back to the time of Henry VIII and Edward VI, when there was considerable opposition in the Cotswolds to the religious changes of the Reformation.

Among the leaders of a rising in 1549, was the then Vicar of Chipping Norton. The rebels were quickly dispersed by an army of 1,500 mercenary troops and the vicar was condemned to be hanged in his own church tower.

Some believe his ghost haunts the tower to this day.

Minster Lovell Hall, the ruined home of the Lovells, is believed to be haunted by the ghost of Lord Lovell, a supporter of Lambert Simnel in 1487.

After the Battle of Stoke, he lived in hiding, locked in a secret room and looked after by one faithful servant. When the servant died, his master starved to death.

In 1718, when the house was being rebuilt, a vault was found. In it was a skeleton sitting at a table with a skeleton dog at its feet.

Only a few miles away at Burford there is a haunting

by a terrifying apparition said to take the form of a black cloud. If you drive through it, you experience a feeling of utter terror. And also, according to a recently published book — Haunted Britain, by Antony D. Hippisley Cox — animals are driven frantic by it.

The priory and Old Rectory both have long established reputations for being "very haunted", says the book. Telekinetic phenomena, unearthly screams, sounds of singing near the monks' old graveyard, and the tolling of a bell at 2 a.m. are reported.

Apparitions include an old-fashioned gamekeeper and a little brown monk.

Just over six years ago Paul Littlechild, then landlord of the Railway Inn, Eynsham, felt forced to leave his pub.

There was, he said, a ghost in the cellar — it was commonly believed the cellar had been haunted for 100 years by the ghost of a man who was murdered there.

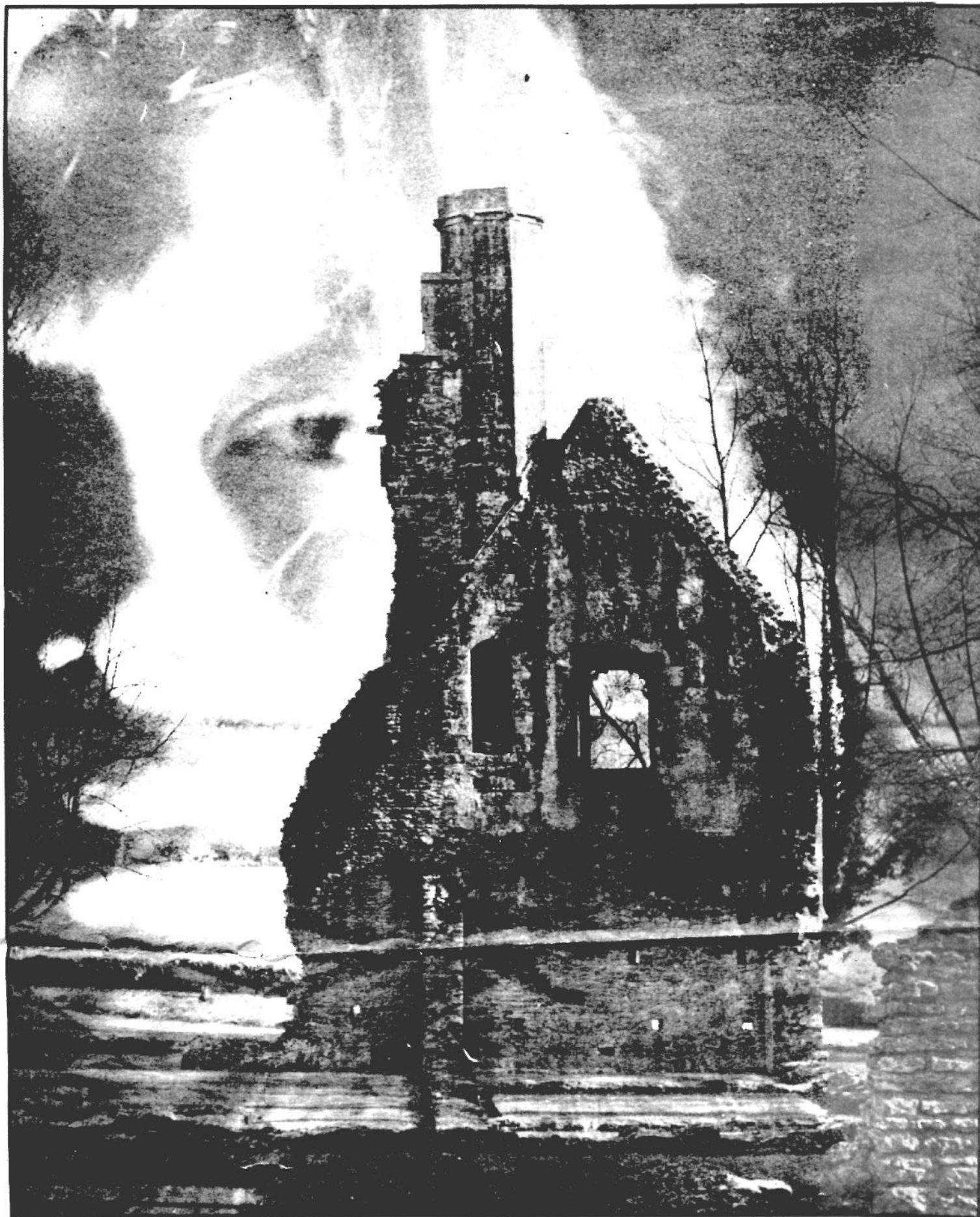
For no apparent reason strange things kept happening. Beer suddenly stopped flowing because the pressure turned itself off; the fridge also frequently switched itself off; and, at night, the cellar doors rattled.

Woodstock, completely steeped in history can, surprisingly, boast only one supernatural series of events. Not so long ago there were reports of a poltergeist in a room at the Bear Hotel. Lights have been switched on, articles moved and drawers opened by unseen forces. Footsteps have echoed in empty corridors.

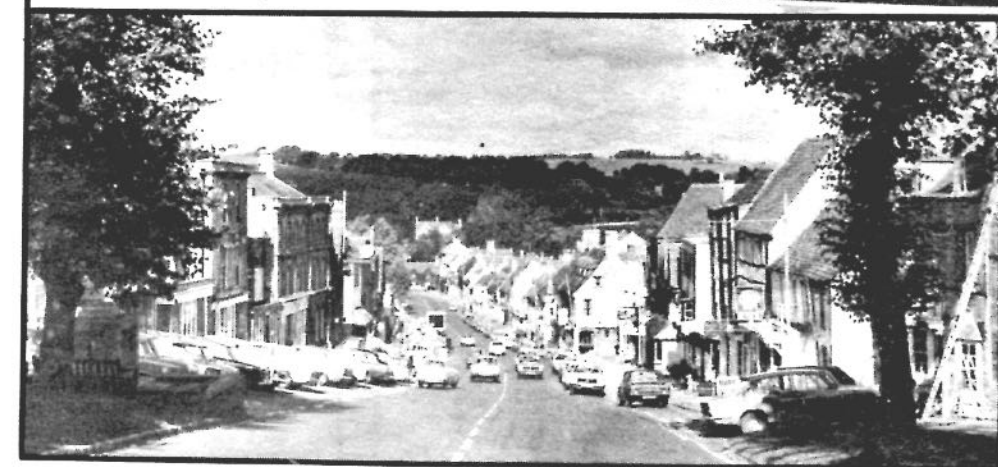
Whether or not you believe in ghosts is immaterial. If you have an open mind on the matter you cannot discount the stories of quite a number of ordinary, commonsense folk who believe they have seen or heard something extraordinary.

These tales must, at least, make you wonder — and watchful.

ANNE EDWARDS



Minster Lovell



Top: The Talbot Hotel where Horace lives

Bottom: Burford, but no sign of the terrifying apparition



Sub-Officer Arthur H. Beckley, of Bampton Fire Station, with his son Peter, wife Thelma and daughter Lynn after receiving a BEM at Kidlington on Friday night.

Bampton fireman gets BEM for his work

REGULAR and part-time members of the Oxfordshire Fire Service came in for high praise on Friday night from Col. Sir John Thomson, the Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire.

They provide an efficient service on which the whole electorate depends, he said.

"All in the county are immensely grateful for what you do and we admire the way you do it," Sir John told a parade of regular and part-time fire-

men who received awards at the county fire service HQ at Kidlington.

He presented the British Empire Medal to Sub-Officer Arthur Beckley, of South Side, Church Street, Bampton, who has been officer in charge of Bampton Fire Station since 1960.

Mr Beckley, who already holds the brigade's long-service award, was told the BEM was awarded for long and devoted service. He joined the NFS as a fireman at Bampton in 1946.

Long Service Medals were also presented to Station Of-

ficer Ronald Lee, stationed at Kidlington; Station Officer Robert Avery of Burford; Sub-Officer John Webb of Goring, who is employed in the control room of the Berkshire and Reading Fire Brigade; and Leading Fireman Peter Spencer of Bicester.

Diploma awards from the Institute of Fire Engineers were also presented to Station Officer Thomas Percy and Sub-Officer Terence Letts, both of Kidlington.

Also present was Coun. J. Hannis, acting chairman of the county fire brigade committee; and the Chief County Fire Officer, Mr Timothy White.

Cocoa tin

IT SEEMS that Onesipherous Oliver Collett, the energetic inventor of the Bampton Voiturette in 1901, the first motor car to be seen thereabouts, did not stop at mechanical vehicles when using his ingenuity.

Ethel Moss of Appleton Road, Cumnor, the daughter of O. O. Collett — Onesipherous, I had better explain, again means bringer of benefit, from the Greek — popped in to see me the other day with another of his clever ideas.

"I remember during the First World War when everyone was collecting the Christmas parcels for 1916 to send to the Bampton soldiers my father heard that the lads in the trenches were making tea in cocoa tins over candles.

"He thought he could make it easier for them by putting a hollow funnel up through the middle of the tin to get the heat round beter," Ethel recalls. "So we got everyone to give us their spare tins and my father and mother and I spent ages soldering the new bits in and we stuck some wire on top as a holder.

"We worked in his workshop until late in the evening sometimes and packed 120 of them off to the Tommies as our family contribution to the parcel, along with the fruit cakes and the tobacco from everyone else. It was a good idea, too, because several of the men when they came back said they had been glad to have the Collett cocoa tins."

BAMPTON

Wives' Club.—An interesting talk and demonstration of wood and wood products was given by Mr. R. Griffiths of Brize Norton at the meeting of the Wives' Club on Wednesday evening. Mr. Griffiths showed wood of various grains and colours and his creations of jewellery, animals etc. were greatly admired. He was thanked by the chairman, Mrs. C. Richens. Arrangements were made for a group trip to the Wyvern theatre early in April and it was agreed that members of the club should help with a house-to-house collection in aid of the Dr. Barnardo National Campaign in March. Refreshments were organised and served by Mrs. R. Ayrton and the monthly competition was won by Mrs. D. Green, R. Ayrton and J. Woodhouse.

Youth Club. — Inter-house knock-out competitions were held at the Youth Club on Wednesday evening, and the following were winners: Table tennis, Gordon Walker (runner-up Richard Buckingham); billiards, Gordon Walker (Kevin Bradley); table football, Malcolm Walker (Gordon Walker); darts, Kevin Bradley (Andrew Clarke). Wednesday was also the last evening for the club's leader, Mr. John Anderson, who has been appointed assistant leader at the Carterton Youth Club. Mr. Anderson has been associated with the Bampton club for 10 years, firstly as a member of the management committee, then chairman of that committee and club leader for the past five years. The club wished him well in his new appointment.

7.3.75



SOME of the children in the audience who watched Bampton W.I.'s pantomime "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp" in the WI Hall, Bampton, last Wednesday and Thursday.

VELLY GOOD INDEED

The Women's Institute was packed to capacity on Wednesday and Thursday evening for the WI Drama Group's production of their annual pantomime.

This year "Aladdin" was the chosen piece and written by K. O. Samuel. The traditional story was carefully adhered to throughout, to the great delight of the many children in the audience.

Playing "Aladdin", Carol Court made a winsome principal boy, with a charming singing voice and her "princess" played by Sally Verdon made a pretty picture. Comedy was supplied by Sylvia Barney in the role of "Widow Twanky", Edna Amos as the "Wicked Uncle", Ann Irvin as "Sing-Sing", and Audrey Court as "Mustapha".

The children playing the part of Chinese girls added much to the production, with a sense of fun and much vivacity and two efforts by Maxine Court, a wee eight-year-old, received great ovations.

Scenery and lighting were used to good effect and the production was dressed quite lavishly. Also taking part were Pauline Woolliams, Judith Smith, Evelyn Godwin, Wendy Pierce (who also performed a classical dance), Florence Lovell, Betty Collet, Maxine Court, Linda Amos, Helen Woolliams and Debbie Broome. The pianist throughout was Vera Elward and the pantomime was produced by Hilda Pickard.

£80.67 was realised towards the cost of redecorating the Institute Hall.



THREE of the characters from Bampton W.I.'s pantomime "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp", performed last Wednesday and Thursday in the village. Left to right, "Aladdin", Carol Court; the "Wicked Uncle", Edna Amos, and "Princess Beldroubadour", Sally Verdon.



"WIDOW TWANKEY", played by Sylvia Barney, and "Sing-Sing", played by Ann Irvin, in a scene from Bampton W.I.'s pantomime, "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp" at the WI Hall, last Wednesday and Thursday.

Trees will live in memory of Bampton boys



Two trees which were planted on Friday afternoon at Bampton, will be a memorial to two boys from the town who were victims of the school coach crash in February.

Some of many people who were there are seen watching one being planted by Mr H. W. Pooley, headmaster of Wood Green School, Witney, where the boys were pupils.

The trees, of the tulip variety, were provided by Bampton parish council, and have been placed in the playing fields in New Road.

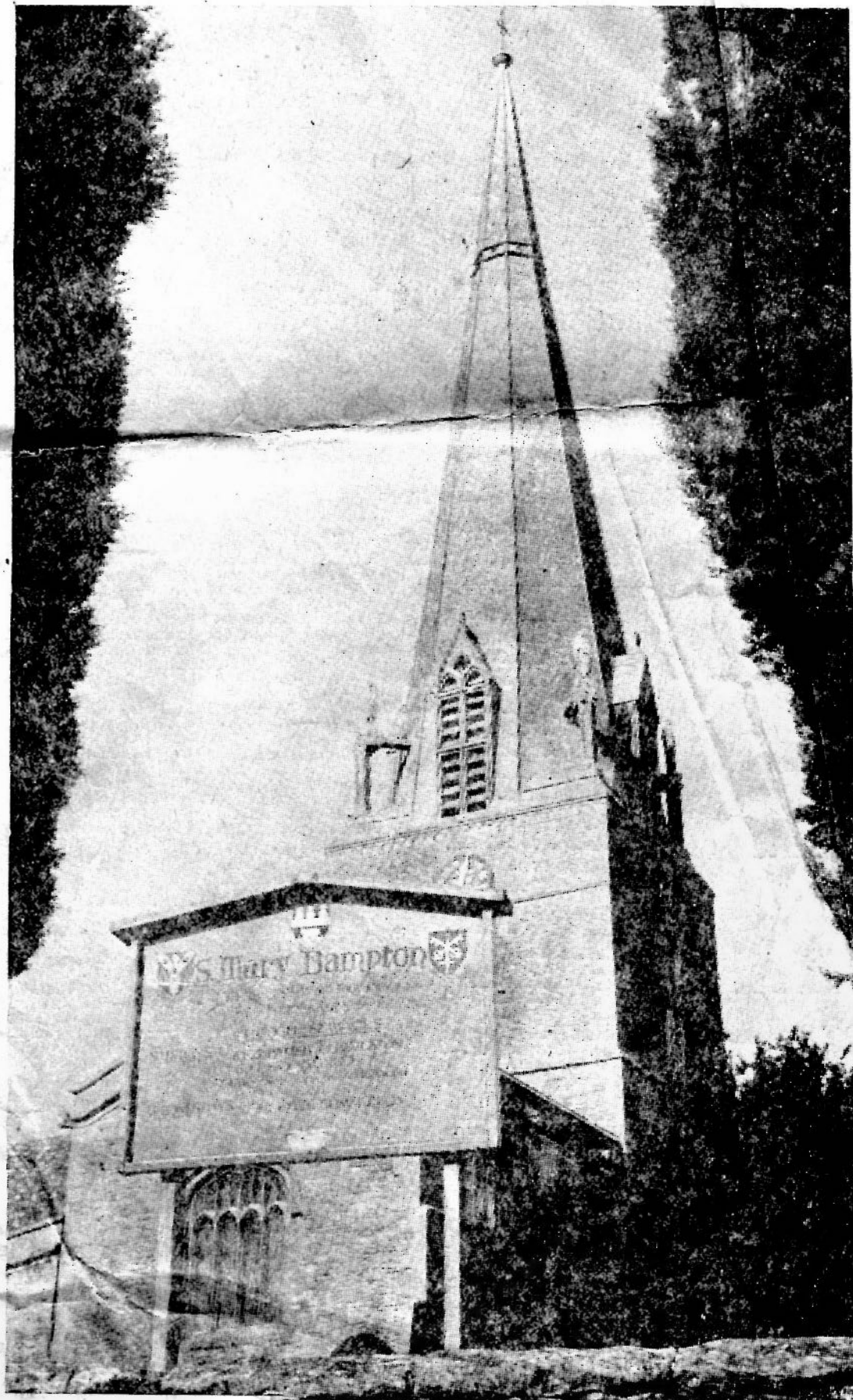
A plaque on each tree bears the respective names of the boys — Gary Gerhardt, 14, and Alec White, 16. They died following a road accident in which their school coach was involved a quarter of a mile from Bampton at the end of their journey home in a snowstorm. A Clanfield boy was a third victim.

Mr Pooley said the trees were a visual and living memorial, and he was delighted they had been chosen instead of cold stone or metal by which to remember the boys.

Mr R. Carter, chairman of the parish council, said he hoped everyone would treasure the trees. The Vicar of Bampton, the Rev. J. Selwyn Taborn, offered prayers.

Alec's parents, Mr and Mrs P. White, of Mercury Close, and Gary's foster-parents, Mr and Mrs J. Ellis, of New Road, and members of the parish council attended the planting ceremony.

A MOVE TO CEMENT BAMPTON'S PAST FIRMLY IN PLACE



ST. MARY'S CHURCH at Bampton.

IF ALL goes as planned, Bampton will be designated a Conservation Area by West Oxfordshire District Council in April.

In the words of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971, it is 'an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character of appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.'

At the local consultation stage, the Council will progress with the County and Parish Councils, about the designation.

If the plan goes through the Parish Council will probably set up a Conservation Area advisory committee to obtain the views of the public, and liaise with the planning department of the district council on proposals for new development, and schemes for enhancing the village.

The District Council are producing a pamphlet laying out details about the proposed conservation area which will be on sale for a few pence.

Bampton was one of the primary Saxon settlements in the area and in the 11th century was the only place in the county outside Oxford where a market was recorded.

Despite this, Bampton never flourished probably because of its relative isolation and inaccessibility. In the 17th and 18th centuries the town was famed for its gloves and sheepskin products and was acquiring a reputation as a genteel centre in good sporting country.

Bampton's weakness, however, was its isolation and, surrounded by stretches of common, it was given the name of Bampton-in-the-Bush. By the time efforts were made to improve its roads during the 19th century the town failed to compete with better placed centres and it gradually relapsed to the status of a large village.

FINE EXAMPLE
At least three medieval buildings remain. The earliest is the fine cruciform church of St. Mary which is one of the largest, finest and most impressive churches in the county. Largely rebuilt about 1270 the church retains evidence of late Saxon or early Norman work in its tower.

Nearby stands the Deanery, the house of the Dean and Chapter of Exeter to which Bampton had been annexed in 1069; it still contains a 14th century nucleus but was much altered in the 17th century.

On the opposite bank of the Highmoor Brook lies Ham Court with a most substantial remains of the gatehouse of the castle built by Aymer de Valence in 1315 and purchased by the Earl of Pembroke in the same year.

The above mentioned buildings, and many other architecturally interesting premises in the village are recorded on the Statutory list of Listed Buildings registered in 1955. Most of these premises will be enveloped by the boundaries of the conservation area and they will be safe through legislation and the knowledge that the aim of the district council is to protect the essential character of the village, whilst encouraging changes and development which will keep it flourishing and alive.

CHARACTER

The character of the village is created by the low scale of the buildings which line the three wide main streets which converge onto the central triangular market place.

The District Council describes Bampton thus: "It did not develop in any planned way and so retains a rural simplicity. Long lengths of dry stone walling link the buildings and enclose their plots and a large number of trees tend to bring the surrounding country right into the centre of the village."

Some houses, such as Weald Manor, attain a style and dignity reflecting the wealth of their first owner. The Town Hall, built in 1940 in an attempt to increase the facilities of the town, stands isolated in the centre of the Market Square.

Church View, the old Grammar school, was founded in 1635 by Robert Veysey, a woollen merchant, and was completed in 1653.

When designated a Conservation area, Bampton will join the ranks of those towns and villages in West Oxfordshire which are already protected by this legislation.

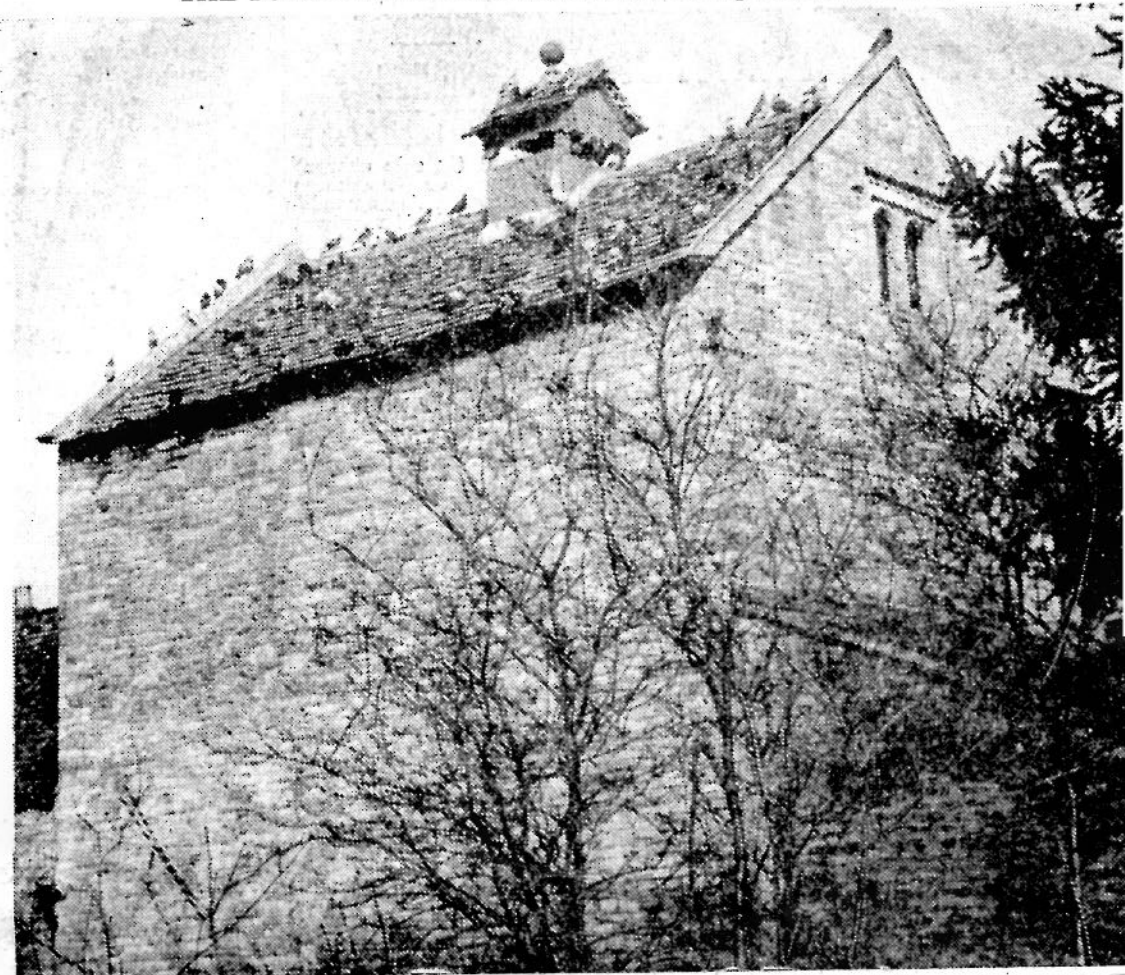
A TRIO

Witney and Burford designated outstanding conservation areas in connection with European Architectural Heritage year. Witney was originally designated in 1968 and Burford in 1970.

Bampton, near Burford, was designated in 1970 as was Chipping Norton, and Charlbury was made a conservation area in 1974. Bampton will be the first conservation area to be designated by West Oxfordshire District Council since it came into existence in April last year after local government reorganisation.



THE TOWN HALL and market house in Bampton's main square.



ONE of the old Dovecotes, complete with modern day tenants.



THE picturesque Lime Tree houses.



THE HIGH STREET, many of whose buildings have been listed.



THE OLD Grammar School at Church View.



THE DEANERY, situated behind the Church.

Firemen trapped under engine

TWO BURFORD FIREMEN were trapped on Tuesday night after their fire engine overturned in driving rain and gale force winds near Bampton.

Four of the crew crawled out of the fire engine unhurt but shaken.

The other two had to wait for half-an-hour until their colleagues in the fire service's accident vehicle from Kidlington could release them.

Fireman Brian Wood and

Fireman Alfred Hitchcock were taken to the Radcliffe Infirmary. Mr Hitchcock was comfortable with a shoulder injury and Mr Wood, who has head and leg injuries, was satisfactory yesterday.

The other four, Leading Fireman Leo Ciosk and Firemen Frederick Blackwell, Charles Williams and Grevill

Wain helped their colleagues to release the trapped men.

The crash happened on the Brize Norton to Bampton road 200 yards on the Bampton side of the Lew turn.

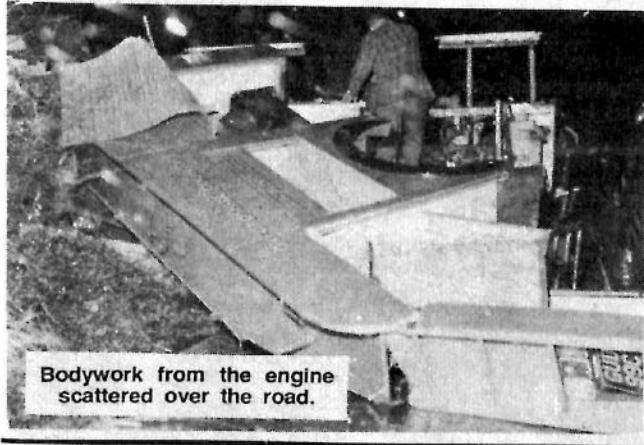
The engine veered across the road, mounted the grass verge, smashed into a telephone pole and struck and uprooted a tree before finally turning on its side next to a hedge.

A motorist drove into Bampton to tell the crew there what had happened. The Burford men had been on the way to stand-by at Bampton while the Bampton crew dealt with a chip-pan fire at the Cotswold Grill Cafe.

Sub-officer Arthur Beckley and his men rushed to the scene and radioed for a doctor, ambulance and other help. Dr Landray from Bampton went to the scene and gave first aid.

Mr Timothy White, Oxfordshire's Chief Fire Officer, said late on Tuesday night that his men at the scene had reported that weather conditions were shocking with torrential rain and terrific winds.

"When it was found that the Burford crew were not required the control room at Kidlington tried to turn them back, but radio contact could not be established."



Bodywork from the engine scattered over the road.



The wrecked cab of the fire engine after it was righted.
(Pictures: Peter Farr)

The fun of Bampton fair...

Friday, August 25th 1972.

Anthony Wood

Doubtless the crowds will be flocking to Bampton tomorrow evening as usual for the township's third annual chariot race.

But as an occasion I can't imagine it will begin to compare with the junket they used to hold at this time of year 70 years ago. "People used to try to get their holidays to coincide with Bampton Horse Fair," recalls Mrs Ethel Moss of Appleton Road, Cumnor.

"It was the big event of the year and everybody looked forward to it. Girls in service, young men who had

gone away to find work, they all used to come home for it. And people from miles around used to walk to it or ride over on their bicycles."

A little before 6 p.m. on the evening of August 24 a policeman would walk to the end of each main street. Then as the church clock chimed the hour, cheered on by the watching crowds, the show people with their caravans would race into the township to secure the best pitches in the market square.

Some drinks

The tradesmen used to bolt their doors and barricade their windows because they knew the showmen might come to blows if not now, then later when they had a few ales under their belts.

But to a little girl like Mrs Moss and the scores of other children who lined the streets it was simply a thrilling spectacle as they spurred on their horses and fought to manoeuvre their heavy vehicles on to the vacant lots.

Then as the young spectators watched excitedly they would start erecting their booths. In 1899 the big attractions were Taylor's Biograph Exhibition — a forerunner of the cinematograph — and Madame Levita and her troop of performing crocodiles and serpents. The following year it was Phillips' steam horses lit up by electricity.

But the fair didn't really get down to serious business until the following morning when the horse dealers and breeders took their places at the hitching posts which had been erected for the occasion in Bridge Street and the donkey and Welsh pony drovers set up shop outside the church.

It was a big fair, says Mrs Moss, as important in its way as Chipping Norton Sheep Fair, and all sorts of prospective buyers came to it: far-

mers looking for fresh carthorses, tradesmen anxious to purchase sturdy cobs and mares to pull their delivery vehicles, well-to-do family men seeking reliable mounts for themselves, or their sons and daughters.

August 25 was officially Show Day when — I presume — the vendors were supposed to show off their wares and August 26 was officially Horse Fair Day when — again I presume — they tried to dispose of them.

But in fact to judge by contemporary press reports some of the more likely looking beasts never got as far as the hitching posts. They were snapped up in private deals before the fair. And other regular exhibitors could rely upon their reputations.

James Mason of Eynsham Hall sent 20 carthorses to the fair in 1899 and collected an average price of 50 guineas a head for them, some of them fetching as much as 60 and 70 guineas each.

If you weren't in the market for a mare you could always amuse yourself by watching the pony and donkey drovers running up and down to show their animals paces, extolling their virtues at the tops of their voices, and getting up to all sorts of other antics.

Last farthing

Or you could enjoy the fun of the fair, which — despite the fact that August 27 was officially Pleasure Fair Day —

on all three days. Or, if you had spent your last farthing, you could stand and watch the showmen.

"Old Mrs Buckland was a particularly imposing character," recalls Mrs Moss, "in her black and gold dinery and I think most people were afraid of her. 'Every day the Lord's got some work for you to do,' I once heard her tell one of her boys, 'get on and do it.'"

"In those days they went in for those heavy gold earrings, necklaces, and bracelets — I think they still do — and they used to save up all their repairs and their sovereigns and half-sovereigns that they wanted turning into earrings and bracelets and bring them to my father. I don't suppose they came across many jeweller's shops in the places they visited."

All pleasure

But as the years went by they decreased in numbers and the Horse Fair dwindled in importance. "You see, as the motor-car increased in popularity," says Mrs Moss, "there wasn't the same call for horses any more and by the time I left Bampton in 1934 it was all pleasure fair apart from a few children's ponies."

She could hardly grumble. It was her father, Onesiphorous Oliver Collett, as you may remember me telling you some months ago, who introduced the motor-car to Bampton. And while still a young girl she learnt to drive the horseless carriage herself.



Bampton Horse Fair as it looked at the turn of the century when it was a big event in the local calendar.

Morris dancing

WHILE SOME folk in Bampton are getting ready to heave chariots tomorrow others will be tripping the light fantastic.

Some 70 Morris Men from Abingdon, Burford, West Somerset, the Thames Valley and Hammersmith are taking part in a Festival of Morris Dancing organised by the Traditional Bampton Morris Dancers, under the leadership of their squire Arnold Woodley.

The dancing will start in the township at 10 a.m. and go on until noon, when they will move off in two buses to The Trout at Tadpole Bridge for lunch. Then they will divide up into two groups for an afternoon tour of the Cotswolds.

The first group will go to the Red Lion, Buscot, Lechlade, Fairford, Northleach, arriving at The Three Pigeons, Witney, in time for tea at 5 p.m. The second group will go from Tadpole Bridge to The Three Pigeons, then on to Burford, Stow, Moreton-in-Marsh, and Ilminster for tea.

They will team up for a final display outside The Three Pigeons at 6 p.m., then hotfoot it back to Bampton for the tradition feast at 8 p.m. when Bert Cleaver, the Squire of the English Morris Ring, will be in attendance together with Colin Fleming, the Squire elect.

First big show

NO, I haven't quite finished with Bampton yet. On Monday at 2 p.m. in the Women's Institute Hall the Bampton Horticultural society are

holding what they think is the first big flower show in the township since 1934.

I say think because until recently they thought the horticultural society was a new addition to Bampton's amenities. Then the secretary, Winifred Woodley — the wife of Arnold Woodley — came across a couple of old Flower Show schedules dating from 1923 and 1934.

The 1934 schedule bore the proud slogan "Bampton Horticultural Society established 1860." So now Mrs Woodley is wondering if the original society's minutes are still in existence or anybody knows more of its activities.

BAMPTON-IN-THE-BUSH.

South-west Oxfordshire is still a singularly unspoilt part of the country, mainly through the absence of trunk roads and main railway lines within its borders.

The capital of this peaceful region is Bampton, or, to give the little town its full name, Bampton-in-the-Bush. The district was formerly common land or "bush," and until the middle of the 18th century there were no roads worthy of the name. Bampton belonged in the reign of Edward the Confessor to Leofric, the King's Chaplain, who became the first Bishop of Exeter, and he gave it to the See. The connection with Exeter has been maintained ever since, the Dean and Chapter being still patrons of the benefice.

Bampton is singularly rich in old houses, massively constructed of stone in the Cotswold manner, and it possesses a very noble church, which is one of the great ecclesiastical edifices of Oxfordshire. It is a cruciform structure with central tower and spire. A drastic "restoration" in 1862 wrought much damage to the building. The clerestory of the nave was removed and the interior walls, with the exception of the chancel, were most improperly denuded of plaster, a process which probably involved the destruction of mediæval mural paintings. The earliest part of the fabric is the chancel arch, which belongs to the first half of the 12th century, with the characteristic herring work above it. The lower part of the central tower and the core of the transepts are also pure Norman, though the tower arches were altered in the latter part of the 12th century when another stage was added to the tower. The chancel also is of Norman origin, as is shown by the much-renewed, corbelled side on the exterior, and the doorway at the end of the south transept is of the same period.

Later Additions.

The nave arcade and the aisles, the top stage of the tower and the spire date from about 1250. The spire, of very pleasing outline, is one of a group of four in south-west Oxfordshire—the others are at Broadwell, Shipton-under-Wychwood and Wilton—which have a close affinity with one another. At the base of the spire are four pinnacles terminating in figures, the identification of which is uncertain. Early in the 14th century the east and west windows and the west doorway, with ball-flower ornament, were inserted. Finally, in the next century, the nave and transepts were provided with clerestories and the south porch was added. A chapel on the east of the south transept was curtailed in 1502.

In spite of the vandalism of the Victorian restorers the church retains some interesting fittings. The chancel has a beautiful triple sedilia, a stone reredos of the 14th century with figures of Christ and the Apostles, a 15th century Easter sepulchre and stalls with carved misericords and the arms of the See of Exeter. The aisles and transepts have plain 15th century roofs.

Ham Court.

Among the domestic architecture the most notable example is Ham Court. This is the gate-house of a fortified residence built about 1315 by Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, whose niece and co-heiress, Elizabeth, married Sir Richard Talbot, progenitor of the Earl of Shrewsbury. It remained in the possession of the Talbots for 500 years until the death of Bertram Arthur, the 17th Earl, who, shortly before his premature death in 1836, established a Catholic chapel in the gate-house, which was, however, closed the following year.

The entrance gateway, though blocked and divided into two floors, retains beautiful stone vaulting with exquisitely carved bosses at the intersection of the ribs, and there are contemporary windows and a newel staircase. The moat enclosing several acres can be clearly traced, and among other interesting features are a fine stone barn and an ancient well, the water of which is reputed to have healing properties.

These by no means exhaust the interest of Bampton. To the west of the church is the Deanery, a spacious Elizabethan house, formerly a country residence of the Deans of Exeter, and nearby are the Vicarage and Manor House of the 17th century. Further afield is Haddon Manor, now a farm, which for centuries belonged to the Delamore family, whose original seat was at Northmoor. Few places of its size are so rich as Bampton in ancient buildings, which exhibit work of every century from the 12th to the 20th.

E. T. LONG.

June 1970

Rev. E.J. Clarke M.A.
The Manse, 43 Cote Rd.
Aston, Oxon.
Tel: Bampton Castle 375.

Pastors Letter.

Dear Friends, as we approach the month of June probably the outstanding event in our minds is the valedictory service of Mrs. Margaret Ogle, known to most of us much better as Margaret Mason, on Sunday 7th June. This is indeed an important event in the life of the Church. Cote has a very strong missionary tradition going back over many years, and I would like to take this opportunity of reminding you a little of that tradition. The first missionary to be sent out by the Cote Church was Henry John Dutton, of Bampton, who studied for the ministry at Regents Park College, (then called Stepney College) from 1836-39. On October 1st, 1839 an ordination service was held at Cote when Henry Dutton was designated for service with the B.M.S. in Jamaica, to work in the Church at Bethany, Brownstown. Many of the neighbouring ministers were present on that occasion, two of whom, Samuel Jones of Burford, and David East of Arlington and Fairford, afterwards also offered themselves for service in Jamaica. David East, in particular had an outstanding ministry there, leaving England in 1850, acting as principal of the Calabar college for ministerial students until 1893, and finally dying in 1903 after nearly 70 years in the ministry. How challengingly the missionary call must have been given at that valedictory service in Cote in 1839. May it be given as clearly, and the response be as great in 1970! Rev., and Mrs. Dutton sailed from England on December 16th 1839, arriving in Jamaica in the Spring of 1840. From the annual report of the Society in 1841, we read: 'No part of the field occupied by the Society in Jamaica has been more highly favoured than the district in St. Ann's in which our brethren Clark and Dutton have been called to labour..... Clarkstown Stepney, Mount Zion, and Carlisle furnish ample employment for the zeal and energy of Mr. Dutton..... the nett increase in these Churches during the last years is no less than 733. The following year Mr. Dutton's Church recorded 220 baptisms, and in 1843 the statistics for that Church were 818 members, 550 inquirers, 1100 Sunday School Scholars, and 5 day schools with 292 scholars. In 1845 Henry Dutton returned for a furlough, probably on health grounds. He returned to the field in 1846, but died in Jamaica in 1847. What blessings followed his work! May Margaret experience such blessings.

Henry Dutton may well have been inspired to offer for missionary service by the example of Ebenezer Daniel, who was born at Burford in 1784, but spent much of his childhood and youth at Cote, he was a great grandson of Mr. Collet, minister of Cote, in 1703, he was also related to John Williams of the South Seas, their respective grandfathers being brothers. Ebenezer Daniel was educated at Burford Grammar School, and was baptized in Cote Chapel in 1801, but joined the Church at Burford. The following year he went to Bristol Baptist College, and after several pastorates in England, left his Church in Luton in 1830 to work in Ceylon. A recent article in the 'Missionary Herald' refers to the dynamic leadership of Daniel in the Baptist Church at Colombo, Ceylon, for 13 years, during

which time the Church grew in numbers and maturity. For a time it was the centre of the Baptist community in Ceylon. Dynamic leadership under the Holy Spirit. May Margaret know that leadership.

Ceylon, Jamaica, our interest through present Church members, in the work in India, and Brazil, now after a long gap someone else going out in our name, this time to Congo. Let us be much in prayer that on June 7th the challenge of missionary commitment may ring out loud and clear; let us pray that Margaret may know the rich blessing and the dynamic leading of God - and not only Margaret and Andrew but each one of us, in our work for Him.

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Aston Junior Church held a rally on Sunday 10th May, when scholars from the other chapels, parents and friends enjoyed a service conducted by Mr. K. Mumford of Witney.

At the Church Meeting held on May 14th, plans for a new kitchen at the Hall were agreed upon, for which Planning Permission has now been applied, with a view to getting the kitchen built this summer.

Brownies and Guides There was a good muster of Brownies and Guides at Cote on May 17th, when our Pastor conducted the very enjoyable service.

Buckland The spring Bank Holiday service at Buckland was a great success, when the Rev. Selwyn Morgan of Reading, preached, and Mr. & Mrs. Thorne of Oxford sang duets. The Chapel was almost filled to capacity. The ramble from Aston which preceded the service attracted 14 of the younger members.

Aston L.A.M. Meeting members were entertained to tea by Mrs. Beckinsale on Wednesday May 20th at her home 'Byeways' Aston, and this gave the ladies an opportunity for a real 'get-together'!

Coming Events The first half of June is to be a busy time in the circuit.

June 4th at 6.p.m. there is to be a 'Brownie Evening' in the Aston Hall when the grown-ups will be entertained, and refreshments will be available, and there will also be a cake stall.

June 6th at 6.p.m. The circuit ladies meetings are holding a Garden Party at Cote Lodge in aid of the Baptist Womens' League, project of a new hostel for girls in London. Music will be supplied, games, and a Bring and Buy stall. A Barbeque is being arranged by the Circuit youth group.

June 7th It is hoped that a large congregation will be at Cote Service which will take the form of a valedictory service for Mrs. Margaret Ogile, formerly Miss Margaret Mason, who with her husband is going to Brussels, and then to Congo, with the B.M.S. The preacher will be the Rev. E. Madge, General Overseas Secretary of the B.M.S.

June 2nd The Bampton Women's meeting are going to Coventry for their annual outing.

June 10th is the date for the Aston Women's Meeting outing to Waddesdon Manor, near Aylesbury.

Sick We are very sorry to hear that Mrs. Carter is not at all well, and our thoughts and prayers are with the family at this time, as they are with the family of Mr. Zaccaria, who is still seriously ill in hospital.

We regret to report the passing of Mrs. Gwen Gurney who was laid to rest at Cote on Friday May 22nd, the service being conducted by our Pastor, and our old friend the Rev. C.O. Price, who was also a great friend of the late Mrs. Gurney.

Aston: Junior Church 9.45am
Evening Worship 6.00pm
Station Prayer Meetings as announced
Ladies Meeting: Tuesdays 2.45pm, Outing June 10th
Young Wives group: June ^{10th} 3rd 2.30pm
Brownies: Thursdays 6.00pm, Guides: Fridays 7.00pm

Bampton: Sunday School: 2.30pm
Evening Worship 6.00pm
J.C.B. Wednesdays 6.15pm
B.W.L. Tuesdays 2nd and 16th 2.30pm. (Outing to Coventry)

Buckland: Evening Worship 6.00pm

Ducklington: Sunday School: 2.30pm
Evening Worship: 6.00pm
Women's Meetings, Tuesdays June 2nd and 16th at 2.30pm
Station Prayer Meetings: Wednesdays, June 10th and 24th
at 7.15pm.

Standlake: Evening Worship: 6.00pm
Station Prayer Meeting: Mondays June 8th and 22nd at 7.30pm
Young Wives Club: Wednesday, June 3rd and 17th at 2.30pm.

Notice: There will be another joint Sale of Work in early Autumn,
which will be open to any organisation in any station.
Details at a later date.

Birthday Scheme: Birthday greetings this month to:-

Mrs Lucksee	Mrs K. Long.	Miss J. Fitchett.
Mrs B. B. B.	Mrs Gyde.	

Croche Rota for June:

7th	Mrs. Clarke, Jenny Dunston & Diana Watts.
14th	Mrs. Merriman & Mrs. Gyde
21st	Miss Glanville & Mrs. Worrell
28th	Mrs. Ivinge & Mrs. Pettifer.

Cote Flower Rota:

7th	Mrs. A. Long
14th	Miss V. Neal
21st	Mrs. T. Harris
28th	Mrs. Sutton.

Cote Door Stewards:

7th	Mr. A. Long & Mr. T. Harris
14th	Mr. D. Fitchett & Mr. Austin
21st	Mr. Sparrowhawk & Mr. J. Witt
28th	Mr. A. Long & Mr. T. Harris.

Preachers for June:

	<u>Aston</u>	Bampton	Buckland	Ducklington	Standlake
7th	Mr. Sparrowhawk	Miss Carter.	Mr. Hill	Mr. C. Poole	Pastor
14th	Pastor	Mr Poole (SSA)	J.B.S.	Mr. P. Fielder	G. Fielder.
21st	Mr. G. Light	Mr Johnstone (BPC) Pastor.	Mr. Snow	Mr. Merrigan.	Mr. Robson
28th	Miss Carter	-	Mr. Under	Pastor	Mr. Ricketts.

Pastor will be at Cote each Sunday morning. See Special Notices Re:
June 7th.

Diary for June:

Cote: Sunday Worship, every Sunday at 11.am.
June 7th Valedictory Service for Mrs. Margaret Ogle.
Y.P.F. Sundays at 7.30pm
Circuit Prayer Meetings: Thursdays 7.30pm, (Aston Hall).

BAMPTON village news

Pumpkin club

Bampton Village Hall was packed for the great Pumpkin Club weigh-in. Chairman Mr Max Norman paid tribute to two very keen members, Mrs Win Woodley and Mr Rocky Hunt, who had died during the year.

The weighmasters were Mr Ron Bateman of Radio Oxford and Mr Graham Taylor, assisted by several strong men who lifted the giant gourds on to the scales, where it was learned that the heaviest three pumpkins had broken all club records.

The winners were Mr J. Buckingham with 175.5lb., Chris Chapman (174lb.) and Mr F. Truman (172 lb.). The junior class winners were J. Barker (117 lb.), Miss Tara Wright with (80lb.) and Miss Emily Glyde (weight not stated). The Catchweight pumpkin winner was Gordon Lorimer (19.5lb.)

The marrow winners were Mr Roger Glyde (34lb.), Mrs Kath Tanner (26lb.) and Mr George Lumsden (25lb.)

All the winners were presented with cups and trophies by the Pumpkin Club May Queen, Miss Tara Wright.

Harvest concert

Raise the Song of Harvest Home, was the title of a concert organised in Bampton parish church of St Mary the Virgin by Dr Bernard Rose.

The Musica Vera Choir performed, directed by Malcolm McKelvey with Dr Rose on the organ and Christine McKelvey the pianoforte. The concert was followed by a buffet supper in the Bampton Youth Centre.

Mothers' Union

Members of the Bampton-with-Clanfield Mothers' Union were welcomed to the monthly meeting in the Bampton Village Hall by the enrolling member, Mrs Eileen Dring. A short service led by the Vicar, the Rev. Andrew Scott, was followed by the annual meeting. The report of the secretary, Mrs Jean Fifoot, and the financial statement by the treasurer, Mrs Helen Groves, were approved.

In her report Mrs Dring paid tribute to the late Mrs Betty Cooper, enrolling member for a number of years.

She announced with regret

that Mrs Rose Gerring wished to retire after 20 years as social hostess. Miss Phyllis Gauntlet agreed to continue as Leprosy Mission secretary and Mrs J. Lee continues as representative to the Village Hall Committee.

Boys' football

Bampton Under 10s met the Apollo side from Oxford on an extremely wet and cold morning, but Tim Burley wasted no time in scoring Bampton's first goal minutes after kick-off. His teammate Gareth Preston then scored a hat-trick.

Bampton continued to press with Burley scoring further three. Johnny Tupman also scored a goal for Bampton. Minutes from the end an indirect free-kick was awarded to Bampton just outside the penalty area. Robert Whalley shot and the keeper touched the ball, making the goal valid.

Horticulture

A coffee morning with bring and buy stalls at the home of the Bampton Horticultural Club chairman, Mrs Liz Chambers, raised £63 for funds.

Village plans to help



Carole Lewis (right) joins in a practice for the fund-raising human chain planned for Bampton later this month

Until the beginning of this year Carole Lewis lived life to the full.

She had the same sort of carefree existence as any other single girl in her early twenties. She went to discos, did a bit of amateur photography and needlework, and she loved driving her car.

Then Carole, 24, of Chandler Close, Bampton, near Witney, started getting severe headaches and seeing double. Her vision began to get worse and worse.

Doctors told her her eyes had been damaged when a blockage in the system which drains the brain's fluid put pressure on the back of her eyes.

Her sight continued to get worse despite an operation, and now Carole mostly sees only shades of light and dark.

Occasionally she will recognise the odd colour. She can see shapes but indistinctly.

Carole is living in hope that she may get better. Doctors have not ruled it out and the decline in her sight seems to have stopped.

Her plight has brought a wave of sympathy from friends in Bampton where she grew up.

They have decided to do something to make life a bit more comfortable for her. Carole, who lives with her parents, can't earn her own living at the moment, so they are hoping to raise some cash so she can buy a few luxuries. Carole would like to get a hi-fi because she finds she is listening to music much more now.

On October 26 at 1 pm villagers will try to form a human chain at The Romany Inn and linking it to the other seven pubs in Bampton.

They think they need about 500 people to do it, and are encouraging as many as possible to take part. While the chain is being formed scouts from the 1st Bampton group will go round with buckets collecting money from participants for Carole.

Mrs Winifred Gascoigne, of New Road, Bampton, one of the organisers of the human chain, said: "Carole grew up with my own children. It could just as easily have happened to any of our kids.

"We are not doing it just to raise the money. We want her to feel the whole village is with her as well."

Linking hands for a friend

Village to form human chain of support

By DONALD COLE

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Then Carole, 24, of Chandler Close, Bampton, started getting severe headaches and seeing double. Her vision began to get worse and worse.

Doctors said her eyes had been damaged when a blockage in the system which drains the brain's fluid put pressure on the back of the eyes.

Her sight continued to get worse despite an operation, and now Carole mostly sees only shades of light and dark. Occasionally she will recognise colour. She can see shapes, but indistinctly.

Wave of sympathy

"I would say I have got about four per cent sight," said Carole. "I hate being in this position because I love life and I lived it to the full. I have had to give up so much.

"I can't drive, I don't feel like going to discos, and I can't take photographs. There are so many little things you miss.

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with her parents, can't earn her own living at the moment, so they are hoping to raise some cash so she can buy a few luxuries. Carole would like a hi-fi because she likes listening to music.

On Sunday at 1 p.m. villagers will try to form a human chain, starting at The Romany Inn, linking to the other seven pubs in Bampton.

They reckon they need about 500 people and are encouraging as many as possible to take part. While

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Mrs Winifred Gascoigne, of New Road, Bampton, one of the organisers of the human chain, said: "Carole grew up with my own children. It could just as easily have happened to any of our kids.

"We aren't doing it just to raise the money. We want her to feel the whole village is with her as well."



Carol Lewis (second right) joins in a practice link-up for the human chain attempt at Bampton on Sunday.

23.10.86
Picture: PETER FLOYD
WIMBORNE GAZETTE

Giving a helping hand



Around 300 people decided to lend a hand to partially-sighted Carole Lewis in Bampton.

The town hall in the middle of the village was surrounded by a human chain of well-wishers and friends hoping to provide not just money but a day she would always remember.

Twenty-four-year-old Carole, of Chandler Close, Bampton, who has almost lost her sight after a painful series of headaches and seeing double, is unable to work.

Her plight touched the hearts

of friends in the village who organised a sympathetic show of hands on Sunday.

More than £500 was raised to help her to buy luxuries like a hi-fi set.

Dozens of other well-wishers travelled from Witney, Carterton and the surrounding villages.

"I was very moved by it all and would like to thank everyone for what they have done for me. It was really fabulous and has given me a tremendous boost, a day I'll not forget," she said.

Carole, who has had an unsuccessful operation, still hopes some of her sight will return. Previously she led the full life, but now cannot drive, go to discos or enjoy her favourite hobby of photography.

Today was very special. It was lovely going out again among friends," she said.

The fund for Carole is organised by Mrs Winifred Gascoigne, of New Road, Bampton (Bampton Castle 850119).



BAMPTON May Queen, Nicola Gardner, presented a cheque to Carole Lewis for £585 following a human chain appeal around the village, to show support for Carole who suffers from an eye disorder which has left her almost blind. The cheque presented at the Romany Inn last Thursday will help provide a few luxuries for Carole.

Human chain

A spontaneous gesture of support by the villagers of Bampton, to help a local girl recently struck by an eye disorder which has left her almost blind, has raised over £500.

On Sunday, around 300 locals formed a human chain stretching through the village to raise money for 24-year-old Carole Lewis of Chandler Close, Bampton.

Carole found herself losing her sight earlier this year and is now registered blind. When locals heard of her plight they decided to demonstrate their concern in a practical manner.

So last weekend, they formed themselves into a human chain while local scouts carried out a street collection for Carole.

Mr. Jim Gascoigne, one of the organisers, said they were very pleased with the outcome. "It was purely a spontaneous gesture by locals and it went off very well. It was one of those things where everyone can get involved and is over more or less straightaway. It was great and very worthwhile," he said.

Mr. Gascoigne said the total stood at around £521, but donations were still coming in. "We hope to hand over a cheque next week at the Romany Inn to Carole. I think she wants to spend the money on a few little luxuries including a hi-fi."

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1986



Linking hands in a human chain at Bampton

Holding hands on Carole's day to remember

About 300 people joined hands for partially-sighted Carole Lewis in Bampton.

The town hall in the middle of the village was surrounded by a human chain of well-wishers and friends hoping to

give not just money but a day she'll never forget.

Carole, 24, of Chandler Close, Bampton, has almost lost her sight after a painful series of headaches and in seeing double.

Her plight has gone to the hearts of friends in the village who on Sunday organised their sympathetic show of hands.

Over £500 was raised from donations and, because Carole cannot work and earn money, it will help her to buy luxuries like a hi-fi set.

It wasn't only sympathisers in the village who turned up for Carole's special day — dozens of other well-wishers travelled to be there from Witney, Carterton and surrounding villages.

"I was very moved by it all and would like to thank everyone for what they have done for me. It was really fabulous and has given me a tremendous boost, a day I'll not forget," she said afterwards.

Carole, who has had an unsuccessful operation, still hopes some of her sight will return. Previously she led the full life of a young woman but now cannot drive, go to discos or enjoy her favourite hobby, photography.

"Today was very special. It was lovely going out again among friends," she added.

The fund for Carole is open until the end of the month and anyone who would like to donate should contact the organiser Mrs Winifred Gascoigne, of New Road, Bampton, telephone Bampton Castle 850119.



John Lee (left) and Max Norman present Carole Lewis with some of the money raised by the appeal. Pictures: PETER FARR

WIT GAZ 30/10/86