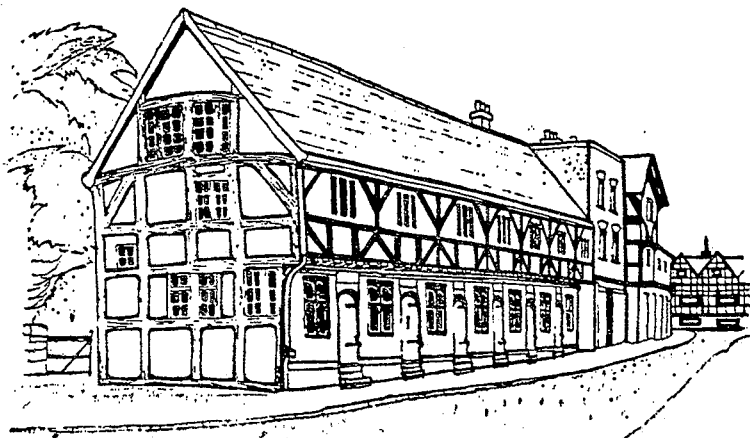


# Local History Bulletin

AUTUMN 1971 — No. 24



ABBEY LAWN COTTAGES, TEWKESBURY

illustration by Stephen Harvey, College of Art and Design, Gloucester

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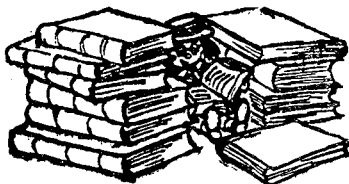
## EDITORIAL

TEWKESBURY IS FEATURED ON our cover to honour the highly successful Festival. The Abbey Lawn Cottages have been particularly well restored, and, with the heavy traffic happily bypassed, they will, we hope, grace the main street of the town for many more centuries.

As we go to press the Schools' Local History Essay Competition has just closed its entries, about which we hope to comment in the Spring edition. Meanwhile, rather belatedly owing to space problems, we are including in this number illustrated excerpts from the prize winning essay of 1970.

I was very pleased to attend the interesting exhibition in the village of South Cerney which showed ancient tools, arts, crafts and pictures collected from all over the village. The Exhibition was held to celebrate the publication of a delightful booklet, "South Cerney, Old and New", a history of the Parish researched between 1965 and 1971 by members of the Local History Group. It is reviewed on page 14.

MERCEDES MACKAY, EDITOR



### THE SCHOOLS ESSAY COMPETITION 1970

THE ENTRIES WERE not so numerous, but very varied and interesting, and the judge, Mr Graham Adams, had some difficulty in assessing the winners. The first prize was awarded to J. S. Day, of Marling School, Stroud, for an excellent history of the Gloucestershire Militia and Volunteer movement between 1756 and 1908. The second prize went to C. M. Mitchell, also of Marling School which certainly seems to take an immense interest in local history. His essay was on the moated sites of Gloucestershire, which showed very careful research. The third prize was awarded to C. Sterry, of Saintbridge School, for his essay on the brasses of Deerhurst village church, with an introduction on brasses in general. All these essays have now been returned to their owners except the first prize winner, and from this we are happy to include excerpts.

## THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE MILITIA AND VOLUNTEER MOVEMENT

A concise History between 1756 and 1908

by

JONATHAN S. DAY

The militia of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had its origins in the Trained Bands of Tudor and Stuart England, themselves the heirs to the traditions of the Saxon Fyrd. As with the Fyrd, the Trained Bands were mobilised in times of national emergency by the County Sheriff, every able bodied male being eligible for service which was considered a national obligation. In some cases especially where the Bands were under the wing of a benevolent local Lord or land owner, they were capable military units, the London Trained Bands being the most famous and soldierlike, but mostly the poorly armed, undisciplined semi units were of little use on active service, the men being all too ready to desert when away from home. An example of the former case was the Bristol Trained Band of the early seventeenth century, when there was:

“A voluntary company of gentle, proper, martial and disciplined men who have their arms in a handsome Artillery House, newly built up in the Castle Yard, where once a year they entertain both Earls and Lords, and a great many knights and gentry of good quality.”

Despite the condition of many of the Bands, Parliament especially, preferred them to a regular army, which they considered the tool of the monarchy.

Eventually, James II abolished the local Trained Bands and replaced them with a semi voluntary body of less practical use than their predecessors.

The 18th century brought the foundation of a more workmanlike militia. Pitts Militia Bill of 1756, passed at the outbreak of hostilities with France and Austria, was a logical and well considered attempt to place the home reserve on an efficient footing for the first time. Every county in England and Wales was to provide a stated number of militiamen for home defence, the men to be selected by a ballot conducted by the Authorities in every Parish. The men were to be furnished with arms and uniforms as soon as the county could signify that three-fifths of the quota had been raised, after which they were to appoint officers and form the men into regiments or battalions. Gloucestershire's quota was 960 men, or approximately one man in every twenty-nine in the county (which, incidentally, included the Cities of Gloucester and Bristol).

In Gloucestershire, the Annual Register of 1759 states that by July, the county had furnished its complete quota, forming one Battalion and that it was at that date “Officered and near completion.” This statement is, however, in disagreement with other contemporary documents. It seems that the Lord Lieutenant, Lord Chedworth, had adopted the policy of making both North and South Gloucestershire raise a Battalion each and that all efforts up to then had been centred on the formation of the Southern unit, three-fifths of which had been raised by April 1759. A delay then occurred and in July the Government pressed for details as to the state of the militia in the county. In reply Lord Chedworth stated that 630 men had been raised and formed into ten

companies, of which eight were the nucleus for the southern Battalion and two the nucleus for the northern one.

During August of the following year, the Lord Lieutenant informed White-hall that the second Battalion had been completed and he requested the dispatch of arms and ammunition, plus uniforms. A list of officers was forwarded to the Home Office soon afterwards, command of the two units being given to Colonel Norborne Berkeley (later Lord Botetourt). Both uniforms and arms arrived during 1760 and it was during that year that the South Gloucestershire Battalion was quartered at Cirencester, where a lady wrote:

“We breakfasted at the King’s Head in Cirencester and we were much amused by the gay appearance of the Militiamen, and had a sight of Colonel Berkeley, all alive! The martial air and dress improved him extremely.”



The gay appearance of the Militiamen referred to in the above extract was a further reason put forward for the success of the units, the Gloucestershire Battalions wearing scarlet jackets, faced with blue and laced with gold, a play on the vanity of any man.

Meanwhile, one Colonel Baillie had been given the command of the Volunteers, but the unit was originally a very un-military body, neither weapons nor uniforms being available, the former deficiency forcing the Colonel to equip his force with iron spikes, mounted on mopsticks. Even when uniforms were finally acquired, they depended very much on the Colonel’s tastes, coats varying from red to blue and being very extravagant.

However, despite receiving no financial assistance from the Government, the Volunteer Units thrived, numerous other companies forming throughout the county, some reaching a very high state of efficiency, being in no way just a ‘Saturday afternoon Army’.

A routine order of the Bristol Volunteers, dated 1804, showed their high efficiency:

“Whenever any drum beats to Arms, whether belonging to the Regiment or not, all men will, within half-an-hour, repair properly equipped to the usual place of parade. As the Regiment may possibly be shortly called upon to render their services for the defence of their Native Land, the Commanding Officer strongly recommends the absolute necessity of being provided with certain necessary articles of comfort, viz. 1 Knapsack, 1 Haversack, Canteen, 1 Shirt, 1 pair Shoes, 1 pair Worsted Stockings, Comb, Three Brushes, Black Ball, Soap and Pipeclay, Great Coat, 3 Days Bread—4½ lb. These articles he hopes the Gentlemen will bring with them on Monday next to the Parade, properly packed.”

Spring 1803 brought a resumption of hostilities with Napoleon. On March 10th, the militia was called out by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on behalf of the King. In May both Regiments marched to Portsmouth, where, based at Portsea Barracks they alternated duties. These duties included coastal patrol, the prevention of smuggling and the capture of spies. Part of the Royal North Gloucestershire Militia were guarding convicts in hulks during the Autumn, while in October, the Regiment provided an escort for 250 French prisoners-of-war en route to Uxbridge. Both regiments remained in Sussex and the surrounding area until May 1805, when the northern regiment moved to Bristol where their duties centred around the guarding of a large military prison at Stapleton. While at Bristol they took part in the suppression of an attempted break-out by the prisoners after the halting of the traffic in goods between the prisoners and guards by the garrison Commander.

It was during 1808 that, in common with the rest of the army, the militia was ordered to 'cut off its pigtails', the curse of every soldier of the eighteenth century. During August of that year, both Gloucestershire regiments moved to Brighton, as part of a force of militia assembled to celebrate the birthday of the Prince of Wales. Here they received the favourable attention of the Prince and became known as the 'Brighton Guards'.

The main features of the reforms affecting the militia and volunteers centred around the division of the country into sixty Brigade Districts, to each of which was allotted two regular regiments plus all local volunteer units and two Battalions of militia. The two regular regiments attached to Gloucestershire were the 28th and 61st regiments which became, respectively, the First and Second Battalions, the Gloucestershire Regiment. Changes of name affecting the militia and volunteer units were numerous and resulted in the two militia Battalions losing their 'Royal' prefixes. The changes are tabulated here:

Royal South Gloucestershire Militia became 3rd Battalion, The Gloucestershire Regiment.

Royal North Gloucestershire Militia became 4th Battalion, The Gloucestershire Regiment.

1st (City of Bristol) Volunteer Rifles became 1st (City of Bristol) Volunteer Battalion, The Gloucestershire Regiment.

2nd Gloucestershire Volunteer Rifles became 2nd Volunteer Battalion, The Gloucestershire Regiment.

The old militia adopted standard army dress but the volunteer units retained their traditional green uniforms.

The Boer War was the last conflict in which the militia participated, for with Haldane's Military Reforms of 1905-1912, it ceased to be an autonomous unit and instead became solely a reserve for supplying trained drafts to the regular army in time of war. With this change of role came a change of name, the 3rd Battalion, The Gloucestershire Regiment becoming the 3rd (Special Reserve) Battalion, The Gloucestershire Regiment, while the 4th Battalion was disbanded. The Volunteers too, had their role changed and with their role, their title, becoming the Territorial Forces The Gloucestershire Volunteers were renamed as follows:

- 1st (City of Bristol) Volunteer Battalion, The Gloucestershire Regiment became  
4th (City of Bristol) Battalion, The Gloucestershire Regiment, T.F.  
2nd Volunteer Battalion, The Gloucestershire Regiment became  
5th Battalion, The Gloucestershire Regiment, T.F.  
3rd Volunteer Battalion, The Gloucestershire Regiment became  
6th Battalion, The Gloucestershire Regiment, T.F.

## RECENT EXCAVATIONS IN GLOUCESTER

### ROMAN COLUMN AT 4 WESTGATE ST.

IN MARCH OF this year, during demolition work on the site of the Midland Bank extension at 4 Westgate St., a Roman column was noticed beneath the foundations of a Victorian cellar. Subsequent excavation showed the column to be standing on its original plinth to a height of c. 6 ft. 6 in. This probably makes it the highest standing Roman column ever found in Britain. Later a second column was revealed c. 13 ft. to the west of it. Within the small 4 Westgate St. site it was not possible to find out any more about the building the colonnade belonged to, except that it extended southwards under Westgate St. and northwards out of the site.

The 3 ft. diameter of the columns suggests that they stood c. 30 ft. high. They clearly belonged to a monumental building, perhaps a basilica, and can be added to other tantalising hints of grandiose architecture at the centre of Glevum; to the south of them, on the site of Burton Montague Ltd., similar large columns and chambers with flagged floors were found in 1894-5; under the Westminster Bank just west of this, at 3-5 Westgate St., a hypocaust and lead water pipe was found in 1959. This may well be part of the same building complex as the other finds, in which case there is a possibility that this was the site of the Roman public baths.

The Midland Bank Ltd. generously undertook to pay the cost of removing the large column by crane and depositing it in the entrance hall of the City Museum, where it now stands.

H. R. HURST.

### ROMAN GLOUCESTER — AN EXPANDING CITY

THE ROMAN CITY walls of Gloucester enclose an area of 20 hectares, less than a fifth of that of Roman Cirencester. We have never been happy with the implication that Roman Gloucester was an unsuccessful city, and so we were very grateful when the architect for Allied Carpet Stores Ltd. allowed us to work for six weeks on a site at 96 Northgate Street, 150 metres outside the walled circuit. There our volunteer helpers valiantly dug through a full two metres of Roman deposits, including the remains of three successive buildings which had faced the main Gloucester-Cirencester road. A wattle-lined wall, remarkably preserved in the waterlogged soil, formed part of the civil settlement at the gate of the early fortress; even more remarkable was the preservation of

continuous timbers, as thick as railway-sleepers, which had supported a wooden verandah in the decades following the founding of the Roman city. The heyday of Roman Gloucester was represented by a very substantial stone building which had been partly rebuilt three times. A colonnade faced the street, which was served by two series of timber drains; the interior was divided into many rooms of which one contained a forge. The building extended beyond the limits of the excavation on three sides. Although the site is technically suburban, the sequence of buildings was such as we would expect to find at the heart of a Roman city. We must dig much further afield if we are to find the true extent of Roman Gloucester.

J. F. RHODES.

### A LONG-VANISHED MONUMENT

A ROMAN BUILDING-INSRIPTION is for Gloucester an unprecedented find. One day in August we noticed some carved masonry beside a sewer-trench in King's Square. Some members of the Archaeology Group, working on our Northgate Street site, examined the trench and soon established that it was passing through the second-century defensive rampart of the Roman city; the masonry, intended for use in a nearby tower, had been robbed from an earlier monument. Pillar-capitals suggested that the monument was pierced by two or more arches. The most tantalising fragment, however, was of a stone which carried within a frame the signature of its builders, CO . . . I . . . The name is probably that of an army cohort engaged in building either the fortress or the first phase of the *colonia*, at a time when masonry structures in Britain were far from common. For extricating the pillar-capitals, and for many other instances of co-operation we are indebted to the Norwich Union Insurance Group, to John Laing Construction Ltd. and to O. J. Elliot & Co. As a result of their work earlier in the year we were able to add many structures to our plans of the King's Square area including 80 metres of Roman wall, two Roman bastions, two Roman streets, a medieval street, a Civil War tower and the nineteenth-century culvert of the River Twyver.

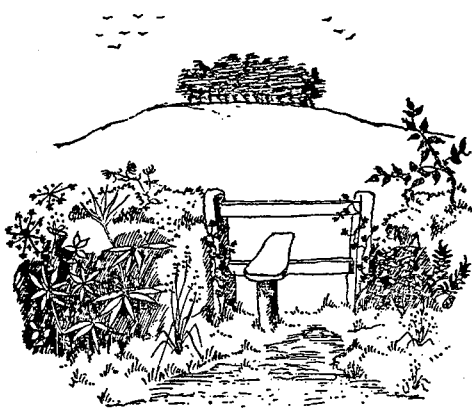
J. F. RHODES.

### MAY HILL

BEST-KNOWN LANDMARK in Gloucestershire; the place where the hundredth tree won't grow; May Hill to us; Yarkledun to earlier folk. What is it that gives to this area of the county a character so much apart from the rest?

Geologists tell us that the rocks forming the upper part of the hill are an intrusion that in a well-ordered sequence would not reach the surface until mid-Wales (and there is much in common with the formation around the Elan Reservoirs). Fortunately some mighty upheaval upset the sequence, giving us this "foreign" island with its own outline and a natural vegetation in sharp contrast to its surroundings.

The name? A writer in 1777 tells us that it comes from the May Day games "now long since given up". This makes sense if we allow that the games were a survival from the old Spring fire festival — the feast of Beltane, for this was traditionally a hill-top occasion. (See Fraser's Golden Bough.)



The story that the trees were originally planted by an Admiral May as a guide-point for ships coming up the Bristol Channel seems to fail on two counts. No one has identified the Admiral, and no pilot would navigate a twisting channel by such a distant point.

The old name survives in Yartleton Lane, Yartleton Farm, etc., and is found in documents of the 13th century, the earliest known form being Iarkeldun. The volume on county place names puts this aside as obscure, suggesting a link with Yorkley and Yark Hill. Another writer attributes it to a Welsh origin mean "the hill that goes over". Certainly words like this have been used more recently to describe it.

While on names, one of the more interesting hereabouts is Bearfoot Wood (or should it be Bare?). Neither, we are told, for it comes from the Anglo-Saxon name for the Hellebore, which can be found on the east side of the Hill.

The trees? Sad as it is to spoil the 99 story the fact remains that during the past 25 years the number has declined from about 250 to a present count of 170. This is without the reinforcements lately planted to take the place of further losses. The main clump was planted as part of the Golden Jubilee celebrations for Queen Victoria, and the lamp-post-like iron standard did carry wording to the effect. There is no record of any particular number.

There is evidence of more than one earlier planting here, but the origin of the 99 tradition is, like the name, obscure. Students of folklore may see a link with the three-times-three which figures prominently in the ritual of the Beltane feast.

A surprising feature of this prominent hilltop is the absence of any signs of pre-historic earthworks. A few pieces of worked flint have been found, though no more than could have reached a flintless region by accident. The situation, so clearly in the line between the British Camp, Malvern and Welshbury Camp near Littledean does seem to call for at least a signal-station.

Tree planting may have destroyed some traces of early occupation, and one flattened mound could have been a small round barrow. This idea seems to have occurred to someone with a roving eye and no archaeological conscience,



for it was "explored" some twenty years ago without any information being made known.

Sections of two circular ditches are only a snare for the unwary. Both are very shallow, even when allowance is made for weathering, and one having its bank outside the ditch is quite clearly not defensive. The other is in the right shape, but has been made to reveal so many broken bottles as to suggest construction during a hot spell in the late 1800s. In fact one of the ditches marks the area belonging to Longhope Parish, while the other carried a fence to enclose a planting of trees.

The surrounding area was enclosed from common land by an Award of 1873. The documents, which can be seen in the Records Office, Shire Hall, are a good illustration of a late enclosure award. Some small fields carrying personal names (Ben's Acre, etc.) are a reminder of this event, which changed the course of the road on the south-west side of the hill.

While a few small areas remained in the hands of common graziers, most of the narrow strips so patiently set out in the Award were acquired by a Mr Probyn, later being sold to H. A. Pringle, from whom it was purchased by the National Trust in 1935.

During the last war the open area (excluding the four acres belonging to Longhope Parish) was requisitioned by the War Agricultural Executive Committee and ploughed up at a very heavy cost in plough-shares and other equipment. The crops attempted were far from successful and the subsequent grass seeding could not be turned to the best account owing to a shortage of water for grazing stock. Those who visit this wonderful open space may notice springs and wet patches (locally "quab-holes"), but these are erratic and almost impossible to harness.

This same uncertainty of water has been responsible for the loss of quite a number of bog plants listed as growing here in the past, but there is still plenty to interest the botanist, the zoologist and the plain sightseer.

At 969 ft. this is the highest point in the county West of the Severn.

F. W. BATY.

### THE PARISH CONSTABLE

WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE for law and order in the days before we had police? Most people probably suppose that Sir Robert Peel's Metropolitan Police, introduced in 1829, were the first to pursue criminals and bring them before the courts.

In fact England had for centuries a system of law enforcement, depending in each village upon the parish constable, which did not come to an end in Gloucestershire until 1839 and persisted for some years more in many other counties. In mediaeval times the village constable was chosen by the manor court, and all inhabitants were liable to serve when chosen, without payment. In the eighteenth century, when manor courts had often ceased to be held, the parish constable or 'petty constable', as he was known, was appointed instead by a justice of the peace. These justices organised most aspects of county government at the Quarter Sessions and it was the parish constable whom they used



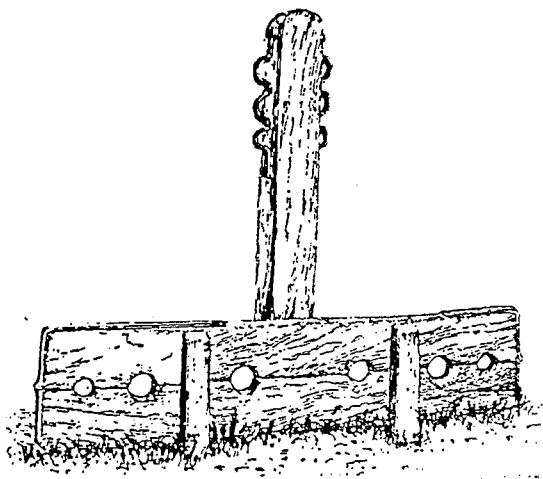
to put their orders into effect: by checking, for example, on weights and measures, closing unlicensed ale-houses, or leading the hue and cry for wanted men, such as army deserters.

Some picture of the nature of their work may be gained from the reports, called 'presentments', which had to be made regularly to Quarter Sessions by the constable of each parish, telling of anything that was not in order in his village: for example if the roads or the stocks were in bad repair, if anyone allowed his cattle to stray about the streets, or if the local pub was often the scene of disorder. The original presentments, written in vigorous language and showing a great variety of forms of spelling, are preserved at the County Records Office.

Not many villages in the county still retain their stocks, but until the last century each parish had both stocks and whipping post, and some also had ducking stools, in which people who spread malicious gossip were tied and wheeled to the nearest stream, to be dipped underwater. One such stool may be seen in Leominster church in Herefordshire and another is said to have given its name to Duck Street in Winchcomb. It was the constable's duty to look after the stocks and whipping post and parish accounts frequently mention them, as at Twyning in 1669 when two shillings were paid 'for the carpenters work 7 days & timber to make a whipping post.' At Salperton, however, they were cut down year after year by a certain Robert Williams, about whom the constable complained in 1739 for causing 'a disorderly meeting to be kept in our parish for sum years past on ye munday after all saints day, to ye great predgabis -prejudice- of ye parish the stocks and whipping post being then pold up and tore to pieces . . . & he says he'l hold up ye said rietous meeting in spite of any body.' Ten years later the constable of Bromsberrow accused two persons of attacking and beating him 'for putting a boy in the stocks in our parish for Gaming on last Sunday.'

In the past, as now, games of various types could become violent and cause annoyance: at Acton Turville in 1736 the constable presented 'Johnnathan Rogers for Keeping A skittell Alley in his Garden which Causes much Blasfeming and quarelling And much pregadice in Abuseing our parish.'

In former times the authorities set out with remarkable optimism to prevent such immorality on 'prophane swearing' and secular activities on Sunday. One cannot help doubting the frequent reports of constables that all was well in their parishes and that they had no vice or drunkenness, but in particularly outrageous instances they were stirred to make more truthful presentments, as at Dursley in 1737, where 'Cardplaying . . . and such like Vile and Ileagal Practises' were indulged in. Another shocking case occurred ten years later at Tidenham, where Christopher Beves had 'Eidel fellows at his hous on Severall Sundayes and speshally on Sunday ye 27 of September ther was Dancing and Singing at three a Clock on Sunday morning.'



Military duties formed an important part of the constable's office from early times, his responsibility for inspecting the parish armour being mentioned in the Statute of Winchester as early as 1285. Under the old militia system every parish was liable to provide armed men to serve the king, and it was the constable's duty to organise the most able-bodied into 'trained bands' and to see that they were properly equipped. Payments for weapons and clothing were recorded in the accounts which the constable submitted to the parish vestry for approval: thus at Welford-on-Avon in 1708 seven shillings were paid 'for three new scabords and scowering sword blades and a new handle.' The parish armour used often to be kept in the church, together with gun powder and shot. It is perhaps surprising that more churches did not suffer from explosions, like that which greatly damaged the chancel of St. Columb Major in

Cornwall in 1676. The Welford accounts show the constable buying gunpowder early in the eighteenth century to be used at times of celebration, such as the king's coronation day and on November 5th: an early form of Guy Fawkes' night fireworks.

Apart from his responsibilities in regard to the militia and the keeping of law and order, the constable had many administrative duties laid on him by the justices of the peace. He collected various ancient taxes such as trophy money, which helped to pay for the militia, money for the repair of county bridges, and, until 1739, the county rates. He also assisted in enforcing the collection of the tax on windows and in making assessments for the land tax. Many taxpayers would perhaps sympathise with James Davies of Horsley, who was presented by the constable in 1736 'for Assaulting and Abusing in a Very Vile manner the Collector of the land tax . . . as he was Collecting the Money and Cursing Dam the taxis for he should not go forward in Gathering of it any further.'

As with the stocks and whipping post, each parish also had a pound for straying animals, which was maintained either by the churchwardens or by the constable. It was usually cattle or sheep which caused annoyance by being allowed to wander, but at Painswick James Turner was accused of 'Kipping a large masty Dog that has Bit and asalted many People in ye hei way'.

In 1827 the system of making presentments was abolished, since by then a formal report that everything was all right was almost invariably made. Nineteenth century legislation ensured that most of the administrative duties of the constable were taken over by trained civil servants and other paid officials, the old militia organisation was brought to an end, and police responsibilities passed to the new county forces. However, it was still possible for the vestry of a rural parish to decide to pay its own constable instead of adopting the County Police Act, and this option continues to be exercised by some parish councils today. All inhabitants are liable for service if chosen, but you need not worry if you are pilot licensed by the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, a household servant of Her Majesty, a person who preaches in a registered congregation of Protestant Dissenters, or if you follow a host of other occupations, because legally you may claim exemption.

ROBIN HARCOURT WILLIAMS.

#### FURTHER NEWS OF THE IRON AGE FORT AT CRICKLEY HILL

DOCTOR PHILIP DIXON contributed an article in our last edition about this fort, based on last year's excavations. It now looks as if parts of the site may be 5,000 years old. This season, further digging unearthed flint arrows which pre-date the walls of the fortress. The recent excavations also revealed that the south wall curves round to meet the north wall, making the fort much more impervious to attack, and which slightly alters the drawing of the reconstruction

which illustrated the article. It is certain that many more exciting revelations are in store for us about this site which is one of the most important ever found in southern England.

I had a pleasant interview with Councillor Morris the other evening, and we discussed the possibility of really opening up this enormous fort, doing some restoration, and turning the whole beautiful hill with its wonderful views into a public park with the fort as a central attraction.

Although the quarry, and some of the surrounding land belongs to Councillor Morris, there are several other bodies involved in any such plan. First there is the Countryside Commission, responsible for the provision of parks, and the custodian of the actual fort and surrounding woods, the National Trust. Then the Ministry of Environment, and the Ministry of Works, the latter responsible for the physical restoration and upkeep of Historic Monuments. The intermediary authority is of course, the Gloucestershire County Council. All these authorities are involved in any such scheme, but Mr Morris hopes that joint discussions might lead to getting the fort preserved and restored as far as possible to its original form.

Every dig brings new revelations, but at present, owing to fear of weathering and vandalism it all has to be re-buried after each season. Properly restored and protected it would be a great asset to Gloucestershire.

It seems relevant to mention here the formation of "RESCUE", a trust for British Archeology. In their pamphlet they state that 50,000 acres of land are being submerged under development every year. In Gloucestershire alone half of its 360 round barrows have been destroyed and only one barrow cemetery now survives intact. Anyone wanting further details or who would help financially now survives intact. Anyone wanting further details or who would help financially should write to: "Rescue", 4 Foregate Street, Worcester. The next article warns against some of the illegal digging which is going on.

M. M.

## METAL DETECTORS AND ARCHAEOLOGY

CURRENTLY A COMMERCIAL campaign to popularise cheap metal detectors is also promoting the old-fashioned idea of 'treasure-hunting'. The detectors themselves are effective in locating small metal objects e.g. coins, at shallow depths and can obviously have a limited use in proper archaeological investigation. Their promotion for 'treasure-hunting' and their intended use by the archaeologically ignorant or the 'something for nothing brigade' must, however, be contested since both can lead to unskilled and indeed, in the case of scheduled and guardianship monuments, illegal digging on archaeological sites. Furthermore, their use for other than scientific purposes will lead to the loss of archaeological objects and information. 'Treasure-hunters' are advised by the promoters to join their local archaeological societies, not for the reasons which have attracted our members so far, but to obtain easier access to information on the location of sites which can then be gone over and presumably looted of what the detectors detect. Clearly there is a threat here to one of the basic freedoms on which scholarship, including archaeology, is based i.e. the free publication of information by the printed and spoken word.

It is likely that there will be a series of incidents involving these instruments from 1971 onwards. Landowners especially are warned about the probability of unauthorised entry by 'treasure-hunters' on to their land and of the legal difficulties, arising from Treasure Trove and Ancient Monuments legislation, which could occur even if such persons ask for permission to search. Readers are asked to report any incidents involving the use of detectors to a Museum, the Council for British Archaeology (Tel: 01-486-1527) or Mr P. J. Fowler, Honorary Secretary, Council for British Archaeology, Extra Mural Department, University of Bristol (Tel: 0272-24161, Ext. 212). In case of difficulty inform the landowners or call the Police, since apart from trespass and larceny which could well be involved in cases of unauthorised 'treasure-hunting', there is a duty and a right to protect our national archaeological heritage from those who would harm it. Meanwhile, it is all the more important that bona fide archaeologists, both full and part-time, should take especial care to do the proper things like obtaining permission to enter land.

COUNCIL FOR BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY.

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## *Book Review*

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### **SOUTH CERNEY OLD AND NEW**

South Cerney Local History Group, 89 pp., 75 n.p.

THIS BOOK IS the most successful result of a great deal of hard work and research. First hand stories, illustrating many of the different sections have been obtained from South Cerney's senior citizens, and these are perhaps the highlights of the book.

It opens with an introduction and brief history by Mrs A. M. Hadfield, and is delightfully illustrated by Mr Cyril Stephens, with a frontispiece of three

children of Upper Up, taken from a post card circa 1905, by Mrs E. Hill. Some of the local names are a delight, and I am glad the famous village walk between the mill stream and the River Churn with the name of Bow Wow is included among the pictures.

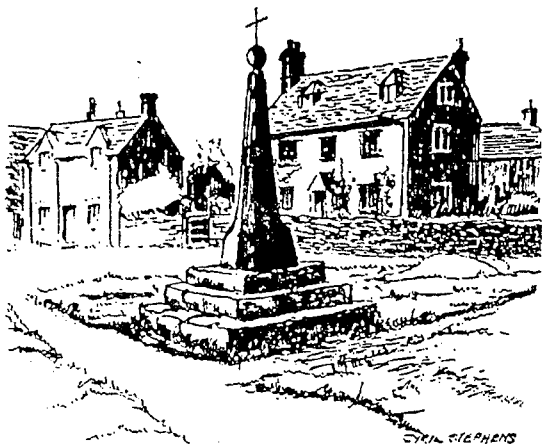
The chapters cover maps and records (illustrated), customs, occupations, Schools, the church, councils, canals and even sheep stealing. Some of the school records which have been unearthed show how secondary a place schooling took in the nineteenth century to haying, harvesting or even planting. "Fevers" caused absenteeism, and resulting deaths were quite casually recorded, but the little "wretches" got punished for ordinary truancy and going sliding.

With all the moans one hears today from villages living near aerodromes, it is most refreshing to read that South Cerney takes a pride in the R.A.F. station only a mile from the village, and gives details of in its war record and the enemy bombing.

It is all absorbing reading, and there is a general index, and a list of people's names, many of which can be traced back a very long way in the history.

The history of the village is not yet complete, and this book is only the first instalment. We shall all look forward to the completion of this delightful village history.

M. M.



*The old Cross, South Cerney, circa 1910.  
The Cross itself is about 500 years old, history unknown.*

# LECTURES AND MEETINGS

CIRENCESTER ARCHÆOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

WINTER PROGRAMME 1971-72

November 8th

"Excavations in Gloucester." Henry Hurst, Gloucester City Museum.

December 6th

"The River Severn." F. W. Rowbotham of Stonehouse.

January 10th, 1972

"After the Sack of Rome." Richard Reece, B.Sc., F.S.A., Institute of Archaeology, University of London.

February 7th

"Religious, Historical & Social Effect on Design in Silver." Thomas Hudson of Cirencester.

February 28th

CROOME MEMORIAL LECTURE — "The Contribution of the West Country to Romanesque Architecture." Dr. Peter Kidson, Ph.D., F.S.A., Lecturer in Art, Courtauld Institute University of London.

March 20th

"Cirencester Excavations 1971." Alan McWhirr, B.Sc., M.A., F.S.A., College of Education, Leicester University.

