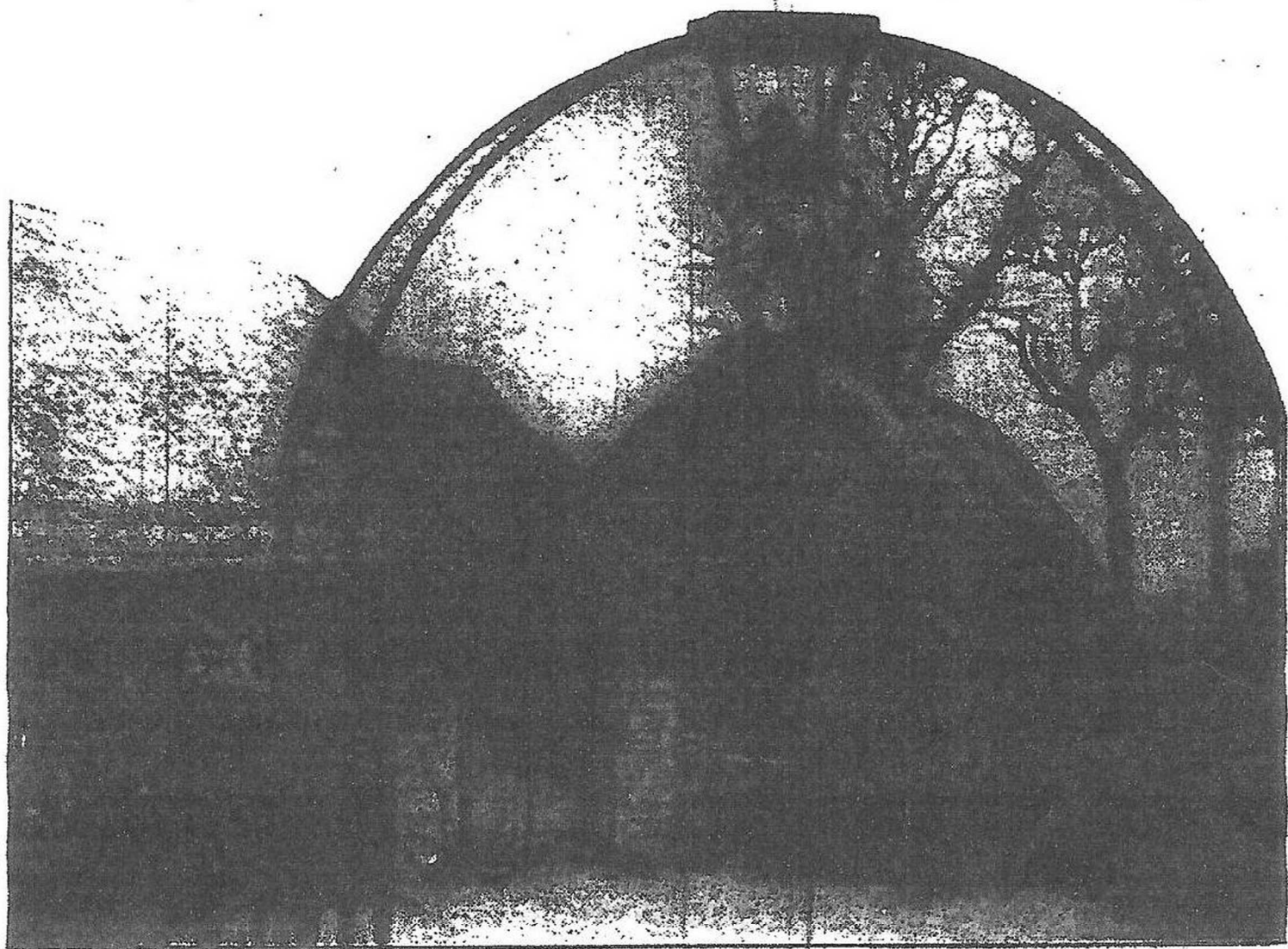


DERELICT COTTAGES NOW A VILLAGE HALL.

How a Veritable Transformation Has Been Effected at Ashbury.



ROMANCE is not associated, as a rule, with village halls, but the story of the enterprise that has just been achieved at Ashbury is far removed from the commonplace. Of course, one would expect something out of the ordinary from this village, which, steeped in history, has much in its records of a noteworthy character.

An Ashbury cleric of the 18th century, Thomas Stock, founded a school that provided the seed from which the national system of education developed. But that is a different story, and I must return to Ashbury's village hall.

It is due to the enterprise of the present incumbent, the Rev. Edward Glanville Mortimer, who was formerly Vicar of St. Paul's, at Swindon that

Beauchamp as a Silver Jubilee memorial. Lady Craven at once agreed and gave £380 towards the cost.

It was decided that the 16th century walls and roofs should be retained, and under the skilful direction of Mr. Gimson, Architect to the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the original character of the cottages has been preserved. Even where it was found necessary to pull down the south wall, the ancient stones were carefully replaced. The porch and a window alone are the only modern outside introductions, and these have been designed to tone with the 16th century exterior.

The cost of the project is £900, and so far about £700 has been subscribed. The hall will be opened by the Coun-

Crown, the Earl of Essex, and the Craven family.

On the hills above Ashbury was fought one of King Alfred's greatest battles.

The ecclesiastical parish of Ashbury includes Compton Beauchamp. This is one of the beautiful villages of Britain, and has an unspoiled church of the 13th century.

BLUNSDON'S LOSS,

Death of Former Tradesman and Councillor.