

Hilltop hold-ups

REGULAR travellers along the A50 will know the two coverts that stand just past the Saddington-Bruntingthorpe cross-roads on the Husbands Bosworth side, known as Jane Ball, on the right, and John Ball.

Who these two were in real life is lost in history and folklore, and although one tale says that they were millers who died on the hill when their cart overturned, there is a much more popular story.

John Ball was a highwayman and lived in the cottages on the left-hand

side of the road with his wife, Jane, some time late in the 17th century. As carriages went up the hill their speed was reduced to a walk, because of the steepness, so this was an ideal spot for the couple to ply their trade.

Their system was to stop the coach, rob and kill, and run off the horses. Eventually they were caught and hanged, one either side of the road.

So the coverts, when planted about 40 years later, were named after them.