WIMBORNE COMMUNITY THEATRE

The Bare Bones: Secrets of the Hill Hambledon Hill 2003



Collectively devised by Wimborne Community Theatre (WCT) and the Childe Okeford Youth Theatre Workshop (COYT)

Original script by Tony Horitz, Gill Horitz and Jonathan Kelley and members of WCT and COYT

Scene 1:	Summoning the Ancestral Voices from North, West, East and South	page 2
Scene 2:	The Monster from the North	page 4
Scene 3:	The Fool from the West	page 6
Scene 4:	The Soldier from the East	page 13
Scene 5:	The Poet from the South	page 17
Scene 6:	Finale	page 19



Scene 1: Summoning the Ancestral Voices from North, West, East and South

A musician is playing. He leads the audience over the hill path to see actors all lying in tableaux in foetal positions.

Chris approaches the group from stage right. She picks up chalk and crumbles it into four pieces.

Chris (pointing to each compass point as she speaks): North! South! East! West!

Poem: The Rose and the Yew (T S Eliot): Chris (speaking): We die with the dying:

See, they depart, and we go with them.

We are born with the dead:

See, they return and bring us with them. The moment of the rose and the moment

Of the yew tree
Are of equal duration.

All sit up slowly, looking at Chris, then at the audience, speaking and finally linking.

Chorus: And all shall be well

And all manner of things shall be well When the tongues of flame are infolded

Into the crowned knot of fire
And the fire and the rose are one.

Musicians move across in front of actors and start singing The Rose and the Yew song. Chorus doesn't join in the first verse. During instrumental part, all scatter purposefully to next position further up the hill and stand with their backs to the audience, e.g. Gill by thorn tree, Linda looking up pointing at stage left. Musicians sing verse again and the Chorus turns to face the audience and sings on following "And all shall be well..."

Chorus speaks the next lines from the positions they have already adopted on the hill.

Gill/Helen/Sian: Down scarps spotted with yews and thorn trees.

Linda/Catherine: With thickets of ash elder and white beam.

Chris: And hawks wiver in the pure air.

Jeff: We gaze
Rachael: North!
Jeff: East!

The Bare Bones: Secrets of the Hill at Hambledon Hill 2003 (Script as of 01.06.2003)

© copyright Wimborne Community Theatre

Barbara: South! Jonathan: West!

Megan/Ellie: Over vale and down

Tuppy/Kate: Woodland fades into a vacant haze.

Music. Drum beats. All walk down to downstage left. Non-speakers lie in line from west to east on the bank. Others cover them with a white cloth - Chris in the middle, Gill and Linda at the top corners, Tuppy and Lynn at the lower corners, facing audience. Also Catherine and Rachael. All look at the cloth as if into a magic mirror where they see the following:

Gill: Long Barrow.
Linda: Causeway Camp
Rachael: Banks and ditches
Katherine: Round barrows
Lynn: Saxon necropolis

Chris: Bodies laid east to west.

The cloth is hoisted up. The 'bodies' stand up and are wrapped inside the cloth, which is opened and closed like a curtain. All end standing close together in a huddle on the bank facing the audience.

Chorus (together): We are gathered here, one and all!

Monster (Rachael, stepping forward):

Soldier (Jeff, stepping forward):

Soldier!

Poet (Barbara, stepping forward):

Poet!

Fool (Jonathan, stepping forward, shaking bells and standing in a cowpat): Fool!

All laugh. The four archetypes run off to their compass points. Chris shushes the others and they all crouch down to listen to the earth.

All (in canon): Listen ... listen ... listen ...

Chris: Listen hard and you can hear voices!

All (repeat in Chinese whisper style): Voices, voices ...

Chris: From the hill

Tuppy (lowers head to the ground): Everyone has a claim to this land (Others follow Tuppy)

Ellie/Megan: To the sacred soil where children play Linda/Katherine (looking up): Every breath of wind has a tale to tell

Lynn (standing above the others): Listen to the claims from the four points of the compass.

Monster: North
Poet: South
Fool: West
Soldier: East

Lynn: Who will begin? Monster: I, the beast!



Scene 2: The Monster from the North

Monster: I am the Oozer up from the North

In the wind's icy breath I spew forth!

The Chorus scatters, scrambling up the hill to begin pulling the bodies down.

Monster: This place is a ground of death

Lonely chambers from the dead

On your brother's carcass birds alight

Feast upon the flesh

Time alone will claim you all

There's no escape from the reaper's call Like a fly caught in the spider's web

Struggle as you fall!

Ritual of death. Sound effects. Music. Drums.

The cleaning of the bones. During Oozer's next speech, adult Chorus members drag the bodies wrapped in cloths down the steep slope and lay them in a circle. They leave them and go to turn their backs and put on bird masks, and arrange black cloths as cloaks. They become birds pecking away the flesh. Unwrapping of the cloth.

Monster: Slobbering on bones in a chalk-white cave

I am the glossy greasepaint of a jackdaw's neck,

I am the swansong of the ravenous rook.
I slurp on marrow in the lungs of the hill
Splayed down from lacy banks of speedwell
Where the funereal stoop of the carrion crow
Denotes the patterns and shapes of its passing.
(All freeze.) In the rump of the hill something moves.

Birds listen carefully.

Monster: That June, orchids grew through the skull of the bird

And buzzards wheeled against cattle-tracked slops.

Birds process up the bank and across to stage left, ending behind a small thorn bush where they leave their masks and cloaks.

Monster: The skeleton will walk hand in hand with the hare

And bones will leak calcium into the chalk-lined tor.

Listen! It is my curse that whispers through this wind-whipped place,

My monstrous darkness that chills souls young and old.

Yesterday, today and tomorrow \dots the North's reign lasts longest.

Watch! When young girls climb to the top of my world

I breathe cold fear onto their sleeping forms

And make cruel words fly in the air!

Ellie and Kate become frightened girls in sleeping bags. Rachael, Catherine, Helen, Sian and Megan approach them as modern children behaving like bullies. Two are teasing and bullying the third, taunting her with stories of death, murder and ghosts. They are describing the scene we have just seen.

Kate cries.

The Monster laughs.



Scene 3: The Fool from the West: the Fool and the children playing

The Fool rescues the crying child, chasing away the Monster. He sneaks up behind the Monster with a cowpat or nettles and scares it, then chases off the bullies.

Fool (singing in ridicule to the retreating bullies): Ha! Ha! Not so scary! Not so tough!

Not so brave! What? Had enough? I belong on this hill too, you know! Want to know who I am? I'm Robin Goodfellow!

The bullies hide. The Fool talks to Ellie and Kate.

Fool: Don't be afraid! Fear is in the mind,

The air that roars is full of wind not blood.

Feel! Touch! Taste! Smell! Close your eyes,

Imagination is always painted blind.

Those fleshless bones lying underneath

Were not laid here in anger but in love,

Remembrance for all to see

From miles around in gleaming white chalk

And people would look up, wonder, talk.

And other tales

Seeded by imagination's flight

Grow like wild flowers on Hambledon.

Kate: Who did you say you were?

Ellie: Robin who?

Fool: Goodfellow! Puck! What you will!

I am the Fool, the Fool on the hill!

I come from the West.

Want to know what I think best? Live for the present is my advice, Joy and laughter will suffice,

Let others live a life of strife, Rejoice now with the Fool

We can't fight fate or what it brings,

The bitter taste of all its stings.

The moment's precious – live it now!

The Fool does a head-over-heels.

Kate: You're funny!

Ellie: Weird!

Fool (moves above them into the centre): I dance with the wind and sing with the skylark!

I play all day long until it gets dark! Then close my eyes and fly away Then start again the very next day!

Girls: Silly!

Fool: Certainly! And proud to be!

Listen! Ssh! Come and sit down here! (He leads them to downstage right. Pause) Close your eyes! (He waits for them to move to the side) What do

you see?

Girls: I see ... Children!

The Children's Story of Hambledon Hill as told by the Fool follows:

Meanwhile Chorus members go up the hill path and prepare to be soldiers marching down the path.

Fool: Once upon a time, or so I say, long ago, not in your time, not in my time, but

in an imaginary time, there lived close to this hill ...

Ellie: A tribe of Celts?

Fool: Yes.

Kate: Neolithic warriors?

Fool: Yes! And their children, just like you, used to come up here and play games

and have fun!

Kate: What did they play?

Fool: Lie back on the grass, put your head on the chalk, listen carefully and you'll

hear them talk!

Music. The Children appear, rushing up and making a circle. They chant.

Children: Odjy! Odjy! Hey! Hey! Hey! What are we going to play today?

Jack: Today we shall play – Chalk Ball!

Children: Hurray! Hurray! We're going to play Chalk Ball today!

Jack: When I ring the cow bell! Richard and Sinead, you two will jump for the chalk

ball. You know the rules! The first team to score a mark wins! Are you

ready?

Sinead and Richard step into the middle, ready to jump.

All Sinead's Team: Fly, Sinead, fly! As high as the sky!

All Richard's Team: Jump, Richard, jump! Grab that chalky lump!

Sinead and Richard jump and all cheer. Richard grabs the ball and passes it to his team to charge for the line (stage left corner). They win. Loud cheers and protests from the two teams. They freeze on bang of the Fool's drum.

Fool: As they were cheering or booing their game, their lucid excitement turned to

horror. For there above them were the old Oozers! Part-Witch, part-Yeti, part-Monster! Yes, they were hairy and scary! And green and slimy! They

were known in those days as the Bogeys of Hambledon!

The Children scream and run away: the Sprites, the good witches (Martha, Sinead and Ruth) run to the bush to the right. The Roman Soldier and Tiger, the cat, run to the bush on the left. Jack, Abbie and Nathan escape into the audience.

Other Children (as they run to the centre to hide): Oh no! It's the Bogeys! Help! They're going to get me! They're so slimy! Run for it! Let's pretend to be bushes!

They pretend to be bushes close to the front in the centre, trembling.

Bogeys: We're fierce and tough,

We slime about and we cut up rough! With our magic powers you can't escape

So lie back and accept your fate!

Bogey 1 (doing a spell on one of the Children): I'll turn this one into stone.

Oogly boogly, bogey, now you won't moan!

Child becomes stone.

All Bogeys: Ha! Ha! Ha! Ta-ra for now!

Bogey 2 (doing another spell): I'll turn this one into a frog.

Oogly boogly, bogey, umparog!

Child becomes a frog and hops about.

The Bare Bones: Secrets of the Hill at Hambledon Hill 2003 (Script as of 01.06.2003)

© copyright Wimborne Community Theatre

All Bogeys: Ha! Ha! Ha! Ta-ra for now!

Bogey 3 (doing another spell): And I'll turn this one into a frazzle.

Oogly boogly, bogey, let my electricity dazzle!

All Bogeys: Ha! Ha! Ha! Ta-ra for now!

The Monsters cackle and run off to hide.

Fool (pointing at the frozen Children): So there they were and all looked bad.

Ooh! Such nasty behaviour! It makes me mad!

As for the friends who escaped, They were feeling ever so sad!

Jack, Abbie and Nathan come in and look at their friends sadly.

Abbie: What are we going to do?

Nathan: There's nothing we can do! It's hopeless!

Jack: Yes, there is! We can make a wish!

Abbie/Nathan: Who to?

Jack: The Hambledon Sprites!

Nathan: Isn't that a drink?

Jack: No, they're good witches who live in Hambledon's deep ditches. To summon

their help we must call with all our might. Are you ready?

Abbie/Nathan: Yes!

All: Please help us Hambledon Sprites!

Music. The Sprites fly on from behind the hawthorn tree upstage right.

Sprites: Hambledon Sprites! How can we help you?

Abbie: Our friends - look! Turned to stone!

Nathan: And this one's been turned into a dog!

Frog: Excuse me, don't you mean frog! (says 'rabbit')

Nathan: Sorry – a rabbit (*Frog shows he is angry*) Sorry – I mean, a frog!

Sprite 1 (pointing to the electrified child): And what's wrong with this one?

Jack: Er, he had a bit of a shock!

Sprite 2: Who has done this dastardly deed?

Children: The Bogeymen! Can you help reverse the spell?

Sprite 3: Yes!

Children cheer.

Sprite 3: On one condition.

Children: What?

Sprite 2: You must give us your best cow!

Sprite 1: And a couple of nice newts.

Jack: Is that all?

Sprite 3: No!

All Sprites: We want your chalk ball!

Children: But that's our favourite game!

Sprite 2: It's jolly hard work being a hill sprite, you know!

Sprite 1: Yes, we need recreation and relation too like you mortals.

Children are unsure what to do.

Sprite 3: Do you want your friends back or not?

Sprite 2: There isn't much time!

Jack: Oh, all right! (He fetches the chalk ball and gives it to them) You'll get the

cow and the newts later!

Sprites: Agreed! Now stand back while we light the blue touch paper!

Sprite 1: So to speak!

Sprites form a circle and dance around the petrified Children.

The Bare Bones: Secrets of the Hill at Hambledon Hill 2003 (Script as of 01.06.2003)

© copyright Wimborne Community Theatre

Sprites: Squiggly, wiggly, squishy cow pats,

A pinch of spice

And the cunning of cats

Turn these children back to brats!

Jack/Abbie/Nathan: Hey, that's not fair!

Petrified Children (unfreezing): Who cares! We're back to being kids again! Hooray!

Bogeys appear again.

Bogeys: Ha! Ha! Ha!

Bogey 1: So you thought you were safe!

Bogey 2: 'Cos of them silly Sprites!

Bogey 3: This time we'll really give you a fright!

They freeze as they are about to strike down the Children.

Fool: Oh no, stop! The Bogeys returned! Now they planned to make everyone

barmy! Who could stop their wicked plans?

Joshua and Katie appear at stage right.

Joshua: The Roman army!

Katie: And their fearless cat, Tiger!

Both march down the hill, calling out.

Joshua/Katie: Sinister! Dexter! Dexter! Clear out of here, Bogeys, or we'll fetch

our ballista!

The Bogeys run away scared and hide behind the thorn bushes on the right. The Romans

pursue them. All the Children cheer and run off after them.

All Children: We beat the Bogeys! Hurrah! Hurrah!

Joshua: Ahem! We beat the Bogeys! (He charges off after the Bogeys)

Fool: And that was the last they saw of the Bogeys. For the artful Romans turned

them into that spiky thorn bush! And they say that on a summer night, if you

listen carefully, you can still hear the spiky Bogeys grumbling!

Bogeys (grumbling): It's not fair! Yeah! Those Romans are cheats!

Fool: And if anyone is fool enough to go near the bush – they'll get scratched! I call

it the Revenge of the Bogeys!

Ellie: And what happened to the children?

Kate: And did they keep their promises to the Sprites?

Fool: Of course! Each year after that, they brought a cow and two newts and left

them on this very spot for the Sprites. Sadly, the children never played Chalk Ball up on Hambledon again. But they still had fun – they played tag instead.

The Children run across, playing tag, then stop and bow.

Ellie: Is that story true?

Fool: What sort of question is that?

Kate: A good one!

Fool: No, it's a silly one!

Ellie: You're the silly one!

Fool: Life is a dream! A poor stage. And all the men and women merely players,

as I think someone famous once said. Nothing's real. And that's the truth!

But the important thing is - you're both smiling now!

Kate: What about the Romans? Did they really come to Hambledon?

Fool: Yes. And they weren't the only soldiers to cross these fine chalk paths either.

Listen! Hambledon - a place of monsters and stories, of fear and bravery, of tears and laughter, of industry, leisure and hard work, of peasant farmers, and

soldiers from the East ...



Scene 4: The Soldier from the East

Wind instruments and drums. The soldier stops laughter and storytelling. The Chorus are seen marching down the path from the brow of the hill under the soldier's command.

Soldier (with crook/musket): I am a soldier, I come from the East.

Hope is alive while we draw breath Seize the moment, take our part, Every day resume the fight, We can make our mark.

From barren ground crops will grow,

By our labours we can show

Our destiny through human hands,

Masters of this land.

Soldier: Into position, troops ...

Action: Military style – cast mime to Soldier's words with accompanying drumbeats.

Soldier: ... working with antlers; growing crops; knapping flints; making arrowheads;

standing steadfast; gathering moss; shepherding; grazing cattle and sheep.

Soldier: And many commanders have led their warriors

Bravely up Hambledon's fair heights

Like General Wolfe who trained his men here

Before leaving for Canada To set the world to rights.

Song

Wolfe (Rachael) breaks from the troop and sits on other soldiers who are acting as a 'desk' and 'chair'. He is reading a letter to his father. The Chorus mime assembling tents with cloths.

Wolfe: My dear Father,

Our little army amounts to six battalions, 6 squadrons, 12 small pieces of artillery and two troops of light horse. We are encamped upon a very wholesome and very pleasant dry spot, although as our situation is high, the

winds rather incommode us ...

So much for the army ... As for myself, this sort of life generally agrees very well with me and I am much better in health since I came into the open air. I wish you and my mother all happiness and am, sir, etc.

James Wolfe

Song

Fool: And what happened to this noble Wolfe

When he reached the Heights of Abraham in Canada?

Soldier: He fought bravely with his men but eventually, in spite of great courage,

strength and determination ...

Fool: He was beaten!

Soldier: Outmanoeuvred by superior numbers. And he is immortalised to this day by

a grateful nation. Immortalised by his death.

Fool (to the audience): Unlike the other celebrated

Military gentlemen who graced Hambledon with his armed might!

He soon showed the yokels

What was right! On this hill On this very hill

The new Model Army came to fight!

Two thousand Dorset peasants
Sick of armies trampling their land
And stealing the fruits of their labours

Under the Reverend Bravel of Compton Abbas Had taken up clubs, pitchforks, axes, scythes And scaled the heights of Hambledon Hill To challenge the forces of Oliver Cromwell.

Drum beats. Cromwell enters.

Cromwell: A dispatch to General Fairfax. (he writes)

Sir,

We marched on to Shaftesbury where we heard a great body of them was

drawn together about Hambledon Hill.

The Clubmen appear up the hill, shouting: "For England and our homes!"
They have a banner reading "If you offer to plunder our cattle, Be assured that we'll give you battle." (They freeze)

Cromwell: Indeed, nearly two thousand were gathered. I sent a forlorne of about fifty

horse, who coming very civilly to them were refused with disdain and fired

upon. (Drumbeats)

Clubmen: We will never surrender!

Rev. Bravel: And if anyone does, I, Reverend Bravel of Compton Abbas, will shoot any him

- or her!

Cromwell: Mister Lee! Go and certify the peaceableness of my intentions and desire

them to peacefulness.

Lee runs up the hill.

Lee: Colonel Cromwell comes in peace! He wants you to be peaceful too!

They fire at him.

Cromwell: Lee! Go back up the hill again! Tell them if they lay down their arms, I will do

no wrong to them.

Lee runs up the hill again.

Lee: Lay down your arms! And Colonel Cromwell promises that ...

Lee is again under fire. Two Ministers step forward.

Minister 1: Get thee hence, Satan! No surrender!

Minister 2: We will never surrender!

Chorus: No Surrender!

Cromwell: Captain Lieutenant! Draw the men upon them. Be in readiness to charge. If,

upon your falling on, they lay down their arms, accept them and spare them.

Captain Lieutenant and the men charge up the hill. Drumbeats. Men are killed.

Cromwell: Major Desburgh, wheel about and get in the rear of them. Beat them from

their work!

Major Desburgh wheels about and charges round the back.

Major: You heard Colonel Cromwell! Wheel about and take 'em by surprise! Well,

what are you waiting for?

All charge off. Music. We see a series of slow motion and freeze frames of soldiers getting behind the Clubmen and the Clubmen trying to escape. During Cromwell's speech, the Chorus marches down the hill slowly as captive prisoners, now with cloths like bandages, heads down.

Cromwell (when the last freeze is over, returns to his letter):

Whereupon Major Desburgh wheeled about, got in the rear of them and beat them from their work. Indeed, he performed some small execution on them. I believe we killed not twelve of them, but cut very many more. Having taken three hundred prisoners, many of which are silly poor creatures, who, if you please to let me, we will send home under the promise that they be very dutiful for time to come and will be hanged before they come out again. Your most humble servant,

Oliver Cromwell.

Cromwell and the troop of soldiers exit.

Song: Sleeping in the Wind



Scene 5: The Poet from the South

The Poet (Barbara) and the Chorus as other poets are seen on the brow of the hill with books in their hands, reading or writing.

The poets bring in a sense of reflection and looking to the future. The cast tell their own stories about beautiful places, including Hambledon: a way of reconciling joy with happiness, war with peace, the past with the present etc.

Barbara/Tuppy/Catherine/Sian/Gill: We are the poets from the South

We are the voices of yesterday, today

And tomorrow.

There's beauty in the bleached white bones

Just as in the first breath cry

Intellect our legacy

Words beyond the grave
The present is a fragile place
Look to a future full of grace
Mark our words one and all.

Megan. Lynn, Helen, Linda and Rachael step forward and form a line at the bottom of the hill facing the audience.

Megan: Wind blowing the grass flat Lynn: Barrows in the distance Views for miles around

Linda: Forest below Rachael: Overcast sky

All: Exposed to the elements.

They retreat and Barbara, Sian, Catherine and Tuppy step forward. They stand on raised banks. The rest of the cast make Wind noises and ruffle cloths.

Barbara/Sian/Catherine/Tuppy: High on the hill!

Sian: Higher than the line-dancing sheep

Catherine: I am alone with my thoughts
Barbara: Into the blustering bully-wind

All, except Barbara, run down the bank and move forward as if fighting the wind.

Tuppy: Longing for the wind to blow my cares away.

All sink down to their knees.

Catherine: Little yellow cowslips turn their golden heads. (she touches the ground)
Sian: Lowly sheep graze round cowslips and orchids (she points them out)

Barbara: Look! We look in a new light high on the hill. We see ...

Tuppy: Carline thistle
Gill: Chalk milkwort
Linda: Rock rose
Lynn: Cowslip
Chris: Eye bright
Katherine: Fairy flax

Sian: Meadow saxifrage

Megan: Yellow-rattle Helen: Wild thyme

Tuppy: Keep still, see butterflies dance by ...

Linda: Holly blue Chris: Ringlet

Sian: Speckled wood Helen: Wall brown

Megan/Catherine: Dingy skipper Ellie/Rachael: Green hairstreak

Gill: Brown argus Lynn: Adonis blue.

Barbara (to Kate and Ellie): And you two, what words does this ancient hill draw from your

secret store? Let them breathe again in the clear air! Echo down the valleys

of Hambledon!

She moves down the bank, looking up.

Kate laughs and runs up the bank to Ellie. She sits down with her and tells her story.

Kate: I remember, I remember a thistle prickling my hand. A picnic on

a hill. A spider catching a fly. Sugar-coated yum-yums.

Ellie: I remember, I remember, I remember a dragonfly, sapphire blue.

Kate (stands): Here on Hambledon Hill, I remember and I am not afraid.

Ellie (stands): Here on Hambledon Hill, I remember and I am not afraid.

Kate/Ellie (folding arms defiantly): We remember and we are not afraid.

Song: On this Hill



Scene 6: Finale

The Chorus speaks:

Chris: Now you've heard the claims of all

Rachael: Monster

Barbara: Poet

Jeff: Soldier

Jonathan: Fool

Lynn: Can the bones beneath our feet

Give answers to their call?

Gill: There are many truths we all know

Linda: Many paths that we can choose

All: Find your own way to unlock

The secrets of the hill.

Song: The Rose and the Yew

We die with the dying:

See, they depart, and we go with them.

We are born with the dead:

See, they return and bring us with them. The moment of the rose and the moment

Of the yew tree Are of equal duration. And all shall be well

And all manner of things shall be well When the tongues of flame are infolded

Into the crowned knot of fire

And the fire and the rose are one.

During the song, the cast sink down to the ground into their original foetal positions. The Children come out from the audience and dance around, in and out of the bodies, waving cloths.

When the song ends, the Chorus rises to their feet and form a line. The Children run to the top of the hill and form a line.

Bow

The End

When the applause dies down, the cast go out into the audience and invite members of the audience to join them in a circle dance.