

GUARD ON TWYFORD AMMUNITION FIND

A 24-HOUR WATCH is being kept on a pond near the Seven Stars public house, Twyford, in which thousands of rounds of live ammunition have been found.

Bicester Police contacted the R.A.F. bomb disposal experts after children were seen playing with live bullets which they found while playing in the pond during the summer holidays. Work on clearing the pond of ammunition began earlier this month and should be completed by the end of next week.

The work is being carried out by men from the 71 M.U. Explosives Ordnance Division (Bomb Disposal) Flight, from R.A.F. Bicester. The officer in charge is Ft/Lt. Ted Tout, and a team is working daily on the task under Chief Technician Alan Ferris.

So far they have discovered more than 50,000 rounds of .303 inch belted ammunition of the type fired from aircraft. Detectors are used, but it involves grovelling in the mud on the bed of the pond to bring out the ammunition.

Detectors have located plenty of scrap metal as well as bullets, and several practice bombs.

FORMER RANGE

The pond was already scheduled to be cleared, because it was believed it might contain some live ammunition — the area was part of a bombing range during the war. But the task was not given priority until children began splashing about in the pond and finding live ammunition which could cause serious accidents.

The guard has been placed on the pond to ensure no-one goes near until the bomb disposal squad is quite satisfied there is no more ammunition to be found there. Chief Technician Ferris said this week the final total was likely to be as

much as 80,000 rounds.

It is thought to be one of the largest quantities of ammunition found in this area for some years.

FISH RESCUE

Another special feature of the exercise has been the rescue operation mounted to save hundreds of fish, including perch, in the pond.

Buckingham Angling Club uses the pond, and before the bomb disposal men made a start the pond was drained. As many fish as possible were removed to a neighbouring pond. Members of the Angling Club were helped by the R.A.F. team and also by the owner of the pond, Mr. W. Hodges, of Huntingate Farm, Thornborough.

Among the fish found was a three-foot pike. Much of the ammunition found in the mud in the pond is in good condition and, although manufactured in 1943, is still usable. The R.A.F. will be destroying the lot.