



Serious Fire at Whaddon

On Tuesday afternoon, about two o'clock, a fire broke out in the farmyard of Mr. Jacob Golledge, of Whaddon Grove Farm. It seems that a very fine rick of hay standing in the barton, had been slightly heated, and to prevent ignition the centre part was removed, and spread about the fields, and an old man, not regularly employed on the farm, was set to watch it, while Mr. Golledge and the farm labourers were at another part of the farm carrying a field of hay. The old man went to dinner, and at about two Mr. Golledge happening to go into the farmyard, discovered the rick and an adjoining outhouse to be in flames. All hands were mustered, and every effort was made to extinguish the fire, but in vain. As the outhouse was on fire from end to end, and the rick on fire on the outside, it is supposed that some portions of the heated hay spread about the ground became ignited, and hence the conflagration. Fears were entertained lest another large rick close by would be consumed, and as there were no hopes of saving the burning rick, efforts were made to prevent the fire spreading by pouring water over it. As the fire assumed a threatening aspect, a message was despatched to Trowbridge for a fire engine. Within half an hour afterwards a fire engine arrived on the spot, but was of very little use, as the outhouses were burnt down and the flames had gained complete mastery over the rick. Mr. Golledge attributes the cause of the disaster to the negligence of the man in charge of the rick, as there were no indications of the rick igniting an hour or two previously. The value of the rick is estimated by Mr. Golledge at £500, and it was uninsured. The Melksham fire engine under the direction of Inspector Bullock and the police, was also on the spot shortly after, and every exertion made to save some portion of the burning rick, but there were not sufficient hands to supply the engines with water fast enough and the rick was consumed. The fire, however, was confined to that place, and as the wind did not shift, the adjoining rick and premises were fortunately saved. It was not till ten o'clock at night that the burning mass of hay was considered to be extinguished, as the rick was of such immense size that the water, which was poured upon it plentifully, could not penetrate it. Mr. Sidnell of Trowbridge, the police, and others, who were in charge of the engines, exerted themselves in a most praiseworthy manner to suppress the conflagration, which has occasioned a sad loss to Mr. Golledge.

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