

at  
in  
the  
ry  
to  
th  
tio

FROM THE SALISBURY & WINCHESTER  
JOURNAL & GENERAL ADVERTISER  
SATURDAY MAY 23<sup>RD</sup> 1914

### DISASTROUS FIRE AT PITTON.

#### Farm and Outbuildings Destroyed.

#### ROOF STRUCK BY LIGHTNING.

WU-1

During a heavy thunderstorm which occurred on Saturday morning, Lodge Farm and the greater part of its outbuildings, the property of Mr. Uriah Whitlock, a farmer, of Pitton, were burned to the ground. A long barn with thatched roof enclosed the stables, the piggeries, and the cowhouse, and closely adjoining this barn stood a small but picturesque farmhouse, built in the Queen Anne style, with pointed early English windows, owned and occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Whitlock. The barn was ignited at about half-past two o'clock in the concluding stages of the thunderstorm, being struck, it is supposed, by lightning. Mr. Roland Mills, a carpenter and wheelwright, watching from his bedroom window, saw flames suddenly burst from the thatched roof immediately above the barn doors in the midst of a terrific peal of thunder. He shouted and whistled until he was satisfied that the alarm had been communicated to the inmates. The flames spread quickly under the eaves of the barn, gradually creeping over the top of the thatch and spreading from side to side of the roof. There was no lack of willing helpers from the village, and these by means of buckets of water attempted to quell the flames until the arrival of the Salisbury Volunteer Fire Brigade, to whom a messenger on a bicycle had been despatched. But the means of prevention were ineffectual to cope with the fire, which had taken a firm hold on the sun-dried thatch. A good many buckets were lost, and two ladders were burnt as the result of the desperate efforts of the villagers. Large pieces of burning thatch began to fly off the roof of the barn and to blow down the hill in the direction of the village. Fears were entertained that if the wind were to strengthen the fire would spread to the village, in which a great many roofs are thatched. As much of the furniture as it was possible to remove was hastily taken from Lodge Farm. It was impossible to save the carpets, the bedsteads, and other articles of furniture and a number of the pictures; and with much of the furniture still left inside, the farmhouse caught fire, and quickly burnt to the ground. Large beams which had supported the rooms were easily ignited and in their fall they broke down the walls and floors. When the Salisbury Brigade arrived the fire had demolished beyond hope of prevention the large barn and the picturesque farmhouse. A slate-roofed granary close by in the same farmyard escaped injury. Within two hours of their ignition the farmhouse was a heap of bricks and plaster and blackened, smouldering beams, and the barn, with the exception of three feet of brick wall, and the walled partition between the stables and the cowhouse, had crumbled to fine ash. The property which is burned had but recently been acquired by Mr. Uriah Whitlock. The loss is, however, covered by insurance.