

Serious Fire in Tisbury 1856
Dwellings, Barn and Stable Destroyed
Registration Books Lost



On Tuesday, the 8th inst., shortly after six o'clock, a.m., a fire broke out in an outhouse adjoining a cottage occupied by James Hewlett, which rapidly extended to three attached houses, including that of Mr James Lush, jun. So rapid was the progress of the flames that Mr Lush, who had left home at six o'clock on business, unaware of any danger, returned within ten minutes to witness the dwelling he had so recently left, doomed to destruction, and the escape of Mrs Lush and family of six children almost in a state of nudity.

Facing the danger he afterwards, with difficulty, from the dense smoke and suffocating heat in the whole house, succeeded in saving cash to the amount of 220/. just collected and deposited in his bedroom, having been met in his retreat by the devouring element. In a few minutes the four dwellings were enshrouded in flames and in less than half an hour the whole, with their contents, were reduced to a heap of ruins.

A small portion only of Mr Lush's furniture was saved, and his loss is estimated at 350/., unfortunately, being as well as the other sufferers, uninsured. Fortunately no life was lost, which would inevitably have been the case had the fire broken out only a few hours earlier.

The houses, which are held by A Morrison Esq under the Dean and Chapter of Bristol, are uninsured. The wind being unusually high at the time, portions of the burning mass were drifted across to the farm yard of Mrs Turner, and in an incredibly short time the extensive range of out-buildings, including a barn, stable, and cow shed, were also destroyed. These buildings, which were partly in ruins and empty, belong to the Right Honourable Lord Arundell. Mrs Turner's dwelling house, being detached and tiled, was saved, but two large hay ricks, although not wholly destroyed, are greatly deteriorated in value - these were also uninsured.

Every exertion was made to stay the progress of the fire but it could not possibly be effected. An engine arrived from Shaftesbury too late to be of any material service, except to aid in recovering the parish rate books in Mr Lush's house, from the smouldering mass, before they were totally destroyed, the last rates made being mostly legible. The iron chest, supposed to be fireproof, containing the registration books, was by great exertion previously recovered there, but the books are found to be wholly useless, and the entries illegible.

The fire is generally believed to have arisen more from the incautious disposal of the heated embers, than from twice heating the oven on the previous day.

Salisbury & Winchester Journal Saturday 12 July 1856

THE LATE FIRE AT TISBURY – A MEETING was held at the NATIONAL SCHOOL at TISBURY, on WEDNESDAY EVENING, to consider what means should be adopted to RELIEVE the under-named SUFFERERS by the LATE FIRE.

The four Houses which they occupied were completely destroyed, and the value their property consumed was stated to be about 156/. On Sunday they returned thanks that the lives of themselves and their Families had been preserved.

The Rev. S. TENISON MOSSEE proposed and Mr JOHN COOMBS seconded – That Mr Jukes be Chairman, and the following resolutions were unanimously passed:-

That a Committee be appointed to canvass the Parish and Neighbourhood for subscriptions for the Sufferers

That John Bracher, James Hewlett, and James Turner, who lost their all, be paid in full, and the residue be given to Mr James Lush, at least to the extent of his loss – the loss of each to be assessed by the Committee.

That the Bankers at Salisbury, Shaftesbury, and Warminster, be requested to receive Donations in the name of the Committee for the benefit of the Sufferers

That Mr Jukes, Mr Roberts, Mr Hibberd, Mr James Combes and Mr Wm Jeffery, for the Committee

That these resolutions be published in the *Salisbury Journal* and the *County Mirror*

THOMAS JUKES, Chairman
Tisbury, July 17th, 1856