

The Fire. 1635.

Lost in the mists of time is the cause thereof, how, where, or why it started.

The Church was badly burned, also thatched cottages in the Square, and possibly a part of the Rectory though this seems improbable. There is no reference as yet in the Briefs, Charity Registers or Accounts of surrounding parishes but this would only refer to the raising of money for rebuilding.

The Fire would have to be simulated by records of crackling flames etc., and with artificial smoke - also people running hither and yon with 17th century buckets of water from the Brook. It is conceivable that Giles Dowse was

Checked  
1630 -  
1687.

Rector at the time. He incidently went off to fight in the siege of Winchester (verify dates). After the Fire the roof was covered with spear or rag (reeds or rough stone slates), the former cut from nearby meadows, and the main arches of chalk were from the Parish Pit in Wallop Road.

The initials on the pews are believed to be those of the two Churchwardens of the time. No real clue as to their identity - possibly William Biddle and Henry Braumond - there was a Huffe Biddle too.

Several local names date from that time and the Pragnells, Lywoods, Crams, Hunts and Mundays might well have had ancestors trying to douse the fire.