

Big Blaze At Melbourn – 13 Cottages Destroyed

A hard fight

A piece of burning thatch alighted on some straw covering a heap of mangold wurzles in the farmyard occupied by Mr W. Stockbridge at the back of the residence of the Misses Stockbridge, in the High Street. A man in the yard hastened to trample it out but before he could do anything the straw was in a blaze, and a large barn, one of the largest barns in Melbourn was on fire, which quickly spread to other buildings, and all were

soon destroyed. Several valuable horses in one of the buildings were got out uninjured. All this had taken place almost as quickly as it takes to tell the story. The spot where the fire started on Mr Bullen's premises backs onto Mr Disbrey's premises and seeing the flames he called to Mr. O. Campkin, and together with Mr Jubal Howard, they quickly had the Melbourn Fire Engine out, and then with the engine in the Dolphin



Yard, and with pails of water a hard fight ensued for the saving of Miss Stockbridges house, and this was accomplished after all the furniture had been removed. Sparks from the burning buildings flew across the street on to the thatch of the houses opposite, occupied by Mrs Thixton and Mr W. King, but men with ladders and pails of water and tarpaulins managed to keep the fire from getting a hold. At one time it looked as if that side of the High Street would suffer but fortunately the spread in this direction was prevented.

Scenes in Dolphin Lane

In Dolphin Lane the fire was spreading with alarming rapidity, and cottage after cottage soon became a raging furnace. The distracted cottagers were rushing hither and thither with their household goods, removing them from one place to another as the remorseless flames followed them up. Eventually they carried them into a meadow on the opposite side of the lane, and here heaps, some small and some fairly large, of furniture, crockery