

## VALUABLE FURNITURE DESTROYED.

A serious fire occurred at Castle House, Deddington, in the early hours of Thursday morning, involving the historical residence of Mr. Herbert Long, which adjoins the church.

The beautiful house was the old Rectorial Manor, the original building having been supplemented by a front wing in modern times. It was built during the period 1610 to 1650, some parts being older still, and there is a small chapel dating back to the 14th Century. This, fortunately, was not seriously injured, but the whole of the structure comprising the original Manor, with its quaint Oriel windows, was completely burnt out.

In an interview Mr. Long gave us some interesting particulars of the old place. It was built by a Thomas Appletree, who was one of Cromwell's civil Vicars, and the rooms still contained a great deal of genuine Tudor panelling. The oak staircase was considered one of the finest in the country. The various rooms were decorated with valuable furniture of the period which had been collected by Mr. Long during many years, and this loss is, of course, irreplaceable.

### The Origin of The Fire.

It was about 3 a.m. when Mr. Long woke up and became aware that something was amiss. He went downstairs and located the fire in the dining room, it having apparently started near the fireplace behind the oak panelling. The members of the household, consisting of Mrs. Long, her two sons and two servants, were at once aroused, and the two boys, who were sleeping in a bedroom immediately over the dining room, had a narrow escape. They burnt their feet upon jumping out of bed and about five minutes afterwards the floor, bedstead and contents of the room fell through with a crash. Mr. Long used some fire extinguishers that were available, and the local Brigade was soon at work. Mr. Bassett, who lives in an adjoining house, 'phoned for the Banbury and Brackley Fire Brigades, but before these could reach Deddington the building was a mass of flames.

The Banbury Brigade was the first to arrive, and Brackley followed very soon afterwards. Water was obtained from underground reservoirs about the village, and both brigades set to work with a will. At this time the flames were shooting out at the top of the tower-like building to a considerable height and efforts were directed towards saving the modern portion of the house. All the furniture and effects were removed to the grounds, but considerable damage was done to the interior by water.

The most deplorable feature of the affair is the destruction of articles of great antiquity which were very highly prized.

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