

Kelly's Directory of Dorset 1889

MILTON ABBAS is a parish and pretty village, formerly a market town, situated in a deep valley sheltered on the north and south by very steep and chalky hills and surrounded by scenery of the most picturesque description, 7 miles south-west from Blandford and 11 north-east from Dorchester, in the Northern division of the county, Whiteway hundred, Cerne sub-division, Blandford petty sessional division, union and county court district, Whitchurch rural deanery Milton portion, Dorset archdeaconry and Salisbury diocese : the present appellation of this place is a contraction of its ancient name of Middleton, the adjunct being given from its ancient lords the abbots: the earliest mention of it is in the reign of King Athelstan, who founded a monastery here : the whole village was removed to its present site by the first Earl of Dorchester in 1787, when Milton Abbas Grammar school was removed to Blandford; the old town of Milton lay around the Abbey church. The parish church of St. James, situated in the centre of the village, was built in 1786 at the sole expense of the first Earl of Dorchester, in the Transition style, is of stone, and consists of chancel and nave, with a western embattled tower containing a clock and 2 bells belonging to the old peal, the others having been sold : there is a fine old font of Purbeck marble removed from the Abbey, which is now placed in the centre of the tower: during the year 1889 the church was thoroughly restored : the chancel was lengthened 14 feet: there is an organ in an organ-chamber, vestry and a heating-chamber underneath ; this was done by Col. Hambro M.P. : the western gallery has been removed, new south aisle added and an archway made between the tower and nave, which forms the main entrance to the church : all the windows have been re-glazed with cathedral glass : the church floor-paved with wood and the aisle fitted with pitch pine seats and re-opened for divine service by the Bishop of Salisbury on the 17th Oct. 1883 : the total cost of the restoration being £2000 and defrayed by public subscription, with the exception of that borne by Col. Hambro: there are sittings for 300 persons. The earliest register dates from 1650. The living is a vicarage, gross yearly value £210, net £130, including a good residence, in the gift of Col. Charles Joseph Theophilus Hambro M.P., D. L. and held since 1886 by the Rev. Charles James Johnston, M.A. of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge. The vicarage house is the oldest in the present village, it had formerly been the dairy-house of the Lacombe (*sic*) farm, and was altered to a vicarage, when the present abbey house was built in 1771. Here is a Wesleyan chapel, built in 1865. There is a reading-room open during winter months, and a lending library containing over 200 volumes. An almshouse for six widows was founded and endowed by Madam Jane Tregonwell in 1674.: the inmates receive an allowance of

2s. 6d. weekly and fuel, in addition to two dresses and 10s. 6d. given annually on St. Thomas' day. The late Mr. John Ham, glazier and brewer, who died in this parish in 1848, left the sum of ,£333 6s. 8d. in the £3 per Cent, (now £2¾|), the proceeds to be given for the maintenance of a Sunday school, and the purchase of bread and fuel for the poor of this parish for ever. A Benedictine monastery, dedicated.1 to St. Mary, St. Michael, St. Branwalader, and St. Sampson, was founded here in 934 by King Athelstan, the revenue of which, at the Dissolution, was about ,£720 : it was originally a minster and a religious house occupied by secular canons ; in King Edgar's time (964) it became an abbey, with 40 monks. The present Abbey church was built in the reign of Edward II. and is a magnificent structure, in the Decorated and Later English styles: the old abbey church was struck by lightning and burned to the ground on the 23rd Sept. 1306, and not rebuilt til 1392-1417 when Walter Archer was abbot ; in this building no nave was added : a parish church, dedicated to St. James, was built at the south-east angle : the first lay owner was Sir John Tregonwell, king's proctor, to whom the place was surrendered by Abbot Bradley on the 11th March, 1539; there were then 12 monks: Sir John died 26 years subsequently, and is buried in the abbey: on an iron bracket in west wall of the south transept where it has been for four centuries, stands a tabernacle, it had previously stood over the high altar, and is supposed to be unique in England : service is held here every Sunday evening during summer months : the church was restored in 1865 under the superintendence of the late Sir G. G. Scott R.A and a new oak pulpit and reading desk and an organ added. A Cottage Hospital was built and endowed by the late Baron Hambro : it was opened on the 1st August, 1873, and is supported by voluntary subscription. Here is also a brewery and a co-operative society. Milton Abbey was built by the first Earl of Dorchester about the year 1771, on the site of the old Abbey house : this splendid mansion, the style of which corresponds with the Abbey church, is beautifully situated in a valley, and is approached through an avenue of fine trees ; the park and woods of this estate extend over an area of 5,000 acres ; George III. visited here in 1804 and 1805 ; it is the seat of Col. Charles Joseph Theophilus Hambro M.P., D.L., J.P. who is lord of the manor and sole landowner. The soil is chalk ; subsoil, chalk. The area is 4,609 acres ; rateable value, £4,270 ; the population in 1881 was 873.

By a Local Government Order, dated March 25, 1882, a detached part of this parish, known as Liscombe, was amalgamated with Chesilborne, and at the same date another detached part, known as Holvorth, was added to Overmoigne in the Weymouth union.

Parish Clerk, Charles Pride.

-POST, M. O. & T. O., S. B. & Annuity & Insurance Office. —Absalom Vatcher, sub-postmaster. Letters are received through Blandford at 7 a.m. & 1.45 p.m. ; & are dispatched at 1.40 & 5.40 p.m

Parish School (mixed), built in 1840, for 150 children; average attendance, 94; William Mariow, master; Mrs. Elizabeth Marlow, mistress

CARRIERS TO : —

BLANDFORD—George Frizzle, mon. & thurs. & George Guy, Aved. & sat

DORCHESTER—George Frizzle, wed. & sat

Fielding Thomas M.D

Fookes Henry

Fookes William

Hambro Col. Charles Joseph Theophilus M.P., D.L., J. P. Milton Abbey; & 22 Mansfield st. Portland pi & White's & Carlton clubs, London s w

Johnstons Rev. Clia. Jas. M.A. Vicarage

Player Go.(res. agent to Col. Hambro)

COMMERCIAL.

Cottage Hospital (Thomas Fielding M.D. medical officer ; George Player, sec. ; Mrs. Bussell, matron

Davies F. farmer, Barnes hill

Derryman John, dairyman

Fielding Thomas M.D.surgeon,& medical officer & public vaccinator, 3rd district, Bland ford union & 3rd district, Cerne union

Fookes Brothers, brewers & maltsters

Foster Joseph, farmer, East Luccombe

Frizzle George, carrier

George Edward, builder & miller (steam & water), Milton mills

Guy Albert, blacksmith

Keynes Thomas, farmer, Chescombe farm

Milton Abbas Co-operative Society Lim. (Henry James Whiffen, manager)

Mitchell Louisa (Mrs.), blacksmith

Rogers William John, shoe maker

Satchell Robert, jun. Hambro Arms inn & posting house

Satchell Robert, sen. grocer

Spiller Elizabeth (Mrs.), farmer, Luccombe farm

Standfield Herbert, farmer, Bagber frm

Vatcher Absalom, shopkeeper, Post office

Willis Henry Fookes, farm bailiff to Col. Hambro M.P