

A Thumbnail History of Lydiard Millicent

Thumbnail History:

Lydiard Millicent can be found three miles from Wotton Bassett and five from Swindon. Twentieth century boundary changes have altered the parish; it previously contained Shaw, Green Hill, Nine Elms, the Washpool and Common Platt. The remaining areas include Lydiard Millicent village, Holburn, Wood Lane, The Plain, Stone Lane and Webb's Wood. In 1974 the parish became part of the North Wiltshire District Council authority. It comes under the Benefice and Parish of West Swindon and the Lydiards, in the Deanery of Swindon and the Diocese of Bristol.

There are three roads linking Lydiard Millicent to Cricklade, Purton, Wootton Bassett and Calne. One was turnpiked in 1791 and disturnpiked in 1879. Stone Lane has been regarded as an ancient track way since Saxon times. A shallow depression can still be found in the fields; the remains of workings where they used to dig out brash to repair the roads.

The soil consists of Kimmeridge Clay to the east of the parish and Oxford Clay to the west. The clay has been used for making bricks and in 1840 there was an area called Brick Hill Copse. This name has evolved from Brickkill, a common dialect-form for kiln. An area by the Woodbridge brook at the west end of the parish has been a nature reserve since 1997. Lots of dew ponds can be found scattered around the parish.

The name Lydiard may well derive from the ancient British word meaning 'gate by the ford'. The ford could have been found across the stream which now runs under the road at Brook House. It marks the boundary between this parish and Lydiard Tregoze. The second part of the word Lydiard could also come from the equivalent Welsh term 'garth' meaning hill. It may also have taken its meaning from the word led-yard; 'loeod' (people) and 'yeard' (enclosure). One owner of Lydiard Manor, William de Clinton, had a wife called Lady Milsent who died in the late 12th century. This is where the village gets its second name. It is quite uncommon for a female Christian name to be used as a second parish name. The name Lydiard Millicent has had many varied spellings, including Lidiard (1166), Lydierd (1228), Lydyerd Mylisent (1268) Lydyerd (1316) (Mulcent) 1379, Lidyert Milsent (1357), Northlydyerd al. Lydyerd Milsent (1412), Ledeyerd Milcent (1412), Ludeyard Mylcent (1473) and Ludyerd Milcent (1502).

In the 10th and 11th centuries the land at Lydiard Millicent seemed to lie as a single estate which was later called Lydiard Millicent Manor. The entry in the Domesday Book states 'The lands of Alnred, of Marlborough. Alnred himself holds Lidiar'. In 1066 the manor was held by Godric and later by William FitzOsbern, Earl of Hereford. William I granted land to FitzOsbern for his part in the Wiltshire Council Conquest. His son Roger rebelled against William I and his lands were confiscated; Lydiard Millicent became the King's land.

Norman forests were created in well wooded and sparsely populated areas of Wiltshire where there were extensive royal demesnes. Lydiard Millicent was one such as this. Most of the parish lay within the boundary of Braydon Forest from 1228 until it was mostly disafforested in 1330. In the Middle Ages the parish contained open fields, common pasture and meadows with Braydon Forest on the western edge. Wood was sold from the manor in the mid 15th century. Under the reign of Elizabeth I commissions were issued to check abuses in the forest, particularly the unauthorized cutting of timber and underwood. In 1573 depositions were taken in Malmesbury and Cricklade. Inhabitants of Lydiard Millicent (among others) attended the swaincotes and had common pasture for their cattle within the forest boundaries.

In 1570-1 the open fields and commonwealth pastures were enclosed by private agreement. Through this the grazing of common livestock was decimated at an unusually early date. To

compensate for it a small alteration was made to the parish's allotments in 1576-7. Mr. Webb enclosed the wood (known as Webb's wood) in 1650 after Braydon Forest had been enclosed by the Crown in 1630. He gave up an area of Lydiard Plain to be used as common instead. Webb's Wood covered 387a in 1637. The woods were used for sport in the late 19th century. A great deal of the woodland in the parish had been lost by 1880 and in 2004 Webb's Wood covered 200a. Common pasture remained as grassland into the 20th century.

The de Clinton's were in possession of Lydiard Manor until 1459 when it was sold to Robert Turgis. He was granted a licence by the King to rebuild the manor. The de Clinton manor moats could still be seen in the late 19th century. They formed part of a very wide, silted ditch that enclosed the garden and a farmhouse. In the 16th and 17th centuries the Webb's owned the manor and estate. It was sold to William Richmond, alias Webb, in 1576. William Webb(e) was a Roman Catholic and was fined £20 for harbouring a priest in 1581. In 1610 the house was ransacked in the search for arms. There was a chapel in the roof over the drawing room and two secret rooms beyond which could hide two men. Priests could escape to the woods where there were two small cottages.

The Askews held Lydiard Manor after the Webbs. Sir John Askew laid out the gardens in a mathematical scheme of the multiple of five and Lady Jane Askew planted the chestnut trees in 1753.

Many of the houses in the parish were built close to the road. In the 19th century it was supposed that if you could put up the walls and chimney in 24 hours, the plot was yours! In the early 19th century Lydiard Millicent village only consisted of around twenty small cottages and a small house.

The Street is the site of the stables to Lydiard House, built in 1840. They are of squared limestone rubble with a slate roof. The carriage doors are contained in the right bay of the main block and there is a three centred arch with a raised keystone. It also has a hipped roof and a centre pitching door with an iron ladder to the ground. There is a louvred turret with a wind vane and a gate pier to the road. The stables have cast iron stalls. The house itself is Georgian, built in 1830. Captain Sadler owned Lydiard House in the early 20th century. In 1929 it contained three reception rooms and 11 bedrooms (four were for servants), stables, two cottages and nearly 28 acres of pasture. Lydiard Cottage was the gardener's cottage and the groom lived at Stable Cottage.

Captain Sadler had cottages built for the locals. Each had a pigsty and the tenants' had to keep two pigs as part of their tenancy agreement. One pig was allowed to be slaughtered by and for the family and the other sold at Michaelmas or on Lady Day. He asked that upon his death the cottages would be offered to the villagers at a reasonable price to prevent evictions or hardship. There were two pairs of thatched cottages still present in the 1940s. One was at the entrance to Park Lane, the other pair by the brook at Holburn. All had dirt floors.

Sir John Betjeman was a frequent visitor to Lydiard House where Captain Sadler also threw parties for the village children twice a year. His butler scattered sweets and the children caught them! When Captain Sadler died relatives arranged for a marquee to be erected to hold the furniture to be sold off. The marquee crashed down and smashed some of the furniture. In 1947 the House was owned by the War Office; the property was then purchased by a farmer, Mr. Smith, in 1949 and by 1990 the house had been sold to Technological Solutions Ltd.

In the 19th century the building on the opposite side of the road was previously used by a local carpenter and undertaker. It became a slaughterhouse and a new butcher's retail shop was built close by.

Paddock House is a three bayed house of stone with brick dressings, built in the middle of the 19th century. Also in The Street are three small farmsteads, the sites of which have probably been occupied since the Middle Ages.

The Sun Inn on The Street is a late 17th/early 18th century rubblestone building with a thatched roof and some 19th century alterations. The Inn was owned by Ushers in 1920 and was then sold on to the Stroud Brewery. More recently it was owned by Whitbread.

The church is Anglican with architecture dating from the 14th, 15th and 19th centuries but is situated in the boundaries of the Saxon tun of Lidgeard. It is of rubble limestone which was originally rendered. There is a 14th century nave and south aisle, a porch, chancel, west tower and north chancel vestry. The nave is plastered with a three-bay arcade to the south side. There is an open 15th to 16th century roof of six and a half bays with carved bosses.

Mr Streeton bought the Lydiard Manor estate in the early 19th century and was also responsible for restoring the parish church. The old manor was used by the Reverend McKnight as a preparatory school for the sons of lords from 1852 until 1879 when he left the parish. The Reverend served as Curate from 1851 and employed maids and a footman. He gave talks in the Mechanic's Institute in Swindon as a Liberal. He wrote leading articles for the Old Swindon Advertiser (he had secured a financial interest in the newspaper) and helped to establish a Liberal Association in Cricklade. Fire destroyed the manor house in 1880 but Manor Farm was incorporated in the grounds of the big house and was still a working farm in the 1950s. The original manor could be found behind the church on the left of the road. It was demolished in c.1962 and a new manor was built in 1966 for an American couple by Smith and Hope, bricklayers, who reused a mullioned window from the old house. They made changes to the church interior at the same time.

In November 1873 trees were torn down by a cyclone; the occupants of Manor Lodge had a narrow escape when one side of their building crumpled under the weight of a falling trunk. Manor Farm has a dovecote which is 18th century. It is brick with red brick quoins and a stone slate roof. There are three storeys, a gable and timber windows. It is one of two large dovecotes which were being used as potato stores in the 1930s. The other is in a turret, attached to a house in The Close, which is smaller in size.

The Grove is an early 19th century house with stucco and a slate roof. There is a stone hipped rear wing on the left. The roof is also hipped and the gable end is extended as a wall, sweeping down to a pier with stone copings. There are gate piers with gable caps. In the 1861 census a Lieutenant of the Royal Navy was living at The Grove with his family and staff.

Parkside Farmhouse is a 16th century limestone rubble building with a stone slate roof and is the oldest surviving farmhouse in the parish. It has an original E-plan which was partly replaced in the 18th century. The two-storey porch is gabled and the arms and supporters over the door are dated 1581.

At The Butts is Priory Cottage which looks to be a 17th century building. It is of colourwashed limestone rubble with a thatched roof and two dormers. There was a rectory house situated off the south side of The Butts which was the rectory house in 1839. In 1783 it was noted as having stone walls, a stone slate roof, five rooms on each of the two floors and three garrets. It was demolished in 1885. The larger Honeywood House was also once the rectory but is now a private house. It was built in the mid 19th century of rock faced stone with Bath stone dressings in the eclectic northern

European style. There is a gabled porch, dormer and braced bargeboards. The roof has a tall iron balustrade to the ridge. A stone flagged floor with decorated tile bands and an iron balustrade on the stairs can be found in the interior. The arms of Pembroke College (who appointed the parish's rector from the mid 19th century) are in the stair window. It was the rectory house until 1952. A new and smaller rectory house was built nearby in 1951/2; the team vicar lived there in 2004.

A schoolroom and teacher's cottage was built on the north west side of The Butts in 1841 and opened in 1842. It was built on a part of manorial lands called 'Skinner's Close' which incorporated manorial waste land adjacent to The Butts. The main financial contributors were the Reverend Streeton and Lord Shaftesbury. The bricks used came from the Greenhill brickworks in Purton and were brought by wagon and horses.

There is a Primitive Methodist Chapel at Lydiard Green, built of red brick in 1863. The hamlet also contains approximately nine cottages beside a lane linking Lydiard Millicent to the Cricklade and Wootton Bassett Road. More houses were built in the 20th century.

Settlement at Greatfield sprang up between 1839 and 1885 on the west side of the road which consisted of houses, cottages and a beer house. The Butcher's Arms at Greatfield was the former beerhouse, the earliest reference to it being in 1861. It was bought from a Miss Hinder by Arkell's in 1866 and was modernised in 1934. In about 1930 a bungalow was built at Greatfield and the buildings of a retail garden centre were erected later, known as 'Greatfield Nurseries'. The nursery expanded during the World War II with increased demand for fruit and vegetables. It was still in operation in 2004 when a number of farm buildings in the hamlet had become disused.

The house in Stone Lane now called Beechwood House was used as an isolation hospital from 1910. Children who were ill with scarlet fever or diphtheria were taken there or to the isolation hospital in Stratton.

The parish had a mill as early as 1086 and there were two by the 13th century. One was a water mill used for storing grain. The walls and roof needed repair in the 1540s; it had disappeared by the 19th century. The other mill was described as a ruined windmill in 1586 and had also disappeared by the 19th century.

A stone quarry opened in the mid 17th century and may have been the one which was situated near Greenhill Farm. In the later 19th century a quarry was opened up on glebe land off Stone Lane; it had closed by 1920. Another was in operation from 1899-1922 off the Cricklade to Marlborough Road.

There were two water pumps, one on top of the hill and the other down by the brook. This pump was rescued by the parish council and now stands in front of the village hall. The parish council produced an agreement for a fire service to be provided from Swindon in 1924. Mains water was installed in 1938 and gas and electricity in the late 1940s/early 1950s.

Council houses were built in the village in the early 1920s, the late 1940s and also in the 1960s. Houses were built in Stone Lane in the 1950s and in the village again in the 1960s when the walls and hedge of the post office were taken down to build a garage (a tyre workshop in the 21st century). More houses and bungalows were built off The Street in the early 1990s.

In 1839 there was 556 acres of arable and 1,225 acres of grassland in the parish. In the mid 19th century, the Reverend McKnight organised for allotments to be provided in Lydiard Millicent so

that farm workers who were jobless in the winter months had wholesome food. Lord Shaftesbury had a farm in the parish and provided land for this. An allotment scheme was also devised by the Reverend Henry Streeten. Twelve farmers ceded land to a common pool and the whole was rented out to thirty-six tenants in proportion to their need. Allotments known as Hook Allotments (20a) were sold and now form part of Godwin's Farm. By 1910 almost 10% of agricultural land lay as allotments but the amount fell rapidly after this although dairy farming continued. In the 1930s the amount of arable land had fallen to around 150a but market gardening had mushroomed; from three gardeners in 1911 to fourteen in 1939. In the 1930s most inhabitants were occupied in the railway works at Swindon or in market gardening; some villagers had small market gardens and also milked a few cows. They were sold at the Swindon Cattle Market. There were still a lot of allotments remaining between Lydiard Plain and Greatfield in the 1960s. During the 1980s land use was predominantly meadow and pasture. By 2004 most of the market gardening had ceased and the major use was pasture.

The 1861 Census shows that the largest occupation by far was that of an agricultural labourer. Farmers grew wheat and a barrel of cider was kept in the barn at harvest time for the harvesters' to help themselves. School children were also welcome! Peas were picked on Franklin's field at Greatfield.

Other occupations in the 1861 census included carpenters, a wheelwright, tailor, grocer, blacksmiths, gardeners, basket maker, butcher and publican, grocer, draper, carters, shoe maker, stone mason, woodman, carrier, hoop maker, shepherds, seven plough boys and two laundresses. There was also a police constable (there had been four constables appointed in the 1850s) and five farmers, one of which had servants and a nurse maid, and finally one factory labourer. The areas of habitation included The Grove, The Butts, Wootton Bassett Road, Wood Lane and the Plain. The Lydiard Millicent Co-operative Stores stood opposite where the footpath from Shaw came out into The Street. It was on the Shaw side of the Sun Inn but burnt down between 1881 and 1891.

Between 1851 and 1891 the population of Lydiard Millicent almost doubled, mostly due to the increase in dairy farming and the availability of work at the GWR railway works in Swindon. The inhabited areas now included Lydiard Street, Holborn and Stone Lane. The major employer was now the GWR. Men worked as general labourers, factory labourers, strike moulders and strikers, steam engine fitters, machine men, iron workers and dressers, coach finishers, boiler maker's apprentices, boiler smith's apprentices and labourers, wagon builders, factory machine wood workers, coppersmith's apprentices, plate labourers and plate layers, machinists and an office boy. Most of the GWR workers walked to work and some also kept a vegetable garden, pigs and chickens which they tended after they got home. Agricultural labourers now totalled a much smaller percentage. Other trades included a wool maker, wheelwright, housekeepers, twelve farmers, a yeoman (whose son was a banker's clerk), a market gardener and grocer in Lydiard Street, five bakers, gardeners, a shoeing and general smith, carter, dressmaker, laundress, carpenter, haulier, eight general labourers, cowman, milk boy, agricultural herdsman, and a ploughboy. More unusual occupations included a wood shaping machinist in the saw mill, a timber yard labourer, a gas filler and a Manager at the Coal Wharf. There was also a Post Master and Assistant Grocer living in Lydiard Street. Some streets seem to be newly named and Lydiard Street (now The Street) had become the main street of the community.

A butcher could be found at number seven Lydiard Green in the early 20th century. Home cured bacon was sold there in the 1930s. The baker used to make Wiltshire lardy cake even during World War II. In the 1930s there were two grocers' shops; one is the present post office which was the larger and had a cool pantry. The other was a general shop and the general post office, which had

the only telephone. Up to the mid point of the 20th century the post office and general stores had a garden and vegetable patch behind the building. Some of the produce like the tomatoes, runner beans and lettuces were sold in the shop. There was also an orchard. It is now a private house. During the 1930s and possibly even earlier there was a Co-op delivery service from Purton. The agent called around to take orders. There was also a horse drawn shop on wheels from The Fox. This may be the same shop that sold paraffin and hardware. It also travelled to the surrounding villages in an open sided van pulled by two horses, which later became a van with an engine! There used to be a man who collected old rags, bones and rabbit skins with a donkey and cart (hence the term 'rag and bone man'). Coal came from a depot at Purton Station. Home deliveries of beer, cider and fizzy pop came from a Bath firm and there was also a milk cart. A 'stop me and buy one' Walls' ice cream man came on a tricycle. The ice creams were sold for 1d. The doctor came from Purton. A bus could be caught from the church or Common. An 'Indian Salesman' visited selling head scarves, handkerchiefs, stockings, socks etc. He carried a huge suitcase on his bicycle. Children used to warm themselves up at the blacksmith's shop in The Street on their way home from school. Horse drawn wagons with gypsies were parked behind the Sun Inn in the 1930s. Only two families of gypsies were allowed at any one time. Laundresses could still be found in the village by the time of WWII. Their children went to collect baskets of washing from the Americans and Italians.

In 1970 Blackford's Fuels acquired land from the McLindey coal yard and they transferred their business from their Swindon depot. They later diversified into landscaping and in 1980 were known as Blackford's Landscaping Services, when they moved to purpose-built premises at Greenhill. The Forge Fields development took over the site.

A further population increase had taken place by the early 1970s with a rise to 1,224 inhabitants. This remained steady even with the parish's loss of Shaw in the 1980s. In the early 1990s the population had risen to 1,203. A post office store survives in the village in the early 21st century.

The parish spent £159 on relieving the poor in 1775-6. An average of £218 per year was paid in the three years ending Easter 1785. In 1801 a house belonging to the parish was called a workhouse and in 1802/3, £2 10s was spent on materials to provide work for paupers. The house was not mentioned again and during 1815, £251 was spent. The amount had nearly doubled by 1817/18 when £445 was paid. During the 1830s the parish paid for boys from poor families to be apprenticed and also to allow several families to emigrate to America.

The Endowed Charities Report, published in 1908, showed that the Reverend Christopher Cleobury requested in his will of 1855 that £100 should be invested by the incumbent and churchwardens. The yearly interest and dividends should be used to purchase bread, fuel or clothing for distribution to the poor. Five cwt. each was given to widows and poor families on St Thomas' Day (21st December) each year. A portion of land for allotments was contained in the will of John Kibblewhite. The will was proved in 1845 but was found to be 'void in mortmain' and so did not take place.

The Village Festival was held annually. The main event was 'bowling' for a pig. The Lydiard Flower Show was a special event; there were competitions, a hoop-la and coconut shies etc. There was also a Sports Day. When the ponds froze over the children would try the horse pond first and then the big pond. They had great fun sliding around on it and some even had ice skates! In 1779 the church vestry paid small boys to collect sparrow's heads. They were thought of as vermin as they ate the corn in the fields and were thought to be a fire hazard on thatched roofs. They were paid per head! The first Parish Council Chairman was appointed in 1896. They held meetings at the school.

An air display took place at the top of Purton Hill, across from Stone Lane in the 1930s. You could get a ride in a bi-plane for 10/6d (52½p).

Captain Sadler had a reading room built in Lydiard Millicent which contained 'wall to wall' books. It was intended for young men to use for study and to thank home coming soldiers in 1921. It was the fore-runner of the village hall and had a corrugated iron roof. Sadler gave the rooms to the Parish Council in 1924. In the 20th century the Parish Council held their meetings in the Reading Room. They then went to the Sun Inn next door! Whist drives were also held at the Reading Room along with a weekly square dance with the village dance band and caller. It was also used for wedding receptions too. Pantomimes were held there from at least the 1950s and travelling players put on shows. The Reading Room was eventually sold to the brewery owners of the Sun Inn to turn the site into a car park. The village hall was built after funds had been raised by activities such as jumble sales, fetes, garden parties, whist drives and car treasure hunts which took place from 1957 onwards. Mr Ewart Webb provided the land and Mr 'Pop' Bailey was the main fundraiser. Money from the Shaw Victory Fund was also kindly donated towards the project. A Government grant was obtained and the new hall was built at the end of 1964 by the Purton firm Crouch and Co; the architect was Mr D. Hilton. It opened in 1965.

A playing field was built behind new housing to the north east of The Street and was given to the Parish Council in 1986. A wooden pavilion was later built at the site but burnt down. In 2002 a new clubhouse was built.

The Lydiard Millicent Industrial and Provident Society were active in the village in the late 19th century. A clothing club for those with a weekly income of less than £2 began in 1911 and closed in 1930. In 1913 there was a village band and in the 1920s there was also a football and netball team. A scout troop was operating in the 1930s but had to temporarily suspend activities during the war years. In 1984 All Saints Church purchased some hand chimes and the Lydiard Hand Chime Group was set up. They give concerts in the Swindon area and hold a Christmas concert in Lydiard Millicent Parish Hall. In 1988 the 50+ Luncheon Club was set up. Thirty-nine people attended the first lunch and they still have a rota of volunteers. The Butts Pond Group was set up in 1990 to restore the pond which was situated on glebe land. During 1992 volunteers and Lydiard Millicent schoolchildren completed the work. The school now uses it for field study and tours are given on the annual school fete day. In 1992 the group began to help plant native woodland tree species around the pond to create a nature reserve. Evening sewing classes were held at Lydiard School. The Women's Institute was begun in 1952 and they met in the reading room. There were outings such as one to a show at Oxford and one to the County W.I. Headquarters at Devizes. The W.I. Choir sang carols before the Christmas service began in All Saints Church. An Over 60s club also had a choir. They entertained pensioners around Swindon but had ceased operating by the year 2000. There was a Red Cross Organisation in the village in the mid 20th century, along with a Youth Club, Chrysanthemum Society and Sports Committee. The Lydiard Flower and Produce Society held an annual flower show from 1994.

The church clock in the clock tower was installed after the Second World War as a war memorial. Villagers remember the bombing of Coventry clearly; they could hear the roar of the engines as the bombers flew over the village. A bomb landed at Greenhill and another in the field behind 'The Moors' in Stone Lane dropped by German bombers returning from Liverpool. The evacuees sent to the village attended Purton School.

Lydiard House was used as a German POW Camp in World War II. By 1946 German POWs included some captured from a U-boat. Two German prisoners would stand guard on sentry duty. One used

to make village children little presents. Once a German POW escaped. American soldiers went looking for him and he was later discovered hiding in the camp's laundry area. There were huts to house the POWs; they were used for all sorts of personnel at different times during the war: ATS Girls, ambulance drivers, the Red Cross, parachutists and American servicemen.

A USAF hospital was based in Lydiard Park in an area known as 'The Beeches' where huts were put up. The Americans gave the children a Christmas party in one of the huts. There was party food, party games, a Christmas tree with a fairy on top. The children took a present home with them too. The huts still stood in 1997.

Unfortunately, some American soldiers broke into the Church and Lydiard House, causing a lot of damage. A staircase was damaged and the Church walls were chalked on and the communion wine taken. The incident was reported to the commanding officer who forced every soldier to go to Church the following Sunday. The camp Chaplain spoke and the service was 'almost a service of repentance'.

The Home Guard Platoon held marching and manoeuvre practices in nearby fields. Their headquarters was next to the pub and their first meeting was held at the triangle of lawn at the end of The Butts.

Tank traps and square cement road blocks could be found in clusters at various points on the side of the road. An old concrete gun site can still be seen in a nearby field. The tank trenches were cut across the southern part of Lydiard Green and were fourteen feet wide and six feet deep with vertical sides. Temporary wooden bridges were erected for farms (a lot of farm holdings were cut in half by the trenches). A barbed wire fence was put up along the trench and a pill box built near the road and Lydiard Green. After the war the bulldozers filled in the trench.

Church of All Saints, Lydiard Millicent

Lydiard Millicent church was given to the abbey of Corneilles between 1066 and 1075 by the FitzOsbern's. William FitzOsbern, Earl of Hereford and owner of Lydiard Millicent manor, founded the abbey at Corneilles.

One surviving fitting from the late 12th century is the font which has arcade carving and a limestone bowl. The new font was carved by the choir boys in 1862 under the instruction of the curate, the Reverend McKnight.

All Saint's Church was greatly enlarged in the 14th century; the tower and the aisle are proof of this. There are seven masks set in the walls of the south aisle and a sundial can be found in the south east corner.

In the 15th century the nave was reroofed and given large Perpendicular windows; they retain fragments of the original stained glass. The chancel was also altered. This was done when Robert Turgis purchased the estate and was given a licence by the King to rebuild the manor house and the church.

The chancel has a blocked priest's door on the south side and the east window is 19th century. In 1857 a canopy was fitted above the south doorway. There is a timber panelled vault in the chancel and a squint from the nave. The trefoiled piscina has a slot for a credence shelf. In 1870 the chancel was largely rebuilt and a vestry was added in the Middle-Pointed style, designed by G. E.

Street. The Reverend Hayward put up the present pews at the same time. A 'Gillwarmer' was installed which was an early type of central heating. The Reverend McKnight noted 'I was anxious to get the old [ugly] stoves and pipes out of the church, and so, as soon as the Gillwarmer was in place and tested, I asked the churchwarden, Mr. Plummer, for permission to remove and sell them. He demurred. Wait a bit sir, wait a bit. Them new fangled things often fail. We shall most likely want the stove yet to help it. When the time came to try out the new heating system Mr. Plummer was prepared for the worst! The heating worked splendidly and Mr. Plummer had to remove many layers before the end of the service. He told McKnight to sell the stoves at once!

In 1870 new fittings were also purchased, including a reredos and chamber for an organ. The organ itself was pumped by hand. It was given by the Reverend McKnight and his pupils. The later 16th century pulpit is oak panelled, octagonal and has good ironmongery. It was removed and given to Braydon Church; the Reverend McKnight's reading desk was converted and replaced it. In 1963 the pulpit was replaced by the original (which had remained in Braydon Church until its closure) and the panels of the converted writing desk were reused as parts of a vestment chest.

In 1924 the west vestry was created by erecting a carved oak gothic screen under the tower arch; it was produced by local craftsmen. The organ was moved to the west vestry and the screen removed to the chancel in 1963. This occurred because the current organ was to be exchanged with that from Clyffe Pypard and the replacement was three inches too wide! The west tower has a stair tower which was added to the north side in 1858. The weather vane is 18th century.

In 1850 Dr. Warneford, rector, philosopher and philanthropist, restored the roof. He lived in his other parish in Gloucestershire. The services at All Saint's Church were taken by the Reverend Hugh Allen, Rector of St Mary's, Cricklade.

Oswald Brakespear designed the cross and candlesticks. The black cross behind the altar was buried under a new central aisle. The plain stone with which it had been fixed was sold to become part of the fireplace at the new manor house.

The brass oil lamps in the church were taken out and replaced with electric lighting in the 1950s.

In the 1960s the old tiled steps to the altar and brass altar rails were removed, along with the choir stalls. The steps were replaced with stone ones.

Two and a half ounces of church plate was confiscated in 1553, leaving nine and a half remaining. In 1862 plate hallmarked 1861 was given by the rector's wife and was still in the church in 2004. The Elizabethan chalice and a more modern set of silver communion plate were given to the Reverend McKnight as a gift for all he had done for the parish by the churchwardens and parishioners. A chalice was also given to the church in 1994.

There were three church bells in 1553, later becoming a ring of five. Four of these bells were cast by Abraham Rudhall of Gloucester in 1712 and the later sixth bell was by Gillet and Johnson of Croydon, added in 1933 and given by Colonel and Mrs Canning. The bells were re-hung in 1906.

The lynch-gate is roofed with a large piece of topiary. The shaft of the churchyard cross probably dates from Saxon times but the cross itself was added in 1854, replacing the one destroyed by Puritans. Robert Whitfield, rector from 1614-1664 was among the Puritan clergy who signed the 'Concurrent Testimony of the Ministers of Wiltshire' in 1648.

Even up until the 1930s coffins were transported by horse drawn cart or motor lorry. There was a four wheeled hand bier which is still in the village but is not used now. There was a Sunday school which held treats on the lawns of Lydiard House.

John Butler served as rector from 1724-1754. In 1738 he was accused of being drunk and sleeping during a service. Another complaint by Mr Askew, the owner of the Manor House, in 1747 was that his services were too short and too few. The Reverend Christopher Cleobury was the first Rector to be appointed by Pembroke College. He built the rectory in 1857. He was too ill to serve the cure so the curate Reverend McKnight served instead.

The United benefice was formed in 1956 - the rector lived at Lydiard Millicent. From c.1989 the team rector lived near the new church at Shaw but by 2004 had moved back to Lydiard Millicent.