

Introduction at the front of John Kearney's book

Bourton is a Parish not a District Church. It was June 1866 when I first entered the village as Curate to the late Vicar of Shrivenham (the Rev. George William Murray) until June 5th 1899 when I quitted it. The term District was never applied to Bourton. It was formed into a separate parish at the most urgent request of the late Rev. G.W.Murray who relinquished towards the support of the new parish, the Swanhill Glebe called 36 acres, but being really 35a 2r 4p and which at the date of the formation of the parish of Bourton was let £75 per see. In support of my assertion that Bourton is an Ecclesiastical Parish I will quote from the late Samuel Wilberforce's Institution Deeds dated Feb 13th 1869. "We admit you to the Vicarage of the Parish Church of Bourton in the County of Berks within our Diocese and jurisdiction as the first Vicar thereof, the same having been Constituted a separate Benefice by an Order of Queen in Council of 26th June 1867 etc." Archdeacon James Randall's Induction Mandate contains the same words "Parish Church."

Prior to the separation Bourton was a Hamlet in the parish of Shrivenham. Today, Cecilly, Bourton is a rural parish in the ancient parish of Shrivenham but ecclesiastically it is a Parish per se.

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