



Kellys Directory Extract 1915

Fonthill Gifford



FONTHILL GIFFORD is a parish 2 miles from Tisbury station on the Salisbury and Yeovil branch of the London & South Western railway, 16 west from Salisbury, and 7.5 north-east from Shaftesbury, in the Southern division of the county, Dunworth hundred, Tisbury petty sessional division and union, Shaftesbury county court district, Chalke rural deanery, (Tisbury portion), archdeaconry and diocese of Salisbury. The adjunct Gifford seems to have come from a family that held this and 14 other manors in Wilts, soon after the Conquest. A stream which rises in the parish flows onwards to Tisbury, thence to Salisbury. The church of the Holy Trinity, built in 1866, at the cost of the late Marquess of Westminster, is in stone, in the French Gothic style of the 14th century, and consists of apsidal chancel, nave, transepts, porches, vestry, and a south-west tower with pinnacle and spire, and containing one bell: there are 3 stained windows, placed as a memorial to the late rector; the pulpit, of alabaster and marble, sculptured with the heads of the four Evangelists, and the font, of freestone, supported by a column of green marble, were given by the late Alfred Morrison esq of Fonthill House. The date of the foundation stone of the old church, built into the wall of the vestry of the new, is May 18th 1748. The register dates from the year 1518. The living is a rectory, net yearly value £200, with 38 acres of glebe, with residence, in the gift of Lady Octavia Shaw-Stewart, and held since 1886, by the Rev. William Henry Lewis MA of Lincoln College, Oxford, and rural dean of Chalke, (Tisbury portion). In the Dean portion of the parish is a Congregational chapel. On the downs here, now nearly covered with woods and pastures, the late William Beckford esq MP, erected in 1795 and subsequently, that modern display of architectural grandeur called Fonthill Abbey, which had a magnificent octangular tower, full 300 feet high, visible from an eminence 20 miles' distance on the London road, 4 miles before entering the city of Salisbury. The buildings are said to have cost, during a period of 16 years, not less than £273,000. So long as they stood, they excited great curiosity, but had unfortunately, more pretentiousness than solidity, for soon after the estate passed into the hands of John Farquhar esq of London, for a sum of £330,000, the central tower, on account of its defective foundations, came to the ground for the second time, on St Thomas' day 1825, levelling in its fall, the whole of the western part of the Abbey. The structure was never repaired, but was soon after sold, and the ruins removed. Mr Beckford, after disposing of Fonthill, lived at Bath, where he died 2nd May 1844. The estate and land in the parish is now divided: Hugh Morrison esq BA, DL, JP possessing the old park, and Lady Octavia Shaw-Stewart the remaining portion of these beautiful grounds, including the site on which stood the Abbey, near which the Marquess of Westminster erected the present mansion now called Fonthill Abbey, the seat of Lady Octavia Shaw-Stewart. Fonthill House, the residence of Hugh Morrison esq BA, DL, JP is seated in park-like grounds containing a large lake. The soil is in some parts sand, land in others, heavy clay land: sub-soil, clay and gravel and chalk. The chief crops are wheat, barley, oats and some land is in pasturage; the area is 1996 acres of land and 8 of water, rateable value £1950. The population in 1911 was 357.

Wall Letter Boxes: Stop Farm, cleared at 7.20am & 6.40pm, Sundays, 9.20am: near Beckford Arms, 8.25am & 6.55pm, Sunday, 9.35am. Letters from Tisbury, which is also the nearest money order and telegraph office, arrive at 8am & 5pm.

Elementary School (mixed), built in 1846, and subsequently enlarged in 1889 for 80 children. Miss Minnie Fryer, mistress.

Gentry/Private Residents

Surname	Given Names	Title	Industry/Occupation	Place/Parish
Lewis	William Henry	Reverend, MA	Rector & Rural Dean	Rectory
Morris		Miss		Dean House (postal)

				address, Hindon)
Morrison	Hugh	BA DL JP		Fonthill House
Morrison	Mary	Lady		Fonthill House
Shaw-Stewart	Octavia	Lady		Fonthill Abbey

Traders

Surname	Given Names	Title	Industry/Occupation	Place/Parish
Benjafield	Maurice		Brewer & Farmer	Beckford Arms Hotel
Clark	John Whitfield		Clerk of Works to Lady Shaw-Stewart	
Coombs	Brian		Blacksmith	(postal address, Hindon)
Genge	Mark William			Stop Farm
Green	Frank		Grocer & Baker	
Macey	John		Head Gardener to Lady Shaw-Stewart	
Mills	Harry Hodson		Head Gardener to Hugh Morrison	