



Post Office Directory Extract 1875

Fonthill Gifford



Fonthill Gifford is a parish in the Southern division of the county, Dunworth hundred, Tisbury union, Shaftesbury county court district, Chalke rural deanery, Sarum archdeaconry, and Salisbury diocese, a mile and a half east from Hindon, 16 west from Salisbury and 2 from Tisbury Railway station. The name of Gifford seems to have come from a family that held this manor, with 14 other manors in Wilts, soon after the Conquest. This parish contains only a few scattered houses. 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 Marquis of Westminster, stands on the site of the church built by Alderman Beckford. The style of architecture is that of France in the earlier part of the thirteenth century.

It has north and south transepts, the chancel has an apsidal end and there is a vestry projecting on the north side. At the south-west angle, formed by the chancel and transept, is a tower, with spire and pinnacles, surmounting the principal entrance porch. The interior is lined with fine white Bath stone, ornamented breast high with a stringcourse of greenstone. Two equal arches, supported by columns of Devonshire marble, with beautifully sculptured capitals of freestone, separate the transepts from the nave, and the chancel arch is supported by columns of green Irish marble, the arch being groined, with moulded ribs springing from Purbeck marble columns. The apse has fine Early English windows. There are two cinquefoil windows on the north side of the chancel, and at the west end, above two Early English windows, divided by a buttress, is a fine circular window of stained glass.

The pulpit, which is of alabaster, resting on a base of marble, sculptured with the heads of the four Evangelists, and the font, which is of freestone, supported by a column of green marble, were given by Alfred Morrison, esq., of Fonthill House. The date of foundation stone of the old church, built into the wall of the vestry of the new, is May 18th 1748. The living is a rectory, yearly value £320, with 36 acres of glebe, in the gift of the Marchioness of Westminster, and held by the Rev. William Coxe Radcliffe, M.A., of Trinity College, Cambridge.

There is a National school for boys and girls, and a chapel for Independents.

In the neighbourhood, where once stood the Abbey of Fonthill, are the downs, now nearly covered with woods and pastures. It was here, on the side of one of those natural elevations, that the late Mr Beckford erected that modern display of architectural grandeur---Fonthill Abbey, which had a lofty and magnificent octangular tower, full 300 feet high, and could be seen from an eminence at 20 miles distance on the London road, 4 miles before entering the city of Salisbury. The scene of magnificence, which was displayed when this building was standing, excited great curiosity; but that extraordinary object had more beauty than solidity. Soon after it had passed into the hands of John Farquhar, esq., of London, the central tower came to the ground on St Thomas's Day, 1825, leveling, in its fall, the whole of the western part of the Abbey, the cause being that the builder had dishonestly neglected the foundations, as had been confessed by his foreman on his death bed.

Fonthill Abbey was never repaired, but soon after sold and the ruins removed. The estate is now divided, Alfred Morrison, esq., possessing the old park; the Marchioness of Westminster possesses the remaining portion of these beautiful grounds including the site on which stood the Abbey, near which the Marquis erected the present splendid seat. Fonthill House, the seat of Alfred Morrison, esq., J.P., is situated amid park like grounds containing a lake.

The principal landowners are the Marchioness of Westminster (who is lady of the manor) and Alfred Morrison, esq.

The soil is some sand, and other clay heavy land; subsoil, clay and gravel. The chief crops are wheat, barley, oats and pasturage.

The area is 1,961 acres; gross estimated rental, £2,339; rateable value, £2,059; the population in 1871 was 457.

PARISH CLERK James Hacker

WALL LETTER BOX cleared at 9.15 am. & 6.15 pm.

LETTERS from Salisbury via Tisbury, which is also the nearest money order office.

NATIONAL SCHOOL Miss Mary Weller Mistress

Private Residents

Surname	Given Names	Title	Industry/Occupation	Place/Parish
Westminster		Dowager Marchioness of		Fonthill House
Morrison	Alfred	J.P.		Fonthill House
Radcliffe	William Coxe	Rev., M.A.	Rector	Rectory

Commercial

Surname	Given Names	Title	Industry/Occupation	Place/Parish
Bell	Edward		Farmer	Berwick farm
Burt	John		Shopkeeper	
Dann	William		Superintendent of police	
Maffey	Joseph		Wheelwright & smith	
Titt	Stephen		Maltster, brewer & farmer	<i>Beckford's Arms</i>
Turgess	George		Keeper to Alfred Morrison	
Vincent	Charles		Farmer	
Whittle	William		Farmer	Stop farm