

HIGHWORTH, Wiltshire - Extract from National Gazetteer, 1868

"**HIGHWORTH**, a parish, post and market town, in the hundred of Highworth, county Wilts, 6 miles from Swindon, 6 from Farringdon, and 7½ from Cricklade. It is situated on elevated ground between the Thames and Severn canal, which passes about 4 miles to the N., and the Wilts and Berks canal, about the same distance towards the S. The parish contains the villages of Broad-Blunsdon, South Marston, Sevenhampton, Bury-Blunsdon, Eastrop, Fresden, and Westrop. It was part of the royal demesne at the time of the Norman Conquest, and was subsequently held by Edmund de Langley and the St. Johns.

The town, as its name implies, is situated on high land, commanding extensive prospects. It is a nominal borough, having been summoned to send two members to parliament, but made no return. The market and fairs formerly did a brisk trade, but have considerably declined in consequence of the construction of the Great Western railway. The streets are partially paved, and the houses in general are built of stone. There are a small subscription library, a scientific and literary institute, and a bank. A bailiff and constables are appointed annually at a court held by the steward for the "manor of the borough of Highworth", but the government of the town is virtually under the jurisdiction of the county magistrates.

The living is a vicarage* in the diocese of Gloucester and Bristol, with the curacies of South Marston, Sevenhampton, and Broad Blunsdon annexed, value £555, in the patronage of the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners are about to make Broad Blunsdon a separate parish. The church, dedicated to St. Michael, was built in the reign of Henry VI., and has lately been restored. It has a square tower, surmounted by an open parapet, and containing eight bells. In the interior of the church, on the S. side, is a chantry, the property and burial-place of the Warnefords of Warneford for several generations. There are chapels-of-ease at Broad Blunsdon, South Marston, and Sevenhampton in this parish.

The charities are various, producing about £277 per annum, a portion going towards apprenticing children of the parish. There are National, British, and infant schools, also places of worship for the Wesleyans, Independents, and Primitive Methodists. The Poor-law Union of Highworth and Swindon comprises 16 parishes or places, of which 15 are in the county of Wilts and one in that of Berks. The market is held on Wednesday; there is also a monthly cattle market held on the last Wednesday in each month. The December market is held on the first Wednesday preceding the 8th of the month. Fairs are held on the 13th August for cattle, and 11th October for cattle and hiring of servants."

"**BURY BLUNSDON**, a tything in the parish of Highworth, in the county of Wilts, 2 miles to the W. of Highworth."

"**EASTROP**, a tything in the parish and hundred of Highworth, county Wilts, 1 mile E. of Highworth. The village is considerable."

"**FRESDON**, a tything in the parish and hundred of Highworth, county Wilts, 2 miles N.E. of Highworth."

"**LYNT FARM**, a tything in the parish and hundred of Highworth, county Wilts, 1½ mile N.E. of Highworth."

"**WESTROP**, a tything in the parish of Highworth, county Wilts, 1 mile from Highworth."