

## Gloucestershire Almshouses

by John Loosley

In 2006 the Family and Community Historical Research Society (FACHRS) embarked on a nation-wide project to record all known almshouses in England, Wales and Scotland with a view to establishing the first ever comprehensive list of almshouses, when they were founded, by whom and what provision was provided in them for the poor. In Gloucestershire several members of FACHRS, Judith Ellis, Cecile Hunt, Denise Haylor, Christine Seal and John Loosley contributed information which is being analyzed along with the data from other parts of the country by Professor Nigel Goose and his team at the University of Hertfordshire. A book will be published in 2011 covering the findings of the survey.

The following article presents details of almshouses identified in Gloucestershire either continuing in existence following the Reformation and the associated Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 1530s or established after that date up to 1900 together with an analysis of the inhabitants of these establishments taken from the census returns of 1851, 1881 and 1901.

Almshouses, in various forms have existed for over 1000 years. They originated as places that provided care for the sick poor, usually attached to a monastic establishment. From the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries monasteries began to minister to lay people as well as their own brethren who were sick or feeble. Alongside these were the leper houses designed to isolate those afflicted with the disease, some 250 of which were founded in the early medieval period. The origins of the modern almshouse are confused by the many names which can be found such as hospitals, lazarhouses, spitalhouses, bedehouses, Godshouses, and a range of other descriptions, as well as almshouses. It is therefore often difficult to establish clearly their function as many served a number of purposes but by the 1450s the almshouse emerged in its modern form, specifically intended to provide accommodation for the local elderly people who had fallen into poverty on account of their age and failing health. Between 1536 and 1549, during the Dissolution of the Monasteries and confiscation of the property of chantries, some 260 hospitals and endowed almshouses were closed, estimated to represent at least half of the existing institutions.

One problem has been the definition of almshouses as they are sometimes confused with parish poor houses which were often given by individuals to parishes for the housing of the poor. The usual definition is that an almshouse provides charitable accommodation for elderly poor people usually administered by trustees, not parish overseers.

### Census Analysis.

Using the website *findmypast* a search has been made of the census returns for Gloucestershire to identify the almshouses, most of which have been found, but there are small gaps, for instance the two-roomed almshouse in Mitcheldean does not appear in either the 1881 and 1901 census and the Rowland Hill almshouse in Wotton-under-Edge and that in Woodchester are not shown in the 1851 census. These missing almshouses would only represent a maximum of 5% of the total number of almspeople.

Census year	1851	1881	1901
Total no. of almspeople	375	403	384
% male	32	30	27
% female	68	70	73
% males married	40	39	38
% females married	19	17	14
% aged below 60	8	5	2
% aged 60-69	34	22	20
% aged 70-79	43	48	50
% aged 80 and above	15	25	28

The percentage of people over 60 in Gloucestershire who were resident in almshouses is small, less than 1%, and work still needs to be carried out on an analysis of the number in workhouses compared to almshouses to establish the importance of almshouses in the care of the elderly poor. Taking into account that there were 8 new almshouses established between 1851 and 1881 and at least 3 disappeared between 1881 and 1901 the figures are fairly constant and the high percentage of single female residents would be expected as many almshouses were founded specifically for widowed females. What is of interest is the number of married couples. When the results of the national survey are published a comparison will be able to be made with other areas of the country.

### **Care of the elderly in almshouses**

There are many instances of younger members of the family living with their elderly relatives providing support such as Minnie Brookes aged 27 and Elizabeth Blakeman aged 48, both single living with their respective fathers in the Hicks Almshouses in Chipping Campden in 1901, Mary Davies aged 18 living with her grandmother Mary Partridge aged 80 in the United Almshouses in Gloucester in 1881 and Mary Parker a widow aged 53 providing care for her father James Ettery aged 83 in Wotton-under-Edge in 1851. There are several instances of very young members of the family living with their elderly relatives, for instance in Newland, Emma Ireland aged 8 was living with her grandmother Sarah Morse, Keziah Court aged 8 living with her grandmother Elizabeth Court in the Chandos Almshouses in Winchcombe and Elizabeth Stevens aged 7 living with her aunt Jane Stevens in Fairford in 1851. In other instances domestic help was provided by resident nurses or servants such as Elizabeth Cambourne aged 52 a nurse living with Ann Bence aged 73 at Marshfield, Lucy Bullock a nurse aged 57 providing care for Mary Roberts in Cheltenham and Matilda Webb a servant aged 15 living with Sarah Baker in the Perry Dawes Almshouses in Wotton-under-Edge. In large almshouses there were resident managers such as Edward Wilson master of United Almshouses Gloucester in 1881, Emily Flower matron at the same almshouse in 1901 and William Mayo master of St Bartholomew's Gloucester in 1881.

### **Occupations**

Unfortunately details of former occupations of inhabitants of almshouse are not always given in the census returns. In urban areas, where information is given, the inmates were usually from trades. In Gloucester the men were retired cabinet makers, gilders and carvers, tailors, grocers, coopers, watch makers, gun makers, pin makers, shoe makers, hairdressers, upholsterers, carpenters, mariners and gardeners. In Tewkesbury the women were stocking weavers, lace makers, shopkeepers, laundresses, cake sellers and the men labourers, nail makers, carters, butchers, masons, chair makers. In the rural districts there was a preponderance of labourers, servants and charwomen, in Coleford industrial workers such as chemical worker and iron moulder whilst the cloth making areas such as Dursley, Cirencester, Wotton-under-Edge and Woodchester inmates were clothworkers, weavers, wool sorters and dyers.

### **Acknowledgements**

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[www.imagesofengland.org.uk](http://www.imagesofengland.org.uk)  
[www.thornburyroots.co.uk](http://www.thornburyroots.co.uk)



### **Berkeley**

Founded by Rt. Hon. Georgina Baroness Fitzhardinge in memory of her husband Francis the second Baron Fitzhardinge in 1899 for the use of the aged and infirm inhabitants of Berkeley. Still in use today.

### **Bibury – Jesus Almshouse**

Founded by Hugh Westwood (d.1559) but finally built in 1605 for four poor men of Bibury. Endowed with rents from his land in Ampney St Peter, Ampney Crucis and Ashbrook amounting to £18 per annum. By 1900 the almshouse was empty and in a poor state of repair and at the suggestion of the Charity Commissioner it was disposed of for £115 to the Sherborne estate, the sale proceeds and £70 in cash being invested in India 3% stock.



### **Bitton – Frere Almshouses**

Built in 1859, the 5 almshouses were for aged married couples or surviving spouses who shall be members of the Church of England and resident in Bitton for 5 years.

### **Cheltenham – Pate's Almshouses**

In 1586 Richard Pate endowed his old college Corpus Christi in Oxford on condition that three-quarters of the income should be used by the college *for the perpetual maintenance and foundation of a free Grammar School at Cheltenham and also a Hospital or Almshouse for 6 old poor people, of whom two were to be women.* The almshouse was built on the north side of the High Street and consisted of a stone house with chapel attached to it, a courtyard with grass in front and a garden, pasture and orchard at the back. In 1816 the college allowed the building and site to be sold using some of the money to build a much smaller house in Albion Street.



### **Chipping Campden**

Sir Baptist Hicks, Lord Viscount Campden by his will of 1629 endowed almshouses for 6 poor men and 6 poor women who each have 2 apartments and are appointed by the descendants of Sir Baptist Hicks. Each alms person to have 3s 4d a week, a frieze gown and a ton of coal yearly plus a felt hat.



### **Cirencester – St John’s Hospital**

Founded by Henry I in 1133 for the care of the destitute and sick so that they might pray for his soul and those of his descendants. In 1722 they housed 3 poor men and women each allowed 20d weekly. In 1792, the old tenement having fallen into a bad state it was decided to build six new cottages on hospital land adjoining in Spitalgate.

### **Cirencester – St Lawrence’s Hospital**

Founded by Edith Bisset, lady of Wiggold manor around the middle of 13<sup>th</sup> century, converted from the church for 3 poor widows. In 1722 they housed a master and 2 poor women. Current almshouses in use and administered by the Bathurst Estate.

### **Cirencester – St Thomas Hospital**

Founded by Sir William Nottingham, Attorney General to Edward IV in 1483 and endowed with rents from his properties in Down Ampney, Stratton and Shorncote for 4 poor weavers. The almshouse was administered by the Master and Wardens of the Weavers’ Company and continues to this day.



### **Cirencester – Bridge’s Almshouses**

Elizabeth Bridges (d.1620) wife of Humfry Bridges gave 6 habitations for poor widows with 6s weekly. The house, known as Hodden House, was built in Dollar Street but at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the house being in a bad state of repair it was sold to John Wilkins who built replacement almshouses in Querns Lane. There is a fine memorial in Cirencester Church to Humfry and Elizabeth Bridges. It is today administered by an almshouse charity covering St John’s Hospital and George Almshouses.



### **Cirencester – George's Almshouses**

In 1702 William and Rebecca George gave 6 tenements in Lewis Lane for 6 poor widows and endowed them with the rent from houses in Cricklade Street. Further endowments were provided by Thomas Powell and Mrs Rebecca Powell. The houses were demolished around 1835 and replaced with the present buildings which were re-endowed in 1874 by William Lennox, 5<sup>th</sup> Earl Bathurst, in memory of his sister, the Lady Georgina L. Bathurst.



### **Cirencester – Christopher Bowly's Almshouses**

In 1826, Mr Christopher Bowly erected 8 almshouses in Watermoor and provided endowments for them in 1837 for deserving persons of slender means irrespective of creed or denomination. Subsequently endowed by Sarah Adlum Bowly in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, they are now occupied by men or women with preference being given to Members of the Society of Friends.

### **Coleford**

By his trust deed of 1892 Isaiah Trotter conveyed a row of ten single-storeyed almshouses that he had built at the Gorse in 1889 to the minister and deacons of Coleford Baptist Church as free housing for 5 men and 5 women who had lived within 2 miles of the church and were preferably members of it. The almshouses were first occupied a few years later, and in 1899 Trotter endowed the charity with £8000 stock.



### **Cranham**

George Jones, a wealthy farmer of Whitley Court, Upton St Leonards, in 1868 bequeathed two cottages in Cranham and provided an endowment from interest from £162 7s 7d in 3% Consolidated Bank Annuities.. They were to be occupied by one poor widow and her family or two poor widows without families subsequently also allowing widowers to be nominated by the Rector and churchwardens. This was amended in 1900 to allow bachelors or spinsters if there were no suitable widows or widowers.



### **Dursley**

In Woodmancote in 1852 Henry Vizard built almshouses for 6 poor people, 3 men and 3 women of good moral character belonging to the parish of Dursley not having received parish relief for 3 years nor under 60 years of age for the support and benefit of such poor men and widows, a preference being given to such as may have been unfortunate in life from losses or afflictions and thereby reduced to needy circumstances. The original almshouses were sold to the then Dursley RDC for demolition and rebuilding of old peoples homes. Vizard Close opened on 14 March 1973.

### **English Bicknor**

In 1858 an almshouse was built on the site of the former Bear Inn beside the churchyard provided by the former rector Edward Field. It housed six elderly widows and was run by the incumbents of English Bicknor and Staunton and members of the Machen family; Edward Machen having given £100 stock for the maintenance. It was sold in 1982 and converted into flats.

### **Fairford**

According to the 1851 census returns there was an almshouse at East End providing accommodation for 6 elderly people

### **Gloucester – St Mary Magdalen**

It was probably founded in the early 12<sup>th</sup> century and the chapel survived relatively unaltered until the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1861 the nave was demolished. It also served a separate parish including Wotton. The hospital was originally controlled by Llanthony Priory but the Crown assumed the rights following the Dissolution and appointed governors of the hospital. In 1563 it maintained a reader and 6 poor men and women. Control was passed to the corporation in 1617 by James I and it became known as the Hospital of King James. There were then 19 almspeople (10 men and 9 women).







### Gloucester – St Margaret’s Hospital

One of 3 ancient hospitals in Gloucester founded before the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century. The chapel was rebuilt in the early 14<sup>th</sup> century and restored in 1846 and 1875. As well as serving the inmates the chapel was used by inhabitants of the neighbouring suburbs.

In the late Middle Ages control passed to the corporation of Gloucester and leading burgesses were appointed master. In 1546 the hospital had an income of £8 12s 0d and in 1563 the inmates were a reader and 10 poor men. Those almsmen who were married at the time of their election were allowed to bring their wives into the hospital. In 1861 St Margaret’s was united with St Mary Magdalen.

### Gloucester – St Bartholomew’s Hospital

It was the wealthiest of the 3 ancient hospitals and the first buildings date from the reign of Henry II in 12<sup>th</sup> century and the chantry chapel added in 1236. In 1564 Elizabeth I granted patronage to the corporation and it was to maintain a priest, physician, surgeon and 40 almspeople. In 1636 it maintained 50 almspeople (20 men and 30 women) at a weekly pay of 2s 6d and by 1830 weekly pay had increased to 5s 6d. Bishop of Gloucester appointed visitor from 1566. Completely rebuilt between 1787 and 1790.



### Gloucester – St Kyneburgh’s Hospital

Commonly called the Kimbrose was founded by Sir Thomas Bell, the wealthy Gloucester capper, on the site of St Kyneburgh’s chapel at the south gate around 1560. It was to maintain 6 poor people. In 1598 there were only 2 trustees remaining and control was passed to the corporation. The almshouses were demolished in 1862

### Great Badminton

By deed 22 June 1705 Mary, Duchess Dowager of Beaufort granted an annuity of £94 to 3 aged men 2s 6d a week, once in 3 years at Christmas a gown, waistcoat, breeches and hat to the value of £3 and 20s each year for a load of coal. Also to 3 aged women 2s 6d a week and once every 3 years a gown, petticoat and hat to the value of £3 and 20s each year for a load of coal. The men and women to be preferred who had lived long and served faithfully in the family.



## Lydney

In 1683 there was an almshouse near Lydney town cross which was replaced by a row of six almshouses in Church Road. They were supported by the Bathursts until the foundation of the War Memorial Trust almshouses in the 1920s.



## Marshfield – Crispe Almshouses

The almshouses were built and endowed by the Crispe family between 1612 and 1625. They were *to provide for 8, either man or woman unmarried or man or woman married but no children. If any die or should not be of good, quiet, sober and honest conversation then replacements should be elected from the needy honest people who have lived in the parish of Marshfield for not less than 2 years and who have not received poor-law relief during the last year. £12 to be distributed equally per annum and 13s 4d for keeping the clock in good order and reading morning prayer daily in the chapel.*



## Minchinhampton

At the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Alice Hampton built an almshouse for 3 paupers which was maintained by Syon Abbey until the Dissolution when it became an ordinary tenement. Samuel Sheppard built an almshouse for 8 poor people but it suffered from having no endowment and fell into a state of disrepair. In 1821 it was pulled down and David Ricardo built new almshouses for the same number of paupers on the north side of West Street which were maintained by the Ricardo family until the early 1930s.



## Mitcheldean – Henrietta Davies's Almshouses

In 1857 Henrietta Davies built a pair of almshouses south of Stenders Road. The occupants paid a nominal rent and received a small weekly allowance. In 1868 Mrs. Davies, who managed the almshouses until her death, endowed the charity with £1,200 and it was renamed the Wilderness Charity.



### **Newent - Nanfan Almshouses**

Giles Nanfan in 1635 provided almshouses for the habitation, relief, better settling and nursing of such poor persons which should be orderly and fittingly placed there. Families could be turned out if children were kept at home in idleness and laziness. In 1639 Randolph Dobyns conveyed another tenement and William Rogers gave a further two. No payments were made to the 20 almspeople appointed by the vicar and churchwardens. They were demolished in the 1970s.



### **Newland – Bell's Almshouse**

Edward Bell, a native of Newland who had become steward to the politician Sir William Petrie, by will dated 1576 left funds to complete a school and almshouse which he had begun to build at Newland. The almshouses were rebuilt and enlarged in 1662 with 4 men in the old building and 4 women in the new.

### **Newland – Jones Almshouses**

William Jones, a Hamburg merchant and probably a native of Newland, by will proved in 1615, gave £5000 to the Haberdashers' Company for the use of the poor of Newland and for the maintenance of a lecturer there. The almshouses were built in 1617 and in 1620 it was ordained that 16 almspeople should be maintained. They were to receive 2s weekly and cloth for a gown every year. A scheme of 1922 provided for between 10 and 16 almspeople, married couples were allowed. In 1973 qualification was widened to include those who had lived for at least two years in Newland, Coleford, West Dean and Lydbrook.



### **Northleach – Dutton's Almshouses**

Thomas Dutton of Turkdean at his death in 1615 gave a house in East End, Northleach as a site for an almshouse for 6 inmates each of whom was to have 2 rooms and a garden. The almshouse was to be supervised by the bailiff, constable and parish officers who were to find suitable inmates subject to the final choice of the Dutton family. *Governors to meet 4 times a year to examine the morals of inmates expelling those absent from church and "brawlers, scoulders, drunkards or any other misliving people. Almsfolk shall weekly during their lives resort unto the parish church of Northleach when and as often as divine*

*prayer or preaching be then and there solemnized. No almsman to be admitted who will not leave all his possessions to his successor. Each almsperson to receive 20d per week and a gown annually. In 1932 Lord Sherborne endowed it with £1200 of stock and it was transferred to the town's charity trustees. The interior was modernised in the early 1900s to accommodate 4 elderly residents.*

### **Northleach – Allen's Almshouses**

Mary Harriett Allen, widow of Revd John Allen, a former master of Northleach Grammar School gave by her will in 1817 the bulk of her estate for charitable purposes. The will provided for the support of an almshouse for 6 men which was to be built by the bailiff and leading townspeople. A row of 6 small cottages was opened in Mill End in 1818 and a dole of 6s a week was assigned to each inmate. She also gave a further 4d a week to the inmates of Dutton's Almshouse provided they wear the letter "D" on some conspicuous part of their dress and again in her almshouse the men were to wear the letter "A".



### **Prestbury – Ann Goodrich Almshouses**

In 1720 Anne Goodrich gave an almshouse of six rooms in the High Street for the use of the 'religious poor'; in 1856 there were 10 people in the almshouse, but in 1889 only 3 men and 3 women, and later only 3 people in all. The almshouse was sold by the Prestbury United Charities to the Cheltenham Rural District Council in 1954, and replaced by six new dwellings; the Charities retaining the right to nominate the residents for two of them.

### **Shipton Moyne**

Almshouse built in 1851. Nothing else known of this.



### **St Briavels**

C.L. Denton (d.1892) left an endowment to establish an almshouse for 3 elderly men and 3 elderly widows. It was built in 1895 by his heir O.W. Andrews and modernized in the late 1960s and in 1991.

### **Stapleton**

Mary Webb by will dated 15 October 1729 bequeathed £420 in trust for a school near Fishponds £15 per year and the remaining £7 10s to 3 poor women, *which said 3 old women to be placed and settled in rooms, chambers or lodgings adjoining the school; the women to be bred up in the Church of England.* In the almshouse there are 3 rooms for 3 old women in which they reside and have since 1796 received 1s 6d a week.

### **Stow-on-the-Wold – Shepham Almshouses**

Richard Shepham, citizen and merchant tailor of London by his will dated 20 July 1604 left rent from his houses in London for his almshouses lately built at Stow and 9 poor almsfolk of Stow should be relieved in the almshouses with £23 8s yearly.



### **Tetbury**

Built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century on the south side of The Green, the founder is unknown but thought by some to have been Sir William Romney. In 1857, 8 poor women resided there each having a room rent free and receiving about 30s a year from different benefactions left by Thomas Thomson, Eleanor Ludlow and Ester Clark for that purpose. By 1967 the almshouse was providing accommodation for 4 people.



### **Tewkesbury – Richardson Almshouses**

Ernest Richardson by will dated 1652 gave £60 stock for the poor, with which in 1653 the officers of the corporation bought a row a seven cottages in Gander Lane. The cottages were repaired in 1739 with money belonging to the town charities. There was no other endowment than the almshouses themselves, and in 1828, when they were occupied by 7 poor persons and their families, they were overcrowded. The scheme of 1881 ruled that the 7 occupants were

reduced to 5 and in 1957 was raised again to 7.

### **Tewkesbury – Russell Almshouses**

Sir Francis Russell, by deed of 1674, gave a range of buildings north of the abbey church, together with various plots of land, for the use of 10 poor widows aged 50 or more. The buildings comprised 5 rooms up and 5 rooms down. In 1828, when there were 10 apartments under one roof occupied by 10 widows, the buildings were said to be so ruinous that they would soon need to be demolished. They were rebuilt in 1831-2 as a range of 10 two-room dwellings on two floors.



### **Tewkesbury –Barnes Almshouses**

In 1830 Samuel Barnes built three-storey block of almshouses in Oldbury, comprising 24 apartments of 2 rooms each. His gift of them to the corporation in his will was void but his heirs gave them to the corporation in 1834. The charity included an endowment of £384 stock. Under the scheme of 1881 there



were to be 32 inmates including at least 16 women; the other 16 could include married couples. By 1955, however, Barnes almshouses were in such a poor condition that they housed only one woman and it was said to be too late to save the building; it was demolished soon afterwards.

### **Thornbury – Sir John Stafford Almshouses**

Sir John Stafford in 1620 conveyed in trust for 6 poor people, widows, widowers or single persons of Thornbury to be nominated by the Feoffees and endowed with £10 a year from his estate at Buckover. In 1839 they were described as an ancient stone edifice located in St Mary Street with 6 rooms on the ground floor and six above inhabited by 6 poor aged single women. It was managed by the Trustees of Stafford's Charity until the 1910s when it was taken over by Thornbury Town Trust which administered other charitable trusts in Thornbury. By 1923 it had been vacant for some time and was sold and demolished. There was another almshouse founded by Thomas Slimbridge in the 16<sup>th</sup> century for 4 poor people and endowed with lands worth £11 9s 4d a year which was referred to in the Report of the Commissioners of Charities 1815-1839 as formerly 2 old tenements of a ruinous uninhabitable condition standing in the corner of the street near the school-house called Lower Almshouse.



### **Tibberton**

Built in 1868, endowed in trust by William Philip Price MP, landowner and owner of Tibberton Court. The trust was established *to permit the same to be forever occupied by aged or infirm persons, inhabitants of the said parish of Tibberton who would otherwise be probably compelled to end their days in the Union Workhouse. No person shall be ineligible or considered a less deserving object of the charity by reason or on account of their religious opinions.*

### **Winchcombe – Chandos Almshouses**

Lady Dorothy Chandos provided for the building of almshouses in the town to accommodate 12 poor people. These almshouses were originally built in 1573 and substantially rebuilt in 1841. In 1849 Hester Ann Durham left money for the repair of the almshouses and to provide clothes or fuel for the almshouse residents. They were further renovated in 1996 to provide 12 flats.





### Winchcombe – Dents Almshouses

Work on these almshouses started in March 1863 and they were completed by April 1865 at a cost of £4000 of which £2000 came from a legacy by John Dent. The design of the almshouses is due to Emma Dent's choice of the London architects Gilbert Scott and J. Daynton Wyatt

### Winterbourne – Perry Almshouses

In 1851 Mary Anne Jones, widow of the Rev. J.W. Jones and daughter of Mrs Hull (a daughter of William Perry of Winterbourne) conveyed to the Rev. W.B. Allen, rector of Winterbourne, Henry Marsh of Bath, William Tanner, the younger of Stapleton and William Charles Fox MD of Northwoods

*All that piece of ground near to the late common called Winterbourne Down and the Turnpike Road leading to Bristol and containing 2 roods and 22 perches and also all those 10 several cottages now in the course of erection by her the said Mary Anne Jones upon trust to select such poor men and*

*women of sound mind who shall have attained the age of 60 years or be incapable of wholly maintaining themselves (then follow certain conditions as to residence) and who not being let by sickness or some other urgent cause have attended Divine Service at the Church of the parish of their residences for the time being every Sunday for the last 5 years and been partakers of the Holy Communion and lived a righteous and sober life to the glory of God's holy name.*

*The Incumbent of the rectory for the time being to be a trustee and any vacancy in the number of the 3 lay trustees to be filled up by the surviving lay trustee. The 10 cottages are by the desire of Mrs Jones to be called "The Perry Almshouses" out of respect to her family and dearest relatives.*

She transferred £3000 Bank 3% Annuities for the maintenance of the almshouses; she died in 1862 bequeathing an additional sum of £1000 subject to the same trust.



### Woodchester

In 1729 Richard Cambridge by his will gave £20 to the Overseers of the Poor of Woodchester, the interest to be disposed of for poor persons of the Parish. The Overseers, Messrs Pavey, Box and Powell, in 1763 bought the almshouses for £16 16s and spent the balance of the legacy in putting the premises in repair. Under the Local Government Act of 1894, the Parish Council had the charge of the five alms houses situated at the top of Bospin Lane. Gradually the need for them lessened and for a number of years they stood empty. Finally in 1954 the Charity Commissioners gave the Parish Council permission to sell these now unwanted houses. In April of the following year they were sold for £107 14s 6d. The money was invested pending the establishment of a scheme to regulate the charity. This scheme was soon in operation and the yearly interest is paid out to suitable recipients at Christmas.



### **Wotton-under-Edge – Perry Dawes Almshouses**

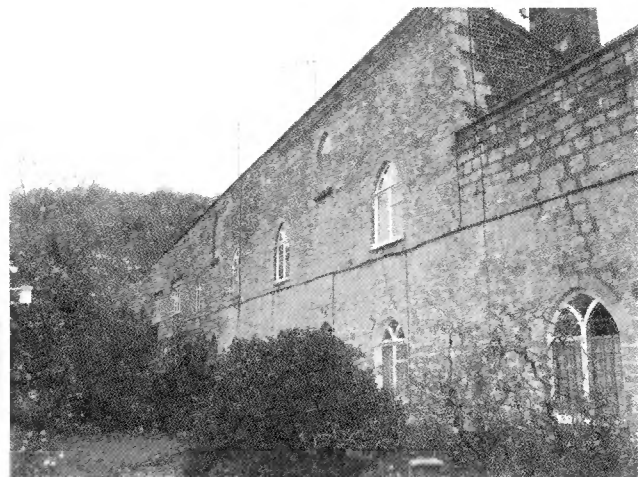
Hugh Perry, born in Wotton, became Sheriff of London in 1632. He left £300 to the Mayor and Aldermen of Wotton to erect an almshouse for 6 poor men and 6 poor women. The chapel was built at the same time.

Thomas Dawes in his will of 1712 provided for a hospital to adjoin that of Hugh Perry. It consisted of 6 houses at the lower end of the courtyard and also 6 pieces of garden and the inmates were to have free use of the chapel, well and other facilities. There was a further extension on the south side in 1723 with 12 apartments. This made a total of 30. In 1952 the almshouses were remodelled and reduced to 22.

The rules stated

*If any persons in this almshouse shall behave themselves in carriage and conversation as to be thought unfit and unworthy of charity of this gift then their part or portion of apparel, fuel and money shall be given to such persons as the mayor and his brethren shall think fit. The persons enjoying this charity shall constantly attend the public prayers at the time appointed for them to be read. Those neglecting to attend on the prayers without lawful cause, to be approved of by the mayor, shall be deemed as unworthy of the charity which shall be distributed to other poor people as the mayor and his brethren shall think fit.*

In 1697 the mayor agreed that the poor people in the almshouse shall wear gowns with the letters on them in remembrance of the donor and shall have new ones made once every 3 years.



### **Wotton-under-Edge – Rowland Hill Almshouses**

Reverend Rowland Hill, a Calvinist came to Wotton in 1771. His Tabernacle was completed in 1773 and the almshouses date from 1815. *12 almshouses for poor aged women of good character who are members or former members of the Tabernacle.* In 1887 they were replaced by new buildings on Tabernacle Pitch.

### **Wotton-under-Edge – Ann Bearpacker's Almshouses**

Built by Miss Ann Bearpacker in 1818 and extended in 1837/8 for poor aged persons of good character who are members of the Church of England and reside in the parish.

