

A history of the building known as Church Cottages.

When Henry Strother died in 1718 there was no school in Lesbury but in his will he left a bequest 'for the benefit of Lesbury School'. This was in the form of a piece of land known as Pine Hill near Wooden Farm. The land was to be let out and the income used for the benefit of Lesbury School.

Maps show that by 1723 a school had been established where Church Cottages now stand. Thompson's survey of 1769

shows the existence in the village of a school but not a poor house. By 1776 books of accounts in the church records show the existence of a Poorhouse. Maps from this time show the school had moved to a separate building and the poor house now existed on the site of the school.



Contracts between the Overseers of the Poor and the Duke of Northumberland show that when the property was no longer used as a poor house it would be taken back by the Estate. This occurred in June 1850 and prompted discussions concerning the future of the building. It was recommended that the poor house be demolished and replaced by two semi-detached cottages. These cottages were intended as replacements for

other cottages which stood opposite the church (adjacent to where Lesbury Post Office now stands) and had fallen into disrepair. The cottages to be replaced were described as being 'low, thatched, and in a bad state', they also looked 'awkward' as they were not facing the street. The excellent location of the Poor House within the village meant that it made sense to repurpose the site for housing.