

In another act of charity for the locals James Barton esq. of London built a large and handsome block of almshouses about one mile out of Turvey adjoining the Station, it is still not clear why he built almshouses but he chose Turvey when he failed to obtain the land he wanted in Bedford. On the board in the church porch is the following: James Barton Esq. Built in 1885, at a cost of £6197 the "Almshouses situated in this parish" and transferred to Trustees £15,833-6-8. In £3% consols for the endowment of same. Olive Kay writes an article in the Bedfordshire Magazine vol. V pg. 126 titled the Victorian Philanthropist: 'Poor persons of good character being the inhabitants of the Parish of Turvey or of the town of Bedford' received notes from James Barton telling them that they had been chosen as residents of his newly erected homes at Turvey and could move in during the following month. Known as the James, Mary and Louisa Barton charity, now called The Barton and Royal homes was built, as a memorial to James sister, in the Tudor style and arranged as flats for ten married and ten single pensioners. An endowment fund of approximately £16,000 provided each tenant with a weekly pension of eight shillings per married couple and six shillings for a single person. For each block built there included a communal kitchen and a scullery. The buildings included a caretaker's house, a board room and a Memorial Hall (which has just re-opened this year following a refurbishment).

An article in the *Bedfordshire Mercury* 27th November 1886 pays homage to Mr. Barton says Mr. Barton was seventy two years of age and had been unwell for some days. The telegram announcing his death caused great grief to all the aged pensioners, by whom he was much loved, not only for the comfortable homes he had provided them but for the friendly spirit he ever manifested and the practical and kindly interest he took in their comfort and enjoyment.