

Uffculme - Home of Richard Barrow Cadbury

Richard Cadbury

Richard Barrow Cadbury (b.29 August 1835 – d.22 March 1899) was the second son of the Quaker John Cadbury, founder of Cadbury's cocoa and chocolate company. Together with his younger brother George, Richard took over the family business in 1861. They were from a Quaker family and known for their philanthropy and in 1878 they acquired 14 acres of land in open country, four miles south of Birmingham, where they opened a new factory in 1879, which became known as Bournville, named after a local river and which set it apart from the local area. In 1893, George Cadbury bought 120 acres of land close to the works and planned, at his own expense, a model village. It was George Cadbury, who created the Bournville Village Trust. Richard Cadbury donated Moseley Hall to the City of Birmingham, for use as a children's convalescent home.

Uffculme – The House

A Victorian Grade 2 listed building, built in the Jacobethan Style and takes its name from the Devon town of Uffculme.



The house was built, for Richard Cadbury by William Jenkins in 1890, in Red Brick with Portland Stone dressings. Richard Cadbury and his wife lived there until the death of his widow in 1906.

The house was gifted to the city Council in 1916 for the furthering of psychiatric health for which it was used until 1999. It is now an NHS conference, function, meeting and training centre.

Uffculme is a large two storey house and attic divided by a large, full height central hall with an oriel at one end. There is a conservatory at the other end, which is located at the south front of the house

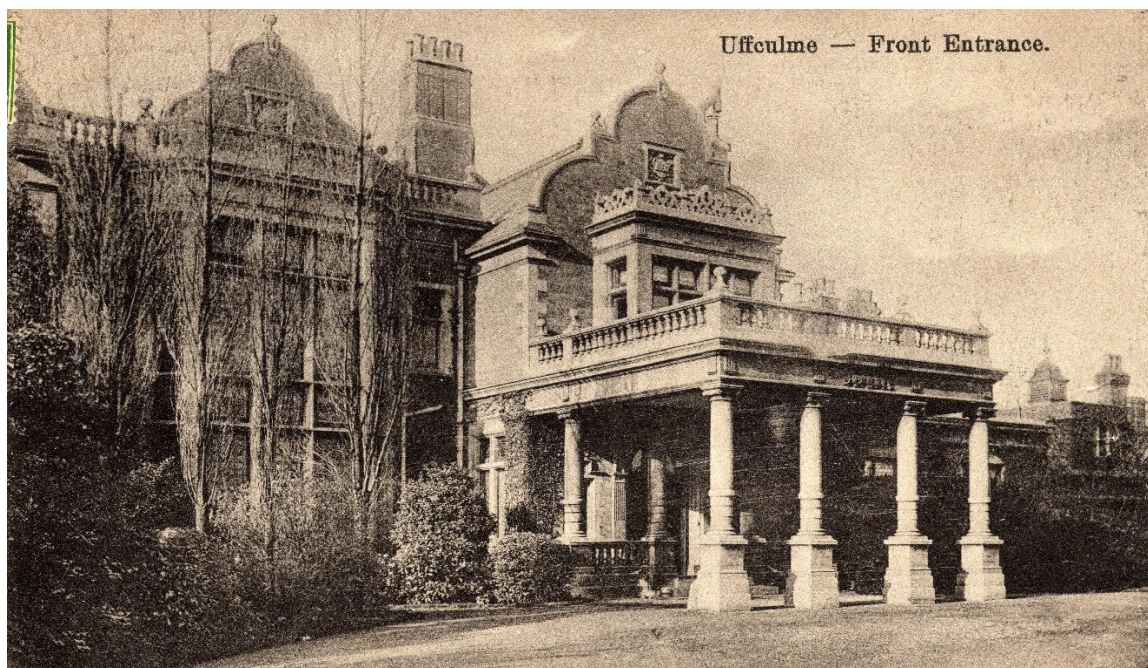
and garden and which is made of cast iron with a lead roof. The hall was thought to have been used for entertaining and charity events.



Uffculme", Conference Hall.

A gallery runs along 3 sides of the of the hall and has a stained glass window positioned between the gallery and the conservatory as well an imperial staircase with a stained glass window which rises from the East side. The service wing is on the west side of the house.

At the North front of the house is the Porte Cochere (where vehicles stop to set down passengers), and a coach house which is also located at the front of the house.



Uffculme – The School

Uffculme was inherited in 1908 by Barrow and Geraldine. They never lived there, but used it for philanthropic purposes, and donated it to the City of Birmingham in 1916 for the furthering of psychiatric health services. The site was considered ideal for an open-air school, providing a south-facing slope, with the grounds of the house available for nature study and recreation and trams running by the back gate to deliver children from their inner-city homes.

The philanthropy of the local Quaker chocolate-manufacturing dynasty extended beyond provision for their own workforce at Bournville, and Barrow and Geraldine Cadbury took a particular interest in the education and welfare of children and young people; Geraldine Cadbury opened Birmingham's first kindergarten in 1904.

Their own son's ill-health had responded well to a programme of regulated exposure to the open air, and Mrs Cadbury wished to make a similar treatment available to children suffering from the effects of malnutrition and poverty.

Uffculme School, opened on 18 September 1911 and was Birmingham's first open-air school. Barrow and Geraldine Cadbury, who gave part of the grounds of Uffculme House, and provided the new buildings, were closely involved in the project. Uffculme continued to operate as an open-air school through both world wars and into the 1950s, though adapting to changing needs.

In the 1960s the school pioneered education for autistic children, and today Uffculme provides 125 places for pupils aged between three and nineteen, diagnosed within the autistic spectrum, or with communication and social skills disorders.

Following extensive refurbishment, Uffculme is now also one of the region's best training and conference centres.



Gail Pittaway and Julia C Griffin Kings Heath Local History Society Nov 2017.