

Ufford Heritage Trail

19. The Red House



Photos c1900

This Queen Anne/ early Georgian house, set back from the High Street, started life as an early C17th cottage and was remodelled and extended in the C18th. The house you see today is very similar in design to The Red House (now The Dower House) in Lower Street and was almost certainly designed and built by the same architect/builder, E.D. Highmoor between 1745 and 1750. Its construction was around the same time as Ufford saw the introduction of the turnpike (toll road) with increased traffic from coaches going from London to the coast and Norwich.

The house is constructed with Flemish bond bricks under a pantile roof and retains its original courtyard and fine walled garden. The house was associated for many years with the Red House Estate and its surrounding farmland. This estate was broken up into lots in 1901 and changed hands again in 1944.

The house and farm were occupied in the 1860s and 1870s by local farmer, James Waspe and his family; they farmed around 200 acres and employed 7 labourers and four boys. The Waspe family are listed in the 1871 census and in White's History as being at The Red House in 1874. James was the son of William Bonner Waspe who owned Gusford Hall in Ipswich (near Stoke Park and long since demolished) and was one of 13 children.

James and his wife Charlotte fell on hard times after his farming business was liquidated in March 1876. They moved to London, where he worked for a cab proprietor, probably driving a hansom cab - the forerunner of today's London taxi. He was later employed as a clerk and lived in Battersea. The Red House Estate incorporating the house, its farm, land and several associated cottages were sold off in lots in 1901 through Garrod, Turner and Sons an Ipswich Estate Agent in the Buttermarket. Lot 1 was The Red House itself.

It is unclear who bought The Red House but, in the 1901 census, the house was the home to Mary A Rowley and her daughter, Fanny Maitland, Both ladies had been widowed not many years before. Mary Rowley was the wife of Reverend Joseph Moss Rowley who was the first Vicar of St John's Church in Woodbridge; he served there from its opening in 1846 to 1871. He then became the Rector of Ufford and Rural Dean of Wilford until he retired. Fanny Maitland was the widow of Dr Gilbert G Maitland who had been Surgeon General for the Army in Bombay, India. In around 1920, Fanny's sister Mary J Rowley joined her and they continued to live at The Red House until 1943, when Mary died.



The C18th walled garden as it is today

History Note - Ufford Village School

White's History, Gazetteer and Directory for Suffolk (1874) shows that the Rowley and Waspe families played an important role in Ufford. They founded the village school in 1873, and ran it in its early years. It was built at a cost of £900. The school board members were Reverend Joseph Rowley, Chairman, James Waspe, Vice-Chairman, Ernest St George Cobbold who lived at what is now The Dower House, Lower Street and William Lines, a farmer and grazier who lived at The Grove (this is now Grove Farm adjacent to the A12/ Ufford slip road).

The School became a primary school and operated in School Lane until it closed in 1987.