

## Ufford Heritage Trail

### 10. Ufford House (formerly The Cottage)

Take a short detour just down from Ufford Place gates and on the western side of the road are the well wooded grounds of Ufford House (No.6 Barrack Lane). The house historically backed onto the parkland of Ufford Place and it stands by the original entrance to the park, which was abandoned in the late nineteenth century.

Ufford House itself is Grade II listed and is an attractive timber framed and rendered house, with clay plain tiled gabled roofs. The core of the house is C16<sup>th</sup> with Georgian and Victorian additions.



The house has had a number of interesting owners over the years. Perhaps most notable was David Elisha Davey (b1769 and d1851) who was an English antiquary and collector. Davey was born in Yoxford, studied at Pembroke College, Cambridge and was ordained as a deacon. He was later to be a magistrate and receiver-general for Suffolk. This latter role involved him in the collection of Land Tax and disbursement of grants across the county. His passion and life's work, however, was to study and write about Suffolk and its people. He researched and published 43 volumes of Suffolk pedigrees which trace back local families and their lineage. His manuscripts and collection were purchased by the British Museum after his death.

One of his books *A Journey of Excursions through the County of Suffolk 1824 -1844* was written when he lived at The Cottage (renamed Ufford House around 1980) and describes his daily walks from the house and his routines in East Suffolk with forays further afield by horse or coach.



MISS MARY CHOLMONDELEY  
Author of "Prisoners"

Later the house was home to the author Mary Cholmondeley (1859 -1925) who lived in Kensington and in Hodnet, Shropshire, for much of her early life.

From 1907, Mary and her sister Victoria spent their summers at The Cottage in Ufford.

Mary writes lovingly about the house, the village (which she calls Riff) and the Deben (which she calls Rieben) in the introduction to a collection of stories called *The Romance in his Life*. One of her books, *Notwithstanding*, was set in Ufford. Here is a short extract from the book, which tells of rural life in autumn in the village at the start of the 1900s.

*"Time moves imperceptibly at Riff, as imperceptibly as the Rieben among its reeds. To Janey it seemed as if life stood stock-still. Nevertheless, the slow wheel of the year was turning. The hay was long since in, standing in high ricks in the farmyards, or built up into stacks in lonely fields with a hurdle round them to keep off the cattle. The wheat and the clover had been reaped and carried. The fields were bare, waiting for the plough. It was the time of the Harvest Thanksgiving.*

*Janey had been at work ever since breakfast helping to decorate the church, together with Harry and Miss Black, and her deaf friend Miss Conder, the secretary of the Plain Needlework Guild. Miss Conder's secretarial duties apparently left her wide margins of leisure which were always at the disposal of Miss Black. Except for the somewhat uninspiring presence of Miss Black and Miss Conder and her ear trumpet, it had all been exactly as it had been ever since Janey could remember.*

*As she stood by the Ringers' Arch it seemed to her as if she had seen it all a hundred times before: the children coming crowding round her, flaxen and ruddy, with their hot little posies tied with grass,—the boys made as pretty posies as the girls,—and Hesketh, "crome from the cradle," limping up the aisle with his little thatched stack under his arm; and Sayler with his loaf; and the farmers' wives bringing in their heavy baskets of apples and vegetables"*

Not long after Mary died, the house became the retirement home of Vice-Admiral Charles F Corbett and his wife Marjorie, as recorded in the 1939 Register.

As a Royal Navy officer during WWI, Captain Corbett played an important role in protecting the North Atlantic, Suez Canal and Mediterranean Sea routes on HMS Glory and HMS Jupiter from 1914 to the end of 1916.

He became Commodore at RN Barracks at Devonport, Plymouth at the start of 1917 and from 1919 he ran RN Rosyth in Scotland.



His wife, Marjorie had lived close by at Cransford Hall near Saxmundham before she married in October 1920; she was 30 years younger than her husband. Admiral Corbett died in Ufford in January 1955

*The portrait of Admiral Charles F Corbett, painted by Francis Dodd, 1917 is held at the Imperial War Museum.*