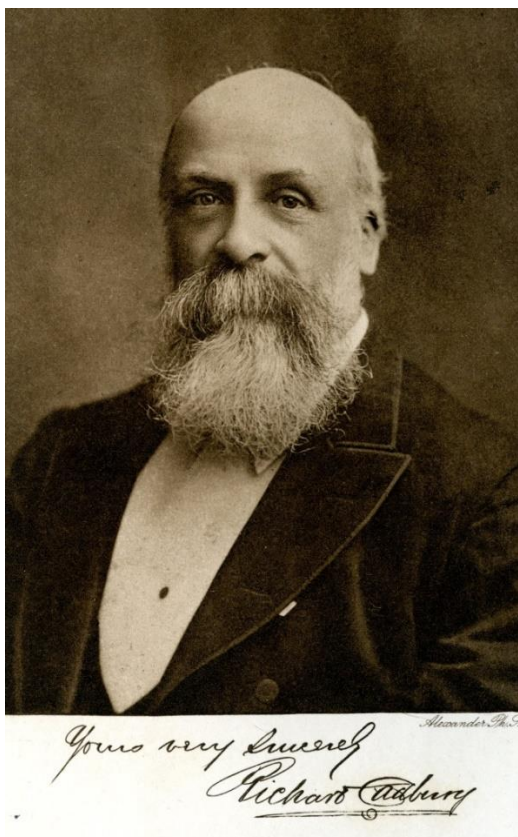


## Richard Cadbury and Moseley Hall



The Cadbury brothers, Richard and George, relocated their Birmingham chocolate factory to Bournville in 1873. In 1884 Richard Cadbury moved from the Calthorpe Estate where the Cadburys had lived for many years to Moseley where he rented Moseley Hall. Helen Cadbury, Richard's daughter, writes movingly about this in her book, *Richard Cadbury of Birmingham*. The children, Barrow, William and Richard, Jessie, Edith, Helen and Margaret, were delighted by Richard's stories of the 'spreading lawns, the trees and woods, the open fields and the beautiful pool with its tree-shaded island'. He told them stories of the rabbits 'scuttling across the grass, waving their little white 'flags of truce'', or 'venturing onto the lawns in the evening to nibble the softer grass.' The result was that the children nicknamed their new home 'The Bunny House'.

On arrival in Moseley, they found:

... low houses and old-fashioned shops, with a blacksmiths at the corner and up the street to the left could be seen the square tower of the village church. Close by the Green and sloping steeply away from the road at right angles, was the entrance to Moseley Hall. Tall wooden gates, flanked by a little lodge on each side, were thrown open under the shade of spreading trees, and showed a vista of the long drive winding between woods and fields, down-hill and up again with glimpses of the pool at the bottom of the valley. The old house, with its portico of stone pillars, its spacious rooms, and long stone-paved passages, was full of mystery and delight to the young folks.

The children were fascinated by the cellars, the oldest part of the Hall burnt down in the 1791 Priestley Riots. They stretched the whole length of the house and had been built as prisons and used for this purpose. There were secret rooms in the house. A cupboard door with mirror panels led to a mysterious room filled with cupboards. A door to one of these cupboards was opened by a spring and led into another secret room, whilst another door with metal lattice work slid aside and revealed 'a large roomy safe'. Views from the windows were 'very beautiful' with no houses in sight and from the dining-room, drawing room and library there was a vista to the pool and then up 'a green hillside to the thick belt of trees fringing the top of the hill'. St Ann's Church spire 'soared' above it all. The woods were glorious in the summer and Richard Cadbury would often send Beatrice and her nurse

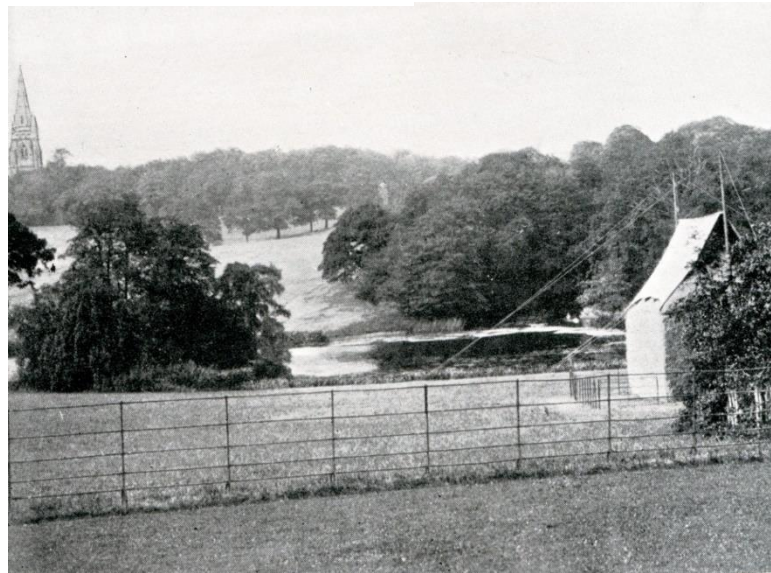


*Moseley Hall, 1828*

carrying baskets of bluebells to give away in the village, 'which with the advent of steam-trams was fast losing its country appearance'.

The Richard Cadburys welcomed many guests to Moseley Hall, 'Sunday Schools, men's and women's classes, mothers' meetings, bands of hope, Christian workers of every variety

and every denomination'. Larger parties 'were entertained in the fields with tents and booths erected in case of rain' and smaller ones in the gardens. The children shared in the work of entertaining, 'carrying round heavy cans of tea ... or distributing buns and cakes'. One such event was The Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. 600 children were welcomed to the grounds of Moseley Hall. 'The ladies' and the Amusement Committee provided a special tea, 'balloons were sent up and each child was given a toy and a medal'.



*View from the Windows of Moseley Hall to St Ann's Church, Park Hill*

However, the 1884 *Dart* noted 'the felling of trees in the park for a new road' and an old wall 'being pulled down, and a rail being put up'. In 1886 W.F. Taylor sold plots which cut across the kitchen gardens of Moseley Hall and planned a grid of roads across the greater portion of the estate. Richard Cadbury bought Moseley Hall and twenty-two acres of land from him in 1890 in consequence. In 1892 he generously donated the Hall to the city as a Children's Convalescent Home and moved to Uffculme the house he built in Moor Green.

**Janet Berry**