

## NEWSletter

Number 58

## Easter time ...

*Often seen as a time of renewal in Edwardian Britain...*

Easter, the most significant festival in the Christian calendar, was celebrated with great fervour and tradition in Edwardian Britain (1901-1910). This period, marked by the reign of King Edward VII, was a time of social change, yet many Victorian customs and religious practices persisted, particularly around Easter. The rituals of Easter in Edwardian Britain reflected a blend of religious devotion, social customs, and emerging commercial influences, offering a fascinating glimpse into the era's cultural and spiritual life.

Good Friday, in particular, was a day of fasting and penance. Many Edwardians attended church services that featured readings of the Passion narrative and hymns such as "O Sacred Head, Sore Wounded." The somber tone of Good Friday contrasted sharply with the joy of Easter Sunday, when churches were adorned with flowers, particularly lilies, symbolising purity and resurrection. The Easter Sunday service, often held at dawn, celebrated the Resurrection of Christ with hymns like "Christ the Lord is Risen Today" and the ringing of church bells, which had remained silent since Maundy Thursday.

The tradition of Easter eggs, symbolising new life and rebirth, was deeply ingrained in Edwardian Britain. While the custom of decorating eggs had ancient roots, the Edwardian era saw the rise of chocolate eggs as a popular gift. These were often elaborately packaged and adorned with ribbons, reflecting the period's love of elegance and refinement. Wealthier families might exchange expensive, handcrafted eggs made by confectioners, while simpler versions were available for the working classes.

In addition to chocolate eggs, children often received other gifts, such as toys or books, as part of Easter celebrations. The Easter egg hunt, a tradition that had gained popularity in the late 19th century, became a cherished activity for children in

Edwardian households. Gardens and parlours were transformed into treasure troves of hidden eggs, delighting young participants.

Food played a central role in Easter celebrations, with special dishes prepared to mark the end of Lenten fasting. Roast lamb, symbolising the Lamb of God, was a traditional Easter Sunday meal, often accompanied by spring vegetables like asparagus and new potatoes. Hot cross buns, spiced sweet buns marked with a cross, were a staple of Good Friday and throughout the Easter season. These buns were often given to the poor as an act of charity, reflecting the Christian values of compassion and generosity.

Easter was also a time for socialising and leisure. The Edwardian era saw the rise of public holidays, and Easter Monday was a day off for many workers. Families took advantage of the spring weather to enjoy outings to the countryside or seaside. Parks and gardens, blooming with daffodils and tulips, provided a picturesque backdrop for Easter walks and picnics.

For the upper classes, Easter was an opportunity to host or attend lavish parties and balls. Fashion was an important aspect of these gatherings, with women wearing new Easter outfits, often in pastel colours, to symbolise the season of renewal. The Easter bonnet, adorned with flowers and ribbons, was a particularly iconic accessory.

Easter in Edwardian Britain was a time of rich tradition and communal celebration, blending religious devotion with social customs and emerging commercial trends.



## Appleby's Neolithic links ...

*Richard Dunmore researched Appleby's origins ...*

**A**rchaeological evidence suggests human activity in the area around Appleby Magna from the early Neolithic period, ie up to 6000 years ago. This was when settled farming—rearing animals and cultivating crops—began to replace hunter-gathering as the principal

Each group was protected within its defences and surrounded by a system of fields as clearings were carved out of the ancient forest.

The site of the earliest known human activity in the parish was discovered on Barns Heath Farm (SK330 098) by aerial photography. An oval-shaped enclosure about 2.5 hectares in area (about 220m by 145m) and distinguished by three concentric ditches showed up as crop marks. This configuration is early **Neolithic** in character, and a subsequent archaeological excavation c.1966 produced prehistoric pottery.

In a review of Neolithic and Bronze Age Leicestershire, Patrick Clay compared the Appleby site with a better-preserved early Neolithic 'causewayed enclosure' at Husbands Bosworth in the south of the county.

Elsewhere in the parish, crop marks also disclosed a rectangular enclosure a short distance east of the White House (SK326 108), which is a possible **Iron Age** site. Further crop marks of a ring ditch, possibly **Bronze Age**, with another unidentified ditch have been noted on Birdshill Gorse (SK314 118).

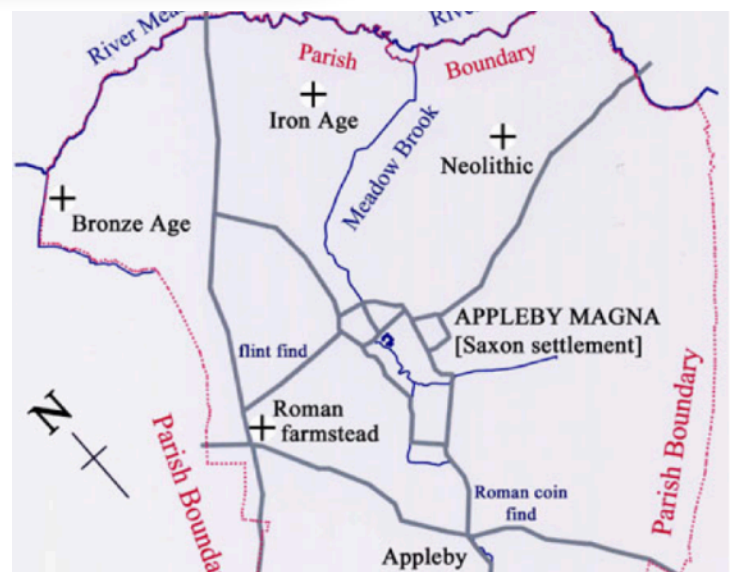


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**RECONSTRUCTED IRON-AGE HOUSES**

Castell Henllys  
Pembrokeshire

means of providing food. Arable cultivation had its primitive beginnings as woodland was progressively cleared, but hunter-gathering was still vital. The picture that emerges from local archaeology is of the gradual development of small settlements from the Neolithic period onwards. There is no suggestion of a nuclear settlement (ie central village) until Saxon times. Rather, scattered farms or small groups of farms with their characteristic thatched round-houses and associated buildings were built on the gentle slopes south of the River Mease.





## The village teacher & Guide leader

Anne Silins remembers Miss Mabel Knight ...

**M**iss Knight.... A School Teacher, and our wonderful leader for the village Brownies and Girl Guides.

As I look back on those years in the village I often am amazed at the patience and knowledge that Miss. Mabel Knight had for young girls in our village. She would have spent her days patiently teaching us, and we could be a noisy bunch. Twice a week Miss Knight held Brownie and Girl Guide groups in the Church School (across from the church). We learned crafts, camping skills, Morse code, how to use signal flags, and how to tie knots correctly. Sometimes as a special treat we sang and danced to old tunes played on Miss Knight's gramophone.



Brownies, ages 7 yrs. to 10 yrs. learned in small groups called sixes: each six was named after either fairies or woodland creatures. A six is led by a Sixer and has a Second who acts as deputy. I walked along Church Street to attend Brownies from our the shop in Church Street. Later we moved to Lower Rectory Farm in Snarestone Lane, at that time I graduated to the Girl Guide troop. Girl Guides, for girls ages 10 yrs. to 14 yrs. My friends and I now felt quite grown up. Life at the farm was quite different from life in the centre of Appleby, I was a little lonely, but my Grandfather would start up his car after 'tea time' and drive me to our Girl Guide meetings. I am sure while my Grandpa waited for me, he enjoyed a pint and conversation at the Queen Adelaide Inn or the Crown Inn.

In the Summer of 1950 Miss. Knight arranged for some of us to travel to Barmouth in North

Wales for a week of camping in a farmer's field. Here we would put to use some of the newly aquired camping and field craft



knowledge she had taught us. We all squeezed into her car and early one sunny morning we were off to Wales. Our camp site looked down towards the famous Barmouth railway bridge, all 900 yards of it. This bridge crossed the estuary of the river Mawddach. Our first chore was to set up our bell tents, I well remember that they were smelly having been used some years earlier during war manoeuvres and most likely put away wet. Our second chore of that first day was to dig a trench which acted as our toilet facilities. We cooked our meals on an open fire, all taking turns to cook or to clean up afterwards. One of the high-lights of that week was our day-long trek along the famous Precipice Walk, such views, so beautiful. Miss. Knight, never missed an opportunity to teach, and so we heard that this walk originally was a path used by sheep and shepherds in the 12th. century. Over the last century it was widened for use as a public footpath. Miss. Knight, always mindful of our education, made sure we knew the history of everywhere we visited. She was a gentle educator and always had time to explain and point out places of interest to us. One of her favourite sayings was "every five minutes the scenery changes, so enjoy the views". She had a kindly manner as she re-assured those nervous girls who were away from home for the first time.

I think we all learned a great deal of common sense and practical knowledge from her during those weekly gatherings at Girl Guides, I know I did.

## Renovations to the School ...

Midday to 3.00pm Sunday 6th April in the Great Hall  
and Sir John Foundation Appleby Magna .

The graffiti in the Hall at the Sir John Moore Foundation School is now legendary. There are names with associated dates and places, some of which go back to the 1720s. Visitors love to come and try to find the oldest graffiti (the newest is by a rogue called Miller, who dated his masterpiece in 2003. Miller – get in touch. You have a detention outstanding). People whose family have lived in the village for generations can see the work of their ancestors carved in to the very fabric of the building.

But how did it get on the wall? And why is some of it upside down?

In October 1882, the parish magazine records that the large schoolroom at Appleby was re-arranged and repaired. The two desks, which probably ran the length of the Hall, were removed. They were re-purposed as wainscot. More modern desks were introduced, and the school continued as usual. But the graffiti remained. It does not appear to have been carved in a hurry – in fact, some of the writing is quite ornate, and must have taken quite a while, with the person doing the carving standing up and moving around the desk. The question we can't really answer is this: was it graffiti? Or did the boys write their own place names on their desk? Did the Masters encourage it? And what became of the boys who committed their names to these desks in such a proud show of script?

If you would like to volunteer to find out about some of the past pupils, please contact our Museum Manager, Sally.

Professor Fred Steward is delivering a talk on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> April from 3.30 to 5.30 pm, about the role some of the former pupils at Appleby School played in the Industrial Revolution and beyond:

<https://sirjohnmoorefoundation.eventbrite.co.uk>

## Meet with a real life Queen ...

Friday 11th April at 7.00pm in the Great Hall and Sir John Foundation Appleby Magna . Tickets £15.00

There is no doubt that Elizabeth I had one of the most profound effects on English and European politics of any British ruler.



The Protestant queen in the cold bed was given a matter of months on the throne by Catholic observers of the day, believing she could not hope to survive. Instead, Elizabeth in fact went on to rule England for nearly forty-five years, mostly in peace. Her passionate belief in the English people and her lack of martial ambition combined with a brilliant mind and outstanding political skills made her hugely successful, confounding all her critics.

Here is a chance to meet Her Majesty at her political zenith and already an icon in an English psyche. This glittering presentation will transport the audience back to the time of Drake, Raleigh, and Shakespeare, on England's voyage into the Renaissance.

Click on there link below for tickets for this  
and other events:

<https://sirjohnmoorefoundation.eventbrite.co.uk>



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