

# NEWSLETTER

January 2024

## Local History Cafe



### Childhood Memories ...

Jean Turnbull recalls some of her rural childhood ...

I have many childhood memories at the gamekeeper's lodge, where my paternal grandfather was the gamekeeper. They had a small holding where granny kept goats. Many people came to buy the milk from the goats, especially the eczema sufferers who couldn't tolerate cows milk.

Nearby Kettering, Wickstead Park famously, kept herd of goats for making their ice cream. Granny used to lend her bill to service the herd, for which she was paid. She called it her "mucky money." She also raised chickens and geese to sell at Christmas. Her flock of chickens meant that she used to sell the eggs. She had a few pigs that once slaughtered and cured were used for home consumption. I remember vividly, there was always a ham hanging on the kitchen wall. Apparently when the butcher came to slaughter the pigs I was given a cardboard box to catch the squeak. Everything was home produced. We ate pheasant, rabbit, pigeon, venison and in the autumn granny always bottled fruit. I do recall that she even made her own tomato ketchup.



Granny always took on two or three cade lambs fed with the excess milk from the goats. I have very happy memories of bottle feeding a lamb with its tail madly wagging. There was much fun to be had playing with the young goat kids who would eat anything and everything! Visitors couldn't leave their bikes outside, or they would find the saddleback had been chewed, and for that matter, shoelaces were always fair game.

I also remember walking across a couple of fields with granny carrying a huge wicker basket of sandwiches and cakes for the cricket teas. Dad played in the team and grandad was the Empire. The social highlight of the year was a cricket social in the village hall, with much dancing and children's games. Across the green, you could hear the strains of the "The teddy bears picnic" which always put me in mind of the "The teddy bears waltz".

When granny had a heart attack, we had to move into the lodge for awhile to help out with the animals, so I attended the village school, there were only 12 of us ranging from the ages of 4 to 11 and just one teacher. My main memory of that school was producing lots and lots of Cross-stitch



The Big Freeze

Page 5



New memories  
from Anne  
Silins

Page 2



Howard Carter  
January  
discovery

Page 3



Family Farm  
Memories

Page 4

The next History Cafe meeting will be at 10.00 am on January 16th

# Anne Silins recalls Appleby Magna ...

**In a new series of writings. Anne Silins, now living in Canada, recalls her childhood life in Appleby Magna.**



As a little girl I found our small village to be a safe and wonderful place to play in and grow up in, we children were happy among our villagers. Every person in our village helped to raise and teach each child, yes even the naughty ones. I remember Appleby Magna being blessed with friendly people and quite a number of 'special characters'. All of these characters were interesting, all of them were admired for their various talents.

I will write about three people who meant a great deal to me as a child. Each person who lived and work within Appleby borders played a part to make the children's lives special. I do remember hearing about the odd 'to do' between a couple of people, occasionally voices would be raised, but a few days later these same people would share a walk along a village lane or foot path, sit together in one of our pubs and calm was restored again. Perhaps being at war had something to do with any adult squabbles being put aside quickly. Many men were away on military duty, some far overseas. Some women were raising their children alone with villagers often lending a hand with the little ones. Farm workers were needed for growing our food and they usually did their war service in the Village Home Guard. They walked the village lanes, with a sharp eye open for strangers and strange vehicles travelling the lanes. In the evenings they climbed the stone steps to the church steeple where they were on lookout duty.

## **The first village character Anne recalls is:**

*Mr. Vincent Saddington. Teacher and my Saturday morning Arithmetic Tutor.*

Vincent Charles Saddington, lived with his sister at Bateman House, Top Street, Appleby Magna.

My Grandparents decided to send me to the Ivanhoe Modern School in Ashby de la Zouch rather than move with the other Appleby students to the school in Ibstock. I missed being with the village students on their bus to Ibstock. Soon, as happens with young people, I got used to catching the Ashby Midland Red bus where it stopped along side the stone wall in front of the Alms Houses. Once aboard I listened to the conversations and giggles of the young women who travelled each morning to jobs in Ashby or Measham. Later and after our move to Lower Rectory Farm, I waited for the same bus after carefully placing my Wellington boots open side down on the side of our ditch. By doing this, I found my Wellies were dry for the walk down our muddy driveway and across the barnyard to the kitchen door.

Mr. Saddington rode the Ashby bus with me, he boarded the bus at the Bull Ring, where Snarestone Lane and Top Street meet. He usually read a book on our journey, and so did I. He enjoyed quizzing me about the books I was reading. Usually these books were gifts from my Godmother, Eileen (Chapman) Lower, who was also a teacher. Most were from the series of books by author Enid Blyton - "the Five Adventures". Mr. Saddington would quiz me about the plots, the character studies and the endings, he would ask, "was I happy with the end". He wanted me to have an answer. As an adult I realised that I slowly learned a great deal from those morning rides sitting beside him. As a child I was teased by my family about 'always having my head in a book', and yes I usually did have my head in a book. Perhaps that is why I have joined so many book clubs over the years. Mr. Saddington taught at the Ivanhoe Modern School and his subjects were for the most part Science and Arithmetic. For many of us girls he made these subjects we thought of as dull, interesting and sometimes exciting. For the boys in our classes they took to these subjects like 'ducks to water'. He never raised his voice, and he had an excellent aim when he threw a piece of chalk at a student's back, a student who was 'larking around'. "Ouch" yelled the receiver as the chalk found its mark, and for that day, at least, he paid attention.

With all of Mr. Saddington's teaching I still had problems with Arithmetic. After studying my school report card one Christmas my Grandparents decided that I needed some extra studies in Arithmetic. My low marks must improve. And so each Saturday morning I would ride my bicycle, be seated at Mr. Saddington's kitchen table studying my number tables, learning fractions, divisions and multiplication until my report card showed some improvement. There was a bonus to those Saturday morning classes, Mr. Saddington's sister was an excellent baker. There was always a special snack set out for me, it made a rainy morning ride worth getting wet.



## January 3rd 1924

### Howard Carter discovers Tutankhamun's Tomb ...

In 1907, he began work for Lord Carnarvon, who employed him to supervise the excavation of nobles' tombs in Deir el-Bahri, near Thebes. Gaston Maspero, head of the Egyptian Antiquities Service, had recommended Carter to Carnarvon as he knew he would apply modern archaeological methods and systems of recording. Carter soon developed a good working relationship with his patron, with Lady Burghclere, Carnarvon's sister, observing that "for the next sixteen years the two men worked together with varying fortune, yet ever united not more by their common aim than by their mutual regard and affection".



By 1922, Lord Carnarvon had become dissatisfied with the lack of results after several years of finding little. After considering withdrawing his funding, Carnarvon agreed, after a discussion with Carter, that he would fund one more season of work in the Valley of the Kings. It was then that Carter returned to the Valley of Kings, and investigated a line of huts that he had abandoned a few seasons earlier. The crew cleared the huts and rock debris beneath to discover a stairway.

On 3rd January 1924, the full extent of the stairway was cleared and a seal containing Tutankhamen's cartouche found on the outer doorway. This door was removed and the rubble-filled corridor behind cleared, revealing the door of the tomb itself.

Carter then made a "tiny breach in the top left-hand corner" of the doorway, using a chisel that his grandmother had given him for his 17th birthday. He was able to peer in by the light of a candle and see that many of the gold and ebony treasures were still in place. He did not yet know whether it was "a tomb or merely an old cache", but he did see a promising sealed doorway between two sentinel statues. Carnarvon asked, "Can you see anything?" Carter replied: "Yes, wonderful things!" Carter had, in fact, discovered Tutankhamun's tomb.

## Appleby's Puritan Parsons ...

### Alan Roberts looks into 17th Century vicars of Appleby ...

The rectors of Appleby took an active part in religious prophesying, maintaining links with radical Puritans at Ashby and exchanging books with kinsmen and neighbours of like mind.

Among the factors that gave the sons of the gentry and clergy an advantage over their neighbours was their more widespread attendance and placement in grammar schools which gave access to the universities and thus initiated them into the 'high culture' of their Age. Of the two, the clergy in each parish appear to have been more educated than their gentry colleagues - all of the incumbents from the late Elizabethan era to the Restoration were Cambridge alumni.

Most of the seventeenth-century rectors attended colleges which were havens of 'puritan' influence. The patronage of powerful men like the third earl of Huntingdon and the influence of radical Protestant Divines such as John Brinsley and Arthur Hildersham promoted the Grammar School at Ashby as a training ground for Protestant Divines. *(A divine was seen as someone who spoke directly from God)*

Promising scholars could go from here to especially endowed places in Cambridge where they were encouraged to become 'godly Protestants'. One of the supporters of this scheme was Thomas Mould, the rector of Appleby until 1642 and himself a fellow of Peterhouse,, who placed two of his sons at Ashby School under the supervision of Robert Orme in the early 1620s. Both, as intended, later entered the church.

Abraham, his eldest son who later succeeded his father as rector of Appleby, was admitted to Emmanuel College where he completed an M.A. in 1639. His brother, James, went to Sidney Sussex where he gained his degree and presentment to the living at Tatenhill in Staffordshire.

# Family memories ...

Michael Lower recalls his early life in Appleby Magna

**M**y mother was born in Appleby in 1921 at her grandparents house, Homer's farm Duck Lake. Her grandfather was Matthew Rowland, who in addition had Hill House Farm and her mother run the village post office which was there on the corner opposite Hill house and the Black Horse. Her father was Oliver Chapman originally from the Markfield area who was a builder in the district.

My mother lived in the post office until going to Derby Teachers Training College in 1939. Parents and two younger brothers moved firstly to the Tuckers Holt near Newton Burgoland. After the war, she moved to the Channel Isles where she married, and I was born in Jersey in 1948 we moved back to the mainland in 1953.

I have recollections of Appleby Magna from the early 1950s, as we had relatives in the village and surrounding area. We may have visited when we were still based in Jersey and certainly did when we moved to Desford in 1953.

My great great grandfather had died in 1943, but my great grandmother lived until 1955. She occupied Hill House Farm, the old house having been sold after her husband's death. Hill house was split into two dwellings with my great grandmother, and my auntie Lizzie, her unmarried daughter, occupying one half, and her eldest son, named after his father, but was always known to me as Uncle Tom and his family occupying the other half.

grandfather had given up his car at the start of the war. Public transport between Appleby and Desford, was quite complex despite the villages being only 14 miles apart.

Hill House was large, and according to my mother very cold, though we only seemed to visit during the summer to help with the haymaking.



*Copyright A W Moore*

My grandmother's elder sister, another Annie was married to Charlie Bates, who had inherited a gross shop and bakery in Church Street. As well as a row of cottages also in Church Street. He owned lower rectory farm of Snarestone Road, which apparently had been run by the Ashmore family, until Frank, the second of four sons had finished a course at Sutton Bonington, Agricultural College.

When I was a child, Uncle Charlie and Auntie Annie had retired to the farm, which was run by Frank and his younger brother John. I used to stay at the farm, as one of my second cousins was my age, and he came to Desford on occasions when we were both at primary school. What I remember best is the fact that though they had several tractors they kept shire horse which was used to play the headlands before the days of reversible ploughs, and it was used to pull a dray during haymaking.



*Copyright SJMF Collection*

I have vivid memories of their houses as well as the field around the village, but cannot recall how we got there, as we did not have a car until 1958 and my



*Copyright A W Moore*



## In the saddlebag ...

Reginald Joseph Eyre recalls the many punctures around Appleby Magna



In my early days Tom Pointon ran the local bike shop as a part time job, from the shed behind his parent's house in Church Street. Tom left the village to live in Polesworth and my father took over the bikes. I became very adept at mending punctures for which the charge was four pence, I got half. There was never a big rush. Everybody carried a puncture repair kit in their saddlebags as the country roads were not tarmaced and farmers didn't always clear up too well after hedge cutting. Tyres had to be robust and the most popular ones were Dunlop Roadsters that cost three shillings and sixpence each. New Bikes ranged from about two pounds ten shillings upwards. A Raleigh De-Luxe with oil-bath gear cases cost more than seven pounds.

There were never any petrol pumps in Appleby, so where else should the sale of petrol and paraffin take place other than the Blacksmith's Shop. It then came in two-gallon cans and the minimum sale was half a gallon of petrol or a quart of paraffin decanted into measures. Petrol cost 11d. for Russian oil products or 1s.3d. for Shell or B.P. per gallon. It had to be stored underground in a steel tank in the back garden at least forty feet from any building. There were then less than twenty motor vehicles in the village, not including motorbikes. Nearly all the younger miners had a motorbike. Motor oil was dispensed from five-gallon drums and sold by the pint.

## The Big Freeze ...

James Jones remembers the long cold days of 1963

The Met Office said the icy conditions set in just before Christmas 1962 following weeks of changeable and stormy weather. On 22 December a high pressure system moved to the north-east of the British Isles, dragging bitterly cold winds across the country. The situation was to last much of the winter. A belt of rain over northern Scotland on 24 December turned to snow as it moved south, giving Glasgow its first white Christmas since 1938. The snow-belt reached southern England on Boxing Day and parked over the country, bringing a snowfall of up to 12 inches deep.

This snow set the scene for the next two months, as much of England remained covered every day until early March 1963. Imagine a time when snow was lying on the ground for more than 60 days and the temperature barely climbed above freezing for three whole months. That was the winter of 1962/63 - the coldest on record in the Midlands.

It was dubbed the Big Freeze as the region stayed sub-zero for week after week. The sea froze over near the coast, boats became trapped in thick ice on rivers across the Midland Counties and crops stayed frozen in the fields.

Its difficult today to imagine a time when many homes lacked central heating the impact on people and their lives was harsh and relentless. Even the school at Appleby had only outside toilets which needed the ice breaking day after day!



[www.sirjohnmoore.org.uk](http://www.sirjohnmoore.org.uk)



SirJohn Moore  
Foundation Heritage  
Centre



@CentreSjmf

**THE  
NEWSLETTER IS  
EDITED BY**

Andrew Moore

[SJMFHeritage@post.com](mailto:SJMFHeritage@post.com)

