

# Local History Cafe

SJMF Heritage, Appleby Magna



## Where did it all start ...

Richard Dunmore looks at the early life of Sir John Moore

**S**ir John Moore's Free School', as it was known, first opened its doors to pupils in 1697. Almost 100 years earlier, in 1599, the Moore family had moved to Appleby from Norton-juxta-Twycross after Sir John's father, Charles Moore, purchased the manor of Appleby Parva. John was his second son and was born at Norton: .. there I drew my first breath. The precise date of his birth is not known but, as he was baptised on 11 June 1620 and died on 2 June 1702 aged 82 years, we may conclude that he was born in the springtime of 1620. The Moores had come previously from Lancashire and were descended from the Moores of Moore Hall and Bank Hall in that county.

Sir John Moore played an important role in national affairs during the reign of King Charles II and lived through very troubled times in England. Born towards the end of the reign of James I, Sir John lived through the reign of Charles I which culminated in the Civil War and Charles's death on the scaffold; Cromwell's republican Commonwealth and Protectorate; the Restoration of Charles II; and, in Sir John's latter years, the short reign of the Roman Catholic James II, which ended in the 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688 and brought William and Mary to the throne. By the time of his death in 1702, Queen Anne had just acceded to the throne in accordance with the Act of Settlement, an act which also reaffirmed the continuing Protestant succession through the House of Hanover. During Sir John's lifetime, opposition to the policies of the King's government was regarded as at best a serious nuisance, at worst culpable treason and led to the political controversies of his mayoralty.

We know little of John Moore's early years, but he rose to prominence in the City of London. As a younger son of the family he went into trade and became the most considerable lead merchant in the City. His business, which he carried out from premises in Mincing Lane, was concerned mainly with the export of lead from Derbyshire and Yorkshire to Amsterdam and Rotterdam through the port of Kingston upon Hull and also through the East India and Levant Companies. In this period he amassed a considerable fortune by investing his profits in East India Company stock and shares in the New River Company.



© Sir John Moore Family



Shopping Around.

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The Allotment Competition of 1893

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Remembering George Reeves.

Appleby Clockmaker  
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The next History Cafe meeting will be at 10.00 am on November 15th

## School Holiday Camp

Marina Sketchley recalls her school holiday camp in Oxfordshire

When I was 13 I went with the school to a holiday camp in Oxford for about 10 days. This was one of the strangest experiences. I remember little about the 'holiday' – I just remember the odd things that happened.



The camp was deep in a wood and the path to it got more narrow and more winding as we approached it. The thick canopy of trees let in no light and we felt a long way from 'civilisation'. The Principal was a lady with a beard, which we tried hard not to stare at.

In our dormitory, the teacher who accompanied us had a little box of a bedroom at one end – so she knew what went on.

At breakfast one morning we had sago or tapioca milk pudding, and one girl literally couldn't stomach it. Someone stood behind her until she ate it all, then she went out and was violently sick. Another day, we had stewed fruit and custard and the fruit was bad. Half the girls had diarrhoea – and the whole thing was quickly hushed up.

Friday night was bath night. I hated undressing in an ante-room, in front of a prefect and another girl.

We put on our coats and went into the bathroom, two at a time, then bathed in 6 inches of water, in adjoining baths. I wouldn't take my coat off till the hem was wet! Four timed minutes only and we were out again.

One day, I found my way out of the wood and walked into Oxford. I was amazed to see our teacher walking with a man, whom she clearly knew well. So, accompanying us was really an excuse to see her boyfriend! I told another girl when I got back, but she didn't react.

I'd love to know what my parents made of my letters at home. I went on and on about the lovely trees, and nothing about camp life! I suppose the Camp was to toughen us up. I was just home-sick.

## Samhain

Countryside Fokelore ...

The Celts divided their year into two seasons: the light and the dark, with Beltane on 1st May and Samhain marking the transition. Many believe that Samhain was the more important festival, marking the beginning of a new cycle. Just as the Celtic day began at night, it was believed that in the darkness new life would emerge, similar to the stirring of the seed below the ground. The most magical time of this festival was November Eve, the night of 31st October, better known today as Halloween.

In the country year, Samhain marked the first day of winter, when the herders led the cattle and sheep down from their summer pastures to the shelter of the stables. Those destined for the table were slaughtered. All the harvest must be gathered in by this date – barley, oats, wheat, turnips, and apples – for come November, the faeries would blast every growing plant with their breath, blighting any nuts and berries remaining on the hedgerows.

With the rise of Christianity, Samhain was changed to Hallowmas, or All Saints' Day, to celebrate the saints in heaven, and so the night before became popularly known as Halloween. The 2nd November became All Souls Day, when prayers were to be offered to the souls of the departed. Throughout the centuries, pagan and Christian beliefs and celebrations have intertwined and from 31st Oct through to 5th November, they are particularly confusing.



A modern Samhain Festival

*"I was born on the night of Samhain, when the barrier between the worlds is whisper-thin and when magic, old magic, sings its heady and sweet song to anyone who cares to hear it."*

Anon



## Village Personalities

Aubrey Moore remembers George Reeves

No account of Appleby would be complete without a word about George Reeves. It was the custom of what were known as big houses to have their clocks wound weekly by the local clockmaker. So, every Monday morning, George set off to wind clocks at the hall, the villa and the rectory. Every clock in the house was in his care and he would clean as and when he thought it was necessary. Nobody else was allowed to touch a clock, not even to adjust the time. George arrived at the rectory, prompt at midday. He did the round of the house even to the nursery. It took quite a time to get round as there was always a spot of gossip to be had and if it was something spicy, it took a little longer. Also George had a jug of beer at each place so the tongue was getting loosened by the time he got to us where, of course, he had another jug of beer.



George Reeves House

Picture from Margaret Cater

George Reeves was a real master of craft, taught by his father. His shop was a great joy to me. Here was a place where I had the run of the house. All round the walls of his workshop, stood or hung clocks of every description. At the hour all of them struck almost together, a sound to be remembered. On his workbench were watches in various stages of repair, each under an inverted wine glass of which only the stem was broken. Whenever a wine glass was broken, provided the bowl was all right, it was taken to George to use as a dust cover for his delicate work. The hall and rectory were his chief source of supply and this gave me an excuse to get into his shop.

I never knew what the winding service cost but it did ensure correct time. They were all set to the church clock which George looked after, but where he got his time from I do not know. If George cleaned or repaired a watch or clock it did not fail the owner.

A Sunday ritual was the walk home from church after morning service. Mother would go by the road and have a good gossip on the way. I would wait for father while he talked with Riley who, in addition to being organist, was also warden and as such counted and took with him the collection. We always went home 'by the fields', calling on John Wilkins. He lived in an old cottage, now demolished, in the corner of the glebe joining Parker's field, just off the footpath. John was very deaf so we had to shout. Father would ask what he was having for dinner, the oven door would be opened to display the joint. Usually John said 'bit of poke' (pork). We would get back to the rectory just on time for lunch at one o'clock.

## Balls ...

Taken from Joan Noble's  
Appleby Peelings

Dances and balls were held in various places, particularly the Grammar School and the Moore Arms. In the upper room of the latter was a large room very suitable for the purpose.

Mrs. Dessie Fish, an old friend of mine, lived in the Alms Houses when I knew her. She has now departed, unfortunately, but she was one of those who lived to be nearly a hundred.

The dances Dessie remembers consisted of such delights as the Quadrilles, the Strauss waltz, the Polka and the Lancers. She said that, in the latter dance, when the circle of dancers revolved at great speed, the legs of the girls, clad in their long dresses, flew out high behind them. She told me that she attended these dances as a young girl.

Dessie also related to me the story of the squire's son, George. This young man, who lived at the Hall, had the temerity to fall in love with the governess, who also dwelt there and taught his younger brothers and sisters. He was asked to leave his home and his things were sent to the Moore Arms which is now The Appleby Inn.



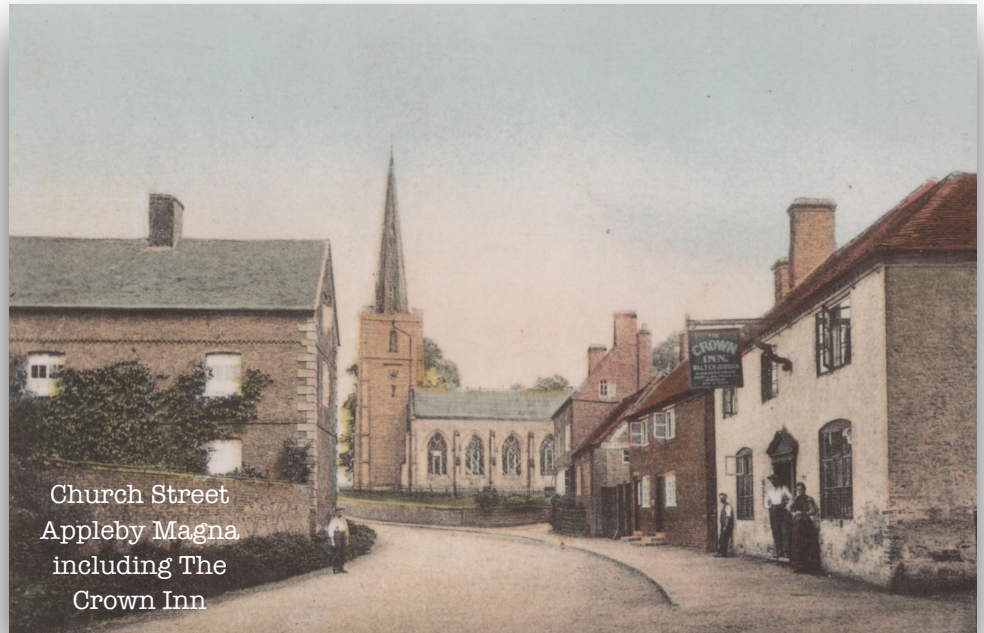
His groom was sent after him, leading his horse. I am pleased to say that, later on, George and the governess did marry and lived a happy life together for many years.

## Shopping around ...

Taken from the memoirs of Eileen Lower

Appleby was a small village in the 1930's. We literally knew everybody in the village: their names, occupations, who was related to whom, who was pregnant, who was "courting". There were very few secrets in our little village.

The men were employed as farm labourers, miners at Measham or Donithorpe collieries or worked at the brick-yard at Snarestone. There were three shops where groceries were sold. At our Post Office which mother ran, we sold groceries. Biscuits were in large tins and had to be weighed and sold by the pound. Sweets and chocolates were sold loose too, in ozs or a quarter lbs (4 ozs). We also sold paraffin for the lamps; kept in smelly barrels in a back yard shed. Cigarettes and tobacco we stocked too; Woodbines in 5's, Craven A, Gold Make Players. An old man, Mr Fowkes, smoked thick twist and also chewed it and then spat it out. He often came when the shop was closed. He came round to the back door as large as life and as he came by the window he shouted "Bring it, way ya Mrs Chapman" and Mrs Chapman obliged and bought it. Uncle Charlie Bates had the general stores in Church Street. Of course he sold bread and cakes and pork pies – all home made by Dan Harper from Acresford. He sold ham, bacon sausage etc. Beadman's butchers shop was on his premises and animals were actually killed at the back somewhere. Uncle Charlie was in partnership with him at one stage.



Mrs Lakin also had a little shop in Duck Lake. She sold sweets, biscuits and haberdashery. She was a widow and had one son Tom, who was a couple of years older than I was. I remember he bought a car for £15, when he was old enough to drive- there were no driving tests. One Saturday four of us went to a dance at Austrey. Eddie Johnson and I were at the back, Tom driving of course and Elaine Johnson to partner him. He ran over a rabbit and killed it on Austrey Hill and Eddie and I had to have its dead body at the back with us. There were no boots to the cars then. I was horrified but Tom was determined to get the rabbit home for his Mother to stew for their dinner.

Mr Eyre was the Blacksmith and his forge was in Church Street. He shod the horses and worked with metal. He had a son Reg who was a few years older than I was. He played the piano very well and worked at 'Snowden's', a Men's Clothing', store in Leicester.

When I was a lad all those years ago  
We'd get our shopping from the corner shop,  
There were no supermarkets then you know  
The pace of life slower, now it's nonstop.  
We were served by a little old lady  
Who would gather our order while we wait,  
I think her name was Mrs O'Grady,  
And nothing ever had a sell by date.  
She would tot up our order in her head  
There were no computers then, or fancy till,  
Just a pad and a pencil tipped with lead  
We knew she was right when we got the bill.

But along came the supermarket chain  
And we all had to stand in a long queue  
We'd walk round the aisles again and again  
And we got our Green Shield stamps which was new.  
We collected thousands of them each week  
The dreaded Green Shield stamp books grew and grew  
They became an irritant, something pique,  
Gone the old way of life, the life we knew.

David Wood



## Allotment Competition

September 1893

On Friday, July 28th, the inspection of the Allotment Garden took place, when Mr. Abraham, accompanied by Mr. Varnam, who kindly consented to act as judge, expressed great satisfaction at the results. Mr. Varnam was astonished and pleased with the general excellence of all the allotments, which he said reflected the greatest credit to the parish of Appleby, especially considering the long drought.

On August 1st the 10th Annual Flower Show was held in the Townsend by kind permission of Mr. Harper. The day was beautifully fine throughout, and the show of fruit, flowers, and vegetables quite up to the average. Mr. Bates, gardener to Sir Vauncey Crewe, at Calke Abbey, and Mr. Holder, gardener to Earl Ferrers, Staunton Harold, were the Judges, and assisted by the Committee performed their duties in the most satisfactory manner.

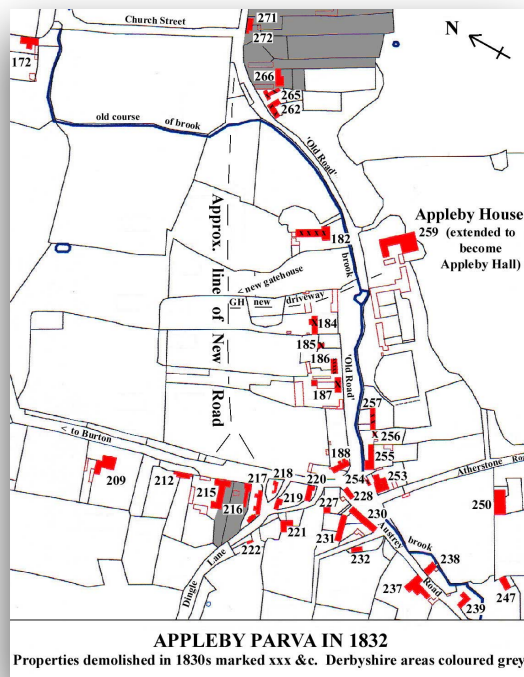
During the afternoon some sports were arranged and proved to be a most pleasing innovation, superintended by Mr. Riley. A variety of swings, roundabouts, and shooting galleries helped to wile away the evening, and at the close of the day the prize money was distributed by Mr. Moore. The Gresley church band played throughout the day, which concluded with dancing. There is no record of who actually won the competition!

## Census time ...

Richard Dunmore studies the 1841 Census

The National Census started in 1801, but the level of information collected in the early ones doesn't make it easy to link individuals to identified properties, or properties to maps. Richard Dunmore's detective work has allowed us to do that for the 1841 Census. The map shown below is the result of his work making sense of the data which only had the household number but no location.

The 1841 enumerators, one of whom was Edwin Hague the English master of the school, worked their way round the village in a methodical way so that it is possible to deduce where many of the villagers lived.



The crucial factor which makes this possible is the near-contemporary 1832 Parish map. Importantly the 1831 'Owners' are named. Moreover, the left hand margin are pencilled further names which must be those of the tenants or occupiers at an unspecified date after 1831 and possibly closer to 1841.

Although in the 10-year interval there will have been some changes of occupation of the houses, and indeed in the housing stock itself, many families may be expected to have occupied the same property throughout. This

is particularly true of the more stable members of society, eg farmers, owner-occupiers and many of the tradesmen.

By contrast it may not be possible to locate precisely those on the move, such as young people who set up home between the two dates, or rent-payers moving a short distance to better accommodation.

The problem of changes in the housing stock is particularly apparent at Appleby Parva, where houses were demolished and New Road built in the 1830s. The 1831 Reference has been manually amended by crossing out properties near the Hall which were demolished at this time. Unfortunately, the previous occupiers are not given.



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