

Edward Moore

Hailey Chan, Simon Fraser University

Edward Moore was born in Abingdon, Berkshire on 22 March 1712, to a Dissenting pastor. Religion played an integral role in the paternal line of Moore's family. Moore's grandfather, John Moore, left the church of England early in his life and became a dissenting pastor of the Protestant Baptist denomination. His grandfather, father, and uncle were all important figures who supported the growth of the Baptist denomination in England.

Moore was the third child born out of seven children. During childhood, his parents placed great emphasis on learning. At an early age, Moore's father passed away. Struggling to care for seven children by herself, his mother chose to remand care of Edward Moore to his paternal uncle, John Moore, a teacher at the Bridgewater seminary. Moore was enrolled there for the remainder of his childhood and studied under his uncle. There he underwent a strict classical education in Greek and Roman philosophy as well as religion. Though the education he received growing up does not appear to have a large impact on the poetical works of Moore, the focus on divinity and religion may have played a role in the more sentimentalist views in his poetry. There is focus on the divine elements of nature as well as mention of morality and philosophical elements in most of Moore's poetry.

After a failed business venture, Moore took up writing, beginning with drama. His career began with a rendition of William Boyce's *Solomon: a Serenata*. The piece was written into an overture by Moore. *Solomon: a Serenata* appears to be the only musical score that Moore ever wrote. His works often focus on relationships and more specifically struggles within relationships. Moore did not achieve any level of fame for his poetry during his life; his most well-known work then and now is *The Gamester*, a tragedy. Later in life, Moore became the editor of a weekly journal, using the pseudonym Adam Fitz-Adam. Edward Moore died on 1 March 1757 with very little recognition or fame regarding his literary career.

"A Ballad" was published posthumously in 1770 in *A Collection of Poems in Four Volumes. By Several Hands. Vol. IV*, by G. Pearch. The poem describes the grief and mourning of a woman who has lost her lover. Through the poem the woman is calling out to her lover in a form of song similar to a pastoral elegy. However, the poem does not completely follow the same structure as other pastoral elegies. There is no true resolution and peace for the deceased in the

form of religious afterlife and God. It is pastoral in genre and in anapaestic trimeter. The rhyme scheme is ABABCDC. “A Ballad” is not a work Moore is well known for, but it reflects pastoral idealization and sentimentalism seen in his other works.

Further Reading

Caskey, John Homer. *The Life and Works of Edward Moore*, edited by Albert S. Cook, Oxford UP, 1927.

Demers, Patricia. “Moore, Edward (1712–1757), Playwright and Writer.” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 Sept. 2004.

Westover, Paul. “At Home in the Churchyard: Localism and Literary Heritage in the Prose Pastoral.” *Representing Place in British Literature and Culture, 1660–1830: From Local to Global*, Routledge, 2016, pp. 65–81.

A Ballad²³⁴

HARK, hark,²³⁵ 'tis a voice from the tomb,

Come, Lucy, it cries, come away,

The grave of thy Colin has room

To rest thee beside his cold clay.

I come, my dear shepherd, I come,

5

Ye friends and companions adieu,²³⁶

I haste to my Colin's dark home,

To die on his bosom so true.

All mournful the midnight bell rung,

When Lucy, sad Lucy, arose;

10

And forth to the green turf²³⁷ she sprung,

Where Colin's pale ashes repose.²³⁸

All wet with the night's chilling dew,

Her bosom embrac'd the cold ground,

While stormy winds over her blew,

15

And night-ravens croak'd all around.

How long, my lov'd Colin, she cry'd,

How long must thy Lucy complain?

How long shall the grave my love hide?

How long ere it join us again?

20

For thee thy fond shepherdess liv'd,

²³⁴ *A Collection of Poems in Four Volumes. By several hands. Vol. IV*, 2nd edition, London, G. Pearch, 1770, pp. 104-106; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*

²³⁵ *HARK, hark.* a call to listen

²³⁶ *adieu* goodbye

²³⁷ *green turf* a lawn of grass

²³⁸ *repose* to lay at rest

With thee o'er the world would she fly;
 For thee has she sorrow'd and griev'd;
 For thee would she lie down and die.

Alas! what avails it how dear 25

Thy Lucy was once to her swain!²³⁹
 Her face like the lily so fair,
 And eyes that gave light to the plain.
 The shepherd that lov'd her is gone;
 That face and those eyes charm no more; 30
 And Lucy forgot, and alone,
 To death shall her Colin deplore.²⁴⁰

While thus she lay sunk in despair,
 And mourn'd to the echoes around,
 Inflam'd²⁴¹ all at once grew the air, 35
 And thunder shook dreadful the ground.
 I hear the kind call, and obey,
 O! Colin receive me, she cried,
 Then breathing a groan o'er his clay,²⁴²
 She hung on his tomb-stone and died. 40



[This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/)

© Hailey Chan, 2024

²³⁹ *swain* a lover or romantic partner

²⁴⁰ *deplore* weep for

²⁴¹ *Inflam'd* lightning appears

²⁴² *clay* his buried remains