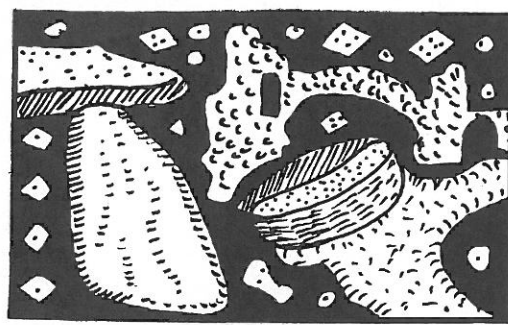
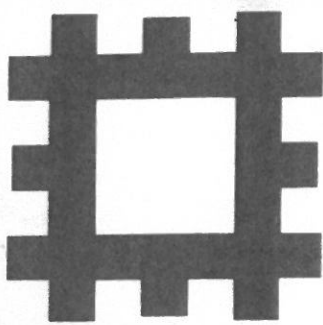
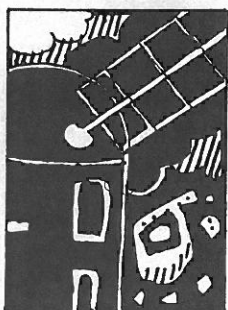


REMNANTS



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Not much to look at?

Go to Hunsbury with an open mind; it may not look much but the walls and the ditch are still there. Just think, they've been there nearly two thousand years.

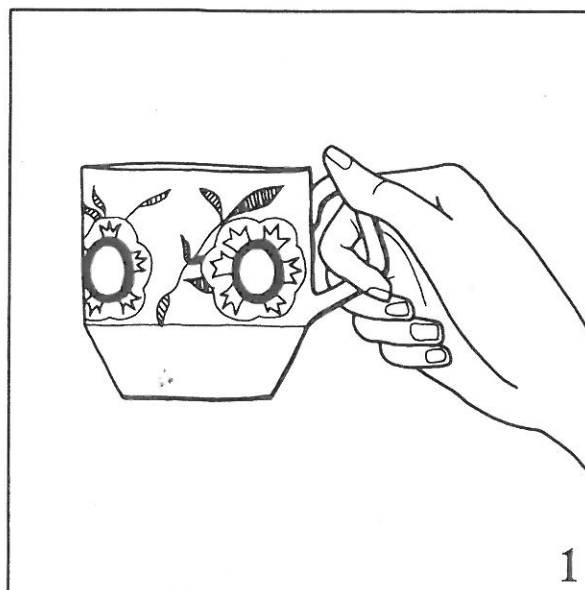
This was written by an eleven year old after visiting the iron age hillfort of Hunsbury in Northamptonshire. Of course there isn't much left of the past — at least compared with what was once there. Half the fun, I think, lies in being able to piece together from the remains a story of what happened in the past.

We decided to give a name to our re-formed newsletter for teachers. We chose the name REMNANTS because none of the sites or buildings English Heritage cares for are *whole*. Indeed this applies to the entire historic landscape. What we have left is only a part of what was once there — to a greater or lesser extent. There is plenty to see at Wharram Percy deserted medieval village in North Yorkshire but it is, nevertheless, a 'ghost town'. The earthworks of the village streets, houses and fields and the shell of the church have to be investigated to draw out a picture of bustling medieval life. On the other hand, Osborne House, the royal holiday retreat on the Isle of Wight, is well preserved. It is not a ruin and is furnished. However, it is no longer *lived in* as a royal house. Both Wharram Percy and Osborne House are *remnants* of what was once there.

Explaining to children that what they are looking at represents only *part* of something is not always easy. One approach which might be developed before the visit is to introduce the idea of looking at remains through the eyes of a detective — that is an archaeological detective. The children will be looking for clues which may help them form a theory about what happened there in the past. For example, the great earthworks and outer walls of a medieval castle will suggest one thing and the standing stones at a place like Stonehenge will suggest something quite different.

The questions children should be encouraged to ask of the physical evidence on site begin with *why* or *where*, such as Why is this wall so high? The question should not be What was this wall used for? until they have examined and asked questions of the *evidence*.

Here is a practical demonstration you can try out with children — it works well even if you do run out of crockery!



1 Take an ordinary ceramic cup or mug. Hold it up and ask the question you shouldn't ask at the site — *What is this?* The answer will be obvious and is usually very precise — a tea cup. Then ask about the material (what is it made of and how was it made?), its form and shape (is it the right form or shape for, say, beer or soup?) and its decoration (does the glaze or design tell you any more about the object or when it was made?)

Wroxeter Roman City

Viroconium (Wroxeter), the capital of the Cornovii tribe, was the fourth largest town in Roman Britain: its defences enclosed an area of over 180 acres. One of the most imposing building complexes still extant in Roman Britain stands at its centre. The site is 5 miles from the town of Shrewsbury in Shropshire.

School parties may visit the *baths* and see the remains of the *basilica*, the *forum* and the earthwork defences of the town. The site museum has plans and photographs and a fine collection of objects.

There is a large Education Room on the edge of the baths, well away from any roads. Many schools have made use of the room as a welcome shelter and a place to eat lunch. You might like to plan your visit to this Roman site to include the use of the books, Roman costume (enough tunics, dresses and togas for 50 children) and handling collections of pottery, wall plaster and building materials. There is also a replica Roman *groma* for schools to use. This surveyor's instrument will help you plan an extra room to the baths if you want to!



Wroxeter from the air taken during the excavations in 1985.

Dover Castle

One of the upper rooms in Keep Yard has been converted for use as an Education Room capable of accommodating up to 40 pupils. It is equipped with tables and chairs, blackboard, measuring tapes, projector and screen, a small display and a set of clipboards; other resources are being provided. For bookings please mention your wish to use the room when you return your Free Educational Visits form or telephone 0304 201628. If you have not been able to book the room in advance please enquire at the ticket office on arrival if it happens to be available. There is no charge.

Osborne House

A magic lantern and a collection of Victorian toys and costume accessories are available for schools in the Osborne House Education Room. In addition there is a projector with slides of archive pictures and from September, for one year, Pippa Henry, a local middle school teacher, will be based at the house and can help teachers plan their visits. Tours of the house are available during the winter when the building is closed. To make a booking contact:

Richard Underwood
State Apartment Supervisor
Osborne House
East Cowes
Isle of Wight PO32 6JY
Tel: 0983 200022

Publications

Living History – Reconstructing the Past with children

by Patrick Redsell and John Fairclough

“Putting children into a living reconstruction of the past enables them to learn by experience a totally different way of life and at the same time to acquire a greater interest in our heritage as represented by historic buildings.”

This manual for teachers, part of a series called ‘Education On Site’, gives a whole range of practical tips on setting up drama and role play experiences. You can buy it (P & P included) for £1.50 or £1.25 at any English Heritage site.

Food and Cooking in Britain

This series of booklets was published with teachers in mind and many schools have been tasting the past using recipes from them. There is a lengthy introduction which provides information about what food was available and how it was cooked and served. The titles are Food and cooking in Prehistoric Britain, in Roman Britain, in Medieval Britain and in Sixteenth, Seventeenth, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Britain. They cost £1.50 each (plus 25p P & P) or £9.95 (plus £1.50 P & P) for a boxed set of seven volumes.

Living History and *Food and Cooking in Britain* can be obtained from:

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