

Young Historians win English Heritage Award

English Heritage is sponsoring an annual Young Historian Scheme Award organised by the Historical Association. The first winners were Surbiton High School in Surrey for their project based on visits to Bolsover Castle and Wingfield Manor in Derbyshire. Their teacher, Dr. Elizabeth Griffiths, explains the aims of the project and we also include some extracts from the prizewinning entries by the pupils, all aged 13-14.

The Year 9 History trip to Derbyshire was designed to explore the development of the English country house from the fortified medieval manor to the grandiose structures of the eighteenth century. The same classes had visited Penshurst Place in Year 8 and now they were ready for a more comparative approach. The idea was to link the social and cultural themes specified in CSU Medieval Realms with those outlined in CSU The Making of the United Kingdom; and also to demonstrate how buildings reflect all types of historical change - political, religious, economic, and technological as well as the more obvious social, cultural and aesthetic.

We chose five historic properties: Haddon Hall, Wingfield Manor, Bolsover Castle, Hardwick Hall and Chatsworth, primarily for architectural interest, but also for their links and the personalities associated with them. Experience has shown that architecture is made more palatable when swallowed with a good story, and the benefits are greatly extended. Follow-up work was approached from many angles: the empathy study written through the eyes of one of the occupants; comparative studies on plans, furnishings, gardens and so on; and evaluations on the interpretation and presentation of the sites. The two English Heritage properties, Wingfield and Bolsover, both ruinous and architecturally very unusual, were the most difficult, but this seemed to provide an added stimulus... such is the power of Mary Queen of Scots and the passion for horses!

Dr Elizabeth Griffiths
Surbiton High School, Kingston upon Thames

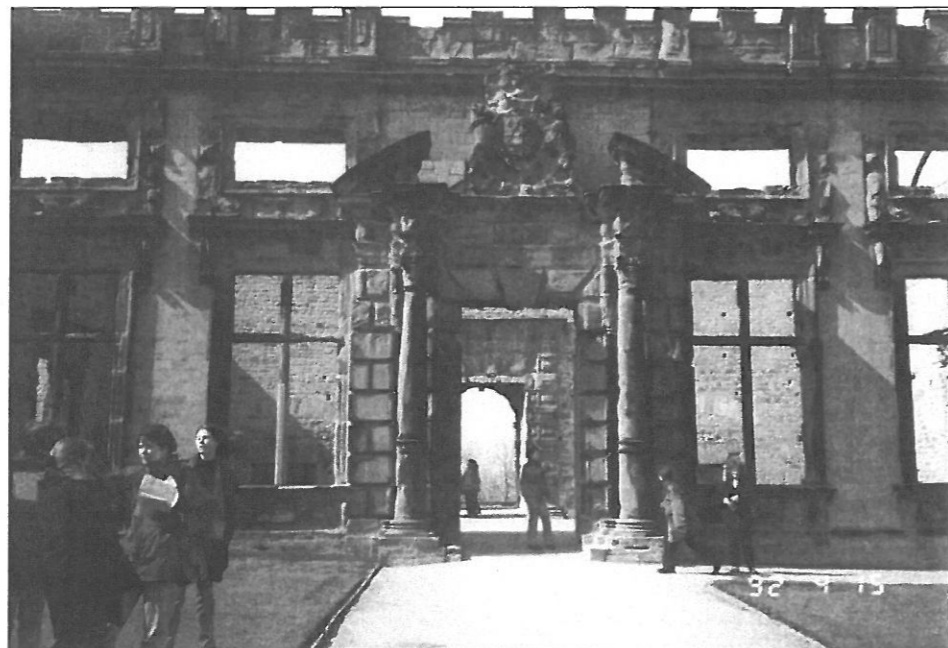
Right: Bolsover Castle, the terrace range with pupils from Surbiton High School.



The Prizewinners from Surbiton High School

Lucy Baird studied Bolsover Castle and discussed the problems of presenting buildings to the public: *Out of all the amazing houses we saw on the history trip to Derbyshire, Bolsover Castle had to be the one that impressed me the most. Haddon Hall, Hardwick Hall and Chatsworth House all have unique architectural and historical interest like Bolsover Castle but as they are in very good condition you cannot imagine what they would have been like to live in when they were first built. Bolsover Castle intrigued me as it seems to be in a very strange condition... when we went to see it, it seemed sadly deserted... when I first walked up and saw the Long Terrace Range I was very impressed. It had a glow of grandeur about it, even though there are no*

windows and the ceilings of rooms have slowly crumbled away. The Long Terrace Range are ruins and as ruins it is very tricky to know how to present them...you can use your imagination but only so far... as ruins they are primary evidence, but once you start mucking around and changing or rebuilding them, they become a sham. Chatsworth may be quite amazing but it felt rather modern, in the way that it has been changed so much over the years, even though the original architecture still stands. Bolsover felt entirely different - perhaps English Heritage is right to leave it alone and let it speak for itself. But I still think that an audio tape would be useful, and perhaps a more colourful guide, with reconstructions of what it might have been like. Colourful guides are a very



Lucy Baird

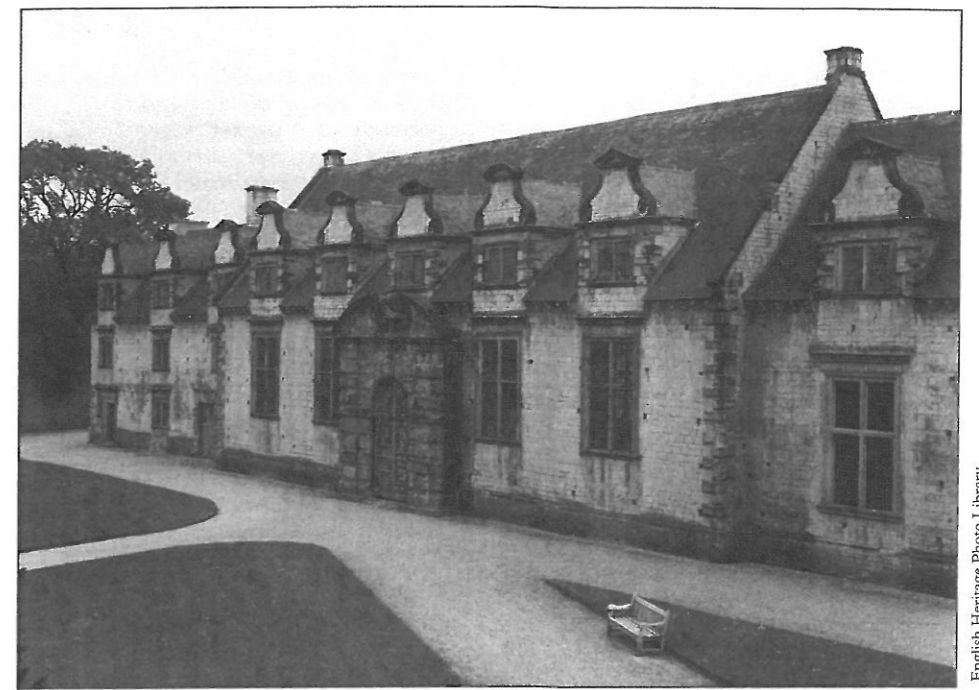
good idea in my opinion as they can open people's minds and expand their imaginations. I did like the information panels in the Little Castle - but you couldn't take these away with you.

Katy Randles gave an empathetic account of Bolsover Castle called 'More than the eye can see' focusing on the Riding School:

In this project I shall be focusing on 'The Riding School' which was designed for William Cavendish by Huntingdon Smythson between 1630-40. I feel that this small part of the huge building is an appropriate focal point because the idea behind this amazing piece of architecture was 'The Revival of Chivalry'.

I stood in the midst of a turbulent crowd of eager upper fourths in the first floor gallery of the Riding School Range at Bolsover. Leaning on the stone ledge of the window or screen I was enthralled and fascinated by the view in front of me... I could just imagine the scene - fine ladies and gentlemen clad in fine silken clothes of all colours and styles all gathered to admire William Cavendish's feats on horseback. The atmosphere seemed to reach its climax and swallow me up completely; in fact it was almost as if...as if...this was all really happening. No!

I closed my eyes and upon opening them again looked down at the previously
Below: Wingfield Manor, Derbyshire.



The Riding School, Bolsover Castle, Derbyshire.

empty Riding School and saw a man with long dark hair riding upon a beautiful black stallion. Looking more carefully this time I recognised the man to be William Cavendish himself, clad in a weighty leather jerkin, feathered hat, leather boots with spurs attached and a

red baldric sash around his midriff. The hat had a high crown and broad brim with three red feathers protruding from the back of the hat which he wore in a cocked position. This added to his air of dignity and his respect for all the latest fashion in clothing and the way in which



English Heritage Photo Library

one wore it.

I sat, somewhat inhibited in the corner, upon one of the window ledges overwhelmed by the swirl of brightly coloured clothing that was fashionable in the seventeenth century. At this particular point I began to get very confused as to what century I actually happened to be in. I dived with the idea of leaving the fine ladies and gentlemen in the gallery, and just as I was about to arise I was compelled to be seated once more. William Cavendish held me with his stare of disbelief, and I read disappointment too. He sauntered up to me purposefully and asked me rather guardedly whether I was a puritan or not. To this I replied that I wasn't and that I belonged to the twentieth century. 'Damnation!' he exclaimed, 'always one to ruin the party,' he spat angrily. I sat rather afraid and thought he was about to thump me and so I stared at the floor shamefaced. He snapped his fingers and the room was silent. 'Ladies and gentlemen, the party is over I fear, our small gathering must be abandoned. I thank you for coming and will see you next year, be gone!'. What I witnessed stunned me further - the fine ladies and gentlemen faded away paler and paler until finally they were gone.

Sangeeta Atwal studied Wingfield Manor:

Most people enjoy visiting vast glamorous houses like Chatsworth and Hardwick Hall but they do not particularly enjoy visiting ruins like Wingfield Manor, but to historians and archaeologists, Wingfield is a place of historic interest due to the fact that over the centuries it has been almost untouched by modern development. The manor and the site dates back to before the time of the Domesday Book and the Norman Conquest and was once called 'Winefield' and 'Winnefelt'. It was owned by a number of people like King William I, William Peveril, Lord Cromwell and of course the most remembered, sixth Earl of Shrewsbury, George Talbot who was the gaoler of the ill-fated Mary Queen of Scots, which is a subject inseparably connected with Wingfield Manor.

Wingfield is typical of a medieval building that has slowly become ruinous over the far-reaching centuries. Just by studying the plan it is possible to tell that the building has a medieval foundation with a keep, an inner bailey, and an outer bailey. The building itself still remains medieval with Gothic windows, doors, towers, buttresses and crenellations. There is also more evidence of it being a fortress, like it being built on a hill, safe from attack...the hill where the keep is on is extremely steep and only just possible for it to be climbed by foot soldiers. During the medieval era people were not as wealthy compared to the renaissance era and most of the wealth belonged to the King so people tried to make the best use of their land available to them. Wingfield is a perfect example of this as there are underground rooms like

the crypt which is under the banqueting hall. Historians assume that it was a storage room or a wine cellar...we do know that entertainment was an important phase that began to grow in the medieval era and therefore estates were extended to meet social requirements. However Wingfield has never been extended due to the fact that the owners had more interesting properties elsewhere and did not have the space and time to do this at Wingfield and it has always remained a fortress since the day it was built.'

But why isn't Wingfield 'intact' like Haddon Hall or Penshurst Place? The reason for this is that Wingfield became a centre of Parliamentary activity during the Civil War. During 1643 it was held by the Earl of Pembroke who had married one of the daughters of Gilbert Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury. They tried to fight off the Parliamentarians but unsuccessfully. Parliament gained control and dismantled the building in 1646; the Roundheads wanted to destroy any place which might serve as a 'nest for malignants'. The damage they inflicted left Wingfield very much as it is today.

Kate Walsh wrote on the subject of 'Why are surviving buildings so useful to historians?':

Buildings provide concrete evidence of people's thoughts, ideas and needs. They show how people advanced in technology and how styles changed over different periods as the architects were influenced by different concepts from other countries and other people. Houses are a group of buildings loved by historians because they show people's desire for privacy, style and room. They are able to take historians back over a period of history and provide physical evidence of the way houses reflect people's needs. Houses also show the different social sectors in England. They illustrate how the houses in each of these sectors were built to satisfy the people's requirements, and demonstrate how the rich started to regard their houses as status symbols and wanted their house to look the most impressive and the best. Houses such as Chatsworth are regarded with great respect by historians as they show how houses were developed over many centuries. They also show how technology advanced by the different materials used and the type of building. They reflect the fact that people got more sophisticated by the adding of many more private rooms for the owner and their family. But houses such as Haddon Hall are also beneficial to historians as they are pure examples of one specific period of building and show clearly how the architecture was inspired and influenced by other ideas from other cultures. The only drawback with Haddon is the fact that although major building finished in 1624 restoration had taken place since then which is likely to have altered the original building.

English Heritage Young Historian Prizes 1993

English Heritage will be sponsoring a Young Historian Prize again in 1993. This competition is open to all schools and educational bodies, limited to one entry per institution per year. Pupils and students of all ages from 5-16 are eligible to enter. Entries should take the form of group projects and be based on the use of an English Heritage property. The work may relate to any National Curriculum subject or be cross-curricular. The Regional Education Officers at English Heritage can offer advice on project ideas on request.

There will be up to three prizes, an overall winner and two runners-up. The winning institution will receive a trophy, a certificate and a selection of English Heritage publications and videos. The pupils will also receive a certificate each. Completed entries must be submitted by 9 July 1993.

For further details of the Young Historian Scheme including other 1993 prizes or to submit an entry for the English Heritage Prize please write to: Emeritus Professor G.R. Batho Young Historian Prizes School of Education University of Durham Durham DH1 1TA.

Bolsover Castle in Derbyshire is 6m E of Chesterfield on the A632. OS Map 120; ref SK 471707. It is situated high on a wooded hilltop dominating the surrounding countryside. Built on the site of a Norman castle, this is largely an early seventeenth century mansion. The 'Little Castle' is a folly with intricate carvings, frescoes and wall-paintings. There is also a seventeenth century Indoor Riding School which is still used on occasion. To book a free educational group visit and check opening times ring 0902-765105.

Wingfield Manor in Derbyshire is 2m N of Ripley off the B5035. OS Map 119; ref SK 374548. This is a late medieval manor house where Mary Queen of Scots spent part of her imprisonment. It is now a substantial but roofless ruin. To check access ring 0902-765105.

Developing Fieldwork Skills at Kirby Hall

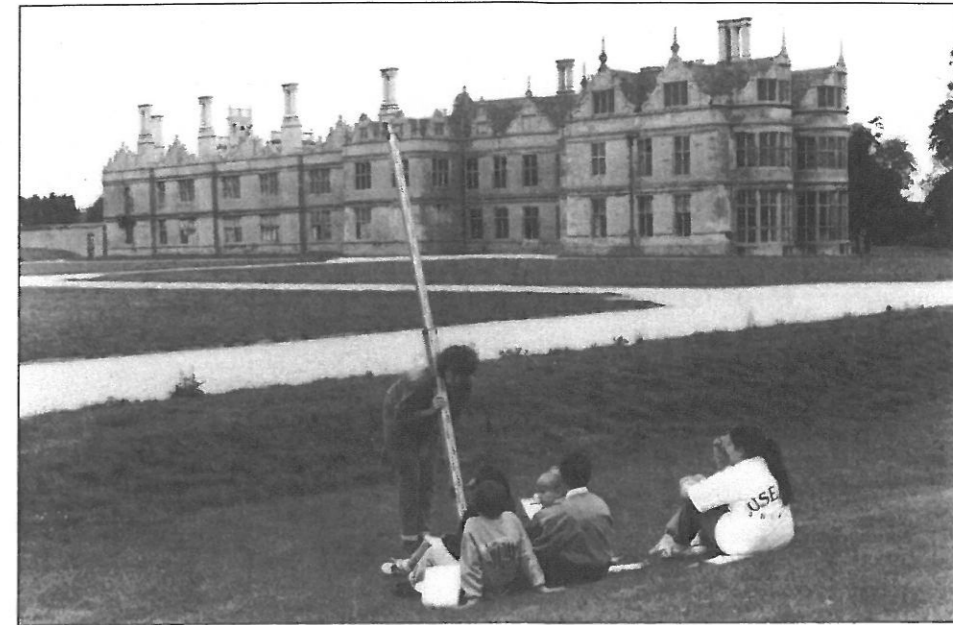
Regular teacher-training sessions are currently being run by the Northamptonshire Archaeology Unit's Education Service at Kirby Hall, introducing ideas for on-site field-work and the use of historical and archaeological sources.

Kirby Hall, an English Heritage property in Northamptonshire, is mainly known as a splendid Renaissance mansion, now in ruins, once the home of Queen Elizabeth I's favourite, Sir Christopher Hatton. However, traces of the medieval village of Kirby are still to be found, and archaeologists have recently discovered evidence of the original design and layout of the gardens.

For five seasons, school pupils in Northamptonshire had experienced 'real' dirt archaeology alongside the professionals at Stanwick Roman Villa. So when digging finished in summer 1991, we were faced with a problem. Teachers had come to value a site where children could both learn fieldwork skills and feel the excitement (and frustration) of making new discoveries about the past.

Focusing our attention on a major

Below: Fieldwork at Kirby Hall.
Bottom: Kirby in 1694.



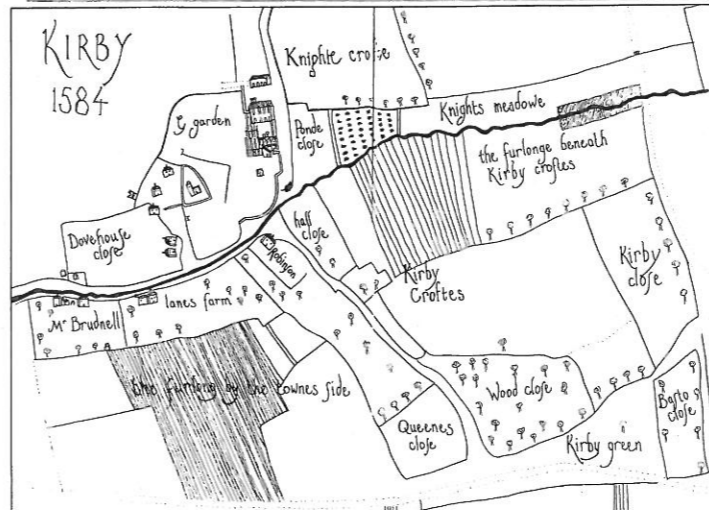
Fieldwork at Kirby Hall, Northamptonshire.

excavation like Stanwick has had its disadvantages, too, for it had tended to reinforce the misconception that archaeology is only about digging. So the end of the 'Stanwick era' provided us with a challenge.

Could we demonstrate that the true excitement of archaeology lies more in discovery than just in 'digging', in understanding, not merely unearthing? Kirby Hall seemed a promising site to consider. Evidence

for the medieval village of Kirby exists in earthworks and air photos, early maps and back-references by eighteenth-century local historians. The village disappeared and the splendid Renaissance mansion of Kirby Hall was built, improved and extended for Sir Christopher Hatton and his successors. In its heyday, it boasted one of the finest gardens in England. Numerous letters and accounts illustrate this phase. The

Below: Aerial view of earthworks at Kirby Hall.



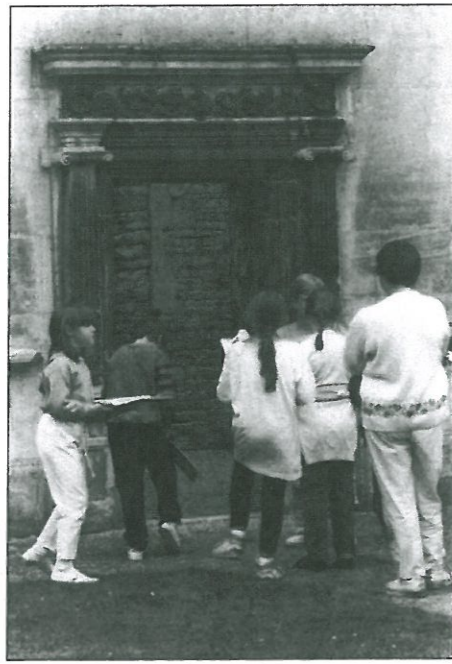
gradual decline in the family fortunes was matched by the decay of the building, which was eventually taken over by H.M. Office of Works and is now being cared for by English Heritage for the benefit of visitors, schools among them. A small team of archaeologists, led by Brian Dix, had been investigating the origins and development of the site for several years. Therefore, an accumulation of background research, archaeological evidence and advice about the site was readily to hand.

The majority of schools look to Kirby Hall to support work on the Medieval, Tudor and Stuart periods, at Key Stage 2 and 3. In addition to giving their pupils the experience of working in a different environment, the teachers are also looking for ways of covering Attainment Target 3 (The Use of Historical Sources), in a purposeful way. Therefore, we set up a number of 'investigations' for the pupils to pursue - in the course of these, they practice basic fieldwork skills and are introduced to as many different sources as possible.

The 'investigations' arise from simple field observations, such as 'What was the Mound?', 'What happened to the stream?', 'Why does Kirby Hall look the way it does?', or 'Why is this field special?' This last question arises because the children are told that the farmer must not plough the field beyond Kirby Hall. Why might this be? The children speculate at this stage - was there a battle?, a rare species of wild life?, a graveyard? - and the scene is set, they are eager to confirm or reject their theories, their work now has a clear goal.

Then, they are let loose in the field itself. After a coach ride to Kirby Hall, this is a good way of letting off steam - and simply being in a field is a new experience for some of the children. Once the initial excitement had subsided, they begin to look in earnest for clues, and before long begin to come across the classic signs of a deserted medieval village site: hollow way, house platforms, stony outcrops, variable grass growth. Older children record their observations on sketch plans and estimate dimensions, using non-standard unit measurements (pacing, pupil's height, etc.). For younger pupils, simply searching, finding, thinking and talking about their discoveries is enough.

The children are still not sure what they have found, though they will be buzzing with ideas. More evidence is clearly needed, so the next stage is to go to our temporary 'Search Room', where all the other relevant source material is available. In small groups, they are guided through air photographs of the files they have been exploring. Seen from the air, it is clear that the bumps and mounds they discovered are the rectangular foundations of buildings. They study

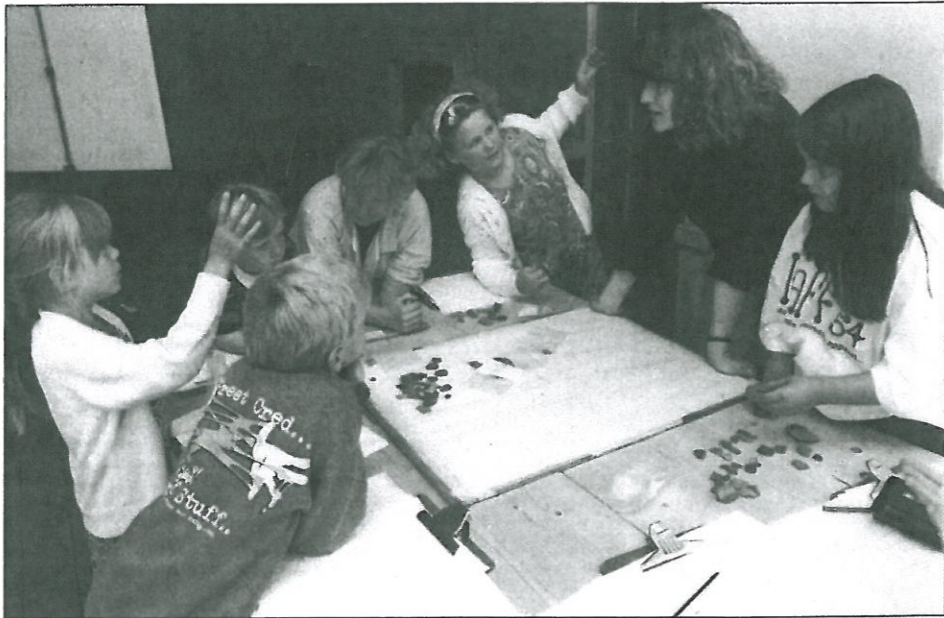


Investigations in progress.

early maps, read eighteenth century retrospective descriptions of Kirby and examine bags of surface finds (mainly pottery) gathered on a field-work exercise. The field has been gridded out and each bag relates to part of the grid, so the pupils can work out exactly where the pottery comes from and soon realise that high concentrations of pottery coincide with the position of houses as drawn on the early maps.

Eventually, the pieces fit together, some sort of synthesis emerges - and it is one that the children themselves have actively constructed, using only the evidence before them and their own intellectual skills. The degree to which they can assimilate and draw together the information they discover will obviously vary - sometimes their observations are surprisingly acute. The exercise has, however, proved satisfying and enjoyable whatever the

Examining the finds from a fieldwalking exercise.



National Curriculum Council

level reached, and the value of doing the work in the actual historical setting is enormous.

Several such 'investigations' are undertaken by different groups of children, and the visit is usually rounded off by a viewing of slides taken during the recent excavations - this consolidates and reinforces what the children have seen and done, during a day of hard work and challenging experiences.

The activities are cross-curricular but have been designed to complement National Curriculum work in Geography (AT1 Geographical Skills, AT2 Knowledge and Understanding of Places, AT4 Human Geography, and AT5 Environmental Geography); Science (AT1 Scientific Investigation and AT3 Materials and their properties); Technology (AT4 Evaluating); and Mathematics.

Rachel Shaw
Education Officer, Northamptonshire
Archaeology Unit

The next teacher-training days are taking place on: Thursday, 1st April, 1993; Wednesday, 12th May, 1993; Saturday, 5th June, 1993, and Tuesday, 31st August, 1993. For full details of enrolment, please contact:

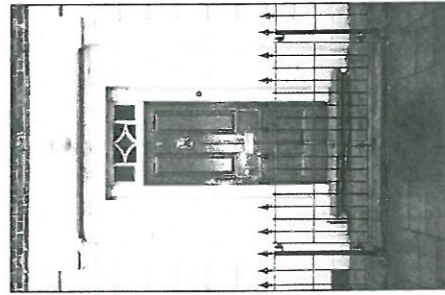
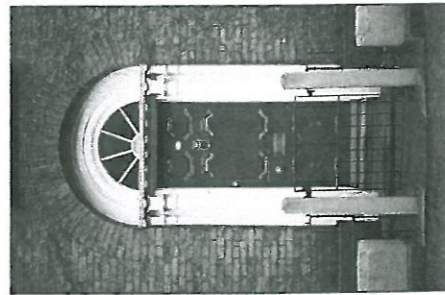
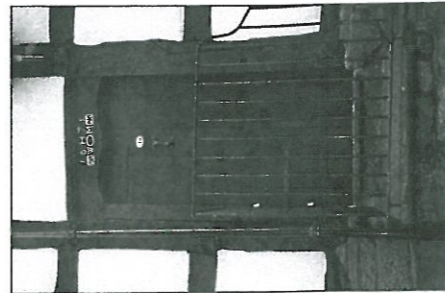
Rachel Shaw Education Officer
Northamptonshire Archaeology Unit
Wootton Hall, Park Mere Way
Northampton NN4 9BE
Telephone: 0604 7020493/4

Kirby Hall in Northamptonshire is an English Heritage site located 4m NE of Corby on an unclassified road off the A43. OS map 141; ref SP 926927. To book a free educational group visit and check opening times ring 0223-455532.

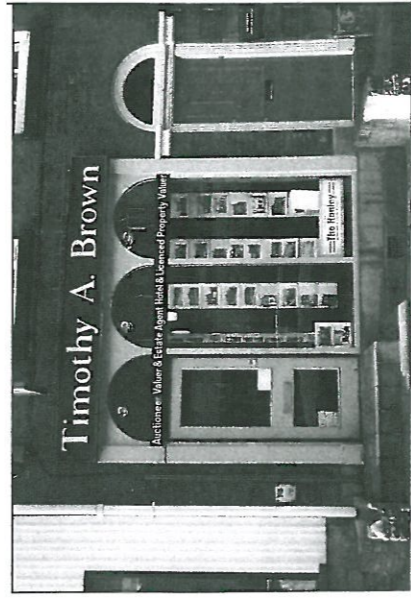
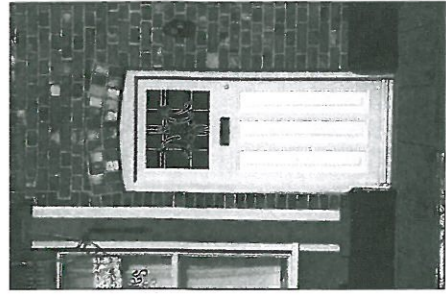
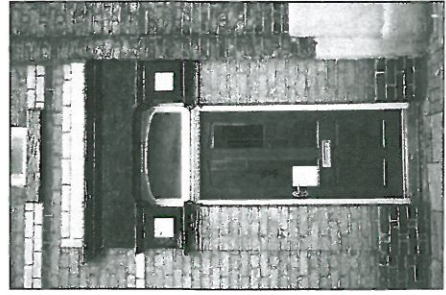
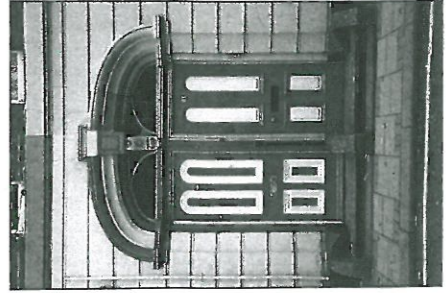
STREETWISE

An Open and Shut Case

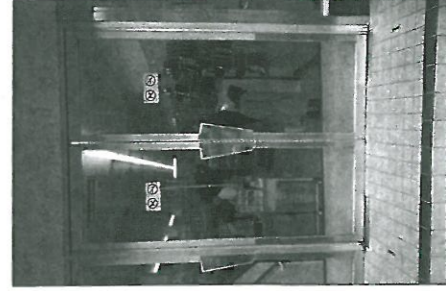
Beware of doors - they can give the wrong signals about the age of a building. This is because the wood from which they are made rots, and replacements are subject to the stylistic whims of the owners. The doorways surrounding them, on the other hand, usually give strong and reliable clues about date.



The first doorway, (Above left) dated 1671, is gently shaped, wooden and wide, and has a door of rough planks similar to the original. The Georgian doorway, (Above centre) is much more elaborate and has an elegant dome shape, with a fanlight at the top and columns on each side. Details of this style were used in doorways throughout the Victorian and Edwardian periods (Above right: below left & centre) until by the 1930s we arrive at a simple, no-nonsense door opening (Below right). From the Victorian period glass was being used in doors, and now many modern doors incorporate glass in their design.



Above: Shop doorways occasionally try to reflect the style of a building, or, more often, incorporate a door made solely of glass into the display frontage.



Looking at doorways can provide an enjoyable exercise in sequencing. Most towns have a good variety - all these pictures were taken in a small market town.

Streetwise investigates clues to the past that can often be found in the streets near your school!