

# DuddonDig Schools' Outreach – 2016

Stephe Cove, DVLHG, November 2016

Our schools' programme has worked with five Primaries and the Archaeology Club from a local Comprehensive School with classroom visits for our presentations and practical activities. Over five days, 115 children, mostly Year 6, have had a chance to find out what archaeology is and about the site where we are working this summer. They also took part in classroom based activities ready for their visits to the site during the two weeks of the dig.

We were lucky to have four boxes of assorted finds from Oxford Archaeology North's school collection ranging from a nineteenth century steelworker's iron shod clog to stone age flint tools. Handling and looking closely at the objects brought out some wonderful ideas and language about how things would have been different all those years ago. Most children will never get the chance to feel the glaze on medieval pottery or handle a fragment of a roman dish that may have held a centurion's supper.



The children scraped carefully away at a trayful of sand with trowels made from credit cards and lollipop sticks to expose their own finds. Modern objects were buried along with coins and bits of pottery. Careful recordings were made as scissors, tin lids, spectacles and felt pens were slowly revealed to the diggers.

Meanwhile another group were sifting through a large bucket of sand laced with "treasures" discovering that many things slipped away depending on the size of the holes in the sieves. They were surprised to find how long thin objects like keys could upend and slip through the hole rather than staying flat in the sieve.



A fourth group used a planning frame as a grid over our "trench" so they could make an accurate drawing, transferring the size and shape of the individual stones to equivalent squares on a sheet of paper. Some of their record sheets were so accurate that you could see at a glance where they had been standing and looking into the trench. This is one of the activities they will be doing on their site visit, helping to record a real section of trench or wall.

The final group had the task of putting finds together. In the presentation they had seen how the parts of a Viking sword, broken into pieces over a thousand years, could be fitted back together and x-rayed to see the shape of the original weapon under all the rust. Faced with broken pottery, they had to co-operate to identify the pieces and work together using a tray of damp sand to help support the bits. Again, the discussions and experimenting with techniques led to interesting discussions. I wish we had been able to record some of the conversations.



Now it was time for the visits to the site. Organising transport was quite an issue but Chris at Ricky's Taxis was up to the job and all went well. The minibus had three trips up and down the valley dropping group one off at Turner Hall, returning empty to Millom to collect group two; driving back to Millom with group one; returning empty to the camp site before finally returning to base with group two. All this was repeated a second time with another two schools the following week. The final two schools had their own transport which made life so much easier.

The walk to the site was over a kilometre and a half across the fields, up the waterboard track and finally across the rocky and boggy fellside to the longhouse. To make the walk a part of the historical experience, I had made a timeline with each stride going back a year in history from 2016 at the fellgate to 950 at the dig site. A board every fifty metres recorded the happenings of the fifty years that had passed. It was difficult to find mostly local events and it showed clearly how under-represented women are in the history books.



Four schools on site were split into groups to be told about longhouses and the people who lived here, to look at the enclosures and imagine the activities all those years ago, to look at the progress of the excavation and to record boundary walls using the techniques they had learned in the classroom.

We didn't have the resources for all the children to dig so two schools only were designated key-schools who were going to get a chance to do some digging in a series of one metre square trenches that had been prepared for them by removing the turf and the top layer of bracken roots.



Each of the trenches was centred over an anomaly that had been picked up by the geophysics survey or the metal detector. Unfortunately, we have come to learn that many of the positives have been caused by mineral deposits in some of the rocks on site. That didn't discourage Jamie from demonstrating how to trowel a level surface and keep the edges crisp and vertical. Jamie was also able to demonstrate how the drone could be used for taking the



photos to be used for making the 3D images. It was impressive to see the way the drone adjusted to the gusts of wind to maintain its position without the pilot touching any of the controls, and the children were as much enthused by the drone as they were about the opportunity to excavate.



It was at this point that the first of a series of showers could be seen racing up the valley and we could be seen racing to the tent. The rain on the tent and the flapping of the material in the wind was quite impressive. More showers came through but eventually there seemed to a break and we joined the diggers heading back to the valley. By the time we reached the campsite, it was a lovely afternoon again and I left the teacher watching her class using up their excess energies racing round the field.

There was one last school day. The teacher at Haverigg asked if they could make a model of what the longhouse would have looked like. I took some large slate rocks and glued them to a base boards cut into sections. I collected slate chippings, twigs, bracken and with



some mastic guns full of decorator's caulk we were ready to go. It was a lovely day and we worked outside building the enclosure walls and the longhouse base. Getting the roof in place was really tricky (and sticky!). I guess it wasn't easy for the medieval builders either. Once it was finished, I took a series of fifty "aerial shots" leaning over the board to get a

drone's eye view just as we had done on site. Jamie used OAN's photogrammetry software to make a 3D model and a video fly round, zooming in and out to pick up the detail of the children's work. All in all, it was a brilliant day.



I must thank my trusty team of helpers as well as the teachers, classroom assistants, caretakers and children of the schools who made these days really memorable. All the equipment will go up to the garage now to be stored until we start all over again next year with new groups of children who will take part in DuddonDig 2017



Examples of children's Work



# Examples of children's work

National Events

Local Events

local events 5 on each side of post

1066 national event

- 1066 - Battle of Hastings
- 1122 - Henry I visited Carlisle
- 1133 - Carlisle Cathedral opened
- 1280 - Ulverston granted Market Charter by King Edward
- 1327 - Piel Island completed.
- \* 1785 - Bobbin Mill established
- ✓ 1736 - Duddon Iron works established
- 1760 - Georgian houses built on the square
- \* 1766 - Town Hall - once a market hall (broughton)
- ✓ 1810 - Obelisk built marking King George III Jubilee
- ✓ 1871 - Barrow shipyard company establish.
- ✓ 1887 - Barrow clock tower formally opened/rebuilt
- 1859 - Millom school built - comp.
- ✓ 2005 - Year 6 children born

**THE DUDDON DIG**


Excavating medieval longhouses in the Duddon Valley

Duddon Valley Local History Group

**1850** ↓


**1830**

Captain Shaw of the Royal Navy gave money for a School in Bootle.




**1815**

The Battle of Waterloo was between the British and French.



**1810**

An Obelisk was built in Broughton for George III's Golden Jubilee.



**THE DUDDON DIG**


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**1800** ↓


**1778**

John Paul Jones attacked Whitehaven in an American ship.




**1776**

The Market Hall was built in the Square at Broughton in Furness.



**1757**

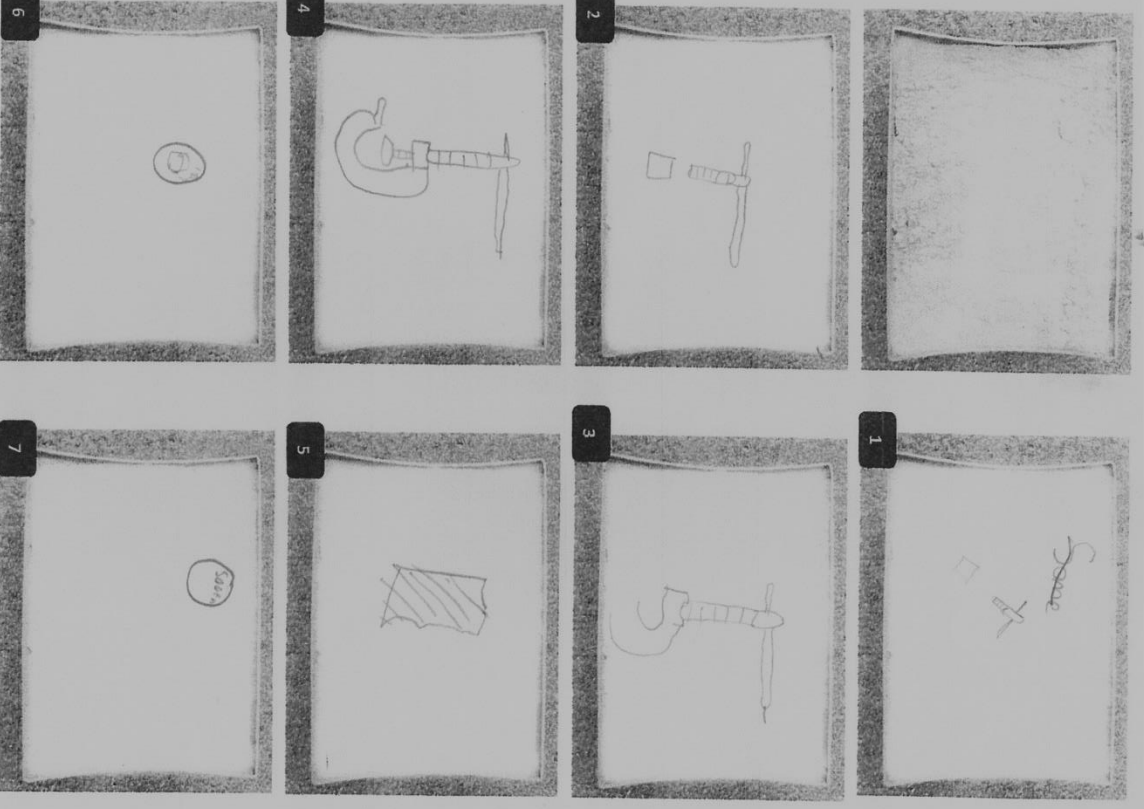
The first canal was built in England through Manchester.



# The Duddon Dig - Finds Record Sheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Object with size	Size of sieve	Tally	Object with size	Size of sieve	Tally
counter	large holes medium holes small holes		bell	large holes medium holes small holes	
sp	large holes medium holes small holes		nail	large holes medium holes small holes	 
bubble	large holes medium holes small holes		spring	large holes medium holes small holes	
peg	large holes medium holes small holes		pts. side	large holes medium holes small holes	
button	large holes medium holes small holes	      	paper clip	large holes medium holes small holes	
peg	large holes medium holes small holes		seen	large holes medium holes small holes	
stone	large holes medium holes small holes		crystal	large holes medium holes small holes	
marble	large holes medium holes small holes				



Duddon Dig Excavation Recording Sheet

First guess: my object is - a screw

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Fully excavated: my object is -

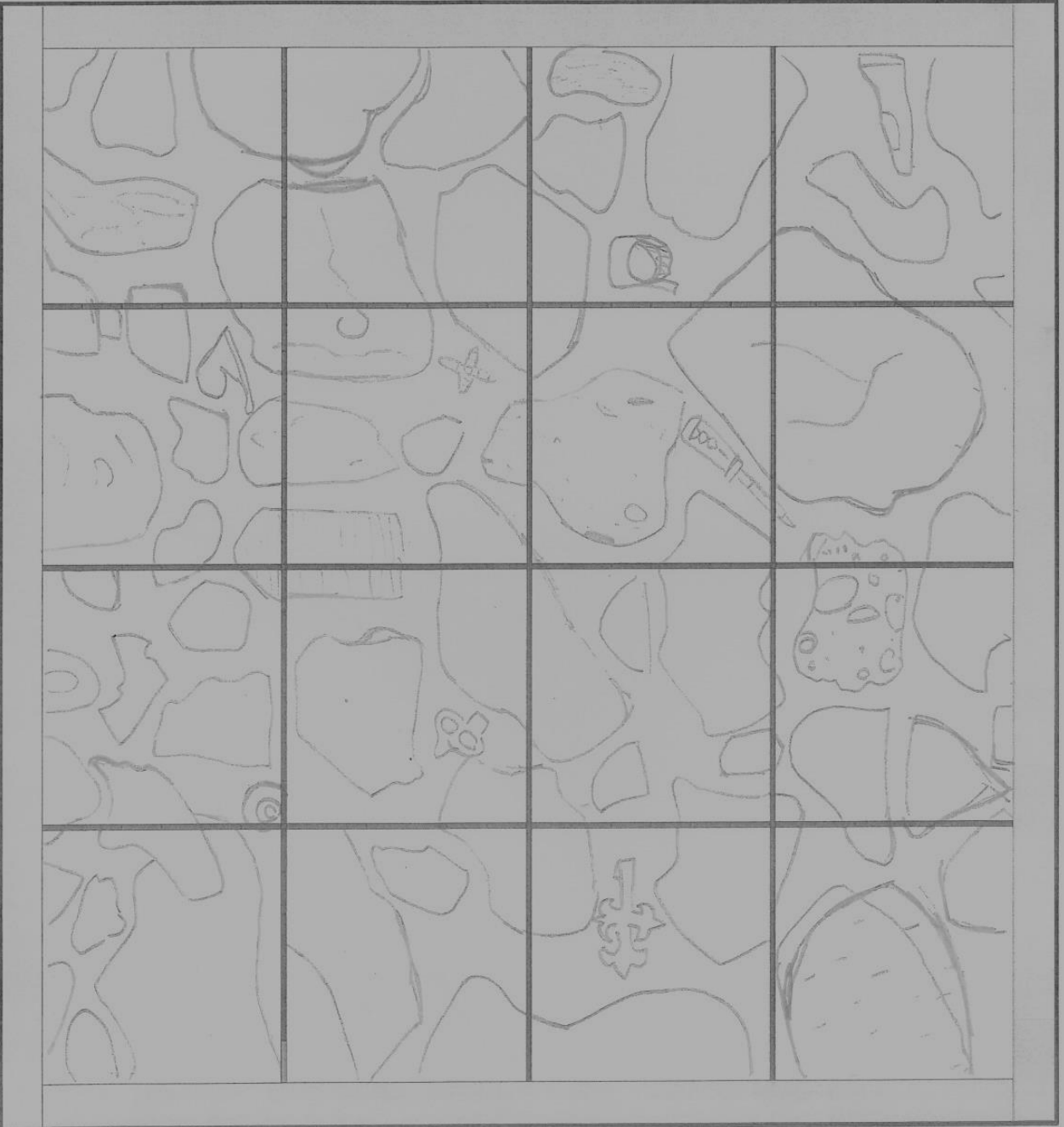
# Duddon Dig

## Planning Grid

Name: Millie

Group:

Date:



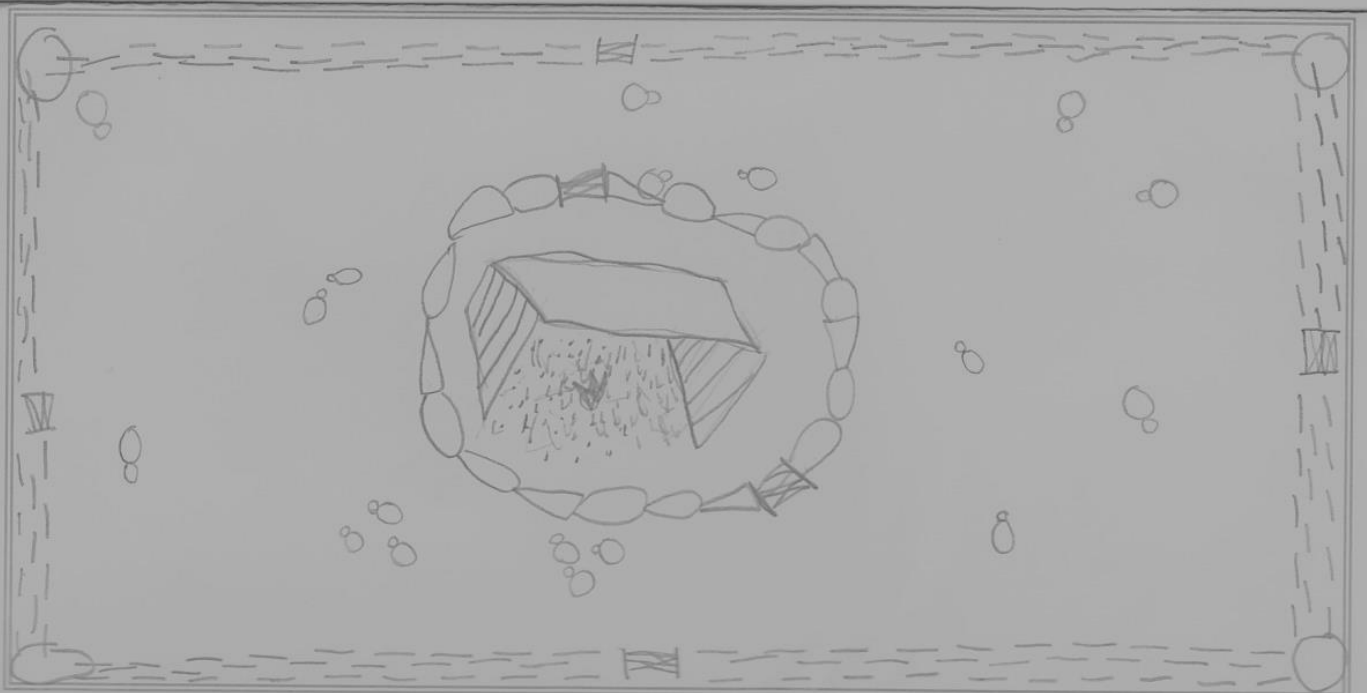
# Duddon Dig!

After the dig we were really disappointed because we thought our experience was all over. However, we found out that Steve and Mur were coming in to build our very own Viking Long House! :)

On the day of the build we were shown how to mark out the positions of the walls. After this we got to build the walls of the longhouse - it was tricky building it with no gaps but after a while we got the hang of it! Then our group was then chosen to help build the actually Long House and bits of floor and roof!

It took all the groups all day to complete their section but once it was completed Steve put it together! It looked amazing and we really appreciated being allowed to do it.

By Jake and Euan



After spending the day building the longhouse...