

The Bishop's Palace, Nettleham

Introducing the history of the site - Whole Class Playscript

Cast:

28 Children

1 -	2 -	3 -	4 -	5 -
6 -	7 -	8 -	9 -	10
11 -	12 -	13 -	14 -	15
16 -	17 -	18 -	19 -	20
21 -	22 -	23 -	24 -	25
26 -	27 -	28 -		

Teacher -

Queen Edith -

Edward the Confessor -

King Henry I -

Maud -

Robert Bloet, Bishop of Lincoln -

Royal Servant -

The Bishop's Palace, Nettleham

SCENE 1 - IN CLASS(Teacher, Children 1 - 4)

Teacher: Right class, for homework I want you to find out all you can about the Bishops Palace in Nettleham. Does anyone already know any interesting facts?

Child 1: My mum says when the manor of Nettleham was created in medieval times, the term manor would've meant an area of land that was held by the Lord of the manor. I thought it was the house, but it isn't it's the land.

Child 2: Yes but the owner of the land was still the king.

Child 3: True, but it would've been the Lord who lived in the manor and the surrounding land would've been mainly farmland.

Child 4: The Lord would rent plots to local villagers to farm the land.

Teacher: Oh well done class you're already very knowledgeable. Go home and talk to your parents, Google it and see what you can find out.

SCENE 2 - FACETIME BETWEEN CHILDREN

(Children 5 - 14 all with 'book' laptops +
Queen Edith + Edward, King Henry I + Maud + Royal Servant)

Child 5: In the mid-11th century, the manor of Nettleham was in the hands of Queen Edith, wife of Edward the Confessor. (Queen Edith to be sat on her throne, with Husband Edward)

Child 6: Yes I think her husband must have given her the land as a gift.
(The king hands over a document and the queen gives him a royal hug!)

Child 7: Did you know, upon Edith's death, the land was passed back to the crown and then later given to Maud, the wife of Henry I?
(Edith now dead, Royal Servant to pass the land document to King Henry I and Maud.)

Child 8: Who was Edith?

Child 7: Keep up, she was Edward the Confessor's wife. Maud was the one who agreed with her husband Henry's request to give the land to Robert Bloet, in his role as Bishop of Lincoln. (Land document to be passed from Maud to the Bishop.)

Child 8: Ok show off. Well I've found out that many Bishops spent time in their palace at Nettleham, there's evidence in documents and charters of the time. The handwriting was very different then, very curly and really neat.

Child 9: Miss Thompson would be impressed! Did you know Oliver Sutton, Bishop of Lincoln died in 1299, whilst he was living there? Maybe the Bishop's Palace is haunted!

Child 10: It says here on my laptop that 'In 1301, Parliament was held in the Chapter House of Lincoln Cathedral and King Edward I stayed as a guest of the Bishop John Dalderby at Nettleham. '

Child 11: What you mean an actual King has stayed here in Nettleham? That is amazing. Royalty has been here! Wow!

Child 12: Yeah, it says 'It is during this time that the King endowed his son (the future Edward II) with all the land in Wales effectively making him the Prince of Wales and heir to the throne.'

Child 13: Yeah I've discovered on my my ipad 'Evidence exists that Edward I stayed in 1304 and Edward II stayed in 1316 as guests of the Bishop of Lincoln.'

Child 14: I can't believe that, just wait until I tell my mum!

Scene 3 - NEXT DAY AT SCHOOL

(Teacher, Child 15 + 16)

Teacher: You have found out so much, I'm really impressed. Now, in 1336 Edward III granted Bishop Henry Burghersh the right to 'crenellate' the palace. This means they were allowed to create walls to protect the palace and strengthen the area against attack. Can you imagine what this would look like? Around this time it is thought that the gardens were created.

Child 15: Yeah, they would've grown herbs that would've been used in medicines as well as cooking.

Child 16: Yeah, in Tudor times most medicines were made from herbs like sage, lavender and chamomile.

Teacher: Excellent! (Pointing to the map showing how the palace used to look) And look here you can see where the main entrance would've been. It's to the south of the manor and heads towards Wragby Road.

Child 17: Miss, Miss, Miss.....Wragby Road is an old Roman road. I live on Wragby Road and my mum said it used to be the old Fosse Way!

Teacher: That's right. Can you imagine what the procession would've looked like with the entrance of Royalty?
Look carefully at this map and you will see many interesting features. In fact, let's go and see for ourselves. Children, grab your coats!

SCENE 4 - ON LOCATION AT THE BISHOP PALACE (Teacher, Children 17 - 25 + Child 2)

Child 18: Well where is it? There's nothing here, it just looks like a bumpy field.

Teacher: The structure of the Manor House had disappeared by about 1650, having been badly damaged in the Lincolnshire Rising in 1536. Over time, the Bishop's Palace has slowly been demolished.

Child 19: What was the Lincolnshire Rising?

Child 20: The Lincolnshire Rising was a time when the Roman Catholics protested against the Church of England. The Bishop's Palace came under attack by rebels and damage was caused. Unfortunately, following this damage, building materials were then robbed. In Oliver Cromwell's era, the manor was fired - overall adding to the manor's gradual demise.....until the only evidence of this magnificent estate today is a series of grassy mounds in a field.

Child 21: Oh look at this, (pointing at the huge dip in the ground) can we run down it Miss?

Teacher: No, this is where the quarry would've been.

Child 21: A quarry? What's that all about?

Child 22: The quarry is where they would've dug up limestone.

Teacher: Well done, the lime kiln was next to the quarry and the limestone would've been used to create mortar for building work.

Child 22: Is that like old-fashioned cement?

Everyone laughs

Child 23: Miss, would they have had decorations on their buildings?

Teacher: Well funnily enough, when we go into the village you will see some stone carvings of heads that were originally on the Bishop's Palace.

Child 2: I've seen them, they're on the High Street, number 30 and 62. We had to sketch them once at cubs!

Child 24: So how did they get there?

Child 17: I think the villagers must have taken them.

Child 25: Yeah because some of the cottages look really old. Maybe they were built from the stone at the Bishop's Palace?

Teacher: Quite probable.

Child 26: Let's go and have a look at them.

SCENE 5 - CHANGE OF VENUE, 30 & 62 HIGH STREET
(Teacher, Child 6, 11, 26)

Teacher: (Pointing at the carved heads photo) Look class, look at this.

Child 11: It looks like a gargoyle, like you'd see in the cathedral.

Child 6: Yeah, I wonder who posed for them!

Child 27: Would the Church have been around at that time? Would that have been important too?

Teacher: Let's go and have a look.

SCENE 6 - AT THE CHURCH

(Teacher, Children 3-4 + 14-15 + 21-22 + 27)

Child 23: Miss, it says here the church would have been a very simple building made from local limestone and a thatched roof.

Child 22: Maybe it was the limestone from the Bishop's Palace!

Child 14: Oh Miss look, Isaac has pushed Charlie into the beck!

Teacher: Isaac! Help him out now!

Child 15: The beck certainly would've been here back then.

Child 4: I think it would've been bigger.

Child 3: Yeah, because it flooded during the Winter, my Grandad told me that. I laughed because I thought he was pulling my leg.

Child 28: Wow, life would have been so different back then!