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la reconstrucció *in situ* a debat**

**Interpretation spaces for archaeological heritage:
discussions about *in situ* reconstructions**

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Espais de presentació del patrimoni arqueològic: la reconstrucció *in situ* a debat / Interpretation spaces for archaeological heritage: discussions about *in situ* reconstructions

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Rebuilding the past: challenges in education and public interpretation at Castell Henllys Iron Age fort

Harold Mytum*

Introduction

The Iron Age in Britain has some distinctive features that mark it out from most of Europe. Apart from the exceptional regions of eastern Yorkshire and the south-east of England, formal burial in cemeteries is lacking across the country. Although forms of ritualised burial, often of partial bodies, may be found on settlements, generally the population itself is not directly represented. In contrast, however, all parts of Britain are richly endowed with settlement evidence (Cunliffe 2005). Early archaeological focus was on the hillforts, but now a wide range of enclosed farmstead settlements is known, and in some parts of Britain, notably eastern England, open settlements of loosely clustered dwellings are now seen to have been common. In lowland areas there were usually extensive field systems, now identified (along with settlement in these areas) by aerial photography. Upland and western Britain has less evidence of field systems, even though these survive in these regions from earlier periods. In the last 20 years, numerous surveys and excavations have revealed the complexity of Iron Age settlement, and the certainties of grand narratives based on limited excavation in archaeologically popular areas such as Wessex are now shown to be inappropriate for most if not all regions (Haselgrove *et alii* 2001). Moreover, the importance of ritual, through burial and structured deposition of artefacts on settlements, reveals a less pragmatic culture than was previously assumed under many functionalist models that replaced the culture-historical invasion hypotheses in the 1970s.

Whilst key elements of British Iron Age culture are widespread, such as the roundhouse dwelling or the four-post storage structure, many variations in size, details of construction, and use of material culture such as ceramics is highly localised. This makes synthesis and public interpretation more difficult, particularly as this is a period little understood by the British public.

There are many forms of Iron Age settlement in Britain, but even the most dramatic – the hillforts – have received limited public interpretation. Very few are under state or local government management; almost none have much on-site information, and at best this consists of a few information

panels. Most museums do not focus on the Iron Age – with the exception of one at Andover that displays the results of Professor Barry Cunliffe's excavations at Danebury (Cunliffe 2003). In contrast, however, Iron Age buildings have been reconstructed and displayed at a number of museums, and at Butser experimental complex (Reynolds 1979, 1982). In some cases these reconstructions are based on particular excavated examples, taken out of their site and landscape context, in others they are generic building types. Almost all efforts have been directed at roundhouses, usually timber ones though a few with stone walls have been built. Some are academically-grounded attempts based on specific archaeological evidence, but others are generic simulations. Sadly, only a few of the reconstructions have been published (Harding *et alii* 1993, Dixon 2004), and one of these is at Castell Henllys (Mytum 1986), a site with the most extensive on-site reconstruction programme for this period in Britain.

Landscape and archaeological context

Castell Henllys lies in southwest Wales, in western Britain, a small inland promontory fort which has remained as upstanding earthworks until the time investigations began (Mytum 1991, 1999a). It lies beside a narrow, steep-sided valley with gently rolling plateaux either side. The fort is defined by steep slopes on three sides, further enhanced by the Iron Age occupants with scarping and a small ditch and bank, but the steep slopes are now clothed in tree cover, protected for its ecological significance. On the northern, more gentle approach there are two earthen ramparts and two ditches defining the main fort of about 0.5 hectare, and beyond these lie other ramparts and ditches that define an annexe area of similar size. This is a form of settlement common in some parts of Britain, but few have been investigated.

It is important to understand the nature of the topography and archaeology of the site because where it lies, and what was found archaeologically, limits what can be done in reconstruction and public interpretation according to the strict academic criteria that have been applied within the project. Off-site museums can build whatever they select, and link the structures in whatever interpretive story they wish, but by limiting construction to on-site reconstructions at Castell Henllys it is necessary to work with the

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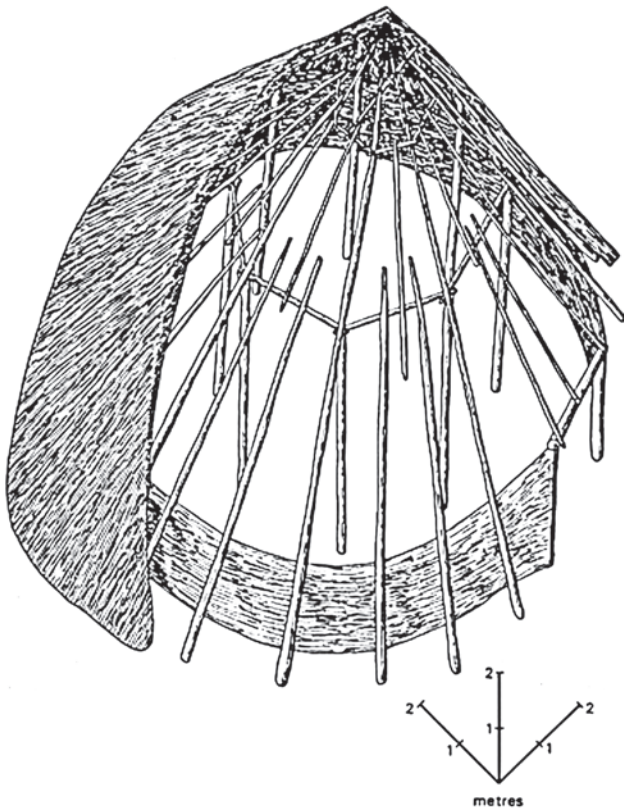


Figure 1. Isometric view of roundhouse 1 showing the main structural features, without the horizontal purlins between the rafters.

specific evidence recovered through excavation. However, all reconstruction involves going beyond the most basic and confident inferences that can be drawn from the archaeology, and here lie the challenges – both practical and ethical – in reconstruction and public interpretation.

Castell Henllys was originally developed by private entrepreneur Hugh Foster who wished to create a tourist attraction, but one based on scientific accuracy, so excavations were conducted in advance of all reconstruction. One explicit purpose was to identify building remains which could then be interpreted, the other was to understand the overall cultural sequence of the site and its role in the wider Iron Age society and economy. High Foster developed the site to the point where three roundhouses were reconstructed, together with one four-post granary, but then he died. The management of the site passed to the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park (PCNP), but excavations continued and subsequently one further roundhouse was erected, though sadly not with the same rigorous experimental criteria of the previous reconstructions. The excavations have been very extensive, with all of the available interior area investigated, demonstrating that the main fort was full of roundhouses, between 10 and 12 standing at any one time.

The fort started at about 450 BC as a palisaded settlement, with a timber fence defining an area in which a pioneer group first camped and then constructed some houses. A *chevaux-de-frise* of very small quartz and shale

stones set on edge was found beneath the outer rampart and belongs to this palisade phase. Soon after the initial settlement, work began on constructing two ramparts and ditches on the northern approach, with a single bank and ditch on the steep slopes around the promontory. Substantial parts of the rampart and ditch sections have been investigated, but have now been reinstated to their original pre-excavation form. Also, the whole of the entrance complex with its stone guard chambers and adjacent lengths of rampart were completely excavated. Whilst the early gateway phases were elaborate, later a simple timber gateway stood on the site and for the last part of the occupation there was no gate at all. A full sequence to the 1st or 2nd century BC was found, after which the main fort was abandoned. No full scale gateway reconstruction has taken place because of cost, but there are also issues surrounding which phase to reconstruct. Instead, the PCNP has attempted to mark out the position of the four guard chambers of the most elaborate phase, though with vertical timbers rather than drystone walling of the original and with no indication of the tower or gate posts, creating a false and probably confusing impression for those entering the fort today.

A large area of the annexe, outside the fort to the north, has also been excavated. This revealed a late Iron Age settlement that remained in use throughout the Roman occupation of Britain, unlike the main fort that was abandoned in the 2nd or 1st century BC. It is likely that some of the families in the fort merely moved outside, though others set up small enclosed farmsteads on the fertile plateau areas a few kilometres away at the same time; several of these have been excavated. This period of the site's history is hardly mentioned in the interpretations, and there have been no reconstructions.

Reconstructing buildings

Excavation began in 1981 and recovered the evidence for a double ring roundhouse with its circular timber wattle and daub wall and the roof supported by a concentric ring of internal posts (Guilbert 1981). The wall line bisected the door posts showing that the doorway was on the wall line rather than being part of a porch that extended out in front of the house, which is a feature found on many British Iron Age houses, though none at Castell Henllys. The last important piece of information only survives on the western side of the house – a concentric gully running round outside the wall to channel water from the roof away from the house. It is from these elements that a reconstruction can be attempted – wattle and daub wall, inner ring of posts with natural forks to support a ring beam, a spider's web of rafters, some set on upright posts in the wall, with horizontal purlins running between them (fig. 1). The thatch was then laid on this framework. The roof comes low to the ground so that rain runs off into the gully known from the excavation. The reconstruction was completed in 1982 (Mytum 1986), so it has been standing for almost 30 years. Many different doors have been tried over the years, as there are many possible options, but generally they open inwards because of the overhang of the thatched roof. Single and

double doors have been used, and materials have varied from wooden planks, tight wattling, and leather and straw on a looser wattle framework. All have their advantages and disadvantages.

When reconstruction began Peter Reynolds, who had considerable experience of building reconstructions at Butser in Hampshire, was consulted. He had erected a number of roundhouses of various sizes, some of which had then been standing for a considerable time (Reynolds 1979, 1982). Though his expertise was not ignored, there was soon disagreement over some of the details and his assistance was withdrawn, so even this first reconstruction should not be seen as a Reynolds Butser copied house (contra Townend 2007). As other buildings were reconstructed, localised understandings of the issues and appropriate solutions evolved.

After building the first roundhouse, many more were excavated but not one of these contained an inner ring of posts, so all the other reconstructions rely on a wall plate round the top of the wattle and daub wall to support the full weight of the roof, and the rafters rest at any appropriate point on this wall plate (Mytum 1991; 1999b). The second reconstruction was a smaller house of 6 metres diameter, unusually small for the site but a common one elsewhere (fig. 2). This created a much more intimate atmosphere, as not only did it have a smaller floor area but the apex of the roof was much lower.

The third roundhouse that was built shows the importance of on-site reconstruction. The wall trench was deep on the downhill side and shallow uphill, unlike most roundhouse foundations that are similar in depth around the whole circumference. However, the downhill side would potentially take more of the weight of the roof, especially if there was any settling of the building. Also in order to have the wall plate horizontal so that the roof could easily sit on the structure, the wall had to be much higher on the downhill side. The foundation trench was therefore deeper to make the wall secure. This explained the difference in the depth of the foundation trench, but it meant that every timber upright had to be measured and cut to stand in a particular place around the circumference of the building, a much more time-consuming exercise than for the other structures where wall uprights could be prepared ahead of the construction phase. In some other house sites at Castell Henllys and at many other settlements, Iron Age builders dug hut scoops on slopes to make a horizontal surface on which to build, a much easier solution than the one chosen here, but only appreciated after reconstructing this house.

When the reconstruction began on the third roundhouse, other features unique to the building became obvious. The building wall plan is circular, about 10 metres in diameter, but the roof was asymmetrical, because the eaves on the downhill side have to stretch much further beyond the wall than on the uphill side (fig. 3). This meant that the rafters were also required to be of different lengths, and with a substantial overhang on the downhill side. This required additional bracing so that the weight of the thatched roof could be supported. All this could have



Figure 2. Children and costumed interpreter enter roundhouse 2, the smallest structure reconstructed on the site.



Figure 3. The asymmetrical roof line of roundhouse and the slope of the ground can be seen on this view from the east.

been avoided with an excavated scoop, and also removed the problem of a steeply sloping floor. The original floor surface did not survive, so it unclear what was the original solution, but the PCNP has partially levelled up the floor by infilling the lower portion of the house, making the wall in effect a revetment for the interior surface. This is further assisted by the deep foundations at this point.

The roundhouse interiors are very varied, because there is little information about what would be correct. At the original Butser site the interiors were almost completely barren. They were bare empty spaces, devoid of furniture and fittings, feeling unloved and un-lived in. Because Reynolds did not know what was in them, nothing was put there; since his death, a slightly more furnished look has been created. At Castell Henllys it was agreed that the empty appearance was even more misleading than filling the houses up with items which individually may well be incorrect in some way, but which created a credible overall impression of domestic life. Moreover, the interiors have been altered many times, including the use of Celtic art (Mytum 2003), and so repeat visitors see the fluidity of these interpretations. The double ring house offers many possibilities for subdivision, putting in radial walls between the inner ring posts and the wall, and for creating raised platforms for storage or sleeping. The large spaces of the other buildings are less flexible,



Figure 4. The reconstructed four-post structure, interpreted as a granary, being inspected by a family.

though it is possible that they could have been subdivided with elements that did not include structural posts in the ground. Some of the implications of decisions regarding the reconstruction of the building and its interior treatment are discussed further below.

The four-poster

At Castell Henllys arrangements of four substantial post holes making a square or rectangle have been excavated, as at many other British Iron Age settlements. They were not common at Castell Henllys, and all were late in the main fort sequence, but it was decided one should be reconstructed as this presented very different challenges to those of roundhouses. Many drawings of four-poster structures in books are of simple rectangular buildings, their corners being defined by the upright posts (Cunliffe 2003). Whilst this is possibly how some were built, the structural repertoire known from the British Iron Age, apart perhaps from some gateways, suggests that the round was preferred over the rectangular. There are important structural traditions and techniques that make rectangular buildings (with their structurally weak corners) very different from those that are based on a round or curvilinear form, and this is an important distinction both in terms of craft traditions and cultural expectations. To modern western society, four posts in a square are joined by straight lines; in other cultures they may be four points on a circle.

A logical process was followed in reconstruction, slotting uprights into the original post holes dug into the clay subsoil with almost no packing on a slightly sloping site, so that the platform on which the structure stood was horizontal. The posts only rose to the height necessary to create the platform, not to the full height of any walls, as in some reconstructions. A circular plan was decided for the platform, and onto this was erected a circular wattle and daub wall, similar to those of the roundhouses. The conical roof was then designed to continue down close to the ground, to protect the structure from any updraught in

strong winds (fig. 4). This four-poster matches the design repertoire of the roundhouses, and works very effectively as a storehouse, resilient to even hurricane-force winds and rain. The rectangular-walled structures inevitably cannot be protected from driving rain by the roof, making it highly likely that the interiors would have been damp, and the flat surfaces of the walls would also have been liable to collapse in strong winds. Neither of these problems apply to this design of four-post structure.

Following Hugh Foster's death Castell Henllys was taken over by the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, which has developed its educational role, as well as that of public interpretation. Part of this new direction involved the construction of the Education Centre and the employment of a full-time Education Officer. The Park has generally maintained the existing buildings, though sadly in some cases not taking any notice of archaeological advice and making changes that do not fit the archaeological evidence. They have also built one more roundhouse, not on the same experimental archaeology basis as the others, but creating another house that is approximately on the site of the original.

Issues in Reconstruction and Interpretation

The reconstructions and interpretations of Castell Henllys raise many issues. Some are generic practical and ethical matters that would apply to all site interpretations (Stone and Planel 1999; Jameson 2004), but others are raised by the specific decisions made in the form of the interpretations and the PCNP policies that underly them. In particular, conflicts arise between the aims and methods applied to formal school education on the one hand and public interpretation on the other. This paper offers a critical review, but it should be recognised that in the real world difficult decisions have to be made, and any solution to one problem can create others. Sadly, much of the recent theoretically-informed criticism on Iron Age on-site reconstruction has concentrated on deconstruction (Piccini 1999; Townend 2002 and 2007) at the expense of facing the practical dilemmas of running an educational and public interpretation resource, with all the good that this can achieve. Nevertheless these challenges are worth discussing, especially where many others are facing similar choices.

The public arrive at Castell Henllys by car and park close to the Education Centre before walking to the shop beyond this building to buy their entrance tickets (fig. 5). They then cross over a concrete bridge and follow a path round the base of the hill, then up and through the annex and into the fort through the original entrance. The first part of the journey is linear, though there is a longer riverside walk option, and there are intermittent information panels (Mytum 2004). Once on-site, there is no set order; for a long time no signage was in the fort so as to not intrude on the atmosphere, but now some external panels have been set up to augment the visitor leaflet.

A staff member is normally available to answer questions and engage with the public; they may be carrying out



Figure 5. Aerial view of Castell Henllys taken soon after the completion of roundhouse 4 and when extensive excavations were still under way. A) Education Centre; B) shop; C) public car park (coach park for schools out of top of picture); D) reconstructed roundhouses in fort; E) Entrance still under excavation.

maintenance tasks such as managing the fires, and may be in PCNP uniforms or in costume, though if the latter they are not permanently in role. Visitors then take the same or a different route back down the hill to the toilets and shop, before departure. The site works well for all ages, and there is a disabled access point near to the annexe entrance so that only gentle slopes have to be managed by wheelchair users.

Schools have a different experience (Mytum 2000). There is great demand to visit the site as the Celts are part of the key stage 2 History national curriculum in Wales (DCELLS. 2008a), though sadly not in England. There are site-specific teacher's materials available in print and on CD (Bennett and Owen 2004), which may be used before or after the visit; most teachers are repeat visitors.

The school coaches arrive at a more distant coach park, and they walk down a longer path with themed sculpture along it before passing the car park and entering the distinctive Education Centre where they are briefed for their visit by costumed interpreters. They leave via a spiral and cross a timber bridge, by which time they have been transported back into the Iron Age, and the interpreters are now fully in role. They are no longer in the 21st century but back in pre-history and work with people supposedly from that time.

The children carry out various activities in role, some

on the way up to the site and others inside and outside the buildings (PCNP 2011). These may involve participation as in activities such as wattle and daubing, spear throwing and war dances, or watching crafts such as basketry or weaving (fig. 6). The classes hear about the lifestyle and diet, and may be given a storytelling session around the fire in a roundhouse. The teaching can be in the medium of English or Welsh. The programme for schools meets many of the objectives within the History curriculum (DCELLS 2009) and in cross-curricular learning (DCELLS 2008b). The PCNP provides much guidance to teachers and clearly ensures a stimulating experience for the children. This is recognised nationally through the Sandford Awards for Heritage Education which are non-competitive but judged by education professionals with regard to the quality of the experience. They are awarded for five years, at which point institutions may re-apply (HET 2008). Castell Henllys was awarded its third award in 2010 (Western Telegraph 2010), reflecting 15 years of continuous quality provision in the view of the Heritage Education Trust. The effectiveness of the support and inspiration of the visit can be seen in what schools undertake back in the classroom across a range of subjects and media linked to the theme of the Celts, as exemplified by the work at Orierton School (2008) where all types of art, crafts, and creative writing were produced



Figure 6. School group learns about basketry from costumed interpreters in a small shelter.

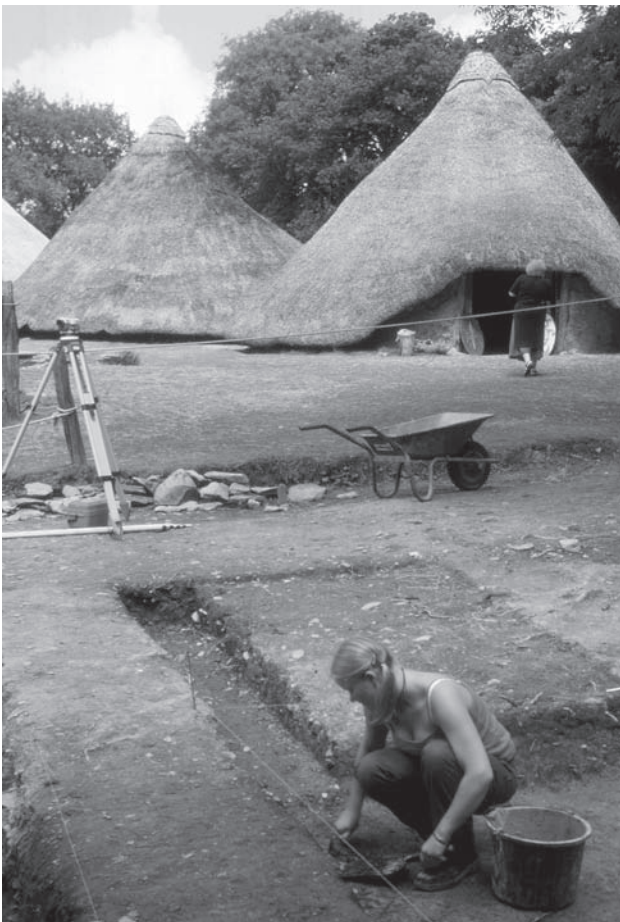


Figure 7. Excavation and reconstruction combine to enhance the public experience and also validate the Castell Henllys experience.

as a result of the Castell Henllys visit.

Whilst the strategy taken at Castell Henllys is clearly successful in that the children fully engage with this imagined world and teachers can develop excellent learning outcomes from the visit and support materials, there are

distinct limits on what this policy allows. The most obvious drawback is that past life is not effectively related to the children's own experience, except by surprise at the alternatives to their own claimed lifestyle by the re-enactors who have to remain in-role. This limits some forms of explanation and application, though teachers may be able to remedy this in their classroom sessions.

Despite the importance of evidence and interpretation in the national curriculum, there is no evaluation of archaeology –it did not exist in the Iron Age– nor of any of the choices in interpretation that could be made. This is a major limitation, given that the attraction of Castell Henllys is that it is a real archaeological site which has been subject to decades of research excavation. Whilst the National Museum of Wales has run short courses for teachers looking at the problematic definition of the Celts, a major theme in British Iron Age archaeology and one fraught with nationalistic implications in Wales, this is ignored at Castell Henllys. Despite having only a simulation Iron Age settlement for their St Fagan's schools programme, the children and teachers in the National Museum of Wales programmes engage with genuine objects in the museum displays and do have real interpretive dilemmas revealed to them. Despite the fact that Castell Henllys could do this even more effectively on the excavated site itself, this opportunity is lost by the children supposedly being in the past, rather than in the present. Ironically, what is provided for schools at Castell Henllys could be provided at any simulation site erected anywhere in the country. The special authenticity of the place (though not, of course, of the reconstructions which remain speculative even if scientifically grounded) does not form the starting-point for the provision of learning support.

Another important challenge in the management and operation of Castell Henllys is the relationship between the schools parties and the public visitors who can be there at the same time. A similar tension existed for part of the year when the excavations were under way. Some of the interpreters explained the archaeologists away as slaves that they had captured (though what we were doing was not developed, and reflects perhaps some wishful thinking regarding the contemporary power structures on the site!). The general public visitors clearly are not of the Iron Age, and with their pushchairs and questions they intrude modern life onto the site (fig. 4). For many of the children this is easily ignored, but is more problematic for the interpretive staff, school teachers, and some of the more aware children.

The public experience of the site is completely set in the present. Panels explain about archaeological method, Classical texts mentioning the Celts, and various aspects of life in the Iron Age. Depending on staffing levels, there are also interpreters available, who may be in costume if linked to the schools programme, or can be in PCNP contemporary staff clothing. On the actual archaeological site itself there were no signs at all until recently, when some panels have been added in one location, but generally the reconstructed buildings and their

immediate surroundings have no overt interpretation to impede the experience of the structures themselves.

The reconstructed roundhouses are spaces that allow and create feelings of otherness that are powerful. The noise of children's activities, and their domination of certain structures for significant periods of time, greatly diminishes the visitor experience for those there at the same time as a school party, so there are difficulties on both sides with this uneasy site sharing. For the visitors the site is real because of the archaeology (fig. 7); ironically for the school children any authenticity is unnecessary, though it may attract the teachers to chose this attraction over alternatives such as that at St Fagan's, which is completely contrived, despite being at a buildings museum where all other structures are genuine, even if transferred there and rebuilt to their original, pristine state.

Many of the visitors thrive on debate, thinking about how the houses are and how they could have been, how space is laid out and the alternatives. The variation between houses could be taken as past variation, but actually stimulates the imagination as to what was possible anywhere. Whilst laid out foundations at an excavated site do not easily conjure up the popular imagination or stimulate engagement with the past, the reconstructions easily provoke observations, questions, and discussions amongst visitors and with any staff available. Moreover, if the place is quiet, sitting still in a roundhouse with the fire quietly smouldering and crackling, it is clear that the darkness of the space creates a cosiness and empathy that transports visitors to a different time, to a noticeably different way of living, way of thinking, way of acting.

What is experienced has been created in the present, albeit in part with archaeological evidence and logical deduction, but this does raise questions of authenticity. However, the guides all support debate, and so this issue is addressed and, because of the experiential power of the structures and the site, the public avidly engage with this issue. Although the PCNP manager's policy is to imply that their authoritative reconstruction and interpretation is 'correct', this is in practice subverted by visitor debate. It would be much more effective if the interpretive panels and indeed other literature available in the shop could focus on the issues of doubt rather than peddle a falsely confident image of interpretive certainty. Just as debate is removed from the schools programme, so the PCNP policy is to exclude it from public interpretation as much as possible. This is despite academic consideration of the impact of using Celtic art within the buildings (Mytum 2003), and some speculative guides for children not coming in school groups providing a young person's perspective of living at Castell Henllys (Mytum 1996a and 1996b).

The greatest problem in public interpretation of the site as a whole lies in only having some houses reconstructed, and none of the defences (fig. 8). Despite all the information, few visitors appreciate let alone imagine the whole fort full of houses and properly enclosed. The children likewise see the site as it is, and do activities where other buildings would have stood. Partial reconstruction,



Figure 8. A view of roundhouses 1, 3 and 4; only this view gives an impression of the density of settlement; the area left of this picture is open, and only two other structures stand on the site that should have held 10-12 at any one time; in the background here should have been the defences but they are degraded and make little impact.

necessary for financial reasons, is a major impediment to site understanding, as opposed to appreciating individual structures. Some roundhouse sites have been marked out by partial structures, but these are so incomplete as to be ignored or misunderstood, and the very limited entrance features in wood rather than stone create quite the wrong impression. This problem of incompleteness is seen elsewhere with on-site reconstruction, but that others have the same difficulties does not diminish this from a public interpretation viewpoint.

The landscape setting of Castell Henllys is still very rural, but the wooded slopes of the fort (fig. 5), the 19th-century enclosed field system and a scatter of cottages in view are all inappropriate, and create a false impression. However the rural nature, the 'natural' feel of some of the views, and the links to the wider topography –including the magical and fort-topped Carn Ingli– creates a setting that feels authentic. Only the occasional tractor intrudes its noise. Sadly, insufficient is known of Iron Age landscape use in the area –there are no known field systems or route ways, and even any pollen sequences to indicate vegetation cover are lacking. Nevertheless, the rectangular hedged fields in most views are undoubtedly incorrect, and the tree-covered slopes around the fort would have been clear in the Iron Age, both making the site more visible from afar and allowing its inhabitants to defend it effectively against any aggressors. It is difficult to physically manipulate a wider environment, largely not under the ownership or close control of the PCNP, to create an appropriate wider setting. This is something also recognised at many other sites including the Lunt Fort in a suburb of Coventry and next to an airport, and Calafell with urban housing and transport links so close. However, the apparent authenticity at Castell Henllys needs to be challenged rather than accepted in an act of collusion; the very rural nature of the environment makes the debates regarding Iron Age landscape more easy for visitors to consider.

Conclusions

It is the mix of the archaeological excavation and verification by 'science' that makes the Castell Henllys site visit such a powerful experience. The logical albeit in some senses speculative reconstructions give form to past places and spaces. Their location on the very spots where these buildings once stood and were lived in and experienced in the Iron Age provides such a unique and profound experience for so many people. Ironically for the children any level of authenticity is irrelevant because of the chosen mode of delivering the curriculum chosen by PCNP; though its genuine character justifies the site choice by the teachers and parents, this is not developed for schools in the way that it is for public interpretation. Having these two contrasting and indeed incompatible ambitions, with schools in the past and the public simultaneously in the present, creates more tensions than are necessary. The conflicts in experience, the balance between information in and out of role, and the explanation (or lack of it) of the process of inference leading to the reconstructions, cannot be easily balanced. Whilst the present policies at Castell Henllys clearly do not fail, it would be exciting and rewarding if new attempts were made to address these issues at the site. Both schools and the public could be offered more sophisticated, layered and ultimately more rewarding experiences at a site that has so many features that appeal. Castell Henllys could do so much more to enhance wider understanding of this poorly interpreted period of the British past.

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