



HISTORY BITES

LITTLE NIBBLES OF HISTORY

What was the 'Plumstead Ghost'

In October 1897, the 'Plumstead Ghost' appeared in Plumstead, near Woolwich, around the St James's Church and the school.

The local papers were full of stories about young girls fainting on being approached by the ghost, even according to the *Daily News*, having to take to their beds due to nervous exhaustion. Then a schoolmaster was frightened out of his wits when the ghost suddenly shouted 'Boo-hah!' at the top of its voice and grabbed him from behind. Well, he was convinced it was the 'Plumstead ghost'. This went on until another schoolmaster, while taking his large Newfoundland dog for his evening walk, heard rustling in the hedges, then a shout of "Boo-hah!" Immediately, he let his dog go, who rushed after the ghost.



He then heard the ghost give a cry, as his dog bit into his buttocks. Now convinced that the *Plumstead* Ghost was flesh and blood, he suggested to the other masters and the schoolboys that they teach the ghost a lesson when they next came across it.

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The schoolboys decided to try and one evening, when they heard the ghost about, a hundred schoolboys, stormed the churchyard. It was there, so shouting and yahoing, they pelted hit with stones, none hit, it disappeared into the hedges. Unfortunately, for them their stones broke the church's valuable stained-glass windows, so the police were called.

Two schoolboys were arrested and taken to Woolwich Police Station, which meant that the school master had to go to the police station and explain everything that led up to what the police described as a riot. The boys were discharged. The next evening, the Plumstead Ghost was seen in the grounds of a big house, sitting in a tree wearing a grotesque mask, shouting "Boo-hah!" to frighten the female domestics. The house owner, who was not at all amused, sent for the police and the ghost was arrested.

It turned out that the ghost's white garb had been torn, his buttocks were badly bruised, from his encounters with the fierce Newfoundland dog. He was in fact a local engineer who they placed under restraint in an asylum.

The Plumstead Ghost was laid to rest.

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HISTORY BITES

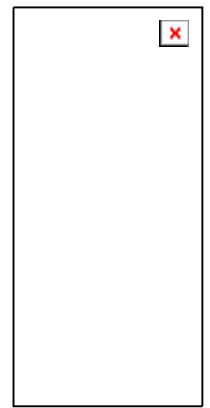
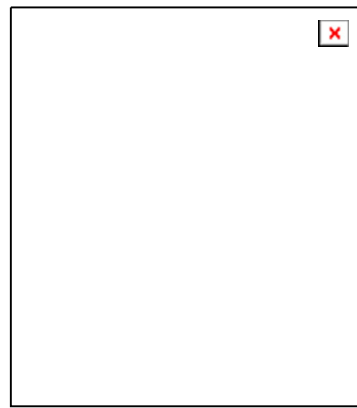
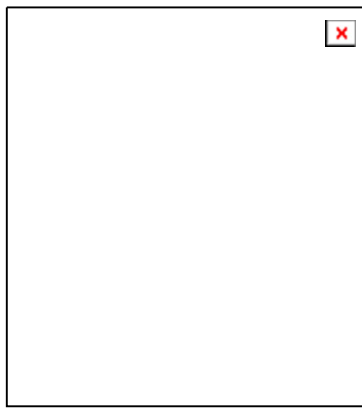
LITTLE NIBBLES OF HISTORY

2 lesson. (1 to make, 1 to paint)

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

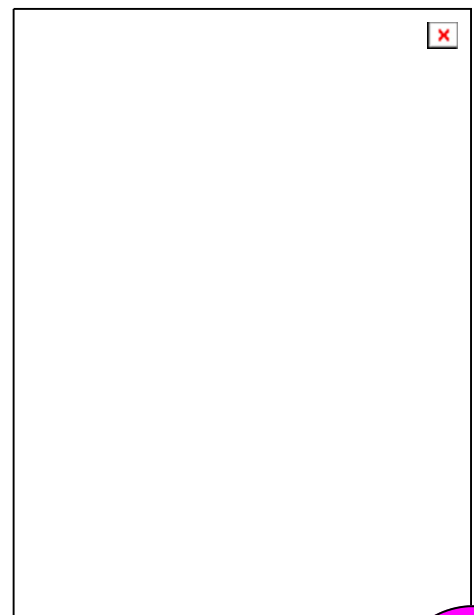
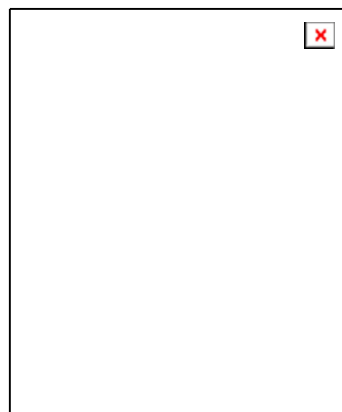
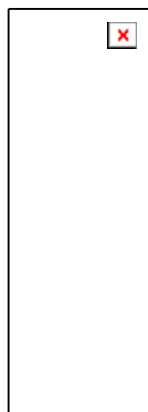
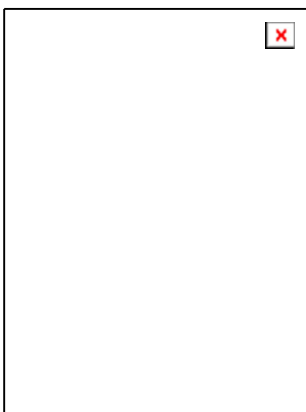
Plumstead Ghost Mask

Cut a large egg shape out of some cereal box card. Then use a marker to draw two large triangles as in the picture, cut these out then pull the triangles together and fix with masking tape. Now fold flat, draw an eye and nose.



When you cut out your eye and half nose from your folded mask, when opened you will have both eyes and a full Skull nose. Attach a thin piece of card that will fit around your head to both sides. Now paint white.

Then use black to paint on a toothy mouth and details.



Wait until your mask is completely dry before wearing

BOO-Hah!!!