



# Lossenham Project Newsletter

ISSUE 20



## Introduction

*Ne dites jamais du mal de vous; vos amis en diront toujours assez.  
(Never speak ill of yourself; your friends say quite enough.)*

*Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord*

July can be a month of revolution, and few observers have been better placed to comment than Prince de Talleyrand. Born in 1754, he served as diplomat or foreign minister under the Ancien Régime, the Directory, the Consulate, the Napoleonic Empire, the Restored Bourbons and even the July Monarchy.

I have just been reading Duff Cooper's biography of Talleyrand (1932), and can thoroughly recommend it. Nowadays, he is probably mostly remembered as France's chief diplomat during the 1814-15 Congress of Vienna, where he skilfully maintained France's role as a Great Power, despite the whole purpose of the Congress being to put France back in its cage after Napoleon. His reputation is mixed, with some seeing him as a prime turncoat. It is said that, during the July 1830 revolution, Talleyrand, hearing the riots outside his salon, said "Listen – we are winning!" At which his company wondered "Who are 'we'?" And he replied "I will tell you tomorrow!".

However, Cooper shows that, in fact, Talleyrand was consistent throughout his long career, always working in France's best interest. And it is remarkable that a core, unchanging view of his was that France and England should be allies – being complementary countries where ultimate power belongs to the people, as against the autocracies of Austria, Prussia and Russia.

The July revolution was unusual in being a popular uprising to replace one king (Charles X) with another (Louis Philippe), from a junior branch of the same (Bourbon) family. That sort of revolution was of course pioneered in England, in 1688...

I wish you a pleasant July with no more revolutions than you can handle!

*Åke Nilson*

*Chairman of the Janus Foundation*



# Cyrena Marble



The shelly rocks found in the fields of Lossenham and Frogs Hill are a bioclastic limestone packed with the shells of the small bivalve *Filosina gregaria*. Known as Cyrena Marble the rock is 6.5 – 7 on the Mohs scale, a similar hardness to flint. This means the stone, when cut and worked, shows a good polished surface with great detail and could be used decoratively. The uneven slabs are generally just a few inches in thickness and were formed in shallow braided streams or rivers on the Wealden floodplains of the Lower Cretaceous. The rocks derive from the Wadhurst Clay and Tunbridge Wells Sand formations within the Hastings Beds and can be readily found as fallen slabs and sea-worn slabs at Cliff End in Sussex.



The stone found at Lossenham differs from Bathersden Marble, also known as Sussex Marble or *Paludina* Limestone, which contains the shells of the gastropods *Viviparus sussexianis* and *Paludina fluviarium*. On a visit to Aylesford Priory I spotted what I believe to be the Bathersden type used for both an early fireplace and occasional floor slabs in the cloisters. The Bathersden type shows mostly blackened shelly material with some white infills in a greenish grey matrix, whilst so far the bivalve rock found at Lossenham shows white shells with occasional iron staining in a brown matrix.

*It would be good to keep an eye out for the type found at Lossenham in early architectural features. If you spot anything of interest, please let me know! [russell@lossenham.org.uk](mailto:russell@lossenham.org.uk)*

*Russell Burden  
Artist in Residence*



# Questioning Castle Toll



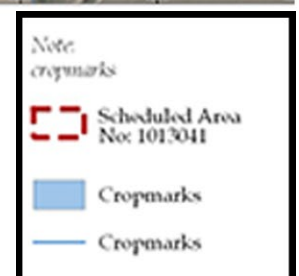
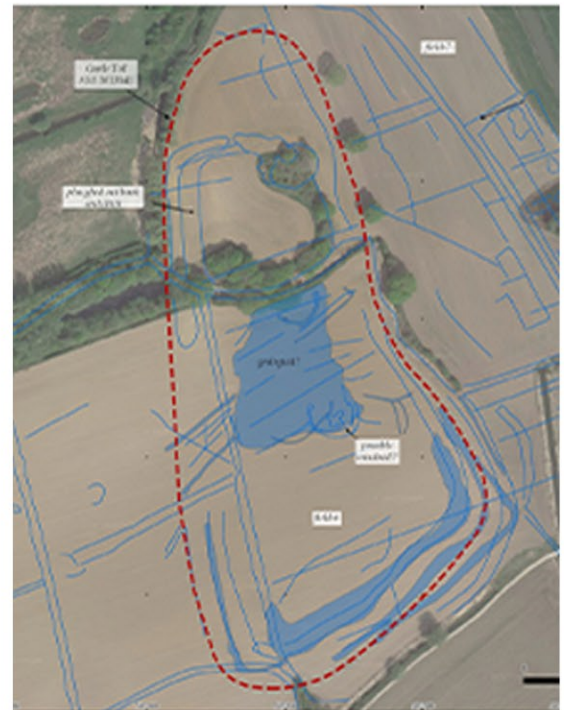
We have recently submitted an application for scheduled monument consent for a programme of archaeological work on Castle Toll, the complex of earthworks at the eastern end of the Lossenham peninsula. If successful, this will allow the first excavations on the site since 1971, with the hope that we can learn more about this little understood monument.



# These are some of the questions we hope to answer:

- What is the date of construction and purpose of the larger earthwork enclosure at Castle Toll, and can multiple phases be identified?
- Can the large earthwork at Castle Toll be identified as the 'half made' fortification that was recorded as being attacked and overrun by a Danish Viking force in AD 892?
- Can the large earthwork at Castle Toll be identified as the site of Eorpeburnan?
- What is the date of the construction and initial purpose of the smaller defensive enclosure at Castle Toll, and can subsequent phases of occupation be identified?
- Who built the smaller enclosure, and why?
- What is the form and layout of the small fortification at Castle Toll, and how does this compare to other earthwork fortifications of comparable date in England or France?
- Is there any evidence for the occupation and use of the earthworks at Castle Toll in the centuries after its initial construction, down to and including the post-medieval and modern periods?

Other questions will doubtless emerge as our work progresses.



A key thing that is apparent from our research on Castle Toll to-date is that we know less about it than previous writings on it suggest. The idea that it is the half-finished fort recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for the year 892 as being overrun by a Danish Viking force is unproven, as is the suggestion that it is the site of the lost Anglo-Saxon burh of Eorpeburnan. These represent two separate possibilities; both might be true, but equally it may be that neither is correct, or only one is.

Further, whilst the 1965 excavation of the smaller, northern fortification established that it dated to the thirteenth century, the records of this work have been lost. The date of much of the monument remains unknown and could range from the prehistoric to medieval periods.

A geophysical survey led by Kevin Cornwell and HAARG has recently been carried out as part of the Lossenham Project. This work, along with analysis of aerial photographs, cropmarks and historic maps, has helped build up a picture of a complex multiphase site. But ultimately only targeted excavation will allow us to date, and better understand, Castle Toll. Watch this space!

Andrew Richardson  
Isle Heritage CIC





# Newenden through to Wealden Wallop finals

With the evening sun beating down on an absolutely immaculate NCG, the scene was set for a great game. We knew we could not take anything for granted as Northiam are the reigning champions and they had no intention of handing over the trophy lightly.

Northiam won the toss and decided to bat, which suited us just fine, as we are rapidly becoming experts at chasing, mainly due to my inability to win a toss.



Things couldn't have started better with Jones Snr taking two wickets in the first over. Northiam then put on 46 for the next wicket. Mike Parr was brought into the attack and what a difference he made, ending up with 1-14 from his four overs. The ball was thrown to Bates, who bowled two superb containing overs at a crucial time. Northiam were now 105-5 from 15 overs.

Next, I give you Christian Kutner. Introduced to bowl the death overs, he was like a man possessed, the Northiam batsmen didn't know if they were coming or going, he was sending them back at such a rate I hear Priti Patel wants him to act as a consultant on her Rwanda project. He finished up with 4-9 from three overs, leaving Northiam with a below-par 129 from their allocation.

We still had to get the runs and things started badly as Bourne was caught behind in the first over without troubling the scorer. This brought Parr to the crease to join Edwards. They had taken the score through to 81 before Parr popped one up to the bowler, for a superb 42.

Gibbs then came out and maintained the momentum, before Edwards could restrain himself no longer and pulled out the switch hit and got himself bowled in the process. Gibbs then fell shortly afterwards, leaving us on 123-4. Scott and Jones Jnr then took us home with five overs to spare.

Now to the final, which will take place at Tenterden's lovely ground on Wednesday, July 6th, hope we can get a good crowd down to cheer us home.

*Phil Morris*  
*League Captain*





# Looking for Aliens



Sandhurst church from the entrance



Sandhurst church

In addition to working directly on primary sources, such as probate records and manorial accounts, researchers on the Lossenham Project can make use of materials gathered by other projects, such as 'England's Immigrants 1330–1550: Resident Aliens in the Late Middle Ages'. The project's resulting database is searchable at: <https://www.englishimmigrants.com/> and I thought I would look at a couple of local parishes.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Newenden draws a complete blank, while at the other end of the scale Tenterden provides 54 names across the 15th century. This includes five listed under Small Hythe, nine under Lydd and Tenterden and six under Reading. Of the latter, three were called servants in 1440, including John William (deceased) previously in Thomas Colyn's household.

Now this may be just coincidence, but Wittersham and Sandhurst include several 'Colyns'. Among the seventeen names under Wittersham for 1440 and 1441 are a couple called John and Roberta Colyn. Their place of origin is not recorded but he is named as a labourer. Although apparently not an alien, Richard Colyn of Wittersham employed a female servant, who if his two servants called 'Alice' for these two years are the same person was from France and her surname was Harnell.

If we move west to the parish of Sandhurst, we find a single person listed in the same two years: as John de Colyn, then as John Coleyne. This John presumably worshipped with his neighbours in Sandhurst church and perhaps met other 'Colyns' there, whether related or not.

*Dr Sheila Sweetinburgh  
Centre for Kent History and Heritage*







# Nature Recovery in Kent

In response to the effects of Climate Change on our local countryside, Kent's Biodiversity Strategy 2020 – 2045 sets out plans for the recovery of wildlife across Kent. It encourages sound management, restoration or creation of a range of habitats for plants and animals. The plan has been prepared by Kent Nature Partnership, a collaboration of organisations with shared objectives for the local environment.

The document will help shape and guide local policy through projects for Biodiversity Net Gain and other 'natural capital' initiatives. At a Parish level, there are real opportunities for shaping environmental improvement.

Tenterden Parish is ahead of the curve, undertaking local consultation and producing their own Parish Nature Recovery Plan. Their plan has recognition and support from the county nature recovery partnership, the borough and Kent Wildlife Trust. With local people who are passionate about wildlife, and an accepted nature recovery plan, this formative group is well positioned to shape the planning and delivery of wildlife conservation across the parish.

On the farms at Lossenham we are doing what we can to improve wildlife habitats and connecting corridors, some of which have been completed and others that are planned. These habitats include reedbeds, ponds and shallow margins adjacent to existing drains. Also the replanting of lost hedgerows and orchards, and new wildflower meadows. All are well aligned with the Biodiversity Strategy objectives and with Kent's Plan Bee – pollinator action plan. This conservation work sits within the context of a working farm that still needs to provide food for people!

I do not know if there is a group in or around Newenden considering nature recovery in response to Kent's Biodiversity Strategy. If there is, it would be great to hear about it and see how we can contribute.



Contact Simon Weymouth via [simon@lossenham.org.uk](mailto:simon@lossenham.org.uk)





# Annie's Dig Diary



We have started June off with a rather disappointing forecast of rain threatening to hamper progress. Despite the weather's best efforts, the medieval drain in Trench 4 was removed and in Area 1 work started on defining the foundation walls of the southern range. This week is a busy week as we have a team from the Camborne School of Mines come over to do a geophysical survey of Castle Toll as part of a research MSc. We also have Maeve, Chloe, and Maddy from the University of York who are all studying MSc's in archaeozoology (animal bones) and have come to look at our collection so far.

Overnight rain meant that the clay parts of the site had to be abandoned. Work progressed on the sandier walls but for the rest of the volunteers it was a day of washing that medieval drain from Trench 4. A late afternoon downpour put an end to the day on site but the rest of the week is looking much better!







Finally the sun is shining! Work on the walls is showing us that the foundation walls appear to be intact in places, although there are patches which have unfortunately been robbed out. Two buttresses have been cleaned up and seem to be quite intact, in fact one of them may even be the first course of stone rather than the foundation, and there is a small wall to the north end of the trench which looks to be higher than the foundation. This is great news as the survival of the walls on the eastern range may be better.



On our final day we achieved our goal of digging out all the robbed out backfill of the wall trenches down to the intact foundations, and Mick and Roy found a lovely decorated floor tile, one of the most complete examples we have to date, with two winged creatures on it. Jury is currently out on exactly what the creatures are but theories include gryphons, phoenixes, eagles, falcons, or vultures. The tile is incredibly worn so it had a long life on the floor of the building. Fingers crossed for more of those in July!







## Dates for the Diary

### **Between July 11-17**

Isle Heritage will be working in partnership with the National Trust at the White Cliffs of Dover to excavate the World War 2 cross channel gun emplacement known as 'Jane'. It will be one of the rare times the National Trust open this area up to the public. If you would like more details about visiting please e-mail [annie@lossenham.org.uk](mailto:annie@lossenham.org.uk). Opportunities to sign up to the project will be released by the National Trust in early July.

### **July 2022**

Monday 11th to Sunday 17th: White Cliffs of Dover (see above)

Monday 18th to Sunday 31st: Excavation (site TBC)

### **August 2022**

Tuesday 23rd: Family Day at Smallhythe Place, 11am - 3pm

Wednesday 10th, Thursday 11th, Tuesday 16th to Monday 22nd, Wednesday 24th to Thursday 28th: Excavation (site TBC)

### **September 2022**

Saturday 3rd: Lossenham Priory Study Day at Lossenham Farm

Saturday 3rd to Friday 16th: Excavation (site TBC)