

Notes taken Walker's Slide box 15, row B No 4-5

**Laburnum House, Station Road – from notes supplied by
R. Winter, Esq.**

[] text in these brackets – Jennie Burgess, Archivist

The present house was built in 1765 or 1766 by Daniel and John Jarvis, both of Deal, or possibly their mother who was a widow. [With its Dutch gables, the original date is more likely 1670-90, but the house may have been rebuilt in some parts in the 1760s.]

It was built on part of a 3-rod plot which was the garden to the older mentioned in the original deeds of 1619 [what we now call the Powell Arms].

The Tithe Map lists the house, when it was probably called Mulberry House, and the original Ordnance Map of 1872, 25inch map, shows the Inn and the Dutch gable houses with a tree, probably a Mulberry or a Laburnum tree, in the road outside. This tree was still there within living memory, and had a seat built round it on which the locals used to sit on hot summer evenings.

The older house was divided into two by a previous Daniel and John Jarvis in 1698 and there is a detailed record of how it was divided in the deeds.

Five separate plots of land belonged to the property at one time, and of these the original 3-rod piece was used to build the present house on, the 1½ acres called the "Butts" where the villagers practised their shooting, probably lay at the back and had a frontage to Kent Gardens, the ½ acre plot lying "towards the sea" was at Epple Bay.

The following is a list of owners of the property from 1619-1899.

Prior to 1619	John Sutton – Yeoman
1619	Thomas Grenefield – Clerk (see notes Vol 4 to 39
1622	Daniel Friend – Tailor
1631	John Twyman – Yeoman
1674	John Jarvis I – Yeoman [and owner of the New Inn (Powell Arms)] [He is buried in churchyard and possibly the builder of the house in his rear garden.]
1691	Daniel I and John Jarvis 2 – Yeomen [John senior's two sons]
1722	John Jarvis 3 – Carpenter, later 'Tidesman'
1762	Daniel 2 and John Jarvis 4 – Gentlemen
1767	Richard Lawrence Bowles – Riding Officer
1807	Anthony May Jnr – Victualler [inn keeper]
1815	Francis Jenkins Neame – Gentleman
1856	William Neame – Gentleman

List of Deeds from Laburnum House

1. 17th and 18th Feb. 1767
Conveyance of several Messuages [properties] and land from Daniel Jarvis and others to Richard Lawrence Bowles.
2. 17th Feb. 1767
Lease for a year from Daniel Jarvis and others to Richard Lawrence Bowles.
3. 19th Feb. 1767
Deed to lead the uses of a fine of several Messuages and lands at Birchington.

4. Easter 1767
Indentures of Fine [fee].
5. 28th March 1799
Certificate of Redemption of Land Tax. R. L. Bowles.
6. 8th Oct. 1807
Lease for a year from R. L. Bowles to Anthony May Jnr.
7. 9th Oct. 1807
Release and Conveyance of several Messuages and Lands from R. L. Bowles to Anthony May Jnr., for £1260.
8. 10th Oct. 1807
Mortgage of several Messuages and Lands from Anthony May Jnr to R. L. Bowles, for £800 at £5%.
9. 7th Nov. 1815
Abstract of Title to several Messuages and Lands in Birchington.
10. 5th and 6th Dec. 1815
Conveyance from John Friend Esq., and others to Francis Jenkins Neame and his Trustee.
11. 5th Dec. 1815
Lease for a year from John Friend Esq., and others to Francis Jenkins Neame.
12. 28th March 1839
Mortgage (by demise) from Francis J. Neame to William Hasler. (for £400 at £4 10 0%)
Discharged by William Neame for £409 on 17th June 1858.
13. 12th June 1858
Copy of Administration of Francis Jenkins Neame.
14. 20th April 1899
Abstract of Title of William Neame.

Notes from Abstract of Title to several Messuages and Lands in Birchington, dated 7th November 1815

Headed

Abstract of Title to a Messuage or Tenement, Barn, Chaise-house, Stable, Yard, Gardens and Appurtenances, and to another Messuage or Tenement (into two Dwellings divided). Yards, Gardens and Appurtenances, and also to Four several pieces or parcels of land containing together by estimation 2 acres 3 roods and 3 perches more or less in Birchington and now or late in the Tenure or Occupation of Anthony May the Younger.

18th Sept. 1619

John Sutton of St. Nicholas at Wade, Yeoman, sold for £40 to Thomas Grenefielde of Birchington, Clerk, one messuage or tenement one Barn and 3 Rods of land abutting to,

The King's high street to the north
 The Messuage and Place of John Sutton to the east
 The Church Yard and lands of Sir Henry Crispe Knight to the south
 The Lands and Tenements of the heirs of William Foorde sometimes Henry Cooper's to the West.

Note. The east side of the barn abutted on to John Sutton's land as the deed gives Thomas Grenefelde the right of "ladder room" on John Sutton's property for thatching, walling and underpinning the Barn.

5th Jan. 1619

William Dodds of St. Peters and Gilbert Dodds of St. Johns – Masons, sold for £21 to Thomas Grenefielde.

1. A piece of land called the Butts containing 1½ acres abutting to
 The Kings high street leading from Birchington Church to Gore End to the South West.
 The lands to Richard Hartye to the North West.
 The lands of the heirs of William Foorde to the North East.
 The lands of the heirs of John Smith to the South East.
2. Another piece of ½ acre 'toward the sea' abutting to,
 The lands of Richard Hartye Gent to the East and South.
 The lands of the heirs of William Foorde to the West.
 The lands of Robert Sayer to the North.

5th Oct. 1622

Thomas Grenefield now of Goudhurst – Clerk, sold for £61 to Daniel Friend of Birchington – Taylor, the house, barn, stable, garden cartilage and ½ acre of land bounding to,
 The Kings highway to the north.
 The Messuage of John Sutton to the East.
 The Church Yard and lands of Henry Crispe Knight to the South.
 The lands and Tenements of Daniel Friend to the West.

Also 2 pieces of arable land

1. 1½ acres called the Butts bounding to,
 The highway to the west.
 The land of Richard Hartye – gent, to the North.
 The lands and tenements of William Ford to the East.
 The lands of the heirs of John Smith to the South.
2. ½ acre near the sea abutting to,
 The lands of Richard Hartye – Gent, to the East and South.
 The lands of the heirs of William Ford to the West.
 The lands of Robert Sayer to the North.

28th Feb. 1631

Daniel Friend sold for £70 to John Twyman of St. Nicholas at wade in Thanet – Yeoman, one Messuage or Tenement (in which Rebecca Stock – Widow, then dwelt) and one barn, one stable, one garden, one courtilage and ½ acre land to the same messuage belonging abutting to,
 Kings highway to the north
 Messuages and Tenements of the heirs of John Sutton to the East.
 Church Yard and lands and tenements of Henry Crispe Knight to the South and West.

Note. It looks as though Daniel Friend had already sold the “lands and tenements to the West” to Henry Crispe.

Also two pieces of arable and pasture land,

1. 1½ acres commonly called the Butts and bounding to,
The Kings highway to the west.
Lands of Richard Hartye – Gent, to the North.
Lands of the heirs of William Ford to the East.
Lands of the heirs of John Smith to the South.
2. ½ acre near the sea abutting to,
Lands of Richard Hartye – Gent, to the East and South.
Lands of the heirs of William Ford to the West.
Lands of the heirs of John Smith to the South.

13th July 2nd Charles II

Indenture of a fine levied in Dover from Daniel Friend and Jane his wife to John Twyman.

25th January 1674

John Witherden of Broadstairs in the Parish of St. Peters, Mariner and Hester his then wife, daughter and heyre of John Twyman late of St. Nicholas in Thanet, Yeoman decd sold for £100 to John Jarvis of Birchington Yeoman the house etc and 3 rods of land more or less abutting to,

Kings highway to the north.
Lands of Henry Spratling to the East.
Church Yard and lands of Thomas Crispe Esq to the South.
Lands of Thomas Crispe to the West.

And also the piece of land of 1½ acres called the Butts abutting to,
Kings highway leading from Birchington Church to Gore end to the S.W.
Church land to the N.W.
Lands of John Laming to the N.E.
Lands of John Hayward to the S.E.

Also ½ acre lying towards the sea abutting to,
Lands of Thomas Kerbie to the E and S.
Lands of John Laming to the W.
Lands heretofore the lands of Robt Sayer to the N.

“all which previous were in the tenure or occupancy of Sarah Smith widow and were late the lands and tenements of John Twyman decd.”

1st October 1677

An indenture confirming that John Jarvis had bought of John and Hester Witherden all that Messuage or tenement the barn outhouses edifices buildings orchard place and 2 acres of land more or less to the same.

7th November 1648 Bond

10th Nov. 1670

Thomas Parker of Nash in the parish of St. John Yeoman sold for £11 4 0 to John Jarvis of Birchington in Thanet Yeoman and Mary his wife 2 pieces arable land containing together 1 acre and 10 perches etc.

1st March 1691-2

Extract from John Jarvis Will.

“I give and bequeath to John Jarvis my sonne and to Daniel Jarvis my sonne the house I now live in with the Barn and stable and Game Spot or Backside and two acres of arable land (1½ acres lying neere the Butt acre in Birchington) etc ---- to be equally divided between my sonnes John and Daniel etc ----

I give to Mary my beloved wife one acre of arable land lying neere a place by the sea called Ephall (Epple) at Birchington during her natural life etc” ---

20th Dec. 1698

Agreement between John and Daniel Jarvis both Yeoman as to the division of the property.

10th Nov. 1716

Will of Daniel Jarvis re his property.

22nd Jan. 1722

Will of John Jarvis who died a bachelor.

Bequeathed to his kinsman John Jarvis of Birchington Carpenter the property.

13th April 1762

Will of John Jarvis Carpenter now of Margate, Tidesman.

Left the Messuage etc to his wife Anne.

17th and 18th Feb. 1767

The two sons of Daniel Jarvis etc ---- sold to Richard Lawrence Bowles of Birchington Gent a Riding Officer in His Majesty's Customs for £267 “All that new built Messuage or tenement with the Barn Stable and Garden and then or late in occupancy of R. L. Bowles. Etc ----

And also all 5 pieces land containing 3 acres 13 perches in the occupancy of R. L. Bowles detailed as follows,

1. 3 rods abutting to Kings highway to then.
Lands formerly of Henry Spratling to the E.
Church Yard and Lands formerly of Thos Crispe to the S.
Lands formerly of Thos Crispe to the W.
2. 1½ acres lying near a place called the Butts abutting to, Kings highway from Birchington Church to Gore end to the S.W.
Church lands to the N.W.
Lands formerly of John Laming to the N.E.
Lands formerly of John Hayward to the S.E.
3. ½ acre lying towards the sea etc.
4. 3 roods etc.
5. 1 rood 10 perches etc.

19th Feb. 1767

Deed confirming the above sale.

Easter 1767

Indenture re the above listing the property as, two messuages 1 barn 1 stable 2 Gardens 4 acres land and 4 acres pasture.

8th 9th Oct. 1807

Nos 6,7,8, are documents apparently selling the property to Anthony May Junior Victualler for £1260 with a mortgage of £800.

The property is described as follows,

“Mess. Or Ten. With the Barn Chaise-house Stable Yard Gardens Backside Ground and Appurts for many years past occupied by R. L. Bowles, and also all that Mess. or Ten. (for many years past divided into 2 dwellings) with the etc.

Also 4 pieces of land 2 acres 3 roods 3 perches occ for many years by R. L Bowles and later used by Anthony May,

1. - - - -
2. 1½ acres at or near a place called the Butts,
Kings Highway from the Church to Gore end to S.W.
Church lands to the N.W.
Lands formerly of John Laming and then of James Neame to N.E.
Lands formerly of John Hayward and then of Robert Clunn to the S.E.
3. ½ acre lying towards the sea.
4. 3 roods etc ----

5th and 6th Dec. 1815

Four part Indenture between,

John Friend of Brooks End Esq and Francis William Cobb of Margate, Banker.

Anthony May of Birchington, Miller.

Richard Lawrence Bowles late of Birchington and now of Thanington, Gent.

Francis Jenkins Neame of Tton Gent and Peter Wooton of Bton Tailor a Trustee for F. J. Neame.

Selling the lot to Francis Jenkins Neame for £600.

28th March 1839

Hasler of Minster, Butcher for £400.

Gives a description of the property very much as before.

House now in the occupation of Francis J. Neame.

House divided into two now in the occupation of John Reader etc ----

4th July 1878

A memo on the back of this Mortgage – piece of the land conveyed to Edmund Francis Davis of St. Peters.

12th June 1858

Francis Jenkins Neame died at Margate 27.2.1856, intestate.

Letters of administration were granted to William Neame of Margate, Gent, one of the children of the intestate ----

Attached to the above is a paper apparently written (both sides) by Francis J. Neame setting out the dates of the christening of his children.
Also "30th June 1843 My Father died aged 97 years."

20th April 1899

Abstract of Title of Mr. William Neame relating to a freehold messuage premises with a cottage and other buildings known as Laburnam House situated in Station Road, Birchington.

This document repeats extracts from or the whole of the previous documents for 28th March 1839 to 1878.

The owner prior to 1619, John Sutton, Yeoman, lived at St. Nicholas-at-Wade, but owned the house on the site of the present Powell Arms. In later documents this house was described as belonging to Henry Spratling, who was the Innkeeper, and then Francis Cobb, who besides being a brewer was a baker in Margate.

Thomas Grenefield was the curate at Birchington, and was an interesting and progressive character being many years ahead of his time. (I doubt this. A.T.W.)
In 1620 he was up before the Archdeacon, presented by the Churchwardens, for unseemly conduct. See notes Vol.4, page 39.

He was a married man, having married a Margery Stace, widow at St. Margaret's, Canterbury, on June 9th 1618.

He left Birchington, presumably after his trouble with the Churchwardens, and in 1622 was living in Goudhurst.

Daniel Friend who bought the property from Thomas Grenefield in 1622 was a member of a well known Birchington family.

They ultimately owned Birchington Hall, later Spurgeons Homes, which was pulled down in 1967.

Several other well known Birchington families are mentioned in the deeds including Thomas Kerby who owned South End Farm, now Court Mount. The bar at Court Mount is probably part of the original Tudor farm house belonging to the Kerbys, and is one of the oldest buildings in Birchington.

John Jarvis who inherited the house in 1722 was a carpenter but later moved to Margate and became a Tidesman. The Tidesman controlled the loading of cargoes and worked very closely with the Customs Officials who were known as Riding Officers.

In 1767 the property was sold to Richard Lawrence Bowles who was the Riding Officer for Birchington.

Francis Jenkins Neame who acquired the property in 1815 was a member of perhaps the most famous Birchington family of all, except the Crispes. The first Neame arrived in Birchington in 1662, and by the end of the 18th century they had built up a little farming empire, and were paying over one third of the total rated of the Parish. The Tithe Map of 1839 shows that Francis Jenkins Neame, besides owning Mulberry House owned some cottages on the site of the Methodist Hall, and Queen Bertha Estate, and was also one of the principal land owners in Acol.

His father James Neame, who in 1839 was 93 years old, was living at Evergreen House, now The Smugglers, and also owned Kent House. Francis's younger brother Edward who was carrying on the farming business lived in Oakleigh House and farmed Street Farm, South End Farm, Evergreen Farm, Gore End Farm, Church Hill Farm, East End Farm and part of Quex.

Francis Jenkins Neame is described in the deeds as a "Gentleman" which implies that he did not work, and the fact that he raised a mortgage of £400 on Mulberry House in 1839 suggests that he may have been hard up. The decline and fall of the Neame empire was probably due to the fact that too many of them became "Gentlemen" and stopped working.

The Neames are, of course, alleged to have been at the centre of smuggling activities in Birchington, and if this is true, it is interesting that they should acquire the house of the principal Customs Officer.

Further Notes on Laburnam House

1. Present house built about 1765 by Daniel and John Jarvis or perhaps their mother. Both of Deal.
2. The older house possibly on the site of Watsons, the Fishmonger. It was possibly divided into two by Daniel and John Jarvis in 1698.
3. John Sutton's house was on the site now occupied by the Powell Arms. In later documents this is described as belonging to Henry Spratling, who was an Innkeeper, and then Francis Cobb.
4. The Butts were probably sold after 1899. The Butts were probably adjoining the Dog Acre on the South side.
5. Thomas Kerby had South End Farm, now Court Mount. Gravestone on the nave floor of All Saints Church
6. The 2 sons and the 6 daughters of John Jarvis sold the whole property including the "new built house" to Richard Lawrence Bowles, a Riding Officer in 1767. Riding Officers were part of the Coast Guard contingent.