

Richard Bowles - Riding Officer 1771

Richard Lawrence Bowles was Riding Officer in Birchington in the late 1700s. He lived in Laburnum House, now Mulberry's Tea Rooms.

In 1771 he insured his house and stable, together with several other properties and land, with the Sun Alliance Insurance Co. as the fire-mark on the house shows. He had bought the house from the Jarvis family, whose uncle lies buried under the oldest gravestone in All Saints Churchyard near the vestry door.

Richard's job was to patrol the coastline, and pathways leading from it, on horseback. He had authority to stop and search suspicious carts, pack-horses etc for smuggled goods. His job was a lonely and dangerous one, becoming increasingly so as the 18th C. closed.