

NEAME FAMILY

WESTGATE ON SEA

91 Brixton Road, March 19th 1878

To the Editor of the Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News - 30th March 1878

Sir

I have read with great interest the account of "Westgate on Sea" in this week's issue of the Dramatic News and which would be more interesting if more correct. The "Westgate" Estate (not Westgate-on-Sea, otherwise "Marsh Bay") together with the "Hundred", "East End", "Buckington" and "Quex" home farms belonged to my grandfather and his father before him. They came into possession after the "Crispes" died out. Mr Powell (Lord Holland's steward) bought Quex about 48 years ago and left it to his nephew, Captain Cotton. On my grandfather's death in 1842, the remaining estates were divided between his three sons with certain charges thereon. My father the late John Neame, Surgeon, of Margate, had "Westgate" proper and "Richborough" as his share and farmed it, in which I assisted to the day of his death in 1855. "Richborough" was exchanged for "Streete" adjoining Westgate, and my mother, now residing in Margate, has her income served on it. My aunt, upwards of 90, who is residing at the Home Farm, Evergreen House, Birchington, enjoys the income from another. I have heard that a Mr Corbett is the present occupier of the estate, but it is not necessary to enter into that, for the subject may be entered into in another place when the time arrives. As the whole coast-line from Minnis Bay past Birchington on the west to "Westgate" was in possession of the Neames family for upwards of 100 years, I have trespassed on your patience and kindness with this letter, for which I must apologise, hoping that you will be so kind as to accept the correction, as I hardly like to see the old family, who held the property for so long, ignored altogether without a protest. If my old friend Frank Watkins of Feltham is the author of the article as well as the artist of the sketches, I thought he would have known the above facts. Our Thanet branch of the family originally migrated from Barham near Canterbury. It may interest your readers to know – and I was surprised that you did not mention it as a matter of history – that Streete Green, adjoining Westgate on Sea (Marsh Bay) and now in possession of my brother in law, Mr Mertens, was the identical house, when belonging to Mr Rammell, that the imposter, Courtney, made his head-quarters. If not from fear of wearying you I could give you many particulars about the locality in question and in fact of the whole island – I remain, your etc
PERCY NEAME

PS My grandfather, as you may see by the brass in the aisle of Birchington Church was born in 1745 and his father forty years previous. Mem – The Taddy family are our close relatives. Possibly the omission occurred through that. Taddy-Tomlin is the name.