

Pope's or St Nicholas Coast Guard Station

A Coast Guard Station was opened up every three miles along the coast, each in charge of an officer with midshipman and 7 or 8 seamen, all provided with living accommodation for themselves and their families. Birchington was in the Centre Division of the "Coast Blockade", as it was then called. The station at St Nicholas, or Pope's, stood west of Plum Pudding Island, quite near to where the Wantsum enters the sea.

When the National School was opened in Park Lane in 1849, the children from St Nicholas walked to school each day, except when the weather was very bad. One entry in the Log Book for Nov. 9th 1863 states:

"Elizabeth Edward, Freeman Everall, Henry and William England and Adelaide, Ellen and William Corney who live at the St Nicholas Station of Coastguards, left for the winter, the way being dangerous - indeed, William Corney, who came to bring me notice, was blown over the cliff on his way here. Fortunately he was very little hurt."

The men at this end of the Bay kept watch over the area to the west as far as Reculver and also eastwards about half way along the Bay.