

Marker Stone on boundary of Neame land

Boundary stones are usually on the edge or corner of a plot and frequently have a letter incised into at least one side. They used to stand about one foot above ground, with the same amount buried below and are often about 4-5 inches wide and deep. They marked the corners of plots belonging to land-owners from time immemorial. Many of them are still marked on present day maps, but the most useful place to check up on Birchington's historic ones is on the 1840 Tithe Map.

There is one in the corner hedge of a garden in Ingle Close, with a clear letter "N" engraved on one side. The land here belonged to **Edward Neame** in 1840, when the map was made. We still have Neame Road from this connection. When the stone was discovered it was almost buried in earth and leaves. The owners of the property have uncovered it and cleaned it so that the 'N' can clearly be seen on the side nearest their property. The letter on the other side is badly damaged, but it looks like an 'H', or perhaps another 'N'. The stones were usually placed at the corners of the field boundaries and were used each year when the boundaries of the Parish lands were walked in the ceremony of 'The Beating of the Bounds'.

When we checked the Tithe map, plot 116 belonged to Edward Neame – but so did plot 115, so the second letter is another 'N'.

