

## MAJOR MORRISON BELL

Major William Morrison Bell is remembered in Birchington by the Morrison Bell houses in Albion Road. He was a Major in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Kings Own Hussars. He was a great benefactor to the village. He lived in the Victorian times in a house on the front off of Spencer Road.

He donated most of the money for the Church Clock in 1887, erected to commemorate the Queen's Jubilee.

It was through his perseverance that the Institute was established in the Square, along with much help and support from the Vicar, Rev J Alcock. The building was already there – possibly an old farm building, which was converted for use as our first “village centre”.

Major Bell died on 6<sup>th</sup> April 1900. His brother offered a fountain in the Square as a Memorial to him but the offer caused such controversy that he withdrew his offer. Morrison Bell House in Albion Road was erected in his memory and used as a convalescent home for delicate boys from London. It was owned by a London Church.

During Word War 1 it was used for wounded soldiers. It was again vacated in the Second World War, but this time it was used for accommodation for the troops. It was seriously damaged by bombs on the night of 6<sup>th</sup> August 1941 when the south end of the house was demolished. Fortunately there were no casualties.

After the war it was repaired and made into flats. Later the house was demolished and the site developed for Piper's white Georgian style houses.

There is a memorial tablet in the Church on the North wall to Major Morrison Bell, erected by the parishioners.

The memorial tablet says:-

“An esteemed resident of Birchington  
This tablet is erected by his fellow parishioners”

