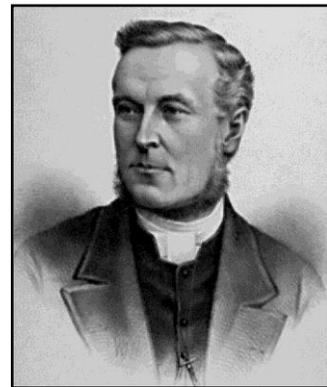


COACH HOUSE in SHAKESPEARE ROAD

Some weeks ago, a visitor to Museum asked what we held about the "Coach House" in Shakespeare Road. At that stage there was nothing specific held in our files, but we promised to look further into the subject. On researching the old maps, it was discovered that the "Coach House" had been built for the Rev Canon James Fleming who owned "Erin Dene", 38 Shakespeare Road. He used to come to Birchington from his parish of St Michael's in Chester Square, London, to enjoy our clean air and lovely coastline. One of his parishioners, Dr Cross, gave him £25,500 to build a Convalescent Home, known to us locally as "The Thicket" in Cross Road. The road was named after the good Doctor.

The coach house was built some distance from Fleming's own house, as the presence of horses could have made it unsavoury at times! Canon Fleming was 'Chaplain in Ordinary' to King Edward VII, which meant that he frequently went to preach in the chapel at Buckingham Palace, just round the corner from his church and vicarage in Chester Square. He had also preached at Sandringham and Windsor for Queen Victoria and was a Residentiary Canon of York Minster at the same time. The family who at present now live in the "Coach House" can now savour the fact that the man whose coach once graced their living room belonged to a famous and much loved cleric a hundred years ago!



Canon James Fleming
The Coach House