

## Birchington 1000 B.C. – 1400

The earliest discovery of past civilization in Birchington was in 1853, when a hoard of about 600 tin-money coins was discovered at Quex, dating back to the days of the **Ancient Britons**. A **Bronze Age** axe was unearthed at Epple Bay and in 1938 a Bronze Age sword was found at Minnis Bay. At that time Thanet was still an island with considerable woodland areas and the only access to it was by boat.

The **Romans** must have visited the area, as it was very visible from their fort at Reculver, across the Wantsum Channel. There are tiny fragments of Roman tiles in parts of the south wall of All Saints Church, and there is clear evidence of their time elsewhere in Thanet.

When the Romans had to leave Britain in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, **Saxons** invaded and then settled here during the next two hundred years. A Saxon burial site was discovered in the Epple area when the railway was built in 1863. Coins from this era have been found at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and Saxon burial urns were found at Minnis. Christianity was spreading through the island by the 600s and the community here were part of the Manor of Monkton. In 961, Birchington was part of a gift to the monks of Christ Church Canterbury by Queen Ediva.

At the time of the **Norman Conquest**, Birchington was still part of the Manor of Monkton and appears to have already had its tiny church, quite possibly of stone. By c.1250, the monks at Monkton decided to rebuild the chancel and then added a tower and chapel on the south side. The owner of the house we now call "Quex" had his own north chapel added. The little community was slowly growing round the Square and so in 1343, it was decided to rebuild the nave and add a large south aisle. The Black Death in 1347 forced a change plan, so two small half aisles were built instead.