

## MINNIS MEMORY in WINTER – February 1949 by Dr Robert Preston

*[Robert first came to Birchington in 1949 with his parents, and returned on several successive summers, including 1953, after the great flood. This is the account of his very first visit.]*

“I went to Birchington only once during the winter – February 1949, I think it was. My mother took me with her on the train from London to ‘scope out’ our prospective accommodation and take stock of the place generally. We were also to meet the landlady of the guest house (in Ethelbert Road) where we would be staying during July and August.

After looking over the guest house, I remember walking with my mother to the seafront at Minnis Bay. It was a leaden, overcast day with a vicious, icy cold wind, and driving sleet blowing directly from the (North) sea. Huge grey waves were thumping into the cliffs and exploding in clouds of white spray. Hundreds of wet stones lay scattered on top of the sea wall and huge frozen puddles of solid ice covered large areas of it. When we finally returned to Birchington Station, my mother revealed that she had been distressed by the thudding wave, as they were reminiscent of the bombs exploding around us during the Blitz and its aftermath.

I, on the other hand, had found the visit most exhilarating, but remember being shocked when we came back in July, to clear blue skies, gently lapping waves and warm sunshine. The tide was out, as I recall, and there, stretched out before me, full of promise, was an expanse of beautiful sandy beach curving away towards what I later discovered to be Reculver Towers in the distance.”

Minnis Bay -  
Winter  
c. 1950

