

**BEDLAM COTTAGE** was a 400 year old thatched cottage situated by itself in the fields in Essex Gardens opposite the junction of Devon Gardens. It stood in the way of a development planned by George Farrar in 1939. He gave the tenants, the Hooker family, notice to quit and then offered the building to the combined Fire Brigades of Thanet to practise on in February 1939. A notice appeared in the local press announcing the event would take place on the 13<sup>th</sup>. The report on it afterwards was quite happy to state the age of the house, without any regrets at its demise!

The house is mentioned in the Churchwardens' accounts in 1741. Widow Hills lived in it when Thomas Hill drew up his 1688 of Birchington. From the photographic evidence, of which we have several very clear photos before the fire, was built about 1620-30