

## **SOUTHDOWN HOUSE – 207 Canterbury Road**

When Ray Butcher first bought this property it had pseudo beams fixed to its outer walls and there was a shop being run from the front room. Ray and his wife continued to run this through the 1970s and it was very useful for those people in this eastern end of the village. One customer in particular, “Old Joe”, who lived in one of east End Cottages nearby. These were up the small alley off the Canterbury Road on its south side nearly opposite Epple Road. He was a neighbour of Christine Fagg, who was a dear soul with a heart of gold. Old Joe used to frequent Ray’s shop as much for the company (and probably the warmth in winter time) as for the items he wished to buy. In fact, he was not a ‘good’ customer in that sense of the word and he was also very smelly – but such a character and so full of stories of old Birchington that Ray and his wife always made him welcome.

Ray took a photograph of him one day and since he died, Ray’s daughter Susan (now Mrs Wimbush) painted an excellent portrait of him. (See next page)