

Three Cottages Opposite the Church : 237-241 Canterbury Road¹

This row of old cottages stands opposite the churchyard. At one stage, they were part of Church Hill Farm, bought by John Bridges in 1688 and are included in the map drawn up for the sale. This may have been the original farmhouse for Church Hill Farm, before the later brick building a little further down the street was built. The central and right hand sections once formed one dwelling

The buildings have a flint and brick facing on the outside, though Nick Dermott suggested that the flint areas were probably poured in between wooden shuttering, using mortar to bind it all together. The fact that it is now painted over has helped to preserve and weatherproof the walling. No. 237 on the left has some very old timbers in its structure with a narrow staircase in the front left hand corner. All the rooms in the three houses have very low ceilings on both floors. The roof is large and is tiled with Kent peg-tiles, with the end wall at the left side standing outside the roof-line. The wall at the right of the row fits just under the roof tiles, with no overhang.

There are three chimneys, with the central one being the oldest. This is a multi-stack structure and probably belonged to the original house. The stacks at each end of the row appear to be Victorian. The flint and brick walls, which enclose the front gardens, all had to be re-sited in 1933, when the Canterbury Road was widened, although much of the original material was re-used. These properties had quite long front gardens at that stage, as an early photograph shows. There is a fire-mark from the Sun Alliance of London on the right hand one, dated 7th November 1787, when the properties were divided into just two dwellings. William Grigg of Birchington, Miller, took out the insurance, with Widow Ayles in the other part, not exceeding £50.

¹ See Appendix No. 36