

A Kent Village in London

Once river ways were streaming
And willow trees were leaning
Beside the working Mill.
Horse and Cart would trundle through
Dusty lanes as West winds blew
A village standing still.

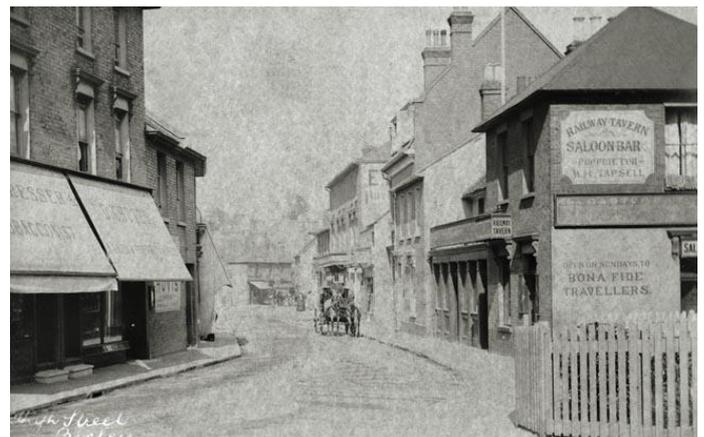
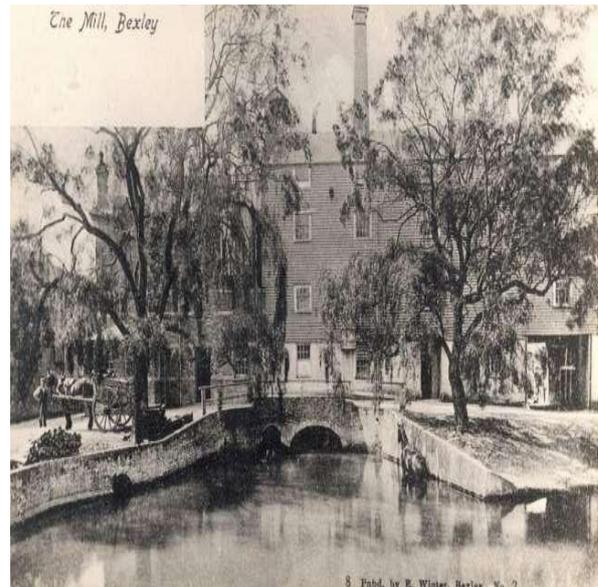
Razzles sold delicious fish
Butchers cut the Sunday dish
Bookmakers measured feet.
Blacksmith Beadle dealt in coal
Never to be undersold
For villagers a treat.

Ironmongers plied their trade
Trading slow and sleepy lanes
So too the Greengrocer.
A time of staple diet
And Sunday peace and quiet
Villagers were closer.

Local shops once known as stores
People yearned for little more
All Traders had a Son.
Reffell's Brewery made the beer
Tramways started to appear
In a village near London.

Lost the Ford of olden day
Arches built across the Cray
Bridge House was set to go.
Old Mill now in changing hands
Spanning out across the land
A village starts to grow.

Build a bridge for trains to run
Taking people to London
What will local trade become?
Workers will commute away
Leaving silence in the day
A village with no-one.



Dressing roads with painted lines
Hail the traffic changing times
Oh what will we do next?
Tarmac coats the main road lanes
Curbs appear along with drains
Will village ways progress.

Now a fast pace seems to suit
Commutes lead from busy routes
To a frustrating stop.
Cars queuing send a warning
On motorists it's dawning
The village must take stock.

More buildings will surely yield
Country spaces densely filled
With metro fumes and smoke.
Fresh clean air will all be gone
For the stillness we will long
While villages will choke.

Bexley library paves the way
Staying green not turning grey
As rural space has peaked.
So protect the country scene
With past wisdom from what's been
And Keep Bexley life unique.

Note:

Leave no old village standing
Betjeman warned us handing
Down a cautious tale
Of Inexpensive Progress
By honouring speed no less
All villages for sale!
Yet Walk the Shuttle Riverway
Stroll along the rippling Cray
In urban borough peace
And drifting in fields and meadows
Near river banks and hedgerows
Where village borders cease
As we do let us remember
A famous village defender
With broly and a hat
If Betjeman could come back
And see Bexley's green space gap
With knowing poetic rap
He'd say 'Watch out for that'.

