

Looking for North Cray

Once North Cray was in Ruxley Hundred
Then in Kent its boundaries plundered
In Bromley it hid
Before Chis' and Sid
And then into London it thundered

Notable locals made a great sound
When on Parliament's drum they did pound
An MP their fate
Then part of our State
Becoming the Mayor of London Town

Once stood a striking house on the Cray
This was one of only four built that way
It burnt to the ground
No Firemen around
Footh Cray Place had then past its day

Mount Mascall met the demolishers' ball
Planning rules altered the use of it all
Horses now trot
The Mascall Farm plot
As there's nothing left of the Hall

North Cray Place a casualty of war
Air raid bombings and the house was no more
Creating a space
And changing the pace
Stylish estates brought houses galore

An Open Hall House was also to move
Widening roads was said to improve
Commuting for cars
But the loss still jars
As precious timbers in Sussex will prove



Vale Mascal bought in a cold gothic bath
Hydraulics pumped water along a shaft
Gothic genius seen
As people kept clean
Building Bath Houses was truly a craft



Loring Hall viewed a cascading scene
A joy for many past owners who've been
The Hall changed hands
So too the land
Yet Cricket is still played on the green



Five Arches Bridge stands with graceful might
Brown a master of visual delight
Meandering here
The Water is clear
And the meadows a beautiful sight

Church bells sound from St.James in the trees
A flock worships for all North Crayees
We must heed the call
To look after it all
Noting advice from resident payees



Today it is tricky to see what remains
Housing estates replace mansions and lanes
With views still stunning
And river still running
North Cray may have lost more than its gained?

S.A.M.Hawkes

This poem has been written as a Limerick to be read at a pace observing the odd stress change. It is a poem that pays tribute to the tranquil scenery and past times of North Cray.