

Forster, whose house stands in its own grounds up Hiher Green Lane.

A writer in a monthly magazine (1880) gives the following graphic sketch of the Ravensbourne from its source to its confluence with the Thames:—

“Amongst the various rivers and streams that flow through the picturesque county of Kent, there is a stream so small that an average pedestrian, proceeding at his usual pace of walking, can start from the source after breakfast, and reach its estuary

flight of a pair of ravens, may be received as true or not, as the reader thinks fit. From this well the water flows into two small lakes, one beneath the other, and finally into a third lake, which is now enclosed in private grounds. From this spot, for some miles, the stream, having a serpentine course, flows through private estates, only in one place disclosing itself in a pretty waterfall, and then flowing round a small island, radiant in spring with blossoms of the rhododendron. Hence, through Hayes, near



OLD SYDENHAM BRIDGE, 1831.  
(From a Sketch from Nature.)

comfortably before dinner. And this is no mere dribbling brook, or ditch dry for half the summer, but a steady perennial stream, rising in a beautifully romantic country, and capable, when it is in flood, of letting the inhabitants of the adjacent valleys feel its power by wild irruptions into kitchens and cellars, flower and kitchen gardens, disturbing the porcine inmates of the styes in their slumbers, and scaring the poultry in their sheds. . . . At Keston Common we come at once upon the source of the Ravensbourne, known as Cæsar's Well, whence rises a copious stream of crystal water. The traditions that Cæsar watered his troops here, and also that their steps were directed to it by the

Bromley, and past Beckenham, the tiny river steals along, and at a place called South End again comes forward into public view. . . . From this point it winds through South End and Catford to Lewisham, where it formerly bifurcated, the larger branch flowing behind the village, the smaller through the centre of the public street. From Lewisham the stream soon begins to lose its romance, and is here joined by a not inconsiderable tributary, the Quaggy, which in rainy weather brings down torrents of water, and manages, with the waters of the Ravensbourne, to do considerable damage to the house property which, in defiance of the laws of prudence, has been built on the lower