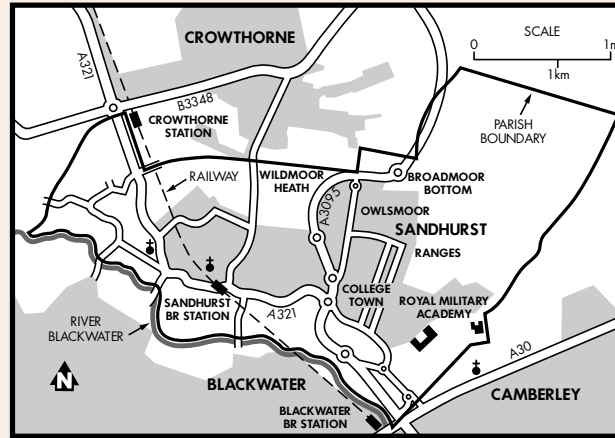




Rectory Cottages today

1874 dedicated to Miss Harriet Connell. At that time most of the village water was obtained from wells. At Mickle Hill stands the 7-sided "Round House". The grand house at Ambarrow Court has been demolished and the land is now public open space, together with Wildmoor Heath and Shepherd Meadows.

For a fascinating insight into Sandhurst village life read Sam Chesterman and Kitty Dancy's 'History of Sandhurst', 1983.



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Other leaflets available on local history include St. Michael's Parish Church, Sandhurst, St George's Parish Church, Owlsmoor, the history of Crowthorne Parish and The Making of Bracknell New Town.

For a full list ring 01344 354124 or visit our Website at www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk

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BRACKNELL FOREST SANDHURST A BRIEF HISTORY



COUNTRYSIDE SERVICE

SANDHURST, A BRIEF HISTORY

EARLY DAYS

Sandhurst derived its name from the sandy soils and hurst (a wooded eminence), for the earliest hamlet was situated high above the River Blackwater. It was up the river that tribes invaded and populated the area, including the Belgic tribe of Attribates. The Romans built a military road to link London with Silchester, now called The Devil's Highway and, judging from the pottery and coins found locally, the Romans settled in the vicinity.

THE PARISH OF SANDHURST

Sandhurst is not mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086. At that time it was a small hamlet, on the border of the large Parish of Sonning, with a chapel on the site of St Michael's Parish Church, between the two river crossings. The manor of Sandhurst is first mentioned in 1316. It changed hands many times, reverted to the Crown briefly during the reign of Henry VIII, before being sold again. No large manor house is recorded for Sandhurst until 1789 when Sandhurst Lodge was built on the manor land.

ROYAL FOREST AND ENCLOSURE

In reality, Sandhurst was part of the Royal Forest and subject to restrictive Forest Laws, rigorously controlling the number of inhabitants. This part of the Forest was known as Sandhurst Walk and during the reign of James I only 23 houses are recorded. The hamlet had grown very little by the early 1800s when, at the time of the Enclosure Acts, only 36 houses are listed and the population was around 222. At that time about 3,400 acres was listed as open forest

land, heath and common whilst a further 1,000 acres was private enclosed property. The loss of commoners' rights to grazing, cutting turves for the fire, etc. caused much hardship in rural Sandhurst.

SANDHURST'S CHURCHES



St Michael's Church in the early 20th century

The earlier Church of St Michael was rebuilt in 1853 with further works in 1868. The architect was the renowned G E Street who designed the Church in the style of the 13th Century, using squared dark brown rubble and dressed stone for the corners and details. The ornately carved font is a special feature. St Michael's School opened in 1862. Non-Conformist chapels still in use are the Methodist Church of 1906 and the Baptist Church of 1884. The Roman Catholic Church was opened in 1960.

THE ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY

In 1812 The Royal Military Academy moved from Great Marlow to Sandhurst. The original building is designed as a mansion with a splendid Greek portico and landscaped grounds with a lake. A siding from Blackwater Station carried all the building materials to the site of this huge project. The chapel was built in 1879 and extended in 1937 through gifts from people associated with the Academy. The Academy provided officers for the Crimean



Ground staff in front of the RMA circa 1913

War, the Indian Mutiny and the Boer War. The demand for officers was so high during World War I that training in the early days was for three months only and during World War II there was a Passing Out ceremony every fourteen days. Women cadets were admitted in 1984.

The other great institutions of Wellington College and Broadmoor Hospital, which were in the Parish of Sandhurst until 1894, are described in another leaflet, on the history of Crowthorne Parish.

WELLINGTONIA AVENUE

This amazing avenue of Wellingtonia trees was planted in 1863 by John Walter III of The Times Newspaper, in memory of the Duke of Wellington.

HOMES AND LAND

Rectory Cottages, converted from the Rectory Farm, is one of the oldest buildings in Sandhurst. It has been much altered and enlarged but still possesses much old brickwork and massive wooden beams support the roof.

By the end of the 19th Century Sandhurst had become a fashionable neighbourhood. Many fine homes were built and, despite the rise in land values and the strong demand for residential development, some are still standing. In Scotland Hill there is the Memorial Well of