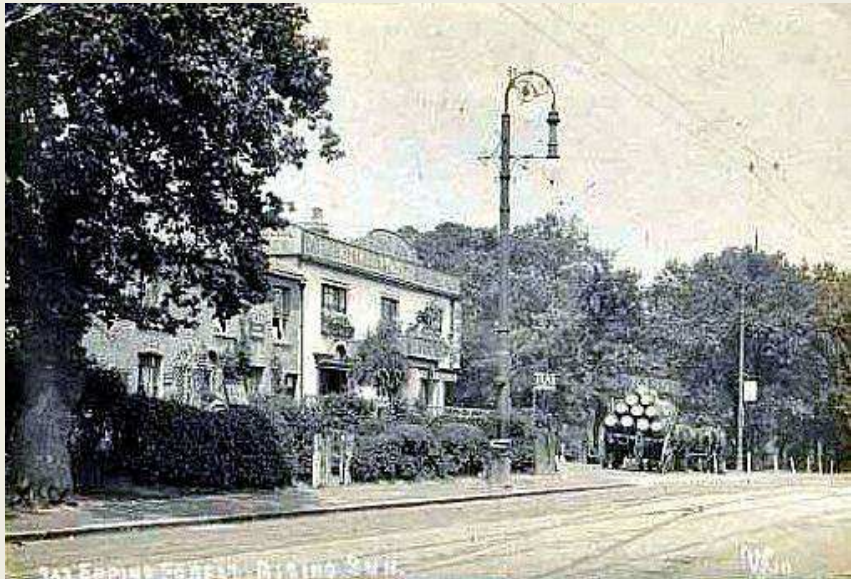


The Rising Sun Public House, Woodford New Road, Walthamstow

Some Licencees

Our first knowledge of the pub come from an entry in the 1851 Census when we learn that 27 year old Leyton born William Picton, his wife, young daughter and a domestic servant were living in Woodford New Road. (Interestingly, his parents were either living with them or next door) William is described as a 'Victualler' who was a person who ran an inn and also provided food.



William died in 1854 and his wife Sarah took over the pub. The pub must have been thriving as, in 1861, she is described as a Licenced Victualler and has a live-in Bar Maid, House Servant and Ostler.

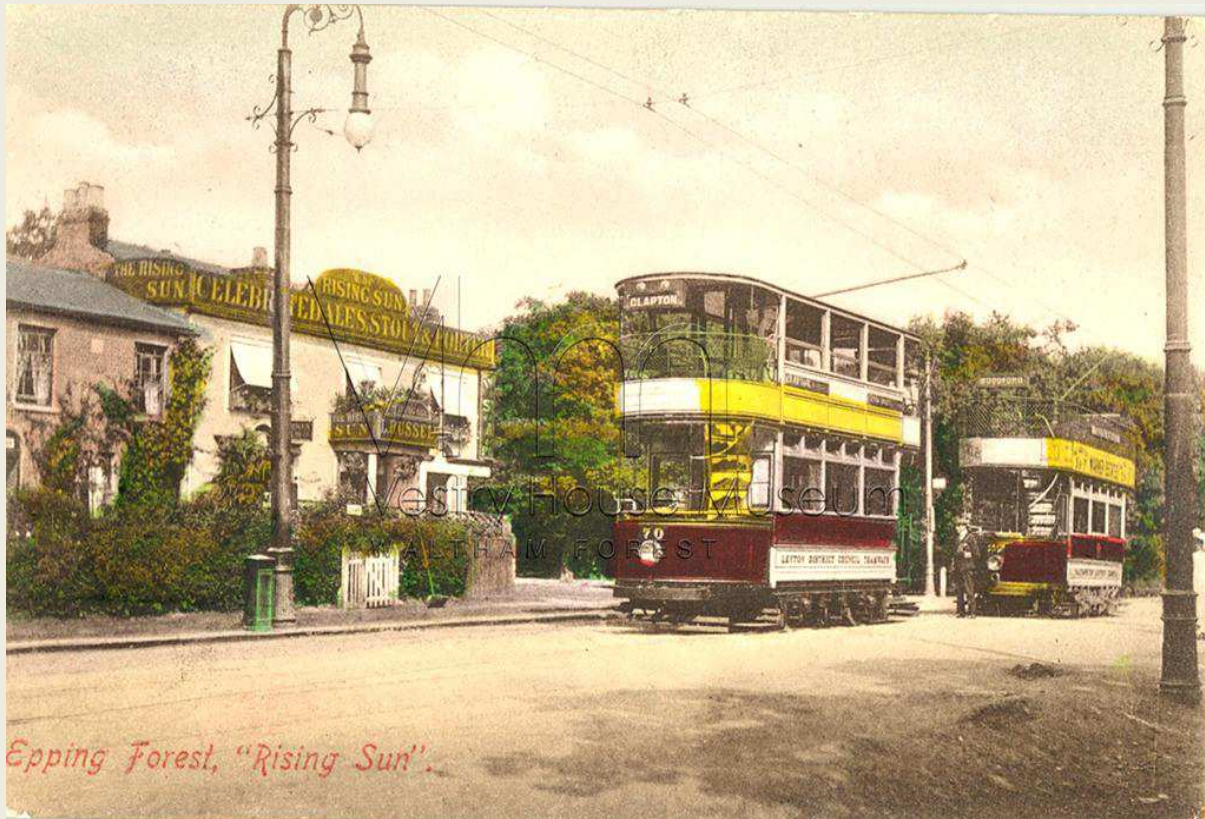
In 1871 Census, the premises are described as the Rising Sun Inn and are run by Alfred Joyce and his wife. They also have a live-in Barmaid, Cook and Ostler.

From 1874 until 1895 the pub was in the hands of George Clifton and his family.

Walthamstow Memories correspondent Carol Ann Brown's great grand-parents, Harry & Sarah Brown ran the pub from 1916-1925 and we learn from Laura Fuller that "I lived at the Rising Sun in the late 1970s to 1984. My mother and father were the landlords, George Henry Appleton and Florence Violet Appleton. It was a fantastic family pub in those days."

A Forest Pub

By the beginning of the 20th century, The Rising Sun public house was a typical Epping Forest pub. It was situated in Woodford New Road. (Don't be fooled, the 'new' road is actually 178 years old!) at one of the nearest public accessible places to the forest. It would have had a resident 'local' trade of people from Upper Walthamstow in the Parish of St Peter's and a huge 'passing' trade of the hundreds of thousands of north and east



Londoners who flocked to the area at Spring and in summer. As working people only had one day off each week, a Sunday, they would come to Epping Forest for the fresh air. It was close enough to come for a day to picnic, play games, use the fairground rides, have their fortunes told, ride donkeys, swim, row, fish games, have donkey rides and gypsy fortune telling.

Public Access

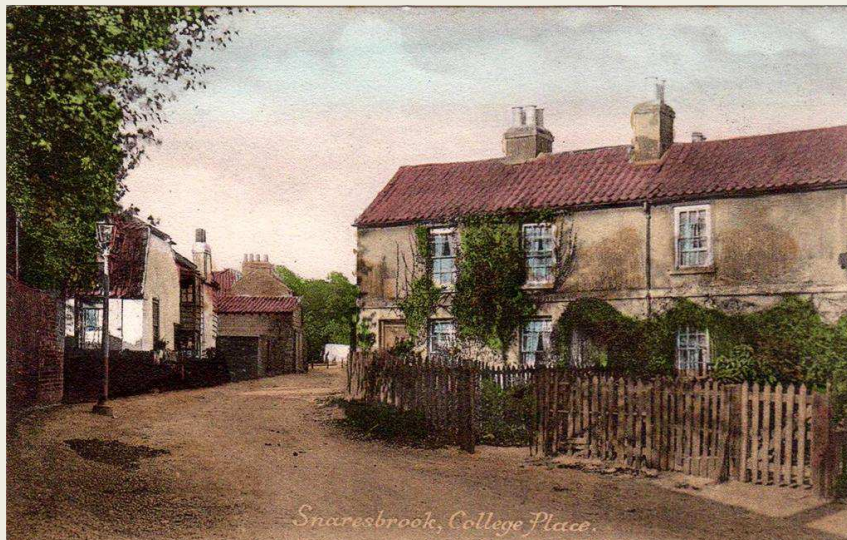
Public access to the area was facilitated because the pub was located by the terminus of the public service trams from Clapton, Hackney coming via Lea Bridge Road and from Ferry Lane, Tottenham coming via Forest Road to the Napier Arms at Woodford New Road. There was also a tram service that connected the Napier Arms pub to the Rising Sun pub. Additionally, there were large numbers of groups of people who were in groups that were

organised by pubs, workhouses, churches and workplaces and travelled by horse drawn charabancs that were hired for the day and came for a day out in the forest. The men only groups tended to head for the forest pubs and the family groups often brought their own picnics.



Gilbert's Slade

The Rising Sun pub is in a part of the forest named *Gilbert's Slade*. This is a stretch of open grassland in an otherwise mainly wooded part of Epping Forest. The name is used to locate an area which includes adjacent and nearby forest land. The whole of this area lies between Snaresbrook Road in the south and the Waterworks Corner roundabout and the North Circular Road in the north. To the east, fences separate the forest from housing or playing fields.



Left: College Place in Gilbert's Slade

Gilbert's Slade is separated from Rising Sun Woods by the Woodford New Road. These woods are named after the public house that lies near St. Peter's Church. To the west, the boundaries consist of the road called

Forest Rise, fences which separate the land from allotments or buildings, and Becontree Avenue. A number of buildings lie within these boundaries, particularly in the south, and include the church and the public house west of Woodford New Road, Forest School adjacent to *Gilbert's Slade*, and dwelling houses.

The total area is about 75 hectares, predominantly of woodland, but with pieces of grassland as well as ponds and other wet areas.. A number of streams or ditches are present in the area, flowing generally north to south, although some of these may lie empty except at times of high rainfall. During such periods however, many temporary

watercourses may be formed particularly in the south part of Gilbert's Slade proper. Ponds or wet hollows are scattered about the whole area, the largest of these being Bulrush Pond. There are a number of marshy spots.

The most popular parts of the area are the vicinity of Bulrush Pond and in the open region of Gilbert's Slade itself which is used by both pedestrians and equestrians, as are the main tracks which run through it.

The Refreshment Hut

Opposite the Rising Sun pub in Gilbert's Slade was a popular refreshment hut.



The tea stall is remembered with fondness by many visitors. *Walthamstow Memories* correspondent [Carol Ann Barber](#), a great grand-daughter of Harry & Sarah Brown who were the pub licencees from 1916-1925 tells us:

"My great grandparents owned The Rising Sun in the early 1900's. Their names were Sarah and Harry Brown. He was also a Councillor and JP and laid the stone outside the old Walthamstow Library. I was born in 1951 at home in Edingburgh Road. It was nice to read about the tea stall opposite the pub. When I was young my father used to take me on walks to the forest and we always had a slice of bread pudding and a mug of tea at that stall."

The Bullrush Pond



The Bullrush pond is beside the Rising Sun pub and was much beloved by local Walthamstow children who pond dipped for tadpoles and newts and by the day visitors who hired canoes and small rowing boats.

Mike Gilbey tells us that: "On summer weekends hundreds of people used to flock to this

location. Deck chairs were available for hire as were rowing boats for use on the lake. Swimming and paddling were also popular features and a permanent refreshment kiosk selling teas, sandwiches and ice cream was located near the shallow sandy banks of the lake

A Different Kind Of World

Although it wouldn't have been readily apparent, the pub's decline started in the 1980 as a result of the increased mobility of working people. As Michael Gilbey notes in his excellent Mick;s Muses posted March 9th 2011, *Memories - 3*

"It was probably the coming of mass car ownership that sounded the death knell for the lake. People could now travel further afar to real sea-side resorts or the countryside. People simply stopped coming to this location and the boats, deck chairs and refreshment kiosk all disappeared without trace. The next time you have an opportunity to drive along Woodford New Road, spare a glance for the lake which may have gone unnoticed before. Try and visualise this sorry-looking bog which once rang to the sound of children's laughter, sunbathers, swimmers and serene boating"

This situation of course also applied to the pub and the mass week-end exodus of East Londoners to Epping Forest dramatically slowed and the Pub and the surrounding amenities went into decline. The Refreshment Hut and boat hire facility at Bullrush Pond ceased and without mass public use the pond slowly silted up and became a



bog with only a small area of open water. The situation with the pond changed in 2006 when The City of London Corporation worked with the Scouts and Epping Forest Centenary Trust to host the 24th annual Epping Forest conservation project. This brought Explorer Scouts and Ranger Guides (aged 14-18), with over 20 Scout Leaders, from all over the UK, together in Epping Forest for a unique camping experience, between 20th and 25th August. As part of their voluntary work in the forest they removed reeds at Bulrush Pond.



The R & S Lounge

In 2008 the Rising Sun pub vanished and following a £2 million transformation emerged as the R & S (Presumably for Rising Sun) Lounge. The following is part of how one reviewer described the venue and is sufficient to give a taste of the place:

"...The whole design is not dissimilar to a stylish bar in Ibiza. The main bar has been designed in dazzling white Phillipino marble with 300 LED ceiling panels and neon underfloor lights to create a stylish club atmosphere. In the middle of the room is a large central bar, surrounded by bespoke cream and black finished sofas with glass tables. Nearer the back of the bar are two cordoned off VIP areas, designed to the same high standards as the rest of the bar. To drink in here requires a minimum spend of £500 per table. Adorning each wall is a top of the range plasma TV, and the DJ booth is as hi-tech as you'd find in a club with decks, CDJs and Bose speakers. It's clear that no expense has been spared when designing this venue....."

The venue, a nightclub, is aimed at the young (Over 18 year old) affluent Essex crowd and the following pictures don't need any words.



Licence Restrictions Following Violent Incidents

According to the local paper, in January this year, the Police called for a review of its Licence following six serious violent incidents at the premises last year, with many of the victims being stabbed, slashed or hospitalised. As a result, the council's licensing committee agreed with police recommendations to cut the bar service and opening times by one hour at weekends.

- Now, the club will shut at 1am on a Thursday and 2am on a Friday and Saturday.
- Conditions were also imposed by the council. These included the use of club scan equipment to record who is in the club at all times, a no search no entry policy and extra CCTV.
- Patrons will not be allowed to re-enter the club after midnight and a metal wand will be used to search people on their way in.

This is not a new situation for nightclubs in Waltham Forest and it will be interesting to see how long it continues to trade under these conditions.

Bill Bayliss

Some resources used in this article:

<http://pubshistory.com/EssexPubs/Walthamstow/risinsun.shtml>

Various census extracts from Ancestry.UK

<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/essex/vol6/pp250-251>

<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/27136/page/6929/data.pdf>

<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/essex/vol6/pp174-184>

<http://www.wansteadwildlife.org.uk/index.php/gilberts-slade70>

<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/green-spaces/epping-forest/visitor-information/Documents/gilberts-slade-epping-forest.pdf>

<http://greenflagaward.org/news/2012/08/scouts-making-a-difference-at-epping-forest/>

<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/green-spaces/epping-forest/heritage/Pages/history-of-Epping-Forest.aspx>

http://www.guardian-series.co.uk/news/10490137.500_years_of_tourism_history_from_the_East_End_to_Epping_Forest/

<http://boroughphotos.org/walthamforest/rising-sun-ph/>

<http://micksmuses.com/category/memories/walthamstow/>

<http://www.rslounge.co.uk/>

http://www.fluidlondon.co.uk/venue/woodford_and_chingford/rs_lounge_e17

http://www.guardian-series.co.uk/news/11751190.Police_call_nightclub_licence_review_over_violence/?ref=mr

http://www.guardian-series.co.uk/news/11751190.Police_call_nightclub_licence_review_over_violence/?ref=mr

http://www.guardian-series.co.uk/news/11764795.Club_hours_cut_over_police_fears_of_further_violence/