

THE AGE OF THE TRAIN

Harry Pellow

The end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th was surely 'the age of the train'. Perhaps not in high speeds but in the creation of routes of communication which were to make substantial changes to previously quiet country areas. Although a few groups expressed their opposition the railways seem to have been generally accepted. Not far away in Chesham the local population gave the Metropolitan line the last half mile of land for their track so that the station could be built nearer the town centre.

On the 18th January 1863, the Metropolitan opened the first underground railway in the world from Paddington to Farringdon Street. So great was the interest that 40,000 people paid to travel on the opening day. A fifteen minute service was intended with some increase at peak times. During church hours on Sundays there was a break of service.

The Metropolitan and St. Johns Wood Railway of which the Metropolitan Railway was a substantial share holder opened a single line track with passing loops at stations from Baker Street junction to Swiss Cottage. There were intermediate stations at St. Johns Wood Road and Marlborough Road. So began the extension to Northwood and Ruislip. The Service opened on the 13th April 1868 and the first year saw a through service from Swiss Cottage to Moorgate, but on the 7th March 1869 the familiar pattern of trains terminating at Baker Street began and the junction line was not used again until 1907.

The Swiss Cottage terminus was extended to West Hampstead in 1879 and on to Willesden Green at the end of the year. Harrow was reached on the 2nd August 1880.

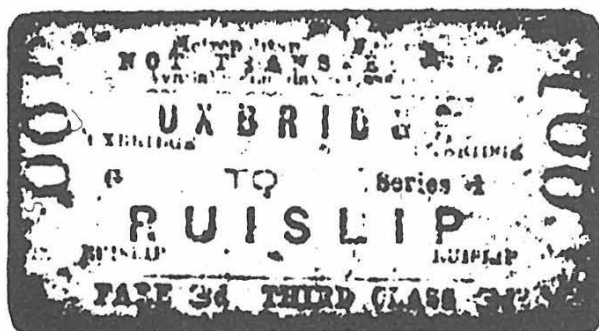
The single track to Baker Street was doubled in 1882 by a further tunnel which explains why much of the approach to Baker Street is even today by single tunnels.

The extension line went on to Pinner in 1885, Rickmansworth in 1887 and Chesham in 1889. Aylesbury was eventually reached in 1892. Northwood station had been opened in the extension of 1887. This prompted property dealings in the area and house construction proceeded. The first commuters were arriving!

It is interesting that Sir Edward Watkin, the Chairman of the Metropolitan, did not think of this railway as a local service but told his shareholders of a line from Manchester and Sheffield through Baker Street and then via Farringdon, Holborn Viaduct and Blackfriars to the South Eastern Railway and on to Dover. This was not to be the end as through the Channel Tunnel the continent of Europe was to be reached. The Stephensons' interest had already meant that French Railways and many other European Countries had laid tracks with 4ft. 8½ins between the rails.

The Metropolitan did make contact at Verney Junction with the rails from the North and at 50 miles from Baker Street it was the furthest point reached. The connection with the South was once made through Farringdon but the Channel Tunnel is still a talking point today.

Of more local interest a branch was opened from Harrow to Uxbridge on the 4th July 1904 and although the track had been laid with electric rails, steam engines were the motive power for the first six months. On the opening day the stations on the line were Harrow, Ruislip and Uxbridge. This branch saw the introduction of the first multiple unit electric train sets on 1st January 1905.



Face of ticket no. 001. First day of service 4 July 1904.

A spur was also built in 1904 from Rayners Lane to South Harrow which the District trains had reached. However, due to a dispute between the Metropolitan and District, the District Railway did not run their passenger trains through to Ruislip and Uxbridge until 1910. With such routes available, Ruislip became the 'awayday' for many Londoners. On Public holidays several hundred people came for a walk in the country and a 9d. tea at the Poplars Tea Garden.

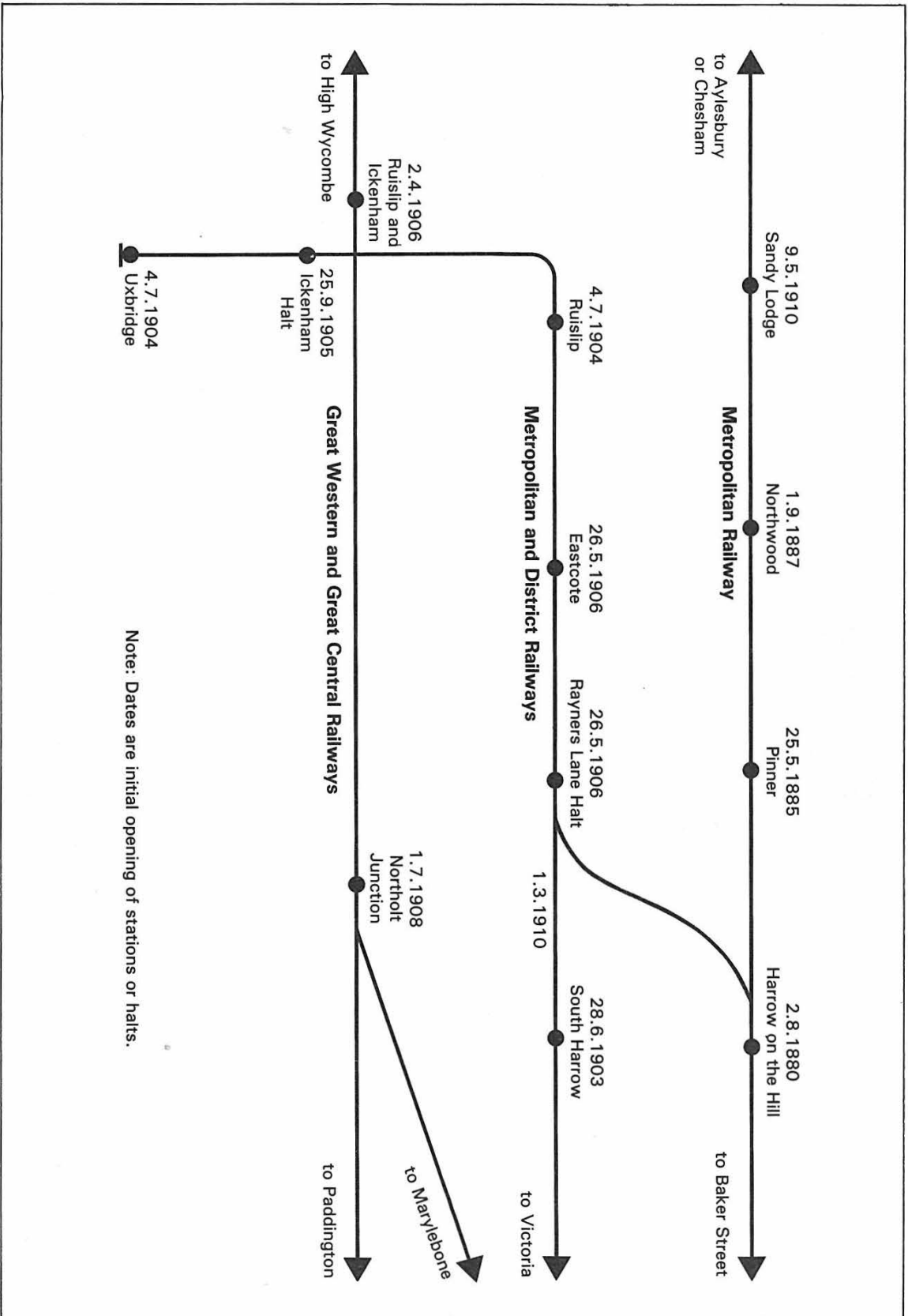
Electrification of the track through Northwood was not achieved with the same speed. By 1906 trains through Northwood were hauled by electric locomotives from London to Wembley Park and then steam engines were substituted for the remainder of the journey. In 1908 the change-over was made at Harrow. Beyond Harrow electrification was completed to Rickmansworth in 1925 and Amersham and Chesham in 1960.

The sequence of opening stations round this area was:

Harrow the first in 1880
(It became Harrow on the Hill in 1894)
Next Pinner 1885
Northwood 1887
Ruislip and Uxbridge 1904
Ickenham Halt 1905
Eastcote and Rayners Lane Halt 1906
Moor Park (originally Sandy Lodge) 1910
Ruislip Manor Halt 1912
West Harrow 1913
North Harrow 1915
Hillingdon 1923
and almost up to date Northwood Hills 1933

Most of the original station buildings have been substantially altered over the years or resited such as Uxbridge which moved from Belmont Road. However, Ruislip is of interest as the main building adjacent to the London platform is almost entirely original construction as on the opening day. Ornamental pillars supporting the platform awning can be admired. On the

Railways of Ruislip 1910.





Ruislip Station 1933.

London Transport Executive

Uxbridge platform plain girders suffice. Also note the use of red bricks to produce patterns and lines. The footbridge and Uxbridge shelter are later additions.

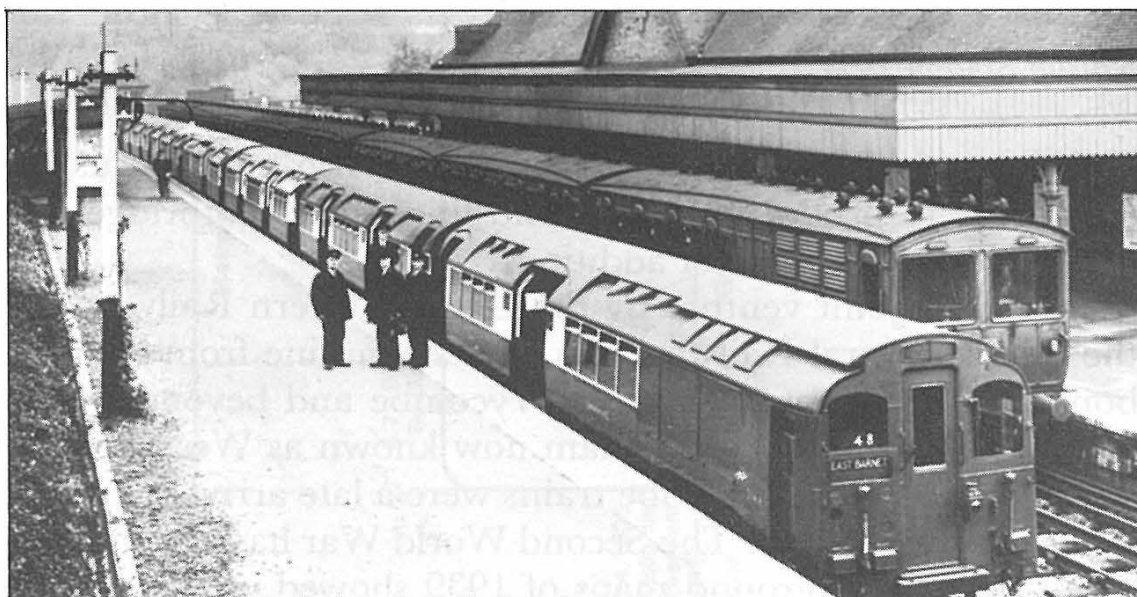
In 1906 a joint venture by the Great Western Railway and the Great Central Railway opened a steam line from Marylebone and Paddington to High Wycombe and beyond with a station at Ruislip and Ickenham now known as West Ruislip. The electric central line tube trains were a late arrival reaching West Ruislip in 1948. The Second World War had delayed this extension. Underground maps of 1939 showed projected tube stations at Harefield Road and Denham but these were never constructed.

Although the West Ruislip lines passed over the Metropolitan line to Uxbridge there was originally no connection. This was, however, achieved in later years as from Ruislip Gardens a line passes through the depot and out to a siding known as

Ruislip Siding alongside the Metropolitan to which it is connected. In 1979 London Transport ran an enthusiasts train from White City to Baker Street via Ruislip using this line. The unusual route had many Ruislip interests covering stations at South Ruislip, Ruislip Gardens, Ruislip (Metro), Ruislip Manor and Eastcote. A Victoria line train was used but this was to be expected as the train departed from Seven Sisters in the morning and returned there about tea time.

The Western interest in the line to High Wycombe ceased some years back but they still run one train a day hauled by a diesel locomotive with main line coaches from Birmingham to Paddington. It passes through West Ruislip at 8.55 a.m. and returns in the evening at 5.55 p.m.

Recollections of early days can however be brought back by sitting on a red platform seat at Ruislip Gardens and noting the initials G.W.R. cast in a circle about one foot in diameter in the metal supports.



Uxbridge Library

The original Uxbridge Station in Belmont Road 1933; note Metropolitan Compartment Stock.

Another of the research projects carried out by members of the W.E.A. Local History Class has been a study of

the local newspapers at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries.

In the Buckinghamshire Advertiser for the year 1872 there were only 43 mentions of Ruislip and over half of these were in the accounts of proceedings of the Uxbridge Petty Sessions — the magistrates frequently under the Chairmanship of F. H. Deane of Eastcote House. Such headlines as “A dastardly assault” and “A brutal son and a forgiving mother” vie with “Drunkenness in Ruislip” and “Another sleeping carter”.

Ron Hudson has extracted information from the local press about other crimes in the locality.

LOCAL CRIME AND PUNISHMENT — 1899

(As Reported in the Uxbridge Magistrates Court)

Ron Hudson

1899 was in the reign of Queen Victoria and this year saw the start of the Boer War. I studied the weekly newspaper ‘The Uxbridge Review and District Record’ which reported International, National and Local News.

I have endeavoured to keep the presentation relevant to our local area, however, where I felt the subject matter was worthy of note I have included news from further afield.

Most cases related to drunkenness and disorderly behaviour — more of this later.

Those of you expecting a nice juicy murder locally are, I’m afraid, going to be unlucky. However, there was a particularly gruesome murder carried out in Yiewsley in November when a P.C. patrolling in Edgar Road, near West Drayton Railway Station, and close to the Baptist Church, which was in the course of erection, saw what appeared to be a bundle of rags in

some rubbish. Closer examination revealed the body of William Cliffe, a labourer at the local India Rubber Works.

Cliffe, a 38 year-old bachelor had been robbed. His body was conveyed to the De Burgh Arms Hotel and laid on a trestle table in an outhouse 'a fearful wound at the back of the head (temporarily plastered with newspaper) and gaping crevices from the forehead to the chin'. The Coroner's report quoted verbatim in the newspaper, showed that he had been hit by bricks. The Police were continuing their enquiries 'great excitement prevails in the vicinity but general order is maintained by a local posse of Police'.

It is interesting to note that at this time all Coroners' Courts were held at a nearby inn.

In June, a jury empanelled by the Deputy Coroner, R. Demp, at the 'Ship' at Eastcote decided that Sydney Charles Bull, 30, committed suicide whilst of unsound mind. The deceased was found in a ditch on the previous Thursday with his throat cut.

There were several applications brought to the Magistrate for exemption from the Vaccination Act of 1898.

The disease of Smallpox 'a dangerous and disfiguring illness' had partly been halted by the 1853 Vaccination Act, which was voluntary and used 'an arm to arm' method. There had been opposition to the Act, indeed, in 1866 an 'Anti-Compulsory Vaccination League' had been set up. Despite this, compulsory vaccination was introduced by the 1898 Act, this time using glycerinated calf lymphs. It was not until 1946 that compulsion was abolished.

In April, Joseph Seabrook of Ruislip liable to the penalties of the Act Fined 10/- with 5/6d costs. Also Edwin Sydney Hunt of Eastcote Park conscientious objection to the vaccination of his child case adjourned for 1 month.

In August, Mr. Kemp of Hallowell Road, Northwood, a cab proprietor, said he believed the death of one of his children was caused, or accelerated by the operation of vaccination. His application for exemption was granted.

Mr. Gregory of the High Road, Uxbridge, told the bench in

August, "I have had my three other children vaccinated but I conscientiously believe their health has been affected by it." He secured exemption from the demands of the Act.

I have detailed below a few miscellaneous cases brought before the bench during the year:

In July, Edwin Hughes 'whistler' has had his much needed bath and change of clothing in 'Her Majesty's Hotel, Holloway' in Park Road, Harefield, he begged for food at No. 4 Park Terrace. He asked for a copper, but unfortunately for him it came in the form of bright buttons and blue clothing, P.C. 53X 14 days hard labour.

Interesting to note that Holloway was used for males and females at this time and I believe it was not until 1946 that it housed women only.

Henry Forester fell asleep whilst on his van proceeding through the High Street, Uxbridge, at midnight. P.C. 228X saw the horse's reins trailing on the ground, and on stopping them he found the man asleep, penalty 18/-.

James Payne and James Long were in December charged with trespassing on lands in the occupation of Thomas Byles. Both pleaded guilty. Caught by gamekeeper William Lavender on Sunday at 3 p.m. Both convicted of a similar offence three weeks ago and fined 15/-. This time 20/-.

In Hayes a woman trespassed on to the railway line which the Magistrate felt left a grave responsibility upon the engine drivers — fined 5/-.

Thomas Jackson of Southall was told to remember his childhood and was made to contribute 1/- per week towards the maintenance of his mother. The old lady, aged 83, became chargeable to the guardians in February last and is now in receipt of 2/6d per week as out relief.

In July, James Rixon of Northwood, a well known cab proprietor was summoned for having unlawfully plied for hire with an unlicensed vehicle, a landau — license fee £2 and fined 20/-.

Edward Ive of Ducks Hill, Ruislip, allowed a pig to stray in contravention of the regulations of the Swine Fever Act, it

roamed around Harefield Lane fined 7/6d.

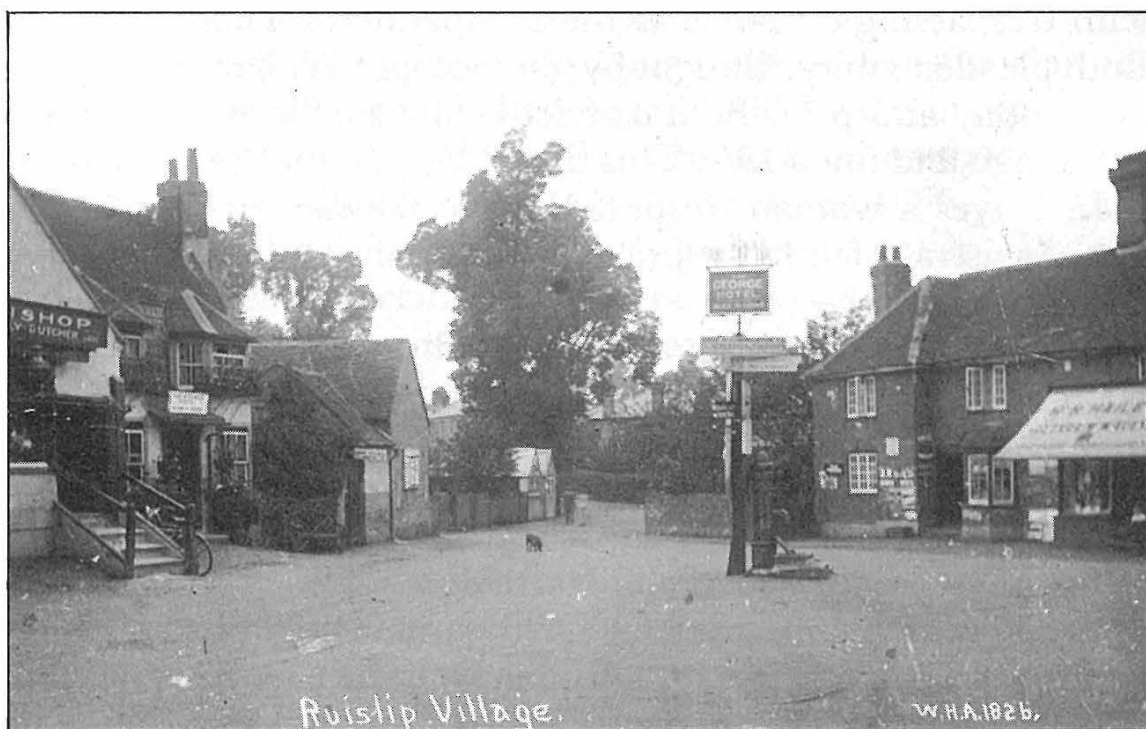
William Mawnder of Uxbridge and Edith Swyn of Northwood both fined 5/- for letting their dogs stray unmuzzled.

Mr. Thirkettle, the landlord of 'The George' and also the adjoining butchers, caught John King, a family man, stealing from the till in the Pub. He had been called to the butchers to serve a customer and on returning saw King carrying out the felony. 21 days hard labour.

William Parker, 35, a homeless labourer was charged with having stolen a loaf of bread, half a pound of butter, two glass bottles and a corn sack value 2/-, the property of William Woodland, a farmer of Field End Farm, Ruislip guilty and committed to gaol for 14 days with hard labour.

One tends to think that all crime would be carried out by local people, however, this was not so:—

A rough looking character, William Williams, aged 25, of 13 Bangor Street, Notting Dale, was charged at Uxbridge Police Court on Tuesday (before Mr. H. Woodlands and Mr. C. M.



Ruislip Library Local History Collection

Ruislip Village c. 1921 showing The George and butcher's shop on left.



Ruislip Library Local History Collection

Duck's Hill Farm: home of Mr. Jesse Tobutt. Photo taken 1948.

Wakefield) with having committed an assault upon Mr. Jesse Tobutt, a farmer of Ducks Hill Farm Ruislip.

The prisoner and five other men in Tobutt's field were engaged in cooking some birds, caught from the hedges and were also causing damage to his growing grass. They also had 2 cwt. of large daisies plucked from his crop. They refused to give it up fight developed between Williams and Tobutt Tobutt took Williams to the Police Station saying that the men had caused £4 damage and were a danger to lives as 'men of his class' frequently trespassed on his land carrying short sticks up their sleeves and acting in a menacing manner.

He called for exemplary sentence and called for greater Police protection. Prisoners convicted of larceny, unlawful possession etc. the prisoner said he had already been 'paid out' by Tobutt, — 21 days hard labour. Tobutt said the policemen

came round only once a week, however, the Bench pointed out that the constable only lived half a mile from Mr. Tobutt's house.

Eastcote, Cheney Street. P.C. 469X saw six boys in Mr. Elkington's orchard hitting fruit to the ground. The prisoners had come from Great Portland Street and Euston Road. They did not think they were doing any harm. 10/- or 7 days.

Henry Massey of Ruislip Common was summoned for being drunk and disorderly and also with having committed an assault upon P.C. Dewey whilst Alfred Lavender was summoned for having incited Mr. Massey to resist arrest P.C. called to eject a Mr. Lucas from the 'George Inn' and whilst doing this Massey interfered later off duty but in uniform P.C. Dewey stopped to have a drink at the 'George' and accepted a lift home from Mr. Ives. Whilst in the trap Massey came out and Ives offered him a lift which was accepted. On arrival at Ruislip Common, Massey referred to the early evening happenings and wanted to fight the constable, at the same time striking the constable violently and cutting his eye. When taking Massey into custody Lavender interfered and enabled Massey to escape. Witnesses included William Carter, a gamekeeper of Ducks Hill Road, George Ives, landlord of the Six Bells and his son James Ives. Massey was convicted of common assault, fined 15/-. Lavender was let off due to insufficient evidence.

Birching of the Young July 15th. Harefield.

William R. Webb, 10 and George Quarterman 9, making their first close acquaintance with the qualities of the birch twig stole 3 pheasants from a coop at Harefield Park Webb was a truant and had been caught stealing two weeks previously 6 strokes and if convicted again to be sent to a reformatory.

Drink

Wednesday 1st March.

George Barrow of Harefield was charged with having broken

a plate-glass panel in the door of 'The Cricketers' Inn, damage to the extent of 4/- . The Bench imposed a penalty of 10/- which was immediately paid.

July 1st.

George Miller of Uxbridge indulged too freely in the cup that cheers and inebriates on Tuesday evening. Fined 5/-.

September 30th. *The Lodger and the Lady*

A young carpenter, Henry Wright of Hillside Cottage, Hallowell Road was charged with being drunk and disorderly. P.C. 149SX said that on Saturday night there was a disturbance and that Wright was drunk, shouting at his wife and otherwise misconducting himself Wright went to work at 5.30 a.m. as usual but he had to go back for some tools he had forgotten he saw the young lodger with his wife The lodger ran away. In the evening, after finding new lodgings, his wife refused to go with him and the lodger attacked him, one blow going through the rim of his felt hat and inflicting a serious wound on his forehead whilst his nose was cut and both eyes blackened by other blows. He believed the injuries were inflicted by a revolver. Charge was dismissed and Wright was told he could bring charges against the lodger.

October 7th. *New Trial*

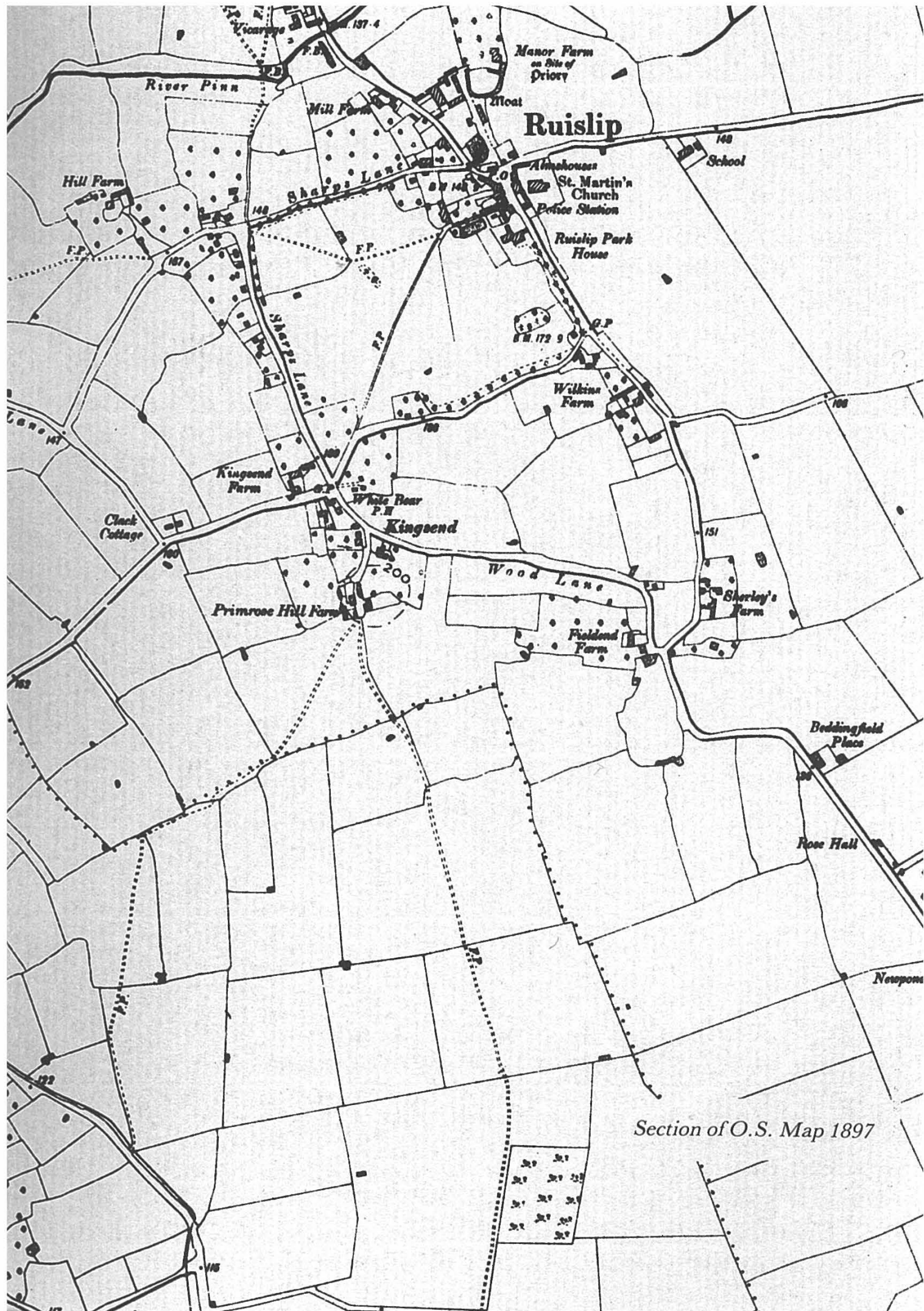
Wright was convicted of assault on his wife who had been protected by Hubert Brooks the lodger, who had struck Wright only with his fists. Wright also attacked the lodging house-keeper Mrs. Mary Nash. Fined 40/- or prison for one month with hard labour.

*Local History books available from The Ruislip Northwood
and Eastcote Local History Society and local bookshops:*

The Story of Northwood and Northwood Hills by
W.A.G. Kemp

Ruislip in Times Past by Celia Cartwright and Valery
Cowley

Ruislip Woods by Eileen and Colin Bowlt



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