

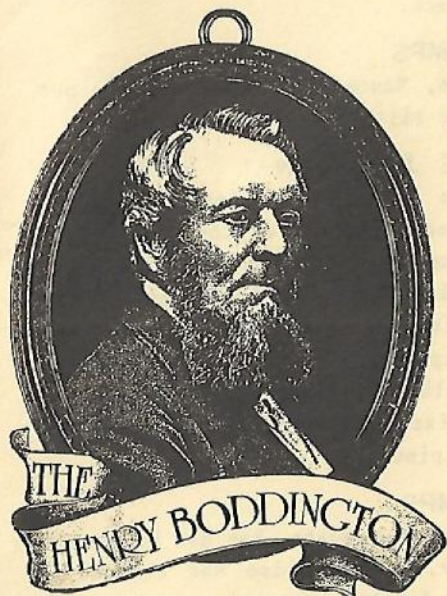
# WHAT'S DOING



SEPT  
1985

THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

## HOORAY HENRY'S



Boddies' latest new pub, the Henry Boddington on Bolton Road, Pendlebury, opened on 22nd August. Converted from a former private hotel at a cost of £150,000, this is Boddington's 11th catering house and emphasises "a relaxed and comfortable environment conducive to either business entertaining or that informal family outing" as it says in the blurb. The pub is typical of the new type of upmarket establishment which is appearing more and more. Raised drinking areas, wooden beams, polished wooden tables, old brickwork on the bar, exposed chimney breasts, a wood-burning fire with piles of chopped wood, and suits of armour

create an atmosphere of what brewers imagine to be traditional respectability. Some of the things are overdone - the carpeting looks like 1950's Wilton stair carpet from a middle class home and do we really need stained glass windows in the bogs? But the overall impression is far superior to the Houses of Horror created by Whitbread or the barmy theme pubs of Pennine Joke.

Informal family eating with "Little Boddies" menus is considered important, but just how informal you can be is not so certain - there's a notice on the door saying you might be chucked out if you're not wearing smart casual dress. So smarten yourself up and sample a pint or two of handpumped mild or bitter or take your credit card and enjoy the food which is well prepared and good value for money.



# WHAT'S DOING

## NEWS FROM NEWTON HEATH

Wilsons Gold Medal, that excellent premium bitter which we sampled many moons ago, is still under review, which means it won't appear this year. Meanwhile, "foreign" beers are being produced at the Newton Heath brewery. Mann's IPA, Mann's bitter for the Midlands and S&P Best Bitter for Norwich are all being brewed in traditional form. One trend which may be of interest to mild drinkers is the introduction of save-all kegs for traditional mild. The exact operation is as yet unclear but involves living beer being delivered from a container which is designed to prevent pouring back.

## HANDPUMPS

The Old Wellington on Shambles Square, Manchester, has recently put its draught Bass on to handpump. Stones bitter is also on sale.

## CHANGE AT THE JUNCTION

The Grand Junction (Hydes), Rolls Crescent, Hulme, has been refurbished in comfy style. New seating helps divide the room; there is a new carpet, smart lighting and much brighter and appealing wallpaper. The original Victorian bar, which was moved to one end of the room before the last major modernisation, has been retained. The fine etched-mirror ceiling panels have reappeared - these were shamefully painted over in a drab purple during the previous modernisation. The vault has also been smartened up. Excellent traditional mild and bitter is available at 64p and 66p per pint.

## HANDPUMPS

Bolton's cider pub, the Man & Scythe on Churchgate, has had handpumps fitted to dispense the golden nectar. Nothing else has changed - Whitbread keg beers are still available for the eccentric.

## HOLTS NEWS

The new landlord of the Good Beer Guide Union on Liverpool Street, Salford, Danny Grayson, took over recently from Mike Macovey. Well known in the Salford area, Mr Grayson formerly had the Old Veteran and the Salisbury.

The new landlord of another Good Beer Guide listed Holts pub, the Waggon & Horses, Irlams o'th'Height, is Eric Lindley, who comes to the Waggon from yet another Holts GBG pub, the White Lion at Westhoughton. Previous licensee at the Waggon, Dave McConville, left in July to take over the Crabtree on Crabtree Lane, Clayton, a free house selling Holts and Wilsons (and possibly Websters) ales via handpumps. It is to be renamed the "Strawberry Duck".

## PLANNING NEWS

Burtonwood are at long last changing the layout of the Grove in Blackley, moving all the living accommodation upstairs and extending the ground floor licensed area. This should be an improvement to a homely but strangely laid-out pub.

Whitbread plan to turn part of the ground floor of Arkwright House in Parsonage Gardens into a public house - the first pub in the area for many years.

An application has been made to change 37 Oxford Street in Manchester city centre to a public bar.

## BODDY ODOUR

In the May WD we reported that Topham's Tavern, Smithybridge, Rochdale, had been bought by Boddingtons. It appears that Manchester's favourite brewer is now selling keg OB beers through handpumps there. Although this deceitful practice has been noticed in certain free houses, this is believed to be the first Boddingtons tied house to descend to such behaviour.

## KING BILL GOES KEG

Real ale has been withdrawn from the King William IV, Stamford Street, Ashton-under-Lyne. This means that Greenalls Original Bitter is no longer on sale in Ashton.

\*\*\*\*\*

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### WHAT'S DOING

**WHAT'S DOING** is edited by Neil Richardson, 375 Chorley Road, Swinton, Manchester M27 2AY

**COPY DATE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS THE 20th OF THIS MONTH**

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## DEATH KNELL?

Is Oldham Brewery gradually fading away? At the Grants Arms, a Boddingtons pub in Royce Road, Hulme, the bright OB mild box-type pump once displayed the OB bell trademark, but now in its place is the Boddingtons barrel accompanied by a sack of malt and a sheaf of barleycorn. The name "Boddingtons" appears in bold letters - "Boddingtons OB Mild, Brewed in Lancashire". The prospect of the disappearance of Oldham Brewery seems more and more likely.

## WHAT'S DOING IN WIGAN AND DISTRICT

Handpumped Tetley bitter is now on sale at the Nevison, Plank Lane, Abram, alongside Tetley mild and Walker best bitter. The Walkers is on electric pumps, despite the pump-clips. (The Nevison, incidentally, gets its name from a local highwayman.)

Wickets and Ind Coope Burton Ale have popped up at the Old Crow, Crow Lane, Newton-le-Willows. Tetley bitter and mild and Walkers best bitter are also available. The Old Crow has been in the Good Beer Guide for many years and a good pint is guaranteed.

The Royal, Castle Hill, Hindley, has been selling keg beer for some time. This Matthew Brown house was almost included in next year's Good Beer Guide. The Strangeways Hotel, Liverpool Road, Hindley, is now the only pub in the entire Wigan Metro that still serves cask Lion beers. Further to the Almonds article in last month's WD, Burtonwood's "Almond" bitter is on sale in the following houses:

Royal, Golborne

Raffles, Wigan

Royal Oak, Standish Lower Ground

Old Pear Tree, Wigan

Cherry Gardens, Wigan

Park, Bryn

Welcome, Marton, Blackpool

Manor Farm, Rainhill, St Helens

Contrary to an earlier report, the Spinners at Hindley Green does not sell Almond bitter.

The Minorca Hotel, Wallgate, Wigan, formerly a Berni Inn but now a Chef and Brewer pub serving keg Greenalls, is reportedly closing in September for extensive renovation.

The Abbey Lakes, a traditional Wilsons pub at Orrell, is also due for renovation shortly, although this pub is staying open.

Renovation is underway at the Swan & Railway, Wallgate, Wigan, a former Tetley pub which has been closed for three years. It has been bought as a free house by Sam Holding, currently landlord of Burtonwood's Balcarres Arms at Haigh, and is expected to reopen in September selling cask John Smiths and Bass beers.

Following the renovation of Tetleys Victoria Hotel on Wallgate and its renaming "Victoria's", the Clarence Hotel on Wallgate has had the same treatment and is now "Clarence's". This pub is now open all day for coffee and food from "Fatso's Food Bar"; the beer remains keg, but with bitter at 75p a pint, the renovation will soon be paid for.



The Tetley demolition squad has now moved to the Crofters Arms, another keg house on Market Street. This is now closed and when modernised it will leave the Brickmakers Arms on Hallgate with not only the only traditional Tetley ale in Wigan centre; it will also be the only traditional Tetley pub.

### ORIGINAL GOES

Greenalls Original bitter is no longer available at the Wellington, Worsley Road, Patricroft, due to poor sales. It was popular when first introduced but gradually went into decline. Traditional mild and bitter are still on sale (electric dispense). It is excellent beer at a noteworthy price - 62p and 64p.

### JOHN SMITHS

The Horse and Jockey, the John Smiths "free house" in Edenfield, is now selling cask bitter alongside the keg version - both at 68p. Happily, demand for the keg appears minimal.

### CLUB NEWS

The Barrfield Club in Salford is now selling Youngers Number 3 and IPA on handpumps.



**THE STATION**

**Our range of hand pumped real ales include Marstons Pedigree, Merrie Monk, Mercian Mild, Owd Rodger (when it's cold), Boddingtons Bitter.**

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**UNSPOILT BY PROGRESS**

## COMMUTERS BEWARE!

The new-look Crewe railway station has lost its real ale. Boddingtons bitter has been replaced by something called "Boddingtons QB" (see "Death Knell?" in this issue). You may, of course, prefer keg Snotes or YSB.

## CITY CENTRE ALE

The Boardroom on Portland Street/Minshull Street, Manchester, is now the Boardroom Tavern and is selling Wilsons bitter at 78p. The food is not cheap either, but the place will be handy for GMC redundancy parties.

## WHO PAYS?

Following the recent costly renovation and reopening of the Golden Lion (Whitbread), Clifton, the price of a pint of Chesters bitter jumped to 73p (not 74p as in July WD) from around the 66p mark. In early August it rose again, this time by 2p to 75p a pint. It would appear that Whitbread are anxious to recover some of their outlay on the pub. Despite the price, the beer is selling well.

## BUDDIES SPARED

Buddies (Whitbread), Lapwing Lane/Burton Road, West Didsbury, is now the Midland Hotel again. It has been given the new gold-lettered Whitbread trademark and livery, which appears to be replacing the Chesters red/green livery. The Midland is now one very large lounge and spacious pool area (two tables). Chesters mild and bitter are on sale via handpump.

## WILSONS MILD

Cask mild is now available at the Good Samaritan, Ramsbottom. The pub exterior has recently been smartened up to go with the excellent inner alterations of a few months ago.

## FLAT SPIN

The Spinners (Wilsons), Rolls Crescent, Hulme, has reopened with some refurbishments. It was selling real ale prior to the closure but now the pub has returned to both bright mild and bitter. The Spinners has always had a drab look about it and the absence of real ale doesn't help.

## NEW FREE HOUSE FOR SALFORD

The Prince of Wales on Oldfield Road, Salford, formerly a keg Bass pub, reopened as a free house on Monday 19th August. Handpumped John Smiths and Boddingtons bitters are on sale. Licensees Dave and Jenny have come from the New Black Bull in Padiham (Tetley), and Dave is very much in favour of cask beer - a guest beer may be featured if demand is there. The exterior of the pub has been repainted and the interior refurbished.

### ARCH ANNIVERSARY

Last month John Worthington celebrated his first year as licensee of The Marble Arch on Rochdale Road. Manchester's favourite amber nectar shop now has a turnover which is eight times what it was when Wilsons shut the pub two years ago. In the past year John has sold a total of 83 different ales. The current range is Holts mild and bitter, JW Lees bitter, Hydes bitter, Marstons Pedigree, Youngers No 3, Fullers London Pride and ESB, Hook Norton bitter. The best seller is now Fullers London Pride.

### MARSTONS MANOEUVRES

First the good news! The Oldham Hotel on Yorkshire Street is to gain handpumps. At the same time Pedigree will be added to the range of beers available.

Now the bad! The One and Three, Manchester Street, has gone keg. The pub, renowned amongst the Irish community for the quality of its draught Guinness, never sold much real ale and consequently quality suffered.

### ANCOATS ALE

There's building activity in the White House, an ex-Wilsons house on Great Ancoats Street which has been closed for a year or two. Always something of a white elephant, it will be interesting to see what is to become of the pub.

## The Diggle Hotel

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## FRESH FRUIT

The Pineapple, a recently modernised Robinsons house on High Street/Kenworthy Street, Stalybridge, has new licensees. Jim and Pat Shaw previously had a greengrocery business in Newton and gained experience in the licensed trade by helping out at the Highland Laddie, Mossley.

## NEW PUB FOR BROOKLANDS

Sam Smiths have applied for planning permission to extend Massey House, 181 Brooklands Road, and to change the use of the building from flats to a public house and restaurant.

## IRLAM HOLTS?

Rumours are abroad that Holts are seeking to establish themselves in the Irlam and Cadishead area. It was said that they were interested in the George in Cadishead but Whitbread wouldn't play ball. Local drinkers who have been seen lurking in the various Holts pubs in Eccles feel that the Holts score of Eccles 13, Irlam 0 is somewhat unfair.

## ROCHDALE SWITCH

The Merrie Monk, College Road, Rochdale, has been sold. John and Carol Ferrige hope to take over on 1st October. John is currently managing the pub for the present owner and intends to modify the range of beers to include Mercian mild, Burton bitter, Pedigree, Bulmers cider and, it is hoped, Border bitter. We wish him well.

The Navigation, Drake Street - the other pub owned by the company running the Merrie Monk - is also up for sale.

## CAMRA AT CASTLEFIELD

Members of the Campaign for Real Ale will be staffing a stall at the Castlefield Festival on Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th September. The Festival is held each year on the entire Castlefield Heritage site, off Deansgate, Manchester city centre. As well as the usual exhibits in the Science & Technology Museum, the Aerospace Museum and the Roman Fort, the organisers promise numerous sideshows and stalls.

CAMRA's stall on Bridgewater Street, behind the Roman Fort, will be selling local and national guides, CAMRA products and lottery tickets. However, the main aim will be to talk to the public and put over the Campaign's message. The organisers would be delighted to see all What's Doing readers, so go and introduce yourself. See you there!

## LIES?

What's Doing has received its first wrist-slapping for printing something which is allegedly untrue. The Advertising Standards Authority have written to Wolverhampton & Dudley Brewery concerning the Banks's advert. A member of the public has objected to the claim "Bank's (sic) Draft (sic) Beers are full-bodied, cask conditioned ales", claiming

that a number of the brewery's tied houses serve brewery conditioned keg beer. It will all hinge on the meaning of Draught (or Draft), which according to one dictionary means drawn or the opposite of bottled. Is keg beer drawn or draught or just bottled on a large scale? Do Banks's houses in What's Doing's circulation area serve keg beer and how do Banks's distinguish between keg and draught at the point of sale? The saga continues.

### SIXTH BURY BEER FESTIVAL

The highlight of the Bury beer drinker's calendar is set for a sixth appearance at the Derby Hall, Market Street (near the bus-rail interchange).

The festival is open Friday and Saturday 18th and 19th October from 11.30 to 3.00pm lunchtimes and 5.30 to 11.00pm evenings. Admission (free to current card-carrying CAMRA members, of course), will be 30p lunchtimes, 50p evenings (before 7.00pm) and 70p thereafter.

Around 30 real ales from 20 countrywide breweries will feature, together with farmhouse cider and wines. Good food will be available throughout the event and jazz and brass bands will entertain both evenings and Saturday lunchtime. An unlicensed room will be available for accompanied children during the lunchtime sessions.

Full details of beers, etc, next month.

Any enquiries - please contact Steve Lawton (see Branch Diary).

# MOORHOUSE'S

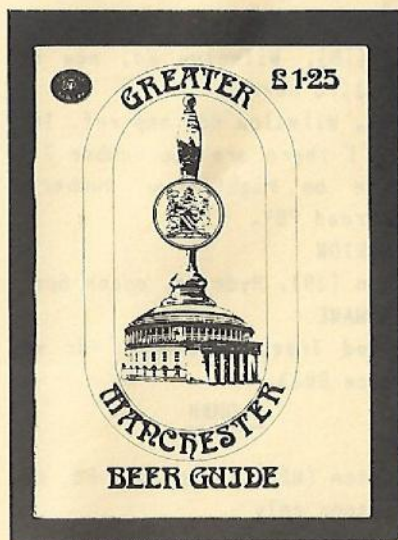
## PRIZE BURNLEY ALES

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## UPDATE

We hope to publish Gtr Manchester Beer Guide updates from time to time, so if you know of any changes not listed here, please write to the Editor, Rob Carder, 35 Hayfield Close, Pennine Meadows, Moorside, Oldham.

Thank you to the branches who sent in the information for this update: Bolton; Rochdale, Oldham & Bury; Stockport and South Manchester; Cheshire & High Peak and South Lancashire.

### THE BREWERIES

**MATTHEW BROWN** As many people will already know, this brewery is in the middle of a campaign against a takeover by Scottish & Newcastle. The bid has been referred to the Monopolies Commission. Let us hope the bid fails as a takeover would surely lead to brewery closures and to loss of choice in the area.

**GREENALL WHITLEY**, who are always out to expand, have done it again; this time they have bought and closed the West Midlands brewery, Simpkins.

**HIGSONS** are now no longer independent; Boddingtons merged with them, mainly, it would seem, to make use of the lager plant. Will Higsons survive? Let's hope so.

**JENNINGS** have ended their trading agreement with Bass so the bitter and mild have been withdrawn from Bass houses. However, they have a new deal with Tetleys and their beers can now be found in some of Tetleys pubs.

**SAMUEL SMITH** have produced a cask strong ale called Museum. It is available in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire and could be in Manchester soon.

### BOLTON

Licensing hours are now 11.00-3.00, 5.30-11.00: Sundays 12.00-2.00, 7.00-10.30.

All pubs on the first two pages of this section serve beer via hand-pumps, except the Craven Heifer (B5), which has electric pumps.

### BOLTON

Peel (B17), Hr Bridge St, now shut  
Prince Rupert (B18), Holmeswood Rd, now has Jennings bitter H

Winstons (B23) Deansgate, no longer has a "happy hour"

### BROMLEY CROSS

House Without a Name (A6) Lee Gate, no longer sells Bulmers cider

### HORWICH

Toll Bar (A18), Chorley New Rd, has Thwaites B Mild and no longer has old monochrome TV



Brinsop Arms (A23), Cross Guns (A24), Hart Common (A25), Victoria Inn (A26) and White Lion (A27) are all in **WESTHOUGHTON**

#### BURY

Licensing hours are 11.00-3.00, 5.30-11.00: Sundays 12.00-2.00, 7.00-10.30.

Insert the heading **BURY** above the Bridge Inn (D1), Bridge Street.

#### **BURY**

Church Inn (D3), Spring St, no longer sells Whitbread Castle Eden.

#### **PRESTWICH**

Commercial (E2), Bury Old Rd, now has Jennings Bitter H

Insert the heading **SIMISTER** above Same Yet (E11), Simister Lane

#### **RAMSBOTTOM**

Eagle & Child (C10), Whalley Rd, now has hand pulled beer.

The Lamb (C5), Tottington Road, is in **WOOLFOLD**

#### MANCHESTER CITY CENTRE

##### **ANCOATS**

Edinburgh Castle (G30), Blossom St, now has Chesters Bitter H.

Insert the heading **ARDWICK** above Church Inn (J2), Ardwick Green; this pub now sells Websters bitter as well as Wilsons

##### **MANCHESTER CITY CENTRE**

Coach & Horses (G8), London Road, opens at 7.00pm on Saturdays

Grey Horse (G11), 80 Portland St, sells Hydes B Mild

Marble Arch (G17), Rochdale Rd, is closed Sunday lunchtime. Fullers London Pride replaces Marstons Owd Rodger.

Old Grapes (G19), Little Quay St, no longer sells Boddingtons bitter.

##### **CLAYTON**

Victoria, Croft St: map ref. is H6  
Why Not, Ashton New Rd: map ref H5

#### **DIDSBURY**

Crown (I6), Wilmslow Rd, now has hand pulled beers

Station, Wilmslow Rd: map ref. I4

On Map I there are two number 7's: the one on right near number 5 should read "6".

#### **WEST GORTON**

Rock Inn (J9), Hyde Rd, opens 6pm

#### **WYTHENSHANE**

Greenwood Tree, Greenwood Rd; map reference BB23.

#### OLDHAM

##### **OLDHAM**

Wellington (N20), Ripponden Rd, now keg Wilsons only

##### **GRASSCROFT**

Farrars Arms (P8), Oldham Rd, has no vault and provides accommodation

#### ROCHDALE

##### **CROSSGATES**

Gallows (W1), Kiln La, no longer sell Jennings; now has Cask Bass E

Insert the heading **HOPWOOD** above Black Swan (T10), Middleton Road

##### **MIDDLETON**

Ring o'Bells (V9), St Leonards Sq, sells handpulled Lees

##### **MIDDLETON JUNCTION**

Gardeners Arms (V13), Sandy La, has Moonraker E

##### **MILNROW**

First pub should read Free Trade Tavern (W2), New Hey Rd

##### **OGDEN**

Bulls Head (W5), Ogden La, now no Jennings, but Cask & Draught Bass H

#### **ROCHDALE**

Merrie Monk (X15), College Rd, has replaced Marston Merrie Monk and Burtonwood Bitter with Marston Mild and Border Bitter H

The Sandknockers (X19), Halifax Rd, appears under **SLATTOCKS**. It should be under **SMALLBRIDGE**, below Green



Gate (X11), Halifax Road

#### **SMITHYBRIDGE**

Tophams Tavern (U6), Smithybridge Rd, has been bought by Boddingtons and is no longer free house. Now sells Boddingtons B only. H.

#### **SALFORD**

#### **SALFORD**

The pub at the top of the page after the map is the Horseshoe (Y10), Back Hope Street.

#### **STOCKPORT**

Licensing hours now 11.00-3.00,  
5.30-11.00: Sundays 12.00-2.00,  
7.00-10-30

#### **CHEADLE**

Crown, High St, map ref. CC4

#### **STOCKPORT**

Pack Horse (FF24), Churchgate.

#### **TAMESIDE**

Insert heading **HURST** above Old Ball Inn (GG25), Broadoak Rd. Insert the heading **NEWTON** above Cotton Tree (GG22), Markham Street.

#### **TRAFFORD**

#### **ALTRINCHAM**

Barrington (MM2), 2 Barrington Rd, now has hand pulled beers.

#### **PARTINGTON**

King William IV (LL13), Manchester Rd, has added Marstons Pedigree

#### **WIGAN**

In description of Wigan: Draught Bass is served in one of Wigan's Tetley outlets, not three.

Licensing hours: 11.00-3.00, 5.30-11.00: Sundays 12.00-2.00, 7.00-10.30

#### **ASPULL**

Queens Head (NN5), Wigan Rd, sells Walker Best Bitter H, not Tetley Walker Bitter

#### **ATHERTON**

Punch Bowl (003), Market St, no longer sells Greenalls Original Red Lion (004), Church St, sells Walker BB, not Tetley Walker Bitter

#### **BAMFURLONG**

Bamfurlong Hotel (NN6), Lily La, sells Walker BB H and Tetley Mild H, not Tetley Walker Mild & Bitter

#### **HINDLEY**

Cumberland Arms (NN10), Chapel Gn Rd, sells Walker Bitter, not Tetley Walker Bitter

#### **LEIGH**

Railway Hotel (PP5), Twist Lane, sells Walker Best Bitter, Tetley mild and occasional guest beers

#### **STANDISH**

Dog & Partridge (NN16), School La, sells Tetley Mild, not Walker mild. Crown (NN17), Platt La, no longer sells Taylors Landlord. Now sells Theakstons XB

#### **TYLDESLEY**

Union Arms (QQ1), Castle St, sells Thwaites B Mild H

Half Moon Inn (QQ3), Elliot St. The description should read: Recently opened, this is the oldest building in Tyldesley. Now sells Oldham mild rather than Boddingtons mild.

#### **WIGAN**

Millstone (RR5), Frog La, sells Almond bitter and Burtonwood beers

#### **BRANCH CONTACTS**

#### **STOCKPORT AND SOUTH MANCHESTER**

John Clarke 061 477 1973

#### **MEMBERSHIP**

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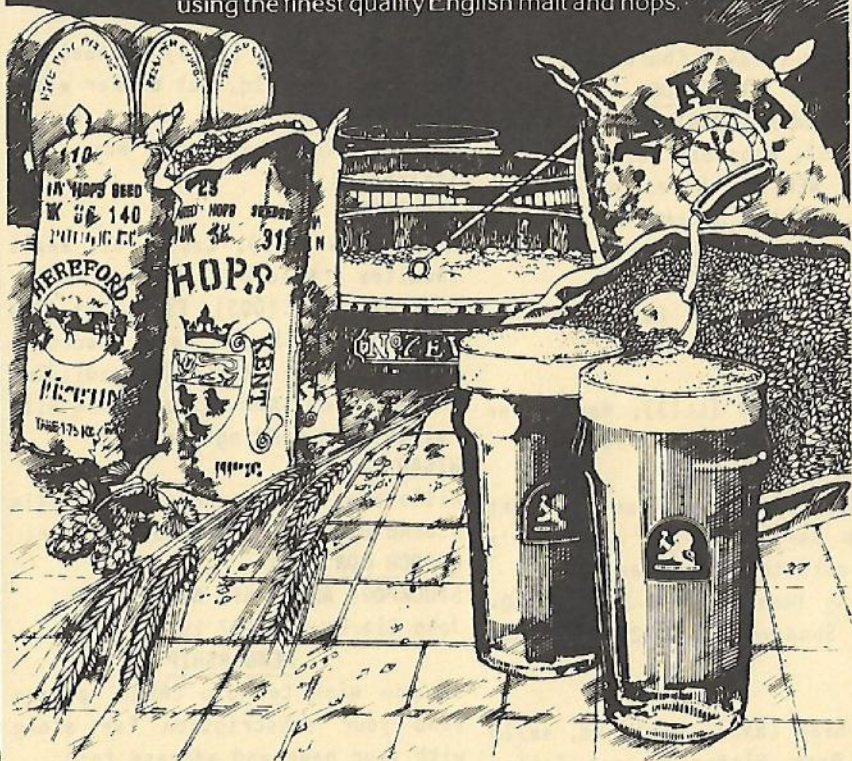
# BANKS'S

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They are brewed in the Traditional way,  
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## DOWN IN T'VALLEY

The Bulls Head in the tiny hamlet of Ogden, near Newhey, has a new owner and a new range of beers. Licensees Neil and Ann Gibbons have assumed command of this Bass pub. Previously the only real ale was Jennings bitter (removed a couple of months ago when the Bass agreement with Jennings ended); now 4x mild and Bass bitter are served through handpumps.

Confusion is arising in some Bass houses where the same new pump clip is used to indicate Cask Bitter and Draught Bass. Naughty, naughty!

**Contributors:** Peter Wadsworth, Steve Lawton, Paul Roberts, Roger Hall, Jim Flynn, Dave Hale, Rob Dunford, Peter Wightman, Dave White, Paul Gaskell, George Glass, Leo King.



### JOHN SMITHS

Sir - In view of all the dithering by the licensees, district managers and John Smiths brewery (see survey, Aug WD) I wish to record that there has been no messing about at the Crown, 111 Great Jackson Street, Hulme. This pub is the only one in the city of Manchester which has been selling traditional handpumped John Smiths bitter for over a year.

This excellently kept bitter from a keen landlord has been enjoyed by many customers (myself included).

Leo King

### RIP-OFF CORNER

Sir - I recently called in at the Brown Bull at the Bottom of Bridge Street, Manchester, and asked for a bottle of Guinness. The barmaid asked me if I was having a meal and I said I was not. She said she would have to charge me the "no meal price" of 60p. I was amazed, to say the least, and on meandering around the pub I could not see a price list anywhere. Shortly afterwards someone ordered two pints and two shorts. He was asked if he was having a meal and he said he was not. He was told that if he had one meal the cost of the meal and drinks would be less than the cost of the drinks alone, charged at "no meal prices". Has anyone else had a similar experience?

B Partington

### REAL ALE IN BOLTON

Sir - Does not the Pineapple at Astley Bridge sell Matthew Brown and Theakstons beers via electric pumps? (see Real Ale in Bolton, WD June)

G Glass

## MIXED CURRY

Sir - As a dedicated reader of Asian Corner, I wish to complain on two counts:

1 Why has the column appeared so infrequently in recent months?

2 There was a glaring mistake in your last column. Does your correspondent not know that the Medina has long been demolished and indeed the Shapla is in fact the Medina risen phoenix-like from the (tandoori) ashes?

Al O'Matey

(There was a misprint in last month's article. For Medina read Selina Scott - Ed)

## LETTER FROM LIVERPOOL

Sir - How sad to see Germaine Periwinkle's logic overtaken by prejudice and emotion. You don't need a sociology degree to know that if Brobdingnags tried to change any of their new-found Scousely pubs to make them less of "a crumbling hovel full of foul-mouthed smelly tramps" they would have empty pubs.

I thought everyone knew that Liverpool had no middle class (and virtually no employed) apart from hybrid oddballs like Zimbabwe-Molyneux and myself - and, as you know, we make every effort to look and sound other than we are.

This despicable antipathy to "foul-mouthed smelly tramps" and other real characters who enliven our pubs has recently evidenced itself among CAMRA "top people" in their sideline dabblings to resurrect Ma Pardoe's in the Black Country as a going concern. Here the motive seems to be superprofit or pure greed as Brew Ten, the Scots HQ factotum, most of the Thatcherite National Executive, plus a sprinkling of venture capitalists with the ackers, fall over each other to destroy a living local pub, altering it beyond recognition. Bona fide tramps and other underprivileged boozers on less than £10,000 a year (not to mention foul-mouthed sociology researchers like me who enjoy their company) might find things a bit off-putting in the new Pardoes. Plans so far (there have been four sets) envisage an eating establishment for tourists and the West Midlands upwardly-mobile, with a facility for drinking overpriced cask beer as a sideline - if you can stand the new (CAMRA?) elite. Whatever did happen to a company called CAMRA Investments?

The singular indifference of CAMRA bureaucrats to all the advice on anti-deseccration of Pardoes from the Pub Preservation Group (one of CAMRA's national advisory committees) has already caused a resignation from CAMRA by a leading conservation architect serving on PPG.

So come on, Germaine, luv, sort yourself out. You and I both know that it's people who make pubs - Bunty Fortescue, Mole Whalebody and the foul-mouthed, vomit-prone Jamie Frazzle - they're all much more

interesting than the average boring CAMRA fraternity (readers of your organ excepted!) I shall be looking to find exactly such splendid human accoutrements of the British pub, and a good diversity of others, in my assessment of the Howcroft, Raven and Hark to Towler for the 1985 Pub Preservation Awards. Even if CAMRA is in danger of losing its marbles on what constitutes a good pub, some of us can't be silenced. We fight on, despite your editor's UDI, and against all the odds.

Pip! Pip! Bogbrush

#### DISCLAIMER

Sir - We wish it to be known that the Rochdale, Oldham and Bury branch of CAMRA do not endorse the selection of the Hark to Towler, Tottington, for consideration in the CAMRA Pub Preservation awards. Although the pub is listed in the Good Beer Guide, we do not feel that the recent alterations, although quite tastefully executed, are sufficiently "different" to merit such an award. Assuming that the brewery (Thwaites) made the selection themselves, one would have thought that they might have informed or consulted the local branch before rushing to press.

The branch do not consider that any recently modernised pub in their area is eligible for consideration in these prestigious awards.

Steve Lawton, ROB Press Officer

### THE CHURCH'S WRONG FOUNDATION

A card produced by the licensees of the Church Inn, Ardwick Green, describes the pub as a seventeenth century style inn. Inside, an extract from "The Manchester Man" describes a whitewashed inn. As is so often the case, the truth is vastly different from wishful thinking. The thatch-roofed and whitewashed roadside inn was in fact the George & Dragon. According to Swindells ("Manchester Streets and Manchester Men" vol 2 p63) a blacksmith's shop, the village stocks and the George and Dragon were the only things to be seen by the wayfarer as he passed from Manchester to Ardwick in 1776.

According to the licensing records the George and Dragon was first licensed in 1758 and the Church Inn 100 years later in 1858. Trade directories from the 1860's show no entries for the Church Inn under "Public houses, inns and taverns". There is, however, a beerhouse listed in the 1863 directory at 11 Ardwick Green. Such a pity, but the Church seems to be a nineteenth century beerhouse and not a seventeenth century inn. Although the building dates back to the early 1790's (Green's map), it was not licensed until long after the Beerhouse Act was passed. The Church's seventeenth century pretensions must be relegated to the mythology section along with priests' bolt holes, secret tunnels and headless ghosts.

Roger Hall



**One simple question from**



## **ALE HOUSES**

Could you drink Pendle Witches Brew in the company of a Headbanger, Old Tom, Old Eli, Old Timer, Old Hookey and a Forty-niner whilst discussing simultaneously the finer points of Bishops Tipple, Moonraker or the merits of Varsity and College—without losing your bottle?

Regulars will know the answer.

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**The Woodcock, Halifax**

**The Duck & Drake, Leeds**

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Sunday: 12.00pm-2.00pm, 7.00pm-10.30pm



Several years exile in the soft underbelly of the South, swigging brackish gunge at £1 a pint with a bunch of limp-wristed pseud Jessies had evidently knocked the rough corners off Eric Snot and turned him into a more rounded empathetic person. At least that was how it seemed as he sounded off in the club room of the rebuilt Dockers Wedge. "It's real tough, Roop," he exclaimed, slipping into an easy familiarity, "trying to get you to sling your hook like that when you've done more for t'cause than that bunch of Johnnie come latelies led by that bellyaching git with a voice like a castrated cat. No offence meant, Roop. Who was it put Drabs and Grotley on the map, brought tourists to the Gungesmeaters and the Rat and Handbag and shared the Nobel prize for joined-up writing with Bob Gelding and Bishop Rastus Ballifrock?"

"Oh, I'm not so sure," I demurred, not entirely without dissimulation, "I think we might have been more co-operative."

It was at this point that Tish and Fiona both interjected most vehemently. "Oh yes, and where's that got us in the past?" screamed Tish. "Two beer guides, one of which was out of date and lost money and the second one about as useful and interesting as the Krakow telephone directory."

"Come on now, be fair..." I started but was prevented from continuing by Fiona. "And what about the Amber Nectar Show!" she shouted triumphantly, "Made Fred Karno's look like the Church of England synod and Al Capone like one of the bishops."

I was so upset that I had to leave and in my haste fell over Ben Chestnut, who was bending down tying his shoelace behind the door. The meeting broke up in a melee reminiscent of the Slumley brouhahas of yesteryear.

The following morning I awoke with the customary post-Drabs hangover and crawled down to open the post. Imagine my delight when I opened a letter from Slumley Infirmary. Professor Dick Risseau and his team of dedicated surgeons really believe they can restore my manhood and I await with trepidation that hour, a week on Friday, when I am to turn up at the GU unit, chutney jar in hand. They tell me there's a 50% chance of success.

**RUMOUR DENIAL:** There is no truth whatsoever in vicious tittle-tattle that a person of great financial acumen and unimpeachable moral probity is in an ongoing legover situation with her indoors next door.



## part two grist from the mill

The main ingredient of all home brewed ales is pale malt grain, whether they are pale ales, bitters, milds, browns or stouts. When you consider that just one five gallon brew will use 5-8 lb of malt, it is clear that it is better to obtain this in larger quantities than the 1 lb bags found in some home-brew shops.

I usually get  $\frac{1}{2}$  cwt (or metric equivalent), depending on requirements over the next few months.

Before malt can be mashed, it must be cracked (not ground to a powder) so that the hot water can reach the starch and enzymes inside the grains. It is on this aspect more than any other that most home brew books fail to suggest a satisfactory method.

C J J Berry used a small hand coffee mill (2), but also suggested a food mixer, or a wine bottle used as a rolling pin. (Just try

$\frac{1}{2}$  lb of grain with a wine bottle - more ends up, uncracked, in the corners of the room than in the mash bucket!) H E Bravery (1) simply reminds us to "crack grain malts before use".

Dave Line (5) describes a hand mill, as Berry, but driven by an electric drill. Later (8) he recommends buying ready-crushed malt, but this does not have the same keeping qualities if bought in large amounts. In his last book (9) a photograph of a home-made malt mill is shown but no construction details are given for this hand-powered device.

Wilf Newsome (6) devotes a page to the question of milling and mentions several types of mill without giving specific details. They appear to be commercial (expensive?) types, however.

Dart and Smith (10) describe the construction of a wooden device using a pair of rolling pins which are counter-rotated by hand with the grain passing through a small gap.

I have tried nearly all these devices - the rolling pins soon produced cramp of the wrist. Berry's hand mill works but is slow and tends to grind the grain too finely. When an electric drill is added, this certainly speeds things up, but I have worn out two coffee grinders this way; the grinding faces have too small an area for the throughput



and a hard pebble in the grain can be disastrous! Also the grist still ends up too fine.

A different type of mill, intended I believe for mincing herbs, and in which a large number of equispaced parallel blades rotated between fixed vanes, was once recommended for malt crushing. I found this excellent, for the first brew only, but as more and more blades broke off it became less and less efficient and eventually useless.

After much searching, I found what I believe to be an acceptable device. This is the Spong Coffee Mill, shown in the drawing. This comes in various sizes; I use the No.3. Smaller versions (1 & 2) also exist and there is at least one larger model.

The grinding areas are large and the throughput (of coffee) would probably be considered high for domestic use. By adjusting the setting to the coarsest grind it is just about right for cracking malt. The mill is clamped to a strong wooden frame, turned by hand and the grist collected in a 2-gallon plastic bucket.

Next time I will describe mashing techniques and how these are simpler than many people think.

Humulus Lupulus

#### REFERENCES

- 8 "Brewing Beers like those you Buy" by Dave Line, Amateur Winemaker
- 9 "Beer Kits and Brewing" by Dave Line. Amateur Winemaker
- 10 "Woodwork for Winemakers" by CJ Dart & DA Smith, Amateur Winemaker

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INVESTORS CHRONICLE 9 August 1985

## Brewers on a £4bn blinder

Been to your local recently? If so, you've probably found it facelifted, if not dismembered — anything from plush new curtains and furniture to snazzy awnings and an American-style bar have transformed the traditional English pub in recent years. The cost is enormous. Already the brewers have slugged their way through £2bn. Eventually they plan to spend more than £4bn on what will be one of Britain's biggest capital investment programmes during the 1980s. Astonishingly, they seem to have little notion of the prospective returns on this financial deluge.

Even quantifying the flood is difficult. The total money spent on pub refurbishment will substantially top £4bn, if you

include the brewers' tenants' expenditure on fixtures, the brewers' loans to the free trade and 'free' houses own spending.

### Problems which prompted the big spend

The major spur behind the spree is well-known: beer sales have stopped growing. The slump in the early '80s has been followed by stagnation at the mid '70s levels. The only reason the brewers have managed to carry on making good profits is they are making more money on the beer they do sell.

The price of a pint has been rising fast, and that rise has not all been increased taxation. This is partly because of the switch to (higher margin) lager. "The guy who

previously knocked back eight jars of bitter now quenches his thirst with four pints of lager — maintaining our profits", says one industry spokesman. And one reason Bass has outperformed Allied in recent years is its greater emphasis on lager.

Some of the refurbishment is just making up for previous neglect by the breweries of their tied estates. (While sales were booming anyway, some brewers let the premises run down.) And just keeping pubs in good order is very costly.

Charrington reckons that after 3 to 5 years any boozer needs cheering up and at a cost of £30,000-£35,000 a throw, treats a quarter of its managed estate to a revamp every year. Even regular renovation includes an element of improvement in order to keep abreast of consumer expectations.

More radical "improvements" have been prompted by the new competition from the leisure industry and fast-food merchants. Nowadays no self-respecting, or indeed profitable, local can afford to spurn food or be a mere outlet for pints. An average pub kitchen might cost around £15,000 and last 5-10 years; extend the treatment to a high proportion of the country's 75,000 pubs and you're into big money.

But there is still no real evidence that the £4bn spend will produce a worthwhile return. The brewers will probably keep their existing customers (they might have done so more cheaply anyway), but they may not be too successful in getting new ones. And even if they do, the new markets they are tackling may not be too lucrative.

Catering is an expensive sideline to start up; food margins are tough and competition is fierce. Brewers have two ways of benefiting

directly from sales of meals. Some own their own restaurant chains — Whitbread owns Beefeaters, Roast Inns and Pizza Huts; Bass owns Toby Inns; Grand Met operates Chef & Brewer, Clifton and Berni Inns; Allied Lyons are behind Cavalier Restaurants and Chesters Restaurants. And roughly a quarter of all pubs owned by the brewers are managed directly by them.

One estimate claims that pub grub accounts for around a tenth of all pub sales — the unduly low figure underlining the brewers' difficulties in getting a slice of the action.

An alternative to selling new products under the same old roof is creating new outlets or redesigning old ones to match specific needs in specific areas. But the success record here is very patchy. Charrington reckons on 12-18 months of discussion before embarking on a major refurbishment project, and it uses Acorn surveys to ascertain the presence of a specific need. But it still makes mistakes.

A city centre cafe-bar designed for lunching ladies flopped because the women wanted about three times as much space as the average tippler. A scene bar suffered a similar fate because, although the scene flocked, it didn't drink. On the other hand replacing a married couple with a male duo as managers of a two-storey pub produced an all-male clientele and fat returns. All very interesting, but probably the kind of targetting that individual entrepreneurs find more profitable than brewing giants. So we are back where we started. The brewers are spending £4bn. And there is no hard evidence that the bulk of it will be well spent.

David Brierley

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#### WET T SHIRTS

Sir — On the recommendation of your magazine I visited the Old Priory in Salford on Wednesday 26th June. I was shocked to see in progress a wet T-shirt competition. Is it not hypocritical for a pub group like Pennine Hosts, which quite rightly refuses admission to scruffily dressed persons, to encourage the humiliation of wimmin in a male chauvinist extravaganza?

Ms D Parton



# Branch Diary

## HIGH PEAK AND NORTH EAST CHESHIRE

Tues 17 Sept Branch Meeting, Andrew Arms, Compstall (Robbies)

Sat 20 Sept West Midlands Trip (proposed)

Contact Tom Lord 061 427 7099

## TRAFFORD & HULME

Thurs 5 Sept Committee/Social, King William IV, Partington, all welcome. 8pm

Thurs 12 Sept 8.15pm, Hulme survey/crawl. Commence Legs of Man, City Rd

Thurs 19 Sept 8pm. Branch Meeting, Crown, Deansgate, near station

Thurs 3 Oct, Committee/Social, Bridge Inn, Dane Rd, Sale. All welcome

Mon 14 Oct Coach trip to The Station, Ashton under Lyne. Bookings for places now being taken. Refer to branch contact

Contact Dave Shelton 061 795 2113 or Keith Egerton 061 969 7706

## ROCHDALE, OLDHAM AND BURY

Tues 3 Sept 8pm Branch Meeting, Cross Keys (Lees), Uppermill, Oldham

Sat 14 Sept Saturday lunchtime coach trip - a mystery tour!

Tues 17 Sept 8pm Committee meeting, Dog & Partridge (Lees), Middleton Rd, Royton

Fri 27 Sept 7.30 Inter-branch social with South Manchester & Stockport branch at the Cemetery Hotel, Bury Rd, Rochdale

Tues 1 Oct 8pm Branch Meeting, Alpine Gasthof (Sam Smiths), Whitworth Rd, Rochdale.  
Guest speaker from Sam Smiths brewery

Fri/Sat 18/19 Oct Bury Beer Festival - see elsewhere in this issue

Tues 22 Oct 8pm Committee meeting, Waggon Inn (Burtonwood), Milnrow

Contact: Steve Lawton 061 620 9239 (h) or 061 928 6311 x7111 (w) Please note new no.

## STOCKPORT AND SOUTH MANCHESTER

Tues 3 Sept Open Committee Meeting, The Longsight, Belle Vue, 8pm

Thurs 12 Sept Branch Meeting, Manchester Arms, Wellington Rd South, Stockport 8pm

Sat/Sun 14/15 Sept Branch Stall at Castlefield Carnival

Fri 20 Sept GBG survey crawl of Hazel Grove. 7pm Crown, 8.30pm Grove

Thurs 26 Sept Pub of the Month, Victoria, Withington (Hydes)

Fri 27 Sept Joint Social with ROB at the Cemetery, Rochdale (contact Andy Cooper 445 4953 h 0625 872641 w)

Tues 1 Oct Open Committee Meeting, Alexandra, Northgate Rd, Edgeley 8pm

Fri 18 Oct Coach to Stoke Beer Festival - details from Andy Cooper.

Contact John Clarke 477 1973 (h) 832 2468 x385 (w)

## NORTH MANCHESTER

Wed 2 Oct Pendleton Crawl. Church, Ford La 7pm. Bridge Strawberry Rd 8pm

Sat 5th Oct Train Ride to Todmorden. Meet 7.15pm for 7.30 train from Victoria. Train back 11.48 from Todmorden

Wed 9 Oct Committee/Social, Crown & Anchor, Hilton St, Manchester 8pm

Wed 16 Oct Branch Meeting, White Swan, Swinton, 8pm. Speaker: Dave Lockwood will give a talk on cellar craft.

Wed 23 Oct Eccles Crawl. Crown & Volunteer 7pm, White Lion 8pm

Wed 30 Oct Albert Park, Gt Clowes St 8pm.

Contact Roger Hall 740 7937

## REGIONAL MEETING

Wed 25 Sept 8pm Britons Protection



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