

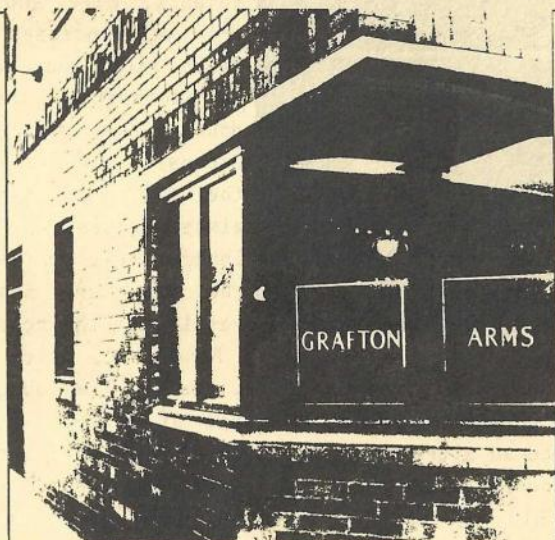
WHAT'S DOING



APRIL
1986

THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

NEW PUB FOR HOLTS



Holts' newest pub, the Grafton in Chorlton-on-Medlock, opened on Thursday 20th March. It is possibly the best pub the brewery has built since the heady days of Sir Edward Holt's Edwardian palaces. The layout is traditional but avoids the Lego-look of the 70's. There is a large vault to the right and an even larger lounge to the left of a central bar. The pub is very well appointed with Britannia tables and carpets in the lounge. All the fittings are of high quality and there is great attention to detail with hardwood window frames and doors and etched glass windows. The jukebox is somewhat obtrusive and the fruit machine and slightly twee 1930-ish pictures and light shades detract from the ambience. Nevertheless, the overall effect is pleasing; a comfortable pub with few gimmicks and excellent handpumped beers at reasonable prices (mild 59, bitter 62). Barry Manning, the licensee, was formerly at a Watneys pub in London where he won the regional cellar of the year award. The Grafton is certainly a suitable candidate for an award for the best new pub. Let's hope other breweries take note instead of building daft ephemeral gimmick pubs.



OLD VET

The Old Veteran off Eccles New Road, Salford, was opened on 27th February by Billy McNeill, Manchester City's manager. Perhaps it was some United supporters who chucked bricks through 7 of the pub's windows on 12th March. Notwithstanding this wanton vandalism, the Old Vet's new tenants, Mike and Pauline (left) Morton, are well pleased with their new pub. Their first pub was the Brickmakers Arms in Warrington, where in 10 months they doubled the turnover to 13 barrels a week. Greenalls have spent £160,000 on extending the pub into two adjacent houses and almost completely rebuilding it. CAMRA was instrumental in saving the Old Vet from the bulldozer some years ago and the results of the rebuild are far more satis-

factory than the Priory in Pendleton, which was also reprieved. A spacious vault has been retained and the lounge is well appointed and laid out with imaginative use of space. Lunchtime food has already proved an attraction to people in the local industrial estates and the handpumped mild and bitter (69p, 71p) are in excellent condition. The new Old Vet is a much-needed addition to the area and it is to be hoped that it will be able to develop the family atmosphere which characterised the old pub.

SWINGING

The new Swinging Bridge in Barton, masquerading as a free house, serves all three Chesters real ales by handpump. Unfortunately the car park is so crammed and the pub/restaurant so clogged with besuited hoorays that it's difficult to try a pint. No doubt the customers can afford the beer, the price of which our reporter was unable to ascertain. Perhaps you'd be better off crossing the real swinging bridge to sample the delights of Eccles.

BURTON GOING FOR A CHANGE

Bass have applied for permission to erect new illuminated signs on the Burton Arms in Swan Street, Manchester. Let's hope the beer will not be as bright as the signs when the pub reopens.

NOTHING TO CROW ABOUT

The Olde Cock in Didsbury is closed once again for refurbishment. The guts were ripped out of this Whitbread/Chesters house about five years ago - now it's happening again.

CITY DESK

Peter O'Grady

PEAK OF SUCCESS

Manchester's finest restoration project is now completed (internally, at least). The Peveril of the Peak, Chepstow Street, Great Bridgewater Street, is an outstanding example of what can be done to improve the lot of both tenants and drinking public alike. After suffering from "planners' blight" for more years than one cares to remember, it is now an absolute delight to drink in this 3-roomed pub which also has a "drinking corridor". The stained glass panels and fine woodwork have been well restored and the external tiles are soon to be renovated. Nancy Swanick and her family thoroughly deserve the new-found success which will undoubtedly flow from Manchester's second-finest restoration project - the nearby G-Mex Centre. (I am reliably informed that at the recent Pub of the Month award at the Pev, the Wilsons bitter and mild were on such good form that even a previously vitriolic correspondent to this venerable organ was won over from his formerly critical position.) The photo shows David Shelton (Chairman) and Mike Goode (Secretary) of the Trafford & Hulme branch with Theresa Swanick.



ALL CHANGE

With the flurry of activity indicating that a summer re-opening is definitely on target, I am sure that there is absolutely no truth in the rumour that Boddingtons are planning to change the name of the Royal Central Hotel, Windmill Street (known to one and all as "Cox's Bar"). Seriously, the "Royal G-Mex Hotel" just doesn't sound right, does it?



WINTER WARMERS

It has definitely been a bitter winter in Queen Street, Manchester. Not even a keg mild in sight at Wilson's Rising Sun. The bitter is handpumped, however,

and there at least three draught lagers!!! BUT NO MILD.

GULLIVERS

John Willie Lees' Gullivers in Oldham Street (formerly the Grenadier)



had an unfortunate fire recently. They've been working night and day to re-open. Meanwhile, at their back door in Tib Street, there is an Asian food take-away opening soon. Hot giant kebabs a speciality?

Until recently Gullivers was the Grenadier, a Wilsons pub. Some readers will remember it as the Albert, but not many will remember it as a Walkers house. This photo was taken in the 1890s (the lantern on the corner advertises Tennents lager) and Walkers gave the pub up in 1922, when Wilsons took over.

ÆMOST THERE

The Waggon & Horses, Southgate, off Bridge Street, are offering Theakston XB and Ruddles County at 96p a pint alongside Wilsons bitter at 76p. Wilsons handpumped mild is also available.

HAT TRICK

There are now three "traditional" bitters on sale at the City Arms, Kennedy Street. Burton Ale and Walkers bitter are joined by Jennings ("guaranteed, no nuclear piles"). It won't be long until Derek and Mavis Dearden go nap by serving Tetley bitter and mild through hand-pumps too. The world (OK then, the City) would be a much nicer place if the brewery decided to do a tasteful Walkers-style conversion on the premises - it's a large bar for two small rooms. Just think, twice as many people could enjoy the delights of great beer and good food if a little time, effort and money were spent wisely.

A NICE DROP

Monton's newest hostelry, the Drop Inn, is now selling Holts bitter as well as Boddies and Tetleys. A return of Walkers proved totally unsuccessful and for some reason Tetleys isn't selling too well either. The Holts bitter sells at 64p (same as the Park lounge nearby) and the Boddies at 65p. Both seem to be doing well, even if the Drop Inn is no longer the cheapest free house in the country.

HOLTS 91

With the opening of the Atherton Arms and the Grafton, Holts now have 91 pubs. All except the Black Dog are in Greater Manchester. 46 of the pubs are in North Manchester and Salford, which accounts for the mammoth representation in North Manchester's Good Beer Guide selections. The biggest concentrations are in Eccles, Cheetham, Prestwich and Whitefield. But all 10 metropolitan districts have at least one Holts house. The oldest Holts pub is the Golden Cross (pre-1772), the newest the Grafton (1986), the smallest the Eagle, the biggest the Cleveland, the poshest the Woodthorpe, the scruffiest - well, when you've toured all 91, please let us know.

Apollo, Heywood Street, Cheetham
 Atherton Arms, Atherton
 Bay Horse, Unsworth
 Bird in Hand, Liverpool Rd, Patricroft
 Black Dog, Belmont
 Blue Bell, Manchester Road, Bury
 Blue Bell, Moston Lane, Moston
 Bradford, Bradford Rd, Manchester
 Bricklayers, Ordsall Lane, Salford
 Bridgewater, Manchester Road,

Hollinwood

Bridgewater, Liverpool Rd, Patricroft
 Brigadier, Sale
 Broadway, Broadway, Salford
 Bulls Head, Church Street, Eccles
 Cart & Horses, Astley
 Cheetwood Hotel, Derby St, Cheetham
 Church Inn, Bury New Rd, Whitefield
 Church Inn, Droylsden Road,

Newton Heath

Claremont Hotel, Moss Side
 Cleveland Hotel, Crumpsall Lane
 Coach & Horses, Bury Old Road,

Prestwich

Cricketers, Manchester Rd, Swinton
 Cross Yates, Whitworth Rd, Rochdale
 Crown & Volunteer, Liverpool Road,

Eccles

Crumpsall Hotel, Bury Old Road,
 Cheetham Hill

Derby Brewery Arms, Cheetham Hill
 Road, Manchester

Duke of Wellington, Higher Blackley
 Duke of York, Marlborough Rd, Salford
 Eagle & Child Higher La, Whitefield
 Eagle, Collier Street, Salford
 Egerton Inn, Hanlon Street,

Cheetham Hill

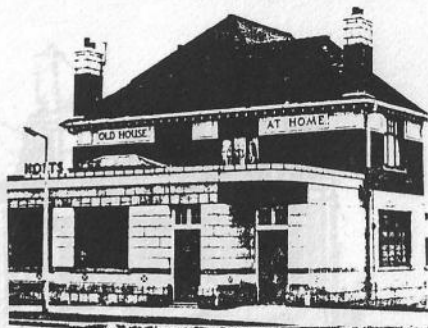
Ellesmere, King William St, Winton
 Foresters, Bury New Rd, Prestwich
 Fox Inn, Blackley

Friendship, Scholes Lane, Prestwich
 Frigate, Thatch Leach Lane, Whitefield
 Garratt, Pink Bank Lane, Longsight



Goats Gate, Whitefield
 Golden Cross, Liverpool Rd, Patricroft
 Golden Lion, Blackley
 Grafton, Chorlton-on-Medlock
 Grapes, Liverpool Rd, Peel Green
 Griffin, Wilmslow Road, Cheadle
 Griffin, Didsbury Rd, Heaton Mersey
 Grove, Ashton New Road, Clayton
 Half Way House, Droylsden
 Hare & Hounds, Outwood
 Junction, Cheadle Hulme
 Kings Arms, Manchester Rd, Hollinwood
 Kings Arms, Oldfield Road, Salford
 Lamb Inn, Regent Street, Eccles
 Legh Arms, Sale Moor
 Lord Nelson, Bolton Rd, Pendlebury
 Lord Nelson, Urmston
 Melville, Stretford
 Morning Star, Manchester Road,
 Swinton
 Mort Arms, Elliott Street, Tyldesley

Navigation, Drake Street, Rochdale
 New Grove, Bury New Rd, Whitefield
 Newmarket, Bolton Road, Pendlebury
 Old Cross, Radcliffe
 Old House at Home, Whit La, Salford
 Ostrich, Bury Old Road, Prestwich
 Papermakers, Church St, Radcliffe
 Park Hotel, Monton Road, Monton
 Park Inn, Worsley Road, Swinton
 Railway, Dean La, Newton Heath
 Railway, Manshaw Rd, Fairfield
 Red Lion, Bury New Road, Prestwich
 Red Lion, Irlams o'th'Height
 Roebuck, Flixton
 Rose Hill, Daisy Hill, Westhoughton
 Royal Oak, Barton La, Eccles
 Sabre, Taylorson Street, Salford
 Seven Stars, Ashton Old Road



Spread Eagle, Regent Road, Salford
 Stanley, Liverpool Road, Patricroft
 Tanners, Fairy Lane, Cheetham
 Union Tavern, Liverpool St, Salford
 Waggon & Horses, Hyde Road, Gorton
 Waggon & Horses, Irlams o'th'Height
 Welcome, Bury Old Road, Prestwich
 Wellington, Church Street, Eccles
 Wellington, Irlams o'th'Height
 White Horse, Bury New Rd, Prestwich
 White Lion, Liverpool Rd, Patricroft
 White Lion, Westhoughton
 White Swan, Worsley Road, Swinton
 Wilton Arms, Coronation Rd, Radcliffe
 Winston, Churchill Way, Salford
 Woodthorpe, Bury Old Rd, Prestwich

GUIDE TO WALKERS PUBS

After "Around the Houses with Tetley" (WD December) we now have "The Complete Walkers Guide" to "houses of character and distinction" in Merseyside and Lancashire. The booklet distances itself from the barmy remarks ("In-scene pub", etc) of the Tetley book, although some of the descriptions are a bit too close to the "charming local with unspoilt darts team" cliches beloved of CAMRA guides. CAMRA features prominently - Good Beer Guide entries, Pub of the Year recipients, etc, and the guide is up to date with the mention of the Howcroft's recent Pub Preservation Award.

75 pubs are listed; 52 in Merseyside and 23 in "Lancashire" (mainly Greater Manchester and two in Cheshire) All pubs sell real ale. The "Complete Walkers Guide" is available free from any of the 75 pubs.



CITY CENTRE PUBS

On 5th March CAMRA North Manchester celebrated not only the joint birthdays of Rhys Jones and Roger Hall but also the granting that day of 11pm Monday-Thursday closing for Manchester. The festivities took the form of a route march round Manchester city centre to visit and assess the twelve pubs in the 1986 Good Beer Guide. This is summarised as follows:

1 MARBLE ARCH, 73 Rochdale Road (free)

More akin to a Dublin bar than an English town pub, the Arch is in the Good Beer Guide by virtue of the variety of its beers and the commitment of its owner.

2 SMITHS ARMS, 37 Sherratt St (Tetley)

This splendid back-street local retains a good pub atmosphere probably because it still has separate rooms and an identifiable lobby.

3 WHEATSHEAF, 30 Oak Street (Tetley)

Here is a pub with a nice vault, lobby and snug which live side by side with a rather anonymous larger room whose only redeeming feature is a bar billiards table. The pub currently sells Jennings alongside Tetley mild and bitter, helped, no doubt, by the enthusiasm of the landlord.

4 UNICORN, 26 Church Street (Bass)

Dark mild has now augmented the range of traditional ales at this neat city centre pub. Unfortunately the draught Bass had been sold out on our visit. One wonders why more Bass pubs in the North West do not offer such choice.

5 WHITE LION, Liverpool Road (Chesters)

A rather bland establishment, relieved mainly by a number of stills from early films which provoked a fair bit of conversation.

6 PACK HORSE, 361 Deansgate (Greenall Whitley)

I must confess a personal dislike of open plan pubs, particularly pubs which have been altered to this layout by the partial or complete removal of interior walls or screens. No pub, it seems, can survive this treatment without some loss of character. The Pack Horse has survived such treatment better than most. This, together with a



general smartening-up of its previously forbidding interior, has left it neat and tidy.

7 BRITONS PROTECTION, 50 Great Bridgewater Street (Tetley)

It's a disgrace that such a distinctive pub should be ruined by insensitive redecoration. The minimum wattage bulbs now installed gave insufficient illumination for one to see if the pub has also been altered structurally. Tetley bitter and Jennings bitter at 82p a pint are significantly overpriced. Daft notices informing people in working clothes that there is no vault are little short of insulting.

8 PEVERIL OF THE PEAK, 127 Great Bridgewater Street (Wilsons)

Tetley should take a long, hard look at what can be done 150 yards up the street. An excellent and tasteful redecoration (see City Desk in this issue), with fresh varnish, paint and wallpaper - how many now-spoilt pubs needed anything more? - shows that the big breweries can get it right. A Bury-type table football machine is provided.

9 CIRCUS TAVERN, 86 Portland Street (Tetley)

The silly exterior canopies hardly dignify this otherwise unspoilt and tiny two-roomed pub. It's a miracle that it has not been opened out. Perhaps its owners now realise that this is the Circus's attraction.

10 GREY HORSE, 80 Portland Street (Hydes)

This pub so polarised opinion that it is difficult to present a branch view of the place. We can say that it was full and noisy.

11 CROWN & ANCHOR, 41 Hilton Street (Whitbread, relaxed tie)

It seems a little sad that Whitbread (possibly envious of the Crown's success where their own low-cost Victoriana has failed) have spent little money on the pub. This may change in the near future. The house is still in transition, but despite this, is frequently hectic.

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Other contributors to this issue: Rob Dunford, Roger Hall, Bert Kerks, Des Nogalski, Pete Cash, Steve Byrne. Apologies to those whose contributions have had to be held over - keep the news and letters coming in!

12 JOLLY ANGLER, 47 Ducie Street (Hydes)

The Jolly Angler was severely modified some time ago, although the increase in space this gained was consumed by a pool table. Nevertheless, the pub has a unique ambience. The new tenants have plans for change...

I have deliberately refrained from commenting on beer quality, pub by pub. No truly awful beer was encountered. (One should hope that this is the case, as all pubs are in the Good Beer Guide.)

Four pubs offered beer that was particularly good: Smiths Arms, Peveril of the Peak, Crown & Anchor and the Jolly Angler. All twelve pubs, with the exception of the

Circus Tavern, sold keg lager. Indeed, this pub sold but one bulk beer, Tetley bitter. Readers may also ponder Tetley's good showing - four pubs compared to Wilsons' one.

Duncan Roberts



THE PITS

Eddie Cass (WD March) asks about pubs with names connected to coal mining. In 1772 the first alehouse recognizances which named pubs record only one in the entire area - the Colliers in Bradford where James Bottomley was the licensee. However, the predecessor of the Crown & Kettle on the corner of Newton Lane and Ancoats Lane was known as the Iron Dish and Cob o'Coal. The name is echoed today in the Cob o'Coal on Winder Avenue, a pub which was formerly the Colliers Arms in Cannel Street (Ancoats). In 1825 this was the only Manchester pub with mining associations. The advent of the beerhouse brought about numerous names associated with trades and occupations, mining included. However, in the entire Manchester licensing records only two pubs appear - the Colliers in Ancoats and the Colliers on Ashton New Road. In other districts there were numerous Colliers and Miners Arms. There were, for example, two Colliers Arms in Pendlebury. Perhaps the earliest connection between mining and public houses is a reference in the Manorial records of Worsley to Thomas Collier, who was an alehouse-keeper in Meanlee at the beginning of the seventeenth century and who paid the Lord of the Manor for "coal mole", or land for mining.

BOLTON NEWS

As predicted in February WD, handpumped Castle Eden is now on sale at the Man & Scythe, Churchgate. The pub, famous for its traditional cider, has not sold real ale for years.

Across the road at the Boars Head the Greenalls Original bitter is still holding its own alongside the ordinary bitter and is particularly popular with weekend drinkers. Customers are usually asked "Which bitter?", and this has probably a lot to do with the continued high sales. It's such attention, as well as the high quality of the ale, which puts pubs like the Boars Head in the Good Beer Guide.

Greenalls Original, we are told, is also on sale at the Jolly Crofters on Chorley Old Road.



The New Zealand Chief, one of Bolton's colourful town centre pubs, was demolished last month. Varied in its clientele (Cro-magnon, Neanderthal included), the Chief certainly earned its place in the annals of Bolton's folklore. It's a shame to see the old pub go, to be replaced by yet another office block.

Just up the road, scaffolding has appeared round the Griffin, a keg Bass pub. What's this? Are Bass forking

out some readies? Will the Griffin be gentrified like the Railway nearby?

Still on Great Moor Street, the George (Wilsons) is being redecorated - nothing drastic - and for a time after stripping down, the old plaster and paintwork was visible, giving an idea of the look of the pub half a century or more ago.

Considerable alterations are taking place at the Millstone, off Deansgate, round the corner from the Three Crowns. The pub is due to reopen soon and it will be interesting to see what Tetleys have in store for us. The Millstone was a dismal keg-only joint. Will real ale appear?

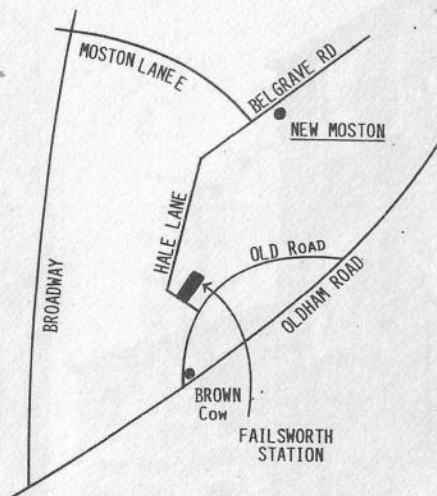
Some redecoration is also taking place at the Rose Hill, Manchester Road. Rumour has it that draught Bass may soon be installed here - the pub is owned by the same people who have Winstons (aka Gipsys Tent), where draught Bass is doing well.

Meanwhile, up Daubhill way, David Rowlinson has been improving the Sunnyside (off Adelaide Street - see January WD). The upstairs function room (with bar) - the "Sharman Room" - is now complete and work will soon begin on the beer garden and children's playground for the summer. The concert room is in regular use and Dave's first Jazz Night will be on April 4th. The current guest beer is Hydes bitter and it is hoped that Holts will soon be joining the Boddies and OB. The Sunnyside has an excellent bowling green - any bowlers interested in forming a team should call in at the pub or phone Dave on Bolton 61601. While in the Daubill area, two pubs within walking distance of the Sunnyside are worth trying - the Oddfellows (Greenalls (E)) and the Stags Head (Tetley (H)), both on St Helens Road. Note the interesting dog transporting device above the bar at the Oddfellows.

Last month's "What's Brewing" announced the formation of CARPET - the Campaign for Real Pub Titles - in Bolton. Many of Bolton's pubs have been rechristened: Fleece-Gaiety-Maxims, Gipsys Tent-Winstons, Lower Nags Head-Olivers, etc, and the most recent change has occurred in Farnworth. The Golden Lion is now "Bananas" (yes, really). Probably something to do with the gentlemen in monkey suits who patrol the place.

NEW MOSTON

Tucked away on Belgrave Road in a housing estate on the Failsworth boundary is the New Moston, a Marstons pub serving handpumped mild (71p) and bitter (73p). Tom O'Malley, the licensee, was previously at the New Crown in Newton Heath and is justifiably proud of the beer and the pub where he has now been for four years. The New Moston is a two-roomed pub with a high standard of furnishings. It's a bit out of the way and is best approached from Failsworth. Take a bus to the Brown Cow or a train to Failsworth Station and walk through.



CHANGES FOR THE BETTER?

Mr Chesters, Cateaton Street, Manchester, is shut and the builders are knocking the place about. Will real ale return?

A couple of Salford's non-real ale pubs also had the builders in recently - the Golden Gate on Cross Lane and the Royal on Eccles New Road. Any chance of upping the percentage of real ale pubs in Salford?

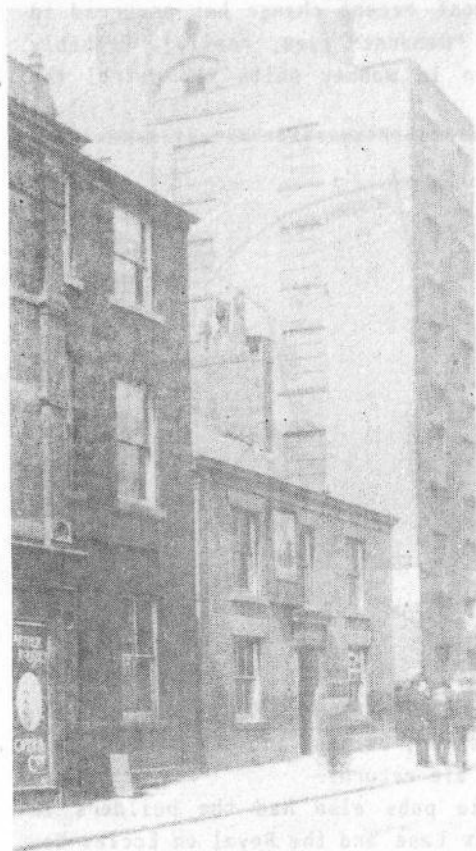
NOW & THEN

by ROB MAGEE

No. 4

BLACK SWAN

13 Bottom o' th'
Moor, Oldham



Although the original licensing date of this inn is officially given as 1829, there is no doubt that it was in existence much earlier. As mentioned in the last article in this series, the old road through Oldham wound its way from Jackson Pit; from Rhodes Bank it crossed to the left of Mumps and down to the left of the bank, past the bus stops, to the rear of the present Black Swan and up Castle Mill Street. The licensee of the Black Swan in the late eighteenth century was Richard Chadwick, although the inn was then known as the Talbot - in fact, there was a Richard Chadwick innkeeper here as early as 1715. It was probably Richard's son, another Richard, who changed the name to the Black Swan in 1813. The premises may have been rebuilt at that time to face the new road, now Bottom o' th' Moor. Richard Chadwick junior was the innkeeper from at least 1810

until 1820; he died in 1833 at the grand old age of 82.

Following Richard in 1820 came Joseph Bradbury, who was killed in 1850 when the horse pulling the gig he was driving bolted. His son Ralph took over for a short time but by 1852 Henry Thompson, who was also a hackney coach owner, had become innkeeper and he remained until 1860.

It was while William Buckley was licensee (1860-1875) that the Black Swan was first described as a "commercial inn and market house". By 1871 the address was 13 Bottom o'th' Moor. There then followed William Ashworth (1879) and Amos Firth (1880-1895) While Amos was licensee, Oldham's 1894 Alehouse Report was published. This commented that the Black Swan was in good condition, had stabling for seven horses and the property was owned by Hibbert & Whitehead. There were six drinking rooms, six bedrooms, bathrooms and accommodation for travellers. The inn was "very clean" and was not tied to any brewery.

Six landlords after Amos Firth came William Hartley (1916-1929), who was the first tenant of John Willie Lees's brewery, which had bought the Black Swan in 1916. It was whilst John Coverley was tenant of the "Dirty Duck", as it was known (1970-1981), that major alterations were made and the pub was tastefully refurbished in 1971. John's wife Hilda briefly succeeded him in 1981 and in the same year the present landlord, Ronald Smith, took over with his wife Margaret - he is the 35th licensee! They previously had the tenancy of the Hare & Hounds, Block Lane, Chadderton, for five years.

Ron and Margaret are now in their fifth year at this busy inn, which still offers accommodation. It is also the meeting place for the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines Association. Ron sells his John Willie Lees mild for 62p a pint and bitter for 67p - both electric pumped and cask conditioned, naturally.

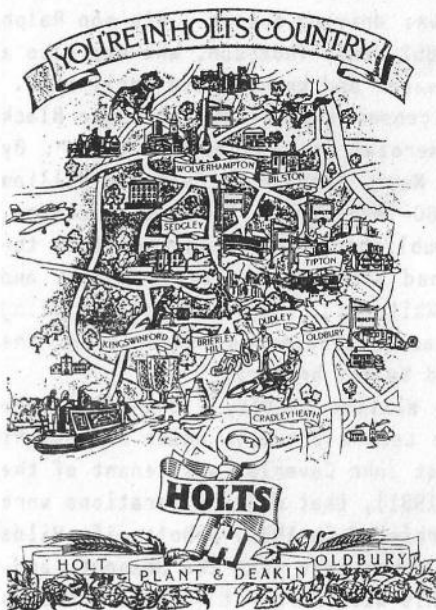
Comparing the two photos (c1895 and 1983) the Black Swan hasn't changed much, has it? But the surroundings certainly have!

CLARENCE COMEBACK

The Clarence, on the corner of Bolton Street and Silver Street, Bury, reopened last month. Wilsons (as distinct from Pennine Joke) have done a nice job on the place and what was until recently a tatty town centre boozer has been transformed into a neat three-roomed pub. With smart wallpaper and carpets, an attractive fireplace (with "real" fire), and even Britannia tables, the new Clarence is worth a visit. Wilsons mild and bitter are on handpump - but beware the keg Websters.

FALLING STAR

Holts have applied for planning permission to alter the Seven Stars on Ashton Old Road.



THE OTHER HOLTS

A little over two years ago Holt, Plant and Deakin was set up by Allied Breweries to provide an alternative estate to Ansells in the West Midlands. So far 17 pubs have had the treatment, which involves restoring and renovating suitable pubs to a high standard, using traditional materials and generally providing an atmosphere sympathetic to the requirements of the customers. HPD has a lot in common with Peter Walker Ltd, who pioneered this type of operation on Merseyside, and anyone visiting the Black Country would recognise the familiar style. Like Peter Walker, two HPD beers are brewed at Tetley-Walker's in Warrington (Holt's mild and bitter, both 1036 og) and both tend to have a Tetley-ish taste. However, where

Holts is different is in the fact that it has its own brewery as well. There is a small brewery attached to the Holts Brewery Inn, Station Road, Oldbury, and this produces Holt's Entire (1043 og). This is not, as the name may imply, a porter, but a classic bitter in the mould of Pedigree or Landlord.

The pub itself has been lovingly renovated and, as an added feature, the brewing plant can be viewed through large glass windows. Not surprisingly, the Brewery Inn is very popular.

The tradition of pub/breweries, once widespread throughout the country, was slower to die out in the Black Country than elsewhere, and for those who enjoy such ales as Bathams, Holdens, Ma Pardoes, Hansons, etc, Holts represents a welcome return to local tradition.

Average prices are mild 66p, bitter 68p, Entire 72p. There is also a winter strong ale (again brewed at Station Road), which sold for 72p - good value for a 1050 brew.

A list of all their pubs can be obtained from Holt, Plant & Deakin Ltd, Brewery Office, 91 Station Road, Oldbury, West Midlands B69 4LU

Ken Birch

JOLLY GOOD

Pennine Host are planning to install handpumped real ale at the Jolly Carter, Winton. But what else are they going to do?

To the Editor:

375 Chorley Road, Swinton, Manchester M27

LETTERS



PRICES

Sir - Thank you for publishing my contribution on prices in last month's WD. To add to this vital point, in pre-decimal coinage days the beer price rises always seemed to be either $\frac{1}{2}$ d or 1d, but today's rises far exceed this and appear to be definitely rip-off tactics on the part of the brewers.

The Crown & Kettle (Wilsons, City Taverns) have put 3p (7d in old money) on their Websters Yorkshire bitter and Wilsons Original bitter (an increase from 71p to 74p a pint). Holts brewery is regarded as having the cheapest beers in the country - and it is the most prosperous and successful. Rarely is there to be found a sparsely populated Holts outlet. They sell a fairly high-gravity bitter at down-to-earth prices. Why do other brewers' slightly higher gravity beers cost the earth? For example, Marstons Pedigree (the so-called "King of Bitters") costs 80p a pint upwards, and that beer is just four degrees stronger in original gravity than Holts. Ah, well. Think Joe's!

It has come to my notice (and I suppose to many other people's as well) that three free houses can sell beer under 70p a pint - the Drop Inn, Monton; the White House and the Ancoats, Great Ancoats Street. Tetley bitter at the Drop Inn is just 70p a pint and at the Ancoats, Youngers Scotch, Jennings, Websters and Tetleys all sell at 68p a pint. Great! Now consider the price of each of these beers at tied houses. Youngers at the Star Inn (Hulme) is 75p. Jennings at the Wheatsheaf (central Manchester, Tetley tied) is 71p - not too bad for an arrangement beer introduced to Tetley outlets. Websters is 74p at the Crown & Kettle (Wilsons, central Manchester), 76p at the Old Grey Horse (Didsbury) and 78p at the Withington Ale House. As for Tetley, well, just call in at the Portland Bar in the city centre (and other daft places) and you will see what I mean! If you want (heaven forbid!) a tot of lime in your lager at Nicklebys (Wilsons), Dale Street, you can expect to fork out 10p (just 3p at the Ancoats).

If free houses can keep the prices down, who is kidding who? To the best of my knowledge, tied houses selling value-for-money beer in the city centre include the Unicorn (Bass), Castle (Robinsons), Gullivers (Lees) and the Jolly Angler (Hydes). We should avoid most of the remainder because of their too-high prices. Will drinkers ever learn?

Leo King



THIS SURFACE IS ADHESIVE. ASK YOUR TOBACCONIST FOR THE ATTRACTIVE ALBUM (PRICE ONE PENNY) SPECIALLY PREPARED TO HOLD THE COMPLETE SERIES

CYCLING

A SERIES OF 50
BY THE EDITOR OF "CYCLING"

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POST OFFICE CENTRE-CYCLES

A number of Centre-Cycles (five-wheeler carrier machines) were used by the Post Office in the Horsham area in 1883, about the time of the introduction of the parcel post. Above the small wheels of the Centre-Cycle were brackets supporting large baskets for carrying correspondence and parcels. Because of the arrangement of its four small wheels clustered round the centre big wheel, it was familiarly known as the "Hen and Chickens." These Centre-Cycles were not generally successful and their use was soon discontinued. (Photograph, Crown Copyright).

JOHN PLAYER & SONS

BRANCH OF THE IMPERIAL TOBACCO CO.,
50F GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND LTD.

ON YER BIKE

Sir - I wonder if there is any connection between the name "Hen & Chickens" in this pre-war cigarette card, and the pub in Bolton which is very close to the Post Office?

Pete Cash

IRLAM OPINION

Sir - the only comment I have about "Boddies Bother" (March WD) is that any person who can give up a good job because he can't get a better one is in a more fortunate position than most. However, CAMRA can applaud that under new management the Irlam Railway (not the Cadishead one - keg Greenalls) has seen the introduction of Boddingtons mild, an improvement in beer quality and an increase in turnover.

Sports sports a handpump which does not dispense Websters bitter (March WD). Pennine Joke have had their pump in over a month, but the beer hasn't arrived yet.

The Nags Head (Chesters) is going to be altered and is under new management. Perhaps we can have three real ales, like in the Swinging Bridge, Barton - some hopes!

Bill Collier

JOLLY ANGLER

New tenants at the Jolly Angler, Ducie Street, Manchester, are Sheila and Michael Reynolds, who took over on 3rd March after Dave's farewell thrash on the Saturday. The Reynolds intend to redecorate, perhaps provide an open fire and keep the Angler a pub of character. On a recent visit the Hydes mild and bitter were of excellent quality and should earn the Angler a place in the next Good Beer Guide. Sheila and Michael have returned to the trade after a 14-year absence - they had the Royal (Robinsons) on Phoebe Street, Salford, until it shut in 1972.

WIGAN & DISTRICT

Dave White

The photo was taken at the presentation of Wigan branch's Pub of the Year award to the Millstone (Thwaites), Wigan Lane. Landlord



Bill Brown and his wife Janet are on the right.

Moorhouses Premium Bitter returned briefly to Wigan town centre last month. A handpump popped up in the Turnkey Cellars, King Street, along with several bar-stickers and dripmats. The ale sold at 75p a pint. Now the Turnkey is experimenting with Pendle Witch (80p a pint). Since Boddies relinquished the Turnkey, McEwans 80/- has been the regular cask ale on sale, but other beers - cask YSB and No.3 - have been less successful and were soon taken off. Let's hope that the Burnley beers don't share the same demise.

The Queen's visit to Wigan has led to Wallgate bridge being tarted up. Maybe HRH won't notice the surrounding Ring Road trenches and bollards. Sadly, this meant that the old "Magees Ales" sign over the bridge has been painted over. Vestiges of Magees' presence can still be seen on the exterior of the Pagefield Hotel, Park Road (keg GW); the Bridgewater, Scot Lane (GW) and the Seven Stars, Wallgate (now Thwaites).

All is not lost, however. The White Lion was an old pub on the corner of Market Street. Town centre development in the 1960s led to the closure and demolition of the pub, but a "White Lion" in the stonework



was saved and inserted in the brickwork at the back of Lowe's department store. Most of the building was pulled down last year, to give a better view of the Parish Church. However, the White Lion "White Lion" has been saved again and can be seen in the new brickwork at the

front of the reconstructed building. A relic of a long-gone pub lives on, for once.

Incidentally, the Park Hotel, Hope Street, which closed a year ago, is still standing and being used as the site HQ for the surrounding development, so it could remain for some time to come. The interior of

the pub was removed soon after closure and is now in the Wigan Pier Heritage Centre complete with wax effigies of Mrs Brown, the landlady, and customers. No real ale!



DRAGON BREATHES AGAIN

Salford's Red Dragon on the Crescent which has been closed for a number of years has been bought by Andy and Jo Davies. Licence permitting, the pub should be open shortly, serving Holts and a guest beer.

The new licence for the Red Dragon was due to be transferred to the pub on April 1st and previously belonged to the Royal Oak, Chapel Street, Cheetham Hill. This licence has been held in suspension by Holts since the Royal Oak closed in 1967.

ABOUT TIME

Despite decisions to retain 10.30 closing in Eccles, Salford and Trafford, the Licensing Justices in

Manchester have come to the conclusion that public houses in the City should be permitted to remain open until 11 o'clock every night except Sunday. From 17th March drinkers from Didsbury to Moston, from Gorton to Cheetham Hill, have been able to enjoy the freedom which other parts of Greater Manchester have had for a year.

The decision is a step in the right direction towards more flexible opening hours. Manchester's move creates serious border problems particularly in the city centre. Fancy having to rush out of the Eagle to get a drink in the Boddies brewery tap! We can only hope that Manchester's lead will ensure that Salford, Eccles and Trafford follow suit in 1987.

BULL DOZES

Kirkbridge Ltd have applied for permission to rebuild the Red Bull and adjoining house, Mason Street, Manchester, after the existing building has been knocked down.

SPANKING NEW BEER

Jim Ostrick took over as landlord of Miles Platting's Spanking Roger on 17th February; by the following Saturday handpumps had been installed and real ale was flowing for the first time. The Spanking Roger is just off Hulme Hall Lane near Oldham Road and CAMRA members will be more welcome than a certain Regional Organiser was before Jim became licensee!



There's never a dull moment for the frequenters of Grotley's favourite amber nectar shop. Not only can one talk to like-minded people on amber-nectar-related topics but the cosy little hostelry is positively peppered with megapersonalities and superstars. Only the other week Tish was interrupted in full flow as she tiraded on about "blinkered self-perpetuating oligarchic gerontocracies" by Humphrey Dumpty, Duncan Busman and the silly celt, who all rushed in shouting, "We've won! We've won! It's eleven o'clock closing in Grotley!" Tish blushed and tried to change the topic to paedophile vicars but without success.

As Beinlos and Ms von Trapp are still unwelcome, there was no throwing of Gollocks mild and Charlie Bass maintained a nonchalant and serene mien until guess who walked through the door? No, it wasn't Baby Doc Marcos or one of the astronauts but the Noble Robin and his inamorata, both sporting matching macaws.

We were so stunned that we missed the opening exchange of pleasantries between the two mine hosts. What on earth could they have in common apart from a cellar full of remaindered Manky Ales? We tried our best at unobtrusive eavesdropping but the only remark we managed to overhear was when a nubile, pouting, page-three lovely swished out of the ladies and one of them was heard to say, "Cor, I wouldn't arf like to lend her one!" As their conversation is too important to remain shrouded in mystery for ever, the usual hogshead of Drabs is offered for a full, no-punches-pulled account. Is a joint venture planned? Will Robin sell What's Doing again? Watch this space.

After the Nobles had left we drank up and arranged to meet again at the Shillelagh Ceilidh to celebrate Yom Kippur and 11 o'clock closing which coincided nicely.

JOKE CORNER: Psst! Heard the one about the lager company that bought the Manchester Ship Canal? No? Well there's no room in What's Doing, but for a lengthier, not to say tedious, version of this jocular little witty whimsicality why not buy a copy of our cheeky little sister success story publication Manky Ale, on sale at amber nectar shops everywhere?

PISS OFF: In the unbowlerised version of Gulliver's Travels a fire in the palace of Lilliput is extinguished by the simple expedient of

urinating upon it. Unfortunately, when Gullivers in Oldham Street burst into flames there was no bladderful giant about so the place was pretty well gutted.

BANKS'S

Banks's Brewery, which with Hansons makes up Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries, is presently building a new pub on Radcliffe Moor Road, Radcliffe, near Bury. The pub, which is due to open in November or December, is as yet unnamed and a local competition will be held later in the year to choose an appropriate name. We understand that this new managed house will comprise a lounge and bar and will offer a range of three real ales - Banks's mild and bitter and Hansons Black Country Bitter - served through Banks's customary electric pumps.

The new Banks's pub on Burnage Lane, Burnage, is rapidly rising from the rubble of a former Henley's garage. There'll be no future for the former underground petrol tanks, so the locals won't be drinking 4-star mild. Due to open late summer.



Branch Diary

BOLTON

Wed 2 April 8.30pm Branch Meeting, Sunnyside Hotel (free house), Adelaide Street, off St Helens Road, Bolton

Sun 6 April Sunday Social, 12 noon Royal Oak (Greenalls), Bradshaw Brow; 1pm House Without a Name (Chesters), Lee Gate, Harwood

Sun 13 April Sunday Social 12 noon Bob's Smithy (Tetley), Chorley Old Road, Bolton

Tues 15 April, Trip to Mitchells Brewery, Lancaster. Spaces limited. Phone Des Nogalski on Bolton 655418

Wed 23 April St George's Day crawl of Farnworth. 8pm Market, 8.30 Britannia, 9pm Saddle, 9.30 White Hart, 10pm Shakespeare, 10.30pm White Horse

Wed 7 May, 8.30pm Branch Meeting, Cross Guns (Walkers), Deane Road, Bolton

Mon 12 May Thwaites trip. Few spaces remaining. Phone Des Nogalski, Bolton 655418

Sun 18 May, 12 noon. Social, Flag, Bromley Cross

Contact: Dave Fleming Bolton 389918 (h), Farnworth 75111 x207 (w)

WIGAN

Wed 2 April 8.30. Campaign Meeting, Swan & Railway, Wallgate, Wigan

Fri 11 April Standish/Coppull Moor Survey. Alison Arms, Coppull, 8.15; Plough & Harrow 8.45

Wed 16 April 8.30 Branch Meeting, Red Lion, Gerrard St, Ashton-in-Makerfield

Contact: Brian Gleave Atherton 892965 (h) Atherton 876200 (w)

NORTH MANCHESTER

Wed 2 April Salford Crawl. Woolpack 7pm, Paddock 8pm

Wed 9 April Old Veteran, My Street, Weaste 8pm

Wed 16 April, White Swan, Swinton, 8pm. Holts speaker (oh, yes!)

Wed 23 April Kenyon Arms, Little Hulton, 8pm

Wed 30 April, Tyldesley Crawl. Carders 7.30, Half Moon 8.30

Wed 7th May. Bill's pre-birthday crawl of Irlam. Nags Head vault 7.30, Boathouse 8.30

Wed 14 May Newmarket, Pendlebury 8pm

Wed 21 May, Brewers Arms (Boddies), 8pm

Contact: Roger Hall 740 7937