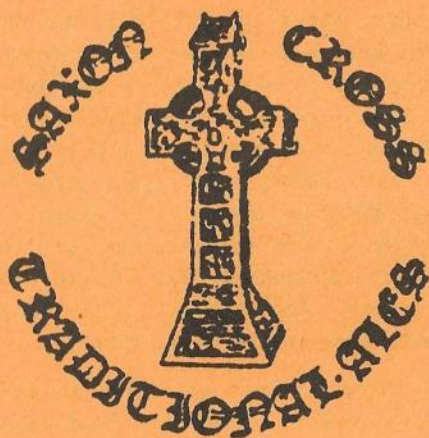


# WHAT'S DOING



APRIL  
1987

THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE



## LIQUID ASSETS

It is sad to report that one of the pioneers of the small brewery, Clive Winkle's Saxon Cross Brewery, went into liquidation in early February after nearly nine years of trading. This once thriving company was turning out 50 barrels per week a few years ago, but this had declined to 10-15 by the end of 1986.

The decline has been blamed on a number of factors, mainly the loss of a number of free trade accounts. Big brewers have either acquired the outlets or have bought their way in, effectively tying them. There was lack of adequate finance and maintenance due to the strain on resources brought about by trying to run two pubs, which also meant that no time was spent on sales or after sales service. A cash flow problem arose with those paying late on "monthly" accounts.

An attempt to buy the brewing equipment was made by a garage owner in Stoke, who intended to move the plant to a more accessible location. When this fell through there were negotiations between a Trafford & Hulme CAMRA member and the brewer, with a view to keeping the brewery operative on its present site, and when this also fell through a further possibility was for two CAMRA members to resume the trade.

Now that these attempts at rescue have failed, the plant is available to any budding brewers - and it's very cheap at only £3,000, including



some casks and handpumps. Anyone interested should contact either Cecil Perry of Butters' accountants on 0782 261511 or Peter Jones of Kidsons' accountants on 061 832 3017 for details.

Keith Egerton

\*\*\*\*\*

# PRICES

The results of CAMRA's national pub price survey are rolling in to St Albans. Those for Manchester confirm what we always knew - the local independents give the best value for money and rip-off prices are more likely to be found in pubs owned by the Big Seven.

Holts is still the cheapest pint around; bitter can still be bought for 63p in managed houses - real value when you consider the strength of the beer. Boddies sells for around 70p in most outlets but Robinsons and Hydes are usually about 2p a pint more expensive. Beers from the Big Seven are typically in the mid-70s, but there are considerable variations. Websters bitter, for example, sells for 78p in the Monton Green, whilst Wilsons can be bought for 72p in the Old House at Home. Bass prices also vary considerably even in the city centre.



Strangely there is less variation in the price of either wine or spirits. Most pubs sell wine for between 68p and 75p and spirits vary from 60p to 75p. Compare this with the price of beer which, even in Manchester, can cost anywhere between 63p and £1 per pint. Why?

Expensive beers still offer better value than lager - the cheapest pint we found was 70p and the most expensive £1.08. The average was well over 80p per pint - poor value when you take into account the strength (or lack of it) and the lack of flavour and distinctiveness.

North Manchester was the second cheapest area for beer from the independents (after Walsall) and the 5th cheapest for products of the Big Seven, proving that competition does help to keep prices down.

The following table gives an idea of national and local comparisons of CAMRA's "standard round" - the mixture of drinks you may have to buy when out with a wide group of friends:

	<u>National Average</u>		<u>North Manchester</u>		
	<u>Big 7</u>	<u>Independent</u>	<u>Big 7</u>	<u>Ind.</u>	<u>Cheapest</u>
1 pint ordinary bitter	82	80	73	67	63
1 pint premium bitter	90	86	79	72	72
½ pint ordinary lager	46	45	44	40	35
1 pint Guinness	101	99	94	92	86
1 glass wine	76	74	70	70	70
1 Bacardi & Coke	110	107	105	99	95
1 Gin & Tonic	102	100	99	96	87
1 fruit juice	41	41	37	36	30
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£6.48</u></b>	<b><u>£6.32</u></b>	<b><u>£6.01</u></b>	<b><u>£5.72</u></b>	<b><u>£5.38</u></b>

The most expensive round would be £7.26, which is an average of the Big 7's pubs in Croydon.

\*\*\*\*\*

### BY GEORGE

The George, Haymarket, Bury, reopened on March 12th and has been pleasantly refurbished. It now has the appearance of a cocktail lounge, which is a distinct improvement on the old tram shelter-like George. The improvement has continued with the beer - handpumped Castle Eden has been introduced.

Across Kay Gardens the keg-only House of Horrors, the Knowsley, is also closed for refurbishment. Any alterations must be an improvement and it is hoped some real ale will be introduced here as well.

### BOLTON NOTES

The Kings Head, Junction Road, is now serving Tetley mild and bitter through handpumps. Another Tetley real ale gain is the Victoria on Market Street, Farnworth, whose handpumps arrived during March.

The Brinsop Arms, Chorley Road, Westhoughton, now has Hydes dark mild and bitter on sale. Recent guest beers included Taylors Ram Tam and Lees bitter.

Maxims on Bradshawgate, Bolton, should by now have begun its lengthy period of closure for yet another refurbishment. Recent guest beers at this Vaux pub have included Smiles bitter, Batemans XXXB and Burtonwood JBA. On reopening, the range should include Vaux Samson, Darleys Thorne best bitter, Wards bitter, Everards and Smiles.

### TANKS FOR THE MEMORY

All Oldham Brewery tanks are to be removed but it remains to be seen whether they are to be replaced with keg or cask conditioned beer.

# CITY DESK

Peter O'Grady



SAM'S CHOP HOUSE, Back Pool Fold, seems to have settled on Wilsons bitter, Websters YB and Ruddles County as their draught beers. The good news is that when you ask for "bitter" you are automatically given Wilsons.

\* \* \* \* \*

Brahms & Liszt, Brown Street, have added Theakstons bitter and Old Peculier to their range. The Old Peculier is served straight from the barrel, the bitter is handpumped. Happy Hours: 11.30am-12.30pm and at early doors in the evening.

\* \* \* \* \*

Another Happy Hour (5.30-7.00pm) is available in the bar of THE MITRE, Cathedral Walks. Wilsons bitter and Websters YB at 60p a pint.

\* \* \* \* \*

## HOO-FLUNG-DUNG

On a recent walk from the SEVEN OAKS, Nicholas Street (well kept Chesters bitter and mild on handpump) to the GREY HORSE on Portland Street, I passed the new Chinese Garden and Archway and was assailed by this unbelievable pong. On closer inspection it was revealed that the whole of the garden had been "manured" with spent hops. Thank goodness beer doesn't stink like that!

\* \* \* \* \*

In the GREY HORSE there is a painting on the wall depicting the row of buildings which contains the pub. The painting also shows two other

pubs (next door but one and two). These are the OLD MONKEY INN (now the Al Lock & Key Shop) and the BEEHIVE (now a jeweller's shop). The buildings are basically unaltered and it is believed that the Old Monkey was formerly a Walkers house and then transferred to Wilsons and that the Beehive was a Joe Holts pub. If they were still open you could have had a 30-yard crawl of the CIRCUS (Tetleys), the GREY HORSE (Hydes), together with the Old Monkey and the Beehive. Wow!





Talking about old pubs... The poor old KENSINGTON on Newton Street will be no more. The structural problems proved too great and the building will probably be sold de-licensed, more than likely to the garment trade.

\* \* \* \* \*

Great news for those who have difficulty finding the PEVERIL OF THE PEAK. The brewery are at long last to put up a sign on the blank rear wall of the building. Will it be a neon sign of a moving stagecoach - to try to outdo the effete "Statue of Liberty" at the New York?

\* \* \* \* \*

Just along the way from the Pev there is news that TOMMY DUCKS (Greenalls Original and Local on handpump) is to be turned round and extended up to Lower Mosley Street to take advantage of its proximity to G-Mex. No doubt the new smooth image will include Nicholas Wines!

\* \* \* \* \*

#### OUT OF TOWN

BOWLERS, the cricket and flat green bowling centre in Trafford Park, sells remarkably good pints of handpumped Greenalls mild and bitter.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### H.O.B.D.

The mystical society which is the Honourable Order of Bass Drinkers celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. The club, which meets monthly at the UNICORN on Church Street, will hold its 20th annual visit to the brewery in Burton over the weekend of and on Monday April 6th. The 20th Anniversary Meeting will be on Tuesday 5th May at the Unicorn. I'm sure all CAMRA members wish the H.O.B.D well at this time of celebration.

If any CAMRA member still has a copy of the "What's Brewing" article/ letters that appeared about a year or so ago then Mr Alan Newnes, the licensee of the NAGS.HEAD (near the roundabout of the M56/A556) would be very pleased to receive a copy. Tel 0565 830486. Needless to say the Nags serves a brilliant pint of draught Bass - at under 80p a pint. (Town Hall Tavern please note.)

\*\*\*\*\*

#### NOBODDY'S FOOLED!

Higsons' furthest outlet from the brewery isn't any more. The Fools Nook, south of Macclesfield, has become a Boddingtons-only pub.

#### ECCLES UPDATE

The following should be added to the real ale list published a few months ago: **TOWN HALL:** Wilsons mild, Websters bitter, Websters Choice. **KINGS HEAD:** Higsons bitter. **BLACK BOY:** Websters bitter.

## EXTRA TIME

Not everybody is overjoyed by the extra half hour's evening drinking won recently by CAMRA. Albert O'Connor of Boddingtons' White Horse Hotel near the Swinton/Worsley boundary doubts whether the extra trade, if any, will justify the extra time he and his staff will have to put in. He is keen to point out that his is one of the few pubs in the area which opens at the start of the permitted hours: 11.00am and 5.30pm.

Albert would support a system which allows him to choose when he opens. This is very much in line with CAMRA's thinking outlined in the policy document "Licence for Change":

- \* "Permitted Hours" would become "Chosen Hours"

- \* Licensees could choose their hours from between  
10.00am and 11.30pm Monday to Saturday  
12.00am and 11.30pm Sunday

- \* Voluntary breaks during the day

- \* Opening times displayed inside and outside the pub

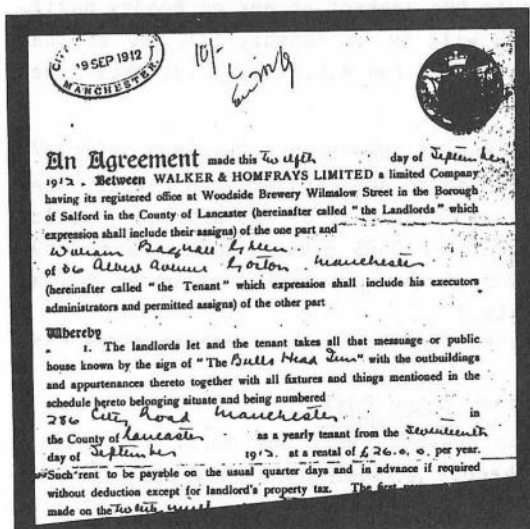
\* \* \* \* \*

Albert's grandfather would have wondered what all the fuss was about when he took over the Bulls Head Hotel on City Road, Manchester. This

was in 1912, before the Great War and before the Defence of the Realm Act of 1915, which amongst other oppressive anti-working class measures introduced "temporary" restrictions on the sale of alcohol to aid the war effort.

Albert still has the original agreement between his grandfather, Mr William Bagnall Green, and the brewery, Walker & Homfray, dated 19th September 1912. The yearly rent was £26 and £35 was deposited by Mr

Green as security with the brewery. Regarding opening hours, he agreed "not to close or permit (the pub) to be closed during hours in which the same may by law be kept open".



The tie was just as strong in those days: "the tenant will purchase from the landlords and from no other companies or persons whatsoever all wines and spirits and all ales, beer, bitter beer, stout, porter, both draught and in bottle and other liquors, aerated and other waters."

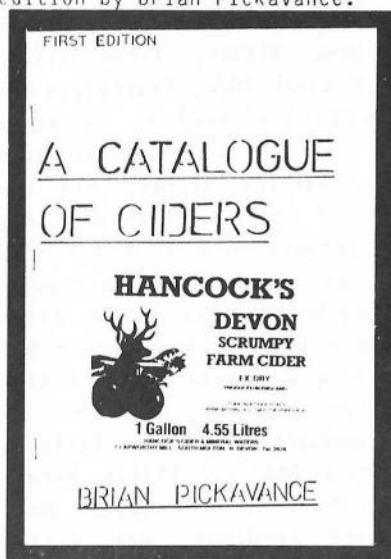
Pete Cash

(The Bulls Head closed in 1929 and the brewery, Walker & Homfray of Salford, merged with Wilsons in 1949 and closed)

\*\*\*\*\*

## CIDER CATALOGUE

Anybody with a liking for good cider but confused by the many brands available in Greater Manchester might do well to obtain this first edition by Brian Pickavance.



He lists over 80 types, most of which he has tasted personally! He is equally unstinting with either praise ("A country rough cider, very raw and very strong. Highly recommended") or condemnation ("I couldn't drink a full carton of this stuff as it made me feel sick halfway through"). Some details of price and container size are also given.

Don't expect a professional publication; he admits it was put together in a hurry. A pity, because the content is all there. With better attention to English and visual presentation it would be a worthy companion to many

CAMRA local beer guides. A "much better" second edition is promised, but not for some time.

No price is given, but details are available from Brian Pickavance, 80 Dewhurst Road, Syke, Rochdale OL12 0AT.

Pete Cash

\*\*\*\*\*

## PENDLEBURY SURPRISE

The Britannia on Bolton Road, Pendlebury, which has been a keg Tetleys pub since the parish church was a chip shop, is now selling handpumped Jennings bitter (70p a pint).

## PRIORITIES

Pennine Joke plan to build even more extensions on the already over-extended Old Priory in Broughton.

## GREAT NORTH WESTERN BEER FESTIVAL

Bolton's first beer festival in almost four years takes place on 2-5th April at the Bolton Sports and Exhibition Centre, Silverwell Street. The Great North Western Beer Festival opens at 6.00pm on Thursday 2nd April, with sessions on Friday and Saturday (11.30am-4.00pm, 6.00pm-11.00pm). If there is any beer left, there will be a "drinking-up" session on Sunday afternoon (12.00noon-2.00pm).



Over 50 real ales and ciders will be on sale from 30+ breweries. It is hoped that the following will be on sale...

Belhaven 80/- and 90/-, Vaux Samson, Darley Best Bitter, Wards Bitter, Lorimer & Clark 70/-, Federation Best and Special (believed to be making their North West debut), Malton Double Chance, Franklins Bitter, Big Lamp ESB and Old Genie, Trough Wild Boar Bitter, Bateman Dark Mild and XXXB, Archers Best Bitter and Headbanger, Brains Red Dragon mild and SA, Felin-foel Double Dragon, Hook Norton Best Bitter, King & Barnes Sussex Bitter, Ringwood Best Bitter, 49-er and Old Thumper, Wadworth 6X, Palmer Tally Ho, Crouch Vale SAS and Willie Warmer, Devenish Stud, Taylors Golden Best, Porter and Landlord, Wem Bitter, Marstons Merrie Monk, Mercian Mild, Pedigree and Owd Roger, Moorhouses Premium Bitter and Pendle Witch, Goose Eye Bitter, Old Three Laps, Pommies Revenge, Mitchells Mild, Bitter and ESB, Lees Moonraker, Youngers Scotch Bitter, No.3 and IPA, Theakstons XB and Old Peculier, Linfit Bitter, Lead-boiler, English Guineas, Old Eli and Enochs Hammer.

For cider drinkers we hope to have Symonds Scrumpy Jack, West Country Medium Sweet and Extra Dry, Lanes Dry and Medium and Zum Zum Zider Sweet and Medium.



Food will be available at all sessions and entertainment will be provided by Farnworth Brass Band, the Brasshoppers (a Bavarian-style band), Paddy and the Wild Country and the Titanic Disaster Fiddle Band.

Entrance is £1.50 (including souvenir glass and programme) 75p for CAMRA members with a current membership card and £1 for coach parties of 12 or more. Enthusiasts coming to more than one session will only pay 35p if they already have a glass and programme.

Des Nogalski

\*\*\*\*\*

## ECONOMISER PURGE

There have been several reports in the local press of prosecutions by Rochdale Environmental Health Department of pubs which use economisers. The reports have tended to be full of emotive language, referring to recycling slops and painting a lurid picture of all manner of diseases being passed on to the drinker. Yes, if dirty glasses are used. Yes, if the beer pours all over the barmaid's greasy paws, then it ain't too healthy. But, if the system is treated with care, it does allow the use of brim measure glasses, it does permit a tight head on a pint and the beer is recycled immediately rather than left lying about in buckets to be poured back during the night.

Because of the antics of the big brewers, consumers now associate real ale with handpumps which do not give a measured pint but require a measured container, usually a 20oz glass. In the North we want a tight head, which is difficult to achieve to the satisfaction of both the customer and the Weights & Measures fellows without spilling a lot of beer - hence the economiser. The only alternatives are a price increase of perhaps 5-10% or, less realistically but more satisfactorily, the use of lined 21oz glasses which can contain a full pint with a head, without spillage.

\*\*\*\*\*

## WHAT FATE LOOMS?

The Weavers Arms on Angel Street, off Rochdale Road, is boarded up yet again. If pubs like the Smithfield, the Burton Arms, Smithfields and the Marble Arch can survive in the area, what's up with the Weavers?

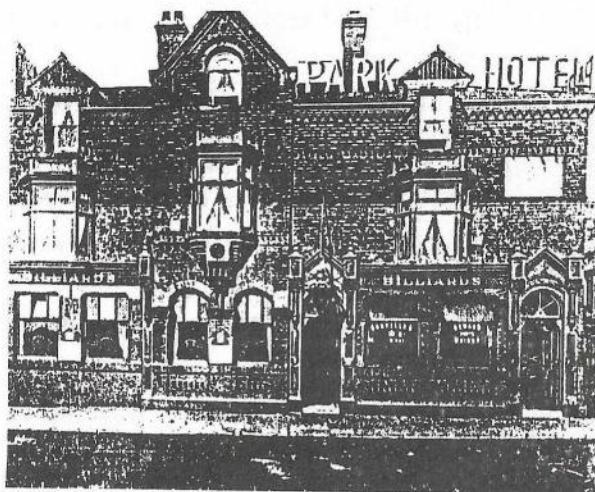
## SIGN OF THE TIMES?

An interesting poster appeared outside the Royal George, Lever Street, Manchester, last month. It proclaimed that this "Samuel Webster" house sold Wilsons bitter. What's up? Can't sell the Websters?

# WIGAN & DISTRICT

Dave White

Wigan's most famous pub, the Park Hotel in Hope Street, has finally been demolished to make way for town centre redevelopment. This ex-Walkers house has been closed and boarded up since April 1985.



The CROWN HOTEL, a free house in Worthington Village, near Standish, has just had a shake-up in the range of beers, and the pub is all the better for it. Gone is the ever-present Boddingtons bitter and Holts bitter (72p) is now on sale, as is Hydes bitter (78p). The rest of the range includes Thwaites bitter (75p), Theakstons XB (85p), cask Stones bitter (75p), 4X mild (72p), draught Bass (81p) and cask Bass - ask for "Hammonds" - at 75p. Of course, the prices at the Crown are a bit higher than what you'd expect in a tied house, but a good pint is guaranteed.

\* \* \* \* \*

Thwaites have always had a good reputation in Wigan. Their pubs, though few in number, nearly all sold cask ale. The PIT PONY on Low Bank Road, Ashton-in-Makerfield, alas, has now gone over to the fizzy stuff. It was possible to do a fair-sized crawl in Ashton not so long ago - now only a couple of pubs are worth bothering with. Greenalls are turning the RED LION into a hotel (see March WD); Burtonwood's inns are among the dreariest in Wigan (ANGEL, COMMERCIAL, CROSS KEYS) and the only Higsons pub left in the district - the ROBIN HOOD - sells keg beer. Nope, Ashton ain't what it was.

\* \* \* \* \*

Jennings bitter is now on sale at the VICTORIA, Haigh Road, Haigh, as well as Tetley mild and bitter. The only other places in the Wigan area to sell the Cumbrian beer are the WHITE LION, Upholland, and the ORWELL, Wigan Pier. A recent visit to the ORWELL found the Jennings in excellent condition.

\* \* \* \* \*

The UNICORN, Upholland Road, Billinge, was closed at the time of

writing. Not far away, Greenalls ruined the GEORGE & DRAGON, Main Street, when it was done up, and the cask beer was removed. What chance is there of them getting the real stuff back on at the Unicorn?

\* \* \* \* \*

The PLOUGH, Atherton Road, Hindley, has reopened as a Peter Walker house, after an era on keg Tetleys. The PLOUGH will provide a welcome haven in an area awash with Matthew Brown fizz. Wigan CAMRA branch are holding a Social there on Wednesday 29th April, so come along and meet us.

\* \* \* \* \*

Finally, you may recall the old joke - circa 1981 - about Walkers Warrington Ale being available everywhere except in Warrington. Well, Greenalls have done it now with their Original bitter. It has disappeared from the BLUE BELL, Horsemarket Street, recently and the beer is only to be found - this side of Stockton Heath - at the RING O' BELLS, Church Street, on the edge of Warrington town. Greenalls' marketing logic remains a mystery...

\*\*\*\*\*

# MOORHOUSE'S

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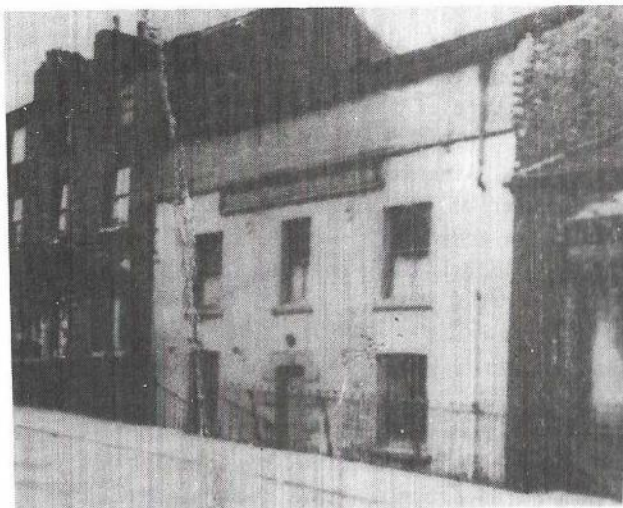
# NOW & THEN

by Rob Magee

No.15

## HARE & HOUNDS

67 Sandy Lane  
Royton



This old hostelry was built around 1790 by John Cotes. It had three storeys: the top floor was John's workshop (he was a fustian cutter), the middle floor was the living quarters and by 1805 he had obtained an alehouse licence for the ground floor. By 1820, when Robert Hay had the inn, it had acquired a name - "Same Man Still". At that time Sandy Lane was the main road through Royton from Oldham via High Street. Ten years later, during James Booth's tenancy, the lane became something of a backwater; the new turnpike had been cut through from Shaw Road end to Rochdale via Summit. Despite a conviction for allowing gambling (fined £2 - a serious offence in those days!) James was licensee until 1843, when William Fish took over for a stay of 31 years.

Mr Fish extended the inn in 1859, telling the licensing authorities that he needed the space for his growing family. During his time the inn hosted many dinners, shows and sporting events, and during Royton Wakes in 1860 he advertised that he had on view "a perfect representation of Tom Sayers, the Pugilistic Champion of All England, in sixteen different positions which must be seen to be appreciated". Gambling again caused problems at the Hare & Hounds in 1862 - Mr Fish lost his licence for a month and was fined £2.

The "Public House Closing Act", amended in 1865, restricted, among other things, Sunday hours to 12.30-2.30pm and Mr Fish and other licensees found this sometimes hard to enforce - he was fined 10/- for serving at 8.15am on a Sunday.

In 1874 William Fish, his wife and son moved to the Church Inn, Fleet Street (Middleton Road) and were succeeded at the Hare & Hounds by

Thomas Greenwood (1874-80) and Joseph Bottomley (1880-1916). The licensing magistrates decided to close the Hare & Hounds in 1916. It had structural defects and within a quarter of a mile there were fifteen other licensed houses. The pub's owners, Grimshaw's Brewery, appealed against the decision in Manchester, but failed, and in early 1917 the Hare & Hounds closed.

Structural defects notwithstanding, around 1920 the Royton Band and Social Club made the building their headquarters. Just when the old building was demolished is unrecorded, but the Royton Brass Band and Musical Club, as it is now known, is only 50 yards from the site of the old Hare and Hounds.

\*\*\*\*\*

### SALFORD CHANGES

In Weaste, Robbies' Old Tom has appeared on gravity at the Royal (Widows Rest), alongside the exceedingly bland handpumped Stones bitter. Across the road at the Old Vet, Greenalls Original has been dropped from the real ale range, leaving only mild and bitter. In Pendleton, handpumps have reappeared at the Maypole - how long for this time?

# TOTAL

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## TRANSATLANTIC TIPPLES

While the USA may not rank as an amber nectar paradise, the range and quality of the beers available is far greater than most would imagine.

Although the mega-brands (Budweiser, Coors, Millers, Schlitz, etc) dominate, new small breweries are springing up all over. The longer established small breweries (Anchor Steam Brewery, Raniers, etc) are flourishing.

Imported beer sales are also booming. Draught and bottled Becks are just two of the German beers widely available. Lowenbrau is brewed under licence by Millers and, although not quite up to the Munich standard, is far superior to our poor imitation brewed at Wrexham. Weiss beers are also becoming more popular, either imported from the Fatherland or brewed by the new German-style breweries. Dark beers (like a cross between a German Dunkel and our own Mild) are very widespread in bottles and can occasionally be found on tap. Corona and Dos Equis are two of the more popular Mexican imports.

The drinking establishments tend to be bars (not unlike Channel 4's "Cheers"). The beer is normally served in half pint glasses or can be bought by the pitcher (3 pint jug). State licensing hours vary, but most states are open until 2.00am and nobody under 21 can be admitted to a bar, even if only for a soft drink. Prices vary enormously from the astronomically high New York to the incredibly low Las Vegas.





For any would-be tourists following the "Golden Triangle" route in California/Nevada, here's a few recommendations...

In San Francisco avoid the tourist traps of Fishermans Wharf area. Head to the Lombard Street area where it's all bars and restaurants. Donahue's Marina Lounge is at 2138 Chestnut Street. The locally produced Anchor Steam beer is served here in very friendly surroundings. The Anchor Steam beer is copper coloured, quite bitter in taste and makes a nice change from the usual Pilsner-style beers.

Las Vegas in the Nevada Desert is the easterly point of the Golden Triangle and the casinos here subsidise everything. Beer can be drunk free at the tables or at giveaway prices in the main hotel bars. (Even in Caesar's Palace, etc.)

On the way to Los Angeles, the interstate freeway passes Fontana. Stop off at Mlakar's Elbow Room Bar at 8662 Sierra Avenue. Let them know you're from England and Joe Mlakar and the locals will give you a VIP welcome. Second Sunday in every month is Party Night - a true Slavian knees-up with Joe's own band and authentic Slavian fare as well.

In the Los Angeles district the Cat & Fiddle on Sunset Boulevard serves draught Bass and Guinness as well as bottled Ruddles County and Fullers ESB.

The USA is a vast and varied country, and it offers tremendous value for money - petrol 50p a gallon, cigs 60p a pack of 20, enormous steaks for £2. If you're thinking of visiting, don't worry about the beer, there's plenty of drinkable stuff around and the English are treated like royalty. What's our favourite state? Totally pissed!

Have a nice day!

Beinlos & Kactus Kate

(The photo shows Beinlos & Kactus Kate enjoying Party Time at Mlakars)

## BURNING ISSUES (2)

The Druids Arms (Wilsons) on Liverpool Street, Salford, which reopened in late December after a fire, is once again shut and awaiting a new tenant. The Spinners (Marstons), nearby on Oldfield Road, which also suffered a fire and reopened about the same time, was apparently selling beer from plastic bottles a month or so ago. Now the Spinners has a new licensee and is back to selling draught beer.

## BASS

Draught Bass has rejoined the handpumped Stones bitter in the Crown, Booth Street, Manchester, after an absence of several months.

## WHITBREAD - CHANGE FOR THE WORSE?

The Crown & Anchor on Hilton Street in Manchester has been a remarkable success since it was taken out of Whitbread's managed estate and became a semi free house. As a managed house it was little more than an early "house of horrors", unpopular and unsuccessful. Under the control of Robin Bence and his manager Dave Glass, the pub has been transformed. There is now an excellent range of cask beers which are good enough to ensure the Crown & Anchor's place in the Good Beer Guide. The pub is much busier and much more popular than hitherto.

Whitbread have evidently noticed the success of this city centre pub and feel that they can cash in on it themselves by returning it to their managed estate. However, although a bit of money wisely spent wouldn't go amiss, they should remember that the success of the pub was due almost entirely to the commitment of both Robin and Dave. You can't just shove in six different cask beers under a manager who isn't all that concerned and sit back and watch the cash roll in. The Duke of York and the Crown & Anchor were an enterprising experiment in a new system of pub ownership/management which resulted in a revitalisation of two fairly dismal establishments. To knock one of them on the head is a pretty retrograde step.

The Crown & Anchor is likely to deteriorate once again and is unlikely to reappear in CAMRA's national Good Beer Guide. A generation of drinkers who've grown to know the Crown & Anchor will certainly regret the change. The brewery will only realise their mistake when drinkers vote with their feet.

\*\*\*\*\*

### MANHATTAN TRANSFER (2)

A company called Tanehope Ltd have bought the Manhattan in Collyhurst and it is expected to reopen at Easter. The disco area at the back of the pub is expected to be converted into a snooker room. Wilsons and Websters beers will be on sale.

### WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS

Stories that the Bank on Mosley Street, which cost £ $\frac{1}{2}$  million to do up, is losing £4,000 a week are surely without foundation. How could they lose money at the prices they charge?

### ANCOATS ALE

The Cheshire Cheese, a former basic Whitbread pub on Oswald Street, was revamped in December 1985. At that time the keg beer was replaced by cask conditioned mild and bitter. Sadly sales of bitter were not buoyant and now only handpumped mild remains.

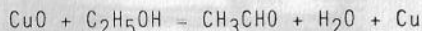
To the Editor:

375 Chorley Road, Swinton, Manchester M27

## LETTERS



Sir - I should like to join the debate over mulled ale (WD Feb, Mar). Provided a copper poker is used, then chemical changes can occur in the beer. A hot copper poker will be coated with cupric oxide. This reacts with the alcohol in the beer to produce acetaldehyde.



Acetaldehyde is the "rotten apple" ingredient in cider and beer which has gone "over the top". It is also produced as an intermediate in normal fermentation but is only present in very small quantities in healthy beer.

Acetaldehyde and other minor fermentation products such as iso-propyl alcohol have a much more intoxicating effect, weight for weight, than ethyl alcohol. In large quantities these "fusel oils" can cause illness or death; hence the dangers of home-made "whisky", where they are concentrated. (Drinkers of large volumes of "rough" cider often succumb at an early age to changes in facial features and often have a reduced life expectancy.)

In minor amounts, they will give a brew "potency" out of proportion to its (ethyl) alcohol content. It is quite conceivable, therefore, that the mulling of ale or wine with a copper poker was in order to give more "poke" as well as to heat it up.

Pete Cash

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*WHAT'S DOING is edited by Neil Richardson, 375 Chorley Road, Swinton, Manchester M27 2AY. News, articles, letters, moans, etc, must arrive by the 20th of the month for inclusion in the next month's issue.*

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## BASS

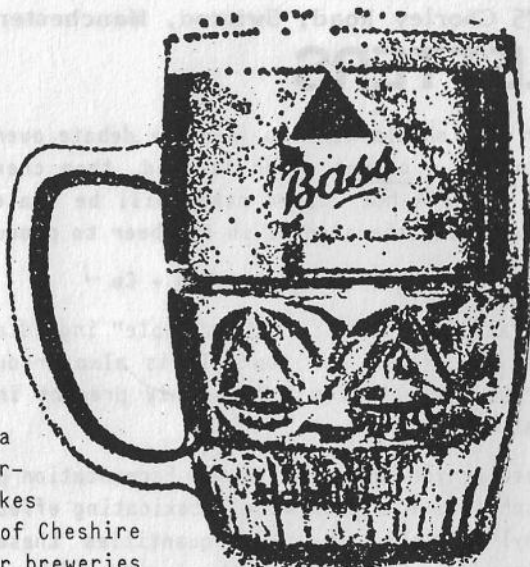
(Based on a talk given to the N. Manchester branch of CAMRA on 11th March by Richard Smith, Tied Estate Director, assisted by Martin Thomas, Head Brewer at Preston Brook.)

Bass North West, which is one of the five regional companies within Bass North, has 140 managed and 230 tenanted houses in an area which stretches from North Derbyshire to North Wales and takes in Greater Manchester, parts of Cheshire and the Wirral. There are four breweries within Bass North and the following brews are available in cask form in the area: Bass mild, M&B mild, Bass Lite, Special Bitter, Brew 11, Worthington Best Bitter, Draught Bass, Stones.

In the managed houses cask beers are on handpumps and all other beers are on metered dispense. Autovacs or economisers are not used in any of the tied houses.

Bass have a budget of several millions to maintain and improve their tied estate. £250,000 was spent on the Town Hall Tavern, Manchester, where Bass admit prices are too high and need to be adjusted. The Unicorn is due for refurbishment soon, but we are assured that this will only be a much needed lick of paint and that the essential character of the pub will not be destroyed.

The introduction of cask Stones into the managed houses was determined by cellar facilities and space. Bass are delighted with the progress and are selling considerably more. There has been a feeling among CAMRA members that cask Stones has deteriorated as it has been brought to a wider market; that the beer has become blander and that it may be brewed elsewhere than the Cannon Brewery in Sheffield. We were assured that the recipe for Stones has not changed for at least ten years and that all cask Stones is still brewed at the Cannon Brewery. The only possible change to the beer has been an attempt to remove the sulphury "nose" which may have been a particular characteristic. Whether CAMRA



elders are suffering from jaded palates as they approach senility or whether Bass are telling fairy stories is a matter of conjecture.

Asked about the virtual disappearance of draught Bass, the company spokesmen were unable to offer any explanation as to why this might have happened. The trading agreement with Robinsons whereby Old Tom was sold in selected pubs has not yet been evaluated and there is no possibility that Preston Brook Brewery (sounds nicer than Runcorn, doesn't it?) will brew cask beer in the foreseeable future.

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## Branch Diary

### WIGAN

Wed 1 April 8.30 GBG Meeting, Millstone, Wigan Lane, Wigan

Wed 8 April 8.30 Branch Meeting, Seven Stars, Wallgate, Wigan

Tues 14 April Visit to Greenall Whitley Brewery

Wed 29 April CAMRA Social, Plough, Atherton Street, Hindley. 8.30pm

Contact Dave White, Wigan 37389 (h): Warrington 826515 x306 (w)

### BOLTON

Thurs 2 - April 5 Great North Western Beer Festival, Bolton Sports Centre, Silverwell Street, Bolton. Volunteer bar staff welcome.

Tues 14 April 8.30pm Branch Meeting/Beer Festival Post-Mortem, White Lion (Holts), Westhoughton

Sun 26th April, Social. 12.00noon, Doffcocker, Chorley Old Road, Bolton, moving on to the Jolly Ploughman at 1.00pm, Finishers Arms at 1.30pm.

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

### NORTH MANCHESTER

Wed 8 April GBG Final Selection, Royal Oak, Eccles, 8pm

Wed 15 April White Swan, Swinton, 8pm

Wed 22 April Mild Survey, Meet Unicorn, Church St, Manchester, 7pm

Wed 29 April Brewers Arms, Gt Ducie Street, 8pm. Speaker from Public Health.

Wed 6 May In praise of Ethnos. 7pm Braziers, Blackfriars Rd, Salford, 8.30pm Smiths Arms, Sherratt Street, Ancoats.

Weds 13 May Queens Arms, Patricroft, 8pm

Wed 20 May, Branch Meeting, Crescent, Salford, 8pm

Wed 10 June, Mitchells Brewery visit. See Peter Barnes.

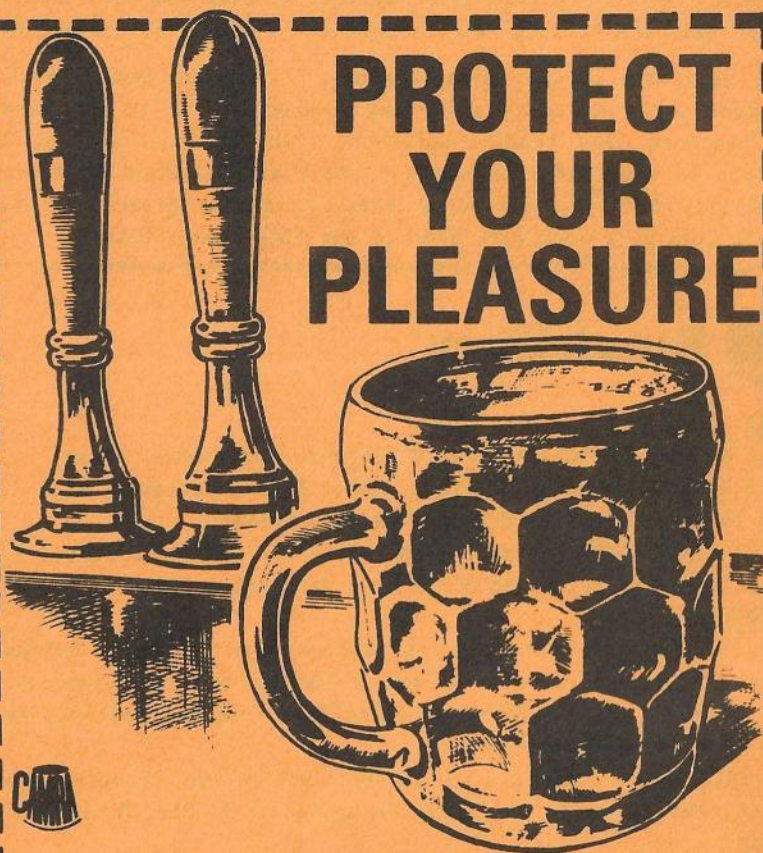
Contact Roger Hall 740 7937

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Other contributors to this issue: Paul Roberts, Stewart Revell, Rob Dunford, Des Nogalski, Peter Barnes



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