

WHAT'S DOING



MAY
1987

THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

MAKE MAY A MILD MONTH

Mild, one of England's traditional tipplables, is fast disappearing as brewers push lager and overpriced premium bitters at the expense of a unique and moderately priced beer. Mild is brewed in the same way as bitter, usually at a lower gravity to give a reduced strength, and with less hops to give a milder flavour. Mild can be light or dark (added caramel or coloured malt) and should be cheaper and better value for money than bitters or lagers. Being of low gravity, it is a good session beer and contains less calories than its stronger competitors.

Why, then, is mild disappearing and what's the record of the brewers on mild? First of all the Big Seven:

BASS Three draught milds are available in this area - Bass mild, M&B mild and Bass Light. The beers are excellent when sold in cask form - at the Unicorn, Manchester, for example - but outlets serving cask mild are few and far between. New cask outlets tend to serve Stones bitter.

GREENALLS Real mild is available and to many tastes is a better bet than the bitter, but few outlets serve it in cask form and sales have declined. There is little likelihood of traditional mild lasting more than five years.

SCOTTISH & NEWCASTLE No mild unless

MAKE MINE
★ Real ★
MILD

Do you
know
what
you're
missing?

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you count No.3, which with an original gravity of 1043 is hardly a mild.

JOHN SMITHS No real mild.

TETLEYS Two milds available from Warrington (Tetleys, Walkers), both of excellent quality. Cask mild is usually served in pubs that serve cask bitter but these are still a bit thin on the ground.

WHITBREAD Chesters mild may not be a patch on the old "fighting mild", but it's still a palatable drink and bears comparison with the bitter. Unfortunately few outlets serve any cask beer at all and of those that do, many have no real mild.

WILSONS The only one of the Big Seven actively to promote mild. Mind you, that was in the past. More recently they've introduced confusing point-of-sale displays and the availability of real mild has dropped. When the marketing director doesn't appreciate the importance of the difference between cask and brewery-conditioned beers, what hope is there for the customer? No real Websters dark mild is now brewed.

Now the locals:

BODDINGTONS Strangeways used to produce two milds; now only one remains and, since their acquisition of Oldham Brewery and Higsons, some evidence that keg mild is slowly taking over from the real version - a sort of back door method of introducing keg beers. Much of the Oldham mild in Boddies pubs is keg, and where Boddies have introduced their own beers into Oldham outlets, mild is rarely included.

HOLTS The only brewer in this locality to sell both mild and bitter in every tied house. The differential is only 2p, but who cares when both beers are excellent and cheap.

HYDES Still brewing two milds. Most outlets serve one cask mild.

LEES Until five years ago brewed two milds. Most outlets still serve cask mild.

ROBINSONS Most tied houses serve cask mild, sales of which have remained buoyant as a result of a large differential between best bitter (1041og) and best mild (1032og).

Other brewers:

BANKS'S Excellent mild on sale by metered dispense in most houses.

MATTHEW BROWN Less than half their tied houses serve any cask beer. Chance of real mild even more remote.

BURTONWOOD Cask light mild phased out some years ago. Tendency for real mild to be replaced by keg.

MARSTONS Although two cask milds are available, in practice only Mercian Mild is sold in Manchester. With Burton Bitter, Pedigree, Merrie Monk and Owd Rodger also available, mild may be the first to fall by the wayside in real form.

MOORHOUSES No mild.

SAM SMITHS No cask mild yet.

TAYLORS Two milds, one of which is available in local free houses, but it is Landlord and best bitter which have the reputation.

THEAKSTONS No mild.

THWAITES Two milds still brewed, yet again some outlets are now serving only bitter in cask form.

During May CAMRA branches will be surveying local pubs to determine the availability of real mild. A report of these findings will be published in June's What's Doing.

NEW BANKS'S HOUSE?

Swinton, which has benefitted from two new pubs in recent years - the New Ellesmere and the Henry Boddington - may be getting a third if Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries receive planning permission. The site in question is Moorside Farm on the corner of Moorside Road and Priestley Road near British Oxygen. They plan to demolish the out-buildings, alter the existing building and build a car park with some landscaping.

A proposal from Boddies to develop an adjacent site was turned down a couple of years ago, presumably because of its proximity to the East Lancs Road, as was an original proposal fifty-odd years ago when the road was built. Access to Moorside Farm should not, however, create the same problems and a Banks's pub in that location would be a bonus for the industrial estate on Priestley Road.

MAKE YOUR MIND UP TIME

Mossley Town Hall has evidently outgrown its purpose as a hostel. Tameside MBC have plans to turn it into a pub. Mind you, they've also put in applications to turn it into offices, an outdoor pursuits centre, a snooker hall and a hotel. What, no chip shop, cinema or massage parlour?

REAL ALE AND THE REST IN SALFORD

Since 1984 there has been a marginal increase in the proportion of pubs serving real ale. In Salford we have a situation where all the independent brewers serve cask conditioned beers in all their pubs and the Big Seven do not. Bass have improved slightly by introducing real ale to two pubs, so they're now level with Greenalls on 37%. Wilsons have the best record with 88% of pubs on real ale. John Smiths haven't yet ventured into either of their Salford pubs with cask beer. Tetleys and Whitbread have an appalling record, with three-quarters of their pubs serving keg-only beers. This is particularly sad in the case of Whitbread, whose brewery is in the city. They own more Salford pubs than any other brewer and account for 44% of the pubs not serving traditional beer. At least three of their pubs are still advertising handpumped traditional beers and serving keg. Wake up Whitbread, it's not good enough! Salford should be and could be the flagship of Chesters Brewery.

BASS

Real Ale

Horseshoe, Maypole, Royal

Non-real ale

Black Lion, Bridge, Dog & Partridge
Kettle Drum, Royal Archer

HOLTS

All pubs sell real ale

Bricklayers, Broadway, Duke of York, Eagle, Kings Arms, Old House at Home, Red Lion, Sabre, Union Tavern, Waggon & Horses, Wellington, Winston

BODDINGTONS

All pubs sell real ale

Black Friar, Braziers, Church, Jubilee, Kersal, Kildakin, Old Ship, Paddock, Priory, Railway, Wellington

LEES

Real Ale: Jollies

MARSTONS

Real Ale: Brown Bull, Spinners

ROBINSONS

Real Ale: Star, Three Legs of Man

BURTONWOOD

Real Ale: Borough, Globe

JOHN SMITHS

Non-Real Ale: Egerton, Peel Park

TETLEY

Real Ale

Albion, Punch Bowl

Non-real ale

Albert Vaults, Brewery Tavern,
Carlton, Keystone, Kings Arms, Pied
Piper

WHITBREAD

Real Ale

Buskers, Oakwood, Salford Arms,
Sportsman, Swan, Town Hall,
Waverley

Non-real ale

Albert, Brass Handles, Broughton
Hotel, Dover Castle, The End, Flat
Iron, Flemish Weaver, Golden Gate,
Griffin, Grosvenor, Hobsons Choice,
Langworthy, Lima, Lowry, Regent,
Star, Tallow Tub, Two Brewers,
Unicorn, Vavasour, Weaste Hotel, Ye
Olde Nelson

SAM SMITHS

Real Ale: Coach & Horses, Prince of Wales

TOTAL

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GREENALLS

Real Ale

Beehive, Dover, Duchy, Grey Mare, Old Veteran, Railway, Unicorn

Non-real ale

Black Horse, Brass Tally, Castle, Broughton Tavern, Champion, Church, Greyhound, Liner, Moonrakers, Palatine, Poets Corner, Racecourse

WILSONS

Real Ale

Bridge, Britannia, Chequerboard, Church, Corporation, Crown, Druids Arms, Druids Home, Globe, Feathers, Inn of Good Hope, Irwell Castle, Lord Nelson, Mariners, Old Priory, Ordsall, Old Shears, Oxford, Pen & Wig, Red Lion, Woodman, Woolpack

Non-real ale

Bird in Hand, House that Jack Built, Rovers Return

FREE HOUSES

All sell real ale

Albert Park, Crescent, King William IV, Mark Addy, Prince of Wales, Wallness

| <u>BREWERY</u> | <u>Real Ale</u> | <u>Non-Real</u> | <u>Total</u> | <u>% Real Ale</u> |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Bass | 3 | 5 | 8 | 37 |
| Boddingtons | 11 | 0 | 11 | 100 |
| Burtonwood | 2 | 0 | 2 | 100 |
| Greenalls | 7 | 12 | 19 | 37 |
| Holts | 12 | 0 | 12 | 100 |
| Lees | 1 | 0 | 1 | 100 |
| Marstons | 2 | 0 | 2 | 100 |
| Robinsons | 2 | 0 | 2 | 100 |
| John Smiths | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Sam Smiths | 2 | 0 | 2 | 100 |
| Tetleys | 2 | 6 | 8 | 25 |
| Whitbread | 7 | 22 | 29 | 24 |
| Wilsons | 22 | 3 | 25 | 88 |
| Free houses | 6 | 0 | 6 | 100 |
| <u>Total</u> | <u>79</u> | <u>50</u> | <u>129</u> | <u>61%</u> |

Other contributors to this issue: Stewart Revell, Paul Roberts, Peter Wadsworth, Brian Gleave, Steve Lawton, R Greenwood, Paula Carder, Ken Birch

To the Editor:

375 Chorley Road, Swinton, Manchester M27

LETTERS



WINNING WITH WHITBREAD

Sir - I recently won a camera in a Whitbread pub competition. It was a good competition - not because I won, but because it got people talking. It consisted of silhouettes of film stars which you were asked to identify, with a tie-breaker (marked by the brewery, with correct answers varying according to the pub) asking you to list in order the qualities you valued most in a good pub.

The first part led to much discussion, across the generations, in my local and everyone joined in. The second part, if they looked at it carefully, may even convince the brewers that good beer and friendly service are more important to most people than plush seating or gimmicks. And if you've already got a camera, you can at least give it to one of the kids in the family - far more useful than the boring and inevitable ties and T-shirts. Not that the prize really mattered - it was the chat that was the fun.

Full marks, Whitbread! Let's hope other brewers can devise something similarly imaginative instead of the usual "scratch off" or "tick the box". Monkeys can do that.

Lucky Lucy

PLATT BRIDGE

Sir - On behalf of Platt Bridge Residents Association I write to express our disgust at the phrase used by Mr White in his Ince Pub Crawl (WD March), referring to Platt Bridge and its urban crime. I would have written sooner but the one copy of What's Doing which reaches Platt Bridge has only just been smuggled to me. If Platt Bridge is as bad as White makes out, then why does the Wigan branch of CAMRA have a treasurer who lives there? I know their treasurer very well; he is a fine fellow. We have been good friends since we met in the Embezzlement Wing of Strangeways. If you must insult our pubs, Mr White, (and I cannot understand why when 30% of the town's 6 pubs sell real ale) please do not brand us as criminals. With remission, we expect to be able to raise a quorum to hold a committee meeting in approximately five years' time, when we shall take the matter up with our solicitor, if he is back from exile in Brazil.

Fingers Fairhurst

CASK CONVERSION

The Ashton Arms, Clegg Street, Oldham, is now selling handpumped Stones bitter (72p). It was formerly a keg-only Bass pub.

WIGAN & DISTRICT

Dave White

First of all, a brief update on last month's column:

1. Holts bitter has been replaced by Theakstons bitter at the Crown free house in Worthington. The other beers stay the same, only now the Bass Special Bitter is called just that, instead of "Hammonds". The Marstons Pedigree is sadly missed.

2. Jennings bitter has proven unsuccessful at the Victoria, Haigh, and is no longer on sale there.

Up-to-date news now, and Gem's free house opened in late March. The pub is situated in Upper Dicconson Street, near the new Wigan Bus Station and across the road from that Tetley-Walker "free house", the Charles Dickens Hotel.



Gem's sells Boddies bitter and Holts mild and bitter (all hand-pumped) and I hope that landlord Barrie Philbin doesn't ban the entire Wigan CAMRA branch if I describe the pub as a big room with a bar - the description springs most readily to mind. A pint of Holts bitter will set you back 74p, but on recent visits was on good form. Give it a try.

Still in the town centre, the Wigan Arms, or "Squires", as it was later known, has reopened. The pub, in Barrack Square, is now known as "The Officers Club". Still no real ale, just fizzy 'Snotes and Tennants Lager. One for the birds.

Poor sales have led to the demise of Youngers No.3 at the Market Tavern, Mesnes Street, Wigan. Cask YSB and IPA are still available.

The White Duck Inn, High Street, Standish, was set to make an appearance in the 1988 Good Beer Guide. Alas, the future of this quaint old boozer is uncertain and the pub will be closed for at least a while. The Duck, reputedly haunted, sells excellent Burtonwood beers through electric pumps; do try to pay a visit whilst you still can.

Still with Burtonwood, their JBA premium bitter isn't going down too well in the area - JBA is no longer on sale at the Royal Oak, Wigan Lower Road, Standish Lower Ground - and has already disappeared from other pubs round here. Your best bet for a decent pint of JBA in Wigan is at the Old Pear Tree, Frog Lane, near the town centre.

Another Burtonwood pub, the Old Springs, Spring Lane, Kitt Green, has gone over to handpumps and the beer seems all the better for it. If only Burtonwood Light were still on sale here, though!

Finally, Wigan CAMRA branch would like to thank Boddingtons and Greenall Whitley breweries for two very enjoyable and informative tours over the last few weeks. Indeed, branch members sampled two new (premium?) test brews at Wilderspool. While it's always nice to see new cask beers appear on the market, let's hope that the future of the very drinkable Greenalls Original bitter is secure. Then again, whatever happened to Wilsons Gold Medal Best?

BODDIES AT THE BULLS HEAD

This once keg-only Whitbread/Chesters pub in the centre of Walkden now has a single handpump dispensing Boddies bitter. Licensee, William Murphy tells us that negotiations with Whitbread for cask Boddies have been going on for around twelve months. If the Boddies proves successful (as no doubt it will), then other cask beers may follow. Will the Bulls Head become Walkden's equivalent of the Duke of York in Eccles? Mr Murphy has been at the Bulls Head since its "Amsterdam Bar" days and was a keen advocate for the place being turned back into a proper pub.

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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Bitter taste at pub

A RECENT survey of pubs in Lancashire proved a little hard to swallow for county councillors.

It revealed in some cases that drinkers were losing an average of 6 pence worth of beer in every pint.

The figures caused distaste to members of Lancashire's public protection committee which heard a claim that the situation was "disgraceful."

The trading standards survey found that out of a total of 57 pints checked in Lancashire pubs only three contained the full amount.

Despite the availability of certain measuring equipment which would enable full pints to be served, retailers seemed unwilling to adopt the methods.

DEAR BEER

The newspaper article reproduced here comes from the Bolton Evening News of 20th March. Whilst not agreeing with their solution - electric pumps all round - the problem is serious in Manchester as well. In the Mark Addy which sells Boddies for an incredible 86p, or Bensons, which has Pedigree at 90p and Chesters bitter at 82p, it's unusual to get a full pint without asking for a top up. At over 4p a fluid ounce, short measure is inexcusable and the new style glasses, which are considerably wider at the top than at the bottom, don't help very much either. Mind you, the sort of people who want to sit in a licensed ladies' hairdresser's with a choice of umpteen lagers from massive fonts probably don't give a monkey's.

LUCKY HORSESHOE

Renovations are being carried out at the keg-only Horseshoe (Bass) in the centre of Little Hulton. Along with internal alterations, there will be a change over to handpumped Stones bitter (as forecast in WD a few months ago).

Just before last Christmas the New Inn on Manchester Road, Walkden, switched over to cask Stones bitter. So in six months Bass

have improved the real ale representation in their five pubs in the area from 0% to 40%.

JOLLY ANGLER

Structural repairs at the Jolly Angler, Ducie Street, Manchester, have been completed. We hear that business at the pub has increased since customers no longer fear that the place is about to fall down around their ears.

BLAND BODDIES

Brian Gleave

In common with seemingly a majority of CAMRA members I believe that the Boddingtons bitter of today is blander than its late seventies counterpart, which was rightly regarded as one of the best pints in the country.

Last month, when I had the opportunity to visit the brewery with a party from Wigan CAMRA, I was expecting a superficial PR job, particularly in view of the reported bad relations between CAMRA and Boddingtons. I was delighted, therefore, to rate the visit as one of the most interesting brewery visits I have been on. It was a delight to be taken round by a young brewer whose enthusiasm for his job was infectious. No attempt was made to hide anything and difficult questions weren't evaded.



Well water is used exclusively for brewing and some salts are added to bring it close to the Burton-on-Trent consistency. The well water is much more consistent in composition than town water, although it is chemically analysed weekly. In case of variation, the taste of the final product takes precedence over the chemist's opinion.

Bitter is brewed from 90% pale malt and 10% brewing sugar. The lack of crystal malt no doubt accounts for the characteristic pale colour. Mild is brewed from .75% pale malt, 15% crystal malt and 10% brewing sugar. Caramel is occasionally added when the colour is not considered dark enough.

Only best British malt and hops are used. The hop blend for bitter consists mainly of Fuggles, Goldings and Whitbread Goldings (WGV), with smaller quantities of Northern Brewer and Brambling Cross. The overall lack of adjuncts and additives is a record to be proud of following the recent controversy concerning these. Boddingtons are even negotiating to purchase finings which are free from preservatives.

Recent investment in new plant has followed traditional lines. The brewery has an infusion mash system and separate copper and hop-back, rather than adopting the continental approach, as many breweries seem to be doing. "If it has worked well in the past, why change it?" seems to be the attitude.

The bitter is still highly attenuated (final gravity around 1004), which makes the beer high in alcohol content for its gravity. 90% of production is traditional draught beer. The other 10% goes in cans, bottles and PET bottles. There is no keg or tank Boddies. Hogsheads (54 gallon casks) are still used for high volume outlets. Holts and Banks are believed to be the only other brewers still using them.

Considerable investment in both Oldham Brewery and Higsons recently would seem to make imminent closure of either unlikely. However, rationalisation of mild production to one site (Strangeways) was felt to make economic if not political sense.

I must say that Boddingtons brew beer closer to CAMRA's ideals than any brewery I have toured. This being so, then why does the bitter taste so bland these days? The reason would seem to be the hop-blend. The harsher, more bitter hops - Northern Brewer and Brambling Cross - are used in much smaller proportion than of yore and are liable to be phased out altogether when the present stock, already some years old, is exhausted.

Boddingtons believe the present hop-blend gives the beer a more balanced and rounded bitterness rather than the harsh bitterness so fondly remembered by myself. They also think that the less harsh flavour will be much more acceptable to the average drinker, thus boosting sales.

I would not be one to criticise a brewery per se for taking a decision based solely on commercial considerations, but why have they been so slow to admit this deliberate change in recipe? It seems to me that Boddies' present-day reputation among many drinkers (not CAMRA members) dates back to the late seventies, when they brewed a truly distinctive bitter.

A second reason for the bland beer these days applies equally to many other breweries. Cost-conscious landlords, worried about cash-flow, do not carry much stock of cask beer. This means that the beer is served too soon after delivery; little or no secondary fermentation takes place and the beer lacks its full flavour.

In contrast, I think Boddingtons' efforts to improve their mild have been successful. Boddies mild today is better than it was in the seventies. I must remember to order a pint next time I'm in a Boddies pub.



ASIAN CORNER EXTRA

Shaking the dust from his dhoti, Duncan Roberts returns from the East with this cautionary tale...

DOWN AND OUT AT BANGALORE STATION

Indian Railways' catering is usually of decent quality and reasonably priced. However, Bangalore Station's non-vegetarian refreshment room is the exception that proves the rule. We entered this shabby establishment one hot afternoon in late March, somewhat travel weary after the trip up from Mysore. To protect us from the gaze of the locals, the manager ushered us into a walled-off enclave in the corner of a sort of down-market farrowing pen.

After a while our orders arrived. My chicken curry comprised a tiny portion (mainly bone) of the unfortunate animal in a sauce of insipid gravy. My companions' meals were little better. Tea was presented in a motley selection of cracked and dirty cups. For this we were charged the best part of Rs 30/- (a good 50% higher than we would expect). We beat a hasty retreat. Our anticipated bouts of food poisoning did not, mercifully, follow.

More pleasant Indian gastronomic experiences will be related in future issues.

WEBSTERED

The Pen & Wig opposite Salford Station has recently received the Webster treatment but the pub, which is residential and caters



extensively at lunchtime, still serves Wilsons bitter alongside Eurobland and Choice. The Irwell Castle where, according to the landlady, Websters would be served over her dead body, is serving Websters. The insidious brew has also insinuated itself into the Royal Oak in Boothstown, whilst Nicklebys in central Manchester has kicked Wilsons out entirely in favour of the lacklustre Yorkshire alternative.

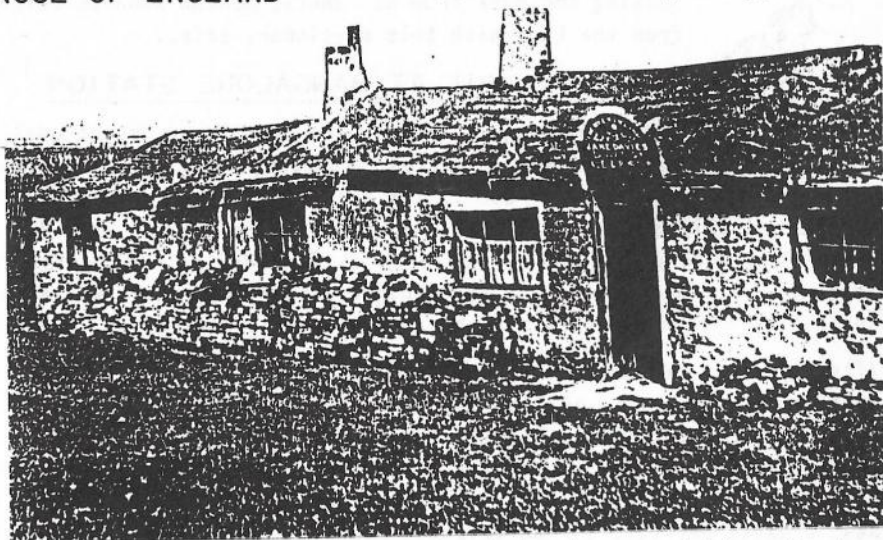
NOW & THEN

ROSE OF ENGLAND

(No.16)

by Rob Magee

Moss Gardens, Higginshaw



This mud-brick building was once thatched and was probably a farmhouse before becoming a beerhouse. It was pulled down around 1910, when it was at least 400 years old. In its heyday it must have been a popular place - it had a "dancing board", a small boating lake at the front and a bowling green at the rear.

The earliest licensee I have traced was Joseph Hilton, described as a "cowman and beerseller" in 1861. James Hilton succeeded Joseph and another Hilton, Elizabeth, was at the pub until 1899. The photograph was taken in 1904 or 1905, when Jane Davies had the pub - by 1906 she had become Mrs Jane Wolfenden. The last landlord was Joseph Scott (1906-10)

The only approach to the Rose of England from Higginshaw Lane was via Meek Street, a small road with scarcely any buildings. Moss Lane branched off it with a double bend and the Rose of England, affectionately known as the "Moss Rose", was on the first part of the bend, with Moss Gardens beyond.

MANHATTAN TRANSFER (3)

The new owners of the Manhattan, Collyhurst, obviously know something we don't. They've applied to use the first floor as hotel accommodation. It's exactly the sort of place that a yuppie executive would love to visit and park his Porsche. The pub has been renamed the Parklands Hotel.

BODDIES BOOST OB

Boddingtons recently took this page advertisement in the Oldham Evening Chronicle, announcing the further introduction of cask conditioned Oldham Brewery beers. This means that around 50% of OB pubs now serve real ale. The list below comes from the advertisement.

* = OB beers were already on sale via handpump (no change)

E = Conversion from electric pumps

B = Previously sold only Boddies bitter on handpump; the OB was keg.

K = previously sold no real ale at all.

All the pubs listed also sell cask mild.

- * **Rose of Lancaster**, Manchester Street.
- * **Clarksfield Hotel**, Ronald Street.
- E **Ordnance Arms**, Park Road.
- * **Old Post Office**, Manchester Road.
- E **Westbourne Hotel**, Middleton Road.
- * **Westwood Inn**, Featherstall Road South.
- E **Gardners Rest**, Acre Lane.
- K **Gardners Rest**, Hollins Road.
- * **Front House**, Oldham Road.
- B **Colliers Arms**, Old Lane.
- B **Springvale Inn**, Burnley Street.
- * **Kings Arms**, Delph Road.
- * **Flowerpot Inn**, Higginshaw Lane.
- * **Park Hotel**, Park Road.
- * **Streetsbridge Inn**, Failsworth.
- B **Bath Hotel**, Union Street.
- B **Brook Tavern**, Rochdale Road.
- K **Church Inn**, Stockport Road.
- * **Farmers Boy**, Huddersfield Road.
- * **Hawthorn Inn**, Roundthorn Road.

In Oldham, the clock goes back tonight!

In Oldham Brewery pubs, that is! Oldham Brewery have been turning the clock back with the glorious flavour of cask-conditioned, hand pulled beer.

From today, even more Oldham Brewery pubs will be serving superb Oldham Bitter the traditional way - the taste of the town has never been more tempting.

And, to celebrate the occasion, we're offering you a pint - absolutely free!

Just ask for your "Time for a Pint" card when you visit any of the pubs listed below.

The traditional taste of the town

- * **Angel Inn**, Nicholson Street.
- * **Footballers Arms**, Huddersfield Road.
- E **Boltmakers Rest**, Rock Street.
- K **Railway Hotel**, Milnrow Road.
- B **Hathershaw Hotel**, Ashton Road.
- * **Abbey Inn**, West Street.
- * **Sun Mill Inn**, Middleton Road.
- * **Golden Buck**, Manchester Road.
- K **Druids Arms**, Ashton Road.
- E **Old Grey Mare**, Oldham Road.
- * **King George Hotel**, Hollins Road.
- * **Bulls Head**, Heyside.
- E **Robin Hood Inn**, Lees Road.
- * **Turn O' Luck**, Glodwick Road.
- * **Citizen Inn**, Drake Street.
- * **Golden Ball**, Spotland Road.
- * **Crown Inn**, Huddersfield Road.
- K **White Stone Inn**, Chadderton Way.
- K **Snipe Inn**, Henshaw Street.
- K **Artizans Rest**, Yorkshire Street.
- K **Lowerhouse Inn**, Derker Street.

K Manor Inn, Abbeyhills Road.
K Centurion Hotel, Lord Street.
B Primrose View, Ashton Road.

K Travellers Rest, Rochdale Road.
B Spotted Cow, Henshaw Street.
K Hare & Hounds, Yorkshire Street.

FALLEN ARCH

There are few surprises in North Manchester's selections for the 1988 Good Beer Guide, except, perhaps, for the dropping of what was once described as Manchester's premier free house, the Marble Arch. Let's hope that the powers that be don't panic and insert the pub anyway, when branch members with local knowledge consider other pubs should be included. With the exclusion of the Crown & Anchor (WD last month), the White House is now the only city centre free house in the guide, but this is compensated for by the addition of the Crescent and the Prince of Wales in Salford and the Drop Inn which joins the Duke of York in Eccles.

TETLEYS DELIVER

The Letters, formerly a keg-only Tetley pub in Atherton (across the road from the Punchbowl) is now selling handpumped Tetley mild and bitter.

MOORHOUSE'S

BREWERS OF REAL ALE



PREMIER BITTER (O.G. 1036°)
Silver Medal Award Winner, Brewex 83



PENDLE WITCHES BREW (O.G. 1050°)
Believed Strongest Bitter Brewed in the North-West

Both delivered weekly direct from brewery to cellar. Contact Max Taylor to place your order.

Tel: BURNLEY (0282) 22864

RENTS AND PROFITS

One interesting outcome from CAMRA's price survey is some information gleaned on relative brewery rents in different areas. Breweries which own pubs in, say, Manchester and West Yorkshire, do not charge their tenants significantly different rents despite a price difference in the beer of about 6p a pint. In Manchester, beer prices are necessarily low because of competition from the local independents. In Yorkshire there is little such competition and prices are appreciably higher.

The rents of Manchester's tenanted pubs are not, however, reduced to take account of the lower selling price. The tenant is squeezed by both the competition and the brewery and we have the phenomenon of new tenants taking over a marginal pub only to find after a few weeks that the margin is a negative one - they can't make a decent living out of the place despite hard work and long hours. Eventually the pub will close and be sold either to another brewer or delicensed.



It would make a lot more sense if the big brewers charged realistic rents which would enable the tenant to make a living whilst still allowing them to sell their beer. The costs of changing licensees or even keeping a pub empty are enormous and it seems obvious that a reduction in the number of pubs will lead inexorably to brewery closures. Small brewers seem to look after their pubs and their tenants much more assiduously than their big brothers do. Pubs that are boarded up or which have a succession of licensees usually belong to the Big Seven. Some of Holts' and Boddies' places may be a bit spit and sawdust, but at least they're open.

It's about time the Big Seven woke up to the fact that they're losing a lot of outlets because of greedy rents and that other people can make a success of similar (or even the same) pubs.

BURY BODDIES

Boddingtons bitter has replaced Castle Eden at the George in Bury town centre (see last month's WD). Across the road, the Knowsley (a former Whitbread house of horrors) has reopened selling Hartleys XB.

RUPERT'S PAGE



A cold frisson of premonitionary dread ran down my spine as I tore open Eddy's jocular envelope, headed "Sperm Bank - Rejection". With a sense of *deja vu*, I thumbed through my complimentary copy of What's Doing to discover that my own scholarly contribution was not included. Had I given the best years of my life as man, boy and trans-sexual to be treated in so cavalier and contemptuous a fashion? Desolation mingled with choleric apoplexy as I contemplated my fate. As I glanced at the brass dial of the longcase clock by the conservatory door, I noticed the date. April 1st - All Fools' Day. Eddy had cobbled together a counterfeit idiot copy in order to dupe me! What a cunning stunt, I thought, and attempted to telephone the perpetrator and ask for another copy. To no avail; he'd gone off on a spree of purchasing which would endanger the reputation of Carnegie or the Library of Congress.

I resolved to acquire a copy in one of the many hostelryes which stock this organ. Alas, I had quite forgotten that both Charlie Bass and the Noble still bore grudges and it was four hours and twelve pubs later that I found myself in a sordid, back-street Slumley hovel where a dog-eared and stout-stained single copy remained. This I purchased and was devastated to see no by-line. What could this mean! Was I sacked again? Why? Was the photo of Billy Cosh in a quasi-legover situation with a pretend member of the Greater Grotley filth too much for the monastic sensibilities of our readers? Perhaps Eddie, having ascertained that the death throes of Manky Ale were final, was attempting to appeal to a wider readership and considered my features didn't fit, that they were in fact superfluous to requirements? Was the threnody about the dying moments of Manky Ale considered too much of a panegyric? The Nestfeathers remained incommunicado and the reply was a deafening silence.

Gradually, however, through the grapevine, came the message loud and clear. My writing was considered too lavatorial and my remarks about AIDS were tasteless. I had, it seemed, been blue-pencilled into oblivion by Glynnis Nestfeather. Tasteless? It's only by treating with levity issues of great moment that we can summon up the strength to tackle them. Remember the war? Uncle Hitler was made a figure of fun, as Napoleon and others were in the past. Some of my closest

friends in both PORGI (Persons of Restricted Growth Institute) and BESS (British Effeminate Sailors Society) have become victims of what I have never referred to as the gay plague, so I can hardly be accused of treating the matter lightly.

Nevertheless, I have given Glynnis my solemn promise that my remarks will henceforth be confined to matters of moment to the beer swilling yobbo who is likely to form the future readership of this organ in Slutch and other areas of semi-literacy.

WALES ALES

The line-up at the Prince of Wales free house, Oldfield Road, Salford, is now Boddingtons bitter, John Smiths bitter and Oldham Brewery mild and bitter.

BRANNIGANS

Brannigans is another Manchester bar with "happy hours" (11.30-12.30 and 5.30-7.00). The beers are Wilsons and Websters bitters (50p during happy hours) and McEwans 80/- and Choice (60p during happy hours).

BEER FESTIVALS



First there's the annual Saddleworth Beer Festival on the weekend of May 1st, 2nd and 3rd. Around 25 different beers, cider, wine; food and entertainment.

Looking to the future, there's the Great British Beer Festival in Brighton. Over 200 real ales and ciders; food, entertainment, etc.

"Train Tours" are again running a special train from this area to Brighton on Saturday 8th August; times are as follows:

Bolton depart 7.15am
returning 11.05pm



Manchester Victoria depart 7.30am: rtn 10.50pm Stockport depart 8am: returning 10.12pm Macclesfield depart 8.15am: returning 9.52pm.

The train arrives in Brighton at 12.30pm and leaves at 5.35. For booking details ring Train Tours, 061 832 3389

ADVERTISING STANDARDS

Banks's Brewery are a bit upset about the use of the phrase "Unspoilt by Progress" in an advert for the Cemetery Hotel, Rochdale, printed in Manky Ale (remember that?) Their Mr Willis has written to the Cemetery alleging the use of the phrase is plagiarism. Well, look who's talking! Wasn't it Banks's who nicked the "Black Country" beers idea from Holdens? Older readers may remember that one of Banks's "Unspoilt by Progress" adverts was referred to the Advertising Standards Authority for alleged fibbing a couple of years ago. The Cemetery's "Unspoilt by Progress" advert is apparently quite legal, decent, honest, etc.



Branch Diary

WIGAN

Wed 13 May, 8.30. Branch Meeting, Charles Dickens Hotel, Upper Dicconson Street, Wigan; to be followed by a Social at Gem's

Wed 20 May, 8.30. Local Beer Guide Meeting, Victoria, Liverpool Road, Platt Bridge

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

NORTH MANCHESTER

Wed 6 May. Traditional British Pubs crawl. Braziers Arms, Salford, 7pm. Smiths Arms, Ancoats, 8.30pm-

Wed 13 May Queens Arms, Patricroft, 8pm.

Wed 20 May 8pm, Crescent, Salford.

Wed 3 June Top Derby, Rochdale Road, 7pm. - and again at 8.30

Wed 10 June. Mitchells Brewery trip

Wed 17 June, 8pm, White Swan, Swinton

Contact Roger Hall 740 7937

TRAFFORD & HULME

Thurs 7 May 8pm, Committee/Social, Melville, Barton Road, Stretford. All welcome.

Mon 11 May 8.15pm, Inter-branch social with Macclesfield branch. Bulls Head, Mobberley

Thurs 14 May 8.15pm. City centre survey: Square Albert, Albert Square: Royal Central Hotel, Windmill Street, 9pm.

Thurs 21 May 8pm, Branch Meeting, Railway, Mobberley

Thurs 28 May, 8.30. Hulme Survey. Meet Grand Junction, Royce Road: Crown, 9pm.

Thurs 4 June 8pm, Committee/Social, King William IV, Manchester Road, Partington.

Contact David Shelton 061 224 7341 x27 (w): 061 795 2113 (h)