

WHAT'S DOING

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BROKEN ARROWS

Boddingtons have completed their latest act of desecration. The Three Arrows is one of four Boddingtons pubs in Rhodes near Middleton. It stands on the Prestwich/Manchester boundary at the end of the motorway and is an imposing building. Before conversion, The Three Arrows was a busy, four-roomed pub with a mixed clientele. It had some unique features. The vault was in two parts at the front and back of the central bar. The vault at the front was known as the horse box because it was only four feet wide by about twelve feet long. There was a window seat in the bowed, etched glass window.

Across the large lobby, on to which the bar also opened, was a lounge which was tastefully decorated in traditional style. The room contained seats in alcoves reminiscent of the back room of the Grapes in Deansgate, and wooden topped, cast iron tables. The back rooms were never as crowded as the lobby or the front rooms and in the recent hot summers customers tended to spill outside on to the grass on the edge of Middleton Road.

The pub's ideal location and extreme popularity (it has a brisk trade before seven in the evenings), coupled with the bad utilisation of space within the building, made it ripe for alteration. The conversion of The Three Arrows has involved sinking a new cellar in the back yard, incorporating the old, above-ground cellar into the main body of the pub, moving the bar to what was the back of the house, knocking nearly all the walls down, bringing the toilets inside

and covering the tables with wood-grained plastic laminate. The result is a tasteless abortion where plastic coated RSJs and brash formica clash with the original etched glass and the relatively unspoilt exterior. Even the three arrows above the door have been removed. The only redeeming feature is the retention of a vault, although this is effectively separated from the rest of the pub as it has a different entrance.

No doubt The Three Arrows will continue to be popular and successful. This may, however, have more to do with the price and quality of the beer than with the architectural splendour of the surroundings.

WINDSOR OUT OF WILSONS SALES

The Windsor Castle near Cross Lane roundabout, Salford, has been closed since before Christmas. This is the first pub to go in preparation for road-widening at the roundabout. Other pubs included in the Compulsory Purchase Order are the Red Cow (Boddingtons) and the Corporation (Wilsons). We understand that Watney-Wilson have been compensated to the tune of £35,000.

MUSICAL CHEERS?

A new plush 'wine, ale and dining bar' has been opened in Brown Street, Manchester 2, called the Brahms and Liszt.

Whilst similar to Sam's Chop House in most respects, the Brahms and Liszt sells only keg beer - namely Worthington E and Tetley bitter, compared to Sam's excellent Marstons Pedigree and Tetley bitter, both hand drawn.

As the business 'City' is almost a real ale desert, it may be worthwhile if we were to try to point out to the management the error of their ways and to press for the installation of some real ale.

Paul Roberts

WHITBREAD SELLS PUBS (2)

It seems that the sale of six Whitbread pubs announced in last months What's Doing is no isolated example of the company's policy. Advertisements are repeatedly appearing in the licensed trade press offering Whitbread pubs for sale. The movement seems at present to be concentrated on the area covered by Whitbread East Pennines - principally Yorkshire and County Durham - but there are examples throughout the whole of Whitbread's trading area. One Greater Manchester pub currently under offer is that opposite the White Gates in Hyde. Trade there has been so badly hit - though the glucose factory might be as much to blame as the White Gates in drawing off custom - that Whitbread have offered to sell the pub to the present landlord. It is understood that this generous business opportunity has been turned down!

Meanwhile, the Colonel continues his dreadful works elsewhere in the country. The number of real ale outlets for the Strongs of Romsey and Brickwoods, Portsmouth, breweries, taken over in the late 60s is declining again, having remained fairly constant for the last few years. In fact, a substantial number of former Strongs houses introduced the improved Brickwoods Best Bitter, giving in many of these pubs a choice of real ales for the first time for many years. On the whole though, it seems that unlike the other national brewers Whitbread do not concede that there is sufficient demand for real ale even in the south. Perhaps Maxwell Joseph could have a quiet word in the Colonels ear!

It's nice to know that CAMRA is not the only organisation in conflict with Whitbread. The licensed trade protection associations in general and Whitbread landlords in particular have been bitterly criticising the company over both their timing and amounts of price increases this month. The brewery wanted their own increases applied seperately from the Chancellors penny, giving two price increases in two weeks. The landlords felt that their customers might react unfavourably to this, and in many parts of the country refused to follow the brewerys directive. If they carry on with that attitude, the landlords might even try to dictate what sort of beer they sell, and that would never do.

RAW DEAL

The Rawsons Arms, Peel Street, Farnworth, was recently bought by Burtonwood from Whitbread. Members of local branches of CAMRA were lured to the official reopening and given assurances that the pub would be selling cask-conditioned beer. Also, when we telephoned the brewery about the Rawsons and four other Whitbread pubs bought in the package deal, 'A Spokesman' gave the impression that to suggest Burtonwood may sell non-traditional beer in any of these pubs was like implying the Lone Ranger and Tonto were more than just good friends. So, conceive then of our dismay when only a few weeks later bright pressurised beer began flowing from the Rawsons conveniently adaptable electric pumps. Whether this is a temporary or permanent state of affairs is not known.

BOTTOM HOUSE

The observant drinker may have noticed something different about the clientele of the Lower Turk's Head on Shude Hill. This may be not unconnected with regular meetings of the Manchester Gay Liberation Front at the said hostelry.

NO MOW

One of North Manchester's pubs in the Greater Manchester Beer Guide is the Barley Mow on Turner Street which is described as "tucked away near old market". A more apt description would be "folded up" because the pub is now a wholesale draper's.

NICE ONE

Whilst many pubs may have a dog or a parrot, the Old House at Home, Blackley, has a six foot boa constrictor called - Cyril.

MORE THAN HIS FAIR SHARE

A former employee of Joseph Holt's brewery is currently at the centre of police investigations into an alleged sale of bogus Holt's shares. The shares, valued in total at almost £10,000, are said to have been offered during last summer to a number of Holt's licensees by a man who at the time was a director of Holt's but who is now no longer with the company. Some licensees apparently purchased the shares in the belief that they were helping the brewery and their suspicions were only aroused when share certificates were not issued. The matter was brought to the attention of officials of the Manchester and Salford LVA, the secretary of which, Mr Alf Slinn, (who gave a talk to our branch at its November meeting) is calling for an investigation at national level. Mr Slinn is understood to be examining whether or not the brewery can be held responsible for the sums lost by its licensees, for Holts have disclaimed all responsibility. According to the "Morning Advertiser", a Holt's spokesman said that the brewery could not be held responsible because "the former director was acting on his own behalf".

No names have been mentioned in connection with the fraud, but a spokesman from Holt's confirmed to the "Morning Advertiser" and later to a member of the branch that Mr John Mills, a former director of the company, did not work at the brewery any more, having left in October or November last year. Branch members may recall that some time ago Mr Mills was invited to give a talk at a meeting but regretted that he was fully occupied at the time, promising to come in January or February. Mr Mills would doubtless be able to give a very interesting talk - he may even have a bit more time on his hands now.

BRANCH MEETINGS

Our speaker at the November branch meeting was Mr Alf Slinn, Public Relations Officer of the National Union of Licensed Victuallers. He told some twenty members at the Three Crowns in Little Lever about the work of the association and expressed his own views on CAMRA and its activities. It was clear from Mr Slinn's talk that he had as little idea about our organisation as we had about his and unfortunately what could have been an excellent opportunity for a helpful exchange of views and information was spoiled by Mr Slinn's unwillingness to accept suggestions and ideas which were not actually legal requirements on publicans. He was, for instance opposed to the labelling of beers at the point of dispense for the information of the customer since this would involve the licensee in some expense, and he did not in any case feel that the public needed or should have such information. We were left at the end of the evening feeling that we had had a most stimulating and provoking talk, and the landlord at the Three Crowns was left with a wall in the Gents toilet which was rather dented at approximately head height.

The December branch meeting coincided with the branch social. Unfortunately Chris Bruton, who had agreed to talk to us, had to cancel his trip and his place was taken by Joe Goodwin, the South East Area Organiser, who withstood our grouses about CAMRA for about an hour. Our branch musicians, Ken, Pete and Bill then took over and, to the accompaniment of two people singing and the rest munching hot pot, hammered out stirring versions of a number of tunes. When we broke up in disorder at closing time, a select few slipped back under cover of darkness to Pete's, where it seemed both the home brew and the singing were better than ever before.

WILSONS NET NEW OUTLET

A new Wilsons pub has opened on Liverpool Street, Salford, on the corner of Athole Street. The pub is designed on similar lines to The Chequerboard and goes by the name of The Mariner.

I'VE FORGOTTEN MY SCRIPT, CAN I USE YOURS?

The Morning Advertiser, the trade newspaper published by the Society of Licensed Victuallers, is not noted for its volublesupport of CAMRA or its ideals. However, following the rejection in December of proposals to impose EEC standards on certain foods including beer, the following appeared as part of its leader comment:-

Our concern, of course, is primarily with British beer . . . a product of such individuality that its reputation and adherents are world wide.

What a tragedy it would have been if the EEC authorities had attempted to bring in standardisation to such a degree that it lost this personality.

From the beginning this was not a viable proposition and common sense had to prevail even in the circles of the European Community.

Exaggerated fears that the time was not far off when Britishers would be drinking a standardised "Euro beer" can now be thrown out of the window.

What a relief this will be to the average beer drinker in Britain who, despite the views of certain organisations, still has more choice of brews than anyone anywhere else in the world.

But, honestly, Common Market or not, was it ever really on that Britain's beer drinkers were going to be told that they must drink a standard product?

The thought is enough to shatter the average public bar to its foundations.



The branch committee has decided to discontinue the campaign to save the Derby. There are several reasons for this decision. We "discovered" the Derby too late in the planning process. The compulsory purchase order had already been served and enquiries had taken place. The plans for Ordsall are now finalised. The site of the Derby is scheduled as an "amenity space" and will comprise an adventure playground and a football pitch.

This in itself would create tremendous difficulties in arguing a case. Preserving open spaces for children has great emotional potential with its associations of caring and protecting family life. We should attract little sympathy in arguing for the retention of a pub, with its associations of drunkenness, noise, drinking and driving and so forth, in the face of this. Even if this hurdle could be overcome, it would be necessary, because of government planning criteria, to find an alternative "amenity space" were the Derby to remain. Unless the whole Ordsall plan were scrapped and redrawn, this would be impossible.

Plans have already been passed for two new pubs in Ordsall and it is likely that The Bricklayers on Ordsall Lane will be retained. It would be hard to argue the case for the Derby against the Bricklayers.

The Derby is obviously lacking in basic amenities. While this in itself is of no serious consequence, there are indications that the building is "structurally unsound". We have not been able to ascertain exactly what this expression might mean but our arguments for retention would be seriously weakened if Salford Corporation could produce a survey from a professional surveyor indicating severe structural

faults. This would also substantially damage the credit of any future campaigns which we might wish to mount. Although we have been provided by the brewery with certain information which supports our case, this has been given in confidence and cannot be used in any negotiations with the Corporation.

Whilst the planners appear to be sympathetic to our objectives, they are under great pressure to provide a stock of acceptable housing in the city quickly. Land is scarce in Salford partly because of astounding decisions to expand the University and Technical College on land which may have had better alternative uses. The politicians who make the decisions are, it seems, determined to eradicate all links with Salford's past and are unlikely to be swayed by arguments which emphasise the atmosphere of a working class community typified by the Derby.

Although we now accept the inevitability of the Derby's demise, that is not to say that we applaud the decision. The destruction of Salford's pubs is a crime and many people are to blame. The politicians must take the lion's share of the guilt for attempting to create a city with no past and therefore no future, but the planners must bear their share for making recommendations and drawing up plans which have resulted in wholesale demolition of entire communities and their replacement by tasteless aberrations. The brewers have been only too willing to accept generous compensation of up to £40,000 per pub as their houses have been compulsorily purchased. It evidently made economic sense to replace two or three street corner pubs with a larger pub with cellar tanks, particularly if it was paid for mainly out of public money.

Last, but by no means least, the citizens of Salford are to blame for allowing their communities to be torn apart. Vociferous public protest can do much to prevent needless destruction if it is made early enough. We intend to continue our opposition to the unnecessary demolition of pubs in Salford and to select a pub which we may save. This will need to be structurally sound and to be chosen before a C.P.O. is confirmed. There will also need to be a commitment from the brewery, the licensee and the customers before we consider a campaign. As for the Derby, all we can do is mourn its passing as it disappears (probably in August) and make our views known to those responsible.

REGIONAL CONFERENCE

This year's Northern Regional Conference was held in St. William's College, York, on Saturday, January 15th. Four North Manchester members went along. Resisting the temptation to flee when it was announced that the morning would be spent in study groups of equal numbers under the general guidance of a discussion leader, we were pleasantly surprised to find ourselves genuinely interested. The four topics discussed were the Whitbread campaign, Make May a Mild Month, finance and publicity.

Chris Bruton opened the discussion on finance by describing the Campaign's current financial plight and how it had been caused. In addition to two publications relatively unsuccessful in financial terms, "Beer Naturally" and "Real Ale on the Waterways", Campaign funds had been hit by the low return from the CAMRA pints competition (£6,000 taken as opposed to £12,000 expected). The resulting overdraft had been halved in the space of six weeks to £7,000 by contributions from branches but this had only eased the problem in the short term. Discussion as to how to solve the long term financial problem produced a consensus in favour of increasing the membership fee only to keep pace with inflation but of separating the fee itself from the subscription to "What's Brewing"; of seeking cash in the form of voluntary levies from branches; and of organising another CAMRA competition. The North Manchester contingent pointed out that St. Albans could not expect voluntary contributions unless CAMRA centrally abandoned the "establishmentism" that now characterised it, adopted a meaningful and relevant campaigning programme and in general discarded its present silliness and bureaucracy in favour of the aims and objectives which had originally motivated it. This being said, though, the present financial problem still remained and threatened even the production of the 1977 Good Beer Guide which might need to be part-financed by instituting a system of advanced orders.

Other discussions showed that plans to make May a mild month were well advanced and that the decline and fall of the Whitbread empire was imminent. The afternoon general dis-

cussion (I think it was called a plenary session) was highlighted by Michael Hardman rising to his feet at every opportunity to say nothing in particular and Rod Oliver trying to recapture his wellies from the top of an oak beam twenty feet above the audience. We all agreed on the way home that the optimum point for talking about CAMRA is somewhere between two and four pints and that only Chris Bruton had managed to hit the target. There's an element of self-defeat about the Campaign for Real Ale.

Jem Callaghan

PUB CRAWL

Wednesday 2nd February 1977

BREWS TEN - HULME and SALFORD

All right, so it's impossible, but it's an experience. Twenty pubs and ten different breweries feature in the most ambitious North Manchester Pub Crawl to date. Kick-off at 7.00, or 8.30 in the Pomona Palace.

Red Admiral	Hulme Walk	Robinsons
Grants Arms	Royce Road	Boddingtons
Junction Hotel	Rolls Crescent	Hydes
Albert	Erskine Street	GW
Three Legs of Man	Stretford Road	Wilsons
Talbot	Stretford Road	Wilsons
Mancunian	Royce Road	Marstons
Hope Inn	Chester Road	Hydes
Pomona Palace	Cornbrook Road	Marstons
Cornbrook	Chester Road	Tetley
Greyhound	Woden Street	GW
Bricklayers	Ordsall Lane	Holts
Welcome	Ordsall Lane	Lees
Albion	Ordsall Lane	Tetley
Derby	Derby Street	Wilsons
Derby	Derby Street	Boddingtons
Wellington	Regent Road	Boddingtons
Grove	Regent Road	GW
Spread Eagle	Regent Road	Holts
Albert	Regent Road	Bass

SEND US FOUR PINTS

Thus runs the headline in January's "What's Brewing". Denying rumours of CAMRA's financial difficulties, Bruton uses the conventional wisdom to blame any problems on "cash flow" rather than on lack of financial planning, falling membership and overstocking of the daft tee shirts, cufflinks etc. which we've criticised in the past and which are now being sold off cheaply (at a loss?) to generate cash. Statements of this nature have a familiar ring and are not likely to instil confidence in a sceptical press. The campaign should be on a sound financial footing rather than appeal for contributions. My four pints won't be going to St. Albans.

Roger Hall

PUB OF THE MONTH

The Clock Face, Farnworth

The Clock Face is a quiet Tetley pub near Hipwood and Grundy's garage in Farnworth. Like the Lord Nelson when Percy and Mary were there, the pub has the feeling of a real local with a small, regular clientele, a friendly landlord and a pint of Tetley's which, on form, is as good as you can get.

The pub is of the three-roomed variety with a fair sized vault, complete with dart board and colour television, and two medium sized lounges off the central bar, from which the beer is served through handpumps. The pub has a comfortable "faded" atmosphere which seems unlikely to change with the redecoration now in progress. Loudspeakers indicate piped music, but this is well in the background and seems to be more Vera Lynn and Ivor Novello than modern day pop. The Clock Face, handy for bus routes to both Manchester and Bolton, as well as being near the motorway, is an excellent pub for a quiet evening's drinking.

REAL ALE IN CAMBRIDGE

Until recent years Cambridge was a little known city on the North East extremity of the London commuter belt. However a couple of years ago this East Anglian County Town was put on the map by the establishment of Camra Real Ale Investments headquarters in Hills Road. This was closely followed by the biggest piece of pub vandalism in recent years - THE SALISBURY - one of Camrails newest acquisitions.

As this 'pub' lies on Tennison Road, which is close to the station, it is ideal to start a crawl here. Any intending visitors should be in before 7.30 in the evening, as after that time it is overrun by trendies. What was formerly a back street local is now a pseud palace. All ale is hand-pumped and includes Batemans mild and bitter, Greene King Abbot, Charles Wells bitter and Sam Smiths bitter. In line with Camras preservation of the traditional English pub the Salisbury serves 'Traditional English Pub Food' - pizzas and vegetarian rissoles. The whole pub has been ripped apart and now resembles a Scandinavian log cabin, with almost no seating capacity.

After one leaves this modern monstrosity heading away from the station, one will come across the DEWDROP INN in Gwydir Street, which is a friendly local serving some of the best Tolly Cobbold bitter and best bitter available in Cambridge. From here one can walk along Gwydir Street to Norfolk Street and along there until East Road. From here one will be able to sight the BAKERS ARMS, a very basic Greene King establishment selling Abbot, IPA and mild. A few yards around the corner one will find the FORRESTERS on Burleigh Street - a Tolly Cobbold house with just bitter on draught. Like the Bakers this is quite a basic house, although the lounge is reasonably comfortable.

A few minutes walk to the top of Burleigh Street and right into Fitzroy Street will lead the dedicated aler to the ANCIENT DRUIDS, the only real Charles Wells outlet in central Cambridge. This is very much a locals pub with a distinct Irish trade and beers on offer are Wells bitter and Wells Fargo Best Bitter. The only other Wells pub in central Cambridge was the ELM TREE in Orchard Street which was

burnt down in mid-1976.

If one continues along Fitzroy Street one will once again come onto East Road, and by turning left this will lead to a roundabout joining East Road to Newmarket Road. At this junction stands the ROSE AND CROWN, a dominating Greene King pub. Hand drawn Abbott and IPA are available but alas no mild. This is a regular venue for local Camra meetings. Travelling east along Newmarket Road a quick call can be made at the FIVE BELLS, a modern house selling hand drawn Tolly Cobbold. After leaving this characterless pub follow Newmarket Road until the SEVEN STARS, a really excellent Greene King pub. The landlord here is a very enthusiastic drinker and serves excellent handpumped IPA and Abbott - which are also available on keg. After being entertained by the landlord it is very doubtful if one can escape before last orders (if then - this pub is residential).

However if one does leave early evening, a stroll along Elizabeth Way with a brief call at the FLEUR DE LYS (hand drawn Tolly) will lead to Chesterton, where the GREEN DRAGON on Water Street sells excellent Greene King mild as well as the usual IPA and Abbott. By this stage of the evening the conscientious drinker will have consumed several pints so it may be advisable to catch the local bus into the city.

The CAMBRIDGE ARMS in King Street seems to be the haunt of most Camra members from which one can draw ones own conclusions. IPA and Abbott are served by handpumps and in the winter mild is provided as a bonus. Along the road is the CHAMPION OF THE THAMES, which I cannot recommend as the mild and bitter are pressurised, the only real draught being the Abbott on gravity. By cutting across the back streets to Park Street one reaches the MAYPOLE, a new pub serving electric Tolly bitter and Cantab best bitter. It is usually empty and makes a pleasant finishing point to the evening.

Paul Roberts

GOING INTO EXTRA TIME

The local branch of the Licenced Victuallers Association has applied to the local magistrates for an extension of weekday drinking hours by half an hour in Manchester and Salford. But don't put the flags out just yet, as it is rumoured that although most tenants are in favour, the managers are against it.

GM BEER GUIDE, AN OPINION

CAMRA WHITE ELEPHANTS

No - it's not the new range of cuddly toys bearing the new CAMRA motif. It's the 1976 Book of Useless Information. This 'masterpiece', which is sheer robbery at 45p, is bound in a Greater Manchester Transport Timetable cover and gives such relevant details as:

- Strong on extramural competitions (Prampushing etc.)
- Large plush friendly staff
- One of the few genuine pubs remaining (Rubbish!)
- Football goals in Gents
- Austere
- Meeting place for pigeon fanciers
- Unpretentious with wide ranging trade
- Till rings up to 9/11³/₄d

My only regret is that this branch was silly enough to waste time and effort in participating in the 1976 Greater Manchester Good Beer Guide, the information for which was supplied over a year ago. Comments from non-biased drinkers range from 'Downright rubbish' to 'stupid'. The average value placed on it is 15-20 pence, so it comes as no surprise to find that it isn't selling at 45p.

It is now up to North Manchester to lead the way yet again and to publish early in 1977 a complete and accurate guide to ALL real ale outlets in our area - listing address, brewery, method of dispense and without silly comments.

Paul Roberts

SEASONAL BEER

As usual the quality of one of our local brews - Boddingtons - declined dramatically over the Christmas period. In four of their pubs the beer was nearly undrinkable and had to be left - The Queens, Patricroft; Bridgewater, Worsley; Church, Salford; White Hart, Cheadle. Out of a dozen or so of the local pubs which I visited only one - the Ellesmere at Patricroft - served a pint which could be described as decent.

As a complete contrast the quality of Holts has greatly improved. Perhaps it is time we started to give Holts some encouragement. For too long now CAMRA has praised breweries such as Boddingtons who take absolutely no notice of our views and continue to vandalise their pubs to a greater extent than many non- real ale breweries.

Let us prove to Boddingtons that we want what they claim to be famous for - good inexpensive beer and not car stickers, tee-shirts or belts bearing their emblems.

Paul Roberts

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE
NORTH MANCHESTER BRANCH
OF CAMRA WILL BE IN THE
CASTLE, OLDHAM STREET,
MANCHESTER, ON 16th Feb.