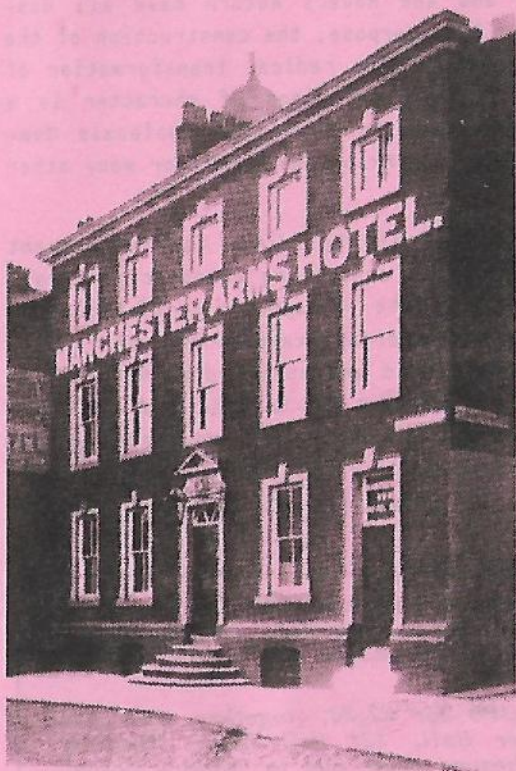


20p

WHAT'S DOING

FEB
1990

THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE



CENTRAL MANCHESTER'S LOST PUBS

The city centre of Manchester is no stranger to wholesale demolition and reconstruction. Pubs, churches and other historic buildings have disappeared in waves of rebuilding from the eighteenth century to the present day. Street widening, new roads and new commercial developments have all taken their toll. The dozens of pubs which once lined both Deansgate and Market Street have long since disappeared. Indeed,

Manchester's very success seemed to depend on a willingness to abolish the old and replace with the new.

In the past the demolition had a certain rationale; it was essential if, for example, new railway stations, factories, town halls, roads were to be built to create the infrastructure on which Manchester's pre-eminence depended. In some ways that rationale still exists. In order that the Arndale Centre could be built it was necessary to raze to the ground a large area of the city which contained many pubs of both character and historical interest. Seftons, the Sugar Loaf Inn, Liston's Bar, the Lower Ship, the Mosley Arms, the New Boars Head, the Seven Stars, the Fatted Calf and the Rovers Return have all disappeared for a purpose. Whether that purpose, the construction of the Arndale Centre, is a valid reason for the radical transformation of the city and the destruction of many buildings of character is a matter of conjecture. What is certain is that this wholesale demolition would not have taken place in York or Cheltenham or many other towns.

Disturbing as it is, the demise of old buildings for replacement purposes can be supported by arguments concerning economic progress. What surely cannot be justified is the disappearance of buildings for no purpose whatsoever. There are numerous examples of pubs in city centre Manchester which have been closed and pulled down not because they were unsafe, dangerous or uneconomic or because the site was urgently required for redevelopment, but because it was convenient to do so. The sites of many of these pubs are still brick-strewn crofts years later. The building of the Mancunian Way necessitated the

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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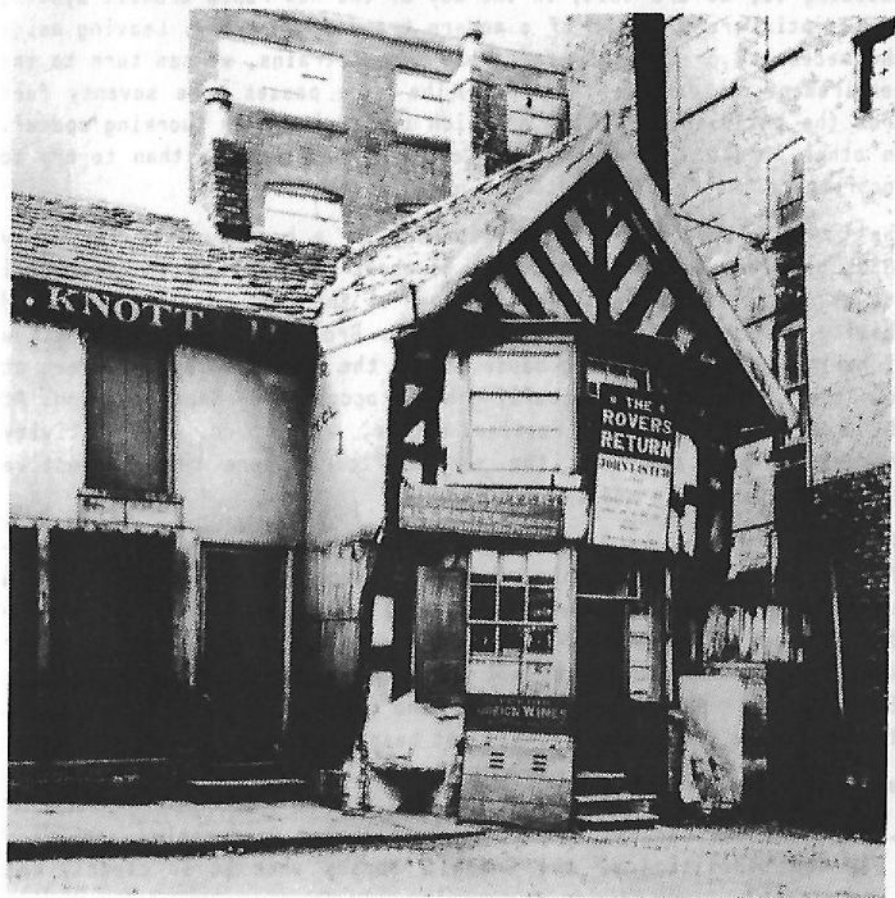
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clearance of a considerable area on the fringe of the city. Yet pubs on London Road, not directly affected by the road, were knocked down. The Manchester Arms, a three-hundred-year-old town house on Long Millgate, was acquired and knocked down 15 years ago to make way for an underground station for the new Manchester Metro. The Oxford Hotel was knocked down for a redevelopment which has yet to take place over 10 years later. Pubs on Lower Mosley Street have been replaced by a car park.

It would be naive and unrealistic to expect every pub to remain intact for ever. Buildings do become dilapidated and unworkable. Land does need to be fully utilised. New transport systems do have to be accommodated and new commercial undertakings do need to be considered. Yet, by the indiscriminate destruction of our past we are surely losing something of our sense of the present. Old buildings, partic-



ularly where they are still used for the same purpose as they were 150 to 200 years ago forge links with our past and create a continuity which helps to sustain a sense of cultural identity. Without these links a city becomes heartless and soul-less.

Manchester would have been both more attractive and more human if the Seven Stars, the Rovers Return, the Manchester Arms, the Haymarket, the Thatched House, Liston's Music Hall, the Sugar Loaf, the Garrick, the Concert Inn and one or two other pubs of character had been allowed to remain. Their retention would have helped to create more considered developments; developments on a human scale which take into account human needs and patterns of life.

The latest victim of Manchester's knock-it-down-for-convenience policy is the Coach & Horses on London Road. This late eighteenth century building is, we are told, in the way of the new rapid transit system, an essential requirement of a modern transport network. Leaving aside the necessity or otherwise of these street trains, we can turn to the requirement to demolish the pub. The line passes some seventy feet from the building, the site of which is required for 'working space'. In other words, it's more convenient to knock it down than to try to incorporate the building into the new development.

The Coach & Horses was first licensed as a beerhouse in the early 1830s but the building dates back to about 1786 and was in commercial use as a victualling house by the turn of the century. In 1800 Edward Shepley, clockmaker, was at 10 Shooters Brow and underneath Matthew Pickering had a victualling house. Round the corner in Upton Street at no.1 there was another victualling house occupied by Samuel Ashton. At the same address was a fustian cutter, Juda Dodd. This activity presumably took place on the second floor, where the distinctive windows can still be seen.

The Coach & Horses is, according to many experts and amenity organisations, an excellent example of late 18th century building. It is a building well worth preserving. Several attempts have been made to list the building (by CAMRA, the Victorian Society, Manchester City Council). The building meets all the criteria for listing: It is pre-1830; it is structurally sound and relatively unaltered. Yet, strangely, the Coach & Horses has not been listed.

Several questions require answering...

1. Why does the Central Manchester Development Corporation acquiesce in the demolition of the Coach & Horses when it is clearly not necessary?



2. Why cannot the pub be renovated to provide an imposing introduction to the city at its main gateway?
3. Why has the Department of the Environment consistently refused to list the building?

Roger Hall

CLAYTON MOVES

Plans have been submitted for extensions to the Strawberry Duck on Crabtree Lane.

BRITON'S PROTECTION

December WD's article about Tetley's plans for the Britons Protection in Manchester has provoked a strong reaction from Tetley's Director Malcolm Nicholls. He says that they have never had any intention of building a hotel on the site. That is good news. He also says that the objective is to maintain and enhance the quality and character of the pub as it is and that they would be failing in their duty to shareholders if they did not attempt to transfer the pub to management. However, they want the current tenant to stay on as manager. This all goes to show that you should never believe all these rumours about pubs - just ring up the brewery and they will tell you exactly what is going on.

With regard to our charge about spoiling the Railway (Top House), Eccles, he says that the tenant has carried out extensive changes to the pub exterior (he does not mention the interior) without Tetley's permission and the tenant has been told to reinstate the Victorian exterior. That will be worth watching.

BIGGER GRAFTON

The Grafton Arms, C-on-M, may be enlarged in a few months time. As a result of a new access road being constructed at the side of the Grafton, Holts have been able to obtain the extra land from Manchester Health Authority.

TENANT MOVES ON

The White Lion, Little Hulton, has been a thriving pub with tenant Frank Peake for the last 15 or 16 years. Sadly Boddies have seen fit to install a manager at the White Lion - it's one of 17 Boddies pubs to 'go managed' recently. Frank is moving to the Hawker Siddeley club at Farnworth. We wish him well.

MISERABLE MINUTES

'Happy Hour' in Papillons Bar in the Arndale Centre offers Boddingtons bitter at the giveaway price of £1 a pint! One dreads to think what the normal price is.

RHODES UPDATE

The latest Henry' Table, the Wilton at Rhodes, is due to open week commencing 11th February. The nearby Gardners Arms now offers Oldham bitter as well as Boddingtons following the recent refurbishment.

BOLTON NEWS

Des Nogalski

'THE DOME' is Bolton's latest cafe bar. Situated on Knowsley Street and part of the Victoria Hall complex, The Dome opened late last year offering meals, coffee and tea and, among other alcoholic beverages, Bass Special Bitter at £1 a pint.

The ALBERT VAULTS on Derby Street now lives up to its boast of 'Tetley Traditional Beers', featured for so long on the pub's facia. Further down Derby Street, though, Tetley's dark mild appears to have died a death at the PILKINGTON ARMS. Tetley bitter and ordinary mild remain on handpump.

Finally, Peter Walker news. The HARE & HOUNDS on Bury Road has been refurbished again. A pint of bitter will set you back 96p. The AINSWORTH ARMS on Halliwell Road now has a beer range that comprises Walker mild, best bitter, winter warmer and Ind Coope Burton Ale.

A6 BLUES

Chapel Street is certainly not the ideal part of Salford for the traditional beer drinker. Admittedly the Peel Park makes a good start with John Smiths bitter at 88p, Magnet at 92p and Courage Directors at 98p, but it's all downhill from there. The Borough has only Burtonwood bitter (82p) on draught. The Oxford, still up for grabs as a licensed retail business opportunity, is now all keg Wilsons. The Church (Greenalls), the Town Hall (Whitbread) and the Bird in Hand (Banks's) are also keg despite the surrounding burgeoning yuppiedom. Some respite is offered at Ye Olde Nelson if you like Chesters and the Brown Bull is vastly improved under its new management. Marstons best bitter and Pedigree are both on handpump at 90p and £1 respectively. Sadly the Salford Arms serves only Chesters bitter and the Kings Arms, which recently opened as a Higsons house, had only Boddies on draught on our visit. Both the mild and the handpumps have disappeared from the Punchbowl, so electrically dispensed cask Tetley bitter is the only choice. The ardent traveller would be well advised to repair for a final pint or two to the Eagle on Collier Street, where the Holts is currently on excellent form.

PRICE RISES

The first of the 1990 price increases are: Robbies up 4p a pint; Tetley up 6p. Whitbread beers are also going up.

ROADS TO RUIN

Many good pubs have been lost to road schemes over the last few years - Manchester Inner Relief Route; Regent Road, Salford; M66 extension; various schemes in Wigan and Bolton; not to mention the pubs along Hyde Road which have been under threat for the last decade. There are eleven different highway authorities in Greater Manchester, all of them, at this moment, with schemes on the drawing board and for all we know with routes passing through some great pubs. In addition, during the next two years, the Department of Transport is preparing a scheme for a new motorway connecting the M62 at Eccles with the M6 at Knutsford and an eight-mile dual carriageway linking Ringway with the A6 at Hazel Grove (Tatton Arms, Moss Nook, look out!)

If any pubs are in the way of these road schemes being designed at the moment their closure and demolition is not inevitable and you do not have to be "against progress" to campaign for their retention. Providing the public (that is us) is prepared to make a move to protect pubs then the engineers and planners are often ready to respond with an alternative route. After all, many of them enjoy the pubs as much as we do but as professionals they have to put forward the most efficient and cost effective schemes for consideration, regardless of what buildings happen to be in the way.

The Department of Transport Schemes will not be available for public consultation until 1991, but other local schemes are coming up all the time. To find out about them it is best regularly to check the public notices in your local paper. Also make sure your local civic society/amenity group, local history society or CAMRA branch is kept in the picture. If we can take on Metrolink and the Passenger Transport Executive and save the Castle & Falcon (and we expect the Coach & Horses), we can save other pubs too.

Peter Barnes

MORE TRIPE

The newsletter of the new Boddingtons leisure group has a familiar title - "The Opening Times". Suggestions that their first choice of title was "What's Doing" are surely unfounded. The A4 format corporate puffer is full of the familiar drivel. Ewart, having succeeded in making his ancestors revolve in their tombs, is still there. A photograph at the retirement of Albert O'Connor from the White Horse shows Farmer Bod and a youthful business manager pouring tins of Boddington's Lite into Albert's tankard. It'll be monogrammed Zimmer frames next.

WIGAN & DISTRICT

Dave White

This month we begin with a trip down Memory Lane and a look at some of the things that were forecast about Wigan's pubs in 1989.

In the town centre, the JOHN BULL CHOPHOUSE up the Wiend remains doggedly keg, despite an assurance from a regular (WD Feb 89) that the coming of cask Thwaites was nigh. The Bull is easily the best pub in town that doesn't sell real ale and is worth the price of a bottle of Guinness anytime; but I'm sure that the arrival of traditional beer - they already have the handpumps - would turn the place into an even bigger goldmine than it is already.

In the May 89 issue I reported that the SPRINGFIELD HOTEL, Springfield Road, was to be drastically revamped. Well, nothing has happened yet. Did the local CAMRA branch take this Walkers pub out of the Good Beer Guide for nothing?

As predicted, the GRIFFIN HOTEL, Wigan Lane, has been substantially modernised (June 89). The dreary old interior has been vastly improved, but the ale (Tetleys) remains fizzy.

Since Whitbread's beers replaced Bass at the KILHEY COURT HOTEL, Chorley Road, Worthington (Dec 89), I can now confirm that the lone handpump is selling Castle Eden Ale at £1 a pint. Cheap at twice the price... From the same issue, the Ellesmere on Lancaster Road, Hindley, has reopened, but that's all the information there is on this Burtonwood pub for now.

Into the nineties with a tale of two BOWLING GREEN hotels. The Tetley pub on Wigan Lane, Wigan, sells both milds now, plus the bitter and Burton Ale. The new landlord is trying his best, but this once-thriving boozer still seems dead most nights. At the other end of town, the Boddies pub at Ormskirk Road, Newtown, has lost its cask Higsons mild. No, Whitbread's haven't axed the stuff yet - the punters just weren't drinking it. Will the 'Green' remain in the Good Beer Guide? Time will tell.

Following the alterations at the BELLINGHAM HOTEL, Wigan Lane, Thwaites best mild has replaced the ordinary mild. Thwaites and Boddies bitter remain.



Right at the other side of Wigan, the BLACK BULL, Hardybutts, has been done up. I've seen worse jobs, though why Tetleys insisted on selling their cask ales via illuminated boxes is a mystery, Dark mild joins a range of beers that used to be served by diaphragms.

Nearby, the FOUNDRY on Warrington Road caught fire over Christmas. Despite a striking resemblance to the Gungesmeare's Arms (remember the Grotley Guide?) this ex-Tetley, ex-Whitbread pub will, I am reliably informed, open again. You read it here first.

By the time you read this, the Ruddles bitter in the PARK HOTEL, Manchester Road, Ince, will probably have died the death. The beer never caught on.

To end on a brighter note, POTTERS BAR, Market Street, Standish, has gone over to real ale in the form of Tetley bitter and mild. Gassy Whitbread ales once dominated the bar of this snooker club. If only Burtonwoods would lay some decent beer on down at the BOARS HEAD...

VAUX BUY ANSON

Sunderland brewers Vaux are in the process of taking over the Anson Hotel on Beresford Road, Longsight, from Whitbread. This makes a pleasant change from Banks's, but it remains to be seen if Vaux will do the right thing and install cask beers. Let's hope so. The change over is due to take place at the end of February.

Third Beer at the Pier

CAMRA



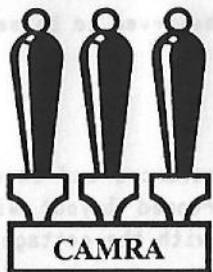
CAMRA

WIGAN BEER FESTIVAL

Thursday 5.00 - 11.30 Featuring Trad
Jazz with The Lazy River Band

Friday 12.00 - 3.00 and 5.30 - 11.30
(Evening entertainment from the
Ronnie Moor Big Band.)

Sat 12.00 - 4.00 with Intoxicated Brass;
7.00 - 11.30 featuring
The Last Blues Band.



8th-10th
March
The Mill
at the Pier

Admission £1.00 (FREE Friday
lunchtime and to CAMRA members)
Over 30 different Real Ales + Cider
+ imported lagers

FAMILY ROOM - SATURDAY AFTERNOON
SPECIAL ENTERTAINMENT PROVIDED

FOOD AVAILABLE all sessions
featuring authentic German Sausages
and French Pancakes.



OLDHAM BEER FESTIVAL

This year's Oldham Beer Festival will take place on Friday-Sunday 30th, 31st March and 1st April. The venue is the same as last year - Werneth Park Music Rooms, Frederick Street, Oldham. Full details next month.

WHEN GOD WAS A LAD

During a decennial clearout, I came across the North Manchester CAMRA branch archives from the 1970s. Among the stropky exchanges with Good Beer Guide editors, regional organisers and others, there were fading newspaper clippings of campaigns to save the Derby, the Welcome, the Old Vet, the Grey Mare, the Priory and the Old House at Home. Plus ca

change. Back in February 1980 What's Doing was welcoming a new Lees pub in Rochdale, criticising Tetleys and Matthew Brown; traditional Boddies houses were being knocked down in Stockport for a new motorway, Holts mild was 28p a pint and Wilsons 40p. D Mason and Jim Davies were fighting it out in the pages of WD. Humphrey Higgins, Leo King and Mick Rottenbury were all contributors and there was a quiz about who the landlord in a beret was. South Manchester hadn't taken their bat and ball home and Rupert was going on about Hitleresque Regional Organisers, chaotic DOGSHIT meetings and the escapades of Beinlos and Perry Drab. Plus la meme chose.

RH

FARNWORTH CHANGES

The Moses Gate Hotel may soon have new owners. At present it is owned by Whitbread, but Holts and presumably others have been looking at it. The asking price was beyond what Holts were prepared to pay. Shame.

At the other end of town, Websters/Wilsons are believed to be selling the Moss Rose on Manchester Road, Kearsley.

FARMERS

Work at the Farmers Arms in Swinton is well advanced and should be completed before Easter. Although the three-roomed layout will be lost, the alterations do seem to be in keeping with the cottage-style building. We shall see.

NOW & THEN

by Rob Magee

No.44

FARRARS ARMS

Oldham Road, Grasscroft, Greenfield

The Farrars Arms opened in 1702, built on the site of the thirteenth century Shaw Hall. The first innkeeper was John Whitehead, and he was also the rent collector for the Manor of Saddleworth; the Lord of the Manor was Lord Farrar. Succeeding innkeepers were also Whiteheads - Henry in 1723, Radcliffe in 1727, then another Henry by 1770. Ralph Whitehead was in charge by 1790, but his career in the licensing trade came to an untimely end when he was killed in a shooting accident on the moors on 15th August 1796. William Whitehead then took over until 1809, when the property was sold to Marsden Church for £400.

The Farrars Arms was also a working farm, with 27 acres of fertile land and 26 acres of moorland. The former barn and shippon for cattle is now Shaw Hall Garage. There was also a piggery at the back of the inn. To one side was a cottage (now the rear lounge of the pub) with an arched ginnel from there to a well which provided the water for the horse trough in the yard.

By 1897 the Farrars Arms was owned by James Wrigley, a cotton spinner of Fern Hill. It remained in his family until May 1927, when Wilsons



Brewery of Newton Heath took over. Today the old inn still offers accommodation - and real ale. The landlord is Philip A Whiteman, who came from the Friendship on Lees Road, Oldham, in 1986. Being such an old building, the Farrars Arms has its secret passageway, and there still exists an old inn sign which reads: "James Lees - Licensed brewer and retailer of ales and porter". James ran the pub from 1870 to at least 1880, when he was 81 years old. The photograph was taken on September 30th 1944.

CHEERS!

But just what are you drinking?

LAGER louts may not be as drunk as they seem according to Middleton consumer watchdogs.

In special tests they found that **HALF** the lagers sampled were up to **ONE THIRD** weaker than their labels claimed.

Brewery

Bitter too was often not what it seemed. One third of the pints tested were well under strength.

The Christmas survey of 28 beers and lagers was carried out by a plain clothes team of experts.

They visited pubs, ordered pints, then announced to shocked barmen they were

taking their drinks away for analysis.

But the man who led the pub "raids", Rochdale senior trading standards officer Richard Green, said landlords were not to blame.

"The lab reports showed that there was no watering or dilution of the drinks.

"The fault lies at the brewery. Significantly, when drink strengths did vary from what was on the label, they were always lower, never higher.

"About eight out of 28 were found to have between half; to one per cent less alcohol in them than claimed on the label or by the brewery.

Defend

"When you consider that the average strength of lager is around 3.5 per cent alcohol to total volume, and bitter

about 4 per cent alcohol, this is big difference, up to 30 per cent in some cases.

"I suppose it may be good news as far as drink driving is concerned, but our job is to defend the rights of the consumer who are clearly not getting what they are told they are getting."

Strength

All the weaker beers and lagers were all manufactured by the big national breweries not Manchester based independents.

The Rochdale report has now been sent to trading standards teams throughout Greater Manchester for them to take action.

The survey is a curtain raiser to new laws which will compel landlords to display charts listing the strength of drinks sold in pubs.

RUPERT'S PAGE



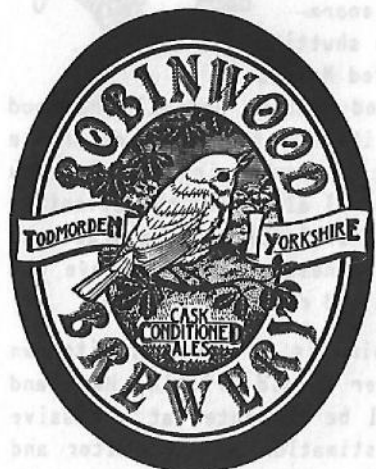
Enough of overweight promiscuous home-breakers (© D Locuch 1990). Weightier matters press upon us. First of all it came as an enormous surprise to all of us that Dillons are shutting their Scousely brewery. As you'd expect, Red Max is well into his now-that-the-horse-has-bolted routine and all the good people of Scousely are up in arms about it. Not that they deserve a brewery in any case. Dillons will continue to brew their esoteric brew in Tykeley and it'll be just the same. They'll also have the advantage of supranational branded Brobdingnags which will still be manufactured in Grotley and won't be altered one jot, honest, and won't have the price hiked to pay for all the advertising and redundancy money.

Following a national precedent, What's Doing is to institute its own Beer Writer Awards. The Boris Pratt Silver Inlaid Drinking Horn and the Bearded Beerbore Mahogany Quaich will be presented at a massive 14-course freebie to those who, in the estimation of the editor and his cronies, have made the greatest contributions to writing about well hopped amber nectars. The likely recipients are, I am reliably informed, the editor and his cronies. It is particularly fitting that the national awards should have been made to top writers who contribute regularly to the Campaign's national organ, which under the guidance of Kendal Eggcup has achieved the pithiness and self-effacing wit of a 1980s Ceausescu speech.

One tip which emerges from these beerbore awards is how to write a book. What you do, it seems, is get people from all over the country to get some local beer, put it in a plastic bottle and post it to you. What you do then is taste it all and describe all the tastes using imaginative descriptions, put it all in a book with a glossy cover and flog it. Then the Grauniad will ask you to write patronising articles and you can make further use of your contacts in the Campaign by thinking up another bazzing wheeze for a book - perhaps - considering the ageing profile of potential buyers - pubs that just love to have senile incontinents.

There has recently been considerable litigation by Foxhunting groups against people who've criticised them. I'd just like to make clear What's Doing's stance on this matter. We have no objection whatsoever

to persons in pink suits murdering little furry animals. Indeed, some of our own members are also members of the Vile Splatting Hunt. Our only itsy bitsy teeny weeny minor criticism is that when the MFH, the whipper-in et al take a stirrup cup, it is invariably not real ale.



MAT MATTERS

This design from Robinwood Brewery has won the British Beer Mat Collectors' Society Beer Mat of the Year award. It was selected from over 120 entries submitted by most of the nation's brewers. The presentation of the trophy and certificate took place at the Staff of Life, Todmorden, on Saturday 27th January.

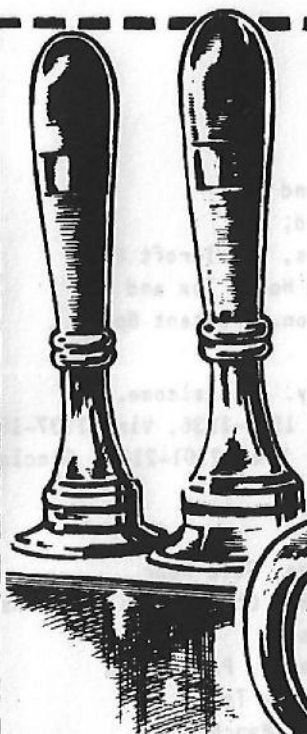
The mat was designed by Tony Moore and Nick Littlewood of 'Old Nick at Elton' in Todmorden and was produced by Burton Beermats of Burton.

RED ROSE OF IRLAM

The old Border Club near Irlam Station became a public house on 5th January 1990. Its new name will be the Red Rose Inn and it is a free house. At present the pub serves the range of Bass keg beers, but after a substantial refurbishment handpumped traditional beers will be installed - Wards Sheffield Bitter, Vaux Double Maxim Bitter and Samson Ale. The new pub will have a vault, best room and upstairs function room. Meals will be available at lunchtime and the Red Rose will be open all permitted hours.

The 'Border' started life as an Independent Labour Party Club in 1919, and an 'ILP' window can still be seen on the third floor of the building. It later became a Working Men's Club.

The pub is easily reached by public transport. It's a stone's throw from Irlam Station and the 10/67 buses stop outside.



PROTECT YOUR PLEASURE



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Just fill in the form below and send, with a cheque for £9 (payable to CAMRA Ltd) to Sally Bennell, CAMRA, 34 Alma Road, St. Albans, Herts AL1 3BW.

APPLICATION FORM

NAME

ADDRESS

.....

..... POST CODE

I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association. I enclose a cheque for £9 (£12 if overseas).

Signed Date



Branch Diary

NORTH MANCHESTER

Wed 7 Feb, Miles Platting. White Hart 7pm and 8pm

Wed 21 Feb Branch Meeting, Crescent, Salford, 8pm

Wed 28 Feb, Unicorn, Peel Green, 7pm. Grapes, Patricroft 8pm

Wed 7 March, Crab Village, Blackley. Flying Horse 7pm and 8pm

Wed 14 March, Good Beer Guide Final Selection. Crescent 8pm

Contact: Roger Hall 740 7937

Beinlos Birthday Binge Thursday 8th February. All welcome.

Sportsman 1730-1838, Crown 1843-1907, City 1909-1936, Vine 1937-1954,

Town Hall 1958-2029, Swan 2038-2059, J W Lees 2101-2140, Sinclairs

2145-2220, Welly 2222-.

TRAFFORD & HULME

Thurs 1 Feb 8pm, Committee Meeting, Legh Arms, Sale Moor

Thur 8 Feb, Hale & Altrincham Crawl. Meet 8pm Cheshire Midland, Hale.

Then Railway, Tatton, Faulkners Arms, Grapes.

Thur 15 Feb Branch Meeting 8pm, King William IV, Partington

Thurs 22 Feb, Altrincham Crawl. Meet 8pm Orange Tree

Thur 1 March 8pm, White Lion, Liverpool Road, Manchester

WIGAN

Wed 7 Feb 8.30, Branch Meeting, Silverwell, Darlington Street East, Wigan

Wed 28 Feb 8.30, GBG Selection Meeting, Bowling Green, Wigan Lane, Wigan. ALL MEMBERS PLEASE ATTEND - LET'S HAVE A REPRESENTATIVE SELECTION OF PUBS!!

Thur 8 - Sat 10th March. Third Wigan Beer Festival

Contact: Brian Gleave, Atherton 897200 (w), 892965 (h)

BOLTON

Sat 3 Feb, 12 noon. Great North Western Beer Festival Committee Meeting, York Hotel, Newport Street. All welcome

Thur 8 Feb, 8.30pm, Branch Meeting/Social, Howcroft, Pool Street, off Vernon Street.

Sun 11 Feb, Price Survey, 12.00 Nab Gate, Arthur Lane; 1pm House Without a Name, Lea Gate; 2.30pm Bolton Castle, Tonge Moor Road.

Thur 15 Feb 8.30pm, Price Survey of Town Centre. Meet at Dog & Partridge.

Thur 1 March 8.30pm, Branch Meeting/Social, York Hotel, Newport Street

Thur 8 March, Wigan Beer Festival Trip

Sat 10 March, Theakstons Trip
Contact: B Kerks 658458 (h)

ROCHDALE, OLDHAM & BURY

Thur 6 Feb 8.30, Branch Meeting, Royal Oak, Bridge Street, Ramsbottom
Fri 9 Feb 8pm, Pub Crawl, Huddersfield Road, Oldham. 8pm Gardners Arms, Millbottom. 9pm Minders Arms, 10pm White Swan
Tues 20 Feb 8.30pm, Committee Meeting, Papermakers, Church Street East, Radcliffe
Tues 6 March 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Cloggers Arms, Oldham Road, Failsworth
Contact: B Lee 0706 824407

AILING ECCLES

Among the glowing press reviews of "Ale of Two Cities" was one which was less than complimentary. It appeared in the Journal on 21st December. The author, one Mike Huggins, uses the guide as a vehicle to display his own prejudices. Referring to that well known tourist attraction and imbibers' Elysium, Huggins states, "The 30 different real ales mentioned by the guide are scant reward for the atmosphere of impending violence that characterises Eccles." He talks about gangs of abusive, leering, tanked-up men on Church Street, but forgets that none of the pubs on that section of Church Street are included for special mention in the guide. The author also snipes at CAMRA for its tendency to cling to the past as necessarily better than the present simply because it is the past. Bollocks! The features which are praised are praised for one very good reason - they add to the character of the pub and help to achieve the essential feeling of "pubness" which is very often lacking in some modern developments.

CAMRA does not automatically believe old is good, new is bad. The precise purpose of a book like "Ale of Two Cities" is to single out, identify and analyse those characteristics of pubs which make them "real". It is unlikely that the cynical attempts of brewers to create instant atmosphere will succeed. Little wonder that few modern pubs feature in the guide. One that is, the Moorside Farm in Swinton, is criticised by Huggins for its "unpleasant Midland beer". As Huggins also thinks that the Robinsons in the Star ranges from "drinkable to painful", we can only assume that he is not used to drinking real ale and didn't want to do the job in the first place.

Other contributors to this issue: Stewart Revell, Bill Collier, Paul Roberts

THE QUEENS ARMS

FREE HOUSE

6 HONEY STREET (off Red Bank)

MANCHESTER

Tel. 061 834 4239



*Serving a range of
traditional ales from*



THEAKSTONS & TIMOTHY TAYLORS

Best Bitter, XB, Landlord

YOUNGERS No.3

*and weekly guest beers from around
the country*

A selection of Continental
bottled beers also available

*** * OPENING HOURS * ***

Sun: 12.00-3.00. 7.00-10.30

Mon: 12.00-4.00 7.00-11.00

Tues: 12.00-4.00 7.00-11.00

Weds: 12.00-4.00 6.00-11.00

Thur: 12.00-4.00 6.00-11.00

Fri: 12.00-11.00

Sat 12.00-4.00 7.00-11.00

A selection of hot & cold
food at lunchtime and
early evening, including
chilli and curry.

We're in the Good Beer Guide
and CAMRA's Good Food Guide

**Your hosts,
DAVE & JO**

