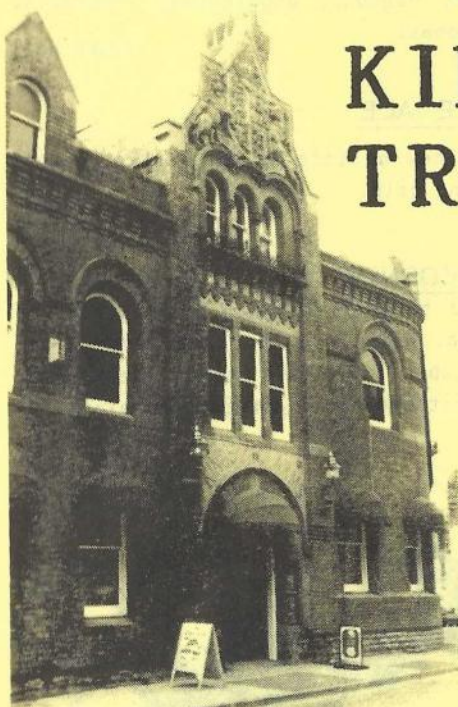


WHAT'S DOING

AUG
1990



THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE



KINGS ARMS TRIES AGAIN

BodPubCo are going in for guest beers at the Kings Arms, Bloom Street, Salford. This pub has had its ups and downs (mainly downs) in recent years, including a few months spent as a Higsons pub (remember them?). The choice of ales is expected to be more adventurous than Whitbread and Tetley bitter. Bloom Street itself is going through some changes. The ex-Sally Army hostel opposite the pub has been bought by the BBC and new offices are being built nearby.

FILLING STATION

The Esso garage on Worsley Road next to the Cock is closed. On a July morning the doors of the Cock were open and several besuited Jeremies and Nigels were to be observed crawling over the site next door with clipboards and rulers. What can it mean? Are the custodians of the village pub going to build a brand new vault? It surely couldn't be for a motel, could it?

GUEST BEER

There is some evidence that the big brewers are allowing guest beers from independent breweries into their pubs. In Tyldesley the Welcome Traveller has served Robinsons Best Bitter as a guest beer for about three months alongside the in-house beers - Wilsons mild and bitter and Ruddles County. Before we all throw our caps in the air, we might perhaps ponder about what it may all mean. If, as has happened in some outlets, the guest beer or foreign in-house beer outsells Wilsons bitter, then the demise of that beer is made more likely ("Hooray," shouts Paul Roberts). Is the gradual appearance of guest beers really to be welcomed when it may be one more nail in the coffin of products like Wilsons mild and bitter, OB, Higsons, Boddingtons, Chesters, Trophy, Walkers, John Smiths and Stones?

Roger Hall

CASTLE ALE

Robinsons Ordinary Bitter (84p) is now on sale at the Castle, Oldham Street, alongside the best bitter and mild.

HOLTS CORNER

Salford City Council have got round to smartening up Silk Street and Adelphi Street, and about time, too. Holts own the Hyde Park Corner (below), a derelict former Tetley pub which closed several years ago, and they may soon be considering refitting and reopening the place.



KING'S ALE

Leo King

I am becoming more and more concerned about "false brews" on sale up and down the country, and obviously in our area. There are very many beers sold bearing brewery names that should no longer be on the market. Ind Coope (Burton and Romford) produce brews named after gone-but-not-forgotten breweries such as Halls (Oxford), Benskins (Watford), Taylor-Walker (London) and Friary Meux (Guildford). The company even brews so-called Aylesbury Brewery beers, even though the Aylesbury Brewery Co still exists! Nostalgic names, trade marks and liveries are reinstated but the old taste is, of course, missing.

Much nearer home are beers bearing the names of non-existent breweries such as Oldham, Chesters, Davenport and Higsons. Even Tetleys hereabouts is a misnomer. Years ago, before the Tetley-Walker merger, all Tetley pubs this side of the Pennines sold true Tetley beers from Leeds and Walkers of Warrington pubs sold Walkers. Why, then, didn't Tetley-Walker do the decent thing and keep all Warrington brewery outlets as "Walkers"? How can Warrington beers be called "Tetleys" if the genuine article is actually brewed almost 60 miles away? Oldham beers brewed at Strangeways are nowhere near the once-delightful, flavoursome beers brewed just 6 miles away. On the other hand, Whitbread sell beer from a subsidiary brewery (yes, it's true, but for how long, though?) It is called Castle Eden Ale. The pump-clip displays the trademark of the company. However, the name of the company is "Nimmos", and the bitter is brewed at Castle Eden, County Durham. Why, then, don't we see the name "Nimmos"? Finally, how many more beers of the breweries which Whitbread keep closing are going to be brewed at Cheltenham? Surely this place must be bursting at the seams! The aforementioned are practically all real ales. Oh, well. Perhaps with false brews we can take a false pride in drinking them.

The Albert Vaults (Tetleys - that name again) on Chapel Street, Salford, has for some time been selling real ale after a lapse of around 25 years. Both mild and bitter are dispensed via handpumps and on my visit the bitter was perfect.

A Saturday evening (slow jogging) tour brought a few surprises recently. I began at the Cornbrook in the St George's area of South Manchester. As mentioned in last month's WD, Vaux is on sale. This former Tetley/Walker/Empress Brewery house is a clean, basic, no-nonsense pub with the traditional layout of vault and room (as a pub should be). On sale were Samson Ale and Ward's Sheffield bitter. Next door (well, almost) via a tricky trafficky crossing (Ellesmere Street)

is a pub which has had more names than brewery owners. Turville's (Bass) still sells traditional bitter, Stones, but it costs more than £1 a pint.

Onwards (over a mile) to my next calling place. The Lass o'Gowrie on Charles Street in the city centre sells those two home-brewed beers which I personally named, Log 35 and Log 42, and they were both selling well. Naturally, I had a pint of each. Chesters mild and bitter are still available, but during the lengthy time I was in the pub there were no orders for either.

The next call was at the nearby Old Garratt. Boddingtons and Higsos were on sale, but I couldn't see Oldham bitter. However, much to my surprise, Theakstons best bitter was on sale. Whether this is a guest beer or a regular one remains to be seen, but it was in fine condition.

Another surprise awaited me at the Swinging Sporrán in Sackville Street. This rare Youngers outlet no longer sells the Scottish & New-



castle traditional bitter - was it Youngers or McEwans? (Why worry? They're both the same!) Anyway, the replacement beer was Theakstons best bitter (both handpumps), which drew favourable comments from a few customers. So it was quite an enjoyable evening, with beers rarely or never before seen in a Manchester pub - Vaux, Wards and Theakstons.

The Cross Keys, Jersey Street, Ancoats (ex-Tetley) is now in the livery of Vaux of Sunderland. However, inside the pub the Tetley huntsman trademark stares (or glares) down at you from a beautiful coloured glass window. It would be nice if the window were retained as a memory of the former brewery. The Cross Keys offered Samson Ale, and the bitter sold for 75p a pint - that's 1p a pint cheaper than Holts!! But this may have been an introductory, promotional or 'happy hour' price.

For the record, the Vaux Group beers are:

Vaux (Sunderland): Sunderland Draught Bitter (1040)

Samson Bitter (1042.3)

Darleys (Thorne, near Doncaster): Chairman's dark (1038)

Thorne Best Bitter (1038)

Wards (Sheffield): Best Bitter (1038)

Lorimer & Clark (Edinburgh): Lorimer's Best Scotch 70/- (1036)

Lorimer's Best Scotch 80/- (1043)

Caledonian (1077)

"ALE OF TWO CITIES"

"Ale of Two Cities" has almost sold out. 200 copies remain of this comprehensive guide to all Manchester and Salford real ale pubs. All the best pubs are spotlighted and the book was recently described as an "excellent handbook" by the Manchester Evening News. It costs £2.95 from city centre bookshops or via your What's Doing distributor.

ROPE & ANCHOR REOPENS

After years of forecasting a refurbishment of the Rope & Anchor at Dunham, it has finally happened. The pub is now much cleaner and pleasant, with quality wall coverings. All the original furniture has been repolished and retained, the vault has been reduced in size and, unfortunately, due to the requirements of the licensing justices, several openings have been made in walls. Nevertheless, there is still a number of distinct drinking/seating areas.

Food is available at all lunchtime sessions and early evenings (5-8pm) Monday to Saturday and there are plenty of handpumps on the bar to dispense Boddingtons mild and bitter (at less than £1). Tetley bitter is also on offer, although sales of this are very low at present.

WIGAN & DISTRICT

Dave White

The end of civilisation as we know it - well, for Wigan CAMRA branch anyway - seemed on the cards when Chris Docherty, mine host at STANLEY'S TRUE FREE HOUSE, announced that he was moving on last June. After all, this was the man who had brought such goodies as Batemans mild and Adnams Broadside to the thirsty masses of Wigan. Fortunately, Chris has merely moved to the nearby snooker club on Poolstock Lane. This former keg-only club is now selling traditional Tetley mild and bitter, Taylors Landlord, plus other cask beers by John Smiths and Bass, courtesy of Mr Docherty.

"What about STANLEY'S?" I hear you ask. Joe the cellarman is now running the show and has promised little change. Recent guest ales such as Theakstons XB, Taylors Best Bitter and Wells Bombardier bear this view out. You can reach both clubs on a balmy summer night. A straight walk down Northway and Chapel Street will get you from the town centre to Poolstock in 10-15 minutes.

Changes are afoot at long last at the BALL & BOOT, Orchard Street... the Tetley mild is now keg. The proposed plans for the pub have been on display, but the pub - reputedly to be transformed into the DOUGLAS GATE, with guest beers - remains the same. ANYTHING that Tetley did to this dismal hostel would be an improvement.

On the subject of guest beers, Brendan Dobbin's range of ales has been on sale at the ORWELL, Wigan Pier, alongside the Jennings, Tetley and Walker Best Bitter. Sadly, however, the rest of the pubs in the town centre have been slow to take advantage of the guest beer policy, save the OLD PEAR TREE on Frog Lane, which is now selling Hook Norton Old Hookey alongside Burtonwood mild and bitter.

The OFFICERS CLUB, Barrack Square, has had more aliases than Carlos the Jackal. Back in the seventies, this pub was known as the WIGAN ARMS and sold Pollards beers (remember them?) for a while. In the 1980s it re-emerged as SQUIRES, selling cask Wilsons bitter. It's taken a while longer, but the "Club" has finally got around to real ale in the form of Draught Bass. Let's hope that the ale sticks around longer than its predecessors did.

Finally, news in brief...Rumour is rife that Burtonwood plan to convert the bowling green at the back of the HOLT ARMS (aka "The Foot") near Billinge Hospital into an old folks' home...The WHITE CROW, Chorley Road, Worthington (GW) is closed and boarded up...The LEIGH ARMS, Ladies Lane, Hindley, is still boarded up and the skip outside this would-be Holts pub isn't getting any fuller...The BEN

JONSON, Warrington Road, Goose Green, has, further to last month's report, re-opened as a Peter Walker house. The mild and best bitter are said to be on good form...STOP PRESS - the SWAN & RAILWAY, Wallgate, Wigan, is now selling Banks's bitter alongside Draught Bass, Special Bitter, Stones Best Bitter, 4X Mild, John Smith bitter and Courage Directors.

WOODTHORPE

The three main large public rooms at the Woodthorpe Hotel (Holts) near Heaton Park have been redecorated and the pub is now open all day.

ED'S AGAIN

Members of the Ed's Cafe Bar Appreciation Society will be pleased to hear that handpumped Courage Directors is on sale there at £1.10 a pint, or 70p during Happy Hour. It is now the only real ale.

A GREAT COMIC STRIP ADVENTURE AT YOUR
LOCAL GREENALLS PUB...

HEY BOSS,
HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT
THE PROMOTION THAT'S GOING
DOWN AT GREENALLS' PUBS.
THEY'RE GIVING AWAY
HUNDREDS OF PRIZES.

YEH....
A GREAT MURDER
MYSTERY CHALLENGE.....
IT'S CRIMINAL!

GET DOWN
THERE NOW AND
CHECK IT OUT.
IT'S TOO GOOD TO
MISS!



QUESTIONS

- 1 Who killed Simpkins?
- 2 Who killed Wem?
- 3 Who killed Davenport?

GREENALLS
**MURDER
MYSTERY
CHALLENGE**

Answers on a postcard to

The men with red braces
and not much between the
ears,
Wilderspool Beer Factory,
Warrington.

ALTRINCHAM ALE

Refurbishing work has begun on the QUARRYBANK INN (Hydes), Bloomsbury Lane, Timperley. The vault will be left more or less as it is, but the lounge side will be extended to include an eating/family area. The snug will be retained but moved to what was once an off-sales department of this 80-year-old pub. Alterations will be completed by November.

John Leicester has finally been forced to leave the GARDENERS ARMS (Boddingtons), Deansgate Lane, Timperley. The pub had been in his family since before the First World War, but the Gardeners is now a managed pub. The new manager moved in on the day of Boddingtons' recent price increases, which the pub has escaped, but not for long! John has moved to the FOOLS NOOK INN, on the Leek Road at Sutton.

Jim Cunningham, licensee of the HARE & HOUNDS (Marstons), Ward Lane, Timperley, is suffering the same fate as John Leicester - his tenanted pub is being turned over to the managed estate of the brewery. Jim has recently obtained the DOG (formerly GAY DOG) at Over Peover and the OLD PACKET HOUSE (Wilsons), Navigation Road, Broadheath. It is believed he wishes to turn the latter into a restaurant, presumably to emulate Le Bon Viseur.

The OLD HALL, Stockport Road, Altrincham, which used to sell cask Chesters is now all keg (Beefeater Restaurant).

Peter Foster, landlord of the ORANGE TREE (Wilsons), Market Place, Altrincham, has been making best use of the recent changes in the law regarding guest beers. To date he has sold Wells Bombardier, Adnams Broadside, Moorhouse Pendle Witch, Taylors Landlord and Fullers ESB. Camerons Strongarm is promised and Peter plans to provide two guest beers per month at a price around £1-£1.10 per pint.

Greenalls have recently completed two extensive refurbishments of long standing keg pubs, but with different results. Colin Hollinshead, landlord of the STATION HOTEL, Stamford New Road, Altrincham, is pleased with the work carried out in his pub, which has done much to retain the atmosphere of a railway hotel with a vault. However, he is dismayed by the fact that nothing has been done with the bar area. Colin is keen to provide real ale for his customers, but the brewery is not, so the pub unfortunately remains keg. In contrast, the SARACENS HEAD at Warburton has also recently undergone major works, but now has four cask conditioned beers on sale - mild, bitter, Original and Davenports bitter.

Roger Wilson

BOLTON NEWS

Des Nogalski

While the National Brewers try every trick in the book to scupper the Guest Beer scheme, two of Bolton's Burtonwood pubs are now stocking Hook Norton's pleasant premium ale, Old Hookey. The 1049 o.g. brew is on sale at the York Hotel, Newport Street, and the Alma Inn on Bradshawgate.

It is sad to relate that beer prices in the Bolton area now hover around the £1 a pint mark. I've always left the role of championing the Joseph Holt cause to other contributors to this magazine, but I cannot help but point out that a pint of Holts bitter at the Rose Hill Tavern in Daisy Hill costs just 76p a pint, 30 or 40p less than in many local establishments.

Finally, the recent mishaps which befell Bolton councillor Jim Sherrington - being banned from his local for criticising the refurbishments and supporting the lost cause of the Ancient Shepherd - may all now be in the past. It is highly unlikely that Jim will be barred from the White Hart on Albert Road in Farnworth, for I believe he now owns the pub.

BLEEDING BEER

Chris Calaz, manager of the Crown & Anchor, Hilton Street, Manchester, somewhat concerned about the dearth of blood in Greater Manchester, has started a "pint for a pint" scheme. You give a pint of blood, he gives you a pint of ale. (Come to think of it, you only actually give half a litre of blood, so on this system you are in credit.) Full details at the pub.

RED LION

Dave and Jeanette Cowley have taken over at the Red Lion (Holts) in Prestwich Village. Their move to Holts comes after nine years of running the Ex-Servicemen's Club in Flixton. Bryan Armstrong left the "Red" to take on the Cheadle Hulme (late Junction Hotel) on Station Road, Cheadle Hulme, Holts' new pub/restaurant.

RADCLIFFE NEWS

The Wellington (Bass) on Stand Lane has undergone some exterior renovation. It is hoped that Bass don't intend to spoil the interior of this Victorian tiled pub. Bass 4X mild (88p) and Stones bitter (97p) are available on handpump.

Editor:

375 Chorley Road, Swinton, Manchester M27

LETTERS



CAMPAIGNING FOR REAL ALE

Sir - Ken Hargreaves (WD July) misses the point entirely. It's not that campaigning is futile, but that what many CAMRA members fondly imagine is the only method of campaigning is wholly ineffectual. Shaking a stick at Whitbread is much like trying to lasso an escaped bucking stallion with a woollen lariat, when what we should have done is bolt the door firmly in the first place. Enough of metaphors. Marching round Oldham and Wem with placards and laying wreaths on long defunct breweries does have a purpose. It creates a climate of opinion where the conventional wisdom is on our side and the brewers are cast as bad guys. I don't discount the long term effects of that, but it ain't stopped no brewer yet and it ain't likely to. CAMRA has manifestly failed to prevent the acts which we all find reprehensible because of a marked reluctance to become actively involved in the kind of campaigning which might achieve something.

How many CAMRA members have carried out any of the following activities?

- 1 Visited their MP to discuss the effects of a possible brewery closure in the constituency.
- 2 Discussed with trade union officials and shop stewards their attitude to brewery closures.
- 3 Sought the opinions of councillors on the possibility and impact of brewery closures.
- 4 Talked to draymen and brewery workers about the volume and capacity of their brewery and reported concerns to CAMRA headquarters.
- 5 Monitored planning applications by brewers to ascertain whether they have alternative plans for their brewery sites.
- 6 Written to the Monopolies & Mergers Commission, the Office of Fair Trading or the Department of the Environment expressing concern about a particular issue.
- 7 Met with planners and members of planning committees to discuss policy and local plans insofar as they affect pubs.
- 8 Appeared at Public Enquiries to fight for traditional pubs.

- 9 Spoken in the Magistrates' Court in favour of more liberal licensing hours or against specific pub alterations.
- 10 Joined a committee to fight for the survival of a pub.
- 11 Drawn up comprehensive lists by licensing district of pub ownership to identify potential monopolies and reported these to CAMRA headquarters.
- 12 Carried out comprehensive biennial price surveys of City Centre pubs and published them.
- 13 Attended Brewery Action Group meetings to formulate policy and initiate action in the area.

In the last 17 years members of the North Manchester branch have carried out all these activities. They have also made banners, joined marches, carried coffins and laid wreaths.

I am by no means suggesting that we give up on Whitbread. I am hoping to create some sense of realism. CAMRA has twenty-odd thousand members. It is incapable of mounting a sustained and effective boycott campaign. Big breweries are in it for the money. They haven't got a better nature to appeal to. The only way to fight for what we believe in is by using existing legislation and pressing for more. The listed building procedure, the planning process, the licensing courts, the Office of Fair Trading and the Monopolies & Mergers Commission can all be used successfully against the brewers. We should continue to use them and at the same time lobby MPs for more effective legislation to curb the worst excesses. A little more thought and effort at prevention may result in fewer wreath - laying ceremonies. After all, CAMRA is not an elite drinking club but a campaign.

Roger Hall

HOLTS BLO REPLIES

Sir - In last month's WD there were two letters giving opposing views on the role of a Brewery Liaison Officer.

John Clarke requests - no, demands - that I should tell Holts to cease work on the Seven Stars. On the other hand, Peter Barnes suggests that I leave pubs and their character well alone. You just can't win.

John Clarke believes I ought to adopt a more belligerent attitude in my dealings with Holts, and have the management quaking at the knees, resulting in instant termination of their plans for the Seven Stars. If John's dealings with Robinsons Brewery, in his late capacity as BLO, succeeded with this type of behaviour, rather than taking a more

understanding yet critical stance, I would be pleased to hear about the pubs he has saved from Robinsonisation.

The fact is that there is no guarantee that either method will succeed, but I suspect that the management of any small/medium brewery would be more likely to listen to rational argument. I thought the days of bumping off the bringer of bad news went out after the Romans had finished running the world, but John Clarke seems to want to re-instate this pastime. If he can't accept (via me) the brewery's proposals for the Ashton Old Road pub, and he wants to take the matter further, he should do so via the BLO, and not just dish out abuse at the courier. Check who you are aiming at before you pull the trigger!

Peter Barnes suggests that a BLO should concentrate on matters of beer and leave pubs and their alterations to the experts. He may well have a valid point here, but just what are the qualifications for an expert on pub conservation? When a pub owner embarks on some alterations a whole host of officials come on the scene to have their say. Building Regulations (local government by-laws), Fire & Safety Authority, Environmental Health Authority and Licensing Authority all have their two penn'orth on just what can or can't be done. For instance...If, say, a small internal wall needs to be removed for some reason, then the complete pub may have to go 'one-roomed' on the grounds of safety or some other pretext. This is not the brewery's 'fault', but that of the system. Perhaps it is better to leave well alone as Peter suggests. CAMRA members can help here in indicating to brewery management (via the BLO) the qualities of the comfortable boozers they own and which do not need 'improvements'.
Stewart Revell

LONDON BEER

Sir - I agree with J McIvor (Letters, June, in response to Bill Collier's criticism of London pubs).

A couple more to try: The Sun, Lambs Conduit Street, Holborn (opposite the Sun, Youngs) has a huge blackboard on one wall listing Adnams to Youngs' gravities and prices. The pub does not have all beers on at once, of course, but the Boddies bitter was in good nick when I called.

The Flounder & Firkin, Holloway Road (two stops from Euston, Victoria Line tube), is a Bruces pub with own brew and guest beers.

The BR station bars at St Pancras and Marylebone stations (the latter has nice wood panelling reminiscent of the era when you could catch a train to Sheffield or Manchester!) have the real stuff, usually two or three bitters.

Isn't it true that it is possible to find rather nondescript "brassy pubs" in both Manchester and Liverpool (typically Wilsons/Websters and Tetley emporia - hardly the tastiest of tipples) on alighting from the train?

Note about beer choice in London. Fullers pubs usually have three bitters: ordinary, London Pride and ESB. Not many tied houses up here can manage two, can they?

Finally, a 'Capitalcard' ticket for BR trains, tube and bus can be had for £2.60 per day, a bargain even compared with GMPTE's 'Wayfarer'. You can recoup the cost of this in three journeys or less!

Kim Rampley

ALTERNATIVE BEER GUIDE

Sir - I found Paul Roberts' alternative beer guide a right riveting read. (WD July) He's obviously wasting his time getting pissed in Bath and should be made Good Beer Guide editor right now. It would prove extremely useful to the visitor to Manchester. If we accept what Paul says about most beers as a matter of fact rather than taste, there are only a few questions left to ask. When did Paul last try the Robinsons mild in the Three Legs? When did he last have a drink in the Star or the Pleasant (Robinsons), the Jolly Angler or the Dutton (Hydes), the Drop Inn (John Smiths) and most of the Holts pubs in North Manchester and Salford? And what on earth's wrong with our free houses - the Marble Arch, the Crescent and the White House? Have they chucked you out, Paul, or do you think the branch only puts them in because they get free butties at meetings? Perhaps we should be told or, then again, if it means more mindless tripe, perhaps not.

Jeff Evans

Sir - Paul Roberts's article, 'Beinlos on Beer' (WD July), is a good, to-the-point description of most of the beers available in the North. However, we all have different tastes, and I feel the point missed by Paul is that all beers are good if they are well kept. In other words, if the landlord or cellar manager has pride in his job and is sensitive to a bad pint. (Aren't we all?)

Has anyone ever noticed that the better served beers seem to be in small pubs? Is this because of the shorter lines to the cellar? Or perhaps landlords of smaller pubs care more about their beer than those who serve meals in their 'Disneyworld' restaurants, which are now part of the breweries' masterplan.

Another major factor is the way a pint is pulled. It is possible to have an undrinkable, acidy, flat pint when it is pulled with a lazy arm, or an ignorance of technique. At my local I avoid being served by the untrained pullers!

I have proved this theory by using off-licence flat bitter in a plastic bucket and pulling the beer through my own pump, correctly. This produced the desired creamy "albino Guinness" effect.

Of course, a preference for Holts or Robinsons is entirely personal (coffee and tea, etc), but if the beer is nurtured at the correct temperature in the cellar, the lines are kept clean, no slops poured back and sparklers kept tight (sometimes these are slackened by non-beer-drinking staff to ease the job when busy) the result will be a creamy pint.

Alan Unsworth

REGIONAL ORGANISER

Sir - Paula Carder manages to achieve nothing in an atmosphere of rib-tickling hilarity (Ian McDermott, Letters, July). In the McDermott era the same result was achieved in an atmosphere of dictatorial catalepsy. Surely a bonus?

Max Wall (dec)

YUPPIES

Sir - Your "out in the sticks" correspondent (WD July) seems very upset about the prospect of finding yuppies in Affetside and Entwistle pubs.

He/she is sufficiently patronising to describe these areas as "the sticks" and "the wilds" and then worsens the situation by describing their pubs' customers as "yuppies". Yuppies are people of either sex wearing loud striped shirts, braying into mobile phones and driving off noisily in BMWs or Porsches. They are rarely seen here in St Albans, 20 miles from their reputed London home. The chances of a true yuppie finding its way to Affetside are minimal.

So your correspondent, seemingly imbued with the worst characteristics of English class distinction, did not find what he/she was expecting in "rural parts". No need, however, to put your journal's esteemed record of objectivity and accuracy on the line and gratuitously insult the customers of two pubs because they did not inhabit your correspondent's private fantasy world. If I lived in Affetside or Entwistle I would feel inclined to cancel my subscription.

Peter Lerner

(Editor's note: Mr Lerner is quite right and henceforth the words "yuppie" and "yuppification" are banned from these pages. I have a duty to readers to uphold the high standards of literacy in this magazine. "Characterful" is another word which seems to be creeping in. That too is banned. I'm also getting a bit pissed-off with "refurbished" - so lay off that one as well.)

WHITEFIELD (BAD) NEWS

At the Parkfield Inn (Whitbread) on Park Lane, Whitefield, a pint of Boddies will cost you £1.05. If you think that's dear, just have a half - that will cost you 55p.

IDENTITY CRISIS

Whitbread seem to be quite keen to hide their corporate identity, at least inside their pubs. Recently, a number of their establishments have had their "Whitbreadesque" ornamentation (eg drip trays and ash-trays) replaced with those of either Boddingtons or Heineken. Hence, once inside such a house Joe Public would consider himself to be in a pub owned by Heineken or Boddingtons.

Publicans have been somewhat less than chuffed at this move, as the displaced Whitbread ashtrays and drip trays were of decidedly superior quality to their replacements. The considerable influx of beer mats that accompanied the change has been the only consolation.

BEER SWAP

The Courage Directors at the Oddfellows Arms, Clifton, has been replaced by Tetley mild.

THE BELL

The Bell, Little Hulton, is now a Vaux pub (WD July) and was selling Wards bitter (90p) shortly after the changeover from Tetley. The Vaux mild appeared to be keg.

Other contributors to this issue: Paul Roberts, Peter Barnes, Keith Egerton, Duncan Busman

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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NOW & THEN

by Rob Magee

No.50

RADCLYFFE ARMS

34 Radcliffe Street, Oldham

In 1802 James Newton took out a victualler's licence for his house, the Kings Head in Oldham town centre. In 1814 the house became the Duke of York, probably named after King George III's second son, the one who had problems with his 10,000 men!

In 1823 James Newton moved into his new public house in Radclyffe Street, which he named the Old Church. (The Parish Church, built in 1476, was nearby.) The pub was called the Old Church until 1850, when Abraham Jackson arrived and changed the name to the Radclyffe Arms. Abraham was also the Parish Clerk (1834-1874) and the pub was owned by the Church authorities.

The Radclyffe Arms was said to have underground passages linking it to the church crypt and to the basement of the Bluecoat School. The passages were probably where the friendly ghost, Ernie, resided. He was often seen in the 1950-1968 period when Stanley Harrison kept the pub. Wendy, Stanley's daughter, saw Ernie a few times and described him as an elderly gentleman who stood at the bar smoking a churchwarden clay pipe of thick twist.



As early as 1886 the pub was leased to brewers J W Lees & Co, but it wasn't until August 1921 that J W Lees actually bought the Radclyffe Arms. By the 1970s it was realised that the pub would have to be demolished for road widening and with this in mind J W Lees built a new public house on Henshaw/New Radcliffe Street corner. In December 1978 Trevor Harrison closed the doors of the Radclyffe Arms for the last time and moved to the Tommyfield, which he kept until 1980.

PRESTWICH PRICE SURVEY

(Every pub visited between July 1st and July 8th 1990)

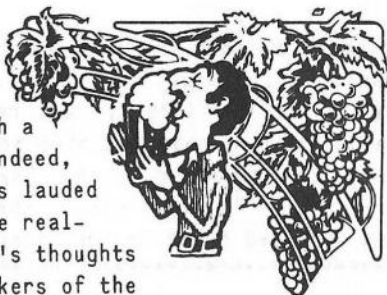
WILTON	Whitbread	Trophy 95p, Chesters B 94p	Keg Mild
TURF TAVERN	Whitbread	Boddingtons B 94p, Thwaites B 94p	
			Keg Mild
PARK HOTEL	Whitbread	Chesters B 97p, Boddies B 97p	Keg Mild
GEORGE	Boddingtons	B 96p, Mild 93p	
PARKSIDE	Boddingtons	B 99p, M 92p, OB B 99p	
THREE ARROWS	Boddingtons	B 98p	Keg Mild
PLOUGH	Wilsons	B 97p, M 94p, Websters Green Label 95p	
RAILWAY & NATS	Wilsons	B 94p, M 92p, Websters B 96p	
SAME YET	Lees	B 90p, M 88p	
FARMERS ARMS	Lees	B 90p, M 88p	
CHURCH INN	John Smiths	B 92p, Courage Directors £1.07p,	
		Taylor's Landlord £1.12	Keg Mild
COMMERCIAL	Tetley Walker	B 92p, M 89p	
GRAPES	Greenalls	Original £1.08, Davenport B 97p	Keg Mild
STAFF OF LIFE	Marstons	BB 93p, Pedigree £1.03	Keg Mild
ST MARGARETS	Bass	Stones B £1.06	Keg Mild
ROYAL OAK	Hydes	B 90p, Light M 84p	
COACH & HORSES	Holts	B 79p, M 75p	
WELCOME	Holts	B 79p, M 76p	
OSTRICH	Holts	B 79p, M 74p	
WHITE HORSE	Holts	B 79p, M 77p	
FORESTERS	Holts	B 75p, M 71p	
FRIENDSHIP	Holts	B 75p, M 71p	
RED LION	Holts	B 75p, M 71p	
WOODTHORPE	Holts	B 75p, M 71p	

(Websters Green Label was not available at the Plough 3/7/90. Pedigree was not available at the Staff of Life 3/7/90.)

Glenn Worth

UPDATE: At the Church Inn Taylor's Landlord is now £1.20 and Directors £1.14 per pint.

RUPERT'S PAGE



Better than a poke in the naughties with a sharp stick - encouragement, that is. Indeed, it is a joy to find one's humble efforts lauded with paeans of praise and to come to the realisation that one is not alone, that one's thoughts echo the sentiments of one's fellow seekers of the well-hopped amber nectar from the wickets. My thanks indeed to Magnus for his uncharacteristically succinct panegyric.

But enough of symbiotic sycophancy. Nora Tackler, our Regional Boss-person, has been up there among the bogeys yet again. This time she's really upset the patient and long-suffering Dale Merit by snaffling all his goodies, locking them up miles away, throwing the key away and joining a Benedictine convent with no telephones. Dale's really taken the huff, taken his bat and ball home and was last seen clutching his teddy and a blanket comforter in a cupboard.

This promises to be the main plot of the next knockabout farce at Mrs Tiggywinkles when branch worthies assemble for an evening of rib-tickling hilarity (@ Dermatitis). Some silly sods like Royal Hall and Billy Shippon want to talk about throwing our hard-earned spondulicks away on saving grotty hostelries which ought to have been knocked down when the first iron horse came to Grotley, let alone this latest one. That hardly merits consideration, and as for running seminars to learn how to save even more crumbling licensed hovels - well, that's clearly beyond the pale.

So the scene is set for something which the Campaign in Grotley has always carried out with consummate ease - namely the ordering of its own affairs and the eradication from a cluttered agenda of irrelevant trivia like pub campaigns. The sense of hilarity could no doubt be enhanced in the future if those who have streamlined the proceedings of the Slumley branch were to bring their undoubted talents to bear on the organisational structure and protocol of the region.

There are those who hanker for the demagogic leadership of former bosspersons, but whilst incompetence tinged with megalomania, paranoia or obfuscation does have some positive attributes, there is surely no substitute for chaos with an X-certificate. Just when we thought that everyone had reached the stage where they'd swap the chance of a knee-trembler for a zimmer-frame or a woolly hat, along comes someone to shatter our fond illusions whilst restoring our faith in the moral vulnerability of the human spirit.



Branch Diary

BOLTON

Thur 2 Aug 8.30pm Branch Meeting, Oddfellows Arms, St Helens Road
Sun 19 Aug 7pm, 1991 Beerfest Inaugural Meeting, Castle, Oldham St, Manchester

Sat 11 Aug, Peak Wayfarer Day Out. Meet 9am, Railway Station
Thur 6 Sept 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Sweet Green Tavern, Crook Street
Contact: B Kerks 658458 (h) 22494 x2221 (w)

NORTH MANCHESTER

Wed 8 August Cadishead & Irlam: 7pm Coach & Horses, 8pm Railway
Wed 15 August, Branch Meeting, Crescent, Salford
Wed 22 Aug, Bradford. 7pm Cricketers, Bradford Rd; 8pm Bradford Rd Inn
Wed 29 Aug Clifton & Newtown: 7pm Robin Hood, 8pm Oddfellows Arms
Wed 5 Sept, Ancoats: 7pm River, 8pm White House
Wed 12 Sept, Newton Heath: New Moston 7pm, Railway 8pm.
Contact: Roger Hall 740 7937

TRAFFORD & HULME

Thur 2 Aug, Committee Meeting, Ye Old No.3, Warrington Rd, Little Bollington (A56) 8pm
Thur 9 Aug Timperley Survey: 8pm Gardeners Arms, Deansgate La; then Moss Trooper, Hare & Hounds, Stonemasons and Quarry Bank
Thur 16 Aug Branch Meeting, Stalybridge Railway Station
Thur 23 Aug Urmston Survey: 8pm Yates's, then on to Nelson and Manor Hey Hotel
Thur 30 Aug Town Survey: 8pm Pack Horse, Deansgate; then City Road Inn, Britons Protection, Tommy Ducks, Midland Hotel, Peveril of the Peak
Thurs 6 Sept Committee Meeting, Rope & Anchor, Dunham, 8pm

ROCHDALE, OLDHAM & BURY

Sat 4 Aug 11am Trip to Dobbins Brewery. Limited places. Ring for details.
Tues 7 Aug 8.30pm Branch Meeting, Dusty Miller, Crostons Rd, Bury
Sun 19 Aug 10am, Sunday Social Stroll, Saddleworth area. Pub lunch. Ring for details
Tues 21 Aug 8.30pm Committee Meeting, White Horse, Hall Street, Walshaw, near Bury
Tues 4 Sept 8.30pm Branch Meeting, Robin Hood, Lees Road, Oldham
Contact: B Lee 061 766 6601 (w), 0706 824407 (h)

WIGAN

Wed 22 Aug 8.30 Branch Meeting, Tudor House Hotel, New Market St, Wigan
Contact: Brian Gleave, Atherton 876200 (w), 840658 (h)

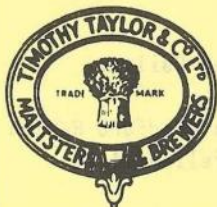
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Weds: 12.00-4.00 6.00-11.00

Thur: 12.00-4.00 6.00-11.00

Fri: 12.00-11.00

Sat 12.00-4.00 7.00-11.00

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