

WHAT'S DOING



DEC
1990

THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

BIG FIVE MOVES

The Monopolies & Mergers Commission has certainly had an enormous impact on the brewing industry. Whether the impact is that which was envisaged remains to be seen. In the last month the deal between Grand Met and Courage has been given the green light and both Bass and Allied Breweries have announced plans to sell off thousands of pubs.

Grand Met is to hand over its brewing interests, including brands such as Ruddles and Ushers, as well as the all-pervading Websters, to Courage. In exchange, Grand Met will operate jointly with Courage 4,800 pubs which will be tied to Courage for the next seven years. A further 1,730 managed houses owned by Grand Met will also be tied for a period of four years. Whitbread have not been able to keep out of the deal. They have bought 150 pubs from Grand Met, including 115



Berni Inns, for £115m - a strange move, perhaps, considering a recent downturn in Whitbread's other food outlets.

Bass have declared their intention to remain in brewing by announcing the sale of some 2,500 pubs. Fears that Allied might follow the Grand Met line by disposing of its breweries were allayed with the announcement that they, too, will be disposing of over 2,000 pubs. With Whitbread still flogging off their tied estate (Holts have bought Mr Chesters and are rumoured to be interested in the Duke of York), there are going to be a lot of pubs on the market in the next couple of years. If you were thinking of buying one, perhaps 1991 would be an ideal time.

But, as the freeing of pubs from the brewery tie and the introduction of guest real ales gives people more choice, the continued concentration of brewing in fewer and fewer hands gives cause for concern. Whitbread's extensive portfolio is under threat, as we have indicated before. Courage's acquisition of Grand Met can only hasten the demise of such brands as Wilsons.

Roger Hall

HOLTS CORNER

Stewart Revell

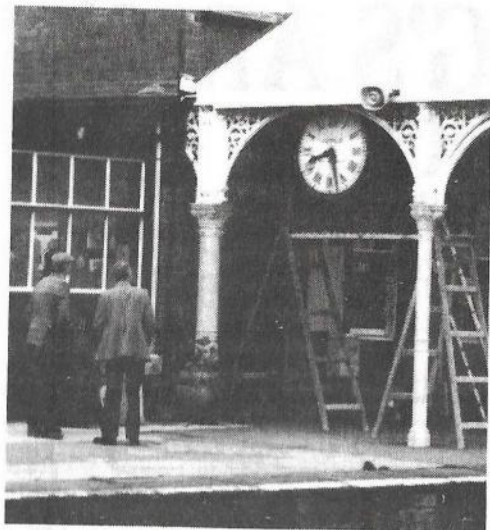
During the middle of November news came through that Holts had acquired Chesters Pie & Ale House on Cateaton Street, Manchester, from Whitbread. A spokesman for Holts said that they hope to have it in their own style and selling Holts beers for Christmas. All this is very good news for those who like the odd pint or two in the centre of Manchester but object to paying through the nose for Websters, Tetley, Whitbread, Bass, etc. At the moment there are no plans to change the name from Chesters - some wits thought it might become Mr Holts, or even Joseph's Pie & Ale House! The pub is handy for Victoria Station and the Arndale bus station.

The brewery is expected to increase prices by only 5.5% at the end of November, making bitter 80p and mild about 75p per pint in managed houses (best room prices).

December 4th sees the opening of the Ashley Brook at 517 Liverpool Street, Seedley, Salford. With these two new outlets, the tied estate goes up to 98, according to my figures (yes, I know the Apollo is shut). So, with the rebuilding of the Hyde Park Corner (Silk Street/Adelphi Street, Salford) next year, it won't be long before Holts have the ton, providing the Royal Oak and the Crown & Volunteer remain intact.

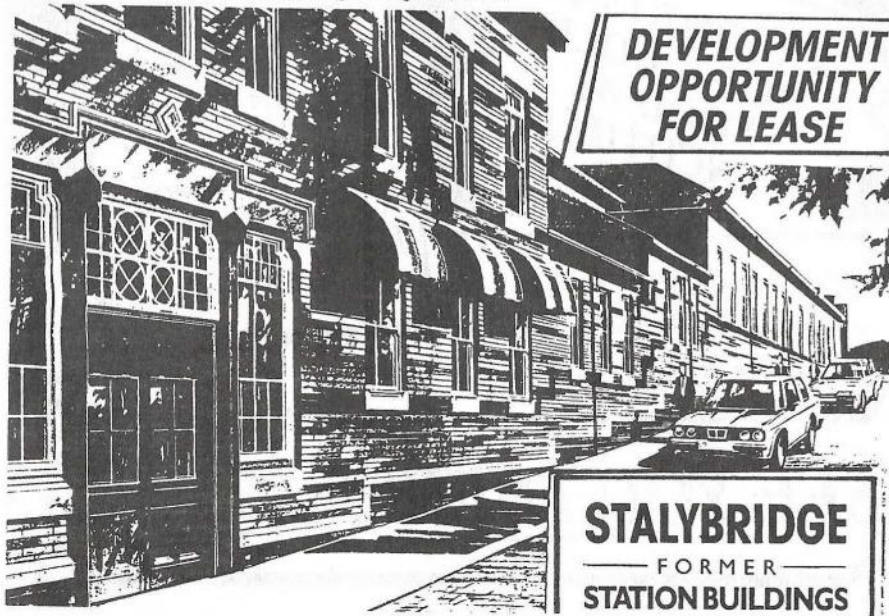
TIME, GENTLEMEN, PLEASE!

This photograph shows the clock outside Stalybridge Station Buffet just before it was taken down and sent to York Railway Museum. British



Rail Property Board have put the whole of the station buildings, including the famous buffet bar, up for grabs as a "development opportunity"; part of their advert is reproduced below. This puts under threat the future of a real ale outlet which has featured in the Good Beer Guide for many years and one which is sought out by enthusiasts from far and wide. CAMRA is mounting a campaign, in conjunction with the Victorian Society and other civic amenity groups, to save the Buffet, first licensed in 1860, from the developers.

If you feel strongly about the loss of the Stalybridge Station Buffet, please write to the editor expressing your views and the letter will be passed on to the Campaign organisers.



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OPPORTUNITY
FOR LEASE**

STALYBRIDGE
— FORMER —
STATION BUILDINGS




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to the nominated
driver in groups of
four or more, during
the festive season.

SEE YOU THERE!



CHEERS

CHESTERS TO CHANGE



Good news for Holts drinkers this month, with the brewery's purchase of Chesters Pie & Ale House.

Ten years ago this was the Crown & Anchor, a basic but busy ex-Threl-falls pub which, like every other Whitbread pub in Manchester and Salford, sold no real ale. Then Whitbread rediscovered the proper stuff, found that people liked it and started brewing it again at the old Threlfalls Brewery in Salford. Whitbread wheeled in the marketing men, who decided that "Chesters" was a nice name for the new beers and the brewery which they said had a secure future. (They chose "Chesters", the name of a brewery in Ardwick which shut in the 1960s, because "Threlfalls" had already been selected for their Liverpool operations.) Next on the agenda was a Manchester city centre "flag-ship". The Crown & Anchor was chosen, gutted and refitted as "Mister Chesters".

Time passed. (Not a lot.) The Liverpool brewery shut. The "Chesters" Brewery shut. Chesters beers probably won't be with us for much longer. The marketing men have taken their talents elsewhere and Whitbread are selling pubs such as Chesters, the Duke of York in Eccles and several others in the area so that they can concentrate on what they do best - closing down breweries!

MIDDLETON MILLER

The Dusty Miller (Whitbread), Central Gardens, Middleton, is now selling Boddingtons bitter on handpump at the princely sum of £1.04 a pint! It won't be too surprising if there are not many takers as the stronger and far cheaper Lees bitter can be purchased in a dozen or so pubs nearby. Handpumps have yet to sprout at the New Inn, Whitbread's other town centre pub.

NEW, BIGGER AND EVEN BETTER VENUE



CAMRA's 11th



BEER FESTIVAL

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(Behind the Two Tubs)

DECEMBER
7TH & 8TH
1990

FOREIGN
BEER
BAR

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LUNCHTIMES &
EARLY EVENINGS

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BREWERS WHICH WILL INCLUDE MILDS, BITTERS, EAST BITTERS, PREMIUM
BITTERS AND A SELECTION OF THE STRONGEST - STRONG ALES IN BRITAIN.
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AROUND 7.00 P.M.

WIGAN & DISTRICT

Dave White

The refurbishment at the **BIRD I'TH'HAND**, Gidlow Lane, Wigan, was completed in October and the pub is as good, if not better, than it was before. The two-room layout has been retained, while the bar has been pushed to what used to be the back wall, creating much more room. Indeed, the only casualty at the "'En Hole" is the area that used to be the Outdoor Dept., while the long-neglected strip of land between the pub and the petrol station has been transformed into a car park. Ind Coope Burton Ale joins the Tetley mild, dark and bitter at this GBG-listed pub, making the Bird i'th'Hand well worth a visit.

Further up Gidlow Lane, Greenalls are to remove the tanks from the **PAGEFIELD HOTEL**. What chance real ale? This ex-Magees pub has a magnificent Edwardian exterior and is the only pub for miles that still has a revolving door, so beloved of CAMRA members. Fingers crossed..

Some of us in the Wigan Branch of CAMRA are still trying to figure out how the **MARKET TAVERN** managed to get into the 1991 Good Beer Guide. However, the days of inconsistent ale may be about to end. The landlord admitted that the Youngers IPA didn't sell too well and is hoping to save the beer engine to serve a guest beer from the S&N range on a rotating basis. Youngers No.3, Theakstons XB and Old Peculier were just some of the beers mentioned, so this once-mighty boozer could be restored to its former glory. The Market sells a decent pint of Youngers Scotch and Theakstons best bitter and the pub can be found on Mesnes Street, and not Market Street, as stated in the 1991 Good Beer Guide.

Theakstons best bitter is now on sale at the otherwise-keg **CLARENCE'S** on Wallgate. This pub now rejoices in the name "Harry's Bar", while the old "Harry's Bar" on Standishgate - known to millions as the **WHITESMITHS ARMS** until a couple of years ago - looks set to revert to its old name. Confused? You should be...

Rumour has it that Walkers are going to renovate the **SILVERWELL**, a GBG pub on Darlington Street East. Meanwhile, just up the road, behind the flats, the **BALL & BOOT**, Orchard Street, continues its relentless decline. There were plans for Tetley to blitz this dismal boozer and rename it the **DOUGLAS GATE** and indeed, the plans could be seen on the wall of the pub. But that was months ago; nothing has happened yet.

Out of town now. The **ROBIN HOOD**, Wigan Road, Ashton-in-Makerfield, has gone over to real ale after a facelift. For years this, the only Higsons pub in the Wigan area, remained doggedly keg, but now hand-pumps adorn the bar, selling Boddies mild and bitter, Theakstons best bitter and "Higsons bitter". I haven't been to the pub yet, but,

according to our Branch Chairman (whom the Gods preserve), all the beers are "as flat as a fart". Sounds good to me! Your best bet for a decent pint in Ashton is probably the PIT PONY on Low Bank Street. Don't let the horrible exterior of this estate pub put you off. The Thwaites best mild and bitter are in pretty good nick and wickets have recently been installed. Give it a try.

The HAND & HEART, a keg Greenalls pub on Market Street, Hindley, has re-opened as the HINDLEY ARMS. The inn is known locally as "Fingers". More on this next month.

The word is out that Bass and Greenalls are to swap pubs in the South East Lancs region. Whatever the individual merits of the yummy beers involved, this would be bad news in, say, Leigh or Lowton, where most of the Greenalls pubs sell cask ale and the Bass ones don't. Further news on this one when I get it.

Lastly, an update on the branch entries in the new Good Beer Guide. The HORSESHOE, Wigan Road, Standish, has been mysteriously omitted (maybe the entry form was lost). The pub sells Burtonwood mild and bitter and the dull new brew, Forshaws Bitter, while it lasts...the BRICKMAKERS, Woodhouse Lane, Wigan (GW) has gone over to real hand-pumps after "technical problems" with the fake ones...it's the end of an era at the TUDOR HOUSE HOTEL, New Market Street. The celebrated 22-year-old cat has gone to the great pet's playground in the sky. R.I.P.

BODPUBCO NEWS

The Boddington Pub Company's free house venture with the Kings Arms in Salford and a similar set-up in Merseyside will be extended to other pubs in similar locations if the present pubs are a success. "Traditional Style" pubs look as though they are safe from gratuitous interference and will continue to be upgraded in a sensitive fashion, as with the Braziers and the Black Friar in Salford and the Concert and the Smithfield (Locomotive) in Openshaw. The destruction of all that was endearing and individual in the Farmers, Swinton, was, apparently, a one-off aberration.

The Parrswood, Didsbury, a large between-the-wars pub, has recently been renovated in what has been described as "completely over-the-top neo-Victorian, including an impressive display cabinet containing a variety of pottery" - sounds awful. BodPubCo is now actually selling the cheapest bitter in Manchester at the Kildakin, St Kilda's Drive, Cheetham, where it is 75p a pint.

Peter Barnes

CITY NEWS

Paul Roberts

The **Royal Crown Hotel** (formerly the Smithfield Vaults) on Swan Street reopened on Thursday 25th October after a much needed refurbishment. Boddingtons bitter and Chesters mild are on sale.

Another new Boddingtons bitter outlet is the **Pig & Porcupine** at the Castlefield end of Deansgate. Theakstons bitter (£1.15) is also on offer, served in unusual "Slim Jim" style pint glasses. The interior, particularly the bar area, is plush and tastefully fitted out, with lots of solid wood around the place. On a list of international beers, Grolsch is described as coming from Denmark. Have the Danes been doing a bit of pillaging in Holland whilst all the other UN troops are concentrating on the Gulf?

Just across Deansgate, the **Crown** (Grand Met) is selling Holts bitter at 80p a pint.

Tommy Ducks serves an excellent pint of Greenalls Original at lunch-time, but for some reason never seems to have any available on a Friday evening.

Best value for traditional beer in Central Manchester must be...wait for it...yes, it's that **Ed's Cafe Bar** (Gardens Hotel). Courage Directors can be had for a mere 75p per pint in Happy Hour(s). It's also quite good value at the usual rate of £1.15.

The **Conservatory**, off St Ann's Square, is currently offering Ruddles bitter at £1 per pint and Ruddles is now the only real beer available at Mulligans (formerly Waggon & Horses), just off Deansgate.

The **City Arms** on Oldham Street reopened in early November selling handpumped Boddingtons bitter and Chesters mild.

Between prayer meetings (see local press), Smithfields on Shudehill sells beer in the form of Robinsons best bitter at £1.10 and Ind Coope Burton Ale at almost 20p dearer than the five star Piccadilly Hotel! If prices here rise much higher they'll reach the Almighty Himself!

According to an advert in the Manchester Evening News, the **Pavilion** on Portland Street is to open soon selling "a huge range of chilled lagers and a choice of seventeen types of champagne". There was no mention of beers in the main advert, although there was a side advert for the Courage range - at what price?

Finally, another mention for the **Castle Hotel** on Oldham Street, where the North West launch of the Good Beer Guide was held at the end of October. All and sundry enjoyed the excellent line-up of all four

Robinsons beers on handpump. This pub continues to go from strength to strength and if it becomes much more popular they'll be taking reservations for standing room at the bar at weekends.

PRICES SURVEY

Beer prices seem to have increased by around 10% since our survey of Central Manchester last year. The £1 pint is now commonplace. The independent brewers still offer the best value for money. Holts at the Crown & Cushion was 76p on November 14th, Robinsons ordinary bitter at the Castle was 88p, Dobbins 85p at the White House and Holts 82p. Lager continues to be a massive rip off, with the £1.50 pint quite common. A disturbing number of pubs still have no price list. What are the trading standards people doing?

SCOTCH MIST

The Matthew Brown brewery in Blackburn is being closed down by the owners, Scottish & Newcastle. Five years ago, when they took over Matthew Brown, S&N told the Monopolies & Mergers Commission: "We have stated categorically, publicly and in writing that without any question whatsoever the Blackburn and Masham breweries are sacrosanct for continued brewing purposes." Sadly, the MMC believed them. It's a funny old world.

BARGAIN BELGIAN BEERS

Tesco Superstore in Walkden has increased its already substantial selection of beers with the addition of a full range of Belgian lambic beers. Prices go from £2.69 for a 4-pack of Gueuze (£2.89 for Kriek) to £3.29 for Peche. These prices are less than half those being charged in most of the area's free houses. So the message for lambic lovers is clear - stock up at Tesco and sup your exotic beers whilst watching the box and stick to drinking mundane English draught beers in the pubs!

Other recent additions to the Tesco range include Chinese and Japanese beers, plus a selection of bottles and cans from breweries the length and breadth of Britain. The store must offer the largest range of beers anywhere in the North West.

Paul Roberts

SENIOR SERVICE

The Admiral on Rodney Street in Ancoats is now selling Boddingtons alongside keg Wilsons.

LETTERS



ASHLEY BROOK

Sir - As the Methodist minister, working in Seedley with Salford Urban Mission, who was very much involved in the residents' campaign to get the new Holts pub which is now the Ashley Brook, I feel I need to share a bit of local information with your readers.

We regard our area as Seedley, not Weaste. Weaste is not very far away but it matters inasmuch as the Seedley terraces west of Langworthy Road and north of the railway have been dry for many decades. Holts have been trying to put a pub on the Ashley Street/Liverpool Street site since 1924. It was not until we took the initiative in 1988 that the pub became a live possibility. It happened because the brewery was willing to work alongside local people who were determined to get a local eyesore replaced with a small, traditional locals' pub catering for all ages, not least the elderly.

Full points to Holts for working with the grain of local opinion, which was tested by a very thorough survey carried out by local residents. The brewery consulted local people about the design and by the time it came for applications to the City Planning Committee and the Licensing Justices we had built up a very powerful case. It was probably the elderly resident in a wheelchair, who lives in the house next door to the site, who clinched it when she assured the Chair of the Planning Committee that the pub would be the best thing that had happened to her for years!

If anyone else in similar circumstances could benefit from our experiences I would be happy to supply further information.

Rev Geoff Reid, 20 Pembroke Street, Seedley, Salford M6 5GS

WHITE SWAN, SWINTON

Sir - In April I wrote in criticism of Holts and their plans for the White Swan. I now have to eat my words - or some of them. The pub is not quite finished but you can see how it is turning out and it is not as bad as was feared. It is not yet clear what is happening to the back pool room but, counting that, it is still a four room pub. The Bar Parlour and Smoke Room have been almost knocked into one room but the bench seating extends to form a half screen between the two spaces. Nearly all of the best of the original fittings such as fireplaces, doors and architraves and the oak panelling in the lounge have

been retained. The lounge now seems more intimate, being away from the main flow through the front door, and the vault is still a true vault but with a new bar. However, I think the mixture of oak panelling in the lounge and modern mahogany and stained glass bar fronts in the other rooms is a mistake and I still think it is a pity that the original layout and design have been compromised. I cannot believe it will make the pub any more successful than it was and it seems an awful lot of trouble and expense to gain a few extra square feet of bar area and two extra pumps, but it could have been worse and would have been worse in the hands of most other brewers. By the way, when I visited, the mild was on good form.

Peter Barnes

NEW CROWN

Sir - I recently caught sight of your November issue, which included a rather depressing survey of Newton Heath pubs. My purpose in writing is to let you know that the New Crown Inn on Old Church Street changed hands in October (the very day after your visit, no doubt) and our new tenants, Gerard (Ged) and Bridget Kelsall, have since completed major improvements to the decor and interior furnishings.

Furthermore, Ged is a determined perfectionist in the handling of his beers and I have no doubt that you will find our Burton Best Bitter in tip-top condition when next you are able to visit.

D Frost, District Manager, Marston, Thompson & Evershed

HOPSCOTCH, SKIP THEAKSTONS

Sir - We can't drink Boddies, Chesters OB or Higsons because of the Whitbread naughtiness. We can't drink the best beer in the world, Burton Ale, or even Walkers, Tetleys or Greenalls because of the Warrington deal. Now that S&N have broken their promise (cross my heart, on my mother's grave, hope to die, etc) - sorry, now that circumstances have changed, we won't be able to drink Youngers Scotch, McEwans 80/-, No.3, Matthew Brown or even that other stuff, what's it called, oh yes, Theakstons. What a pity - it was so nice drinking in the Queens Arms.

R.P.

CLASSIC CLOSURE

Bass seem to have kicked off early with the disposal of 2,500 pubs from their tied estate. The Bottom Derby in Harpurhey is now boarded up to match the Foresters (ex-Tetley) across the road.

A DUTY TO BEER?

Roger Wilson

Each year the Manchester branches of CAMRA come together to conduct a Prices Survey of the numerous beers which are served by the various pubs, wine/cafe bars and hotels in the City of Manchester. This year has been no different, and as usual the survey shows a wide range of prices charged for the same product.

The price we pay for a pint of foaming amber nectar is frequently a subject of discussion, but how much is really known about how that price is made up? Most drinkers are aware of the fact that the price of a pint includes amounts for Excise Duty and Value Added Tax, but generally speaking they are unaware of exactly what proportion of the money they hand over the bar goes on duty and tax.

The system of levying Excise Duty on beer is basically the same today as it was in 1880 when it was introduced, and there has been an Excise Duty on beer in one form or another since 1643. The rate of duty charged is 97 pence per hectolitre for each degree above 1000. The duty is calculated from a declaration which is made to HM Customs & Excise by the brewer on each brew. This declaration is the result of measuring the amount of fermentable material present in the wort before the onset of fermentation, when the brewing yeasts are added. The measure is called the original gravity (OG) and it is established by the use of a saccharometer.

On the right is a table showing some local and well known beers, their OG and the Excise Duty per pint. If you compare these values to the prices paid in local pubs you can quickly work out the proportion of the price of a pint which is the Excise Duty. Taking Holts bitter at the managed

BEER	O.G.	EXCISE DUTY
Boddingtons B	1035	19.3p
Boddingtons M	1032	17.6p
Holts B	1039	21.5p
Holts M	1033	18.2p
Hydes B	1036.5	20.1p
Hydes Light	1034	18.7p
Hydes Mild	1032	17.6p
Lees Moonraker	1073	40.2p
Lees B	1038	20.9p
Lees M	1032	17.6p
Robinsons Old Tom	1080	44.1p
Robinsons BB	1041	22.6p
Robinsons B	1035	19.3p
Robinsons M	1032	17.6p
Sam Smith Museum	1047	25.9p
Sam Smith OBB	1039	21.5p
Tetley B	1035	19.3p
Tetley M	1032	17.6p
Bass	1044	24.3p
Stones B	1036	19.8p
Bass Light)		
Bass XXXX M)	1031	17.1p
Courage Directors	1046	25.4p
John Smith B	1036	19.8p
Greenalls Original	1038.5	21.2p
Greenalls B	1036.5	20.1p
Greenalls M	1033.5	18.5p
S&N No.3	1043	23.7p
Scotch B	1036.5	20.1p
Theakstons OP	1057	31.4p
Theakstons XB	1044	24.3p
Theakstons B	1037	20.4p
Wilsons B	1036.5	20.1p
Wilsons M	1032	17.6p
Websters Choice	1045	24.8p
Chesters B	1033	18.2p
Chesters M	1032	17.6p
Marstons Pedigree	1043	23.7p
Marstons Burton B	1037	20.4p

house price of 76p per pint, the Excise Duty works out at 28.3% of the price. If this proportion were projected to other brews, it would mean that Boddingtons bitter would be 68p a pint, Wilsons bitter 71p, Chesters bitter 64p, Greenalls Original 75p and Stones bitter 70p per pint. What does this tell a trained mind?

The overall proportion of duty and tax on a pint of beer has fallen over the years, but the price seems to be rising over and above inflation.

	Average Retail Price	Excise Duty (on 1037 OG)	V.A.I.	Total	Total revenue as % of Price
1981	46p	12.6p	6.0p	18.6p	40.4
1984	69p	16.8p	9.0p	25.8p	37.4
1987	82p	18.1p	10.7p	28.8p	35.1
1990	104p	20.4p	13.6p	34.0p	32.7

As the breweries and/or licensees increase the price of your pint they do not pay any more Excise Duty, although they do pay more Value Added Tax (15% of the net value of the pint). The total revenue from beer is shown as 32.7% of the price, and when this is compared with other commodities, it can be seen that beer is not the most heavily taxed:

Excise Duty & VAT		
Commodity	as % of Price	Price
Beer	32.7	104p per pint at OG 1037
Lager	28.1	115p per pint at OG 1034
Cider	21.9	120p per pint less than 8.5% by vol.
Wine	49.7	300p per litre of still wine
Port/Sherry	56.9	375p per 75cl bottle
Spirits	67.9	950p per 75cl @ 40% by vol.
Cigarettes	73.9	175p per 20 King Size Filter
Petrol	59.7	220p per gallon 4 Star leaded

As can be seen from the above table, there is a difference in the percentages of total revenue on price for beer (non-lager products), lager and cider. The Excise Duty on lager is calculated in exactly the same way as for beer, but as lager is, generally speaking, weaker than the average strength beer and more expensive than beer at a comparable gravity, it means that the duty and tax form a smaller percentage of the total price. As for cider, the method of taxing is different again. Excise Duty on cider was reintroduced in 1976, having been originally introduced in 1643, repealed in 1830 and reintroduced between 1916 and 1923. The rate of duty today is only £18.77 per hectolitre - a flat rate for all ciders regardless of strength below

8.5% by volume. This is equivalent to 10.6p per pint. Just think on next time you pay £1.30 for a pint of cider!!

I hope the above information helps to correct several misconceptions that seem to prevail amongst various groups of quaffers in hostelryes I have visited over the past year. Just consider this next time you purchase a pint:- Generally speaking, less than one third of the price of a pint goes in taxation (Holts bitter being one notable exception at 41.3%), so who gets the other two-thirds plus?

WOODCOURT

The former Watney/Wilsons training centre, the Woodcourt on Brooklands Road, Baguley, has been sold as a free house to a partnership which includes David Bentley, a former licensee of the Square Albert in Manchester. David is the licensee of this ex-Berni Inn and is converting the long-standing keg establishment into a real ale free house. His initial plans include the conversion of Wilsons mild and bitter to cask and the introduction of Websters Choice and a Ruddles beer from the same stable. Further, he intends to have Marstons Burton Bitter and a beer from Timothy Taylors by Christmas. In the New Year, it is hoped that a further cask beer from another independent brewer will be introduced to the line of handpumps which are about to be installed.

David, who is a member of the Bentley's Yorkshire Brewery family, is keen to promote the restaurant of 75 covers and the two function rooms which hold 100 and 200. He is currently refitting the former hotel, which he has renamed Kilverts. (Before it was a hotel, Woodcourt was the residence of Nicholas Kilvert, of lard fame.)

WHAT'S DOING contributions should be sent to the editor c/o 88 Ringley Road, Stoneclough, Radcliffe, Manchester M26 9ET. News, articles, letters, etc, must arrive by the 20th of the month for inclusion in the next month's issue.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Send cheque/PO for £2.40, together with your name and address, to Roger Hall, 123 Hill Lane, Blackley, Manchester M9 2PW, for 6 issues. Cheques made out to "What's Doing".

BACK NUMBERS: 10p per copy. Send stamped addressed envelope to Roger Hall, address above.

To join CAMRA send £9 to Membership, CAMRA, 34 Alma Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 3BW.

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WALKER *Winter* WARMER

A dark rich ruby-coloured extra strong ale, sweet to the palate with a distinctive taste.

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White House,
Stich-Hi Lane, Harwood

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Manchester Road, Rixton
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Old Market Place,
Golden Square
Hare & Hounds,
Golbourne Road, Lowton
Lord Rodney,
Winick Road
Lower Angel,
Buttermarket Street

Wigan

Kings Arms, Warrington Road,
Ashton in Makerfield
Raven Hotel, Wallgate
Railway, Appley Lane
Springfield, Springfield Road
Stagg Inn, Orrell Road, Orrell

Blackpool

Bay Horse, Station Road,
Thornton, Cleveley
Boars Head,
Preston Old Road, Marton
Plough, Chain Lane, Staining

Crewe

Ashbank, Pym's Lane
Belle Vue, Earle Street

Chorley

Falcon, Church Street,
Littleborough
Market Tavern,
Cleveland Square

Altrincham

Stonemasons Arms,
Stockport Road, Timperley

Knutsford

White Lion,
King Street, Knutsford

Middlewich

Vaults, Wheelock Street

Manchester

Antelope, Manchester Road
West, Little Hulton
Barleycorn, Barlow Moor
Road, West Didsbury
Buckley Arms,
Partington Lane, Swinton
Junction, New Bury Road,
Whitefield
Moonraker, Wood Street,
Langley, Middleton
White Horse,
Liverpool Road, Irlam

Chester

Carlton Tavern, Harrington
Street, Handbridge

RUPERT'S PAGE



As most contributors to this cheeky little organ are self-effacing in the extreme, it falls once again to me to trumpet What's Doing's 15th birthday from the rooftops. It's particularly wonderful as it coincides with Bunty Fortescue's final release from incarceration after many years. I met Bunty at 6am at the prison gates with the first issue of What's Doing. I did wonder whether his exemplary sentence had cured Bunty of his predilection for hostelries and the amber nectar - but no! By the time we'd reached Grotley it was almost opening time and Bunty was anxious to visit his former haunts.

I am afraid that Bunty was to be greatly disappointed. He was aware that the Dockers Wedge had been rebuilt since the notorious brouhaha but he was wholly unprepared for its reincarnation as the Stevedores Canape and its twee setting on Slumley Quay. The sites of the Gunge-smearers and the Rat & Handbag were visited with equal nostalgia. To see a grown man, particularly one with the reputation of Mr Fortescue, on the verge of tears is not a pleasant sight.

If Bunty was horrified by the process of tavern smartening and demolition, he was delighted by the wider availability of amber nectars in Grotley and by the number of old acquaintances who turned up to celebrate his release at the recently reopened Queens Legs.

ADVERTISEMENT

REGIONAL BOSSPERSON

NATIONAL CONSUMER ORGANISATION

Based in the North West, you will be responsible for the co-ordination of nine branches of a National Campaign. The branches consist of squabbling, neurotic malcontents, many of whom are not infrequently hopelessly drunk and abusive. You will also be responsible for liaising with other Regional Bosspersons and members of the National Bossgroup. Meetings are held monthly at convenient locations such as Canterbury, Penzance and Benbecula. You will also be responsible for overseeing branch accounts, beer festivals, publications and campaigning events. Specific knowledge of the licensed trade is essential, as are demonstrable interpersonal skills and a confident, friendly and enthusiastic manner. Mental instability, infidelity and the ability to imitate music hall comedians, ventriloquists and faith healers are desirable but not essential as training will be given.

Salary up to £0K

Perks few

Apart from Bogbrush, there was a strange absence of persons from Scouseley. Bunty was as dismissive of them as he had been in the past and was on the verge of setting off down the East Clog Road to sort them out when we were locked in till dawn. Sadly there was no tigg off the ground, charades or spanking, but a good time was had by all, helped by the odd pint down your trouser front and the cutting of Whats Doing birthday cake, which was full of worms, dung beetles and decaying weasel corpses. Bunty hadn't seen a woman for ages and I'm hoping he'll hit it off with one of the Junoesque stalwarts of the Campaign in the near future.

BBBB

NORTHERNERS COULDN'T GIVE A BBBB
for any other beer festival!

Contributors to this issue: Roger Hall, Stewart Revell, Roger Wilson, Paul Roberts, Dave White, Peter Barnes.



Branch Diary

NORTH MANCHESTER

Wed 5 Dec, Swinton Crawl. White Horse 7pm, Park Inn 8pm

Wed 12 Dec, Regional Meeting, Marble Arch 8pm

Wed 19 Dec, Branch Meeting & Christmas Social, Crescent, Salford, 8pm

Sat 29 Dec, Lunchtime Crawl and Curry, Manchester City Centre. Start Crown & Cushion at noon, then Marble Arch, Harp & Shamrock, Beerhouse 1.30pm. Castle, Oldham Street, 2.30pm. Tables reserved in Cuckoo Chef (Banqueting Suite) for 4pm

Wed 2 Jan, Social, Ashley Brook (new Holts pub), Liverpool Street, Seedley.

Contact: Roger Hall 740 7937

WIGAN

Wed 19 Dec, Branch Meeting/Xmas Social, Seven Stars Hotel, Wallgate, Wigan

Fri 28th Dec, Salford Pub Crawl. Commence Crescent 7.30. Kings Arms 8.30

Tues 8th Jan, Visit to Marstons & Burton Bridge breweries, Burton on Trent

Contact: Brian Gleave, Atherton 876200 (w), 840658 (h)

ROCHDALE, OLDHAM & BURY

Tues 4 Dec 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, The Junction, Joshua Lane, Middleton Junction

Fri 7th/Sat 8th Dec, BURY BEER FESTIVAL - see advert

Tues 11th Dec, 8.30pm, Committee Meeting, Royal Oak, Manchester Road, Werneth, Oldham

Tues 18th Dec 8pm, Branch Xmas Social, Woodthorpe Hotel, Bury Old Road, Heaton Park, Prestwich. Buffet, quiz. All welcome

Fri 28th Dec, Drown the turkey crawl, Rochdale. 8pm Cross Yates, Whitworth Road; 8.30 Tap & Spile, Hope Street; 9.15 The Albert, Sheriff Street; 9.45 The Reed, off Yorkshire Street; 10.30 The Brunswick, Baillie Street. All welcome.

Tues 8th Jan, Branch Meeting, 8.30pm, Tap & Spile, Hope Street, Rochdale.

Contact: B Lee 0706 824407

CAMRA GROWS

There are 26,000 CAMRA members in the UK and around 1,100 members in Greater Manchester. Nationally, CAMRA membership is growing at the rate of 20% per year, but in Manchester the rate is nearer 30%. If you want to find out more about CAMRA, come along to some of our meetings (see Branch Diary). They are all open meetings and there is no obligation to join. If you do decide to join the Campaign the benefits are:

- * A member's handbook
- * A monthly copy of "What's Brewing", the Campaign's entertaining and highly-regarded newspaper
- * Generous discounts on a wide range of CAMRA products and publications, including the Good Beer Guide.
- * Free or reduced entry to most CAMRA beer festivals
- * An opportunity to join all local and national activities including the annual National Conference which, in 1993, will be held at Salford University.

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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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