

20p

WHAT'S DOING



APRIL
1992

THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

PUB LOSSES IN OLDHAM



Oldham is soon to lose four public houses to the bulldozer. The Black Horse, Rose of Lancaster, Waggon & Horses and the Auld Lang Syne, all on Manchester Street/Manchester Road, have been acquired by Oldham Council for a road scheme which starts construction at the end of April.

The Rose of Lancaster is to close on April 10th, with the Black Horse and the Waggon & Horses closing their doors for the last time the week

before. The Auld Lang Syne is already shut, the last pints having been pulled in November last year.

Another pub affected by the scheme, the Bridgewater, was demolished last year and a replacement was built by Joseph Holt. Michael Robinson

BRADFORD

The Shakespeare is still closed although it has been put on the market. Trading conditions in this part of Manchester remain difficult and the imposing Duke of Edinburgh has been closed for the last two months. An estate pub, the Crescent, has been vandalised and remains shut. A vast swathe of the inner city from Miles Platting to Long-sight now contains dozens of closed and derelict pubs. There seems little hope that regeneration and the end of the recession will do much to revive the fortunes of licensed premises in those areas.

SALFORD UPS AND DOWNS

The Oxford in Bexley Square is closed again. The nearby Bell Tower has reopened and the Crown on Blackfriars Street is trading again. The Tallow Tub is closed but still intact.

RECORD LOST

Prestwich has lost its 100% real ale record because the Wilton Arms (Whitbread) has reverted to keg beer only. The other twenty pubs still sell real ale.

Kendlegate Wine Cellars Ltd.

164 Northgate Rd, Edgeley. Tel: 477 3939

Wide range of Belgian & Continental Beers.

Cask beers to order, glass hire, delivery service.

Timmermans, Leifmans, Orval, Chimay, Duvel, Hooegarden, Rodenbach, Kwak, Westmalle, St Sixtus, Pinkus, and more. Worthington White Shield, Imperial Russian Stout, Taddy Porter

Westons Scrumpy & Vintage Ciders.

Wide Selection of Wines £2 - £20

Parties & Functions supplied.

Note: We operate under Wholesale Licensing Regulations, therefore minimum purchase is 24 bottles beer or 12 bottles wines/spirits, which can all be different.

Open: 8am-5.30pm Monday - Friday; 11am-3pm Saturday

Closed Sunday and Bank Holiday Weekends

Telephone orders accepted on a COD basis

KING'S ALE

Leo King

DOWN SOUTH

Chorlton-cum-Hardy may not have quantity (pubs) but it now has quality (real ale). Of its eleven pubs (including the Grove on the Whalley Range boundary), ten now serve real ale. One of the two Bass pubs - the Lloyds on Wilbraham Road in the centre of Chorlton - has installed handpumps and sells draught Bass. The other Bass pub, the Bowling Green, appears to be the only one now selling just keg beer. In the last few years this South Manchester district has really flourished with the advent of traditional ales. However, there are few pubs in central Chorlton (not to be confused with Chorlton Green, where four are grouped closely together). There have been four applications to convert vacant property into pubs. One was a building contractor's (application turned down after residents' protests). In the case of an application by Holts Brewery for a building near the bus station, this was refused and the site was taken over for offices (as if there aren't enough offices in Manchester). No doubt all the applications were unsuccessful because people complained that there were enough pubs in Chorlton. Who are they trying to kid?

Chorlton is akin to a town, not a Manchester suburb. The much smaller centre of Didsbury has eight pubs on one stretch of road, with three others on side roads. As well as these, Banks's Brewery have been given permission to convert a large Victorian mansion on the corner of Lapwing Lane and Palatine Road into a pub, despite a bitter fight from nearby residents.

WHERE HAVE ALL THE PUBS GONE?

In North Manchester (Collyhurst, Miles Platting, Newton Heath), East Manchester (Bradford, Beswick, Clayton, Ancoats) and West Manchester (Cheetham, Cheetham Hill, Strangeways) pubs have been closing at an alarming rate. Only Blackley and Moston appear to be stable in the north and places like Crumpsall, Higher Blackley and Harpurhey appear to have lost few pubs (an extremely good record). It is an entirely different story down in the south of Manchester. Not only is there an abundance of pubs in some parts, but many districts have long-established shopping centres, dating from the days when they were independent towns. Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Longsight, Didsbury, Rusholme, Levenshulme, Burnage, Withington, St George's, Fallowfield, Ladybarn and Northenden have a wealth of pubs and real ale. Fallowfield, Didsbury and Levenshulme have even had additional pubs built or converted from other uses.

However, all is not completely lost on the east side, for shops and pubs are well established in Gorton and (central) Openshaw. Of course, some parts of South Manchester have disappointing records. The destruction of Hulme, Moss Side and Ardwick has resulted in many pub losses. Central Manchester, too, has lost quite a few pubs. Anybody remember the Sugar Loaf, Lower Ship, Douglas, Wellington, Seftons (the original one), New Theatre, Mosley Arms, Bay Horse (Thomas Street), Bay Horse (Corporation Street), North Western, Manchester Arms, Crown & Sceptre, Green Dragon (off Miller Street), Royal George (Rochdale Road), Liston's Bar, Fatted Calf, Thatched House, Red Lion, Red Bull, Kensington and the George & Dragon? There have been a few replacements and new pubs built, but not many.

HOLTS CORNER

Stewart Revell

After the penny-on-a-pint budget, big brewers have put the prices of their beers up by as much as 3p a pint. This comes as no surprise and is made up of the imposed increase, a bit of extra VAT on excise duty, rounded up with a bit of extra profit for the brewers. Holts have not done this and to their credit have stuck to the penny increase, absorbing the extra VAT. Regal lager has now reached the £1-a-pint mark in managed houses.

The Gardeners Arms in Middleton (see Middleton News) and the Pullet (Oldham) are now trading as Holts pubs.

The Hyde Park Corner opens on Wednesday 8th April.

The following pubs are now taking Holts bitter as a guest beer: The Plough (Wilsons), Waterhead; Churchills (free house), Bolton; Old White Horse (Whitbread), Ainsworth; Horse & Jockey (Wilsons), Hazel Grove. With increased capacity at the brewery, Holts expect to take on more free trade accounts.

Has anyone spotted the new "J" registration dray wagon? It was seen recently delivering the amber nectar to pubs in the Eccles/Patricroft area.

Until recently Holts shares were quoted in the Manchester Evening News Business Section under "Drinks". This service would appear to have ceased. However, the last figure for Holts shares was £22.25 - an all time high.

MIDDLETON NEWS

Peter Alexander

Joseph Holt's first pub in Middleton is now open for business, and by all accounts is doing a roaring trade. The GARDENERS ARMS, Hollin Lane, a not unimpressive ex-Whitbread roadside pub, has been tastefully done up in standard Holts decor. A welcome change is that the pub has been divided to allow a vault to be formed. In its Whitbread guise the place was open plan. The effect is very pleasing and the locals, after some initial shock at the new low prices, have fully adapted. Bitter is 88p, mild 83p.

A not unrelated spin-off from the above has brought an unexpected bonus to drinkers in the nearby RED LION. This BodPubCo house now proudly displays two huge external banners proclaiming "Mild and Bitter from 90p". This represents a drop in price of some 14p-16p. It's amazing what a bit of competition can do! The beers on offer at the new "low" prices are OB mild and Boddingtons bitter. Mansfield-brewed Old Shilling Ale made a brief appearance here, but presumably was not thought robust enough to stand up to direct competition from Messrs Holt. Makes you wonder why they bothered having it brewed!

Just outside Middleton, at the WILTON HOTEL, Rhodes, an excellent pint of Cains bitter can be had for the not inconsiderable price of £1.22 (the Boddies is a mere £1.14). In my experience the beer here may be pricey but is always in very drinkable condition. The mild is Boddingtons, is real ale and sells at £1.12.

In Middleton itself, the BRUNSWICK continues to lead the way in choice



if not in decor. Recently landlord Jim Mellor has been experimenting with beers from Oak, the Heywood independent brewer. Particularly well received has been Wobbly Bob. Old Oak Ale, Hopwood bitter and Oak Best have also featured recently. Jim is still persevering in his attempts to keep a mild on. Sales have not been as brisk as he would like, so readers are urged to get in there and drink some. His most recent mild, Banks & Taylor Shefford Mild, was excellent. Moorhouses Black Cat is expected soon.

Nearby, the BodPubCo DOG & PARTRIDGE in Spring Vale, which featured in these pages for selling keg beer through handpumps, continues to do so, but has blacked out the external advertising for cask conditioned beer. Better to have installed cask beer, but it's a victory of sorts, I suppose. The local CAMRA branch intends to take the matter up with BodPubCo, but as the pub was recently offered for sale it may be necessary to contact new owners.

Another BodPubCo outlet charged with the above offence, the former Good Beer Guide listed JOINERS ARMS, is now selling Boddingtons OB bitter and mild in traditional form. Both were in good condition on a recent visit.

Incidentally, on Oldham Road, the beer in Thwaites's HARE & HOUNDS remains suspiciously cold and gassy, despite assurances from the bar staff that it is the real stuff. Any other opinions on this would be welcomed.

Finally, the Good Beer Guide entries for Middleton in 1993 will be the Brunswick, the Crown and the Tandle Hill Tavern.

Note: All prices referred to are pre-Budget.

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: 15p per copy. Send stamped addressed envelope to Roger Hall, address above.

To join CAMRA send £10 to Membership, CAMRA, 34 Alma Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 3BW.

WHAT'S DOING ADVERTISING: Enquiries to the editor, address above. Full page £25, $\frac{3}{4}$ page £20, $\frac{1}{2}$ page £15, $\frac{1}{4}$ page £7.50. Discount on bookings for 6 months or longer.

LETTERS



LAUREL & HARDY

Sir - As a result of the interest shown in the Oliver Hardy Centenary in January, the Sons of the Desert (the world-wide Laurel and Hardy Appreciation Society) have organised Tent evenings at the Beer Engine in Wigan on Thursday 26th March and the Stanley Arms in Stockport on 14th April. There will also be information on display at the Bolton Beer Festival.

The Sons of the Desert want to hold regular monthly meetings at a pub in the Bolton area. They are looking for a pub either in Bolton centre or very easy to get to by public transport from the centre. It must have a function room that the society can use for free (there's no admission charge to the meetings and the society makes very little money) and excellent beer. If readers can advise, please ring Norman on Bolton (0204) 848366.

Chris Coffee

IS YOUR BEER WHISKY COMPATIBLE?

Sir - I recently introduced a Scottish friend to the delights of Taylors Landlord. Two-thirds of the way down his third pint he declared that he liked the beer. After further cogitation he announced that the product was "whisky compatible".

Discussion ensued. Surely, I suggested, one should be discriminating. A whisky that would accompany such a distinctive beer as Landlord would be entirely inappropriate for a subtle mild, such as Banks's.

The strong, smokey flavour of, say, Jura would suit Landlord, and perhaps one of the "softer" east coast malts such as Glen Ord would go down well with Banks's mild.

So, a question to all readers. Which malt would you choose with your favourite ale? A lot of pubs in Manchester and Salford offer a poor selection of malts. We may yet change this.

D Busman

IN SEARCH OF THE GREEN BAIZE

Sir - Leaving the Bent & Bongs Beer Bash recently, we took shelter in the Atherton Arms, Uncle Joseph's GBG pub in Atherton. Despite the modernization (well, they have moved the furniture about a bit), we noticed that the snooker/billiard table still nestled in the corner of the vault, together with a pool table, dart board and numerous card schools.

The WAGS, Warrington

PUB GAMES

Sir - I am attempting to survey the country for details of games that are basically pub orientated. What game is indigenous to your area? How many variants are there to the game? Is that dartboard standard? Does that pub down the road still have its "twister"? Can you find "Daddlums"?

I would be most interested to hear of all aspects of local leagues and rules, peculiarities, the geographical spread of a game or its possible uniqueness. Histories and photographs would also be appreciated and, of course, would be returned.

John Penny, 12 Wessex Dr, Bradford Abbas, Sherborne, Dorset DT9 6SH

FULLERS IN MANCHESTER

Fullers Chiswick Bitter is on sale at the Crown & Anchor on Hilton Street, Manchester. Beers from Brains of Cardiff may appear in the near future.

HAVING A PARTY?

Small "Real Ale" bar complete with handpumps
available for hire

* * * * *

Beer and glasses can also be supplied
if required

* * * * *

Delivered and set up in your home

* * * * *

For further details please telephone

061 798 7639

THE STATION

*Ashton's Premier Free House
offers a friendly, juke box free
atmosphere with an evergrowing
collection of railway & brewery
bric-a-brac.*

*Handpumped Pedigree, Boddies
and Border Mild are always
available, along with GUEST
beers from smaller or more
distant independant breweries.*

We're open all day ~

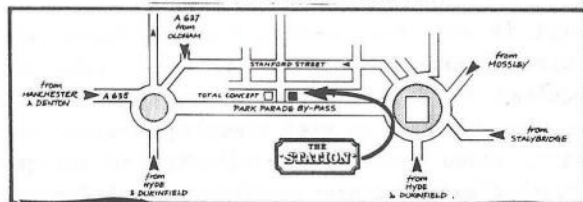
MONDAY TO FRIDAY

SATURDAY 11.30 - 3.00 / 7.00 - 11.00

SUNDAY USUAL HOURS

*...and there's a pleasant GARDEN
for the warmer weather!*

**LUNCHEONS TRY OUR HOT MEALS
& SUPER COLD BUFFET**



Conservatory & Rooms

For Meetings & Parties

**WARRINGTON STREET · ASHTON-U-LYNE
NEXT TO THE BY-PASS**

RECENT GUEST BEERS

Bushy's
Best Bitter

Hopwood Bitter

Jolly Roger Ale

Captain Smith's
Strong Ale

Adnem's
Broadside

Wobbly Bob

Smiles
Exhibition

Banks & Taylor
Black Bat

Coachman's
Best Bitter

Titanic
Lifeboat

Robinwood
I.P.A.

VICTORIANS PICK ON HOLTS

The Victorian Society is getting a bit concerned about the way Holts are knocking their pubs about. The following comes from a recent letter to the brewery from the society's Conservation Officer. (Bet he doesn't get a reply!)

"...Many of your premises are of Victorian and Edwardian date and the more interesting of these show to the full the exuberant sense of design, the excellence of materials and the high quality craftsmanship characteristic of the best buildings of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Recently, however, some of our members in the Manchester area have noticed with concern that work has been done or is in hand in some of your houses that runs the risk of destroying or compromising their Victorian character. Examples of where this has happened are:

SEVEN STARS, Ardwick. A large extension which looks reasonable from the outside but has involved the destruction of two rooms. One half of the pub is therefore now out of character with the other.

ROEBUCK, Flixton. Modernisation here has involved the gutting of a multi-room pub which had some interesting features; the front has been sandblasted and there is bright outdoor lighting.

COACH & HORSES, Astley. Removal of a corridor wall has opened out two rooms and has destroyed some original wall tiling.

CHURCH, Whitefield. This was a small, intimate little pub that has now had walls removed in a most insensitive manner.

We also feel that there is reason to be concerned about the future of the ROYAL OAK, Eccles, and the WHITE LION, Westhoughton.

We appreciate that, except in very rare cases, a public house cannot be treated as if it were a museum specimen, and that like other buildings which are required to show a return on capital, pubs may have to be altered from time to time to meet changing circumstances. Your company has, in fact, shown that good architects and designers can manage to carry through changes without spoiling the character of a pub, as may be seen in the cases of the LEGH ARMS, Sale, the WELCOME, Prestwich, and the WHITE LION and GRAPES, Eccles. The fact that good work has been done at these houses makes it the more regrettable - and puzzling - that in other instances there has been unsympathetic handling of buildings of character...

The urban public house in the industrial town is one of the most

characteristically Victorian types of building. Over the past 40 years, social and urban change has led to the loss of a very large number of these buildings and we are naturally concerned to do what we can to safeguard the character of those that remain more or less intact.

We feel, too, that while in the short term a brewery may profit by following the latest trend in design fads, a longer view will show the commercial advantages of retaining and enhancing a genuine Victorian atmosphere in its licensed premises."

HAUTE CUISINE IN FARNWORTH

by the Bombay Potato

Haute cuisine (that's French for hot curry) can now be found in Farnworth as well as in Rusholme and Eccles, but first...

Farnworth is easy to get to because it is the centre of a major bus interchange dating from the days of trolley buses. (Remember them? Metrolink, eat your heart out!)

Treat yourself to a rare pint of Tetley mild in the Clock Face, off Higher Market Street (a time capsule of a pub). Then go along Long-causeway to Albert Road, turn right and enjoy Lees bitter in the Albert. Further along is the Old White Hart, also serving Lees. Go down Queen Street and turn right at Market Street for the Victoria and Vaux Samson (complain to the licensee about the absence of Double Maxim). Finish with draught Bass in the Freemasons.

Then to the Ajmeer Tandoori Restaurant. This is situated in what used to be the Koh-i-Noor. The new owner gutted the building and opened the Ajmeer in November 1990. It immediately became a Farnworth favourite and has recently been given a Bronze Award by the Gourmet Wining and Dining Guide 1992/3.

The Ajmeer is open seven days a week from 5.00pm to 1.00am (2.30 Friday and Saturday).

OAK IN WHITEFIELD

Oak bitter from the Phoenix Brewery in Heywood has at last arrived at the Beehive in Whitefield. It follows Moorhouses Premier Bitter as the "new guest" in John Hannan's brave determination to provide a selection of beers from independent breweries, which otherwise would not be available in the area.

GOOD BEER GUIDE 1993

Roger Hall

Over the years the North Manchester branch of CAMRA has tried to select entries for the National Good Beer Guide which give a fair choice of breweries and good geographical coverage across the branch area. For 1993, what was intended to be user-friendly has gone by the board, not through any deliberate shift of policy, but by force of circumstance and the operation of a democratic system of selection.

The 27 entries can be broken down as follows:

Holts	11	Ancoats	2
Free	5	Blackley	1
Robinsons	3	Central Manchester	4
Hydes	2	Crumpsall, Cheetham,	
Marstons	1	Strangeways	1
John Smiths	1	Eccles	4
Tetley Walker	2	Moston	1
Whitbread	1	Salford	9
Lees	1	Swinton	3
S&N	0	Worsley	2
Wilsons	0	Collyhurst & Harpurhey	0
Bass	0	Irlam & Cadishead	0
Boddingtons	0	Miles Platting	0
Sam Smiths	0	Newton Heath	0
Banks's	0		

There are, therefore, no entries for some of our major brewers and pub-owning groups and vast areas of Manchester and Salford with no pubs in the Guide. We need to ask whether this is desirable from the point of view of the reader.

The exclusion of places like Collyhurst, Harpurhey, Miles Platting and Newton Heath is an indication of the deterioration of pubs in the inner city and the rapid turnover of licensees in these areas. The Robin Hood in Newton Heath was a certain contender for the guide until it was discovered that the long serving tenant was due to leave, that Marstons were taking the pub into managership and had plans to alter the premises substantially. The exclusion of Irlam and Cadishead probably has more to do with branch members' ignorance of the area and their prejudice against pubs belonging to certain brewers and pub-owning groups.

Holts might be the best beer in the world but I wonder how much sense it makes to include a dozen of their pubs. Are Boddingtons, Bass, Wilsons and Banks's so universally bad that we can't include any of

their pubs, even those that sell guest beers? Boddingtons, after all, is not now a brewery but a pub-owning group. Strange that only one of their pubs has found its way into the guide. Even the token Whitbread pub has been selected for reasons other than the quality of the beer. Ye Olde Nelson is threatened with demolition and may well be knocked down before the end of 1993.

The Good Beer Guide is a campaigning publication but this is something which can be reflected in editorial matter. More fundamentally it is a Good Beer Guide which should give the readers a good cross section of pubs in which to sample a wide range of beers wherever they may be in the country. We are failing in our duty to the readers if we merely select the 27 best pubs without consideration of choice, variety and location. Democracy may ensure that the views of the majority are heard, but at the expense of minorities. A more enlightened approach would ensure that good beer from brewers other than our favourites were also recognised.

The 1993 Good Beer Guide entries are:

White House, Ancoats	Star, Higher Broughton
Jolly Angler, Ancoats	Ashley Brook, Seedley
Pleasant, Blackley	Eagle, Salford
Castle, Oldham Street	Union Tavern, Liverpool Street
Beer House, Rochdale Road	Kings Arms, Bloom Street
Dutton, Strangeways	Crescent, Salford
Crown & Cushion, Cateaton Street	Peel Park, Chapel Street
Queens Arms, Cheetham	Olde Nelson, Chapel Street
Crown & Volunteer, Eccles	Welcome, Ordsall
Grapes, Peel Green	Lord Nelson, Pendlebury
Lamb, Eccles	Park, Swinton
Stanley, Patricroft	Buckley Arms, Swinton
Dean Brook, Moston	Morning Star, Wardley
	Dun Mare, Little Hulton

REAL ALE IN WERNETH

The Unicorn on Charles Street, opposite Werneth Station (Featherstall Road), is now selling four handpulled real ales. This former Oldham Brewery house is now owned by the Boddington Pub Company and had been on keg beer since the 1970s. The new licensee, Tony Stott, persuaded BodPubCo to change to real ale last year. Chesters mild sells at £1.06, OB and Boddingtons bitter at £1.09 and the low gravity Old Shilling is still on sale at 89p a pint. The pub is open all day.

NOW & THEN

by Rob Magee

No.64

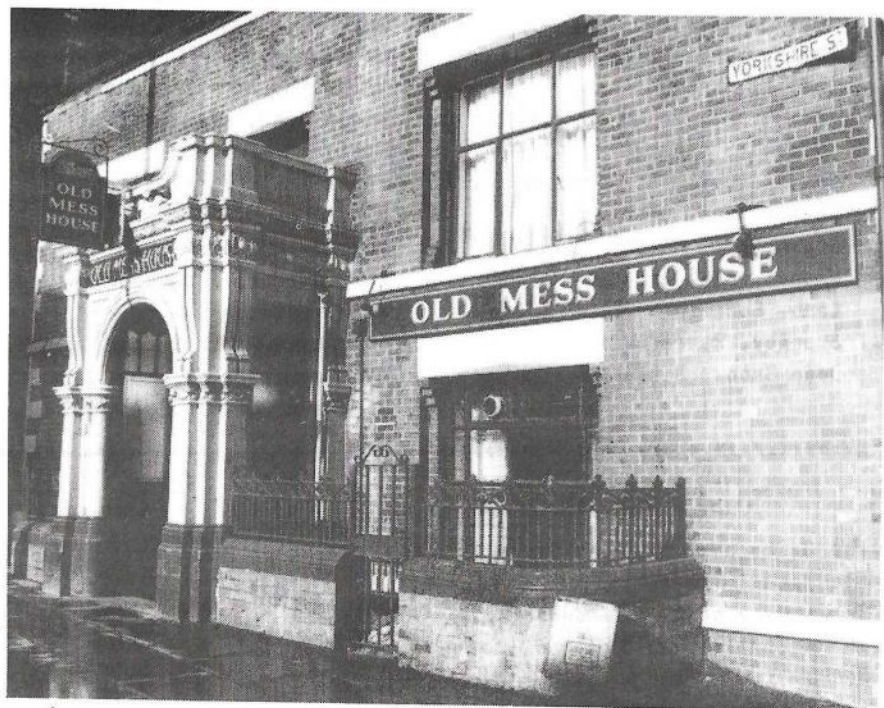
OLD MESS HOUSE

63 Yorkshire Street, Oldham

The Old Mess House has its origins in one of Oldham's first inns, the Pack Horse. At the beginning of the eighteenth century Oldham consisted of three separate hamlets along an ancient pack horse road. This road wended its way down from Coal Pit Lane (High Street), past the Old Church and the Nags Head Inn to the hamlet of Holebottom. One of the stone cottages at a bend in the road near here was the Pack Horse Inn, which appears in the records in 1713.

Thirty years later Oldham had seven principal inns and alehouses - the Pack Horse, the Horseshoe, the Roebuck, the Sun, the Dog, the Nags Head and another Pack Horse, which later became the Albion. There were 36 inns and alehouses in Oldham by 1756, and of these only 9 are known to have survived.

By 1795 the three hamlets had grown and merged and the town of Oldham was developing. Then came the new Manchester to Huddersfield turnpike



road, cutting through the town centre to form the principal street. Most of the old road became a backwater, apart from Main Street (formerly Coal Pit Lane, later High Street). The Pack Horse had been renamed the Red Lion by this time, although other names - the Lion Rampant and Lion and Flag - appear in the records. In 1825 the Oldham diarist, Rowbottom, mentions a pub called the Slaughter House at Holebottom, which could only have been the Red Lion.

The unusual name probably stems from the troubled times after the Peterloo Massacre in Manchester in 1819, when soldiers were sent to Oldham to keep order. The soldiers were billeted in various pubs round the town and seemed to attract more trouble than they cooled. There were several clashes between soldiers and locals and some people were badly wounded. The Bulls Head on George Street was wrecked in one skirmish.

The pub at Holebottom became the Old Mess House about 1827 and fifteen years later a sale notice mentions the pub, a brewhouse and stables. The property was subject to a 999-year lease from 6th December 1794, at which time the original inn may have been rebuilt.

It was a three-storey building until the 1880s, when the unused top floor was taken off. Some internal changes were made and the frontage was rebuilt. About this time the road outside was raised a couple of feet or so to aid the horse-drawn trams. Oldham brewers Taylor & Lees bought the Old Mess House in the 1890s, when it had six drinking rooms, three bedrooms, a bathroom, no accommodation for travellers, but stabling for two horses. In August 1896 the ornate front porch was added. There was another entrance (to the vault) on Yorkshire Street, near the Bradshaw Street corner.

Taylor & Lees were taken over by Threlfalls in 1898 and in 1948/9 the Salford brewery made some alterations. The vault door was bricked up, the Bradshaw Street gable end was rebuilt and a sign proclaiming "Old Mess House" in 12" gold letters was fixed over the middle top window. On each side of the front porch, bigger signs of 15" letters bore the words "Threlfalls Ales". These signs were removed some time after 1961 when the pub was given a "Chesters" image.

At the time of writing the Old Mess House is closed and undergoing the latest in the series of changes which began when pack horses ambled through Holebottom.

BEINLOS IN BAVARIA

Paul Roberts

I always knew that What's Doing was of immense importance to the world's drinkers, but the latest event has amazed even me. The March edition, containing my article on the MÜNchener Hofbräuhaus, had only been out a week when who should turn up at the world's most famous



hostelry but that ardent WD reader, Mikhail Gorbachev! Complete with Bavarian hat and stone "Masskrug", the former Soviet anti-alcohol campaigner is definitely a changed man. While 1,200 of Bavaria's most prominent politicians helped Gorby sink a few litres in the upstairs Festaal, other customers, including myself, had to sit in the downstairs Schwemme and watch the proceedings on closed circuit TV.

Gorby was, however, a little too late for Munich's crazy season - Fasching. This is described as Munich at its most foolish. From the preceding Thursday (Weibesfastnacht) to Faschingsdienstag (Shrove Tuesday), the whole city centre is decorated to create a carnival atmosphere. Hundreds of thousands of fancy-costumed people filled the pedestrian precinct and town hall square on Faschingssonntag (the Sunday before Ash Wednesday) to sing and sup from the various beer and schnapps stalls. A dray full of Augustiner helles was soon consumed - served direct from the wooden barrels. They probably sold in an hour what most landlords in England dream of selling in a month!

On Faschingsdienstag the venue is Munich's famous Viktualienmarkt, where tens of thousands of people throng on to the small market, drinking, singing and dancing. All this was helped on both days with the best weather for 72 years - temperatures up to almost 70°F and constant brilliant sunshine. Ash Wednesday sees a few more celebrations in the various hostelrys, but gone are the costumes and the frivolity. Then from March 14th comes Starkbierzeit (Strong Beer Season) - but that's another story...

Wed 22 - Sat 25 Apr



Festival Open : Wed 6 - 11 pm
Thu, Fri, Sat : 12 - 4 pm ; 6 - 11 pm
£1 Lunch, £1.50 Eve; £2 Friday Eve
Party discounts. Camra Members Free
Enquiries: Steve Prescott 0942 719037

**ST. GEORGE LOOKALIKE
CONTEST - THUR 23RD**
2 galls beer + runner-up prizes

rupert

It is wholly appropriate that as the Campaign celebrates its coming of age with gargantuan posh jollies, stalwarts of the movement should celebrate milestones in their own lives as they move inexorably towards senility and oblivion. Billy Cosh marked his half century with a curry extravaganza at a Grotley Drabs outlet which some felt was more in keeping with the provenance of a grass roots campaign. Royal Hall, who is suffering from pre-senile dementia, has been chucked on the scrap heap. Thrusting young dynamos are now poised to move the Campaign forward into the next century. Such is the wealth of talent that Greater Grotley members will be simultaneously hosting the 1993 blether session and the Greater Grotley Amber Nectar Show. Billy Shippon, who has secretly been organising the blether session at Slumley University, is a bit busy pedalling round Clogshire collecting data for his amber nectar guide for the overhall - Lanky Ale - so he's passed on the responsibility to former boss person Wristy Barreler. The event and, in particular, the integral amber nectar show, is safe in Wristy's hands. He is a person who learns from his mistakes and it's highly unlikely that he will ever again forget to get a licence to purvey alcoholic beverages.

There are mutterings about the stupidity of doing two things at once, but Billy Bog needn't worry. There are vast depths of talents untapped in the branches who don't much involve themselves in what's going on and I'm certain that nobody will be spread too thinly. 1993 will be the year of success for Greater Grotley. The Organising Committees have been asked to re-form to front the Olympics.

Not that our lords and masters at St Allballs are massively impressed. The blether session is an opportunity for them to enjoy true Northern hospitality and preen themselves on a stage so they don't want something that goes off at half cock. Anyway, they're a funny lot. A motion goes in so that branches can act together and they imagine that it's some carefully orchestrated machiavellian plot to undermine their authority and turn everyone into a singing teapot. Nothing could be further from the truth. The wisdom in organising birthday celebrations is beginning to look a bit thin if they've become paranoid about simple requests. I'm certain that the motion will get the straightforward 99% majority that they say it needs at the Titley blether session. This will enable the massed branches of Grotley to march forward to the year 2000 with the mandate required.



Branch Diary

TRAFFORD & HULME

Thur 2 April 8pm, Committee Meeting and Cornbrook Survey. Starting at Pomona Palace at 8pm, then visiting Cornbrook, Hope and Toll Gate.

Thur 9 April 8pm, City Centre Survey: City Road Inn 8pm, Pack Horse 8.30pm, Crown 9pm, Britons Protection 9.30, Peveril of the Peak 10.15.

Thur 16 April 8pm. Branch Meeting, 8-9.15pm, in Railway, Hale. Then surveying Cheshire Midland 9.15pm, Tatton Arms 9.30pm, Bakers Arms 10pm, Faulkners Arms 10.15pm, Railway (Altrincham) 10.30pm.

Thur 23 April 8pm, University Area Survey, starting at Jabez Cleggs, then Ducie Arms, Salutation, The Church, and finishing at Britons Protection.

Thur 30 April 8pm, Broadheath Survey. Cheshire Cheese, Railway, Packet House, Navigation, George & Dragon, Wheatsheaf, Orange Tree.

Contact: Allan Glover 061 962 9890 (h), 061 428 7930 (w)

NORTH MANCHESTER

Wed 1 April, All Fools' Tram Trip to Besses o'th'Barn. Meet Crown & Anchor, Cateaton Street, 7pm.

Wed 8 April, Committee & Social, Ashley Brook, Liverpool Street, Salford 8pm.

Wed 15 April, Branch Meeting, Royal Oak, Corporation Road, Eccles, 8pm

Wed 29 April, Higher Blackley Crawl: Duke of Wellington, Weardale Rd, 7pm; Flying Horse, Crab Lane, 7.30; Pleasant, Chapel Lane, 8pm.

Wed 6 May, Greengate Crawl: Old Ship 7pm, Three Legs of Man 7.30, Eagle 8pm.

Contact: Roger Hall 740 7937

ROCHDALE, OLDHAM & BURY

Tues 7 April 8pm, Branch Meeting, Wishing Well, York Street, Heywood.

Tues 14 April 8pm, Social, Spring Inn, Broad Lane, Rochdale

Sun 26 April 12 noon, Social, Red Lion, Bolton Road, Hawkshaw, Bury

Tues 5 May 8pm, Branch AGM, Woodthorpe, Bury Old Road, Prestwich

Tues 12 May 8pm, Social. Dusty Miller, Crostons Road, Bury

Contact: B Lee 0706 824407 (h)

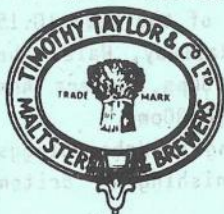
Contributors to this issue: Rob Magee, Roger Hall, Paul Roberts, Leo King, Peter Alexander, Peter Barnes, Peter Wadsworth, Stewart Revell, Glenn Worth, D Busman, Michael Robinson.

THE QUEENS ARMS

FREE HOUSE

4/6 HONEY STREET (off Red Bank)
MANCHESTER

Tel. 061 834 4239



*Serving a range of
traditional ales from*



BATEMANS & TIMOTHY TAYLORS

XB, XXXB, Best Bitter
Landlord

*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: 12.00-11.00
Thur: 12.00-11.00
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**

