

25p

What's Doing

JANUARY 1998

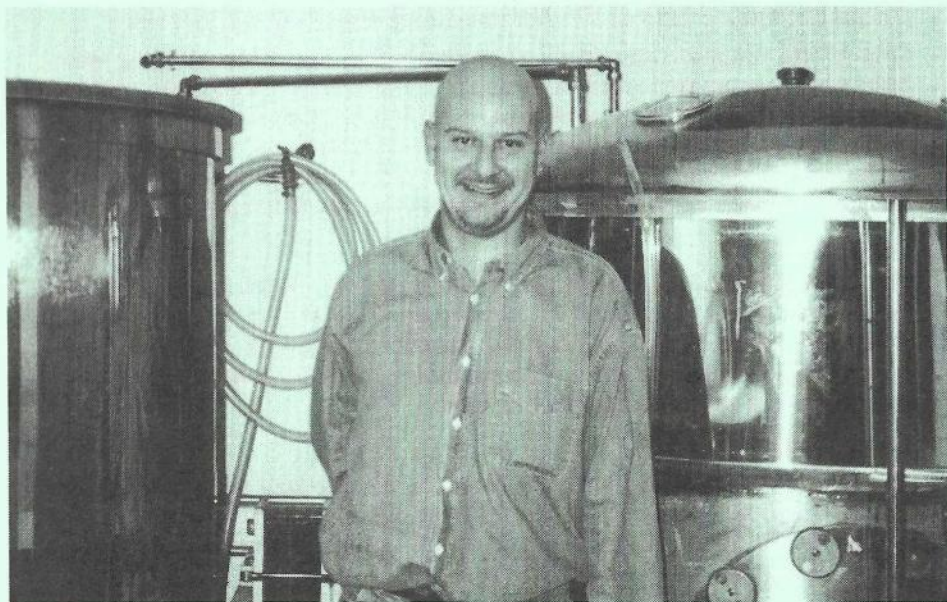


The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

Marble gets rolling

It has been a long wait, but on Monday December 8th the Marble Brewery was launched at the Marble Arch free house, Manchester. The brewery is in the back room of the popular Rochdale Road establishment and the brewer is pub licensee Mark Dade (pictured here beside the polished brewing vessels).

The five-barrel plant was designed and installed by noted micro-brewer Brendan Dobbin (late of the Kings Arms, C-on-M). Mark received a thorough



training in the brewer's art and has produced two excellent beers that should prove to be the pub's mainstay. Marble bitter at 4% and £1.50 is a tasty, quite hoppy, golden session beer, while the 5% Totally Marbled at £1.80 is darker but with all the characteristics of the lower gravity beer. A stronger Christmas beer should be on sale as you read this.

As well as the Marble Arch, the brewery products will be supplied to Bars One and Two and Marble Arch World Beers in Chorlton, and the Sandbar on Grosvenor Street, All Saints.

Further Shambles

The dismantling of the Wellington and Sinclairs began in December. The timing is as brilliant as the entire concept. Beginning the project just before Christmas will expose the historic pubs to the greatest risk of damage, so instead of having a few bits over they may have one or two bits missing. Pity we couldn't have extracted a denial from our city fathers early on, but then not even What's Doing would have believed that anyone could be so daft as to want to move Manchester's last remaining mediaeval building across the city in the name of tidiness and commerce.

Award for Stalybridge Buffet

The 1997 Railtrack Award for carrying out heritage improvement works, part of the Ian Allan National Heritage Awards, has been won by Stalybridge Station Buffet Bar. The plaque was presented by James Sherwood, President of Sea Containers Ltd and owner of the Orient Express trains at the National Railway Museum in York.

One of the judges commented that the buffet had been given a well-balanced restoration and it was 'a particularly successful object-lesson in well-judged restraint. Sufficient measures of repair, conservation and alteration have been carried out to enable the refreshment room to work very well in its intended traditional way, but not so much as to lose the character of an old building.'

Brinsop

The Brinsop Arms on the A6 at Westhoughton, which has been shut for several years, reopened in November. It is still a free house and this time round is selling Taylors Landlord, Boddies, draught Bass, Wadworth 6X and Pedigree. The premises have been nicely fitted out and there is a restaurant plus bar food.

Fairy Tale

The Old Veteran on Eccles New Road in Weaste has reopened as the Ugly Duckling. No doubt, in the fullness of time, it will grow up, chop off the wolf's head, marry the prince and suffer the same fate as the Swan down the road which was closed to make way for the new tramway.

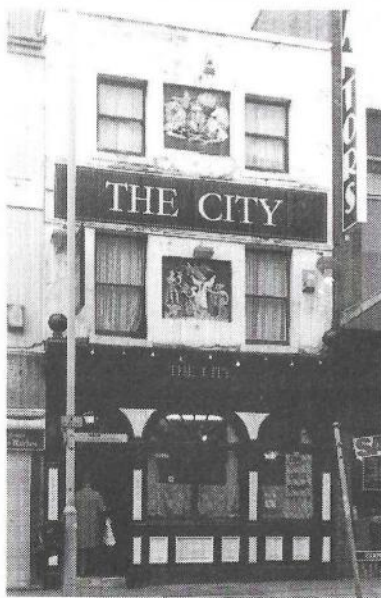
Manchester Prices Survey

The 1997 survey was less ambitious than those of previous years. It covered twenty pubs in the northern part of the city centre. The good news is that full measure was provided in all outlets, usually without needing to ask for a top up. Price lists were displayed in a majority of premises, although some were difficult to read.

Nobody was thrown out of the John Willie Lees for wearing a cap and our surveyor was welcomed into the City rather than being chucked out and abused. Perhaps this says more about who did the survey than any change in the pub. The manager at the Mitre was less than chuffed about the *What's Doing* article which suggested the pub wasn't long for this world.



In terms of value for money, Holts is still ahead of the field with mild at 99p and bitter at 105p. As a guest beer in the Hare & Hounds it sold at 112p. The Hogshead was the most expensive of the pubs we surveyed, but it had an extensive range of beers in fine condition. Particularly good value were Pedigree at the City (120p) and Buccaneer (5.2%) at the Wheatsheaf (133p). Lager, of course, is still poor value for money.



Although mild was still available in most of the pubs surveyed, the price differential seems to be fast disappearing. Holts still maintain 6p a pint (about 6%) difference. In 1960 the prices were 1s2d and 1s4d (around 13%). In some outlets mild was considerably more expensive than the cheapest bitter. It is not always economies of scale which account for the difference.

<i>Name of Pub</i>	<i>Brewer</i>	<i>Mild</i>	<i>Bitter</i>	<i>Premium Bitter</i>	<i>Lager</i>
Beer House	Free	140	105	160	195
Blob Shop	Free	-	110	-	150
Burton Arms	? *	keg	140	145	180
Castle	Robinsons	124	127	137	190
City	Whitbread	-	keg	120	150
Crown & Anchor	Holts	99	105	-	127
Crown & Cushion	Holts	99	105	-	127
Ducie Bridge	Free	-	140	-	180
Gullivers	J W Lees	110	120	-	160
Hare & Hounds	Tetley	138	112	-	180
Hogshead	Whitbread	150	158	180	201
John Willie Lees	J W Lees	130	135	-	190
King	Tetley	140	140	-	175
Marble Arch	Free	-	140	170	200
Millstone	?	Closed at 8.00pm			
Mitre	Free	keg	140	-	180
Pot of Beer	Free	138	146	158	195
Smithfields	Free	110	110	165	180
Unicom	Bass	-	150	160	190
Wheatsheaf	Burtonwood	118	123	133	160

** Ownership of the Burton Arms was a closely guarded secret. The sign said 'Free House' and beer included Theakstons, Youngers, Boddingtons, Ruddles, Daleside and John Smiths. Could there be a Courage tie?*

From this limited survey the following general conclusions can be drawn:

- ⇒ Local independents offer best value for money.
- ⇒ Real free houses are good value and offer choice.
- ⇒ Prices vary by as much as 50%.
- ⇒ Excellent value can still be found in the city centre.
- ⇒ Beers are generally in good condition.

Distributors required

Since the retirement of the indefatigable Peter Wadsworth, there is a need for further volunteers to deliver What's Doing to pubs in the city centre, North Manchester and Salford. The job is unpaid and largely thankless but it is an essential plank of campaigning. If you'd like to help, ring Pete Cash on 0161 794 5143 or come along to collation (see Branch Diary).

Anvil Tales

Keith Egerton

With the aim of almost doubling sales, Hydes are embarking on a five-year programme involving consultations with customers to find out what they want from the brewery. The company hopes to expand the estate beyond the present sixty-one houses, and pub refurbishments will continue, broadening the customer base which is currently at the older end of the market.

1998 will see a further range of seasonal ales, to follow Anvil 4X Strong which was reintroduced with a new recipe last year.

All done by computer

It is a widely held belief that marketing men are to blame for destroying our pub heritage. Well, maybe not any longer. A recent *Manchester Evening News* article revealed that Greenalls now use a computer to decide 'the right kind of pub for a particular area'. Apparently statistical modelling and demographics all play a part in deciding whether it should be an Irish theme or mock-Victorian pub we are landed with. It would be interesting to see what proposals the computer has for the small pubs in North Manchester.

Globe gone

On 19th December, as the demolition men prepared to dismantle the Wellington and Sinclairs brick by brick, and lower each brick into a specially prepared, foam-lined skip, a more robust attitude was being taken a few hundred yards away in Salford. The Globe on Bury Street (latterly called the Queen Victoria) bit the dust within a few hours.





We're in the 1998 Good Beer Guide

COME TO THE ALL YEAR ROUND BEER FESTIVAL

THE BEER HOUSE

Angel Street, Manchester. 0161 839 7019

12 REAL ALES ON OFFER

including

USHERS BEST BITTER £1.05

DIRECTORS BITTER

MOORHOUSES PENDLE WITCH

plus

9 EVER-CHANGING GUEST BEERS

including A GUEST MILD



TWO TRADITIONAL CIDERS ALWAYS AVAILABLE

DRAUGHT BELGIAN KRIEK, LEFFE BLONDE, HOEGAARDEN &

MANY BOTTLED BELGIAN and other FOREIGN BEERS

GOOD FOOD - *Vegetarians welcome*

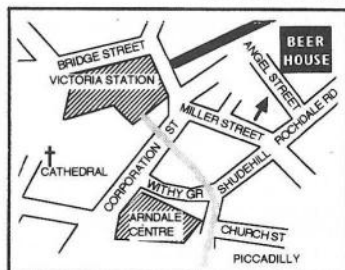
- ☐ Lunchtime food seven days a week ☐ Evening Meals 5 - 7 Friday
- ☐ Thurs 5 - 8 Choice of three curries (veg and carnivore) + rice £3
- ☐ Half price menus Monday lunch

Ceilidh Band every Tuesday from 9.30

Now taking bookings for Xmas lunches

OPEN ALL DAY MONDAY to SUNDAY

FREE PARTY ROOM AVAILABLE



Corrections to GBG '98:

- ☆ *We open at 12 on Sunday*
 - ☆ *We do have a beer garden*
 - ☆ *We do not have a Laurel & Hardy Club (although it looks that way at times!)*
- Shurely shome mishtake?**

Barbary Coast to Blackburn

Daddy Bell

Cross Lane in Crisis

Seven North Manchester CAMRA members took part in what was coyly advertised as an 'Ordsall/Pendleton visit' on November 26th. We started in the **Broadway**, where the Holts mild was rather off form, but the bitter was reassuringly OK. In the **Stowell Spire**, the Banks's bitter (the only real ale) proved similarly acceptable. Taking the underpass footpath to Cross Lane, we found a Samson pump in Vaux's **Ship**, but there was no real ale to issue through it. Was this a temporary aberration or a more permanent loss? Passing by on the other side from the **Golden Gate** (long closed and boarded) and the **Corporation** (above, more recently boarded up downstairs), we entered the **Paddock**, but left feeling distinctly parched as only Tetley smoothflow was available.



This meant that a road (the 'Barbary Coast') which once represented one of the most challenging pub crawls in Western civilisation now has no real ale at all - and only two pubs to sell it in, in any case.

Round the corner there was a pleasant discovery in the **Flemish Weaver** (left). It was only Boddingtons bitter, but the atmosphere and the beer were all right.

We strode on to journey's end, the **Crescent**, where Ruth Broomfield has recently joined Jo Davies as licensee. Of the eight beers available, Bateman's mild and Hanby Russet Ale proved the most popular with us. Ruth is

aiming to keep a range of eight beers on regularly, with a mild or a porter as one of them whenever possible, as these beers are increasingly popular at the Crescent.

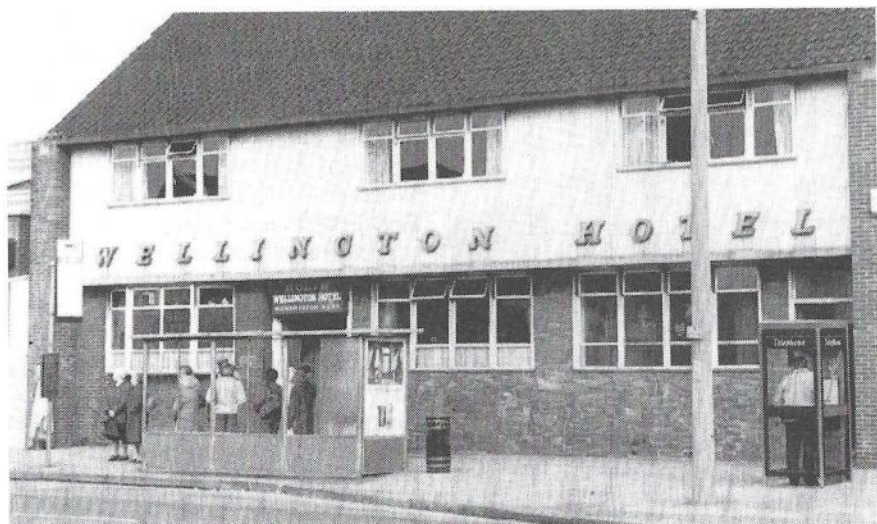
So you can still have a pub crawl in inner-city Salford without finding yourself in intimidating surroundings or company, or being propositioned by purveyors of sexual favours or dodgy goods. Of course, pubs (good or bad) are far thinner on the ground than they used to be, a situation often documented and analysed in *What's Doing*, but what remains is often well worth discovering and encouraging.

Echoes of Eccles

The **Oddfellows Arms** has been treated to a new fascia and internal refit. The **Grapes** has been refurbished and Tetleys bitter seems to be available in cask form. Other national brands are on handpump as well at times.

Also on the pedestrianised portion of Church Street, **Finn McCoul's** (formerly the **Fox**) has both Boddingtons and Greenalls bitters on handpump. The Oirish theme is not quite as painful as in some similar conversions: the varying floor surfaces (flags, tiles and boards) are harmless enough, and the drinking alcoves are useful for quiet contemplation.

Black marks, though, to the **Dog & Partridge**, misleadingly signed as 'A Porter's Ale House'. Real ale has not been on sale for several months now (only nitrokeg), despite numerous claims to be offering cask ale on signs and notices inside and out.



All in all, the best bet for real ale in Eccles is - predictably - a Holts house. If you want a change from the splendours of Edwardian woodwork and tiling, why not try the **Wellington** or the **Crown & Volunteer**? I've found the mild to be particularly good in both pubs in recent months.

Wetherspoons - bane or blessing?

The only Wetherspoons pub I feel comfortable in and about is the **Postal Order** in Blackburn. Perhaps the scale helps - it's converted from a main post office. The staff have mastered the art of delivering a full pint in a 21oz glass, and the clientele (at least at lunchtimes) is generally older than in the superpub Wetherspoons of other city centres. Best of all is the price of guest ales - **£1.25** (at least to the end of 1997). For quality (and up to 6%) beers at that price, it's well worth patronising. And if such prices are possible in Blackburn, why are they out of the question in Manchester or Rochdale or Bury?

Walkden free house

The New Albion, on the A6 between Walkden and Little Hulton, reopened as a free house on Friday 19th December (*see WD last month*). The former run-down Tetley pub, closed since October 1996, has been transformed into a very smart outlet for the MGR leisure group. There is a large, well-appointed lounge and an equally impressive vault.

Licensees are Joe and Marie Jordan, who have run pubs in Oldham (Sergeant at Arms) and Rochdale (Woolpack). The handpumped beers at the Albion are Websters Green Label, Courage Directors and Theakstons bitter and mild.



Brewery shares

Joseph Holt has seen its share price fall to £21 from a high of £38 eighteen months ago. What can be going on? Robinsons made £6m profit on a turnover of £40.5m and employs 519; J W Lees made £2m on £32.7m turnover and they employ 746 people.

ATHERTON & TYLDESLEY

ROUND TABLE

IN CONJUNCTION WITH CAMRA
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PROCEEDS IN AID OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY
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THURSDAY 29th JAN. Admission £2.50 : 6.00pm to 7.30pm
Admission £3.50 : 7.30pm to 11.00pm

FRIDAY 30th JAN. Admission £4.00 : 6.00pm to 11.00pm

SATURDAY 31st JAN. Admission £3.00 : 12 noon to 4.00pm
Admission £3.50 : 7.00pm to 11.00pm

ALL CAMRA members get £1.00 off the admission cost at all sessions

ENTERTAINMENT
HOT & COLD FOOD AVAILABLE AT ALL SESSIONS

Extended hours

CAMRA has been campaigning for a long time for a relaxation of our archaic licensing hours which were introduced in 1916. There has been some progress with 11.00pm closing, the removal of the afternoon break and all-day Sunday opening. There's still a long way to go. One way we could move to hours which are in keeping with the millennium would be to extend opening hours on Fridays and Saturdays. Individual letters may help to get things moving. Why not write to the minister, making some of the following points?

- 1 There is strong consumer demand for more flexible hours.
- 2 Staggered closing times are beneficial to public order and are supported by the police. People will leave pubs at different times, pubs will close at different times and there will be reduced strain on public transport and other services.
- 3 Longer opening times do not mean increased drinking. There was no significant increase following all-day opening (1988) and Sunday afternoons (1995).
- 4 More flexible hours may encourage people to drink in pubs rather than at home. Pubs are a controlled environment and a key factor in promoting sensible drinking. It will be fairer on drinkers who want to drink later but do not like the ambience of discos and nightclubs.
- 5 Existing licensing law is unfair and has little relevance to life in the 1990s. Why not try extending hours on Fridays and Saturdays as a move towards greater deregulation?

Letters should be sent to: George Howarth MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Home Office, 50 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AT.

Swansong?

The Swan Hotel in Bolton town centre was reopened by Regent Inns on 17th December. It's now called the Cygnet Inn and the signs outside say it is a 'genuine free house'. However, the old Malt & Hops bar has been closed and the real ales are on sale in the main part of the pub, which, like others in the neighbourhood, seems to be targeting the young and the deaf. In the first week, Boddingtons, Directors, Theakstons and draught Bass were among the beers on offer. The Bass was a bit iffy.

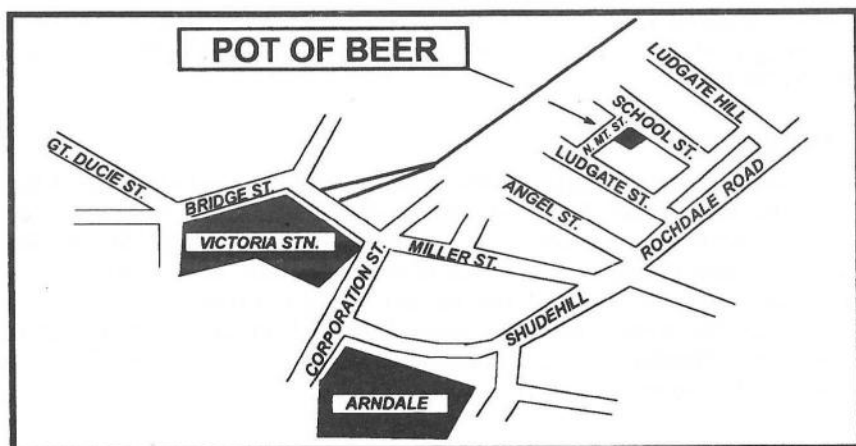
Junction drama

A television crew took over the Junction at Harpurhey for a week just before Christmas. The people from Granada weren't running the pub, though; it was being used for a few hours each day in the recording of a two-hour drama. So look out for this famous Harpurhey landmark, as both interior and exterior shots are promised.

POT OF BEER

36 NEW MOUNT ST.
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- ✓ 4 GUEST ALES EVERY WEEK
- ✓ ROBINSONS DARK MILD
- ✓ HOEGAARDEN WHEAT BEER
- ✓ TRADITIONAL CIDER
- ✓ SELECTION OF WINES & MALT WHISKIES



FOOD NOW AVAILABLE
12 TO 2 PM, MONDAY TO FRIDAY !

Saddleworth Sojourns

Steve Smith

Part 2c: Denshaw, Delph, Dobcross *continued*

Rams Head Inn, Ripponden Road, Denshaw

An isolated moorland hostelry, part of a farm, high up and with views across to the Rochdale area. Also known as 'Owd Tupps' and sheep are apt to wander into the car park. The days when beers were dispensed from casks on stillage behind the bar are gone; nowadays there are handpumps for Timothy Taylors Best and Tetley bitters. The small rooms are mainly for diners and the food operation is professionally run and well patronised. The gents' toilet is a shrine to Scottish Courage brewery products.

Rose & Crown,

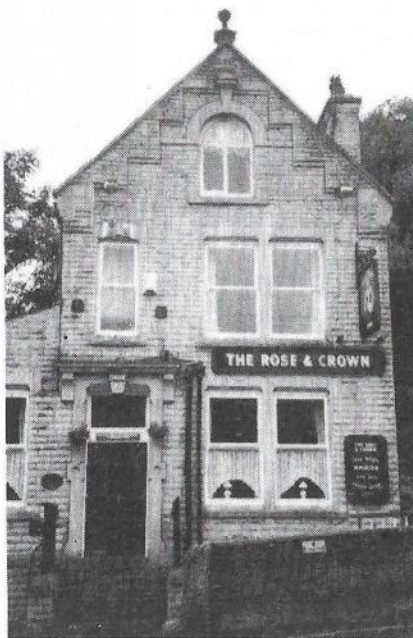
27 King Street, Delph

A Vaux house with a riverside setting and unusual in its range of beers. There is the rarely seen (dark) mild and bitter, with Wards bitter also appearing on handpump. A comfortable local on the main street, with spacious, opened-out rooms with high ceilings and pleasant furnishings.

Royal Oak Inn, Broad Lane, Delph

The name on the wall outside is 'Royal Oak Heights', so it is no surprise that this hostelry is up in t'hills. It is not easy to find, but can be reached from either Delph (uphill) or Diggle (downhill) on a narrow, winding lane. 'Th'Heights', as it is commonly known, is well worth the effort to

reach it - low beamed rooms, comfortable furniture and framed local prints and hunting scenes on the walls. This is a quiet place, with no pool table, juke box or television to distract from the business of sociable drinking. There are up to five real ales, the two regulars being Boddingtons bitter and Coach House Gunpowder mild. One of the three guests is Royal Oak Bitter, a blend of Moorhouses Premium and Pendle Witch.



Saddleworth Hotel, Huddersfield Road, Delph

An isolated hotel and restaurant with no real ale.

Swan Inn, 21 King Street, Delph

A 'Wm Stones free house', with small rooms and an opened-out main area. There are low ceilings and arched alcoves, and a variety of bric-

a-brac is displayed in dark wooden frames on the lounge wall. A collection of plates adorns the pillars and beams, and brasses and old pictures complement the scene. There's a separate vault to the left, a kind of games area. The Swan can be a busy place and usually there are up to five beers on hand pump -

Worthington bitter (creamflow was offered as an alternative), Highgate Dark and Lees bitter were the regulars. Unusually, there is a bus stop plate attached to the outer wall.



Swan Inn, 1 The Square, Dobcross

A mid-eighteenth century ex-Bass house in a pretty setting by the village cross, with an etched window at the entrance indicating that it used to be called the Kings Head Hotel. There are uneven stone flagged floors and lots of wood panelling. Two of the rooms off the main bar are mostly for diners and there is a games room with pool and a television set aloft. Several beers are available, the regulars being Theakstons Best Bitter and mild (unusual for the area) and Marstons Pedigree. Guests can include those from the Moorhouses and Phoenix Breweries.

White Lion, 1 Delph Lane, Delph

A rambling old village pub with small rooms, uneven flooring and brasses, plates and pictures of old village scenes on the walls. The two real ales on offer are the regular Theakstons Best Bitter and a guest (Riverhead's Cupwith Special at the time of calling). On entering the gents' toilet, to the left is a vestibule containing a chair, table and dartboard, a most unusual situation.

Woolpack Inn, 2 Dobcross New Road, Dobcross

Advertised as 'The Woolpack at Dobcross' on the pleasant frontage, this is a basic, three-room hostelry with its old Bass inn sign preserved inside. There's a friendly, down-to-earth clientele with plenty to talk about. Pictures and prints of local scenes adorn the walls and by the bar are a number of chalkboards advertising food. A pleasant retreat in which to sample Tetley bitter, the sole real ale.

Lancashire Beer *Leo King*

The Lancashire Beer Festival at the Beer House in Manchester went down well at the end of November. There were 21 beers from 13 breweries, from Liverpool in the south to Coniston in the north. The festival was promoted by Friends of Real Lancashire, the organisation committed to getting rid of place names like Cumbria, Greater Manchester and Merseyside.

In the beer list for the Bury Beer Festival I was really happy to see the addresses of Phoenix Brewery and Thomas McGuinness listed as Heywood, Lancashire, and Rochdale, Lancashire - not Greater Manchester.

But I was annoyed that J W Lees was down as Middleton Junction, Manchester. Manchester is not a county and never has been. Lees, along with Bank Top (Bolton), Cains (Liverpool) and Coach House (Warrington) should be proud of Lancashire and its history. Three daft counties have been abolished - Humberside, Cleveland and Avon - so now it's time to get rid of the rest!

My thanks to the breweries who sent their beers to the Lancashire Festival, and to Idy at the Beer House for making it a great success.



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LANCASHIRE
not
Greater Manchester
Cumbria, Merseyside
or part of Cheshire

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Theakstons, Taylors and Guest Beers
Thatchers Cider
plus German and Belgian Beers
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Now and Then

Rob Magee

No.103

Halfway House

315 Shaw Road, Oldham

The Halfway House (*below*) opened at High Moor in 1838 and closed when the area was being redeveloped, a hundred and thirty years later. For most of its life it was a beerhouse, but for the last few years it had a full licence, which was something that had been denied to successive licensees in Victorian times. The earliest report of a full licence application for the Halfway House comes from 1854, when tenant John Ogden tried his luck. He didn't have much of a chance, since two years earlier he had been fined 40/- for serving three men and a boy with a jug of beer outside permitted hours, and it wasn't his first offence.

A survey of 1886 found the Halfway House in good condition and owned by Rochdale brewer Thomas Sutcliffe. The next survey, in 1894, noted three drinking rooms, three bedrooms and an enclosed yard, but the house was dirty and in poor repair. The Rochdale & Manor Brewery became the owners in 1895 and the company must have done something about the state of the place.

The Halfway House became a Sam Smiths house in 1948, acquired a full licence in 1960 and was pulled down in 1968 to make room for new housing. Some of the flats built on the estate covering the site of the Halfway House didn't last very long and were demolished, but the pub licence survived, held in suspension by Sam Smiths brewery.

The licence was brought out of retirement in November 1976 and transferred to a former British Legion Club in Failsworth. The new pub was called the Failsworth Arms, which in 1992 was transformed into the Millgate pub/restaurant.



Home Brewing Revisited

Humulus Lupulus

Part Eight: Formulating the Mash

For the purposes of this article, I am relying on Pale Ale Malt to supply most of the fermentable material, whilst using other grains, etc, to vary the character of the finished beer. I shall take each in turn and discuss the way it affects the colour and/or flavour.

Pale Ale Malt: A very acceptable all-malt bitter or light mild can be made using this grain alone. It will necessarily be pale in colour, closer, say, to Taylor's Landlord or Golden Best than to Sam Smith's Old Brewery Bitter.

Crystal Malt: This is unusual amongst malts in that it has already been 'mashed' within the husk before drying. It contains a high proportion of non-fermentable, coloured sugars and will add colour, body and sweetness to the finished beer.

Wheat Malt: Apart from Weizenbier, where it can comprise up to 70%, this is a useful addition to British style beers, say 5% to 10%, where it contributes to flavour and head retention.

Black Malt: Highly coloured, it is used in small quantities in dark beers and stouts (but not Irish stout). If over-used, it can make the finished beer too acrid.

Chocolate Malt: Not quite as dark as black malt, this has less acidity and is a useful ingredient for sweet stouts. I remember a visit to the Cook Street Brewery in Salford about twenty years ago when Mackeson was made there; chocolate malt was the main flavouring and colouring ingredient. I would use about 15%, the balance being mainly pale malt. Some sweetening is also beneficial (eg lactose, a non-fermentable sugar).

Roasted Barley: As an aficionado of dark beers with a dry palate, including Irish style stout, I rate this as my favourite adjunct. In a stout, I would use up to 10%, with an equal quantity of Flaked Barley (see below), the remaining 80% being Pale Malt. In milds, 2-3% will produce all the colour you need, whilst the distinct dry flavour remains unmistakable.



Flaked Barley: Looking a bit like uncooked porridge, this is the other essential adjunct for Irish stout. Unlike all the ingredients so far listed after pale malt, this contains high proportions of unmodified starch, which relies on the diastase enzymes in the pale malt to convert it to a fermentable form. It **must** therefore be included in the mash, whereas the others are usually included more for convenience in preference to putting them in the boil. The flakes add a grainy flavour to the beers, and being rich in water soluble gums they help with head retention. Use in pale beers should be restricted to lower percentages to avoid possible haze problems.

Torrefied barley: Made in a similar way to popcorn or 'puffed wheat', it is a large, low density grain which is said to open up the mash and make sparging and sugar extraction more efficient. Both the torrefying and flaking processes make the unmodified starch more open to conversion by the diastase enzymes.

Flaked Maize: Looks like cornflakes, but much tougher and a paler yellow. Again needs external diastase to convert it. The 'corn' taste can be quite noticeable if high proportions are used.

Flaked Rice: As above, but white, and contributes no colour and very little flavour. Best regarded as a diluent to Pale Ale Malt when making high gravity pale ales, where it reduces the risk of nitrogen haze, whilst maintaining the 'body' of the finished beer.

Sugars: Common household sugar (sucrose) **can** be added to the wort before or after boiling. It will increase the final alcohol content of the beer whilst reducing the body, since it is 100% fermentable. Overdone, it will produce an unbalanced, headache-inducing brew. I would only use it in very small amounts, to increase the original gravity by a point or two where my mash had come out lower than expected. However, quite a number of home-brew 'kits' rely on quite large amounts of this ingredient to supplement their malt extract base. Enough said!

Commercial brewers use a range of coloured sugars, not generally available to the home brewer. Dave Line (5) was a fan of dark sugars such as demerara, soft brown and Barbados. I once used Barbados in a dark brew and found the resulting 'molasses' taste, stripped of its sweetness in the finished beer, obtrusive and inappropriate. However, Graham Wheeler (11) acknowledges that some famous names use sugar and that in strong beer they can reduce the cloying which would result from an all-malt formulation.

Another sugar which used to be widely available was 'glucose chips', sold by home brew shops. This comes in large buff-coloured chunks and I believe is derived from maize starch by acid hydrolysis. Their process 'inverts' the sugar: it is broken down into simple glucose and fructose molecules, which are said to be more quickly fermented by

the yeast. It is also reckoned to yield a 'drier' end flavour.

Recipes

I don't intend, in this series, to give a large collection of recipes. I haven't yet touched upon hops, which are an equally important ingredient. However, two books stand out and are worth acquiring: Dave Line's second volume (8) and Graham Wheeler & Roger Protz (11). Unlike all others, both these name commercial beers and give recipes which will result in a beer approximating to the original.

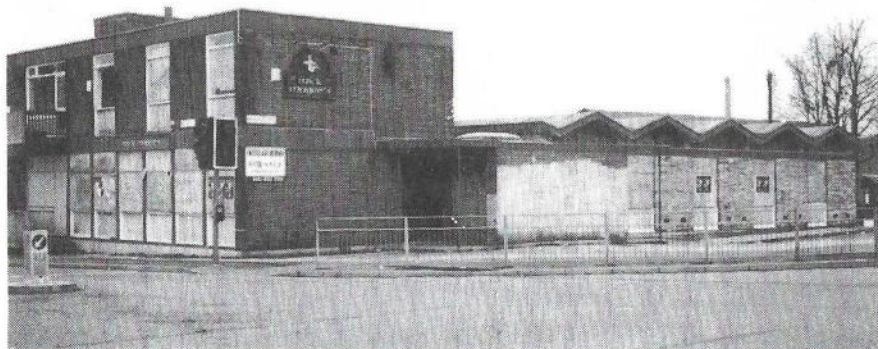
Next time, boiling the wort.

References

- 5 *The Big Book of Brewing* by Dave Line, Amateur Winemaker/Argus Books
- 8 *Brewing Beers like those you Buy* by Dave Line, Amateur Winemaker
- 11 *Brew Classic European Beers at Home* by Graham Wheeler & Roger Protz, CAMRA

Spanking

A recent jaunt around the Miles Platting and Ancoats areas revealed some changes. The Spanking Roger (ex Vaux) has reopened with the help of the people behind the nearby Cricketers Sports & Social Club - more on this next time.



The same people also have a controlling interest in the Fountain (ex J Smiths) on Bradford Road, so improvements should be seen there. Further down Bradford Road, Mick Magee's (above, ex-Magpie) is boarded and vandalised and the Cob o'Coal is open, but has no cask beer.

Brewery Tavern

The Brewery Tavern (Burtonwood) on Adelphi Street, Salford, was selling the seasonal Advent bitter in December. The quality of this and the Burtonwood bitter were excellent, so it's worth making the detour en route from the Dock & Pulpit to the Crescent.

Last orders at the Dog & Rat

The old photograph shows Deansgate when the roadway was just a few yards wide. The building on the right is the Three Arrows on the corner of St Mary's Street and the Golden Lion is next door (Kendal's covers the site now). In the middle years of the Victorian era there were more than fifty pubs and beerhouses lining Deansgate and many more in the streets on either side, which also housed a considerable inner city population.

The Rising Sun on Queen Street and the Nags Head on Jacksons Row are survivors from that age, when the area was a pretty rough one. The following story comes from a account of a failed eviction in 1855 and concerns a beerhouse called the Dog & Rat, which was on the other side of Queen Street from the Rising Sun and nearer Deansgate.

At that time the centre of Manchester was being transformed and old houses were being pulled down to make way for new commercial buildings. One man who didn't agree with what was going on was



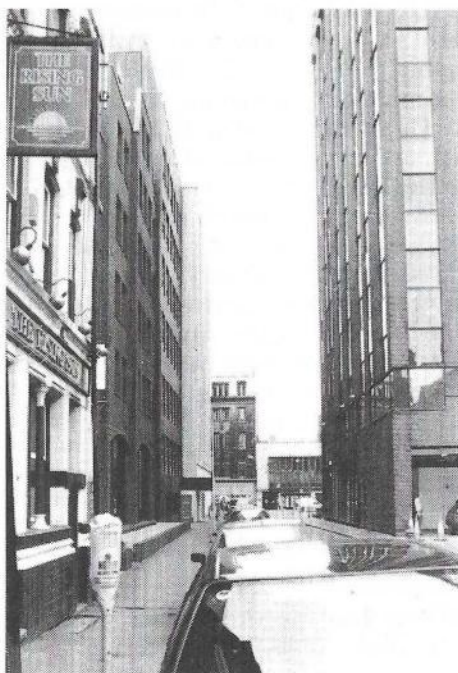
Photo courtesy Manchester City Engineers Photographic Department

John Windsor, mine host at the Dog & Rat. The owner of the beerhouse and adjoining property wanted him out in order to build a warehouse across the site, but Old John was not for moving. He had plenty of support from his customers, but none from the authorities, who thought there were still too many places like the Dog & Rat in Manchester. They said the beerhouse was one of the worst of its class, almost constantly crowded with disreputable women and thieves who drank, danced and fought at intervals, and in pretty regular succession.

With Old John resisting all attempts to get him out, the rest of the site was cleared and the builders got to work on the new warehouse. Then the owner decided on drastic action and told the contractor to start taking down the Dog & Rat with Old John and his customers still inside. On the Friday morning the roof was removed and demolition continued during the day. By Saturday morning all that remained were the ground floor walls and a few floor beams overhead. The demolition continued and Old John retreated to the cellar, taking his furniture with him. Surrounded by beer barrels and with some tarpaulin stretched across the timbers over his head, he carried on serving the locals.

He was still there the following Tuesday and the *Manchester Guardian* reported that he could be seen seated upon a cask, smoking a pipe with the most philosophic calmness. As news of Old John's stand spread, quite a crowd gathered in Queen Street and a number of policemen had to be stationed outside the cellar to keep order. There was some pushing and shoving as people tried to reach the cellar for a drink with Old John and at least one customer was arrested. There was talk of court action to get him out, but he seems to have left of his own accord when the beer barrels were empty.

The warehouse which replaced the Dog & Rat has now also gone and today the site of Old John Windsor's last stand is beneath a block of offices called Centurion House (*right*).



Rupert

As usual over the festive period, all my favourite amber nectar resorts were filled to overbrimming with amateur imbibers and parvenu tipplers standing ten deep at the bar, preventing seasoned connoisseurs from partaking of their customary foaming ales. I was able to console myself with the contents of my Christmas stocking, not least the 25th edition of the taverngoers' vademecum, in a handy vomit-proof hardback version. It's much improved since that flimsy volume of 1974, cobbled together in a shoebox in a Slumley slum and containing several fictional hostelries in and around Greater Grotley and at least one city centre tavern which was built for keg and didn't sell true ale for ages. We tend to get things right these days, thanks most probably to the regime of Grotty Hardman who reminisced in a recent edition of the Campaign's national rag. He's still scared to death of coming to Grotley and facing the opprobrium of Slumley members about the number of entries permitted. You're welcome, Grotty, 'cos we're all sweeties now. Anyway, the new vademecum's bigger and half our alehouses have been burned down or turned into keg gay cyberbars, so what's the need?

It's delightful to see that Smarmford & Slutch are still

sufficiently bold to put in entries that will be shut when the tome is published. Such was the fate of Goosebums. I'm also pleased that the practice of including sordid hovels where Southern Jessies will like as not get their throats cut has not diminished. This is a long-standing tradition and I would hate to see such places flung out in favour of some ephemeral trendy outlet merely on the basis of beer quality. We should remember that the good thing about real ale is that sometimes it's rotten. If we wanted consistency we'd all drink Smugsmooth. I don't see any fan clubs for that.

In 1974 there were two pages on amber nectar producers; today there are 140 pages. Most of our local purveyors are still with us. Fuddies and Goosegrease & Dishwater have gone and Brobdingnags is not as it was but Drabs, Brassos, Sikhs and Boringsods are still going strong and are supported by a growing number of embryo brewers and in-house cellar breweries.

Armed with my new-found knowledge from the vademecum and from the Opening Tripe website, I plan to spend 1998 seeking out taverns of quality serving these lesser known brews, ticking them off in my palm-top database and transferring my tasting notes to Boris Pratt's homepage so he can win the Beerbore of the Year's Golden Hop Award yet again.

Contributors to this issue: Brian Gleave, Pete Cash, Steve Smith, Mark McConachie, Stewart Revell, Roger Hall, Rob Magee, Roger Wood, Leo King, Daddy Bell, Keith Egerton

Branch Diary

Rochdale, Oldham & Bury

Tue 6 Jan 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Eagle & Child, Whitefield

Tue 20 Jan 8.30pm, Joint Committee Meeting & Pub of Season, Rose & Crown (ex Tap & Spile), Bury centre

Tue 27 Jan 8.30pm, What's Doing collation, Flying Horse, Town Hall Square, Rochdale

Sat 31 Jan 12noon, GBG 1999 Selection Meeting, Blue Pits, Manchester Road, Castleton

Tue 3 Feb 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Success to the Plough, Sudden, Rochdale

Contact: Peter Alexander 0113 232 4023(w), 0161 655 4002 (h)

Trafford & Hulme

Thur 8 Jan 8pm, Swan with Two Nicks, Little Bollington. Then Vine, Dunham. Finish Railway, Broadheath

Thur 15 Jan 8pm, Thirsty Scholar, under arch at Oxford Road Station, City Centre. Then Ducie Arms, Devas Street; Church, Britons Protection, Peveril of the Peak.

Thur 22 Jan 8pm, Church, Church Road, then Bird i'th'Hand and Roebuck, all Flixton. Finish Lord Nelson, Urmston

Thur 29 Jan 8pm City Crawl. 8pm Crown, Deansgate; 9.30 Ape & Apple, finish City Arms.

Thur 5 Feb 8pm, Railway, Broadheath, then Cresta Court, Railway and Malt Shovels, all Altrincham

Contact: Roger Wood 0161 747 3987

North Manchester

Jan 7 Atherton crawl: Atherton Arms 8pm; Wheatsheaf 9pm

Jan 14 GBG 1999 Shortlisting meeting (city & non-city): Marble Arch, Rochdale Rd. 7.30pm

Jan 17 (Saturday) Regional meeting (High Peak): Stalybridge Station Buffet, 12 noon

Jan 21 Branch meeting: Hare & Hounds, Shudehill, Manchester, 8pm

Jan 27 (Tuesday) What's Doing Collation: Queens Arms, Honey Street, Cheetham, 6pm onward

Jan 28 Irlams o'th'Height crawl: Henry Boddington 7pm; Waggon & Horses 8; Red Lion 9.30 (all Bolton Road)

Feb. 4 City crawl & survey: Old Garratt, Granby Row 7pm; Grey Horse, Portland Street 8.30; Waldorf, Gore Street. 9.30

Contact: Roger Hall 0161 740 7937

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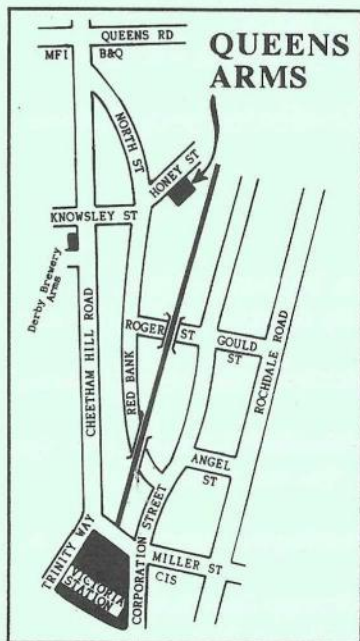


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and CAMRA's Good Food Guide*