

30p

What's Doing

OCTOBER 1999



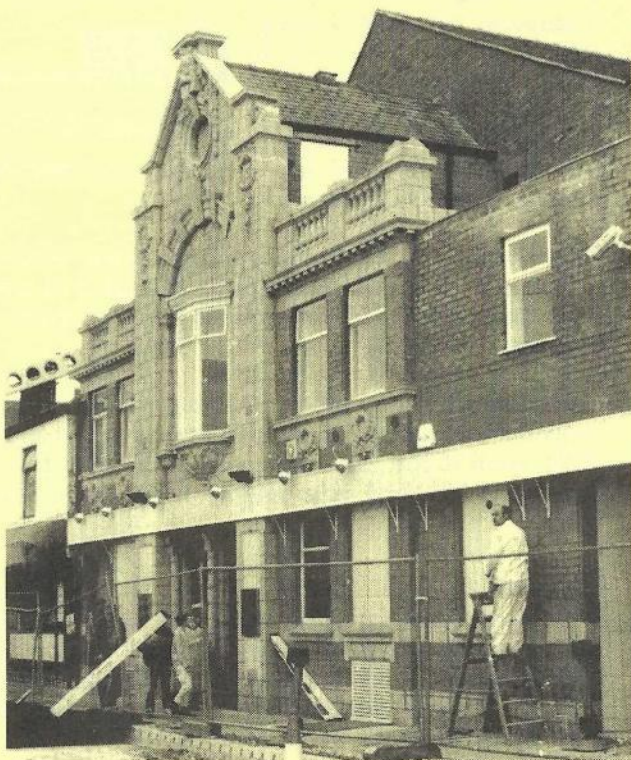
The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

WETHERSPOONS IN ECCLES

As What's Doing went to press, Wetherspoons were putting the finishing touches to their latest Greater Manchester premises, the Eccles Cross on Regent Street in Eccles.

This is the former Regent Cinema which was latterly a night club known as Jungle Jim's or the Silver Screen. It's by no means as large as the Moon Under Water and the upper floors have not been incorporated in the pub. There is a mezzanine floor or raised seating area and a terrace which looks out on the back of Church Street.

Whether the Eccles Cross will succeed in enticing customers from pubs like the Lamb remains to be seen.



Peel Park

Another Salford pub is due to close. The Peel Park on Chapel Street (*right*) has been bought by the finance company next door (the old TSB bank) and the pub will be turned into offices.

Bury Beer Festival

The 18th Bury Beer Festival takes place on Friday 5th (opening 12-3pm and 5-11 pm) and Saturday 6th November (12-4pm and 6-11pm) at The Met Arts Centre on Market Street.

As usual, admission is free to CAMRA members on production of a valid membership card. For non-members, the entry charge is 50p at lunchtimes, £2 on Friday evening and £1.50 on Saturday evening. There is a lift for disabled access to the hall, guide dogs are welcome and well-behaved children are allowed in the side room.

There will be a wide choice of cask ales, bottled foreign beer, cider, perry and wine. Hot food will be available at a reasonable price. Live entertainment on Friday evening and a quiet session on Saturday evening.

Volunteers to help set up the festival or serve the beer are always welcome and appreciated - please contact Graham Chinn on 0161 652 4524, even if you can only spare an hour or two. Further information about the Festival is available from Peter Alexander on 0161 655 4002.

Big Cat

Moorhouses are introducing a new dark beer called Black Panther (4.8%), brewed to retain the characteristics of Black Cat but with a higher ABV. Black Panther was recently available as a guest at Bolton's Sweet Green Tavern, where the other guest beer is Boddingtons bitter.



Kings reopens

The Kings Arms on Bloom Street, Salford, reopened on Thursday 26th August after a brief period of closure. The new lessees are Mike Bowden and Christine Nash, late of Marston's Pack Horse, Wrigley Head, Failsworth's oldest pub. Christine spent some time at the Salutation (Tetley) in Chorlton-on-Medlock, where she first met Mike, who was then in the music business, playing with such bands as the Roach Twins and Right Band, Wrong Planet.



In the short term they aim to stabilise trade at the Kings with quality and consistent beers, introduce live music again and serve simple lunchtime food. The permanent beers are Bridgewater Navigator, Ash Blonde, Delph Porter and Taylors Landlord and there will be one or two guests - recently Hopback Summer Lightning. Every other Saturday there will be music with the Clive D'Cruz Trio. Clive, it seems, used to play on the Goon Show in the fifties.

In the long term, Mike and Christine hope to refurbish the top room so that it can be used for live music and they would also like to offer B&B accommodation.

Tyldesley Wetherspools

The George & Dragon on Elliott Street, Tyldesley, is Wetherspoon's latest venture in the area. This former Greenalls pub has been totally refurbished and brightened up; it even has a small beer garden. Food is available all day, not to mention espresso and capuccino coffee - surely a first for Tyldesley!

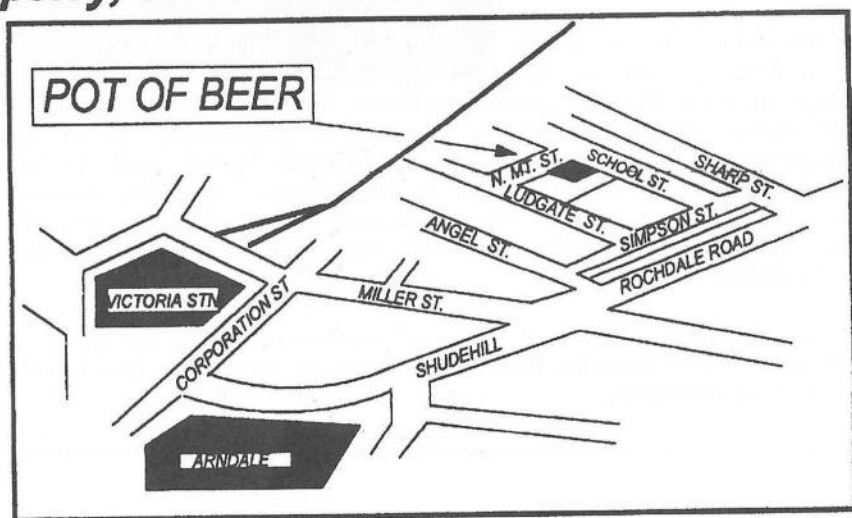
That's the good news. The beer range is disappointing: Boddies, Directors and Theakstons, plus a guest. Most recently this was Clarkes Golden Hornet and was in very poor condition. Bottles of Becks and John Smiths Extra Smooth (both at 99p) are heavily promoted and perhaps that says it all.

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Here and there

with Daddy Bell

The Crescent and the Beer House

Everyone agrees that it is the end of one era at the Crescent, with the departure of Ruth Broomfield and the withdrawal of Jo and Andy Davies from day-to-day responsibility for the pub, and the dawn of a new era with the coming of Idy and Sal from the Beer House. Ruth has spent almost five years at the Crescent, first behind the bar and for the past two years as manager and co-licensee, being particularly assiduous in her cellar-work. It is surprising that Rupert has not found need or opportunity to include Ruth in his *dramatis personae*: Oprah Brushmeadow would have made a very recognisable addition to his gallery of the great and the good. I for one will miss Ruth, Jo, Andy and Matthew at the Crescent; but I know that I am only one of many who want to say 'Thank you' to them. I hope Ruth will find as much fulfilment and success in feeding the five thousand as in slaking the thirst of a smaller multitude.

It is intriguing how much speculation has already been generated about the future of the Beer House (*right*), notwithstanding the evident commitment of its owner, Graham Rawlinson, to maintaining its position as a flagship real ale free house. Some have even expressed a desire for the return of Simon Finch, in ethos and spirit if not in person, and for a less adventurous choice of beers. Curiously, some such voices have called for the Crescent to move in an opposite direction in beer range, which indeed will be the case. I shall continue to maintain an even-handed appreciation of both pubs, and others besides.



Bridgewater Ales

Richard Bazen's second brew at 142 Chapel Street, on August 24th, came out almost half as strong again as projected. The resultant 5.5% beer has gone on sale as Ratcatcher, which I sampled in both the Beer House and the Kings Arms on September 16th. It is a hefty beer, initially sweet but with a lingering bitterness. Ash Blonde proved popular at the Sheffield Beer Festival, where it was in good clear condition and compared well with the other 120 or so beers on offer. Stockport and South Manchester CAMRA visited the brewery and the Kings Arms on September 11th, for the presentation of the Beer of the (Stockport) Festival Award to Richard and Ken for Delph Porter: their visit included an excursion to the Old Pint Pot to view Bridgewater's natal brewery.

Bolton

Being in Bolton for a meeting on September 14th, I chanced upon Thwaites' new pub, **Red on the Square** (below). Inside, it is all lightish wood, with some nice metalwork in traceried balustrades and light fittings, and walls painted in blocks of bold bright colours, the sort you used to get in poster paints at school. As for the beer, there is a large ceramic Warsteiner dispenser at the centre of the U-shaped bar, several banks of fonts for lagers, wines and keg beers, and three handpumps - on my visit, two for Thwaites bitter and one for a seasonal Thwaites ale, Morning Glory (3.8%, £1.80 a pint). The menu is rather pricey but not uninteresting; there is additional room in an upstairs gallery; and the clientele consisted mostly of young or would-be-young professionals.

The older-established Wetherspoons pub next door, the **Spinning Mule**, was similarly comfortable,



but busier and noisier, with a more mixed clientele. The only exotic colouring in this pub is in the carpeting and the mosaic floor tiling. Here there was a choice of six real ales, including Harviestoun Schiehallion at £1.69, and Thwaites dark mild. How will the two pubs thrive alongside each other? How long will it be before Red is revamped?

After this I wondered what **Maxims** in Bradshawgate would be selling on handpump following the downfall of Vaux as a brewer. The answer turned out to be Theakston XB, Bass and Stones. Not finding this a compelling choice, and avoiding the **Cygnets Inn** at the Swan Hotel (which claims to be 'a genuine free house' but has only Boddies and Directors at £1 a pint, Monday to Thursday all day to entice customers), I looked into Banks's **Varsity**. It was almost empty, despite offering Banks's bitter at the 'stupid' summer price of £1.25. I went instead for Lindridge Ale (4.5%, £1.95), served in an oversized glass from which I had several mouthfuls before I got anywhere near the pint line. Varsity is much more airy than the other pubs, with plain surfaces of brick and wood, and green-painted ducting everywhere. It also had the best-looking female customers.

Returning to thoughts of **Wetherspoons**... Their pub in Piccadilly (Manchester) reopened on September 15th, with a sort of peaches-and-cream and aquamarine decor, and seemingly comfier and more open than I remembered. Butcombe Gold, Morrells Graduate [who is brewing that now?] and Hopback Summer Lightning were on as guests, even if the last was £1.99. At least they were available. In Wetherspoons' **Postal Order** in Blackburn on the Tuesday of one week in September and the Friday of the following week, no guest beers were available, despite three pumpclips advertising 'guest ales from £1.39.' On the former occasion, even Thwaites mild was not to be had. Let's hope Wetherspoons can do better when their Eccles outlet opens.

Predator

Wolverhampton & Dudley took over Marstons earlier this year. The company lost out on its bid for Morlands to Greene King and has now set its sights on Mansfield. It seems as though, as a Midlands brewer, it has started in the middle of the alphabet with its takeover bids. Could the Marble Brewery be next? Or Moorhouses? Perhaps W&D will skip a few pages and start on Lees, Holts, Hydes and Robinsons.

It will be interesting to see to what extent Mansfield is protected by its share structure. It is 48% owned by two trusts. If this works in fending off the aggressor, then there's hope yet in this neck of the woods.

Idy and Sal are now at

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THE DARK SIDE OF THE MOON

30 Winter Ales, Milds, Porters &

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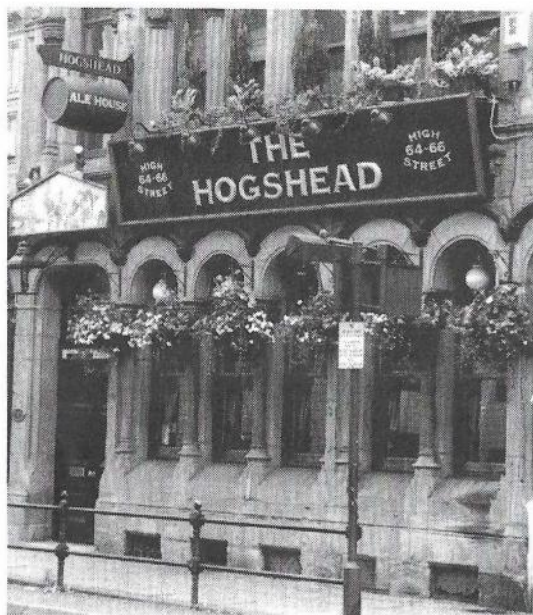
Friday 29th Oct - With many prizes!

King's Ale

Leo King

Hogshead Festival

The Hogshead on High Street in Manchester is holding a beer festival from 21st to 31st October. Vance, the new manager, promises a range of up to 54 real ales and as usual you can 'taste before you buy'. Tours of the beer cellars can be arranged by appointment. For further details, ask at the pub.



Lancashire Beer Festival

This year the Lancashire Beer Festival will be held at Idy Phillips' new pub, the Crescent in Salford. It starts on November 27th and will run for three days. The aim of the festival is to promote 'real' Lancashire, the Red Rose County. All the beers will be from breweries in Lancashire and the hypothetical counties of Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cumbria.

Cumbria

As a member of the Friends of Real Lancashire, I cannot let Daddy Bell's anti-Lancashire remarks (*Roving the North-West, September WD*) pass without comment. He says, 'I count this area as Cumbria, though no doubt Leo King still calls it Lancashire-over-the-Sands'. For a start, it is called 'Lonsdale North of the Sands'. Cumbria is one of those Mickey Mouse names, like Greater Manchester and Merseyside. I found Daddy Bell's article interesting, but perhaps he could get his geography right in future.

And another thing...

Paul Roberts, in his article about the new Rain Bar (*Welcome Rain, September WD*) perpetuates the myth that Manchester has more rain than anywhere else in the country. This, of course, is rubbish. In the 'wet' league, Exeter and Cardiff, for example, come before Manchester. Upper Chorlton Road is split lengthwise between Stretford and Manchester, so when it rains, does only the Manchester side of the road get wet? Nicknames such as the 'Rainy City', the 'Umbrella City' and the 'Land of the Eternal Dewdrop' are as misleading as 'Greater Manchester' and should be banned!

Wigan and district

Dave White

Two-and-a-half years ago, I reported that the **Boars Head**, Market Street, Leigh (*below*) had been transformed into the **Fritch & Firkin**. Well, it's the Boars Head again, run this time by Vanguard Inns. Beers available are Tetley mild and something called Boars Head Bitter.



A few weeks ago, I was driving down the B5207 between Bryn and Stubshaw Cross, when I passed a pub I hadn't known was there. The **Ashfield** on the corner of Bryn Road and Nicol Road used to be a Labour Club (and still has that look to it) before Wolverhampton & Dudley bought it about a year ago. Banks's bitter is the only cask-conditioned brew on offer, and there are no other pubs within reasonable walking distance.

Still in Bryn, the **Britannia**, a Greenalls pub on Wigan Road by the railway station appears to be open again.

The word is out that the **Grand Hotel** on Dorning Street in Wigan town centre is to be converted into student accommodation. The place hasn't sold real ale in donkey's years and isn't particularly grand these days either. Nary a cockstride away in Hallgate, Tetley's renowned **Bricklayers Arms** is now keg only.

How are the mighty fallen! The **Springfield Hotel**, Springfield Road, Springfield, which got into the 1999 Good Beer Guide on the strength of its Tetley mild and bitter, now sells no real ale at all. Taking the road from Springfield into Standish Lower Ground, you will find the **Royal Oak**, a Burtonwood inn on Wigan Lower Road. On a mid-August Saturday, I was informed that cask bitter had just gone off and that there wasn't any more in the cellar. Another one gone west?

Traditional beer has been shown the door in a couple of pubs in Orrell; namely the **Fishergate Inn** (Burtonwood) and the **Travellers Rest**, once a Tetley house, but now owned by a pub company, the name of which escapes me. Still on Ormskirk Road, the **Miners Lamp** sells cask Thwaites bitter (as opposed to the smoothflow) for £1.15 a pint all day on a Monday. The condition of my pint on a Saturday night visit would suggest that little is sold during the rest of the week.

Greenalls

After a period of test brewing, Greenalls bitter and mild are now being produced by Carlsberg Tetley at Leeds. Thomas Greenall Original and the Higsons and Shipstones brands have been dropped and it appears that Theakstons is being withdrawn from their pubs because of inadequate discounts.

Last month Scottish & Newcastle were in discussions to acquire Greenalls' 770 managed pubs and restaurants, together with 69 Premier Lodges. If the purchase goes ahead, this would leave Greenalls with the De Vere and Village Leisure hotel chains, plus Greens health and fitness clubs and Tavern Wholesaling. There are rumours of a possible merger of Greenalls with the Swallow Group (formerly Vaux), and also of a takeover bid by Whitbread, either separately or for the merged group.

The headquarters of Inn Partnership, a former Greenalls company now owned by Nomura Bank, has been moved from Warrington to Runcorn. Inn Partnership have 1,241 pubs; most are in the North West, with a cluster in the Midlands and the remainder in the South West and Home Counties. The Greenalls name will soon be removed from the pubs.

Inn Partnership's outlets sell beers from national brewers and some major regionals, such as Marstons and Cains. The company says that licencees are allowed to make local supply deals, but this doesn't seem to be encouraged. Cask beer is considered important and will only be replaced where demand and quality fall. Greenalls brands and guest list beers are still taken, although alternative sources of supply are being investigated in case Greenalls pull out. Thomas Greenall Original is to be replaced by Draught Bass and Flowers, Wadworths 6X and Pedigree may be available.

All change

The Station Hotel in Pendlebury is being fitted out as a restaurant. It will be called the Isis and is due to open at Christmas.

*Westrose Leisure are delighted to announce that
Ian Casson (formerly of the Stafford Arms - a
Titanic Free House) will be taking over...*

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OCTOBERFEST GERMAN BEER FESTIVAL

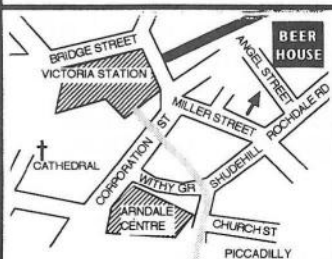
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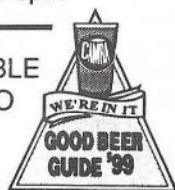
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OVER THE MOON AND INTO THE MILLENNIUM!

Northern Quarter

The North Manchester branch of CAMRA undertook two crawls of the city's 'Northern Quarter' recently. Mark McConachie reports...

The first crawl began at **Gullivers** (J W Lees) on Oldham Street. This has a long front room and bar leading to a mid-sized rear lounge popular with a middle aged clientele who like a singalong. The beers are Lees mild and bitter. Gullivers is Oldham Street's second-best pub. The best is the **Castle** (Robinsons) - smallish, with three rooms and packed with quality and character, from the exterior tiling, the bar counter and cosy snug to the full Robbies cask range. (Seven beers, all year round, too.) Unfortunately the light mild had just gone, so we tried Old Stockport, a more than acceptable replacement. There are DM, BB, XB, Frederics and Old Tom to choose from as well.

Next it was on to the **Bar Fringe** (free) on Swan Street. On the way we passed the newly reopened **Wheatsheaf** (Burtonwood) - it remains keg-only. Bar Fringe is an increasingly popular and enterprising free house serving a large selection of Belgian beers together with Flowers IPA and a beer from Bank Top Brewery. Today it was Samuel Crompton, so we all tried this and found it had a distinctly odd taste not normally associated with the beer. We informed the bar staff, 'this isn't right', but received no exchange nor an apology and left with a sour taste in the mouth, in more ways than one.

On to the area's latest cask outlet - the **Cheshire Cheese** on Oldham Road, styled a John Smiths house. The pub had that beer together with Theakstons BB; Pedigree had been tried but dropped because it wasn't selling. We left a reasonably busy pub to head for Blossom Street and the **Edinburgh Castle** (Whitbread, right). This well run street corner house has a modest three-room layout and two cask beers (Boddies and Chesters mild) in excellent condition. The Chesters was superb - rich, dark and luscious - everything the beer should be. It was



no surprise to see that most of the regulars were drinking mild and we stayed for another. A fitting end to the first crawl.

Crawl two, a few weeks later, began at Holts' **Crown & Anchor**, their recently refurbished pub on Cateaton Street. The mild and bitter were in good nick. We made our way across the partially constructed Exchange Square to the **John Willie Lees** on Withy Grove. Lees mild and bitter were available (150p for Lees is a bit steep, though) and there was a loud disco. There was no escaping to the lower vault as it was shut. Oh, well, the beer was enjoyable enough. Round the corner on High Street, the **Hogshead** (Whitbread) was selling six or seven beers. Our visit coincided with a cider festival and the pub was fairly busy. The beers sampled were good.

We then decided to try the **Bar Centro** on Tib Street as it was reportedly selling cask beer. Indeed it was - Theakstons BB at 150p and not too bad either. The modern-style bar seems to cater for a fairly wide clientele and good reports have been heard about the food.

Away from the trendy and back to the trad for our final pub, the **Hare & Hounds**, Shudehill. This is a fine Tetley house featuring one of the best tiled interiors of any pub in the city. There are two rooms divided by a lobby, bar dispensing Tetley, Holts and Lees bitters.



Peveril news

The demise of Wilsons bitter has meant the introduction of Boddies and this, plus Tetley bitter, Websters bitter and Pedigree, means a very unexciting choice at the Peveril of the Peak in Manchester. With all the Lees beers on offer opposite at the Rail Bar, maybe the Pev will be brave and at least swap Pedigree for a more exciting guest ale.

Despite this, the attraction of table football emains - and the original table has been refurbished to prevent it falling apart! The Pev is staying open all day on Saturdays now that more people live in and visit the area.

Holts Corner

Stewart Revell

During September I received reports of beer which was not of the quality one would expect from Holts. At least one iffy batch seems to have been delivered from the brewery and it was soon replaced by beer of a quality to which Holts drinkers are more accustomed.

It may have been part of the same problem at the Kingsway, the venue for CAMRA's Regional Meeting last month. The Kingsway doesn't sell mild and there was no bitter either. Some members ordered the bottled 1849 beer at £1.50, but this quickly ran out. The 'meeting' lasted no longer than 45 minutes, when everyone made alternative arrangements to drink in a pub that had beer on draught. I called at the Spread Eagle (Chorlton) where the bitter was OK.

The Winston in Salford reopened recently. It is understood that this is no longer a Holts tied pub and is supplied as a free trade outlet. The problems which led to its closure earlier this year seem to have been overcome.

Holts' former Underbrewer, Dick Venes (*WD August*) survived his trip to the USA without being mugged or worse, and is now happily studying at a local university.

Stewart@reve1162.freemove.co.uk

Tramway Pub Guides

Way back in May 1992 the world's first Real Ale Guide to the Tramways was published right here in *What's Doing*. Earlier this year the new tram system in the West Midlands opened its first line, appropriately named 'Line One', and a guide has been published similar to that produced by CAMRA for Metrolink later in 1992. It contains full details of twenty-six CAMRA-recommended pubs, all within a short walk of thirteen of the twenty-four stations along the route. A £3 ticket to travel all day on bus and trams can be purchased (exact money only) from bus drivers and tram stations. Copies of the guide can be obtained by sending an s.a.e to Travel Midland Metro, Potters Lane, Wednesbury, WS10 0AR.

The Supertram System in Sheffield hasn't got a similar guide yet, but the fourth new U.K tram system, due to open in Croydon later this year, will probably manage something. Watch this space! What's that saying? Today, Manchester. Tomorrow, the rest of the world!

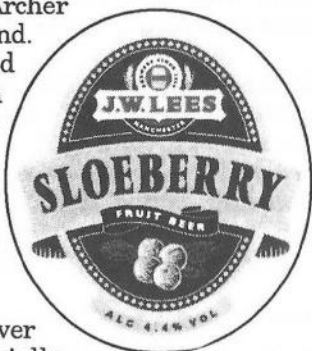
An updated version of the first real ale guide is still being produced by the Metrolink people.

Sloely does it

Grognard

It's finally happened. The long-awaited Sloeberry has made its appearance in selected Lees pubs. Has it been worth the wait? Definitely yes. This is one of the Middleton brewers' better efforts. I won't say best; that accolade goes to their Archer Stout in my book, but this runs a close second.

An attractive coppery tinge to the liquid warns of the potential difference which comes with a dry, sharp, long-lasting hoppy flavour with an underlying hint of, well, sloeberries. What else? The price is around £1.55/60, which is a bit up on Lees' normal own-guest prices, but then I suppose sloeberries are at a premium.



Where did the brewery obtain them? I've never heard of sloeberries being grown commercially.

When I lived in Hampshire they could be found by scouring the hedgerows where blackthorn bushes grow, most of the crop ending up in home-made wines, though there is a delicacy known as sloe-gin which is a trendy tipple down south, on and off.

So far, in Oldham, I have located the brew on sale at the **Woodman**, Hollinwood, the **Black Swan** on Huddersfield Road, near Mumps Bridge; the **Spinners** on Woodbrook Road at Springhead (*below*) and the **Falconers Arms** on Hollins Road.



This last named pub deserves a bit of detail. It's one of the oldest in Oldham and certainly the most visually attractive in the neighbourhood, perched on the side of a steep banking overlooking Copster Hill Park. Lees must appreciate it as they have dipped deeply into their purse to spruce up what used to be a very basic car park.

Further down Hollins Road, other changes are afoot. The **Britannia** on the corner of Heron Street has a 'To Let' sign up. This pub has been a bit of

a dump for years, with a silly mock-Tudor exterior and an interior filled with fizz. A change might bring an improvement, but let's not hold our collective breath while waiting.

Further down Hollins Road, next to the Somerfields supermarket, is the **Sett**, previously known as the Limelight. This is a place I've never been in as I prefer to visit the dentist to have my teeth removed. It's now closed and boarded up without even a 'To Let' in evidence.

I suspect the **Bridgewater** on Manchester Road has received the benefit, judging by some of the specimens I spotted the last time I was in there. Another minus for this Holts emporium is the smoothing of the Derby bitter.

I'd better finish on a more positive note. My favourite takeaway, **Greggs Discount** on Yorkshire Street, has a selection of McMullens bottled beers at half price, including the very chewable Chocolate Stout. There is also Archer Perch from Marstons - a pleasant pale ale named after the barley variety it's made from - and, here's one for the book, Double Diamond.

This once noble, cask conditioned, served from the wood Burton ale was bastardised into a thin, keg, national brand by Ind Coope in the sixties. It was supposed to 'work wonders' and eventually went the way of Red Barrel, Whitbread Tankard and other insults to the drinker's palate.

But this one is the export version, specifically intended for French-Canadian consumption at 5% and only 80p for an impressive 640ml. Certainly a full bodied ale worth trying.

More Wetherspoons

Wetherspoons have chosen another well pubbed area for a new planning application - Didsbury. They plan to convert premises at 726-732 Wilmslow Road (between Barlow Moor Road and York Street) into a wine and food bar. There's no mention of beer in the application.

On 16th September the Planning Department of Salford City Council gave the company the go-ahead to adapt part of the Lancastrian Halls at Swinton into a pub. Work will involve removing the toilets and the sloped access to the library. The new pub will cover much of the ground floor of the premises on the Station Road and Chorley Road corner.

Now and Then

Rob Magee

No.113

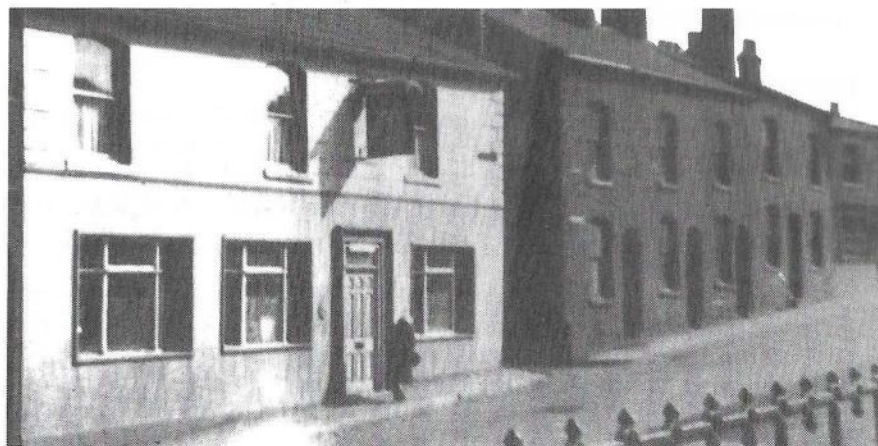
Shakespeare Inn

211 Glodwick Road, Oldham

The Glodwick district of Oldham was developed in the second half of the nineteenth century. Rows and rows of houses for mill workers were built and to look after the inhabitants' spiritual needs, St Mark's Church was opened in 1876. This impressive building can still be seen on Glodwick Road and it stands on the site of Glodwick's first pub, the Shakespeare Inn.

The Shakespeare dated from the end of the eighteenth century, when Glodwick was a hamlet surrounded by farmland and alongside one of Oldham's ancient highways. The original name was the Punch Bowl, then in 1823 the sign of 'Shakespeare's Head' is recorded. The licensee at this time was Thomas Potter, who must have been a busy man as he also ran a cotton mill on Jackson Street in Oldham. He leased the Shakespeare from a gentleman called John Lowe and the property comprised the inn with kitchen and brewhouse, some gardens and, at the end of a short street called Lowe Street (now Waterloo Street), stables and a bowling green.

By the 1860s Glodwick's population had increased considerably and business at the inn must have been good. In 1869 the tenant, George Harrop, obtained a licence for music and dancing, but he didn't see much dancing as he left the following year. By then there were plans to build a new church at Glodwick and at the licensing sessions in August 1874, when St Mark's was under construction, Sam Horsfall applied to transfer the Shakespeare licence to a new building. A row of houses had been built on the other side of Glodwick Road and three of these were combined to form 'a very comfortable public house'. Since more houses were being built nearby and plots for further developments were being marked out, the magistrates decided that a new Shakespeare was a good idea and granted the transfer. Stables



and a coach house were built and a billiard room fitted out, but there was no bowling green - land in Glodwick was now too valuable for such rural pursuits - and there was no brewhouse because there were now quite a few breweries in Oldham and further afield capable of supplying Mr Horsfall.

By the 1880s the Shakespeare was owned by a brewer, William Roberts of Greenheys, Manchester. His company became Hardy's Crown Brewery and a survey of the Shakespeare property in 1894 found it clean and in good condition. The house had been



fitted with a bathroom, there were four drinking rooms, three bedrooms and stabling for two horses in the yard. A plan of the Shakespeare in 1914 is reproduced here. The photograph shows the pub in later years, with the railings of St Mark's Church in the foreground.

Kay's Atlas Brewery purchased the Shakespeare in the early twentieth century and they were still the owners in the 1960s, although brewing had ceased many years before and the company had become a subsidiary of Robinsons of Stockport. In February 1964 they submitted plans to modernise the pub by creating a two-room layout and building new toilets to replace the lavatories across the yard. In the event, Glodwick folk were denied the new facilities because the Shakespeare was closed and demolished later that year.

WHAT'S DOING contributions should be sent to the editor c/o 88 Ringley Road, Stoneclough, Radcliffe, Manchester M26 1ET, to arrive no later than first post on the 20th of the month for inclusion in the next month's issue.

WHAT'S DOING ADVERTISING: Full page £52.50 or £210 for six months, half page £36.75 or £157.50 for six months, quarter page £26.25 or £105 for six months. All adverts must be accompanied with payment. Cheque payable to 'What's Doing'.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: £3.30 for six months, £5.80 for twelve months. Send cheque/PO together with your name and address to Roger Hall, 123 Hill Lane, Blackley, Manchester M9 6PW. Cheques made out to 'What's Doing'.

BACK NUMBERS: 15p per copy. Send stamped addressed envelope to Roger Hall, 123 Hill Lane, Blackley, Manchester M9 6PW.

To join CAMRA send £14 to Membership, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 4LW.

Home Brewing Revisited

Humulus Lupulus

Part 21: Hop Bitters

After a long period of inactivity on the brewing front, I decided to make a 'Total Eclipse' dark brew to mark the recent astronomical event. To this end I took my stock of brewery yeast (already at its sixth regeneration) out of the fridge. I did not expect it still to be viable, and indeed most of the two pints or so went down the grid. However, I retained a teaspoonful and after allowing it a few hours to acclimatize to the summer temperatures, I mixed it into a little sugar solution.

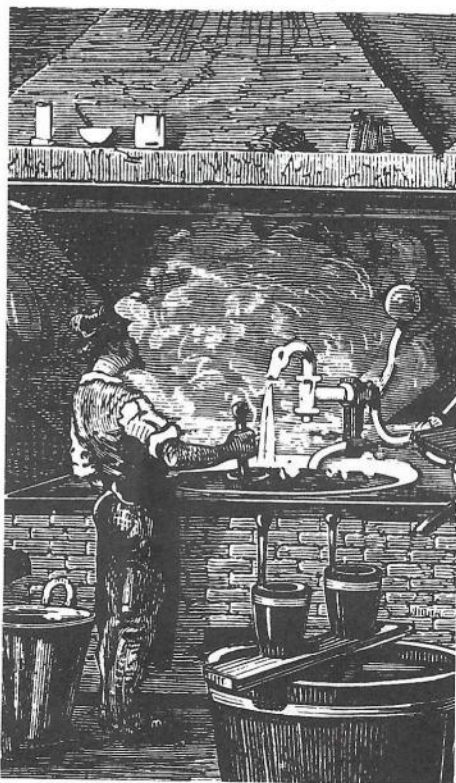
Surprisingly, the next day there was obvious activity and it smelt all right. Now the eclipse was still a few weeks away (I pitch the yeast at the moment of maximum totality) and my sample was pitifully small. I resolved to 'work it up' to a larger quantity using something vaguely resembling beer wort.

A few generous tablespoons of powdered malt extract were boiled in three pints of water along with even more white sugar and a very large handful of hops (Target, typical a 12%, and well past their best-by date; June 1996).

The 'wort' was strained through a sieve, cooled and measured at S.G 1060. After aeration, the active yeast was mixed in and within two days a strong fermentation was under way. The lid was screwed down (loosely!) and the fermenter was put into the fridge until needed.

A couple of days before 11th August, I took out the fermenter and looked inside. Activity had ceased and the 'beer' had cleared. The yeast at the bottom had become quite granular, so I was able to decant the three pints into a large jug with no sediment carried over.

The yeast did its business on the main brew, but that is a later story. Meanwhile, I had a



quantity of crystal clear alcoholic beverage; what do you do in these circumstances?

The first pint I drank 'neat'. It was incredibly bitter and literally removed a layer of skin from the inside of my mouth. I wanted for nothing else that evening and the jug went back in the fridge for a few days.

Then, inspiration! Remembering a visit to Moorhouses brewery a few years ago, I recalled that they made 'hop bitters' which were used to make shandy. Three parts lemonade to one part of my 'liquor' made a very refreshing shandy with a strong but palatable hop flavour and alcohol about 2%.

Moorhouses began as a hop bitters brewery in 1865, long before their first cask beers in 1978. A quick phone call confirmed that they still make hop bitters, which they sell to Nichols Foods to make shandy and Vimto, amongst other things.

I remember their product as a dark, viscous liquid, such was the hop concentration. Our guide described it as 'totally undrinkable' in its neat form and having sampled my anaemic version and winced, I would not disagree.

Letter

Chill factor

Sir - Why do Holts licensees insist on storing bottles of 6X and 1849 ale alongside the likes of Stella, Heineken and Coke in the fridge? Do they need reminding that real ales served too cold lose their full flavour and that bottles of Joey's finest are best appreciated when served at cellar temperature? Imagine the uproar if Holts bitter and mild were flash chilled and served at the same temperature as lager! Hmm... I have a strange feeling of deja vu.

Dave Crookell

Ringing the Changes

Harry and Janice Knight left the Ring o'Bells in Middleton on Friday 10th September to take over at the Colliers Arms in Shaw. They have always been very keen on the catering aspect of the trade and the Colliers offers far more opportunities in this respect.

The Ring o'Bells has been a comfortable pub where a pint or two of Lees could be enjoyed without loud music and it is hoped that the new landlord will not alter things too much in this respect.

Rupert

I really must take issue with the quality of entries to last month's caption competition. This is supposed to be an intellectual exercise where readers use their skill and judgement to craft a witty remark or two. Regrettably, few of the entries were suitable for inclusion in a family magazine. It seems that many, largely anonymous readers, used this as an excuse to publicise their own strange erotic fantasies. I suppose that in an era of geriatric spyesses, coke snorting royalty and gay porn-hoarding headmasters we should not be surprised. Nonetheless, it is depressing and makes one wonder whether it is worthwhile to seek out wholesome photographs of our leaders, only to see them subjected to demeaning obloquy. I don't think Ron Badloss will be persuaded to pose for any more photographs if this is the outcome.

Meanwhile in the heart of Slumley Parva, Eunuchramforks open another warehouse-cum-tavern, no doubt to the delight of Beinlos but to the chagrin of aficionados of Drabs, to whom Slumley Parva is nirvana. No doubt members of D.O.G.S.H.I.T will jump for joy and give it a gong, just as they did to the minimalist shed in Walsall.

Opening Tripe is full of complaints from people about dress codes. These people were ejected from a range of establishments for being inappropriately attired. I don't think it's that. It's difficult to say to a customer, 'Look here, you're a dishevelled piss-head. We don't want you in here looking like a pile

of rags and offending customers with your luminous nose, gross beer belly and loud voice.' Much easier to say, 'Sorry sir (and it's always blokes, you'll observe), you haven't got a tie/jacket/chinos/alligator shoes.' Saves a lot of bother. In the cold light of day, the ejected forget how drunk and obstreperous they were and pen



self-pitying letters to boss-brewers and newspapers as they wear their perceived hurt on their sleeves.

I, for one, can't see anything wrong with looking smart and clean. It's been instilled in me since birth. The only times I've been thrown out of a tavern are when Bunty's had one of his spats with a dozen stevedores. If people need to show up the crassness of dress codes,

they should organise a sartorial ejection night. Obey the code to the letter, but dress as bizarrely as possible within the code. Spurs, gaiters, cuirasses, farthingales, top hats, tuxedos, bandanas, bandoleers and fluorescent duck suits all come in handy. On such a night twenty years ago Slumley members were not thrown out of anywhere, nor have they been since.

Branch Diary

Rochdale, Oldham & Bury

Tue 5th Oct 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Old Boars Head, Long Street, Middleton

Sun 10th Oct, 10k Fun Run, Tandle Hill Park/Tandle Hill Tavern.

Further details from Branch Contact.

Tue 26th Oct 8.30pm, WD Collation, Cask & Feather, Drake Street, Rochdale

Sat 30th - Sun 31st Oct, Coach Social Weekend, Big Lamp Brewery and Newcastle area. Further details from Branch Contact.

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

Email: P.Alexander@Virgin.net

North Manchester

Wed 6th Oct 7.30pm, social. Idy and Sal say 'Welcome to the Crescent'.

Tues 12 Oct 8pm, social. 'Our Best Pubs' No.2. Hogshead, High Street, Manchester

Wed 20 Oct Branch Meeting, Crescent, Salford, 8pm.

Tues 26 Oct, What's Doing Collation, Queens Arms, Honey Street, Cheetham. 6pm onwards

Wed 27 Oct, Committee & Social, Football, Swinton Hall Road, Swinton, 8pm.

Wed 3 Nov 8pm, Eagle, Collier Street, Salford.

Tues 9 Nov, Pint and Curry Evening, Bulls Head, Old Glossop. Times next month. Pre-booking essential - phone Pete Cash 0161 794 5143.

Contact: Roger Hall 0161 740 7937

Contributors to this issue: Rob Magee, Pete Cash, Paul Roberts, Mark McConachie, Roy Bullock, Mike Goode, Michael Lynn, Leo King, Dave Crookell, Peter Wadsworth, Sue Barker, Daddy Bell, Dave White, Roger Hall, Mark Enderby.

Dave and Sue welcome you to

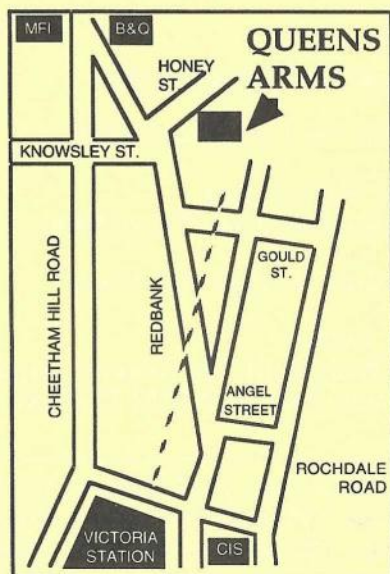
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