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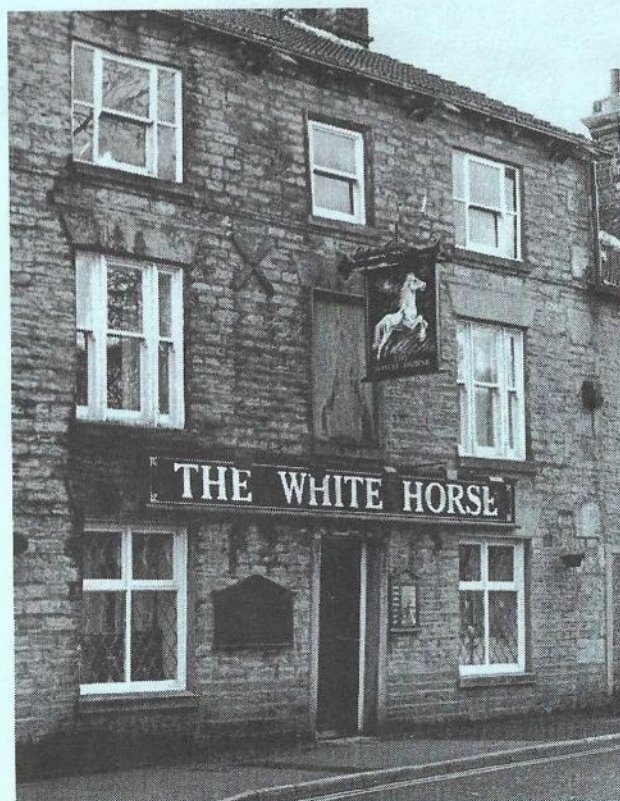
What's Doing

MARCH 2000



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

EDGORTH ALE



Out in Edgworth, the White Horse had a grand reopening on 17th February following an extensive refurbishment.

The premises have been extended by knocking through into the old stable block to create a kitchen. The rear entrance has been enlarged, the bar extended and a patio area created where the old toilets stood.

The cask beers available at the White Horse are John Smiths bitter, Theakstons bitter and mild, plus a guest beer.

Paul Warbrick

Millstone

Holts watchers have remarked that the brewery seems to be dragging its feet with regard to the Millstone on Crown Street in Bolton, the pub they bought last year. The building still looks much the same as it did in Tetley days and a recent planning application reveals why.

Joeys have also acquired the old H Rigby & Co building behind the Millstone, which fronts on to Bank Street, and their architects have been busy. Now the company has applied to Bolton Council for permission to create a nice big pub/restaurant.

Ancoats Lane changes

It is rumoured that the Crown & Kettle at New Cross (right) may reopen as a pub. Apparently the ground floor is intact, still with its R100 panelling, the first floor less so. The prospective purchaser is said to be in favour of a multi-beer free house, in line with the Northern Quarter's growing reputation as Manchester's Beer Quarter.



Apparently the vacated Moulders Arms on Heyrod Street has gone up in smoke. The soon-to-be-demolished Cotton Tree (Whitbread) has been bricked up following vandalism.

Holts triangle

Last month it was reported that three sets of Holts managers were moving to each other's pubs at the end of January. Well they didn't. For various reasons, everyone is staying put.

So Jimmy and Chris McCormack will be running the Ape and Apple in Manchester for the foreseeable future. Which is good news for What's Doing sales in the city centre!

New Rochdale Micro

Ex-Footage and Firkin brewer Richard 'Sutty' Sutton, who worked at the Phoenix Brewery in Heywood for a while, is now planning to open his own microbrewery in Rochdale. The brewing equipment has come from the Dundee Firkin and Sutty will be ready to go when his premises are in order. The beers should be available in March.

Porter's Fifth

Brewer David Porter opened his fifth pub, the Arthur Inn at 95 Bolton Road, Bury, on 12th February. The former run-down Thwaites boozer has been transformed in under six weeks and there is now a no-smoking room, a bar-lounge and a games room. Five beers will usually be on sale - mild, bitter, Rossendale, porter and Sunshine - and at the very keen prices which set Porter houses apart from the rest.

From the town centre, buses 471, 485 and 98 (ex Manchester) go past the Arthur Inn, which is not far from Bury's Moorhouses pub, the Dusty Miller.

Rawlinson digs in

Graham Rawlinson, owner of the Beer House, Browns in Heywood and the Midland Beer Co in Castleton, has acquired a fourth pub - the well known (and many times GBG-listed) Cemetery Inn, Spotland, Rochdale. No changes are planned.

Rosy Winton

As well as selling good quality mild and bitter, Holts' Ellesmere on King William Street, Winton, now has a well appointed beer garden. If you prefer Robinsons when drinking alfresco, go under the bridge to the Brown Cow, where there is a terraced drinking area and a large picnic/playground to sup in.

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.

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Special German food served all day**

**Games Room now open
with darts, bar billiards and table football**

Letters

Ale Rage

Sir - I rarely feel the need to put finger to keyboard to complain about What's Doing, but I cannot help doing so after the four page article about Ireland in February's issue.

We at the Atomic Research Labs in Haslingden read What's Doing avidly, as we all drink in North Manchester which is, as you know, the most wonderful area for drinking real ale in the whole world. It would almost be fair to say that some of our members get so involved in the articles that we have occasionally taken our eyes off some new experiment which has become critical, thereby setting off the radioactivity alarms.

We read What's Doing both to keep abreast of the pub and brewery developments in our favourite area and to enjoy the historical articles about Manchester and Oldham pubs, which are also very funny. We would willingly pay £1 for What's Doing to be three times longer.

We therefore must object strongly to the recent trend towards very long articles about drinking in other areas. Not too long ago there was an article about drinking in the Lake District and the same issue, as I remember, contained another article about the Lakes, making a substantial chunk of the magazine about this area. It is very easy to research drinking in the Lakes by reading other publications.

The recent article about Ireland was four pages out of twenty-four. This is a whole sixth of the 'CAMRA Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine'. It was about drinking somewhere with virtually no real ale, nowhere near Manchester and with no real pubs. I've toured Ireland, and they have bars, not pubs. Irish bars are completely different from real English pubs, the like of which I've only ever seen in one other country - Wales.

The article didn't mention real ale much, except for 'Macardle's Traditional Ale', which was keg! For goodness sake, What's Doing is a small publication, let's not fill four pages with totally uninteresting drivel about some bars with keg beer which we have no intention of ever visiting. It's about as relevant as an article about rebuilding a Jag gearbox or the TCP/IP protocol used during Internet connections.

Keep What's Doing to real ale and Manchester pubs, or make articles such as these a pull-out addition to the normal twenty-four pages, so that we can use them for lighting the fire. Must go - one of my reactors seems to have an unusually high reading...

Albert Onejug

(Contributors are reminded that articles in the 'What I Did on My Holidays' genre can be deeply uninteresting to What's Doing's enlightened and discerning readership. So make the articles entertaining or funny and preferably both.)

Pub plug

Sir - As a regular visitor to the Bolton area, am I alone in wondering why the Flag on Hardmans Lane, Bromley Cross (fifteen minutes' walk from the station) never gets a mention in despatches?

This is a stone-flagged local with a really warm welcome and an ever changing range of around six real ales kept in top condition. Amongst the breweries recently featured have been Yates, Harvistoun, Titanic, Black Sheep, Roosters, Shepherd Neame and Coniston.

Given the relative dearth of pubs of the Flag's calibre in Bolton, I am a little surprised that it never gets included in references to good pubs in the area. Is anyone aware of its existence?

Geoff Johnson



Ale Oscars

In February brewers from around the world competed for the Brewing Industry International Awards at Burton-on-Trent. Entries were received from some 37 countries for the contest generally regarded as the beer industry's Oscars.

The event is held every two years, with awards for cask conditioned ales, bottled and keg products and lagers. Each category had a trade sponsor and the beer quality group Cask Marque sponsored the International Cask Conditioned Ale competition, which is recognised as one of the blue riband sections of the awards. In 1999 over 200 cask brands competed for nine awards in this section and the Champion Cask Conditioned Ale trophy was eventually won by Oxford brewer Hook Norton for its best bitter.

Judging for the millennium competition took place over two days and was carried out by top brewers from around the world, with a shortlist drawn up in each section. The winners will be announced at the awards ceremony lunch at London's Guild Hall on April 11th.

the

14th



OLDHAM

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Friday 12noon - 3pm 50p

Friday 5pm - 11pm £2

Saturday 12noon - 4pm £1

Saturday 6pm - 11pm £2

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Seftons sold

Remember Seftons, the pub built into the Arndale Centre on Corporation Street? In its latter days, before being blown up by the IRA in 1996, it was called Paddy's Rat and Carrot. When the Arndale Centre was rebuilt, the former pub was put on the market by new owners Greene King. It has now been bought by a retailer for more than £2m! The chaps at Greene King must be rubbing their hands with glee.

Bog standard Wetherspooons

J D Wetherspoon have been granted a licence for their new £750,000 pub on the site of Swinton Precinct's public lavatories. Work will begin later this year after JDW have constructed replacement toilets. The pub should open around March 2001. Any suggestions for a name for the new pub?

Contributors to this issue: Roger Wilson, Dave Crookell, Mark McConachie, Paul Warbrick, Stewart Revell, Steve Smith, Rob Magee, Mike Goode, Roger Hall

13th WIGAN BEER FESTIVAL

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Real Ales

Foreign
Beers

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Cider



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2000

Thursday 16th March

5:30 - 11:00 - Admission £1.50

Friday 17th March

12:00 - 2:30 - Admission FREE 5:30 - 11:00 - Admission £2.50

Saturday 18th March

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7:00 - 11:00 - Admission £2.00 (Eagles Tribute Band)

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GBG 2000 *The Millennium Experience*

Steve Smith and Mark McConachie have set themselves the task of visiting all the Greater Manchester pubs listed in the Millennium edition of the Good Beer Guide. They travel only by public transport and have at least one pint in each pub. They started at midnight at the beginning of the 21st century...

The **Castle** on Oldham Street in Manchester was the ideal place to begin the trail. It's Robinsons' only central Manchester pub and it sells all seven cask ales. A friendly and comfortable three-roomed hostelry with an interesting frontage and elaborately tiled bar.

A few nights later we caught the 157 bus and headed for three more Robinsons houses. The **Davenport Arms** (aka Thief's Neck, *below*) is practically next to the terminus at Woodford on the busy Chester Road. This is a pleasant, comfortable country pub with open fires. On handpump are Hatters Mild, Best Bitter and Fredericks; Old Stockport Bitter and Old Tom are on assisted electric dispense.



Next stop was Cheadle Hulme and the **Church Inn** on Ravenoak Road, a popular local selling Hatters Mild, Best Bitter, Old Stockport Bitter and Hartleys XB, all on handpump.

Across the road is the newish **Governors House**, a haunt of the young. It isn't in the GBG, but we tried a half of Mansfield Millennium Ale and good it was, too!

The final pub of the night was the **Queens Arms** on Stockport Road, Cheadle. A lively outlet, this, selling handpumped Hatters Mild, Best Bitter and Old Stockport Bitter.

A journey along the Manchester to Glossop railway line enabled us to visit three of the more out of the way pubs. The excellent free-house-cum-Thwaites pub, the **Cheshire Cheese**, is on Lower Market Street, Broadbottom, a five minute walk from the station. The effect of the country-style furnishings is rather spoilt by obtrusive gaming machines and a large screen television, but the Thwaites mild and bitter are good. The pub also sells Thwaites seasonal ales and a guest beer.

Returning towards Manchester, our next stop was Godley Station and the **Godley Hall Inn**, once the ancestral home of the Godleigh family. Although the Vaux beers have been replaced by Boddingtons and Tetley bitters, the pub's unusual setting amongst industrial sites makes it worth a visit. The interior is pleasantly furnished and the accent is on food.

Flowerly Field Station was next and a short walk brought us to the **White Hart** on Old Road at Newton. This is a basic, friendly Robinsons house, where the old layout of rooms has survived. Hatters Mild and Best Bitter are on free flow electric pumps.

Back in Manchester on a rather wet Saturday night, we made a quick dash for the **Bar Fringe** on Swan Street. This busy, continental-style bar sells one or two local guest ales, usually from Bank Top and Marble Brewery. We tried the latter's Northern Quarter Bitter. The Bar Fringe has an extensive range of draught and bottled Belgian and German beers, including the satisfying St Louis Kriek cherry beer.

Towards the end of January there was the National Winter Ales Festival at Castlefield, which rather slowed us down a bit, but we managed to visit some of the surrounding pubs, starting with the **White Lion** on Liverpool Road. This is a Whitbread pub which has become popular for its splendid range of good food and ales. Neatly opened-out with a raised section at the back and outside seating on the paved area adjoining the Castlefield Conservation Area. Regular beers are Boddingtons bitter, Flowers Original, Tetley bitter and Taylors Landlord, and there are two guests, so it's well worth a visit.

The **Oxno**, a 'try also' entry in the GBG and the only pub in Manchester named after a variety of potato, is a few yards along Liverpool Road. The pub was opened out to provide a food and drink operation and there is a large screen television for sporting events. Beers are Boddingtons Bitter, Flowers IPA, Tetley bitter, plus guests, one of which proved to be a very pleasant drop of Cains bitter.

On Deansgate is the popular **Crown Inn**, but sadly no Vaux beers these days as the brewery has closed. They have been replaced by Tetley bitter, Old Speckled Hen and Chesters mild.

The final pub of the evening was the excellent **City Arms** on Kennedy Street. This is a 'Festival Ale House', with a business and tourist clientele and good value meals and snacks. A range of guest

beers is sold alongside Tetley bitter in the front bar, which serves as the vault, and the back lounge has subdued lighting and pictures of old Manchester.



Our next excursion into Manchester began with a visit to the **Queens Arms** on Honey Street (*left*), a long-standing free house with regularly changing guest beers, nearly always from Britain's independent brewers. Taylors Landlord and Phoenix Bantam make regular

appearances. The pub has two pleasant rooms and a beer garden with views over the Irk Valley.

Making our way towards the city centre, we arrived at the **Hare and Hounds**, now a Grade II listed building with some nice tiling and leaded glass. There is a bar area, a traditional games room and a lounge, both with televisions. Piano music is featured at weekends. The beers include Lees, Holts and Tetley bitters and a guest. Unfortunately the mild is no longer available.

The **Smithfield** on Swan Street, more of a residential hotel than a pub, has over recent years built up a strong reputation for its ever-changing guest ales at reasonable prices. There is always a mild available, usually one of the darker ones. We only had a half here, but plan to return later in the year. I tried the Greene King XX mild, whilst my colleague opted for the Oakham JHB (Jeffrey Hudson Bitter).

The day's penultimate port of call was the roomy **White House** on Great Ancoats Street, which offers a decent drop of Holts bitter.

Around the corner on Ducie Street, not far from Piccadilly Station, is the **Jolly Angler** (below). This is a lovely little boozer with friendly clientele and usually selling Hydes mild, bitter and seasonal beers. However only the bitter was available.

Our final excursion of the month featured two more of Manchester's premier free houses. We began at the small and cosy **Grey Horse** on Portland Street. Hydes mild, bitter and seasonal beer (Harry Verdechi) were available. A pint of the 4.8% Harry was £1.60 (the bar person wasn't sure how much to charge!) and it proved to be a robust, fruity ale.

A short bus ride took us into the Northern Quarter. Just about visible from the bus stop, behind Rochdale Road on New Mount Street, is the **Pot of Beer**. This used to be a Marstons house called the Harp and Shamrock (aka the Thumbs Up) and it had a complete makeover a few years ago to emerge as a popular free house with up to five guest

ales, two usually on stillage behind the bar. It is also an outlet for Robinsons dark mild.



Around the corner on Angel Street is the **Beer House**, a pub which has built up a good reputation for quality ales (up to twelve handpumps) and a rotating guest beer policy which usually includes a mild. There is also real cider and many continental beers.

The **Marble Arch** on Rochdale Road is another long established free house. This Victorian alehouse, with its vaulted ceiling, ornate tiling and sloping mosaic floor now has its own micro brewery. A £1-a-pint mini beer festival was in progress, with a superb collection of beers supplementing the usual Marble Brewery range, and this provided a fitting end to our first month of GBG 2000 touring.

Northern Quarter news

A number of events in the area coincided with Manchester's Winter Ales Festival. At the **Beer House**, Ian Casson held a January's Ale Fest (geddit?), featuring, among others, new offerings from south east England. The upstairs room was brought back into use following a thorough refurbishment - it now has bare brickwork, scumbling and fixed seating. More festivals are planned: 2nd-5th March (Early March Fest) and 30th March - 2nd April, both featuring new and rare beers from around the country.

To celebrate brewer Mark Dade's birthday, a beer festival was held at the **Marble Arch** on the weekend of Bent & Bongs. Twenty-odd ales were on handpull (and gravity in the back room) at an incredible £1 a pint. Needless to say, trade was brisk. Landlady Christine was pleased with the event and Vance has promised further fests at the Marble.

At the **Smithfield** festival, landlady Jenny laid on a fine selection of beers, including some new ones for the enthusiasts. Linda and Tony at the **Pot of Beer** didn't have a fest, but they are pleased with trade and plan some changes at the pub. Extra dishes are to be added to the menu (some non-Polish ones, we hear), and the right-hand room is to be extended via a doorway into a new function/dining room.



At the **Fringe**, a new Marble beer has replaced N/4. It's called Short Back and Sides (3.8%) and appears to be a variant on Dades/Chorlton bitter. Improvements to the beer garden - the introduction of outside heating - make it unique in the Northern Quarter.

The Marble Brewery should be producing its annual batch of ginger beer soon. Mark Dade is once again experimenting and fine-tuning the recipe in his quest for the ultimate Marble Ginger.

THE ALL YEAR BEER FESTIVAL

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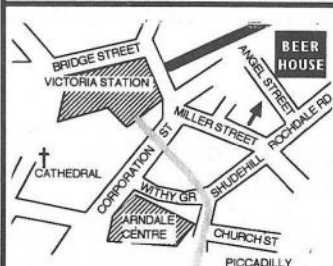
THURS SPECIAL (5-8pm) CHOICE OF 6 CURRIES (VEG & NON-VEG) + RICE £3
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Holts Mild

Stewart Revell

Last month Pete Cash wrote about his unfortunate experience when trying to order a pint of Holts traditional mild. I have received reports from others, including David Schofield and his chums, who have ordered mild and been offered the 'smooth' type rather than the usual hand-drawn variety, so I contacted the tied trade director for a comment from the brewery. This is what he had to say:

Where mild is available the option of it being presented in its normal handpumped format should be available to all customers at all times. This directive to Managers has been passed on positively by our Tied Trade Managers and I should most certainly act on any reports that this has not been carried out.

So, there you have it. Incidents where customers have not received the mild of their choice may have been the exception rather than the rule. I expect the word has now gone out from the brewery to all tied pubs, requiring them to provide the customer with the beer they ask for, not what bar staff think they want (or think they should be drinking). No Holts pub should be serving 'smooth' mild only.

In May, Holts will be promoting their handpumped mild with the help of large posters provided by CAMRA head office, in a joint effort to make the public aware of this excellent traditional beer.

Bass note

Roger Hall

There has been considerable speculation in the financial press about foreign takeovers of some of our brewers, Bass and Whitbread in particular. Should we be worried? Bass are 'highly regarded' in the brewing industry as an efficient operator. Well, you could have fooled me.

They're responsible for about 25% of our beer production and despite the after effects of the Beer Orders, they've still a few pubs left in Greater Manchester. So how many pubs serving Bass beers appear in the Good Beer Guide out of the 166 in Greater Manchester? 40? 25? Not quite. 10 then? No, afraid not. Approximately one. A far cry from the days when Bass pubs were renowned for their ales.

So, if Heineken, say, took over Bass, it wouldn't make a fat lot of difference in Greater Manchester. We might miss Whitbread a little more, but even here the number of GBG entries has dwindled over the years. It's a sad day when we can't even exploit base emotions like xenophobia to protest about the loss of our National brewers

Wigan and district

Dave White

A pub crawl of Ince-in-Makerfield is usually a triumph of hope over experience, so I was pleasantly surprised to find a real ale gain here. The **Black Diamond**, a former hell-hole on Warrington Road, Lower Ince, has been selling cask conditioned Theakstons mild and best bitter since landlord Mark Whittle moved from the **Bird i'th'Hand**, Gathurst, last September. Another handpump is reserved for a guest ale (Old Peculier on my visit) and Mark hopes to get a fourth beer on before long. That brings the number of pubs in Ince selling real ale to two.

The other real ale pub is the **Park Hotel** on Manchester Road, Higher Ince. Thwaites bitter is a bit of a rarity in Wigan, but it is up against Worthington and John Smith nitrokegs and suffering in quality as a consequence. Nary a cockstride away (well, Derbyshire cockstrides, perhaps) on Belle Green Lane, the **Engineers Arms** (*below*) is once again closed, boarded up and for sale. Meanwhile, back on Warrington Road, the **Walmsley Arms** is being given its first coat of paint in light years. It remains to be seen whether the products on the bar of this keg emporium will be similarly spruced.

There was much jubilation in Marsh Green when the **Stork** was demolished in January. The Kitt Green Road pub had been derelict



for years and had become a menace. The estate is now publess, unless you count the **Clubhouse** on Scot Lane.

The number of outlets for cask mild in the area continues to diminish, and two ex-Greenalls pubs in Pemberton have recently given up on it; they are the **Railway** on the corner of Billinge Road and Enfield Street, and the **White Swan**, Ormskirk Road. In the case of the latter pub it was a merciful release. The only pub in the centre of Pemberton still selling cask mild is the **White Lion**, also on Ormskirk Road, which offers a goodish pint of Tetley Dark.

The **Robin Hood**, Sandy Lane, Orrell, looks like the sort of inn that ought to sell a decent pint, but has been on keg Greenalls for as long as I can remember. However, a reliable source of information ('Bill' to his mates) has told me that the situation might be about to change, Watch this space...

Finally, followers of the **Lord Nelson** saga will be sorry to hear that this recently reopened Hindley hostelry offers only keg beer.

Not so Swinging

The Swinging Bridge on Trafford Boulevard, once the only source of cask conditioned ale within the environs of the Trafford Centre, is closed and boarded. Before the construction of the Centre the Swinging Bridge appeared to be a thriving, semi-rural pub with the emphasis on dining. It offered handpumped Boddies and John Smiths bitters and was one of the first outlets in the area to have Courage Directors. There was a beer garden at the front with a pleasant aspect across the fields to Trafford Park and to the side there was a children's play area.

It seems strange that the Swinging Bridge could not benefit from passing trade generated by the wondrous delights of the Trafford Centre. Perhaps the demise of the pub was hastened because of the Centre, with punters preferring the attractions of the various keg-only theme bars of the Orient.

What a carry on

Now that the Golden Gate on Cross Lane, Salford, has reopened as a newsagent's and convenience store, it can only be a matter of time before the nearby Corporation becomes a take-away.

Speaking of take-aways, the Chinese on Lower Monton Road is called the Fu Kuei. Eccles drinkers attempting to place a telephone order must remember not to take offence.

Pub numbers

Towards the end of last year, 'Public Houses, 1999 Market Report Plus' was published by Key Notes Ltd. Roger Wilson has studied the report on behalf of lovers of amber nectar everywhere and he provides the following summary...

There was a marginal increase in the number of pubs in 1998 compared to 1997, but the total was still about 2,500 down on the 1990 figure. Average turnover per pub continues to increase, with sales worth £13.65bn in 1998 and food accounting for 15.4%. The largest independent pub-owner in the United Kingdom is the Japanese bank Nomura, which is the ultimate 'landlord' for around 5,000 pubs, or 9.7% of the total.

Estimated number of public houses in the UK 1990-1998

| | 1990 | 1998 |
|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Big four multiples | N/A | 9,500 |
| Other brewers' multiples | N/A | 19,500 |
| Independent trade | N/A | 22,500 |
| Totals | 54,000 | 51,500 |
| Managed tied houses | | 10,000 |
| Other (tenanted, leased, free) | | 41,500 |
| Public houses | 54,000 | 51,500 |
| Other full licences | 28,890 | 34,000 |
| Totals | 82,890 | 85,500 |

As a total percentage of all full licences, pubs have fallen from 65.1% in 1990 to 60.2% in 1998.

Leading multiple pub owners by outlets

| Brewers | 1995 | 1999 |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Whitbread | 4,100 | 3,450 |
| Scottish Courage | 2,850 | 2,880 |
| Bass | 4,000 | 2,625 |
| Wolverhampton & Dudley Brewers* | 1,000 | 1,900 |
| Greene King | 870 | 1,000 |

* Includes the Marstons estate acquired in 1999.

Non-brewers (pub companies)

| | 1995 | 1999 |
|----------------|-------|-------|
| Nomura** | 1,800 | 5,000 |
| Allied Domecq | 4,250 | 3,638 |
| Pubmaster Ltd | 1,900 | 1,800 |
| Enterprise Inn | 700 | 1,786 |
| Punch Taverns | - | 1,500 |

** Subsidiaries or trading names include Innentrepreneur, Phoenix

Inns, Grand Pub Company, Unique Pub Company, including the tenanted estate of the Greenalls Group, bought in early 1999.

Leading public house owners among regional brewers

(by numbers of pubs)

| | 1995 | 1999 |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Wolverhampton & Dudley | 1,000 | 1,000 ‡ |
| Marston, Thompson & Evershed | 880 | 900 ‡ |
| Vaux Group | 950 | 846 § |
| Burtonwood Brewery | 480 | 493 |
| Daniel Thwaites | 413 | 430 |
| Frederic Robinson | 412 | 412 |
| Samuel Smith | 200 | 200 |
| J W Lees | 175 | 175 |
| Joseph Holt | 110 | 122 |
| Jennings Brothers | 107 | 107 |

‡ Now combined. § Includes 350 pubs for sale in early 1999.

Market shares in UK brewing, 1998

(% volume sales)

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Scottish Courage | 32% |
| Bass | 24% |
| Carlsberg-Tetley | 15% |
| Whitbread | 15% |
| Guinness (Diageo plc) | 5% |
| Regional brewers and importers | 9% |

The report concludes with some rather gloomy forecasts for the future of the pub over the next four years. Despite a prediction that turnover in pubs will rise by some 8.9% to £15.9bn in 2003, the number of pubs in the United Kingdom will fall by 3.9% to around 49,500. The report highlights several reasons for this, including:

1. Competition in the high street.
2. Regional rationalisation by regional brewers, particularly in areas where a brewer has a concentration of pubs as a result of acquisitions from competitors.
3. The uncertain future of national brewers as they reconsider their positions as brewers/property owners. (This is also true of regional brewers.)
4. International influences both in the style of licensed establishment in which the drinker wants to consume his/her beverage, and in the increasing market for foreign beers, legally and illegally imported!

A copy of the report, which runs to 104 pages, may be obtained from Key Notes Ltd, Field House, 72 Oldfield Road, Hampton, Middlesex TW12 2HQ. Tel. 0181 481 8750. Fax 0181 783 0049.
www.keynote.co.uk.

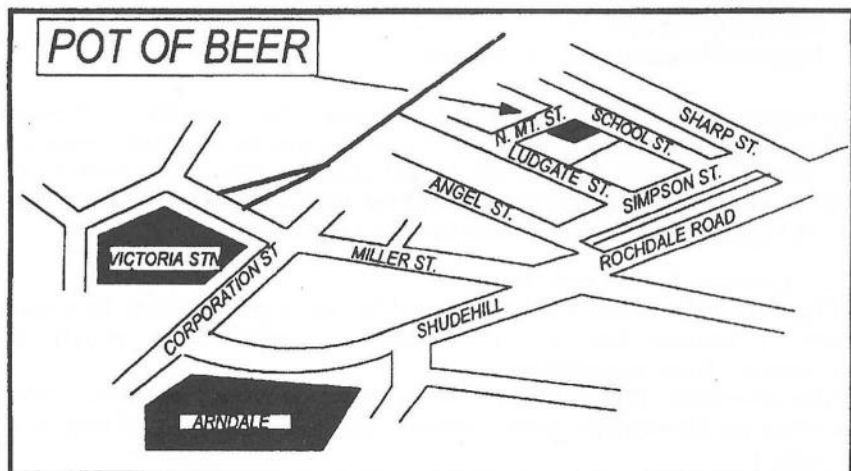
POT OF BEER

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- ▶ *Everchanging Guest Cask Ales*
- ▶ *Robinsons Dark Mild*
- ▶ *Draught Leffe Blond and Hoegaarden*
- ▶ *Black Rat Traditional Cider*
- ▶ *Continental Bottled Beers*
- ▶ *Wide Selection of Wines*



POLISH AND ENGLISH MENU

**AVAILABLE 12 TO 9 PM MONDAY TO FRIDAY
AND 12 TO 4 PM SATURDAY**

Gold for Old Tom

Robinsons' Old Tom (8.5%) was judged to be Supreme Champion Winter Beer of Britain at CAMRA's National Winter Ales Festival in Manchester in January. The full list of winners is as follows...

Supreme Champions

| | |
|--------|---|
| Gold | Old Tom |
| Silver | Theakstons Old Peculier |
| Bronze | Wye Valley Dorothy Goodbody Wholesome Stout |

Old Ales and Strong Milds

| | |
|--------|---------------------|
| Gold | Theakstons Old Pee |
| Silver | Gales Festival Mild |

Stouts and Porters

| | |
|--------|---|
| Gold | Wye Valley Dorothy Goodbody Wholesome Stout |
| Silver | High Force Cauldron Stout |

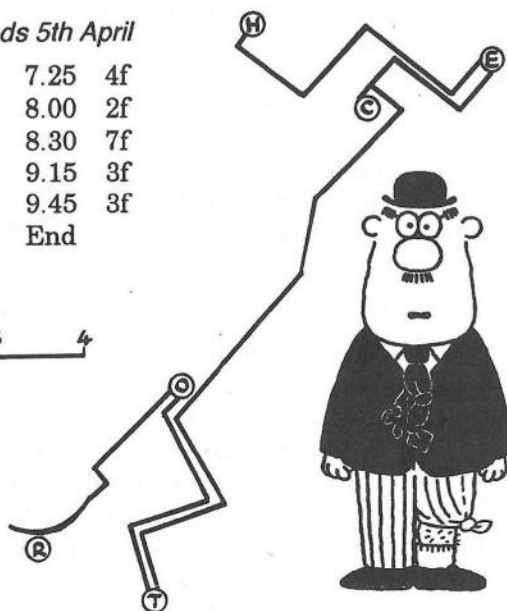
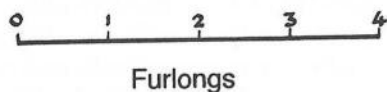
Barley Wines

| | |
|--------|-----------------------------|
| Gold | Robinsons Old Tom |
| Silver | Burton Bridge Old Expensive |

The Supreme Champion Winter Beer of Britain is served all year round at the Castle on Oldham Street in Manchester.

The Hector Crawl *Weds 5th April*

| | | | |
|------------------|------|------|----|
| Hare & Hounds | 7.00 | 7.25 | 4f |
| Edinburgh Castle | 7.40 | 8.00 | 2f |
| Castle | 8.05 | 8.30 | 7f |
| Thirsty Scholar | 8.50 | 9.15 | 3f |
| Old Monkey | 9.25 | 9.45 | 3f |
| Rain Bar | 9.55 | End | |



Rupert

Whilst most people have embraced the orthodoxy of New CAMRA, there are still one or two people out there who act like backwoodspersons, fighting rearguard actions against yesterday's enemy or withdrawing entirely from the Campaign.

Take the Defenders of Grotley Slum Hostelries, Inns and Taverns, for example. Last year there was a gleam of correctness with an award to a minimalist shed. This year, no awards for new premises, conservation or English Heritage. Such stick-in-the-muds. There was a concession to our friends Eunuchramforks, who continue to transform redundant synagogues and organic pig farms into hostelries of character. Quite rightly, DOGSHIT, whilst paying homage to the charismatic ambience, show little concern for the quality of the amber nectars which they serve. Here in Grotley there is such resistance to necessary evolutionary change that Eunuchramforks' excellent establishments are not even considered worthy of inclusion in the toppers' vademecum.

It's coming round to that time of the year when selections are made for that worthy tome. It will be interesting to see whether, in a head-to-heads between Eunuchramforks' Slumley Parva Monolith and a dozen Drabs establishments, the former can make its mark. Quite frankly, I

doubt it. The dyed in the wool traditionalists who are the local branch will no doubt prefer the cheap, unexciting, crowded Drabs hostelries to something which symbolises the paradigm drinking experience of the new millennium. Shame.

Thankfully, many of the antediluvian stalwarts of the past have withdrawn rather than attempt to counter the visionary mission of the present. Where, for example, is Bogbrush or the Noble Robin? Zimbabwe-Talbot pens an epistle from Belchley where he now resides, a fugitive from Scouseley. He still returns from time to time to guide punters round the beer factory and sing sea shanties with his pirate pals, but reports a growing alienation from St Allballs. He concludes:

'Sadly, bearded, beer-bellied, pully-wearing beer campaigners are becoming almost as incorrect as radical socialists.' And rightly so, I say. When CAMRA comprised a rabble of stropky campaigners, it could hardly be said to exert any influence. Today with 50,000-plus members, begonged and highly commended beer writers, profitable beerfests and partnerships with a range of bodies, it is respectable and can be said to have arrived. Foaming amber nectars flow in quantity and the pub scene is wonderful. There is little to worry about, other than how it may perpetuate itself and continue to exist for another thirty years.

Branch Diary

Rochdale, Oldham & Bury

Tue 7 Mar 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Two Tubs, The Wylde, Bury

Sat 11 Mar, Rugby League Urban Pubs, West Yorkshire Social Trip by coach

Tue 14 Mar 8.30pm, Oldham Beer Festival Organising Meeting, Ashton Arms, Clegg Street, Oldham

Tue 21 Mar 8.30pm, Committee Meeting, Rose & Crown, Manchester Old Road, Bury

Tue 28 Mar 8.30pm, What's Doing Collation, Cask and Feather, Drake Street, Rochdale

Fri 31 Mar, Stockport Crawl, Evening Social by Train

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

Email: P.Alexander@Virgin.net

North Manchester

Wed 1 Mar 8pm, GBG 2001 Final Selection (City), Olde Nelson, Chapel Street, Salford.

Wed 8 Mar 8pm, GBG 2001 Final Selection (Non-City), Marble Arch, Rochdale Road, Manchester

Wed 15 Mar 8pm, Branch AGM, Crescent, Salford

Wed 22 Mar, Bolton Social. Howcroft, Pool Street, 7.30pm; Hen & Chickens, Deansgate (near bus station) 9.30pm.

Wed 29 Mar, Swinton Crawl: White Horse, Worsley Road, 7pm; New Ellesmere, East Lincs Road, 8pm; Park Inn, Worsley Road, 9pm.

Tues 28 Mar 6pm, What's Doing collation, Queens Arms, Honey Street, Cheetham

Wed 5 April, Hector Crawl - see elsewhere in this issue.

Contact: Roger Hall 0161 740 7937

Trafford & Hulme

Thur 2 Mar, Curry Night in Knutsford. Meet at Cross Keys, King Street, 7.15pm

Thur 9 Mar, Chorlton Survey. Meet Marble Beerhouse, Manchester Road, 8pm. To finish in the Beech, Chorlton Green.

Thur 16 Mar 8pm, Good Beer Guide Final Selection Meeting, Old Market Tavern, Old Market Place, Altrincham

Thur 23 Mar 8pm, Kings Arms, Bloom Street, Salford

Thur 30 Mar 8pm, Jolly Angler, Ducie Street, Manchester

Thur 6 April, Railway, Sale, 8pm. Finishing at the Brooke, Station Buildings, Brooklands train station.

Contact: Dave Ward, 0161 980 1170

Regional Meeting

Sat 25 March 12.30, Orwell, Wigan

Dave and Sue welcome you to

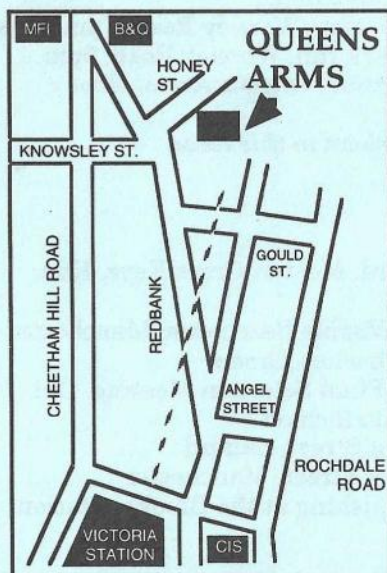
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