

30p

# What's Doing

FEBRUARY 2001



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

## ANOTHER SALFORD PUB LOST

The Prince of Wales on Oldfield Road is expected to close in February so that the land can be cleared for the Snow World development. Originally a Bass pub, it has been a free house since Dave and Jenny Brightman took over in the mid-1980s.





## City guide

The new Manchester city centre guide came out last month, the first guide to real ale in the city for two years. It costs £4.95 in the shops, but CAMRA members can get copies for £4.20, including postage (£5.20 non-members). Cheques payable to CAMRA North Manchester should be sent to Roger Hall, 123 Hill Lane, Manchester M9 6PW.

## New pubs

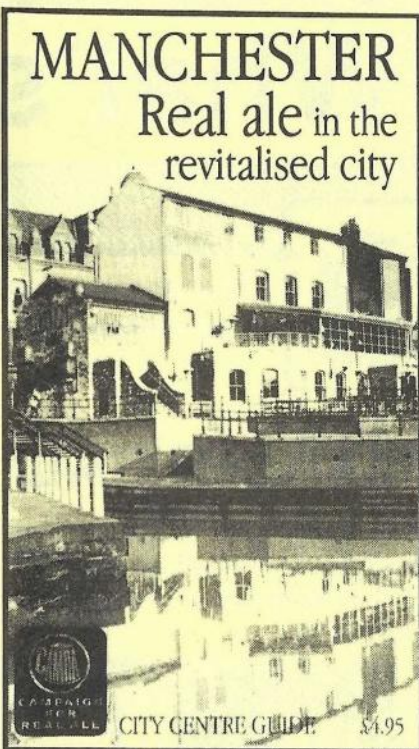
Wetherspoons have applied for planning permission for a new outlet on Princess Street, Manchester. A new neighbour for the City Arms?

A new Hogshead outlet is to open on School Road in Sale.

## Jolly good

The **Jolly Miller** on Fernclough Road, Harpurhey, is trading once more after having been closed for a few years. It has been taken over by a Yorkshire-based company and, surprisingly, real ale has been reintroduced in the form of handpulled Barnsley Bitter. How long this will last in an area of

staunch lager drinkers is anyone's guess. The pub appears to have altered very little internally.



## New Crown?

The **Crown** (ex-Vaux, *left*) on Deansgate in Manchester has been bought by Hale Leisure. The pub has been shut 'for refurbishment' since before Christmas, but local observers say that not a lot of work has been done.

## Festival fun

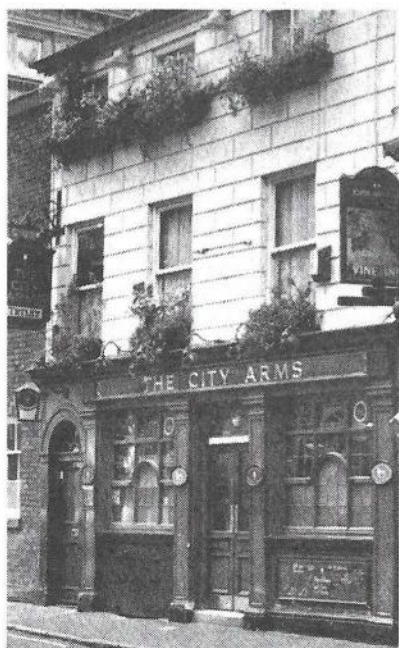
*with Daddy Bell*

Am I alone in being irked by the slogan 'enjoy! Whitbread' which I keep seeing on their vehicles? Is it meant as an invitation, an admonition, or a challenge? Some of us have long since realised that 'enjoying Whitbread' is a contradiction in terms.

There have been numerous truly enjoyable beers available locally in recent weeks. Among my personal favourites I would count Pictish Northern Dawn (4.8%), and Mistle Mild - a fine dark brown ale (3.7%) from a range of good beers produced by the Brown Cow Brewery of Selby. It has been good to renew acquaintance with Cambrinus Lamp Oil Porter (4.5%), which really does have a hint of oiliness about it. In the **Crescent** I drank several pints of Phoenix Golden Glow, at 6.5% an immensely satisfying strong ale, 'brewed for the discerning drinker,' as the pump clip says.

Two long-established family breweries have provided reminders of the excellence of which many more should be capable: Holdens Old Ale (7.2%) in the **Beer House** and the 6.8% Hydes XXXX in the **Victoria** in Withington village. In appearance and flavour they are very different interpretations of the style, but both were presented in beautiful condition. Emboldened by my surviving beers of such strength, I moved on to the mighty 10% Thomas Sykes Old Ale now brewed by Burton Bridge (in the **Crescent**, 17th January) so as to whet my appetite for the National Winter Ales Festival.

The Winter Ales Festival is designedly not a paradise for scratchers, tickers *et hoc genus omne*, though many of that company will have been there, as well as frequenting complementary in-house festivals at the **Beer House**, the **Smithfield**, the **City Arms** and other venues. Scratchers are subjected to much unfair obloquy, derided as the unconscionable in pursuit of the undrinkable. They deserve better treatment and grateful recognition of their sterling efforts, as they risk life and limb, health and happiness in their 'seek-and-enjoy' operations. Let us drink a toast to the pluck and perseverance of these valiant *vaunt-couriers* of the real ale movement: but please, let's make it a pint!





# 2001: A BEER ODDITY

# 14th Wigan Beer Festival

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Bottled  
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Real  
Ciders



German  
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## MILL AT THE PIER

(5 minutes from rail or bus station)

**Thursday 8th March 2001**

5:30 - 11:00 Admission £1.50 Entertainment=Alligator Joe

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12:00 - 3:00 Admission Free No Entertainment

5:30 - 11:00 Admission £2.50 No Entertainment

**Saturday 10th March 2001**

12:00 - 4:00 Admission £1.50 Entertainment=Chas Hooper Band

7:00 - 11:00 Admission £2.00 Entertainment to be arranged

Admission FREE to card carrying CAMRA members at all times

For further information visit our website [www.camrawigan.org.uk](http://www.camrawigan.org.uk)

## The English Pub - terminal decline?

*Roger Hall*

Looking at the new central Manchester pub guide, you can't help noticing the sheer growth in the number of outlets. Many are keg only, but nonetheless there are a lot more of them. Is this a revival of the pub or are city centre pubs opening at the expense of premises elsewhere? Well, the latter certainly appears to be the case. Manchester seems to be developing like an inverted doughnut, with a highly pubbed central core, a surrounding circle with fewer and fewer pubs and a thriving periphery.

Each year, I think that we've seen the end of the attrition which has decimated our inner city pub stock, leaving some areas with very few pubs indeed. And yet, every year the closures continue. The south of the city is a little protected by the universities, but even Ardwick, Chorlton-on-Medlock and Hulme have not been immune to the inexorable spread of the infection.

Of course, some pubs buck the trend. The Welcome in Ordsall springs to mind - one of only two pubs in an area where once a hundred or so thrived. The pubs in and around Red Bank and Angel Meadow seem to have carved out a niche for themselves as part of the Northern Quarter. Five pubs on the wrong side of the tracks - the Queens, the Marble, the Pint Pot, the Beer House and the Hat & Feathers - are an attraction for real ale fans from far and wide.

Elsewhere, outside the area bounded by the Irwell, the Irk, the Medlock and Great Ancoats Street, the picture is bleak. On Oldfield Road in Salford the Kings Arms and Jollies have closed; behind the hospital the Brewery Tavern and the Dock & Pulpit remain shut up. On Chapel Street the Old Ship has been demolished and the Peel Park and the Punchbowl will never reopen. On New Bailey Street the Pen & Wig shows no sign of becoming a pub once again. In Greengate, only the Eagle and the King Billy survive and in



Blackfriars only the Black Friar and the Braziers. The Black Friar has a 'For Sale' sign, so you can't help wondering how long that will be there. In Adelphi, the Town Hall Tavern has been closed for years and the Lima is now a hole in the ground.

Although we've seen a couple of new pubs in Weaste over the years - the Stowell Spire and the Ashley Brook - there have been many closures including the Waverley, the Widows, the Langworthy and the Swan. Pendleton, too, has witnessed more than its fair share of closures, including modern pubs built since the Ellor Street clearance. Many of those that survive seem to be hanging on by their fingertips. Once bustling locals can now barely provide a living for hapless licensees.

There are no pubs at all in Lower Kersal and very few in Broughton. Of the 87 real ale pubs recorded in the old city in 1980, only 39 remain.

Over the border in Manchester the picture is much the same. In Ancoats the Moulders Arms and the Cotton Tree have joined the long list of closed and demolished pubs. In Miles Platting the Grey Mare is closed and boarded, whilst in neighbouring Collyhurst, Banks's ventures came to nought, with the Robert Tinker demolished and the Osborne House a crumbling shell on Rochdale Road. There are no pubs at all in Lower Crumpsall.

Last year, we began to see closures in the outer suburbs - Eccles, Swinton, Blackley - and wondered whether this was a blip (*WD May*)





2000). I think not. Most of the demand-side and supply-side pressures are still there and many pubs in the outer suburbs have an air of inevitable decline about them, much as their inner city cousins had five or ten years ago.

It's now 28 years since Christopher Hutt's Book 'The Death of the English Pub'. He was right, of course, but the manner of the pub's dying was not to be as he foresaw. What we may be witnessing is a more fundamental shift in our society and the lingering demise through neglect of an institution that may be outmoded. Let me explain. The pub (or rather, our stereotypical conception of the pub) is rooted in the industrial society. With the industrial revolution came urbanisation and the establishment of urban alehouses and, later, beerhouses. It is on these street corner locals, often associated with trades or industries, that our image of the archetypal pub is based. Perhaps it is inevitable that, as we shift from an industrial to a post-industrial society, the institutions of the industrial society will disappear.



As the emphasis on employment shifts from jobs to careers and as 'communities' are based more on common interests than on geographical proximity, the local pub, particularly in what were working class districts, may have had its day. Of course, the pre-industrial roles of the pub - as a meeting place and as a place of entertainment - will survive. And, of course, it doesn't matter within reason where the pubs are. The city centre offers a choice of such venues with easy access for scattered communities in the conurbation.

There will, of course, be a need for pubs outside the city centre and it's important that it is the best of these which remain. It may be that we will need to pay a little over the odds to ensure that this is the case.

## Altrincham brews

Dave Ward's Cheshire Cat Ales are now well established at the **Old Market Tavern** in Altrincham, with both Agent X bitter and Coal Porter stout selling well. The beers were available at the Winter Ales Festival in Manchester. Dave intends to launch a mild during February.

## Christmas in Paradise

The weather for the first **Paradise Brewery Beer Festival** (Wrenbury, Cheshire, *WD December*) was seasonal, to say the least. John Cresswell of the Crewe & Shrewsbury Passengers' Association writes to say that despite the snow and the cold, attendance at the festival was encouraging and there were 160 arrivals at Wrenbury station during the three days. The trains managed to run, albeit with some disruption to the timetable, and the brewery provided a good range of beers at competitive prices. Further festivals are planned.

John also writes to say that the **Dolphin Inn**, St Michaels Street, Shrewsbury is now brewing a best bitter - 'a bit on the sweet side'.

# THE CRESCENT

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**JOHN SMITHS BITTER - ROOSTERS SPECIAL**

**PHOENIX THIRSTY MOON** + 7 *guests including a mild*

Erdinger on draught, Liefmans Kriek + Quality Doubles Bar

**Food served every lunchtime from 11.30am**

**TWO MEALS FOR £3** every Saturday 11.30-2.30.

2 Specials from the blackboard for £3

**Free Chip Barms** every Monday 5-6pm

Weds 5-8pm **Choice of Six Curries** (veg and meat) + Rice £3

**Function/Party Room** available for free hire

*Buffets or hot meals provided on request*

**T.V. and Games Room** open for darts, bar billiards and table football

*Beer Garden*



## Holts corner

*Stewart Revell*

The **Railway** at Didsbury, which has been undergoing conversion to a Holts outlet, is expected to open mid-March. The roof was re-tiled recently and there is still a lot of work to do. If all goes according to plan, the brewery will be opening the **Millstone** in Bolton later this year. As for the Lloyds-TSB bank building acquired in Bury a few months ago (close to Wetherspoons), this is unlikely to be serving Holts beers until 2002. So, no point in forming a queue just yet!

There was speculation recently that Holts had put cask conditioned Sixex in some of their pubs. On checking with my contact at the brewery, it turns out that their beer agent, Max Taylor, had asked for a few casks of the strong (6%) beer for his free trade customers in distant places, mainly Scotland.

The Sixex had just been brewed, so it was a relatively simple matter to fill half-a-dozen casks before the beer was sent off for bottling. Holts have no plans to sell cask Sixex in the Greater Manchester area. The beer is brewed once, sometimes twice a year and there would have to be an enormous increase in sales to make it worth while equipping all the pubs with handpumps, etc.

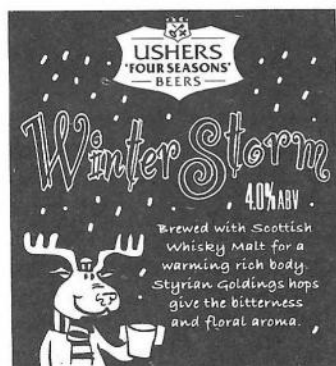
I am told sales of Holts mild are quite good these days because many customers are drinking the smooth variety, and paying an extra 2p a pint for it. CAMRA may not be happy with this situation, but drinkers of handpumped Holts mild get some benefit, as both types come out of the same barrel! Since a cask of mild is emptied more quickly, those who prefer the handpumped variety are obtaining a fresher and more consistent pint.

Both the **Crown & Volunteer** and the **Golden Cross** in Eccles are 'subject to offers'. The selling-off process has been very slow and there is nothing definite to report at the moment.

## Patricroft real ale gain

The **Ellesmere** has reintroduced cask conditioned beer after a gap of several months. Winter Storm, a 4% seasonal beer from Ushers brewed with Styrian Goldings and Scottish whisky malt, is part of the Four Seasons range, each using a different cereal grain. Spring Fever, using malted oats, arrives in March, followed by wheat (summer) and rye (autumn) based beers.

If the seasonal beer is successful, a second cask ale may be sold at the Ellesmere.



## Wigan and district

Dave White

The **Silverwell Hotel**, Darlington Street East, has reopened after spending much of last year closed and surrounded by scaffolding. Joseph Holts have bought the pub and a fine job they have made of it, with a tasteful use of dark wood and glass, reminiscent of the Silverwell's glory days as a Peter Walker house. The pub is on the edge of Scholes, an area of Wigan not known for real ale, so the conversion to Holts is particularly welcome. Smoothflow mild vies with traditional for barspace, so be sure to ask for cask.



Still with Drabs, and cask mild has returned to the **Douglas Bank Hotel**, Woodhouse Lane, Springfield. Yours truly visited the pub one recent Monday night to find the mild on fine form and selling well. Elsewhere in Springfield, the **Guardians** on Frog Lane

reopened (*WD Jan*) but remains keg, despite the presence of a couple of beer engines on the bar, and the once-mighty **Springfield Hotel**, Springfield Road, still offers fizz only, following a change of licensee. At least the handpumps have been removed. On Park Road, the rumour mill has it that J D Wetherspoon is interested in buying the **Famous Pagefield**. Can it be?

Skelmersdale doesn't feature too prominently in this fine publication, and after trudging round the New Town on two successive Saturday nights it'll be a good while before I go back. Of the nine pubs that I found in the Tanhouse and Digmoor areas (I am told there are others) not a single one sold real ale, including the once reliable **Grimshaw Road Inn**. Back in Skelmersdale Old Town, the **Derby Arms** on High Street appeared to be closed.

News in brief, and Burtonwood's **Halfway House**, Ormskirk Road, Pemberton, which reopened recently (*WD Dec*) is still on keg beer... the horny-handed sons of toil at the forthcoming Wigan beer festival won't be slaking their thirsts between sessions at the **Seven Stars Hotel** on Wallgate this year: the Thwaites pub has gone over to smoothflow... a change of licensee at the **White Crow**, Chorley Road, Worthington, has led to a more imaginative guest beer policy... the **Plough Hotel**, an Enterprise Inn on the arid Atherton Road stretch of Hindley, is closed and boarded up at the time of writing. Perhaps the pub should be renamed the Rest Harrow ?



## More changes in brewing

Roger Hall

Just as *What's Doing* was modifying its much used Jolly Brewer cartoon to become Three Jolly Brewers, everything changed again. Last year Interbrew bought Whitbread's and Bass's brewing operations. Bass alone cost them £2.3bn. Now Stephen Byers, the Trade Secretary, has decided that the deal must be undone. Incredibly, the deal was not dependent on permission being granted, so Bass won't have to buy their brewing operation back. Instead, it will be flogged off to someone like Heineken or Anheuser Busch. Interbrew will end up nursing a huge loss approaching £1bn and no doubt heads will roll.

Is this reversal a good thing for your average beer drinker? Insofar as it puts paid to a company with a 35% market share, then yes. But much depends on who buys the brewing operations. Interbrew are committed to brewing and would presumably have kept at least some of the traditional beers as well as brands like Tennents and Carling. It is by no means certain that another buyer would be so committed. Anheuser Busch, for example, might want to use the capacity to swamp Europe with Budweiser, a global brand. Nomura, a Japanese company which already owns many of our pubs, objected to the Interbrew deal, as did many pub operating companies, fearing monopolistic practices may reduce choice and increase prices. Nomura see no reason for global brands in beer, but that's the way it's going.

Meanwhile, Scottish & Newcastle has announced 1,300 job losses in an attempt to improve the efficiency of its operations to compete with Interbrew. It is also selling 740 pubs. It seems as though half the country's pubs are up for sale or to let. Thousands of Bass and Whitbread pubs are on the market and even Boddies and Holts pubs have 'To Let' signs on them. In London, Whitbread have closed their Chiswell Street headquarters, the site of Samuel Whitbread's original brewery 250 years ago.

It is now ten years since the Beer Orders were made. The shake-out from that is still taking place. Turbulence seems to be the steady state of the brewing industry in this country.

## Duke done

The Autumn 2000 edition of West Lancs CAMRA's *Ale Cry* reported the sad decline of Chorley's only Joseph Holts establishment, the **Duke of York** on Bolton Road. The building is now boarded up and 'For Sale' notices have been posted. The pub had a good start, selling some of the best mild and bitter in town, but the location, outside the town centre circuit, led to a drop in trade. Sounds familiar.

## GBG 2000 - The Millennium Pub Trail

### Part Twelve: The Final Frontier (for now)

*With winter setting in, Steve Smith and Mark McConachie headed for the Derbyshire border and the village of Mellor...*

Our purpose was to visit the **Oddfellows Arms** (*below*) on Moor End Road, a stone-built inn with some exterior seating and creeper-clad wall. The interior is what you'd expect - flagged floors and low beams - and there is a separate restaurant. The beer range was Adnams bitter, Marstons Pedigree, Flowers IPA and a guest ale.

A change of buses in Marple Bridge was necessary to reach the next pub, the **Travellers Call** (*right*) on Glossop Road. This is a stone-built, end-of-terrace local, a Robinsons house of some years, close to Etherow Country Park and some good walking country. There are two rooms open at present, the main bar and one for pool. Best Bitter and the seasonal ale are usually on offer. The opening hours have been revised slightly under new licensees.

Wanting to make the most of our day, we ventured into Glossop for the ever-popular **Old Glove Works**, a GBG entry for Derbyshire. This is located just outside the town centre in the old Riverside Mill on George Street. The pub sells up to five guest beers, the regular now being Theakstons (Cool) Cask. Upstairs is a function room with live acts on certain evenings.



Next, to Hyde and the impressive **Sportsman Inn** on Mottram Road. This former Whitbread establishment has been brought back to life as a thriving free house. It is a regular outlet for Whim Ales, in particular their Magic Mushroom Mild, supplemented by Taylors Landlord, Lees, Robinsons and other guest beers. The pub has three drinking areas, including a traditional vault, and table footy is available to the rear.

In Hyde town centre we made for the Market





Place, where Robinsons' **White Lion** is a welcoming boozier, still with its original corridor vault and etched glass windows. The lounge rooms are like a brightly-lit maze, with the company's customised red leatherette bench seats around pillars and openings. Hatters Mild and Best Bitter are

electrically dispensed and the stronger Old Tom is on handpump.

To complete the Trail, our final day out was spent tripping around the pubs of Mossley and Ashton-under-Lyne. First, a visit to the **Church Inn** on Stockport Road, Quickwood, a pleasant free house with a bar lounge and a games room. There is ornate tiling by the entrance and the interior decor commemorates the Mossley Pace Egg Race, local Morris Men and the like. John Smiths Cask Bitter and Theakstons (Cool) Cask are regular beers, with a couple of guests from the likes of Weetwood and Wye Valley.

About half a mile further along the road is the **Rising Sun**, another free house which has been tastefully opened out. The enterprising licensee sells up to six handpumped beers, sometimes at bargain prices. On our visit, Clarks bitter from Wakefield was £1 a pint - not at all bad for a 3.8% ale. The house beer is Rising Sun (3.7%, £1.20), brewed by Coach House of Warrington. Other beers are Black Sheep, Tetley bitter, Taylors Landlord and two guests.

Negotiating the steep descent to Manchester Road in the valley and heading towards Greenfield, we came to the **Tollemache Arms**, a canalside Robinsons pub. The public bar room is not always open and the Hatters Mild may have gone forever here, leaving only Best Bitter. This GBG 'try also' entry has a small, compact lounge area, with much wood in evidence as is this brewery's wont, and it is usually frequented by a more mature clientele.

Coming back towards Ashton, on Mossley Road at Hazelhurst is the **Junction Inn**. Robinsons again, in a comfortably furnished, lively pub with three rooms, one a snug with screens. On one wall there is a collection of framed prints of ecclesiastical buildings; other prints

depict the countryside. There are picnic table sets outside and lunchtime food is sold on certain days of the week. Hatters Mild and Best Bitter are supplemented by the elusive Frederics.

Close by is Hurst and the **Oddfellows** on Kings Road - yet more Robinsons in a cosy collection of linked rooms with a chintzy, warm, 'almost your own front room' feel to the place. Hatters Mild, Best Bitter, Old Tom and seasonal ales are available.

Some way out of Ashton town centre, the **Dog & Pheasant** on Oldham Road is a Marstons badged house which has a 'country pub in the town' air about it. There is a fine collection of rooms, some with colonial-style propeller fans rotating above, much brass, copper, earthenware and lots of other artefacts scattered around. The beer range is Banks's mild and bitter, Marstons bitter and Pedigree, plus a Camerons offering, on our visit Famous Frigate. There are some seats outside and - an unusual sight these days - a 20p-in-the-slot Avery weighing machine in the gents.

To finish, we headed for the **Witchwood** on Old Street, one of Ashton's premier ale houses. It is in a quieter part of town and can come as a shock to those who are not used to this haunt of rock music fans, bikers, Monster Raving Loony Party candidates and real ale lovers. Live bands, the likes of Half Man Half Biscuit and Ozric Tentacles, perform in the back room. The pub has a neatly arranged front room with an area for pool and a generous selection of beers. Regulars are John Smiths Bitter, Moorhouses Pendle Witch, Theakstons XB, Wadworth 6X and a brew called Musician's Ruin (4.2%).



So, that's it then! All the 2000 GBG pubs in Greater Manchester visited over twelve months. There's not really anywhere to go now, except, perhaps, back to where we began... but wait. Maybe we should continue the theme with the latest batch of pubs which have made it into the 2001 beer guide. A survey of additions and variations? Watch this space.



## In the City (2)

*Trotter continues his Manchester tour...*

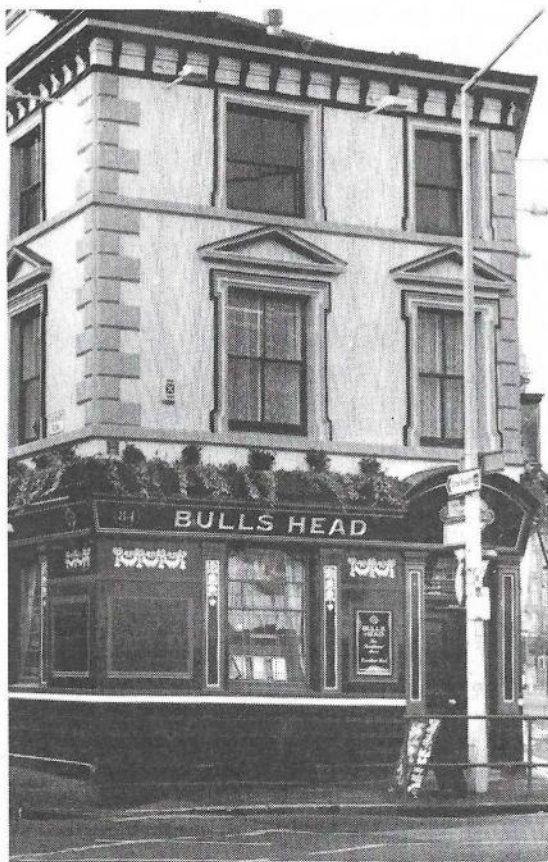
First stop on the second leg was the **Lass o'Gowrie** on Charles Street, a Victorian pub still clad in its Threlfalls tilework. Inside, the pub has been opened-out, though the 'snug' still remains. At the bar, ten handpumps serve a variety of ales and here we tried Moorhouses Black Cat mild and one from Caledonian called Space Odyssey, with an abv of 4.2001%, according to the pumpclip.

Next we went round the corner and paid a return visit to the **Old Garratt**. Their Old Garratt Ale (3.8%) is a dark brown, palatable beer brewed by Porters of Haslingden.

After that, we headed down Granby Row to the **Bulls Head**, the imposing Burtonwood pub on London Road where I used to call on my way to concerts at the Apollo. The walls of the open-plan pub are adorned with old prints and photos of Manchester, and a semi-circular bar serves Burtonwood bitter, Top Hat and Adnams Broadside.

A walk up London Road brought us to the **Waldorf**, a regular entry in the Good Beer Guide and a popular venue for business people during the daytime and early evening. Four ales were available: Tetleys, Boddies, Old Speckled Hen and Taylors Landlord.

Our final pub was the **Piccadilly Tavern** (ex-Goose on Piccadilly), where some seating has been removed to create more standing space around the bar area. There were numerous handpumps, but the only ales available were Bass and Hancocks HB. The HB was a generous £1 a pint, so we ordered that.



## Groggnard in Oldham (mostly)

So, another Christmas over and deeper in debt. This is the time of year when economy rears its ugly head and whispers that too much of my disposable income is going into elbow bending. I could jump on the temperance waggon (an unthinkable concept), drink less (boring), make my own (I already do) or scout out the best bargains in my local locals.

There are 'happy hour' bargains to be had, but boozing between six and seven isn't a practical proposition and in any case most of these offers are in the big-screen smoothflow parlours and the delights of John Smith - with or without his widget - I can cheerfully ignore.

The Northern Quarter is fine for an occasional treat, but with prices of £1.70/80-plus being the norm, its pleasures cannot be overindulged. Even a pint of the ubiquitous Lees can be a bit steep in some places. I'm thinking of the **'Raincoat Factory'**, where a pint of the seasonal Plum Pudding Ale (4.8%) was £2.05. No doubt it would have been cheaper in the Oldham area if I had found a pub prepared to sell it. I dropped into five or six Lees pubs and got the negative. However, I tracked it down to the **Hawthorn** on Roundthorn Road, where it was on offer at £1.75 as a guest ale.

On the subject of guest ales, I can't resist having a dig at **Up Steps** in Oldham - the Wetherspoons place where the John Smiths is cheap and the guest ales £1.49 or £1.59 *when available*. You can't just drop

in at night for a couple, in confident expectation of two new, tasty offerings. Either one or both pump clips will be facing the wall like naughty boys and the only decent regular, the Spitfire, 'hasn't settled yet'. I'm sure we've all heard it. Their finest moment was just after their Halloween festival, on a Sunday, when everything except Boddingtons was off. Even the Heineken fan was doomed to disappointment.





Meanwhile, the **Buck & Union** on Union Street has recently reopened after refurbishment. There are a lot of large white lamp bowls to enable one to admire the beer list clearly. It's not bad; six usually, but Taylors Landlord at £1.99 and Marstons Pedigree at £1.92 mean you're not going to get much change out of a fiver. The cheapest is Mr Gray's Ale (3.6%) at £1.60.

There is one place I sometimes visit on a Sunday afternoon when the wife (God bless her) is driving. Namely the **Rising Sun** in Upper Mossley - as distinct from Lower Mossley, down the hill - on the road to Greenfield. Landlord, Black Sheep and Tetleys are regulars, the first at £1.76, plus two or three guests whose prices can vary from £1.60 to £1 a pint.

Finally, I have to mention the **Ashton** on Clegg Street (otherwise John will throw a tantrum), which recently celebrated a year of selling Porters ales by holding a charity day. Here the prices are unchanged, still ranging from £1.60 for Sunshine to £1.10 for mild.

If all these don't impress, you can always fall back on Mr J H at £1.19.

## centro café bar

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**Open Monday to Saturday from 12 till late**

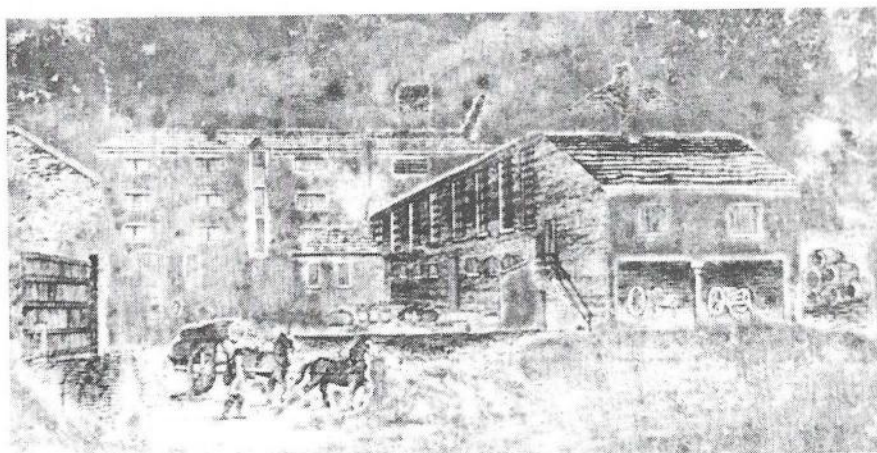
## Mottram's St Stephens Brewery

Alan Gall

Historical evidence now confirms what I've long suspected - some folk will do anything for a free drink. Thus a freak accident at a Salford brewery in 1831 gave the locals a chance to enjoy their beer straight from a stagnant pool containing putrid animal carcasses for flavouring. It must have been pretty potent stuff. The brewery in question vanished at the end of the nineteenth century but it had lasted longer than many, providing over a hundred years of service to the ale drinkers of the borough.

The story begins at a time when our French cousins were busily lopping off heads with Madam Guillotine. In Salford, Samuel Mottram was offering a much more humane treatment for throats, especially the thirsty ones. He was running the White Bull on Dale Street in 1786; by 1793 his brother John had taken over and Samuel is presumed to have begun commercial brewing. The St Stephens Brewery, which he founded, was definitely in operation by 1796. The nearby St Stephen's Church had been consecrated in July 1794. Much of the land surrounding the brewery, and possibly the land upon which it stood, belonged to the Bury family. John and William Bury were timber merchants, with premises on Water Street, Salford, and for a time were also brewers themselves. The junction of Bury Street and St Stephens Street faced the brewery gates and that part of Bury Street is today known as Nathan Drive.

Samuel (Samuel 1, to avoid confusion) was born in 1762 and married twice. He had eleven children, although at least three of them did not survive to see their first birthday, such was the infant mortality at the time. Samuel 1 died in 1816, leaving the business to be run by his sons John and Samuel 2. In keeping with his religious beliefs, one tenth of his estate was bequeathed to the New Jerusalem Church.



*A faded view of the brewery from St Stephens Street in the 1820s*



Under the terms of the will, Samuel 2 and John received one half of the net profits from the brewery. The other half went to the remaining children until all had reached the age of 21 or, in the case of the girls, they married, if that date was sooner. When this point was reached, the terms stipulated that Samuel 2 and John be offered first refusal on the purchase of the brewery at a price based on a fair valuation. The money was to be added to the estate and divided up between all the children. As an incentive for the brothers to continue with the business, they would lose their share of the estate (apart from a payment of £500) should they refuse to take up the offer. Hannah Mottram married at the age of 20 in 1829 and so this part of the will would have come into force as soon as the trustees managed to have the business valued.

Samuel 2 had died in 1823, but the brewery continued to trade as S & J Mottram until John bought it in 1830. John died three years later and his brother James, who had been working at the brewery, continued to run the business because John's sons were under the age of 21.

By 1838 the sons, Richard Elliott and Samuel 3 (grandson of the founder), had taken over from James and by 1840 Richard was on his own. Richard's middle name came from his father-in-law, Richard Elliott, who owned several properties in Salford. R E Mottram was a Salford councillor for over thirty years and his son Richard (*right*) became a mechanical engineer, joined his father on the council and was Salford's Mayor 1894-98. John Mottram lived in one of Elliott's houses at 24 Broken Bank (opposite the Adelphi Street/Chapel Street junction).



Several pubs have been traced to the brewery under R E Mottram. The Golden Eagle on Lodge Street, Miles Platting, was managed by Charles Crapper in about 1889 (relationship to the famous Crapper unknown). The Brewery Arms, which adjoined the brewery on Brewery Street, closed in 1906. (Brewery Street can now be located as Brotherton Drive.) The Rob Roy Tavern on the corner of Arlington Street and Mount Street survived until the 1960s. The White Swan on Cannon Street was bought by Chesters Brewery in August 1907 but closed in 1912. Further afield, the brewery controlled a number of off-licences, with premises on Cross Street, Hyde; John Street, Altrincham, and Mill Street, Bradford.

Richard Elliott Mottram had four sons, one of whom, Charles, was employed as a brewer at the age of 16 in 1861. By the time he was in

his early twenties he had formed a partnership and was trading as Sidgwick & Mottram at the nearby Sun Brewery. Obviously an ambitious fellow.

Whether or not there was a family dispute is unclear, but it does seem strange that he would set up in competition to the existing business. What is known, however, is that his father advanced him the sum of £5,434 against his inheritance.

In the 1870s Charles Mottram owned the Leamington Hotel, Taylorson Street, Ordsall (right, closed 1969); the Mechanics Arms on Ordsall Lane and a beerhouse on Liverpool Street. He also owned the Old Ford Tavern on Ford Lane, near the Sun Brewery. When this was due to be pulled down in 1873 Charles tried to have the licence



transferred to new premises on Robert Hall Street, Ordsall, but his request was turned down. By 1883 Charles was no longer at the Sun Brewery and the premises were used by Walker & Homfray (later, and at a different location, to merge with Wilsons Brewery).

The Sun Brewery had been built about 1835 and used by John Collins until 1846, when the brewery, 'able to produce 100 barrels a week', was advertised to let. George Bleakley was in charge by 1858 but was bankrupt the following year. James Hampson Gartside & Co were resident in the mid-1860s. When it was demolished in 1973 to make way for extensions to St Matthias School, the Sun Brewery must have been one of longest standing breweries in Salford.

The first Richard Elliott Mottram died in Southport on 17th April 1895. Mottram's Brewery Limited was formed in 1895, then two years later the business was acquired by the Cornbrook Brewery Company of Manchester, itself a long established concern and subsequently one of the first to introduce 'tank beer'.

*For help with research, I'm grateful to Richard Mottram of Egremont, Chetham's Library and Tim Ashworth of Salford Local History Library.*



## A jewel of a pub

*Countryman goes to Bacup...*

The **Crown** is not easy to find the first time around, and when you've found it, it looks less like a pub than you'd expect.

The Crown is reached from Bacup town centre via Yorkshire Street, which becomes Todmorden Road, and about half a mile up on the right is Greave Road. The stone-built, nineteenth-century pub originally consisted of two rooms and has been extended into adjoining cottages. The main bar room has comfortable furnishings and the seating areas are flanked by two heartwarming, crackling fires. Extending through to the back is a middle room and at the back a games room.

The beer range (which is what attracted us to the place) comes from the Pictish Brewing Company of Rochdale. Specially brewed for the Crown, the real ales are based on a theme from a website ([www.barearts.com](http://www.barearts.com)): a tasty, full-bodied 3.5% session bitter called Ironical Bearing and a stronger (5%), lighter-coloured bitter called IBA (Imperial Bare Arts). The pump clips take the theme a little further and depict the bare back and buttocks of an attractive and sporty female - and not at all distasteful.

In the pub's upper quarters, the landlady holds art classes for students, where nude models are invited to pose. Back downstairs, the pub's dog is called Albert and a third beer, Albert's Tale, is

brewed by Moorhouses of Burnley. This is a 4.4% blend of Pendle Witch and Premier Bitter.

No beers are priced over £1.80 a pint, which compares admirably with the town's other hostelries. In fact, there are quite a few pubs in Bacup and the town is easily reached on the frequent 464 bus from Rochdale. Check the Crown's opening hours before visiting.



## Rupert

You'd think that when someone dies who has spent the last thirty years knifing in print virtually everyone he'd ever met, the obituarists would fill their pens with vitriol. But no. There was undiluted praise for Auberon Waugh, who shuffled off last month. There's an object lesson there. I have been as nice as possible to people, yet the mildest criticism has met with vituperative vilification *sans pareil*. So it's no more Mr Nice Guy. I'll begin with the Grotley Amber Nectar Show.

In order to provide a fresh perspective, I took as my companions a 25-year-old female Brazilian journalist and a retired male Armenian psychoanalyst. Well, it was like a convention of stereotypes - boring old farts who wouldn't know what fun was if it burst naked out of a birthday cake. They're the sort who'd be better off building matchstick Taj Mahals in the garden shed or downloading internet porn. Perhaps they do that as well.

What sort of rôle models do they provide to attract the young? Well, you could do worse than look at the forty-something followers of the gaga greybeard gurus. They, if anything, are marginally more malodorous than their mentors.

Tubs, for example, is so obese that he will surely explode like Terry Jones' bloated gourmand in *The Meaning of Life*.

The show was peopled by deranged depressives who are tired of life, but don't bother to top themselves and, therefore continue to inflict their misery on others. There was also a fair sprinkling of the great and the good who, in any other organisation, would have been consigned to an appropriate wilderness.

It's little wonder that brewers continue to take the piss out of punters when all that protects us from oblivion is this coterie who compensate for their personality defects and social ineptitude by arranging events like this and preaching to themselves. Meanwhile, the world goes on and mainstream people enjoy themselves. Will we see a diminishing band of war-weary veterans forever living in a mythical past and training to be Chelsea Pensioners, or is there hope? The Church has stumbled on more or less successfully for 2000 years based on a gerontocracy, so there may be some comfort there, but I doubt it.

The Campaign has had its day and its luminaries are odious. If that doesn't get me a decent obituary, I don't know what will.

*Contributors to this issue: Roger Hall, Alan Gall, Paul Warbrick, Pete Cash, Roy Bullock, Mike Goode, Steve Smith, Mark McConachie, Daddy Bell, Dave White, Michael Lynn, John Cresswell*



# Branch Diary

## Regional Meeting

Wed 14 March 8pm, Hare & Hounds, Shudehill, Manchester

### North Manchester

Wed 7 Feb 8pm, GBG 2002 shortlisting, Hare & Hounds, Shudehill, Manchester

Wed 14 Feb, Castlefield/Deansgate crawl. Dukes 92, Castle Street, 7pm; Ape & Apple, John Dalton Street, 8.30pm. Finish at Crown & Anchor, Cateaton Street.

Wed 21 Feb 8pm, Branch Meeting, Crescent, Salford

Tues 27 Feb 6pm, What's Doing collation, Queens Arms, Honey Street, Cheetham

Wed 28 Feb 8pm, GBG final selection (city pubs), Old Nelson, Chapel Street, Salford

Contact: Roger Hall 0161 740 7937

### Rochdale, Oldham & Bury

Sat 3 Feb, Train Trip Social to Bradford pubs. Details from Branch Contact

Tue 6 Feb 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Black Swan, Bottom o'th'Moor, Mumps, Oldham

Tue 27 Feb 8.30pm, Committee/What's Doing Collation, Ashton Arms, Clegg St, Oldham

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

email: P.Alexander@Virgin.net

### Wigan

Wed 7 Feb 8pm, Branch Meeting, Anvil, Dorning Street (near bus station)

Wed 21 Feb. Wigan Beer Festival publicity crawl. Orwell, Wigan Pier at 7pm, followed by a minibus bound for Burscough. £5 deposit (refunded on night) to Deano at Orwell ASAP

Sat 24 Feb, Wigan town centre Beer Festival publicity crawl. Begins at Anvil, 1pm.

Contact: John Barlow (01257) 426464 (w), 427595 (h)

email john@misltd.co.uk

**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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*Dave and Sue welcome you to*

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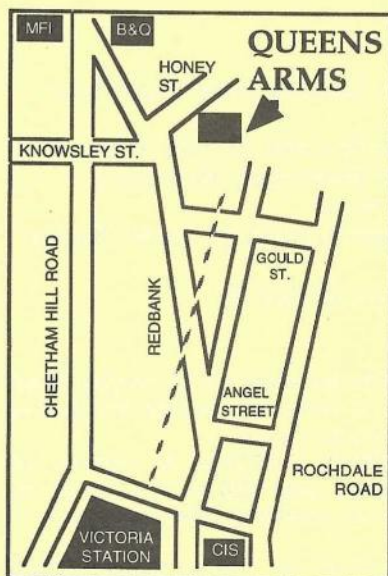
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