

30p

What's Doing

OCTOBER 2003



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

FAMILY BREWERS WEEK

Manchester's four family brewers - Holts, Hydes, Lees and Robinsons - this year chose a spectacular way to publicise the Independent Family Brewers of Britain 'week', from September 18th to 28th. The World's Largest Bike, powered by two teams of 26 employees from the four breweries, was cycled from Lees to Holts, then Hydes (for a team change) and Robinsons, then on to Hydes' Gateway pub in Didsbury.

See centre pages



Andy and Lynn welcome you to

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Lest we forget

Staggerin' Man

Some time ago I was collared by someone who thought his favourite hostelry was being ignored by CAMRA. This set me thinking that some pubs don't get much of a mention in the local CAMRA press, so I set about visiting a few in and around the centres of Manchester and Salford.

First on the list was the **Dutton Hotel** on Park Street, not far from Strangeways Prison. This is one of the last of the back street pubs and it is also unusual for its shape - almost triangular. The Dutton is well supported by regulars, which is amazing as there are few dwellings nearby, except the prison, of course. There are three cosy, separate rooms and Hydes bitter is the one real ale. I found it adequate, but on the tangy side.

I next went into Boddington's **Brewery Tap** on Great Ducie Street. There are three main rooms; a vault, a lounge-cum-dining room and a large, oak panelled 'snug'. I found the Boddies bitter surprisingly dry, with a good hop character and in fresh condition. Between the two main rooms one can see into the cellar of the brewery, with its memorabilia and a listing of head brewers, which strangely only goes up to 1994.

In Blackfriars, I ventured into both the **Rovers Return** and The **Black Lion** to find them keg. On my way to the Egerton Arms, I could not go past the **Albert Vaults** on Chapel Street. This welcoming, basic boozer believes in getting the beer right and to my mind does more. Both the Bazens' Pacific and Phoenix Arizona were in perfect condition and only £1.40 and £1.50 a pint. Onward to the **Egerton Arms** on Gore Street. This is a freehouse linked with Holts, so it's the bitter, which was bittery but on the thin side. The vault (a shrine to Manchester United) has an unusual shed-like wallpapered ceiling!



Slipping into Manchester, I gave **Mulligans** on Back Bridge Street a try. The Irish theme pub has good Irish piped music and one real ale. In the past, this has been a guest such as Jennings Bitter. Nowadays, there seems to be a link-up with Boddies. Again, it was a dry, fresh and fruity example of the Manchester tippie. Are they experimenting at Strangeways brewery before the beer strength is increased (3.8% to 4.1%)?

Passing the still closed **Crown Tavern**, I went into **Sinclairs** near the Cathedral. This is a Samuel Smiths pub, so there was just the Old Brewery Bitter available at £1.28 a pint. Good value is not in doubt, but the quality was disappointing - it was overwhelmingly yeasty. This was surprising as the pub was busy, as it often is, with its outside seating area (plastic glasses only).

Sinclairs and the adjoining 'Old' **Wellington Inn** have been moved from their original sites and both have undergone lengthy periods of restoration. Both are popular with shoppers and office workers, but what was the Old Shambles now looks like something out of a theme park. It has been a good many years since I was last in the Wellington and the beer wasn't cheap then. I found two real ales on - Draught Bass and Boddies. I tried the Bass at £1.10 a half and found it hazy, yeasty and tired. But it was good to see real ale being sold and Hoegaarden and Czech Staropramen on draught. I looked in the **Mitre Hotel**, opposite the Cathedral, only to find there was no real ale. I was told they hadn't had any of the real stuff for the last few weeks and they were vague about whether it will ever be on again. Oh, dear...

Things didn't improve when I entered **Lloyds No.1** on Dantzic Street, the only bar in the Printworks complex to do the proper stuff. Well, I



say 'proper stuff', but that wasn't what I got! Lloyds is a Wetherspoons-with-music, geared to young people. I saw Courage Directors, Taylors Landlord and Holts Bitter all displayed. The Directors was returned, as it resembled and tasted of vinegar. I asked for Holts and was told the lines were being cleaned (at gone 6.00pm in the evening!). There was just one beer left - the Landlord - which was hazy and tangy. The pump badges were displayed, even when the lines were being cleaned and one beer was undrinkable! I visited Lloyds No.1 again on a Friday evening, when the bar was busy with revellers, only to find no real ale on, despite it being advertised.

Surely, I would fare better at the **English Lounge** on High Street? Well, yes, they did have a good and dry example of Boddies as well as Marstons Pedigree. The pub has a pleasant 1930s-style decor and an extensive wine list, and there is a sign outside declaring 'large range of real ales'.

For an alternative nocturnal venue, one could do worse than venture into the very retro **Cord** on Dorsey Street, off Tib Street. I sat downstairs in their recently added cellar bar, where the tiled decor is straight out of Ken Russell's film *The Devils*, and sipped their one real ale, Sunspot from Salamander.

The **Hat & Feathers** on Mason Street was a first time experience for me. The pub has a big main room, back lounge area and a vault serving good quality Holts bitter on handpull. The last pub on my list was the **White House** on Great Ancoats Street, where I supped an excellent example of Teign Valley Tipple from Scatter Rock and finished off with a full-bodied and bittery Holts bitter.



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Holts seasonal

After a short delay because the pumpclip people got the design wrong, the new seasonal beer is due out during the third week in October. **Patersons**, named after James Ralston Paterson, founder of the Paterson research laboratory at Christie's Hospital, will be on sale in many of the 127 pubs of the Joseph Holt estate. For every pint sold, 20p will be donated to the hospital.

The 4% beer is brewed with Challenger hops and a touch of honey and has a reddish hue.

stewart@revell62.freemove.co.uk



Boggart Bulletin

Autumnal shades are now well upon us, but not if you're from Boggart Hole Clough, where the month's special is Sunlight (3.6%). This is a light pale ale with hints of rye and lemon citrus - and it's well hopped, too. Progress on the Rocket Fuel front is moving apace. The Boggart Scientist is working around the clock to reach not just 14% ABV, but 15%!

Salford Brewery Syndicate

Bazens'

The Best Bitter is being improved and at the same time reduced in strength from 4.5% to 4.3%. It will make its first appearance at the Smithfield.

The Virgo beer, **Blue Bullet** (blue is the Virgo colour and the brew uses Green Bullet hops), at 4.5% may well become a permanent beer. The next zodiac beer based on Libra (the Scales) doesn't have a name yet, but should be out soon.

Freshers' Special (5.5%) will run till January, when student money runs out.

Bolton Beer Festival

The tenth annual beer festival at the Howcroft Inn begins at 7.00pm on Wednesday 8th October and continues each evening (7-11pm) until Saturday 11th October, when there is an additional session from 12 noon to 6.00pm. With over 200 beers from around the country, this is the North West's biggest beer festival. The Howcroft is on Pool Street, off St Georges Road.

Bolton Arms

Readers of a pensionable age may remember the Bolton Arms, the S&N pub at the top of New Bridge Street, behind Victoria Station. It was converted into business premises years ago and it has now been demolished.



Higher Broughton

A planning application has been made for alterations to the **Horseshoe** on Back Hope Street in the form of a single storey extension to the rear of the premises and a two storey extension at the side. The pub is just a hundred yards from the Salford Brewery Syndicate and has recently flirted with real ale in the form of Phoenix and Holts. It would appear ideal for the local brewery's products. Failing that, the **Star** (Robinsons) opposite, now in the Good Beer Guide, is well worth a visit.

Little Hulton

One of the few oases for real ale on the troubled Little Hulton estate has gone. Hydes have given up on their solitary pub in the area; the **Lancastrian** on Kenyon way has gone.

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 £16 to Membership, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 4LW.

Wigan and District

Dave White

My report about the conversion of the **Engineers Arms**, Higher Ince, into a house appears to have been a tad premature (*WD July 2003*). The building on Belle Green Lane has a new hanging sign and etched windows which testify to the advent of the **New Engineers Arms**. The curtains, however, have been drawn whenever I've been past, so I haven't been able to see what's on the bar. Higher Ince is, to the best of my knowledge, a real-ale-free zone. Is it too much to hope for the return of amber nectar to this former GBG pub?

Work is in progress at another long-closed boozer, the **Crown Hotel**, Wigan Road, New Springs. The external signs and shutters have been taken down, though the effect has been to make the pub look even more forlorn. Watch this space.

The **Standish Arms**, High Street, Standish, closed recently, and rumour has it that conversion to **Last Orders** is imminent. This was a cracking boozer when Burtonwood ran it as the **White Duck** all those years ago but the pub has, metaphorically speaking, gone down the primrose path since then. There is, at least, the promise of real ale, if the Wigan outlet for Last Orders is anything to go by (*WD Sept 2003*).

You know you're getting old when nitrogenated beers are advertised as 'traditional ales', but it seems to be the case in at least two keg pubs in the Wigan area: namely the **Station Hotel** in Orrell and the **White Lion & Railway**, Whelley. On the other hand, the WL&R has removed the sign which advertised 'traditional handpulled beers' long after it had stopped selling them, and the pub now has a bouncy castle for the kids. Whelley Castle? The mind boggles...



Letter

Pedants' corner

Sir - Last month 'Even More Pedantic Pete' wrote to say that a draughtboard and a chequerboard are the same thing. I know that. The purpose of my letter in the August *What's Doing* was to point out that the use of the word 'chequerboard' to describe the Wilsons Brewery trademark is not right, historically speaking.

The design is called a draughtboard, and it was brought to Newton Heath in 1925 by Wilsons' General Manager, Leonard Hodges. He noticed it at a brewers' exhibition, where it was being used by Eadie & Co of Burton on Trent and Arroll & Sons of Alloa. The two companies had no objection to Wilsons joining the draughtboard club, so long as Wilsons didn't use the design on goods outside 100 miles of Manchester.

The first advertising campaign using the draughtboard was launched in Manchester in October 1925. The company rented 563 poster sites for six months at a cost of £1,235. They also spent £1,035 on 600 flat signs to fix to the walls of their pubs (*see photo*), some of which can still be seen today. In the same month, Wilsons applied to register the design as a trademark.

The word 'chequerboard' came into common parlance in the 1970s, long after Wilsons had been taken over by London-based Watney Mann. We no longer have Watneys Red Barrel and even the Chequerboard pub, which opened in that era, lives on with another name. So can we get back to the draughtboard?

In his letter, 'Even More Pedantic Pete' mentioned the ill-fated change of colour in the draughtboard design, from green to red. When the trademark was confirmed in April 1926 (No.463,450) there were two stipulations: the draughtboard design should always be used 'square-wise, not diamond', and 'no portion shall be coloured red'. It seems nobody at the brewery checked with the legal department before slapping on the red paint.

Pedantic Pete



In the City

Arthur Dent

It baffles me why the **Britons Protection** on Great Bridgewater Street has not been given a full entry in the Good Beer Guide. In the last couple of years the pub has merited only an 'inn brief' mention.

The historic building is on CAMRA's National Inventory and boasts beautifully preserved tiling inside and out. There are many other features, notably the leaded windows around the bar.

The long bar separates the main front room, which is extremely popular, from the two smaller rooms at the rear, which are served via a hatch at the back of the bar. There is a beer garden behind the pub and it was here on a fine September evening that I sampled one of the two guest beers, Archers Best Bitter. The other guest was Archers Special Bitter, but I didn't have that and instead opted for the Jennings Cumberland Ale. The other two permanent beers are Tetleys and Robinsons bitter.



Sinclair's Oyster Bar, at the other end of the city, must be the most re-positioned pub in history. In my youth I recall seeing the Old Shambles propped up on concrete pillars, awaiting relocation behind Marks & Spencers in the concrete jungle known as Shambles Square. Now Sinclair's is in the Triangle area of the city.

The three-storey facade is a replica, as the new pub is of breeze block, brick and cavity wall construction. The interior is original, with wood panelled rooms downstairs, served by the busy bar. A smaller bar upstairs serves two larger rooms which have their original beams exposed. Photos displayed throughout the pub show the various transformations of the Old Shambles.

The only real ale is Sam Smith's OBB and at £1.28 a pint it has to be the cheapest drink in Manchester.

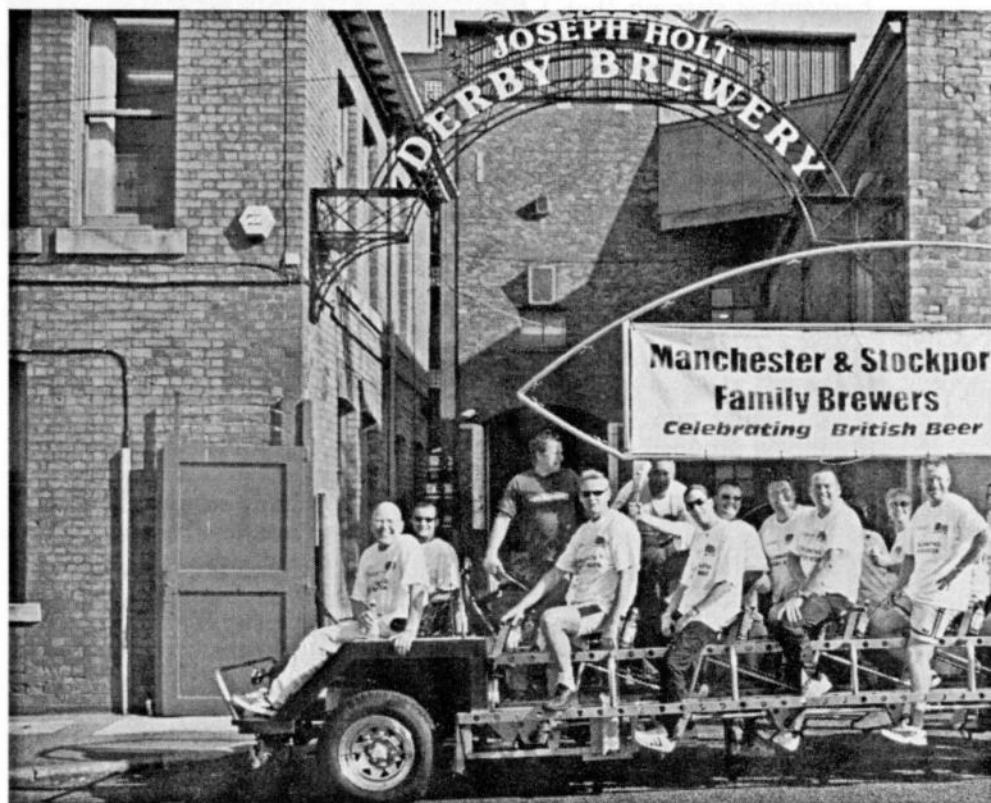
Family Brewers Week

Pete Cash & Phil Stout

At 10.40am on 16th September the World's Largest Bike attempted a right turn off Cheetham Hill Road into Empire Street, where we waited expectantly outside Holts Brewery. Progress was thwarted by a large van parked near the junction, but a bit of pushing in reverse soon overcame the problem and the team rode triumphantly up to the brewery gates. In the front were Giles Dennis, Head Brewer at Lees, and Holt's stocktaker, David Jones.

After a 20-minute break in the Derby Brewery Arms, they set off for Hydes and we walked to Piccadilly Rail Station to catch the East Didsbury train. As we were coming down the station approach at 12.30pm, we heard a loud cheer and the bike, now with a fresh team, cycled past us on its way to Robinsons. Meanwhile, in the Gateway, we enjoyed the beers put on for the day: Holts and Lees Bitter, Robinsons Best Bitter and Hydes Jekyll's Gold.

Towards 1.00 pm, guests started to arrive. Executives, Head Brewers and other staff from the four breweries were there in numbers, whilst CAMRA was well represented by the Regional Director, liaison officers for Holts, Hydes and Robinsons, and various branch officers



and members. Just before 1.45pm the entire pub emptied to cheer the arrival of the bike, still going at a fair lick. It turned out that the steep hills in Stockport centre had been just a little too much for the crew and they had to have a short tow, but otherwise the 21 miles had been covered by man - and woman - power.

Hydes' Paul Jeffries bade everybody welcome. This was the third year of the event and was the biggest and best yet. The launch would be followed by promotions in the pubs, and the Four would be represented at the Manchester Food and Drink Festival on 3rd and 4th October. Hydes would also be staging a South Manchester Beer Festival in their pubs, with over 30 cask beers available - Hydes themselves make eight.

Chris Hellins of Robinsons presented their medal-winning Best Bitter, made from pale and crystal malts with flaked maize. Roger Protz had once described it as his 'Desert Island Beer'.

Keith Sheard of Holts said that their bitter was now unique, as it was the only one still to be supplied in hogsheads (54 gallons). He looked forward to the launch of Patersons in a few weeks; 20p per pint sold would go to Christies Hospital.



Giles Dennis of Lees (the only Head Brewer actually to ride the bike) referred to the 175-year anniversary of the brewery. Bitter was now the key product, though it wasn't always thus. Lees still sold Moonraker (7.5%) on draught, together with mild and six seasonals. (The Christmas brew will be Plum Pudding).

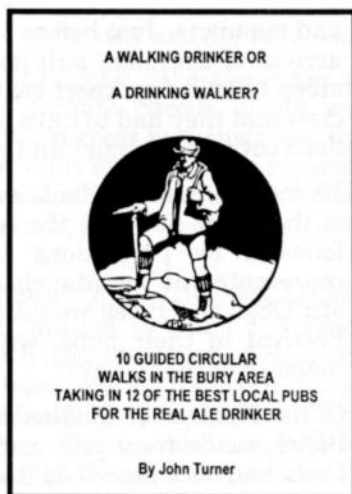
Finally, Paul Jeffries took the stage again. Four years ago Jekyll's Gold had filled a free trade space. The beer uses Pearl pale ale malt, which is roasted at an exceptionally low temperature to maintain its pale colour. Fuggles hops are added, with Styrian Goldings in no fewer than three further stages. Look out soon for Firkin Fruity with raspberry and carrot extracts, Rack & Ruin in November and 4X in time for Christmas.

The Walking Drinker

Twelve of the best pubs in the Bury area are included in a new booklet which combines the joys of real ale drinking and walking. *A Walking Drinker or a Drinking Walker?* by John Turner contains ten walks, taking in such sights as Waugh's Well, the Bolton and Bury Canal, Holcombe Hill, Ringley, Burrs Country Park, Summerseat, Birtle, Affetside, Entwistle and Belmont.

The pubs include the Lord Raglan at Nangreaves: 'A wide range of beers are brewed for the pub and for the free trade... *Nanny Flyer*, named after the local bus, is a tasty session bitter, whilst *Forever Bury* has been brewed to raise funds for the town's football club. *Crowning Glory*, at over 6%, is to be treated with respect! The pub has a large restaurant and serves full meals in addition to a choice of bar snacks. The views from the rear window are superb.'

The author's local is the Footballers Arms, Higher Summerseat: 'Jo and Jed maintain six different ales at very reasonable prices... Taylors Landlord, Moorhouse's Premier and Black Sheep Bitter are regulars, with an excellent and unusual alternative from the Three B's Brewery in Blackburn usually on tap. With the addition of a cask mild, this pub would be perfect!'



Other pubs featured include the Hare & Hounds, Holcombe Brook; the Pack Horse, Birtle; the Shoulder of Mutton, Holcombe, and the Red Lion at Hawkshaw.

A Walking Drinker or a Drinking Walker? is available from Waterstones in Bury and Bury Public Library, price £3. Or contact John Turner on 0161 767 1271.

Breweriana Day

Beer mats, pump clips, labels, bar towels, glasses and other brewery related items will be auctioned, raffled and sold at a stall at the annual charity event to be held at the Crescent, Salford, on Saturday 11th December, starting at 12 noon.

Donations of brewery artefacts for the sale would be most welcome. Contact Graham Lawley on 01743 850821, or Alan Gardner, 4 Beech Road, Leyland, Lancs PR25 3SS. The money raised will be donated to Manchester Children's Hospital.

Salford

After being closed for four years, the **Pied Piper** on Broadwalk was demolished in August. When it opened in 1970, it was the first of nine new pubs in the Pendleton redevelopment area. Tetleys were the first owners, then Burtonwood took over in 1992.

Alongside the tram tracks on Eccles New Road, the **Royal**, aka **Widows Rest**, is derelict and roofless.



Contributors to this issue: Dave Hallows, Paul Warbrick, Pete Cash, Phil Stout, Alan Gardner, Dave White, Roger Hall, Roy Bullock, Rob Magee, Ian Kenny

Session in the Pot

Dave Hallows

The drinking of a good, quaffable session beer can be very much a de-stressing pursuit, as long as one eats something first and uses public transport or a cab afterwards. The **Pot of Beer** on New Mount Street is a hospitable comer pub just behind the Nawaab Indian Restaurant on Rochdale Road. Mine hosts Paul and Sue Higginson have made it into a quality operation for both beer (Good Beer Guide listed) and food (Diners Club accreditation). On a Saturday afternoon you are likely to see a group of board game designers and a vast array of board games. It's best not to taunt them by boasting a love of video/computer games, as this wind-up has been done, I dare say, many times before!

The Pot is a firm favourite on the pub crawl trail and I stayed for a few rounds of the new addition to the beer range - a session beer called Otter Bitter (3.6%) from the Otter Brewery, Devon. Being a well-balanced amber beer, with fruits and a bittery taste, it went down well as I socialised and acknowledged folk such as an elf from Boggart Hole Clough Brewery out on R&R with the May Queen from the Queens Arms, Cheetham. There was a notable apology for absence from the group I was with. Apparently, a better half of one of our number was horse riding in the Botswanan bush.

Because of a deal struck between Robinsons Brewery and the Smithfield Hotel on Swan Street, the rare Hatters Dark has left the Pot and is now a permanent fixture at the Smithfield. The brewery didn't want three nearby outlets (the Castle on Oldham Street being the other) selling the beer. I am told the session beer is doing well and from time to time the Pot will be selling an interesting mild.



Then and Now

Rob Magee

No.120

Whittles

27 King Street, Oldham

In February 2003 the Yard Glass Pub Company refurbished and reopened **Whittles** on King Street, Oldham's newest real ale free house. The pub was once called the **Sergeant at Arms** and it dates back to 1854, when John Taylor obtained a licence to sell beer. It became fully licensed the following year.

The story goes that the pub got its name because the landlord's young son, Lees Taylor, had a collection of toy soldiers and he wore a sergeant's uniform when he was playing with them. In fact, a Serjeant at Arms (the original spelling) is a court official. Samuel Handforth, who had kept the Roebuck on the other side of King Street, had been a Serjeant at Arms, so he may have had something to do with it.

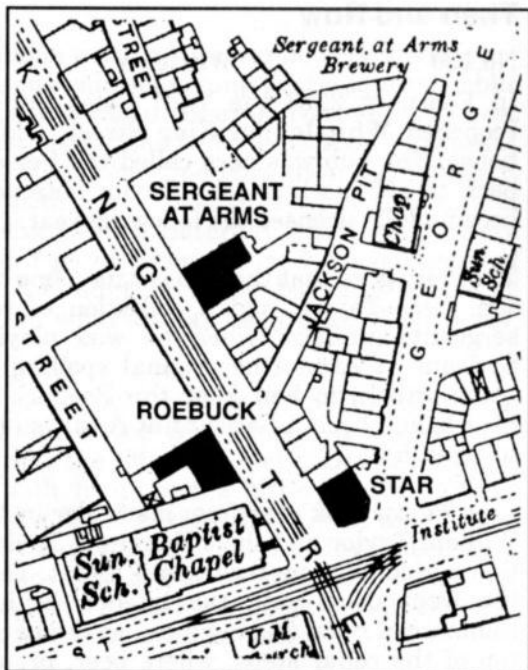
Lees Taylor took over from his father in 1873 and he was followed by William Taylor and then Thomas B Taylor. A plan of the pub during this period shows a traditional layout. The taproom was to the left of the front door, with the kitchen behind. On the right was the commercial room and behind that the bar parlour. The bar was at the top of the cellar steps, where beer, brought up in jugs, was served across the counter.

There was a sizeable brewery in the backyard and a wholesale brewing business was developed by Messrs Taylor & Lees. Improvements were made to the pub in 1890, when the 'Sergeant'



spelling was probably changed. A few years later the Taylor & Lees company owned the pub, as well as other property in the area.

In 1896 Taylor & Lees sold the Sergeant at Arms and its other licensed houses (about ten) to Threlfalls Brewery of Salford. The company continued in business as brewers and wine and spirit merchants and three years later opened their own out-sales shop behind the pub in Jacksons Pit. A local temperance campaigner who opposed the licence application complained that the Sergeant at



Arms and the nearby Star Inn were in a very low district, and many of the 'submerged tenth' of society resided near Jacksons Pit. His protest didn't do any good and the shop obtained a beer licence, a spirits licence in 1900 and a wine licence in 1911.



The shop operated under wholesale licensing regulations, which meant that the minimum beer purchase was two dozen bottles. No draught beer could be sold and permitted hours were 7.00am-7.00pm Monday to Friday and 7.00-2.00pm Saturday. Taylor & Lees remained a family firm - James Sergeant Taylor had the shop licence from 1919 to 1931.

Meanwhile, the Sergeant at Arms continued to sell Threlfalls beers. It became a Threlfalls-Chesters pub in 1961 when the Salford and Manchester firms merged, then six years later the brewing giant Whitbread took over. There were some changes in 1985, when the odd dividing wall was knocked down, then there was a big transformation when Whitbread sold the pub to Style Leisure Ltd and it reopened as **Jacksons** in March 1988.

There was another transformation in April 1995, when the pub became an Irish bar called **John Joe Maguires**, run by Margery Warde. In October 2002 it was renamed **Whittles**, but closed around November.

The pub reopened in February 2003 with a new licensee, John Hollinworth, who sells a good selection of cask ales - London Pride, Black Sheep, Theakstons, Bass and others - at £1.60 a pint.

Home Brewing Revisited

Humulus Lupulus

Part 28: Cider 2003

October is CAMRA's official 'Cider Month', so it is timely to report that, at least where I live, this year has seen bumper apple crops. After a few barren years I am pleased to report that I'm still picking at the moment, whilst at the same time starting to ferment the juice of my first gatherings. My press only handles 10 pounds at a time and I have so far collected over 130 pounds, so it is very much a multi-batch process.

I will give more details next month; suffice to say for now that I am using a Champagne yeast this time (the last lot in 1999 used Hydes' beer yeast). There should also be news about this year's home-grown hop crop, which is looking promising.



Out in Glossop

There was a beer tent at the Glossop Victorian Weekend (the last weekend in August) and up to twenty-five beers from small independent breweries were available. C A Rotwang attended...

The first beer I sampled was Maximum Darkness from Eastwood & Saunders. As the name suggests, this was a dark beer, with a hint of chocolate. E&S is the result of a merger between Barge & Barrel and West Yorkshire Breweries.

Next up was Bitter Experience, a 4%, clean tasting and easy drinking beer from Storm, Macclesfield. After the storm, it was back to sample the Glacier Ale, a strong, hoppy beer from E&S.

At this point I was joined by Rock Chic and Old Dick and friends, so we spent the afternoon

tasting and comparing notes. Among others, they tried Dark Wheat Mild from Tigertops, an unusual mild with a hint of coffee aroma, made primarily with wheat malt.

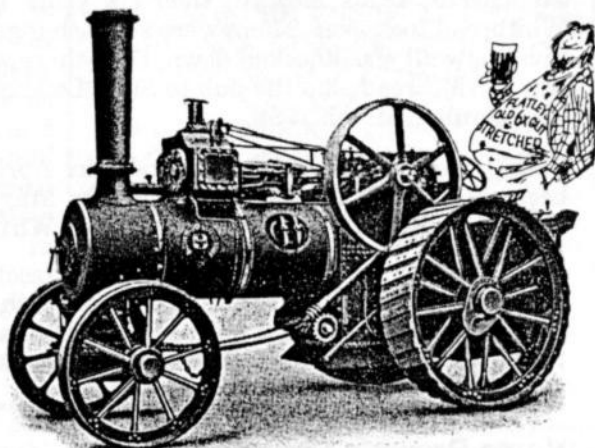
A new brewery to me, Upper Agbrigg, had two beers available. The brewery is named after the Wapentake of Agbrigg (which dates back to the 1200s) and is based at Holme, Holmfirth, Huddersfield. I sampled the Holme Valley Bitter, a continental-style ale.

Kheans, another new brewery, supplied an ale called Traction Engine, which was appropriate, as one of these machines stopped off in the car park to distract us from the beer for a while.

All the beers were in good condition and the event was heaven for beer tickers, as some of the ales on the list are hard to find.

From the beer tent we progressed to the **Old Glove Works**, Riverside Mill, George Street. This was my first visit to the converted mill and we sat outside, listening to a rock/blues band playing on the back of a truck. The guest beers were Summer Lightning, a Jennings seasonal ale called Cross Buttock and Ale Force, an amber, complex beer with a sweet aftertaste, from Storm.

Before heading for the train back to Manchester, we called into the **Oakwood**, a street corner Robinsons pub with friendly bar staff.



Rovers Return

It's now over forty years since Salford Council embarked upon its comprehensive demolition and rebuilding schemes, when large areas of the city were cleared for new developments. Scores of street-corner pubs disappeared along with the old houses. Tilly Bramer, who died last month at the age of 86, was one of the last of the landladies from that era.

Tilly and George Bramer had the licences of several pubs, notably the Grove House on Ellor Street, near where Pendleton shopping precinct is today, and the Park Inn on the corner of Tatton Street and Gloucester Street in Ordsall. They moved to the Park when the Grove House closed in 1960.

Three years later the owners of the Park (Greenalls) modernised the pub and extended it into a former cafe next door. The tiny vault, smoke room and lobby were replaced by a spacious lounge and vault. The pub also got a new name, the Rovers Return. In the early days of *Coronation Street*, Granada TV filmed outdoor scenes in Ordsall. The 'Coronation Street' which was shown at the beginning of each episode was Archie Street, a few hundred yards from the pub, near Ordsall Park. The 'Rovers Return' which appeared on television was another Gloucester Street pub, the Amalgamated, with signboards suitably altered.

The photo shows Tilly behind the bar of her modernised pub in 1963.



Rupert

To celebrate our Indian summer, we decided to experience alfresco drinking in Grotley city centre. It was some time before our wish to bask in the unseasonal warmth came to fruition, for reasons which will become apparent. We started off in the Old Scrotes, near the newly-opened Smarmy Biggles, in Clive's Whelk Hut, to be precise. There were plenty of people drinking outside, but what we didn't spot until we went inside was that the amber nectar was being served in gossamer-thin, condom-like mini-buckets. 'I'm not drinking out of plastic!' Bunty stated. 'We'll go upstairs.' And so we did, partaking of an excellent pint of Tykeley ale that rivals Drabs in price.

At Fiona's behest, we then crossed the city to the Roman fort, where people were sitting outside Leo's, drinking from what appeared to be glasses. But alas, no. They were, it turned out, just more substantial plastics. Again, we stayed inside. A somewhat redundant debate followed about whether bone china actually made a difference to the taste of Lapsong Souchong, whether Grotley had plastic byelaws and, if not, why you can't take glasses outside, and do they have mini-plastics for slugs of Redeye.

Imagine our delight

when, at Earl's lock, we saw people with real glasses outside. Bunty's delight was slightly muted by his description of the frail-looking furniture as only fit 'for dwarves like you, Roop, and nut-eating skeletons like you, Fiona.' Our remonstrations that we were persons of restricted growth and Vegans respectively fell on deaf ears. Sadly, Earl's had stopped selling amber nectar from the wickets, so we plodded off down the canal until we reached Pissers on the other bank.

Here we were able to indulge our wish to drink alfresco from proper glasses. It was wonderful. Nobody smashed any glasses on the floor or over anybody's head. Why can't everywhere be like that?

I have received greetings from Hattie Nightingale (retired hurt) from deepest Thuthix. She believes 'that Rupert has finally run out of vitriol and was last seen plying his wares on a southern beach.' What can this mean? I must find out.



Branch Diary

Regional Meeting: Weds 8 Oct 8pm, Castle, Oldham St, Manchester

Regional under-26 social. Fri 3 Oct 8pm. Session in the Jolly Angler, Ducie Street. by Piccadilly Rail Station, Manchester.

Meet by CAMRA sign.

Contact email: davehallows2002@yahoo.co.uk

Wigan

Wed 1 Oct 8pm, Branch Social, Colliers Arms, Pimbo Rd, Kings Moss

Tues 7 Oct Trip to Robinsons Brewery, Stockport

Wed 15 Oct 8pm, Branch Meeting, Robin Hood, Sandy Lane, Orrell

Wed 12 Nov 8pm, Branch Meeting, Royal Oak, Standishgate, Wigan

Contact: John Barlow (01257) 478816 (w), 427595 (h)

email: john@misltd.co.uk

Rochdale, Oldham & Bury

Tues 7 Oct 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Moorcock, Halifax Road, Littleborough

Fri 17 - Sun 19 Oct, Long weekend social, Cologne/Dusseldorf, Germany

Sun 26 Oct, 'Not the 10k Run' Social, Tandle Hill Tavern, Thornham Lane, Middleton. Branch Contact has details.

Tues 28 Oct 8.30pm, Committee, Healey Hotel, Shawclough Road, Rochdale

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

email: p.alexander@virgin.net

Trafford & Hulme www.camra.org.uk/trafford

Thurs 2 Oct 8pm, **BRANCH AGM**, Old Market Tavern, Altrincham. Followed by social event - Grand Raffle, Quiz and refreshments.

Thurs 9 Oct, Social at Trafford Social Club, Moss Lane, Stretford

Thurs 23 Oct, 7.30/8.00pm. Meet at City Arms for Manchester survey

Contact: Dave Ward 0161 980 1170

North Manchester www.camra.org.uk/nmanchester

Wed 1 Oct, Two pub social, White Swan, Swinton, 8pm. White Lion 9.30.

Wed 8 October 8pm, Regional Meeting, Castle, Oldham Street

Wed 15 Oct 8pm, Branch Meeting, Crescent, Salford

Wed 22 Oct, Oxford Road/Portland Street Crawl. Sand Bar, Grosvenor Street, 7.30pm. Salisbury, Wakefield Street, 8.30. Grey Horse, Portland Street, 10pm.

Tues 28 Oct 3pm on, What's Doing Collation. Queens Arms, Honey Street, Cheetham.

Wed 29 Oct: Pendlebury Social. Newmarket 8pm, Lord Nelson 9pm

Contact Roger Hall 0161 740 7937

Dave and Sue welcome you to

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HONEY STREET, CHEETHAM

Tel: 0161 834 4239

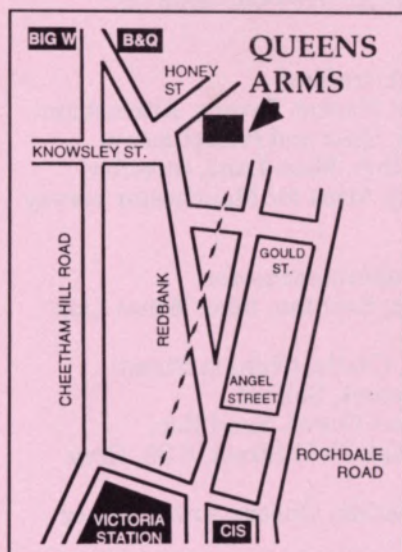
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PUB OF THE YEAR 2002-3



PUB QUIZ

Tuesday, 9.30pm start

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with children's play area

FAMILIES WELCOME

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Sunday Roast

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**GOOD BEER
GUIDE 2003**

