

Vol 3 No1

FEB 1981

10p

LONDON DRINKER

Produced by the London branches of the Campaign for Real Ale Ltd



?WHAT'S SHE DOING?
SEE PAGE
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Look a gift horse in the teeth

THE NEW RANGE of Ind Coope beers - Taylor Walker, Benskins, and Friary Meux, plus the keg John Bull - has been promised for months and is now available. But how can the giant Romford Brewery, geared to 600-barrel batches (172,800 pints), brew a selection of beers?

Our mole has been at work to find out the truth, and this turns out to be what the cynics had guessed - there are not as many beers as there are names. The range of tastes is being achieved by ingredients which are incorporated after brewing rather than by the use of individual recipes.

The Romford system is of 'paired' beers:

- Benskin's bitter and Friary Meux bitter
- Taylor Walker bitter and John Bull keg
- Light ale and KK mild.

Each pair is produced from a basic recipe and the resultant brew adapted in the appropriate quantities.

It is sad to see a modern brewery having to resort to such a dodge to provide customer choice. In extenuation, one can sympathise with Ind Coope having to cope with the archaic scale of their equipment, designed

for ubiquitous standard products as symbolised by that dead Red Hand which still lies on the new range.

What's yours - consomme Benskin or Friary Meux Bouillon?

Note: Because of the scurrilous nature of the above item and the deep and lasting friendship which our publisher enjoys with the Ind Coope oligarchy, this edition of the 'Drinker' will not be distributed in Essex.



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Our next issue will be available early in March. Closing date for copy: 13 February.

LONDON DRINKER is published by the London Branches of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale Ltd.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the individual contributors and are not necessarily the views of either the London Branches of CAMRA or the Campaign for Real Ale Ltd.

Subscriptions: Stan Tompkins

NEWS & VIEWS

○ THEY'RE OFF

THE NEW YEAR has barely begun before prices start rising. Surprisingly, Young's have beaten the big brewers to the punch and have pushed up their pub prices by 4p a pint. This must mean that a pint of any sort of bitter costing less than 50p will rarely be found in the central area of London.

○ BEER TRUTHS

AN UNOFFICIAL "Freedom of Information Act" has been proposed by the Brewers' Society. If it goes ahead, which is likely, pub customers will be told more about the strength of the beer they are drinking and more about the way it is served.

On strength, the Society recommends that either the minimum Original Gravity or the range - Minimum OG 1030 being an example of the first and OG 1030-1035 of the second - should be given on the pump clip or price list.

Beer that is allowed to condition in the cask or container, which is one of CAMRA's main criteria, should be described as "Cask-conditioned" beer. And CAMRA would also welcome the proposal that the use of carbon dioxide gas to move beer from cellar to dispense point should be clearly indicated.

○ CART IT HOME

AS IF finding CAMRA and the Brewers' Society in the same corner was not shock enough, now it is CAMRA and the National Union of Licensed Victuallers who, together with the Society - again, are encouraging people to buy their take-home beer direct from pubs.

To this end, CAMRA have launched CART, the Campaign for Real Take-home. Several brewers have already provided

suitable containers for the "jug and bottle" trade, and these should soon be available throughout the country. This move will no doubt be helped by the report in 'Which?' on canned beer. They found that a great deal of this was stale by the time the supermarkets sold it.

○ SCHOOL HOWLERS

SPACE INVADERS and similar electronic games are being used by ICI to select people to work with semi-automatic machines. An ICI spokesman was quoted in the 'Times Educational Supplement' as saying that schools could learn from motorway cafes how to make children familiar with micro electronics.

The TES notes that Somerset Education Authorities have toyed with the idea and some others will no doubt be tempted to follow ICI. Before our traditionalists get too upset, they may take heart from the TES's conviction that "the moment Space Invaders appear...in a significant number of schools, the pubs will go back to bar-billiards and darts."

○ NOW THERE ARE SIX

ALTERATIONS TO the NAG'S HEAD in Hampstead have doubled the space in the saloon bar and introduced air-conditioning and smoke extraction. The promised carpet (the subject of a 'Drinker' complaint some issues back) is also in place.

Unlike most Free Houses, where hand pumps sprout like spring flowers, the NAG'S HEAD has deliberately reduced its range of beers in the hope that the remainder will be readily available and in good condition. On sale are Brakspear's bitter, Gale's HSB, Greene King Abbot, Ruddle's County, Sam Smith's OBB and Simon's bitter.

£54.99!

+ Vat + p & p

For a Handpump?

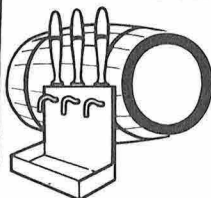
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WHAT, NO MAKMULLEN'S ?

McMULLEN'S OF HERTFORD with 20 or so pubs in or on the fringe of the Greater London area are still, writes DEREK SMITH, paying only lip service to the growing demand for Real Ale. While their major competitor in their Hertfordshire backyard, Ind Coope, are regionalising into smaller companies and providing more and more Real Ale, McMullen's are dragging their feet.

They brew two very tasty cask conditioned beers, AK Best Mild and Country Bitter, but the chances of finding both beers served on handpump in the London area is very remote. Handpumps have been installed in some managed houses for the Country Bitter only but customers have to request it from the handpump. Otherwise, they are more likely to be served a pint of fizzy beer from the gas tap behind the new-style gaudy counter-mounting.

AK Mild is Mac's biggest selling beer, being more than fifty percent of the brewery's total production, but it seems they lack faith either in their product or in their managers by now allowing AK to be served without the iniquitous gas pressure in their managed houses.

In some pubs, even the Country Bitter is more often not available from the recently fitted handpump sporting a brand new pump clip and discerning customers are disappointed.

If McMullen's are conducting a fair test market for non-pressurised beer in some of their pubs, they should ensure that the stuff is available for customers to drink. And they should include the famed AK.

WOULD YOU ADAM AND EVE IT!

AT A TIME when the 'Drinker's editorial team was knee-deep in German lexicons in an attempt to translate the names of certain lagers, our big brewers were engaged in research that was similar but a bit closer to home. All to do with notions of that old-fashioned, free-and-easy

pub atmosphere, full of singing and laughter.

For the externalisation of this concept in the form of advertising, it was thought essential to utilise the demotic vocabulary. For London, this means Cockney slang. Allied Breweries have introduced beer mats which provide a "butcher's hook at brass tacks". Courage's 'Gercha' TV ads are notorious, while last year they launched the "Spot the Courage Best 'laugh and titter' competition." (One should not be pedantic about such things, but is not the authorised version 'giggle and titter'?)

The joke about Courage is that this concern for cultural authenticity coincides with them trying to close their London brewery! In fact, three of the Big Six - Whitbread, Charrington and now Courage - have stopped brewing in Central London in the last decade.

10th Anniversary Issue

CAMRA

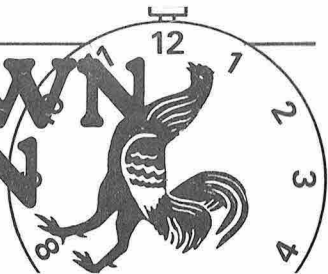
GOOD BEER

PUB GAMES Special feature

GUIDE

Campaign for Real Ale

HORSELYDOWN COUNTDOWN



TWO MONTHS TO GO

SO FAR, the campaign over Horselydown has had more success on the ideological level than on the hard issue of saving the brewery. Courage know that their every false move, their every setback, will be put under the microscope and be given maximum publicity. Shareholders have been alerted by CAMRA to the dangers of over-centralisation and to the fact that a range of traditional beers makes commercial sense.

Courage try to shrug off the need for this advice as being based on "misleading and incorrect information." Can they guarantee, however, that cask-conditioned beer will never be withheld from pubs in what is currently the Horselydown trading area or, given their record, that centralising production in one brewery is sure to lead to better industrial relations?

Certainly there are Courage tenants and customers who are less than happy (see below) and we understand that some landlords have told their brewery contacts what they think of the deal.

The fight continues. Meanwhile, Courage's Bristol brewery prepares to receive the surplus casks from London and to change production so that, according to the 'Morning Advertiser', over 60% of their beer will be cask-conditioned. We hear also that a Courage employee let slip the news that the decision to close the other remaining Southern brewery, in Plymouth, has already been taken. Surprise! Surprise!

THE VIEW FROM THE BAR

THE PROPOSED closure of Horselydown Brewery, writes LAURIE BISHOP,

is just the latest in a long line of actions which satisfy no-one but the company accountants. The same accountants whose previous incompetence and lack of feeling for the drinking public have led to other mistakes. But what about the drinking public, who are always the last to be consulted? CAMRA always claims to speak for the beer drinker and, in order to honour this pledge, I have been finding out the opinions in various Courage pubs around London.

The answers are illuminating. One might expect the older drinkers to voice no more opinion than: "It's not like it was in the old days" and for the young to wax lyrical over Hofmeister lager. Not so. One youngster I talked to complained bitterly of the lack of taste to his bitter and said that the Courage adverts were a complete sham. Too true! Another older toper wanted to know how it was that Courage always managed to drag their pubs down the drain and reach the very lowest common denominator in interior decor. Well said, sir! All Courage pubs nowadays seem to have a sad and weary look about them. Perhaps walls do have ears after all. Other people bemoaned the poor record of delivery of supplies to pubs Courage have and seem to do their best to maintain. I pointed out to one not-so-old man that he would not be likely to get Imperial Russian Stout after present supplies ran out because Courage would only have the Bristol brewery left (Plymouth being too far away) and it was presumed to be uneconomic to send it to London. Since it was only sold in London (normally) they would stop brewing it.

I could go on and on about the complaints I have heard from drinkers about Courage and their policies. What my little survey did was to convince me that we are absolutely right to complain about Courage's intentions. CAMRA is often accused of being too introverted, of being too much a glorified drinking club, of being too concerned with petty definitions of real ale. But this closure brings home to one how even today, ten years after the birth of CAMRA, one of the Big 6, is hell bent on self-destruction

Some of my research into the actions of Courage and the effect on drinkers in their pubs has been surprising in its results. As I said earlier it is gratifying that so many younger drinkers are concerned about the poor quality of Courage Best Bitter. Courage have been devaluing the quality of Best for years. First it was the stuff brewed at the old Reading brewery ready for the 'bright' version from Worton Grange. Next it's the London Best so that the spare capacity at Worton Grange can be partly taken up when London closes.

Bristol Best next? I would never believe that such an apology for beer as London Best Bitter could be brewed. CAMRA should fight for the retention of the beer and for its quality to be restored to its original level.

There again, the point made by the older drinker on the decor in Courage pubs is a good one. Pub preservation doesn't just mean stopping the developers knocking the pub down but also making sure the inside is how a pub should be. Courage love knocking out public bars and doing away with traditional pub games. Steak houses abound and the pity is that only now are people waking up to the vandalism carried out.

Beer deliveries are a sombre way of showing how bad Courage have become. Big breweries always seem to suffer more industrial trouble than smaller ones and Courage seem to be worse than most. Many Cour-

age licensees are fed up to the teeth with the way they are messed around over deliveries. Whenever there's a strike on its always the publican that suffers and normally the tenants suffer first. Clubs and the free trade can often go elsewhere so they're catered for first but the tenant, who has to make his living out of selling beer, and is tied to Courage for his sins, has to grin and bear it.

There is not really much to add to this sorry tale. Brewers always did set out to make a profit. It's just that nowadays some of them are so big that they are just all remoteness and no understanding. All the PR men in the world cannot smooth talk their way out of the mess that Courage have got themselves into. In a recession they are stuck with an outdated image of centralised production with enormous running costs, high interest charges, exorbitant travelling expenses and an outmoded and narrow product range.

Their parent company, Imperial Group are growing continually restless at Courage incompetence and the time must surely be approaching when the whole concern is ditched. So why not talk about the Courage disaster in your local Courage pub today? You would probably be surprised at the attitudes of the rest of the pub. Especially the landlord. You could even try writing to the brewery or your local MP. It's high time that the likes of Courage were made to show some responsibility towards the drinking public and less to the gods of accountancy.

STOP THE KILLER COCK!

Badges available at 15p each from
COLIN RIDDETT 20 CHART ST LONDON N1 6DD
Send a SAE now and support this vital campaign!



Remember Courage Best?

FOR SHEER DISHONESTY, writes NICK WARD, the present Courage advertising campaign must take the Golden Bullshit award for 1980/81.

While preparing to close their main traditional brewery (in London) and transfer production to a new processed beer plant at Reading they are running adverts with a strong traditional theme and Cockney songs.

The hen-pecked husband escapes to the sanctuary of a sepia-toned, corner alehouse, where others, similarly afflicted, are contentedly slurping their Courage Best to traditional (!) Cockney songs in the background. Then a closing shot of a modern top-pressure dispenser - maybe they thought a handpump would be stretching credulity too far?

The rest of their publicity is on similar lines, with old-fashioned posters for the ½ price bitter promotion and offers of old prints. No-one is complaining about the ½ price beer. I certainly took advantage of it and, judging by the number of other jolly toppers present, it seemed quite successful. However the worrying question is: will we be able to get real best bitter by the end of this year - at any price?

In common with some other big brewers, Courage may be coming to

the realisation that their high prices are hitting beer sales. Financial analysts who look for reasons for the big brewers' poor results have pointed to the large drop in beer sales, especially in the London area where prices are the most spectacular. There is even talk of not increasing prices for several months!

You can still buy your beer cheaper from most of the small, independent brewers and their profits seem to be holding up much better. In fact, the cheapest beer I know (30p a pint for mild) comes from a brewery which has only 11 tied houses. Whatever happened to economies of scale? Of course there are other factors, such as money spent on pubs and the margins accepted by the tied trade, but the lesson seems clear, that Courage and others should pay more attention to the cheaper end of the market.

Which brings us back to their advertising campaign. If they have now embraced the old-fashioned cloth-cap image, so despised by their marketing men in the past, can we expect them to go the rest of the way bring back mild.. ...reintroduce local brewery names. ...regional beers....and above all keep their London brewery open?

Answers on a postcard please, to:
The Directors Ward, Horselydown
Sanatorium, Southwark-on-Sea.



A CHEER FOR YOUNG'S SPECIAL. Tim Amsden, CAMRA's new Chairman (right) presents Young's Chairman, John Young and Head Brewer Ken Don with their award for winning the Strong Bitter competition at Alexandra Palace.

FALSE IMPRESSIONS

by BRIAN DESMOND

THE THOUGHT OF false handpumps is unpleasant to the lover of Real Ale. His lips tighten, his eyes narrow and his breathing becomes faster. The sight of such items is terrible to him. So fearful is his ire that his throat becomes intolerably dry and he has to make his way at great speed from the offending establishment to a place selling the real thing where he will need innumerable pints to quench his thirst. And, of course, the same goes for the female gender.

The offending articles are becoming quite rare in London. I saw one in a pub on the edge of Wimbledon Common last September: the sly kind that give the impression of being real but which merely activate top pressure. A devilishly cunning business which, however, does not succeed in fooling the really devoted beer-drinker who knows what to look for.

The second kind is quite blatant. I saw a row of them in a pub in the Brompton Road just a few months ago: a row of handpumps on the bar with those loathesome little chromium-plated pressure taps with the blue knobs, a poster advertising the traditional character of Charrington's IPA and the admission from behind the bar that the beer was not traditional.

The third kind is much rarer: a handpump which is merely a fixture, standing on the bar erect yet forlorn, a relic of former times like a copper warming pan on the wall or a sepia photograph of some long-forgotten char-a-banc outing. But nowadays, if they have survived so long, they are usually once again connected to the beer.

On a visit to the West Midlands recently I found that the reverse situation exists. I went in a pub which, despite its GOOD BEER GUIDE recommendation with the code 'H', appeared to be on top pressure. False handpumps were on display but what appeared to be the much-hated pressure points dispensed real ale by electric pump. A confusing business is electric dispense unless it involves the contraption that looks like a jam-jar on its side.

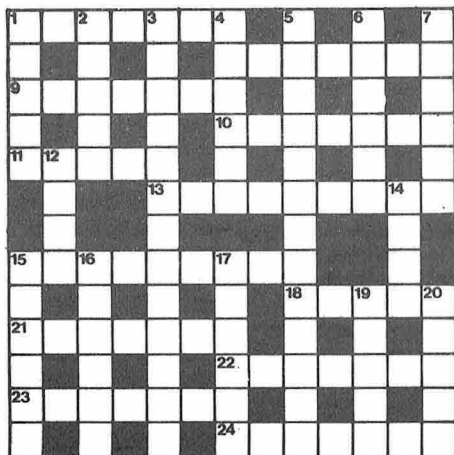
Returning to the subject of London: in Kensington there is a Truman's pub which has a DCL pump at one end of the bar to serve TAP bitter and at the other end a disc connected apparently to nothing at all which advertises the same beer.

Shall we one day see false pressure points with hidden handpumps? Is this particular pub preparing for that day?



"Oh no, you don't!"

DRINKER XWORD 20



LAST MONTHS WINNER
R.L.McGOWAN SE14

Across

1. Note chilly (150) keg on wheels.(7)
8. Companion or tippie for a sing-song.(7)
9. A grubby stain, bill can be evil.(7).
10. Does not bear ill for party.(7).
11. Cock-up leads queen to river gold. (5).
13. Latterly dry yeast mixed with keg.(9).
15. Judges but starts as beasts of burden! (9).
18. Where to eat backwards in a pound.? (5).
21. Close with a wet gram.(3,4).
22. Not so neurotic, but burdensome without a twitch. (7).
23. Footwear has cold in outrage.(7).
24. A broken relative to sea without shackles. (7).

Down

1. How to cook the beast.....(5).
2.and serve with a crate of bubbly?(5).
3. Yellow specks in blue? (6,7).
4. Dregs mixed with two hundred kinds of cake. (6).
5. Horse oozed before engineers in stand and strung together passage.(7,6).
6. All but the revolutionary kept out.(6).
7. Northern brew. (6).
12. Short antipodean mammals.(4).
14. One low back without permission.(4).
15. Sago pudding gets opulent transport with railway.(6).
16. Regent, perhaps, inside corners at rapid pace.(6).
17. It's a rum loo with gilt trimmings! (6).
19. Round back with order to clean up.? (5).
20. Moved a seed with little effort.(5).

Closing date: 18 February.

The Nags Head

79/81 Heath Street
Hampstead, NW3

*Superbly improved and extended lounge bar with
seating accommodation doubled*

Full air-conditioning throughout the pub

Real ales from the country's best brewers

*New buffet bar with hot and cold service
lunchtime, evening and weekends*

Quality wines by the glass or bottle

Public bar and dartboard retained



This pub is owned and managed by CAMRA (Real Ale) Investments Limited.

MEMBERSHIP PRIZE

THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE is now in its tenth year. In London, the number of pubs which sell traditional draught beer without CO2 pressure has more than trebled during that time. This is one indication that CAMRA has been doing its job.

There is still much to do and CAMRA, as the organisation which fights for the beer drinker, needs your help. The more members it has, the stronger its voice and the more money and resources it can devote to active campaigning.

If you agree with us, why not join?

As an inducement, we are running a three-month membership 'competition'. If you wish to join, please complete this form and send it to us with your subscription. All new applications received between now and 30th April will be eligible for the draw, and the winner will receive a polypin (4½ gallons) of beer, delivered free to anywhere within 10 miles of Central London.

Please note that only applications on the 'London Drinker' form will be eligible for the draw. The same form will be printed in the March and April issues.

JOIN NOW and have fun protecting your pint!

FULL MEMBERSHIP OF CAMRA offers you:

- * A member's handbook
- * 12 copies of "What's Brewing" — the Campaign's entertaining and highly regarded monthly newspaper.
- * Generous discounts on a wide range of CAMRA products and publications (including the best selling GOOD BEER GUIDE).
- * An invitation to join in all CAMRA activities such as brewery trips, branch meetings, socials, conferences and beer exhibitions.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

I/We wish to become a member (s) of the CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE LTD.

I/We agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the CAMPAIGN.

I enclose £5 (£7 overseas) for FULL MEMBERSHIP

We enclose £6 for HUSBAND AND WIFE MEMBERSHIP

Or, I/We enclose completed STANDING ORDER AUTHORITY

(Any additional amount will be welcomed as a donation)

FULL NAME

(block capitals)

FULL POSTAL ADDRESS

(block capitals)

SIGNATURE

DATE

Cheques should be made payable to Campaign For Real Ale Ltd. Applications should be sent to 'London Drinker', 122 Manor Way, Uxbridge, Middx.

STANDING ORDER FORM

(For Full or Husband/Wife Membership Only)

To (your Bank)

Please forward to Barclays Bank Ltd., 3 High Street, St. Albans. (20-74-09) for the credit of CAMRA Ltd. Subscription Account. A/C No. 501 87887; now the sum of £5/6* and continue to pay this sum on the annually until further notice.

*Delete as appropriate

SIGNATURE

DATE

NAME (block capitals)

BANK A/C No. AND ADDRESS



★ LOCAL ★

○ THANK YOU

APART FROM the large range of sensibly priced real ales and cider available at the SHIP in High Street, Croydon, one of the big attractions of this pub has been its manager - Greg Winn - a genial fellow of anti-podean origin with a reputation for keeping his beers in top form and entertaining his customers with a dry sense of humour.

Sadly, due to the illness of his father in Australia, Greg has been forced to resign his managerShip (sic) to return down under.

Greg's philosophy throughout his 18 months at the SHIP, writes ROGER FARENDON, has been to give the customer what he wants, and this has led to some fairly heavy confrontations with Henekeys, his 'guvnors'. But generally his requests have been met. He has shown great enthusiasm for real ale (although he confesses to preferring Swan Lager) and the SHIP was the first in the area to offer Tolly Cobbold Original, King and Barnes bitter, Greene King IPA, Bulmer's cider and a regular mild - all on handpumps. He also sold 100 copies of 'London Drinker' per month!

'London Drinker', Croydon and Sutton CAMRA Branch and, we are sure, all of his regular customers would like to express appreciation of Greg's efforts and to offer very best wishes to him and his wife.

○ SIMON'S NIGHT

A PROMOTION night for Simon's bitter will be held at the VILLAGE BLACK-

SMITH, Hillreach, SE18 on Tuesday, 10 February.

○ CLEAN AS A WHISTLE

EMBARRASSMENT all round for your editors when on a recent promotional visit to the POPINJAY in the Daily Express Building. We showed the landlord our splendid magazine, forgetting that there was a reference to his pub being a bit tatty and that it could "do with a good clean".

He looked surprised at this and so did we, because the pub seemed pretty spotless to us. It transpired that a new carpet and new curtains had been installed quite recently, well after the article in question had been sent to us.

We would like to assure anyone thinking about a trip to the POPINJAY that the pub is eminently habitable. The beer isn't bad, either.

○ WELL NAMED

THE PRICE ALBERT in Mitcham Road, Croydon, has re-opened as a Free House, selling Greene King and Courage beers. If the prices, such as 70p for a pint of Director's, seem a bit prohibitive, this is at least recognised in the new name of the pub - THE PROHIBITION!

○ DISTRICT CONVERSION

THE GROSVENOR ARMS in Grosvenor Road now sells Courage Director's and Best Bitter from handpumps. This means that the N5 postal district has gained its first real-

ale pub. According to our records,
this leaves E12 and SW20 as the

only numbered districts without
one. Is this true?

Other Pub Changes

- N1 MITRE, 183 Copenhagen St. - Charrington IPA (H)
PRINCE OF WALES, 139 Graham St. - Ind Coope bitter,Burton (H)
QUEEN'S HEAD,178 Hoxton St. - Ind Coope bitter,Burton (H)
SHAKESPEARE,Upper Street.- Courage bitter,Director's (H)
- N4 BEACONSFIELD ARMS, 359 Green Lanes. -Courage bitter (H)
KING'S HEAD, 126 Blackstock Road.-Courage Director's (H)
- N7 GEORGE, Eden Rd. - Watney London (H)
LORD NELSON, Holloway Rd. - Truman Tap (H)
- N8 THREE COMPASSES, High St.- Wethered bitter,Fremlin Tusker (H)
- N19 GOOD INTENT, Wedmore St.- McEwans 70/- (H)
- NW1 ABBEY TAVERN, 124 Kentish Town Rd.-Charrington IPA (H)
PRINCESS OF WALES, 22 Chalcot St.- Wethered Bitter (H)
ST. MARTIN'S TAVERN, 35 Pratt St.- Charrington IPA, Young
Special(H)
- NW3 SWISS COTTAGE, Finchley Road.-Truman Tap, Eldridge Pope Dorchester
Bitter (H)
- NW5 PRINCE OF WALES,Prince of Wales Rd.- Courage bitter,Director's(H)
- SW3 CRANLEY, 52 Fulham Rd.- Courage bitter, Director's (H)
- SW7 DENMARK, 102 Brompton Rd.-Courage bitter,Director's (H)
- W1 BLUE POSTS,81 Newman St.- Watney London,Stag,Truman Tap(H)
GEORGE, 1 D'Arblay St.- Ind Coope Bitter,Burton (H)
- W4 PACKHORSE & TALBOT,145 Chiswick High Rd.-Eldridge Pope Royal Oak,
Greene King IPA,Abbott,Shepherd
Neame bitter (H).
- WC1 EUSTON TAVERN,73 Euston Rd.-Charrington IPA,Bass (H)
- WC2 PUNCH & JUDY, Market Hall,Covent Garden.-Courage bitter,
Director's (H).

Letter

STOP TAP

Dear Sir,- I see that Truman's
drays have the slogan BEER IS
BEST as headboards. This is an
admirable sentiment and one
which I mentally repeat to myself
an average of twice a day as I
raise a pint to my lips. I am sure
that it is only a short matter of
time before Truman's get round to
producing some decent beer rather
than their current apologies.

Even their Tap bitter, which to
hear some CAMRA members you would
think was the greatest thing

since Fullers ESB, is a drink I
would happily avoid, given the
chance. I have lost count of the
number of times friends of mine
have rung me up to say something
like; "We were in the DOG AND
FERRET in Grimesley last night.
Had a pint of Tap bitter. Bloody
awful. Can't CAMRA do any better?
etc.etc."

Perhaps Truman can do better? I
hope so but fear not. Big brewers
do seem to be losing the knack
of brewing decent beer.

Laurie Bishop,
New Malden,Surrey.

A PLEA FOR HYGIENE

PETE WATSON argues that the drinker risks more at the bar than whether or not the pub serves a decent pint of beer.

WHAT ON EARTH has happened to the standards of bar dispense? Or to put in another way: where are the standards of bar dispense?

I am appalled at the number of public houses, of all types of brewery, that still have no adequate and hygienic method of washing glasses. A sink full of hot water, the glasses just dunked in and left to dry is not good enough. To kill infections and germs from the rim of receptacles requires a temperature of 120°F. Many of the washing facilities lack even a propriety brand of anti-bacteriological detergent.

How many times is your pint or whatever handed to you by the rim of the glass? Yellow nicotine-stained or nail-bitten fingers on the part where you are going to drink from, to say nothing of the hair scratching, spot picking and worse that all go to plant upon the rim of your glass a million-and-one microbes?

After the glasses are purportedly washed, comes the task of drying. The cloth or tea-towel, whisked from some shoulder where it has been collecting particles of your friendly barman's dandruff, or from on top of a pile of crated bottles fresh from the cellar, complete with dust and cobwebs. Proper towel-holders cost only a few pence.

On the subject of bottles, a few barmen are diligent enough to clean them before arranging them in rotation on bottling up. But watch next time a light and bitter is poured and see how much of the neck of the bottle actually gets a dunking in the glass of beer. Even if the neck of the bottle does get wiped over, was it with that glass cloth, or maybe the dish cloth

this time? You know, the one the barmaid just wiped out the ash-trays with, mopped up the bar counter with and threw into the festering sink of warm water in which the glasses are being washed!

Next time you sit or stand by the bar, just remember the previous comments for a while. Maybe you will begin to understand why the glasses smell, or the beer goes flat, or why that sudden bout of 'runs' or flu hit you. Don't you think it is time legislation was enforced to install and use glass-washing machines? Proper towel-holders? Toilets that provide hand-wash facilities?

Let's have the inspectors round more often. Let's raise the standards of bar dispense and hygiene. Write to brewery head offices and complain at what you see, or write to your MP to get some stronger powers for inspectors to enforce. Do something. Don't just sit there and suffer.

DO YOU WANT TO MANAGE A PUB?

CONTACT:—

ROB NUGENT
THE MALT AND HOPS
33, CALEDONIAN ROAD
LONDON N1
TELEPHONE: 01-837 5037

THE ANSWER to our cover question: the lady is advertising mild. On the principle that you join them if you can't beat them, an organ-

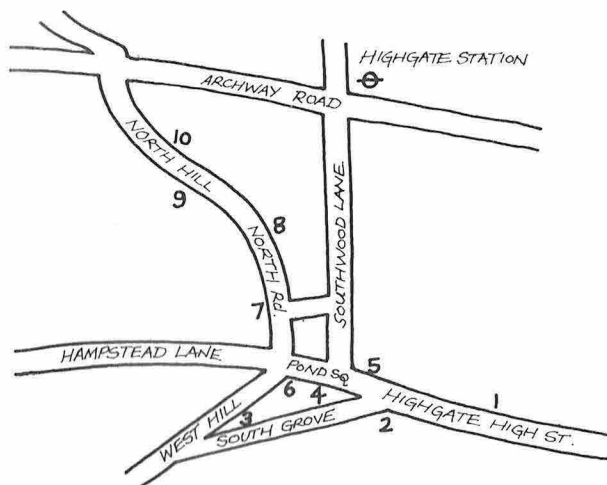
ization called the Mild Marketing Board has taken on the job of giving Mild beer the style of publicity normally reserved for bland national beers backed by seven-figure promotional budgets. If any readers are interested in the MMB, which is based in Kent, please write to them c/o the 'Drinker'.



CAMRA BRANCH CONTACTS

BEXLEY	BOB BELTON	303-4590
BROMLEY	BOB DARVILL	697-1631 (H) 409-3434 (W)
CROYDON & SUTTON	DAVE HAMER	647-0992 (H) 643-3311 x.290 (W)
E.LONDON & CITY	BERNARD BOORMAN	531-4959 (H)
ENFIELD & BARNET	TONY MORGAN	440-2186 (H)
KINGSTON & LEATHERHEAD	ANDY BAGLEY)	399-0915 (H)
	LOUISE JOSELYN)	337-9142 (H) 855-7777 x.699 (W)
NORTH LONDON	LAURIE GORDON	359-1540 (W)
RICHMOND & HOUNSLOW	ANDY PIRSON	977-1633 (H)
SOUTH-WEST ESSEX	CHRIS CASHMORE	Brentwood 211703 (H) 283-1030 x.356 (W)
SOUTH-EAST LONDON	IVOR BLOOR	699-7335 (H) - 934-4396 (W)
SOUTH-WEST LONDON	JIM SMITH	671-3482 (H)
WEST LONDON	DI KEHOE	603-3103 (H) early evening please
WEST MIDDLESEX	KEITH WILDEY	423-1234 (H) 828-7733 x.61 (W)

THE NORTHERN HEIGHTS



1. Duke's Head
2. Angel
3. Flask
4. Prince of Wales
5. Rose and Crown
6. Ye Olde Gate House
7. Red Lion and Sun
8. Wrestlers
9. Bull
10. Victoria

JOHN CONEN samples the view from the hills of Highgate.

HIGHGATE VILLAGE is ideal for the pub crawler in having a good selection of characterful Real Ale pubs within a small area. In fact, all pubs in the village serve Real Ale, and the quality is generally well above average for North London.

Crawls usually start in the historic High Street, and the DUKES HEAD is a particularly good pub in which to have your first pint. This is a quiet Charrington house, once a coaching establishment and features a mock tudor interior with collections of banknotes and brass ornaments. A good pint of IPA or Bass. Over the road, the ANGEL is another Charrington house, rebuilt between the wars. Usually livelier than the Dukes Head - there are pub games - but again, good IPA or Bass.

A diversion from the High Street takes us past picturesque Pond Square to the FLASK in West Hill. This famous old building dates back to 1663 and has two cosy bars and a large courtyard. The latter is the place to be seen on a warm summer's evening and is

usually packed with trendies. Ind Coope Burton Ale was only introduced fairly recently. Back to the High Street via the back door of the PRINCE OF WALES in Pond Square. This is a small, quaint Watney house with a good atmosphere and Stag bitter from an electric dispenser.

Across the High Street is the ROSE AND CROWN, another very old building, although the interior is much modernized. A Whitbread house with Wethered's bitter. Following the traffic around the one-way system, we come to the OLD GATE HOUSE. This is the oldest pub in Highgate (a toll gate once stood next to it) and also the highest in London at 426 feet above sea level. The pub was rebuilt earlier this century and has a large and plush bar with Stag bitter from an electric dispenser. Watney's London Bitter is from a DCL "handpump".

On North Road there are two Charrington houses of similar appearance, being built in the Brewers' Tudor style of the inter-war years and both featuring

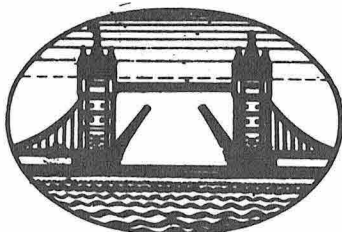
beams, brass and china within. The RED LION AND SUN and the WRESTLER'S TAVERN are otherwise distinct in character and clientele. The RED LION AND SUN benefits from a pleasant, tree-shaded courtyard and elegant Georgian houses nearby. The WRESTLER'S is famous for its tourist-pulling "Swearing on the Horns" ceremony which is ancient in origin. Both pubs have Charrington IPA and Bass on handpump.

Our crawl is now taking a welcome downhill direction and the next port of call is the BULL, an Ind Coope house. This is a sixteenth century building, well-known to artists. It is now very much a young person's pub and there is a jukebox, the only one we will encounter on this crawl. Regrettably the beer is not always of the

highest standard. There is Ind Coope Burton Ale and Bitter, the latter being scheduled for replacement by the new Taylor Walker brew. Pleasant courtyard and garden for outside drinking.

Our final call is at the VICTORIA in North Hill, a pleasant Whitbread house with probably the best beer in Highgate. This popular local was once one of the few Fremelin's houses in London, and appropriately it now sells Fremelin's Tusker bitter in addition to Wethered's. A barrel of Winter Royal adorns the counter in the winter months. A good varied clientele, including musicians from London's leading orchestras.

A short walk takes us to Highgate underground station or to the buses in Archway Road.



SIMON'S TOWER BRIDGE BITTER

A dryish bitter of 1042 O.G. from London's new brewery. Now on sale at:—

Village Blacksmith	—	Hillreach, Woolwich, S.E.18.
Sun	—	Lambs Conduit Street, W.C.1.
Lord Wellington	—	132 Weston St, Bermondsey, S.E.1.
Tramshed	—	51 Woolwich New Road, S.E.18.
Nags Head	—	Heath Street, Hampstead, N.W.3.
Moon	—	New North Street, W.C.1.
Bitter Experience (off-licence)	—	129 Lee Road, Blackheath, S.E.3.
Royal Oak	—	42 Sparrows Herne, Bushey Heath, Herts.
Sailor Prince	—	Gordon Road, Peckham, S.E.15.
Ship	—	St. Mary's Church Street, Rotherhithe S.E.16.

HAVE YOU HAD YOUR PINT OF SIMON'S YET?

Orders from B & W Beer Company Ltd. Telephone: 01-561 3345/1750

Good Beer Guide 1981 lists 6000 pubs throughout Great Britain serving Real Ale. Orders to Camra (GBG Sales) 54 Alma Road, St Albans, Herts. AL1 3BW. Cheques made payable to Camra Ltd. Price £3.50p.

SEE PIX PAGE 5

ALL IN A NIGHT'S WORK

"I AM AN unemployed graduate who took business studies in London. The big city had its trepidations for the country boy (Boston, Lincolnshire), yet I had been well brought up and did not grow my hair long, smoke funny tobacco or become a connoisseur of real ale.

I did not become a radical Leftie or squat in houses. I did not fiddle the Tube and always said 'Please' and 'Thank you.'
(Letter in 'The New Standard').

TUESDAY NIGHTS we normally go on the scrounge, nicking dustbin lids and flowerpots. On this Tuesday the rain pelted down, Sean and Linda were at a Workers' Solidarity demo in Sunderland, Sid was scoring for hash up the Elephant and Bernard's sinus was playing up.

So the rest of the squat decided not to bother. I started to write to my parents, who still live in Nether Wallop where my father has been choirmaster for 30 years. Several weeks since I last tapped him for bread.

Suddenly the door burst open and Sid staggered in. His coat was ripped in three new places, his forehead cut and his left eye swollen. I leapt to my feet. "The fuzz?" I cried.

"No fuzz. I've just been chucked out of the SLUGCATCHER'S, haven't I?

"As you know, they now sell Crockford's Premier," he went on as I stared in disbelief. "So I dropped in for a quick one. First thing wrong was the colour - russet, where Premier should be more of a plangent ochre. When I took a sip I knew that in no way was this Crockford's Premier Ale. I pointed this out to the landlord. He called over two barmen and they started to duff me up."

"Somebody needs to be taught a lesson," I muttered. We roused the others and repaired immediately to the SLUG. As it was still raining we took the Tube, flaunting our 1973 Gadabout tickets derisively at the collector as we scampered down the escalator.

Not much aggravation at the pub. We rounded up the staff, using such force as was necessary, while I went after the landlord, Edwin Splott. He saw me from the bar and immediately split the neck from a bottle of White Shield. Before he could bring it up, my chiv was biting into his Adam's Apple.

"Let's go, Splott. I want to see the barrels."

He led the way down the stairs into his cellar. We scraped around the maze of plastic piping until he stopped at one of the casks. "That's Premier," he said defiantly.

I slit the pipe near the bung-hole, filled up a glass and sipped at it, rolling the beer round the roof of my mouth. Then I handed the glass to Splott. "Now, try and tell me this is Premier Ale."

Splott drank, his face growing darker and his expression more obtuse with every swallow. Finally he looked up, a broken man. "Alright, it's not Premier. I don't know what it is."

"Observe the chalk mark on the barrel, I said in my best Sherlock Holmes. "It is yesterday's date. I deduce, therefore, that the beer has had 36 hours in which to settle, probably less. Even the most pig-ignorant, cloth-brained, first-year apprentice knows that Premier needs to sit for 48 hours before it can begin to be served! My guess - based on the light, pear-drop bouquet and the acrid cashew-tinged flavour - is that this is a barrel of Crockford's IPA.

"For which ordinary bitter," I continued, "your customers are being

charged 75p a pint. You should be had up for professional negligence or public fraud. However, I'll accept free drinks all round and a promise that you will attend to the temperature control in the cellar before the summer months reduce your beer to its habitual vinegary soup."

It was four in the morning when we finally left. "Tell you where we

go tomorrow," said Bob as we walked home. "When we finish at the Social Security, there's this pub nearby. Beer tastes as if the gaffer flushes his pipes with turpentine. We should do something about him."

"Too true, Bob," I concurred. "There aren't half some f---ing villains about these days, playing fast and loose with our alcoholic heritage."

ALAN GREENWOOD'S BEER DIARY

IT NEVER ceases to amaze me that all the largest Companies harbour the most interesting curios, unlike their parents in character as well as size.

An example is inside Bass Charrington, the Country's largest brewing Company, who have many large palatial pubs and hotels. Tucked away in quiet Passmore Street, (in Pimlico, Middlesex - sorry, London, S.W.1) there is a small one-bar pub known as the FOX AND HOUNDS. Whilst it does not claim to be the smallest pub, it is one of the few, perhaps the only pub in London, which are not allowed to sell spirits.

As recently as the 1950's, this was quite common and such pubs were known simply as 'beer houses'. Like the FOX AND HOUNDS, they were usually one- or two-bar pubs serving a small community. The landlord often worked part-time, running it with his family in what was once perhaps the front of an ordinary house, and patrons had to tap on the bar for service.

Well what does a 'beer only' house mean for patrons today? Firstly of course, there is the limited range of drinks, but as beer drinkers are special, who needs spirit drinkers! The important factor, however, is that spirits are highly profitable and are a valuable income to the pub.

It is pleasing to note that beer prices have not been inflated in the FOX AND HOUNDS to compensate. IPA

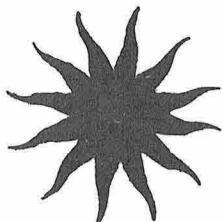
sells at 55p and draught Bass at 57p, and what with rents, rates and other higher costs in this area, this price is average. Until recently they were the lowest around but were increased when new furnishings, more adequate heating and respectable loos had to be paid for.

I wondered if a 'beer only' policy was a Male Chauvinistic Scheme to eliminate women by precluding their drinking pleasure, but was soon corrected when introduced to the tenant and licensee, who turned out to be a lady. In fact, the atmosphere provides one of the few pubs women are comfortable to enter alone, and although there are no spirits, they can sell wine and vermouth.

Well, to have a comfortable bar, attractive landlady and good company, is o.k. but the important thing for beer connoisseurs is the beer, and with nothing else to fall back on they have to be sure it's good. I felt my lip quiver in anticipation as the first pint was drawn, and there it stood, in perfect condition, a golden, crystal-clear pint of IPA.

PROFITS DOWN

FULLER'S LATEST six-month profit figures show a steep fall. They attribute this to the effects of the five-week strike last summer and to the interest charges incurred through the development of their Chiswick Brewery.



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Free of any Brewery tie

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U.K. AND FOREIGN BREWERS

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Godsons — Tolly-Cobold — Everard
Batemans — Wadworths — Belhaven
Arkells — Devenish — Gibbs — Marstons
Beamish — Paines — Hall & Woodhouse
Shepherd Neame — Coopers — Banks
Boddingtons — Penrhos — Ringwood
Simons — King & Barnes — Hook Norton
Robinsons — etc., etc.

Londons largest Real Ale selection

SOLE PROPRIETOR: ROGER BERMAN

TARAG

TARAG THE ANAGALACTIC REAL ALE GUIDE

Part 5.

THE FOURTH FACTOR

LAZARUS AND GRAAFIAN stepped out into the starlit Pistov night. Graafian wore a gold lurex merkin with matching full-length cloak and thigh length boots. Her apparel contrasted beautifully with her soft blue skin. Lazarus wore Levis, training shoes and an old Wadworths T-Shirt.

After a disappointing meal in a candlelit pseudo-French bistro which only sold oxtail soup and beefburgers, they wandered across a quaint little pub. Outside hung a sign "The Apollo" and beneath was a smaller sign saying 'Factor 4'. "Interesting", said Lazarus, "they've added another range of pubs since I was last here." The window of the pub had a sticker in it that read: 'Not and never have been, in any beer guide, good, bad or indifferent!.

"Well, let's go in anyway" said Lazarus. "It can only get worse."

They walked into a dingily lit bar, with a floor covered in worn lino, the omnipresent laser game pulsed in the corner. The three-headed barman looked up from the greasy glass he was half-heartedly cleaning and eyed them suspiciously. "Good evening-ing-ing" the three heads said, nearly in unison, "what would you like to drink-ink-ink?"

"I'll have a pint of Jung's Special and a Stella bitter lemon" Lazarus replied.

The barman shook all three heads slowly in different directions until

he paled slightly and became giddy. "Jung's Special-al-al. That's odd, you're the four-or-or-teen thou-ow-ow-sandth person asking for that in the last 3 weeks-eeeks-eeeks."

"Really" said Lazarus. "Do you sell it?"

All three heads shook sombrely. "No, there's no demand for it-it-it."

Lazarus and Graafian walked out into the cold night air where almost immediately they stumbled across Herbert, his android body racked with sobs. Tears were beginning to rust his cheeks.

"I've had a simply terrible night," he sobbed. "I went to a gay club, and it was full of (choke) full of women in twin sets and pearls, sipping sherry."

Slowly, all three walked back to the space ship.

GARY D. WILLIAMSON.

BRANCH DIARY

THE FOLLOWING events will be held by CAMRA branches during February. For details of other branch meetings, please ring Branch Contact concerned.

BEXLEY:

Wed.11.(8.30) Branch.LORD NELSON,London Rd., Crayford - Wed.18 (8.30) Social COACH & HORSES, North Cray Rd., Bexley.

CROYDON & SUTTON

Tue.10.(8.00) Sutton Crawl. Start at LORD NELSON, then VICTORY and NEW INN - Mon.16 (8.00) Branch, CATHERINE WHEEL,High St.Croydon.-Mon.24 (8.00) Social,RAILWAY TELEGRAPH,Thornton Heath.

ENFIELD & BARNET

Wed.11 (8.00) Branch. KING'S HEAD,Enfield Town - Sun.15 (8.30) Social CROSS KEYS,Edmonton Green, Edmonton - Tue.24 (8.30) Courage Campaigning Social YE OLDE MONKEN HOLT,High Barnet.

NORTH LONDON

Tue.10 (8.00) Branch. ANGEL & CROWN,Upper St.,N1.- Tue.17 (8.00) Social GROSVENOR ARMS,Grosvenor Rd., N5 - Tue.24 (8.00) Social PEMBROKE CASTLE,Gloucester Ave.NW1.

SOUTH-WEST LONDON

Sun.8 (12.00) Social DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE,Balham, SW12.-Thur.12 (8.00) AGM. ALMA 499 York Rd.,SW18.- Fri.27 (8.00) Social KING'S ARMS,Wandsworth,SW18.

WEST LONDON

Wed.11 (8.00) Pub-of-the-month Social.ALBION, Hammersmith Rd. W14.- Thur.19 (8.00) Branch.BROOK GREEN HOTEL,170 Shepherd's Bush Rd.W6.- Sun.1 March (12.00) St.David's Day Social ANGLESEA ARMS,15 Selwood Terrace,SW7.

WEST MIDDLESEX

Tue.10. (8.30) Social RED LION,St.Mary's Rd.,Ealing- Wed.18 (8.30) Branch KING'S HEAD, High St. Harrow-on-the-Hill.-Thur.26 (8.30) Social GENERAL ELLIOTT, St.John's Rd. Uxbridge.

SOUTH-EAST LONDON

Mon.9 (8.00) AGM. OLD NUN'S HEAD, Nunhead Lane,SE15. inc. talk by Councillor Bob Smyth "The Pub in The Year 2001" -Thur.19 (8.00) Social ANCHOR & HOPE, The Cut, SE1. -Wed.4 March. Evening Trip to Charles Wells Brewery. Name to Branch Contact.

THE MALT and HOPS

North London's New Real Ale Pub

featuring

HOOK NORTON 'HOOKEY', WADWORTH'S 6X, SAM SMITH'S OLD BREWERY BITTER,
RUDDLE'S BITTER, SIMON'S TOWER BRIDGE BITTER, MARSTON'S PEDIGREE, AND BASS.

ALL AT REASONABLE PRICES!

THE MALT AND HOPS,
33, CALEDONIAN ROAD,
LONDON N1
(200 yards from Kings Cross Station).

The Brewery Trip

(To be sung to the tune of
'Day Trip to Bangor')

Didn't we have a wonderful time
the day we did McMullen's.
We met in the square
in the chill morning air
and toddled off to "do" the brewery.

When we got there they offered a chair
and made us all a coffee.
After a talk
we took a short walk
and the tour began.

The wort and the mash were explained
in a flash
with samples of ingredients.
Peter begun
to look like "Bugs Bun",
"Go on, try the malt," he said.

We nibbled away from tray to tray
then moved on to the copper.
The hops all went in
this great seething bin
and we carried on.

Didn't we have a wonderful time
the day we did McMullen's.
We saw how yeast floats,
Brian took copious notes,
and Tony clicked his old Box Brownie

Through bottles and kegs we then
stretched our legs,
then moved on to the racking.
Fruit juice and wine
passed a little more time,
plus the sampling room.

At the height of the day we wended
our way
Back to the museum.
Brian got some yeast,
then they gave us a feast
and the beer was on the house, yo ho!

So didn't we have a wonderful time,
the day we did McMullen's.
With not too much strain
we boarded the train
and we wrote this song.

Sue Hardy.
(c) 1980.

Where to buy LONDON DRINKER

NEW OUTLETS

EC1	POPINJAY, Fleet Street.
EC1	QUEEN'S HEAD, 30 Queen Street.
SE1	LEATHER EXCHANGE, Leather Market Street.
WC1	MOON, 18 New North Street.
WC1	SUN, 63 Lamb's Conduit Street.
W1	CARPENTER'S ARMS, Seymour Place.
N9	THE CROSS KEYS, Edmonton Green.
N20	RISING SUN, Oakleigh Road.

OUTLETS - SOUTH

Pubs

SE1	GOOSE & FIRKIN, Southwark Bridge Road.
SE1	WELLINGTON TAVERN, Waterloo Road.
SE3	HARE & BILLET, Eliot Cottages.
SE4	WICKHAM ARMS, Upper Brockley Road.
SE13	DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE, High Street.
SE13	FOX & FIRKIN, 316 Lewisham High Street.
SE15	OLD NUN'S HEAD, Nunhead Lane.
SE18	VILLAGE BLACKSMITH, Hillreach.
SE19	ROYAL ALBERT, Westow Hill.
SE20	LONDON TAVERN, Maple Road.
SW15	JOLLY GARDENERS, Lacy Road.
SW19	ALEXANDRA, Wimbledon Hill Road.
SW19	KING'S HEAD, Merton High Street.
SW19	NELSON ARMS, 15 High Street, Merton.
SW19	PRINCESS ROYAL, Abbey Road.
SW19	ROYAL SIX BELLS, 22 High St. Colliers Wood.
BROMLEY	PRINCE FREDERICK, Nichol Lane.
CARSHALTON	FOX & HOUNDS, High Street.
CARSHALTON	GREYHOUND, 2 High Street.
CHEAM	PRINCE OF WALES, Morden Road.
CROYDON	BUILDER'S ARMS, Leslie Park Road.
CROYDON	LION, Pawsons Road.
CROYDON	MITRE, Canterbury Road.
CROYDON	SHIP, 47 High Street.
SURBITON	RAILWAY TAVERN, Ewell Road.
SURBITON	VICTORIA, Victoria Road.
SUTTON	NEW INN, 18 Myrtle Road.

Off Licences

SE3	Bitter Experience, 128 Lee Road.
SE11	Alan Greenwood's, 226 Kennington Park Road.
SE13	Alan Greenwood's, 252 Lewisham High Street.
SE23	2 Brewer's, 97 Dartmouth Park Road.
KINGSTON	Alan Greenwood's, 1 Hawks Rd.
TOLWORTH	Alan Greenwood's, 120 The Broadway.
WALLINGTON	Alan Greenwood's, 8 Butter Hill.