

Camra Bolton Branch and its Pubs as seen by the What's Doing Contributors 2000

Bolton Branch Pubs included in the 2000 Good Beer Guide were

Bolton – Bob's Smithy, Clifton Arms (Gateway), Dog & Partridge, Hen & Chickens, Howcroft, Lodge Bank Tavern, Sweet Green Tavern

Bromley Cross – Cross Guns

Farnworth – Britannia

Horwich – Crown

Kearsley – Black Horse

Little Lever – Queen Anne

Westhoughton – Rosehill Tavern, White Lion

What's Doing January 2000 <https://greatermanchester.camra.org.uk/branch-magazines/whats-doing/>

Bolton pubs gone

Donaghy's on Great Moor Street was pulled down in December. The pub, which had been shut for months, was once a Tetley house called the Railway (*below*). Down on Manchester Road, opposite the muddy expanse that was once Burnden Park football ground, the King William IV has become business premises.

On Crook Street, across from the Sweet Green, the Academy is boarded up. The building has been put through several incarnations since its days as a Whitbread pub called the Painters Arms.



What's Doing February 2000 <https://greatermanchester.camra.org.uk/branch-magazines/whats-doing/>

For sale

Two central Bolton pubs were for sale in January - the Academy (ex-Painters Arms) on Crook Street (mentioned last month) and the Derby Arms on Derby Street (freehold, ex-Whitbread).

Bolton briefly

Trotter

The Malt & Hops Bar, adjacent to the Swan Hotel on Bradshawgate, reopened towards the end of 1999, but it seems to have closed again. On the several visits I made during the brief reopening, the real ales were national brands and only four were available at any one time, although there were six handpumps on show.

The Hen & Chickens on Deansgate continues to sell three quality guest beers alongside Greenalls bitter and mild. On a recent visit, Marlow Rebellion Smuggler, Pedigree and Gold Digger from the Bolton brewery were available. Listed on the 'coming-up' board were Batemans XXXB, Flowers OG and Hop Back Thunderstorm.

At the Old Man & Scythe, Caledonian Deuchars IPA is a worthy addition to the beer range and is proving very popular.

It amazes me that despite being brewed in Bolton, Bank Top beers are sold in so very few pubs in the town. People who have tried the beers for the first time at beer festivals have then visited Bolton, toured the pubs looking for the stuff and departed in gloom because of the limited availability.



Millstone

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

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

Pub plug

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

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

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

Geoff Johnson



What's Doing April 2000 <https://greatermanchester.camra.org.uk/branch-magazines/whats-doing/>

Nothing about Bolton Branch or its Pubs

What's Doing May 2000 <https://greatermanchester.camra.org.uk/branch-magazines/whats-doing/>

Beer Bash at the Brit

The Britannia on King Street in Farnworth is hosting a beer festival from 28th April to 1st May, in the specially created outdoor bar (covered). All beers are served on handpull from the cellar and making their first appearances at the Brit will be Jennings Snecklifter and Shepherd Neame Brewmaster.

A trio of brews from Moorhouses and Bolton brewer John Feeney's Smokestack Lightning will also be on offer, along with old favourites such as Old Speckled Hen, Brains Skull Attack and Caledonian 80/-. For cider drinkers, there is Westons Old Rosie (both knee and elbow pads advised for this one). Food at reasonable prices is usually available in the form of a barbecue.

Bolton news

Trotter

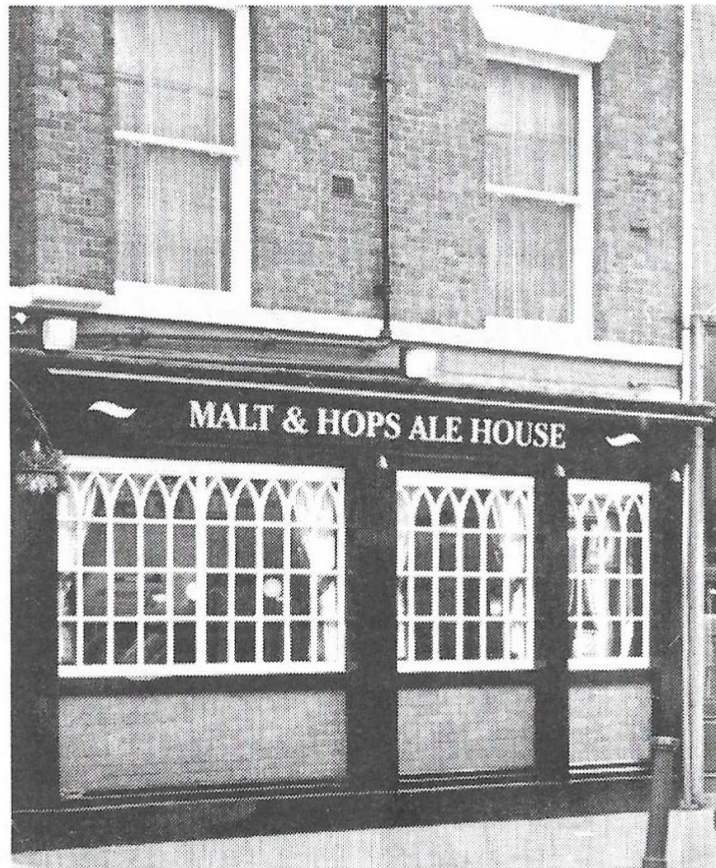
Pub award

Tony and Hilary Coyne have been rewarded for their hard work at the **Hen & Chickens** on Deansgate by being named the best business-building licensees in the region. They have been given the Inn Partnership Business Excellence Award by their pub company, Inn Partnership.

The Hen & Chickens, which last year won a Bolton CAMRA 'Pub of the Season' award, sells Greenalls mild and bitter, together with a regularly changing range of guest ales.

Malt and Hops returns

The Swan Hotel in Bolton has had yet another makeover and its Malt and Hops Bar, retitled the Malt and Hops Ale House, is back in business. For the relaunch of the basic real ale bar, a beer festival was run over two weeks. Around twenty ales were served from the six handpumps at the low price of £1.20 a pint. This proved to be a popular move and the pricing policy continues to apply for selected beer, Monday - Wednesday 12-6pm and Thursday - Saturday 12-4pm.



On my last visit the Malt and Hops Ale House was selling Bass, Charles Wells Bombardier, Hancocks HB, Boddingtons, Courage Directors and Worthington Bitter.

Man & Scythe

The Old Man & Scythe on Churchgate is now selling two real ales from the Caledonian Brewery - Deuchars IPA and 80/- Ale - and both are worth sampling. So is the latest addition to the handpumped range, Fullers London Pride. And you can still get a pint of good old Joeys (the real Manchester ale).

GBG 2000 The Millennium Pub Trail

Part Four

Steve Smith and Mark McConachie continue their tour of Greater Manchester's Good Beer Guide pubs...

We met in the **Circus Tavern** on Portland Street, Manchester's smallest pub, between the Old Monkey and the Grey Horse. It is a 'Tetley Heritage Inn', with a single bar and two tiny rooms. The only beer is Tetley bitter, which is excellent.

Chorlton Street Bus Station is across the road and from there we made the forty-minute journey to the **Cross Guns** on Blackburn Road at Egerton. This imposing Whitbread pub has recently had a change of management. There are four pleasant rooms - main bar area, lounge, pool and dining - and some old Duttons Brewery window panes can still be seen in the door. The beers included Boddingtons bitter, Flowers IPA and guests; we tried the Black Sheep Bitter and Bank Top Brydge Bitter.

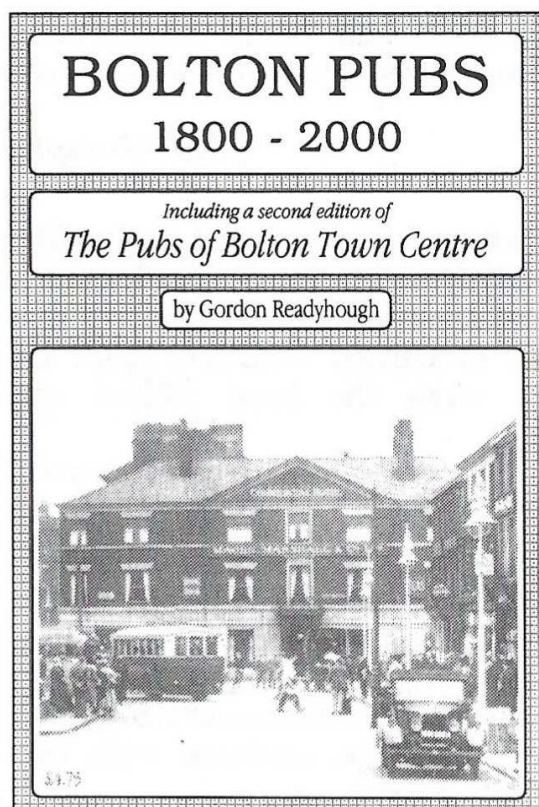
A bus to Bolton and then one to Farnworth brought us to the **Britannia**, opposite the bus station on King Street. This is another Whitbread house, with a traditional vault. It was unusual to find Whitbread Best Bitter on handpump, with Moorhouses Premier. Alas, both beers could only be deemed average. Other beers were from Greene King (Abbot Ale) and Flowers (IPA).

A five-minute walk from the Britannia, on Higher Market Street, is the **Black Horse**, an open-plan Greenalls establishment



incorporating pool and darts areas. It is a pleasant enough pub, with a mock-Tudor frontage and a long, wood-panelled bar. Greenalls bitter (average) was the sole cask ale.

Another Lees pub in the Good Beer Guide with a 'seasonal beers' note is the Lodge Bank Tavern in Bolton. When we visited on 5th February we were told they only sell Lees mild and bitter. The latter was fine.



New Book

Bolton Pubs 1800-2000

by Gordon Readyhough

In 1986 Gordon Readyhough, then the librarian at the Bolton Evening News, compiled his 'Pubs of Bolton Town Centre'. This new volume contains an updated version of the original, together with details of all the other Bolton pubs and beerhouses known to have existed in the last two hundred years.

The book is well illustrated, costs £4.75 and is available from the Artifacts shop in Bolton Library and Sweeten's Bookshop on Deansgate, Bolton.

Bolton briefly

The Derby Hotel on Derby Street (ex-Whitbread) changed hands a few months ago and the property is undergoing a serious amount of building work. But will it still be a pub when the dust settles?

Further up Derby Street, the Farmers Arms has been repainted and the Greenalls sign has been replaced by one advertising Bass.

Around Bolton

Trotter

Just outside the town centre on St Georges Road is the **Oystercatcher Brasserie**. Although the pub is in its fourth incarnation - originally the Crofters Hotel, then Magees and more recently Gallagher's Oyster Bar - the revolving front door and most of the wood panelling remain. A selection of broadsheet newspapers is available in the spacious brasserie area and the vault is now the bistro dining room. On my visit the handpulled beers were Tetley bitter, Boddies, Pedigree and Robinsons bitter, together with a Czech beer, Staropramen.

Regarding David Sheldon's letter (*June WD*) about his experiences in three Lees pubs which are listed in the Good Beer Guide as selling seasonal beers, I cannot comment on the Shaw and Middleton pubs, but I do know about the **Lodge Bank Tavern** in Bolton.

I note that he visited the pub in February. If he had consulted his GBG properly, he would have seen that Lees do not begin their seasonal ales season until March. Before the Guide was published the Bolton CAMRA branch checked out the Lodge Bank Tavern and I have certainly tasted Archer Stout (March/April) and Fudger Ale (May/June) there.

However, there is a possibility that the licensee may have dropped the seasonal ales after the GBG came out - I will look into the situation.



GBG 2000 *The Millennium Pub Trail*

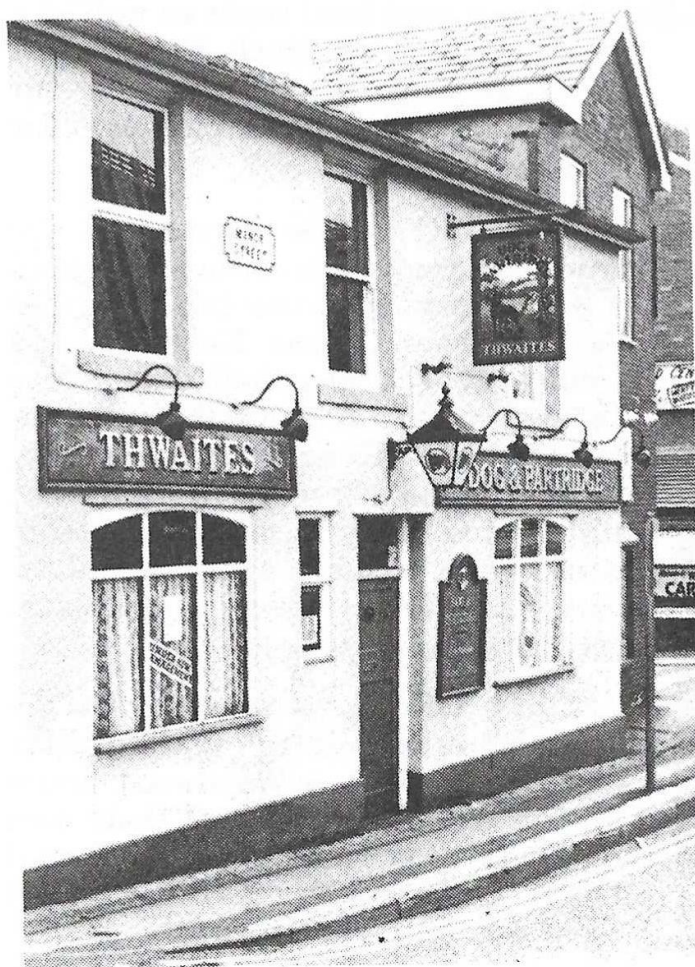
Part Five

Steve Smith and Mark McConachie began their latest outing with another train ride, this time to Bolton...

We headed for the far side of town and the excellent **Howcroft Inn** on Pool Street. This is a multi-roomed Walkers house offering the all too rare mild, along with bitter, Tetley bitter and guests, including beers from the nearby Bank Top Brewery. The pub holds regular beer festivals and boasts a well tended bowling green (packed in summer).

A roundabout stroll back through the town took us to the **Dog & Partridge** (below), a basic Thwaites house on Manor Street. The beers are mild (back on cask again after being in danger of disappearing altogether) and bitter. We opted for the former, which was served in oversized glasses - and a generous measure, too! The pub has a traditional vault and a spartan lounge decorated with sheet music along the walls.

Next up was the **Hen & Chickens** on Deansgate, handily placed around the corner from the bus station. This is a comfortable and relaxing Greenalls pub, offering bitter and mild plus an interesting range of guest beers. We tried the Batemans Spring Breeze, a 4.2% hoppy ale. The pub was renovated a few years ago, resulting in an open-ended vault and split-level drinking and dining areas (good value lunchtime meals and snacks).



Going via Newport Street and passing the **Clifton Arms** (we'll revisit soon) we walked to Bridgeman Street and the **Lodge Bank Tavern**. This is one of the few Lees houses in the area; a friendly place, spacious and well

kept. GB mild and bitter are available and we deemed them the best beers of the night.

Our final call was the **Sweet Green Tavern** on Crook Street, almost opposite the rail station. This is one of those places which never seems to disappoint; plenty of drinking areas and a lively clientele. There is a house beer brewed by Moorhouses (special, a blend of Premier and bitter). On our visit there was also Moorhouses Black Shamrock, along with the standard Tetley bitter.

What's Doing August 2000 <https://greatermanchester.camra.org.uk/branch-magazines/whats-doing/>

Tony Longmire

One of Bolton's popular landlords, Tony Longmire, died on 29th June after a short illness. Tony and his wife Lilian had run the Sweet Green Tavern for thirteen years. He served in the Merchant Navy before becoming catering manager at the local evening paper and then taking the pub. He was also the chairman of the Bolton Licensees' Alliance.

The Sweet Green Tavern is a popular town centre real ale venue, which a few years ago was Bolton CAMRA's Pub of the Year. Mrs Longmire will continue running the pub in Tony's memory.

Horwich

Trotter catches the 575 bus from Bolton town centre and alights at the Crown Hotel...

The **Crown** is a large Holts pub with a spacious lounge and a small vault. In the latter I asked for Holts mild, was offered smooth or cask and naturally chose the cask.

A short walk along Lee Lane brings you to the **Original Bay Horse**, a small, traditional pub with wooden floor, low beams/ceilings in both lounge and cosy vault. The beers are Lees bitter plus two guests. On the day the guests were Tetley bitter and Black Sheep bitter, which I sampled, though I thought it a bit overpriced at £1.68 for a 3.8% beer. The pub has a beer garden at the rear.

The next port of call was the **Victoria and Albert**. From the outside it looks like a traditional pub, but inside it is a modern, open-plan affair with cheap wood panelling. The only cask beer was Theakstons bitter.

Still on Lee Lane, I popped into the **Saddle**, which still advertises 'Lion Ales' in the front windows. Sadly, no real ale now. From here it was down Winter Hey Lane and on to Chorley New Road for the **Vic**, where Boddies was on special offer at £1.20 a pint. A central bar serves this spacious pub, which has some exposed original brickwork. Also note the green tiling in the corridor to the gents.

Back to the roundabout at the Crown and a pint of Thwaites bitter in the **Toll Bar** across the road. This is a large, three-roomed, basic boozery; note the unusual mural on the corner of the pub.

My final port of call was the **Squirrel**, which is just over the border from Horwich in Anderton (left at the roundabout). This is a single - storey pub/restaurant with a large children's play area at the side. Among the real ales listed on the 'coming up' board were Frog Island's best bitter and Fire Bellied Toad, Pride of Pendle and Leyden's Raglan Sleeve. The two beers available on my visit were Hart Amethyst and Jack o'Leys, the legendary beer from Hertfordshire according to the pumpclip.



What's Doing September 2000 <https://greatermanchester.camra.org.uk/branch-magazines/whats-doing/>

Lord Nelson

The Lord Nelson at Ringley, the traditional pub where the North Manchester branch of CAMRA was formed back in the early 1970s, was closed and boarded up last month. Thwaites are rebuilding the premises with a dining room extension.

The Nelson was one of the few pubs left with a variety of rooms to suit different tastes. While there were both juke box and televisions, it was still possible to find a quiet spot in which to chat, and it was second home to many local characters. Altogether a splendid place to drink and it will be missed, as will the long-serving licensees, Terry and Mavis Wolstencroft.



What's Doing October 2000 <https://greatermanchester.camra.org.uk/branch-magazines/whats-doing/>

The 1st Horwich Beer Festival

From 28th to 30th September the Squirrel at Horwich is hosting a beer festival in aid of Rotary Club charities. Sixty different beers are promised.

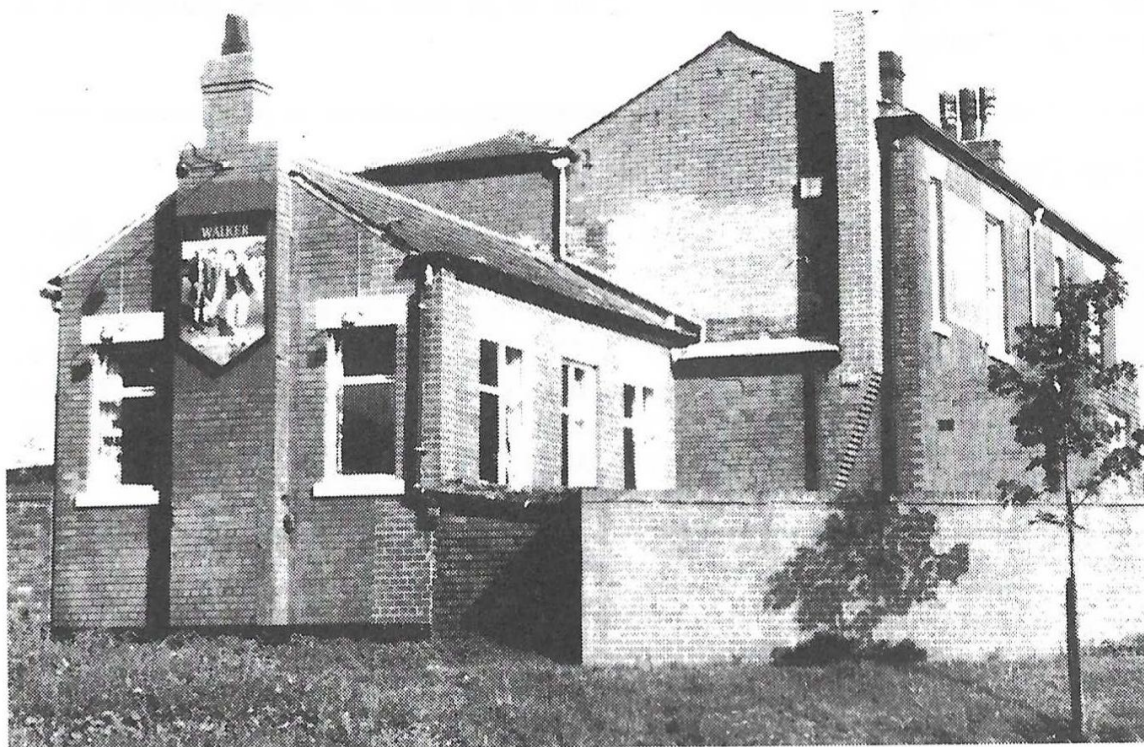
Bolton news

Trotter

Howcroft

The largest pub beer festival in the country will be held at the Howcroft Inn (*below*), Pool Street, Bolton, from Wednesday 11th to Sunday 15th October.

Landlord Clive Nightingale set up his first beer festival - 'The Alternative Bolton Beer Festival' - in 1994 to replace the CAMRA event that used to be held at the now-demolished Silverwell Street Sports Centre. Six years later the beer festival at the Howcroft is one of the best, non-CAMRA organised events in Britain (though several local CAMRA members do assist at the festival).



This year around 200 beers will be available, and no doubt Mr Feeney will be showcasing his new Bank Top Mild. Ciders and foreign bottled beers will be available in addition to the real ales. Proceeds will go to the Bolton Lads' and Girls' Club, as usual.

An open and shut case

The Malt & Hops Ale House, next to the Swan Hotel on Bradshawgate, reopened briefly earlier this year, but now this basic real ale bar appears to be closed permanently. What are Regent Inns up to? A little more promotion and more variation in the available ales might have increased the patronage.

Smooth Rose

The Moss Rose (ex-Wilsons, ex-Vaux) on Manchester Road, Kearsley, has been refurbished by Pubmaster. There is now a beer garden next to the pub, but no real ale.

Into the country

A ride on the hourly 508 service from Bury took us to the **Pack Horse**, nestling in the village of Affetside on Watling Street, the old Roman road. The pub has a main bar area and a lounge (the Duck and Grouse room) furnished with dark wood, ornaments and a blowlamp collection. There is another room off to the right and a pool room. The beers are Hydes bitter, Light Mild (electric dispense) and the seasonal (handpulled).

On the A626 Ramsbottom to Bolton Road at Hawkshaw there is the **Red Lion** (*below*), which was acquired by Cumberland brewers Jennings some years ago. The main room is furnished in sombre style with pictures of old Hawkshaw; bitter, Cocker Hoop and Cumberland Ale are usually on sale.



We caught the 273 bus to Bolton outside the Red Lion and from Bolton travelled on the 125 to Horwich and the **Crown Hotel** on Chorley New Road. Holts acquired the convivial, cavernous pub in the 1990s. Bitter and mild are the beers.

Going back towards Bolton on the 273, we called at **Bob's Smithy** on Chorley Old Road. The pub has a busy bar area and an open-plan room and sells a good selection of ales, including Boddingtons, draught Bass, Taylors Landlord, Tetley bitter and mild and a guest (Cartfold Fylde Ale).

Back in Bolton, we made for the **Clifton Arms** on Newport Street, which was handy for our train back to Manchester. The bitter ales on offer included those from Jennings, Lees and Tetley.

It should read – Going back to Bolton on the 125 not 273!

Branch Meeting and AGM – Dog and Partridge November 15th at 8.30pm

With Guest Speaker John Feeney (Bank Top Brewery)

What's Doing December 2000 <https://greatermanchester.camra.org.uk/branch-magazines/whats-doing/>

BASS FOR BOLTON



Bass Leisure is buying Whitehead's store on Deansgate in Bolton so that they can turn the ground floor into a pub. The building stands in front of the Millstone (*above left*), which Holts bought a year or two ago and then put in for planning permission to extend behind Whitehead's (*right*) into another building at the top of Bank Street. Not a lot has happened since then. Have Bolton's planners giving Joey's the elbow and will they fast track the boys from Bass?

We know it as the Elephant and Castle

Hen Market

Old Speckled Hen can now be savoured at the Market pub in Farnworth. For ale historians, the pub has a replica 'Tong & Sons' window and the old brewery name also appears in the brickwork.

The 617 bus operates from here to Little Scotland at Blackrod, conveniently stopping at **Gallaghers**, a true free house on the outskirts of the town. The beers are Boddingtons, Moorhouses Premier and Tetley bitters, Tetley Dark Mild and a local guest. The guest happened to be the very palatable new brew from Bank Top, Dark Mild, a strongish 4% retailing at £1.70. After a couple of pints of this, it was time to go to the station for a train back to Manchester.

Branch Meeting – Dog and Partridge December 14th at 8.30pm