**Potted History of Monton’s Old Pubs**

Adapted from the Beer and Ballad Walk June 2017 conducted by Mark Charnley on behalf of the Bridgewater Project.

**The Waterside**

He was told that these buildings date from the 18th Century although they are not shown on a 1786 map. However they do appear on an 1830 map which suggests they may have been built between these dates, or possibly earlier.

One local story that has been passed down is that the buildings (cottages?) were used by Bridgewater Canal Navvies as a brothel.

In living memory he would imagine that people over 40 might remember Browse’s Off Licence. The Browse family acquired the off beer licence on Monday 5th May 1902.

Shown in the Manchester Cour transferred from Charles F Benson to Edward Ernest Browse. It shows the address as Canal Bank although directories of the time show address as 1 Parrin Lane which makes more sense nowadays as Canal Bank is regarded as being on the opposite side of the canal.

**Directory entries:**

**1903 Directory** – South side – 1 Parrin Lane – **Edward E Browse** – Shopkeeper & beer retailer. Then British Pluviusin Co Ltd\* at Monton Green Works, Charles N Higgin at Monton Lodge.

\* <http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/British_Pluviusin_Co>

Of 12 Newton Street, Manchester, of Monton Fields Road, Monton Green, Eccles.

1899 The company was registered on 26 October (from Stock Exchange Year Book 1908), to carry on a business of manufacturers of imitation leather, hospital sheets etc. became part of [Nobel Industries](http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Nobel_Industries). Suffered a major fire in 1914.

**1904 Directory** – South side – 1 Parrin Lane – **Mrs Mary Agnes Browse** – Shopkeeper & beer retailer. Then Charles N Higgin at Monton Lodge, British Pluviusin Co Ltd at Monton Green Works. (opposite way round to 1903).

North side – Joseph Hewitt lodge keeper, Old Fold numbers 1 to 7.

**1935 Directory** – 1 Parrin Lane – **Mrs Mary A Browse** – Beer retailer (off)

Old Fold not shown in this directory although it is referred to off Parrin Lane.

Monton Bridge – Charles Thomas Freeman – Smith and Samuel Bethel – Builder – Monton Lodge then Monton fields Road.

It would appear Mary Agnes Browse ran the business for over 30 years and possibly more although I have not found any more information until the 1980’s – most of which is anecdotal. Any corrections or additions to the following information would be much appreciated.

Some time in the 1980’s he was told a Polish owner took over the premises and the shop acquired the nickname ‘Browskis’

C1988 – Became an Indian restaurant briefly. (Possibly some involvement from Jones Travel?)

C1989 – Roy Mozley took over as a pub/restaurant called the ‘Bargee’ although initially only had a restaurant licence. It then became the ‘Barge Inn’.

Chris and Lynn Benson acted as relief staff for Roy initially in 1989 and then ran it for him full time until 1991. Chris Benson was the name on the licence at this time.

* Description then – Front door – pool room and loos to the left, bar along the wall to the right with drinking area.
* Description now – Front door – small bar and loos to the left, eating area to the right (Paul, current owner, said bar moved next to loos so that people using the loos would not disturb eaters).

C199x – possibly some kind of deal with Banks Brewery (West Midlands).

2007? – became Crompton’s at the Waterside. New owners formerly of Crompton’s restaurant in Swinton. Eventually became the ‘Waterside’ and still doing well today.

**Blue Bell (briefly the ‘Monton Green’ in the 1990’s?)**



A public house , known mainly as the Blue Bell, but also as the Monton Green for a spell in the late 1980’s to early 1990’s, has stood on this site from at least the middle of the eighteenth century.

For several decades it was in the hands of the Greenhalgh family, and in the 1830s another well known local family, the Lansdales, took over. Until 1860 they were the biggest farmers in the Monton area.

An 1853 directory shows a Matthew Rome and an 1876 news item shows a Mrs Maria Rome in residence. In 1877 the licence was transferred from Maria Rome to John Jackson.

Items from news papers of the 1780 show that regular concerts were held at Monton Chapel and that tickets were available from the Blue Bell.

In Swindell’s book, “Old Eccles”, the Blue Bell was described as being a whitewashed hostelry alongside several cottages. In 1897 the pub and surrounding land were purchased by Wagstaffe’s Lion Brewery of Hulme for £10,000. A year later Wagstaffe merged with the Salford firm of Watson & Woodhead and in 1906 the present pub was built at a cost of £4,000. Then it had a billiard room and a bowling green; sadly both have now gone.

* 1903 and 1904 directories show a John Matthew Rome so perhaps it had gone back into the Rome families hands.
* 1909 and 1911 directories show William Richardson.

The pub changed hands again in 1912, when it became a Walker & Homfray house, and again in 1949 when Wilsons took over.

A 1981 description of the Blue Bell from ‘A History of the pubs of Eccles’ states that it ‘is frequented by the younger generation and is a disco pub with late licences for its regular concerts. So you know where to go, or where to avoid on a Saturday night’.

He noticed during his research there were a lot of adverts for staff at the Blue Bell during the periods of the 1st and 2nd World Wars – He wondered if this was a common thing in those times, could be something to look into.

Something else he noticed in the Directories in the first half of the 20th century was some famous people lived next door to the Blue Bell (or possibly not):

The 1903 and 1904 directories show a Richard Burton, contractor, living next door at number 35. In 1911 the directory shows Elizabeth Burton at the same address – was she formerly Elizabeth Taylor?

(29 was the Coop so the Blue Bell was effectively numbers 31 & 33 Monton Green)

**The Park Hotel now called the Park**

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A beer house called the Park Inn was granted a licence in 1867. Monton Road at that time was known as Slack Lane, and the area was described as a quiet hamlet with open fields stretching to Winton and Eccles.

One of the earliest references to the old Park Inn is in the Eccles Journal of 1874. The landlord Thomas Chadderton, wrote a letter to the paper regarding “foot runners on the canal bank at Monton”. An earlier correspondent had described them as “low fellows” and in their defence Mr Chadderton wrote, “that when any pedestrian under my care takes exercise he is attired from head to toe in flannels, the same as gentlemen amateurs”.

The Park Hotel was opened in 1902 and cost £5,000 to build, as well as the licences of the Robin Hood and the Britannia Inn, which were surrendered.

* 1903 & 1904 directories show Ellis Pollitt as a beer retailer at 142 Monton Road although the pub is not named.
* 1909 & 1911 directories show John Heaton at the ark Hotel. 1909 shows 118 and 178 either side while 1911 shows 118 and 154 suggesting that Monton was growing in population in this period.

This ties in with an item in one book about Eccles that states that in the early 20th Century many of the houses along the South Side of Monton Road were converted into shops and the gardens removed – hence the wide pavement of today.

In 1917 the landlady, Mary Heaton, was fined 5/6d for failing to obscure lights at 12.20 am – a blackout was in operation and fears of a Zeppelin air raid were in people’s minds.

The Park Hotel was typical of the ornate Holts style, both inside and out, a style now sadly vanishing. In 1970 the pub was closed and demolished, the reason being that mining subsidence was making it unsafe. Local residents raised a petition in an effort to save the pub, but to no avail.

The new Park Hotel opened in 1971, and bore no comparison with the old pub. Inside, there were reminders of Eccles’ industrial past., photographs of steam engines built at the Nasmyth-Wilson foundry and, in the Bridgewater Room, a large map showing the route of the Bridgewater Canal (now on the back wall) and a portrait of the Duke of Bridgewater. The only reminder of the old Park Hotel is one of the acid-etched windows which is on display behind the bar.

In late 2016 the pub was completely refurbished and appears as you see it today.

The vault was altered – particularly the seating (high stools) but the regulars revolted and these were replaced.

**The Blind Pig**



Many years ago, the Blind Pig was a hardware shop. Smaller bars were coming into fashion so some enterprising soul then turned it into a wine bar. This was extended into the next shop when it became empty and then became a pub, The Drop Inn. The Drop Inn was closed in September 2013 for complete refurbishment.

Reopened on November 28th 2013 as the Blind Pig ( apparently a reference to Prohibition era America). It is a pub, coffee bar and diner during the day and a bar and restaurant in the evening.

**The Queens Arms (border of Monton but actually in Patricroft)**

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A traditional pub, the Grade-II listed Queen’s Arms, tucked away off Green Lane near Patricroft train station, has been a feature of local life for over 185 years. Built in 1828 in readiness for the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, it lays claim to be the world's first railway pub. Known locally as the 'Top House'.

Originally called the Patricroft Tavern, the Queen’s Arms was built in 1828 to coincide with the opening of the Liverpool to Manchester Railway and renamed 23 years later in honour of the royal visit Queen Victoria’s royal visit to Salford in 1851. As such, it has a strong claim to be the world’s first ever pub built to serve the railway.

It has served hundreds of thousands of local people since the 1800s and was an important part of daily life in the Industrial Revolution – due to its proximity to James Nasmyth’s now-demolished engineering works.

[Darlington’s Railway Tavern, which was built a year earlier in 1827 for the Stockton to Darlington line, also has a claim, but is not Grade listed due to extensive internal changes]

The Queen’s Arms was Grade-II listed in 1989 due to its range of architectural features, including Edwardian etched glass windows and doors, and fireplaces with Art Noveau surrounds inside. It really is a great example of an unspoilt public house and in 2010 [won CAMRA’s Traditional Pub of the Year](http://www.salfordonline.com/salfordvideos_page/17591-camra%27s_traditional_pub_of_the_year.html) Award.

Community campaigners the Queen’s Arms Preservation Society have been trying to get the pub listed as an Asset of Community Value since March 2014. The listing as an Asset of Community Value means has that if the pub ever goes up for sale, the group will be given time to come up with a bid. This ‘community right to bid’ was introduced by the government’s 2011 Localism Act, which says that Salford City Council must maintain a list of community assets, as nominated by community groups.