
The Rose & Monkey Hotel was built in 1783.

The year American independence was declared. In France Louis XVI and Marie Antoniette still have heads...just. Catherine the Great is on the throne in Russia and the monarch in Britain is King George III who, after losing America, is about to go completely mad. In Paris the Mongolifier brothers have successfully took flight in a hot air balloon, in Vienna Mozart is playing sold out shows throughout the city and in Bonn, a teenage Beethoven publishes his first work.

An eight-month volcano in Iceland is causing havoc throughout the continent (the sun in Manchester went blood red for a month) and after the skies cleared in late summer the 'Great Meteor' burned bright on a Hot August night for a fleeting celestial moment above the small Lancashire town of Manchester..



All prophecies perhaps, as Manchester was about to disrupt the ancient ways of the world.



By 1848 The 'Glasgow Tavern' had become '**The John O Groats Tavern**' and the Grapes opened up a second drinking den in the basement, infamously known as '**The Tam O Shanter**'

"**Tam o' Shanter**" is a narrative poem written by the Scottish poet Robert Burns first published in 1791 about a drunken man being chased home from the pub by Witches.

*Inspiring, bold John Barleycorn!
What dangers you can make us scorn!
With ale, we fear no evil;
With whisky, we'll face the Devil!
The ales so swam in Tam's head*



Surrounding areas

Outside along much of the length of Swan Street back in the 1800's, a pall of dirty smoke hung permanently. Across the road were the Shudehill Pits - small reservoirs that for many years supplied Arkwright's mill and other local textile mills with water from the River Medlock, via a series of pump engines.

Immediately to the south-east, were the great works and foundries of Ancoats, aside row upon row of cramped terraced dwellings, including many occupied by impoverished Italians, giving rise to the colloquial name 'Little Italy'. And to the north and east, was the area that became known as 'Irish Town' following 'the great tidal wave of Irish arrivals in the last decades of the 19th Century'. The area was booming, but not with the most genteel of characters.

The pub was on the doorstep of the Industrial Revolution, that would steam-power modern Capitalism, and the Roses's early customers are the factory workers whose squalid living conditions would be described by reformers and radicals who sought to overthrow Capitalism.

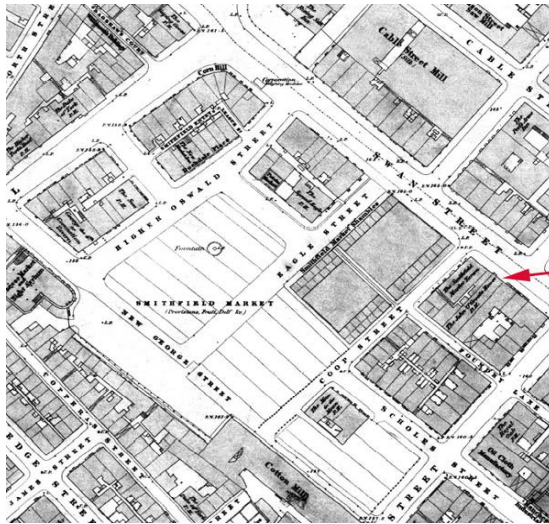
The most famous of which - Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, likely sat in the Rose & Monkey's front window, whilst writing their damning indictment of capitalism, 'The Condition of the Working Class in England'.



Sometime in the reign of Queen Victoria, the various ramshackle pubs and watering holes were given some semblance of order and knocked together, to create the current layout, and renamed the Burton Arms, for reasons we cannot explain.

During the late 19th century Manchester was 'gripped by recurring panics over youth gangs and knife-crime'. Two of the notorious gangs of 'scuttlers' were based within 500 yards of the pub. These were the Angel Meadow gang and the 'Bengal Tigers' from Bengal Street and area, off Oldham Road. The two gangs frequently clashed 'with knives and buckle ends of their heavy leather belts in seemingly endless raids on street corners and pubs'.

The pubs' ropery cast of vagabonds, musicians, thieves and noble harlots changed little, if anything the reputation got worse (*or better, depending on where you stand*). Music and debates would fill the pub all day and night.

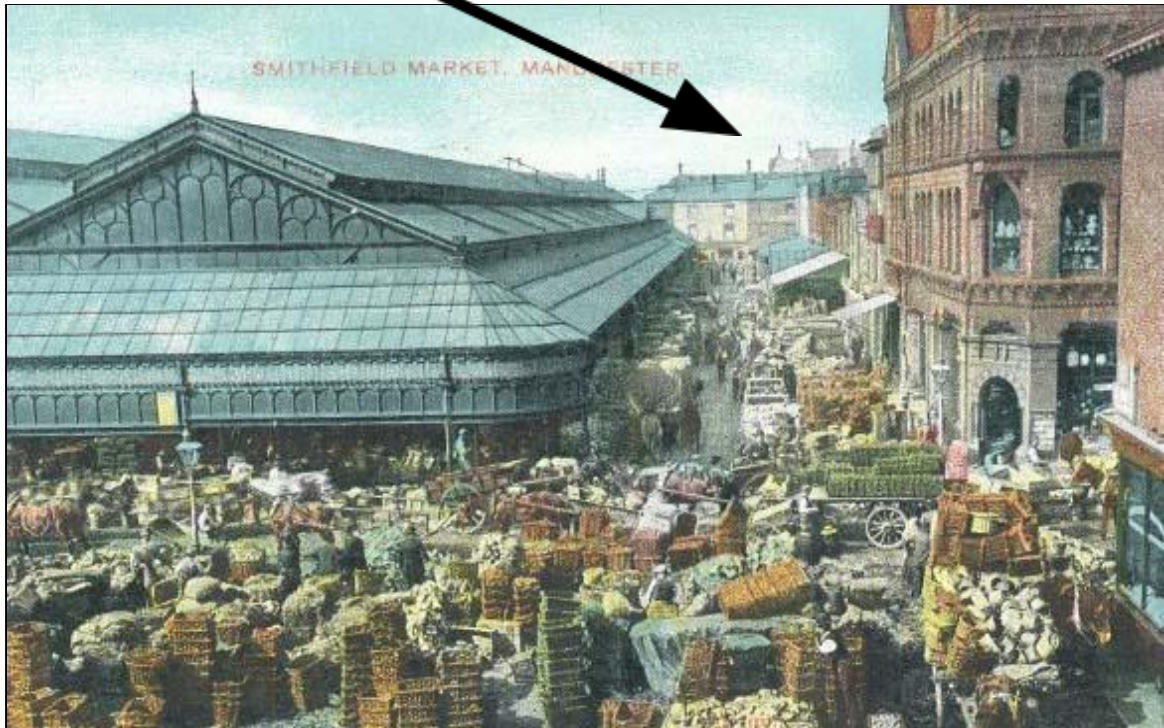


Directly behind the pub, The Smithfield Market was built in 1860, and covered 4 and 1/2 acres with over 370 traders listed: fruit, vegetable, fish, meat and potato salesmen with many more assistants employed; and hundreds of customers visited daily.

If you had stayed at the Rose around this time you would have slept little. Around 6 a.m. each market day, the surrounding streets were congested with hundreds of horse-drawn 'lurries' and carts, heavy-laden with vegetables, coming to market. The pub would open soon after. And for those who had little or no wages to spend the city streets themselves provided free entertainment. Nowhere was this more evident than at the Saturday night markets which traditionally sold off food which would not keep till Monday and which were accompanied by a range of free or cheap amusements and musicians and singers.



Visitors to Swan Street could buy: fish, fruit, groceries, shoes and boots, leather goods, belt and braces, an umbrella, photographic material, a suit, a hat, sweets, stationery, tobacco, a saddle, curtains, jewelry, agricultural implements, ironmongery and, with a choice of two manufacturers over the road in Swan Buildings, a piano, from F Weber, of Berlin, or Cullum & Best, of London. And, of course, get a drink.

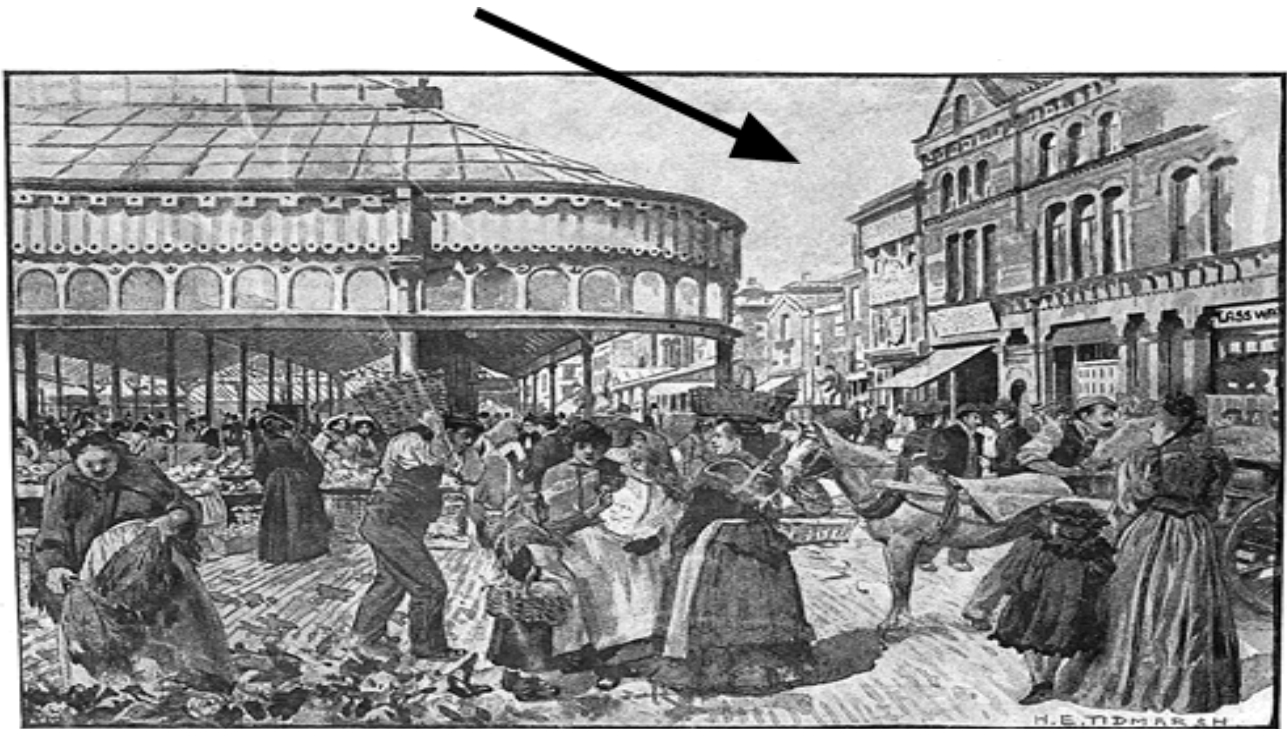


Another sound, arguably more musical, came from buskers and — made by Italians in Ancoats — barrel organs. The operators would ***‘walk the streets of Manchester playing their barrel organs and hurdy gurdies, some with monkeys in red waistcoats and hats’***. The makers of the barrel organs were Domenico Antonelli who had his organ factory in Great Ancoats Street.

As a pub that served the Market, the Rose & Monkey had extended opening hours. In the evening, the Market area became an attraction in its own right as musicians and entertainers arrived on the scene and customers looked for late bargains; Saturday night was a big night in the vicinity of the Market and in a single day in 1870 it was estimated that as many as 20,000 people were attracted to the area.

Market pubs are well known for their musical connections and many writers of the time refer to buskers and musicians around the market. Sounds from pub entertainments and street singers were roundly condemned in some of the local Press; identified as particular culprit locations were the immediate environs of the Rose & Monkey: the Smithfield Market, Oldham Road, Ancoats and Oldham Street that on a Sunday night was ‘given up to the carnival revels of Manchester’s vagabonds’, with loud music from its pubs mixing with street singing.

This 1880 drawing, looking northwards from Oak Street, shows the busy Smithfield Market, with the 'Cocozza Wood' building on the right hand side, and the rear façade of the adjacent Rose & Monkey Hotel just beyond.



SMITHFIELD MARKET, FROM OAK STREET.

By the middle of the twentieth century Swan Street was in decline. Many textile factories had closed and people moved out of the area. Market trade was down and the wonderful glass buildings were demolished in the early 1970s.

Throughout the 50's to the 80's the Burton Arms was known for many of the wrong reasons. The market element brought about a great number of ruffians and the shotgun shack layout meant it was very handy for disappearing in and out of, or dropping off stolen goods.

By the 90's and 00's, with Sir Alex Ferguson at the helm of one of football's greatest dynasties, this was a Manchester United stronghold, complete with hundreds of televisions and cheap lager and vast oceans of rather loud football fans. But as United's dominance waned, the sporting times for the Burton were over, it changed hands and breweries in quick succession in the late 2010's and in 2019 it finally landed with us. Due a shot in the arm, it was time to peel back the years and get back

to some of the original features of this fascinating building, and to bring back its rich musical heritage.

Down came the TV's, back came the real ales, and a completely vegan food and drink menu inspired by the old Smithfield Vegetable Market. In time we will reopen the Victorian pub cellars, but for now the pubs heritage has returned and the music wafts out the doors once more every night.

The Rose and Monkey Hotel is just the next chapter in the fascinating musical life of a Northern Quarter pub.

