

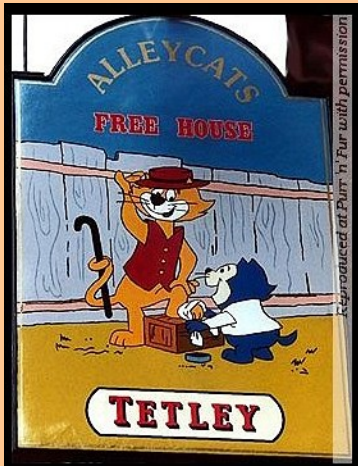
Cats that Got Away (2008/2021)

Signs that 'lost' their cats, inns that changed their names, etc.

(page checked April 2026)

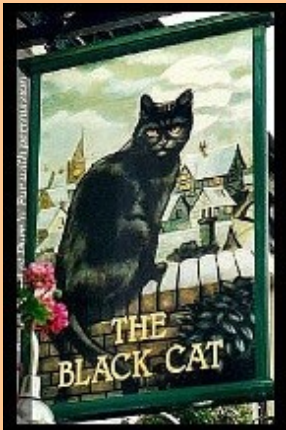
Section 1: Pubs now closed or gone, but signs were photographed.

Sadly, changing times and circumstances mean that the number of pubs in the UK has decreased considerably, and following are signs with cats for pubs that are no longer in existence.



Alley Cats

Wigton, Cumbria, 1992.
Closed, date unknown.



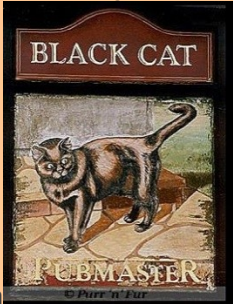
Black Cat

Lymington, Hampshire, 1998.
Closed, date unknown.

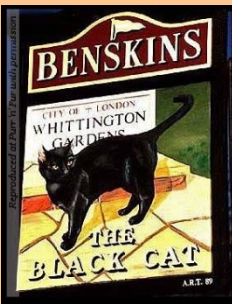
The **Black Cat**, Lye Green, Chesham, Buckinghamshire was closed for some five years, but was rejuvenated and reopened in December 2024. However, by early 2026 it appears to be once again **closed**. Not sure whether the image at far right is of a sign, but it seems odd to picture a tabby cat for a pub called the Black Cat!



2005 sign ↓

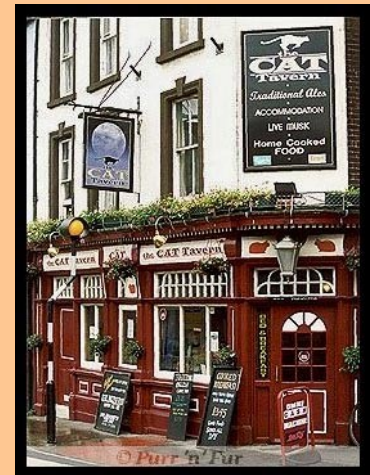
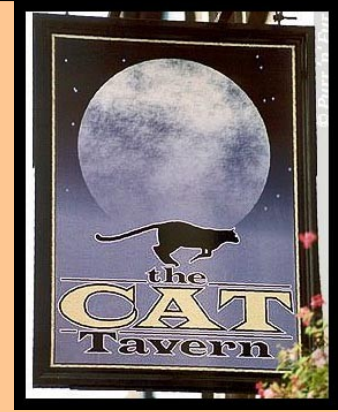


1991 sign ↓





The **Burmese Cat** (above; 2004-10) in Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire had a fine tiger on the sign when I visited. Although there are tigers in Burma, the story behind the sign seems to be that the brewery chairman's wife bred Burmese cats (not tigers!). Rather a nice beer mat from the pub, found on ebay. The pub was **demolished in about 2009**.



The Cat Tavern, Salisbury, Wiltshire (above)

By 2019 a rather tatty pub with a somewhat dubious reputation had been completely refurbished to become a bar and bed-and-breakfast called 'Caboose'. **Closed permanently in 2024**.



2005 signs ↑ ↓

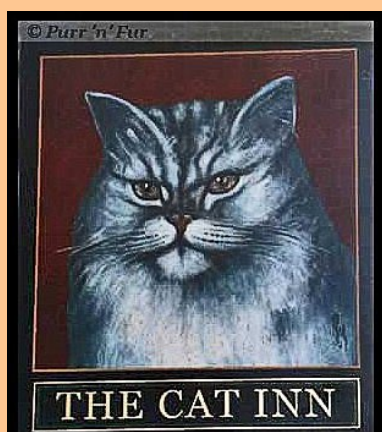
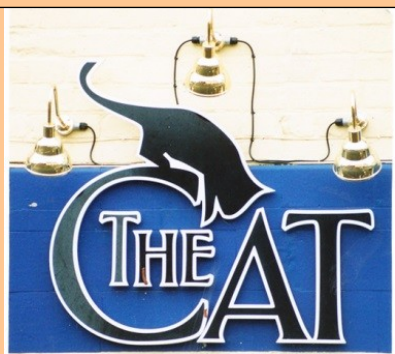


2004 sign ↓

The Caf, Willenhall, 2005
Originally the White Swan, it became The Cat in 1996. It **closed permanently** in mid-2018 and was converted into a restaurant..



Cat and Cabbage, Rotherham
A play on the cap badge of the York & Lancaster Regiment, which showed a tiger and a cabbage rose; the regiment's HQ was in Rotherham. The pub closed early in 2011 and **became a shop**.



The main street in the village of Egremont, also in the county of Cumbria, boasts a number of pubs, and one of them was **The Cat Inn** (2011-10: above). **From 2021 it seems to have had a brief spell as Maqs Bistro Hotel, but by early 2026 was closed again, with the property up for auction.**

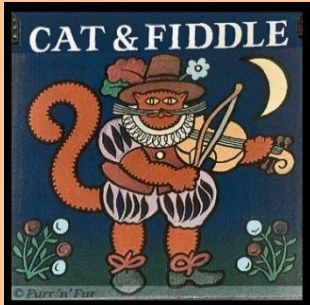


Cat and Canary This pub at Canary Wharf in London's Docklands had a double-sided sign in 2005 (right), which was replaced by the left-hand one in 2009. Sometime in the mid-2010s the pub seems to have been refurbished and renamed the **Tea Merchant**. Later it became **The Merchant**, but closed in early 2020 and in 2021 **became a gaming centre**.

Cat and Cockatoo, Pontesbury, Shropshire.

Formerly called the Horseshoes, it was renamed during the 1980s' fashion for 'different' names. However, it

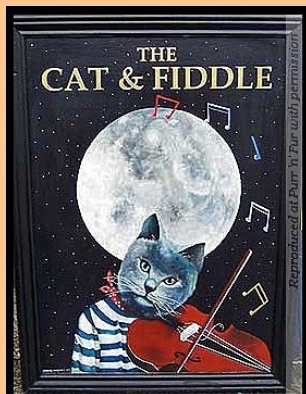
reverted to the **Horseshoe Inn** some years later (*below*), but was **demolished for housing in early 2022**.



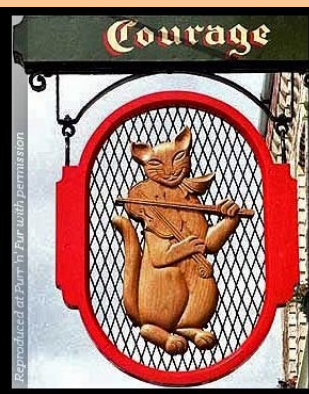
Cat and Fiddle Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, 2004.

Closed in 2009 to be converted into flats, but was eventually **demolished in 2012**.

[History](#)



2005 sign ↑



1984 sign ↑

Cat and Fiddle, Bodmin, Cornwall, 2005

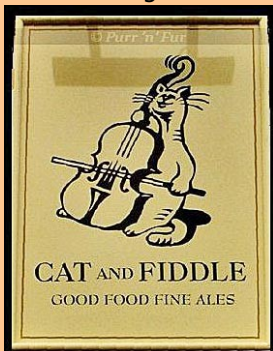
This seems to have been quite a notorious pub. It was closed from 1998 to 2002, reopened, but then following a police raid was **closed permanently in 2013**.

2005 ↓

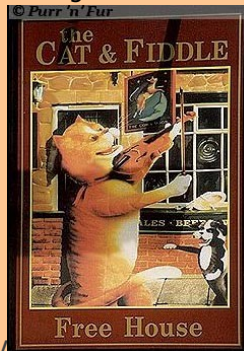


← 1991

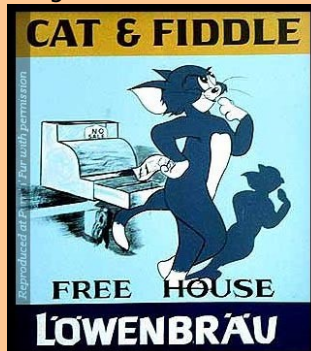
2006 sign ↓



2005 sign ↓



1980 sign ↓

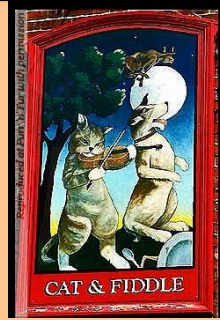


Cat and Fiddle, East Rudham, Norfolk, 2006 (*left*)

Closed in September 2009; muvh later approved to become a shop with accommodation above.

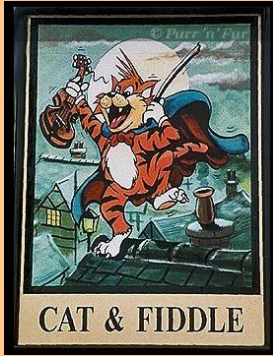


Cat and Fiddle, Norwich, 2005. A large city-centre

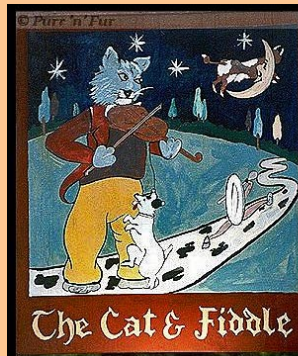


1997 sign ↑

pub that towards the end of its life gained a poor reputation and also suffered a lack of investment and became very scruffy. It changed owners at least once, but finally **closed permanently in June 2011**. [History](#)



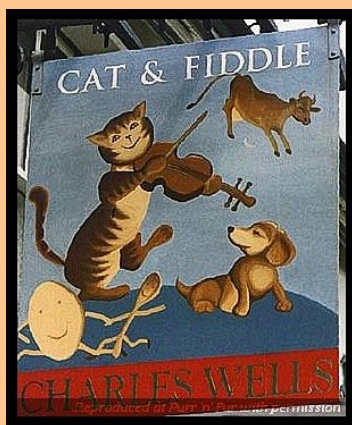
Cat and Fiddle, Hatfield, 2005 (above). Closed August 2012, **demolished in 2013**



This **Cat & Fiddle** (above) was in Radlett, Herts. Inside there was an amazing collection of ornamental shelf, nook and cranny. Even dartboard case in the bar of the fiddling cat — this one double bass (above centre) — more cats adorning the outside, such as the one **Closed in 2019**; its future uncertain in 2023, but by site .was **approved for**



cats filling every the doors to the had a depiction playing a and there were building above right. was still 2024 the **housing**.



Cat and Fiddle
Pirton, near Hitchin,
Hertfordshire, 1992.

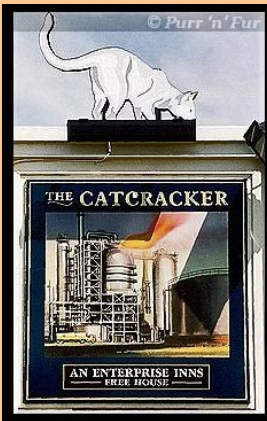


Cat and Lantern

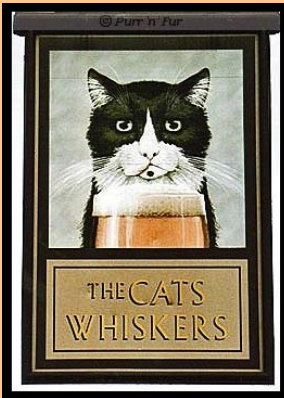
East Barnet, Hertfordshire, 2005 (photo at left). In 2007 became The Village Bar, **closed in late 2008**. It then became a Persian restaurant, now also closed.



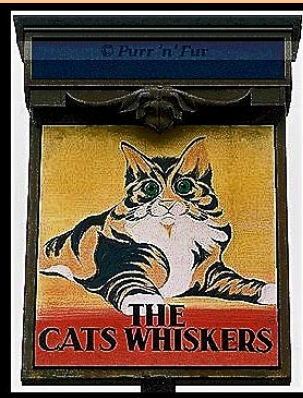
Became a private house, I think in around 2000.



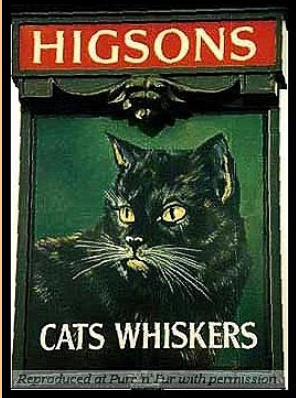
The Catcracker, Stanford-le-Hope, Essex, 2005; note cat on top of the sign. Closed at the start of 2013; became a Co-op convenience store.



2010 sign ↑



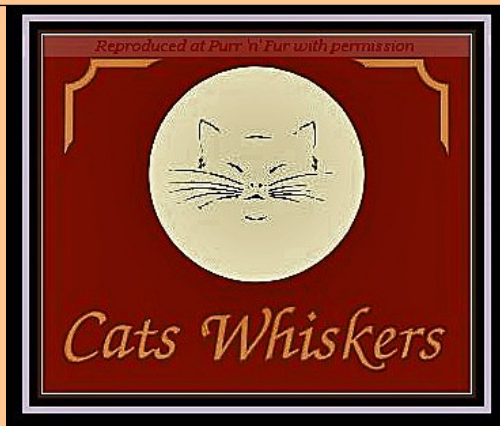
2005 sign ↑



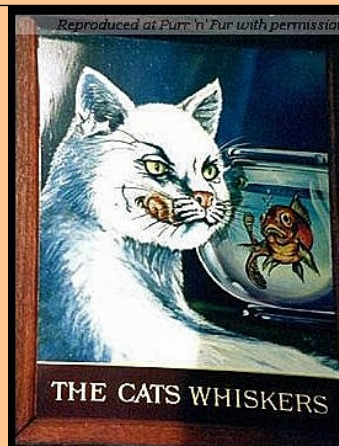
1990s sign ↑



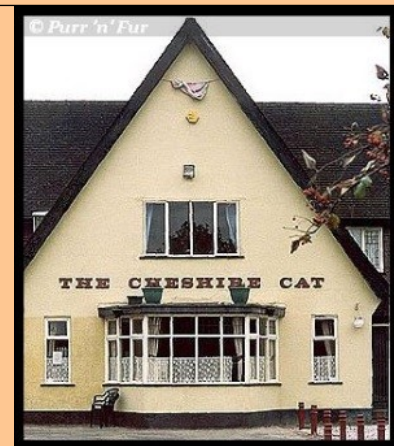
The Cats Whiskers was an urban pub in the Childwall district of the city of Liverpool. In 2010 it had been redecorated outside and had gained a fine new sign (above far left). It closed in 2014 and was later demolished and housing built there.



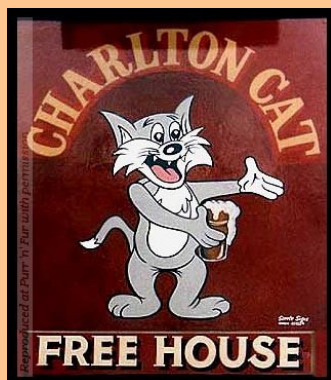
Cat's Whiskers
Elgin, Scotland. 2006.
Closed by the end of 2008.



Cat's Whiskers
Luton, Bedfordshire
See 'The Office' below.



Cheshire Cat, 2004-09
Brinnington, Stockport.
Closed in January 2010, and was
converted to shop premises a
year later. No separate sign.



1995 sign ↑



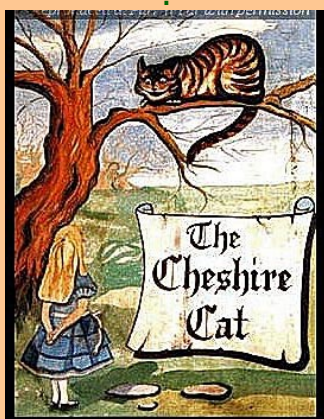
2008 sign ↓



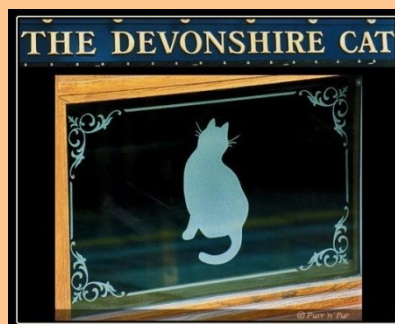
Charlton Cat (2005-06)
(left)

There was a pub in Charlton St Peter, between Andover in Hampshire and Devizes in Wiltshire, since 1821, although there was an alehouse there long before that. Officially it was called the Poores Arms, but that coat-of-arms included a leopard, so in the Victorian era it became known to the locals as the Charlton Cat, a name that was formally adopted in 1921. There was an interesting festival held at the pub: see Notes & Anecdotes. **The pub closed as such in 2013** and reopened as a licensed tearoom and café, 2015.

[Facebook](#)



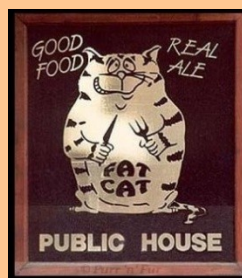
Cheshire Cat, Thornton Hough, Cheshire, 1992. A very fine sign for a pub that **no longer exists**.



The Devonshire Cat (2005-05) was a modern town pub opened in 2001 in the centre of Sheffield, South Yorkshire. There was no pictorial sign, but a cat silhouette was on the front windows. It **closed in June 2020**, owing to reduced 'footfall', high business rates and the coronavirus crisis.

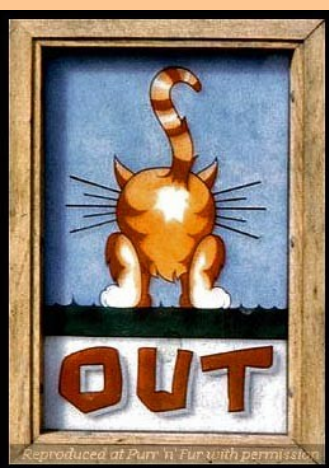
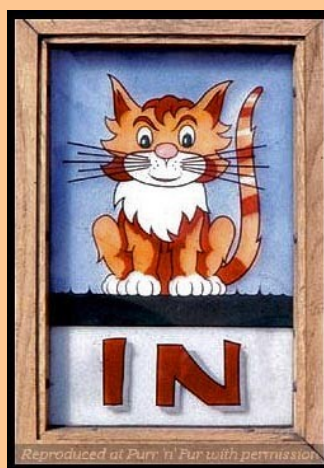


Downing Arms, Tadlow, near Royston, Hertfordshire. The Downing family's coat-of-arms (*left*) shows a griffin — which the locals didn't recognise; so they called it the '**Scratching Cat**!' It **closed in 1996**.



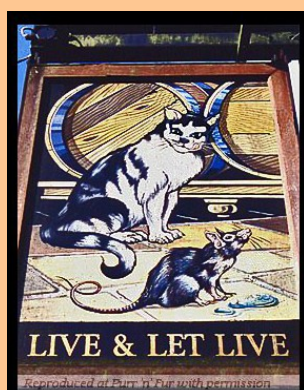
Fat Cat, Chester

Some doubt about this; the sign proclaims it as a 'public house', and it seemed to be regarded as such in the city, but it was also one of a series of 'café bars' across the country. It **closed in 2013**. It had various incarnations before reopening as the Henry Potts pub in early 2022. – but that also closed in June 2024



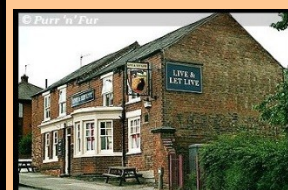
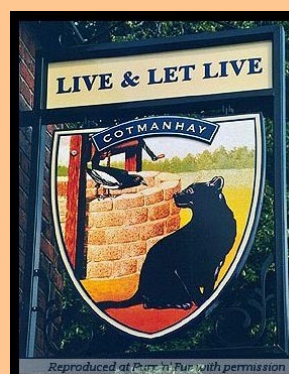
Ginger Tom – Sneinton, Nottingham, 1965.

As well as the actual pub sign (*left*), there were two other signs at the parking entrance and exit (*centre and right*). It was later renamed Huckleberry's, but finally **closed in 2004 and was demolished**.

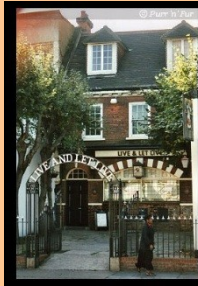


Live and Let Live

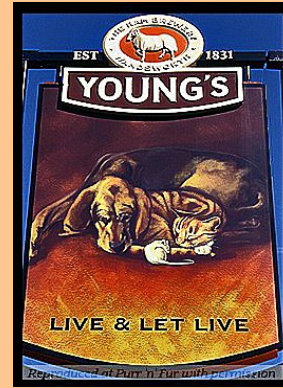
Booker Common, High Wycombe, 2000. It had become 'The Livvy' by 2009, but **closed in 2011**.



Live and Let Live, 2004, Cotmanhay, Derbyshire. **Permanently closed** at the start of 2013, converted to housing.



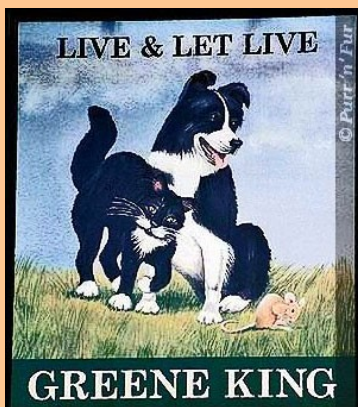
Nice double-sided sign for the former **Live and Let Live**, Forest Gate, east London. **Closed in 2013**; various planning applications since have all been refused..



Live and Let Live

Frampton Cotterell, Gloucestershire. 2000
Closed November 2019, to be a convenience store and two houses..

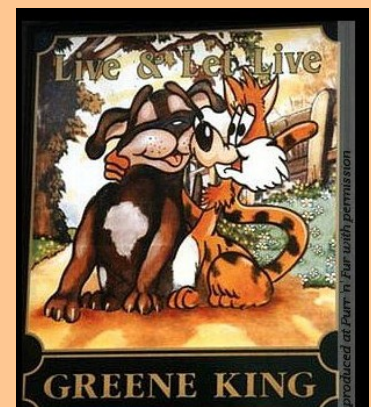
Live and Let Live – Glodwick, Oldham, Greater Manchester, 2007. The pub was derelict for a time, and there are now **shops on the former site**. Certainly the sign was very neglected, and it's not even clear what was shown with the kitten.



Live and Let Live, Guildford, Surrey, 2007. **Closed in 2012**, demolished



← Guildford ↑



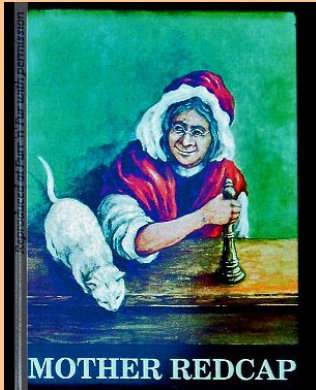
Live and Let Live
Olympia, Kensington, London

2014 for supermarket (photo above right.)

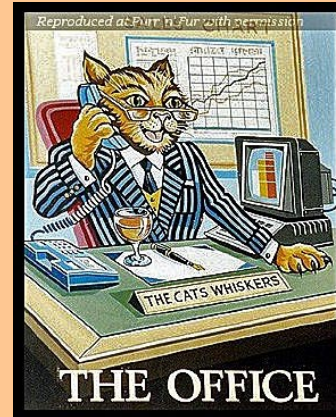


Olympia ↑ →

Closed in 2016: to be demolished and redeveloped as housing (photo lower left).



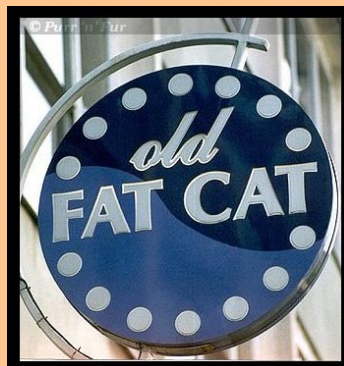
The **Mother Redcap**, Luton (2011-06). The name might have derived from an old, generic name for an ale wife, dating from 16th-century folklore or even earlier. An ale wife was simply a woman who kept an alehouse. **Closed in January 2018**, sold for housing.



The Office, Luton, Bedfordshire. 1997. Was renamed from the 'Cat's Whiskers' (see above), but by 2007 was an **Indian restaurant**.



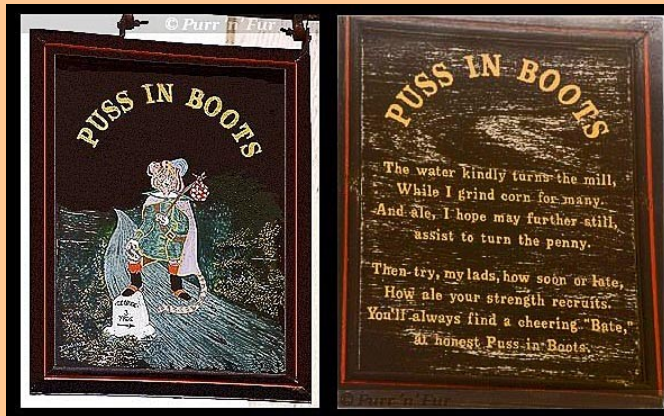
Old Butcher's Arms
Calne, Wiltshire, 2005.
Closed in the 1980s and converted into housing.



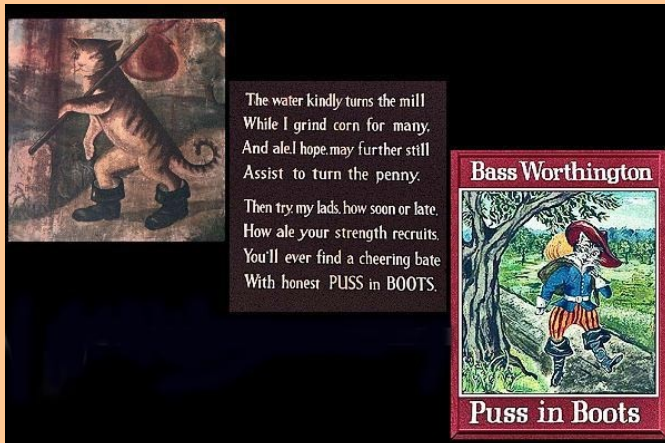
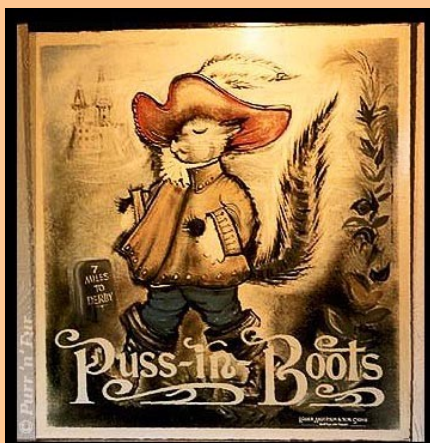
The **Old Fat Cat** (2005-06: above) A large town pub in the northern part of the port city of Southampton, in Hampshire on England's south coast. **Permanently closed by late 2024.**

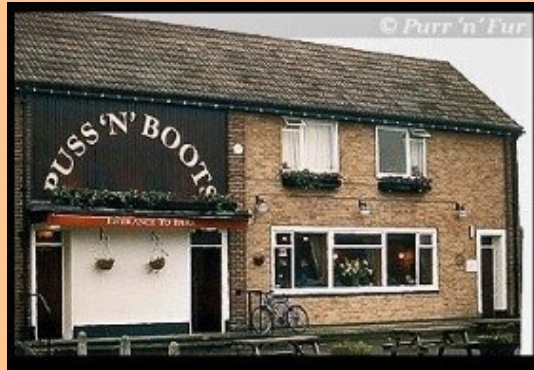
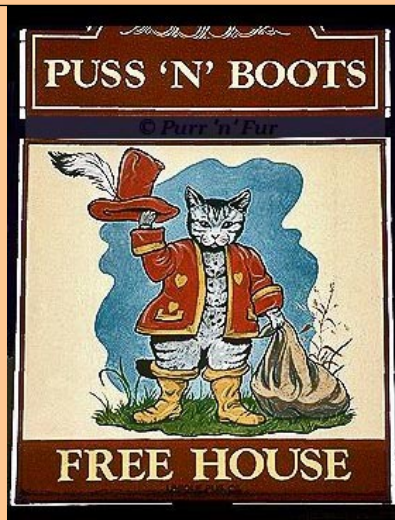


The **Picketty Witch** was a well-known pub in Yeovil, Dorset whose name was borrowed by a pop group of the 1960s after they had visited. The pub was **closed permanently in 2012** to make way for a supermarket. The sign showed a witch and her black cat, although actually the name had nothing to do with witches.
[Yeovil History](#)



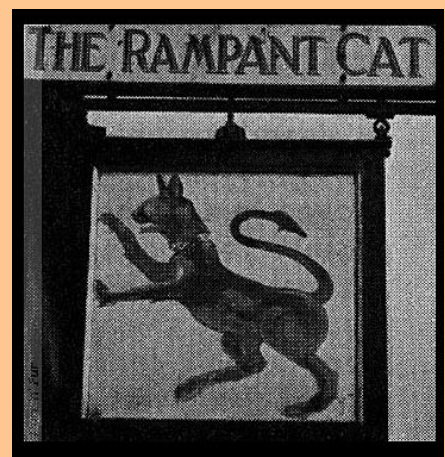
This **Puss in Boots** (2005-05) is in the small village of Windley, near Duffield in Derbyshire. It's also the oldest of the four with that name. The sign (the black one to the left above, with a verse on one side) is not the original one, which was stolen. It was later recovered from a car boot sale, and kept safely inside the bar area (*below left*). The inscription on the milestone says '7 miles to Derby'. Below right are also older signs of unknown date. As far as I can establish, the pub was **permanently closed early in 2024**, although the owners were said to be still living there.
[Facebook](#)





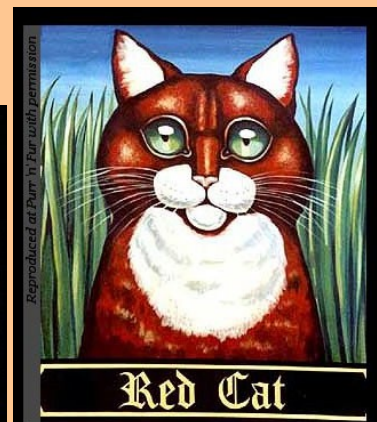
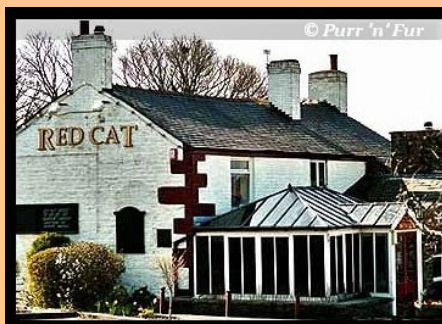
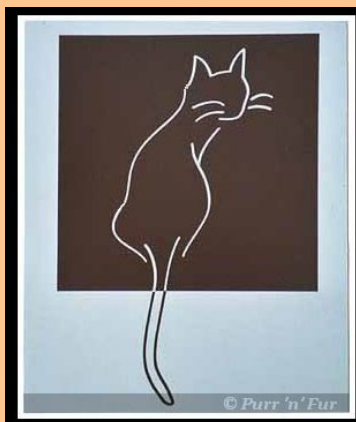
Puss 'n' Boots, Acomb, York, 2005.

Closed in July 2020 and **demolished in early 2021** for housing.

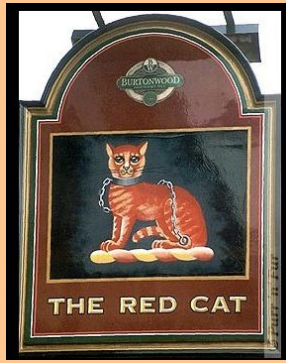


Rampant Cat – Burford, Oxfordshire. 1986.

The pub closed during the 1990s and was **converted into a Chinese restaurant**. A much older sign, from the 1950s (*above right*) reflects the town's and its founder's heraldic symbols.



The **Red Cat** (2007-04) at Whittle-le-Woods in Lancashire had just this maroon-coloured cat outline when I visited, forming part of a larger sign; there wasn't a traditional sign as such. The 'proper' pictorial sign at right above dates from 1992. **By late 2024 it was a 'Mediterranean restaurant'** rather than a pub as such.



Red Cat, Hindley, Lancashire, 2005.
Closed in **October 2016**; became flats



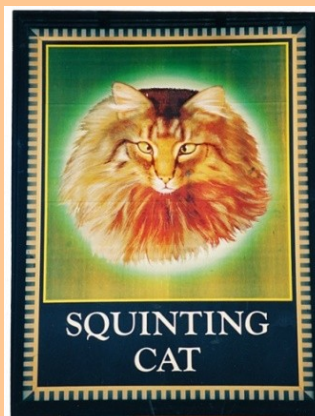
Robin Hood
Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire
The pub **closed in 2004**
and became an Indian restaurant.



The **Romping Cat** was a small country pub, renowned for its beer, at Old Woods near the village of Bomere Heath, not far from Shrewsbury in Shropshire. It was formerly known as the Railway Tavern. It **closed in early 2013** and became a private house.



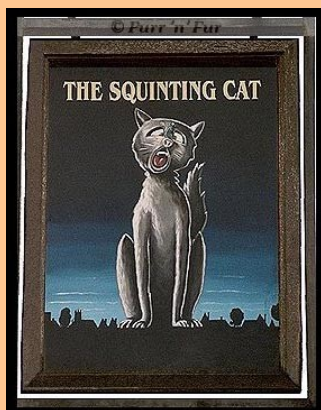
2003 sign ↑



1998 sign ↑



Squinting Cat, Clipstone
Situating in a former mining village near Mansfield in Nottinghamshire, the pub was **closed and demolished in late 2012**.



Squinting Cat

Swarcliffe, Leeds, 2005

Closed in 2010 and lay empty until a fire in 2013 destroyed much of the building, after which it was demolished.



Whittington's, London EC4.

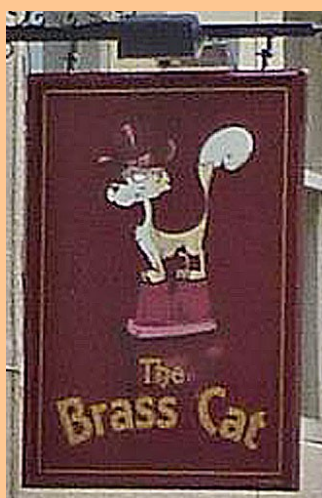
Former pub-cum-wine bar near St Paul's Cathedral in London, In July 2009 it was an Indian restaurant, but by 2021 had apparently **disappeared**.

Section 2: Changed sign and/or name.

The following pubs still exist (in late 2024) and at one time featured a cat on their sign, but no longer do. When years are given, the cats were still there.



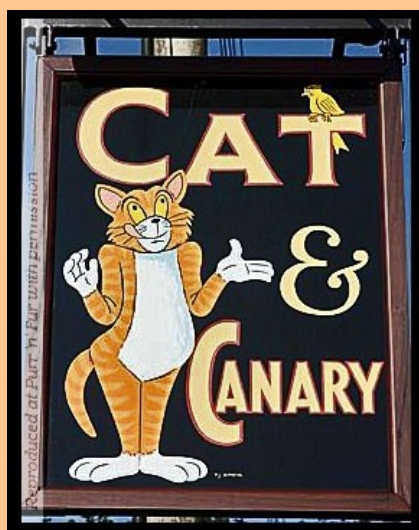
The **Brass Cat** was situated in the centre of Bolton, a former Lancashire mill town. As well as the hanging sign, there was a fine-looking cat figure on the front of the building. By 2024 the pub seems to have been renamed **The Churchgate**; I think the change dates from 2018.



The **Brass Cat** in Halifax, West Yorkshire (*above*), has undergone a number of reincarnations. Originally the Golden Lion, it became the Brass Cat in 1981, with a humorous sign and a black cat painted on the façade (*above*).

In 2014 the name changed to the **Cat and Fiddle** (*right*), under which name it continued until January 2022, when it closed.

After a major refurbishment, this town-centre pub emerged again in December 2023, this time with no feline connections and under the name The **Watchmakers Bar and Grill**.



The **Cat and Canary**, Henfield (2009-07). Renamed for a number of years as the 'Old Railway Tavern', by 2008 the pub had reverted to its previous name. The Cat House and the story behind the name are found [here](#); see also [here](#). **Still going late 2024, but now The Old Railway again!**

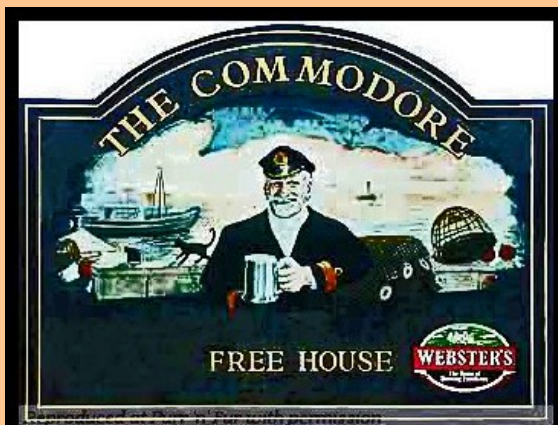


The **Cat Inn** (2009-04) was located a little way south of Berwick-upon-Tweed, the border town between England

and Scotland, just off the A1 (Great North Road) and near the village of Cheswick. Thanks to the Inn Sign Society for notification of this one and supplying the photo of the sign.

By late 2024

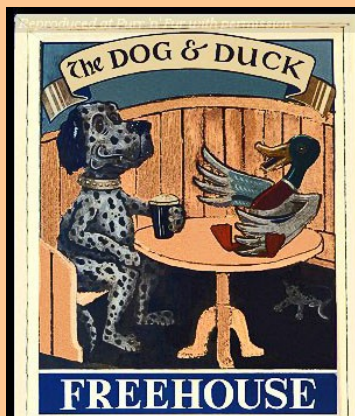
its name had been changed to Island View.



The **Commodore Inn**, Grange-over-Sands, Lancashire (*above*; date unknown). The genial naval gentleman used to have a small black cat on the sea wall behind, but on later signs it's vanished. [Website](#)



Adding to the various signs featuring Dick Whittington and his cat, here's one (*below*) from the **Dick Whittington** (2007-08) at South Oxhey, not far from Harrow Weald in the north-west of outer London. Apparently there is a legend in the area that in the fifteenth century Sir Richard Whittington owned what is now Oxhey Hall Farm, to the south of Watford town; that probably accounts for the choice of name for this pub. **Still operational in April 2026, but sign changed: no cat.** [Facebook](#)



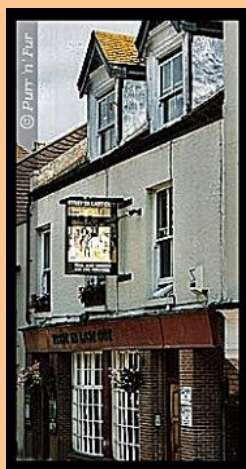
The **Dog and Duck** (2010) is a country pub at Campsea Ashe in Suffolk. You have to look hard to see the cat on the sign, but it's lurking under the table! By 2021 the pub had been renamed as just '**The Duck**'. **Still operational in April 2026.** [Website](#)



First In, Last Out ('FILO')

Hastings, East Sussex, 1996.

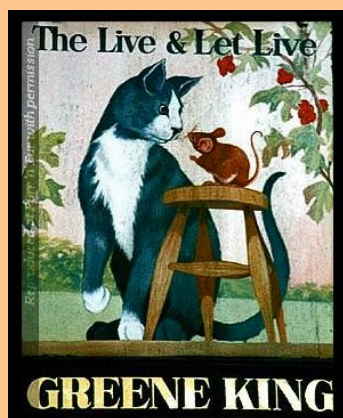
I think this less-than-kind sign would likely be frowned upon today! **The pub remains operational in April 2026; no cat on sign** (photo below).



The **Gate Inn** (2009-10) at Shirebrook, near the Nottinghamshire town of Mansfield, was empty for a time until new tenants took over in 2014 **Still operational in April 2026, but the sign no longer has a cat.** (pub photo below) [Quality Taverns](#)

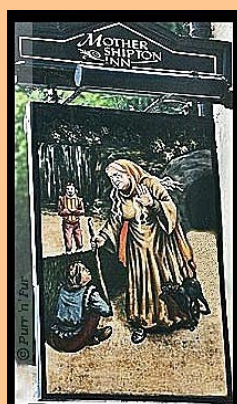


The sign for the **Half Moon** (2009-07; *above*) at Whipton, near the south-western English city of Exeter, was photographed by Denis Lewis of the Inn Sign Society, to whom many thanks. It's the same sign as for the Star Inn, which is also not far from Exeter. Notorious pub, closed for a while in October 2019 but by late 2020 was open under new management and renamed **The Star Inn**. **Still operational in April 2026**



Live and Let Live

Pegsdon, Bedfordshire, 1994. For sale in 2018/19, but by 2021 had been bought, refurbished and renamed as **'The View'**.. **Still operational in April 2026**

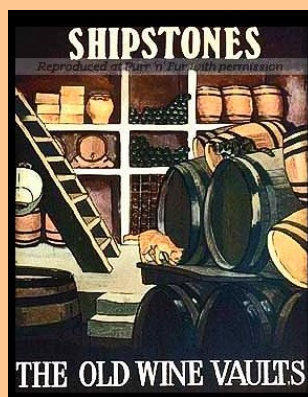


The **Mother Shipton** is in North Yorkshire, in the ancient town of Knaresborough, birthplace of the prophetess and soothsayer known as Mother Shipton (*circa* 1488 to 1561). She made a number of prophecies, mostly to do with her local region. She's accompanied on the sign by her black cat. **Still operational in April 2026; sign changed, no cat.**

[Website](#) | [Facebook](#)

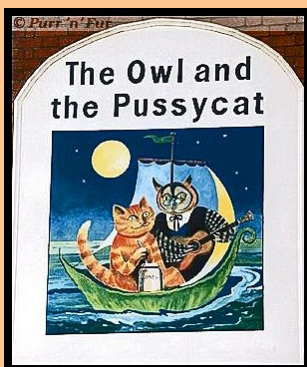
New Broom (above)

Checkley, near Stoke-on-Trent, 1978 (*right*). **Still operational April 2026; no longer has cat on sign.** [Facebook](#)

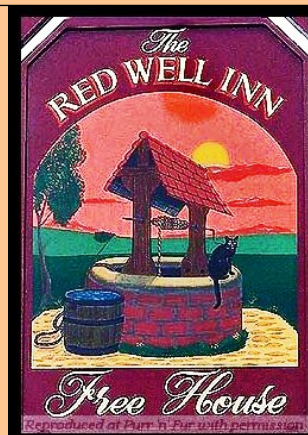


Old Wine Vaults

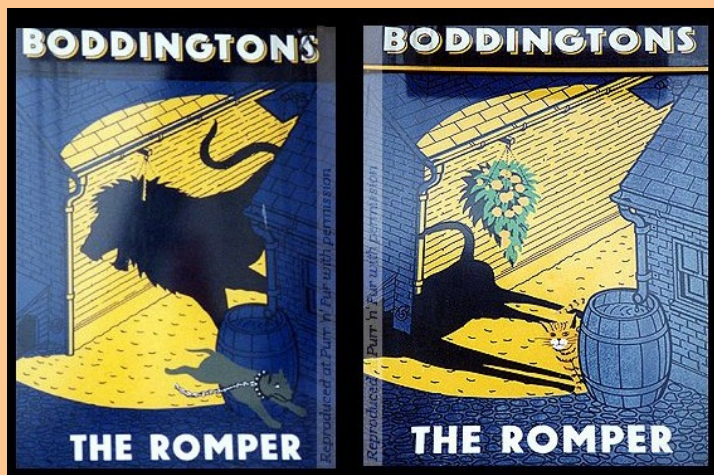
Eastwood, Nottingham, 1988 (*left*) **Still operational in April 2026; no longer has cat on sign.** [Facebook](#)



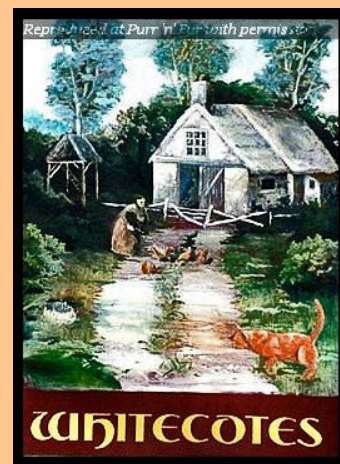
The Owl and the Pussycat, Kingston-on-Thames, Surrey (photos from 2005). In 2007 it was renamed **The Queen's Head**, and later closed, but by 2024 had reopened. **Still operational in April 2026.** [Website](#)



Red Well Inn, Over Kellett, Lancashire **Still operational April 2026 as Red Well Country Inn;** no cat sign. [Website](#) | [Facebook](#)



The Romper, Ringway, Manchester, 1996 **Still operational April 2026, now with just a lion on the sign.** [Website](#)



The Whitecotes, Chesterfield, Derbyshire. 1997. Doubtless has changed sign since. **Still operational April 2026.** [Website](#)





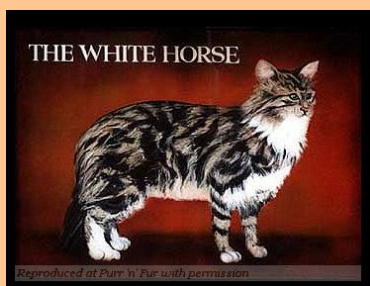
2007 sign ↑



2005 sign ↑

The **Three Legged Stool** (2007-04) is situated near the Nottinghamshire town of Worksop in central England. The pub is on the site of a former dairy, so the name probably refers to an old three-legged milking stool. **Still operational in April 2026, but there's no longer a pictorial sign.**

[Website](#) | [Facebook](#)



White Horse

Chilgrove, Wiltshire. 1996.

This is strange: the story is that the sign-writer couldn't paint horses, so he painted a cat instead! After a spell as an upmarket restaurant called 'The Fish House', in 2021 it was once again a country pub with accommodation (and a horse sign!) **Still operational in April 2026.** [Website](#) | [Facebook](#)



Ye Olde Market

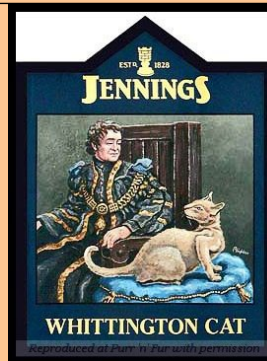
Newark, Nottinghamshire, 1993.

This pub in the centre of town was the only one with a dance floor. Closed in 2006, it stood empty for a decade or so, but from about 2015 was refurbished and reopened as **The Ram** hotel and brasserie. [Website](#)





2007 sign ↑



2005 sign ↑

The **Whittington Cat** (2011-10; *above*) is a small pub situated in the main shopping street of the coastal town of Whitehaven, in the north-western English county of Cumbria. There was no pictorial sign (in 2007) and I don't know the connection, if any, with Dick Whittington or his cat. **Still operational late 2024 and advertised as a 'sports pub'.** [Website](#)

Section 3: Changed name or closed, signs not recorded.

The pubs listed below don't exist any more, or have changed their name, and no cat signs relating to their previous existence have been found.



Cat and Bagpipes, Edinburgh, Scotland.
It changed its name to the Rose and Crown some years ago. **Rose and Crown still operational in April 2026.** [Website](#)



Cat and Cracker, Isle of Grain, Kent
Demolished to make way for housing in the early 2000s. The name was a play on 'catalytic cracker', part of the plant at the nearby oil refinery.

Cat and Fiddle, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria.
Demolished to make way for a leisure park.

Cat's Eyes, Baillieston, near Glasgow, Scotland.
I could find no trace of this.

Copy Cat, Glasgow, Scotland.

This pub was **demolished in the 1990s**. It used to be a haunt of staff from the *Daily Record* newspaper, hence the name



Fiddler's Cat Tavern, Sheerness, Kent.
It was renamed as the 'Bar One', but **closed permanently** in May 2010.



Maltese Cat, Roehampton, south-west London.
The pub closed in October 2004 and was later **demolished** for flats.



Whittington and Cat, Highgate Hill, London, 2005. The sign was inaccessible to photograph when I visited. The pub closed in April 2014 and lay empty for 4 years, then was converted into a shop.

Section 4: These establishments aren't pubs and as far as is known never were

Blue Cat, Stockport, Greater Manchester: is a wine bar.

Cat Hotel, Luton, Bedfordshire: is a hotel for cats (i.e. a cattery).

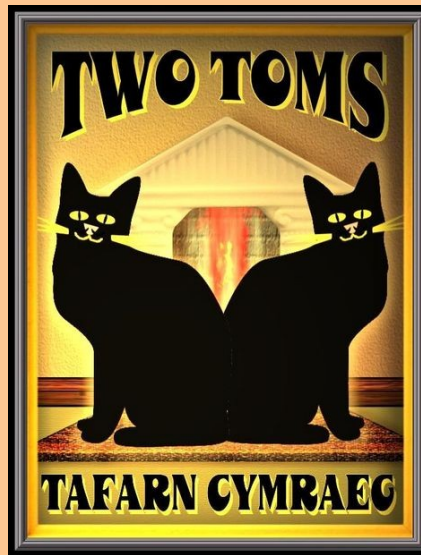
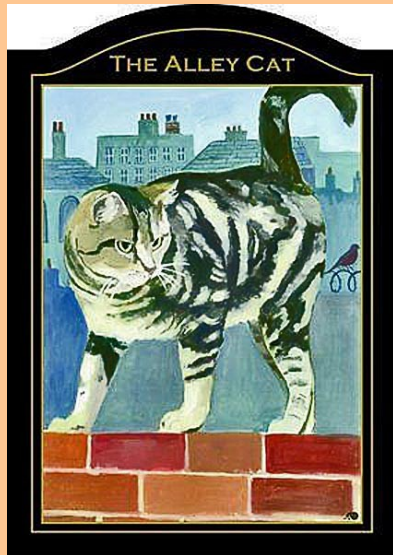
Cats Inn, Deverill, Warminster, Wiltshire: another 'cat hotel'.

Cat's Bar, Middlewich, Cheshire: seems to be a café and had no pictorial sign.

Cheshire Cat, Fallowfield, Manchester: this looks like a club of some kind.

There are **Fat Cat** establishments in a number of towns and cities, but they are 'café bars' and not pubs as such.

And lastly ... a sign that I haven't been able to trace at all (left), and one that I think is fictitious.



I suspect that the Two Toms is artwork created for a fictitious Welsh pub, although I can't be certain. There's a description of a pub on the edge of the Brecon Beacons, but I think it's a made-up story; xee [this link](#) (June 2003). As for the Alley Cat, I don't think it's a genuine pub sign, but one designed as a 'collectable'.

* * * * *