

## **CAVERSHAM (Reading) – 26<sup>th</sup> November 2009**

The first written description of Caversham appeared in the Domesday Book. Some time before 1106 a Shrine of Our Lady was established in Caversham near the present St. Peter's Church. It became a popular place of pilgrimage, along with the chapel of St. Anne on the bridge and her well, whose waters were believed to have healing properties. By the fifteenth century the statue was plated in silver; Catherine of Aragon is recorded as visiting on 17 July 1532. The shrine was destroyed on 14 September 1538 under the orders of Henry VIII.

In the Middle Ages, Caversham Manor was one of the Demesnes of William Marshal (1146 – 1219), Earl of Pembroke and Regent during King Henry III's minority. The medieval community was clustered on the north side of Caversham Bridge to the east of St. Peter's Church, which was built in the 12th century.

During the Civil War there was fierce fighting around Caversham Bridge for a short period in April 1643. Reading had been held by the Royalists, but was under siege by Parliamentary forces under the Earl of Essex. Royalist forces marched south from Oxford in an attempt to relieve the town's defenders, but were heavily defeated, and the town fell to Parliament a few days later.

The fortified manor house was replaced by Caversham Park in the 16th century. Several houses have stood on the site, notably the home of William Cadogan, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl Cadogan. BBC Monitoring is housed in the present Caversham Park House, built in 1850. It is the section of the BBC World Service that supplies news, information and comment gathered from the mass media around the world.

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It is a 25 minute stroll to get to the first pub, a Wetherspoon's, by going through the back of Reading Station and turn left along Vastern Road, turn right onto Caversham Road, and cross the bridge over the Thames, bearing right, and turn left into Prospect St. Alternatively, to catch the bus number 24 (running every 15 mins.) go over the pedestrian crossing at the front of the station, turn right and walk along to bus stop "SS" outside "Total Sounds". Alight from the bus in Hemdean Road (marked Caversham Library), cross over the road, and turn right into Chester Street. Walk 100 yards and turn right into a car park and the Wetherspoon's will be halfway down on your left.

All the pubs listed are recommended by Reading and Mid-Berkshire CAMRA.

- 1) The Baron Cadogan, 22, Prospect Street. - open at 9am serving breakfast, with the usual array of Wetherspoon's beers and food. Turn right at front of pub, walk to roundabout, turn left by "Marparts" – 5 mins to:-
- 2) The Clifton Arms, 12, Gosbrook Road – open at 11am – food 12 till 2:30 (small reduction for Seniors, according to Sue) Brakspears. Turn right leaving pub, walk past the roundabout, bearing left until you reach the traffic lights. Turn right into Church Road, walk 60 yds (a total of 7mins.) to:-
- 3) The Griffin, 10, Church Road – open 11am, good selection of food all day. 2 course lunch £6.95. Adnams, Courage, Bombadier, Hobgoblin. Turn right leaving pub, cross over Bridge Street at traffic lights, turn right, walk 75 yards ( a total of 3 mins) to:-
- 4) Crown on the Bridge, 3, Bridge Street – open 12 onwards – good selection of food 12 till 2:30 – Youngs, Brakspears, Fullers. Turn left leaving the pub, cross over the bridge, then cross over Caversham Road on the other side of the roundabout, turn left, walk 50 yards (a total of 5 mins) to:-
- 5) The Moderation, 213, Caversham Road – open 12 onwards. Food available 12 till 2:30 – St. Austell, Sharp's, Ringwood, and Addlestons Cloudy Cider. (This pub has just been refurbished, is a bit trendy, but good beer)

From here a 12 mins (approx) walk to Reading Station. Turn right out of pub, cross to other side via a pedestrian crossing, at large roundabout turn left into Vastern Rd. Cross over at ped. xing, and proceed past a shopping park (formerly GWR Goods Yard). Then take first right into access road to Post Office Depot (big red gates), turn left at gates under car park, turn right for lift to level 9, and over station footbridge to a platform of your choice.

