

A SHORT AND PLEASANT RAMBLE AROUND CHERITON

(Where we find a very watery place and also visit a famous battlefield)

Fact File.....

Starting Point: This walk starts from the Flower Pots pub in Cheriton.

Alternative Parking and Start Point: There are no car parks around the route, so if you are not parking at the Flower Pots, then we suggest that you park your car somewhere in Cheriton village. There are several places where the roads are suitable.

Distance: Allow 2 hours 15 minutes for this walk, the distance is 4.5 miles (7.2km).

Classification: 'Moderate' - One easy climb to gain access to the downs.

Safety and Comfort: No problems.

Maps: Ordnance Survey Landranger 1: 50 000 Series - Sheet 185.

Ordnance Survey Explorer 1: 25 000 Series - Sheet 132.

Ordnance Survey Pathfinder 1: 25 000 Series - Sheets 1264 (SU 42/52) and 1265 (SU 62/72).

Map reference of start and finish - SU 581283.

Other Refreshment Possibilities: There are no other opportunities on this walk for refreshment.

Travel by Car: Cheriton is situated on the B3146 just north of the A272 Petersfield to Winchester road.

Public Transport: Cheriton is served hourly on weekdays from Winchester and Petersfield by Stagecoach Hampshire Bus Service No. 67 (Tel: 01256 464501 for more information).

Background

Cheriton is a pretty and fairly quiet village once you have walked away from the main road. The source of the River Itchen is barely a mile away and it is a very watery place with streams everywhere, and large signs warning you of the likelihood of ducks crossing the road. The pretty river cannot seem to decide which course to take, as it divides up into several channels twisting this way and that, under bridges and around garden walls. There are not many villages in England where

there are probably more ducks and geese than people, but we would guess this is the situation in Cheriton.

Aside from its ducks and geese,

The Flower Pots



Give-me-Five Treasure Hunt

This is a simple quiz - just keep alert and you will find the answers in order as you go round:

1. How many robins will you find on a flowerpot?
2. At which cottage could you become a little drunk?
3. Who was worried about the bridges?
4. What was built in 1919?
5. What was built in 1911?

Cheriton is also famous for an epic civil war battle. There is nothing to mark this fact anywhere as far as we can tell - except on Ordnance Survey maps. The battle took place east of the B3046 in the valley between Cheriton Wood and the village on 29th March 1644. If you walk these byways on a

Geese at Cheriton



summer's day, nothing could be more peaceful than this gentle countryside. The land slopes gently down to the infant river and nothing noisier than a sheep or a skylark can be heard. But things were much different in the spring of 1644 when such a fierce battle took place that 2000 men were killed and buried in communal graves. Such was the intensity of the battle that the lanes on which the walk takes place were said to have run with blood. You can still see the burial mounds around the village. These lanes were a fundamental factor in the battle which ended with a Parliamentary victory and the Royalist forces retreating to Beving House.

In a most wonderful note, the name of the Flower Pots - the excellent pub that is our starting point - is worthy of some explanation. It has become clearer when you discover the origins of the pub. It was built in 1841 by the retired head gardener of nearby Avington Park who is said to have built it with his "golden hands". It is a bustling well-kept village local surrounded by rolling Hampshire downland where you are sure of a friendly welcome. The two little rooms have an atmosphere all of their own. Hops adorn the walls, the tables are of scrubbed pine and pews form much of the seating. For the last six years, all of the ales sold here have been brewed in the micro-brewery across the car park and very good they are too. We walked the route on a Thursday and the brewery was belching out that delicious smell of the hot wort. The traditional games of cribbage, shove halfpenny and dominoes are played in the public bar. At one time, the Flower Pots was not the only pub in Cheriton. The former HH Inn - passed on the walk, is now a private house but was once a place where "rings" was played. The game enjoyed a revival in 1959 but ceased when the pub closed some time back.

An Ordnance Survey map of the route is normally placed here.

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The Walk

Turn right from the pub and after only 100 yards (91 metres), turn left down



a narrow footpath, and walk between a buttressed brick and flint wall and a cypressus hedge. Pass through the

kissing gate and you will be faced with a choice of three possible ways. Take the middle of the three possible routes towards the green, which in the distance, which dips slightly from the corner of the graveyard. Climb this stile, cross the little lane, climb the stile on the other side, and you will notice you are on the Wayfarers Walk. This is a wide path between sheep fence and hedging. Climb a further stile and walk along the right hand side of the field following the hedge line.

Family Days in the Countryside around Portsmouth and the South Downs. Family Days in the Country-

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Just after you pass under the power lines, where Badshear Lane swings to the left, turn sharp right down another track (marked as Right of Way). After you achieve the high point of this route (by one of the mobile phone transmitters), turn right on the public footpath through the rather dilapidated wicket gate and walk along the edge of this large open field. Emerge from the field by a further wicket gate, cross straight over the track and continue on a track for 500 yards (457

