

## London Mensa First Friday Pub Crawl

### "Oxford Street" pub crawl

**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2013**

My Monopoly counter (the vintage sports car, naturally) has landed on Oxford Street, but, as there is nowhere decent to find a drink on Oxford Street itself, I hope you'll forgive me for using this as an excuse to plot a long-overdue return to the charming pubs to the north, in and around Marylebone Village.

Where available, I have included the write-up for each pub from CAMRA's new online pub guide, [www.whatpub.com](http://www.whatpub.com), which is written by CAMRA members, rather than random members of the public with dubious motives. For legal reasons, I should point out that I'm not a CAMRA member, I was just not feeling very original.

1. 6 – 6.45pm: Dover Castle, 44 Weymouth Mews, W1G 7EH

Admittedly not the easiest pub to find, but definitely worth seeking out. It's situated down a quiet mews which links New Cavendish Street and Weymouth Street, just off Portland Place.

"One of Marylebone's two remaining mews pubs, built in 1777 and grade II listed. The etched glass windows show the original layout and purpose of the two front bars before the removal of the partitioning. Note the mirrors underneath the dividing beam which allowed coachmen to observe when their passengers were ready to depart." (whatpub.com). A Sam Smith's pub.

2. 6.45 – 7.30pm: The King's Head, 15 Westmoreland Street, W1G 8PJ

Whatpub.com says: "Small corner local hidden away in the back doubles (*sic*) and one of the few remaining real Marylebone pubs of character. Inside, the small lounge bar is snug with a cosy feel about it. First licensed 1765 and rebuilt in 1939 by Charringtons." It's now owned by Greene King.

3. 7.30 – 8.10pm: Angel in the Fields, 37 Thayer Street, W1U 2QY

It hasn't been reviewed on whatpub.com yet and I realise a second Sam Smith's pub might not be to everyone's taste beerwise; however, this pub is worth the visit for the interior alone. The old-fashioned oak-panelling lends to a feeling of cosiness; it's the complete antithesis of the nearby Marylebone High Street. The upstairs bar area may be open if we need to spread out.

4. 8.10 – 8.50 pm: The Golden Eagle, 59 Marylebone Lane, W1U 2NW

I'm taking a bit of a risk including this as it is a fairly small pub. I hope we'll be able to squeeze in, because (as whatpub.com puts it): "One of the few remaining old style Marylebone pubs, small and cosy. First licensed 1842 and rebuilt 1890." It usually has a decent range of ales.

If we can't fit in, then we'll just spend longer in the later pubs.

5. 8.50 – 9.30pm: Cock and Lion, 62 Wigmore Street, W1U 2SA

To say this is on Wigmore Street, just up from Oxford Street, it's a pretty reasonable pub – and certainly better than the dreadful Pontefract Castle down the road. Whatpub.com has this to say: "Claimed to be the only pub in the country with this name. Quite small downstairs with another bar upstairs with first floor restaurant. First licensed in 1764 as the Lyon & Cock and rebuilt in 1880. Four ale handpumps."

6. 9.30 – 10.15pm: Three Tuns, 1 Portman Mews South, W1H 6HP

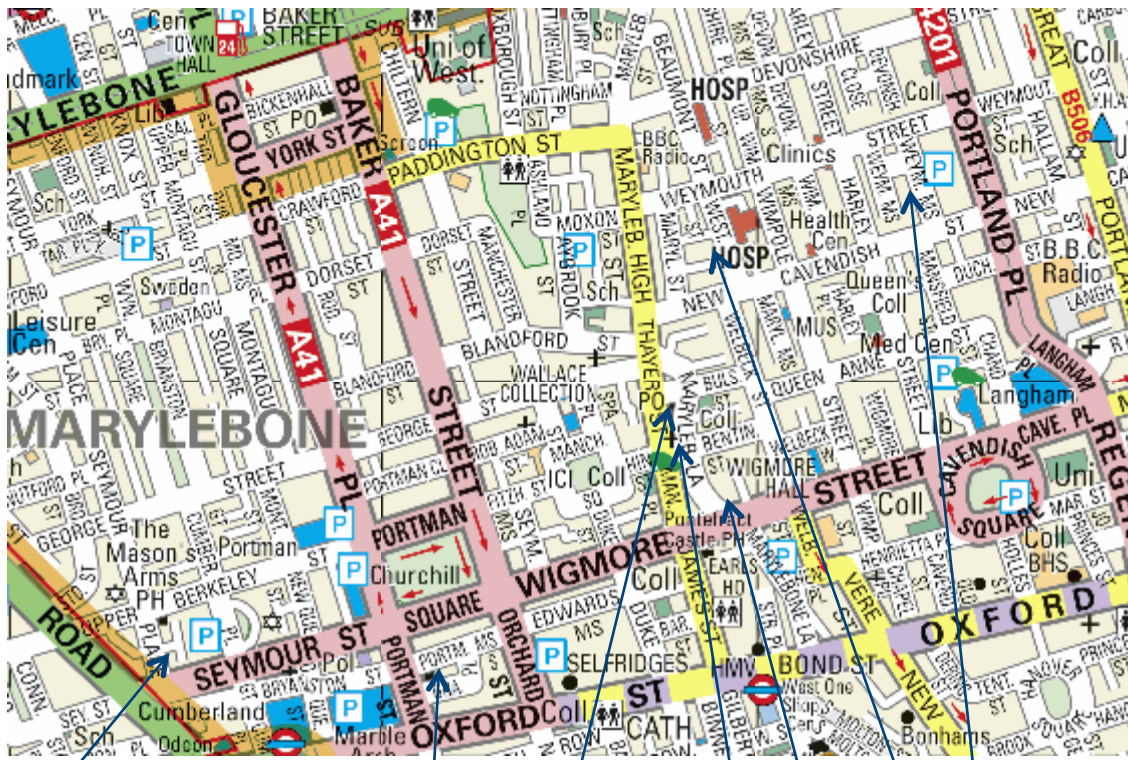
I've deliberately arranged the crawl this way round so that, by the time we get to the last two pubs, the after work rush should have subsided. It may have a fairly ordinary looking exterior, but this is a pretty cosy and characterful pub inside, which whatpub.com explains as follows: "Originally dating from 1764 and later merged with the building next door, hence the split level interior. The frontage dates from 1871." A Taylor Walker pub, it should offer a reasonable selection of ales.

7. 10.15 – closing: Carpenters Arms, 12 Seymour Place W1H 7NA

Easily one of the best pubs in the area.

"First licensed in 1776 and rebuilt by Meux in 1872. Close to Marble Arch, this popular pub is known locally as the Carp. Now a sister hostelry to the Market Porter in SE1, but with a smaller range of guest beers, this establishment is a haven from the bustle of Edgware Road. The pub has had a sensitive refurbishment, preserving the mosaics, and on the side wall is a display of facsimiles of woodworking tools."

It does close at 11 which I'm sure will be late enough for me. However, there are various other establishments in the area for those who wish to carry on imbibing.



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