

Economists' Walk No 2: Soho

The walk begins in Trafalgar Square (1). In the south-west corner is Cockspur St in which stood the British Coffee House where **Adam Smith** discussed draft chapters of the *Wealth of Nations* with friends while resident in London in the mid 1770s.

Follow Cockspur Street west and turn sharply right into Pall Mall East, then left

into Suffolk St. **Adam Smith** lodged at what was formerly No 27 in this street. The location was towards the north-west side of the street, to the rear of the current Haymarket theatre (2) (where there is a plaque commemorating the centenary of the first night of *An Ideal Husband* and the first production of *A Woman of No Importance*).



Return to Pall Mall East and follow it back to Trafalgar Square. The church of St Martin in the Fields (3) on the north east corner is the burial site of **Abraham**

de Moivre, early statistician, though it no longer possible to see his grave.

Proceed northwards and, where the road forks, take the right-hand fork along St Martin's Lane. The junction with Cranbourn St (4) was once the location of Old Slaughter's Coffee House. **Abraham de Moivre**, living in the early half of the eighteenth century as a Huguenot émigré in London, sustained himself by acting here as consultant mathematician.

Follow Cranbourn St to Charing Cross Rd, turn right then left into Little Newport St which leads to Lisle St (5). In this road **David Hume** lodged at the Misses Elliott's boarding house for Scottish gentlemen when resident in London.

At the end of the street turn right into Wardour St and right again into Gerrard St (6), now the main thoroughfare of Chinatown. Here in the late eighteenth century was the Turk's Head at which **Adam Smith** met to talk with other members of a society known as The Club such as Edmund Burke, Edward Gibbon, Charles James Fox and Samuel Johnson.

Turn left after the arch at the end of Gerrard St, cross Shaftesbury Avenue and continue eastward until you turn left into Greek St. **Thomas de Quincey**, Ricardian economist now best known for his literary memoirs *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, spent part of his earlier years of destitution in this street in 1802. The house no longer exists but stood "in Greek St on the west, and is the house on that side nearest to Soho Square, but without looking into the Square" (7). His life at the time is well covered in the book.

On reaching Soho Square turn left. On the left you pass first Bateman Buildings (8) then Frith St. **John Snow**, early epidemiologist, on whom more below, lived in 1836 at 11 Bateman Buildings and from 1858 at 54 Frith St.

Following Soho Square clockwise turn left into Carlisle St then left again into Dean St (9). At No 28, marked by a blue plaque, is one of **Karl Marx's** early residences in London (the building is now occupied by the restaurant, *Quo Vadis*).

Continuing to the end of Dean St, turn right into Shaftesbury Avenue and then next right into Wardour St. On your right you will find St Anne's Church Yard (10) where is buried **Brook Taylor**, mathematician of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, and originator of the Taylor expansion. The church was heavily damaged in the war and the location of the grave is unknown.

Continuing northward, turn left when you reach Broadwick St. Here you will find a pub (11) named after **John Snow**. In collaboration with **William Farr**, pathbreaking analysis of mortality data by Snow identified the source of an 1854 cholera outbreak as an infected water pump immediately outside the pub. A memorial in the form of a water pump minus the handle (removed by Snow to prevent further infection) can be found across the street.

At the end of the road turn left into Marshall St, right into Beak Street, then left into Upper James St and through Golden Square and Lower James Street to Brewer Street. The Misses Elliott's boarding house at which **David Hume** stayed while in London was later located in this street. Turn right into Brewer Street and then cross Regent St into Vigo St and then left into Sackville St. In this street died John Snow at No 18 and also in 1687 **Sir William Petty**. Petty was an early advocate of data collection and quantitative study of economics. The house in which he died stood opposite the church of St James on the east side of the street at the southern end where it joins Piccadilly (12).

Crossing Piccadilly, go through the churchyard (open 08.00-19.00; there is a passage round the church to the left if the garden is closed) into Jermyn St. At No 88 (now Hackett's tailor) a blue plaque marks the residence (13) of **Sir Isaac Newton**, scientific genius and discoverer of the differential calculus.