

A brief report on our trip to Cambridge*

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Abstract

A short report on our trip to Cambridge between April 9th and April 13th. We flew there and back, had a few meals and walked mainly in the town centre, making mental notes on pricing of goods. I had a reunion with Sainsburys chocolate and Walkers crisps.

What I found out by my empirical research was that food and petrol prices were a bit less in U.K. and housing prices were not. To accomplish equality between the nations I'd recommend raising the VAT to the more sophisticated 25% and corresponding ALV to 300% for housing in Finland. This way one wouldn't have to bother inventing sneaky names like "sugar tax" or "health tax" for more equality.

*Thanks to anyone involved. Especially to my father in law Heikki, who understands that a 14-year old boy eats a lot and donated a pile of money to feed him.

Contents

1	Sunday:	3
1.1	Arrival — Greville rd.— local park — hotel — catholic church — another park — A noisy restaurant	3
2	Monday:	3
2.1	Giants grave — Chalk pits — Robin Hood — Dogget road — nap — a movie @ Junction	3
3	Tuesday:	4
3.1	Great st. Mary — Kings college — The Round Church — punting — CU-shop	4
4	Wednesday:	4
4.1	University Museum Of Zoology — The Round Church — Yori — Five guys	4
5	Thursday:	5
5.1	Royal mail — Botanic garden	5
5.2	An airport or two	5

1 Sunday:

1.1 Arrival — Greville rd.— local park — hotel — catholic church — another park — A noisy restaurant

When we departed Tampere we had 21 cm of snow left (official number). When we came back there was only five.

While the wait at the terminal was long and uncomfortable, the flight was even more so. I couldn't really fit my legs behind the seat so everyone walking past would bump into my leg waking me up.

From Stanstead airport we took a train to Cambridge. We walked to Greville road, where grandad, among some others, used to live. The house was for sale. £750 000 for a house which was £2 600 in 1957! I told Kalle some stories I remembered from my childhood. I noticed the corner shop had been bricked in. We walked through some alleys to a local park which Nana had taken me to. I don't remember it having football pitches and tennis courts at all. I think there might have been a seasaw and public lavatories. From there we went to the hotel.

After checking in we strolled to town. We attended the mass at the catholic church. The church as all churches had beatifully crafted stuff in it. We sneaked out as soon as the priest had done his bit. We walked to a proper British park which had paved paths and grass in it. It also had signs to encourage people to stay off the grass.

On the way back we'd planned to eat in a posh restaurant, but it was packed full. We had to find an other place, which turned out to be a "chicken on rice" place. Served with loud music. Lucky for me, Sanna detests noise, so we went next door which served beef and chips with loud music.

2 Monday:

2.1 Giants grave — Chalk pits — Robin Hood — Dogget road — nap — a movie @ Junction

Waking up we went to the lobby where we were served the traditional "Full Hobbit breakfast". With 12 slices of bacon and plenty of mushrooms we were ready to face the wilds of Cambridgeshire. We took the bus.

Next to the Robin Hood was the Giants grave which was an unplanned extra. It is a lovely spot. Just a roadside ditch which doesn't even show on the map. A brook, some flowers, a bench, some birds. We only found it because it was next to the bus stop. About the chalk pits I could ramble a bit more, but there were actual trees. I saw two rabbits, a deer and plenty of birds. It started to rain and the wind turned Sannas umbrella upside down.

The food at Robin Hood was good and consisted of local delicacies including Fish and chips, a steak pie and chips, and a chicken curry. All with optional mashed or unmashed peas (I think they called them regular). I loved the gravy. The talk on Dogget road was above avarege =). We managed a walk around the block and we were pointed a local

primary school. Had a talk about my ignorance of proper British tree names. I would argue that the 'w' in rowan is still a double vee, not a " $2 \times U$ ".

All the walking had a toll on me, so I had to have a nap and I wouldn't go for a walk in the evening so we went to see a film. I can't remember what it was called, but it too was above average. The noise level in the theater was 84.7db at maximum. This was probably the best day of the week.

3 Tuesday:

3.1 Great st. Mary — Kings college — The Round Church — punting — CU-shop

Exercising while on painkillers isn't that clever so we took the bus and I didn't go up the tower, but Kalle and Sanna did. We had a looksie in Kings college chappel and the yard. We had some coffee in what seemed to be a chappel on Trinity street. I peeked through the door of the round church, but we were in a hurry to be on time for punting. I do like the river. The guide disguised as a punter told us things. One that I remember is that killing a swan is an act of treason. If you want to kill swans, you'd better come over here. It's only a two grand fine.

Kalle got his Cambridge United shirt and some CU-pencils and I bought a pack of two Cambridge University pens. Come to think of it, they're CU-pens too. Had our dinner – some kind of a noodle soup and watched some telly. A rerun of "Who wants to be a millionaire?" from the 90's. I decided on not going to Duxford. It was a pity, because I would have liked Kalle to see the place. It's massive! Then I wouldn't manage all the walking.

4 Wednesday:

4.1 University Museum Of Zoology — The Round Church — Yori — Five guys

A repeat of Tuesday. Went to the museum of zoology to see some skeletons. There were kids, school classes, people and skeletons. I would normally be interested, but I was too knackered to stand and read. I took a picture of a sundial clock. Went back to the round church. An elderly man working there gave us some history of the place. There were stools so I could sit on while reading the texts. I would recommend this place.

We had a reservation to Yori's, which we had plenty of time to get to. Sanna wanted to go to Trinity's, but she didn't think 40 minutes was enough so she didn't. Instead we went to a bookstore to dodge the rain and I bought a new hat from a hattier. Yori's is a Korean grill. The idea is that they bring you stuff to grill and the customer grills their own food. Fun Idea, but I didn't think very highly of unseasoned bits of beef and bacon. After my nap, we tried the Five guys. It was alright i suppose, but nothing to write home about. There would have been a show by the local juniors at the theatre, but our

peculiar minor repulsed the idea. I noticed a police car parked at the theatre just after the show. I know not what had happened.

5 Thursday:

5.1 Royal mail — Botanic garden

My mother had requested for some Marmite before we left, and I had immediatly declined her request. As we all know, the black stuff is of fluidic nature and might run out of the jar after a year of storing it upside down. Anyway I had had a mindblanc moment and I'd bought two jars of it from Sainsburys. Sanna pointed out that it indeed was a fluid and there was a picture on internet of a man who packed a half kilo jar into 10cc bottles. He got quite many.

So I decided I'll post them instead. I went into a shop with postal services and asked that I'd like to send two jars of Marmite to Finland. He didn't quite point out that I was an idiot. Rather he pointed out that I would have to pay for the customs, fill out a form and all of the bother. "Would you still want to go ahead, Sir?" He sighed when I told him my mother needs it and told me to get a package for them by the door. I filled out the form. –Senders address– "No you can't use your home address. Where are you staying? You don't know where you're staying, Sir? Oh the hotel next door. I'll help you, sir while you fill in yet another form. . ." He must have been glad to see me go, but unknown to him was that I had developed a thirst and sneaked back at the counter with a bottle of water. He was shocked!

When i got back Sanna and Kalle had just checked out of the hotel so we went to the botanic garden for an hour or so. We could have spent a bit more time there, but there was a train to catch.

5.2 An airport or two

Stanstead security check is always a welcomed chance to check ones inventory. The line was fairly long and it didn't move very quickly. The reason was that after removing your boots, belts and clothes and pointing out that the beeping was indeed because of an artifical hip, they had determined that they'd like to search almost every bag on the conveyer. They swiped the bags for drugs or explosives and tried to claim something was wrong with the packs. I saw a discarded tube of toothpaste on a table and a French lady in front of me had to put her lighter in a plastic bag, and she was left with only seven minutes till departure. In my case it was a sample of limestone taken as a souvenir by Kalle. I admit colourwise it could have been a few bits of TNT. When through on the other side you could then buy replacements for whatever had been confiscated. Except for Marmite. They didn't have Marmite. I searched.

After awhile we were called to gate by "go to gate 44", "relax" and "boarding" messeges that changed every now and then. When we arrived at the gate the sign said "Milan" on it so I figured they were late. Sometime after when we should have allready left we got called to gate 55, where we had some more time to rest on our feet. Our flight too was

late. This time I managed to sleep on the plane after not understanding the book I was reading.

At the airport on arrival we were queued up outside the terminal I guess waiting for the two officers checking passports of departing people to move to the next kiosks to check ours. They took their time, for the plane had filled up and loaded with passengers before they let us in. A poor Brit who decided to travel light in shorts was shivering and didn't look that happy. He couldn't have been frostbitten, for it wasn't freezing. It was $+1^{\circ}\text{C}$. We had a laugh, he got some exercise.

When we finally got to the car I felt satisfied. I can't remember another time that driving felt so good. Even on Monday, half a week later, I've still got aches along my back and feet. Kalle ordered some Marmite on Amazon. About 13€ per jar of 250 grams with delivery.