INDUSTRIAL READING

1. Boatbuilding
2. Brewing
3. Cock’s Reading Sauce
4. Brickworks see inset map
5. Co-operative Jam Factory
6. Cycle manufacture
7. Eel fishing
8. Elliotts
9. Gascoigne-Crowther
10. Gypsy caravans
11. GWR/BR Signal & Clock Dept
12. Herbert Engineering
13. Huntley & Palmers
14. Huntley Boone & Stevens
15. Little Miss Muffet Junket
16. Mills
17. The Oracle
18. Printing
19. Reading Ironworks
20. SPP see inset map
21. Suttons Seeds
22. Thames Valley Bus Garage
23. Thornycroft Engines

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 IndustriReading
The great abbey at Reading profoundly influenced the development of the town of Reading, not least for attracting artists and craftspeople to its workshops. During the middle and early modern ages the woolen trade predominated. Later, agriculture-based industries flourished such as biscuits and brewing. In the 19th century manufacturing on a wider scale developed. Latterly the shift has been to high-tech and service activity. This leaflet is not comprehensive but a selective introduction to the town’s industrial heritage, now largely disappeared.

The Market
Most industrial sites have been obliterated by later developments. The Abbey Mill arch and some Hussey and Palmer’s and Simonds Brewery buildings are physical reminders while others are recorded in such places as guidebooks and on the map indicate the initial importance of waterways—the Thames, Kennet, and canal. The coming of the railway gave a stimulus to industry. Road transport underwent a huge increase during the 19th century. This move from the town centre towards the M4 where Europe’s largest brewery was built in 1978.

For more information
A good starting point is the Museum in the Town Hall which has permanent and temporary exhibitions. The local studies collection in the Central Library has a mass of information accessible to both the researcher and the public at large. There are an increasing number of books of local interest available in the libraries and bookshops. A number of local societies cover aspects of working Reading including the History of Reading Society, the Mills Archive, Berkshire Industrial Archaeology Group.

Reading and nearby
linens, plain and figured silks and satin ribbons were some of the hardship in the town. The Kendricks made their fortunes in wool and Avon Trust, Reading Civic Society and Berkshire Industrial.

INDUSTRIAL READING

The Thames was a highway from earliest times but the River Kennet was really only navigable from Kennetsham to High Bridge in Medival times. The Kennet Navigation was opened to Newbury in 1712, but not until 1811 was this line completed to Bath (thus Bristol) in 1812. These connections influenced Reading’s trade and industry and the waterways were lined with warehouses including Bear Wharf and Crane Wharf with nearby wharves including Bear Wharf and Crane Wharf with nearby

BIAG welcomes your comments on the leaflet, and contributions on any aspect of Berkshire’s industrial past. Web site: www.biag.org.uk

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