



History and Heritage in Nene Park

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FORWARD AND NOTES ON THE TEXT

This document has been written to help make the history of Nene Park more accessible to all NPT staff. My original brief was to explore the Trust's archive of historical documents and to undertake research into the chronological 'gaps' in the Nene Park story. My aim was to create a resource for staff that would pull all this information into one place and to present it using a conversational tone; assuming no prior knowledge of British history or pre-history.

I soon discovered that this was quite a big job.

In this Resource Pack I have attempted create a narrative history of the park from the end of the last Ice Age through to the early years of the Trust's management of the site. I chose to begin with the formation of the gravel deposits that made this part of the river valley so attractive to generations of local people and to stop in 1993 after detailing the successes of the first five years of NPT management. This sets the scene for the reminiscences that have been collected in celebration of our 25th anniversary.

My hope is that this history will make it easier to understand the development of our Nene Park landscape and give the opportunity to create interest in the site's heritage.

A NOTE ON SOURCES

This document draws on a wide range of both published and unpublished sources. I have tried to keep references out of the main body of text to help with readability and pace. Unfortunately, many of the sources that I found most useful were 'in-house' documents that, unlike books and academic papers, are difficult to meaningfully reference. If you wish to find out more about any of the particular periods or events, you will find a list of useful texts at the back of this document.

A NOTE ON MISTAKES

I am sure there are some. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all those who helped me make sense of my sources and those who read the drafts of this document in search of howlers. Any that remain are, of course, my own. If you spot one, please let me know so that I can update the electronic copy.

Claire Stevenson October 2013.

THE HISTORY OF NENE PARK

1 GEOLOGY ROCKS!

It's hard for us to get a sense of the geology of the Nene Valley when we're out in the Park, because there are no sites where all the different rock layers are exposed. It is, however, useful to have a quick review of how the landscape came to be the way it is because the fertile soils, gravel deposits, clay beds and limestone have been attracting people to the area for at least four and a half thousand years.

Northern Europe has seen a lot of Ice Ages, the last of which ended 11, 500 years ago. The Valley was shaped as a mile wide torrent of water and debris scoured its way from the retreating glaciers to the sea. As the flow tapered off, up to 7m of gravel was left behind. It's interesting gravel, as gravel goes, made up of lots of rock types including ironstone, limestone, flints, quartz and marine fossils.

Unlike other English gravel deposits, ours unfortunately do not contain traces of Neanderthals and woolly rhinoceroses. This is because successive ice-melts washed away any really ancient gravels that were there before the gravel we have today.

The Romans exploited the gravel here, while they were building their great road between London and Lincoln, Ermine Street, which runs through the Park. Two thousand years later, the Development Corporation took exactly the same opportunity, but on a much larger scale, creating our lakes.

There is lots of information available to staff in the old publication *Geology of the Nene Park*, if you're interested.

2 PREHISTORY

'Prehistory' means the time before written records; so the information here is gleaned from context, i.e. regional/national surveys of sea-level change, sediments from lakes, ice cores, fossil pollen and the few man-made items that have been found.

During the period between the end of the ice and the appearance of the first settlements in the valley around 5,000 years ago, the landscape changed dramatically. Sea levels were much lower than today and animals and plants re-colonised the UK from Europe by crossing Doggerland; a grassy plain which is now at the bottom of the North Sea. People came too. They

Quick Quotes:

- Ice age ended 11,500 years ago
- The Nene was a raging torrent of melt water, full of gravel
- The gravel was dropped as the flow decreased
- The gravel was economically important to different inhabitants of the valley, including us.

After the ice:

- 8,800 BC birch recolonizes
- 8,300 BC pine and birch
- 7,600 BC hazel
- 7,000 BC elm and oak

Lost: reindeer, horse, bison, mammoth, woolly rhino.

Gained: deer, oxen and boar

were highly socially organised and resourceful hunter-gatherers. They kept domestic dogs and may have used them as hunting partners.

The fens began to form around 5,500 BC as sea levels rose and drainage was impeded. The first settled people in the valley lived in what is now the Fengate industrial estate at around 3,500 BC. We call this period the Neolithic.

Year	Key Events
4500 BC-3000 BC	First evidence of small permanent settlements
4500 BC-2500 BC	Carpentry and coppicing developed
4500 BC-3500 BC	Simple pottery appears
4500 BC-3500 BC	Farming introduced
Winter 3807 BC - Spring 3806 BC	Sweet Track built in Somerset
3300 BC- 1200 BC	First stone circles and 'hengese' built
3000 BC- 1500 BC	Settlements proliferate and more land is farmed
2500 BC-1500 BC	First bronze axes improve woodworking
2500 BC-800 BC	Metalworking becomes more sophisticated, flint tools still in use
April-June 2049	'Seahenge' built in Norfolk
1500 BC-800 BC	Major lowland valleys extensively settled
1200 BC-800 BC	Roundhouse becomes normal form of settlement, Celtic culture and tribal kingdoms emerge

It's a long period with little domestic archaeology; people built round wood/thatch huts and had small field systems. This is the period in which huge ceremonial sites like Stonehenge were made, but the Neolithic people left light traces in our part of the world. We do have flint finds from the Park: exquisite arrowheads and blades. Some of these were found on the ridge where the Roman Fortress later stood, at Longthorpe, reflecting the fact that this position has a great tactical vantage point and is thus attractive to settlers. We should be careful about underestimating stone tool technology: flint will take a keener edge than a modern surgeon's scalpel.

One of the most impressive artefacts ever found in the park is a Neolithic greenstone axe found in the Lynch Farm scheduled area. This axe, and the polishing stone found nearby, came from Langdale Pike in the peak district.

3 THE IRON AGE

The Iron Age begins at 800 years BC, and from this point on we have a lot more information about the people who lived here. These people are sometimes called Britons, sometimes Celts: in this context they mean the same thing. At this time the land within the meander of the river – at the heart of Ferry Meadows –was defended by great ditches 900m long which cut across the land approach to the meander. We don't know for sure where the homes of the ditch diggers were situated.

Population had expanded by 800BC and was continuing to expand. Celtic tribal culture had developed: complex territorial boundaries, alliances and trade. The Corieltauvi tribe, who held the Nene Valley, were probably allies to the powerful Catuvellauni, who played a big part in the struggles that came with the Roman occupation. The Celts were people who dressed in dyed wool and linen, with a currency system and a taste for imported luxuries from the continent, like Roman wine.

Iron Age plants documented archaeologically:

Docks, centaury, meadow saxifrage, venus looking glass, red bartsia, raspberry, hawthorn, elder, hogweed, St-John's wort, henbane, celery, parsnip, hops, marjoram, opium poppy

We know quite a lot about the plants that grew in the park during the Iron Age, from archaeological traces. Many of these plants were useful as food or medicinally, and most can still be found in the Park today.

4 WHAT THE ROMANS DID FOR US: 43 AD-410 AD

We have a lot of very exciting evidence of the Roman Occupation in the Park. This section isn't an attempt to cover all of it. I'm going to clear up some popular misconceptions/out-dated ideas about what the invasion meant for the Britons, talk about the main sites that have been excavated, and give some context for the archaeological artefacts we have in the Visitor Centre.

Misconceptions:

- Before the Romans arrived, the Iron Ages Britons were not isolated from events on the continent. They had strong trade networks with Northern Europe, the Mediterranean and further afield. They didn't use written language, but they had a vibrant oral culture, comfortable homes, great prowess in metalworking and a stratified society with powerful regional tribal elites.
- The Roman Invasion wasn't a bolt out of the blue. Some of the tribes were in dispute over territory, and because their leaders had diplomatic relations with Rome, they invited the Empire to come and support their side of the territorial argument. They got more than they bargained for. We see a similar background to the Anglo Saxon invasions 400 years later: they began as invited mercenaries.
- The Romans didn't wipe out the Britons or bring a lot of settlers from other parts of the Empire. They *Romanised* the local aristocracy and their followers. Small local kings lost real power but gained status by fitting in to the Roman way of life and they were used by Rome to legitimise the conquest. Ordinary people might find they were now paying taxes to Rome, but their lord was still the same as before. By the 3rd Century, all Britons had been granted citizenship: they *were* now Romans.

- They weren't Italian. Roman soldiers on the British front came from all over the Empire to serve, and after 25 years they were retired with a land grant, usually near where they had been stationed. We don't often think about the roles of people of colour in British prehistory, but the Roman army included Mauretians (North Africa), Sarmatians (Iran) as well as Batavians (Germany), Thracians (Greece) and others. The 'Germans' were probably one of the largest groups among the soldiers in Britain.
- The Boudiccan revolt (which is central to our Nene Park story, so more of this in a minute) wasn't exactly a Braveheart style struggle for freedom. To put it very simplistically, the Iceni tribe had been manipulated into incurring in a whole lot of debt to Roman money lenders – at ruinous interest rates. Then their King died and tried to leave half of his kingdom to the Emperor Nero, who was a tyrant, and half to his wife, Boudicca. The local Roman leader understood this to be an insult to Nero, so suddenly all the debts were called in. Boudicca and her daughters were publicly raped. This led to the rebellion in AD 60, 17 years after the occupation began.

4.1 THE LONGTHORPE FORTRESS

The 27 acre fortress was discovered on the ridge of Thorpe Golf Course beyond Bluebell Wood. We aren't positive of the date, but it looks like it was built in a hurry, and so was probably built in 43-44 AD at the start of the occupation as forces pressed their frontier north. The fortress occupied land on the ridge above the Nene, facing the river. Three cohorts of 2400 men could have been stationed there, part of the 9th Legion. It's almost certain that the fortress's Bathhouse and the site of the community of traders and camp followers that typically develop next to a fortress remain to be found. The Longthorpe site is unique in Western Europe because it contained its own works depot for pottery manufacture. The potters, whose repertoire suggests they came from the Rhineland, made superb vessels.

Although I've said above that the Romans didn't usually kill their new native subjects, the story at Longthorpe may be a bit more dramatic. We have 3 burials of young people, buried in a crouching position and accompanied by their 4 dogs, in the boundary ditch of the Celtic roundhouse that bordered the fort. This tantalising evidence suggests that here, the Celts didn't take it well when their new neighbours built a huge military/industrial complex and commandeered grain and cattle to feed their troops.

We know that the 9th was sent to put down the Boudiccan rebellion after the Celts had burned Colchester to the ground. The Romans of the 9th were soundly defeated by Boudicca's forces and limped back to Longthorpe with heavy casualties. We can see this in the archaeology. In the early 60's AD the Longthorpe fortress was rapidly remodelled to accommodate a much, much smaller force: a force on the defensive. Walls they could no longer defend were pulled down and a smaller perimeter was established; a perimeter that could be manned by their depleted force.

4.2 THE LYNCH FARM CEMETARY

The name of this site is confusing, because the Lynch Farm dig site is on what is now Coney Meadow, quite far from the Lynch farm buildings. This dig pre-dates the Park (they were 'rescuing' the site in case it was destroyed by the gravel extraction) when Lynch Farm was the only handy landmark.

The farmstead and associated cemetery date from the 3rd to middle 4th centuries A.D. Attentive readers will note that this is 200-300 years after the Longthorpe Fortress was built. We sometimes don't appreciate how long the Roman period was and assume that all Roman archaeology is broadly contemporary. Think about it for a moment: 300 years ago from today England and Scotland were just being united into one nation. It's a really long time in human terms.

The features at Lynch Farm were originally spotted from the air. Excavators found a courtyard and an enclosed paddock with 50 burials. We think that the farm and cemetery were in use at the same time, but comparable rural cemeteries are scarce in Britain and the Lynch Farm excavation would have benefitted from more time and resources to open up a larger area and better understand how the features relate to each other. We don't know how the site related to nearby Roman Point, which was in use at the same time.

We do know that the people buried here were not members of the leisured elite, they were ordinary farm workers whose bones show many signs of a tough life such as arthritis and healed fractures. Most of the pottery is really coarse and cheap and there are few fragments from the type of containers used for expensive oil or wine. There are very few grave goods. This could be evidence of Christianity: grave goods are a pre-Christian custom. The empire converted during the cemetery's period of operation and some of the burials are east-west aligned. We could alternatively attribute this to poverty as we have no Christian symbols, such as the fish sign used in the early church. The people buried are likely to include several closely related people who shared a heritable bone abnormality of the arm joint. Several burials were those of children who may have died from complications after an ear infection (we can tell from characteristic bone damage). For a modern child this illness can be simply cured with antibiotics or a routine operation. Sadly, there was little these Roman Britons could do to heal the fever and infection. We also have evidence of women, buried with their small babies, who are likely to have died from sepsis after childbirth.

I remember the archaeology... there was a burial site, when we trimmed of (sic) the soil we exposed a lot of thin white circles. We had taken the tops off skulls as though they were eggs!! The burials were not very deep.

John Cooper, personal communication 2012.

4.3 ROMAN POINT

When the gravel extractors were stripping the topsoil to create Overton Lake, they discovered Roman remains. A respite from digging was granted so that the features could be recorded before they were destroyed. The archaeologists found three main features at Roman Point: the foundation of an aisled barn, a shallow, stone lined pond initially interpreted as a fishpond, and a series of drainage ditches covering 7 acres. The Development Corporation decided to alter the plan of the lake, leaving a promontory to preserve the barn's foundations for public display. The remainder of the site was destroyed.

The barn is the most impressive of a series of farm outbuildings that once stood here. It was a timber building on a stone base. It was a big building: 26m long x 11m wide. The 'aisled' part of 'aisled barn' simply means that it was divided into 3 areas along the length of the building by the rows of posts that held up the roof. We don't think it was a storage building or used for livestock, as the word 'barn' suggests to modern ears. It was probably a workshop. There were a series of small furnaces, probably used for the finishing work on iron tools. Three tools were found in the building (which is unusual). They were probably the tools of a farmworker, set down and then accidentally covered over and forgotten. There was a small axe, a mower's anvil and an old, rather duffed-up hammer. The hammer had probably been demoted from fine smithying work to the crude task of knocking dents out of scythes and thus belonged with the mower's anvil. Together these would have been used to correct a dented scythe blade when out working in the fields.

Archaeologists also discovered a shallow stone revetted (faced with stones) tank measuring 35m x 13m. This was initially interpreted as a fish-pond, but is now believed to have been involved in salt production. The River Nene was tidal as far as Ferry Meadows during the Roman period so salt, a valuable resource used for food preservation as well as seasoning, could have been extracted from the water by evaporation.

The ditch system represents a systematic attempt, during the 2nd or 3rd centuries A.D., to drain a large tract of water meadow to make grazing land for sheep. They went out of use by the 4th century when they were used to dump household waste. The large amount of nice pottery and bits of metalworking found in this rubbish suggest a higher standard of living than was suggested by the burials in the nearby Lynch Farm complex. We have no living quarters associated with Roman Point. Several structures that were visible during the excavations had been so heavily damaged by earth-moving equipment that no indication of their function could be determined and these are now deep under Overton Lake. Neither of these sites was explored with the amount of time and resources that the archaeologists would have wanted so it isn't surprising that there are gaps in our knowledge.

4.4 ARTEFACTS IN THE VISITOR CENTRE

These came from excavations in 1998 when a gas pipeline cut across the park. Most of the artefacts that we retain are from a temple site on the agricultural estate near Water Newton. There was another fortress at Water Newton, which guarded the Nene crossing there (probably a wooded bridge). A town grew up outside the fortress, full of soldiers' families, traders, merchants and entrepreneurial types who saw profit in the occupying force. Over time, the town, Durobrivae, grew into an important manufacturing centre. The Romans were here for nearly 400 years: imagine our section of the river valley, with villas at intervals of around 1.5 miles, each taking a share of the good land at the waterside. Durobrivae supplied metals and pottery for local use and export along the river. Passing trade would have come by road too: you can see Ermine Street, the major Roman north/south road, on the aerial photo in the board room. It is argued that Ham Lane is a relic of the early line of Ermine Street, which was redirected to the west early in the Roman period.

The Water Newton (Durobrivae) treasure is also worth a mention. This hoard of 4th century silver jugs, bowls and dishes are the earliest Christian liturgical items found anywhere in the Roman Empire. The treasure is so important that it's held by the British Museum but you can see replicas in Peterborough Museum.

The bulk of our remains come from a temple outside Durobrivae, on Ermine Street. Positioning temples like this was common across the Empire. We have a lot of brick, tile and Roman food-rubbish as well as more exciting bits like coins, jewellery and decorated pottery.

This isn't the place for a full account of the Romans in Britain. If you want a short, readable account that goes into the drama of the invasion, I recommend the BBC History website (see useful reading at end of document).

5 SHINING A LIGHT ON THE DARK AGES

Rome fell. Troops were recalled from the provinces to defend Italy, but in vain. Britain was abandoned. We enter a period where there are fewer written sources and archaeological remains. The Angles and Saxons who succeed the Romans built in wood, not stone, and they didn't maintain the civic architecture of Roman centres. Bridges collapsed and settlement patterns changed. Trade continued, but the population moved away from many of the former Roman centres. Durobrivae was eventually forgotten and buried under the turf. We won't spend too long on the Dark Ages because we don't have much evidence that directly relates to the Park. Towards the end of the Dark Ages we can pick up our local story again through the chronicles of the monks who founded their Abbey at Peterborough. We'll also touch in with the regional events to give a framework for how life changed in these islands after the departure of the Empire.

The Angles and Saxons were agricultural peoples. They settled Britain from Northern Europe, bringing with them the language that would eventually become English. The Nene Valley was divided into a number of homesteads – here we start to see familiar names on the map.

We can assume that there was mixed farming in the valley – grazing, oats, barley, flax. Watermills become important during this period (the Domesday Book records 6 locally). The Anglo Saxons introduced a distinctive method of farming: ‘open field systems’ which persisted in some form until the enclosure of the 1700’s. The community held all the land and shared it out between farmers on rotation so that good and bad soils were distributed fairly.

Anglo Saxon homesteads:
Fletton: ‘floating farm’
Woodston: ‘the farm in the woods’
Orton: ‘farm over the river’
Alwalton (Aepelwoldingun): ‘the farm of Aepelword’s people’
Milton: ‘Mill farm’
Water Newton ‘farm on the water’
Wandsford: ‘ford by a spring/whirlpool’

There is a 6th century Anglo-Saxon cemetery within the area of scheduled land around the Longthorpe Fortress which contains 22 cremations as well as two graves.

By the 7th century, towards the end of the Dark Ages, our land was under control of the Kings of Mercia. Mercia was the most powerful kingdom until, under Alfred the Great, Wessex became dominant.

5.1 CHRISTIANS AND VIKINGS

Christianity was officially introduced to England by St Augustine in 597AD, and was adopted by the rulers of the independent English kingdoms when it became politically convenient for those rulers to do so. This is relevant to our story because the Abbey at Peterborough was founded to further the political alliances of king Peada of Mercia. Between 800 and 1066 the area, and the Abbey, suffered the depredations of Viking raiders, notably one Ivar the Boneless. The Abbey was re-founded as a Benedictine house in the late 900’s and it became a really important centre. The Abbey was fortified –it became a *Burgh* - in the 11th century. A lot of this information comes from the Peterborough version of the Anglo Saxon Chronicle, kept by the monks.

Below is a brief timeline of the Dark Ages. I’ve included it because elements of the story have slipped into our national collective memory. Perhaps you have heard the story of King Cnut (pronounced Can-oot) ordering the tide to retreat? The Venerable Bede? Or King Alfred, in hiding, burning a peasant woman’s cakes?

Dark Ages timeline:

Year	Key Events
449 AD	Angles and Saxons arrive in South East Britain
597 AD	Augustine arrives in Kent and begins the conversion to Christianity
731 AD	Bede finishes his Ecclesiastical History of the English People

5.2 1066 AND ~~ALL THAT~~ SOME OF THAT

In 1066, following his victory at Hastings, William of Normandy became King of England. It took him 20 years to consolidate his rule. One of the tools he used to do this was a property survey on a scale not seen before. This record, the Domesday Book, recorded the lands and property of all of William's new subjects, down to the last goat, for tax purposes. Peterborough's Abbey kept its lands, but got a new Norman Abbot, Thorold. Thorold brought his relations in as knights on the monastic estate, which is how Roger de Milton came to hold the land which his decedents own to this day. The Normans also divided the parish of Orton into Orton Longueville and Orton Waterville, hence the French sounding names. The boundary was placed to allow both Longueville and Waterville good pastureland – hedge lines on the park today still reflect this distribution e.g. the boundary between Coney and Oak Meadows.

6 THE MIDDLE AGES

After the Norman Conquest the Abbots of Peterborough began a policy of turning arable land over to pasture to support the growing wool industry. This industry was dominant; in the 12th Century 60% of the wool exports from England came from Peterborough. This change of land use put large numbers of labourers out of work, which caused social problems. The population was also hit by bad harvests and plague, which killed half the monks in Peterborough in the 14th Century. When not expiring of the Black Death, the monks apparently led a decadent life, the rents of

the villages of Fletton and Alwalton both went to support the monastic kitchen. The scene is set for unrest. In 1381 locals seized the Abbey but were driven back by the men of the Bishop of Norwich.

This part of our story ends, as we come into the Early Modern period, with the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII. In 1541 Peterborough Abbey was dissolved and turned into a Cathedral. The fact that Henry's first wife, Katherine of Aragon, is entombed there may explain why the monastic estate was spared some of the destruction we see in other religious centres.

7 THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD

This label applies to the 16th, 17th and 18th Centuries. That's everything from the Tudors, through the English renaissance, Civil War, colonization and war in America, then India, and eventually the Napoleonic wars and Trafalgar. As you would imagine, any timeline with this sort of span is beyond the scope of this document. The reason I'm treating this era together is that, seen through the lens of Nene Park, not a lot remains to track social and societal change. We're going to talk a bit more about the enclosure acts I'm afraid, and have a look at the legacy of the Milton Estate in the Park.

Two main historical trends are really important for understanding the Early Modern period in East Anglia: Enclosure and Fen drainage. The draining of the Fens impacted only indirectly on our Nene Park story. Ambitious regional drainage systems contributed to the increasing usefulness of the River Nene for transport to the coast and the river was made more stable and navigable downstream of the Park. Enclosure, however, brought huge changes in agricultural practice and revolutionised the life of agricultural tenants in the area that forms Nene Park today. If you want to get an accessible overview of the factors that led to Enclosure, you could do no better than to visit John Clare Cottage. Clare's most celebrated poetry laments the devastating effect of enclosure on the locality.

In short, Enclosure was the process by which management of the land by the whole community was replaced by a system of private land management. Since the Dark Ages, farming landscapes had been open landscapes without hedges or fences in which strips of land were managed in rotation by tenant farmers. Under Enclosure, individual landowners took private control of their land and parcelled up the meadows and commons into fenced fields. Enclosure refers to both these physical changes and the legal changes, enacted through a great number of Acts of Parliament, which facilitated the process. The result was that the community lost its ancient rights over the land and many were left destitute. Enclosure combined with increasing farming of sheep (which required much less labour than arable farming)

meant vagrancy, hunger, and riots across England. Enclosure reached its peak in the 18th century, but the process progressed unevenly, reflected in the dates at which enclosure was taken up in the Nene Valley.

7.1 THE MILTON ESTATE

Many of the heritage features still visible in the Park are connected to the Milton Estate. The Fitzwilliam family once owned the land that was to become Ferry Meadows and collected rents from tenant farmers who worked the fields. The Milton Estate remains in private hands and is not open to the public. The family has a distinguished history, much of which is available from online sources, so I'm going to limit my account of them to the landscape features which are a legacy of their ownership. This section draws heavily on material that was written for interpretation panels that used to be on display in the park, as my investigations have not resulted in significant new information.

7.2 MILTON FERRY BRIDGE

It goes without saying that this handsome eighteenth century bridge is a local treasure and a great favourite with photographers. The bridge is both a Grade II listed structure and a Scheduled Monument. It was built from local Barnack limestone and marks the site of the old Gunnerswade or Gunworth Ferry which was primarily used for the transportation of Barnack stone during the great cathedral building era when it was in great demand. Ferry Meadows takes its name from the old Ferry service.

The bridge was an important crossing point on the Nene, connecting the south bank of the river with the Great North Road to London, which one could join at Alwalton. There was a toll payable to make the crossing, much to the disgust of Robinson Crusoe author Daniel Defoe who wrote of his experience:

Near this little village of Castor lives the Lord FitzWilliams. His Lordship has lately built a very fine stone bridge over the River Nyne, near Gunworth, where formerly was the ferry. I was very much applauding this generous action of my lord's, knowing the inconvenience of the passage there before,

Milton Estate (including parts of Ferry Meadows): early enclosure before 1502. Hamlet of Milton lost.

Orton Longueville: 1728. Hamlet of Botolph Bridge Lost.

Water Newton: 1750.

Orton Waterville and Alwalton: by 1805.

Woodston: 1809.

Architecturally speaking...

(It is a) fine ashlar bridge of 3 spans with round arches with fluted keyblocks and cutwaters. Moulded parapet ramped up to centre. The north abutment contains 2 chambers with 2 plain segmental-headed doorways on east side and 2 bulls-eye windows on west side. Stone plaque inscribed "The Bridge was built at the sole cost and charge of the It Hon William Fitzwilliam 1716".

especially if the waters of the Nyne were but a little swell'd, and I thought it a piece of publick charity; but my applause was much abated, when coming to pass the bridge (being in a coach) we could not be allow'd to go over it, without paying 2s. 6d. of which I shall only say this, That I think 'tis the only half crown toll that is in Britain, at least that I ever met with.

If you will forgive me another lengthy quotation, I think that this reminiscence, collected by the CAMUS Project, merits inclusion in full because it shows us just how little had changed in 200 years:

In 1963 my husband Aubrey Weston was appointed a job as gamekeeper on the Milton Estate. We moved into one of the flats at Milton Hall, and stayed there for about two months until the Milton Ferry Cottage became vacant. We moved into the Ferry Cottage in May 1963 and found one of my duties was to open and close the tollgate on Milton Ferry Bridge for anyone wanting to go that way to Alwalton or return from Alwalton to the Ferry in which case they paid at Alwalton end and handed me the ticket they were given. There was no bell or any other way of letting me know when anyone was at the gate so I had to keep looking out to see if anyone was there. Anyone using the gate regularly was able to purchase a key, and farm workers were supplied with their own key, otherwise it was 2/6 for a car, 2/- for a motor-cycle and 1/- for a cyclists or walkers. I suppose looking back it was quite a dangerous job as I had to cross the A47 which was very busy and at the time very heavy lorries used the road. Each year I had to go into Peterborough to the Milton Estates Office (then in Priestgate) to hand in the money I had taken and collect my wages. I was paid about £5 for the year.

Towards the end of 1964 to our delight I found I was pregnant, and as I began to get bigger found it more and more difficult to keep going across the road, Aubrey was concerned about me and as my time got nearer we began to worry how I was going to manage to look after the gate when our new baby arrived. Aubrey decided to talk to Mr Sam Egar who was then the Agent for Milton and was relieved when he agreed I should not be doing it any more, he in turn spoke to Earl Fitzwilliam and he agreed and said it was time it stopped anyway as fewer people now used the bridge. At that time the land was farmed, Horrels were the tenants and in the early 70's the land was taken and the Ferry Meadows were developed. I understand that in the days of Daniel Defoe the toll was the same 2/6 for his carriage and horses.

I am pleased to say on 15th April 1965 our daughter Susan was born in Thorpe Hall, she is married and has two daughters, Jennifer and Rebecca.

The Tollgate as I remember it. By Millie Weston. 2002.

7.3 THE SHEEPWASH

Were it not for Jason Thomson's commemorative sculpture, carved in 1999, visitors might be forgiven for overlooking the site of the Sheepwash in Bluebell Wood. The practice of sheepwashing was an important part of the local agricultural calendar from the 15th to mid-19th century. Many hundreds of sheep were grazed in the flood-meadows, under direction of the Milton Estate. Each year estate workers would have

herded them over Milton Ferry Bridge and individually washed them in the purpose dug sheepwash. This was hard, dirty work that would have kept all available hands very busy. Once clean, the sheep would spend several days drying off in Milton Park before shearing. During the late 19th century it became standard practice to clean all fleeces at the woollen mills, and by the early 20th century most sheepwashes had fallen into disuse. By the 1950's the practice had disappeared in all parts of the country.

7.4 THE MOUNT

The Mount is a small, man-made hill sited to enjoy the views over the Nene to Milton Ferry Bridge and beyond. Mounts were most common in estate gardens during the Tudor period. Knot gardens of low, neatly trimmed hedges were the fashion; and these could be best appreciated from a higher vantage point. The Mount in Bluebell Wood is thought to be later in date, and there is an appealing hypothesis that its construction was a means of putting to good use the spoil excavated during the digging of the Sheepwash.

In 2001-2002 the Mount was cleared of rough growth, and seating has been installed. Several large yew trees that grace the Mount today may be the legacy of outgrown topiary from the time when the Fitzwilliam family and their aristocratic guests would have stopped here to enjoy the view amid a bower of sweet-smelling roses and honeysuckles.

7.5 THE BOATHOUSE

As with the Sheepwash, little remains today to mark the site where the Fitzwilliam family had their boathouse. The stone foundations have been preserved by the Trust, but the building itself was almost certainly made from timber. A shingle or thatch roof must have topped the structure, as no tiles were found during renovation work. While it is impossible to say when the latest boathouse was demolished or fell into disuse, we can look for representations of earlier structures in old paintings and photographs. An early 18th century painting by William Van Hagen shows a boathouse in the approximate location, while Victorian photographs show boating closer to Milton Ferry Bridge. Reflecting on these images one can imagine generations of Fitzwilliams and their guests enjoying leisurely boating parties or picnics by the river.

7.6 THE WILLOW INDUSTRY

Before the widespread adoption of plastics and other modern materials, woven willow products, such as baskets, were very important in industry and farming. Willow has the ability to annually regrow stems from a cut stump, known as a stool. It is these strong, flexible stems - withies- that are used for weaving. There are two common methods for producing withies, and we can see evidence for both in the Park. Osier beds are areas where many low willow stools are grown close together

in ordered rows for easy cropping. Pollards are willow trees that are regularly cut about 2m from the ground; a method suited to grazing land as the regrowth is out of reach of browsing livestock. During the 19th Century osier beds were grown along the south bank of the Nene from Ferry Meadows eastwards as far as Wharf Road in Woodston where there was a basket weaving factory. Around the mid-19th century osier beds were planted at Bluebell Wood on land leased from the Fitzwilliam estate. In the first decade of the 20th Century, more beds were planted on land which is now part of Ferry Meadows, at Ham Mere. These beds were established and managed by the Sellars family, who established the industry locally and ran a successful growing and processing business as late as 1932 when the industry was beginning to decline nationally. Remnants of these beds can still be seen today. The osier beds were eventually taken on by the Wilcox family. Len Wilcox, who continued working the beds and weaving baskets until 1974, was a friend to the Trust and contributed his skills and experience to the restoration and preservation of the osier beds.

Who needed baskets?

Customers of the basket making factory at Woodston included:

All the major Railway companies

Smithfield Market

The Post Office

The British and Indian Armies

Local farmers, hotels, laundries and bakers

7.7 CRICKET BAT WILLOWS

The best quality cricket bats are made from British willow and a number of trees of the most favourable strain are growing in the park. To produce straight, knot-free timber of the right size, much attention must be given to the young trees. At between 10 and 20 years old the trees are harvested and replaced with new saplings. The Trust has several top quality bats, grown from our willow and donated by the bat-making company.

7.8 HISTORIC POLLARDS

Pollards are a traditional feature of the Nene Valley. They are full of individual character and provide habitat for countless species of invertebrates as well as birds and climbing plants. Often these trees were planted as boundary markers in the past. There are many important established pollards in Heron Meadow dating back about 150 years. The Trust undertook re-pollarding work on neglected pollards to preserve the trees for future generations. There are also some newer pollards in Short Meadow.

7.9 THE COMING OF THE RAILWAYS

We're approaching the end of the story of what this land was before it became our Park. To recap: the landscape is beginning to look familiar; if you could go back to the early 1800's you would find sheep grazing the wet meadows of the meander,

under the control of the Milton Estate. Some of the modern park's oldest trees are in place: mere saplings. A toll collector nods to carriages from Milton Hall as they cross Milton Ferry Bridge and rattle off in the direction of Lynch Wood along a grand drive that cuts across the parkland where the lakes are today. Soon there will be osier beds planted along the bank of the Nene. Nearby in Helpston a young John Clare is becoming radicalized by the environmental and social cost of encroaching enclosure. Peterborough is a thriving market town with a population of 4,598 (1821). There is one last story to tell before we look to the development corporation and the formation of the Trust: a revolution is coming.

It would be impossible to understate how inconvenient and expensive it was to get around before the development of the railway network. If you were not a member of the privileged elite, your best bet for journeys longer than walking distance might have been a long distance goods cart or mail coach. When space permitted, impoverished travellers were permitted to pay for passage amid baskets of potatoes or swaying stacks of postbags.

The story of how the exact route of the main line north from London was chosen is a litany of intrigue and obstruction. Suffice to say, for the purposes of this account, that the main line railway arrived in Peterborough in 1845 to great jubilation and many others followed over the next five years until 1850 when the North Station opened (at the site of the modern station in Peterborough centre). If you have an interest in the development of the railway network in the region you could do no better than to visit Railworld. The Trust also has a very detailed book about the subject (recommended books are at the end of this document). We're going to focus in on how the Nene Valley Railway came to be, because that's what is most relevant to our Nene Park History.

Today's Nene Valley Railway is the eastern section of the first railway to ever arrive in Peterborough. It used to run as far as Blisworth, but today only the seven mile stretch to Wandsford is preserved. The first ever train to leave Peterborough ran along this line; departing Peterborough at 7 o'clock on Monday 2nd June 1845. The line provided an important link between Norwich, Cambridge and the East of England and the Midlands. It remained in service until 1966, carrying trains to Rugby, but the Peterborough-Northampton trains had stopped in 1964 after years of declining passenger numbers. In 1972 British rail closed the line completely. Locally, there developed a dedicated group of enthusiasts who restored vintage engines and from this group the Peterborough Railway Society was formed in 1974. The Development Corporation purchased the old line for them, with a view to developing it as an attraction at the new Ferry Meadows site. At this time, some continental engines became available for restoration and so the gauge of the railway was changed to allow these to run. The fact that either British or continental engines can run on the NVR makes it unique in the UK; and popular with film-makers. Scenes from the James Bond film *Octopussy* were shot here and Castor church can clearly

be seen in the background, even though this section of the film was set in West Germany and East Germany (pre unification). Also, the Bond film *GoldenEye* was filmed on the line.

Between 1974 and May 1977 the line was upgraded to passenger standards, which required extensive rebuilding. The line between Wansford and Orton Mere was officially opened on 1 June 1977, stopping at Orton Mere, Ferry Meadows and Wandsford.

8 NEW TOWN

London had burned: the Blitz had reduced her slums and tenements to rubble and ash. Post-war, the need for new housing was to be met with a bold restructuring of communities under the New Town Act of 1946. During the following half century 27 of these communities were established. Peterborough was designated a New Town in 1967 by which time the New Towns project, building upon its success with green-field development, was extended in scope to allow the building of New Towns around existing, smaller regional communities.

As the only cathedral city ever to be designated, Peterborough is unique among the New Towns. The city was a natural choice for development because of its convenient location close to London and good road and rail links to the major cities of the Midlands and to East Coast ports. Peterborough also offered an existing industrial base on which to develop enterprise and job creation. It was envisaged that, with planned expansion under the Peterborough Development Corporation (hereafter PDC), Peterborough would grow to become an important regional centre in its own right. The PDC was very successful in attracting new employers and new residents to the city. When you read their planning documents it's evident that the provision of a high standard of living and the opportunity for personal growth for these new residents was top of the PDC agenda. Over ten years from 1970 the population of Peterborough grew from 85,000 to 150,000 people. We're going to focus in on the development of the Park from this point, because the story of Peterborough's growth is available from many other accessible sources. I strongly recommend the new exhibition on the PDC at Peterborough Museum, which illustrates the development of our City using lots of photographs and video clips – it's a lot more interesting than it might sound.

8.1 PROVIDING FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT

In the 1970s there was no significant public green space in Peterborough. If you wanted to enjoy the outdoors and avail of purpose-built leisure facilities, you pretty much had to drive 60 miles to the seaside towns on the Wash. There were few opportunities for informal leisure: no pleasant areas to cycle, to picnic, to walk your dog. Although Peterborough was surrounded by countryside, access to it was really poor. The city was hemmed in on all sides: by the brickworks to the south, the A1 to the west, by intensive agriculture and fenland and that lacked footpaths and rights of

way. The PDC planned, from the outset, to address this situation by securing the corridor of floodplain adjacent to the River Nene for parkland and recreational use. The original plans for Nene Park conceive of a public green space running from the formal leisure facilities on the Embankment in the City Centre for seven miles along the meandering river towards the intended site of the country park within the broad northern meander of the Nene. Westwards from the park, they intended the public to have walking and cycling routes through the agricultural land beside the river towards Wansford. It's a real testament to the effectiveness of The PDC and their partners that the Park today comes so close to the original vision and was delivered with a minimum of public expense. To ensure that the planned park was optimal for both visitors and wildlife, a number of organisations were involved in the design of Ferry Meadows, including the Sports Council, Countryside Commission, the RSPB and the Nature Conservancy Council.

The transformation of exhausted gravel pits into countryside parks is a familiar story across the river valleys of lowland England. Usually the gravel extraction company forms an agreement with the local authority to provide some sort of restoration and landscaping once the gravel deposits are removed and the pits allowed to flood. The story at Ferry meadows is slightly different, and perhaps unique, in that the gravel extraction was planned so as to create the best possible lakes and landscape features for the site's future use as a park. This is a refreshing tale of agencies cooperating for their mutual advantage while maintaining a shared goal of long-term public benefit.

In 1971 a gravel company, Amey Roadstone Corporation, approached the PDC to indicate interest in extracting the sand and gravel reserves at the site which was to become Ferry Meadows. This allowed the PDC to begin the realisation of its plans for the site. Negotiations between the PDC, the landowners and Amey Roadstone centred on the understanding that,

while there were sufficient supplies of road fill material already available elsewhere for the building of Peterborough's new infrastructure, it was convenient to extract the Ferry meadows deposits so that recreational lakes could be created. As a result of these negotiations the planning application in July 1971 specified the shape, layout, depth and edge batter of the two planned lakes, now known as Gunwade and Overton. Gunwade, the larger, would be long and thin, aligned with the prevailing south westerly wind for optimum sailing; Overton would connect to the Nene and offer mooring facilities to pleasure craft. It was also specified that there would be a six year limit on extraction: by 1977 the lakes and channels had to be constructed, all machinery removed and the site tidied and grassed. This unusual stipulation meant that the lakes would be ready for public use as soon as possible. The company

Quick Quotes:

- Between 1971 and 1977, 5 million tons of gravel were removed.
- Gravel extraction was carried out primarily to create recreational lakes of appropriate size, depth, orientation and bank-grading.

started work in 1972, and maintained a good working relationship with the PDC, which is reflected in the refinements made to the plans as the extraction progressed. For example, in 1972 the company uncovered the traces of a Roman building (the aisled barn at Roman Point) and agreed to leave a promontory on the west side of Overton Lake. Also that year, unexpectedly large deposits of gravel were found in a small area between the lakes, intended for backfill, and it was agreed that they would create a third lake, to be kept at a depth of 3 feet only so that it would be suitable for a children's boating lake (Lynch Lake). In 1975 Amey Roadstone decided to close another of its nearby pits so that the Ferry Meadows site could remain in operation in spite of the recession in construction.

Work on land commenced in 1975, half way through the planned extraction phase. With the help of a 33% grant from the Countryside Commission, the PDC undertook initial expenditure of £50, 000 on the first footpaths, bridge and tree planting. Towards the end of the extraction period, the company and the PDC struck another important deal. Amey Roadstone agreed to undertake civil engineering works on site in place of its landscaping obligations. This allowed the efficient construction of car parks, roadways, beaches and a slipway using the plant and expertise already present on-site. As 1977 drew to a close, the gravel extraction was completed and an intensive 3 month period of restoration and construction began. The footpath network was completed, drainage, water and electricity were laid and shrub and tree planting was started. Planting was carefully planned to include lots of native trees and to provide both shelter from the wind and visual interest. With a £20,000 grant from the Sports Council, the Watersports Centre was established in a prefabricated building (opened 1985). The café, Visitor Centre (opened 1981) and public toilets were built. May 1st 1978 was the intended public opening day, but wet weather that spring caused delays and the Park was opened two months later on July 1st 1978, by broadcaster and environmental campaigner David Bellamy.

The Park was popular right from its opening. During 1978, approximately 90, 000 people visited. Figures from 1979 show 5000-6000 people visiting on sunny Sundays and Bank Holidays, with 1/3 of them walking or cycling to the Park. From the outset the PDC recognised that it didn't have the available funding or the necessary expertise to run all of the activities they wanted in the Park. The system of private management of concessions that they set up continues, of course, to this day.

8.2 SOMETHING FROM NOTHING: ORTON MERE

The site wasn't very promising. Originally part of British Sugar's settling ponds; the Orton Mere site was acquired by PDC as part of the land required for the building of the Nene Parkway. In 1972 a sewage pumping station was sited there. Then from 1973, the site was used to house the contractor's compound and the PDC site engineer's offices associated with the huge road building project. The fact that the PDC managed, in their own words, to 'create something from nothing... an attractive park out of derelict, disused waste land' is further testament to their resourcefulness

- They got the land itself because it was needed to facilitate the building of the Parkway
- The sewage pumping station brought several benefits: an access road above flood level, a new pedestrian bridge over the river – built to carry a sewer pipe, and some landscaping
- The hardstandings for the contractor’s compound was conveniently placed to act as a base for a later car park
- The site was nominated to receive unwanted spoil from elsewhere: more landscaping
- The railway platform and associated infrastructure were built by Peterborough Railway Society volunteers
- The picnic furniture was built from diseased elm by young people on a job-creation scheme
- Orton Longueville Women’s Institute provided an attractive village sign, which is still on-site today

and optimism. The PDC had a limited budget for the provision of amenities but managed to take advantage of a sequence unanticipated opportunities (detailed in the box).

By 1978 Orton Mere was ‘intensively used’; visitor figures show up to 20, 000 visitors on summer Sundays and Bank Holidays and an estimated annual turnout of 55, 000 people. Instead of becoming ‘neglected and inaccessible’, the site became a well-used entrance to the Ferry Meadows. Families visiting by train would stop to picnic, fly kites, fish and relax.

The PDC report writers also offer an attempt at cost/benefit analysis of the site. Orton Mere was, of course, free to enter so

the PDC ‘attempt to ascribe monetary values to the benefits accruing to the community’. They reasoned that a fair hypothetical entrance price would be 80p for a family of four, resulting in an annual ‘income’ of £11, 000: This leaves a healthy profit margin over the annual £8,320 bill for grass mowing (14 times per year) and capital interest costs.

9 STEWARDSHIP*

In 1988 the PDC was disbanded. During its period of direct management, the PDC had acquired 660 hectares of land in the river valley and put in place access agreements with the owners of half as much again. The Park was now attracting three quarters of a million visitors a year; making it one of the top ten in Britain. An independent charitable trust was set up to manage the park solely to carry out PDC’s original aim:

To provide for the public benefit a park and recreation ground for the inhabitants of Peterborough and visitors with the object of improving the conditions of life for such persons.

In September 1988 stewardship of the park passed to the newly formed Nene Park Trust. The Trust is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. As a

charitable company the Trust, of course, applies all its income to the operation and development of the Park.

To illustrate the range of projects undertaken in the early years of the Trust we can look at their success stories as recorded in 1993 in the Trust Document *Nene Park Trust the First Five Years*. The table on page 23 helps us to get an overview of the Trust's first priorities and compare the work carried out in the park today with that done by our counterparts 25 years ago.

Part of the Trust's remit is to acquire land, as opportunities arise, to extend the area of Nene Park under the Trust's management or to complement its management of the Park. When the Department of Transport compulsorily purchased land, for the construction of the Castor-Ailsworth by-pass, on the northern boundary of Bluebell Wood, the Trust was able to use the old A47 site to provide safe parking and protect the surroundings of Milton Ferry Bridge. The Trust also bought Woodlands bungalow next to Ham Farm House, to assist with the recruitment and retention of staff during the recession of the 1990s. In 1989, Manor Farm, Sutton was put on the market and the Trust was able to purchase 37 acres of grazing land adjoining the western boundary of the Park beside the River Nene.

*Information in this section comes largely from a Trust publication called *Nene Park Trust the First Five Years*, 1993. I've quoted the document extensively. If you want to browse the original, there is a copy in Ham Farm House.

10 CONCLUDING REMARKS

There you have it – the complete history of Nene Park, from Ice Age to the formation of the Nene Park Trust in just 24 pages. Well done and thank you for sticking through it, from Celts and Romans through aristocracy and Enclosure to the modern era of industrial gravel extraction and our flagship urban recreational site.

If you've enjoyed the read and feel inspired to follow up on any of the diverse elements which make up the Park's history, please check out some of the suggested reading provided in the final section.

So to close as we began, all of us who make our living caring for and developing this landscape know that we are not the first or final stewards of Nene Park. Underneath our feet are the lost treasures and forgotten bones of our predecessors who knew this land through five millennia before our time. Nene Park is cherished by the people of Peterborough because it's a place where their personal family memories become rooted in the landscape. That landscape has been shaped and reshaped by people; and I hope that this document has made their stories more accessible to us as we add our own contributions to the Nene Park story.

Landscape	Woodlands	Community	Visitor Services
Introduced a rolling programme of repollarding ancient willows to ensure their continued survival	Created a new riverside footpath through Bluebell Wood	Regularly hosted the local WATCH group's activities	Opened an information point in the summer season about Ferry Meadows, Nene Park and other attractions and facilities in the area
Entered into a management agreement with English Nature for the Site of Special Scientific Interest at Castor	Extended horse route through Lynch Wood	Hosted the annual national WATCH meeting	Prepared a series of trails and leaflets illuminating different aspects of habitats and their wildlife
Created 70 new pollards in Ferry Meadows	Created a picnic area in Lynch Wood	Hosted and sponsored "Arts and Crafts in the Environment" days as part of the city's annual Environment Week	Established a frequently updated bulletin board of news and reports to visitors on activities, events and wildlife
Planted almost one and a half kilometres of new hedges	Put in place a routine of inspections and action to maintain trees in a safe condition	Hosted and supported major events with Peterborough Wildlife Group	Implemented a programme of interpretive displays on a variety of aspects of Nene Park, past and present
Produced with its tenant a management plan for tree planting on the golf course	Established a programme of regular thinning in young planting	Developed with Marshfields School, Peterborough, their prize winning project on managing an area of the Trust's osier beds	Completed a comprehensive scheme of tourist signs for Nene Park
Planted over 1000 native hardwood trees on field boundaries	Replanted following felling in Bluebell and Lynch Woods	Established on-going links with a dozen local groups who carry out over 30 tasks each year	Started a programme of updating internal signs
Restored old osier beds and planted new ones reflecting Peterborough's past as a centre of basket making industry	Undertaken a review of the management plans of older woodlands	Supported groups of people with disabilities in their use of the park for events, activities and task experiences	Created one new and completely updated two other children's play areas
	Utilised extensively home produced wood chips for footpaths and mulches, converted timber for fencing and boards, and used coppice material for bank protection and revetments	Provided guidance and practical assistance to local schools developing their own environmental projects	Refurbished the Visitor Centre and the adjoining café
	Developed staff skills in woodland and coppice products for education and practical purposes	Visited schools to participate in their projects and topic work on environmental themes	Improved roads, footpaths and bridges to improve access for the less mobile
	Planted with a tenant a hectare of new woodland on former arable land		Rebuilt a hide on the Nature Reserve to make it fully accessible to people in wheelchairs

SUGGESTED READING AND USEFUL RESOURCES

Websites:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history>

The BBC History website is a really good place to start finding out about a topic or era. Their content is both readable and properly fact-checked.

If you want to know more about our local Roman story, I recommend:

The Romans in the East of England, Stephen Upex, Tempus Publishing, 2008.

Durobrivae: A Roman Town between Fen and Upland, Garrick Fincham, Tempus Publishing, 2004.

Actual dig reports from the archaeological investigations in the Park:

The Romano-British Farmstead and it's Cemetary at Lynch Farm, near Peterborough. Richard Jones, Northamptonshire Archaeology, No 10, 1975

Roman settlement in the Lower Nene Valley. J. P. Wild, The Archaeological Journal, Volume 131, 1974

The Roman Fortress at Longthorpe. S.S. Frere and J. K. St. Joseph et al. Britannia 1974

General guides to Peterborough City that have been useful:

The Peterborough Effect, Thetford Press Norfolk

This is a portfolio of information produced by the Peterborough Development Corporation for residents of the City, old and New.

Greater Peterborough Master Plan. Designed and produced by the Peterborough Development Corporation

City of Peterborough official Guide 1988-89, published by the City of Peterborough

City of Peterborough official Guide 1989-90, published by the City of Peterborough

Peterborough Through Time, June and Vernon Bull, Amberley Publishing, 2009

Comprehensive guide to the development of the Railways in the region:

Railways of Peterborough, Peterborough papers No.2, G. H. Fisher and Sons, 1978