

Peterborough New Town: Ten Years On

by Richard Hillier

Peterborough New Town: a Survey of the Antiquities in the Areas of Development was published by the Stationery Office in 1969. The book consisted of two surveys: one by Mr Christopher Taylor on the archaeological sites, and one on the architecture by Mr Robert McDowall and Mr Christopher Stell. Through the members of its staff, the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England) was corporate author of the book.

My task has been simply to go round and report on what survives — or what does not — ten years later. Since the original survey is of considerable importance, three points should be borne in mind when using it. Firstly, it excluded much of the former parish of Peterborough Without, effectively all of the City centre. Secondly, although the impression is given that they were to include all the buildings dating to before 1850, their survey fell well short even of those built in the decades 1820-1850. They even missed a seventeenth-century cottage at Longthorpe! And thirdly, there seems to be little or no relationship between the original survey and the schedules of Listed Buildings.

I am pleased to report that in Old Fletton, Orton Longueville and Orton Waterville there has been no change in the number of the extant buildings listed in the original survey; indeed, there has been little change to the buildings themselves. In most of the villages, however, at least one thatched cottage has been damaged by fire and subsequently demolished, and farm buildings have naturally been vulnerable to encroaching urbanism. The amount of housing development has also visually altered many of the villages.

In the following inventory of demolished or altered buildings (correct to March 1979), the headings and numbering are taken from the original (1969) survey.

Peterborough Within

- (2) St John's Close, former Union Workhouse (demolished about 1973) with school and chapel behind (demolished in 1975).

Peterborough Without

Dogsthorpe

- (3) Cottage (behind The Blue Bell), demolished c.1971/2.
- (4) House, 36-38 Welland Road, demolished (with pigeon house) in 1975.

Newark

- (7) House, semi-derelict.
- (8) Cottage, north of (7), destroyed by fire and demolished c.1970.

Longthorpe

- (5) Dairy Farm, completely derelict.
- (8) The Old House, partly damaged by fire and demolished 1971.
- (22) Cottage, near Grove Farm, destroyed by fire 1975/6 and demolished.

New Fletton

- (1) Fletton Tower, stone gateway facing Oundle Road, was demolished in 1974.
- (2) Peterborough East Station, completely demolished in 1972.
- (5) Windmill, rear of The Peacock, demolished in 1974.

Paston

- (4) Great Knabbs Farm, demolished before 1976.

Walton

- (2) House, 'St. Bedes', no. 1066 Lincoln Road, demolished.

Werrington

- (2) The Primitive Methodist Chapel noted under the entry for the 1835 Methodist Chapel has been demolished.
- (5) Green View Cottages. Renovation has uncovered a datestone in the west gable: EN 1707, followed by an arrowed heart.
- (15) Cottages, two, demolished.
- (24) Cottage, demolished.
- (35) Hamfield Farm, house, barn and bridge, all demolished c.1977.

Ailsworth

- (14) House and barn, presumed demolished and not in any way incorporated in modern stone houses on the site.

(15) Cottage, north wall discernible as incorporated in modern stone house, otherwise assumed demolished.

(16) Barn, demolished.

(17) Cottages, three, demolished.

Alwalton

No change to Lynch Farm, but now used as a riding school.

Castor

- (7) Manor Farm, the barns to the east have been demolished.
- (38) Barn, demolished.

Old Fletton

No change, but note that (3), the carved stone, came from the Manor House demolished in 1922.

Orton Longueville

No change: (13) Cottages, two, are still derelict.

Orton Waterville

No change, but note that the farm buildings immediately north of (24) are now much altered.

Stanground

(8) Cottages, 66-68a North Street, demolished in 1976/7.

Of the early nineteenth-century buildings mentioned under Stanground but not numbered, the following have been demolished: the terrace in Church St. dated 1830; 1-7 Mount Pleasant; 44-52 South St.; 62-64 North St.; and nos. 26, 27 and 27a have been modernised or altered.

Sutton

- (8) Houses, have much modern alteration.
- (12) Barns, three, demolished together with the whole set of farm buildings.
- (15) Cottage, extensive modern additions to north and east.

Woodston

- (4) Old Manor House, demolished.
- (5) Cottage, in grounds of (4), demolished.