Two Men in a Car GB/REE/251001100

In 2023 Reepham Archive received an enquiry about the location of the photograph shown in the Reepham Life calendar for September 2024. The query originated from Michael Edwards, author of several books on De Dion Bouton cars.
It is an image of a 1903 De Dion Bouton, taken around 1905. Cars at the time were rare and very expensive so the owner would have been a person of means.

Could we verify the location? The definitive clue is the guidepost which shows places local to Reepham. The three adjacent parishes of Hackford, Whitwell & Reepham with Kerdiston were still separate until 1935. So the 'Hackford' part of the sign would have been accurate for the estimated date of the photograph, i.e. 1905. The viewpoint suggests the corner of Station Road and Dereham Road (outside V's Cafe/The Crossroad).

Most of the photographs of that era show guideposts of the iron type. But there is one image that shows this white guidepost :-

Further evidence comes from the 1906 Ordnance Survey map where the guidepost is clearly sited on the Dereham Road side of the Towns End crossroads.

A 1903 De Dion Bouton was one of the original five cars that launched the Montagu Motor Museum in 1952. It had been in the Montagu family since 1913 when it was acquired from a tenant on the Beaulieu Estate and was used as a works vehicle by the estate engineer until the early 1930s.
Edward, Lord Montagu found the car in an outhouse and placed it on display in Palace House in 1952 as part of a small display of cars which was the nucleus of what would later become the Montagu Motor Museum, now the National Motor Museum.

Information from the De Dion Bouton UK Club website : dedionboutonclub.co.uk