Hutton Cranswick, S Peter.

Hutton Cranswick lies on the edge of the Wolds a quarter of a mile East of the A164, nine miles from Beverley and 3 miles from Driffield. The population of the two communities is just under 2000, with Hutton the much smaller village and three-quarters of a mile North of Cranswick. St. Peter's Church is in the centre of Hutton.

In the year 669 Wilfred became Bishop of York and it was he who was largely responsible for the spread of Christianity in East Yorkshire. As a result of his action St. Peter's (originally named St. Andrew's) was established at Hutton. Little more is known of the pre-Norman Church and there is no mention of it in the Domesday Book.

The construction of the Church took place over a considerable period. Only fragments of the Norman building remain; the main doorway belongs to this period and the pillars of the chancel arch have Norman dog-tooth moulding on the capitals, although the arch itself is of a later date. The first two arcades of the nave are Early English but the third and fourth arcades, some of the windows and the tower belong to the Perpendicular period.

It is recorded that Joan, widow of Gilbert Gertrude, gave the Church to the Priory of Watton in 1302 and the close connections with Watton Priory and Convent continued until the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII in 1538-39. Following the dissolution came the Reformation when Henry VIII broke away from Rome. The patronage of Hutton Church now passed to Henry VIII (Protestant until 1549), Mary (Catholic 1553-58) and Elizabeth (Protestant 1558-1603). The patronage of the Church passed to the Hotham family in 1664, where it continued almost without a break until 1906. Since this date the patronage has been in the hands of the Archbishop of York.

In the Spring of 1875 urgent attention was given to the Church, "*having fallen into the most dilapidated condition*" and it was decided to endeavour to collect funds sufficient for the complete restoration. The Patron of the living, Fifth Baron Lord Hotham, "*responded most liberally*" and his example was most readily followed. The opening service for the restored Church was held on 17th August 1876 when his Grace the Archbishop of York rededicated it.

It is of interest to note that a Norman Font, originally in St. Peter's but now in the Philosophical Museum at York, has roughly cut panels around the outside, depicting symbolic scenes and one of these shows a man ringing two bells.

The Bells of St. Peter's Church Hutton Cranswick The following extracts are taken from the Parish Magazine for July 1909:

"*The silver toned bells of our old Parish Church which week by week call the faithful to come to God's House and worship Him and remind the careless of a duty they too often neglect, have a romance connected with them, if tradition may be relied upon. Perhaps it is no exaggeration to say that there is no village Church in the district with sweeter toned bells than ours. They are supposed to have been founded originally for the Parish Church of Great Driffield, but never arrived so far. Probably disturbances were taking place which caused them to be placed in this tower for safety and thus have remained ever since.*

*The bells were founded by Samuel Smith of York, from whose foundry bells were made for both the Minster and St. Mary's Church at Beverley. These bells, which for well-nigh three hundred years have rung joyously at weddings and solemnly tolled the passing away of souls from this world to the veil within, each week call us to worship Almighty God, before whom we must all appear. May we not neglect our duty."*

(The Rev. Robert Warner Wheatley B.A., 1906-1920)

In the course of time the tone of the three bells had deteriorated and they had lost the sweetness the Revd. Wheatley had found so pleasing. At the end of World War II (1939-45) a major effort was made to install a peal of bells worthy of our fine Church. The credit for the realisation of this project must go largely to the Revd. George Storer R.D. (1926-1964) who worked unceasingly until it was completed.

During the hanging of the new bells an Ellacombe system was in-stalled which enabled the bells to be chimed when a bell ringing team was not available.

The following description of each bell is given in some detail as every one is most significant:

Tenor:

3' 11" diam. cast 1635 recast 1949. Weight 18½ cwt. Note E.

Ancient inscription: DEO GLORIA PAX HUMINIBUS. (Glory to God. Peace to Men)

Modern inscription: These bells were restored by public subscription in memory of the men from this Parish who fell in the Second Great War 1939 - 1945, and also a thank-offering for victory and peace. George Storer, Vicar.

5th bell:

3' 6" diam. cast 1678 recast 1949. Weight 12½ cwt. Note F#.

Ancient inscription: IN EXCELSIS GLORIA DEO. (Glory to God in the Highest).

4th bell:

3' 2" diam. cast 1678 recast 1949. weight 10.25 cwt. Note G#

Ancient inscription: VENITE EXULTEMUS DOMINIO. (0 Come let us sing unto the Lord).

3rd bell: - The Children's Bell

3' 0" diam. cast 1949. Weight 8½ cwt. Note A.

Inscription: The cost of this bell and fittings was raised by the Sunday School as a thank-offering for the preservation of the Parish Church from enemy action, and also in memory of Joan and Mary Severs, two scholars who with their parents lost their lives March 18/19th 1941. "We will remember them".

2nd bell:— The Farmer's Bell

2' 10" diam. cast 1949. Weight 7.75 cwt. Note B.

Inscription: 0 come, let us worship.

Treble:

2' 8" diam. cast 1949. weight 6.75 cwt. Note C#.

Inscription: To the memory of Jessie Barker Parish Church Clerk, who died 1st May 1924 and his wife Francis who died 1st January 1946. This bell was given by their daughters Kate, Dora and Elsie. "We praise thee 0 God".

The total cost of the bells and their installation was £1500. The dedication service for the installation was held on the 15th July 1950 when His Grace the Archbishop of York officiated. A certifi-cate in the tower records:-

"The first peal was rung by the following members of the Beverley and District Ringing Society:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Mr. G. F. Williams | President, Holy Trinity, Hull |
| Mr. L. Daggot | Ringing Master, Beverley Minster |
| Mr. C. Barker | Hon. Sec. Beverley Minster |
| Mr. C. Rodmell | Ringing Master, Patrington |
| Mr. R. Rodmell | St. James, Sutton |
| Mr. G. Dowling | Beverley Minster |
| Mr. A. E. Sellars | Beverley Minster |

It is understood this was not a peal that was rung but that the certificate is a record of the first ringers who rang the bells following the dedication.

A further certificate of the Yorkshire Association of Change Ringers records:

"A peal of 5040 changes of Kent Treble Bob Minor was rung by the following on 7th August 1950 in 3 hours 3 mins.

Leonard Rodmel John G. Hobson

George F. Williams Fred Osgerby

Philip S. Speck Charles Barker

This is the first peal rung on these bells. George Storer. Vicar"

Other certificates in the tower record three other peals of 5040 changes. On 1st December 1951 a complimentary peal of Grandsire Doubles was rung in five minutes less than three hours in honour of the Revd. George Storer R.D. completing 25 years as vicar of Hutton Cranswick. On Saturday 22nd September 1956 a peal of Plain Bob Minor was rung with seven different extents in 3 hours and 5 minutes, and as a compliment to the Revd. W. M. Clarke on his retirement, a further peal of Plain Bob Minor with seven different extents was rung on Monday 29th December 1975.

Over the years this fine ring of bells has been of special inter-est to the Beverley and District Society and to other associations around the country who have-visited the tower on many occasions and have been most welcome. The current ringing team was formed in 1985 under the direction of the Mr. Tony Wragg. The team numbers about 20 ringers, including trainees, and ages range from 11 to 91 years.

In 1987 a further renovation of the six bells was undertaken. Six new bell ropes were fitted, a tenor clapper, and fittings were replaced. All the bearings were cleaned, greased and resealed and the bell frame painted. The work cost £1624.61p.

The Yorkshire Association of Change Bell Ringers generously donated £100 and the Beverley and District Ringing Society very generously granted £898 toward the cost. The remainder of the money was provided by St. Peter's Bell Ringing Team.

Jerry Ford.