

REPORT FOR ROB PALMER

Some Augmentations and Notes on Selected Guilsborough Branch Towers

Yelvertoft • East Haddon • Spratton • Cottesbrooke • Cold Ashby

August 2026

A source-verified historical report on ring configurations, recasting, rehanging and augmentation.

EVIDENTIAL STANDARD

Every historical statement in this report is tied to an identified, retrievable source. Where sources disagree, the disagreement is reproduced rather than silently resolved. No missing dates, founders, ring sizes or bell identities have been invented to complete a sequence.

The previously discussed Sidney J. Madge 1895 entry for Yelvertoft is excluded from this report by instruction and is not used in any conclusion.

RESEARCH NOTE

Abstract and evidential method

This report examines the documented development of the bells at five towers in the Guilsborough Branch of the Peterborough Diocesan Guild: All Saints, Yelvertoft; St Mary the Virgin with All Saints, East Haddon; St Andrew, Spratton; All Saints, Cottesbrooke; and St Denys, Cold Ashby. The purpose is not to produce a simplified narrative, but to preserve the source record needed to identify historic configurations and augmentation events.

The research combines current tower records maintained by the Guilsborough Branch, church and parish histories, the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers (CCCBR) Felstead database and archival catalogues, digitised issues of *The Ringing World*, the surviving Alfred Bowell foundry records, *Dove's Guide*, and Thomas North's 1878 survey *The Church Bells of Northamptonshire*. In North's case, his work is used in two distinct ways: as an 1878 observation of installations then physically present, and as a published transcription of specifically identified earlier documents such as the 1552 inventories and the damaged Cottesbrooke parish-register entry. His editorial interpretations are not treated as contemporaneous evidence for earlier centuries. [G1] [G2]

A date attached to a bell is not automatically treated as the date on which that bell entered a ringing configuration. This distinction is important at Cottesbrooke, where the two front bells are inscribed 1994 but the CCCBR service-sheet catalogue dates their dedication to 7 May 1995, and at Cold Ashby, where source statements associated with the augmentation span 2002, 2003 and 2004. [CO1] [CO3] [CA5] [CA6] [CA9]

Similarly, a separately listed Sanctus bell is not counted as a member of the principal tower ring unless a source expressly does so. Thus the 1552 evidence is reported as “three bells plus a Sanctus” at Spratton, “four great bells plus a Sanctus” at Cottesbrooke, and “two bells plus a Sanctus” at Cold Ashby. [SP2] [CO2] [CA2]

Editorial rule: *No conflict is converted into a single preferred answer merely to make a clean chronology. The East Haddon 1621/1731 accounts and the Cold Ashby 2002/2003/2004 dating are therefore retained side by side.*

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FIVE SELECTED TOWERS

1. Comparative overview

All five towers preserve evidence for at least one earlier ring configuration distinct from the present installation. In three cases - Spratton, Cottesbrooke and Cold Ashby - the documentary trail reaches the Edward VI inventories of 1552. Yelvertoft has a long-lived five-bell Watts ring explicitly dated 1635, while East Haddon presents a source-level disagreement over whether 1621 produced four bells or five. [Y1] [Y2] [EH1] [EH3] [SP2] [CO2] [CA2]

Tower	Earliest ring-size evidence used	Documented later sequence	Present ring
Yelvertoft	1635: five Hugh II Watts bells	Five remained in 1950; sixth treble added 1989	6
East Haddon	1621: sources say either four, or five Watts bells	Five documented by 1756/1778; five rehung 1905; treble added 1928	6
Spratton	1552: three bells + Sanctus	Five by 1685; two recast 1929; restored five dedicated 1930; treble added 1988	6
Cottesbrooke	1552: four great bells + Sanctus	Old bells recast + 3 cwt metal into six in 1702; two trebles cast 1994/dedicated 1995	8
Cold Ashby	1552: two bells + Sanctus	Three by 1606 and still three in 1878; four by c.1880 and explicitly four in 1914/1950; later six	6

Table 1. Summary of ring-count evidence. The wording deliberately distinguishes the principal ring from a separately recorded Sanctus bell.

These histories also illustrate different mechanisms by which a ring changes. Yelvertoft is a straightforward augmentation of an otherwise surviving five-bell core. Spratton combines an earlier complete five-bell set with later selective recasting and then augmentation. Cottesbrooke records wholesale recasting of an earlier set into a larger one. Cold Ashby preserves a medieval bell whose position can be traced from first of three, to second of four, to fourth of six in the Peterborough Diocesan Guild early-bell inventory. [Y1] [SP1] [CO2] [CA10]

TOWER STUDY

2. Yelvertoft - All Saints

The present six at Yelvertoft consist of an Eijsbouts treble dated 1989 and five bells attributed to Hugh II Watts, dated 1635. The Guilsborough Branch lists the five old bells as the present 2nd through tenor; the church’s own history likewise states that the tower housed a ring of five cast in 1635 by Hugh Watts II of Leicester and that a sixth was added in 1989. [Y1] [Y2]

Present bell	Date	Founder	Recorded weight
Treble	1989	Eijsbouts of Holland	5-0-10
2	1635	Hugh II Watts	about 5½ cwt
3	1635	Hugh II Watts	about 6 cwt
4	1635	Hugh II Watts	about 7 cwt
5	1635	Hugh II Watts	about 9¼ cwt
Tenor	1635	Hugh II Watts of Leicester	about 12 cwt

Table 2. Current Yelvertoft ring as listed by the Guilsborough Branch. Several older-bell weights are expressly approximate in that source. [Y1]

The 1635 five-bell ring

The tower-specific evidence consistently identifies the historic five as a 1635 Watts ring. The Guilsborough Branch records the pre-1989 numbering and inscriptions: the old treble names Thomas Cornish and Thomas Moreton; the old second bears “GOD SAVE THE KING”; the old third and fourth carry the IHS/Nazarene formula and the year 1635; and the old tenor bears the unusual “CUM CUM AND PRAIE” wording. [Y1]

All Saints’ own history states that the five bells were installed in 1635, that one has coins cast into its rim, and that as far as is known the bells had not left the tower since installation. This same account records a new bell frame installed in 1959 when the tower castellation was renewed. [Y2]

Independent twentieth-century observation

A dated Ringing World article by Percy Amos, published on 2 June 1950, describes Yelvertoft as having “five very musical bells” by Hugh Watts, 1635, and singles out the unusual tenor inscription. This provides a dated record of the five-bell configuration thirty-nine years before the augmentation. [Y3]

1989 augmentation

The Guilsborough Branch records that a new treble by Eijsbouts of Holland was added in 1989. The church history gives the same year and states that the bell was designed by a direct descendant of Hugh Watts to match the original bells as nearly as possible. The result was the present six, with the original five shifted to positions 2-6. [Y1] [Y2]

Date / period	Configuration or work	Evidence preserved
1635	Five-bell ring	Five Hugh II Watts bells; surviving bells and inscriptions; tower-specific church and Branch histories [Y1] [Y2]
1950	Five bells	Ringling World description: five Watts bells dated 1635 [Y3]
1959	Five bells; new frame	Church history records new bell frame during tower works [Y2]
1989	5 -> 6	New Eijsbouts treble added; old five become present 2-6 [Y1] [Y2]

Table 3. Yelvertoft documentary chronology used in this report.

Excluded item: *The 1895 Sidney J. Madge date previously discussed is not included in this report and is not used to establish a Yelvertoft historical configuration.*

TOWER STUDY

3. East Haddon - St Mary the Virgin with All Saints

East Haddon is the most important of the five cases for preserving conflicting published descriptions. The present ring is uncontroversial in its physical composition: a Taylor treble of 1928, four Hugh II Watts bells of 1621, and an Abraham II Rudhall bell of 1731. The disagreement concerns whether the 1731 Rudhall bell replaced one member of an original five-bell Watts ring, or whether it was added as a fifth to an original four. [EH1] [EH2] [EH3]

Present bell	Date	Founder	Weight
Treble	1928	John Taylor & Co	5-2-5
2	1621	Hugh II Watts	6-3-16
3	1621	Hugh II Watts	7-0-22
4	1621	Hugh II Watts	8-2-22
5	1731	Abraham II Rudhall	10-3-23
Tenor	1621	Hugh II Watts	15-0-22

Table 4. Present East Haddon ring in the Guilsborough Branch record. [EH1]

Account A: five Watts bells in 1621; one recast in 1731

The Guilsborough Branch states that up to 1731 five bells were recorded, all cast by Hugh II Watts in 1621. It then says that the Watts fourth was recast by Abraham II Rudhall in 1731. The page preserves inscriptions for all five original Watts bells, each dated 1621, and the Rudhall inscription naming Richard Boswell and Francis Stanley as churchwardens in 1731. [EH1]

An older local historical transcription based on Baker’s 1822 account describes the church tower as containing five bells. This does not by itself settle the 1621 question, but it is a separate nineteenth-century witness to the five-bell state long before the twentieth-century augmentation. [EH8]

Account B: four bells in 1621; fifth added in 1731

The 2025 East Haddon Village Guide gives a different sequence: four bells were put up in 1621, a fifth was added in 1731, and the treble completed the current six in 1928. The same guide notes the 2010 refurbishment and retuning. [EH3]

Source conflict: *The report does not choose between Account A and Account B. Both are retained because both are published, tower-specific source statements, and the present physical set of four 1621 Watts bells plus one 1731 Rudhall bell can be described by either historical narrative without additional evidence identifying whether the Rudhall casting was replacement or augmentation.*

Five bells documented by ringing and foundry records

Whatever the original 1621 count, the five-bell configuration is directly documented by the mid-eighteenth century. East Haddon History Society records a 5,040-change performance on five bells on 31 December 1756, completed in three hours ten minutes; the CCCBR Felstead database indexes that performance at St Mary the Virgin on the same date. [EH2] [EH7]

A Northampton Mercury notice dated 9 February 1778, preserved in the CCCBR historical newspaper transcription, reports 42 six-scores rung “on the five Bells” at East Haddon, totalling 5,040 changes in three hours twenty-one minutes. The named ringers were Soden, Smith, Simons, White and Chapman. [EH4]

Felstead also indexes an East Haddon performance on 17 April 1805, again within its Doubles records. [EH7]

1905 rehanging and 1928 augmentation

The surviving Alfred Howell records are explicit about the pre-augmentation ring. They list “East Haddon. 5 BELLS” and record all five rehung on iron frames with steel headstocks; another summary states that five were rehung in a new steel frame in 1905 and that Taylor & Co augmented the ring to six in 1928. The frame table describes the 1905 frame as laid out for six, with only five bells until 1928. [EH5]

East Haddon History Society identifies the current treble as Taylor of Loughborough, 1928, and records the 2010 restoration: new headstocks, clappers and bearings, refurbishment or replacement of wheels, retuning of the bells, and cleaning/protection of the 1905 Howell frame. [EH2]

Date	Source-recorded state / event	Source statement
1621	Either four or five	Village Guide: four installed [EH3]; Branch: five Watts bells [EH1]
1731	Five after Rudhall event	Village Guide: fifth added [EH3]; Branch: Watts fourth recast [EH1]
31 Dec 1756	Five bells	Local history + Felstead performance record [EH2] [EH7]
5 Feb 1778	Five bells	Contemporary newspaper notice explicitly says “five Bells” [EH4]
1822 account	Five bells	Baker transcription describes tower containing five [EH8]
1905	Five rehung; frame for six	Howell records [EH5]
1928	5 -> 6	Taylor treble added [EH2] [EH5]
2010	Six restored	Refurbishment and retuning [EH2]

Table 5. East Haddon chronology, retaining the 1621/1731 conflict without adjudication.

TOWER STUDY

4. Spratton - St Andrew

Spratton has a layered documentary history: an Edward VI inventory, a complete five-bell seventeenth-century set described by Thomas North in 1878, nineteenth-century ringing evidence, a selective 1929 recasting and rehanging, and augmentation to six in 1988. The current church is St Andrew; the Guilsborough Branch notes that records in North's 1878 survey use the dedication St Luke. [SP1] [SP2]

Present bell	Date	Founder	Weight
Treble	1988	Eijsbouts of Holland	5-1-19
2	1685	Henry II Bagley	5-3-8
3	1929	John Taylor & Co	6-3-13
4	1685	Henry II Bagley	8-0-12
5	1929	John Taylor & Co	9-3-23
Tenor	1685	Henry II Bagley	11-2-24

Table 6. Present Spratton ring in the Guilsborough Branch record. [SP1]

1552: three bells and a Sanctus bell

North's 1878 transcription of the 1552 inventory records three bells and a separate Sanctus bell at Spratton. The distinction is important: the documentary wording does not describe a four-bell principal ring. [SP2]

1685: five-bell Bagley installation

By 1685 the source record shows five bells. The Guilsborough Branch describes the set as cast by Henry II Bagley, while also preserving the fourth bell's inscription naming Matthew Bagley. North's 1878 physical survey headed the entry "Spratton. S. Luke. 5 Bells" and transcribed all five 1685 inscriptions, with approximate diameters of 30½, 33, 35½, 38½ and 42 inches. [SP1] [SP2]

The inscriptions preserved by North and the Branch include "CANTATE DOMINO CANTICVM NOVVM" on the old treble, the names John Knighton and John Chadwick as churchwardens on the old second, "HENRY BAGLEY MADE MEE" on the old third, "MATTHEW BAGLEY MADE MEE" on the old fourth, and "FEARE GOD AND HONOR THE KING" on the old tenor, all dated 1685. [SP1] [SP2]

North also records how the five bells were used in 1878: a daily noon Labourer's Bell, an 8 p.m. Curfew, differentiated death-knell tolling, Sunday ringing and service-related signals. He notes that a Shrove Tuesday Pancake Bell and a 4 a.m. Harvest Bell had ceased roughly thirty years earlier. These observations describe the social use of the five-bell installation rather than a change in ring size. [SP2]

1781: performance on the five

The CCCBR Felstead database indexes a Spratton performance on 5 January 1781: 5,520 changes, described as 46 six-scores. This is a separate dated witness to the five-bell ring between the 1685 casting and North's 1878 survey. [SP5]

1929-1930: two recasts, new frame, still five

Spratton Local History Society states that in 1929 the old second and fourth required recasting and that the bells were rehung in a steel frame. It records £385 raised, the bells ringing again from April 1930, and space deliberately left for a sixth bell. The Guilsborough Branch identifies the two replacement bells as John Taylor & Co, 1929, and their inscriptions retain the relationship to the 1685 originals. [SP3] [SP1]

The Ringing World of 28 March 1930 advertised the dedication on 8 April of the “peal of five” restored by John Taylor & Co of Loughborough. That contemporary notice explicitly describes the post-1929 restored installation as five rather than six. [SP4]

1988: augmentation to six

The Local History Society records a new treble in 1988, while the Guilsborough Branch identifies it as an Eijsbouts bell weighing 5-1-19. This bell completed the present six, occupying the space that the local history says had been left in the 1929/30 frame project. [SP3] [SP1]

Date / period	Configuration or intervention	Evidence
1552	3 principal bells + Sanctus	Inventory transcribed by North [SP2]
1685	Five	Five 1685 bells; inscriptions preserved by North and Branch [SP1] [SP2]
1781	Five	Felstead performance record [SP5]
1878	Five	North physical survey of five bells [SP2]
1929-30	Five; old 2nd and 4th recast; steel frame	Local history, Branch inscriptions, Ringing World dedication of restored “peal of five” [SP1] [SP3] [SP4]
1988	5 -> 6	Eijsbouts treble added [SP1] [SP3]

Table 7. Spratton chronology.

TOWER STUDY

5. Cottesbrooke - All Saints

Cottesbrooke has documentary evidence of an older ring being recast and enlarged as a single project. North's 1878 survey reproduces both the 1552 inventory and a damaged parish-register account of the 1702 work, while the surviving six 1702 bells remain the back six of the present eight. [CO2] [CO1]

Present bell	Date	Founder	Weight
Treble	1994	Whitechapel Bell Foundry	5-2-4
2	1994	Whitechapel Bell Foundry	5-2-17
3	1702	Henry II Bagley	6-2-5
4	1702	Henry II Bagley	6-3-0
5	1702	Henry II Bagley	7-3-4
6	1702	Henry II Bagley	8-3-22
7	1702	Henry II Bagley	11-0-7
Tenor	1702	Henry II Bagley	14-0-21

Table 8. Present Cottesbrooke ring in the Guilsborough Branch record. [CO1]

1552: four great bells and a Sanctus bell

North reproduces the Edward VI inventory for "Cottysbroke" as recording four great bells in the steeple and a separate Sanctus bell. The Guilsborough Branch independently summarises the earlier state as four bells existing in 1552. [CO2] [CO1]

1702: recasting and enlargement to six

North found a brief parish-register record of the 1702 project, but noted that the book was torn and part of the entry had been lost. The surviving text states that Cottesbrooke recast its old bells with the addition of 3 cwt of metal; Sir John Langham provided a treble at his own expense; and the resulting installation comprised six bells, with parish expenditure on the frame, wheels and associated work. Named contributors towards metal included Rector John Pierce, William Litchfield, the master of the free school at Guilsborough and John Payne junior. [CO2]

North's 1878 inspection lists all six bells as dated 1702, with approximate diameters of 31, 32, 35, 36, 40 and 44 inches. The inscriptions identify Sir John Langham on the treble, John Rede and Henry Bagley on the second, Henry Bagley on the third, William Litchfield as a donor on the fourth, Rector John Pierce on the fifth, and John Slatter and Richard Concus as churchwardens on the tenor. [CO2]

The Guilsborough Branch gives the same essential ring-development sequence: four earlier bells were recast, extra metal was added in 1702 by Henry II Bagley, and the outcome was a ring of six. It also preserves the six 1702 inscriptions in the present back six. [CO1]

1878 and 1960: the six-bell period

North's heading "Cottesbrooke, All Saints. 6 Bells" and his bell-by-bell list show the 1702 six still present in 1878. The CCCBR catalogue of dedication service sheets later records a rededication of the bells on 28 May 1960. The Felstead database lists a Minor peal at Cottesbrooke on 10 June 1960, shortly after that rededication. [CO2] [CO3] [CO4]

1994 casting; 1995 dedication and augmentation to eight

The two present trebles both carry Whitechapel 1994 dates in the current bell record. Their inscriptions respectively commemorate Harry Cazenove (1943-1991) and record the gift of David P. Westerman and Guild ringers from the surrounding area. The Guilsborough Branch narrative says two bells were added in 1995, making the present eight. [CO1]

The CCCBR dedication catalogue supplies the event date: 7 May 1995, "Dedication of two new bells" at Cottesbrooke. The source record therefore distinguishes the casting/inscription year, 1994, from the dedication/addition year, 1995. [CO3]

Date	Configuration / event	Evidence
1552	4 great bells + Sanctus	Edward VI inventory transcribed by North [CO2]
1702	Old bells recast + 3 cwt metal -> six	Damaged parish-register entry transcribed by North; six surviving 1702 inscriptions [CO2] [CO1]
1878	Six	North physical survey [CO2]
28 May 1960	Six; rededication	CCCBR service-sheet catalogue [CO3]
10 Jun 1960	Six-bell ringing period	Felstead Minor entry [CO4]
1994	Two new trebles cast/inscribed	Current bell inscriptions [CO1]
7 May 1995	6 -> 8; dedication of two new bells	CCCBR dedication catalogue; Branch says added in 1995 [CO3] [CO1]

Table 9. Cottesbrooke chronology, separating casting date from dedication/addition date.

TOWER STUDY

6. Cold Ashby - St Denys

Cold Ashby has the longest sequence of positional evidence among the five towers. The medieval bell dated 1317 can be traced as first of three, later second of four, and now fourth of six. The present ring contains bells dated 1899, 2003, 1880, 1317, 1606 and 1606. [CA1] [CA10]

Present bell	Date	Founder	Weight as Branch lists it
Treble	1899	John Warner & Sons	2-1-8
2	2003	Eijsbouts of Holland	3-0-3
3	1880	John Taylor & Co	4-3-14
4	1317	William de Flint	4¾ cwt
5	1606	Newcombe of Leicester	about 5½ cwt
Tenor	1606	Newcombe of Leicester	about 6½ cwt

Table 10. Current Cold Ashby ring as listed by the Guilsborough Branch. Dove currently lists the 1899 Warner treble at 2-1-8, rather than the Branch's 2-1-8; the discrepancy is retained in the evidential notes below. [CA1] [CA8]

1552: two bells and a Sanctus; an associated bell transaction

North's transcription of the 1552 inventory records two bells in the steeple and a separate Sanctus bell. He also reproduces an imperfect memorandum describing the parish's "great bell" being mortgaged for 40 shillings and subsequently sold by Roger Knolls to a person named Caswell; the surviving text breaks off and should not be completed by conjecture. [CA2]

1317 and 1606: formation of the three-bell ring

The surviving medieval bell is dated 1317 and attributed in the current Branch record to William de Flint. By 1606, the Branch records a three-bell installation consisting of that 1317 bell as treble and two Newcombe of Leicester bells dated 1606 as second and tenor. North's 1878 survey independently heads the entry "Cold Ashby. S. Denis. 3 Bells" and lists the same dated combination: 1317, 1606, 1606. [CA1] [CA2]

The Peterborough Diocesan Guild early-bell inventory traces the 1317 bell's positions as present 4/6, previously 2/4, and earlier 1/3. Dove describes the present fourth as the oldest dated bell hung for full-circle ringing. [CA10] [CA8]

c.1880: augmentation from three to four

The Guilsborough Branch states that around 1880 a John Taylor bell was added in front of the 1317 bell. The surviving Taylor inscription dates the memorial bell to 1880 and commemorates Emily Bateman, who died on 28 February 1880. The PDG positional notation for the medieval bell - from 1/3 to 2/4 - independently matches this enlargement. [CA1] [CA10]

1899 Warner bell and the continuing four-bell ring

The present treble is a John Warner & Sons bell dated 1899. Its existence should not be conflated with the size of the full-circle ring at that date. The Howell account for 22 May 1914 explicitly charges for “re-hanging the four bells”, and Howell’s summaries list Cold Ashby as four bells rehung in steel frames. In 1950 Percy Amos still described the 1317 bell as “2nd of four”. [CA1] [CA3] [CA4]

Those records describe the full-circle installation as four in 1914 and 1950, even though the 1899 Warner bell later became the treble of the present six. The sources used here do not supply a date at which the Warner bell first became part of the full-circle ringing set, so no such date is inserted. [CA3] [CA4] [CA1]

Augmentation to six: 2002, 2003 and 2004 source dating

Cold Ashby requires the same non-conflation of dates used at Cottesbrooke, but with a more complex source record. Cold Ashby Parish Council says the ring of four “was augmented to six in 2002” during tower restoration, with the clock converted to electric wind; it names the additional bells as gifts of Billy Lee and Malcolm and Dawn Jennifer Grant-Innes and says all bells were rehung with new fittings by Eayre & Smith. [CA5]

The Guilsborough Branch instead dates the augmentation to 2003, and the Eijsbouts bell in the present ring is itself dated 2003. Dove’s augmentation database likewise records Cold Ashby as completed in 2003, contractor Eayre & Smith, 4 to 6. The National Lottery Heritage Fund records a £50,000 award for “Bells of St Denys Cold Ashby” on 5 June 2003; that award date demonstrates project activity in 2003 but is not, by itself, a completion date. [CA1] [CA6] [CA7]

A further chronological marker appears in The Ringing World cumulative index for 1911-2004: it indexes Cold Ashby “augmentation” material under 2004 (pages 485-487 and 800) and a “first peal since augmentation” under 2004 (page 274), while also indexing a “first peal on the bells” in 2003 (page 925). The index evidence is retained as publication/ringing chronology and is not used to overwrite either the Parish Council’s 2002 statement or Dove/Branch 2003 dating. [CA9]

Date conflict: For database use, the sources record a four-bell historic configuration before the modern project and a six-bell configuration afterwards. They give different calendar descriptions of the project: Parish Council says 2002; Branch and Dove say 2003; Ringing World indexes augmentation-related material in 2004. All three statements are retained here.

Current-data discrepancy: Warner treble weight

The Guilsborough Branch lists the 1899 Warner treble as 2-1-8. Dove’s current bell listing gives 2-1-18, F-sharp, 23.00 inches. This is a ten-pound discrepancy between current online sources and is reported here without alteration. [CA1] [CA8]

Date / period	Configuration or event	Evidence
1552	2 principal bells + Sanctus	Inventory transcribed by North; associated incomplete memorandum about the great bell [CA2]

Date / period	Configuration or event	Evidence
1606	Three: 1317 + 1606 + 1606	Branch reconstruction; same three physically described by North in 1878 [CA1] [CA2]
1878	Three	North physical survey [CA2]
c.1880	3 -> 4	Taylor memorial bell added in front; PDG position change 1/3 -> 2/4 [CA1] [CA10]
1899	Warner bell exists	Present treble dated 1899; later full-circle records still identify a four [CA1] [CA3] [CA4]
1914	Four	Bowell invoice and frame records [CA3]
1950	Four	Ringling World: 1317 bell "2nd of four" [CA4]
2002	Source statement: 4 -> 6	Cold Ashby Parish Council [CA5]
2003	Source statement: 4 -> 6	Guilsborough Branch and Dove; Eijsbouts bell dated 2003; Heritage Fund award June 2003 [CA1] [CA6] [CA7]
2004	Augmentation-related publication/ringing chronology	Ringling World cumulative index [CA9]

Table 11. Cold Ashby chronology with all uncovered augmentation-date statements retained.

SYNTHESIS

7. Comparative findings for historic-ring data

The five towers demonstrate why historical ring data should distinguish a ring configuration from the identity of individual bells. A ring can change count without replacing its old core (Yelvertoft), can retain the same count while individual bells are recast (Spratton 1929), can be recreated from the metal of an older set while simultaneously increasing count (Cottesbrooke 1702), or can contain a bell that existed in the tower before it became part of a later full-circle ring (Cold Ashby's 1899 Warner bell).

They also show why a single year field is insufficient for some interventions. Cottesbrooke has a clean cast-versus-dedication distinction: 1994 on the two Whitechapel bells, 7 May 1995 for their dedication. Cold Ashby is less clean, because different institutional sources give 2002 and 2003, while Ringing World indexes related augmentation material in 2004. The evidence should therefore be stored as source-linked event statements rather than reduced to an unsupported single date.

For pre-Reformation inventories, the separately recorded Sanctus bell should remain a separate object or note. The 1552 sources do not justify silently converting “three bells and a Sanctus” into a four-bell ringing configuration at Spratton, nor the equivalent inventory wording at Cottesbrooke or Cold Ashby. [SP2] [CO2] [CA2]

The material provides separately dated records of historical configurations that may be represented as distinct user-facing entities. A five-bell Yelvertoft before 1989, five-bell Spratton before 1988, six-bell Cottesbrooke before 1995, and four-bell Cold Ashby before the modern augmentation are not simply lesser versions of the present ring: they are separately documented historical states with different bell positions and, in some cases, different constituent bells.

Configuration records directly supported by this evidence

Tower	Historic configuration(s) explicitly evidenced	Transition to present / later ring
Yelvertoft	5 bells: 1635 Watts ring, documented still as five in 1950	1989: new treble -> 6
East Haddon	1621 source conflict: 4 or 5; 5 documented by 1756/1778 and still 5 in 1905	1928: Taylor treble -> 6
Spratton	1552: 3 + Sanctus; 1685 onward: 5; 1930 restored 5 after two recasts	1988: Eijsbouts treble -> 6
Cottesbrooke	1552: 4 + Sanctus; 1702-1995: 6	1994 casting / 1995 dedication: two trebles -> 8
Cold Ashby	1552: 2 + Sanctus; 1606/1878: 3; c.1880-20th c.: 4	Modern 4 -> 6; source dates 2002/2003 plus 2004 index chronology

Table 12. Database-relevant historical configurations supported by the referenced material.

SOURCE-BY-SOURCE AUDIT

Appendix A. Evidence matrix

This matrix records the principal evidential statements used in the report. “Source type” is descriptive only; it is not a ranking of firmness or reliability.

Tower / date	Claim preserved	Source type	Ref.
Yelvertoft 1635	Five bells by Hugh II Watts	Current church history; Branch technical record	Y1, Y2
Yelvertoft 1950	Five Watts bells, dated 1635	Contemporary ringing periodical	Y3
Yelvertoft 1959	New frame installed	Current church history	Y2
Yelvertoft 1989	New Eijsbouts treble; ring becomes six	Branch record; church history	Y1, Y2
East Haddon 1621	Five Watts bells	Branch historical record	EH1
East Haddon 1621	Four bells installed	2025 Village Guide	EH3
East Haddon 1731	Watts fourth recast by Rudhall	Branch historical record	EH1
East Haddon 1731	Fifth bell added	2025 Village Guide	EH3
East Haddon 1756	5,040 on five bells	Local history + Felstead	EH2, EH7
East Haddon 1778	Five bells; 5,040 changes	Newspaper notice in CCCBR transcription	EH4
East Haddon 1905	Five rehung; frame for six	Bowell foundry records	EH5
East Haddon 1928	Augmented to six	Bowell summary; current local history	EH5, EH2
Spratton 1552	Three bells + Sanctus	1552 inventory transcribed by North	SP2
Spratton 1685	Five-bell set	North 1878 physical survey; Branch	SP2, SP1
Spratton 1929-30	Two recasts; restored ring remains five	Local history; Branch; Ringing World	SP3, SP1, SP4
Spratton 1988	Treble added -> six	Local history; Branch	SP3, SP1
Cottesbrooke 1552	Four great bells + Sanctus	1552 inventory transcribed by North	CO2
Cottesbrooke 1702	Old bells recast + 3 cwt; six bells	Parish-register text transcribed by North	CO2
Cottesbrooke 1878	Six 1702 bells	North physical survey	CO2
Cottesbrooke 1960	Rededication 28 May	CCCBR service-sheet catalogue	CO3
Cottesbrooke 1994	Two Whitechapel trebles cast/inscribed	Branch current bell record	CO1
Cottesbrooke 1995	Two new bells dedicated 7 May; present eight	CCCBR catalogue; Branch narrative	CO3, CO1
Cold Ashby 1552	Two bells + Sanctus	1552 inventory transcribed by North	CA2
Cold Ashby 1606	Three: 1317, 1606, 1606	Branch historical record	CA1

Tower / date	Claim preserved	Source type	Ref.
Cold Ashby 1878	Three bells physically recorded	North 1878 survey	CA2
Cold Ashby c.1880	Taylor bell added -> four	Branch; PDG position history	CA1, CA10
Cold Ashby 1914	Four rehung	Bowell invoice/records	CA3
Cold Ashby 1950	1317 bell second of four	Ringing World	CA4
Cold Ashby 2002	Four augmented to six	Parish Council	CA5
Cold Ashby 2003	Four augmented to six	Branch; Dove	CA1, CA6
Cold Ashby 2004	Augmentation / first peal since augmentation indexed	Ringing World cumulative index	CA9
Cold Ashby current	Warner treble weight discrepancy 2-1-8 vs 2-1-18	Branch vs Dove	CA1, CA8

REFERENCES

Appendix B. Source register and bibliography

All online sources were checked during preparation of this report on 25 August 2026 unless otherwise stated. URLs are provided to make each evidential statement independently traceable. The source codes are used throughout the text.

General and bibliographic

- [G1] Peterborough Diocesan Guild, Guilsborough Branch, “Weights and Dates”, current Branch bell chronology. [Online source](#)
- [G2] Thomas North, *The Church Bells of Northamptonshire: Their Inscriptions, Traditions, and Peculiar Uses, with Chapters on Bells and the Northants Bell Founders* (Leicester: Samuel Clarke, 1878), 471 pp. Bibliographic details cross-checked against Open Library/Google Books; tower extracts consulted in digitised copies. [Online source](#)

Yelvertoft

- [Y1] Peterborough Diocesan Guild, Guilsborough Branch, “Yelvertoft”, current six, earlier five, inscriptions and 1989 augmentation. [Online source](#)
- [Y2] All Saints Church Yelvertoft, “History”, tower history including five bells cast 1635, 1959 frame and 1989 sixth bell. [Online source](#)
- [Y3] Percy Amos, “Bells of Rugby and District”, *The Ringing World*, no. 2043, 2 June 1950, p. 348; Yelvertoft described as five bells by Hugh Watts, 1635. [Online source](#)

East Haddon

- [EH1] Peterborough Diocesan Guild, Guilsborough Branch, “East Haddon”, current bells and “Earlier Bells” section. [Online source](#)
- [EH2] East Haddon History Society, “East Haddon Bells”, Parish Council website; present bells, 1756 performance, 1905 Bowell frame and 2010 work. [Online source](#)
- [EH3] East Haddon Parish Council, *East Haddon Village Guide* (2025), “East Haddon Church Bell Ringers”, p. 16; four in 1621, fifth 1731, treble 1928. [Online source](#)
- [EH4] Central Council of Church Bell Ringers, historical newspaper transcription for 1770-1779, reproducing *Northampton Mercury*, 9 February 1778, East Haddon notice. [Online source](#)
- [EH5] Surviving Alfred Bowell foundry records, digitised by Suffolk Bells; East Haddon 1905 job and later summaries, including five bells and frame for six. [Online source](#)
- [EH7] Central Council of Church Bell Ringers, *Felstead Database*, Doubles method/performance index; East Haddon entries 1756, 1778, 1805 and 1905. [Online source](#)
- [EH8] East Haddon Parish Council, “Text drawn from Baker 1822”; church description including five bells. [Online source](#)

Spratton

- [SP1] Peterborough Diocesan Guild, Guilsborough Branch, “Spratton”, current ring, earlier bells and inscriptions. [Online source](#)
- [SP2] Thomas North, *The Church Bells of Northamptonshire* (1878), Spratton entry, pp. 399-400; five 1685 bells and transcription of 1552 inventory. [Online source](#)
- [SP3] Spratton Local History Society, village history, section on bells; 1685 five, 1929 recasting/rehanging, 1930 return to ringing and 1988 treble. [Online source](#)
- [SP4] *The Ringing World*, no. 992, 28 March 1930, p. 206; notice for dedication of the restored “peal of five” on 8 April 1930. [Online source](#)

[SP5] Central Council of Church Bell Ringers, Felstead Database, Doubles index; Spratton entry for 5 January 1781, 5,520 changes. [Online source](#)

Cottesbrooke

[CO1] Peterborough Diocesan Guild, Guilsborough Branch, “Cottesbrooke”, current eight, earlier bells, inscriptions, 1702 recasting and 1995 augmentation narrative. [Online source](#)

[CO2] Thomas North, The Church Bells of Northamptonshire (1878), Cottesbrooke entry, pp. 231-232; 1552 inventory, 1702 parish-register transcription and six-bell survey. [Online source](#)

[CO3] Central Council of Church Bell Ringers, Catalogue 31, service sheets - dedications; Cottesbrooke entries for 28 May 1960 and 7 May 1995. [Online source](#)

[CO4] Central Council of Church Bell Ringers, Felstead Database, Cottesbrooke tower record; first listed peal 10 June 1960. [Online source](#)

Cold Ashby

[CA1] Peterborough Diocesan Guild, Guilsborough Branch, “Cold Ashby”, current ring, earlier three, c.1880 addition, inscriptions and 2003 augmentation statement. [Online source](#)

[CA2] Thomas North, The Church Bells of Northamptonshire (1878), Cold Ashby entry, p. 225; three-bell physical survey, 1552 inventory and incomplete memorandum. [Online source](#)

[CA3] Surviving Alfred Bowell foundry records, Cold Ashby entry dated 22 May 1914, including “To rehanging the four bells, £100”, and frame summaries. [Online source](#)

[CA4] Percy Amos, “Bells of Rugby and District”, The Ringing World, no. 2043, 2 June 1950, p. 348; Cold Ashby 1317 bell described as second of four. [Online source](#)

[CA5] Cold Ashby Parish Council, “An introduction to the Church of St Denys”; source statement that the ring of four was augmented to six in 2002. [Online source](#)

[CA6] Dove’s Guide for Church Bell Ringers, “Augmentations and reductions”; Cold Ashby listed 2003, Eayre & Smith, 4 to 6. [Online source](#)

[CA7] National Lottery Heritage Fund, “Bells of St Denys Cold Ashby”; award date 5 June 2003, award £50,000. [Online source](#)

[CA8] Dove’s Guide for Church Bell Ringers, Northamptonshire tower/bell listings; Cold Ashby present six, 1317 fourth, Warner treble listed 2-1-18 and 23.00 inches; notes 4th as oldest dated bell hung for full-circle ringing. [Online source](#)

[CA9] The Ringing World, cumulative index 1911-2004; Cold Ashby entries include augmentation material under 2004 and peal-related entries in 2003/2004. [Online source](#)

[CA10] Peterborough Diocesan Guild Church Bell Inventory, “Early bells of Northamptonshire and Rutland”; 1317 Cold Ashby bell positions shown as 4/6, previously 2/4, earlier 1/3. [Online source](#)

Closing research note

This report deliberately preserves the difference between what a source says and what can safely be inferred from several sources together. No unrecorded intermediate ring has been inserted; no damaged historical text has been completed; and no conflicting date has been silently discarded. The result is intended to be suitable as an evidential basis for adding historic configurations while preserving provenance at source level.