

Blessington, St Mary

The story of Blessington bells starts in 1683 when Archbishop Michael Boyle, came into the possession of the Manor of Blessington. There, at his own expense, he founded and built the church "even adding a handsome belfry with six tuneful bells". These bells are still in the tower, and as they have never been recast they are now the oldest ring in Ireland. In fact the bells have never been taken out of the belfry since they were originally dedicated!

Towards the end of the century a Chime keyboard in the upper loft was installed to play tunes on the bells. These included "Xmas 1897"; "Xmas and 31 12 1989"; "Xmas 1900"; "Lead Kindly Light"; "There is no Night in Heaven" and "Trust and Obey".

The bells were then re-hung in 1923 as a tribute and memorial to the servicemen of the parish who died during the Great War. Despite the excellent craftsmanship required to maintain the bells in place, there were some problems that affected the ringing of the Tenor bell, which the locals described as "horse work". This situation was fixed in 1979 by Canon Low, who arranged for the Tenor bell to be re-hung on modern fittings.

Bell Weights & Inscriptions

<https://dove.cccb.org.uk/detail.php?tower=10464>