

## **Drogheda, St Peter**

St Peter's Church in Drogheda holds an important place in Irish history due to its association with Oliver Cromwell, and the siege of 1649. After Cromwell's troops had broken through the city walls the defenders fled, and some of them took refuge in the wooden steeple of St Peter's Church. It is reported that when Cromwell heard this he gave orders to "blow up the steeple". Three barrels of powder were used to do this, but they only succeeded in blowing up the main body of the church. Eventually they took the wooden seats from the church and placed them under the tower in which "five great bells were hung", and set fire to them. Finally this caused "men and bells and the roof to come down together".

The old church was demolished in 1748 and in its place the present building was constructed. There were problems with the spire and steeple, which at this time housed a single bell, and over the next few decades various repair and rebuilding work had to be undertaken. It was in 1787 that the architect Francis Johnston who also designed St George's Church in Dublin, set about building the present tower and spire of this church.

It was probably Francis Johnston who, in 1789, instigated the installation of the bells in Drogheda. Shortly afterwards an order was placed with Rudhall of Gloucester for the eight bells that are currently in the tower.

### **Bell Weights & Inscriptions**

<https://dove.cccbr.org.uk/detail.php?tower=15123>