

SS Philip and St James – Holywood

The present church of St Philip and St James in Holywood, Co. Down, was consecrated in 1844 during the incumbency of the Rev Joseph McCormick. It was through his exertions that a “ring of sweet bells” was erected in the tower - which has a spire over the rear entrance porch, and stands at the north-west corner of the nave.

The first bells came from Wells Foundry in Aldbourne, Wiltshire, and were cast in 1798. The details can be found in the Details of Bells section. These six bells came from a ring of 10 which the bell ringing architect, Francis Johnston had hung over the stable garden of his residence in Eccles Street, Dublin. These bells hung in the tower after his death in 1829 until 1844 and were sold off before the auction of contents in his residence following the death of his late wife Anne Johnston. According to a note in the Johnston Manuscripts in the National Library, Dublin, these bells were sold by the Rev. Richard Johnston for the sum of £180.

The six bells were taken down in 1891, and the back five, together with a 15” bell from the parish room, were sent to Taylor's of Loughborough to be melted down towards the casting of the new ring of eight bells. The Treble bell of the six was sent to Ballyclare Church, Co. Antrim, where it still remains today.

Bell Weights & Inscriptions

Below are the weights of SS Philip and James Bells Holywood

Original Six Bells

	Weight	Dimension	Cast	Founders
<i>Treble</i>		21”	1798	Wells Foundry in Aldbourne, Wiltshire
2	2cwts, 1qrs, 4lbs	23”	1798	Wells Foundry in Aldbourne, Wiltshire
3	2cwts, 3qrs, 21lbs	23½”	1798	Wells Foundry in Aldbourne, Wiltshire
4	3cwts, 2qrs, 11lbs	25¼”	1798	Wells Foundry in Aldbourne, Wiltshire
5	3cwts, 3qrs, 27lbs	27½”	1798	Wells Foundry in Aldbourne, Wiltshire
<i>Tenor</i>	4cwts, 2qrs, 12lbs	29¾”	1798	Wells Foundry in Aldbourne, Wiltshire

Present day ring of Eight

	Weight	Dimension	Cast	Founders
<i>Treble</i>	3cwts	23"	1891	Taylor's of Loughborough
2	3cwts, 0qrs, 24lbs	24 ¹ / ₈ "	1891	Taylor's of Loughborough
3	3cwts, 3qrs, 24lbs	26 ¹ / ₄ "	1891	Taylor's of Loughborough
4	4cwts, 1qrs, 20lbs	27 ⁷ / ₈ "	1891	Taylor's of Loughborough
5	5cwts, 3qrs, 25lbs	31"	1891	Taylor's of Loughborough
6	6cwts, 3qrs, 21lbs	32 ³ / ₈ "	1891	Taylor's of Loughborough
7	8cwts, 3qrs, 12lbs	35 ³ / ₄ "	1891	Taylor's of Loughborough
<i>Tenor</i>	12cwts, 0qrs, 14lbs	40 ¹ / ₂ "	1891	Taylor's of Loughborough

Below are the inscriptions of SS Philip and James Bells Holywood

Original Six Bells

<i>Treble</i>	R & J Wells Albourn Fecit 1798
2	R & J Wells Albourn Fecit 1798
3	R & J Wells Albourn Fecit 1798
4	R & J Wells Albourn Fecit 1798
5	R & J Wells Albourn Fecit 1798
<i>Tenor</i>	R & J Wells Albourn Fecit 1798

Present day ring of Eight

<i>Treble</i>	J Taylor & Co Bellfounders Loughborough MDCCCXCI
2	J Taylor & Co Bellfounders Loughborough MDCCCXCI
3	J Taylor & Co Bellfounders Loughborough MDCCCXCI
4	J Taylor & Co Bellfounders Loughborough MDCCCXCI
5	J Taylor & Co Bellfounders Loughborough MDCCCXCI
6	J Taylor & Co Bellfounders Loughborough MDCCCXCI
7	J Taylor & Co Bellfounders Loughborough MDCCCXCI
<i>Tenor</i>	J Taylor & Co Bellfounders Loughborough MDCCCXCI Holywood Parish Church Erected by Subscription A.D.1891. Rev J B Crozier Vicar