

St Patrick – Ballymena

There is a square tower at the south-east corner of the Church with a circular staircase turret. The present building dates from 1879, after the previous Church was destroyed by fire. The later building was consecrated in 1855, and in 1866 a bell was provided. It was 40" in diameter, has canons inscribed thus:

St Patrick A.D 1866 Sheridan Eagle Foundry Dublin

And on the opposite side, a crest consisting of a harp and Erin Go Bragh

When the new bells were installed in May 1895 the old bell was sold to Lambeg Parish Church, where it remains in service at present. Its weight is given by Matthew O'Byrne of Dublin as 12 cwts. These eight bells of St. Patrick's were put in the tower as a memorial for Dean Murray, Rector from 1865 to 1883. The bells were supplied by Mears and Stainbank of Whitechapel, London, and is in their Daybook entry for the 15th May 1895. The Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette noted this fact when reporting the dedication, giving details of the bells as follows:

"The bells have been hung with the usual fittings for ringing. Elm headstocks with steel gudgeons, gunmetal bearings in iron carriages, wheels and ropes. The framework in which they swing is of massive English oak, well constructed and every joint secured with double bolts or corner plated. A chiming apparatus has also been attached to enable one person to chime the bells"

The recast peal of bells arrived at the end of October 1987 and was put on display in the Church for two weeks. They were Hallowed at Evensong on Remembrance Day, Sunday, November 8, in a ceremony conducted by the Rector, Rev Canon F J Rusk. The bellhanger Mr T N J Bailey, arrived from Whitechapel the following day and the work of re-installing the ring in the tower began, to be completed just over three weeks later. The bells were rung for service for the first time for the Midnight Communion Service on Christmas Eve, when all twelve bells were rung in rounds and call changes. The bells were rung again for the 10.am Service on Sunday and on New Year's Eve the Old Year was rung with half muffled call changes on twelve, and the New Year welcomed with the bells open.

Bell Weights & Inscriptions

Below are the Weights of Ballymena Bells

Original Eight Bells - Before recast in 1987

	Diameter	Weight
<i>Treble</i>	29 ¼	5 cwts, 3 qrs, 5 lbs
2	30 ½	5 cwts, 3 qrs, 26 lbs
3	32	6 cwts, 2 qrs, 22 lbs
4	34 ½	7 cwts, 3 qrs, 26 lbs
5	37 ¼	9 cwts, 1 qr, 15 lbs
6	39 ¼	10 cwts, 2 qrs, 5 lbs
7	42	12 cwt, 2 qrs, 7 lbs
<i>Tenor</i>	47	17 cwt, 2 qrs, 10 lbs

Present Day Twelve - After Recast 1987 by the Whitechapel Bell Foundry Limited. London.

	Diameter	Weight	Note
<i>Treble</i>	22"	3 cwt, 1 qrs, 11 lbs	A
2	23"	3 cwt, 2 qrs, 1 lbs	B
3	23¼"	3 cwt, 2 qrs, 17 lbs	A#
4	24"	3 cwt, 3 qrs, 19 lbs	G#
5	26"	4 cwt, 1 qrs, 5 lbs	F#
6	26"	4 cwt, 1 qrs, 5 lbs	F
7	27"	4 cwt, 3 qrs, 0 lbs	D#
8	30¼"	5 cwt, 3 qrs, 3 lbs	C#
9	32"	6 cwt, 3 qrs, 3 lbs	B
10	33¼"	7 cwt, 2 qrs, 14 lbs	A#
11	38"	10 cwt, 2 qrs, 19 lbs	G#
<i>Tenor</i>	42½"	14 cwt, 2 qrs, 17 lbs	F#

Below are the Inscriptions of Ballymena Bells

Original Eight Bells - Before recast in 1987

	Inscription
Treble	(W) Glory be to God on High and in Earth Peace/ Goodwill Towards Men
2	(W) We Praise Thee
3	(W) We Bless Thee
4	(W) We Worship Thee
5	(W) We Glorify Thee
6	(W) We Give Thanks to/ Thee for thy Great Glory
7	(W) O Lord God, Heavenly King
Tenor	These bells were placed here in Loving Memory of The Very Rev J W Murray. LL D. Dean of Connor He Being Dead Yet Speaketh

Present day Twelve

	Inscription
Treble	In memory of John Letters 1899 - 1985
2	The Gift of the Bellringers of Northern Ireland
3	The Gift of Ballymena Society of Bellringers
4	In memory of Joss Spence
5	Glory be to God on High and in Earth, Peace, Goodwill towards Men <i>and, on the opposite side</i> The Church Lads' Brigade Coy No 1145 "Fight the good fight"
6	We praise thee <i>and, on a brass plated affixed to the headstock,</i> Given by the Hudson Family in thanksgiving for the lives of D P Hudson and F D and E I Dillamore
7	We bless thee
8	We worship thee <i>and, on a brass plated affixed to the headstock,</i> Given by Albert McLean
9	We worship thee <i>and, on a brass plated affixed to the headstock,</i> Given by the McKervill Family Died 26.9.1985 A beloved Husband, Father and Brother
10	We give thee King thy Great Glory
<i>11</i>	O Lord God, Heavenly King
Tenor	The Peal of eight bells was placed here in 1895 in loving Memory of The Very Rev J W Murray LL.D. Dean of Connor and was recast into a peal of Twelve in 1987 "He being Dead yet speaketh"