



## Tower History

# St. Mary's Cathedral, Limerick



The Cathedral is situated on the area of Limerick known as King's Island, Limerick's Medieval Quarter. Bells have been sounding forth from St Mary's Cathedral for a very long time. The first reference to bells being at the Cathedral appears around the years 1380 to 1390 when the celebrated John Budston, seemingly a wealthy and prominent citizen of Limerick and a liberal benefactor to the Cathedral, presented

four brass bells. John Budston was an ancestor of the Arthur family from which the nearby Arthur's Quay and Shopping Centre gets its name. Mr Budston was also a Sheriff of the City and a monument in the South Transept commemorates the memory of this gentleman. No further mention of the bells is made in the Cathedral records until about the year 1670 when a peal of six bells was presented by William Yorke. He was an Alderman of the City and was three times Mayor. He died in 1679 and is buried in the Cathedral.

There is no information available as to what became of Budston's bells, but it is more than likely that the metal of these bells was used in the casting of Yorke's peal. This consisted of six bells in the key of F, the tenor bell of which weighed about 18cwt. They were cast by the bell founders William and Roger Perdue, whose foundry was at Salisbury, England.

One of the brothers - William - died whilst working on the bells at Limerick and was buried in the Cathedral. His burial place was marked by a slab which recorded the following:

"Here a bell founder, honest and true,  
Until the resurrection - lies Perdue."

The peal presented by Mayor Yorke was supplemented in 1703 by the addition of two bells thus bringing the total peal to eight bells. All the six bells of the Yorke peal have since either been recast or replaced by new bells from time to time. The two bells added in 1703 form the treble and second of the present ring.

Two other persons who also have contributed to the wellbeing of the bells were Sir Alec W Shaw of Limerick, who had the third bell recast by John Taylor and Company, Bell Founders, Loughborough, England, in 1923, and Mr Everard Hewson of Castlehewson, Co Limerick, who

presented a new bell (fourth in the present peal) in 1907, replacing a defective one. Mr Hewson also presented a call bell and had the treble, second, seventh and tenor bells recast over a period 1930-1938. All this work was undertaken by Taylors, Loughborough.

St Mary's Cathedral Limerick is also *home* to a set of mini-bells. The bells previously situated in the Cathedral have been moved to the nearby deconsecrated St. Munchin's Church. Arrangements to ring them can be made through Mike Pomeroy.

**Link to tower on web site**

<https://bellringingireland.org/tower/limerick-st-marys-cathedral/>

**Bell Weights & Inscriptions**

<https://dove.cccbr.org.uk/detail.php?tower=15110>

[St. Mary's Cathedral – A Historical Survey. By J. A. Haydn](#)