



Tower History

St. Mary's, Doneraile



The Church of St Mary's, Doneraile and the bells within it owes a lot to the generosity of the St Leger family. The church was originally built by the Rt Hon Sir William St Leger in 1633, and would have had at least one bell.

A stone slab set into the western side of the tower states that in 1726 his grandson the Rt Hon Arthur Viscount Doneraile rebuilt the church. He also saw to it that the bell his grandfather

gave was repaired, as it had cracked some 26 years earlier. Although this bell has cracked again and is no longer in use, it is still in the church.

The current ring of six bells were installed in 1890 as a gift of Lady Castletown of Upper Ossory in memory of her late father, Hayes St Leger, 4th Viscount Doneraile.

The church itself is famous for another reason. In 1752 there is an account of a horse race between a Mr O'Callaghan and a Mr Edmund Blake where natural fences were jumped. The course was between the steeple of nearby Buttevant Church and that of St Mary's Doneraile, and this led to the term "Steeple chasing". The steeple itself was blown down in the early part of the nineteenth century and was replaced by the present tower.

Link to tower on web site

<https://bellringingireland.org/tower/doneraile-st-mary/>

<http://www.mallow.cloyne.anglican.org/parish/st-marys-church-doneraile/>

Bell Weights & Inscriptions

dove.cccb.org.uk/detail.php?tower=13419