



Richard R. Cherry – Irish lawyer, Judge and bellringer.

Born on 19 March 1859 in Waterford, Richard Cherry was the son of a local solicitor. Having learned to ring at Christ Church Cathedral in Waterford he became a proficient change ringer and rang his first peal in Waterford on 9 December 1873, ringing the two for Grandsire Triples.

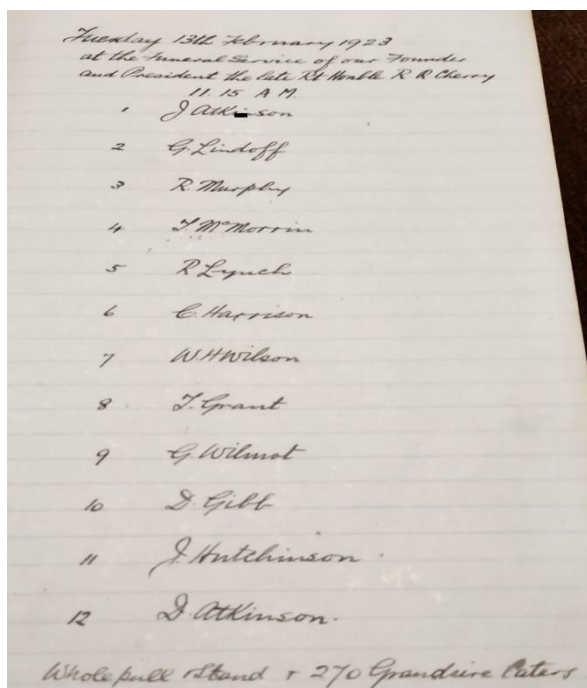
He moved to Dublin to study law and during his time as a student and later as a law lecturer in Trinity College Dublin he rang at both St George's Church in Dublin's north inner city and St Patrick's Cathedral.

At the latter end of the nineteenth century, the bells of St Patrick's were in a poor state of repair. The Cathedral had been extensively restored by Benjamin Guinness in the 1860's but no work was done on the bells. Quite probably with the encouragement of Richard Cherry, Benjamin's son Edward Guinness agreed to finance the recasting of the bells into a peal of ten bells, the work to be undertaken by Taylor's of Loughborough.



However local opposition to the destruction of the existing bells caused a rethink and it was decided to keep two of the existing bells at St Patrick's to be chimed for the daily services and the remaining six bells to be distributed to various parish churches throughout the country who were in need of a bell. Taylors then cast a peal of ten bells with a half tone hung dead for use by the carillon.

In anticipation of the arrival of the new bells, Richard Cherry founded the St Patrick's Society of Change Ringers in 1895 and the new bells were first rung on the 20 August 1897.



The Society's AGM in 1897 records "We can never thank Mr Cherry enough for all the instruction he has given us but it is impossible for him to continue to do the whole of this work. We therefore, after consultation with the Dean, advertised for an instructor and out of 36 applicants chose Mr Lindoff. It is always a risk to appoint a man without having seen him but I think we could not have made a better choice and I hope he likes us as much as we like him".

In 1909, Richard Cherry donated 2 trebles to augment the Guinness bells to a ring of 12.

In October 1898, the Irish Association of Change Ringers was founded by Richard Cherry and Gabriel Lindoff, St Patrick's Cathedral Society and Rev Digby Scott, Christ Church, Bray, Co Wicklow.

Richard Cherry was appointed as the first President of the Irish Association.

In 1902 the Association had the requisite number of members to affiliate to the Central Council of Church Bellringers and Richard was appointed the first Irish representative to the Council.

In October 2023, the 125th anniversary of the founding of the Irish Association will be celebrated. In its annual report for 2022 the Association recorded 338 members.

On 10 February 1923 Richard Cherry died aged 64. In addition to his considerable contribution to bellringing in Ireland, he held high office in the Irish legal profession, including serving as Lord Chief Justice of Ireland. His funeral service was held in St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin.

On 10 February 2023, the ringers at St Patrick's were joined in the belfry by 20 members of Richard Cherry's family and Dean William Morton as the 12 bells were rung to mark the centenary of his death. A son of Richard, John C Cherry rang at St Patrick's during the 1920's but none of the current family members are ringers. Although several of them took the opportunity to ring one of the Cherry bells before attending Evensong in the Cathedral.

