

# Durham Cathedral Bells: History and Details

Bell	Weight	Inscription
1	6-1-2	CAMPANA CHRISTI ET BEATAE MARIAE VIRGINIS WHITECHAPEL 1980
F#	(318 kg)	<i>"Bell of Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary. Whitechapel, 1980"</i>
2	7-0-8	CAMPANA SANCTAE HILDAE EX DONO PULSATORUM CAMPANARUM
E	(359 kg)	HUIUS ECCLESIAE CATHEDRALI WHITECHAPEL 1980 <i>"Bell of St Hild, given as a gift by the Bellingers of this Cathedral Church. Whitechapel, 1980"</i>
3	7-3-10	PACK & CHAPMAN OF LONDON FECERUNT Wm. DIGBY L.L.D., DEAN
D	(398 kg)	OF DURHAM 1780 <i>"Made by Pack and Chapman of London. William Digby, Dean of Durham 1780"</i>
4	7-3-14	OLIM CAMPANA S. MARGARETA DEC. ET CAP. DVNELM.REFEC.
C#	(400 kg)	A.D.MDCXCIII <i>"Once St Margaret's Bell, renewed by the Dean and Chapter of Durham. 1693"</i>
5	9-3-25	DIGBY L.L.D. DEAN OF DURHAM, CHAPMAN OF LONDON FECIT 1781
B	(507 kg)	<i>"Chapman of London made it in 1781 for William Digby, Dean of Durham."</i>
6	11-0-8	MEARS & STAINBANK, LONDINI ME FECERVNT SIT. NOMEN DOMINI
A	(562 kg)	BENEDICTUM: ME OLIM CAMPANAM S. BENEDICTI (1693) REFECERUNT D. ET CAP. DVNELM A:D: MDCCCXCVI <i>"Mears &amp; Stainbank of London made me. May the Lord's Name be Blessed. Once the Bell of St Benedict (1693). Renewed by the Dean &amp; Chapter, 1896."</i>
7	12-2-8	OLIM CAMPANA S. MICHAELIS DECANVS ET CAP REFECERVNT A.D.
G	(639 kg)	MDCXCIII <i>"Once the bell of St Michael, renewed by Dean and Chapter in 1693"</i>
8	15-3-1	OLIM CAMPANA BONI BEDÆ. CHRISTOPHER HODSON REFEC. A.D.
F#	(801 kg)	MDCXCIII I.H. DEC. ET CAP. DVNELM <i>"Once the bell of the Goodly Bede. Christopher Hodson. Renewed by the Dean and Chapter of Durham, 1693."</i>
9	21-2-9	OLIM CAMP. S. OSWALDI QVAM FIERI FECIT R. DE DVNELM. DEC. ET
E	(1100 kg)	CAP. DVNELM. REFECERUNT A.D.MDCXCIII CHR. HODSON ARTIFICE <i>"Once the bell of St Oswald which R(obert) of Durham had made. The Dean &amp; Chapter renewed the bell, 1693. Christopher Hodson was the craftsman."</i>
10	28-0-6	CAMP. S. CVTHBERTI OLIM GALALEA DEC. ET CAP. T. COMBER S.T.P.
D	(1430 kg)	DEC S. EYRE S.T.P. THE SAVR. DVNELM REFECERVNT A.D. MDCXCIII CHR. HODSON ARTIFICE <i>"The Bell of St Cuthbert, once called the Galilee Bell, renewed by Dean &amp; Chapter of Durham in 1693 when Thomas Comber, D.D. was Dean, Samuel Eyre (D.D.) was treasurer. Christopher Hodson was the craftsman."</i>

1104-1130	The central tower and the two western towers were constructed.
1210-1300	A belfry was added on to the central tower and three bells were hung here. These bells were used to call the monks to prayer at Midnight Matins. The four bells in the North Western Tower, named Galilee, Long Bell, St Bede and St Oswald were used on special occasions such as the Feast of St Cuthbert, Christmas and Easter. The bells were chimed individually not as a group.
1429-1459	There were fires in the central tower, leading to its reconstruction between 1464 and 1500. This included the rebuilding of the lantern stage of the tower. Portions of the roof structure of this rebuild survive in the present ringing room. Thus, the vault we can see today is unusually high, at 155 ft. The top of the tower is 218 ft above ground. The belfry containing the bells was a later addition. Three bells named, St Benedict, St Margaret and the Benedictus Bell were hung in this tower.
1631-1690	The "English" method of change ringing was being developed. Three bells from the North Western Tower were moved into the central lantern tower and the Chapter asked Umfrye Kene and quickly following him Thomas Bartlet, a London bellfounder, to recast the ring of six. They used the metal of the six lighter bells and one of the larger medieval bells, probably the Long Bell because there is an entry for Thomas Bartlet recasting the Galilee Bell, which had been chipped during retuning. Unfortunately some of Bartlet's bells had to be recast.
1693	The final expert recasting of the bells was carried out by Christopher Hodson. Hodson agreed to melt down the bells and add a new Treble while at the same time fixing wheels and installing proper ringing mechanisms. Five of the present ring of ten bells (the current 4 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> and Tenor) date back to his casting.
1765-1766	The 3 <sup>rd</sup> bell of the Hodson 8 was recast by George Dalton of York, while Francis Ellis of York constructed a new frame and re-hung the bells.
1780-1781	Bellfounders Pack & Chapman of the Whitechapel Foundry, London, recast the Hodson Treble and 3 <sup>rd</sup> bells, originally cast by Dalton.
1896	Mears & Stainbank of the Whitechapel Foundry, recast the 4 <sup>th</sup> Hodson bell.
1913-1922	Various additions were made to the central tower structure to strengthen it.
1980	Whitechapel Bellfoundry, London, removed the ring of eight bells for retuning and cast two new bells to make a ring of ten. They replaced the 1766 Ellis wooden frame with a steel frame and installed new fittings. The dated part of the old Francis Ellis frame, the eight old wheels and the eight old clappers hang in the ringing room as decorations.