

## THE BELLS OF ST PETER'S, HARBORNE

The tower contains nine bells: the modern ring of eight, and a bell dating from 1691 which is the preserved tenor of the old ring, now hung dead and used as a service bell.

The ring of eight, cast in 1923 by John Taylor of Loughborough, originally belonged to another belfry: that of the Bishop Ryder Memorial Church, Gem Street, near Lancaster Circus in Birmingham city centre. The bells were a recasting of an earlier eight (tenor 11½ cwt) by William Blews & Sons of Birmingham, 1868.

Partly on account of the spacious tower at Gem Street, but principally of course thanks to their vintage – a great era in Loughborough's true-harmonic bell production – the new bells were regarded as among the very best of their kind, too good indeed to be lost to Birmingham's ringing community. When closure and demolition of that church was in train in 1960, arrangements were fortunately made for the whole ring with its fittings to be transferred to Harborne, where it replaced an existing old-style eight which was in poor condition. The cost of the relocation and a new iron-and-steel bell frame was borne by Francis Henry Hawkins of Harborne in memory of his sister Johanna Julia Hawkins, and the ring formally rededicated here in March 1963.

	<i>Weight</i>			<i>Note</i>		<i>Weight</i>			<i>Note</i>
	<i>Cwt</i>	<i>gr</i>	<i>lb</i>			<i>Cwt</i>	<i>gr</i>	<i>lb</i>	
<i>Treble</i>	3	1	11	F#	5	5	2	17	B
2	3	2	10	E#	6	6	2	18	A#
3	4	0	7	D#	7	8	3	22	G#
4	4	1	4	C#	<i>Tenor</i>	12	3	24	F#

All eight modern bells bear the Taylor foundry mark and are inscribed:

WILLIAM BLEWS AND SONS, BIRMINGHAM, 1868 / RECAST 1923

In addition, the tenor has:

TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND IN MEMORY OF GEORGE AND MARY STEPHENS  
 THESE BELLS WERE RECAST AND REHUNG BY THEIR NEPHEW  
 ROBERT RAISBECK GELLING 1923 \* \* \* CANON G.E. BADGER, VICAR  
 JAMES GEORGE, RINGING MASTER

The preserved old bell is inscribed:

BE IT KNOWNE TO ALL THAT DOE MEE SE  
 THAT WILLIAM BAGLEY OF CHACOM MADE MEE 1691

*Weight approximately 9 cwt, note G*