Fig. 2. Part of Galway Arms over tomb in St. Mary's Cathedral.

Fig. 1. Interior of St. Mary's. South Aisle.
St. Mary's Cathedral, Limerick.

ITS DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH.

By R. F. Hewson.

It is with considerable trepidation that I have undertaken to write a paper on this much written about building, but as considerable confusion has occurred from conflicting statements, and as various errors have been copied and taken for granted by one writer after another, it might be of some advantage to have the history of this well-known and loved Limerick church clarified. This I hope to do to some extent, after considerable study of the fabric and taking advantage of Lenihan’s extracts from White and Arthur MSS., also the valuable papers by T. J. Westropp, published in the Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland.  

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I will pass over the controversy as to who was the founder and the date of foundation; was Domnall Mór Uá Briain the founder and the date between 1180 and 1190, as usually stated; or was it founded by his predecessor Mortogh as some authorities aver, owing to Keating’s mention of the Church as the Cathedral of Limerick Diocese in his account of the Synod of Rathbreasail, held in 1112? I think none of the buildings are of an earlier date than 1180.

The first question I will deal with is, what did the original building consist of? And the next, what part of the building still exists?

Examination of the masonry shews that the nave, north and south aisles and the chancel belong to the period when sandstone was used for all dressed stone work, such as doors, windows, the capitals of piers of the arches and the corner stones or coign stones.

The chancel is reputed to have been built by Bishop Donnchadh O’Brien (the first Irish Bishop). This may easily be the case as Donnchadh died in 1209, and all we know is that the chancel was built before the introduction of limestone for dressed or cut stones. The original sandstone coign stones can be seen on the external corners at the east end, nearly hidden by the fifteenth century buttresses; the plinth which extends round the chancel a short distance above ground level is also sandstone though it is copied in limestone on the bases of the buttresses; the cornice under the existing battlements is also sandstone; this was originally under the eaves. Battlements were not put on churches in this country before the fifteenth century when there was a regular spate of them.

The east window is modern and the east gable appears to have been rebuilt after the Williamite siege of 1691; the south window of the chancel is a fifteenth century insertion as can easily be seen by examination of the masonry, so is the blocked up door in the north wall, the door leading to the organ loft, and the door opening into the choir room on the south side. The doors and window might be as late as the sixteenth century as that type of door with a very acute pointed ogee head was very usual in sixteenth century work in Ireland.

It has been stated time and time again that the chancel was lengthened by twenty feet in the fifteenth century. This error can easily be explained by the common confusion between choir and chancel, which many people think are synonymous, which is by no means the case. The chancel is that portion of a church directly east of the crossing, where there are transepts, or of the nave, where there are none. The choir being that part of the church (often screened off) set apart for the stalls of the Dignitaries, Canons, Vicars Choral and other singers, in a secular Cathedral, and for the Regular Canons, Monks, and Brethren in Abbeys and Monastic Churches.

The choir was often in or partly in the chancel when there was room enough, but when the chancel was small and a lot of room was required in front of the High Altar and Sanctuary, in what was called the Presbytery, for a number of clergy participating in ceremonies the choir was pushed westwards across the transept crossing into the nave, so when we hear of the choir being lengthened it does not necessarily mean that the fabric of the chancel was lengthened, and in St. Mary's it obviously was not, as the east end of the chancel is part of the original building as already explained.

The fact that the foundation of a wall was found about 14 feet from the east end does not prove that the chancel was lengthened, on the contrary it shows that St. Mary's at one time had the usual feature of Medieval Cathedrals, a reredos behind the High Altar with what was called the retro-choir to the east of it, a feature very often used as a Lady-Chapel. When, as was probably the case at St. Mary's, a larger one was provided in the south transept, the High Altar was moved back to the east wall of the chancel, giving increased length to the sanctuary and presbytery.

We will now consider the transepts. It is usually stated that Donal Mór's church had two transepts; if that was the case, they were demolished completely when the existing transepts were built, not one bit of dressed sandstone in coigns or anywhere else is to be found. The existing windows are modern rebuilds, but we are told that they are copies of decayed originals and Dynel's sketch of 1680 shews the window of the south transept to be a similar Early English one, which style only came into use in Ireland during the thirteenth century. St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, is one of the earliest examples of that period (1225).

There may have been an early small south transept or side chapel, as the most easterly pier of the aisle arcade shews on the east side at a higher level than the aisle arches the impost or springing stone of a former arch (see illustration). If this arch belonged to a transept, all traces were removed when the thirteenth century transept was built. At the north side there is no trace of such an arch, or of any building earlier than the existing transept, also dating from the thirteenth century.

Conjectural reconstruction of original building.

Now to sum up, what did the original church look like? There was a nave with seven round headed clerestory windows looking over the lean-to roofs of north and south aisles, which were very narrow, 10½ feet wide internally. There were four massive square piers supporting plain pointed arches, forming the arcade between the nave and aisles, which remain unaltered to the present day, a chancel the same width as the nave, and a small transept or side chapel at the east end of the south aisle. I think it can be demonstrated that this transept or chapel was lower and narrower than the present ones. The impost or stone from which the originals sprang is lower than the one from which the existing arch springs; the pier at the east side of the arch has no trace of the older arch, which would, I think, point to the fact that the original pier was removed to make room for a wider as well as higher arch.

The corresponding piers of the north transept arch shew no traces of an earlier arch. It may be noted that there was an old low arch opening from the south aisle into the old transept or chapel, see illustration.

The west door of the nave was the existing one, but the window over it is an insertion, the original one may have been a two or three light one like that at Manister Abbey, which dates from the same period, and is built in the same style of architecture, with heavy square piers, pointed arches in the aisle arcade and round headed clerestory windows. It was quite usual in France when first the pointed arch was introduced, with its great structural advantages, to use it only for the main arches of a church, the doors and windows still retaining their round heads. This practice was introduced into Ireland by the Cistercians.(4)

There would probably have been single round-headed windows at the west end of the aisles, also windows in the aisles opposite each arch of the arcade, these would also probably have round heads. The transept or chapel would have a window probably two light and round headed. What the windows of the chancel were like is problematical, as it was of slightly later date than the nave and aisles, so its windows may have been pointed lancets like that in the chancel at Manister.(5) There was no tower or battlements, just plain

3. See illustration.
4. A typical example is Manister Abbey.
5. Unfortunately the south side and east end of Manister chancel have fallen with the east window, but Wakeman's sketch is reproduced by Westropp in The Antiquities of Limerick, p. 78.
eaves with sandstone cornices under them; this cornice still exists under the battlements of the chancel.

To sum up, the original church consisted of a nave, north and south aisles, chancel, and a small south transept or chapel. All these features exist to the present day, with the exception of the transept, which entirely disappeared when the existing transept were built. (See plan).

Now we come to the first additions to the original church, namely the tower and transepts. The tower, which is built over the most westerly bay of the nave, rests on the west wall, the two most westerly arches of the arcade, and on an arch thrown across between the two west piers which were strengthened to carry the extra load. (See plan). This arch dates the tower.
The two clerestory windows over these piers were also blocked up. The reinforcements of the piers have attached shafts at the corners with caps and bases of a typically Early English pattern; they have also the vertical rectangular rib on the outside face which is very typical of this period; they are made of limestone not sandstone, as the original corner shafts of the piers are.

These limestone shafts with ribs, caps, and bases are of the same pattern as those on the piers of the crossing of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin. This would date the tower as not earlier than the second decade of the thirteenth century (the date of St. Patrick's is given as 1225). It will be noted that all the dressed stones are limestone.

It is only the lower portion of the tower up to the floor of the bell chamber that is of this date, all above this point is much later. The transepts would appear to be of the same period, but the arches at the crossing would appear to have been rebuilt in the fifteenth century.

There is no record of improvements carried out during the remainder of the thirteenth century. Westropp mentions that the church was beautified and redecorated by Bishop Eustace de L'Eau in 1262, but "the times were bad" and an important is light is thrown on the state of the church by an extract from the Vatican Archives: Reg. 351, fol. 355, dated 1362-3, given me by the Rev. M. Molony, P.P. It states that the Pope grants an indulgence to those who contribute to the restoration of Limerick Cathedral which "as we have learned has suffered as regards the belfry, bells and the building in general, such extensive injury and deterioration that the cathedral funds could not make good the damage without the contributions of the faithful."

The Papal indulgence of 1362-3 seems to have the desired effect, as extensive improvements as well as repairs were carried out during the episcopate of Stephen de Vall or Wall (1360-69). Two chapels to the south of the chancel and east of the south transept on the site of the existing choir room, were built at this time, the one nearest the chancel being dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen, and the other to St. James (the Greater).

Westropp states that both these chapels were erected by Thomas Balbeyne, ante, 1369. His will given in full in the Arthur MSS. only mentions one, the chapel of St. James, which he leaves to Nicholas Stretch. The chapel of St. Mary Magdalen may be ascribed to John Budstone, whose daughter, Margaret, the wife of Peter Arthur, bequeathed to her descendants "two monuments of her ancestors, both bearing the name Budstone and a just share of the chapel which represents the name and aid of Magdalen."

It may be assumed that two chapels were also erected at this period, to the east of the north transept. This was a favourite site for chapels, and I think it may be taken for granted that no chapel would have been built to the north and south of the aisles if there had been vacant sites to the east of the north transept. One of these chapels may have been dedicated to St. Catherine, who had an altar somewhere in that part of the church.

These restorations and buildings were executed during the episcopacies of Bishops Wall, Creagh and Cornelius O'Dea, between 1363 and 1405. The

next improvement we hear of is recorded in the Arthur MSS. That Thomas Arthur (Mayor 1421) "built to the blessed Vergin the elaborate Facade of the choir in lofty marble, hence it bears the shield of the family of Arthur on its door." This must refer to a screen erected at the west end of the choir.

The chapel to the west of the north transept now called the Jebb chapel, must have been built during this period; it was dedicated to St. Nicholas and would appear to have belonged to the Arthurs. The Arthur slab in the north transept was in the chapter room in Dynely's time; it is to the memory of Geoffrey Arthur, who was treasurer of the cathedral, and died in 1519.

About the middle of the fifteenth century, Edmond, son of Geoffrey Bultingfort, who was six times Mayor of Limerick, erected the well known and imposing Galway-Bultingfort monument in the south transept, at the right of which is the Budstone sedilia, erected to the memory of John Budstone, who built the chapel of St. Mary Magdalen already referred to. On the left of the Galway monument is a piscina with a shelf.

During the long episcopate of John Folan (1489-1521) many additions were made to the church, which then began to take on its modern appearance. The three chapels on the south side, west of the transept and the two on the north side of the Jebb or Arthur chapel were built during this period. (See plan).

The chapel, now the baptistry, and the Pery or St. George's chapel were built at a later date than the others, which can be seen by the vertical joints in the exterior walls and by the fact that there were windows in the walls between them and the chapels to the east of them. The bell chamber of the tower with its ornate windows was also built during this period.

The construction of these chapels to the north and south of the aisles necessitated considerable structural changes in the aisles. The lean-to roofs were removed, the outer walls heightened, which had arches opened in them leading into the chapels, which latter had independent roofs at right angles to the nave placed over them and across the aisles, and abutting against the nave walls. This arrangement still exists on the north side, but in 1892-3 these roofs were removed and a continuous roof, parallel with that of the nave was placed over the chapels on that side, which reduced the number of gutters between roofs, always a fruitful source of trouble.

To return to Bishop Folan's time, the battlements were then placed on the walls. The two chapels on the south side, between the south transept and the south door, had originally party walls enclosing them, but they were thrown into one when they were turned into a consistory court in the sixteenth century.

The identification of the various chapels with the Saints they were dedicated to, is in some cases very difficult, owing largely to the fact that though they were dedicated to Saints they were also reserved for the burial of members of the founders' families and their successors, and it became usual to call the chapel by the name of the family who had burial rights in it. With the result that out of the eight chapels now in existence besides the two problematical ones that may have been east of the north transept, we only know for certain the names of the Saints that four were dedicated to, viz.: the chapels dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen and St. James, referred to previously, the chapel of St. George, now named from the Pery's, who with the Stacpoole's and
Roches have burial rights in it, and the chapel dedicated to St. Nicholas, now called the Jebb chapel, after Bishop John Jebb. This used to be called the Arthur chapel, as that family had burial rights in it, and we know that Thomas fitz Dominick Arthur directed that he should be buried in the chapel of St. Nicolas, in 1634.(9)

Of the other chapels, two at the north side west of the Jebb chapel and two on the south side between the south transept and the south door, we have no record direct or indirect of their dedication; all we know is that there was a chapel dedicated to St. Ann, and that there was another dedicated to St. Catherine. Westropp, quoting wills, mentions one of Johane, daughter of Nicholas Strech (1587)—"To be buried in St. Ann's chapel within the cathedral."(10) The will of Catherine Arthur, née Skiddy, directs "that her body be laid with her husband's in the ancestral monument at the left wing of the altar of St. Catherine, the Vergine and Martyr." In 1680, Dineley mentions a Stritch Tomb in one of these chapels, this may be the Wall tomb (f. on plan)

Of the two chapels on the north side, west of the St. Nicholas or Arthur (Jebb) chapel, we know next to nothing. The one marked on the plan "O'Brien or Napier Chapel" is the legendary burial place of "Murrough of the Burnings," Earl of Thomond, 1624; the supposed site of the burial is marked 1 on the plan. The chapel, now used as a Baptistery, is called by Westropp the Creagh Chapel, but, I think, with very little reason; he mentions two Creagh slabs in it, but there are Creagh slabs all over the church, at least five in the Arthur chapel. He quotes a MSS. in Trinity College, stating that the Creagh arms (three branches) were "drawn in the chapel on the left hand entering to the quire of our Lady's Church at Limerick"; this, I think, can hardly be taken to apply to a chapel at the extreme west end of the church.

Lenihan,(11) quoting from the Arthur MSS. and referring to the episcopacy of John Folan, who succeeded in 1489, states: "During the episcopacy of this prelate the nave of the church of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which was narrow and mouldering to decay, was enlarged, and several other additions were made, including the erection of three transepts, as well as the formation of several aisles." This statement I think must be taken with the proverbial "grain of salt," as the nave certainly never was enlarged and stands to-day as it left the hands of the builders; as St. Mary's already had two transepts, this addition would make in all five transepts !! The two aisles are also part of the original building. It may be mentioned here that the transept arches date from the fifteenth century, and may have been rebuilt in Bishop Folan's time, though the transepts themselves are thirteenth century work. Dr. Thomas Arthur was, I fear, given to drawing the long bow when he referred to the good old days of his ancestors.

Westropp,(12) quoting from the Arthur MSS., states that "Robert and Christopher Arthur rebuilt the large chapel west of the north transept; this would refer to the chapel of St. Nicholas or Arthur (Jebb) chapel.

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The south window and buttresses of the chancel were also erected at this time, one of which—the south-east—has a shield with the Arthur arms (a chevron between three clarions, underneath the words Johannis Arthur). The north east buttress has a shield with a chevron between three scallops.

The very beautiful and interesting misericord choir stalls with carved oak tip-up seats, are worthy of close inspection, and date from this period; an illustrated booklet by J. A. Haydn, and published by Messrs. McKern a few years ago, describes them in detail. They are remarkable for being the only medieval choir stalls that survive in Ireland.

It may be asked why the chapels to the east of the north transept have so entirely disappeared (if they were ever there); it may be noted that the sacristy has also disappeared, leaving no trace except the blocked up door into the chancel. This I think, may be easily accounted for; it had, unfortunately, become the practice during a siege to mount a gun on the cathedral tower. This was first done in 1641 when the Castle was besieged by the Confederates, the effect during the sieges by Ireton, William of Orange and Ginckell, was to draw the fires of the besiegers’ batteries on the Church, with disastrous results. Westropp and Lenihan both mention that the east end and the tower of the Cathedral were in a ruinous condition after the siege of 1691. William gave a grant of £1,000 towards the repair of this and other churches in the city. It would seem probable that the ruins of the chapels and sacristy were cleared away, and the building called the Blue School, now the Sexton’s lodging, was built on the site.

It may be noted that the south transeptal chapels, dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen and St. James, have also disappeared, with the exception of the arches leading into them, now blocked up. The building on the site must be of a considerably later date, as it blocks up one of the chancel windows, which would not appear to be earlier than late fourteenth century; it was usual for transeptal chapels to be rather shallow, so as not to interfere with the lighting of the chancel, which the existing structure certainly does. The windows appear to date from the late fifteenth or sixteenth century.

During the sixteenth century, it would appear from the Arthur MSS., quoting Lenihan, “to be the custom to apply the fines that were levied by the Mayor on the citizens towards the restoration and improvement of the cathedral,” whence the cost of the various repairs and restorations that were executed by Mayors William Stackpool, 1500; William Harrold, in 1529, who repaired the chancel, and Daniel Arthur, son of Geoffrey Arthur, who in 1532-3 “paved the three aisles and the chancel with those square slabs of Black Marble which originated the popular name of Leccadaniel.”

This ends the Medieval period in the church’s history, and during the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Mary, the old church seems to have suffered little interference with either the structure or its religious services, but in Elizabeth’s reign, the Desmond wars and the impoverishment caused by them, reduced the revenues of the Cathedral to vanishing point. In 1600 Dean Campbell complained of the misery to which he was reduced.

Bishop Bernard Adams,(14) 1603-26, deserves to be remembered (his monument is on the south wall of the chancel, over that of Bishop O’Dea) for

his good work in restoring the church, which he records in the Black Book; he states that the building was greatly injured and almost ruined, he had to restore the walls, roofs and windows. He also installed a beautiful Organ and rearranged the musical services.

Westropp records that Donat, Earl of Thomond, also assisted in the necessary repairs, and that the said Donat bought himself a tomb in the north side of the chancel, and removed the effigy and bones of Cornelius O'Dea to the south side of the chancel on July 14th, 1621. The Earl in his will dated Nov. 28th, 1617, desired "to be buried in the Thoumbe in the Cathedral church of St. Mary in the city of Limerick which I lately purchased there, according to my honour and degree."

He desires his son, Henry, "to repaire, finishe, and make upp my thombe at Limerick, and to laie upon it my picture in Alabaster in roabes, and in the topp of the thoms all pieces of Armor as is uppon Sir francis Vere's thumbe in Westminster, and two earls and two barons in their roabes to be the supporters of the said uppermost stone, as the said Sir francis his thombe is erected. And also to hang and bedeke the saide thumbe by order of heroldrie with my coate Armore and all rights due and aptcyng to an Earle."

Such was the intention of the Earl. Whether it was fully carried out is doubtful; if it was, it must have half filled the chancel, as Sir Francis Vere's monument in Westminster Abbey is very large and stands out in the floor of the north transept, where it takes up a lot of room. The Earl's monument as it exists is a reconstruction of 1678, as its inscription states, and contains little or nothing of the original except two mutilated effigies of the Earl and his Countess, not in Alabaster but in ordinary granite, and painted. The Earl's will also mentions, "I bequeath £20 str. for the adorninge of the quire of our Ladys Church in Limerick."

We know nothing of what happened to the Cathedral during the Commonwealth, or the reigns of Charles II. and James II., except that a fine peal of six bells were cast by the well known West of England Bellfounders, Rodger and William Perdue, in 1673, and contributed to by William York, Mayor. His monument is to be seen on the second pier of the north arcade (marked "K" on the plan). William Perdue died in Limerick in 1673 and was buried in the Cathedral. These bells had two added to their number in 1703, when George Roche was Mayor, making the peal eight. (14a)

Thomas Dyneley, who visited the Cathedral in 1680, would appear to have found it in good repair; he left a sketch of the church which is interesting; it shows the south porch when it was two storeys high, the mark of the higher roof can be seen on the wall above the existing roof. Dyneley notes the tomb of William Perdue, the Bellfounder, which has disappeared, and also the tomb of Bishop O'Dea, with the effigy robed and mitred on it. It had escaped the hammers of the Cromwellians to perish under the hands of restorers. The faint trace of the figure of an ecclesiastic which has been chipped away, can be seen on a slab in the recess of the Galway monument. This can hardly have been Bishop O'Dea's effigy, as has been suggested; if it was, as Mr. Hunt has pointed out, it would have the outline of a pillow or cushion that the head rested on, the head of a recumbent effigy being supported on one, this effigy must have been on an upright wall slab. It is, of course,
possible that Bishop O'Dea's effigy was on an upright slab before the Earl of Thomond evicted it from the north side of the chancel.

It would appear that the O'Dea monument has been pushed back into the wall of the chancel, at some time to make more room. This would account for the disappearance of the effigy, as there is no room for an effigy on the narrow top now projecting from the wall. An account of payments given by R. O'Brien, mentions re-setting Bishop O'Dea's tomb.


As already recorded, the church was severely damaged by fire of a battery at Corbally during the siege of 1691, and extensive repairs had to be undertaken, including the top of the tower, which was completely rebuilt from the string course under the battlements upwards.

Ferrar states that in 1759, £1,357 14s. 8d. was expended on repairs and alterations, the choir was enlarged, "three elegant brass branches were erected to light the church," and "the arches of the choir were glassed." The three fine brass candelabra now hanging in the church are these referred to, and it is the inscription "1759 Corporation of Limerick, Sexten Baylee, Mayor, John Parker, William Gubbins Esqrs. Sherriffs."

"In 1770, several feet of the Church Yard of the Cathedral were taken into Bow Lane. The Verger's house which stood over the Bow was taken down. The passage wall and gate at the north door of the Church (now built up), which served to hide the beauty of the Cathedral were removed, by which means a broad passage has been made to the quay, and carriages can approach close to the church door, which they never could do before."(15)

"In 1809 the passage to the chapter room of the Cathedral was opened under the eastern window communicating with the main street."

"In 1812 Dean Preston dismantled and removed the old Episcopal Court, broke a passage through the wall at the back of a bench which was there, and laid the beams of a new gallery in the south aisle to correspond with the gallery which had recently been erected in the north aisle. This was done for the accommodation of the then Corporation." The stones used as corbels to support these galleries are still in position. Presumably they were taken out of the pier capitals, as the size, section, and manner of carving corresponds. An entry in Robert O'Brien's Report, 1860-62, confirms this. He mentions a payment for cut grit stones from Ballysimon Marble Works to repair columns and fill "gaps in pillars."

We do not hear of any further works being done until 1842, when William Bardwell, a London Architect, made plans and drawings of a proposed restoration of the Cathedral, and removed the plaster covering the west door, and revealed the ancient stonework. Lenihan remarks the grooves and marks on the sandstone dressings of the door, and mentions the opinion that they were caused by soldiers sharpening their arms; this effect can also be seen on the sandstone coign stones on the north east corner of the chancel, between the two fifteenth century buttresses, it will be noted that there are two sets.

15. Lenihan, p. 599-600.
16. This would be the processional passage from the choir room across the south transept. R. F. H.
17. Lenihan, p. 560.
of grooves, one low down at an angle suitable for sharpening swords and the other higher up, suitable for sharpening spears or pikes.

The next restoration and the most far reaching, may be said to have commenced in 1857, when William Slater, an eminent architect, was consulted by the Dean (Kirwan) and Chapter in connection with the erection of a memorial to Mr. Augustus O'Brien Stafford, M.P. (remembered for his exertions towards the amelioration of the sufferings of the sick and wounded in Scutari Hospital during the Crimean War).

Mr. Slater advised the removal of the whitewashed ceilings which concealed the ancient oak roof and celerestory windows, also the removal of the perpendicular east window (which is now in St. Michael's Church). The present three light window of Early English design was put in its place and filled with glass typical of the period, in memory of Mr. Stafford. The large galleries in both transepts were removed and it would appear that the aisle galleries were also taken down. The Organ was removed from the west end of the choir where it stood on a screen or gallery, and put in its present position in the north transept, in an arch made for the purpose.

No record was kept if any traces of arches leading into the transeptal chapels were found. The arches at each side of the choir, which were blocked with brickwork, were opened; the choir was lengthened with new oak stalls made to correspond with the medieval ones, and the whole completed with canopies. (These new stalls have been since removed). Bishop Jebb's statue was removed from the chancel to its present position in the Arthur chapel. The bells were also rehung (at the expense of the Earl of Limerick). These restorations, which were not completed until 1868, cost nearly £4,000.

At the same time a number of unsightly houses in front of the Cathedral, between it and the Potato Market and County Court House, were removed, and the fine retaining wall to the churchyard built. The Corporation and the Grand Jury contributed towards the cost of this work.

In 1862 Mrs. Westropp restored the south transept, including the large five light window, and filled it with stained glass; she also erected the fine monument inserted in the east wall, all in memory of her son, Thomas Johnson Westropp, who died in 1839, not in 1830 as on the brass. The north transept was also reroofed about this time.

In 1879 Dean Bunbury began a series of restorations, including the reroofing of the north aisles and chapels, rebuilding the large five light window of the Jebb (Arthur) chapel. The walls and battlements on the north side of the church were repaired and renewed where necessary, also the old lodge at the north side of the grounds was removed, and replaced with a wall and railings, and a central hot water heating system was installed.

The grounds were considerably enlarged, the old Exchange was acquired and demolished with the exception of the facade facing Nicholas Street.

18. Lenihan, p. 561-2; also Mr. R. V. O'Brien's report on the restoration 1857-81.
19. During this restoration, members of the Arthur family restored the sedilia in the north transept, which was broken and concealed by wooden panels. (Report on the restoration furnished by Robert Vere O'Brien, 1861).
In 1892 further works were undertaken under Dean Bunbury, including the re-roofing of the south aisle and chapels. The floors were re-tiled, the walls re-plastered, the outer walls pointed and repaired, the battlements on the south side were restored to correspond with those on the north, the battlements of the Tower were overhauled and put in good condition and a new roof put on the Tower. The porch in front of the west door was removed. Unfortunately the fine Romanesque doorway was drastically restored, with the unnecessary removal of the very unusual keystone which included the three outer orders of the arch in one stone. The design of this carving on the original capitals of the arch was similar to that on the piers of the south arcade. A number of old houses at the corner of Nicholas Street and Bridge Street, including Ireton’s house, were removed and the sites included in the grounds.

In Dean O’Brien’s time (1913-1929) various improvements were made, including the erection of the fine reredos, which is such an ornament to the Sanctuary. The room over the choir room was restored and is now used as the chapter room. It contains an interesting collection of portraits of former Bishops and Deans. In 1907 the fourth bell of the peal being defective, it was replaced by a new bell cast by Taylor of Loughborough, at the cost of Mr. W. E. Hewson. In 1912 the organ was restored and enlarged.

In Dean Hackett’s time an extensive re-arrangement of the choir and seating was undertaken. The modern stalls of the 1860 restoration were taken away, and the medieval ones removed to the position they now occupy across the transepts, a stone screen (of perpendicular style) was erected west of the Choir, complete with bronze gates. It was unfortunate, that it was thought necessary to set the ancient stalls back between the piers of the transept arches; the result was that there was not room for them all, six being left stranded high and dry outside the screen. If the screen had been put at the west face of the pier instead of the east, it could have included these six stalls in the choir with much happier effect.

In 1923 the third bell was recast by Taylor of Loughborough, at the cost of Sir A. W. Shaw.

The Very Rev. G. L. Swain became Dean in 1929, and during his occupancy of the office, the fabric has been very well maintained. In 1930 the tenor bell was recast by Taylor, at the cost of Mr. W. E. Hewson.

In 1935 The Bishop, The Right Rev. Charles King Irwin, D.D. (now Bishop of Down and Connor and Dromore), suggested the formation of a Guild to assist in the maintenance of the fabric of the Cathedral. This was successfully accomplished in that year. The Guild has been able to afford considerable financial assistance to the Cathedral authorities, for such works as strengthening the tower and bell frames, repairing roofs, gutters, and battlements, with other necessary works for the maintenance of the fabric.

We have now brought the story of the Cathedral fabric from the time of Domnal mór up to the present date, 1944, with the fervent hope that those who will be responsible for its upkeep in the future will carry on the tradition of their predecessors in an adequate manner.
NOTE ON THE BELLS OF ST. MARY'S.

The original peal of six bells cast by William and Rodger Perdue in 1579 have all been recast or replaced, and the two bells cast by Tobias Covey (in Limerick in 1703). It was quite usual at that time for bells to be cast on the spot, often in a pit in the church yard. Tobias Covey was a son-in-law of one of the Perdue's and succeeded them in the business), have also been recast as follows:—

No. 1. The treble cast by Covey in 1703, recast by Taylor of Loughborough in 1827, to the order of Everard Hewson of Castle Hewson. The original inscription has been reproduced.

2. As above, also recast by Taylor to Mr. Hewson's order.

3. The treble of Yorke's peal, cast by the Perdues in 1679, recast by Taylor in 1823 to the order of Sir A. Shaw, the original inscription not reproduced.

4. A new bell cast in 1907 by Taylor replacing a defective Murphy bell, cast to the order of Mr. Hewson.

5. Cast by T. Mears of London in 1827.


7. Cast by Murphy of Dublin in 1829 and recast by Taylor to the order of Mr. Hewson.

8. The Tenor, cast by the Perdues in 1673, recast in 1930 by Taylor, to the order of Mr. Hewson.

All bells marked * have had the original inscription reproduced.

The bell in the City Museum was also cast by Covey, probably in Limerick.