

Ring true: the galvanised steel bells, which cost €100,000, arrived in St John's Cathedral this Thursday. They are expected to be hoisted into place and operational by the weekend

PICTURES: ADRIAN BUTLER

New bells are set to ring out this weekend in St John's Cathedral

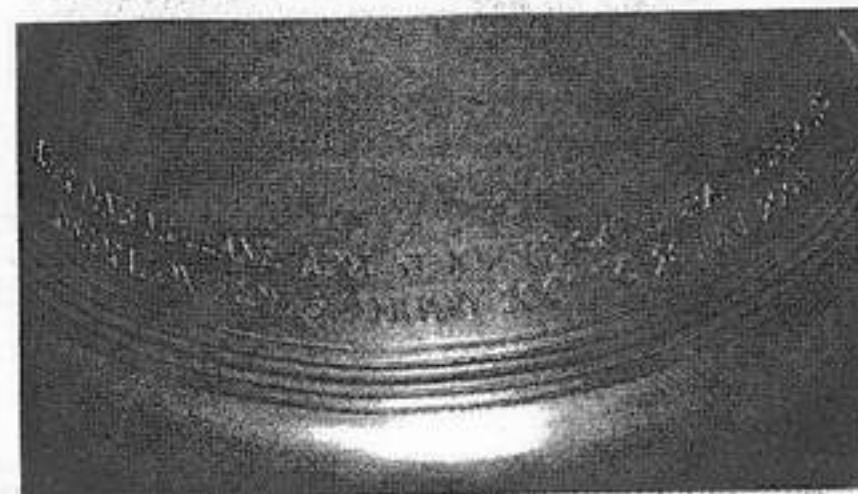
Gerard Fitzgibbon

THE sound of the Angelus will strike out louder and clearer than ever before over Limerick city from next week, as ten new bells are to be installed at St John's Cathedral.

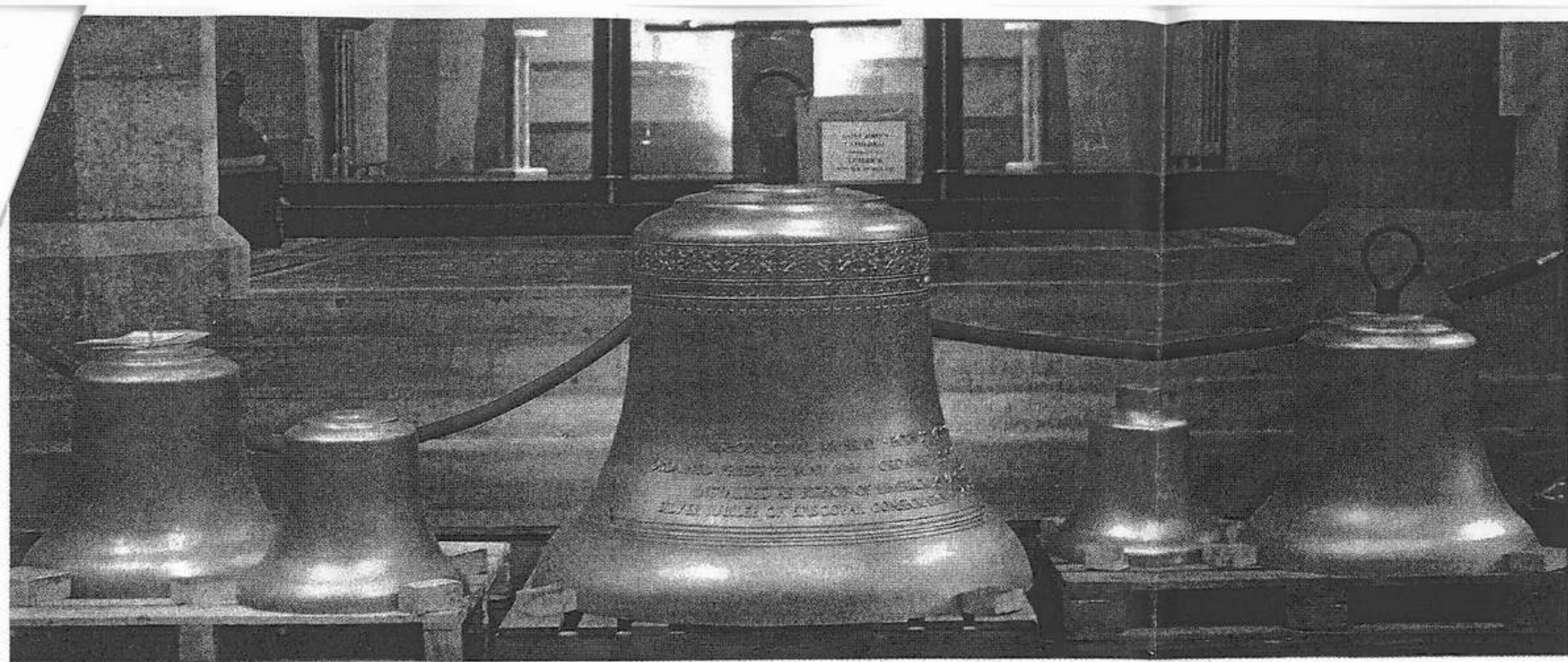
The galvanised steel bells, which arrived at St John's this Thursday from Belgium, cost more than €100,000 and are the same

tonne each. They are inscribed with the dates of birth and ordination of Bishop Murray and Fr Denis Mullane, the former administrator of St John's and head of the Cathedral restoration committee.

The bells were ordered last August from the Clock-O-Matic firm in Holsbeek, Belgium and were forged in purpose-built moulds at the famous Royal Biechoute bell



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The galvanised steel bells, which arrived at St John's this Thursday from Belgium, cost more than €100,000 and are the same size as those at the Cathedrals in Cobh and Derry.

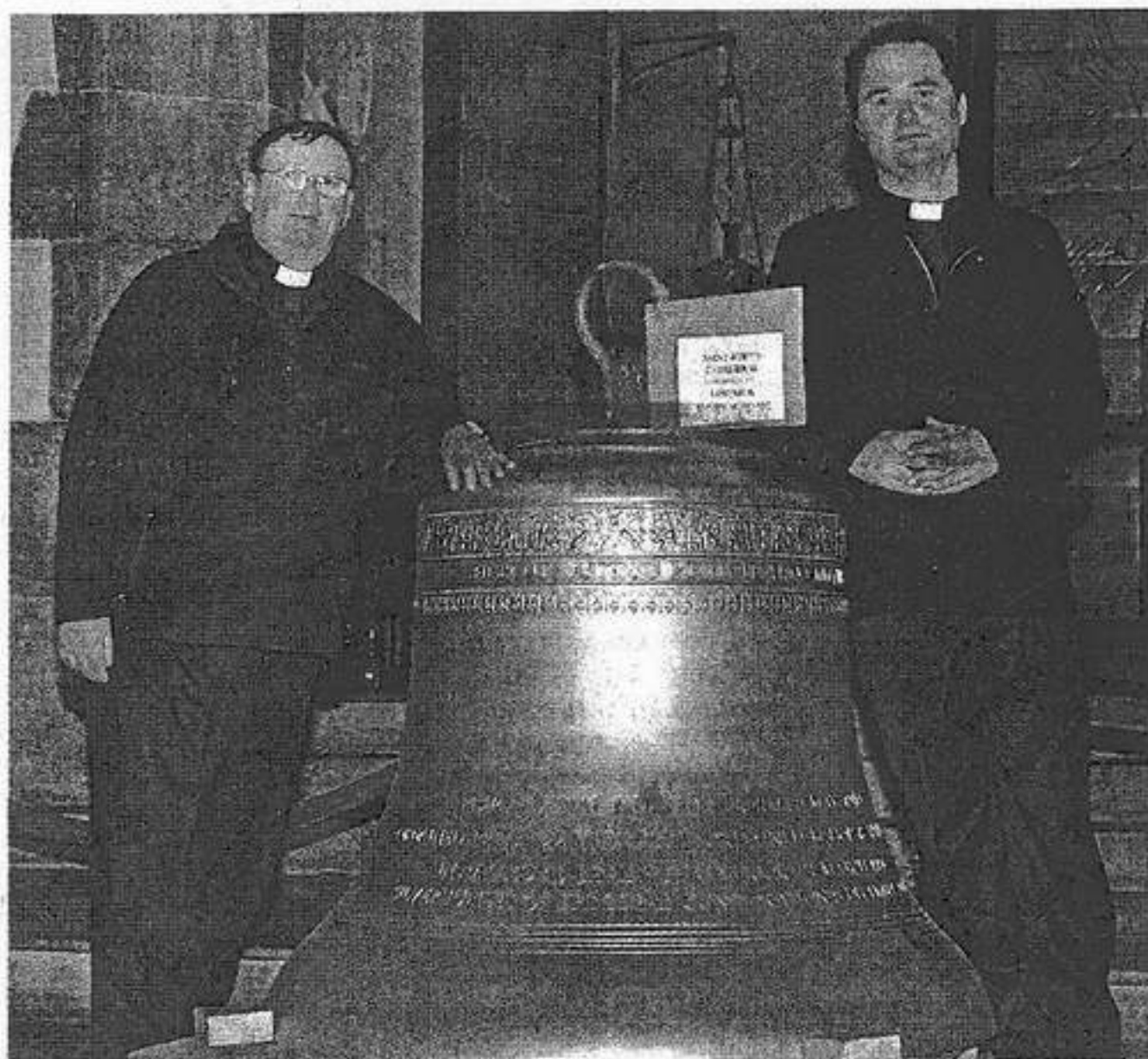
The painstaking operation to mount them on a steel frame and hoist them up alongside the existing bells will begin once they have been blessed by Bishop Donal Murray at Vigil Mass this Saturday evening. They are expected to be in place and fully operational by next weekend.

The centrepiece of the new carillon of bells are two magnificently decorated steel pieces, which weigh more than one

tonne each. They are inscribed with the dates of birth and ordination of Bishop Murray and Fr Denis Mullane, the former administrator of St John's and head of the Cathedral restoration committee.

The bells were ordered last August from the Clock-O-Matic firm in Holsbeek, Belgium and were forged in purpose-built moulds at the famous Royal Eijsbouts bell foundry. They were initially planned to be installed in time for Christmas, but were hit by minor delays.

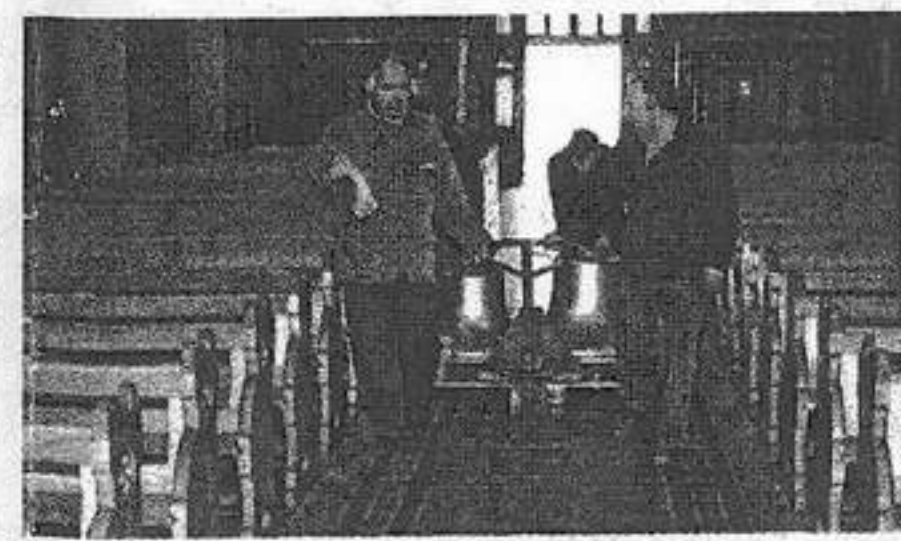
High speed galvanised solenoid strikers will strike the bells, which have been crafted to match the pitch of the existing bells. They will be electronically operated by a keyboard in the organ loft, yet can also be pre-programmed to play a number of tunes through a state-of-the-art movotron system.



Fr Leo McDonnell and Fr Shane Harmon, curates at St John's, with the new bells



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The bells being wheeled into the Cathedral