

SAINT MARY'S CATHEDRAL SOCIETY OF CHANGE RINGERS, EDINBURGH



The badge is in silver and oval in shape and measures 50mm x 38mm. The long axis is vertical and the ten names of the original bells are inscribed around an ornate border. In the centre of the badge is the gilt monogram "S" & "M", for St Mary's above a little bell-shaped mount. The back of the badge has a clasped pin for fixing to clothing and carries the inscription:

S.MARY'S CATHEDRAL CHURCH
BELL-RINGERS SOCIETY

On the bottom edge of the badge is a little eyelet to carry a hooked pendant with a monogram "C"-"Y" signifying that the bearer is a qualified bell-ringer and a member of one of the two senior bell-ringing societies. Originally this meant the "Ancient Society of College Youths" established in London in 1637 but is nowadays extended to include "The Society of Royal Cumberland Youths" established in 1746 but thought to have started out as the London Scholars in 1717.

The St. Mary's Cathedral Society of Change Ringers website 2015

St Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh

An excellent lavatory, with every requisite fitting and toilet accommodation, is also curtained off, with an ever constant supply of water. The whole place is simply fitted up in the most expensive, decorative, and luxurious manner, and it is evident that the ringers here possess surroundings not to be equalled in any other branch of church work elsewhere, and each member of this well-organized Guild is in possession of, and wear on occasions when deemed necessary, a most prettily designed silver badge or medal, with a list of the names on each bell inscribed, and at the bottom also notifying that they are members of the Ancient Society of College Youths. All these esteemed candidates for ringing honours are privileged to occupy chairs beside the Bishop's throne in the choir at service.

'Bell News' 9.x.1886 pp 218-9

St Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh

The annual business meeting of this society was held in the choir schoolroom on Wednesday evening, January 13th. The Rev. H. J. Lawlor, vice-president of the society, occupied the chair. The appointment of office-bearers took place. Mr C. C. Ellis was appointed conductor in the room of Mr W. H. Martin (resigned), and Mr John Murray was appointed secretary and treasurer to the society in the place of Mr C. C. Ellis. The silver badges of the society were redistributed to those members who according to their attendances for the past year were found qualified to receive them.

'Bell News' 6.ii.1897 p 551

There are twelve ornate silver Society badges. These originally numbered perhaps 15 but some are missing. Possibly they were presented to retiring members for exceptional services to bell-ringing at St Mary's; possibly some were lost or retained by a member and forgotten about. One badge came to light quite recently when a member of the public contacted us trying to research an expensive purchase he had just made. This turned out to be a Society badge but he had no further historical information about his purchase. It is quite probable that there are other badges hidden away somewhere.

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