

Liberty Bell cracked in 1835 while sounding a death knell

It was a warm July day, Independence Square, as it is now called, and the streets of Philadelphia were packed with men and women who had waited for hours with faces lifted toward the bell, wondering if their representatives would vote to declare independence.

A messenger hurried up the stairs to the belfry, at the first sentence of that historic document was read, the tones of the bell burst upon the silent and waiting city. For two hours the sound of the bell was heard, proclaiming freedom to the colonies.

The New Province Bell, later to be known as the Liberty Bell, was cast by Thomas Lester of Whitechapel, London, and arrived in Philadelphia in August, 1752. It had been commissioned by the Pennsylvania Provincial Assembly in 1751 to hang in the new State House (later renamed Independence Hall).

Before the bell could be raised to the tower, a local 1752 newspaper reported "it was cracked by a stroke of the clapper during a test without any further violence" and was recast by Pass and Stow, "two ingenious workmen" of Philadelphia.

In the recasting, the English model was broken up and the same metal was melted down to be used in the new bell. To the bell was added one and one-half ounces of American copper to the pound of old bell metal to make it less brittle. However, so much copper had been added that the bell's tone proved too brassy, and still another bell had to be cast.

The third "Liberty Bell" preserved the shape and lettering of the original but substituted the names of the craftsmen and the place and date of recasting. Around the crown was inscribed the Biblical motto "Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof (Lev. 25:10)."

Historians say the quotation was probably chosen to recall William Penn's Charter of Privileges, but the sentiment fitted the American Revolution so well that few people now remember the earlier connotation.

Finally in June, 1753, the third bell was hung in the State House steeple where it remained in use until the steeple was taken down on July 16, 1801. The bell was then lowered into the brick tower of the State House.

Long before the bell was ingled out to proclaim liberty throughout the land, the State House bell changed defiance of British tax and trade restrictions and announced the Boston Tea Party.

As the British advanced on Philadelphia in 1776, the bell was moved to Allentown for safety. The following year, it was returned to Philadelphia and pealed joyfully for American victories during the remainder of the Revolutionary War.

Later the bell tolled the deaths of Washington, Jefferson, Adams and other Founding Fathers. In 1835, exactly 83 years to the day after the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, the bell cracked while sounding the death knell for Chief Justice John Marshall.

Repair efforts were unsuccessful, and the bell hung mute and almost forgotten until 1846 when it was taken down from the tower. After being shifted to various locations within Independence Hall, it was placed in the base of the Tower. There the Liberty Bell remained until New Year's Eve,

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1975, when it was moved to the new Liberty Bell Pavilion one block north of Independence Hall. Today visitors are allowed to see and touch the bell while a National Park Service Guide recounts its history. At night, visitors can look through the glass windows and listen to a taped audio presentation.

We are Proud of what our country has been



and is today!
Charlotte's Little House of Beauty

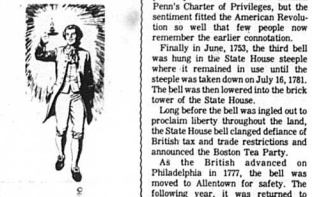
We are proud of our Heritage



Mathers-Shearer

Our message is one of Congratulations!

Snapp's Standard Station

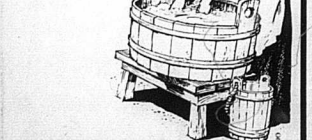


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to all Nicholas Countians



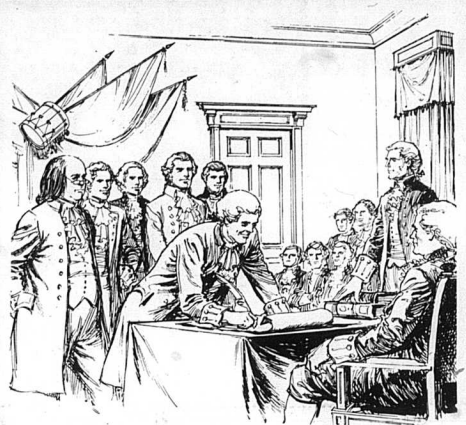
during this Bicentennial year.

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Leet's Beauty Salon



... a time to remember the past and celebrate the present

Bowen's Florist



Our beginning—a time to celebrate
Duncan Electric

Great American Happenings

From a Great America



1770: The street fight of the century.

It isn't just taxes that rile us. We hate seeing British soldiers in our streets, our public buildings, even our homes. We haven't rebelled, and we don't need soldiers to watch us. Our townspeople can't hold their tongues any longer. We jeer the soldiers. Call them "lobster backs." Get the ruffians confused. One March day, we get them too confused. They fire on a Boston crowd, kill five of us and wound several more. Sam Adams calls it the "Boston Massacre" and makes martyrs of the victims. We arrest the soldiers and try them for murder. But more important, we get the regiments out of town. g

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