



NEW HEART BEAT DEVOTIONS

Understanding Our Icon for Liberty

Need a bell: When the Pennsylvania State House was completed, it had no bell to call the delegates to assemble. Isaac Norris, Assembly Speaker and the Chairman of the State House Superintendents, asked Robert Charles, the State's representative in London, to buy a bell.

No significance: The bell arrived from England on Sept 1, 1752 with the following inscription: "By order of the Assembly of the Province of Pensylvania for the State House in the City of Philad(a) 1752 Proclaim Liberty thro' all the Land to all the Inhabitants thereof". Leviticus 25:10. Notice the spelling of Pensylvania and Philad. The year had no historical significance to our independence. It is also strange that the word liberty was inscribed because we were still under the rule of the Country who made the bell. Also, the bell was not purchased for national use.

"It was cracked by a stroke of the clapper without any other violence as it was hung up to try the sound."¹

A business advertisement: Pass and Stow repaired the bell but put their name on it as an advertisement.

The bell didn't sound good, after the repair. (It had an E-flat sound.) Mr. Norris wanted to return the bell to London to be casted again. Instead Mr. Charles ordered a second bell from Whitechapel Bell Foundry.

The bell was not used as intended: The new Whitechapel bell was hung in a cupola, attached to the State House clock. The Pass and Stow's Bell remained in the State House steeple and was only used for a few special events.

Doubtful it rang on July 8, 1776 during the first public reading of the Declaration of Independence. The steeple was in bad condition and historians today doubt the likelihood of the legend.²

All bells were moved when war came to the Philadelphia region in September 1777. The Pass and Stow's Bell was hidden in Zion Reformed Church in Allentown. The [Liberty Bell Museum](#) is located there and not in Philadelphia.

The bell was not rehung for eight years. This time it rang again for special events, as well as, to call students to classes at the nearby University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.

Decided to scrap the Bell. In 1828, John Wilbank was given the task to replace the Whitechapel Bell. He was also paid \$400 to remove and scrap the Pass and Stow's Bell.

Bell became privately owned: There was a breach of contract so the court made John Wilbank return the money but he kept ownership of the bell. He did remove the bell but left it there "on loan". In 1984, an heir of Wilbank named James McCloskey claimed that he wanted to display it in his hometown of Baltimore, or melt the Bell down and make seven million cracked rings and sell them for \$39.95 each.³

The big crack was reported in the Philadelphia Public Ledger. They stated that on February 26, 1846 the bell rang for the last time in honor of the birthday of Washington. "The zig-zag fracture has left it a mere wreck of what it was."⁴ Some historians believe that a squabble by churches over money led to this final crack.⁵

The broken Bell became an Icon. From 1852 to 1915, the Bell toured the country. It was used to promote anti-slavery, women's suffrage, selling of war bonds and was in celebrations of American freedoms. In 2003, on the site where George Washington kept his slaves, the [Liberty Bell Center](#), costing \$12.6 million, opened for all to see the Bell.



I saw & touched it.

Charles L Stambaugh July 2020A

A cracked bell nor a human government can bring you live, liberty nor true happiness. But a wooden cross can break your chains of sin, give you peace that passes all understanding and give you life more abundant.

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." John 8:36

*My chains are gone.
I've been set free.
My God, my Savior
has ransomed me,
and like a flood His
mercy rains unending
love, Amazing Grace.*



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