

INDEPENDENCE



National Historical Park



Pennsylvania

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NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

United States Department of the Interior

Stewart L. Udall, *Secretary*

National Park Service, Conrad L. Wirth, *Director*



Scene of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, the meeting place of the Continental Congress and of the Constitutional Convention of 1787, and the seat of Government of the United States from 1790 to 1800

"THE UNITED STATES was created in Philadelphia on July 4, 1776, when the Continental Congress voted the final form of the Declaration of Independence. The United States was perpetuated on September 17, 1787, when the Federal Convention completed its work on the Constitution and referred it, through Congress, to the individual States for ratification. Both these great decisions were made in the same chamber in what is now called Independence Hall, but was then the Pennsylvania State House. It would still be merely the old State House if independence had not been achieved and if the Constitution had not been ratified and put into effect. The noble building, so venerable to later ages, might not even have survived, but might have been swept away in the surging growth of a modern city. In that case, a few students of history would sometimes remember the site as the stage of those lost causes. Instead, Pennsylvania's State House has become Independence Hall for the entire

United States. Nor is that all. On account of the Declaration of Independence, it is a shrine honored wherever the rights of men are honored. On account of the Constitution, it is a shrine cherished wherever the principles of self-government on a federal scale are cherished."—CARL VAN DOREN.

The Building of Independence Hall

Independence Hall was originally the State House for the Province of Pennsylvania. Before it was built, the Provincial Assembly had no official place for its meetings, but was compelled "to hire a house annually." To provide a regular meeting place, funds were set aside for the building of a state house in 1729. The next year the committee of the assembly, having selected the south side of Chestnut Street between Fifth and Sixth Streets as a site, began to purchase the necessary land. By 1769, the assembly secured all the property (Independence Square) south to Walnut Street. However, Independence

Hall was begun in the spring of 1732, when ground was broken.

Edmund Woolley, master carpenter, and Andrew Hamilton, lawyer, planned the building and supervised its construction. It was designed in the dignity of the Georgian period. Independence Hall, with its wings, has long been considered one of the most beautiful public buildings of the colonial period. Its construction required more than 25 years, delays preventing its completion until the 1750's.

The Liberty Bell

It was not until January 1750 that the assembly authorized the erection of the tower on the south side of Independence Hall. It was "to contain a staircase, with a suitable place therein for hanging a bell." In 1751, the bell for the State House was ordered from England. The famous "Proclaim Liberty" inscription was intended as a 50th anniversary memorial to William Penn's Charter of Privileges of 1701. The bell received its present name from this inscription.

The bell arrived in Philadelphia in 1752, but was cracked while being tested. John Pass and Charles Stow, Jr., "two ingenious workmen" of Philadelphia, recast the bell. The tone was not satisfactory, and it was cast again by Pass and Stow in 1753. (The bell

from this third casting is the one you see today.)

As the official bell of the Pennsylvania State House, the Liberty Bell was intended to be rung on public occasions. During the Revolution, when the British Army occupied Philadelphia in 1777, the bell was removed to Allentown, where it was hidden for almost a year. It was returned to Philadelphia after the departure of the British.

It is the tradition that the bell was cracked in 1835 while being tolled on the death of Chief Justice John Marshall, the great interpreter of the Federal Constitution. Efforts to restore the bell's tone were unsuccessful.

The Liberty Bell is now located in Independence Hall. Its traditional association with the leading events of the Revolution has made the Liberty Bell the most venerated symbol of patriotism in America, and its reputation as an emblem of liberty is worldwide.

The Declaration of Independence

As opposition toward England's colonial policy developed, Philadelphia, the principal city of the English colonies in America, naturally became the center of government. In Carpenters' Hall, near Independence Square, the First Continental Congress met in September 1774, to protest Great Britain's American policies.

In May 1775, the Second Continental Congress met in the Pennsylvania State House (Independence Hall) and decided to move from protest to resistance. Warfare between the colonists and British troops already had begun in Massachusetts. In June the Congress chose George Washington to be General and Commander in Chief of the Army, and he gave his acceptance in Independence Hall. While Washington organized the army, the Congress organized the Revolutionary government. On July 4, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Congress in Independence Hall. This document was largely written by Thomas Jefferson. Perhaps the finest statement of democratic principles and rights ever penned, the Declaration stands today as the basis of the free government of the United States.

Following the Declaration of Independence came the long hard years of war. The British occupied Philadelphia during the winter of 1777-78 while Washington's Army kept watch at Valley Forge. After the departure of the British, Philadelphia again became the seat of government. On November 3, 1781, the Congress officially received the news of the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown, Va., and was presented with the captured colors. American independence had been won.

The Constitutional Convention, 1787

The Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union were drafted while the war was in progress. They were agreed to by the last of the Thirteen States and went into effect in the final year of the war. Under the Articles, the Congress met in various towns, only about half the time in Philadelphia. But Philadelphia remained the chief city of the United States. Here in Independence Hall, in the summer of 1787, the Federal Convention sat to draft the Constitution. It was to make the weak Confederation into a strong Federal State. Washington, the hero of the new nation, was President of the Convention. The other 54 delegates included Benjamin Franklin, James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and men of like caliber. The Convention opened on May 25 and labored 4 months. The meetings, held in the same chamber in which the Declaration of Independence had been adopted, were conducted in the strictest secrecy. No other room in America has ever been the scene of such political courage and wisdom. Out of the Convention came the Constitution of the United States. With amendments, it has continued as the law of the land.

Philadelphia, the Capital, 1790-1800

Just before Philadelphia became the Federal Capital, Independence Hall acquired two new neighbors of destiny. These were the City Hall on the east and the County Court Building on the west. About the same time, the American Philosophical Society, the oldest learned society in the United States, was granted a lot in the Square. Its building, Philosophical Hall, was completed in 1789. The only privately owned building in the Square, its architectural design harmonizes with the other structures.

The Federal Government under the new Constitution first met in New York City

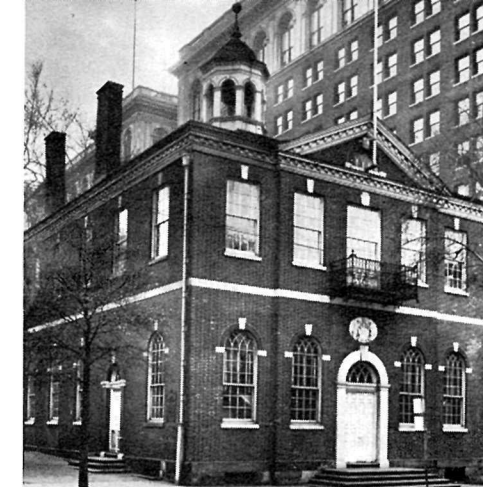
where Federal Hall National Memorial now stands. Then, in 1790, it came to Philadelphia for 10 years. Congress sat in the new County Court House (now known as Congress Hall) and the United States Supreme Court in the new City Hall. In Congress Hall, George Washington was inaugurated for his second term as President. John Adams, his successor, was also inaugurated here. Meanwhile, several important cases were presented to the Supreme Court for decision. During this period, therefore, the governments of the Commonwealth and the Nation were both located in the Independence Hall group of buildings. With the close of the century, however, both capitals were taken from Philadelphia. In 1799, the State government was moved to Lancaster and later to Harrisburg. In the following year the Federal Government left Philadelphia for the new capital at Washington, D.C.

Later History

With Philadelphia no longer the capital either of the United States or of Pennsylvania, Congress Hall was again used as the County Court House.

In 1802, Independence Hall entered into a new phase of its history. Charles Willson Peale, the eminent artist, was granted permission to use most of the building for a museum. This famous museum remained there until Peale's death in 1826. His paintings, purchased by the City of Philadelphia, form the basis for the park's present portrait collection of Revolutionary heroes.

In 1818, the City of Philadelphia bought Independence Hall from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This was a financial and spiritual investment unequalled in the history of American cities. Since then, Philadelphia has protected it, performing an inestimable service in preserving the Independence Hall group for posterity. In recent years, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has undertaken a notable project to develop the three blocks directly north of



Congress Hall.

Independence Hall into a Mall. When completed, it will greatly enhance the entire setting of this area.

The Park

Independence National Historical Park was authorized by act of Congress in 1948 upon the recommendation of the Philadelphia National Shrines Park Commission. The purpose of this act was to provide for the Federal Government's part in the preservation and commemoration of Independence Hall, Carpenters' Hall, Christ Church, and surrounding historic sites and buildings in Philadelphia. This activity includes cooperative agreements with three groups, which own major structures, and the acquisition and interpretation of additional significant sites and buildings east of Independence Square. The entire undertaking is guided by an advisory commission of distinguished citizens.

Guide to Interesting Points

Many historic sites in and near Independence National Historical Park are within easy walking distance. You will be able to locate them easily by the corresponding numbers on the map at the back of this folder.

North Front of State House, c. 1776. Engraved by J. Rogers after Peale's Painting. Courtesy of Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



The Congress Voting Independence, 1776. Painting by Robert Edge Pine and Edward Savage. Courtesy of Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



The National Park System, of which this park is a unit, is dedicated to conserving the scenic, scientific, and historic heritage of the United States for the benefit and inspiration of its people.

1. **Independence Square.** Here, on July 8, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was first read to the citizens of Philadelphia.

2. **Philosophical Hall.** This building, erected between 1785 and 1789, houses the American Philosophical Society. Founded in 1743 by Benjamin Franklin, the society is the oldest of its kind in America. The building is not open to the public.

3. **Library Hall,** a reconstruction, is on Fifth Street, opposite Independence Square. Originally erected in 1789-90 as the home for the Library Company of Philadelphia, it houses the American Philosophical Society library.

4. **The Second Bank of the United States** is on Chestnut Street, between Fifth and Fourth Streets. A splendid example of Greek Revival architecture, it was built between 1819 and 1824. The Second Bank of the United States played an important part in establishing the young nation on a sound financial basis. However, when it became involved in a bitter controversy between President Andrew Jackson and the Whigs over national banking policies, its charter was allowed to expire in 1836. From 1845 to 1934, it was the Philadelphia Custom House. The building is open to the public.

5. **New Hall** is on Chestnut Street near Fourth Street. Reconstructed to house a museum commemorating the early history of the Marine Corps, it was originally erected in 1791 by the Carpenters' Company of Philadelphia as a new meeting hall. Here, in 1791-92, was the office of the War Department.

6. **Carpenters' Hall** is on Chestnut Street, between Fourth and Orianna Streets. It was built in 1770 for use as a guild hall by the Carpenters' Company of Philadelphia. Here, in 1774, the First Continental Congress met to determine what measures the Colonies should take to resist oppressive British colonial policies. The building is open to the public under a cooperative agreement between the Carpenters' Company and the Department of the Interior.

7. **The First Bank of the United States** is on South Third Street, between Walnut and Chestnut Streets. Erected in 1795, it is probably the oldest bank building in the United States.

8. **The Philadelphia Exchange** is on the corner of Third and Walnut Streets. Designed by William Strickland and built between 1832 and 1834, the building is noteworthy for the beauty of its architecture. For many years, it housed the Philadelphia Stock Exchange.

9. **The Bishop White House** is at 309 Walnut Street, between Third and Fourth Streets. It was the home of the Right Reverend William White, "The Father of the American Protestant Episcopal Church." Erected in 1786-87, the building is an excellent example of an early Philadelphia row house.

10. **The Dilworth-Todd-Moylan House,** on the corner of Fourth and Walnut Streets, was erected in 1776 by Jonathan Dilworth. It was purchased in 1791, by John Todd, Jr., the first husband of Dolley Payne, who later married President James Madison. From 1796 to 1807, it was the home of Gen. Stephen Moylan, a member of Gen. George Washington's staff during the Revolution.

11. **Franklin Court,** the site of Benjamin Franklin's home, is located on Orianna Street, between Chestnut and Market Streets. Franklin's house was built on this site in 1765, and here the great statesman and sage died in 1790. Twenty years later the house was razed.

12. **Christ Church** is on Second Street, between Market and Filbert Streets. Built between 1727 and 1754, it is one of the finest colonial churches in America. Many notables of the Revolutionary Period attended services here, and seven signers of the Declaration of Independence are buried either in the churchyard or in the Christ Church cemetery at the corner of Fifth and Arch Streets. The graves of Benjamin Franklin and his

wife are also in the cemetery. The preservation of the church is assured by a cooperative agreement between the Corporation of Christ Church and the Department of the Interior.

13. **St. Joseph's Church** is on the south side of Walnut between Third and Fourth Streets. From 1733 to 1763, St. Joseph's was the only Roman Catholic Church in Philadelphia, and it is possibly the only one in the area of the Thirteen Original Colonies where Mass has been celebrated without interruption for more than 200 years. The first St. Joseph's Church was replaced in 1757 by a larger structure, which was used until 1838 when the present church was begun.

14. **St. Mary's Church** is on South Fourth Street, between Locust and Spruce Streets. Established in 1763, it was the principal Catholic Church in Philadelphia during the Revolutionary period. The church graveyard contains the tombs of Thomas FitzSimons, a signer of the Constitution of the United States, and Commodore John Barry, often called "The Father of the American Navy."

Three other sites in the park do not show on the map:

The Deshler-Morris House is at 5442 Germantown Avenue. Erected in 1772-73, this mansion was the home of President Washington during the summers of 1793 and 1794. It has been restored and refurnished, and is exhibited by the Germantown Historical Society, in cooperation with the National Park Service. The house is open daily, except Monday, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. A nominal admission fee is charged.

St. George's Church, 235 North Fourth Street, is the oldest Methodist Church now standing in America. Except for the winter of 1777-78, when it was occupied by the British, the building has been in continuous use as a Methodist Church since 1769. Here, in 1771, Francis Asbury—the English missionary who spread Methodism in America—preached his first sermon in this country;

here the first three conferences of American Methodism were held in 1773, 1774, and 1775; and in this church, the first Negro Methodist minister in America was ordained in 1799.

Mikveh Israel Cemetery, at Spruce and Ninth Streets, was established in 1738, and is the city's oldest Jewish burial ground. Interred here is Haym Salomon, a patriot and financier of the American Revolution.

Gloria Dei (Old Swede's) Church National Historic Site. This reminder of early Swedish settlement is nearby and is well worth a visit. Built in 1700, Gloria Dei is the oldest church in Philadelphia. It is on Swanson Street, 8 blocks south of Chestnut.

About Your Visit

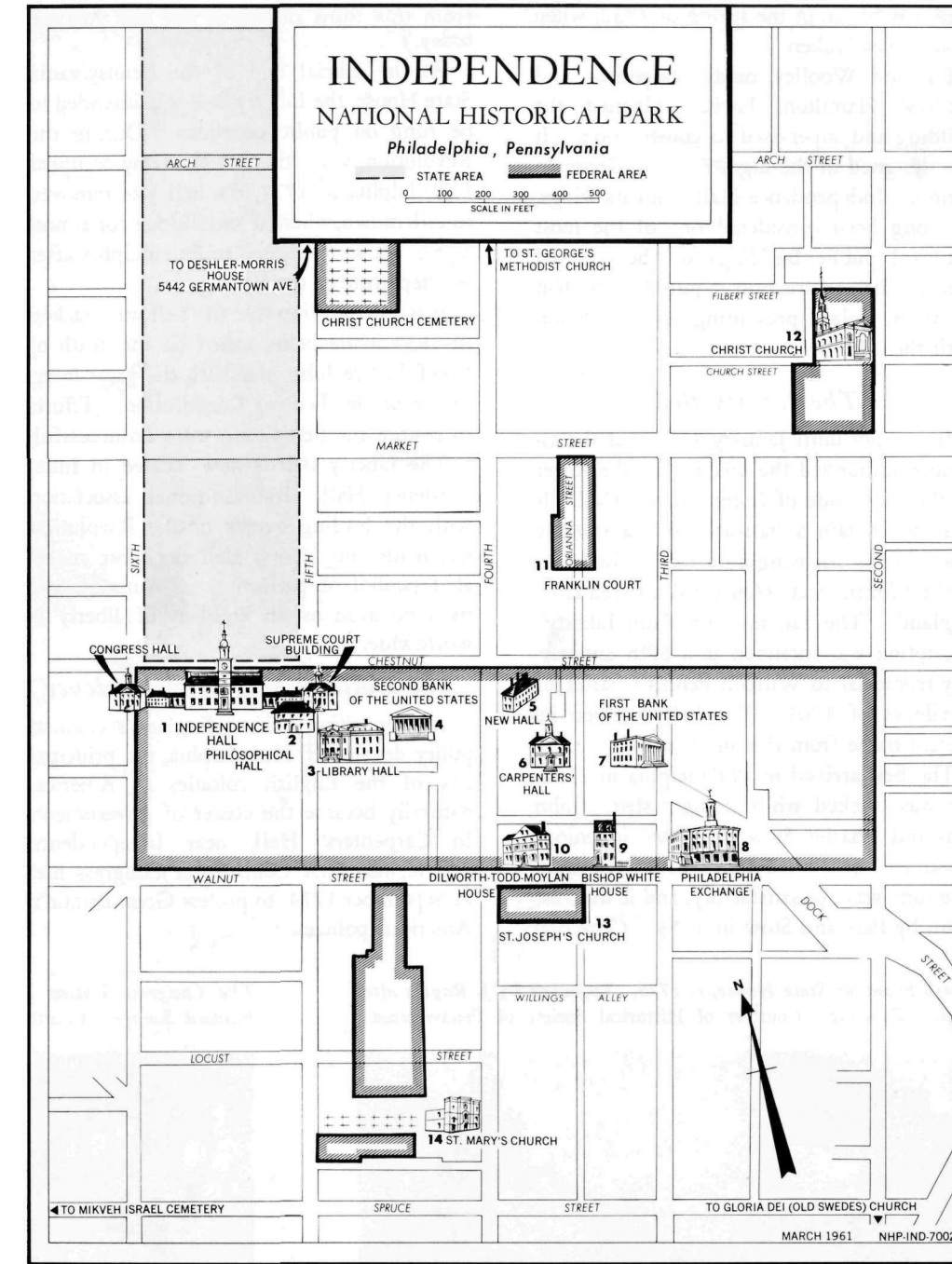
You may obtain further information about this park and other areas of the National Park System at the information center in the west wing of Independence Hall. Groups may receive special service if advance arrangements are made with the superintendent.

Administration

Since January 1, 1951, the Independence Hall group of buildings has been administered as a part of Independence National Historical Park. By a cooperative agreement made in 1950 between the City of Philadelphia and the Department of the Interior, the National Park Service administers the buildings and Independence Square, with the city retaining ownership of the property. A superintendent, whose address is Old Custom House, 420 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia 6, Pa., is in immediate charge.

Mission 66

Mission 66 is a 10-year program to develop and staff the areas of the National Park System so that they may be safely used and enjoyed by this generation while being preserved in full measure for future generations.

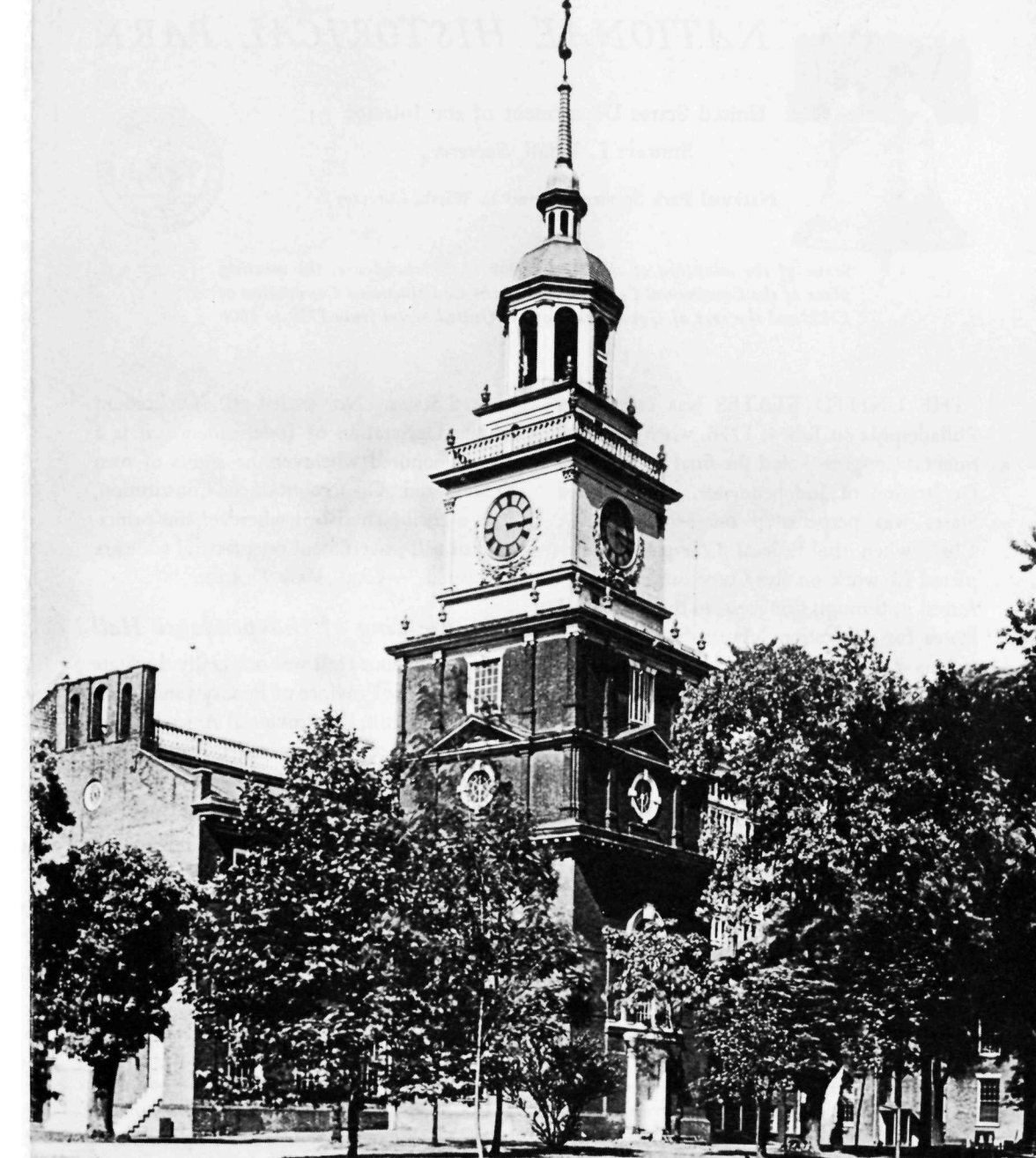


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