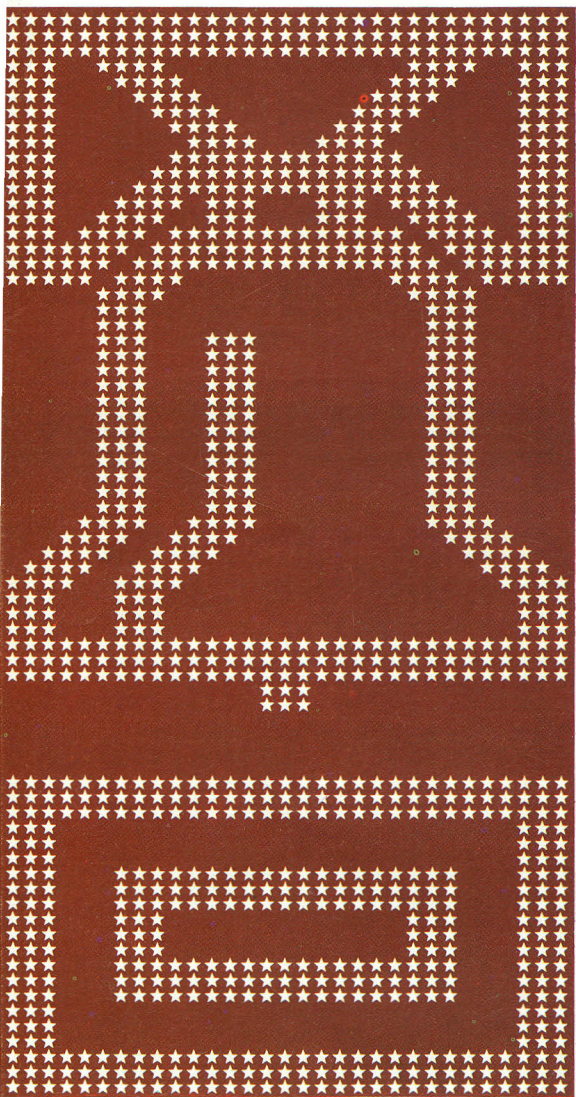


# Independence



National Historical Park, Pennsylvania

**“Proclaim Liberty throughout all the Land unto all the Inhabitants Thereof.”** These words from

Leviticus inscribed around the crown of the Liberty Bell still cast their spell upon all who read them. They remind us of the freedoms for which the patriots fought the Revolutionary War. They symbolize that central purpose of American life, one still to be cherished and vigilantly protected. It was the Liberty Bell which was rung on the first reading of the Declaration of Independence to the citizens of Philadelphia in Independence Square on July 8, 1776, and, according to tradition, it cracked when tolled on the occasion of the funeral of Chief Justice John Marshall 59 years later.

The Liberty Bell tolls no more, but the site in which it is located, **Independence National Historical Park**, is unique among all shrines commemorating the birth of the United States. No other cluster of buildings and sites conjures up for us so many images of great personages and significant events associated with the commencement and progress of the American Revolution and the founding of the Nation. At this site assembled the two Continental Congresses that united the Thirteen States in the conduct of the war and the making of peace. Here was drafted, debated, and signed the Declaration of Independence and the Federal Constitution. In short, the momentous decisions establishing independence, national identity, and the rule of law were all made at this historic site.

Even long before the issues of the American Revolution had begun to take form, a remarkable statesman shaped the course of events in this area. This person was so extraordinarily gifted, so triumphant in so many fields that his feats dating back a generation before the outbreak of war with Great Britain have cast a legendary spell over the sites with which he was associated, most of them right here in Independence National Historical Park. Benjamin Franklin, who arrived in Philadelphia a penniless waif, disheveled and friendless, walking up Market Street munching a puffy roll,



Three of these Market Street houses were designed and built by Benjamin Franklin in 1786-7. Just beyond them, through the archway, is Franklin Court and the site of Franklin's own house.

propelled himself to the top by grit and ability. No person was more dreaded by the proprietary party than Franklin, and no figure commanded more prestige in the Provincial Assembly convened at the State House. In his celebrated *Autobiography* he reveals some of the events in which he was a leading actor.

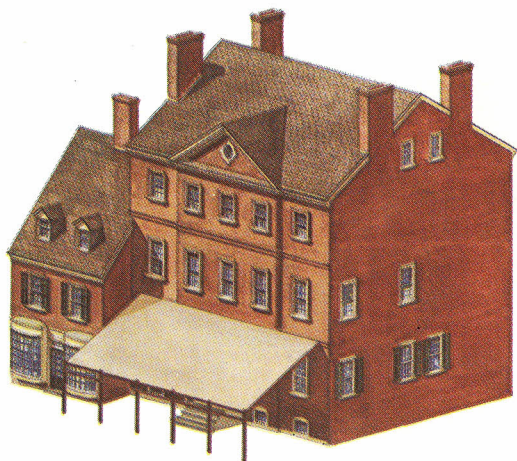
At what is now **Franklin Court** this man of many hats—printer, publisher, civic leader, statesman, and world-renowned scientist—built a house in which he lived intermittently during the early years of the Revolution before being sent to France to help gain that nation's support for the American cause. To Franklin Court he returned after his triumphs in Paris, to resume a life of enormous influence as President of the Executive Council of Pennsylvania and finally as delegate to the Federal Constitutional Convention.

Here at Franklin Court he died, but not before signing a memorial to Congress for the abolition of slavery—most fittingly, Franklin's last public act.

Indubitably the most renowned, Franklin was but one of a group of Philadelphians who joined with other radical leaders in setting up a model for a revolutionary apparatus combining mass involvement and economic warfare. Philadelphia became a principal seat of such operations. The protest demonstrations and the boycott machinery developed in response to Parliamentary tax measures were largely centered or created in the area now covered by Independence National Historical Park.

To circumvent a lukewarm Assembly dominated by Franklin's long-time political partner, Joseph

Galloway, now turned conservative, more radical leaders were forced to assume the initiative. Men like John Dickinson, eminent lawyer and the author of the *Letters of a Pennsylvania Farmer*, that widely read pamphlet attacking the constitutionality of the Townshend Acts, and Charles Thomson, the Irish-born schoolteacher and merchant, who became permanent secretary of the Continental Congress, together kept Pennsylvania abreast of developments in the other colonies. The seat of their extralegal activities was **City Tavern**, one of the historic sites in the park. Built in 1773, that hostelry quickly became a focus of social, business, and political activities for the Philadelphia elite. John Adams called it "the most genteel" tavern in all America. Here on May 20, 1774, came Paul Revere with news from New England that Parliament had passed a bill closing down the port of Boston. A great company gathered in the tavern's long room and, after a tumultuous discussion, passed a resolution agreeing to the appointment of a committee to convey sympathy to the people of Boston and to assure them of Philadelphia's "firm adherence to the cause of American liberty."



City Tavern

From these informal debates in City Tavern the groundwork was laid for the Revolution in Pennsylvania. When the governor refused a request of the populace to summon the Assembly, the popular leaders had committees set up in every county in the colony. Soon a de facto popular government by committee began to supplant and erode the lawful Assembly. The Philadelphia Committee of Observation, Inspection, and Correspondence, as it was called, operating out of its headquarters at City Tavern, proposed that a Congress of the Thirteen Colonies convene in September 1774. Where else but Philadelphia seemed more suitable?

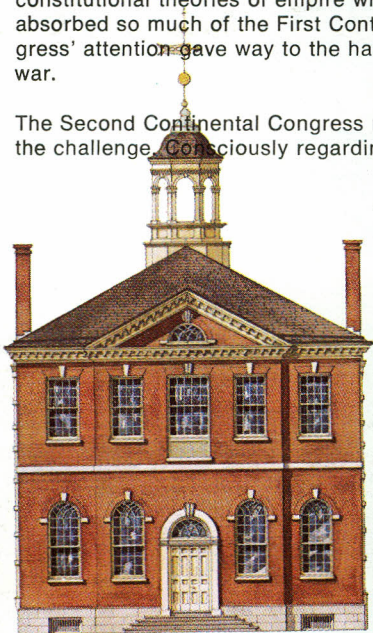
Twelve of the Thirteen Colonies (Georgia excepted) dispatched delegates to Philadelphia in the early fall of 1774. Joseph Galloway, as Speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly, offered the representatives the use of the State House in which to hold their deliberations. But the delegates shunned Galloway's offer and chose instead **Carpenters' Hall**, a private edifice serving the activities of the Master Carpenters of Philadelphia. That decision amounted to an open repudiation of Galloway and his conservative faction. It also forecast a cluster of radical actions, measures which were in no small degree influenced by the persuasive backstage tactics of the indefatigable New England cousins, Samuel and John Adams.

Carpenters' Hall was now the stage of a stirring if brief drama played out between conservatives and radicals. The former made a last-ditch effort to adopt a plan of union proposed by Galloway. Rejected by a close vote, the conservatives abandoned any serious opposition to the measures of the radical faction. The First Continental Congress adopted a sweeping non-importation, nonexportation, and nonconsumption agreement. The delegates approved an eloquent "Petition to the King" asserting the right of the colonies to regulate their internal affairs and claiming for the populace the rights, liberties, and immunities of Englishmen. Before adjourning, the delegates recommended that a second Continental Congress convene at Philadelphia in the spring of 1775. Thus Carpenters' Hall saw the initial steps taken by delegates of 12 colonies to assert national sovereignty.

For some 6 weeks between September and October 1774 Carpenters' Hall resounded with great oratory carrying both nationalist and revolutionary overtones. Most eloquent of all the delegates, Virginia's Patrick Henry declared: "The distinction between Virginians, Pennsylvanians, New Yorkers, and New Englanders are no more. I am not a Virginian, but an American." Considered a more cautious spokesman than the radical Henry, John Jay, a young New York lawyer, warned the people of Great Britain that "we will never submit to be hewers of wood or drawers of water for any ministry or nation in the world!"

Speaking at the Virginia Convention on March 23, 1775, Patrick Henry warned: "Gentlemen may cry, 'Peace! Peace!'—but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms!" Indeed, before the Second Continental Congress convened on May 10th at the **State House** (now **Independence Hall**), two blocks west from Carpenters' Hall, Henry's prophecy had been fulfilled. The shooting war had broken out at Lexington and Concord in Massachusetts. Now arguments over constitutional theories of empire which had absorbed so much of the First Continental Congress' attention gave way to the hard facts of war.

The Second Continental Congress responded to the challenge, consciously regarding itself as

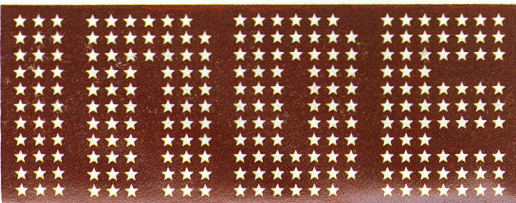


Old City Hall

the embodiment of the "United Colonies," Congress picked one of its own delegates, George Washington, present in the uniform of a colonel of the Virginia militia, to serve as commander in chief of "all the continental forces." A few days later, Congress pledged "the twelve confederated colonies" to support the bills of credit it now resolved to issue. Making a final concession to the peace faction, Congress adopted John Dickinson's "Olive Branch" petition, the last appeal of the colonies to the King. Any notion that George III might have had about the weakening of Congress' intentions to continue the struggle were quickly dissipated by the subsequent adoption of the "Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms," wherein Dickinson and Thomas Jefferson, co-drafters of the document, solemnly declared: "Our cause is just. Our union is perfect."

Ahead lay some of the climactic movements of the drama to be played out in Independence Hall. On May 15, 1776, Congress, in language drafted by John Adams, called upon the colonies to organize their own governments as States. A crucial decision, it still fell short of a formal assertion by Congress of independence and nationhood issued by the colonies collectively; that declaration remained to be drafted, adopted and proclaimed to the world.

Working at his desk in the second-floor parlor of the home of a young German bricklayer named Jacob Graff (the site of which, though some distance from Independence Hall, is under the park's jurisdiction), Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence in 2 weeks. Despite trifling alterations by Franklin and John Adams and the deletion by Congress of the condemnation of slavery and the slave trade, the Great Declaration was the product of the mind and pen of Thomas Jefferson. Adopted on July 4, 1776, and signed by most of the

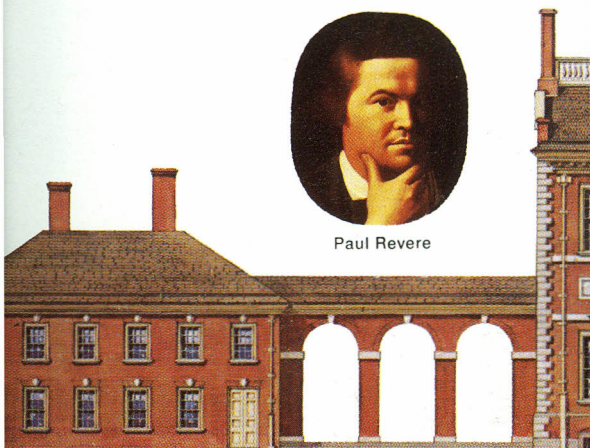


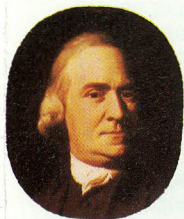
delegates a month later, the Declaration lifted the struggle from self-interested arguments over taxation to the exalted plane of human rights. It proclaimed the self-evident truths of equality, unalienable rights, and the people's right to alter their governments when a "long train of abuses" threatens "to reduce them under absolute despotism."

Since Congress was both an executive and a legislative body, and, in the sense that it had jurisdiction over cases of capture on the high seas, a judicial tribunal as well, Independence Hall stood at the center of the wartime business of the Continental government. Congress dispatched commissioners abroad to seek out foreign aid. It ratified the treaties of amity and commerce and of military alliance with the King of France and, in turn, formally received the French minister Conrad Alexander Gérard. The Congressional delegates wrestled with mounting fiscal problems, drawing upon foreign and domestic loans, requisitions from the States, and printing press money, and, finally, drafting the astute Philadelphia merchant banker Robert Morris to serve as Superintendent of Finance. Morris made heroic efforts to maintain Congress' fiscal solvency in the face of mounting debt and runaway inflation. His dazzling operations enabled him to finance the Yorktown campaign which resulted in the surrender of Cornwallis.



Paul Revere

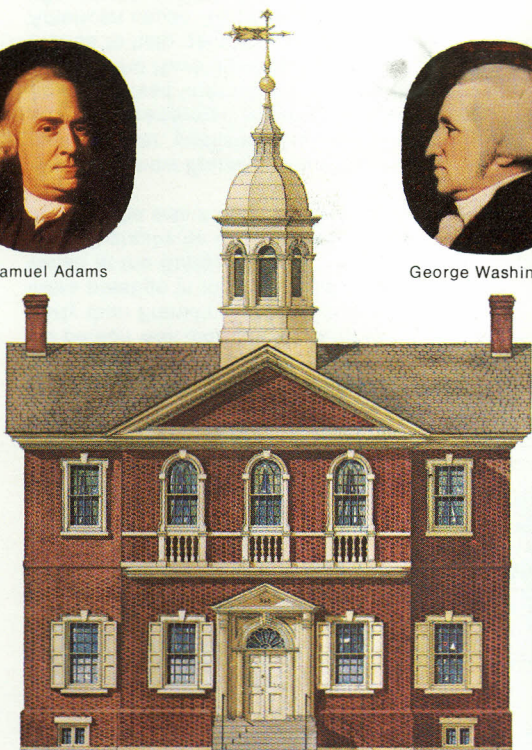




Samuel Adams



George Washington



Carpenters' Hall

These were grave responsibilities and, as more and more leading public figures left Congress for the theater of the war, to take up posts in the State governments, or to serve their country abroad, Congress at times proved barely equal to its responsibilities. Writing to James Warren of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress in







John Hancock



Thomas Jefferson



James Madison



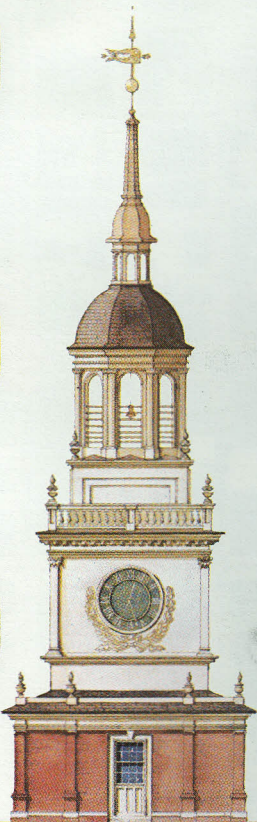
John Adams



Patrick Henry



Benjamin Franklin



Independence Hall (Pennsylvania State House)

April 1776, John Adams had sagely observed: "The management of so complicated and mighty a machine as the United Colonies requires the meekness of Moses, the patience of Job, and the wisdom of Solomon, added to the valour of David." In the absence of such men as Franklin, Jefferson, and Adams himself, Congress had to perform to the best of its abilities.

What Congress needed most of all was a constitutional structure that would confer upon the central government powers commensurate with its responsibilities. The Articles of Confederation that Congress adopted in 1777 (but which were not ratified by all the Thirteen States until 1781) fell considerably short of this objective. Lacking a strong executive, or an effective taxing power, the Articles of Confederation required the affirmative vote of 9 States for the adoption of measures of the first importance and a unanimous vote to amend the document itself.

Mute testimony to the weakness of the central government was the abandonment of Philadelphia by Congress toward the very end of the war. Save for the period of the British occupation of the city (1777-78) Independence Hall had housed the deliberations of Congress until in June 1783 mutinous threats by local militiamen made it expedient for the delegates to begin their peregrinations, first to Princeton and then to Annapolis. It was at Annapolis that Congress ratified the victorious peace by which Great Britain recognized the independence of the United States and the new Nation was endowed with a territorial domain vaster than ever before embraced by a republic.

If Philadelphia was abandoned as the seat of the central government during the years of the Confederation and New York was to play host to the Continental Congress, Independence Hall

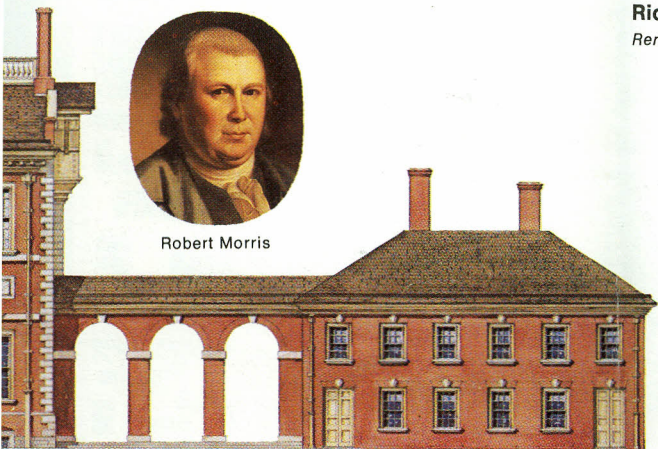


was once more destined to house a great assemblage. Here on May 25, 1787, the Constitutional Convention convened. With some notable omissions, like John Adams and Thomas Jefferson who were holding diplomatic posts abroad, Patrick Henry and Richard Henry Lee who declined to serve, and John Jay who was passed over by his State in favor of an anti-nationalist candidate, the 55 men who convened at Philadelphia constituted an intellectual elite perhaps never again assembled to deal with public affairs in the history of the country. As Louis Otto, the French chargé d'affaires, commented to his superiors at home: "If all the delegates named for this Convention at Philadelphia are present, we will never have seen, even in Europe, an assembly more respectable for the talents, knowledge, disinterestedness, and patriotism of those who compose it."

Visitors to Independence Hall may view the chamber in which the Constitution was framed. Sitting in Windsor chairs around green baize-covered tables were such principal architects of the Constitution as Pennsylvania delegates James Wilson and Gouverneur Morris, the latter chiefly responsible for the final styling and arrangement of the document. Nearby sat Roger Sherman and Oliver Ellsworth, Connecticut delegates, who proposed the Great Compromise providing for equal voting in the Senate and proportional representation in the House. Con-



Robert Morris



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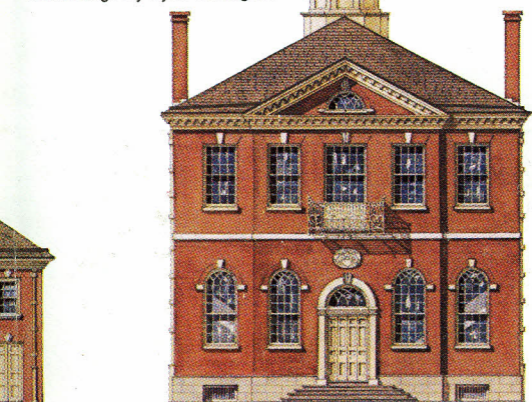
Standing on the hallowed ground of Independence National Historical Park one may still recapture those stirring moments when the people of Philadelphia cheered the reading of the Great Declaration. One may catch echoes of the response of a sobered Congress hearing dispatch after dispatch from General Washington remonstrating on the lack of funds and supplies for his starving and half-naked soldiers, or the shock of the news of the treason of Arnold and of the capitulation of Charleston. There were heartening messages as well: the victory of Saratoga, the news of the French alliance, of the arrival of Rochambeau with French troops and naval forces, the climactic triumph at Yorktown, and of the Preliminary Peace which in effect ended the war and was to bring the United States recognition from all the great powers.

In his first Inaugural Address delivered in New York, Washington had summed up the glorious epoch in which he and his associates had been principal actors, and, in these stirring and cautioning phrases, challenged his fellow Americans to participate in the new era: "The preservation of the sacred fire of liberty, and the destiny of the republican model of government, are justly considered as deeply, perhaps as finally, staked on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people."

Composed almost two centuries ago, Washington's articulation of America's purposes, its responsibilities, and its special role as a symbol of the democratic way of life both at home and abroad constitutes a message and a reminder to those who visit this historic place where the people of the United States first asserted their sovereign right to control their own destiny.

**Richard B. Morris**

*Renderings by Lynn Gallagher*



Congress Hall

spicuous both for his eloquence and his extremist views was Alexander Hamilton of New York, whose influence proved far more effective in securing the Constitution's ratification than in its drafting. Of Virginia's James Madison one delegate wrote: "Every person seems to acknowledge his greatness. He blends together the profound politician with the scholar." Self-appointed scribe of the Convention, Madison left us the most detailed and accurate record of the debates.

Among the most treasured pieces in the park's collection is the high-backed President's chair. The occupant of this chair, for the nearly 3 months of the Federal Convention's continuous sessions, was George Washington. Already a legend, a commanding if generally silent presence, he presided over the deliberations with both vigor and tact. Old Benjamin Franklin, bringing to the assemblage an aura of benevolence and the wisdom of great years, looked up at the President's chair in the closing moments of the Convention and, as Madison records it, observed a sun with out-stretched rays on its back. "I have," he remarked, "often and often in the course of the session and the vicissitudes of my hopes and fears as to its issue, looked at that behind the president without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting. But now at length I have the happiness to know that it is a rising and not a setting sun."

After the great debates about the Constitution had ended and the document was signed and ratified, this site would once again be, for almost a decade, the seat of the new Federal Government. Here at the **County Courthouse (Congress Hall)** convened the new Congress under the Constitution, while the old **City Hall** was the forum for the Supreme Court of the United States in its early years. At Congress Hall President Washington was inaugurated for his second term, and this, too, was the scene of the peaceful transfer of the Presidency to John Adams in 1797.

# A Tour of the Park

**First Bank of the United States**, built between 1795 and 1797 as the home of the "government's banker," is probably the oldest bank building in the United States.

**Philadelphia Exchange** was designed by William Strickland and built between 1832 and 1834. It housed the Philadelphia Stock Exchange for many years. Only the exterior has been restored. (Not open to the public.)

**Bishop White House**. Bishop William White, rector of Christ Church and St. Peter's Church, and the first Episcopal Bishop of Pennsylvania, built this house in 1786-87. He lived here until his death in 1836.

**Todd House**, built in 1775, was occupied from 1791 to 1793 by John Todd, Jr., and his wife, Dolley Payne. She later married President James Madison.

**Carpenters' Hall** was built in 1770 by the Carpenters' Company of Philadelphia, which still owns and maintains it. The First Continental Congress met here in September 1774.

**New Hall** was originally built by the Carpenters' Company in 1790 and used by the War Department in 1791-92. Now reconstructed, it houses the U.S. Marine Corps Memorial Museum.

**Pemberton House** was once the home of Joseph Pemberton, a Quaker merchant. It has been reconstructed and is now occupied by the Army-Navy Museum.

**Franklin Court** is the site of the handsome brick home of Benjamin Franklin, who lived here while serving in the Continental Congress, the Constitutional Convention, and as

President of Pennsylvania. He died here in 1790; the house was torn down about 20 years later. The B. Free Franklin Post Office (316 Market St.) is open daily for stamp purchases and special cancellations; the Postal Museum contains American philatelic exhibits.

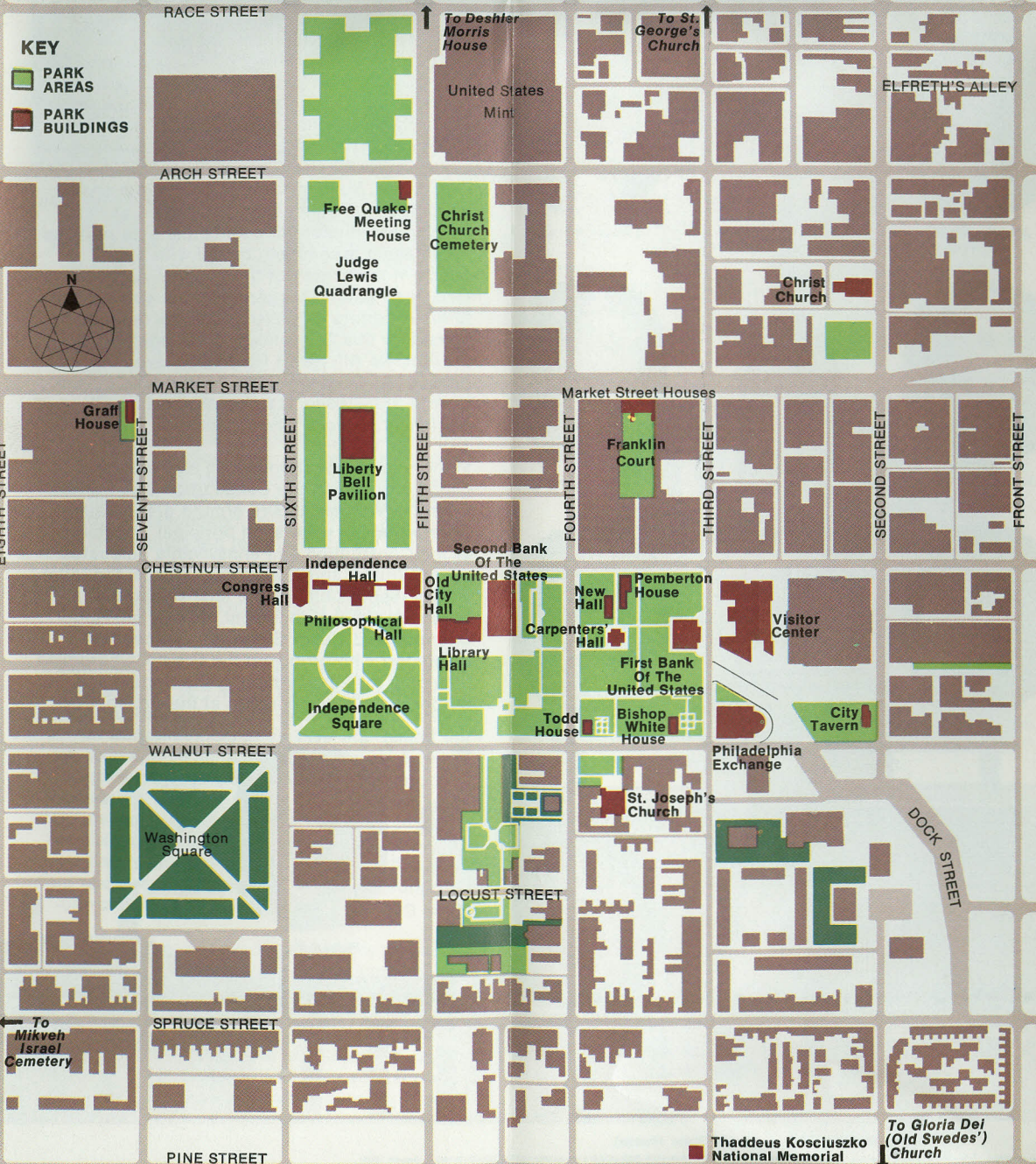
**Second Bank of the United States**, a fine example of Greek Revival Architecture, was designed by William Strickland and built between 1819 and 1824. It houses the park's portrait gallery.

**Library Hall**, built originally for the Library Company of Philadelphia in 1789-90, has been reconstructed and is occupied by the library of the American Philosophical Society. It is open to use by scholars.

**Philosophical Hall**. The American Philosophical Society, founded by Benjamin Franklin in 1743, is the oldest learned society in America. The Society erected this building between 1785 and 1789 and still occupies it. (Not open to the public.)

**Old City Hall** was built in 1790-91 as the Philadelphia City Hall. It was used by the U.S. Supreme Court from 1791 to 1800 and by the municipal government and courts during the 19th century.

**Independence Hall** was originally constructed between 1732 and 1756 as the Pennsylvania State House. Until 1799 it served as the meeting place of the provincial and state governments. The Second Continental Congress and the Constitutional Convention held their sessions here. In Independence Square, then the State House Yard, the Declaration of Independence was first read publicly on July 8, 1776.



### **The Liberty Bell**

In 1751 the Pennsylvania Assembly ordered from England a bell for the State House to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Pennsylvania Charter of Privileges, the democratic constitution William Penn granted his colony in 1701. The bell cracked while being tested, and John Pass and John Stow, "two ingenious workmen" of Philadelphia, recast it. Because the tone was not satisfactory, they cast it a second time. It afterwards served as Pennsylvania's official bell on public occasions until 1835, when, according to tradition, it cracked while tolling during the funeral of Chief Justice John Marshall. This is the bell you see in the Pavilion across from Independence Hall.

The Liberty Bell's traditional associations with the events of the American Revolution and its prophetic "Proclaim Liberty" inscription have made it the most cherished and revered symbol of American freedom, and an emblem of liberty throughout the world.

**Congress Hall** was constructed in 1787-89 as the Philadelphia County Court House. It served as the meetingplace for the Federal Congress from 1790 to 1800. During the 19th century it housed Federal and local courts.

**Christ Church**, built between 1727 and 1754, is a fine example of a colonial church. Seven signers of the Declaration of Independence (including Benjamin Franklin) are buried in the cemetery and churchyard.

**St. Joseph's Church**, established in 1733 as the first Roman Catholic church in Philadelphia, is possibly the only church in the United States in which Mass has been celebrated continuously for more than 200 years.

**City Tavern**, "the most genteel tavern in America," quickly became the social center of Philadelphia. Banquets and receptions were held here for the Continental and Federal Congresses. It has been reconstructed as an operating 18th-century tavern.

**Graff House** was originally built in 1775 by Jacob Graff, Jr., a bricklayer. During the summer of 1776 Jefferson rented the two second-floor rooms and there drafted the Declaration of Independence. The house is a reconstruction.

**Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial**. As a Polish military engineer serving with the American forces, Kosciuszko designed and constructed defense works during the Revolution. The fortifications he had built at Saratoga contributed significantly to the American victory there in 1777. This house served as his Philadelphia residence in 1797-98 during a second visit to America.

**Free Quaker Meeting House**, built in 1783, is the oldest meetinghouse in Philadelphia. The Free Quakers, unlike the main body of Quakers which remained pacifist, supported and fought for the American cause in the Revolutionary War.

*Not shown on the map are other areas of the park and a national historic site:*

**The Deshler-Morris House**, 5442 Germantown Ave., was erected in 1772-73 and served as the home of President Washington during the summers of 1793 and 1794.

**St. George's Church**, 235 North Fourth St., is the oldest Methodist Church in the United States and, except for the winter of 1777-78, has been in constant use since 1769.

**Mikveh Israel Cemetery**, at Ninth and Spruce Sts., was established in 1738 and is the oldest Jewish cemetery in the city. Haym Salomon, a financier of the Revolution, is buried here.

**Gloria Dei (Old Swedes') Church National Historic Site**, at Delaware Ave. and Swanson St., was built in 1700 and is the oldest church in Pennsylvania.

**Benjamin Franklin National Memorial**. In the rotunda of Franklin Institute (20th St. and Benjamin Franklin Parkway), the colossal statue of Franklin honors the scientist-inventor-statesman.

*You may obtain further information about the park and about other areas of the National Park System at the information counters in the visitor center (Chestnut and Third Sts.) and in the East Wing of Independence Hall.*

### **For Your Safety**

Do not allow your visit to be spoiled by an accident. While every effort has been made to provide for your safety, there are still hazards which require your alertness and vigilance. The 18th-century brick sidewalks are sometimes rough and uneven. Walk with caution.

### **Administration**

Independence National Historical Park was authorized by Act of Congress in 1948 to assure the preservation of several historic buildings around Independence Hall in the heart of Philadelphia. By an agreement in 1950 between the City of Philadelphia and the Department of the Interior, the National Park Service administers the Independence Hall group of buildings and Independence Square, but the city retains ownership of the property. A superintendent, whose address is 313 Walnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19106, is in immediate charge.

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering the wisest use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interests of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in Island Territories under U.S. administration.

**National Park Service**  
U.S. Department of the Interior