

The Liberty Bell - Poem by William Ross Wallace

A sound like a sound of thunder rolled,
And the heart of a nation stirred—
For the bell of Freedom, at midnight tolled,
Through a mighty land and was heard.
And the chime still rung
From its iron tongue
Steadily swaying to and fro;
And to some it came
Like a breath of flame—
And to some a sound of wo.

Above the dark mountain, above the blue wave
It was heard by the fettered, and heard by the brave—
It was heard in the cottage, and heard in the hall—
And its chime gave a glorious summons to all—
The sabre was sharpened—the time-rusted blade
Of the Bond started out in the pioneer's glade
Like a herald of wrath: And the host was arrayed!
Along the dark mountain, along the blue wave
Swept the ranks of the Bond—swept the ranks of the Brave;
And a shout as of waters went up to the dome.
When a star blazing banner unfurled,
Like the wing of some Seraph flashed out from its home,

Uttered freedom and hope to the world.
O'er the hill-top and tide its magnificent fold,
With a terrible glitter of azure and gold,
In the storm, in the sunshine, and darkness unrolled.
It blazed in the valley—it blazed on the mast—
It leaped with its Eagle abroad on the blast;
And the eyes of whole nations were turned to its light;
And the heart of the multitude soon
Was swayed by its stars, as they shone through the night
Like an ocean when swayed by the moon.

Again and through the midnight that Bell thunders out,
And banners and torches are hurried about:--
A shout as of waters! a long-uttered cry!
How it leaps, how it leaps from the earth to the sky!
From the sky to the earth, from the earth to the sea,
Hear a chorus re-echoed, "The People are Free!"
That old Bell is still seen by the Patriot's eye,
And he blesses it ever, when journeying by;
Long years have passed o'er it, and yet every soul

Will thrill in the night to its wonderful roll;
For it speaks in its belfry, when kissed by the blast,
Like a glory-breathed tone from the mystical Past.
Long years shall roll o'er it, and yet every chime
Shall unceasingly tell of an era sublime
More splendid, more dear than the rest of all time.
O yes! If the flame on our altars should pale,
Let its voice but be heard, and the Freeman shall start
To rekindle the fire, while he sees on the gale,
All the stars, and the stripes of the Flag of his heart! ¹

Endnotes

1. Wallace, William Ross, The Liberty Bell, <http://xroads.virginia.edu>

When a people lose their history, they lose a part of who they are.
Reclaim your heritage; pass this on to a friend or family member.

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