

## Object Report

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**ObjectID:** 29.1112.1

**Object Name:** Bell (Idiophone)

**Title:** Bell, Cast by Joseph Warren Revere, circa 1834

**Created Date:** circa 1834

**Summary:** Joseph Warren Revere cast this bell circa 1834. Revere was the son of the famous silversmith Paul Revere who had an extensive knowledge of metallurgy and opened his own foundry in 1792. This bell hung in the belfry of the Universalist Church in Hingham, Massachusetts, from 1834 to 1927, before being installed at the Martha-Mary Chapel in Greenfield Village.

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**Remarks:** NEW RESEARCH (RMJ, 12/22/17):

In 1792, Paul Revere began his bell business in Boston with his sons Paul Revere, Jr. and Joseph Warren Revere. In 1801, Revere sets up America's first copper rolling mill in Canton, MA. Paul Jr. was said to have left at this time to work on bells with George Holbrook. Revere bells after this time are marked with inscriptions reading "Revere & Son" instead of the previously used "Revere & Sons".

Joseph Warren Revere goes to Europe in 1804 to study bell-casting. When he returns, Paul Revere, Sr. and Joseph Warren Revere enter into partnership together as "Paul Revere & Son", moving the business from Boston to Canton. The partnership lasts until 1811, when Paul Revere, Sr. retires. Joseph Warren Revere retains a majority interest in the business, while Paul Revere's grandsons Paul Revere III and Thomas Eayres, Jr. retain minority interest. Paul Revere, Jr. dies in 1813.

When Thomas Eayres, Jr. dies in 1818, Paul Revere III sells his shares of the business to Joseph Warren Revere. Paul Revere, Sr. dies in 1818 as well. Paul Revere III goes to work on bell-casting with William Blake.

Bell inscriptions change in 1821 to read "Revere Boston", followed by the casting date. Beginning in 1824, the casting date is dropped from the inscriptions to simply read "Revere Boston." Paul Revere & Son stockbooks and ledgers are closed out in 1828, the same year Joseph Warren Revere and another Paul Revere grandson, Frederick Walker Lincoln, incorporate Revere Copper Company. The new company retains ownership of the original foundry and continues to make bells, although not as frequently. Joseph Warren remains president of the company until his death in 1868; Frederick Walker Lincoln succeeds him as president.

Church records from the area exist from the 1830's and include dated receipts from the Revere Copper Company. The receipts note that the bells have been obtained from the son of Paul Revere. These bells are marked only "Revere Boston". (Stickney, 1976, "The Bells of Paul Revere," Pg. 10)

Between 1792 and 1843, the Revere foundry cast over 900 bells of all sizes.

Conclusion: If the purchase date in the records of the Universalist Church of Hingham, Massachusetts (from previous research listed in EMu) state this bell was bought in 1834 and the bell inscription reads "Revere Boston", then we can conclude that it was bought from Revere Copper Company and made by Joseph Warren Revere.

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH (done before 12/22/17):

Further research in the Martha-Mary Chapel building box turned up a report from 1980 about this bell. Because the inscription on the side is "REVERE BOSTON" and does not have a date, the bell was most likely cast between 1820-1822 or 1825-1828. This would mean that Colonel Paul Revere and his son (Paul Revere Jr.) could not have cast the bell because they had both passed away (1818 and 1813, respectively); they also did not use that mark, using "P. REVERE & SON" instead. The remaining family members who could have cast the bell would be another of the Colonel's sons, Joseph Warren Revere, who was involved in the bell casting business and took over after his father's death, or Paul Jr.'s son, Paul III. However, Joseph is known to have used "REVERE BOSTON" on his bells.

The bell could also be dated circa 1834, because that is the purchase date in the records of the Universalist Church of Hingham, Massachusetts. At this point, the bell may have a) been cast as a special order by Joseph Warren Revere, or b) had been cast earlier and was purchased from the Revere Copper Company. The Revere Copper Company has not been known to make bells, but they may have sold them. At the time, it also sometimes happened that when a church dissolved, its bell went

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back to its manufacturer, so it's again possible that the bell was cast earlier. However, whether or not this bell came from an earlier church is unknown. What is known is that the bell was purchased by the Universalist Church of Hingham, Massachusetts in 1834 and hung in the church there until 1927. That year, the church dissolved and the building was sold to the local Lodge of Odd Fellows. The bell was sold to a member of the lodge, who in turn sold it to an antique shop in Boston. Henry Ford purchased the bell from the Boston Antique Shop in 1929, although a receipt for the bell has not been found.

Bell cast ca. 1834 by Paul Revere (grandson of the American Revolutionary War patriot Paul Revere).

The bell was purchased by the Universalist Society in 1834 evidently from Paul Revere (a son of Paul Revere, Sr.) who had been associated with his father until early in 1800 when he became interested in an iron foundry at Braintree, Mass., where he evidently cast a few bells. His bells were usually inscribed "Revere" and rarely bore a date.

It hung in the belfry of the Universalist Church from 1834-1929. In 1927 the Universalist Society dissolved and sold the building, including the bell to the local Lodge of Odd Fellows who sold it to one of their members who sold it to a junk man who in turn sold it to an antique dealer in Boston. (EI Card)

Letter in file states: "...it appears that...the son Paul never called himself Junior. He was trained by his father to carry on his silversmith's line of work and never cast bells. His son, the Colonel's grandson Paul, did call himself Junior. He also was one of the three who were associated with with the Colonel in bell casting and the copper business for a time. Later he cast bells for himself and in company with William Blake. This easily explains the confusion and why the Colonel's son was thought to have cast bells." (Letter by Christine M. Ayers of Brookline, MA, dated 8/15/36)

**Physical Description:** Bell with "REVERE BOSTON" on the side, undated.

**Creator:** Revere, Joseph Warren, 1777-1868  
Revere Copper Company

**Material:** Metal

**Subject(Geographic names):** United States, Massachusetts

**Subject(Genre Terms):** Bells (Idiophones)

**Subject(Topical Terms):** Churches  
Fraternal organizations