

***BIG BEN***

***Big Ben - the bell tower in London, the part of the architectural complex of the Palace of Westminster.***

***The official name - "Clock Tower of Westminster Palace", also called "the Tower of St. Stephen. "***

**The tower was built in  
1858, the clock tower  
was set on foot 21 May  
1859.**



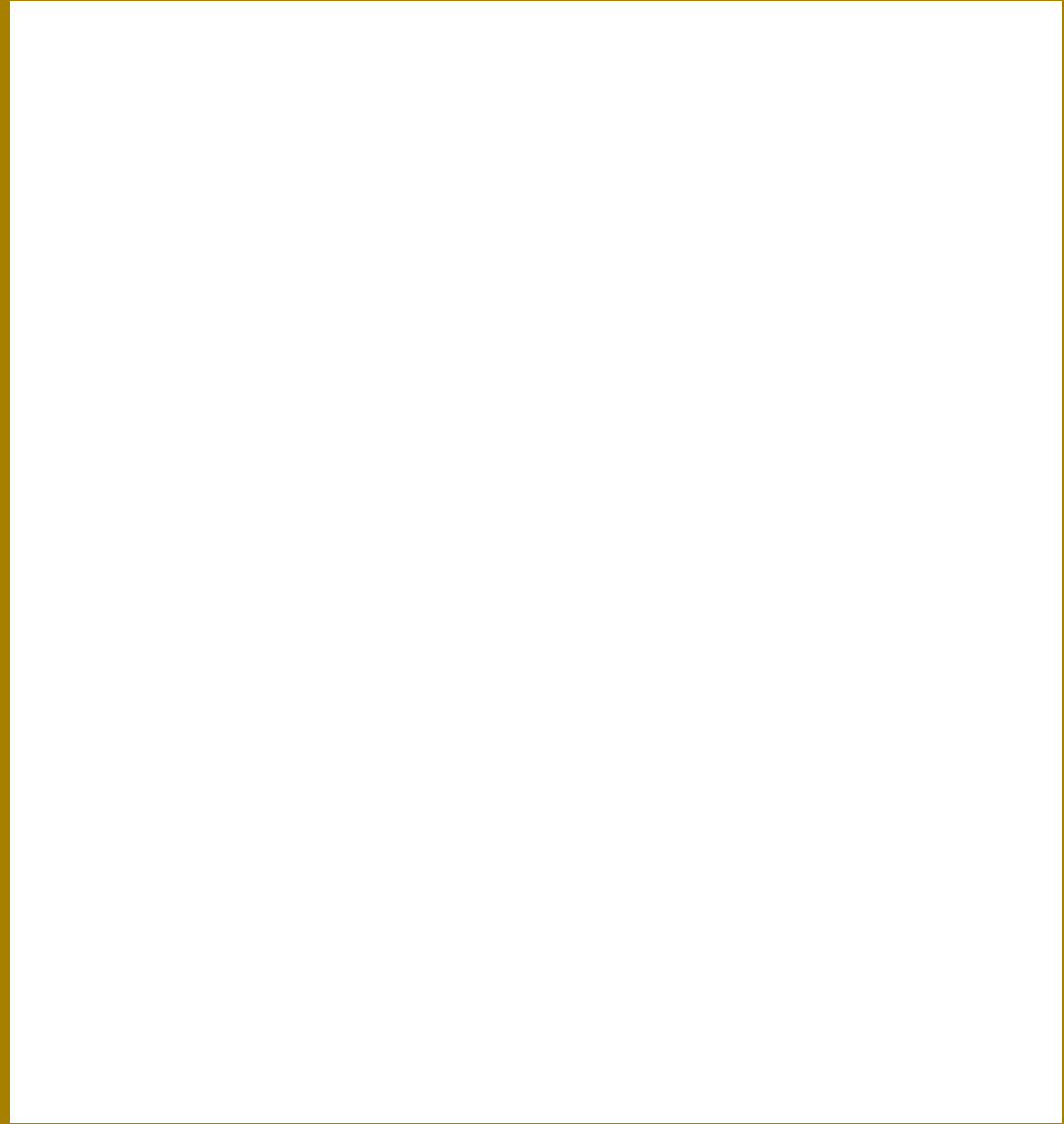
*In 1844 by the decision of the Parliament there was established a commission for the construction of the clock tower. The following requirements for clock were: the first hit of the bell should correspond to hour up to a second.*

*But by 1851, there was found a designer who decided to such a step - Edmund Beckett Denison, who decided to break the record of weight of the bell in York ("Peter the Great") in 10 tons and cast a bell weighing 16 tons.*

*Casting was engaged by George Mears.*

*During the week the bell was melting and then 20 days were spent on the fact that the metal cooled down and took shape. It happened on April 10, 1858*

*And after testing May 31, 1859 the bell was taken to the building of the Parliament with the enthusiastic cheers of the crowd.*



*However, after 2 months the bell cracked to a huge upset of Denison. Weight of the hammer which beat the bell, was twice as heavy as the maximum possible weight of the hammer defined by George Mears.*

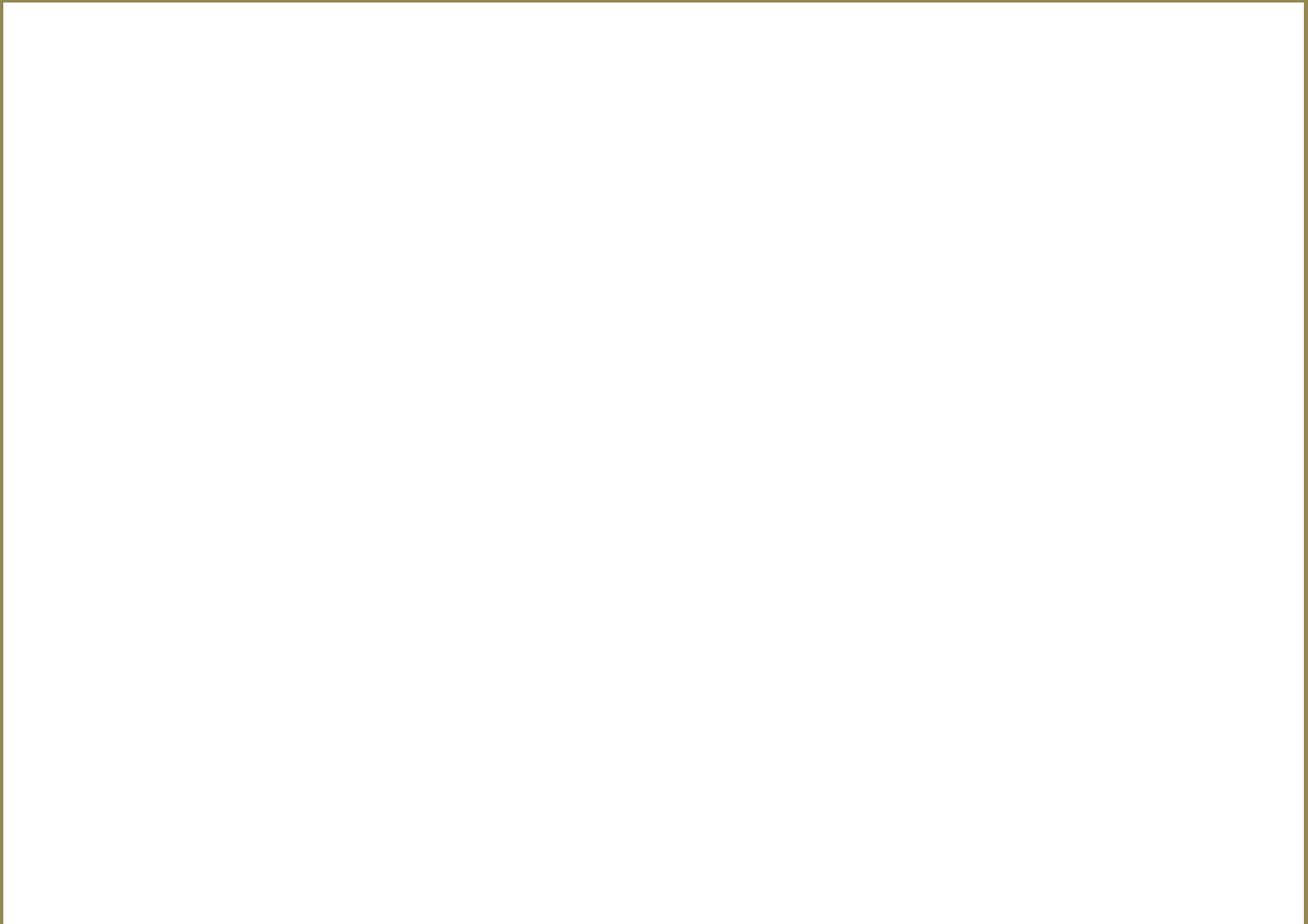
*During 3 years the bell was inactive, and instead beat off hours bell, responsible for a quarter of an hour.*

*Later there was made easier bolt , but the crack is still making its presence felt in the world famous chimes.*



*Iron arrows were poured from a lighter alloy. Clock was opened May 31, 1859. Up to 1912 clock was covered by gas jets, which were later replaced by electric lamps. And on the radio for the first time chimes sounded December 31, 1923.*





**The mechanism that activates the hammer of  
the bell of Big Ben.**



*The name Big Ben is surrounded by interesting stories. The official version: the bell is named after the chief of construction sulfur Benjamin Hall. For its impressive size foreman was given the nickname Big Ben. Another version - the bell got its name from the athlete and boxer of times of Queen Victoria.*

*On the perimeter  
of the tower on  
the right and left  
of the clock there  
is inscribed the  
phrase in Latin:  
«Laus Deo»  
(«Thank God" or  
"Glory to God")*

***There are also  
many different  
copies of the  
famous Big  
Ben.***



