



## BIG BEN

Many people (even in England!) think that Big Ben is the clock or the whole tower next to the Houses of Parliament. In fact, it is the nickname of the largest bell at the top of the tower. It is actually called the Great Bell of Westminster and was made in 1858.

Its sound is well known because it has often been used in films, and British television and radio companies use it to introduce news broadcasts. It is also the sound that rings in each New Year in Britain.

Nobody knows for sure why Big Ben is called Big Ben, but many people think it was something to do with Sir Benjamin Hall, a rather fat man who was in charge of the building works at Westminster and whose nickname was 'Big Ben'.



### Did you know?

- Big Ben weighs 13 tons!
- The famous clock tower is called St Stephen's Tower. It's 96 metres high.
- The tower has 4 white clock faces. They look north, south, east and west.
- The minute hands in each of the clock faces are nearly 5 metres long!
- Even in this technological age, the clock is still wound by hand.
- The clock is very reliable but sometimes it reacts to extreme weather conditions. In 1962, for example, the New Year was ten minutes late because of heavy snow! And on the 27th of May, 2005, the clock stopped for 90 minutes because of the hot weather.

*(To be continued)*



**unpredictable** [ʌnpriˈdɪktəbl̩]  
непредсказуемый

**to suffer from fits of depression**

страдать от приступов депрессии

**Jane Seymour** [ˈsiːmə:] Джейн Сеймур

**potential** [pəˈtenʃl̩] потенциальный,  
возможный

**Anne of Cleves** [æn əv ˈkliːvz] Анна Клевская

**wedding** [ˈwedɪŋ] свадьба

**to divorce** [dɪˈvɔːs] разводиться

**nickname** [ˈnɪkneɪm] прозвище

**bell** колокол

**broadcast** [ˈbrɔːdkɑːst] радиовещание,  
радиопередача

**to ring in** ознаменовывать колокольным звоном  
**it was something to do with** это имело какое-то  
отношение к

**to be in charge of the building works** руководить  
строительными работами

**to wind** [waɪnd] (**wound**) заводить (часы)

**reliable** [rɪˈlaɪəbl̩] надежный