



The STORY of the 1947 - 1949

FREEDOM TRAIN

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THE 1947 - 1949 FREEDOM TRAIN

A PRECIOUS AND UNIQUE CARGO

The Freedom Train was temporary home to America's most precious documents and other unique treasures, including the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, one of the 13 original copies of the Constitution, the Emancipation Proclamation, the Gettysburg Address, the Iwo Jima flag, the German and Japanese surrender documents that ended World War II, and much more.

Among the 127 documents and six historical flags on board, the Freedom Train held dozens of treasures that were the earliest inspirations for the American experience. Some of these were from a distant and oppressive age, when there was little precedent for the rights of ordinary people.

The Freedom Train's displayed cargo included a precious original of the Magna Carta, written in the year 1215 as the first guarantee of the individual Rights of Englishmen that a King could not deny.

Other precious documents of freedom included the first guarantees of individual rights to free expression and the practice of religion, dating from Colonial times. Much that was displayed aboard the train has never left Washington D.C. before or since. Some historic materials - and their presence aboard the train - were shockingly ahead of their time, proclaiming and celebrating Rights and Equality for Women, and Racial Equality (see the next topic on this page).

These and other historic symbols were reminders of the vital contributions of all of America's citizens, of "Rosy the Riveter" and millions of others whose contributions on the home front and in industry had enabled the victory over oppression in World War II. It was a time when everyone was keenly aware just how precious freedom is, and the price Americans have paid to keep it.

Text by Mr. Larry Wines.

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