

The world's most durable battery still works after 180 years

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In the mid-19th century, Robert Walker, a professor of physics at Oxford University, purchased this interesting device. Its battery pack is designed to push a rapidly oscillating metal ball between two small bell blocks, helping them ring continuously. According to scientists, the bell has rung more than 10 billion times.



This device was built by Watkins and Hill, an equipment manufacturing company in London, England, in 1840. It is currently on display at the Clarendon Laboratory at Oxford University. It is recognized by the Guinness Book of Records as "the world's most durable battery pack".

Researchers don't know exactly what mechanism keeps the device working for so long. Disassembling the device for research may damage it.

The device uses a dry battery, consisting of circular discs of silver, zinc, sulfur or other materials arranged alternately to produce low-intensity electric current. This was one of the first types of electric batteries developed by priest and physicist Giuseppe Zamboni in the early 19th century.

AJ Croft, a researcher who worked at Clarendon Laboratory, said that the battery's outer coating is sulfur, but the internal structure is unknown. Because the current flowing through it is at a very low voltage, the bell only makes a very small sound and does not ring loudly like an alarm clock.

Researchers will certainly have to wait until the battery pack runs out of power or the device itself breaks down over time to uncover the mystery of the Oxford Electric Bell.

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