

STATUE OF LIBERTY NATIONAL MONUMENT, consisting of the Statue, its base and the land on which it is situated, Liberty Island, Borough of Manhattan. Erected 1886; sculptor Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi; engineer Gustave Eiffel; architect Richard Morris Hunt.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1, Lot 101 in part.

On July 13, 1976, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Statue of Liberty National Monument and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 2). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Three witnesses spoke in favor of designation. There were no speakers in opposition to designation.

#### DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

I believe this enterprise will take on very great proportions. If things turn out as I hope they will this work of sculpture will become of great moral importance.

The sculptor Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi wrote these prophetic words in 1871, nearly fifteen years before his grand creation, the Statue of Liberty, was completed. The statue was intended to symbolize man's enduring belief in liberty, and to commemorate the long-standing friendship between the United States and France. It is, moreover, a monument to the idealism, perseverance, generosity, and hard work of people both here and in France who, like Bartholdi, had faith in the "great moral importance" of the statue. With the passage of time the significance of the Statue of Liberty has deepened and expanded, until she has become the primary symbol of American liberty, independence and freedom. Standing in New York harbor, she has greeted millions of immigrants arriving in America, and thus has come to symbolize the hope for a better life in a new homeland, free from tyranny and oppression.

Although Liberty has become quintessentially American, the idea for the statue originated in France. It was first suggested by Edouard-René Lefebvre de Laboulaye (1811-1883). Laboulaye was an historian, author, and the foremost French authority on American constitutional history. A great admirer of America, he had published a three-volume history of the United States, a satirical story "Paris in America", and numerous articles espousing the Union cause during the Civil War. He was the principal figure of a group of French intellectuals who, during the Second Empire, advocated Republican rule for France. They viewed American government as exemplary and took pride in the role played by Frenchmen such as Lafayette in the formation of the American republic.

Thus, the initial idea from which the Statue of Liberty resulted was in keeping with Laboulaye's sentiments and political philosophy. At a dinner given by him in the summer of 1865 at his estate at Glatigny, near Versailles, Bartholdi, who was one of the guests, listened to a discussion concerning gratitude between nations. Laboulaye, emphasizing the friendship between France and America, commented, "If a monument to independence were to be built in America, I should think it very natural if it were built by united effort, if it were a common work of both nations."

Historical events at the time, especially in France but also in the United States, made the construction of such a monument an action of potential political significance. In America, the Civil War had just ended with the republic intact, but President Lincoln had been assassinated. The common people of France were profoundly disturbed by this tragic event, so much so that a public subscription was initiated to fund a gift to Mrs. Lincoln which would express the sympathies of the French people. A gold medal was made and inscribed with the words "Dedicated by the French Democracy to Lincoln". This tribute was opposed by the French monarchy then in power; the medal had to be struck in Switzerland and smuggled to the American embassy in France. Republicans such as Laboulaye, who opposed the monarchy of Napoleon III, no doubt deeply resented this act of suppression, directed against a memorial to a leader of a democracy.

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Laboulaye must have recognized that the construction of a great monument to Liberty would constitute a statement of strong political belief, one which would strengthen the image of republicanism in France. Thus, the construction of the Statue of Liberty had distinct propagandistic overtones. By 1877, after much political turmoil, the ends sought by Laboulaye and other Republicans were achieved--monarchy was overturned and the Third Republic founded.

By 1871 positive steps toward the creation of the statue were taken. Bartholdi, who never lost interest in the project, had however, been occupied in the political difficulties of France. He fought in the Franco-Prussian War and witnessed the heartbreaking loss of his native Alsace to the enemy. In 1871, the war at an end, he determined on the advice of Laboulaye to visit the United States. He sailed in June on the Pereire, armed with instructions and letters of introduction, and well-prepared to study America's reactions to the proposed monument. He travelled extensively--as far west as San Francisco--enjoying all that he encountered. He met with many prominent men, including President U. S. Grant, Senator Charles Sumner, and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Everywhere he discussed the statue he received enthusiastic response. Upon his return to France in the fall he was able to report positively on American interest; he had, in addition, selected the site for the monument--Bedloe's Island in New York harbor, at the threshold of the New World.

The precise theme of the monument had also been determined--a statue of colossal proportions entitled "Liberty Enlightening the World". Liberty was to shed a guiding light on Europe--and especially France--from the shores of America where she was already firmly ensconced. Bartholdi began making a series of small studies in clay. In these one can follow the gradual formulation and refinement of the figure which from the very beginning depicted a draped female figure holding a torch aloft. Marvin Trachtenberg in his excellent study The Statue of Liberty (1976) has pointed out that Liberty bears a striking resemblance to an earlier project--never realized--on which Bartholdi had been at work in the late 1860s. This was to be a lighthouse on the Suez Canal in the form of a female figure holding a torch in her upraised hand, and entitled "Progress; Egypt Bearing Light to Asia". Bartholdi himself was never eager to discuss this similarity. Clearly he had found it expedient to adapt the unfulfilled Suez project, on which he had worked intensely, to a new use in America. The transition was, in any event, gracefully accomplished.

In 1871 when Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi (1834-1904) began to work in earnest on the Statue of Liberty, he was thirty-seven years old. He had been born in Colmar, a city in Alsace and came from a respected middle class family. Raised by his widowed mother, a strong-willed woman, Bartholdi remained deeply attached to her throughout his life--the face of the Statue of Liberty was modeled after hers. Bartholdi had a sound artistic training, first studying with the painter Ary Scheffer, a well-known Parisian society portraitist, and later with the sculptors J. F. Soitoux and Antoine Etex. His first major commission, in 1855, was for an over life-size portrait of General Jean Rapp, a native of Colmar. In 1856 the young Bartholdi made a pleasure trip to Egypt where he was deeply impressed by the monumental sculptures of antiquity--their permanence and "imperturbable majesty". Thereafter, in his own work he expressed a love for the colossal, the most dramatic example done before the Statue of Liberty being the great granite Lion of Belfort (1875-1880) which was a monument to the heroic defenders during the Franco-Prussian War of that Alsatian town. This monument also reveals the second theme which characterized much of Bartholdi's sculpture. After the loss of his homeland to the Prussians, he became an ardent patriot and believer in freedom. The themes of his work reflect his political idealism. Two examples are in New York City, the statue of Lafayette in Union Square and the monument to Lafayette and Washington in Morningside Park.

By 1875 Bartholdi was ready to begin the actual construction of the statue. The funding of this great enterprise was the responsibility of a group formed in November of 1875, the Franco-American Union. This group, headed by Laboulaye, numbered in its ranks many men who not only contributed money but also helped with the administration of the project. They decided that France should contribute the statue, America, the pedestal on which it rests. It was hoped that the statue would be ready in time for presentation in 1876, America's centennial year; but fund raising was a laborious process and the statue itself was a work requiring much patient, meticulous labor and calculation. At a great banquet in the Hotel du Louvre, the funding campaign was initiated. Large donations were made by cities, including Paris and Le Havre, and the Free Masons made a

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substantial contribution. The famed composer C. F. Gounod created a cantata "Liberté éclairant le monde" which was presented in a benefit performance at the Paris Opera. A lottery selling 300,000 chances and smaller scaled money-making schemes were organized. The \$400,000 required was finally amassed in 1881. All this had been donated by the French people; the national government was not approached and did not contribute a single centime.

The first clay models of the Statue of Liberty were only a few inches high; the actual statue was to be 151 feet tall, the head alone ten feet wide. As money was collected, Bartholdi, directing a team of skilled craftsmen, began the complicated process of construction. They worked in Paris within the cavernous ateliers of Gaget, Gauthier & Co. in which other colossal statues had been assembled, most notably the Vercingetorix by Millet of 1865. Liberty was to be made from sheets of beaten copper, only 3/32 of an inch thick. This metal was chosen for its relative lightness, and yet the statue weighs approximately one hundred tons. A clay model 1.25 meters high was enlarged twice to about 11 meters in height, roughly one fourth the size of the finished work. Then, section by section, this model was enlarged to full-scale, a formidable task involving more than 9000 measurements for each enlargement. From a set of full-scale plaster fragments carpenters then constructed wooden molds upon which the copper was hammered into shape. More than 300 separate sheets of copper were riveted together to form Liberty.

This enormous figure of very thin copper was not self-supporting. It required a system of internal bracing. Colossal statues in former times had been constructed around massive heavy supports; for example, the 17th-century statue, S. Carlo Borromeo, over 23 meters tall, is built around an enormous masonry pier. The great engineering advances of 19th century made a new approach possible for the Statue of Liberty. The first structural specialist consulted was the eminent E. E. Viollet-le-Duc, with whom Bartholdi had studied. Viollet-le-Duc suggested an ironwork armature above a system of compartments filled with sand. This scheme was not, however, employed since Viollet-le-Duc died in 1879; the responsibility for the interior structure of Liberty was passed on to Gustave Eiffel, a contemporary of Bartholdi and the most brilliant French engineer of his day.

Gustave Eiffel (1832-1923) began his career working for railroad companies and was especially concerned with the construction of iron bridges, such as the Pont du Garabit, a spectacular structural triumph achieving its beauty through frankly expressed design and vast scale. He was also involved in the design of exposition buildings--including the one in which Liberty's head was displayed at the Paris Exposition of 1878--as well as railroad stations and department stores. He is, of course, best remembered for his tower in Paris, erected for the Paris Exhibition of 1889--a grand display piece of little practical value, disliked by the majority of his contemporaries but now rightly considered a masterpiece. It is a symbol of Paris much as Liberty is a symbol of New York.

The Statue of Liberty presented an entirely new problem in design for Eiffel. Not only must the interior armature support the great weight of the copper shell including the upthrust arm, but also, since the statue was to stand unprotected in New York harbor, it must be capable of withstanding high winds, moisture and changes of temperature. Eiffel designed a central wrought-iron pylon with strong angle girders placed at the four corners from which supplementary angle beams project for the attachment of bracing and secondary structure. Diagonal bracing reinforces the entire pylon. An asymmetrically placed girder forms the core of the torch arm. From this central tower a light-weight trusswork system is joined to the interior of the copper shell. This trusswork was an especially ingenious aspect of the design; the individual thin iron members are flexible and act like springs which allow for thermal expansion and contraction as well as resistance to wind pressure. This interior framework supports each section of the copper statue independently, and no copper plate places weight upon another. If the iron of the framework and the copper of the statue were in direct contact, an electric current would be generated. This phenomenon is called galvanic action. To guard against it Eiffel included insulation composed of asbestos impregnated with shellac. He also included a double stairway which leads up 168 steps to the head which contains a series of windows beneath the rays of the crown. The arm supporting the torch was also provided with a stairway (closed since 1916).



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While Bartholdi and Eiffel were at work in Paris, Americans were also at work planning the pedestal and raising funds. In 1877 Congress had agreed to accept the statue and provide a site, but, as in France, the Federal Government did not contribute to expenses. Patrons including prominent New Yorkers such as William Evarts and John Jay organized a committee through the Union League club to solicit contributions. As of 1876, however, when the completed arm and torch of Liberty were displayed in Philadelphia at the Centennial Exposition (and later in Madison Square in New York) in order to encourage donations, very little money had been collected. In January of 1877 the American Committee was formed with William Evarts as Chairman, Henry F. Spaulding, Treasurer, and Richard Butler, Secretary. Still the American public remained apathetic, even skeptical, despite benefit stage performances, an art auction, a poetry contest, and other appeals. This lack of enthusiasm was in part the result of misapprehensions on the part of the American public, the most prevalent being that the statue was a gift to New York and not the nation. By 1885, only half the money needed had been collected, almost all had already been spent, the pedestal was unfinished, the situation grim indeed.

It was at this juncture that Joseph Pulitzer, owner and editor of The New York World Newspaper, took a strong interest in the statue. Pulitzer, a native of Hungary, came to America in 1864, fought in the Civil War, then married well and became active in politics. By 1883 he was able to take over The World, and began a highly successful campaign to make it "the people's paper". Pulitzer, in March of 1885, called the inability to raise funds for the Liberty project a disgrace, severely criticized the rich of the country for not coming to the rescue, and appealed to the masses for contributions. He daily published names and the amounts of donation, however small, and in less than five months over 121,000 donors had contributed the \$100,000 needed.

The Federal government authorized General W. T. Sherman to designate the site for the monument, and in accordance with Bartholdi's wishes he selected Bedloe's Island. The eleven point star-shaped Fort Wood had been built on the Island as part of New York's defense system for the War of 1812, and it was agreed that the pedestal for the statue should be erected atop. The American Committee appointed General Charles Stone as chief engineer and Richard Morris Hunt as architect.

Charles Pomeroy Stone (1825-1887) fought in the Civil War and from 1870 to 1883 served in the Egyptian Army. He also worked in both Virginia and Florida as an engineer and there gained valuable experience which equipped him well in dealing with the Liberty project.

Excavation began in April of 1883, and work progressed more slowly than anticipated since the Fort was more solidly built than old plans and drawings had suggested. At the center of the Fort the foundation was laid. This consisted of an enormous, almost solid, tapering block of concrete fifty-three feet deep and ninety-one feet square upon which was to rest the pedestal itself. The cornerstone was laid in August of 1884, but construction had to be halted soon after for lack of funds. Work resumed after Pulitzer's campaign of 1885. The pedestal has thick concrete walls with stone facing. To solidly anchor the statue on this massive base, Stone laid great pairs of steel I-beams horizontally in the walls at the foot of the pedestal and a second matching set, at the top. Wrought-iron eye-bars were carried down through the base to anchor Eiffel's structure to the steel girders.

Although Bartholdi himself had prepared plans for the pedestal, the decision to incorporate Fort Wood made a new design necessary. The celebrated New York architect Richard Morris Hunt donated his services. Hunt (1828-1895) was the first American to study at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. New York's most prominent architect during the later 19th century, he is best remembered for his opulent city chateaux and grand Newport houses commissioned by the rich and fashionable of New York. He also designed numerous commercial buildings such as No. 478-82 Broadway located within the SoHo-Cast Iron Historic District, and buildings for cultural institutions, including the Fifth Avenue section of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, a designated New York City Landmark.

Liberty had already been completed while construction of the pedestal continued. The statue was temporarily erected in Paris where it caused great excitement, and was then disassembled, carefully packed in hundreds of specially designed crates, and loaded on board the ship Isère, lent by the French government. The Isère arrived off Sandy Hook in May of 1885 and soon after her arrival

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the erection of the statue began. The base was completed in April of 1886 and a grand inauguration ceremony took place on October 28, 1886. The face of Liberty was draped with the French flag, and Bartholdi himself loosed the unveiling cords. President Grover Cleveland accepted the statue in a moving speech in which he stated, "We shall not forget that Liberty has made here her home, nor shall her chosen altar be neglected."

Since 1886 Liberty has majestically surveyed the harbor. With the passage of time the statue has acquired a handsome green patina which contrasts effectively with the brown granite of the pedestal. Liberty directs her gaze out to sea, her right arm bearing aloft the torch, her left clasping a tablet inscribed July Fourth, 1776--the date of the founding of the American republic. This stately female figure is clothed in classical draperies, a mantle fastened at her left shoulder. She wears sandals and tramples a broken shackle, a gesture representing triumph over tyranny. She has classical, severely handsome features, and her hair is bound in an elaborate bun at the nape of the neck. A radiant crown adorns her head, which like the torch is brilliantly illuminated at night. Liberty is best viewed from a passing ship for only then can one fully appreciate her monumental dignity and the subtleties of her pose. She appears to stand proudly erect and still if seen frontally, while from the left, one is aware of the dynamic and dramatic forward thrust of her body.

The pedestal, a monumental architectural form, raises Liberty nearly ninety feet above Fort Wood. Hunt was faced with the task of assimilating his design to both the fortress and the statue--the base must dominate the fort without overwhelming the statue above. His admirable solution is a boldly-scaled, four-sided structure, executed in rusticated and smooth faced granite, with forceful neo-Grec detail. The entire rusticated socle including the double stairways at the north and south facades are now obscured by the recent museum addition. Doorways at each side are surmounted by heavy unornamented projecting pediments and flanked by smooth pilasters with circular shields. A frieze of forty shields, symbolizing the forty states then in the Union, encircles the base below a base-molding with widely spaced pedimental motifs, which echo the form of the doorway pediments. Above this is the shaft of the pedestal, treated identically on all four sides, and consisting of a deeply recessed loggia set above stone panels and flanked by heavily rusticated walls at the corners. The smooth stone panels were originally planned to contain inscriptions. The four piers of the loggia are incised in the manner of triglyphs and have capitals of simplified Doric form. A narrow continuous molding separates the panels from the loggias and lends emphasis to the batter of the walls. The rustication flanking the loggias is beautifully treated with projecting rough-hewn blocks which contrast effectively with the deeply recessed joints. An additional refinement is the beveled effect at the corners. This rusticated masonry is in keeping with the scale of the old fort below.

An observation platform behind a bold parapet, punctuated with arched uprights, crowns the pedestal. From this vantage point one has a magnificent view of the harbor and, gazing upward, an astonishing glimpse of Liberty in all her colossal splendour.

During Liberty's ninety-year history a number of additions and changes to the monument have been made. In 1903 the famed poem "The New Colossus", written by Emma Lazarus in 1883, was inscribed on a tablet and affixed to the pedestal. Elevators were first installed in 1908-09. The torch was redesigned in 1916 and the original copper replaced with yellow-tinted glass. This change was executed by Gutzon Borglum, the sculptor well-known for his monumental presidential portraits carved in the living rock of Mount Rushmore in South Dakota. A new exterior lighting system has recently been installed in honor of the Bicentennial celebration. In 1956 plans for the American Museum of Immigration at the base of the statue were announced, and the museum was opened in 1972. The monument was first placed under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service in 1933, and is today beautifully maintained under its direction.

Millions of Americans have visited the Statue of Liberty, and today she continues to amaze and delight the crowds that daily cross from New York to the island by ferry. Liberty stands as a reminder of international friendship, of the abiding belief in freedom, as well as of the ideals which Americans have long cherished. The symbol of American liberty and of our heritage, she is a truly grand and inspirational figure.

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### The New Colossus

Emma Lazarus (1849-1887), a member of a wealthy New York family, began writing poetry in her early teens. Ralph Waldo Emerson encouraged her work and she published numerous volumes of both poetry and prose. The persecution of Russian Jews during 1879-83 deeply distressed her and when refugees to America began arriving in New York she helped to organize relief efforts. In 1883 she composed "The New Colossus", a stirring poem which casts the Statue of Liberty in the role of a welcoming and sheltering "Mother of Exiles". The final five lines of this inspirational poem have become so famous that millions of Americans know them by heart.

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,  
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;  
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand  
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame  
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name  
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand  
Glow world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command  
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.  
"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she  
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

### History of the Island

Renamed Liberty Island in honor of the Statue in 1956, this small island, approximately 12 acres, is one of a group located in New York harbor near the mouth of the Hudson River. First called Minnissais by the Indians, it has at times been known as Great Oyster, Love, Kennedy's, and Corporation Island as well as Bedloe's Island the name it held longest. Isaak Bedloo a "select burgher" of New Amsterdam, owned the island in the 17th century. His daughter Mary sold it in 1732, and it was then used at various times as a quarantine station. In 1746 Archibald Kennedy purchased the island and built a summer residence there. During the Revolutionary War it was used as a refuge for Tory sympathizers.

When plans were made by the Federal government to erect fortifications in New York harbor, the island was selected as a suitable site. A land battery in the shape of an eleven-point star was constructed between 1806 and 1811 on top of old existing fortifications. After the War of 1812 it was named in honor of the war hero Colonel Eleazer D. Wood. Fort Wood and the entire island were under the control of the War Department until the Liberty project was undertaken. When Liberty was completed the land on which she stood was managed by the Light-house Board until 1901 when it reverted to the control of the War Department. In 1937, by Presidential proclamation, the National Park Service was granted jurisdiction over the island. While located within New Jersey territorial waters, the island itself has been considered since the late 17th century a part of New York City. An agreement of 1834 provides that the island is in New York State above the mean low-water mark, and in New Jersey below it, thereby granting New Jersey riparian rights.

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