

STATUE OF LIBERTY

NATIONAL MONUMENT—LIBERTY ISLAND, N.Y.



STATUE OF LIBERTY

A Gift from the People of France to the People of the United States, Commemorating the Alliance of the Two Nations During the American Revolution and Attesting to Their Abiding Friendship

One of the colossal sculptures in world history, the Statue has greeted many millions of the oppressed and venturesome from other lands who crossed the ocean in search of greater freedom and opportunity. To the world, the Statue has become a symbol of those ideals of liberty upon which our Nation and its form of government were founded.

In its international aspect, the Statue, a gift from the people of France to the people of the United States, commemorates the long friendship between the people of the two Nations. This is a friendship that has continued since the American Revolution when, supported by the French with sinews of war, it helped turn the tide of victory to the side of the Colonies.

Then there is symbolism in the design of the Statue itself. The broken shackles of tyranny that are molded at the feet of Liberty have spoken for themselves to generations of people fleeing tyranny. The tablet in the Statue's left hand, inscribed July 4, 1776, refers to the Declaration of Independence—telling all comers of the American ideal that "all men are created equal." The torch, held high in

her right hand, lights the way to freedom and liberty.

The French Built the Statue

A monument to commemorate the alliance of France and the United States in the War for American Independence was proposed by Edouard de Laboulaye, French historian and commentator. His idea was first offered to a group of his own countrymen shortly after the end of the American Civil War.

A young Alsatian sculptor, Frederic Auguste Bartholdi, was sent to America to study and discuss the project. As Bartholdi entered New York Harbor, he conceived the idea of a colossal statue to stand at the very gateway to the New World to represent the one thing man finds most precious—liberty.

Bartholdi's conception of the international memorial was accepted and in November 1875, the Franco-American Union was formed, with De Laboulaye as president, to make plans, secure funds, and prosecute the program. The Statue was to be erected through the joint efforts of the two peoples: the French to give

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
Glowing 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!"

*"The New Colossus,"
written by Emma Lazarus
in 1883 to aid the pedestal
fund drive.*

the Statue proper and the people of the United States the pedestal.

The response of the people of France was quick and warm, and a campaign to raise the necessary funds was launched with public entertainments. The cost of the statue, approximating \$250,000, was far greater than anticipated, however, and it was not until July 1882 that the required amount was subscribed. Every cent of this amount was contributed by popular subscription and governmental assistance was not required.

The mechanics of enlarging Bartholdi's 9-foot "working model" to its present height of 152 feet tested the sculptor's ingenuity. The plaster model was first reproduced four times its original size. Then section by section the 36-foot model was enlarged to its existing scale. Copper sheets three thirty-seconds of an inch in thickness (about that of a silver dollar) were pressed into wood patterns and hammered into shape by hand. The present green coating of the Statue, a patina, is the result of oxidation of copper. The framework of the Statue, designed by the French engineer, Gustave Eiffel,

consists of four huge steel supports which bear the weight of the entire structure. The construction is remarkable when one considers that the width of the face is 10 feet and that of the eyes 2 feet 6 inches. Moreover, the arm carrying the torch is 42 feet long and 12 feet in diameter at the point of greatest thickness.

The arm of the Statue which carries the torch was exhibited in Philadelphia in 1876 at the Centennial Celebration of American Independence. Later in the same year it was exhibited at Madison Square in New York City and then returned to France. The head of the Statue was shown in Paris at the World's Fair held there in 1878. On July 4, 1884, in Paris, the completed Statue was presented to the United States. The next year it was taken apart and crated for shipment to New York City.

The Americans Built the Pedestal

Meanwhile a committee in the United States started to raise \$125,000 for the construction of the pedestal. The original estimated cost, however, proved to be about half the amount

necessary to complete it. With only 15 feet of the structure completed, work on the pedestal stopped in the fall of 1884, pending subscription of an additional \$100,000. On March 16, 1885, the New York *World* took up the crusade. In daily editorials, Joseph Pulitzer, publisher of the *World*, assailed public indifference and urged benefit performances, sporting events, and entertainments for the pedestal campaign fund. The drive was so successful that he was able to announce the collection of this fund by August 11, 1885. This was less than 5 months after the drive had been started and 2 months after the arrival of the Statue in the United States.

In 1883, work on the construction of the pedestal, at old Fort Wood on the island in New York Harbor then known as Bedloe's Island, had been commenced under the direction

of Gen. Charles P. Stone, engineer in chief. It was built of concrete with a granite facing. Four huge steel girders were built into its walls, with similar girders placed a few feet from the top of the pedestal. These connect with the first set by iron tie rods and continue on up into the framework of the Statue itself. It was only in this way that the 152-foot figure, placed on a pedestal almost 150 feet in height, could withstand the high winds of the bay.

Dedication and Recent History

Edouard de Laboulaye did not live to see the work finished, and his place as president of the Franco-American Union was taken by Count Ferdinand de Lesseps, builder of the Suez Canal. Bartholdi was among those present to see President Grover Cleveland dedicate the Statue on October 28, 1886.

Air view of Statue of Liberty, with New York City in background. Courtesy The Port of New York Authority



Lighting this gigantic structure to best advantage was a perplexing problem. The system of electric lights originally installed has been replaced several times by more modern equipment. The present improved system almost doubles the lighting of the previous installation. Illumination of the torch is equivalent to 2,500 times full moonlight.

The Statue was first placed under the jurisdiction of the Lighthouse Board, as it was for many years considered an aid to navigation. In 1901, control was transferred to the War Department, which continued to maintain Fort Wood, a small army post, on the island. On October 15, 1924, the Statue of Liberty was declared a National Monument by Presidential proclamation. The Army discontinued Fort Wood in 1937 and the remainder of the island was added to the monument.

In 1956 Congress changed the island's name to Liberty Island in recognition of the Statue's symbolic significance and of the plan to establish at its base the American Museum of Immigration, honoring those who chose these shores.

Your Visit to the Statue

The ferry to Liberty Island leaves the landing, situated in Battery Park between Castle Clinton and South Ferry at the lower tip of Manhattan, every hour on the hour, with half-hour schedules during the summer. Transportation to the ferry is available by Broadway bus, by IRT subway, or by BMT subway.

The monument is open daily, Sundays and holidays included, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. When daylight saving time is in effect, visiting hours are until 6 p.m.

The entire structure is divided into three parts: base, pedestal, and statue proper. The base, an 11-pointed star, part of old Fort Wood, is entered at the rear of the Statue. You have the choice of an elevator or stairway to ascend the 10 stories to the top of the pedestal. A small fee is charged for the elevator ride. A 12-story stairway leads from the top of the pedestal to the head of the Statue.

Administration

Statue of Liberty National Monument is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

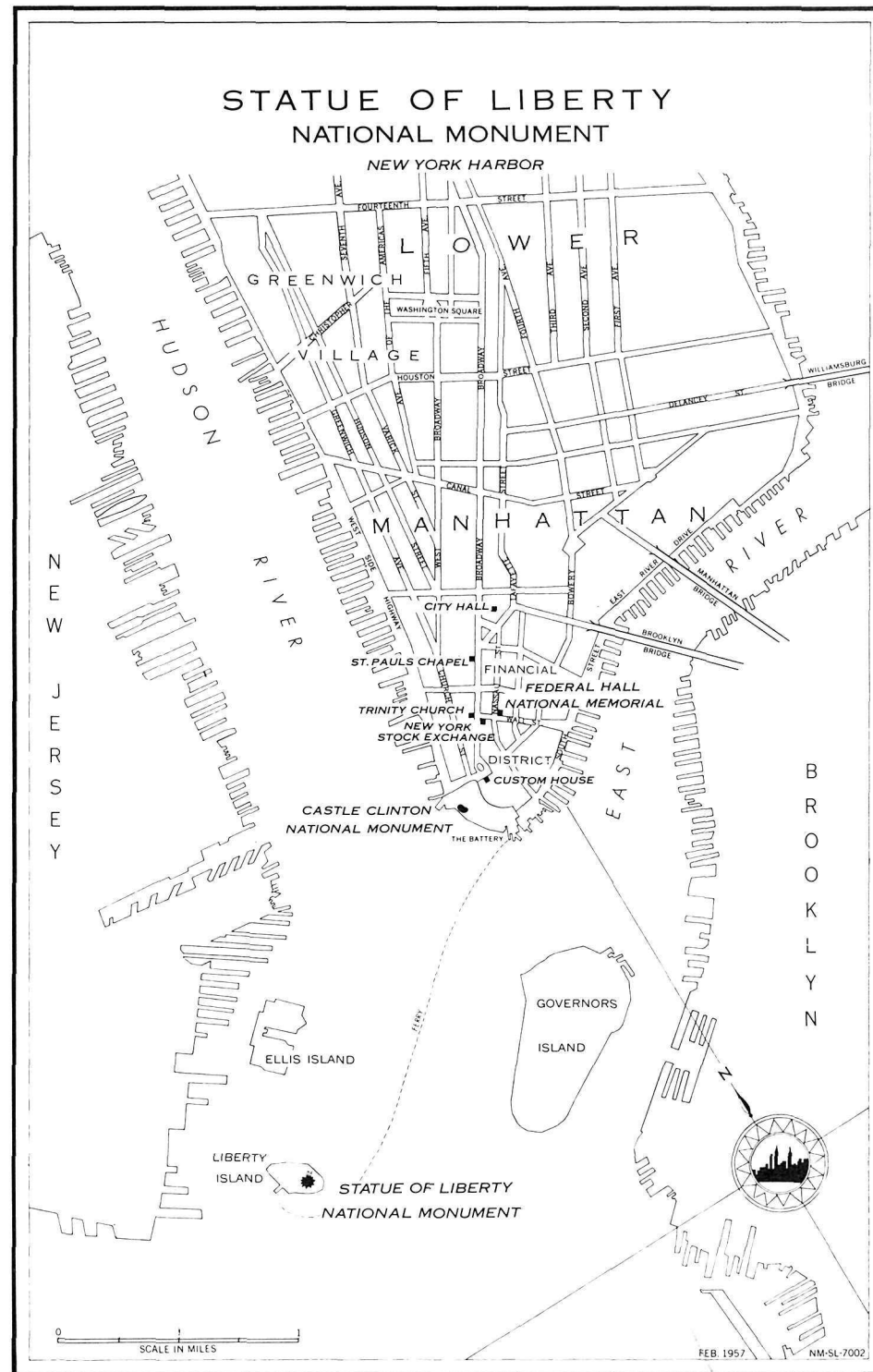
The National Park System, of which this monument is a unit, is dedicated to conserving the scenic, scientific, and historic heritage of the United States for the benefit and inspiration of the people.

The Superintendent of the New York City National Park Service Group administers the monument. Address all communications to the Unit Manager, Statue of Liberty National Monument, Liberty Island, New York, N.Y., 10004.

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR—the Nation's principal natural resource agency—has a special obligation to assure that our expendable resources are conserved, that our renewable resources are managed to produce optimum benefits, and that all resources contribute to the progress and prosperity of the United States, now and in the future.

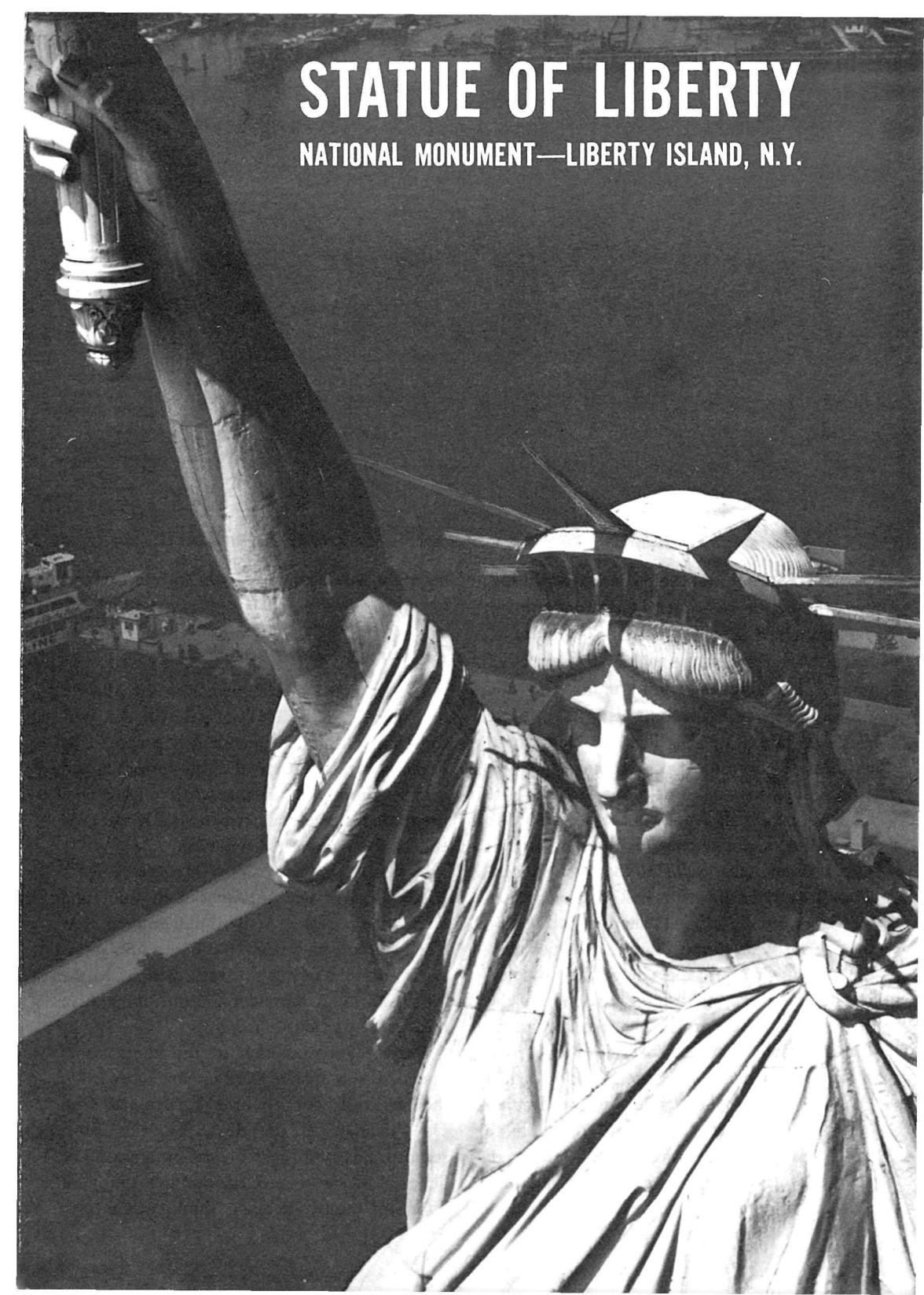


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