



The Statue of Liberty: The History and Legacy of America's Most Famous Statue

Charles River Editors

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*Includes pictures *Includes accounts of the construction by newspapers and men who worked on the Statue of Liberty *Includes a bibliography for further reading *Includes a table of contents “[A] masterpiece of the human spirit [that] endures as a highly potent symbol—inspiring contemplation, debate and protest—of ideals such as liberty, peace, human rights, abolition of slavery, democracy and opportunity.” - The UNESCO "Statement of Significance" describing the Statue of Liberty

Among America’s countless monuments and landmarks, none embody the principles of the nation quite like Lady Liberty, the colossal statue that stands on Liberty Island in New York Harbor. A gift from the French that was built and transported in the late 19th century, the Statue of Liberty has been a symbol of the United States’ guaranty of individual freedom, and its location took on added meaning as it welcomed millions of immigrants sailing across the Atlantic to nearby Ellis Island. As one incoming Greek immigrant remembered, “I saw the Statue of Liberty. And I said to myself, ‘Lady, you're such a beautiful! [sic] You opened your arms and you get all the foreigners here. Give me a chance to prove that I am worth it, to do something, to be someone in America.’ And always that statue was on my mind.” People around the world are instantly familiar with the statue today, whether from seeing pictures or depictions of it or actually visiting it and going inside, but the story of its construction is just as fascinating. Conceived as a monument that would commemorate the crucial alliance between America and France, the statue was a massive undertaking, from fundraising to the construction of the sculpture and a pedestal. The project took several years and a precarious transport of the statue’s pieces across the Atlantic to New York, where it was officially dedicated in 1886 and celebrated with a ticker tape parade. Even before that, the statue was so famous on both sides of the Atlantic that the head and torch had been displayed at various exhibits prior to the completion of the statue. Ironically, given the widespread fame of the Statue of Liberty, its history was turbulent and controversial. While those who conceived of the statue had a difficult time securing the funding, there were arguments over where the statue should go, and how everything from the pedestal to the statue itself should be built. In hindsight, it seems like a foregone conclusion that one of America’s most famous monuments would be completed, but it would actually take almost 15 years for the Statue of Liberty to be designed, constructed, and completed, and the lion’s share of the credit would go not to Americans but to dedicated French artists and engineers who pushed on with the work against major obstacles and heavy odds. The *Statue of Liberty: The History and Legacy of America’s Most Famous Statue* chronicles the design and construction of Lady Liberty. Along with pictures of important people, places, and events, you will learn about the Statue of Liberty like never before, in no time at all.

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