

The Statue of Liberty

Frederic Bartholdi was commissioned to design a sculpture commemorating the 100th anniversary of the American Declaration of Independence. It was a joint effort: Americans would build the pedestal; the French were responsible for the Statue and assembling it. Without adequate monetary support from either country, Bartholdi determined, *"I will try to glorify the Republic and Liberty over there, in the hope that someday I will find it again here."*

On a visit to New York in 1871 where he hoped to find the perfect location for his monument to freedom, Bartholdi even before landing on shore, later wrote of his entrance into New York Harbor. He said:

"The picture that is presented when one arrives in New York is marvelous. When, after some days of voyaging, in the radiance of a beautiful morning is revealed those immense cities... it is thrilling. It is, indeed, the New World in its majestic expanse, with its glowing life."

New York Harbor—gateway to America, was the perfect location *"where people get their first view of the New World."* Every where he went, Bartholdi promoted this massive endeavor dedicated to **"Liberty Enlightening the World"** (the official name for the statue).

In France, Bartholdi asked Alexander Eiffel (designer of the Eiffel Tower) to address structural issues associated with designing the huge sculpture. Eiffel designed the Statue's interior framework allowing its copper skin to move independently yet stand upright.

In July 1884, construction of the **Statue of Liberty** was finished. One year later, it arrived in New York by ship having been reduced to individual pieces packed in 214 crates in order to move it. Reassembling the Statue on its permanent site took four months. On October 28, 1886, dedication of the **Statue of Liberty** took place with thousands of spectators looking on.

The New Colossus, a poem written in 1883 by Emma Lazarus to help raise funds for the pedestal is inscribed on a plaque placed in the pedestal of the Statue:

*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
Glows 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-tossed to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"***