

Liberty Enlightening The World: America's Symbol Of Eternal Freedom



Submitted By John W. Bates National Patriotic Instructor
October 2011

In October, 1886 The United States of America received a Gift from the People of France today known as The Statue of Liberty. When it was dedicated to the people of The United States, There were many Civil War Veterans in attendance. Its meaning to them (and the people in general) was perhaps different, yet in many ways the same as it is to us today. The American Civil War had ended Twenty one years previously, but the causes and effects were still very much a part of everyday Life in 1886.

President Grover Cleveland accepted "The New Colossus" on October 28, 1886 and The United States instantly had a worldwide recognizable Large Symbol Of its Freedom and Purpose. To The Aging Civil War Veterans, The Statue meant many things, but perhaps chief among their thoughts was that it represented FREEDOM, The freedom to once and for all to have one, unified Country, tried by a great Trial of a difficult and costly Civil War.

The Concept of the Statue was devised long before the War, but its power and meaning was greatly enhanced by the War. Certainly the broken chains at the Feet of Miss Liberty represented the bonds of slavery Broken forever to many of them. The cost that the surviving Members of The Union Armies paid was recognized by their Tributes and Memorials to Their fallen Comrades. Since the end of the War, Many memorials and Statues had been erected all over over The North (and South) and perhaps The Statue can be recognized in one way along these lines.

While it was not built or dedicated specifically for this purpose, it sure fell into place as a Giant Memorial to all who craved A true Freedom for all. Perhaps President Lincoln said it best, when in his annual address in 1864 to Congress he explained the goal of the War effort was to (Win) so "The Public Purpose to reestablish and maintain The National Authority is unchanged, and as we believed, unchangeable" As this was the goal of the Union armies, perhaps this is what can be thought when we look at The Statue today. The Victory The Union fought so hard to attain was forever enshrined in their Hearts and minds, and we can see it every time we look at the Statue. May it always be so in our Hearts and Minds.