Statue of Liberty: Its History, Symbolism, and Stamps
A Presentation in Honor of the Statue’s 125th Anniversary

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Outline

- Introduction
- Statue History
- First Stamps
- Imagery-Semiotics
  - Statue Elements
  - New York
  - United States
  - Liberty & Freedom
- Replicas
- Early Uses
- NWLDA
- Defense Series
- Liberty Series
- Airmails & Postal Cards
- Bicentennial Tributes
- Statue’s Centennial
- “United We Stand”
- 125th Anniversary
- Miscellaneous (hidden Statue, one day use, postmarks & cancels, what’s missing)
- Summary
Introduction

- Since its dedication in 1886 (October 28, 1886), the Statue of Liberty (Liberty Enlightening the World) has been a recognized symbol of America and American ideals throughout the world.
- Standing on Liberty Island (formerly Bedloe’s Island) in New York Harbor, it is truly monumental in size rising over 300 feet above the water.
- It was the first image of America for the millions of immigrants that arrived by ship during the succeeding decades.
- An image of freedom and hope and the promise of a better life.
Statue History-Conception

- Presenting a gift representing Republican ideals to the people of the United States was first conceived by Edouard Laboulaye in 1865.

- Laboulaye was a writer, statesman, and leader of the Republican movement in France.

- He later was instrumental in founding the Third French Republic in 1875 after the defeat of Napoleon III by the Prussians.

- Laboulaye commissioned Frederic Auguste Bartholdi, a young sculptor, to create an artistic “gift of significance.”
Bartholdi had traveled to Egypt to view the construction of the Suez Canal.

He proposed a large lighthouse be erected at the entrance to the canal.

The lighthouse was not funded.

The design for the lighthouse featured a crowned and robed Egyptian peasant woman carrying a torch.

Light would emanate from both the torch and the woman’s crown.

Bartholdi modeled the lighthouse after the Roman goddess Libertas, the goddess for freedom from slavery.
**Statue History-Design Influences**

**“Libertas”**
Roman Goddess of Freedom

**“Libertas”**
by Augustin Dumont
Outside Palace of Justice
In Paris

**“La Vérité” (Truth)**
1870 painting by Jules Joseph Lefebvre
Paris
Statue History-Face Design

Bartholdi’s Mother
Anna Maria Augusta
Charlotte Bartholdi
(nee Beysser (1801-1891))

Face Replica in the Pedestal
at the Statue of Liberty
(nose is 1.46 m in length)
Statue History-Torso Design

Bartholdi’s Mistress
(later wife) Jeanne-Emilie Baheux de Puysieux
With Laboulaye’s commission Bartholdi had a chance to build his “lighthouse”.

Bartholdi visited the United States to pick a location for the Statue. The site he picked is the present Statue’s location (Liberty Island formerly Bedloe’s Island)

Impressed by the size of America, Bartholdi was determined to create a statue of monumental proportions (much larger than the lighthouse proposed for the Suez Canal).

Because of the enormous size of the proposed Statue their were two major problems: 1) physical support for such a large statue, and 2) finding enough money.

Bartholdi hired Gustav Eiffel (later to build the Eiffel Tower) and George Koechlin (Eiffel’s Chief Engineer) to design the support armature and the frame work to hang the Statue’s copper skin.
Statue History-Funding

- **Fund Raising in the United States**
  - Centennial Exposition 1876
    - Philadelphia, PA
    - (Torch Measures: meters)

- **Fund raising in Paris**
  - Paris Exposition 1878
    - (Head Measures: meters)
Statue History-Funding (France)

- Because of the enormous cost (about $530,000 US dollars), it was decided that France would pay for the Statue and the United states would pay for the pedestal. A joint French-American Committee was formed.

- Fund raising efforts began in both countries with France being more successful, although construction problems and lack of timely funding slowed Statue construction. **The Statue was originally supposed to be given to the United States in 1876 for its Centennial celebration.**

- By 1884 the Statue of Liberty was completely assembled, towering above the streets of Paris. It was officially presented to the American Ambassador (Levi Morton) on July 4, 1884.
The American committee (pedestal committee) was headed by William Evarts a well respected legislator. Its secretary was Richard Butler. Pedestal funding lagged significantly.

It was not until Joseph Pulitzer and his newspaper took over the fund raising campaign that enough money was finally raised.

The pedestal was design by noted American architect Richard Morris Hunt.
Statue History-U.S. Committee

- Correspondence from France to the American Statue of Liberty Committee (Richard Butler was Secretary of the Committee)

Envelope Measures: 69 mm x 112 mm
Postmark: February 18, 1886, Paris
The Statue of Liberty was then dismantled into 350 pieces and packed into 214 crates. The crates were shipped to New York aboard the French frigate *Isere* where they arrived and were placed in storage for almost a year before the pedestal was completed.

Re-assembly of the Statue took four months and the Statue was dedicated on October 28, 1886 by President Grover Cleveland.

The Statue served its physical design function of being a lighthouse from 1886 until 1902.

It was the first Lighthouse in the United States to use electricity to power the light.

At the time of its dedication, the Statue of Liberty’s light could be seen from almost 40 km off shore.
First Stamps

- First postage stamps in the world depicting the Statue of Liberty were issued by Uruguay in 1919. The stamps marked the end of World War I. (Note: Rays of “light” emanating from the torch)

- First United States postage stamps depicting the Statue of Liberty were issued in 1922

Scott No. 217-222

Scott No. 556

Scott No. 696

Scott No. CZ90
Imagery-Semiotics

- **Statue Elements:**
  - Statue appearance many associate with *Libertas*, the Roman Goddess of freedom from slavery
  - **Torch** signifies enlightenment ("Liberty Enlightening the World")
  - **Crown** with seven spikes is often interpreted as representing the seven continents and the seven seas
  - **Tablet** marks the date of our independence, but is also keystone shaped indicating knowledge
  - **Left foot** tramples broken shackles, signifying our wish to be free
  - **Right foot** raised indicating she is moving forward (to carry her message to the world)
  - **Enormous size** represents vastness of the United States
Imagery-Semiotics

Symbols of New York:

- France Scott No. 373-374, 1940 Worlds Fair
- Dubai Scott No. C36-C38, 1964 Worlds Fair
- Puerto Rico 1940 Semi Official
- Scott No. CB1 1947 CIPEX Bulgaria
- Antigua Information Office Scott No. 303
Imagery-Semiotics

- **Symbols of New York:**

  - Tryptic-Perforated & Imperforated
  - Monaco Scott No. C20
  - Proof

  - 1947-CIPEX
Imagery-Semiotics

- **Symbols of America:**
  - Bulgaria 1959 “Khrushchev Visit” Scott No. C78
  - Korea “End of Korean War”, Scott Nos. 132-173
  - “1947 Truman Visit”, Brazil Scott No. 673
  - Nicaragua “50th Pan American Union” Scott No. C253
  - Haiti Scott No. 338-339 & C12-C13 “1941 Inter-American Association”
Imagery-Semiotics

- **Symbols of America: Spain gone wild!**

“1930 Ibero-American Exposition”

First Day of Issue

Spain Scott No. C56

Printing “Errors”
Imagery-Semiotics

- **Symbols of America: Spain under control!**

- “150th Anniversary U. S. Constitution”

- Spain Scott No. 585*

- Registered Cover

- Artist Signed on First Day of Issue

*Surcharged Version C97
Imagery-Semiotics

- **Symbols of Freedom and Hope:**

  - South Arabia “1968 Human Rights Year”
  - Cuba, “Spirit of Democracy”, Scott No. 372
  - France “Political Refugee Relief” Scott No. B44-45
  - Philippines “1951 Declaration of Human Rights” Scott No. 572-574
Imagery-Semiotics

- **Symbols of Freedom and Hope:**

Yemen
“1969 World Racial Piece”
Statue Replicas-Around the World

- *Replicas* of the Statue of Liberty exist worldwide. At least 20 nations in addition to the United States boast one or more models of the Statue of Liberty.
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- France
- Norway
- Israel
- Brazil
- Japan
Early Uses

- Allies Post Card (French in Origin)
- French Poster Stamps

Type I. A second card exists with Russia replaced by Costa Rica
Early Uses

- **U. S. War Savings Certificates & Booklet Cover:**

  - 1918
  - 1919
  - 1920
**NWLDA**

- **NWLDA was formed in 1908 to promote the liquor industry and protect it from the growing anti-liquor sentiment caused by the Temperance Movement.**
- The NWLDA stamps were sold to liquor distillers and wholesalers to raise money for anti-temperance activities.
- Dealers would then place these stamps on their invoices and correspondence to signify their support of the NWLDA lobbying efforts against the passage of the 18th Amendment.

*National Wholesale Liquor Dealers Association*

_First stamps in the U.S. to feature the Statue (Prior to March 1914, the NWLDA stamps featured a building dome)_
NWLDA*

- **Original Model** (ABNCo. Engraving by Charles Skinner, circa 1890)
- **Stamp Panes of 25**
- Unknown sheet or plate layout, but probably 4 panes wide by three panes high.
- Unknown plate numbers or markings
- Each pane of 25 represented a single month.
- Example shown is for April 1917.

*National Wholesale Liquor Dealers Association*
NWLD*A


[Images of NWLDA* Stamp, Original Engraving, and U.S. Scott No. 566]
Next U. S. Stamps-Defense Series

- Ordered sold by the US Government in place of current regular issues!
- Alert Americans to War threat in Europe and the need to be prepared!
- First Day of Issue, Oct. 18, 1940

Scott No. 899
Liberty Series

• **First Class at Last!**

Scott No. 1075

Sold from 1954 to well into the 1970s!
Don’t Forget the Airmails!

*CARRYING THE SYMBOL NATIONALLY & WORLD WIDE!

Scott C35 (1947)

Scott C58 (1959)

Scott C62 (1961), C58 Redesign

Scott C87 (1974)
Don’t Forget the Airmails!

- Carrying the Symbol Nationally & World Wide!

(Scott No.C80 (1971) Stamps & Photo Essays)
Postal Cards

• Domestic and International!

UX44 (2¢, 1956) and UX45 (4¢, 1956) Regular and Reply
Postal Cards

• Domestic!

Scott UX46 Varieties
US Bicentennial-1976

- Sixteen nations issued stamps featuring the Statue of Liberty.

Niger (Scott Nos. 352-353, C269-C271)
US Bicentennial-1976

• Collecting Niger can be a Challenge!

Souvenir Sheets
Perforate
Imperforate
Imperforate (on card)
Presentation Sets
Deluxe Card
Blue Paper

Imperforate Stamps
US Bicentennial-1976

- *Sixteen nations* issued stamps featuring the Statue
US Bicentennial-1976

- *Sixteen nations* issued stamps featuring the Statue
Statue Centennial-1986

- Over *58 nations* issued stamps featuring the Statue

Scott Nos. 517-518

Scott Nos. 341-343

*Stamps feature period views of the Statue*
Statue Centennial-1986

- Over 58 nations issued stamps featuring the Statue
Statue Centennial-1986

- Over 58 nations issued stamps featuring the Statue

- The United States and France issued a common design.

US Stamp (22¢) Scott No. 2224

French Postal Card (2.50F)

French Cancel

French Stamp (2.20F) Scott No. 2014
“United We Stand”

- **Over 30 nations** issued remembrances to the victims of September 11, 2001. (Many of these were in the form of sheetlets of four, containing images of the Statue of Liberty on the stamps and/or the sheetlet margin. Many had the common theme “United We Stand.” **Others were issued for the 10th Anniversary of 911 this year**)

![Stamps](image1.png)  
![Stamps](image2.png)
125th Anniversary

More to Come!
The Statue Hides!

- *Sometimes the Statue is difficult to find!*
One Day Use!

- May 2, 1947 (first flight Swiss Air non-stop to New York*-Stamp Scott No. C42 only valid for this flight)

*Weather forced the flight to land in Washington DC
Postmarks-Cancels

- Hand stamped fancy postmarks & cancels: foreign and domestic!
What’s missing?!

- Envelopes and Aerogrammes
- Errors, Freaks, and Oddities
- Essays & Proofs
- First Day Covers & Cachets
- Liberty Loan & Bond Material
- Machine Cancels & Labels
- Metered Postage
- Modern U.S. Statue of Liberty Stamps & Stationery
- Most of the world-wide stamps depicting the Statue
- Patriotic Labels
- Perfins & Precancels
- Philatelic Show Stamps & Labels
- Picture Post Cards
- Souvenir Cards (POD/BEP)
- Souvenir Cards (Private)
- Souvenir Pages
- Test stamps & specimens
Summary

- Since its beginning, the Statue of Liberty has been a symbol of America and its ideals.
- The Statue on the representational level has been a symbol of New York City, the United States, and the ideals of freedom and hope.
- Such messages have been portrayed on postage stamps from 1918 to the present day. Over 650 stamps have been issued worldwide and the number is rapidly growing (10th Anniversary of 911 and the 125th Anniversary).
- Poster stamps and other Cinderella stamps have used the Statue image to convey similar messages since its dedication in 1886.
- The Statue of Liberty sends a powerful positive semiotic message regardless of its interpretation or intended stamp design representation.
- **Why the Statue of Liberty? Because it is fun to collect!**
- **One can always find interesting new (and unusual) things!!**