

**AMERICAN  
PLACES**  
*From Vision to Reality*

# The Statue of Liberty

by Kevin Blake

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# The Statue of Liberty



**by Kevin Blake**

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The Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration**

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# Liberty's Birthday

On a wet October day in 1886, more than one million people jammed the streets of New York City. They had gathered to cheer on a parade **presided** over by President Grover Cleveland. Throughout the busy city, bands played **patriotic** songs and people eagerly waved American and French flags. Even the rain couldn't stop the excitement.

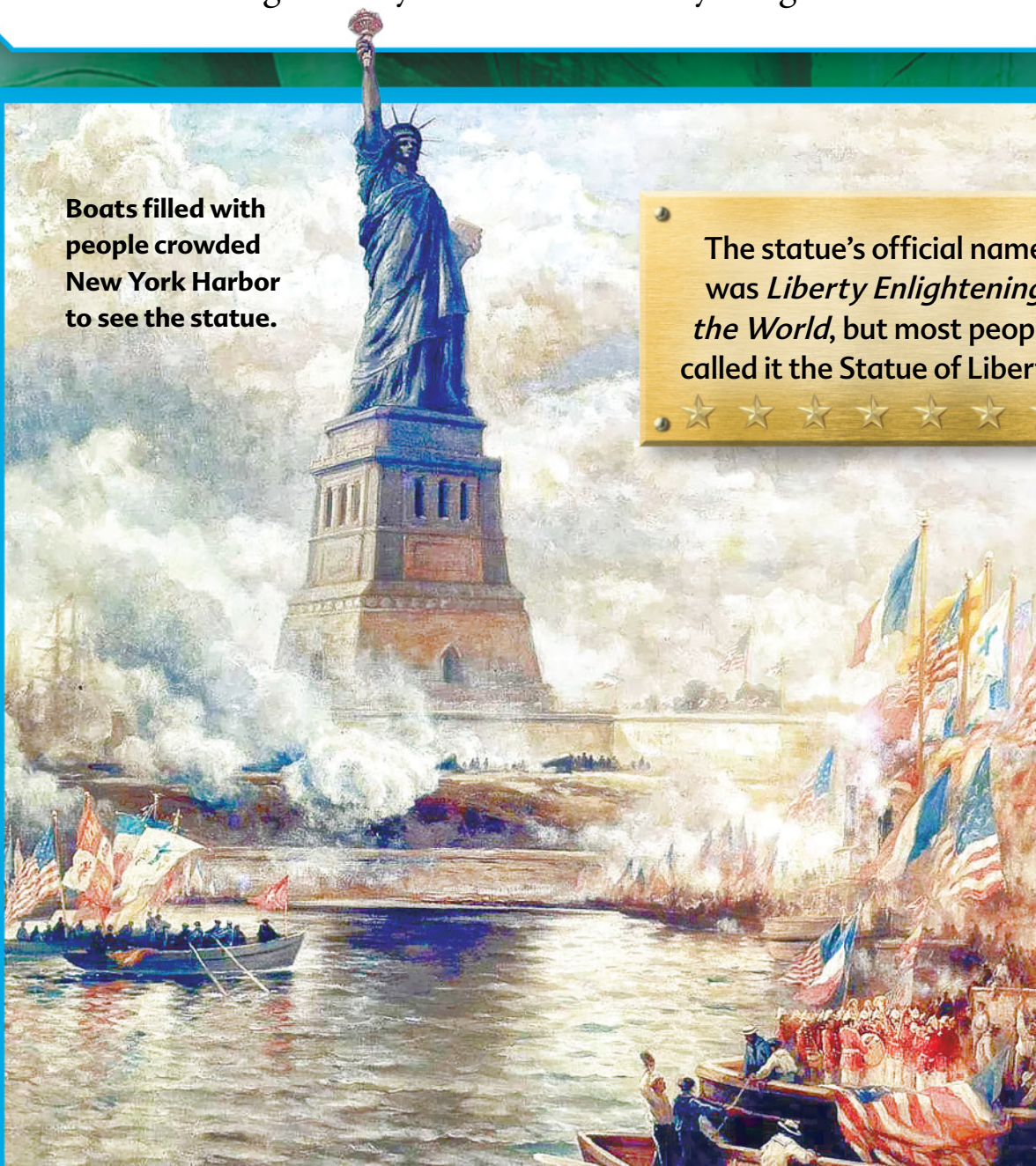
The parade moving down  
a street called Broadway  
in New York City on  
October 28, 1886



As the parade reached the southern tip of the city, onlookers could see a giant metal object rising out of New York **Harbor**. It stood more than 300 feet (91 m) tall and was topped with a glowing **torch**. A huge French flag covered the upper part of it. Suddenly, the flag was pulled away revealing the Statue of Liberty to the crowd. People wept with joy and shouted in delight. They had never seen anything so beautiful.

Boats filled with people crowded New York Harbor to see the statue.

The statue's official name was *Liberty Enlightening the World*, but most people called it the Statue of Liberty.





# Dreaming Big

Where had the majestic statue come from, and who had built it? Edouard de Laboulaye, a French law professor, first dreamt up the idea to build the **monument**. Edouard admired American **democracy** because people were free to choose their leaders. In France, where Edouard lived, the people didn't have a choice. So Edouard had an idea—France should build a huge monument in the United States that celebrated democracy and liberty. Maybe it would inspire the French people to create their own democracy!



Edouard de Laboulaye



Edouard deeply respected President Abraham Lincoln, who fought to end slavery and keep America united and free.

During the Revolutionary War (1775–1783), America fought for independence from Great Britain. France was America's biggest ally and helped the Americans win the war.



Edouard told his friend, a young French sculptor named Auguste Bartholdi, about the idea. Auguste agreed to design and build a giant statue. The young sculptor did not realize, however, just how much hard work was to come.



According to one story, Edouard first told Auguste (above) about his idea for a monument at a dinner party.



**Auguste Bartholdi in his studio**