

= Admiral David G. Farragut ( Ream statue ) =

Admiral David G. Farragut is a statue in Washington , D.C. honoring David Farragut , a career military officer who served as the first admiral in the United States Navy . The monument is sited in the center of Farragut Square , a city square in downtown Washington , D.C. The statue was sculpted by female artist Vinnie Ream , whose best known works include a statue of Abraham Lincoln and several statues in the National Statuary Hall Collection . The monument was dedicated in 1881 in an extravagant ceremony attended by President James A. Garfield , members of his cabinet , and thousands of spectators . It was the first monument erected in Washington , D.C. in honor of a naval war hero .

The statue is one of eighteen Civil War monuments in Washington , D.C. , which were collectively listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978 . The bronze statue , which rests on a granite base , was cast from the USS Hartford bronze propellers and not from enemy cannon like most Civil War monuments in the city . The monument and surrounding park are owned and maintained by the National Park Service , a federal agency of the Interior Department .

= = History = =

= = Background = = =

David Farragut ( 1801 ? 1870 ) was a career military officer who first saw combat during the War of 1812 at the age of 9 . He served on the USS Essex and was captured by the British . After the war , Farragut fought pirates in the West Indies on the ship USS Ferret , his first command of a United States Navy vessel . He also fought in the Mexican ? American War and oversaw the construction of the Mare Island Naval Shipyard in San Francisco . Although Farragut and his wife were Southerners , they remained loyal to the United States during the Civil War . His success in capturing New Orleans resulted in Farragut being honored with a new title created by the Navy , rear admiral . He continued to have great success in defeating Confederate forces , most notably at the Battle of Mobile Bay , where he uttered his famous phrase " Damn the torpedoes ! Full speed ahead ! " Following the war , President Andrew Johnson promoted Farragut to admiral , the first U.S. naval officer to receive the title .

Soon after Farragut 's death in 1870 , there were calls for a memorial to honor the naval hero . Representative Nathaniel P. Banks introduced a resolution in Congress for the erection of a monument to Farragut . The resolution stated that the statue was to be " after a design molded from life " , a subtle caveat intended to assist someone Banks already had in mind to create the statue , sculptor Horatio Stone of Washington , D.C. , who claimed to have met Farragut and had already begun working on a statue . Bank 's resolution was referred to the Joint Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds , where the committee chose to hold a competition , much to the dismay of Stone . Sculptors were only given sixty days to submit models of the statue , but when the congressional act approving the monument passed on April 16 , 1872 , the resolution was amended and the deadline for design submissions was extended by nine months .

Vinnie Ream ( 1847 ? 1914 ) , a sculptor who at age nineteen had received the first government commission ever granted a female artist when she created a bust of President Abraham Lincoln , began working on a bust of Farragut , whom she had met several times . Farragut 's widow , Virginia , admired Ream 's design and became a strong advocate for the artist 's model to be selected . Virginia wrote letters of endorsement to committee members and supplied Ream with the names of Farragut 's friends so that they too would offer their endorsements to the committee . There were thirteen artists who submitted models with Ream being the only woman . Their designs were displayed in the basement of the United States Capitol and several were severely criticized by the press , most notably the models by J. Wilson MacDonald , Randolph Rogers , and Edward Watson .

Stone and Ream 's model received the most praise . Stone 's model was praised by several naval officers who called it " true to life " and " unsurpassed by similar works . " Ream 's model received

praise from several high profile individuals , most notably President Ulysses S. Grant , who called it " first rate " . Admiral David Dixon Porter said the model " of Miss Vinnie Ream is the only likeness in the lot . " General William Tecumseh Sherman , who was reportedly infatuated with Ream , also became a strong advocate for her model . He wrote to the committee that " the plaster model of Vinnie Ream struck me decidedly as the best likeness , and recalled the memory of the Admiral 's face and figure more perfectly than any other model there on exhibition . " The decision by the committee ultimately ended in a three @-@ way tie between Ream , Stone , and MacDonald . The project stalled until the next Congress convened in 1874 . A commission to select the winning model was created and consisted of Virginia , Sherman , and Secretary of the Navy George M. Robeson . Virginia and Sherman voted to approve Ream 's design , though Robeson refused to accept the result and tried in vain to convince Virginia to change her mind . Two months after the vote , Robeson relented and Ream 's model was officially selected .

Ream was awarded \$ 20 @,@ 000 for the design and worked on the statue for the next few years . She consulted Virginia and incorporated her suggestions , much to the delight of Virginia . In 1879 , Ream announced that the model was ready to be cast and that the process would take place at the Washington Navy Yard , which had never before cast such a large statue . She continued to perfect the model while at the Navy Yard , much to the delight of the sailors . Although many of the city 's statues of military heroes were cast from captured enemy cannon , Farragut 's statue was cast from the USS Hartford bronze propellers that were removed and shipped to the Navy Yard . The amount of bronze yielded from the propellers was enough not only for the statue , but the four mortars on the corners of the statue base .

The site chosen for the statue was Farragut Square , a park renamed in honor of the admiral shortly after his death . The original dedication date , March 4 , 1881 , was pushed back because the statue base wasn 't ready . The base did not arrive until April 20 , five days before the dedication , resulting in Ream 's husband , Lieutenant Richard L. Hoxie , working around the clock with a crew of workers to make sure the site was ready . The base was completed and statue erected just hours before the ceremony began .

= = = Dedication = = =

The statue was dedicated at 1 pm on April 25 , 1881 , becoming the first monument erected in Washington , D.C. in honor of a naval war hero . Government employees were dismissed at noon , the same time a procession began at the base of Capitol Hill . The military contingent , led by Commodore Charles H. Baldwin , moved west on Pennsylvania Avenue , where houses were decorated with bunting , and past the White House , before heading north on Connecticut Avenue . The homes surrounding the square were decorated with streamers and flags . Nearly 4 @,@ 000 invited guests , including members of the Grand Army of the Republic and fellow sailors who served alongside Farragut , listened to John Philip Sousa conduct the Marine Band as they filled three temporary stands that were built on three sides of the statue . Distinguished guests included President James A. Garfield and his wife , Lucretia , members of the President 's cabinet , Virginia Farragut , and Ream .

An opening prayer was led by Reverend Arthur Brooks followed by the statue being unveiled by two members of Farragut 's Hartford crew , Quartermaster C. B. Knowles and Boatswain James Wiley . When the statue was unveiled , the Marine Band began playing a march and a seventeen gun salute was fired from nearby Lafayette Square . Secretary of the Navy William H. Hunt then introduced the President , who formally accepted the statue on behalf of the American people and gave a brief address . He stated : " Today we come to hail this hero , who comes from the sea , down from the shrouds of his flagship , wreathed with the smoke and glory of victory , bringing 60 years of national life and honor , to take his place as an honored compatriot and perpetual guardian of his Nation 's glory . In the name of the Nation I accept this noble statue , and his country will guard it as he guarded his country . " Speeches were then given by former Postmaster General Horace Maynard and Senator Daniel W. Voorhees followed by the Marine Band playing " Hail to the Chief " and another seventeen gun salute . At the conclusion of the ceremony , the military

procession saluted the statue as they marched back down Connecticut Avenue , past the White House , and down Pennsylvania Avenue .

= = = Later history = = =

The Farragut statue is one of eighteen Civil War monuments in Washington , D.C. , which were collectively listed on the National Register of Historic Places on September 20 , 1978 , and the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites on March 3 , 1979 . It is one of the few Civil War monuments that is not an equestrian sculpture . The others are the Dupont Circle Fountain , Stephenson Grand Army of the Republic Memorial , Nuns of the Battlefield , the Peace Monument , and statues of Brigadier General Albert Pike and General John A. Rawlins . The monument and park are owned and maintained by the National Park Service , a federal agency of the Interior Department .

= = Design and location = =

The statue is located in the center of Farragut Square , a park in downtown Washington , D.C. , bordered by K Street ( north ) , I Street ( south ) , and 17th Street NW ( east and west ) . Two sidewalks bisect the park from the northwest to southeast corners , running along either side of the statue , on axis with Connecticut Avenue . Another sidewalk leads from the northeast to southwest corners and runs along the statue . A small , ornamental iron fence surrounds the statue base .

The bronze statue measures 10 ft ( 3 @. @ 0 m ) tall , 3 ft ( 0 @. @ 91 m ) wide , and 3 ft ( 0 @. @ 91 m ) long . Farragut is depicted in his military uniform and standing on the deck of his ship , facing south towards the White House . His right knee is bent as his right foot rests on a capstan . He is holding a telescope with both hands . The base , made of granite from Rockland , Maine , is 16 ft ( 4 @. @ 9 m ) tall , 18 ft ( 5 @. @ 5 m ) long , and 24 ft ( 7 @. @ 3 m ) wide . It is a square , three @-@ tiered base with a chopped mortar on each corner . The inscription " FARRAGUT " is on the front of the base . Inside the base is a box containing documents related to Farragut 's career , a history of the sculpture , a copy of the Army and Navy Register , and a bronze model of the propeller used to cast the statue and mortars .