

= George Gordon Meade Memorial =

The George Gordon Meade Memorial , also known as the Meade Memorial or Major General George Gordon Meade , is a public artwork in Washington , D.C. honoring George Meade , a career military officer from Pennsylvania who is best known for defeating General Robert E. Lee at the Battle of Gettysburg . The monument is sited on the 300 block of Pennsylvania Avenue NW in front of the E. Barrett Prettyman United States Courthouse . It was originally located at Union Square , but was removed and placed in storage for fourteen years before being installed at its current location . The statue was sculpted by Charles Grafly , an educator and founder of the National Sculpture Society , and was a gift from the state of Pennsylvania . Prominent attendees at the dedication ceremony in 1927 included President Calvin Coolidge , Governor John Stuchell Fisher , Secretary of the Treasury Andrew W. Mellon , and Senator Simeon D. Fess .

The memorial 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 marble and granite sculpture , which includes depictions of Meade and seven allegorical figures , rests on a granite base and granite platform . It is surrounded by a public plaza and small park . The monument is owned and maintained by the National Park Service , a federal agency of the Interior Department .

= = History = =

= = = Background = = =

George Meade ( 1815 ? 1872 ) was a career military officer from Pennsylvania who is best known for his role as a Union general during the Civil War . He graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1835 and briefly served in the Army during the Second Seminole War . He began working as a civil engineer for railroad companies and the Department of War until reenlisting in the army in 1842 . Meade fought in the Mexican ? American War and was promoted to first lieutenant for his heroic actions at the Battle of Monterrey . From the 1850s until the onset of the Civil War in 1861 , Meade was involved in coastal surveying and designing lighthouses , mainly for the Corps of Topographical Engineers . He was promoted to brigadier general at the beginning of war , but was badly wounded at the Battle of Glendale in 1862 . He recovered and led forces during major battles , including Antietam and Fredericksburg . In June 1863 , Meade succeeded in defeating General Joseph Hooker as commanding officer of the Army of the Potomac , and fought his greatest battle only days later at Gettysburg , the bloodiest battle of the war . He succeeding in defeating General Robert E. Lee and the Confederate forces , but was criticized by President Abraham Lincoln for allowing Confederate forces to retreat to Virginia . Meade continued to serve as the Army of the Potomac 's commanding officer until the end of the war , though Ulysses S. Grant was appointed general @-@ in @-@ chief of all Union armies , superseding Meade 's authority .

Unlike many Civil War generals , there were no calls for a memorial to Meade after his death in 1872 because he was not popular with Lincoln , Grant , or his fellow officers , though he was considered a hero in his native Pennsylvania . In the 1910s , members of the Grand Army of the Republic ( GAR ) and Society of the Army of the Potomac fraternal organizations lobbied the Pennsylvania General Assembly to fund a statue of Meade . The state assembly commissioned the sculpture on October 18 , 1913 , and appropriated \$ 200 @,@ 000 for its construction . Members of the Pennsylvania congressional delegation lobbied Congress to approve the sculpture and an act of Congress authorized its erection on January 21 , 1915 . Congress mandated that the sculpture design and site of the memorial be approved by the Commission of Fine Arts ( CFA ) . Because the memorial was a gift from the state of Pennsylvania , a Meade Memorial Commission was appointed by the state governor . The commission , led by John W. Frazier , a veteran who fought with Meade at Gettysburg , was composed of architects , artists , and planners who agreed on very little . Frazier was considered abusive and tactless , sending rude letters to the CFA and demanding certain requirements for the memorial . This created an impasse which lasted until Frazier 's death in 1918 .

Following his death , the memorial commission finally chose a sculptor , a Pennsylvania native named Charles Grafly ( 1862 ? 1929 ) .

Grafly was a founder of the National Sculpture Society and longtime educator at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts who was best known for his portrait busts . Although Grafly was at the peak of his career , the CGA was hesitant in approving him to design the sculpture because his symbolic works has been criticized for being incomprehensible . The CFA finally agreed to consider Grafly and following several months of negotiations and changes , a preliminary sculpture design was approved in August 1918 . Grafly received \$ 85 @, @ 000 for his commission . Several years of bickering about the final design and location of the memorial passed until March 28 , 1922 , when an official groundbreaking ceremony took place . The chosen site was near 3rd Street NW in Union Square , a public park on Capitol Hill , and close to the large Ulysses S. Grant Memorial . Before the memorial was installed , the last of the old Botanic Garden greenhouses were demolished and the Bartholdi Fountain was moved to make way . The architects chosen to design the memorial were Grant Simon and Edward P. Simon of Philadelphia . Piccirilli Brothers carved the memorial and the project contractor was the George A. Fuller Company . The total cost of the memorial and its installation was \$ 400 @, @ 000 .

= = = Dedication = = =

The memorial was formally dedicated on October 19 , 1927 , becoming one of the last Civil War monuments erected in Washington , D.C. By the time of the dedication , many of the GAR and Society of the Army of the Potomac members who championed the memorial had died and only a few Civil War veterans were able to attend the ceremony . Prominent attendees at the ceremony included President Calvin Coolidge , his wife , Grace , Pennsylvania Governor John Stuchell Fisher , Secretary of the Navy Curtis D. Wilbur , Secretary of the Treasury Andrew W. Mellon , Secretary of Labor James J. Davis , and Senator Simeon D. Fess , the acting chairman of the memorial commission . White , temporary pavilions adorned with greenery , national shields , and the coat of arms of Pennsylvania were built around the memorial for invited guests and members of the public . The speaker 's stand was decorated with palms , ferns , and autumn @-@ colored flowers . On either side of the memorial was the national flag ; the left flag from the Civil War era had 35 stars and the right flag was the current 48 @-@ starred flag .

Northminster Presbyterian Church minister Hugh K. Fulton gave the invocation and Reverend J. H. Pershing led the dedicatory prayer . A speech detailing Meade 's life and career was given by Fisher which was followed by the unveiling of the memorial by Meade 's daughter , Henrietta , who was escorted by Ulysses S. Grant III . As the memorial was unveiled , a flock of pigeons , symbolizing peace , was released from an altar bearing the Army of the Potomac 's emblem . The Army Band played " The Star @-@ Spangled Banner " as Army cannons were fired . Fisher presented the memorial on behalf of the state of Pennsylvania to Coolidge on behalf of the American people . Coolidge 's remarks including the following : " On behalf of the Government of the Nation which he helped to save , I accept this memorial erected by the Commonwealth which has his own home and the home of his ancestors . The conflict in which he took such an important part has long since passed away . The peace which he loved has come . The reconciliation which he sought is complete . The loyalty to the flag which he followed is universal . Through all of this shines his own immortal flame . " An elderly veteran who fought at Gettysburg collapsed as he was giving a speech recounting his experience during the battle . Blanton Winship , at the time the president 's chief military aid , and James F. Coupal , the president 's physician , came to his aid . He was able to finish his speech and the crowds cheered him . The ceremony concluded with the band playing " Taps " .

= = = Later history = = =

In 1969 , the memorial was dismantled and placed in a storage facility at 42nd Street and Hunt Place NE when the Capitol Reflecting Pool was built atop Interstate 395 's Third Street Tunnel . It

remained in storage for several years and members of the public began inquiring why the memorial had not been replaced . Pennsylvania Representative William F. Goodling contacted the memorial coordinator for the National Capital Region of the National Park Service ( NPS ) while members of the Gettysburg Civil War Round Table ( GCWRT ) contacted Jeff Wolf to repair the sculpture , which had cracked in several places . The GCWRT also contacted Maryland Representative Marjorie Holt who had requested the memorial be placed in her congressional district at Fort George G. Meade . The memorial was repaired and in 1983 placed in a new plaza on Pennsylvania Avenue NW . A formal rededication took place on October 3 , 1984 .

The memorial 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 . The memorial and surrounding park are owned and maintained by the NPS , a federal agency of the Interior Department .

= = Design and location = =

The memorial is located on the 300 block of Pennsylvania Avenue NW in the Judiciary Square neighborhood of Washington , D.C. It stands in front of the E. Barrett Prettyman United States Courthouse and across the street from the National Gallery of Art 's East Building . The memorial is sited in the center of a public plaza and small park .

The cylindrical marble and granite sculpture is 10 @. @ 6 ft ( 3 @. @ 2 m ) tall and 9 ft ( 2 @. @ 7 m ) wide . Meade is depicted in his military uniform and standing at the front of the sculpture . A male , winged figure representing War is on the rear side of the sculpture and is flanked by two memorial tablets . Six allegorical figures representing qualities the artist believed necessary in a great military leader are on the sides of the sculpture : Chivalry , Energy , Fame , Loyalty , Military Courage , and Progress . The male figure of Loyalty , on the proper right , and female figure of Chivalry , on the proper left , are removing Meade 's military cloak , representing the " cloak of battle " that Meade leaves behind . The figure representing Loyalty holds a wreath and garlands behind Meade representing his accomplishments . The female figure representing Fame is behind Loyalty and is supported by the male figure of Energy . Behind Chivalry is the male figure of Progress and male figure of Military Courage . The latter is locking arms with War . A gold finial of the state seal of Pennsylvania is at the top of the memorial . The Milford pink granite base is 7 @. @ 4 ft ( 2 @. @ 3 m ) tall with a diameter of 20 @. @ 10 ft ( 6 @. @ 13 m ) .

Inscriptions on the memorial include the following :

CHARLES GRAFLY.SC. / MCMXX @-@ MCMXXV ( on the sculpture )

MEADE ( lower front of base )

EDWARD P. SIMON / GRANT M. SIMON / ARCHITECTS / EXECUTED BY PICCIRILLI BROS ( rear of base )

THE COMMONWEALTH / OF PENNSYLVANIA / TO MAJOR GENERAL / GEORGE GORDON MEADE / WHO COMMANDED / THE UNION FORCES / AT GETTYSBURG ( brass letters set into granite platform )