FROM A PARIS WORKSHOP TO BEDLOE'S ISLAND

Made and shipped

Built in France. Shipped in 1885. Unveiled on 28 October 1886.

The National Park Service facts page says the Statue of Liberty "was officially dedicated on October 28, 1886. It was constructed from 1875-1884 in France, disassembled and shipped to New York in 1885, where it was reassembled atop its pedestal." The creating page, last updated 25 March 2025, fills in the crossing.

Date	What the official pages say
1865	The creating page: "a French political intellectual and anti-slavery activist named Edouard de Laboulaye proposed that a statue representing liberty be built for the United States." (The facts page, updated later, writes "Édouard.")
1870–1871	Bartholdi began designing in 1870, visited the United States in 1871, and "selected Bedloe's Island as the site for the Statue."
1876	Construction in France began. "The arm holding the torch was completed in 1876 and shown at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia."
1878	"The head and shoulders were completed in 1878 and displayed at the Paris Universal Exposition."
1881–1884	"The entire Statue was completed and assembled in Paris between 1881 and 1884." Pedestal construction in the United States also began in 1884.
4 July 1884	The statue "was presented to Levi P Morton, the U.S. minister to France, on July 4, 1884 in Paris."
17 June 1885	Shipped "aboard the French Navy ship, Isère." "The Statue arrived in New York Harbor on June 17, 1885, and was met with great fanfare." The pedestal "was not yet complete."
1886	"The entire structure was not reassembled on Bedloe's Island until 1886." "The first piece of the Statue to be reconstructed was Alexandre-Gustave Eiffel's iron framework." Officially unveiled 28 October 1886; "some one million New Yorkers" turned out in wet, foggy weather.

The reassembly, in the creating page's words

After the iron framework went up first, "the rest of the Statue's elements followed without the use of scaffolding — all construction materials were hoisted up by steam-driven cranes and derricks." Fort Wood, the star-shaped structure on the island, "became a part of the Statue's base — the pedestal sits within its walls."

The facts page also records Emma Lazarus's poem "The New Colossus," written "on November 2, 1883, as part of a fundraising campaign for the statue's construction."

A short quiz

1. On which date does the creating page say the statue arrived in New York Harbor?
2. Which French Navy ship carried her?
3. What, according to that page, was the first piece reconstructed on Bedloe's Island?

Answers. 1. 17 June 1885. 2. The Isère. 3. Alexandre-Gustave Eiffel's iron framework.

Sources: National Park Service, "Statue of Liberty Facts," last updated 20 August 2026; National Park Service, "Creating the Statue of Liberty," last updated 25 March 2025, nps.gov/stli/learn/historyculture/places_creating_statue.htm. Checked 17 November 2026. Official spellings of Laboulaye are kept as each page writes them.