



U.S. CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER

Statue of Freedom *and Philip Reid*

A Primary Source Exploration

Atop the Dome of the U.S. Capitol stands a statue more than 19 feet tall, cast in bronze. Her name is Freedom. American artist Thomas Crawford sculpted Freedom from plaster at his studio in Rome, Italy. Crawford created three designs, shown below.

Consider the different poses, clothes and objects each version includes.

Which one do you like best? _____ Why? _____



A



B

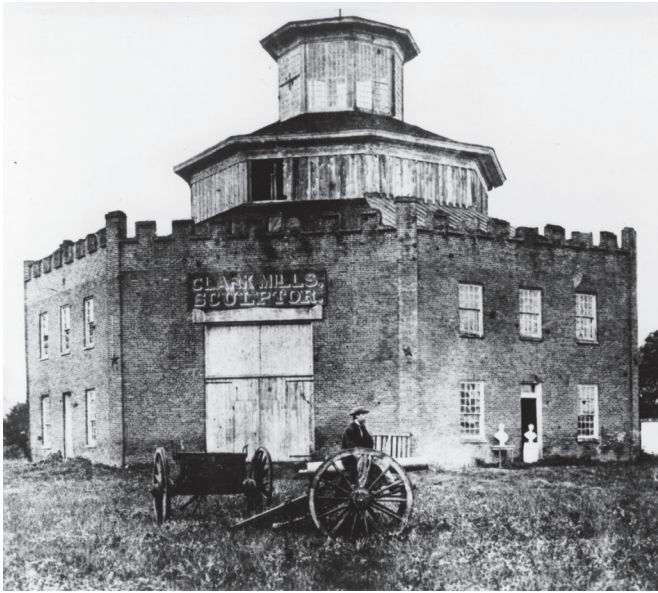


C



The statue was shipped across the ocean in five pieces and assembled by an Italian craftsman for temporary display on the Capitol grounds. Then the pieces were to be taken apart and cast into bronze.

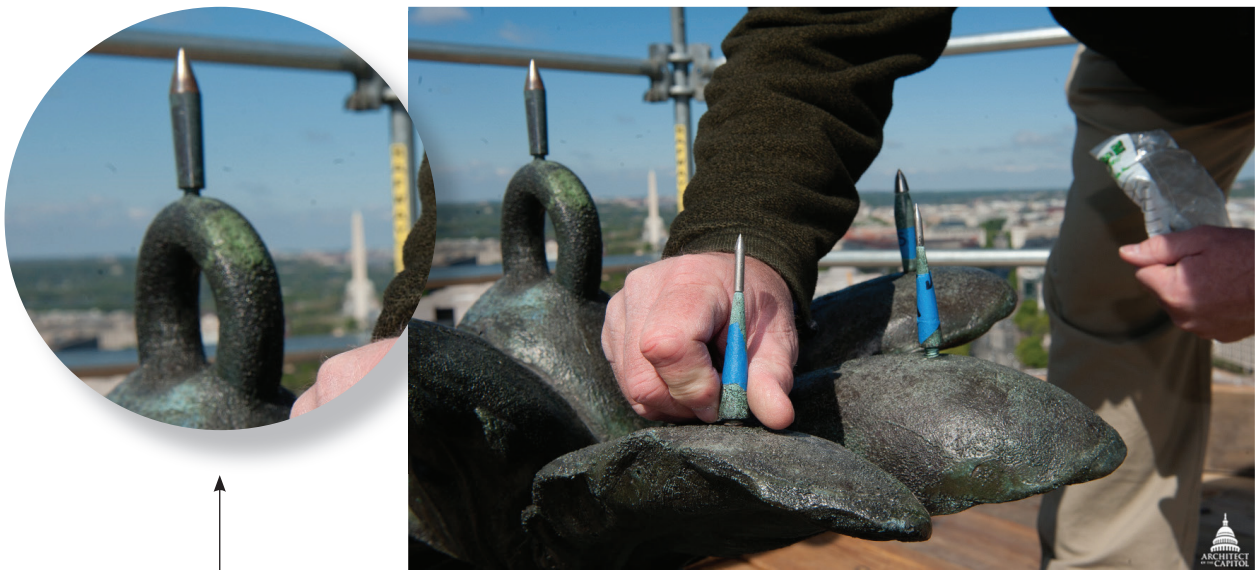
The U.S. government hired Clark Mills, who owned a foundry in Washington, D.C., to make the bronze castings. A foundry is a factory where metal is melted for casting. However, the artist who assembled Freedom covered the seams between the five pieces in plaster, hiding them from view. He refused to take his work apart unless he received a pay raise. Only one man knew what to do. His name was Philip Reid.



Reid was an enslaved man working in the foundry. Reid noticed the lifting ring on top of Freedom's helmet.

With a pulley and tackle, workers lifted the statue, making the seams between the pieces visible. Workers then took her apart and cast the bronze pieces at the foundry.

Clark Mills' Foundry, Washington, D.C.



Lifting ring on Freedom's helmet

The U.S. government paid Clark Mills \$400 a month, plus the cost of materials and labor, for work completed six days a week at the foundry.

For a period of time, Philip Reid worked seven days a week. Because Reid was enslaved, he was never paid for work completed Monday through Saturday, but the government paid Reid directly if he worked on Sundays.

This is a pay voucher received by Philip Reid.

Explore the document and answer the questions below.

THE UNITED STATES			To <i>Philip Reid</i>		Dr.	
DATE.	DESIGNATION.	APPLICATION.	COST.			
			DOLLARS.	CENTS.		
<i>1861</i> <i>May 16</i>	<i>For Services (on Sundays)</i> <i>between July 1, 1860 and</i> <i>May 16, 1861, 33 days</i> <i>(Sundays) @ \$1.²⁵ per day</i>	<i>Keeping up</i> <i>files under</i> <i>the moulds</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>25</i>		

\$ 41 25

I Certify, That the articles above charged have been received, and services performed; that they were necessary for, and have been, or will be, applied to the construction of the New Dome of the Capitol; and that the prices were, in my opinion, just and reasonable.

Wm. Walter
Arch't
Captain in Charge.
1862, from *CAPT. W. B. FRANKLIN*

RECEIVED, Washington, D. C., this *6th* day of *June* 1862, from *CAPT. W. B. FRANKLIN*,
Disbursing Agent
of the Corps of Topographical Engineers, in charge, the sum of *Forty one* dollars *twenty five* cents, in full payment of the above account.

(Signed duplicates.)
\$ 41.²⁵ Wm. Walter
Philip Reid
Command Seal.
mark

JX6 copied July 1972

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- 1 How many Sundays did Reid work from July 1, 1860, to May 16, 1861? _____
- 2 How much money did Reid earn per Sunday? _____

3 Find the “Applications” column. Describe the work Reid did.

4 What was the total amount of money he earned? _____

On April 16, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed the District of Columbia Emancipation Act. Here is a portion of that law:

“Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That all persons held to service or labor within the District of Columbia by reason of African descent are hereby discharged and freed of and from all claim to such service or labor; and from and after the passage of this act neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except for crime, whereof the party shall be duly convicted, shall hereafter exist in said District.”

5 What did this law mean for Philip Reid?



The U.S. Capitol in the winter of 1863-1864

The District of Columbia Emancipation Act made Philip Reid a free man.

It is believed that Philip Reid was the only enslaved person to work directly on the Statue of Freedom.

On December 2, 1863, workers hoisted the statue and placed her on the Capitol Dome.

In 1865, three years after Emancipation, Reid owned and operated his own business as a plasterer. Author S.D. Wyeth wrote in *The Federal City*, “Mr. Reid, the former slave, is now in business for himself, and highly esteemed by all who know him.”