

**UNVEILING OF THE  
JUNEAU MONUMENT,  
JULY 6TH, 1887**

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Unveiling of the Juneau Monument, July 6th, 1887 by Anonymous

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OF THE  
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MILWAUKEE.

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In the old days when the white tower of the light-house gleamed from the summit of the bluffs—just where now no sign of bluff remains; when three long black piers jutted far out into the waters of the bay—just where now no piers are seen at all; when sloop or shallop, seeking entrance to our winding river, sailed through a rift in the sandy beach—just where all is solid soil to-day, while the turbid waters go curdling out through a nearer channel as artificial as their own color; in those old days when there was no Seventh Ward, the bluffs rose bare and bold, and scurred by wave and weather on the bay side, and billowy and rounded towards the nestling town. In those days Milwaukee seemed huddling behind those natural bulwarks and taking shelter from the fierce northeasters that sent the white-capped surges tumbling in foam upon the sweeping curve of the beach; while on bright afternoons that antique light-house was the Mecca of our people. Here was the chosen promenade, here the play-ground of our boyhood, and

from these breezy heights we kept watch for the slow coming of the white steamer from Chicago, or, glancing westward and commanding the whole length of Wisconsin Street, that had not dreamed of boring into our fastness then, we looked down into the sloping valley towards the river, and clear over the roofs of the homely, old-fashioned, white frame houses that were so rapidly springing into being.

Long since has the light-house doused its glim and crumbled away. Long since has the bold bluff at Wisconsin Street been shoveled into the neighboring squares; its broad and uncomplaining bosom yielding tribute by the cubic yard to the rescue of surrounding swamp-land; but farther north, though their crests are shaved away to fill their creases, the bluffs still stand to remind all old Milwaukeeans of their missing comrades. The little huts; the long meshes of the drying nets; the white-winged fleet of fishing smacks that huddled at their feet, are gone. The white combing rollers that broke in long concave and hissing foam are curbed by the ugly line of wooden break-water, but still there remains much of what was once the tall, rounded bluff at the head of Biddle street. Near it—to the west—there were level fields and green pastures and little frame cottages within the first few hundred yards; and then, bigger white houses and one or two of brick—what palaces we boys declared them!—and then the staring walls of the brand new



Cathedral with its marvel of a clock tower and its jangling bells, and the little square belfry of the Court House peeping out beyond. The North Point seemed a long distance away; the South Point a day's journey, thanks to the wide *detour* around the Kinnickinnick marsh, and "many a time and oft," coming home from the forbidden swim in the Lake, have we boys clambered the steep pathway up the Biddle Street bluff, and, stopping to rest and gather breath, have stood there at the very verge, looking downward across the intervening field and far over to the wooded heights beyond the river.

And there to-day—on the summit of that very bluff—just as though he, too, had climbed from the din of the breakers on the beach below and had paused to gather breath and take a long look at the fair city, stands on its granite pedestal the effigy of him whom Milwaukee honors as its first citizen—the pioneer who trod that line of bluff when not a roof was raised between him and the westward stream.

Clad in the garb of the frontiersman, with ready rifle in his hand, "Old Solomo," the friend of the Indian, the trader and trapper and hunter, was known to every man who visited Milwaukee in its early days. Later he donned the dress of civilization, and white and red men hailed him as mayor and magistrate of the struggling town. Year after year he watched it growing, thriving, until the site of his humble cabin

became the heart of a bustling city. New men came and new enterprises prospered, but Solomon Juneau kept his hold upon the hearts of those whom he was first to welcome here, and, as the city grew, so was spread abroad his good name. Milwaukee's father, founder and steadfast friend, he lived his honored life among us, simple, tender-hearted and true; and in his death there fell a pall upon the whole community.

Long years have sped since he was called to his fathers. Here and there in our wide streets and on our archives his name appeared. Here and there the genial and benevolent features beamed from some gilded frame or illumined a page of our history, but not until years had rolled away was there placed upon our sod a lasting memorial of the man first welcomed of the red sons of the forest, whose lodges were thick along these wooded shores.

It is fitting that 'twere done as it was done. No labored municipal appropriation was sought. No appeal to alien ear was made. In all its solid worth the bronze that bears his mien is the tribute of affection and intimate friendship on the part of men who knew him well, of men whose names have been linked with that of our city since its very infancy, and whose own bonds of association are weighted with the records of half a century. The sign-board with their joint names and the first announcement of their enterprise stood within a stone's throw of the site of his

old cabin. They were constant visitors at his fireside. To one of them he offered the land that became the homestead of the young merchant who had so won the old trader's esteem. To him, too, sure of sympathy, he came with great tears trickling down his weather-beaten face and with sobs choking his utterance, to tell how death had robbed him of the wife who had shared his long exile.

Few men knew of their project until just before the blocks of the massive pedestal were hoisted into place. In the hands of an eminent sculptor and designer every detail of the statue had been completed abroad, and not until all preliminaries were settled was Milwaukee aware that within a coming week would the effigy of its founder be unveiled.

Despite the heat of the midsummer sun, no lovelier day had dawned on the city for years than that on which the ceremonies took place. Far out to sea the waters of the bay shown blue as the unclouded sky. The wooded points seemed nearer and clearer than ever before, as though closing in in sympathy with the purpose of the day. The close-cropped greensward, the graded pathways of the park and all the neighboring streets and homesteads were thronged with an interested gathering of our citizens; while the banner-draped platform and the seats upon the green were crowded with invited guests to most of whom Solomon Juneau had been personally well known. Close