

Gutzon Borglum Address

January 19, 1930

(7th)

(Reported by Dale P. Stough)

BY PRESIDENT HANSON:-

We wish to thank Mr. Shallenberger. Now, I am sure Mr. Borglum needs no introduction to the people of this state; "PEOPLE'S MEMORIALS AND THEIR MONUMENTS"

MR. GUTZON BORGLUM, of San Antonio, Texas, and Nebraska.

BY MR. BORGLUM:-

I will ring the bell on you if you don't stop. I was reminded by Mr. Hanson's introduction of me, in fact very much pleased he did not require me to listen to a long one, as I say I was reminded of a very unique introduction I got in North Carolina once. We had a very remarkable audience, a great audience in fact, in a little town, named Salisbury, a very old, a very striking and artistic place with people of the South. There an old lawyer introduced me or rather began to introduce me, and then he said, "by leave of the audience, I will introduce them to Mr. Borglum" It struck me he had a very unique idea he introduced the victims in that audience rather than myself who was to bore them.

It has occurred to me tonight as I sat here and listened to that wonderful story Governor Shallenberger has given us it will be a slide down to come to the story I am to give you. I might take one angle or I might take another. Naturally, a man who has had the experience I have had; who has seen as much of the World as I have been privileged to see; who has been offered the opportunities I have had, from the very beginning, before I was out of my teens, though I had planned my life very carefully, has

been able to live a life very actively and very interesting from all viewpoints. It occurs to me there must be certain interesting things I can say to this audience, a Nebraska audience, people who are living here, in the most remarkable track of human action, about the Old World Vista.

The March of Empire has taken it's way—and you have settled right in its path. Millions before you have come here; millions have died since the first one came here and then moved westward. You have lingered here in this particular station and are building a civilization. I was one of those who was in that program. Both of my parents came out of Europe and led the march out here. My parents left there, tired and disgusted with those governments, and with their economic conditions, lured by the halo that was thrown about this Western Hemisphere—thinking it was a very haven where lovers side by side could bring up their children as they wanted them brought up. That is the story of our parents; it is the story of pioneers and just such a story as we have had related to us tonight.

My father landed here on the Missouri river with his sweet-heart, then he trecked across the Oregon Trail; out there his family was born, way out in the far west; Being a man of natural refinement, my father shrank from the roughness of the far west and came back to the then edge of the protecting influences of civilization, in Nebraska. Here he brought up his family. I have managed to be here two or three times in the last forty years; not more than that, though I run through here once in awhile when I cannot stop, as I go north and south to the Black Hills, or east and west as I go across the country on a hurried trip on business from one side of the continent to the other.

To say I have an interest in what life means by its benefit in dollars to your bank balance will hardly suffice; I haven't thought much about that.

I have been wondering here tonight as I sat on this platform just what angle of what I may be expected to dwell upon I could tell you or should tell you that would be interesting and beneficial, for I should not come here at all except as I might be helpful.

Let's ponder a moment on this subject they have assigned to me, "PEOPLE'S MEMORIALS AND THEIR MONUMENTS." Let's try to explain what we mean by that. Most people don't know the difference between a memorial and a monument. I would say this piece of sculpture Governor Shallenberger has been speaking of tonight is a monument. It would be a memorial of an event; it would locate an incident in the life of a people that has passed. Unless it dealt in a very instructive sense, and commemorated and told the story for all time it would not enter into the realm of being a memorial. Then it must portray the lining up of one tribe against the other. Sometimes one must feel that in this country we don't realize how important the difference is between a memorial and a monument. You can build up here and there and fill the roadways with what we call monuments, that designate to the people that certain things or this and that have taken place or happened here, but those are not memorials. I am explaining this little thing as a kind of a prelude - so you will understand what I am going to talk about.

I was asked by General Pershing, I don't know whether he was born here or brought here early in his life, but anyway he has become involved with the beautiful history of this state; anyway I was asked by him in Washington to come to a place and talk on monuments of certain battlefields. I was in his office for some little time and he showed me volume after volume of pictures presented to show the places where this or that battle occurred. I noticed he was rather absent-minded or indifferent to it all. We said, "what do you

think about it, Borglum?" I said, "I don't think anything about it." He said, "I am assigned a task of selecting a design for a general memorial over there. I would like to have you advise me and help me." I said, "In what way?" He said, "I don't believe in this thing at all." I said, "What do you mean-what is authorizing it?" He said, "We have got a committee with an engineer and an architect on it. He has never thought of anything but mathematical measurements; he never has had a poetic idea in his life aside from any thought that just related to his work.

"I said, "he should not be employed, because an engineer is to create plans, but not equipped to conceive the memory of a sacrifice; as to an architect, his purpose is to see - or figure out -- how you can build a good structure - and see that you do so, beautiful as to utility and taste. They are devoid of any such taste as required; they have no vision as to why they would be building this; you will be wrapped in the technique of the structure they would plan, that is the A.B.C. of the architectural bent; you have begun wrong, General." an architect must have nothing to do with living out the story of the boys that were taken out of this home or that home and brought there to sacrifice for their country and the world. He cannot picture the boy who went two or three or ten thousand miles abroad to kill his fellow-men on the theory he was saving homes. You must design the spirit of sacrifice, as performed by a nation, as it was performed by the American boy, drafted by his republic, to show it to possess a purpose that did not really exist even in Europe where the struggle was really at-hand. Here in America we had worked up the boys, men and women who were the children of the men and women who had left that old World in disgust for its political and economic life and to escape its social conditions, who stopped our business, mortgaged our resources, went without sugar, beef and gasoline, that we might send our boys into the trenches, English, French, Belgian and Italian alike. We sacrificed

all this that they might have some decent things over there. It was right we should do so."

Then I told him that we would be sticking up on that battlefield, excuse me - the damndest lot of rot in its real value as a memorial to what this great Western world really did in the crisis of civilization, for this boy or that boy. It amounts to that. That boy and that boy and that boy didn't go to Europe as a boy. America went to Europe - the youth of the western hemisphere went over there. The most free-born creature that has occurred in the history of the world stopped his business, stopped his government and stopped everything and went to Europe to stay the hand of destruction of his civilization. We are stacking up a slab of marble with the name of John Jones, or Samuel Smith or Gutzon Borglum on it. It don't amount to anything. The American nation in all of it's granduar and greatness - went over to fight a fight with which we had nothing to do - that in itself is a monument whether ever written or sculptured up, that has no precedent in history. We spent billions and billions, sometimes it is said \$25,000,000.000, and I have heard a republican senator claim that sixty per cent of that never found the goals for which it was appropriated. That don't matter either. The service we rendered was such a great gift that if some petty larceny occurred as it was on its way, we cannot stop to worry about that now. God will forgive all that. America has long since forgiven. I am talking of its people as a whole. I am talking tonight of how our people as a whole - how America - is entitled to a monument in the Old World where we sacrificed and where yet every bit of credit we are entitled to is begrudged us. But America began its work at the Argonne and progressed so fast that in October we were within three miles of the Argonne and progressed so fast that in October we were

within three miles of Sedan. France while we were there blessed us in thanksgiving and soon cast us off when it was over."

I said to Pershing: "America, not you nor I, built a monument the world must look on for ten thousand years. Dig into the files and find the records of every man, boy or girl who remained there and that is the story of what the young world did; after it had tried to forget the old world it came back to save it's fatherlands. That is the memorial. That is what I mean by a memorial; names across wooden or marble slabs mean nothing. We must write, hard as it is - we must somehow bring into the medium we are working with, something,- I can't express it any better - something that conveys the heart and spirit that went to pices - that will be the monument."

I was born out here in the West. My grandmother, a Danish woman, told me the story of the Norsemen. It is a wonderful story. The story the Governor has been telling you has rivalled it in interest. You can't imagine the interest I felt in that story. I played with Indians, as a boy; they were my playmates and I lived with them. I recently visited Mexico because my sympathy went to those ancient people who lived there before the Latins drove them out. In the ten days I was there my constant inquiry and constant anxiety was for those pre-historic peoples and I was brought up on the tales of these old chiefs. I believed in the Indian. I still believe in them - I believe in their integrity. They never reached into civilization far enough to know what it was to have an economic life; they lived from day to day. They wrung from nature what they had to have; built such shelter as they needed and then played. I don't commend that at all, but still that is the way you have got to look at their civilization. Yes, I am still cognizant tonight that the old story of the Norse Gods had a great influence on me. I think always in the terms of theheroic.

We must do that in our contact with the greater things in people, in fact even in the little things. . You can do everything in a big way. I think, if I have anything in my life that differentiates me from anyone else - it is that something. I am perfectly sure if there is anything in our civilization that lifts us out of the common run of the European civilization it is the attitude of our nation, a great, broad realm from the Pacific to the Atlantic, that makes our heart beat that much larger. It is that we were founded by and descended from pioneers who came here to gain freedom of action and thought; and we have come to the conclusion that we are still young pioneers. Our opportunities are so great; the opportunities still exist in our thought; the frontier is still there for all kinds of expression; our development is constant. But we are not all modern. We can go west a thousand miles and find older civilizations than we find in Nebraska. Oppressed, tired and bored with the world, here you can come for complacent relief, swept by sixty years of open development, you are modern and young. You don't know how wonderful and valuable that is. You don't know what a magnificent piece of true expression and wonderful piece of work you have got in your city here, given you by Goodhue, probably one of the greatest genuises who ever lived in America.

If I should say to someone here tonight I think there is not another building to rank with it, you might think I was exaggerating. I don't think so when we reckon the taste, culture and courage shown by this man, a great courage hardly to be equalled by any architect in the country. You can hardly realize how that capitol will bring distinction to this city and to the people of the State.

Now, let's go back to the more ancient peoples of Egypt, Greece and Rome and find out what those peoples did. I came out of this west when I

was just about twenty, a young man with ideals and a pretty stubborn kind of a cuss. My father always said, "Gutzon is a good boy, but stubborn as the devil." He meant I was pretty set in my way. After I moved east I never forgot the remark. I lived in Chicago first, from where I had left the west with its plains and mountains. I cherished my great Indian heroes and the great chieftains and my Danish Gods and the stories of those great people. Then I began to see our civilization. My mother had provided me with a book on great ^{Italian} Indian artists, so I began to know Michael Angelo and Leonardo Da Vinci. I grew to know them as if they were here today. My father was a great student, so it was natural for his sons to take up philosophy and such subjects. So when I went to Europe I was rapidly disappointed that all of this fine heroism and background of these fine lives; when I got there I found our whole civilization was housed and built into the cheap imitation - submerged into the culture of the dead sons of Europe. I think this is an important issue.

It was not physical Europe that bothered me, it was mental Europe. The dogmatism of European governments, the lack of vitality in European ideals, her customs as well as her governments. Yet you can imagine the horror as I returned and found Philadelphia, New York and Washington saturated with the same thing. Even then I called on Mr. Cleveland, who was then President, saw him at a meeting, and the thing that hurt was, getting out of the west into the east, and finding that America was so disappointing. I found that the strong, virile something that built us up as a country, that represented the spirit of our people, that had come out of the Renaissance - that had built up our nation, not only in Art, but in all other things, was missing.

I went to Paris and can never forget how I lived three years there. I

made myself stay there for three years. I hated it all the time I was there. I went to school and into the study of languages, drew and painted and studied, modeled and performed for what training the work and study might give me, but I saw there again in France that she was an echo of the poor worn-out echo of the Bastard Renaissance, with little of the Greek or Roman that was supposed to be there. I had a very dear friend, an old man who loved me very much, he had no one to care for, and he travelled a great deal. He followed me to Europe and he begged me to go to Italy. I said, "No, I have got all this old stuff I can stand right here in France. Haven't you noticed that no artist has been to Italy out of America for a hundred years, but has come back with that Italian accent in his art. I don't want that accent." I have gone to the border on a train but I managed to stay away from Italy. Yet, I probably know Michael Angelo and his fine sculpture of the great Cathedral better than ninety-nine men out of a hundred. I knew the importance of their art in its influence on their culture and how much their art enters into their civilization, but I wasn't going down there and get hypnotized and lose what courage I had.

It is thus when I come into a community with an idea that inspires one for another five years. Then you suddenly find that someone else had that idea, or something like it, or enough like it, you must steel up your courage. Those of us who do creative work must let nothing excite us. No drink intoxicates you like the feeling that you are alone, yet at the same time doing something that will be an atom of help to civilization. So you can understand how it hurts me to see this young nation, of 120,000,000 of the sons and daughters of the men and women who left Europe and came over here to escape just what we are still fumbling and mumbling over in their repetition and imitation of ancient arts.

I don't hesitate at all to say to you that most of the American Art is poor; poor, unplanned, un-thought, un-sympathetic, a re-production of poor classical art. When men like Kenyon Cox lend themselves to such stuff and contend you can lend yourself to the Greek and draw as they drew - why, Hell, what should we expect? You can never draw as the Greeks drew, because you are not Greek. Your God is not their God. Your heaven is not their heaven. You can't, however, seem to tell this story to the American people in the terms of Greek. The Greek rose to the height of Pericles in the heroic period unsurpassed in fine arts in the history of civilization. They came out of the near east - some four hundred or more years before Christ, out of the near east, and Pericles was I think the greatest political boss that ever lived. He was a great speaker and a great artist; a great man. All great men are creative. That is another thing. All great executives are creative men. They are constructive men. Pericles realized that. Socrates realized that also. It was so with Plato and with the other men with whom Greece reached it's consummation and thus reached a higher freer and greater level - less the slave to this other thing than any other people before or after then have ever reached. They reached a place that Pericles wanted his country to surpass all others - he wanted that their temples should be re-built and Athens should reach a pinnacle for all time. He got Phidias and told him that he wanted the old Acropolis pulled down, all that Syrian architecture and archaic stuff taken down and something worth while put in, and Athens built up as she is even to this day. I am referring to all of this for a purpose.

The big lesson of it is that the United States should study out a program, build for herself and stop this repetition of European stuff and bunk and take

up the history of the men who dared to say to England, "Get Out." We would like to be free and we would like to be happy. Everything that has been accomplished in history has been in short periods and by a small group of men. Pericles just told them in Greece: "Get your men rounded up; there is the Treasury; there is the Acropolis" And they just built as they were directed. Athens had law, they applied what I was saying a little while ago. But our men of this day can't do these things Greek unless they are Greek. We were not born to do those things. You can't build for Athens unless you are born there, was another rule they had.

Apply that to American intellectual life and where do you get? We must get emancipated from these other things if we are to build for ourselves. I doubt if half of you remember, in this audience tonight, when Washington sat in front of the Capitol, dressed in buff, like a Roman general pleading to his cohorts. Perhaps you will remember too it was finally decided to take him in, but from its appearance it ought to have been sent to Italy. It doesn't look so much like Washington as I do. He was certainly dressed like a Roman General.

I mentioned before that one pathetic thing in the life and history of practically all nations is that their really great and heroic period has covered a span of fifty or sixty years; most always in the lifetime of one individual. The great movement in Greece reached its pinnacle in the life of Pericles; the great movement in Rome, which added but little to civilization, covered the time of Augustus; he repaired its laws and Rome until then left us no record of her greatness. A fine soul did more for it. After then Rome never again reached her flowery height. We must then skip clear over to the Renaissance when greatness flowered for a generation after a thousand years of bigotry and poverty and religious arrogance. It might to

you be a mere co-incidence, but not so, that Galileo, Columbus, Da Vinci, Agelo, Raphael and their compatriots all came practically at once. All of the wonderful accomplishments of that age came in about the lifetime of one of those men. About a dozen men discovered the World, found out it was round, went around it and took it into possession; then they re-discovered the human life. The great experience of that period injected emotion, love and passion back into religion so that life took on again its realities.

Perhaps another peculiar thing was about all of those great artists Michael Angelo, Titian, Raphael and Ra Vinci lived about then and no greater men have come forth in Art since then. Michael Angelo is the only man who in his art created man. Every artist who has been thought to have created a human being really has just simply copied. American artists should recognize the greatest things were conceived during the Renaissance. The greatest gift of the modern age is America herself, standing on one side, with this something in her heart that cares for the world without question. America's greatest duty is to look into her own heart and to serve the other nations of the world. Most of us seem to have forgotten there is something in living, this carrying life's latern in the hand and keeping the race free. We should get back on the right road. Angelo felt he was living for what he created. Columbus discovered the world because he had faith to keep on; Galileo said the world was round and he died for it. Angelo built man about nine feet high. Angelo built his Davy or David, Prior to that he had followed the Grecian bent and had made what looked like Grecian kewpies. He decided to discard all that. He got away from that Grecian then. He became the insurgent against the thralldom of these influences of antiquity; - the young man fighting these influences that prevent him from being what he was born to be. David

is not throwing any slings at Goliath for David is the Renaissance - the young man has gotten away from the old trends and has discovered this country. He is getting tired of old Europe. Then Angelo made the Thinker. Then he made Moses, the Lawgiver, representing the great constructive mind. Do you know his Moses? I don't believe there is a single line that can be conceived by an artist to express strength, to express power, express government or express justice that Angelo did not place into his figure of Moses. It is a perfect piece of sculpture in its expression of virility, strength and power.

As I said, I went to Europe to study and then I came back. I came back here with \$12,000, or \$15,000, more in my pocket, which was a lot of money in those days for a young fellow. I don't think my father ever saw that much money. He went west and got out in the mountains and was contented with a simple maintenance. But with my chosen work I found I could not make progress here in Nebraska. I had to live where the world was moving in greater masses, where bigger things were possible and people were closer together. I came back to the West and stayed there until my money was nearly all gone and then I went back to New York to see if I could get a foothold there, and found no place. I was utterly disgusted and again I went back to Europe. I must concede I went back to Europe feeling I was not fitting into things, but determined, yet, I would fall into the customs of those I detested, - just making busts of people or taking contracts that had no creative genius involved.

There was nothing being done in America, and in fact, there isn't so very much now in any real sense. I went over to England and had enough money to camp over there awhile. Fortunately, I was successful and remained there for seven years. I leased a house and then this peculiar thing happened. One day

a friend of mine came in to me and said "Let's go to Paris." So we went to Paris quite frequently. To my great relief I got some trade rapidly established and it was a relief, for in a way you feel peculiar in England. England never had any sculptors. I don't know why, but they never had any great painters either; they have never had any freedom in the plastic arts, which is peculiar in the light of the fact she has furnished so many brilliant stars in the literary arts, or rather in letters.

I went over to Paris and received offers in three or four days, but decided not to stay. I didn't know what I was going to do until something struck me like a sudden south wind. I took out my watch and, as I knew Paris and its railroad service, I remarked, in an instant, that I had decided to go back to America. So I soon got a boat to New York and was away on the Sherborn. I had left in such haste, on an impulse and I never went back.

I will never forget the feeling I had when we touched the wharf. I wasn't coming back to study, nor did I have a lot of work awaiting me. I had always studied and read up on things I figured I might sometime want to know about. I was trying to find any way, anywhere, anything, I could put into American greatness, and Lincoln stood out as the best subject. My father had talked a great deal about him. I had some money on hand, and wanted to do something just for the fun of it, so I bought a big piece of marble and, after reading everything I could about Lincoln, I got this big piece of marble and had it moved into my studio. I started to just put my life into that piece of marble, with every available explanation and expression of the character of Lincoln. I tried to get into this piece of work an interpretation of his story. I had started a great big fellow for I wanted to carefully and critically interpret him. I worked on him for several months, working in the thought of his drollness and his devotion. The piece

weighed about 800 pounds. It was rough yet. I was depicting his great love. He had a great love for a sweet country girl. She died. You all know the story. He would go to her grave and lay his overcoat to keep out the weather, - go to the grave in raw weather and cover it with his coat. You can see him sitting there, coatless, by the grave, mourning for her. Those big feelings are always present in big people. You find them in someone with a big love and not one to be ashamed of them.

I worked until I came to the big head. It was several feet high. When Robert Lincoln saw it, he came to my studio, having heard of it. When he came he said, "I want to see Mr. Borglum." I said, "I am Mr. Borglum." He began to cry and said, "I never expected to see Father again." What greater tribute could I have had paid to this work. Something had gotten into that head beyond the drawing of the design and general construction - something else had gotten into it. Within a month or two the anniversary of Lincoln's birthday took place. I knew Theodore Roosevelt very well. So I wrote to him and said I had made this head of Lincoln and would like to have that head standing in the National Capitol. He wrote right back and said for me to come and see him and he asked me quite carefully what I had in mind. . I told him it was just a matter of sentiment with me. When he asked what I wanted to do with it, I told him "I want the American people to have it and let it rest in the Capitol. He said, "Let me think about it a little bit. I will write you again, but don't let anybody else have it in the meantime." Within three or four days, Mr. Meyer had heard about it and as he was going to live in Washington, he wanted to know about it, But I couldn't let him have it. After that he asked me to come to Washington at once, which I did. He wanted to join with me then in giving it and proposed we go fifty-fifty and we would give it together. So that is the story,

Governor of how that came to the National Government. After that they asked me to come at once to Washington, which I did for a meeting at 10 o'clock in the morning. A little later in came Joe Cannon, Chairman of the Library Committee, and some Senator. They went over things in detail. That led to a joint resolution that was put through the House and Senate the same day that placed the statue downstairs instead of in Statuary Hall, and placed it in the Rotunda where it must remain, and can't be removed.

In a month or two I had a call from Atlanta, Georgia, and a group of women called on me and said we have seen your Lincoln in the Capitol Rotunda - we want you to come down to Stone Mountain near Atlanta and make there a head of Lee for us. I had carved this Lincoln, in Washington, just as if it was living, with all of his natural character in it, as Angelo had put in his work. They wanted me to put one of Lee right there like the Lincoln. I went down to the Mountain and studied the situation. They wanted me to put in a head of Lee five or ten feet high - the Lincoln head being only four feet. I studied it over and said "I can't do that for you." They said, "Why?" I said, "This mountain here is a big pile of stone so imposing, so massive, I can't put a little head of Lee down there. You might as well put a string on a barn door and call it a monument to Washington." They told me to go back to Atlanta and they got a lot of people together. I told them there was something about that mountain, I wasn't sure what it was, and told them I would have to study it further. I must know more about it. "I came down here at your request, you want me to carve Lee on this mountain - let me study it this afternoon and report to you tomorrow." I think probably that mountain has the best stone in the world for tablatore - it had virgin possibilities for work of that kind, especially the stone on the northeast wall of that mountain. It

had a tremendous effect on me. I spent the afternoon there and tramped and studied it from all angles. I went out that night and sat on Flat Rock just opposite the mountain and just imagined Lee, I imagined him alone and then with a group of men, as Washington, Harry Lee and others. In uniform and with knickerbockers. How many of you know that Lincoln wore them and so did his cabinet. I am not going to get started talking about Lee for I could do that for an hour or more. He was one of the really great men, along with Lincoln. He didn't want the Union to break up. He couldn't stay the tide and had to join the Rebellion, and he stayed with the South. Enough of that. I realized the import of their great story. The War is part of the story of America. For four years the contest waged, up and down the land until more than a half-million men were lost in the bloodiest fights possible in the world, in percentage of men killed, especially at Gettysburg. But the nation remained one great family.

It is a beautiful story, this of Lee, and it is growing more and more sacred as it grows older. I just felt somehow I could build that story up, so it would commend itself to the people of the South who were still hurt and wounded. I didn't want to come back into their hearts to wound them again. We went to Congress and asked Congress to strike a coin - a half-dollar, which it did. They put Lee on one side and Jackson on the other. 13 stars were put on there, as there were 13 states on the south side of the Potomac river that went out together; there were 13 states in the north that joined together against England; it just depended on which side of the Potomac river you lived which way you cared to take that. But the beautiful thing about it was that without regard to Democratic government or Republican government, this republic, with Calvin Coolidge at the head, responded and there were sold five million half-dollars commemorating the valor, honor and sincerity of the South. I

talked with Coolidge, Mellon and Smoot about the plan. They used a haste unusual in our national government. The bill was put in on March 4 and on the 17th of March it had passed the House and Senate and the President wigned it. There wasn't a single dissenting vote against that. A beautiful thing it was, that a great, victorious people, for the first time in the history of wars I think, were so big that they struck a coin to men who struggled against them and that a country that was struggled against them placed or helped to place a statue to honor the opponent's leader, and commemorate his honor and his valor. That is the kind of a thing America is doing all the time. It is the kind of a thing that should be appealing to our hearts. It is the kind of a thing that makes memorials and not monuments. It is the kind of a thing that rises out of the soul and transforms into work undestructible - a thing that will live on forever.

Perhaps that is enough for that. We will come now to the Black Hills, that you people in Nebraska think of practically being your own. Out in South Dakota, in 1924, I got a request from some historian there to come up and see South Dakota and look over the site for a great project there. You remember at that time they had a great non-partisan movement on there and there were some other ideas afloat about North and South Dakota. I had gone down to Stone Mountain and built something that was attracting the attention of the World--probably no piece of work in history has attracted more attention; it was something like the work planned by Alexander, but he died without carrying his plan into execution. He was going to carve a city, build a sort of new Athens, put up a new Acropolis. They asked me to come up to Dakota and see what they had. I found there stone on which to carve several projects. I had no immediate thought, but what they just wanted a big piece of sculpture.

I told them there was no more reason for them to carve a statue of Washington or Jefferson than for any other state to do it.

There seemed to be written in the fates that here was a wonderful place for a symphony of the whole story of the nation. I expect you don't appreciate how big this is. However, I went up there; went into the history rather thoroughly, went over a great many needles up there, saw the story on totem poles, and then they said - "what do you think about it?" I told them only their country's history; there was no reason for doing just a little work there, unless they were interested in hard work, the poetry of young people, - they had a capital place for a great story - depict the struggle of the race and the call to immortality. I went into their story and found that France in 1743 had sent some exploring scouts out to what later became Fort Pierre, with distinct instructions to save all that territory for the Hudson Bay Company, from Mexico to the Pacific, that was not already owned by England and a metal plate marked the location of their claim in this region. Some children playing there ten years ago found that plate. On that incident the whole thing started. That started a great story, it gave France a primary claim on what we call the Louisiana territory. In 1762 the war with England has slipped this over to Spain and then France got it back before 1803, when the Duke of wanted to marry the King's daughter and have a region of his own over which to rule. Eventually Louisiana was sold to the United States. Jefferson and Washington had long been anxious about the Mississippi River. Jefferson wanted to get the Mississippi river for a western boundary and protection, so he dealt with Talleyrand and our minister Livingston negotiated, and then Jefferson sent Madison over and the purchase was made.

Then came the great movement westward, with settlement pushing on even-

tually to the Pacific Coast. In the past century we have taken over everything to the Pacific Coast. From the struggle at the Alamo, when Santa Anna killed everybody he could find in the Alamo, until we took over Texas, from Mexico; northward, - to the final struggles that took over the great west from the Indians, we laid a background for his work.

I said to South Dakota. "There is your story - depict the expansion of the United States, moving from Illinois to the Pacific Coast, make it a greater commemoration of this great movement. Again can Jefferson write the Declaration of Independence and buy Louisiana. Again can Washington's greatness be portrayed. Put in Lincoln, the savior of the Union and one more figure I demanded--Roosevelt, who built up a link between the West and the East--these are what we are carving out of the ground up there. We had on the mountain front, a Washington as big as this theatre, over sixty feet long, from there to there, and a nose nineteen feet long. We had eighteen men working at one time on that nose. Men six feet high can stand on the lower eyelid of that Washington and just touch the upper part. That big head is so far done that Mr. Hoover is expected to come there to dedicate it the 4th of July of this year. (1930) We are carving those four big figures. There we honor the man who wrote the Declaration of Independence; the man who provided for the adoption of the Constitution and initiated the first rule of the nation; the man who saved the Union and the man who joined the east and west by completing the Panama Canal.

When Calvin Coolidge spent a summer in the Black Hills he came to a realization of what these people were really planning to do. He endorsed their proposition and preferred it to the usual step of just putting up a statue for some man. He expressed a desire to help them in some way. The

whole matter is national. The name South Dakota won't appear on that monument at all. They have gained the consent of Calvin Coolidge to prepare a 500 word story of the nation to place on that work. Here they are building a real memorial, not just a monument. The monuments they are carving out there will outlive the race and be a lasting memorial. Mr. President that is why we build memorials in building monuments.

Meeting Adjourned until call of
President or next annual meeting
