CLEOPATRA’S NEEDLE

a 1:300 scale paper model

AN ANCIENT RELIC IN CENTRAL PARK,

this Egyptian obelisk was carved to honor Pharaoh Thutmose III and raised at the capital Heliopolis in roughly 1443 B.C., along with a matching stone which now stands in London.

It was toppled when the Persians sacked Egypt, and lay in the sand for 500 years.

Around 10 B.C., the Romans moved the pair of obelisks to Alexandria where they were re-erected at the entrance to the temple to Julius Caesar. Bronze supports in the form of strong crabs were added to the damaged corners and a platform of steps.

Many centuries and other empires later, other obelisks were taken off to Constantinople, Venice, Rome and Paris. One of this pair was given to England, and the Americans asked for their share, too. Finally, in 1879, the khedive of Egypt granted the obelisk as a gift of friendship and trade to the United States to commemorate the completion of the Suez Canal.

Transporting the immense block of granite to Central Park safely was an engineering feat which took two years. First, a wood and iron apparatus was built around the obelisk to tip and lower it to a horizontal position. At last a ship was found strong enough to transport the 200-ton obelisk and 50-ton base and they were steaming across the Atlantic.

The arrival of the ancient monument in New York stirred great interest in all things Egyptian. Many watched as the great stones were moved by temporary tracks from the Hudson River through narrow streets and then up wooden trestles to a site atop Graywacke Knoll behind the newly-built Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The obelisk was dedicated in a cold January 1881 before a dedicated crowd of thousands who came to welcome this newest and oldest immigrant to New York City.

for more miniature paper models see: www.BuildYourOwnNewYork.com

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A translation of the hieroglyphics on the faces of the obelisk

NORTH

The Horus, Strong-Bull-Son-of-Ra,
the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, User-maat-ra, Chosen-of-Ra,
Ra, created by the gods, to found the Two Lands, the Son of Ra,
Ramesses, Beloved-of-Amun,
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there is no-one who did what he did, in the house of his father,
the Lord of the Two Lands, User-maat-ra,
Chosen of Ra, the Son of Ra,
Ramesses, Beloved of Amun, granted life like Ra,

The Horus, Strong-Bull-Appearing-in-Thebes,
the King of Upper and Lower Egypt,
Men-kheper-ra, who embellishes the house of him who created him,
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(the Son of Ra, Thutmose), beloved of (Atum),
lord (of Heliopolis), may he live for ever.

The Horus, Strong-Bull-Son-of-Ra,
the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, User-maat-ra, Chosen-of-Ra,
the Golden Horus, Mighty-in-years-and-great-of-victories, the Son of Ra,
Ramesses, Beloved-of-Amun,
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the Lord of the Two Lands,
User-maat-ra,
Chosen-of-Ra, the Son of Ra,
Ramesses, Beloved-of-Amun,
granted life

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SOUTH

The Horus, Strong-Bull-Son-of-Khepri,
the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, User-maat-ra, Chosen-of-Ra,
the Golden Horus, Mighty-in-years-and-great-of-victories, the Son of Ra,
Ramesses, Beloved-of-Amun, who came forth from the womb
in order to receive the crowns of Ra, who created him to be sole lord the Lord of the Two Lands,
User-maat-ra Chosen-of-Ra, the Son of Ra,
Ramesses, Beloved-of-Amun, one serviceable to Ra and granted life like Ra.

The Horus, Strong-Bull-Appearing-in-Thebes,
the Son of Ra, Ramesses,
Beloved of Amun,

The Horus, Strong-Bull-Loving-Truth,
the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, User-maat-ra, Chosen-of-Ra,
Ra, created by the gods, who founded the Two Lands, the Son of Ra,
Ramesses, Beloved-of-Amun, the noble youth, beloved like Aten when he shines on the horizon,
the Lord of the Two Lands,
User-maat-ra,
Chosen-of-Ra, the Son of Ra,
Ramesses, Beloved-of-Amun, one serviceable to Ra and granted life like Ra.

EAST

The Horus, Strong-Bull-Son-of-Ra,
the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, User-maat-ra, Chosen-of-Ra,
lord of festivals like his father Ptah-Tatenen, the Son of Ra,
Ramesses, Beloved-of-Amun, whom Ra created in order to make Heliopolis festive and to provide the sanctuaries of him who created him with food offerings,
the Lord of the Two-Lands, User-maat-ra, Chosen-of-Ra,
Ramesses, Beloved-of-Amun granted all life like Ra.

The Horus, High-of-the-White-Crown-Beloved-of-Ra,
the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Men-kheper-ra, the Golden Horus, Contended-with-strength-who-smites-the-rulers-of-foreign-lands-who-attack-him, according as his father Ra has ordained for him victory against every land and strength in his efforts to extend the boundaries of Egypt, the Son of Ra, Thutmose, granted all life forever.

The Horus, Strong-Bull-Son-of-Ra,
the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, User-maat-ra,
Chosen-of-Ra, he of the Two Goddesses, Protector-of-Egypt-and-curbed-of-foreign-lands, the Son of Ra, Ramesses, Beloved-of-Amun, a valiant king active with his arms in the presence of every land, the Lord of the Two Lands, User-maat-ra, Chosen-of-Ra, the Son of Ra, Ramesses, Beloved-of-Amun, granted life like Ra.