

ENDICOTT, N.Y. -
MONUMENTS c.1

The Unveiling Ceremony

Memorial Statue

of

GEORGE F. JOHNSON



October 14, 1951

Enjoie Park, Endicott, New York



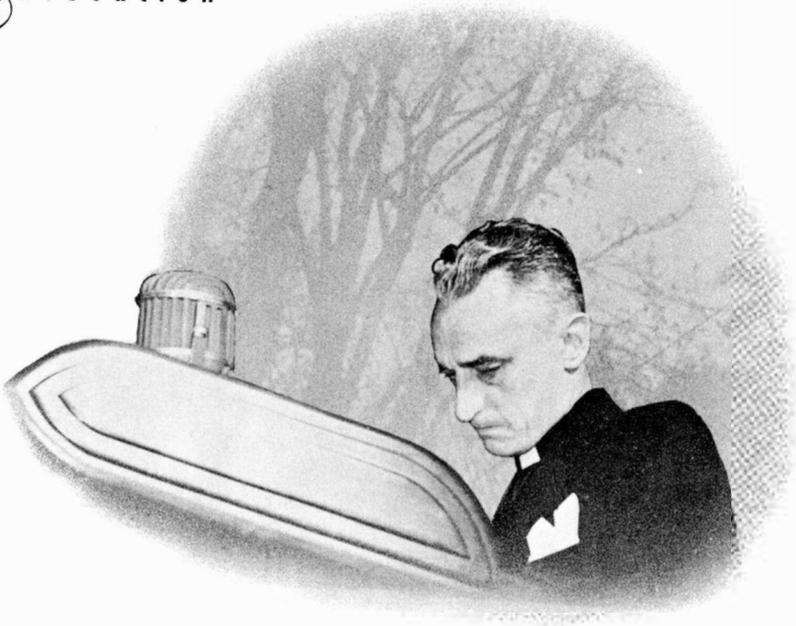
THE HOPE OF THE WORLD LIES IN EVOLUTION, PROGRESS AND CONSTANT IMPROVEMENT, AND WE LOOK WITH CONFIDENCE INTO THAT FUTURE, RAPIDLY APPROACHING, WHEN ALL MAY HAVE A MORE EQUAL SHARE IN THE GOOD THINGS OF LIFE, WHEN THE RIGHTS OF HUMANS ARE ACKNOWLEDGED TO BE MORE SACRED THAN THE RIGHTS OF DOLLARS, WHEN IT WILL BE THE SAME VICE, AND THE SAME CRIME, WHETHER COMMITTED IN BROADCLOTH OR IN RAGS.

JULY 21, 1919.

W. L. Johnson



Invocation



Rev. JOHN WADDICOR

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom then shall I be afraid?

One thing have I desired of the Lord, which I will require; even that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the fair beauty of the Lord, and to visit his temple.

For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his tabernacle; yea, in the secret place of his dwelling shall he hide me, and set me up upon a rock of stone.

And now shall he lift up mine head above mine enemies round about me.

Therefore will I offer in his dwelling an oblation, with great gladness: I will sing and speak praises unto the Lord.

Hearken unto my voice, O Lord, when I cry unto thee; have mercy upon me, and hear me.

My heart hath talked of thee, Seek ye my face: Thy face, Lord, will I seek.

O hide not thou thy face from me, nor cast thy servant away in displeasure.

Thou hast been my succour; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.

I should utterly have fainted, but that I believe verily to see the goodness

of the Lord in the land of the living.

O tarry thou the Lord's leisure; be strong, and he shall comfort thine heart; and put thou thy trust in the Lord.

Glory be to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Ghost:

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen.

In testimony of a great man—George F. Johnson.

“Let us now praise famous men, and our fathers that begat us.

The Lord hath wrought great glory by them through his great power from the beginning.

Such as did bear rule in their kingdoms, men renowned for their power, giving counsel by their understanding, and declaring prophecies:

Leaders of the people by their counsels, and by their knowledge of learning meet for the people, wise and eloquent in their instructions:

Such as found out musical tunes, and recited verses in writing:

Rich men furnished with ability, living peaceably in their habitations:

All these were honoured in their generations, and were the glory of their times.

There be of them, that have left a name behind them, that their praises might be reported.

But these were merciful men, whose righteousness hath not been forgotten.

With their seed shall continually remain a good inheritance, and their children are within the covenant.

Their bodies are buried in peace; but their name liveth for evermore.

The people will tell of their wisdom, and the congregation will shew forth their praise.”

(From the Apocryphal Book of Ecclesiasticus 44)

Almighty God, behold this statue and exedra: we pause to honor the memory of him for whom we now dedicate these works of art, George F. Johnson. For his courage, vision and wisdom, and his charity and charitableness, for his spirit of pioneering, his will to build our town; for his perseverance and encouragement of a new way of living, for the very mighty works he has done in our day, that we might live more securely, labor more abundantly, play more healthfully and enjoy each other more contentedly we give heartfelt thanks for the friendship and leadership of this great man.

May these symbols of our appreciation serve to inspire this generation, and many generations to come, to live in Thy favor and to do an honest day's work. May these symbols serve to remind us, when we are fearful, that America does breed great men and women.

We thank Thee, our Heavenly Father, for George F. Johnson — may his soul rest eternally with Thee in peace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, we ask this.
Amen.

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. Amen.

The Grace of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with us all evermore. Amen.

Presiding



Mayor C. BURDETTE PARKHURST

For many years our shoe workers and friends in this Valley have honored the great Mr. George F Johnson on his birthday, October 14th. Today it is a pleasure to welcome so many more joining with us in the unveiling ceremony of this memorial monument.

In our community is a leading citizen who, at one time, represented this District in the New York State Senate. He is a student of government and a statesman. Over a long period of years he was a close friend of Mr. George F. Johnson. Realizing his high regard for Mr. George F., and the things he did for the working man, the Committee saw him and found him happy to speak today. May I present the Hon. Harvey D. Hinman of Binghamton, New York. Mr. Hinman. . . .



Hon. HARVEY D. HINMAN

Mr. Chairman – Friends:

It is a high privilege and great honor to have a part in the dedication of this beautiful Memorial to the most widely known, biggest hearted, best loved man who has lived, labored, and died in this lovely Valley of Opportunity. Of him it can be truthfully said,

“None knew thee but to love thee,
Nor named thee but to praise.”

There are three classes of men.

One class believe in and act on the principle that “what is yours is mine, if I can take it.”

Another class believe in and act on the principle that “what is mine is mine and I shall keep it.”

The third class believe in and act on the principle that “what is mine is yours if you need it.”

These three classes are represented in the Parable of the Good Samaritan: –
The first class is represented by the thieves.

The second class is represented by the Priest and the Levite who, when they came to the place and saw the man who had been waylaid, robbed, stripped of his raiment, and left half dead at the side of the road, "passed by on the other side."

The third class is represented by the Samaritan. When he saw the helpless man, he went to him, bound up his wounds, took him to the Inn, and cared for him.

George F. Johnson was a lifelong, active member of the third class — what was his was yours if you needed it.

Starting with only good health, a head full of wisdom, understanding, and common sense, a stout heart, willing hands, and faith in God and in his fellow man, George F., with the assistance of his fellow workers, designed, built, and operated the second largest shoe manufacturing concern in the world.

While engaged in that stupendous undertaking, he "went about doing good" and like the Samaritan "showing mercy" to those who needed help and encouragement. Only he and the Recording Angel knew the extent and magnitude of his benefactions — public and private — but they totalled millions.

Every resident, every business concern, every religious denomination, every charitable organization in this Valley, is a beneficiary of his labor and his generosity. But for him Johnson City and Endicott would not be, and Binghamton would be little larger than it was fifty years ago.

Much, if not most, of George F.'s success stemmed from and was the fruit of his understanding of, affection for, and faith in his fellow workers.

That they loved and trusted him was demonstrated when, by an overwhelming — nearly unanimous — vote, they repudiated the malicious, libelous lies about him, his family, and his Company with which outside "organizers" had flooded the Valley in their efforts to Unionize his Company, and which broke his health and his heart.

A more impressive, heart-warming demonstration of workers' devotion and loyalty to their leader has never been given.

When George F. was told that the men and women with whom he had worked for more than a half-century had thus vindicated his faith in them, and approved and endorsed his leadership and his policies, he must have felt as Simeon did when he said to the Master, "Now let thy servant depart in peace."

It is fitting and praiseworthy that those who have known and worked with one they "have long loved and lost a while," should erect and should dedicate a memorial to him, as we are doing here today.

But George F. Johnson needed neither monument nor epitaph to perpetuate his name, his fame, or his accomplishments. They, with those of other of the Nation's greatest industrial leaders and benefactors, are inscribed in the Histories of his day and generation to instruct, inspire, and encourage those who shall follow them.

May his soul rest in peace.

Unveiling

Mayor Parkhurst:

Thank you, Senator Hinman.

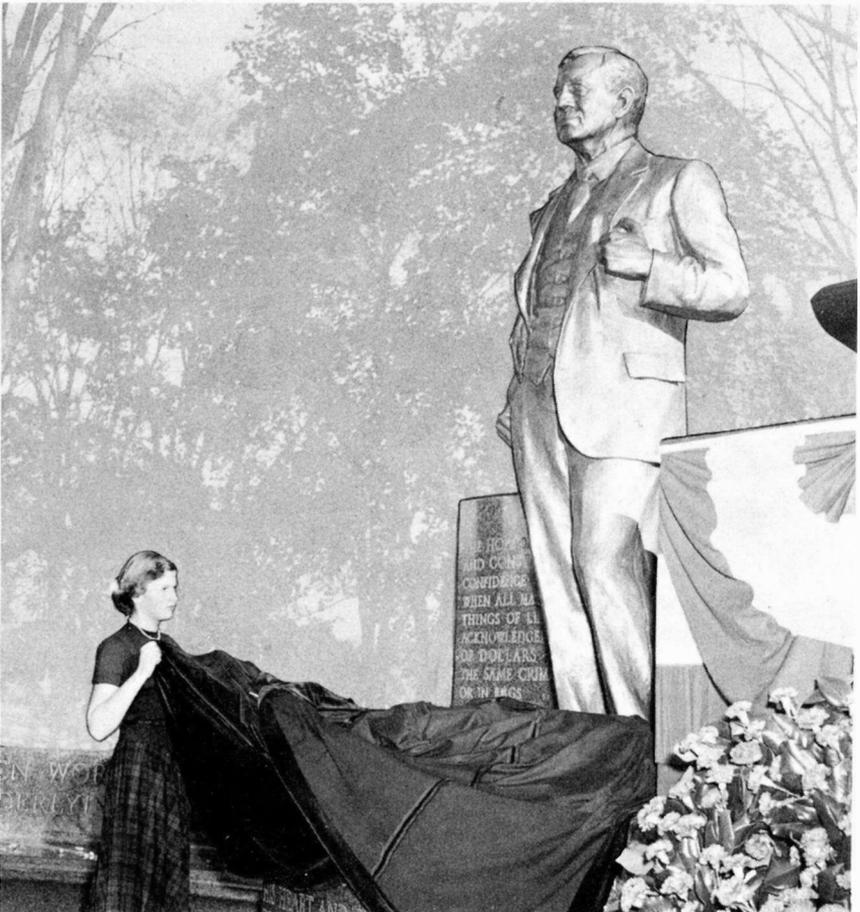
This Memorial is made possible by the gifts of many thousands of Mr. George F. Johnson's friends. Within the base is a bronze urn containing the names of all those who contributed.

This likeness of Mr. George F. was executed by Mr. Charles E. Keck whose untimely passing came just as this work was completed. Mrs. Keck and her sons are here today to share with us the pride Mr. Keck took in this, his final work.

The monument would not be complete without the artistic efforts of our own Mr. John Bonazzi working with Mr. Foster Disinger in designing this magnificent work in granite.

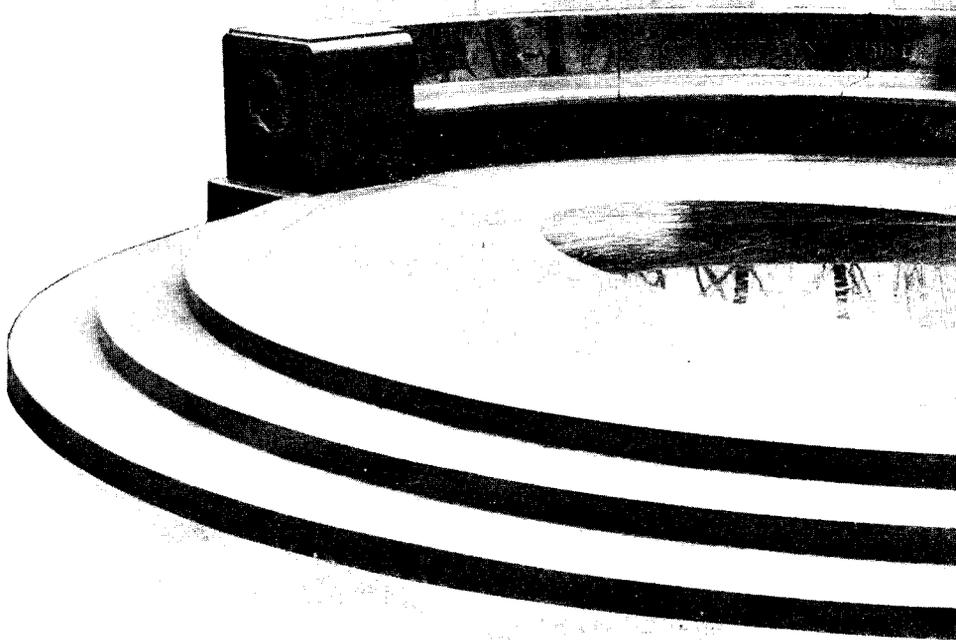
Now, Miss Judith Johnson, daughter of Mr. Frank Johnson and great-granddaughter of Mr. George F., will unveil the Memorial.

Miss Johnson . . . Unveiling



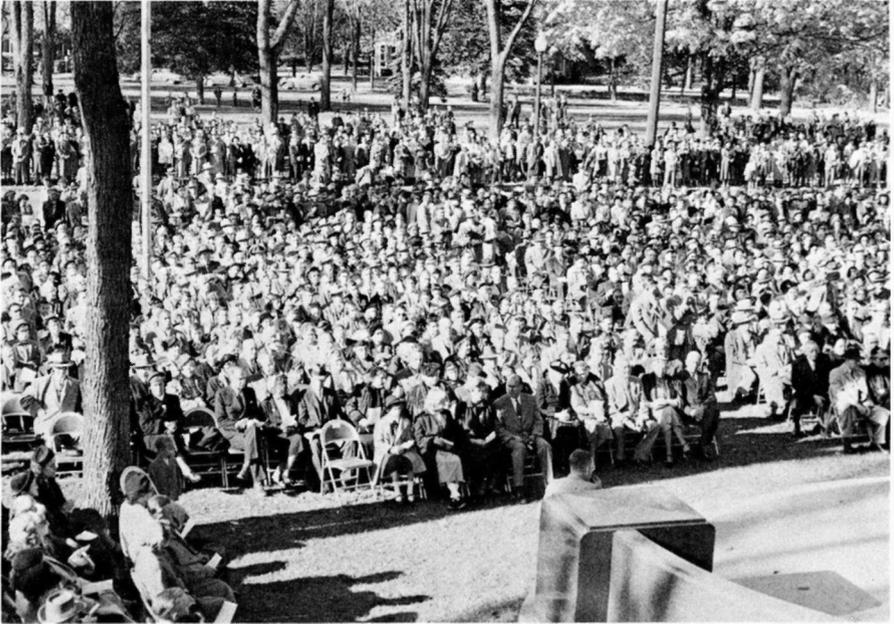
George F. Johnson

Memorial





*T*his memorial is the gift of thousands of friends and fellow workers whose names on microfilm are preserved within a bronze urn set in the base.



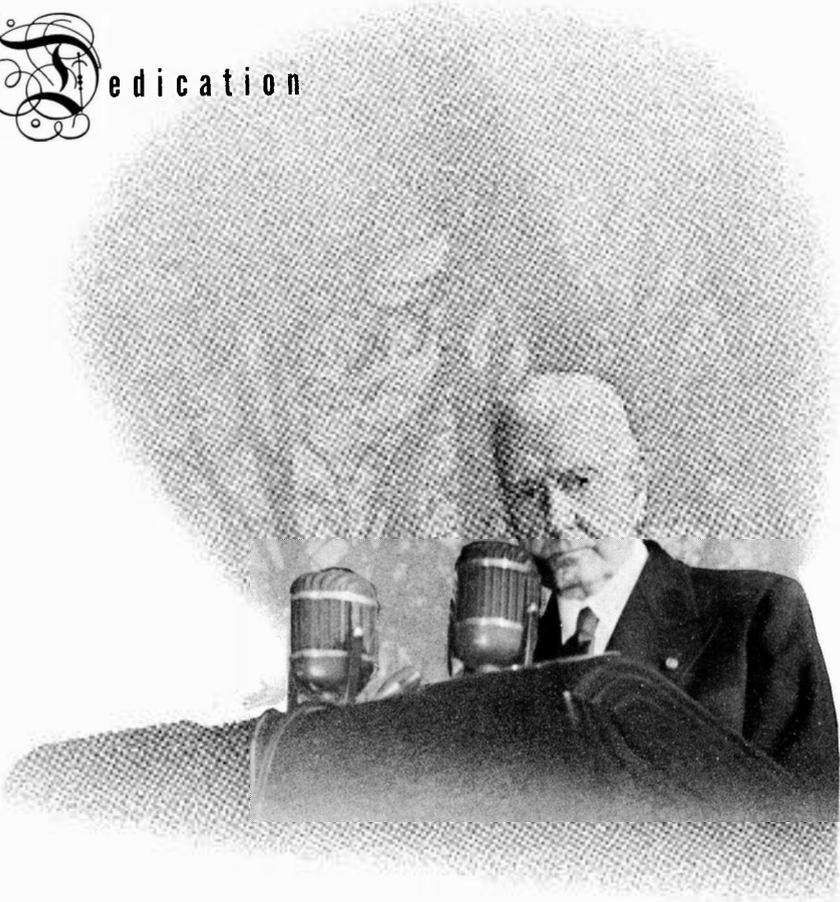
Mayor Parkhurst:

Endicott is only a village but it is fortunate indeed in being the home of two great industries and it is fortunate, too, that the founders of these two industries have worked so closely together, each with a high admiration for the other. It is particularly fitting, therefore, that the founder of I.B.M. should deliver the Dedication Address at the unveiling of this Memorial Statue of Mr. George F. Johnson.

Ladies and gentlemen, it gives me much pleasure to present Mr. Thomas J. Watson . . .



Dedication



*with his wife - my
English alone produced*

Mr. THOMAS J. WATSON

Mayor Parkhurst, Senator Hinman, Members of the Johnson Family and Friends:

It is fitting that on this 94th anniversary of his birth we meet to pay homage to the man who was the pioneer in this community in the development of human relations with his employees and all who live here.

Charles C. Colton, Scottish philosopher, said "Many know what they hate, few know what they love." George F. Johnson wasted very little time on things that he disliked but he gave very generously of his time, unusual talents and material resources in the thing he loved, — service to others.

He was personally responsible for laying the foundation for the development

of Johnson City and Endicott and he encouraged and assisted his employees in getting their own homes to live in. He encouraged and supported the development of educational institutions; he was a spiritual man and was very generous in his support of churches of all denominations, of all the hospitals and charitable institutions throughout our community.

He was a forceful leader but he always tempered all of his activities with kindness and fair play.

Starting without capital, he developed a business from 50 men to one of 20,000 — the number that was in the organization when he passed away. To all of his employees he established for them benefits, medical assistance, housing, recreational facilities, insurance, pensions and many other kind services and his employees of the E. J. Company today have the highest wage rates of any shoe company in the United States.

I know that not only the E.J. employees but the I.B.M. employees and all other employees in our community and industries join in paying their highest personal tribute to the memory of George F. Johnson.

The monument we are dedicating today is a fitting and beautiful one but as we follow George F. Johnson's accomplishments and high principles in the business and social world, we realize that he was unconsciously building a monument that will stand forever in the minds and hearts not only of his generation and the present generation, but will be handed down from parents to children throughout the coming generations and will perpetuate his memory for all time just as the memories of our great men in the country have been perpetuated for the things that they did during their lifetime.

While I am in the position this afternoon of representing the people in the community, I desire to pay my personal tribute to the man whose friendship and encouragement meant so much to me when I started to develop an industry in Endicott. I shall always cherish in my heart his kindness, his encouragement and his friendship which I appreciate beyond my ability to express in words.

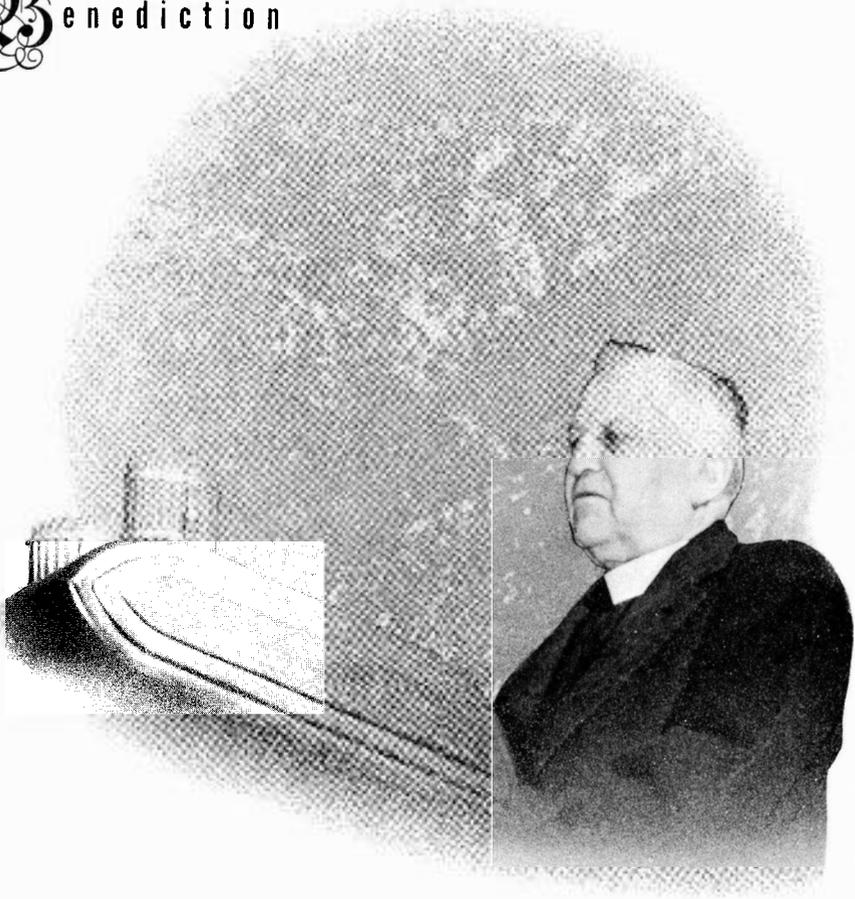
Phillips Brooks said, "To find one's duty certainly and somewhere, somehow perform it faithfully makes us big, strong, useful and happy men." When George F. Johnson, at the age of 13, entered the shoe industry, he found his duty certainly and the record of his over 78 years of active service in the industry proved that he performed his duty faithfully.

His business policies, his high ideals and his appreciation of the duties of a good citizen have helped to develop our community into one of the most outstanding communities in our whole country. We all owe a great debt of gratitude to the memory of George F. Johnson which we can pay in full measure by perpetuating and passing on to future generations his high business, moral and spiritual standards which have been proven to be of such great benefit to all of us.

Mayor Parkhurst:

The Right Reverend Monsignor William H. Purcell, Pastor of St. James Roman Catholic Church in Johnson City will offer the benediction. Monsignor Purcell. . . .

Benediction



Rt. Rev. Msgr. WILLIAM H. PURCELL

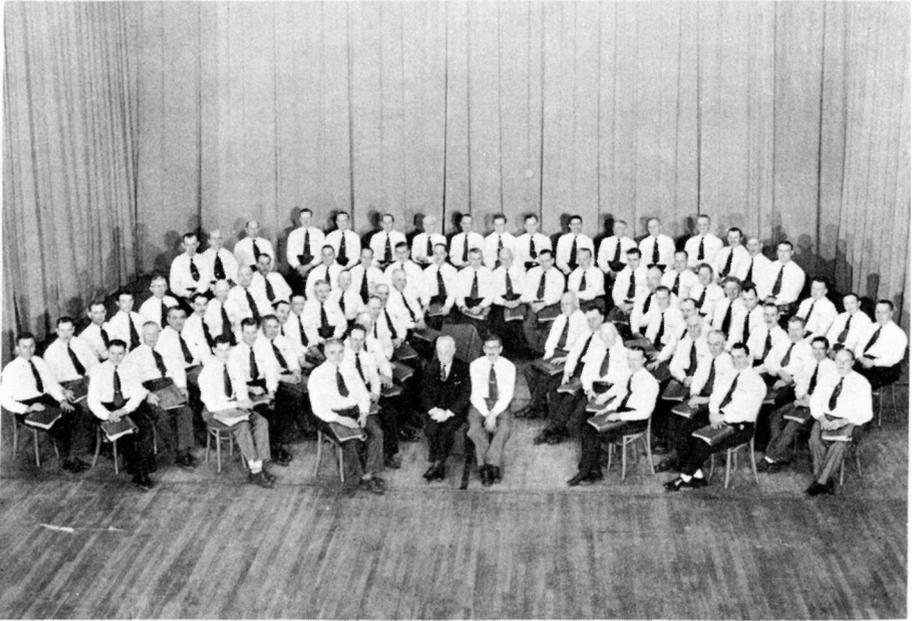
In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost – Amen.

All who are here present today who have witnessed the unveiling of this statue to our great leader, who have listened to the words of eulogy, should thank Almighty God – thank him that you were here to witness this great event. Most of you knew Mr. Johnson, all of you have benefited by his gifts and his generosity. Again thank Almighty God. You knew he was a great leader, he was a great genius. Not only did he build factories and get business going in the southern tier, but here is something he did that stands out in his life as a marvelous man. He raised up young men to take his place after Almighty God had called him out of this world. Again thank Almighty God for this and thank Him because these young men, who were young men then, are carrying on the

work in a marvelous manner. Now there is one thing I would like to ask – in this age, you know we think too little about it – gratitude, appreciation for the things that are being done, that have been done for us. We have all benefited directly or indirectly and so today I am going to ask each and every one of you to be grateful. Now, there is one way in my opinion, to be grateful and that is to do whatever work you have to do, and do it to the best of your ability. When you are working for the welfare of the company, you are working for your own welfare and, so today let us offer up that beautiful prayer, the most beautiful of all prayers, that God may bless us, collectively and individually, our families and homes and all.

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen. The blessing of Almighty God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost descend upon you and remain with you forever. Amen.





Musical Selections

by

Endicott Johnson Workers Chorus

under Direction of Mr. Harold Albert

Memorial Ode

America The Beautiful 

Auld Lang Syne