

April 19 1912

Dedication of the Straus Titanic Memorial

Simple But Impressive Ceremonies at the Unveiling of the Beautiful Bronze Statue

THE memory of the awful tragedy involved in the sinking of the Titanic three years ago was reverently revived on the afternoon of April 15 by the dedication of a memorial to the memory of Isador and Ida Straus, who were victims of the appalling disaster. Mr. Straus was one of the wealthy men of New York who joined to his great wealth a spirit of genuine philanthropy, of which the City of New York possesses many striking evidences. He was one of the most cheerful and revered benefactors of humanity that the world has ever known, and his tragic taking away was the cause of profound sadness, not only to the City of New York, but to practically every community of the land. The noble calmness with which both he and his wife met their fate gave a dignity to the tragedy which added greatly to its appalling solemnity. Among all the great men and women who sank to their graves with the foundering of the Titanic none was more respected and loved than was Isador Straus, and this sentiment was equally shared by his heroic wife.

In Straus Park

The memorial was dedicated on the third anniversary of the loss of the Titanic. It is erected in what was formerly Bloomingdale Square, but is now known as Straus Park, a little triangular piece of ground at 106th street and West End avenue, opposite the old home of Mr. and Mrs. Straus. The memorial is at the end of the park, and is in the shape of a woman looking down into the little pool of water. The figure, which is reclining and of bronze, represents Memory, and under it is this inscription:

"In memory of Isador and Ida Straus, who were lost at sea in the Titanic disaster, April 15, 1912. Lovely and pleasant were they in their lives, and in their death they were not divided. II Samuel 1, 23."

The Ceremonies Simple

Two great wreaths, one of leaves and one of blossoms, hung on either end of

the granite base of the statue, and flowers were distributed all around the little park. It was a most beautiful spring day, quite in harmony with the feelings of the throng of more than two thousand persons who gathered to participate in the simple ceremonies. The descendants of the couple to whose honor the statue was erected were present in large numbers—children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The Beethoven Musical Society of the Social Center of Public School 63, Manhattan, played Chopin's Funeral March and other numbers, and addresses were made by Mayor Mitchel, Justice Greenbaum and Commissioner Ward, Justice Greenbaum presiding over the ceremonies. Reference was made to the courage and loyalty shown by this man and this woman, so great that the wife preferred death to life if her husband could not be saved with her. "We can be grateful to them always," said Mayor Mitchel, "for they have typified qualities on which the progress of the world must rest—fidelity, simplicity and courage." Park Commissioner Ward declared that Mr. Straus' life was a vindication of New York against the accusation that the city's successful men lack sympathy. He added that it was proper, since his wife stood by him in death as in life, that she should be remembered with him.

The Bronze Statue

The bronze statue of Memory is by August Lukeman, and the long exedra of granite behind it is by Evarts Tracy. The memorial was erected through the efforts of the Permanent Fund Memorial Committee, formed shortly after the Titanic disaster. Among its members were the late Dr. Joseph D. Bryant, John Claflin, Robert W. de Forest, Dr. John H. Finley, A. Barton Hepburn, Adolph Lewisohn, Seth Low, William McAdoo, Adolph S. Ochs, George Foster Peabody, Jacob H. Schiff, Isaac N. Seligman, and Louis Stern.

W. S. S. S.