

## *McLean County Illinois Civil War Monument*

Four thousand three hundred and twenty-five citizens (4,325) from McLean County Illinois served in the United States military during the 'War of the Rebellion', as the Civil War was often referred to at the time. Of the citizens from McLean County Illinois serving during the Civil War, six hundred and eighty-six (686) gave their lives to preserve the Union and end slavery.

They were heroes. And with their approval of a ballot initiative in November of 1866, the voters of McLean County Illinois gave the McLean County Board of Supervisors authority to issue bonds for the construction of a monument 'to the memory of those soldiers enlisted from McLean County who lost their lives in the War of the Rebellion, 1861-65'.

The monument featured a lower base of four octagonal columns, with the fallen soldier's names inscribed and listed by unit and company. Above the columns were figures representing the infantry, cavalry, navy and a Zouave soldier. Above these figures were the words, 'McLean County's Honored Sons, Fallen but not Forgotten'.

Towering over that assemblage was an 18-foot-high tapered shaft, itself topped by a fifth figure, a Colonel looking southward, his right hand holding field glasses and his left resting on the hilt of a sword. The monument was 49 feet, from the ground 'to the top of the Colonel's head.'

The monument was erected in Franklin Square in Bloomington Illinois and dedicated on June 17, 1869. Unfortunately, the inferior quality of the monument's marble and limestone was no match for the Midwestern climate and the steady deterioration led to its razing by order of the McLean County Board of Supervisors during the winter of 1914-15.

The Franklin Square Soldiers Monument Committee is proposing to erect an exact granite and bronze replica of the original monument in the original location to provide a lasting memorial to the citizen-heroes from McLean County Illinois who sacrificed their lives in the Civil War.

The Petition to place the question of the construction of the replica monument before the citizens of McLean County Illinois on the November 2024 General Election Ballot is currently available for signature by interested citizens that are registered voters of McLean County Illinois. If the 'Ballot Question' receives a simple majority of the votes cast, then the McLean County Board would be required by Illinois State Statute to fund construction of the new replica monument within one (1) year.

The cost of this replica of the original monument has been estimated at \$1.75 million. If deemed necessary, the McLean County Board at the same election may cause submission to the voters the proposition of levying an additional tax and issuing bonds to pay for the monument, exactly as they did in 1866 to pay for the Original Monument after it was approved by the voters of McLean County Illinois.

The Franklin Square Soldiers Monument Committee is asking for your support to get this ballot initiative on the 2024 General Election Ballot by signing our Petition. Any registered voter of McLean County Illinois can sign the petition.

Please contact us at [FRANKLIN\\_SQUARE@ICLOUD.COM](mailto:FRANKLIN_SQUARE@ICLOUD.COM) if you wish to sign or volunteer to circulate our Petition. Thank you!



Original Monument in 1900



Proposed Replica Monument 2024