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Rhode Island Day, October 5, 1893 at the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago.

The exercises of Rhode Island Day at the World's Columbian Exposition, October 5; 1893, were under the guidance of the Committee on Ceremonies, appointed by the Board of World's Fair Managers of Rhode Island.

This committee consisted of:

- Hon. John P. Sanbokn, Chairman
- Arthur H. Watson
- Lorillard Spencer
- Lyman B. Goff
- Gardiner C. Sims

The arrangements for the day had been made with care and foresight, and every contingency so clearly anticipated that success but waited to crown the efforts of the committee.

The day broke clear and beautiful. All the elements seemed to conspire in favor of the occasion, awaited with such impatience by every loyal son and daughter of Rhode Island. Not a cloud obscured the heavens. The sun put on his brightest robes. The very breezes from the lake tempered the biting chill of yesterday and brought only draughts of inspiration.

Good nature, enthusiasm, patriotism, ruled the assembled hosts, and everyone seemed satisfied with himself, his neighbors and the world. No such day had smiled upon any State occasion thus far since the Great Fair commenced. Nor had any State Day been honored by such a gathering of the tribes as came up to the great festival. One hundred and seventy-nine thousand, nine hundred and sixty-five was the number of paid admissions to Jackson Park, a number unequalled on any previous State Day.



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Glowing and complimentary editorials in all the leading daily papers of Chicago had heralded the event, and not only the people of that great city, but the thousands from the East and West, from the North and South, were out to greet the smallest gem in the constellation of sister States that make up the Great Republic. All were arrayed in holiday attire, men and women, old and young, all in harmony with the glad occasion, prepared to hail and applaud and honor "Little Rhody," as they delighted to call her.

Early the members of the Governor's personal and general staff, and the ladies and gentlemen of the official party, began to assemble at the Hotel Auditorium, the Governor's headquarters; and at 11:30 A. M. the line of carriages, containing Gov. Brown and party, and the Commissioners for Rhode Island, was drawn up on Michigan avenue in front of the hotel and proceeded immediately over the grand boulevards to the Fair Grounds. At the Fifty- Seventh street entrance to the Park the Newport Artillery



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was found drawn, up in line, awaiting the arrival of the Governor, whom they received with fitting military honors, and then promptly wheeled into platoons, ready to escort the Governor through the Park to the Rhode Island building. It seemed very appropriate and fitting that this ancient and honorable company, now the oldest active military organization in the United States, — a company chartered in 1741 by King George the Second, — a company born of the troublous times inaugurated by the declaration of war between England and Spain in 1739 and continued by the war between England and France in 1744, — a company that has participated in every war and been present at every siege from that of Fort William Henry in 1757 to that of Petersburg in 1865, — a company that furnished its quota of men in the French and Indian War, and more than One Thousand during the Civil War, — a company that served as escort to Governor Arthur Fenner and the General Assembly on Inauguration Day in 1793, and has performed the same service annually even to the present day, — it seemed specially fitting that this venerable company should have the honor of acting as escort to Governor Brown upon a State occasion of such historic importance. The company seemed mindful of its ancient virtue, and every officer and man inspired by the memories of a glorious past. The neat dress uniforms and helmets, the bright scarlet trappings, the soldierly bearing and the marching of the men won the admiration of the crowds that lined the way, and called forth encomiums from the regular army officers present.

Under the inspiring music of the Newport Band the line moved past the State Buildings of South Dakota, Nebraska, Minnesota, Louisiana, Missouri, Pennsylvania, New York and Massachusetts to the Rhode Island State Building. All the State flags were flying and the buildings were decorated in honor of "Little Rhody," and it seemed as though the big States could not show affection enough for their little pet sister. Pennsylvania covered herself all over with gay colors and bunting of red and white and blue, and as if to bestow her highest favor, she tolled the old Liberty Bell as Governor Brown passed her house, while at the same time there came floating on the quiet noon air the sounds of the Peace Bell, located in the Administration Plaza.

When the party arrived at the Rhode Island Building, Hon. John P. Sanborn, Chairman of the Committee on Ceremonies, welcomed Governor Brown and made a formal presentation of the structure to the Governor, who in a brief and fitting speech accepted the building in behalf of the State. Here had already, gathered many hundred guests



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from Rhode Island, ladies and gentlemen, and scores of happy children added their joy to the occasion, and the snug little building, nestling under the right wing of the spacious Hancock House, had on her brightest garments, and festoons of red, white and blue lent gaiety and picturesqueness to the severer lines of her classical architecture. From the staff above the building floated, more proudly than its wont, the emblem of the State, and within was unfurled for the first time at the Fair the old flag carried by Gen. Nathanael Greene's command during the Revolutionary War. The crowd that thronged the building and decked the lawn adorned itself with a badge of light blue distributed by the genial Col. Wyman, to distinguish the true sons and daughters of Rhode Island from the great outside throng which surged past or stopped a moment to gaze and wonder, and to inquire whether perchance anybody had been left to guard the State at home.

While the line was at rest, the Rhode Island Board of World's Fair Managers tendered a complimentary luncheon to Governor Brown and staff and other invited guests. The New York State Commissioners performed a most graceful act of courtesy in tendering for this purpose the use of the spacious banquet hall in the New York building, opposite. Seventy-five covers were laid and the luncheon was an elaborate one, and its enjoyment enhanced by the very gracious speech of welcome from the New York Commissioner, Hon. Louis M. Howland.