

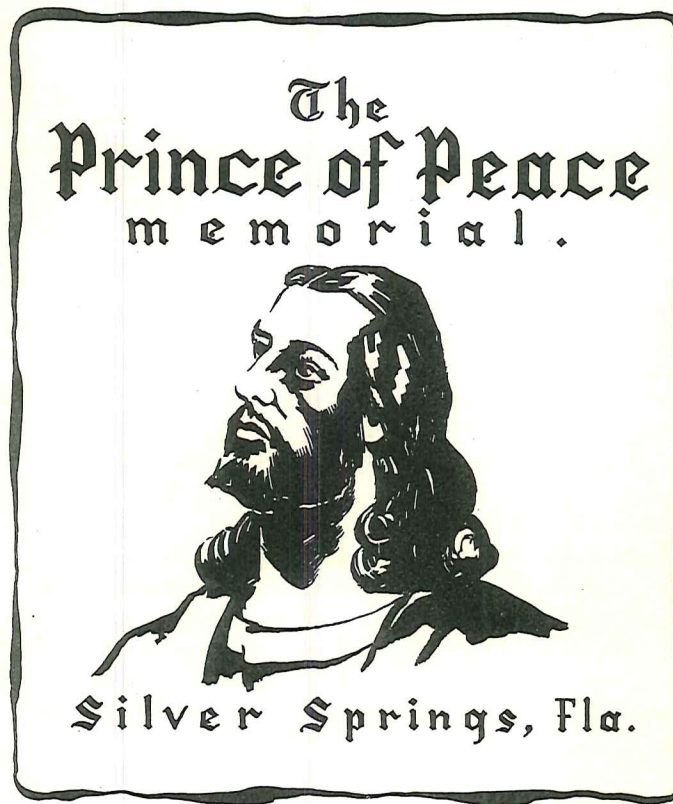
cross is Mary Magdalene, and nearby is the beloved Mother Mary being consoled by Joseph of Arimathea. Contrast the bleakness of this scene with the "Roman holiday" effect in "Bearing the Cross"—over 100 figures are in the latter scene.

There are imperfections in the work, but I hope that you will judge the scenes NOT as examples of craftsmanship, but as a guide to a better understanding of our Saviour. As Abraham Lincoln once said of the Bible—"Take all of this book upon reason that you can, and the balance by faith, and you will live and die a better man."

People often ask, "Do you intend to build more?" I shall carve as many more scenes as my time allows. The "Stoning of the Harlot," "The Sermon on the Mount," "The Wedding at Canaan," are among those planned.

It would be impossible to tell you of the deep spiritual satisfaction I derive as I continue to tell the incomparable story of Jesus Christ.

Paul Cunningham



THE STORY OF A CARVER

"How long did it take you to produce these scenes?" This question is asked many times daily but I am unable to answer it. No record was kept of the time. About the only answer I can give is that the scenes are the result of a spare time project begun over two decades ago. I had no particular plan—the work was started almost by accident—as casually as many a man has strolled into a revival meeting and suddenly found himself with a complete new outlook on life.

I started the first scene where the New Testament began—in a stable in Bethlehem—and as the scene developed my studio became a magnet for people of all ages. As their interest mounted mine did likewise. The work fascinated me so much I often worked sixteen hours a day and long before my first scene, "The Nativity," was finished I had made preliminary sketches for "The Woman at the Well."

Here was a job that I was well qualified to do. It was a complicated task, but my background as a professional artist and sculptor, plus a knack for small modeling, seemed to fit the requirements perfectly. I have met other artists who have all these qualifications and who could no doubt have done a better job of it than I've done, but they lacked one thing—zeal!

A tremendous amount of research has been put into this work to make it as authentic as possible—to give the person viewing it a sense of looking through a clear glass window into the greatest life ever lived, and to inspire the viewers to explore for themselves that book of all books—the Bible.

Many materials were used in the building of these scenes—wood (of several varieties), copper, brass, gold (the coins on Matthew's table are made from melted jewelry). All of the leaves and most of the flowers are of shim brass, and the hair?—buffalo hair.

"Realism" became my watchword, and I searched constantly for materials that would look right. The architecture, costumes, plants, terrain, and the figures received special attention. Every figure had to show his or her attitude toward Christ whether it be love, fear, jealousy, hate, or indifference. Sometimes the expression on the face was enough to tell the story, but more often it was told by the posture of the figure itself. An example of this is the Roman soldier squatting beside the fire as he listens to Peter denying Christ. His sinister appearance makes Peter's position more understandable. "The Last Supper" presents a study in character too, as the disciples react to the electrifying statement of Christ, "One among you shall betray Me."

Golgotha—place of the skull, scene of man's undying shame, is shown here as a barren hillside—at the foot of the