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Presents

Abraham Lincoln's



Gettysburg Address

President Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address

Introduction

Lasting from July 1st to the 3rd, 1863 the Battle of Gettysburg was the bloodiest battle of the Civil War which resulted in 23,000 Union casualties and stopped the final attempt of Confederate forces to invade the North. On November 19th of 1863 a dedication ceremony for the Gettysburg National Cemetery to honor the soldiers killed in the Battle of Gettysburg. President Abraham Lincoln was asked to make a “few appropriate remarks.” President Lincoln wrote the speech in Washington but made revisions before delivering it in Gettysburg and was it revised at least four more times for different publications. In less than 275 words he not only honored the fallen soldiers and their sacrifices, he also defined the necessity of the war for the nation to survive describing it as a momentous occasion in the struggle for self-government, liberty and equality. When President Lincoln gave his address following the main speaker Edward Everett it was largely ignored, but with its eloquent language and its stirring expression of the nation’s ideals it has become one of the most quoted speeches in U.S. history. The following is the speech that President Lincoln spoke as recorded by reporter Charles Hale of the Boston Advertiser.

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation, so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure.

We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live.

It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract.

The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here.

It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us – that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion – that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain – that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom – and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.