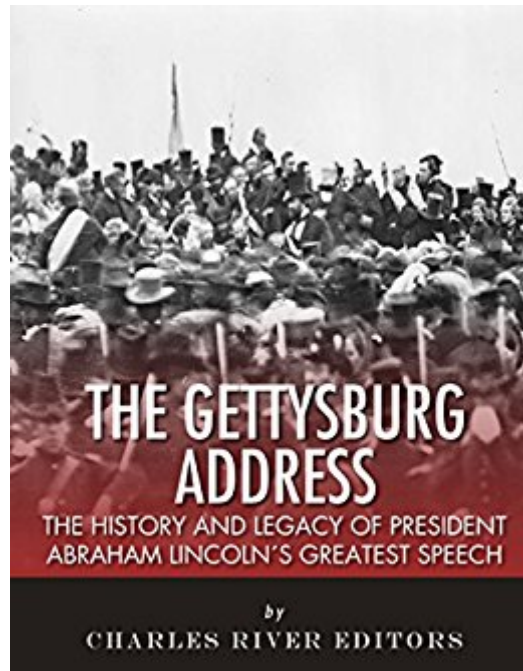


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The Gettysburg Address: The History And Legacy Of President Abraham Lincoln's Greatest Speech



Synopsis

*Includes pictures*Includes accounts of the speech and reactions written by people who were there*Discusses the influences on the speech and debates over the various versions that exist*Includes online resources and a bibliography for further reading*Includes a table of contents

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 battlefield 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.

Abraham Lincoln

Without question, the most famous battle of the American Civil War took place outside of the small town of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, which happened to be a transportation hub, serving as the center of a wheel with several roads leading out to other Pennsylvanian towns. From July 1-3, Robert E. Lee's Confederate Army of Northern Virginia tried everything in its power to decisively defeat George Meade's Union Army of the Potomac, unleashing ferocious assaults that inflicted nearly 50,000 casualties in all. When a crowd came to Gettysburg in November 1863 to commemorate the battle fought there 4 months earlier and dedicate a new national cemetery, they came to hear a series of speeches about the Civil War and the events of that battle. Today it may seem obvious to invite the president to such an occasion, but Lincoln was initially an afterthought, and though he did come to deliver remarks, he was not in fact the keynote speaker. Instead, the man chosen to give the keynote speech was Edward Everett, a politician and educator from Massachusetts. Everett had already been a Congressman, the 15th Governor of Massachusetts, Minister to Great Britain, and Secretary of State, and by the Civil War, he was considered perhaps the greatest orator in the nation, making him a natural choice to be the featured speaker at the dedication ceremony. Everett is still known today for his oratory, but more for the fact that he spoke for over two hours at Gettysburg immediately before President Lincoln delivered his immortal two-minute Gettysburg Address. Everett would later say, "I should be glad if I could flatter myself that I came as near to the central idea of the occasion, in two hours, as you did in two minutes."

At the time, however, Lincoln and many others present at the event thought his speech fell flat and was ultimately a failure that would be consigned to the dustbin of history. Perhaps Lincoln's most impressive feat is that he was able to convey so much with so few words; after Everett spoke for hours at Gettysburg, Lincoln's Gettysburg Address only took a few minutes, but in those few minutes, Lincoln invoked the principles of human equality espoused by the Declaration of Independence. In the process, he redefined the Civil War as a struggle not merely for

the Union but as "a new birth of freedom" that would bring true equality to all of its citizens, ensure that democracy would remain a viable form of government, and would also create a unified nation in which states' rights were no longer dominant. 150 years later, Lincoln's speech is still considered arguably the greatest in American history, yet the exact wording of the speech is disputed. The five known manuscripts of the Gettysburg Address differ in a number of details and also differ from contemporary newspaper reprints of the speech. In fact, at the time, few Americans knew the president had even given a speech at Gettysburg, and the Gettysburg Address was not widely covered in newspapers. The irony is lost on few, given that the Gettysburg Address continues to represent a concise and eloquent statement on the very purpose of the United States.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Length: 63 pages. The other reviewer is right. This is excellent. The war, however, was far from over when this magnificent, brief speech, was delivered by Abraham Lincoln. True, many analysts claim that Gettysburg was the turning point, but that is far from certain and, further still, from being the end of the war. The first 29 pages, give or take, is a discussion of the battle itself, and of the lead up to

and the consequences of a lost gamble and the loss of a cause that was dubious and, possibly, would prove to be a most colossal error by some of the most potent politicians of the young nation. What the speech did, perhaps largely because of its brevity, was enunciate the new mission of a nation composed of United states. As Baarda declares, so do I - you'll find no spoilers here. Read this book, then go on to read more of Lincoln. Had he not been assassinated, the United States might have avoided the ridiculous punishment meted out to the Southern States. You read that right. Those politicians in the South made a colossal blunder in seceding, but the Northern Radicals were far more foolish and caused far greater disaster, long-term, even than did the Southern leaders. This booklet is well-written and well-edited and includes several nice photographs. But, let this book be only your first step on your quest to understand America.

The Gettysburg address was a short speech written by Pres. Abraham Lincoln for the consecration of the Gettysburg Cemetery. I always assumed that the Gettysburg speech was captured in its entirety by either writers who were there or by Abraham Lincoln himself. Found out that was not true. I highly recommend reading this book so that you can understand the history of the speech and Pres. Lincoln's own opinion of his speech.

The Gettysburg Address is Abraham Lincoln's best known speech yet at the time he gave it many people didn't think much of it including President Lincoln. Also the Gettysburg Address went through several revisions before becoming the speech we know today.

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