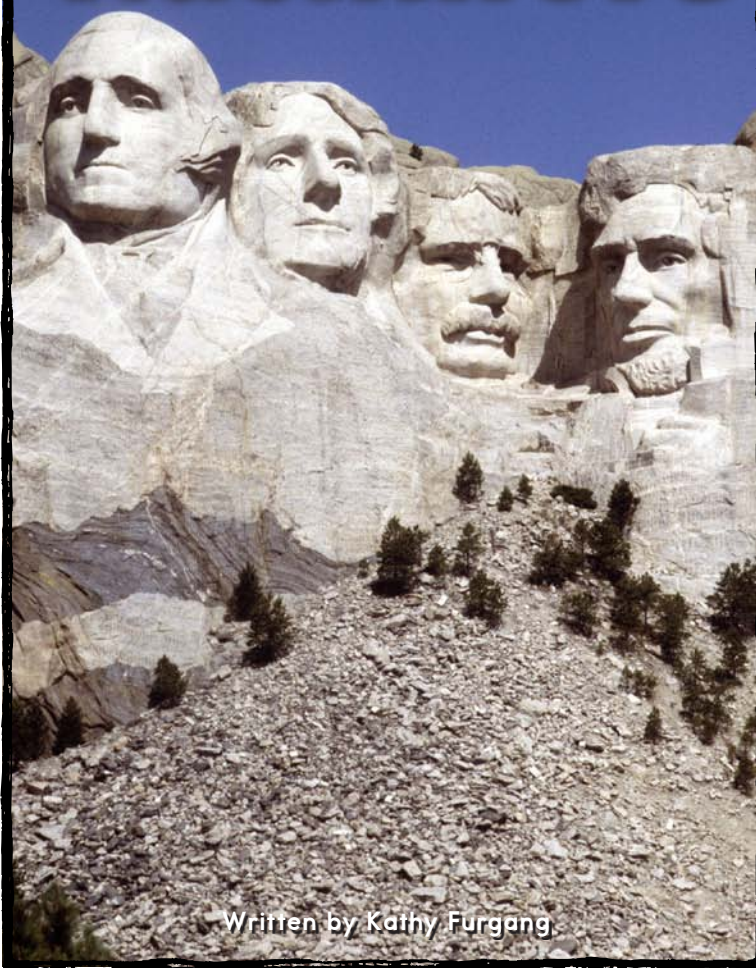


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Mount Rushmore



Written by Kathy Furgang

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Mount Rushmore



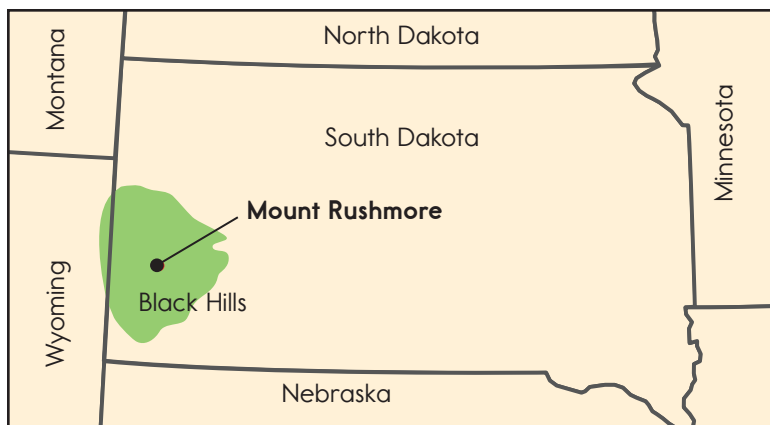
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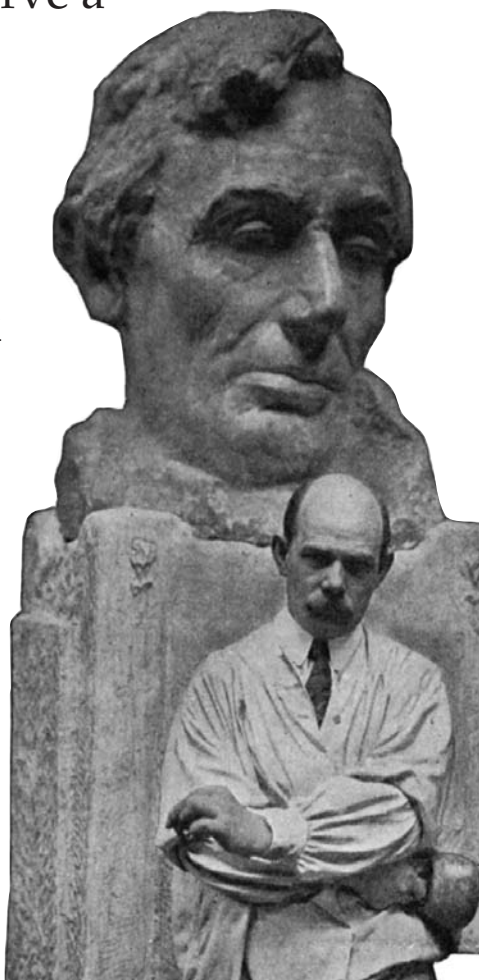
A Big Idea for America

In the early 1900s, the United States of America was growing fast. Many people were settling in the West, but many more had not yet visited the area.

In 1924, a member of the South Dakota Historical Society had an idea. He thought a huge **memorial** carved from rock would bring visitors to the area. And he knew just the **sculptor** for the job.

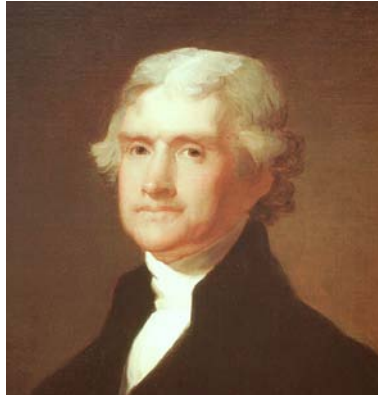
He asked an artist named Gutzon Borglum to help. Borglum suggested a memorial that would show faces of American presidents. After a year of searching for the right place to carve a memorial, he found Mount Rushmore. It was in an area called the **Black Hills**. The area had a special kind of rock called **granite** that was good for carving.

Gutzon Borglum practiced by carving this Abraham Lincoln head before starting on Mount Rushmore.





George Washington

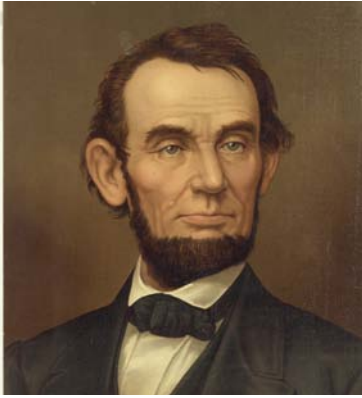


Thomas Jefferson

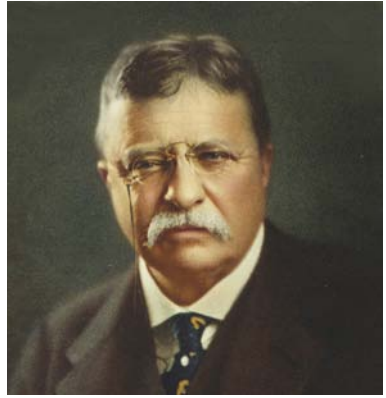
An American Message

Borglum thought about which presidents' faces should be carved into the rock. He wanted to show the strength of America through each person.

First, he chose George Washington because he was the first president. Second, he chose Thomas Jefferson because he purchased land from France that doubled the size of the United States.



Abraham Lincoln



Theodore Roosevelt

Third, he chose Abraham Lincoln because he led the country during the difficult **Civil War**.

Finally, he chose Theodore Roosevelt because he had the United States build an important waterway in Central America. This waterway, the **Panama Canal**, made travel faster between the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. Roosevelt was also a special choice because he had a home in South Dakota.

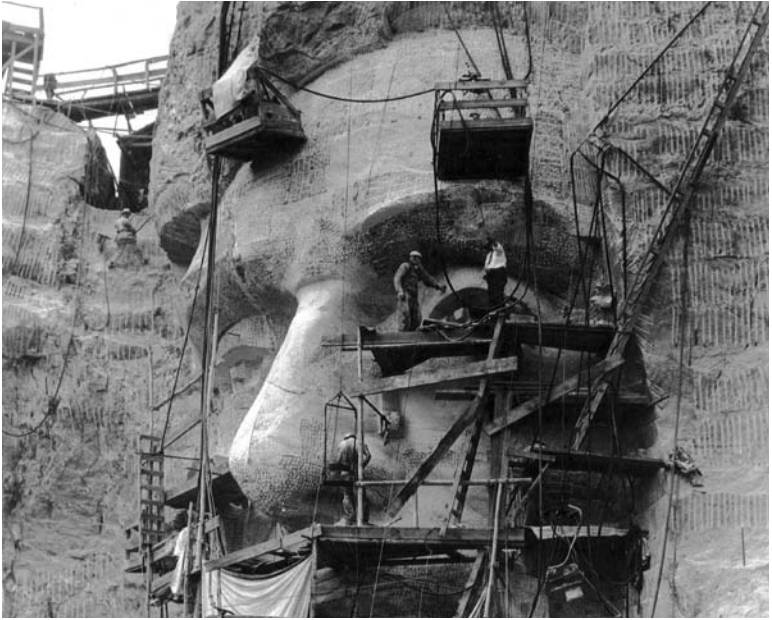
Blasting Through Rock

Carving a work of art into rock is no easy job! First, Borglum made smaller models of each president. Then the models were carried up Mount Rushmore for workers to copy.

Dynamite was used to blast away rock. Finally, workers were lowered down the mountain on cables to drill shapes out of the rocks.



Workers on the Mount Rushmore memorial.



Workers carving Abraham Lincoln's face.

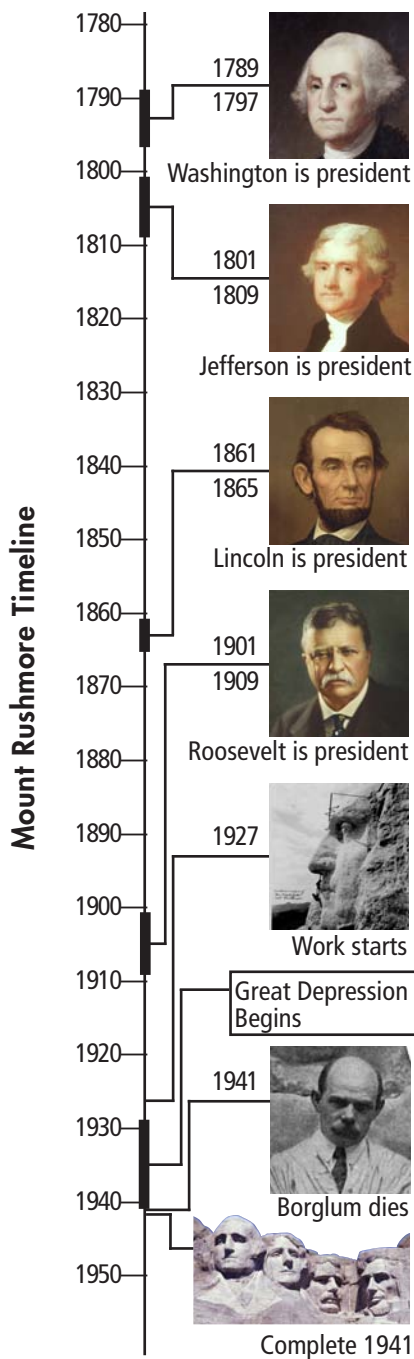
Workers had many problems. One day they blasted an area of rock for Thomas Jefferson's nose. The workers found a split in the rock. So the position of Jefferson's head had to be changed. The crack was patched and now falls across Jefferson's cheek instead of his nose, where it could break.

A Tough Job Pays Off

Other problems had to be overcome when carving Mount Rushmore. The United States had hard times during a period called the **Great Depression**. During this time, there was not much money for the memorial. Work had to stop many times and then restart when more money was raised.



Gutzon Borglum and some of his crew.

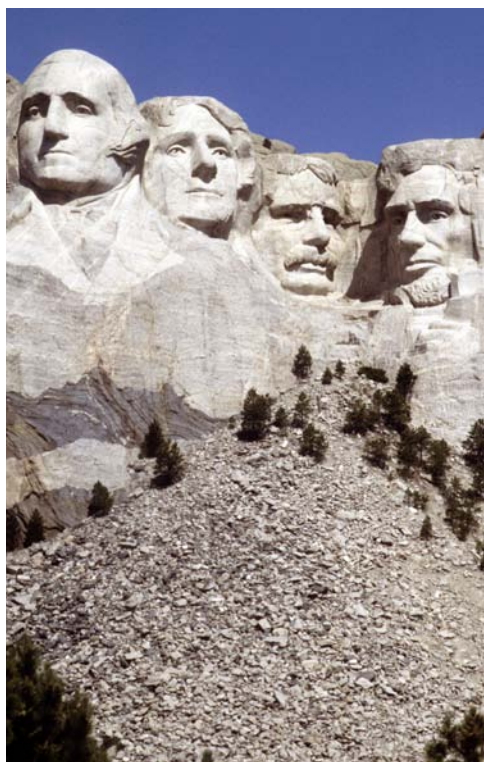


During the Depression when many Americans could not find work, the 400 crew members were happy to have jobs.

The Mount Rushmore memorial took twelve years to complete. Crews spent a few more years on finishing touches. Sadly, Borglum died before the final touches were finished.

Mount Rushmore Today

Mount Rushmore has changed over the years. Roads have been built to lead visitors to the memorial. A special theater was also built at the bottom of the mountain.



The pile of rocks at the bottom of Mount Rushmore was carved from the memorial.

More than two and a half million people visit Mount Rushmore every year. More than two million of them visit during the months of June, July, and August.

Crazy Horse Memorial



A model in front shows what the Crazy Horse memorial will look like when it's finished.

A short distance from the face of Mount Rushmore stands Thunderhead Mountain. In 1940, Chief Henry Standing Bear asked a sculptor to carve a Sioux memorial into the mountain. The sculptor chose to carve the great Sioux leader, Crazy Horse. This memorial represents the importance of Native Americans in U.S. history.

Looking Ahead

Each year the Mount Rushmore Memorial is cleaned and checked for cracks and damage. Rock



Cracks in the rock may fill with water and freeze over the winter. The ice then expands and breaks the rock.

wears away naturally over time, so the memorial must be fixed often. Repair crews use a special material to fill cracks and repair rock. Workers hang from cables the same way the **original** crews did in the 1930s.

Today, technology helps to **preserve** the memorial. Special computers find areas where the memorial needs to be fixed. This care will make sure the memorial is around for future **generations** to see.

Glossary

Black Hills	a mountain range in South Dakota and Wyoming (p. 5)
Civil War	war between the Northern and Southern United States from 1861 to 1865 (p. 7)
generations	the people who are born and live at about the same time (p. 15)
granite	a hard, light-colored rock used for monuments and buildings (p. 5)
Great Depression	an economic crisis that started in 1929 and lasted through the 1930s (p. 10)
memorial	something that represents the memory of people, events, and places (p. 4)

original	the first of its kind (p. 14)
Panama Canal	the shipping canal connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans (p. 7)
preserve	to keep from ruin (p. 15)
sculptor	an artist who shapes wood, clay, stone, metal, or other material (p. 4)

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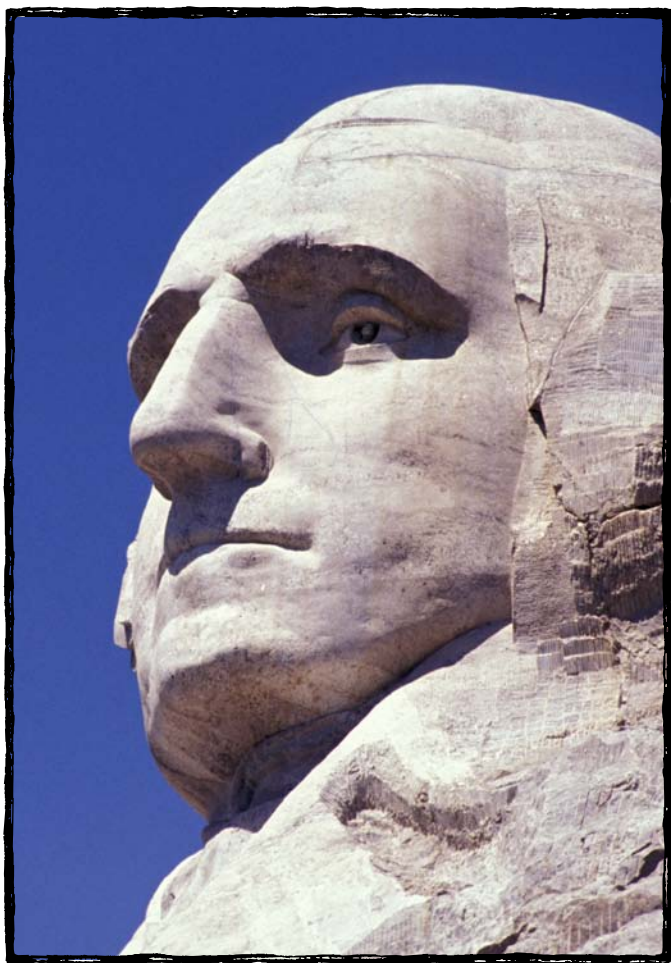
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