

The Gettysburg Address

by Abraham Lincoln

A Scholarly Edition

edited by Tyler Monaghan

Contents

Contents.....	1
Publication Note	2
Introduction	3
Note on the Text	4
The Gettysburg Address	8
Apparatus.....	9
Photographic reproductions.....	13
Bliss copy	13
Nicolay Copy.....	16
Hay draft.....	18
Everett Copy.....	19
Bancroft copy	22
New York Times 11/20/1863	24
References	26

Publication Note

This document was laid out in Microsoft Word 2016 and Microsoft Word 2013. It was printed on a Dell 1130 laser printer. Paragraph text is in 11-point Times New Roman font. Primary headings are in 16-point bold. Secondary headings are italicized. The collation table used to construct the apparatus was created in Microsoft Excel.

All image files are jpeg format files. The “Bliss copy” and *New York Times* images were converted from PDF files using the web application at freepdfconvert.com, see references. The *New York Times* page was cropped and straightened in Photos (Windows application). The images of the Hay draft have been cropped using Microsoft Word in order to remove blank verso pages. The image of the Lincoln Memorial inscription was cropped in Microsoft Word to more clearly focus on the text itself.

Please note that all images and manuscripts derive from trustworthy and authoritative sources (see References) with the exception of the Everett copy. Apparently held by the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, the editor could not obtain digital files directly from this source. The included images are from Wikimedia Commons and appear to match the photographs available online from the *Gettysburg Daily*.

Introduction

In July 1863, the Union army repelled a Confederate invasion of the northern states, leaving “[a]n estimated 51,000 soldiers . . . killed, wounded, captured, or listed as missing after the Battle of Gettysburg.”¹ That November, the battlefield now a cemetery, President Abraham Lincoln traveled by train from Washington to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania to “formally set apart these grounds to their sacred use by a few appropriate remarks.”² Having begun a draft of his remarks in Washington and likely suffering from the symptoms of smallpox, Lincoln continued to work on his written remarks once in Gettysburg.^{3,4}

Spoken before a crowd of around 15,000, Lincoln’s short remarks would eventually become known as the “Gettysburg Address” and would become popularly regarded as one of the finest pieces of oration in America’s history.⁵ Lincoln was not intended to be the “headliner” that day. The day’s program included prayers, music, and only one “oration” – that of Edward Everett, a former politician and renowned orator of the day who delivered over 13,000 words.⁶ Lincoln spoke just over 270.

Lincoln was certainly capable of delivering lengthy addresses. Each of his “state of the union” addresses weighed in between 5,900 and 8,500 words. However, his second inaugural address was only 699 words, showing that Lincoln was also capable of brevity.

This edition compiles six different versions of the Gettysburg Address. A clear reading text is included, based on the Bliss copy of

¹ “Battle of Gettysburg Facts & Summary” at Civil War Trust, <https://www.civilwar.org/learn/civil-war/battles/battle-gettysburg-facts-summary>

² Wills Invitation, Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/gettysburg-address/ext/trans-formal.html>

³ Wills, Garry. *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words That Remade America*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992

⁴ Armond S Goldman and Frank C Schmalstieg Jr, "Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Illness," *Journal of Medical Biography*, 15, no. 2 (2007): 104-111.

⁵ New York Times page 1, November 20 1863. “The Heroes of July.”

⁶ Wills, 34-35.

the text (see textual note for more information). An apparatus records all variants among the different witnesses. Footnotes are included in the apparatus for particularly tricky or interesting variants. Photographic images for each witness are included for the reader's convenience and further study.

Note on the Text

There is no shortage of print or digital materials published about the Gettysburg Address. A primary challenge of this edition was to determine which versions to incorporate and why. This Note on the Texts explains the different versions and the choices that led to their inclusion and the exclusion of other possible versions.

Rationale

This edition attempts to balance two goals for understanding the text of the Gettysburg Address: first, to show how different versions of the address written in Lincoln's hand differ over time. Second, to provide a view, though by no means comprehensive, into how Americans would have received the text contemporaneously with its delivery.

Little attempt is made to ascertain why Lincoln changed his own wording over time; authorial intent is not a key determinant in this edition. Given its delivery as a piece of political rhetoric in a time of war, the Gettysburg Address is herein treated primarily as a social and historical document. Therefore, its change over time is primarily valued here because of the survival of these documents and their continued interest to scholars. If there is a lost manuscript or reading copy, this edition is not interested in it.

Lineation, punctuation, and silent emendations

The Bliss copy serves as the copy-text for the reading text of this edition. Lincoln's long, low dashes (rendered by most sources as em-dashes) are rendered as double underscore characters __ in this volume.

Lincoln often broke words across lines in his manuscripts. In so doing, Lincoln most often used what appear to be two short, stacked horizontal dashes, similar to an equals sign. In this edition, these symbols are ignored and words are silently emended to their whole,

unbroken forms. Words are never broken (hyphenated) across lines in this volume.

Exceptions

Exceptions to any of the guidelines explained in this note should occur with explanatory footnotes in the apparatus.

The copy-text and apparatus

The “Bliss copy” is used as the copy-text because of its popularity and inscription on the Lincoln Memorial.

The Texts

This scholarly edition incorporates six documents. Five are holograph manuscripts. One is a printing of the address in the New York Times the day after Lincoln’s address at Gettysburg.

The “Bliss copy,” signified *BL* in this volume, is used as the copy-text for this edition despite being the last manuscript produced chronologically by Lincoln. He wrote this edition as a correction to the Bancroft edition. It is the only copy to include the opening words, “Address delivered at the dedication of the Cemetery at Gettysburg.” These words are included in this edition, despite obviously not being spoken by Lincoln at Gettysburg and appearing in no other edition. The Bliss copy is also the only one in this edition signed and dated by Lincoln. The White House holds this copy (it is sometimes referred to as the “White House copy”), but loaned it to the Smithsonian Institute who made the images in this volume digitally available.

The “Nicolay copy” takes its name from Lincoln’s personal secretary, John G. Nicolay and is signified *NIC* in this edition.⁷ There is considerable and fascinating debate about whether this might be the reading copy used by Lincoln at Gettysburg, explained clearly by Garry Wills. He concludes that it is possible but “improbable that we have the delivery text.”⁸ This edition is less concerned with that question and more interested in the document itself. The first page is on White House (“Executive Mansion”) stationary in ink, while the second is in pencil on plain paper. An emendation is made at the end of page one, and in fact a hyphenated word stretches across both pages

⁷ “The Gettysburg Address” at Abraham Lincoln Online.
<http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/gettysburg.htm>

⁸ Wills, 192-194.

– despite the different paper and writing implement, these pages are very clearly one cohesive text.

The “**Hay copy**” is signified in this edition by *HAY* and seems to have been copied hastily by Lincoln at an unknown time. Some assert that the corrections mean this is an early edition, but Wills argues convincingly that these corrections are errors of the sort a copyist would make, not an author revising on-the-fly.⁹ It is more likely, therefore, that *HAY* was created by Lincoln after his oral delivery. The Library of Congress holds this manuscript.

The “**Everett Copy**” is signified *EV* and was requested by Edward Everett from Lincoln for publication in a collected volume to be auctioned for charity. Everett’s page numbers are slightly visible in the top corners of these pages, though these page numbers are ignored in this volume. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum holds this manuscript, and a digital edition directly from this source was not found. However, images available freely on Wikimedia Commons match photos of the documents published in *Gettysburg Daily* and are treated here as authoritative. See References.

The “**Bancroft copy**” is signified *BA* and very closely matches the Bliss copy, with only one word and a few commas separating the two. Both *BL* and *BA* were requested from Lincoln in order to be lithographed and sold at the Baltimore Sanitary Fair in 1864. Lincoln created *BA* first, but it was either printed on both sides of the paper or in the wrong size or shape, and Lincoln created 10 to correct this.¹¹

The *New York Times* front-page printing on November 20, 1863 is signified as *NYT*. As New York was America’s largest city in the 1860 census, this is an appropriate text to explore how the Gettysburg Address would have been received by the American public not in attendance at the ceremony. Many stylistic changes are present like capitalization and word combinations. “Unfinished” is rendered as “refinished.” The “we cannot dedicate . . . consecrate . . . hallow”


⁹ Wills, 198-201.

¹¹ Wills, 202-203.

section is broken into two sentences, making it flow differently. And indications of [applause] are scattered throughout, with an indication of “long continued applause” at the conclusion of the address. Note that the lines immediately preceding and following Lincoln’s address are also included in the apparatus and image in this volume as they were part of how the American public – at least the readership of the *Times* – received this text.

Texts Omitted

There were multiple “newspaper copyists” at work while Lincoln gave his address. Their work is not included except as it appeared in print in the *New York Times*. For an editor most concerned about authorial intention, this would be a serious omission; scholars like Garry Wills argue convincingly that critically analyzing and comparing the reporters’ transcripts give the closest reading to what was uttered by Lincoln himself on November 19, 1863.¹² There have also been countless printed editions of the Address, in newspapers, broadsides, illustrated pamphlets and decorations, monuments, etc.

The exclusion of these documents was necessary and appropriate given the scope of this work and the rationale of this edition. The *New York Times* printing serves the role of the text as experienced by Lincoln’s contemporaries. However, with an estimated 7 million visitors in 2014, the Abraham Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC could not be overlooked, as public exposure over the years to the words inscribed on this monument eclipses the number of people who could have possibly read or heard Lincoln’s words in 1863. Though it follows the wording of the Bliss text, the punctuation (dots at the x-height for periods and lightly swung dashes  for hyphens and Lincoln’s low dashes) and presentation (in a narrow column of all capital letters) are aesthetically striking. Though the apparatus of this volume limits itself to documents written or printed on paper, an image of the Memorial inscription is included on page 25.

¹² Wills, 192-193.

The Gettysburg Address

Address delivered at the dedication of the Cemetery at Gettysburg.

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 can not dedicate__ we can not consecrate__ we can not 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.

Abraham Lincoln.

November 19, 1863

Apparatus

The apparatus records all variants (other than lineation and pagination). No distinction is made between accidental and substantive variants. Changes in lineation, however, are not noted. The apparatus records the copy-text version of the text before a closing square bracket, followed by a space then the variant reading, then a space followed by the siglum or sigla for the witnesses in which the variant reading appears.

A vertical pipe | indicates a line break.

A swung dash ~ indicates that the word in the reading text is repeated in the variant. This is usually used to show a change in punctuation.

Ellipses . . . are used to save space by indicating portions of text not reprinted in the apparatus. There are no ellipses in the text, so these never represent readings from any witnesses.

The symbol OMIT is used when the entirety of a given reading does not appear in a witness.

Some witnesses (*NIC*, *HAY*) contain strikethroughs, corrections, and insertions. They are handled by the apparatus as follows:

- For struck through words, when legible, they will appear in curly brackets with the word “strike” followed the struck word(s) in quotation marks. When, as is usually the case, the struck word(s) cannot be read with confidence, the word “strike” simply appears in curly brackets.
- Insertions are enclosed in carat/exponent symbols, ^like so^
- Struck words that are immediately followed by insertions indicate that the insertion was written above the struck word(s) as a replacement.

In all cases, superscript numbers indicate a footnote in this volume and do not occur in any reading of the texts.

BL – Bliss copy
NIC – Nicolay copy
HAY – Hay copy

EV – Everett copy
BA – Bancroft copy
NYT – New York Times

1 Address . . . Gettysburg.] OMIT *HAY, EV, BA* Executive Mansion |
Washington, _____ 186 . *NIC* PRESIDENT LINCOLN’S
ADDRESS. | The President then delivered the following dedica-|tory
speech: *NYT*¹³

2 Four score] Fourscore *NYT*

2 fathers] Fathers *NYT*

2 forth] ~, *BA, HAY NIC*

2 on] upon *NIC EV NYT*

3 continent] Continent *NYT*

3 Liberty] liberty *NIC NYT*

4 all men are created equal.] “all men are created equal” *NIC* all men
are created equal. [Applause.] *NYT*

6 nation] ~, *HAY*

6 conceived] ~, *NIC HAY EV BA*

7 met] met here *HAY*

7 battle-field] battle field *NIC* battle_field *EV*

7 We have come] We {strike} ^have^ {strike} ^come^ *HAY* We are
met *NYT*

8 that field,] it, *NIC* it *HAY NYT*

8 as a] as {strike} a *HAY* as the *NYT*

8 resting place] resting-place *NYT*

8 for] {strike} “of”} *HAY* of *NYT*

8-9 here gave their lives] died here *NIC* here gave their lives, *BA*¹⁴

¹³ Nicolay copy includes header from White House stationary. *NYT* includes a line introducing the President as speaker and is part of a larger front-page narrative of the day’s events. Only the Bliss copy contains the explanatory “Address delivered at the dedication of the Cemetery at Gettysburg.”

¹⁴ It is unclear to the editor whether there is meant to be a comma after “gave their lives” in *BL*, or whether it is just a particularly heavy stroke on the “s” at the end of “lives.” It is here treated as if the comma is not present. If it were, that would of course impact the variants recorded in the apparatus. Likewise, it is not clear whether *HAY* contains this comma; it is treated as if it does not. In the next sentence of *HAY*, “It is . . . do this,” the

9 that that] that the *NIC*
 9-10 It is . . . do this] This we may, in all propriety do *NIC* ¹⁵
 11 But,] ~ *HAY*
 11 dedicate_ we] dedicate. We *NYT*
 11 consecrate__] ~, *NYT*
 12 hallow__ this ground.] hallow, this ground__ *NIC* hallow this
 ground. *HAY NYT*
 13 here,] ~ *NYT*
 13 consecrated] hallowed *NIC*
 13 it,] ~ *HAY BA NYT*
 13 our poor power] our ^poor^ power *HAY*
 14 detract.] detract. [Applause.] *NYT*
 14 note,] ~ *NYT*
 14 remember] ~, *HAY EV NYT*
 15 here, but] here; while *NIC*
 15 it can] can *HAY*
 15 did here.] did here. *NIC* here. [Applause.] *NYT*¹⁶
 15 us] ~, *HAY EV NYT*
 15-16 It is for us the living, rather,] It is rather for us, the living,
 {strike “to stand here”}^we here be dedicated^ *NIC* It is for us the
 living, rather *HAY NYT*
 16 the] this *EV*
 16 unfinished work which] unfinished ^work^ which *HAY* refinished
 work which *NYT*

“s” at the end of “is” appears heavy, matching the “s” in question, but the
 “s” at the end of “this” is quite different, leaving it unclear.

¹⁵ The sentence structure here might suggest a comma after the word
 proprietary. Like the prior note, it is possible there is meant to be a comma
 here, but if so it blends into the “y” in “propriety” too well, and is treated
 here as if it does not exist.

¹⁶ The apparent underlining of “did” is in light, faint hand, but according to
 Wills the pencil used here does not match the pencil used on the second
 page of *NIC*

16 which] that *NYT*

16-17 they who fought here have thus far] they have, thus far, *HAY*
they who fought here, have, thus far, *EV* they have thus so far *NYT*

17 so nobly advanced.] nobly carried on. [Applause.] *NYT*

16-18 dedicated here . . . before us__] dedicated to the great task
remaining before us__ *NIC*

18 before us__] before ^us_^__ *HAY* before us, *NYT*

18 that] ~, *NIC*

19 that] {strike}^that^ *HAY*

19-20 they gave] they here, gave *NIC* they gave {strike “gave”} *HAY*
they here gave *EV BA NYT*

20 dEvotion__] ~; *NYT*

21 that these] these *NIC* that the *NYT*

21 vain__] ~; *NIC HAY NYT*¹⁷

21-22 that this nation, under God, shall] that this nation, shall *NIC*
[applause] that the Nation shall under God *NYT*

22 freedom__] ~, *NIC NYT* ~; *HAY*

22 that government] that this government *HAY* that, government *EV*
that Governments *NYT*

23 people, by] people by *NIC*

23 people, for] people and for *NYT*

23 earth.] earth, [Long continued applause.] *NYT*

24 Abraham Lincoln.] OMIT *NIC HAY EV BA* Three cheers were
then given for the President and the Governors of the States. *NYT*¹⁸

25 November 19, 1863.] OMIT *NIC HAY EV BA NYT*

¹⁷ the light and uneven script here makes it hard to determine whether this is a comma or semicolon in the Nicolay draft; the editor has chosen a semicolon for consistency with the Hay draft but the reader should examine the manuscript image and draw their own conclusion.

¹⁸ Lincoln’s signature and the date November 19, 1863 only appears in one witness, the Bliss copy. Because it immediately follows the closing of the address, the editor has here included the “three cheers” lines. See the rationale section of the Note on the Text for more info.

Photographic reproductions

Bliss copy

Address delivered at the dedication of the
Cemetery at Gettysburg.

Four score and seven years ago our fathers
brought forth on this continent, a new na-
tion, conceived in liberty, and dedicated
to the proposition that all men are cre-
ated 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 alto-
gether fitting and proper that we should
do this.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedi-

BL 1

cate — we can not consecrate — we can not 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,

BL 2

by the people, for the people, shall not per-
ish from the earth.

Abraham Lincoln.

November 19, 1863.

BL 3

Executive Mansion,

Washington, _____, 186 .

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, upon 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 it, as a final resting place for those who died here, that the nation might live. This we may, in all propriety do. But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate—we can not consecrate—we can not hallow, this ground—the brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have hallowed it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here; while it can never forget what they did here.

It is rather for us, the living, to ^{we have but ourselves} stand here,

NIC 1

ted to the great task remaining before us—
that, from these honored dead we take in-
creased devotion to that cause for which
they here, gave the last full measure of dev-
otion— that we here highly resolve these
dead shall not have died in vain; that
the nation, shall have a new birth of free-
dom, and that government of the people by
the people for the people, shall not per-
ish from the earth.

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

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, test-
ing whether that nation, or any nation, so conceived,
and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met
here on a great battle-field of that war. We ^{have} ~~and~~
~~must~~ ^{come} to dedicate a portion of it as ^a ~~the~~ final rest-
ing place ^{for} of 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 can not dedicate—
we can not consecrate—we can not hallow this
ground. The brave men, living and dead, who slug-
gered here, have consecrated it far above ^{most} ~~our~~ power
to add or detract. The world will little note,
nor long remember, what we say here, but
can never forget what they did here. It is
for us, the living, rather to be dedicated
here to the unfinished ^{work} ~~work~~, which they have,
thus far, so nobly carried on. It is rather

for us to be here dedicated to the great
tasks remaining before^{us}— that from these
honored dead we take increased devotion
to ~~the~~^{that} cause for which they here gave ~~gave~~
the last full measure of devotion— that
we here highly resolve that these dead
shall not have died in vain; that this
nation shall have a new birth of freedom;
and that this government of the people, by
the people, for the people, shall not perish
from the earth.

HAY 2

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon 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 can not dedicate—we can not consecrate—we can not 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

EVERETT 1

58
us— that from these honored dead we take increas-
ed devotion to that cause for which they here 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.

Ev 2

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 can not dedicate—we can not consecrate—we can not 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 be-

fore us— that from these honored dead we take in-
creased devotion to that cause for which they here gave
the last full measure of devotion— that we here high-
ly 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.

BA 2

PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S ADDRESS.

The President then delivered the following dedicatory speech :

Fourscore and seven years ago our Fathers brought forth upon this Continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. [Applause.] 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 are met to dedicate a portion of it as the final resting-place of 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 power to add or detract. [Applause.] The world will little note nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. [Applause.] It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work that they have thus so far nobly carried on. [Applause.] 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 here gave the last full measure of devotion ; that we here highly resolve that the dead shall not have died in vain ; [applause] that the Nation shall under God have a new birth of freedom, and that Governments of the people, by the people and for the people, shall not perish from the earth, [Long continued applause.]

Three cheers were then given for the President and the Governors of the States.

NYT

FOUR SCORE AND SEVEN YEARS
AGO OUR FATHERS BROUGHT FORTH
ON THIS CONTINENT A NEW NATION
CONCEIVED IN LIBERTY AND DEDICA-
TED 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 CON-
CEIVED 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 · IT IS ALTOGETHER FIT-
TING AND PROPER THAT WE SHOULD
DO THIS · BUT IN A LARGER SENSE
WE CAN NOT DEDICATE-WE CAN NOT
CONSECRATE-WE CAN NOT HALLOW-
THIS GROUND · THE BRAVE MEN LIV-
ING 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 LIV'NG
RATHER TO BE DEDICATED HERF 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 ·

Abraham Lincoln Memorial Inscription

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