

The Evolution of the Gettysburg Address

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.

5
versions

1 Nicolay Copy

This version was begun in Washington on White House stationary. The second page is written on different paper, indicating it was finished in Gettysburg before the dedication.

2 Hay Copy

Believed to be the second draft of the speech, this version includes Lincoln's handwritten changes.

3 Everett Copy

In 1864, Edward Everett, the chief speaker at the Gettysburg dedication, asked Lincoln for a copy of the speech, making it the third manuscript.

4 Bancroft Copy

Historian George Bancroft asked President Lincoln for a copy to use as a fundraiser for soldiers. When Lincoln sent his copy, he used both sides of the paper, rendering the manuscript useless for Lithographic engraving. So Bancroft kept this copy and Lincoln had to produce an additional one. . .



5 Bliss Copy

This version has been reproduced most often, notably on the walls of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. It is the last known copy written by Lincoln and the only one signed and dated by him.