

The Gettysburg Address

November 19, 1863 – John Nicolay¹ version

(differences between the two versions are indicated in boldface type)

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, we here be** 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 these dead shall not have died in vain; that **the** nation, 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.

The Gettysburg Address

November 19, 1863 – John Hay² version

(differences between the two versions are indicated in boldface type)

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 **here** on a great **battlefield** of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of it 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** can never forget what they **did** here. **It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they have, thus far, so nobly carried on.** 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** 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.

¹ Private Secretary to Lincoln, received what has come be known as the "first draft" of the address.

² Private Secretary to Lincoln, received "second draft" written by Lincoln after returning to Washington from Gettysburg.