

LINCOLN@ GETTYSBURG

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In 1863, Abraham Lincoln proved himself a master of a new frontier—not on the battlefields of the Civil War, but in his “high-tech” command center, the War Department Telegraph Office. The telegraph was the “Internet” of the nineteenth century, and it gave Lincoln new powers to reshape leadership and wield personal control across distant battlefields. The results of Lincoln’s pioneering experiment in electronic leadership led to the rebirth of America on the fields of Gettysburg—both in the battle that turned the tide of the Civil War, and in the few words that recast the American ideal as a national creed, the Gettysburg Address. *Lincoln@Gettysburg* unfolds the greatest turning point in American history, the rebirth of a nation, and the dawn of the information age.

Lincoln’s interest in new technologies gave him powers of command, communications, and control never before exercised by a commander in chief. He used the telegraph to connect the country to him—receiving nearly live dispatches from his generals in the field and sending out his plans for the nation faster and with more clarity than ever before.

Thanks to this technology, Lincoln was the first president to truly be connected with the country. Nowhere was that more evident than at Gettysburg where he had his finger on the pulse of the nation—reading the communications of victory and defeat, of horror and hope, and of a yearning to end the conflict that came from his troops, the press, and his generals in the field.

In the 272 words of the Gettysburg Address, Lincoln reaffirmed the meaning and purpose of American democracy, making his case that preserving the Union was the only ends that could justify the horrors of war and the slaughter of 10,000 men in the fields and forests surrounding Gettysburg. Lincoln’s speech was the opening salvo in a new battle for the fate of the nation.

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CREDITS

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