

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Lincoln: The Person

Abraham Lincoln was born February 12, 1809, in a log cabin near Hodgenville, Kentucky, and became the 16th President of the United States, leading his country through its greatest trial, the Civil War.

Throughout his political career Lincoln strove to maintain the ideals of the Nation's founders. He saw slavery as hypocritical for a Nation founded on the principle that "all men are created equal." In an 1854 speech he said: "I hate it [slavery] because it deprives our republican example of its just influence in the world - enables the enemies of free institutions, with plausibility, to taunt us as hypocrites."

As President he used the power of the office to preserve the Union. In freeing the slaves, Lincoln left a legacy to freedom that is one of the most enduring birthrights Americans possess.



Lincoln: The President

By condemning slavery's expansion and maintaining that he would not interfere with it where it already existed, Lincoln won the presidential nomination of the Republican Party in 1860.

Upon his electoral victory, seven states of the lower South seceded (left the country and formed a new one) and formed the **Confederate States of America - Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Texas**. Representatives from these seven states met in Montgomery, Alabama, to form a new republic.

At his inauguration in March, 1861, Lincoln implored the South to show restraint and tried to dispel its mistrust, but he also pledged to do whatever was necessary to preserve the Union. The South responded by firing on Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, April 12, 1861. Lincoln, in turn, issued the call for troops to put down the rebellion, and four more states in the Upper South - **Virginia, Arkansas, North Carolina, and Tennessee** - seceded.

The result was four years of bloody conflict. In January 1863 Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation to free slaves within the states in rebellion, thus raising the war to a higher moral plane.

In January 1865 he secured Congressional approval of the 13th Amendment that abolished slavery in the United States. In his second Inaugural Address, March 4, 1865, Lincoln offered peace and reconciliation to the South.

He was shot by an assassin on April 14, 1865, and died the next day, six days after the surrender of Gen. Robert E. Lee and his troops at Appomattox Court House, Virginia.

The end of the Civil War brought about the emancipation of the slaves and saw the preservation of the Union – all 36 states of the United States of America were united as one. The end of the war did not bring about the end of the bitterness between the North and the South, however. In some places, especially in the Deep South of the United States, this bitterness continues to fester.

