



“The Gettysburg Lincoln” sculpture by Daniel Chester French, 1912. Photo by David Dale.

CIVIC IMPACT



Abraham Lincoln (1809 - 1965)

Abraham Lincoln is best known for his policies on abolishing slavery and his belief in self-government. He took his job as president very seriously. The night he knew he’d won the election he later said, “I went home, but not to get much sleep, for I then felt as I never had before, the responsibility that was upon me.”

Abraham Lincoln was born in Kentucky and had a frontier childhood that involved much hard work and little schooling. As a young adult, he moved to Illinois, where he owned a general store and served as postmaster. He eventually studied law and became a successful attorney.

He was elected to the state legislature and the U.S. House of Representatives. In 1860, Lincoln became the Republican candidate for President.

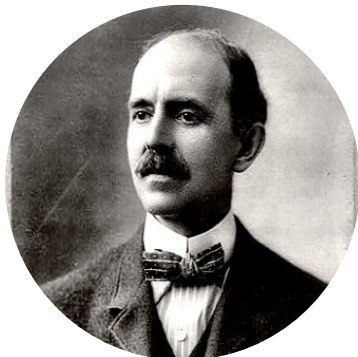
After Lincoln won the election, Southern states began to secede, fearing that he would abolish slavery. Lincoln had to confront two of the most difficult tasks ever faced by a U.S. President—attempting to hold the nation together in the face of secession and then leading it through four years of civil war. He was assassinated in 1865, just days after General Robert E. Lee surrendered on behalf of the Confederacy.

The artist...

Daniel Chester French created monumental memorial sculpture most often inspired by American culture and history. He studied at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and later in Italy and Paris. French created statues and structures to honor and preserve the memory of people and events important to America’s history.

French’s best-known works are his two statues of Abraham Lincoln. The first, a standing sculpture of Lincoln located in Lincoln, Nebraska. “In 1909 eminent American sculptor Daniel Chester French [and architect Henry Bacon] were commissioned by the citizens of Lincoln to create a statue of Abraham Lincoln for placement on the west side of the capitol square. Dedicated in 1912, this monument has become an important part of the city’s landscape.”

The second, French’s most famous sculpture, shows Lincoln seated and is located in the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., USA.



Daniel Chester French
(1850 - 1931)

Ripley (1990:100)

Other Lincoln References in the Capitol



January 1, 1863. Signing of the Emancipation Proclamation.
The five page original document is kept in the National Archives in Washington, D.C.

Lincoln considered the Emancipation Proclamation the crowning achievement of his presidency.

Heralded as the savior of the Union, President Lincoln said, “If my name ever goes into history it will be for this act, and my whole soul is in it.”

“I never, in my life, felt more certain that I was doing right, than I do in signing this paper...”

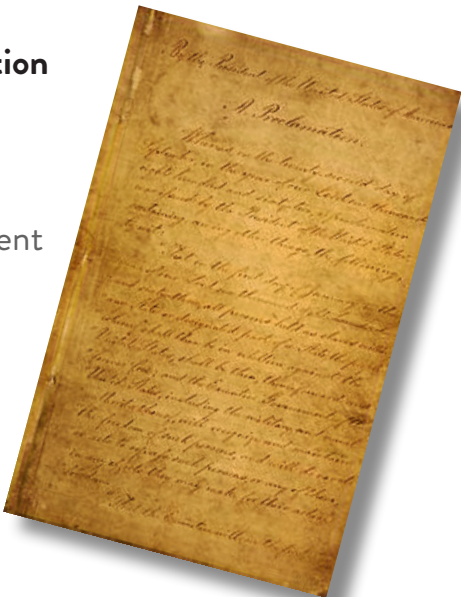
With the Emancipation Proclamation, the aim of the war changed to include the freeing of slaves in addition to preserving the Union. Although the Proclamation initially freed only the slaves in the rebellious states, by the end of the war the Proclamation had influenced and prepared citizens to advocate and accept abolition for all slaves in both the North and South. The 13th Amendment, which abolished slavery in the United States, was passed on December 6th, 1865.

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www.civilwar.org/education/history/emancipation

Honoring our Heroes

The Emancipation Proclamation.

The five page original document is kept in the National Archives in Washington, D.C.



Kansas-Nebraska Act, Stone Relief

Prior to becoming President, Lincoln made speeches that opposed the Kansas-Nebraska Act, because he believed it would result in the spread of slavery. These speeches brought him national attention, and he played an important role in forming the Republican Party. In 1860, he became its candidate for President.

Negro Pioneer: Harry H. Bradley (1875 - 1939) Excellent Citizen of Our State

The following is an excerpt from a manuscript found in the Library of Congress.

American Life Histories: Manuscripts from The Federal Writers’ Project, 1936 TO 1940. Manuscript Division
Library of Congress, Manuscripts/Mixed Material, Nebraska Harry Bradley, [Negro Pioneer] <https://www.loc.gov/item/wpalh000811/>



The oldest employee in any governmental department at the Nebraska State Capitol

at Lincoln, is Harry H. Bradley, colored custodian of the State Senate Chamber, now the Unicameral body. For thirty-eight years

he has assisted in the sessions of legislature, never missing a session.

Harry has had the distinction of putting out two fires in the old Capitol building, and also extinguishing the first blaze which occurred in the new one. One of his jobs in the former building was to remove tubs around from place to place to catch water

that came through a leaky roof, and keep it from spoiling books in the library. Harry has earned the respect and stands high in the estimation of all who know him. He is [sic] excellent citizen of his state, and credit to his race. He has made himself so useful that many solons have come to regard him as an indispensable [sic] adjunct of the business of law making.