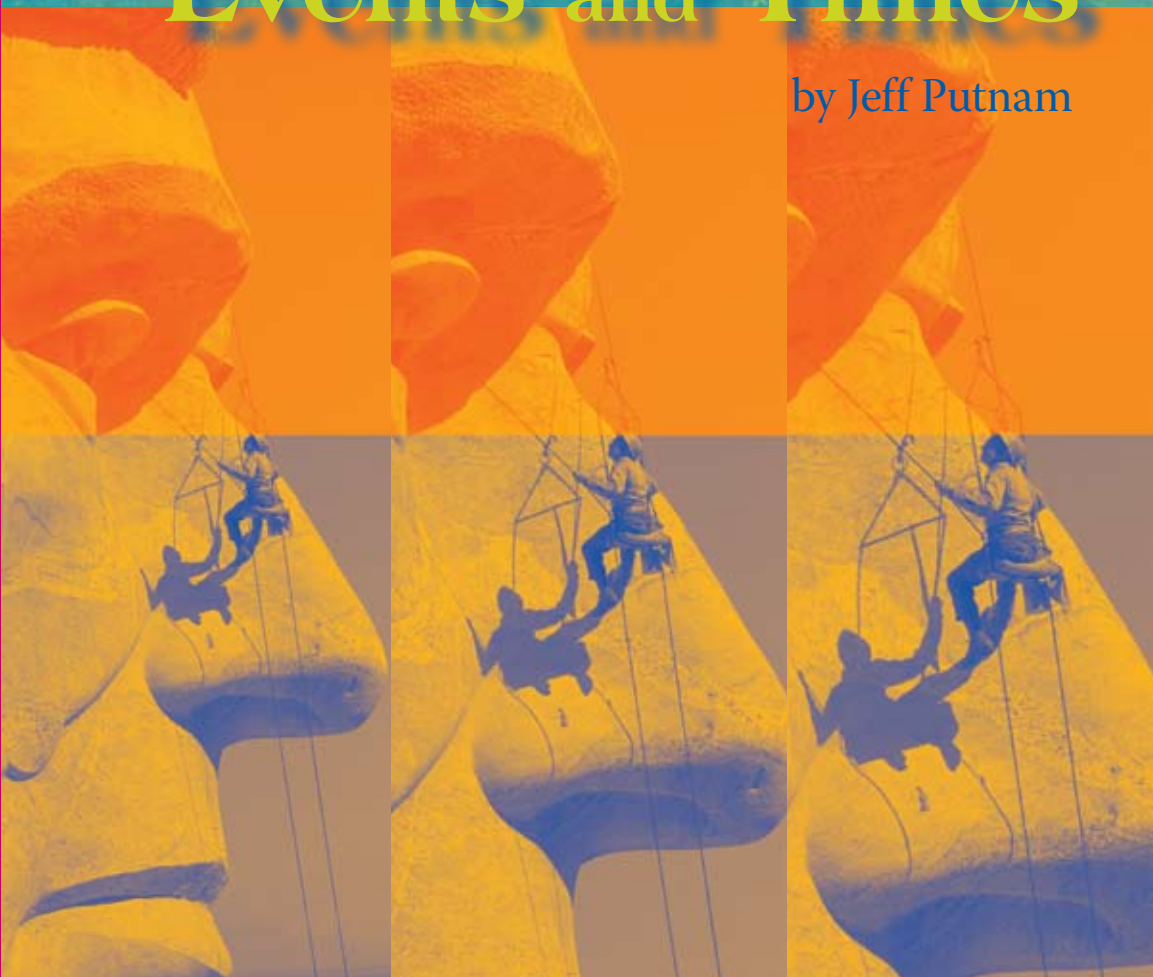


National Monuments

Events and Times

by Jeff Putnam



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What do you think of when you hear the words *national monument*? Some people think of the Statue of Liberty. Others think of the Lincoln Memorial. Still others think of the battlefield at Gettysburg. National monuments are important landmarks, structures, and historic sites. The government has set them aside for people to study and enjoy.

There are more than seventy national monuments in the United States. They fall into three main categories: monuments to important people, monuments to wonders of nature, and monuments to important events and times. This book deals with monuments to important events and times.

Events and Times to Remember

Many of our monuments honor important events in our nation's history. Did you know that you can walk on the beach where the first airplane flew? Or sit in the room where the women's rights movement actually began?

You can explore the places where important battles were fought. You can see where scientific discoveries were made. Or you can be in the spot where historic documents were signed. Imagine what it would be like to stand where the Civil War began or where our freedom from Great Britain was finally won.

Would you like to see the place where our national anthem was inspired? You can also explore where the Declaration of Independence was signed. You can see where railroads and canals first began to reach across the country. You can stand where the first explorers of America stood.



Chapter 1

The Great Stone Faces

Can you name the four famous faces on Mount Rushmore? They are Presidents George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Abraham Lincoln. Mount Rushmore National Monument honors these great presidents and the important events in our history that they influenced.

Can you name the person responsible for creating Mount Rushmore? Probably not. It belongs to an almost unknown man. He worked for 14 years to make his dream a reality. This monument also honors him. His name was Gutzon Borglum. Long before he began Mount Rushmore, Borglum had admired ancient stone carvings in Egypt and the Middle East.

After working on other large sculptures, he turned his attention to a certain mountain in the Black Hills of South Dakota. Why did he select this site, so far away from everything? He had good reasons: The southeast side of Mount Rushmore is smooth, light-colored **granite**. It also receives sunlight all year long.

At first, Borglum thought the mountainside would have room for only three presidents. George Washington would represent independence and liberty. Thomas Jefferson would stand for freedom and democracy. Abraham Lincoln would represent the permanence of our country.

However, Borglum soon found that the mountainside had room for another face. Whom should he choose? After much thought, he selected Theodore Roosevelt. This president was chosen for his important role in world affairs.

Which president would you have chosen to be the fourth face? Why?



Mount Rushmore National Monument, South Dakota

Borglum assembled his team of stone carvers, miners, loggers, and others. Work started in 1927. The first step was making models of the heads. At the foot of Mount Rushmore, Borglum made a smaller, rougher **version** of each head. The models were one-twelfth the size of the finished carvings. Borglum used a measuring system called pointing. It helped him make sure the large carvings on the mountain matched the smaller models. This system involved locating points on the nose, mouth, and eyes of the models. These points were then matched on the larger faces.

However, in 1928, work stopped. The money that people had **contributed** had been spent. Fortunately, the next year Congress voted to give \$250,000 to Borglum's project. The

However, colonial soldiers stopped the troops coming from the east. When Burgoyne attacked the Continental army, he met fierce **resistance**. The colonists gradually forced the British to retreat to the town of Saratoga, New York. There, the British were surrounded. Finally, on October 17, Burgoyne surrendered.

The ragtag colonists had defeated the mighty British army! They must have been joyous, don't you think? This victory helped determine the outcome of the war, partly because it impressed the French. They decided to help the colonists in their fight for independence.



Cannon at Saratoga National Historical Park, New York

Today, you can visit the battlefields around Saratoga in upstate New York. They have been preserved as the Saratoga National Historical Park. They help us remember this **crucial** event in our nation's history.

Birth of a Nation

The dream of the soldiers at Lexington, Concord, Valley Forge, and Saratoga came true almost four years later. It happened at a place not far from George Washington's birthplace in eastern Virginia.

With the help of French allies, Washington's Continental army had trapped a large British force. They were pinned down on a narrow piece of land near Yorktown, Virginia. Washington's cannons blasted the British positions for nine days. The French fleet made it impossible for the British to escape by sea. On October 17, 1781, British Commander Lord Cornwallis asked to surrender.

The British still controlled several major cities. Nevertheless, the war was over. The British people no longer had the heart to support the war. In 1783, a peace **treaty** was signed, and the United States was born.

The Yorktown battlefield is part of the Colonial National Historical Park. One section of this park tells the story of Yorktown and the winning of American independence. The other section focuses on Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in North America.

Visitors to the park can see where the English dream of a new colony was born. They can also see where it died.



Chapter 4

Tested by War

America's national monuments tell of more than 200 years of war and peace, good times and hard times. Many people and events have created this long, proud history.

No event had a greater effect on our nation than the Civil War. Northerners battled Southerners. Brother fought brother. Can you imagine how families were torn apart? The issues were slavery and the preservation of the Union. More than 620,000 Americans from both sides died. Another 280,000 Union soldiers and 194,000 Confederate soldiers were wounded. Civilians also suffered, and the destruction of property was immense.

The Civil War will probably remain the most powerful event in our history. Today at our national monuments, you can see where the war began. You can also see where it was fought and where it finally ended.

It Begins

The place where the first shots of this terrible war were fired is now calm and peaceful. However, in the spring of 1861, tensions between the Northern and Southern states were growing. Southerners feared the new president, Abraham Lincoln. They were afraid he would try to put an end to slavery. The Southern way of life depended on slavery continuing. South Carolina became the first state to **secede** from the United States. It was soon joined by ten other Southern states. Together, they formed the Confederate States of America.

In April, all Southern eyes turned toward a small island in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina. On the island



Ruins at Fort Sumter National Monument, South Carolina

was Fort Sumter. This federal fort was defended by 85 soldiers under the command of Major Robert Anderson. Jefferson Davis, the new president of the Confederacy, demanded that federal troops leave Fort Sumter. When President Lincoln refused to move them, the Confederate soldiers opened fire.

The battle began at 4:30 on the morning of April 12, 1861. Confederate cannonballs and mortar shells rained down on Fort Sumter. The bombardment was intense, but Major Anderson refused to surrender the fort. The Confederates continued their attack on April 13. Suddenly, red-hot cannonballs crashed into the officers' **barracks** in the fort, setting it ablaze.

them that it was beyond his—or anyone’s—power to honor the ground in which the soldiers were to be buried. The soldiers had already honored it by their deaths. Lincoln called their deaths “the last full measure of devotion.”

Lincoln ended by challenging his listeners “to resolve [decide] that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, 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.” You may have heard those words before. Now you know when, where, and why they were first spoken.



The State Box at Ford's Theatre National Historic Site in Washington, D.C., where President Abraham Lincoln was assassinated

“The War Is Over”

You might also want to visit one other Civil War site. At Appomattox Court House National Historical Park in Virginia, you can stand in Wilmer McLean’s home. Why is this house important? Here, on April 9, 1865, the long conflict ended. Two great generals finally met face to face.

General Lee surrendered his ragged army to General Grant. Grant told his men, “The war is over—the Rebels are our countrymen again.”

The war that began four years earlier in the choking smoke and flames at Fort Sumter had ended. The healing of the country’s wounds was about to begin. Sadly, the man who preserved the Union in its darkest hour never shared in the healing. Abraham Lincoln was shot at Ford’s Theatre five days after the surrender at Appomattox. You can see where the president was shot and where he died if you visit Ford’s Theatre National Historic Site in Washington, D.C.

Chapter 6

Wars in Recent Times



Immigrant inspection in the Great Hall on Ellis Island, New York

More than 12 million immigrants passed through its gates from 1892 to 1954.

Do you have an ancestor who passed through Ellis Island? If you don't know, ask your relatives. You might hear some interesting stories.

At its peak, Ellis Island included 35 buildings, including the Great Hall. In this massive room, as many as 5,000 people a day were processed. Ellis Island is now a fascinating museum. There you can see an award-winning film, *Island of Hope, Island of Tears*. The title describes Ellis Island perfectly.

The opening shots of still another war are honored at one of America's most unusual historic sites. How is it different from most monuments? This one lies under the waters of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The USS *Arizona* National Memorial honors more than 2,000 sailors and others who lost their lives. They died in America's first battle during World War II. They were killed in a surprise Japanese attack on the U.S. naval base near Honolulu.

“This Is No Drill!”

On the morning of December 7, 1941, U.S. radar operators picked up a large number of incoming planes on their screens. However, they mistook them for American fighters. Less than an hour later, 360 Japanese fighters, bombers, and torpedo planes reached the naval base. Below them sat 96 battleships, destroyers, and other anchored ships of the U.S. Pacific Fleet.

The Japanese planes flew through the morning mist. Then they began to drop their bombs with deadly effect. Within three minutes, this announcement blared through the base's loudspeaker system: “Air raid, Pearl Harbor—This is no drill!” What terror—and anger—the people there must have felt!

The attack took a dreadful toll. It killed 2,403 Americans and wounded 1,178. Of the 96 ships in port, 18 were sunk or heavily damaged. Fortunately, three of the Pacific Fleet's aircraft carriers were at sea on December 7 and avoided destruction. The attack also destroyed over 200 airplanes.



The USS *Arizona* National Memorial in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii

On the day following the attack, President Franklin Roosevelt asked Congress to declare war against Japan. The surprise raid had forced the United States to enter World War II. The war ended almost four years later. By then, over a million Americans had been killed or wounded. Millions more around the world also lost their lives.

Of the battleships damaged in the attack at Pearl Harbor, all but two were repaired. They later saw action in the war. One that was not repaired was the USS *Arizona*. This battleship has not moved since December 7, 1941. It sits today just below the ocean's surface. Buried inside the ship are the bodies of 1,177 crewmen. They died when the boat caught fire and sank.

Built over the sunken hull of the *Arizona* is a special building. It contains exhibits relating to the attack. One

section of the building is called the Shrine Room. On the walls are the names of all the men who went to the bottom with the *Arizona*.

Remembering an Injustice

You can understand why Americans were enraged by the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. In a short time, the nation was united in the effort to defeat our enemies, Japan and Nazi Germany. However, another historic site demonstrates a dark side of American participation in World War II. It is the Manzanar National Historic Site in eastern California.

On February 19, 1942, President Franklin Roosevelt signed an order that would drastically change the lives of more than 110,000 people. The order affected Japanese Americans, both citizens and legal aliens. It required them to leave their homes and move to "relocation" camps. Why? The United States was at war with Japan. Many Americans feared that people of Japanese ancestry might be a threat to the United States.

Other Americans, however, disagreed strongly with the relocations. They believed that the rights of Japanese Americans were being violated. They pointed out that Americans of German ancestry were not taken from their homes and placed in prison camps.

The region around Manzanar is extremely dry, hot, and dusty in the summer and bitterly cold in the winter. Winds howl off the Sierra Nevada Mountains to the west. The prisoners had to endure a climate very different from the gentler one they were used to.

Chapter 7

Struggling for Justice

In the previous chapters, you have read about historic places relating to our country's wars. Some national monuments honor the struggle for justice. Both kinds of sites preserve our American heritage and teach important lessons. By learning from these sites, we can become better Americans.

Imagining a Different World

In 1848, an American woman's world was a very different place. Women could not vote. Unmarried women could not attend college, hold office, or even speak out in public on important issues. They could work only as teachers, nurses, maids, waitresses, factory workers, or seamstresses.

At that time, women surrendered most of the rights they had when they got married. They could not own property, sign contracts, or file lawsuits. They could not win **custody** of their own children. They could not divorce a violent, abusive husband.

On July 19, 1848, about 300 women and men gathered in the village of Seneca Falls. This is in the Finger Lakes region of western New York. They met to discuss women's rights. Their leaders included Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott.

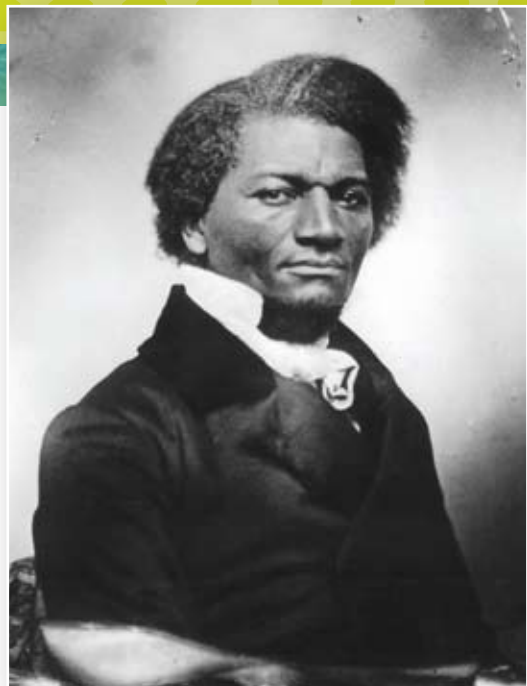
The people at this meeting had read Thomas Jefferson's Declaration of Independence. Why, they asked, were women not allowed the "pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness," just like men? Most of these people also condemned the enslavement of African Americans in the Southern states. They believed that the legal and economic slavery of women was just as evil.



American suffragists, New York City

During the meeting, the discussions and debates led to the writing of a Declaration of Sentiments. Echoing the Declaration of Independence, it said, "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal."

The meeting was the Women's Rights Convention. The group unanimously passed eleven resolutions. The twelfth one was the most controversial. It said that women should be allowed to vote. Many people at the convention, along with many throughout the United States, felt this was going too far. They didn't think that women should have the right to vote! The resolution calling for voting rights for women barely passed, thanks to the strong support of Elizabeth Cady Stanton.



Frederick Douglass

Meeting With President Lincoln

America's first great African American leader is honored at a national historic site. In Washington, D.C., stands Cedar Hill, a stately white house with a wide front porch. The man who lived in the house wrote, "Do not judge me by the heights to which I

have risen, but by the depths from which I have come."

He had been born a slave in Maryland in 1818. He gained his freedom in 1838 when he escaped to the North. His intelligence and passionate opposition to slavery quickly made him a leading **abolitionist**. The man was such a gifted speaker that many people doubted he had ever been a slave. Do you know who this man was?

The man published his autobiography in 1845. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* became a bestseller. Frederick Douglass met with President Lincoln often during the Civil War. He helped convince the president that African Americans should be allowed to fight in the Union army.

From 1877 until his death in 1895, Cedar Hill was

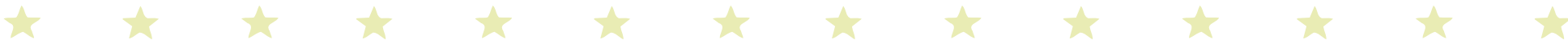
Douglass's home. It was also a center for the causes he strongly supported. You can visit Cedar Hill today and learn about the amazing life and career of Douglass.

Up From Slavery

Another African American leader is honored at the Booker T. Washington National Monument in Virginia and the Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site in Alabama. Like Douglass, Washington was born a slave but became an outstanding African American leader during the last half of the 1800s. Tuskegee Institute is the school that he founded in Alabama.



Booker T. Washington talks to a crowd at the dedication of a cotton-seed mill in Mississippi.



The Klondike gold rush started a **stampede**. Many hopeful **prospectors** began their journeys in Seattle. From there, they took a boat to Skagway, on Alaska's coast just north of Juneau. The boat trip was the easy part. From Skagway, they had to hike over mountains. Often they were lugging hundreds of pounds of equipment. The sudden arrival of 30,000 rough-and-ready gold hunters turned sleepy Alaskan towns into **rowdy** zoos!

As it turned out, few of these prospectors hit pay dirt. Some died on the dangerous overland trail to the Klondike gold fields. They became victims of the **treacherous** weather,

steep slopes, or hungry bears and wolves. Most turned around and went home. They ended up rich in experience but not in gold. The Klondike territory turned out to



Miners and packers bound for the Klondike gold fields, hiking through Chilcoot Pass, Alaska, c. 1898.



Skagway today, Klondike Gold Rush National Historic Park

contain many other valuable minerals but not much gold. The territory has become an important source of silver, lead, zinc, copper, coal, and iron. It also has some petroleum and natural gas.

Would you like to relive those exciting days? You can—by visiting the Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park in Alaska. Part of the park is in the Pioneer Square Historic District in Seattle. Here, many people first heard about the yellow pebbles in the faraway Klondike. Other parts of the park are in Skagway and along the trail over the rugged mountains. Among the buildings you can see in Skagway are the railroad depot, a historic saloon, and miners' cabins.

Glossary

abolitionist a person opposed to slavery

barracks buildings to house soldiers or prisoners

barricades walls to stop movement

blared sounded with loud, harsh tones

boycott a refusal to use or take part in something

chiseled cut or shaped stone with a strong blade that has a sharp edge

civilians people not in the armed services

contributed gave to a common fund or for a common purpose

controversial debatable

crucial of the most importance

custody the care, supervision, and control granted by the court

dedicate to set aside for a special purpose

editorials articles in a newspaper that openly give the opinion of the editor, publisher, or owner

granite a common, hard igneous rock used for buildings and monuments

integrated open to people of all races

massive making up a very large mass; bulky, heavy, and solid

overrides ignores in an unjust or scornful way

patriots people who show great love for their country and are loyal to it

prospectors people who search for deposits of valuable ores

resistance the act of fighting or working against something

rowdy rough, noisy

secede to officially withdraw from a group or union

segregated separated by races

stampede a sudden headlong rush of a crowd of people

treacherous seeming safe but not really so

treaty an agreement

version a particular form of something

withdraw to leave

