

From Dave's Laptop

Tuesday, November 19, 2013

One hundred and fifty years ago today, President Lincoln delivered what we know as "The Gettysburg Address," which has become famous as one of the most powerful speeches ever made. As I'm sure you know, the speech was made at the dedication of the Soldiers' National Cemetery at the site of the three-day Battle of Gettysburg the previous July, during which more than 7,000 died and 40,000 were wounded.

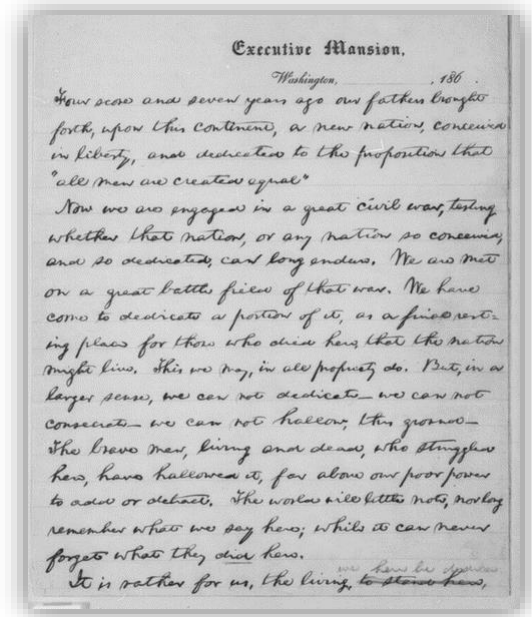
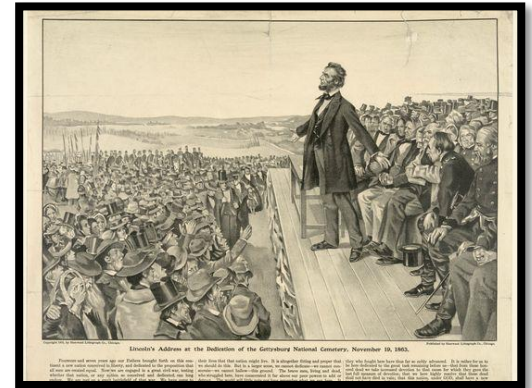
President Lincoln was not the primary speaker for the day. His remarks came after a two-hour address by someone whose name you probably don't know (Edward Everett, a former Secretary of State and Governor of Massachusetts). I'll not try to duplicate all the media coverage of this event today, but here are those 275 immortal words:

"Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth on 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 battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, 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 cannot dedicate -- we cannot consecrate -- we cannot 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 it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced.

"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 gave the last full measure of devotion -- that we here highly resolve 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."



105!

Forty-five years and three days after that speech, on November 22, 1908, June Booker's Mother, whom we know as Eula Hastings, was born, and **on this Friday, Eula will be 105 years young!** We'll honor Eula and help to celebrate her birthday this Sunday, and I hope you'll be able to be a part of that celebration!

On Eula's fifty-fifth birthday, 100 years after Lincoln's Gettysburg address, at least two other very significant events took place. The most infamous event was of course the assassination of President Kennedy; but an hour prior, at 5:30 p.m. London time, C. S. Lewis had already crossed over into the Real Story of which this life had been only the preface and the title page.

You've heard me quote from C. S. Lewis quite regularly. For some of you, Lewis is an old friend, while for others, my citations have been your first introduction to him.

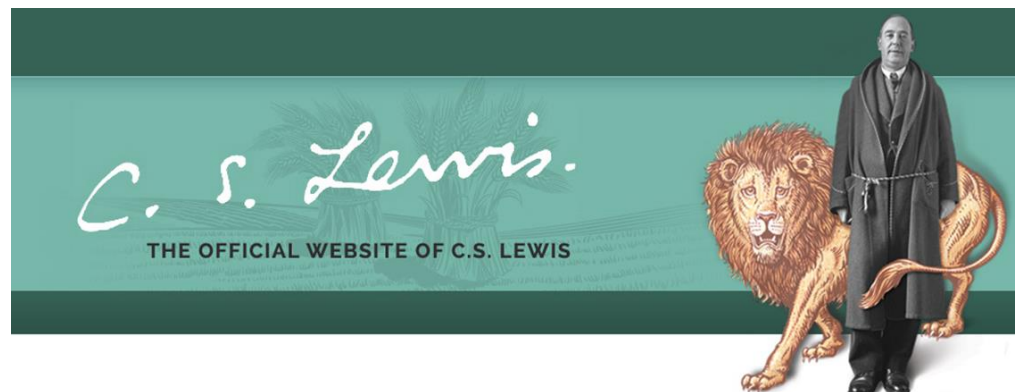
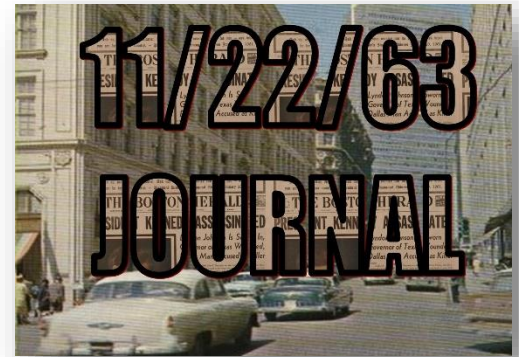
Born in 1898 in Belfast, Ireland, Lewis's mother died when he was ten years old, leading to a crisis of faith that led to his becoming an atheist for more than twenty years. Through the influence of his good friend, J. R. R. Tolkien, Lewis returned to Christian faith at the age of 32, and, although he made his living teaching medieval and Renaissance literature at Oxford and Cambridge Universities, Lewis's real fame began during World War II when he gave a series of talks on the BBC that were later published as *Mere Christianity*.

One of the most important Christian apologists and writers of the twentieth century, Lewis is perhaps best known for his fictional works, especially *The Screwtape Letters*, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, and *The Space Trilogy*, and for his non-fiction apologetics, such as *Mere Christianity*, *Miracles*, and *The Problem of Pain*. Lewis was concerned to present the deep things of Christian faith in forms that could be grasped by the imagination on the one hand, and by reason on the other.

Many, myself included, would say he succeeded in that effort, and *Christianity Today* pronounced *Mere Christianity* the best book of the twentieth century. On this Friday, the 50th anniversary of his death, Lewis will be honored with a memorial in Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey.

A partial bibliography of Lewis's work follows. I commend it to you heartily.

Dave



Nonfiction

- [*The Problem of Pain*](#) (1940)
- [*The Case for Christianity*](#) (1942)
- [*The Abolition of Man*](#) (1943)
- [*Miracles: A Preliminary Study*](#) (1947, revised 1960)
- [*Mere Christianity : a revised and amplified edition, with a new introduction, of the three books, Broadcast talks, Christian behaviour, and Beyond personality*](#) (1952; based on radio talks of 1941–1944)
- [*Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life*](#) (1955; [autobiography](#))
- [*Reflections on the Psalms*](#) (1958)
- [*The Four Loves*](#) (1960)
- [*A Grief Observed*](#) (1961; first published under the [pseudonym](#) «N. W. Clerk»)
- [*Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer*](#) (1963)
- [*God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*](#) (1970)
- [*The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses*](#) (1980)

Fiction

- [*The Pilgrim's Regress*](#) (1933)
- [Space Trilogy](#)
 1. [*Out of the Silent Planet*](#) (1938)
 2. [*Perelandra*](#) (aka *Voyage to Venus*) (1943)
 3. [*That Hideous Strength*](#) (1945)
- [*The Screwtape Letters*](#) (1942)
- [*The Great Divorce*](#) (1945)
- [The Chronicles of Narnia](#)
 1. [*The Magician's Nephew*](#) (1955)
 2. [*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*](#) (1950)
 3. [*The Horse and His Boy*](#) (1954)
 4. [*Prince Caspian*](#) (1951)
 5. [*The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*](#) (1952)
 6. [*The Silver Chair*](#) (1953)
 7. [*The Last Battle*](#) (1956)
- [*Till We Have Faces*](#) (1956)
- [*Screwtape Proposes a Toast*](#) (1961) (an addition to *The Screwtape Letters*)
- [*The Dark Tower*](#) (1977)