

Lincoln well-remembered in Nevada

By Guy Clifton, Reno Gazette-Journal

Abraham Lincoln never set foot in Nevada, but the histories of the state and the nation's 16th president are forever intertwined.

"It's hard to think of a president who had a bigger impact on Nevada," Michael Green, a history professor at UNLV, said about the president who was shot by assassin John Wilkes Booth 150 years ago today.

"Without Lincoln, we don't have a Civil War, we don't have statehood, we don't have laws that were passed during the Civil War that affected Nevada."

We might not even have Mark Twain – the pen name Samuel Langhorne Clemens picked up while working for the Territorial Enterprise in Virginia City. If Lincoln hadn't appointed Clemens' brother, Orion, to be the first secretary of the Nevada Territory, Sam might have never followed his brother West. No "Roughing It," no "Fairest picture the whole earth affords" musings about Lake Tahoe, no tall tales from the Comstock.

Lincoln wanted Nevada to become a state, in part to help ensure his re-election in 1864, but ultimately to help him secure the needed votes in Congress for the 13th Amendment to end slavery.

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