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Feather Pen Used to Sign First International Copyright Act in 1891

Copyright Lore

■ *Frank Evina*

With a bold stroke of a quill pen made from an eagle feather plucked from a live American eagle, President Benjamin Harrison signed into law the Chace International Copyright Act in 1891. For the first time, this law gave foreign authors copyright protection in the United States and also paved the way for U.S. authors to receive copyright protection abroad.

The famous 20-inch-long quill pen was also used by President Taft to sign the Pan-American Copyright Treaty in 1913 and the Joint Resolution providing for the Lincoln Memorial. Presidents Woodrow Wilson and Calvin Coolidge also used the pen to sign important documents during their presidencies. ©