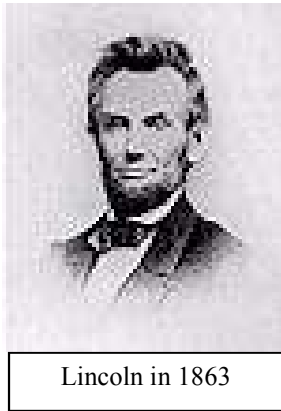


Tonight's

Program:

Lincoln at Gettysburg

On November 2, 1863, David Wills, charged by Pennsylvania Governor Andrew Curtin with cleaning up after the battle of Gettysburg, invited President Lincoln to make a "few appropriate remarks" at the consecration of a cemetery for the Union war dead. Wills had already invited the venerable Edward Everett, the nation's foremost rhetorician, to give an oration at the dedication ceremony planned for October 23. Everett accepted, but, needing more time to prepare, persuaded Wills to postpone the ceremony to November 19.



Lincoln in 1863

Although Wills wrote his invitation to Lincoln only three weeks prior to the dedication -- prompting speculation among historians about his and Pennsylvania Governor Curtin's motivations -- there is evidence that Lincoln was fully apprised of the affair in early October. Further, Wills's invitation included a warm welcome to the president to stay at his house, along with Everett and Curtin.



The Cemetery at Gettysburg



The only known photograph of President Lincoln at the dedication of the cemetery at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, November 19, 1863

Tonight's Speakers:

Mel Maurer

Mel Maurer is a retired executive of Dana Corporation and a student of history. He is a past president of the Roundtable and the Philosophical Club of Cleveland, and a member of the Titanic Historic society. An Abraham Lincoln scholar, Mel attends the annual Lincoln Forum Symposium and gives several talks on Lincoln. He is also a budding thespian.

Mel and his wife, Elaine live in Westlake. They have four children and eight grandchildren. His interests include writing and speaking on community affairs, charitable causes, history, political issues and personal experiences.

**Date: Wednesday,
November 8, 2006**

**Place: The Cleveland
Playhouse Club
8501 Carnegie Ave.**

**Time: Drinks 6 PM
Dinner 7 PM**

**Reservations: Please Call
JAC Communications
(216) 861-5588**

Meal choice: Civil War Buffet

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

FOUNDED 1957

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

NOVEMBER, 2006

The answer to the question posed at the conclusion of last month's message is: Nothing. Now let me be serious for a minute.

At a recent re-enactment at Hale Farm and Village, I ambled over to the Confederate encampment and stumbled upon a tall gray-clad fellow who was pontificating to his comrades about Lincoln. I overheard him say "Lincoln was the most evil President we ever had. He slept with the same man every night for the entire seven years he was in the White House. There was no reason to make war on the South, because every one of the Southern states had laws on their books providing for the abolition of slavery." (Precipitously or gradually, he did not say.) I walked away, because I realized there was no point in talking to someone who knew not Lincoln's term of office, let alone his sexual orientation or Southern statutory law.

Regrettably, idiocy of this kind is not limited to maverick re-enactors whose biases spill over in such an obvious and ugly way. There is, for example, the work of pseudo-scholars like Thomas J. DiLorenzo, the self-styled iconoclast who is now writing shock stuff about our 16th President. Who knows, he may take on Washington or Jesus next; there is, after all, money in iconoclasm. To paraphrase Edmund Burke, the only thing necessary for jerks to prevail is for lovers of truth to be silent. There has never been a shortage of the former, but fortunately there have been plenty of the latter to keep them on the fringes, e.g., Hay and Nicolay, Sandburg, Borritt, Goodwin, et al., and the vast majority of American historians who know that without Lincoln we would have had the Balkanization of the American Union and a continuation of human bondage. One of the lovers of truth is our own Mel Maurer, former President of the Roundtable and member of the Lincoln Forum, who, fittingly for our 50th Anniversary meeting, will talk to us about Lincoln's second finest hour, the Gettysburg Address. Why second? Because I agree with David Lloyd George that Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address was the finest thing ever written with a pen.

John Fazio

**CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE
2006/2007 SCHEDULE**

September 13, 2006

**The 13th Tennessee (Union),
The Men Who Killed
The Invader of Ohio,
John Hunt Morgan**

Dick Crews

October 11, 2006

Images

Karen Thyer portrays Mother Bickerdyke (1817-1901), Botanical Physician, "Cyclone in Calico," and Don Allen portrays a U.S. Sanitary Commission Inspector, singing songs of the Union and Confederacy

November 8, 2006

**Cleveland CWRT
50th Anniversary Celebration**



Lincoln at Gettysburg

Mel Maurer

December 13, 2006

**The Confederacy's New
Mexico Campaign
The Battles of Valverde and
Glorieta Pass**

Dan Zeiser

January 10, 2007

**The Annual Dick Crews
Debate**

*Resolved: That the Institution of
slavery was the cause of the Civil
War*

Moderator: William Vodrey

February 14, 2007

Ohio's Civil War Governors



**William F. B.
Vodrey**



March 14, 2007

**Custer's Last
Stand**

Harold A. George



April 11, 2007

**The Lincoln-Baldwin
Conference**

James Epperson

May 9, 2007

**The Civil War Letters
of Private Alfred Weedon,
26th Ohio Volunteer Infantry - A
Hands-on Lesson in
History**
Jon Thompson



THE BARLOW-GORDON CONTROVERSY: REST IN PEACE

by John C. Fazio

[Editor's Note: This is continuation from last month. When we left off, the issue was Arabella's arrival.]

Still further corroboration of Arabella's arrival comes from a passage in *A Gallant Captain of the Civil War*, edited by Joseph Tyler Butts. Describing the events of the evening of July 1, after the fight on the knoll, Frederick Otto Baron von Fritsch, a war correspondent, says that:

"By seven o'clock we had several hundred men of the Division together. General Barlow lies wounded outside of Gettysburg," the General (Ames) said, "and I take command of the Division. You'd better stay with me, Captain." "Thanks, General," I returned. "Here comes Mrs. Barlow with an ambulance," I added, and we both approached her, and tried to describe where her husband could probably be found. The courageous lady, sitting next to the driver, with a white flag in her hand, then drove quickly towards the town, although we could still hear firing."

A passage in the *War Diary of Stephen Minot Weld*, a staff officer for General John F. Reynolds, is also relevant. In an entry dated July 1, Weld describes a discourse he had with General Howard concerning the identity of troops coming out of the woods toward the cemetery. He rode into town, on Howard's order, and identified the troops as "rebs." Then he writes:

On my way back I saw a lady riding in (i.e. into Gettysburg), through all those bullets, on a horse with a side-saddle, who turned out to be Mrs. General Barlow. She had heard of her husband's dreadful wounds and came in to nurse him. She came in safely, as I afterwards heard, and undoubtedly saved her husband's life.

But there is more.

Daniel Skelly, a teenaged resident of Gettysburg who was a clerk at a dry goods company at the time of the battle, wrote his account of the battle in 1932 under the title "A Boy's Experiences During the Battle of Gettysburg." In pertinent part, this is what he said:

Day dawned on the second of July bright and clear...About dusk, Will McCreary and I were sent on some errand down on Chambersburg Street and as we were crossing from Arnold's corner to the present Eckert corner, we were halted by two Confederate soldiers who had a lady in their charge. She was on horseback and proved to be the wife of General (Francis) Barlow who had come into the Confederate lines under a flag of truce looking for her husband, who had been severely wounded on July 1...

It is reasonable to conclude from these accounts that Arabella arrived at the battlefield on July 1. Because it is unlikely that Gordon's message reached her before sunset, inasmuch as he says he sent it at the close of the day's fighting, and that such shooting as Howard describes would occur at night, it follows that Arabella must have crossed into no-man's land some time in the long summer twilight between sunset and nightfall.

We can thus say with certainty that she came through Confederate lines from Union lines successfully and that once inside Confederate lines she was given an escort. That could only have been accomplished if she had a safe passage or escort and she could have had that only if it had been given to her by a Confederate officer of very high rank. Lt. Pitzer does not fit that description, but Brig. Gen. John B. Gordon does.

Two other Confederate generals also fit the description: Lieutenant General Jubal Early, Gordon's division commander, and Lieutenant General Richard Ewell, their corps commander. Early wrote memoirs, mentioning the fight on the knoll and Barlow, but he says not a word about conversing with him, learning

that Arabella was nearby, sending her a message concerning her husband, or providing her with a safe passage or escort to be with her husband. I submit that if Early had done any or all of those things, he would not have let the opportunity pass to tell the world of his humanity, and that his silence can have but one reasonable conclusion: he did not do them. As for Ewell, he wrote no memoirs and there is no record of his ever having said or written anything relating to the Barlow incident. I think it is a safe conclusion that Ewell had no role in this matter. Well, if Early is not our man, and Ewell is not our man, and they were the only officers other than Gordon who at that time and place had the authority to do what we know was done, then what conclusion shall we draw?

The fourth reason given that Gordon's account is a fable is that both commanders must have known they were facing each other in subsequent encounters at the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, North Anna River, Cold Harbor, Petersburg, and Appomattox. Nonsense. Barlow was out of action from July 29 to August 13, 1864 when he went to Somerville, New Jersey, to bury his wife. Further, on August 24, he took a twenty day leave of absence to recover from the devastating loss of Arabella, illness, and combat exhaustion. On September 12, October 3, and October 22, he obtained twenty day extensions of the leave because he was not improving. Finally, on October 29, he applied for a five month leave (until April 1, 1865), including permission to go abroad. It was granted on November 5 by the War Department. Barlow left for Europe later in November and did not return to the army until April 6, 1865. All told then, Barlow was away from the front from July 29, 1864, to April 6, 1865, a period of eight months and nine days. Gordon absented himself from the Overland battles when he left Lee and fought with Early in the Valley from June 13, 1864, to December 8, 1864. So what do we have?: A period of almost ten months (June 13, 1864 to April 6, 1865) when the commanders did not even face each other. I submit that that was a powerful inducement for Gordon to suppose that Barlow was quite dead, which supposition is supported by his narrative, as previously said. Barlow did not return to service, following his Gettysburg wound, until April 1, 1864 and was not actually in combat again until the fight in the Wilderness (May 5). From Gettysburg to Appomattox, therefore - a period of more than twenty-one months - Gordon and Barlow faced each other for only thirty-nine days, i.e., May 5, 1864, to June 13, 1864, the date that Gordon joined Early. Is it really such a stretch, therefore, to conclude that they were ignorant of each other's presence among the enemy? If they had faced each other for the entire twenty-one month period, or even most of it, we should be justified in our skepticism of such ignorance. But thirty-nine days? A lot can get past a person in thirty-nine days that would not in twenty-one months.

The fifth reason for supposing that Gordon's account is bogus is that, after the war, Gordon was an active voice for reconciliation of the regions and the former belligerents and for that reason was strongly motivated to doctor or wholly fabricate events, in his speeches and in his writings, so as to cast both sides in a favorable light by emphasizing their common humanity, their common nationality, and their mutual respect and admiration.

In some ways this argument is the most egregious of all, because it supposes that Gordon was not only a knave, but also a fool. It supposes that he had not sense enough to know that if, in his addresses, his *Reminiscences*, or his other writings, he told one flagrant lie, and if that lie were exposed, it would destroy all of his credibility, credibility that he desperately needed and sought if he were to accomplish the very purposes for which he is now charged with distorting the truth and marketing wholesale fabrica-

tions. We are being asked to believe, that he would risk his good name, honor, reputation, and bank account. Moreover, we are asked to believe that he would do so at a time when hundreds of thousands of men and women who had fought in the war, or otherwise been directly involved with it, including Barlow, were still alive, and when the lie, therefore, was quite susceptible of being challenged and exposed by eyewitnesses or others who were conversant with the facts.

Let us talk about the Potter dinner party a little bit. This is the second half of Gordon's accounts. If the second half is true, then the first half must also be true, because the second half is entirely dependent upon the first half. Do we have any reason to doubt the second half? None. It is a perfectly plausible story. Furthermore, there were witnesses, i.e., other dinner guests. If the conversation and its effects, as described by Gordon, are fanciful, these witnesses could have and might have exposed it as fraudulent. Again, is it reasonable to suppose that Gordon would risk his priceless credibility for such a piece of fluff? For that matter, is it reasonable to suppose that he would invent the whole story? For what purpose? The second half of the story is dependent upon the first half, as said, but the opposite is not true. If the first half is a fraud, there is no necessity to add the second half; it is gratuitous.

The veracity of Gordon's account receives further support from the story's circulation from at least 1879, seventeen years before Barlow's death, yet it was never contradicted by Barlow. It is simply incredible that the story, as told by Gordon, and as it appeared in the publications antedating 1896, would not have come to Barlow's attention in that seventeen year period. That includes Gordon's speech (*Last Days*), which was given all over the country and which surely appeared in print while Barlow still lived. Further support for the story's veracity is that Barlow and Gordon met on at least two occasions after the war, once at Potter's dinner party (1879) and again at the twenty-fifth anniversary of the battle (1888). By the time of the second meeting, the story had been in circulation for at least nine years. On the occasion of that meeting, the *New York Times* wrote that:

The two men met for the second time in 25 years and the meeting was rather affecting. Gen. Barlow was left on the field on the first day's fight. He was found by Gen. Gordon, who not only saw that he was taken care of, but allowed Mrs. Barlow to come through the lines to nurse her husband.

That the story appeared in such a prominent newspaper as the *New York Times*, which, living in New York, Barlow must surely have read, gave him an excellent opportunity to denounce it as false, but of course he did not.

Still further support for the veracity of the story is Gordon's statements, in both *Reminiscences* and *Last Days*, that Barlow had heard of the death of Gordon's cousin, General J.B. Gordon of North Carolina, who was killed near Richmond in the summer of 1864, and, because of the identical initials, had assumed that this was the J. B. Gordon who had assisted him at Gettysburg. How would Gordon know that? The only reasonable answer, of course, is that Barlow told him. But when and why would Barlow tell him that? The only reasonable answer is that he told him at or some time after the meeting at Potter's dinner party in the context of how and why he, Barlow, assumed that Gordon was dead. Outside the context of a confession of ignorance as to Gordon's survival, Barlow's telling of his mistake as to the other Gordon makes no sense at all. Their supposed deaths must therefore have been a subject of conversation between them. And such conversation would only have taken place if, as Gordon says repeatedly, they both thought each other dead. And if they both thought each other dead, which is the logical

conclusion from all of this, then Gordon's telling of Barlow's mistake is strongly probative of the essential truth of Gordon's accounts.

Still further support for the truth of the story is that, in the account of it that appeared in 1879 in the *National Tribune*, the unidentified author concludes his description of the dinner party by saying "The hearty greeting which followed the touching story, as related to the interested guests by *General Barlow* (my italics), and the thrilling effect upon the company, can be better imagined than described." Observe that according to this unidentified author (who was approximately one hundred twenty-seven years closer to the event than we are), the story was told by *Barlow*, not *Gordon*, thus further corroborating Gordon's accounts, unless we prefer to go off into daisyland again and hold that Barlow fabricated the story first, but that Gordon liked it so much that he later incorporated it into his speech and memoirs, sanitized his other writings, and threw in a couple of other fabrications here and there to beef it up.

The weight of the evidence, indeed the great weight of the evidence, is in favor of the truth of Gordon's and Barlow's accounts, later embellishments in the retelling of it by others notwithstanding. The only reasonable conclusion, therefore, is that it happened in substantially the way that Gordon said it happened, and that the integrity of both Americans, therefore, remains untarnished.

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John C. Fazio

Civil War Monuments in Ohio

By Harold A. George, Privately published, 2006

The author is known to many of us for his in-depth Civil War programs and we will see him in March when he speaks on George Armstrong Custer. George has photographed and indexed more than 270 Ohio Civil War monuments; 66 are featured here. Most of the illustrations are large enough for the viewer to see much detail. Each photo includes the memorials' location, cost and dedication date. Uniformed men are the most common memorial subject. Most are a symbolic 'everyman', but some are familiar Civil War patriots, e.g., Lincoln, McPherson, Steedman, John Clem (the youngest Union volunteer), and Custer. There are lots of cannon, of course, and an assortment of obelisk types. There are some unique memorials, too, including a beautifully sculpted bronze and stone featuring the effigy of the grandfather of the family who paid for the statue. In Canton, a bronze draped woman, "Peace," bows at the base of a large stone and places a palm frond on its surface. George includes the Confederate POW cemetery in Columbus with its huge boulder crudely cut with the words "2260 Confederate Soldiers of the War of 1861-65 buried in this enclosure."

Although "Monuments" is essentially a picture book, George relates some human interest stories collected, he told me, from people he met on thousands of miles' of travel researching this book. He includes quite a bit of incidental monument information. The complete index of monuments, categorized by region and county, is in the book, also. There are thousands of Civil War books, but I doubt if there is another quite like this one, dedicated to the memorials honoring those who served in a cruel war that left millions of broken hearts, bodies, and lives. As I spent time with the book, I felt that it is also a testimonial to the grief and pride of citizens who raised these memorials so that the generations will remember.

George has donated a copy of "Civil War Monuments in Ohio" to our 50th Anniversary raffle. You can bid on this at our November party or you can purchase an autographed copy when George speaks to us on April 11 at a special guest price of \$20.00. If you are in a hurry, call (216 319-4575) and George will mail you a copy for \$25.00.

Reviewed by Marjorie R Wilson. Marjorie is a new member and a current board member.



50th Anniversary Celebration!



At our November meeting, we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable. On November 20, 1956, the Roundtable met for the first time. Please join us in celebrating this momentous occasion. Bring a guest, particularly one who may be interested in joining the group. Please remember to make your reservations.

If you have any thoughts as to how to celebrate, please contact John Fazio, President at 330-665-3000 (office), 330-867-1535 (home), or johncfazio@verizon.net. Happy Anniversary!

NEXT MONTH
THE CONFEDERACY'S NEW MEXICO CAMPAIGN:
THE BATTLES OF VALVERDE AND GLORIETA PASS
DAN ZEISER