



The Cleveland Civil War Round-Table  
P.O. Box 18900, Cleveland, Ohio 44118

# THE CHARGER

Vol. 18 #6

349th Meeting

February, 1997

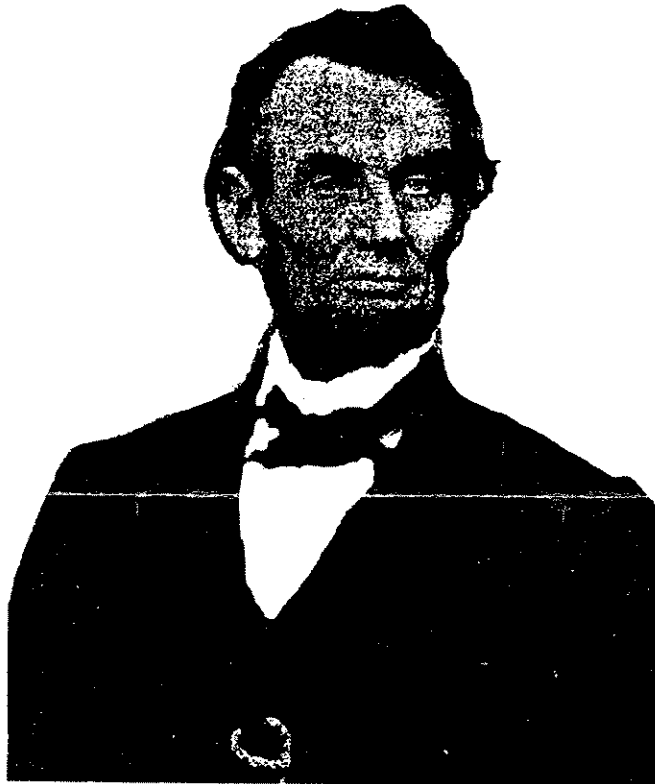
Tonight's Speaker

## John Hubbell

John T. Hubbell is a Professor of History and Director of Kent State University Press. He is a native of Oklahoma coming to Kent in 1968.

Hubbell was editor of the book, *Battles Lost and Won* published in 1975. In 1980 he received a **Distinguished Teaching Award** from Kent State.

In 1996, he received the **Ohioana Ward for Editorial Excellence** from the the Ohio Library Association for *Civil War History: A Journal of the Middle Period*.



The 16th President of the United States

## Abraham Lincoln

...But one of them would make war rather than let  
the nation survive,  
and the other would accept war rather than let it  
perish,  
and the war came.

*Abraham Lincoln, 4 March 1865*

**Date: February 12, 1997**

**Place: The Hermit Club**

**Time: Drinks 6 PM**

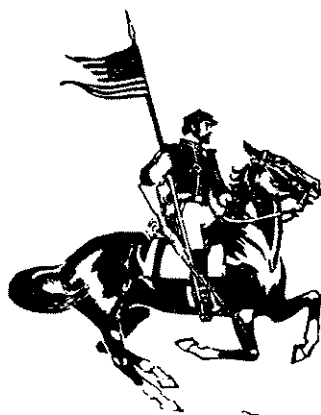
**Dinner 7 PM**

**Reservations: Please call  
JAC Business Communications  
at 861-5588.**

*Happy Fortieth Birthday, Cleveland Round-Table*

The Cleveland  
Civil War Round-Table  
1957 1997

40  
years



President: **Dan Zeiser**  
Vice President: **John Moore**  
Secretary: **Dick Crews**  
Treasurer: **Bob Boyda**

Editor of the **THE CHARGER**

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Shaker Heights, Ohio 44122  
(216) 752-9961 (800) 800-8310

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John & Anne Caputo

The Cleveland Civil War Round-Table meets normally on the second Wednesday of each month from September through May. The Round-Table also sponsors a Fall field trip each year to a selected Civil War site.

*Dues are \$35.00 per year.*

Membership information can be obtained from Secretary:  
Dick Crews (216) 752-9961 or (800) 800-8310

**Past Cleveland C.W.R.T. Presidents**

1996	John Sutula	1976	Milton Holmes
1995	Norton London	1975	Thomas Gretter
1994	Robert E. Battisti	1974	Nolan Heidelbaugh
1993	Kevin Callahan	1973	Arthur Jordan
1992	Bob Baucher	1972	Bernard Drews
1991	Joe Tirpek	1971	Kenneth Callahan
1990	Ken Callahan Jr.	1970	Frank Schuhle
1989	Neil Gleaser	1969	Donald Heckerman
1988	Martin Graham	1968	Frank Moran
1987	George Vourlojianis	1967	William Schlesinger
1986	Tim Beatty	1966	Donald Hamill
1985	Brian Kowell	1965	Lester L. Swift
1984	Neil Evans	1964	Guy DiCarlo, Jr.
1983	William Victory	1963	Paul Guenther
1982	William Harkness	1962	Edward Downer
1981	Thomas Geachke	1961	Charles Clarke
1980	Charles Spiegle	1960	Howard Preston
1979	William Bates	1959	John Cullen, Jr.
1978	Richard McCree	1958	George Farr, Jr.
1977	James Chapman	1957	Kenneth Grant

# Calendar of Events

February 12, 1997

**Dr. John Hubbell**  
**Kent State University**  
**"Lincoln"**

March 12, 1997

**John Taylor**  
**"Bloody Valverde, New Mexico"**

April 9, 1997

**Jay Ruoff**  
**Peninsula Roundtable**  
**"Vallandigham & The Copperheads"**

May 13, 1997 - Note this is a Tuesday

**40th Birthday Celebration**

**Gettysburg**  
**Field Trip 1997**  
**Sept 25 - 28**



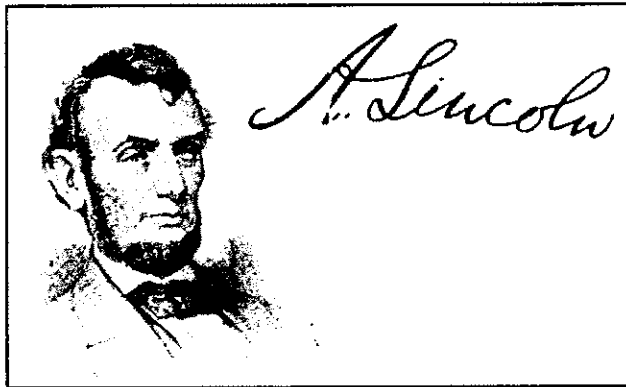
*Brigadier-General Strong Vincent, mortally wounded, July 2, 1863 in the struggle for the Round tops near Gettysburg.*

**Reservations are a must ! Call (216) 861- 5588.**

# ABRAHAM LINCOLN: DID HE FULFILL HIS POTENTIAL?

## *A Psychoanalysis of Abraham Lincoln*

by Robert E. Battisti <sup>1</sup>



So much has been written about Abraham Lincoln. Is there more questions that can be raised? Is there another side of this complex person that needs to be explored? Did his mental health problems interfere with his running of the government? Did our 16th President **fulfill his potential?**

Emotionally, the "log Cabin" President was very well grounded psychologically. He was well nurtured by his "Angel Mother" who died when her Little Abe was nine. He did not have an especially close bond with his father, but his

stepmother, Sarah, formed a close relationship with Abe. Although his total early education amounted to only one year, it was Sarah who understood and reinforced his intellectual curiosity. Abe's ability to educate himself set in at an early age. For example, he read a biography of George Washington whose heroic struggles made a major imprint on Abe's mind.

The controversial side of Lincoln's personality, his so called "depressed side," also goes back to his early life. In addition to his mother's death, he was also deeply affected by his brother Thomas' and sister Sarah's deaths. As a young adult he emotionally suffered when his young "romantic friend" Ann Rutledge died. It was during this latter grieving episode that Lincoln learned to recognize the struggle between his emotion and his reason, a struggle that would last the rest of his life. His on-again, off-again engagement to Mary Todd caused Lincoln so much distress that suicidal ideations appeared. But, even though Lincoln was 31 years old, he felt ill prepared for marriage. Given that he was in debt, owned nothing, and had an unreliable income, it was understandable that he would have misgivings about marriage. But, afterwards, given that he had a reputation of never wanting to let a friend down and given that he was lonely, he anguished over the breakup. This "frustrated Love" experience was unlike any other emotional experience in his life. Once again he recognized the struggle between reason and emotion. An area of Lincoln's personal life where there is absolutely clarity is his integrity. As a young practicing attorney, one of his principle beliefs was to have integrity. He consciously set a high standard of truthfulness for himself. When he began to make decent money, there is plenty of evidence to indicate that he put credibility above finances. The nickname "Honest Abe" emerged because he rightly deserved it. Therefore, one could conclude that the qualities of emotional groundedness, self-education, the ability to survive distressing emotional experiences, reading everything he could get his hands on, and integrity would serve him well during his presidency. But his tendencies toward depression also played an important role during his presidential years of crisis.

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<sup>1</sup>Robert E. Battisti is a Psychologist in private practice and a past President of the Cleveland CWRT

The stress Lincoln felt during his presidency is hard to calculate. To have the problems of the country on his shoulders during this crisis period of our history would be comparable to no other previous period. Especially consider that there was virtually no national consensus on anything. The problems the country faced as Lincoln was elected President had been festering for years, with some going back to the Constitutional Convention. During 1861-62, the problems mounted quickly. The war started, the treasury was exhausted, borrowing was difficult, paper money was issued, and foreign countries were impatient due to the shortages of cotton. Congress, including many members of his own party, was critical of the president's policies. At the same time, it became well known that his wife Mary was often impossible to deal with. And, probably most important, there were no war victories to celebrate. On the day it was announced that Grant had won a victory at Ft. Donaldson, by chance, the Lincolns were having a grand gathering at the White House. Just as the guests were celebrating the good war news, Mrs. Lincoln was summonsed to her son Willie's bed. He was critically sick and would die a few days later. This sad experience was very traumatic for both.

No previous president had experienced more emotional distress than Lincoln. The war, the political problems, the personal issues, and the death of his son caused moodiness, occasional headaches, and deep depression.

So, with so many negative experiences encircling the President, how was it that he was able to ultimately write The Emancipation Proclamation, write and deliver The Gettysburg Address, keep peace with other countries, keep the war machine going, deal with the generals, grieve for his son, deal with his wife's moodswings, face extensive off year election losses, face incessant criticisms, win the war, and direct one of the simplest peace documents in the history of warfare? Certainly these issues would cause Lincoln to deal with the inner personal crisis he had to deal with as a child and as a young man: the struggle between emotion and reason.

Abraham Lincoln was able to rise above his problems. Deep in his psyche were strong role models: his mother, his sister and his stepmother. Also, over the years he made many good and trusted friends. He was a very devoted father and got much pleasure from interacting with his young children during the White House years. Concerning his marriage, he understood his wife and possibly realized that there was little he could do about her most difficult problems, though often depressed there is plenty of evidence that his philosophy of reason superseding emotions during decision making times, was in reality what he had done his whole life. In other words, in the main he conducted his life in a rational, problem solving manner. When he faced a crisis, either on a leadership or on a personal level, he experienced the normal emotional stress and even had some extreme depression, but in the end he weighed the alternatives, then made rational decisions about what to do.

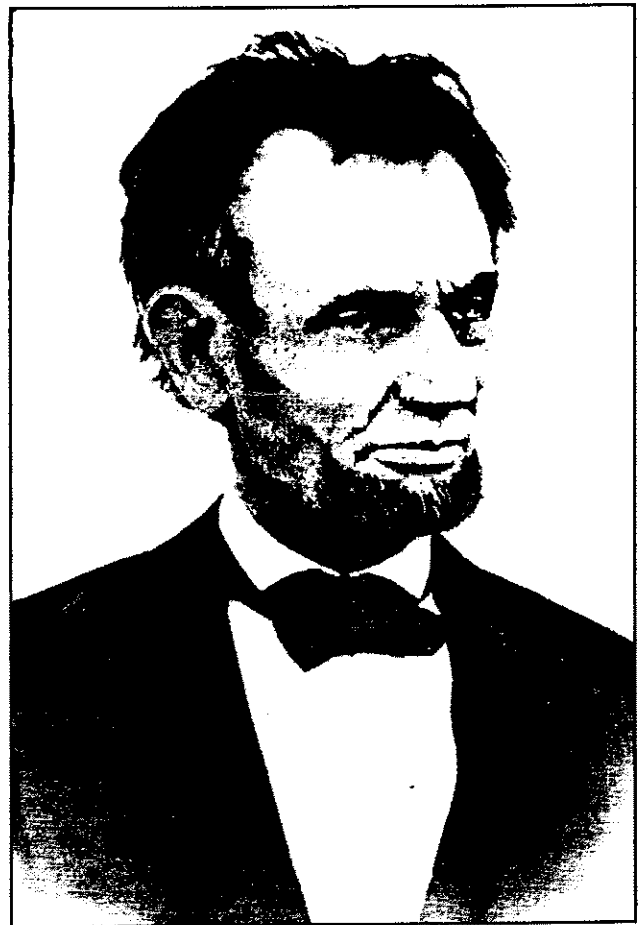


Tad Lincoln in 1865. After Willie's death, Lincoln's devotion to his unruly youngest son intensified. He spent time with the boy at every opportunity.

There were other personal attributes that served to guide him during his presidency. No less a person than Shelby Foote said that Lincoln was a genius and a literary artist. In addition, he chose Thomas Jefferson as his historical role model. "The principles of Jefferson are the axioms of a free society," Lincoln once said. Second, he really believed in democracy "Let us at all times remember that all American citizens are brothers of a common society," he wrote. Third, he never forgot his roots. When he left Springfield he said: "To this place and the kindness of these people I owe everything." Fourth, Lincoln defined the issue: "Union." He never hated his enemy, he wanted reconciliation not retribution, and he played *Dixie* the day the peace was concluded. Fifth, he was able to grow as a person despite his mistakes and problems. As evidence of this, he issued the Emancipation Proclamation which became the first step in bringing freedom to the slaves and therefore extending the concept of "all men are created equal." The document was roundly criticized from all sides. Lincoln, by his ability to look far back in time as well as to the long term future, knew he would be remembered by this important work.

Finally, what about his depression? Well, looking at the tragedies and problems he faced in his life, who would not be depressed? As was mentioned before, in the end, Lincoln's reason superseded his emotions during critical times. Would you want a leader who was not deeply affected by the loss of a loved one, by frustrated love, and by seemingly overwhelming problems? Perhaps his passion stimulated him to problem solve when the going got tough.

When evaluating a person you cannot look at only one aspect of the person's life. In Lincoln's case when you examine his life in its entirety, you would conclude that he did fulfill his potential. Carl Sandburg, in his great books on the sixteenth president, quoted an orator at Lincoln's burial: "There are moments which involve in themselves eternities. There are instants which seem to contain germs which shall develop and bloom forever." The orator must have known that many generations later we would still be benefitting from what Lincoln said and what he did.



March, 1865

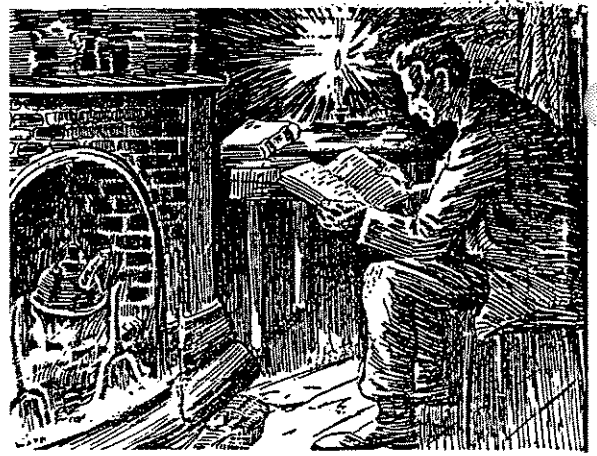
*Robert E. Battisti*

References:

Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years and The War Years  
by Carl Sandburg.  
Lincoln by David Herbert Donald.

# the **10** best books about **LINCOLN**

**A**BRAM LINCOLN IS THE MOST POPULAR CHARACTER IN AMERICAN history, and the sheer volume of writing about his life can be intimidating. Distinguishing the good writing from the bad can be an even greater challenge. To help our readers find their way through the forest of texts, we asked the authors in this issue to identify the best books on Lincoln. Here are the titles they named, ranked 1 to 10. Some older works are out of print, but most large library systems have them.



**1** *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*. Edited by Roy P. Basler. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1953.) The closest thing to a Lincoln autobiography, it contains all his known writings in eight volumes, plus an index and two supplements. It is still available from the publisher.

**2** *Lincoln*. By David Herbert Donald. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995.) Just published in October, it has already earned the praise of several of our authors. Harold Holzer calls it "the definitive one-volume biography of Lincoln for our generation." James M. McPherson says it "will surely take its place as the Lincoln biography of our time." An excellent starting place for new Lincoln students.

**3** *Lincoln Day by Day: A Chronology*. Edited by Earl Schenck Miers. (Washington, DC: 1960.) The authoritative account of Lincoln's whereabouts and activities. This three-volume reference is on the shelves of many libraries. Morningside Press of Dayton, Ohio, offers a one-volume reprint.

**4** *Herndon's Lincoln: The True Story of a Great Life*. By William Henry Herndon and Jesse Weik. (New York: Belford, Clark & Co., 1889.) A contemporary biography first published in three volumes. It has been reprinted several times, most recently in one volume in 1983 by Da Capo Press of Edison, New Jersey.

**5** *Lincoln and the Economics of the American Dream*. By Gabor Boritt. (Memphis, TN: Memphis State Univ.

Press, 1978.) This study of Lincoln's political aims and abilities was written by the author of the article "The President At Play" in this issue. It is now available in a revised paperback edition from the University of Illinois Press in Champaign, Illinois.

**6** *Lincoln the President*. By James G. Randall. (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1945-55.) A four-volume work encompassing Lincoln's whole life, not just his presidency. When it was published, it was heralded as the best and most complete study of Lincoln's life. Only the last volume, "The Final Measure," remains in print, available from the University of Illinois Press.

**7** *Abraham Lincoln, A Biography*. By Benjamin Thomas. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952.) This has been called the best one-volume biography of Lincoln—a distinction earned through accuracy, insightful analysis, and entertaining text. It is available through Random House Modern Library.

**8** *The Fate of Liberty: Abraham Lincoln and Civil Liberties*. By Mark E. Neely, Jr. (New York: Oxford, 1991.) Neely also wrote *The Last Best Hope of Earth: Abraham Lincoln and the Promise of America*, which several authors listed among their top 10. His article "Lincoln's First Love" appears in this issue.

**9** *Prelude To Greatness: Lincoln in the 1850s*. By Don E. Fehrenbacher. (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 1962.) A highly praised study of Lincoln in the years leading up to his presidency.

**10** *Abraham Lincoln: A History*. By John G. Nicolay and John Hay. (New York: The Century Co., 1890.) This 10-volume biography was written by the president's two personal secretaries. The authors revered their late employer too much to be objective, but the work contains a wealth of detailed information about him. It is still available from Reprint Services in Irvine, California.

**O**UR AUTHORS MENTIONED OTHER titles that readers may find interesting. The study of Lincoln's assassination named most often was *The Lincoln Murder Conspiracies* by William Hanchett. Hanchett himself recommended *Come Retribution* by William A. Tidwell, James O. Hall, and David W. Gaddy, and Tidwell's *April '65*.

The authoritative work on the president's photographic legacy is *Lincoln in Photographs* by Charles Hamilton and Lloyd Ostendorf. Other noteworthy books about Lincoln in art and photos include James Mellon's *The Face of Lincoln* and *The Lincoln Image* by Mark E. Neely, Gabor Boritt, and Harold Holzer. Jonathan Mann recommends *Lincoln Collector* by Carl Sandburg for those interested in artifacts related to the president.

Finally, here are some general works on Lincoln's life that were recommended but did not make the top 10: *Lincoln and His Generals* by T. Harry Williams, *With Malice Toward None* by Stephen B. Oates, *Abraham Lincoln, 1809-1858* by Albert J. Beveridge, and *The Lincoln Nobody Knows* by Richard N. Current. **CWT**

# Lincoln at Gettysburg

by William F.B. Vodrey<sup>1</sup>

Just about everyone knows the Gettysburg Address, or at least a few words of it. Americans of a certain age were required to memorize the speech, and may still remember it by rote. In the midst of the bloodiest war Americans have ever waged, on the field of a critical battle in that war, Abraham Lincoln gave a speech that redefined what it means to be an American. He cast the horrific, tragic carnage of the Battle of Gettysburg in terms that would last for the ages. Anyone interested in this speech should read Garry Wills' outstanding book, Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words That Remade America (Simon & Schuster, N.Y. 1992). Wills won the Pulitzer Prize for the book, and he undoubtedly earned it.

Garry Wills argues - convincingly, I think - that Lincoln brought about a major shift in Americans' outlook on the Constitution. As Wills wrote, "He not only put the Declaration [of Independence] in a new light as a matter of founding law, but put its central proposition, equality, in a newly favored position as a principle of the Constitution.. The Gettysburg Address has become an authoritative expression of the American spirit - as authoritative as the Declaration itself and perhaps even more influential, since it determines how we read the Declaration... By accepting the Gettysburg Address, its concept of a single people dedicated to a proposition [equality], we have been changed. Because of it, we live in a different America."

Gen. George Meade's Army of the Potomac had been victorious at Gettysburg, but President Lincoln could not savor the victory. Instead, he ground his teeth in frustration at Meade's failure to pursue and finish Lee. "We had them in our grasp," he said, anguished. "We had only to stretch forth our hands and they were ours." In a letter he never sent to Meade, the President wrote, "[Lee] was within your easy grasp, and to have closed upon him would, in connexion with our other successes, have ended the war.. . Your golden opportunity is gone, and I am distressed immeasurably because of it."

Cleaning up the battlefield took months, as the bodies bloated and putrefied in the summer heat. David Wills, local agent of Pennsylvania Gov. Andrew Curtin, took bids for the burial -and, in many cases, reburial - of the fallen soldiers. The high bid was \$8.00 per corpse; the low and winning bid was \$1.59.



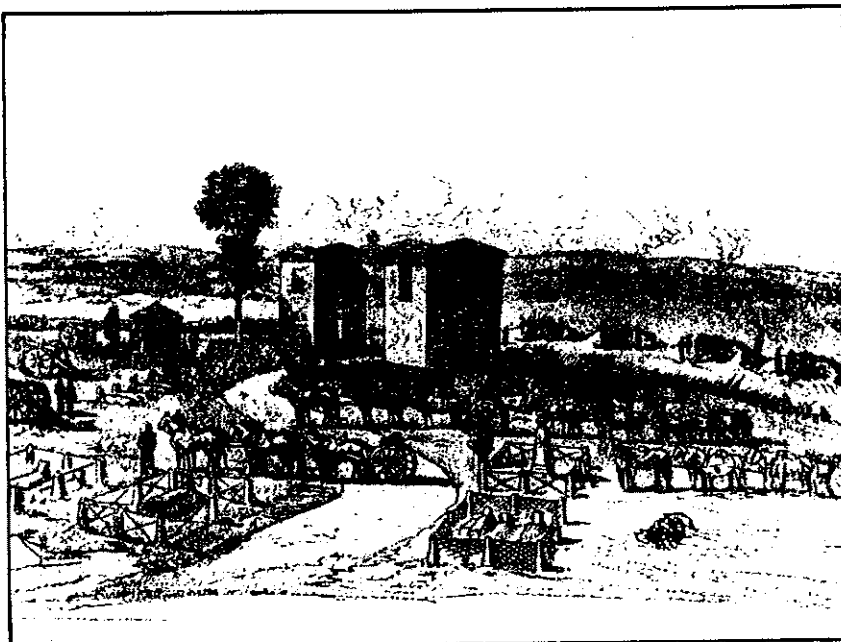
*Dead in the Wheat Field gathered for burial*

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<sup>1</sup>William F. B. Vodrey is an assistant County Prosecutor and a member of the Cleveland CWRT since 1994.

By October, the work was largely done. local organizers set about making arrangements for the dedication of a national cemetery on the battlefield, "across the road from the spot where Southern infantry had broken into Howard's artillery in the hot twilight of the second day," as historian Bruce Catton wrote.

Invited to give the dedication of the national cemetery at Gettysburg was Edward Everett, one of the most prominent orators of the day. He spoke for two hours, while Lincoln spoke for less than three minutes. It is Lincoln's address which we remember, and for good reason. To show us why Lincoln's words still hold such power, Wills dissects the Gettysburg Address line by line and word by word, but the author is never pedantic or boring. He shows how Lincoln drew upon the classical Greek funerary oratorical style to properly honor those who fell at Gettysburg in early July 1863.



*Inside Evergreen Cemetery, Cemetery Hill. (From a War Time Sketch)*

Wills also dispels several of the myths which have grown up about the Address. No, Lincoln didn't jot down his remarks on the back of an envelope on the train; he was always very careful in preparing his speeches. He worked on the Gettysburg Address for several weeks before the ceremony, although there is evidence that he revised it as late as the night before. Lincoln knew that the words he used made a difference in the political life of the nation; as he good-naturedly said during his debates with Stephen Douglas, he thought no one in their oratory should confuse a horse chestnut with a chestnut horse. "Words were weapons, for him, even though he meant them to be weapons of peace in the midst of war," Wills wrote. Lincoln himself once said, "Writing, the art of communicating thoughts to the mind through the eye, is the great invention of the world. .. enabling us to converse with the dead, the absent, and the unborn, at all distances of time and space."

And no, people in the crowd weren't surprised by the brevity of Lincoln's remarks. Nobody expected Lincoln to talk on and on, as Everett did. The two speakers served different functions: Everett was to explore at length the battle itself; Lincoln was just supposed to dedicate the cemetery. Everett's remarks ran to 13,000 words, covering 33 pages and 58 sections; a single page will hold the Gettysburg Address with room to spare.

Press coverage of the Gettysburg Address at the time was not as negative as some historians have suggested, although there was certainly criticism. Newspapers of the day were partisan in a way that would be inconceivable today; they were often simply the local or national organs of the



political parties. The Patriot and Union of Harrisburg remarked, "We pass over the silly remarks of the President; for the credit of the nation we are willing that the veil of oblivion shall be dropped over them and that they shall no more be repeated or thought of." The Chicago Times declared, "The cheek of every American must tingle with shame as he reads the silly, flat and dish-watery utterances of the man who has to be pointed out to intelligent foreigners as the President of the United States."

On the whole, though, the Northern press lauded the Gettysburg Address. The New York Times, the Providence Journal, the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, and the Detroit Advertiser and Tribune all reprinted it with praise. George William Curtis, editor of the influential Harper's Weekly, wrote that the Gettysburg Address was "the most perfect piece of American eloquence, and as noble and pathetic and appropriate as the oration of Pericles over the Peloponnesian dead."

The crowd at Gettysburg seemed to have liked the speech. As Lincoln's aide John Hay wrote in his diary, "The President, in a fine, free way, with more grace than is his wont, said his half dozen words of consequence." Wills wrote, "Lincoln's text was polished, his delivery emphatic, [and] he was interrupted by applause five times." The Associated Press reporter there said that after Lincoln spoke, there was "long-continued applause."

That applause - that national approval - continues today, and with good reason. Edward Everett himself put his finger on it: as he wrote to Lincoln afterwards, "I should be glad, if I could flatter myself that I came as near to the central idea of the occasion, in two hours, as you did in two minutes."



*Lincoln at Gettysburg, November 19, 1863*

*William F. B. Vodrey*

# President's Message

Dear Members:

I hope everyone's New Year has gotten off to a good start. If you were at the January meeting, you saw that the Round Table's year got off to a rousing start. Dick Crews put together a panel to debate the question "*The Decisive Battle of the War.*" Tom Dempsey, Al Enlow, Mike Hardy, Scott Maybaum, Matt Slattery, and William Vodrey were debaters and did an excellent job. The members asked some tough questions, particularly after Dick and Neil Evans put the screws to them. It was an entertaining night. Dick made a special effort to get newer members involved. Thanks to him for putting on a fine program and thanks to Tom, Al, Mike, Scott, Matt, and William for a great debate.

This month our speaker is Dr. John Hubbell of Kent State University. His topic is of course, Lincoln. His focus, though, will be on the relationship between Lincoln and McClellan. He informs me that his talk presents some new information on the topic and he takes some debatable positions. It sounds like a recipe for a lively presentation and discussion. Please join us. Remember to make your reservations by noon on Tuesday.

At our April meeting, we will be holding a book sale. If you have any books in your library that you would like to donate for the sale, please give them to me or Norty London. We will have a table or two set up and hope to raise a few extra dollars for the treasury. There are already some interesting books to be sold that you can add to your collection. I hope to see you at the meeting.

*Dan Zeiser*

## Joan Reilly Callahan

The members of the Cleveland War Round-Table were saddened by the news of the recent death of Joan Reilly Callahan. Many of us have fond memories of the occasional meetings that were held in the home of Dr. and Mrs. Callahan. We will always remember her beaming smile and gracious manner. Her husband Ken, sons Kenneth Jr., and Kevin, were all past Presidents of the Roundtable. The members of the Roundtable extend our deepest sympathies to the entire Callahan family and want them to know that all of our thoughts and Prayers are with you.

*Robert E. Battisti*



*Joan Reilly Callahan*

# THE SUMMIT MEETING AT CITY POINT

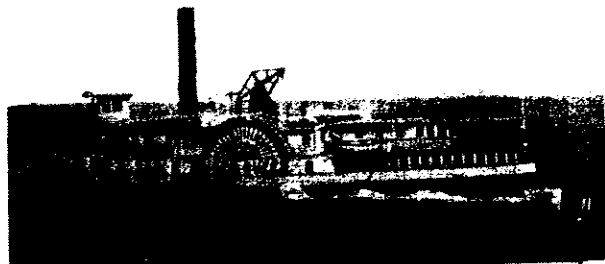
From *Memoirs of General W. T. Sherman*

The Morning of the 28th(March, 1865) General Grant and I took a small tug to meet the President(Abraham Lincoln) aboard the *River Queen*. Admiral Porter accompanied us. We were received most courteously by the President, who conducted us to the after-cabin. After the general compliments, General Grant inquired after *Mrs. Lincoln*, when the President went to her state-room, returned, and begged us

to excuse her, as she was not well. We then again entered upon a general conversation, during which General Grant explained to the President that at that very instant of time General Sheridan was crossing James River from the north, by a pontoon-bridge below City Point; that he had a large, well-appointed force of cavalry, with which he proposed to strike the Southside and Danville Railroads, by which alone General Lee, in Richmond, supplied his army; and that, in his judgment, matters were drawing to a crisis, his only apprehension being that General Lee would not wait long enough. I also explained that my army at Goldsboro (North Carolina)was strong

enough to fight Lee's army and Johnston's combined, provided that General Grant could come up within a day or so; that if Lee would only remain in Richmond another fortnight, I could march up to Burkesville(50 miles west of Petersburg, Virginia), when Lee would have to starve inside of his lines, or come out from his entrenchments and fight us on equal terms.

Both General Grant and myself supposed that one or the other of us would have to fight one more bloody battle, and that it would be the *Last*. Mr. Lincoln exclaimed, more than once, that there had been blood enough shed, and asked us if another battle could not be avoided. I remember well to have said that we could not control that event; that this necessarily rested with our enemy; and I inferred that both Jeff Davis and General Lee would be forced to fight one more desperate and bloody battle. I rather supposed it would fall on me somewhere near Raleigh; and General Grant added that, if Lee would only wait a few more days, he would have his army so disposed that if the enemy should abandon Richmond, and attempt to make junction with General Jos. Johnston in North Carolina, he (General Grant) would be on his heels. Mr. Lincoln more than once expressed uneasiness that I was not with my army at Goldsboro, when again assured him that General Schofield was fully competent to command in my absence; that I was going to start back that very day, and that Admiral Porter had kindly provided for me the steamer *Bat*, which he said was much swifter than my own vessel, *the Russia*. During this



*River Queen*



*Ulysses Simpson Grant*

interview I inquired of the President if he was all ready for the end of the war. What was to be done with the rebel armies when defeated? And what should be done with the political leaders, such as Jeff Davis, etc.? Should we allow them to escape, etc.? He said he was all ready; all he wanted of us was to defeat the opposing armies, and to get the men composing the Confederate armies back to their homes, at work on their farms and in their shops. As to Jeff Davis, he was hardly at liberty to speak his mind fully, but intimated that he ought to clear out, "escape the country," only it would not do for him to say so openly. As usual, he illustrated his meaning by a story: "A man once had taken the total-abstinence pledge. When visiting a friend, he was invited to take a drink, but declined, on the score of his pledge; when his friend suggested lemonade, which was accepted. In preparing the lemonade, the friend pointed to the brandy-bottle, and said the lemonade would be more palatable if he were to pour in a little brandy; when his guest said, if he could do so 'unbeknown' to him, he would not object." From which illustration I inferred that Mr. Lincoln wanted Davis to escape, "unbeknown" to him.

Mr. Lincoln was full and frank in his conversation, assuring me that in his mind he was all ready for the civil reorganization of affairs at the South as soon as the war was over; and he distinctly authorized me to assure Governor Vance and the people of North Carolina that, as soon as the rebel armies laid down their arms, and resumed their civil pursuits, they would at once be guaranteed all their rights as citizens of a common Country; and that to avoid anarchy the State governments then in existence, with their civil functionaries, would be recognized by him as the government *defacto* till Congress could provide others.

I know, when I left him, that I was more than ever impressed by his kindly nature, his deep and earnest sympathy with the afflictions of the whole people, resulting from the war, and by the march of hostile armies through the South; and that his earnest desire seemed to be to end the war speedily, without more bloodshed or devastation, and to restore all the men of both sections to their homes. In the language of his second inaugural address, he seemed to have "**charity for all, malice toward none,**" and, above all, an absolute faith in the courage, manliness, and integrity of the armies in the field. When at rest or listening, his legs and arms seemed to hang almost lifeless, and his face was care-worn and haggard; but, the moment he began to talk, his face lightened up, his tall form, as it were, unfolded, and he was the very impersonation of good-humor and fellowship. The last words I recall as addressed to me were that he would feel better when I was back at Goldsboro. We parted at the gangway of the River Queen, about noon of March 28th, and I never saw him again. Of all the men I ever met, he seemed to possess more of the elements of greatness, combined with goodness, than any other.

*William T. Sherman*



# The "Real" Abe Lincoln

by Jim Kushlan<sup>1</sup>

Human beings are amazing creatures. We live our lives surrounded by other people, many of whom think they know us. But if someone were to pass out a questionnaire on the day we become "the dear departed," what a story the results would tell! Taken together, they would read like a nonsense song: "He was a liberal conservative with bright blue hazel eyes..."

Now, let's say you live your life so extraordinarily that you become enduringly famous -a legend. Not only will more people claim to have known you, they will each want their memories of you published, thus riding your coattails to fame. No two accounts will agree completely. In a few decades, the most marketable stories will become the accepted version, the myth, of you. The myth may not be much like the real you. You know where I'm heading with this. Yes, and the entire *Civil War Times* staff have gotten lost in Lincoln-or at least in the quest to separate the real Lincoln from the myth of "the immortal Abe."

There's a lot to Lincoln. He embodies America's struggle with itself. His election triggered secession; his decision to put down the "rebellion" led to war. He won the war, ended slavery, and enunciated a new vision of the United States. His death made him into a martyr for reunion. Granted, Lincoln is worth understanding; but finding the genuine article can be tricky, because Lincoln comes in any size or shape you want. If you set your mind to it, you can "prove" he was: honest, opportunistic, egalitarian, racist, pious, agnostic, the savior of the Union, a tyrant who permanently diverted the United States from the path the Founding Fathers had carefully set.

I'm sure none of these "Lincolns" comes as a surprise to you -through I'll bet you'd enjoy reading a letter we have in the files, claiming "Abraham Lincoln was a Witch!"



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## IN NEXT MONTH'S MARCH, 1997 CHARGER

BUCKEYES IN BLUE  
THE COST OF THE WAR  
THE 13TH GOES AFTER JEFFERSON DAVIS  
C.S.S. SAVANNAH  
THE RIFLE THAT WON THE WAR



LITTLE PHIL SHERIDAN AT CHATTANOOGA