



APRIL NEWSLETTER  
2014-2015 NUMBER 8

Editor: Shirley Baugher  
Designer: Norman Baugher

# FRIENDS OF AMERICAN WRITERS CHICAGO


[www.fawchicago.org](http://www.fawchicago.org)

## President's Message

CHRISTINE BERN, *President*

It is with great enthusiasm that I announce the acceptance of new Board members at the March meeting and welcome Roberta Gates as our new President. Welcome new Board members Doris Roskin, Freyda Libman, Marti Daniel and Diana Adams to the FAW Board beginning June 2015. I celebrate the return of Vivian Mortensen (two time President) to the Board as Secretary. FAW is very fortunate to have Vivian's invaluable experience. I am pleased that current Board members Christine Spatara, Shirley Baugher, Tammie Bob and Pat Adelberg will remain on the board in a new capacity. Thank you for your commitment.

I would like to thank April Nauman, Tanya Klasser, and Edith Riley for their dedication to Friends of American Writers as they transition off the Board. You have served FAW with loyalty and devotion that deserve our gratitude and appreciation.

The Literary Committees will announce their 2015 award-winning books at the April meeting. Hopefully, all award winners will be present at our May Awards luncheon. These awards are given with your generous donation to the Patron's Fund. 

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## FAW Welcomes Author Kelly O'Connor McNeese


ROBERTA GATES, *Program Chair*

Please join us on April 8 when Chicago-area writer Kelly O'Connor McNeese will meet with us to talk about her work and life.

Kelly has three books to her credit, including *The Lost Summer of Louisa May Alcott*, *In Need of a Good Wife* (which was a finalist for the 2012 Willa Award) and, most recently, *The Island of Doves*. As a writer of historical fiction, Kelly combines good characterization with period details to create narratives that are not only readable and informative but also compelling.

Though it doesn't stray from the biographical facts of Alcott's life, *The Lost Summer of Louisa May Alcott* speculates, in an original and intriguing way, about a summer romance Louisa May Alcott may or may not have had when she was young. The Washington Post had this to say about *The Lost Summer*: "It is the kind of romantic tale to which Alcott herself was partial, one in which love is important but not a solution to life's difficulties. Devotees of Little Women will flock to this story with pleasure."

*In Need of a Good Wife* tells the story of mail-order brides who went to live in Nebraska with husbands they had never met during frontier times. *The Island of Doves*, set on Mackinaw Island, features Susannah Fraser, also a woman heading West in search of a better life, as well as Magdelaine Fonteneau, an extraordinary woman of her period who made her living as a fur trader.

Kelly O'Connor McNeese grew up in Lansing, Michigan, and has degrees from the University of Michigan and DePaul University. She lives in Chicago with her husband and daughter. 



## Friends of American Writers Awards Luncheon



May 8, 2015

- The Fortnightly of Chicago
- 120 Bellevue Place

- 11:00 a.m
- \$45 per person

FAW is proud to celebrate the 85th Annual Awards Luncheon.

This is a wonderful opportunity to meet and hear the remarks of our award-winning authors in the ambiance of the Fortnightly. Bring your friends to support and applaud these new authors and share in the fun.

- To reserve early, clip the following reservation form and send with your payment to:

**Ms. Marion Sherlock, 2650 Central Drive, Flossmoor, IL 60422**

- Or, turn in the reservation form and payment at the March or April luncheon meeting.

If you have questions, please contact Marion Sherlock, [marion.sherlock@sbcglobal.net](mailto:marion.sherlock@sbcglobal.net)

Deadline for reservations (and cancellations) is **Friday, May 1, 2015**

### FAW AWARDS LUNCHEON RESERVATION FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

phone \_\_\_\_\_

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ places at the Awards Luncheon at \$45 per person

Enclosed is my reservation and check payable to FAW Awards Luncheon for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to cover lunch for the following people:

I would like to sit with \_\_\_\_\_

I would like a vegetarian lunch Yes  No

**Please call Marion Sherlock (708) 957-8139 if other food arrangements are needed**



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Luncheon Reservations

Luncheon reservations for the April 8, 2015 meeting of the Friends of American Writers are due **no later than 6:00 p.m.** on Sunday, April 5. Please note that this deadline is firm, and no reservations will be accepted following this date and time. To reserve, please call only Lorraine Campione (773-275-5118) or Vivian Mortensen (847-827-8339).

Luncheon will be served at 12:00 noon in the main floor dining room of the Fortnightly Club of Chicago, 120 E. Bellevue Place. The cost of the luncheon is \$40 payable by cash or check to FAW in the front lobby on the day of the luncheon. If you are reserving for a group, we ask that only one person make the group request to avoid confusion. Please note: if you make a reservation and find you cannot

attend, you must cancel no later than 6:00 p.m. on the Sunday preceding the meeting. Reservations not cancelled must be paid for by the member.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The parking lot at 100 E. Bellevue Place will **not** be available for discount parking on April 9 or May 8, 2015. The lot is closed for renovation through June 30, 2015. Members may obtain parking at the following sites:

- 50 East Bellevue (a bit farther down the block from the current parking garage) \$17
- 900 N. Michigan Avenue Shops
- Elm and Clark Streets (above Treasure Island) \$20
- 1350 N. Lake Shore Drive \$15

### Report from Young People's Literature Committee

TANYA KLASSER

Our dedicated committee read thirty books before selecting two for FAW Awards.

- *Sparkers* by Eleanor Glewwe is a fantasy that tells the story of a young violinist who must battle forces of evil while struggling to survive in her oppressed lower class society.
- *Quinny & Hopper* by Adriana Brad Schanen makes us laugh as we read about two eight-year olds who become friends despite their very different backgrounds and personalities.

We hope our authors can attend the Awards Luncheon. Eleanor lives in Los Angeles and Adriana resides in New Jersey.

### Literature Awards Committee Update

Literature Awards Committee Chair Tammie Bob reported that her committee had received more than sixty books for FAW Awards consideration, many of which were outstanding. The group will meet in mid-March to



determine the number of awards to be given and to make final selections.


### New Members

FAW welcomes new members to the organization. If you know of anyone who would like to become a part of our group, please contact Membership Chair Sandie Weiss, 161 E. Chicago Ave. Apt. 35G, Chicago, IL 60611. As an added incentive, new members will not have to pay dues until next year.

### Contributions to the Patron's Fund

As our President Chris Bern noted in her March message, the Patron's Fund is the education fund from which the FAW draws monies for Literature Awards and Young People's Literature Awards winners. Your contributions are essential to the maintenance of this fund and determine the amount and number of awards to be given annually. Although you may contribute to the Patron's Fund at any time through-

out the year, if you would like your name to appear in the Annual Awards Program book as a donor, your contribution must be received **no later than** April 8, 2015 and be a minimum of \$25. Contributions at a higher level are very much appreciated. Donations may also be made in memoriam or gifted in honor.

We urge you to fill out the information in the box below to make your contribution to the Patron's Fund. 

## Patron's Fund Form



The Patron's Fund is an educational fund used to support the annual awardees selected by The Friends of American Writers. The fund is divided into two categories: the Literature Awards Fund and the Young People's Literature Awards Fund. Contributions to the Patron's Fund are split equally between the Literature Awards and the Young People's Literature Awards. If you would like your donation applied differently, you may designate how you would like the donation applied to each fund. Monies are allocated to these funds from members' dues, sale of books, and patrons' donations.

Donor's Name

---

Donor's Address and/or Contact Information

---

How Donor's Name Should Appear in the Program Book

---

Amount of Donation

---

How Money is to be Divided:

Literature Awards

---

Young People's Literature Awards

---

Undesignated contributions shall be divided equally between the Literature Awards Fund and the Juvenile Literature Awards Fund.

Please mail your contributions to Ms. Eileen McNulty, 4450 N. Kostner, Chicago, IL 60630. 

## FEATURE ON THIS DAY IN APRIL

BY SHIRLEY BAUGHER

We welcome April for many reasons. First and foremost, it signals that the long winter is over

*...for behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.*

SONG OF SOLOMON 2:12

SOME OF us look forward to the Easter celebration; others, to the feast of the Passover. In April, we also observe a number of interesting firsts: the \$ sign was invented (1778), the Pony Express first started delivering mail (1860), NATO was founded (1949), Perry reached the North Pole (1909), the first modern Olympic Games opened in Athens (1896), Twinkies went on the market (1930), the Revolutionary War began (1775), the first Social Security checks were distributed (1937), and the first professional golf tournament was held (1916).

### You Must Remember This

I offer another April day for your remembrance: April 9, 1865. On that day, 150

years ago, two men signed a document that ended one of the bloodiest and costliest wars in American history. There was no media fanfare, no cheering crowds, and no acknowledgment from the world at large that anything was happening. Only two men sitting in a living room surrounded by their aides—the victor and the vanquished.

They met in a two-story cottage in Appomattox, Virginia: the home of Wilmer McLean, a wholesale grocer who liked to say, “The war began in my front yard, and ended in my parlor”—a statement not too far from the truth. Robert E. Lee, Commanding General of the Army of Northern Virginia, arrived first and took his place in a large sitting room on the first floor. Ulysses S. Grant, Gen-

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◀ Home of Wilmer McLean, Appomattox

eral of the Army of the Potomac, arrived shortly thereafter. He entered the room alone and sat ten feet away, facing Lee. Grant's aides then walked in quietly and gathered at the side of the room—like visitors

entering a hospital room where the patient lay dying.

General Grant was then forty-three years old. He stood five feet eight inches tall. There was not a streak of grey in his red/brown hair and beard. He sat casually, his shoulders stooped and a little rounded. His dark blue flannel shirt was unbuttoned in the front, his waistcoat showing underneath. He had tucked his trousers inside an old pair of mud-spattered boots. He had no sword. He looked like an ordinary soldier, and this was deliberate. Many years before this day, as a young West Point graduate, he had made a trip to his home in Ohio wearing his formal second lieutenant's uniform. The men back home laughed at him and called him a dude. After that he wore the

uniform of a private soldier with his officer's insignia stitched to the shoulders, even though he had three stars to put there—more than any American officer since George Washington and Winfield Scott.

Robert E. Lee, sixteen years older than Grant, was a commanding figure at six feet tall. He sat erect. His hair and beard were silver grey and thick. He wore a new uniform of Confederate grey,

buttoned up to his throat. He carried a finely crafted sword, the hilt studded with jewels. His boots, encased in handsome spurs and stitched with red silk, were spotless and looked new. A grey felt hat, matching his uniform, rested on the table at his side along with a pair of long buckskin gloves.

Looking at him, Grant remarked, "I met you once while we were serving in Mexico. I have always remembered your appearance, and I think I should have recognized you anywhere."

"Yes," replied Lee. "I know I met you on that occasion, and I have often thought of it and tried to recollect how you looked, but I have never been able to recall of single feature."

The two men spoke a little more about Mexico. Lee asked for the terms of surrender. Grant took out a book and wrote without stopping. Grant had always been an excellent writer who knew how to say what needed to be said quickly and succinctly. He handed the document to Lee, who studied it briefly and asked only that his Cavalry and Artillery be allowed to keep their horses. Grant agreed. He did not humiliate his

▼ General Robert E. Lee signs the terms of surrender



▲ Lee rides off to break the news of surrender to his troops

old adversary by asking that he or his officers surrender their swords. Lee wrote a letter accepting the terms, shook hands with Grant, and left the room.

The old General stood on the porch looking with great sadness over the valley where his defeated army waited. Grant walked behind him and raised his hat in salute. The other Union officers did the same. Lee acknowledged by raising his hat. Then he mounted his magnificent horse, Cincinnati, and rode off to break the sad news to his troops.

A stillness lay over Appomattox.

### Hard Road to Glory

Appomattox was still that day, but the road leading there was not. It was crowded, noisy, confusing, and covered with blood. If few of us remember the details, it is probably because we were taught (and soon forgot) only the names and dates of battles. The Civil War was memorable for reasons far more important than the names and dates of battles. It brought about a revolution in the nature of combat and combatants. These are just a few things to consider.

The Union Army of 1864 was a different army than the one that came together when Fort Sumter was fired upon in 1861. Northerners had volunteered in droves to save the Union. The Army of the Potomac was no longer a volunteer army. Men who came into this new army were either made to join or paid to join. They were concerned only with money, and used every means possible to desert or fake injuries to avoid combat.

The leadership of the army had also changed. Ulysses S. Grant was a new man for a new era. Nobody quite knew what to make of him. One high-ranking officer said he looked like



▲ Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee

someone who had made up his mind to drive his head through a stone wall. Another observed, "He's a little 'un." While some still thought he was a drunk, he was not. At one time he had gotten into trouble for his drinking, but that time was behind him. He was now a sober, hard-hitting man of war, a hands-on commander who planted himself in the middle of the fray, often sitting on a tree stump smoking a cigar and whittling on a tree branch. In the heat of a battle, he would sit calmly, taking in the whole picture and issuing orders for couriers to carry to the troops. It worked.



▲ Trench warfare

### A New Kind of Warfare

The Civil War introduced a new kind of warfare. In the past, armies fought by facing each other across a field of action and attacking head-on at an appointed time—siege warfare. In 1864, troops

were fighting on terrain where the woods were so dense it was impossible to form a battle line. The Confederate army had learned that good troops, using rifles and artillery and standing in well-built trenches, could not be defeated by a frontal assault. So began the era of trench warfare.

### Faraway Places with Strange Sounding Names

We can all name places of famous historic battles: Troy, Waterloo, Hastings, Agincourt. Civil War battles were fought at sites that no one had ever heard of: Shiloh Church, Chancellorsville, Cold Harbor-- places that both sides believed were critical to their causes. When the fighting was over, their names were engraved in history.

The Civil War is also remembered for the deplorable conditions under which the men had to fight. Infantrymen were marched until they were half dead from exhaustion. Food was so scarce they were literally starving. At Cold Harbor, they arrived so caked with dirt and worn out many fell asleep on their feet. Just before the attack, one soldier woke his sleeping comrade and said, "Jim, there's a pile of troops coming. I guess there's going to be a fight." Jim replied, "I don't care a damn. I wish they'd shoot us and be done with it. I'd rather be shot than marched to death."

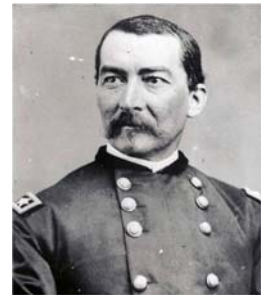
The battle at Cold Harbor—a place that was neither a harbor nor cold—was one of the worst in a series of defeats for the Union. Entire regiments were slaughtered. The 12th New Hampshire never even saw the enemy. All they experienced was fire and smoke and a continual noise that sounded like a volcano erupting. Watching his comrades fall to the ground as they advanced, one officer thought someone had given the order to lie down—and so he did. The company commander kept prodding them with his sword and ordering them to get up until he realized they were all dead. "Nothing but the judgment trumpet

of the Almighty would ever bring them to their feet again." The Union lost 7,000 men in half an hour. At the end of the day, a private wrote to his parents, "If there is ever again any rejoicing in the world, it will be when this war is over. One who has never been under fire has no idea of war." It is an observation many war advocates today might consider.

### They Who Must Be Obeyed

The army had always believed that their leaders knew best and had to be obeyed--until the Civil War. As one bloody battle followed another, it became obvious that the Union army was being defeated as much by inept leadership as by the enemy. At one point, Lincoln brought in an enlisted man and asked how he thought the conduct of the War might be improved. The man replied, "Get rid of the generals."

By 1864, the commanding officer of the Army of the Potomac, General George Meade, had become so war weary he was like a wounded bear. After he lost 60,000 of the 100,000 men under his command, Grant replaced him with General Phillip Sheridan--another new man for the new age. Sheridan's motto for winning the war was: "Smash 'em up! Hurt the enemy in any way possible with whatever means necessary." In the summer of 1864, he ruthlessly marched his men through the Shenandoah Valley, capturing one fort after another and leaving nothing but scorched earth behind. After each battle, the Union position improved and the Confederate position worsened.



▲ General Phillip Sheridan

On March 29, 1865, 9,400 Union soldiers attacked the Confederate army at another unknown place: Dinwiddie Courthouse. Sheridan led his men in yelling, "Give it to them!" The charge was so fierce one Confederate soldier remarked, "Well, good-bye boys, this means death." He was right. The Rebel army had just nine days left.

Amelia Courthouse was Lee's last stand. There, the Union army burned Confederate wagon trains and surrounded the trenches. When the Yankee cavalry charged amid shouting and smoke from thousands of muskets, Confederate soldiers threw down their arms and surrendered. Lee watched from a hilltop.

On April 7, Grant sent Lee a note asking him to surrender under a flag of truce. He then drove his infantry forward on the hardest march they had ever made: forty-two miles over deep ruts and through choking dust. This was the road they had been going toward since the beginning of the war-- the road home. Thousands had died trying to get there.

At dawn on April 8, 1865, Grant's infantry joined Sheridan's cavalry on the road to Appomattox. The men were told that if they hurried, this was the day they could finish everything. They were promised breakfast if they got to Appomattox quickly, and they were desperately hungry. When they arrived, they made a fierce charge at the last of the Confederate army. The Rebels let out one final spine-tingling yell and ran forward. They thought they had broken the charge, until they saw lines and lines of blue infantry coming toward them. They stopped, and everything went quiet. As the two armies looked at each

Continued ►



other, a young officer in a grey uniform rode forward waving a white flag.

The men could not believe it. The end was here. Word spread up and down the lines on both sides. Grant and Lee were going to meet at Appomattox, and Lee was going to surrender. There would be no more killing.

The Union army should have been cheering, but no one felt like celebrating. Both sides just sat on the ground and looked at each other. “I remember how we sat there and pitied and sympathized with these courageous Southern men,” one Union soldier wrote years later. “They had fought for four long and dreary years so stubbornly, so bravely and so well, and now, whipped, beaten, completely used up, they were fully at our mercy—it was pitiful, sad, hard, and seemed to us altogether too bad.”

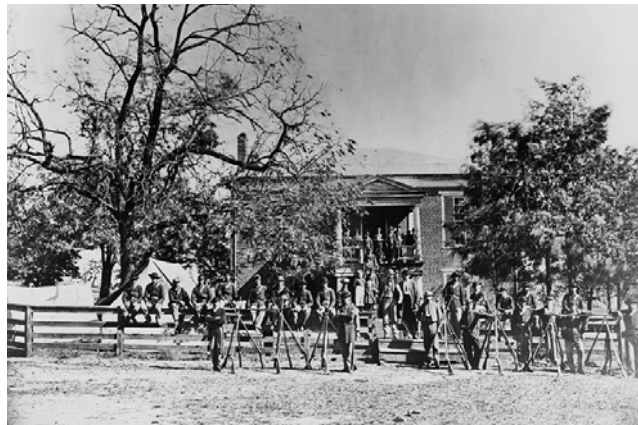
On the road, Grant rode up to Sheridan and his officers. They saluted him. The General nodded his head toward Appomattox and asked, “Is General Lee up there?”

“Yes,” Sheridan answered. “He is.”

“Very well,” Grant said, “let’s go up.”

The two armies stood by in silence as they passed. Somewhere a band started to play “Auld Lang Syne.”

**Note:** On April 9, WTTW, WFMT, the Union League Club, and the Great Books Foundation will present a Great Books-style discussion group called “With Malice Toward None: 150 Years Since the Surrender at Appomattox.” The discussion, led by leading Chicago citizens and Civil War scholars, will be held at the Union League Club from 5:30 to 7:30. Cocktails and hors d’oeuvres will be served at 5:30. The discussion will begin at 6:00. Tickets are \$25 and must be purchased by April 8. To register, go to <https://MaliceTowardNone.eventbrite.com>



▲ A Stillness at Appomattox

## The Reading Corner

*Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words that Remade America.*  
Garry Wills

Reviewed by NORMAN BAUGHER

In the February review of Gore Vidal’s *Lincoln I* I wrote that I hoped Vidal’s book would inspire you to read other Lincoln books and mentioned Garry Wills’ *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words That Remade America* as an example. If you are as much a Lincoln fan as I, this review may further encourage you.

Perhaps the only thing Vidal and Wills have in common, other than their names coming near the end of the alphabet, is their decision to select Lincoln as a subject. That commonality ends with how each chose to portray Lincoln. Vidal’s book explored Lincoln’s heart and

soul. Wills’ book focuses on Lincoln’s mind and language. Vidal viewed Lincoln from the outside. Wills’ book allows you to discover Lincoln’s inner self and mind, through his own words.

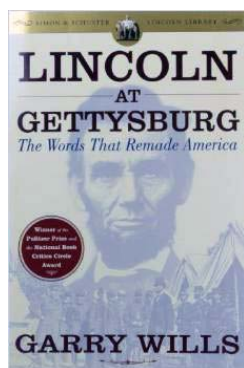
Wills, a Pulitzer Prize winner, has written nearly 40 books, mostly about politics and religion. He is currently an Emeritus Professor of History at Northwestern University and lives in Evanston, Illinois. His books reveal a deep thinker and a keen observer of the smallest details. The chapter titles in the contents page of *Lincoln at Gettysburg* and Wills’ scholarly credentials might lead you to believe this book is dry. This notion will vanish before you finish the first page. I found myself rushing forward with excitement and slowing down to savor all the revelations.

### The Speech

*Lincoln at Gettysburg* is only 320 pages long—even shorter if you read only the 171 pages that comprise the Prologue through the Epilogue. In these essential pages Wills lays out the thesis that Lincoln’s deep political experience, his understanding

of America’s history, and his mastery of language went into the writing of “The Gettysburg Address.” In this brilliant address, Lincoln made America’s cardinal document the Declaration of Independence not the Constitution, a revolutionary change.

The Prologue sets the stage for the Gettysburg Address with a brief synopsis of the battle and its tens of thousands of dead and wounded. Wills shows the effects of the battle on the both the war and its combatants, and explains how the failures of Generals Lee and Meade affected both sides of the conflict. Later chapters explain how and why the idea of a memorial cemetery at that particular place and time came into being. It surprised me that the onerous task of burying the dead was not a national effort but was, in this case, left to the state of Pennsylvania. The Republican Governor, Andrew Curtin, who was facing a difficult re-election campaign, assigned 32 year-old David Wills to be his agent on the scene. Young David immediately formed an interstate commission to finance and plan the creation of a massive cemetery in which to bury the thousands of dead—a job that had to be done quickly and thoroughly. Wills planned to



dedicate the ground using the standard format for cemetery dedications as shown in this program for the Soldiers National Cemetery, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania:

*Music, by Birgfield's band; Prayer, by Rev. T. H. Stockton, D.D.; Music, by the Marine Band; Oration, by Hon. Edward Everett; Music, Hymn composed by B. B. French, Esq.; Dedicatory Remarks, by the President of the United States; Dirge, sung by Choir selected for the occasion; Benediction, by Rev. H. L. Baugher, D.D.*

### Popular Mythology Concerning the Gettysburg Address

It has been said that (1) Lincoln's invitation was an afterthought and a slight, (2) that his speech was ignored or considered weak at the time, (3) that it was not well received, and (4) that the address was so short the photographer didn't have time to record it. Gary Wills debunks all of these myths.

1. It was not unusual for state projects such as this to not invite the president or any federal officials make an address.
2. There was only one 'oration' announced here. Though we call Lincoln's text the Gettysburg Address, that title clearly belongs to Everett. Lincoln's contribution, labeled 'remarks,' was intended to make the dedication formal, somewhat like our modern ribbon-cutting.
3. Lincoln was one of America's first great modern writers. Wills noted that early on Lincoln wrote bad poetry, but like many bad poets, he learned to write great prose. He admired the speeches of Webster and the other great orators of his time, but his own writing evolved into a new style that avoided their Victorian excesses. Lincoln mastered the art of direct, unornamented language. He believed how something was said was critical to effective communication, and he applied Occam's razor to the best of his speeches. He valued phrasing, meter, and precise word selection. He used common phrases and themes from the Bible and from Shakespeare as tools to create deeper, more emotional meaning. His funny stories were

humorous parables that enabled him to express a negative thought with less sting and to make a memorable point. Lincoln knew that no matter how beautiful, language is empty but for the thought it carried—language and concept bolstered one another

Words did not simply flow magically from Lincoln's pen. Just as some authors write without effort, others sweat blood. With his lawyerly mind, penchant for exactness, and for creating and having his conditional statements ordered meaningfully, Lincoln was among the bleeders. He edited and reedited all his major speeches. None was extemporaneous, putting the lie to the myth that he wrote the Gettysburg address on the back of an envelope on the train to the dedication or that he edited it even as he addressed the thousands at the dedication. A comparison between ideas William Seward submitted for Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address and Lincoln's final version of these ideas shows Lincoln's linguistic mastery.

**Seward:** I close.

**Lincoln:** I am loath to close.

**Seward:** Although passion has strained our bonds of affection too hardly, they must not, I am sure they will not, be broken.

**Lincoln:** Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection.

And perhaps more famously:

**Seward:** The mystic chords which, proceeding from so many battle-fields and so many patriot graves, pass through all the hearts and all the hearths in this broad continent of ours, will yet harmonize in their ancient music when breathed upon by the guardian angels of the nation.

**Lincoln:** The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave, to every living heart and hearthstone, all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.

### Lincoln on Slavery

Lincoln was not an abolitionist, and he did not think Negroes were his equals.

To him the Declaration of Independence intended to include all men equal, but equal only in certain unalienable rights—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. He believed slavery was evil, but he knew it was protected by the Constitution. Slavery could be abolished only by a Constitutional amendment, and he knew that an amendment would not pass.

Lincoln was a firm believer in the Union and held that no state could unilaterally secede.

*[T]he union is Perpetual, confirmed by the history of the Union itself. The Union is much older than the Constitution. It was formed, in fact, by the Articles of Association of 1774. It was matured and continued by the Declaration of Independence in 1776. It was matured, and the faith of all the then thirteen States expressly plight and engaged that it should be perpetual, by the Articles of Confederation in 1778. And finally, in 1787 one of the declared objects of ordaining and establishing the constitution was "to form a more perfect union".*

The war started when the rebels fired on Fort Sumter. It didn't end with Gettysburg, but Gettysburg signaled a change of fortune for the Union. When Lincoln was asked to deliver the dedication to the cemetery, to memorialize the awful and fearsome events that took place near and in Gettysburg, he realized that the creation of the cemetery and its dedication ceremony would allow him to use the power of words to express his belief that the cause of freedom was best served through union. He labored over and delivered a deeply felt message focusing on an essential aspect of American nationhood—freedom-- "by tracing its first birth to the Declaration of Independence (which called all men equal) rather than to the Constitution (which tolerated slavery)".

By recalling these words of the Declaration, the first document of the first revolution that dealt with first principles instead of governmental structure and law that comprises the Constitution, Lincoln brought about a second American revolution.

*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among*

Continued ▶



CHRISTINE BERN  
1028 S. Butternut Circle  
Frankfort, IL 60423

*these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.*

Lincoln opened the Gettysburg Address by citing the date of the founding document using Biblical syntax and style: *Fourscore and seven years our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.* He concludes by stating, *we here highly resolve that the dead shall not have died in vain, that the nation shall, under God, have a new birth of freedom, and that the government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.* The full speech, with its self-referential system, eschewing pronouns and repeating antecedents is familiar, personal, succinct, graceful, and muscular.

Wills ends the last chapter before the Epilogue this way. "In his brief time before the crowd at Gettysburg he wove a

spell that has not yet been broken—he called up a new nation out of the blood and trauma."

The Epilogue, titled "The Other Address," deals with Lincoln's Second Inaugural, an address intended to complete what he began with the Gettysburg Address. This address is seen by Wills as a prayer. In the Epilogue, you come to understand the agony Lincoln suffered throughout the war: a non-violent man condemned to lead a most violent war.

Earlier I mentioned that the end matter had nearly as many pages as the main body of text. These supporting pages begin with Appendix I that explores the several versions of the Address: where they are and how they came about. Appendix II explains the confusion about where the speaking platform was located and how the actual location was finally determined. Appendix III includes funeral orations by Everett,

and early Greek orations by Pericles and Gorgias that served as models through the ages. Two versions of The Gettysburg Address are offered: what is assumed to be the spoken version and what is known to be the final version. Wills enables you to compare Edward Everett's 35-page 19th century oration, the now mostly-forgotten main event of ceremony, with Lincoln's 272 words that remain current and powerful. There are 60 pages of endnotes containing acknowledgements, indexes, and photo credits. Most people probably don't read endnotes, but I often scan through them because they often contain interesting tidbits that don't fit comfortably in the text itself.

Because *Lincoln at Gettysburg* is a short, complex, and compact book, every paragraph carries a heavy load of information. Few of us have Lincoln's skill to say so much so clearly with so few words. Garry Wills' analysis could not be expressed in the 272 words of Lincoln's Address, but he does make brief work of explicating so much information around a difficult concept. I repeat, anyone who loves Lincoln ought to read this book. ■■■



▲ Lincoln, bareheaded left of center, three hours before the speech