

(assuming there is no mention in the portion of the letter that did not survive), namely: Barlow was almost certainly in a state of shock at the time, probably delirious, and for that reason may have had only a very dim recollection, assuming he had any at all, of the first person to attend to him; Gordon says quite clearly that he did not linger with Barlow, that he did what was asked of him by Barlow, promised him that he would get word to Arabella, and then turned him over to his subordinates for further care; Barlow may have deliberately omitted Gordon from his narrative because of what he had requested of him, i.e., to destroy Arabella's *billets-doux*.

With respect to the third reason for doubting the authenticity of the meeting, i.e. Arabella's coming to the battlefield, first things first. Is there any doubt that she came? None whatsoever. Is there any doubt as to when she came? None; she came the evening of July 1. Then why does Barlow not mention her in his letter of July 7? One can conceive of reasons, but it really matter little. What matters is that we know with certainty that she came to him well before July 7, that he nevertheless does not mention her in the surviving part of his letter of that date, and that such failure to mention her does not negate her coming, in the same way that failure to mention Gordon's acts of kindness does not negate their meeting.

In an article entitled "After the Battle" that appeared in the December 31, 1885, edition of *The National Tribune*, General O.O. Howard, Commander of the XI Corps at Gettysburg, wrote at great length about Francis and Arabella, spoke glowingly of both and included the following material that is relevant here:

I can never forget how speedily, as if led by instinct, (Barlow's) good wife found her way from Frederick or Baltimore to our lines after they had been established on the Cemetery Ridge. She said, as she found me not far from the Cemetery gates: "Gen. Howard, my husband is wounded and left within the enemy's lines, I MUST GO TO HIM."... She said, "They will not fire at me," and so started rapidly down the Baltimore Pike toward the court-house..."I cannot get through there," she said. She undertook this bold enterprise once again. "I will go there," pointing to the left, "where both sides can see me." She did so, and this time succeeded in passing through both skirmish-lines and reaching her husband.

Arabella's arrival on July 1 receives corroboration from Gordon's statement, in *Last Days*, that "Late that night (i.e. the night of July 1 - July 2), as I lay in the open field upon my saddle, a picket from the front announced a lady on my lines. It was Mrs. Barlow. She was carried to her husband's side during the night by my staff."

[Next month: The rest of the story.]

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