

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-