

**CW/VFM-67: John George Nicolay**

Letter, 1861 November 29, Executive Mansion, to C. A. Walborn, Philadelphia.  
ALS, 1 page. Tipped into a bound copy of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address

Nicolay was originally born in the Rhineland in 1832, and immigrated to the United States in 1838 with his father. Later, he would become the assistant secretary of state of Illinois; where he met Abraham Lincoln. In 1861, Lincoln appointed Nicolay his private secretary and remained so until Lincoln's assassination in 1865. Just prior to his death, Lincoln appointed Nicolay the US Consul at Paris, France. He served in this position until 1869, and a few years later was appointed as the US Supreme Court marshal; he held this position for about five years. He also wrote books, his first was called *The Outbreak of the Rebellion*, and was published in 1881. Later, he and John Hay (who was also assistant secretary to Lincoln) collaborated on a biography of the president and it appeared serially in the *Century Magazine* from 1886 to 1890 before it was issued in a ten-volume book set in the 1890s.

Lincoln's Gettysburg Address:

**Article glued in cover:** *Girard's Topics of the Town*  
Account of the wounding of General H.S. Huidekoper

Huidekoper served in the 150<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Volunteers as an officer (colonel). While at Gettysburg, he was wounded twice and lost his right arm. He was so prostrated from his wounds he could not return to active duty, and instead served in the National Guard of Pennsylvania. He was appointed to Major General in 1870 by Governor Geary.

**Letter from Nicolay glued in cover:**

He wrote a note to C.A. Walborn telling him that Lincoln's message will not be ready when Walborn apparently wanted it to be.

According to the actual text of this book, there are three different forms of Lincoln's famous *Gettysburg Address*. All are fairly similar in sentiment, but worded differently. The first is the original draft written by Lincoln himself, the second is the version that was taken down in shorthand by the reporter on the stand at Gettysburg, and the third is a revised copy made by the president a few days after his return from Gettysburg. Within this book is a copy of the manuscript as it existed just before Lincoln's arrival in Gettysburg. It also contains the shorthand version that was created as he spoke, and the

revised version Lincoln created when he arrived back in Washington, D.C. This book also gives a step by step account of Lincoln's visit to Gettysburg to give this address and contains different quotes from prominent politicians and figures of the time.

Original document: 7pp.

**Keywords:** Lincoln – Presidency; Letters; Politics – Republican;

**Location:** Civil War Vertical File Manuscripts, Special Collections & College Archives, Musselman Library at Gettysburg College.

**See also:** [Civil War Sources in Special Collections](#)