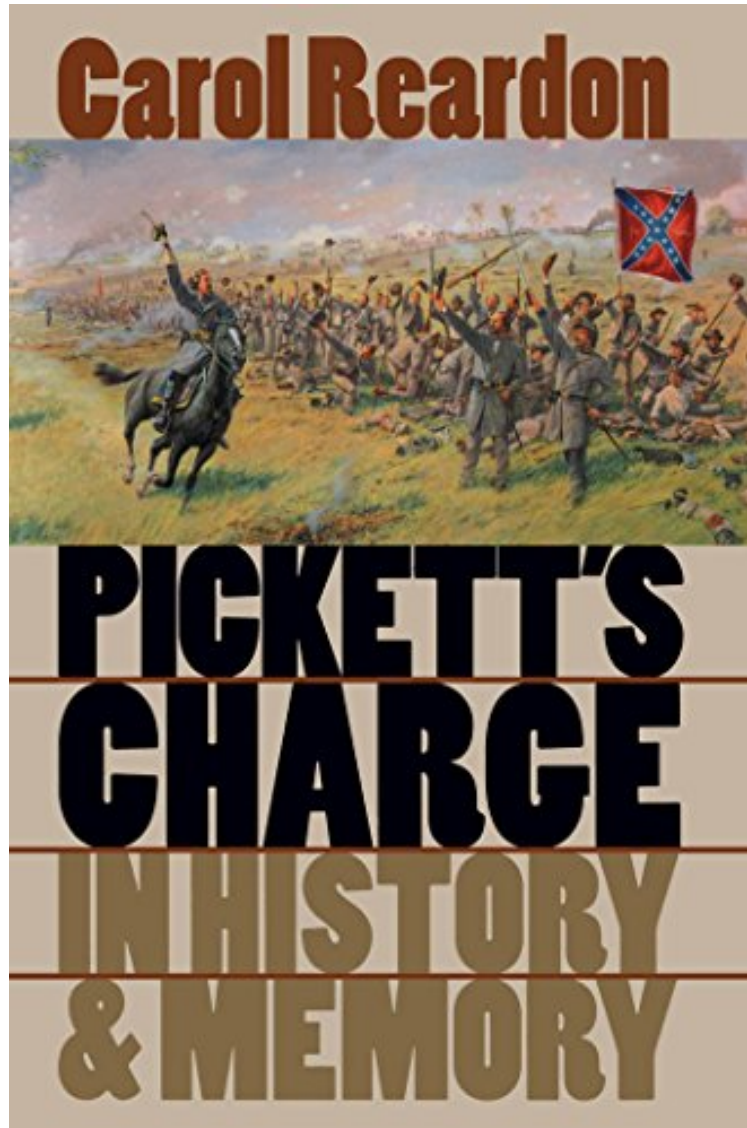


(Download free pdf) Pickett's Charge in History and Memory

## Pickett's Charge in History and Memory

*Carol Reardon*

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#1116039 in Books Carol Reardon 2003-02-24Ingredients: Example IngredientsOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.18 x .74 x 6.021, 1.01 #File Name: 0807854611296 pagesCarol ReardonCampaigns BattlefieldsGettysburgMilitary History | File size: 42.Mb

**Carol Reardon : Pickett's Charge in History and Memory** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Pickett's Charge in History and Memory:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. InformativeBy TawcatAlthough I have not finished this book, for what I have read it is great. I purchased this on recommendation by my journalist brother-in-law.22 of 22 people found the following review helpful. Truth Ever ElusiveBy Kerr SmithMs. Reardon's wonderful book underscores the challenge that we all face as we read and attempt to separate fact from fiction and fancy.This book is a case study in

the mysterious confluence of objective history and subjective history. Ms Reardon deftly takes the reader from July 3, 1863, the day of Pickett's Charge, to the present day and shows how elusive the truth is. As an avid student of the American Civil War in particular and history in general, I learned three very important lessons from Ms Reardon. First, the thundering violence and confusion of battle make the search for the truth exceedingly difficult. The actual participants in Pickett's Charge were able to vividly and tellingly relate their emotions at the time. However, their reports of actual events and actions were understandably contradictory. Second, as Ms Reardon illuminates throughout the book, the careful reader must consider the possible motives of the author while reading the work. Ms Reardon demonstrates that the Virginia Historical Society was more interested in protecting state pride than searching for the truth. The numerous instances of conflicting accounts of this single day of the Civil War reminds me of Richard Nixon's response to the question of how history will judge him: "It depends on who writes the history". One can call Nixon's response cynical, but Ms Reardon reminds us that the wise reader will possess a healthy skepticism. Finally, when one pores through a Civil War book, or any book on warfare for that matter, the reader must understand that the neat maps of the terrain and the formations belie the utter confusion, terror, and violence inherent in battle. Ms Reardon won me over with her eye for the telling detail when she pointed out that the terrain prevented both Union and Confederate soldiers from a panoramic view of the battlefield. The rolling hills prevented the Union troops from seeing large parts of the charge. Meanwhile, a gentle ridge split the attacking Confederates in half. Ms Reardon ruefully notes that numerous historical accounts from both sides provide intimate details of things that were not visible from the participant's location. Ms Reardon quotes a grizzled veteran who summed it all up when he said, "Pickett's Charge has been so grossly exaggerated and misrepresented as to give some color to the oft-repeated axiom that 'history is an agreed-upon lie'." 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Pickett's Charge By Jeffrey R Carlson Too little history, but a good primer on why we will never fully understand nor comprehend precisely what happened here.

If, as many have argued, the Civil War is the most crucial moment in our national life and Gettysburg its turning point, then the climax of the climax, the central moment of our history, must be Pickett's Charge. But as Carol Reardon notes, the Civil War saw many other daring assaults and stout defenses. Why, then, is it Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg--and not, for example, Richardson's Charge at Antietam or Humphreys's Assault at Fredericksburg--that looms so large in the popular imagination? As this innovative study reveals, by examining the events of 3 July 1863 through the selective and evocative lens of 'memory' we can learn much about why Pickett's Charge endures so strongly in the American imagination. Over the years, soldiers, journalists, veterans, politicians, orators, artists, poets, and educators, Northerners and Southerners alike, shaped, revised, and even sacrificed the 'history' of the charge to create 'memories' that met ever-shifting needs and deeply felt values. Reardon shows that the story told today of Pickett's Charge is really an amalgam of history and memory. The evolution of that mix, she concludes, tells us much about how we come to understand our nation's past.

.com Pickett's Charge--the Confederates' desperate (and failed) attempt to break the Union lines on the third and final day of the Battle of Gettysburg--is best remembered as the turning point of the U.S. Civil War. But Penn State historian Carol Reardon reveals how hard it is to remember the past accurately, especially when an event such as this one so quickly slipped into myth. She writes, "From the time the battle smoke cleared, Pickett's Charge took on this chameleonlike aspect and, through a variety of carefully constructed nuances, adjusted superbly to satisfy the changing needs of Northerners, Southerners, and, finally, the entire nation." With care and detail, Reardon's fascinating book teaches a lesson in the uses and misuses of history. This is a skillful and compelling example of the way an event whose story we think we know turns out to be as mobile as quicksilver when we try to put a finger down for certain.--Allen C. Guelzo, The Barnes Noble Reardon has done a wonderful job of bringing together the various threads of most of the contemporary and historical arguments surrounding the charge. . . . Her subject is not Gettysburg: it is American mythology, and she illuminates it in a thoughtful way.--Journal of Military History Exceptionally lucid. . . . This fine book provides vivid evidence of just how far we will go to alchemize fantasy into fact.--Jonathan Yardley, Washington Post [Reardon] does an excellent job of separating the wheat from the chaff in the accounts and shows us that one must always be on guard in how we remember and preserve our past.--Confederate Veteran Pickett's famous 'charge' at Gettysburg eventually acquired the proportions of a heroic myth that influenced the way in which southern whites constructed their past and understood their heritage. Carol Reardon's Pickett's Charge in History and Memory explores with wit and insight the relationship between this pivotal event and the memories of that event. It makes an important contribution to our knowledge of the Civil War and, more importantly, to our understanding of that war's continuing cultural impact.--James M. McPherson, author of For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War Thought provoking and highly interesting, Reardon's book is a pleasure to read.--Orlando Sentinel A superb, informative, highly readable book. . . . This reviewer has for many years been fascinated by this particular battle, has read many historical accounts (virtually all written by Southern authors), and has had the opportunity to read personal letters and diaries as well. Professor Reardon's book is surely the most balanced and objective.--Maryland Historical Magazine [Reardon] offers readers a valuable new guide to the influences of memory in American national history. . . .

Civil War buffs will love it.--ChoiceQuite apart from its notable historical interest, Ms. Reardon's work is a splendidly lively study of the manipulation, not necessarily deliberate or malign, of public opinion.--Atlantic MonthlyIndispensable. . . . Eminently valuable beyond the confines of Civil War scholarship.--Register of the Kentucky Historical SocietyReardon gives a painstaking, vigorous and readable accounting of how legends are built in lieu of facts.--Richmond MagazineEveryone interested in the battle of Gettysburg must read and study Pickett's Charge in History and Memory.--Journal of American HistoryCarol Reardon has given us a riveting study of the evolution of 'Pickett's Charge' from heroic historic event to biased near-legend. I recommend it to all persons having interest in the Charge.--Harry W. Pfanz, author of Gettysburg--The Second DayA fascinating and valuable study.--Georgia Historical QuarterlyCarol Reardon has placed serious students of the Civil War much in her debt with this thoroughly researched, deeply thoughtful study of how the legendary image of Pickett's Charge has shaped historical understanding of that event. With clear, graceful prose, Reardon cuts through the mist of popular myth and memory to show us both the real charge and the societal cravings that gave it a symbolic value transcending reality. An excellent book, this is must reading for anyone serious about understanding the Civil War and its impact on the American mind.--Steven E. Woodworth, author of Davis and Lee at WarWell-written and meticulously researched, Pickett's Charge in History and Memory utilizes first-rate scholarship to tell a fascinating story. It deserves the attention of scholars and should win a wide audience among general readers.--Civil War HistoryA fresh look at the disastrous assault.--New Yorker