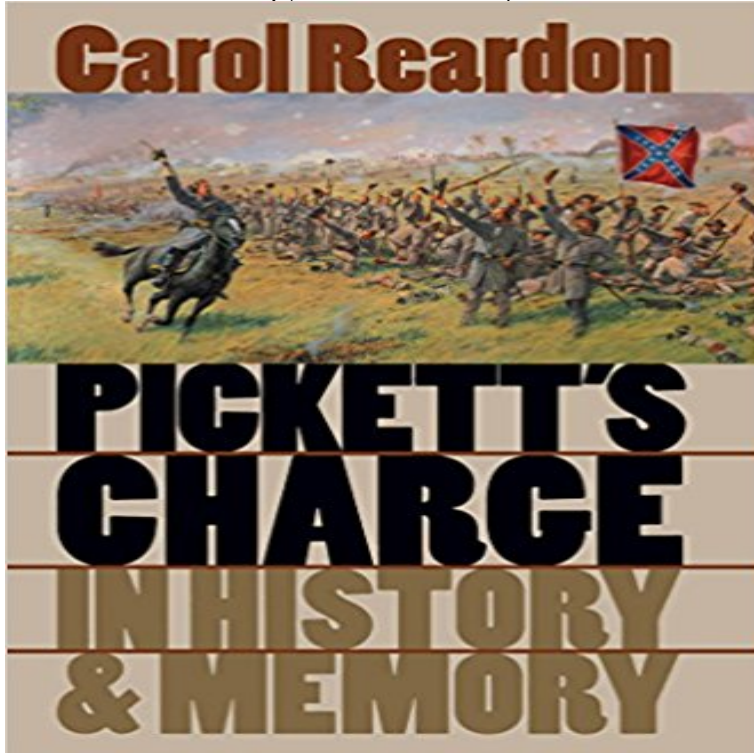


## Picketts Charge in History and Memory



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 Picketts Charge. But as Carol Reardon notes, the Civil War saw many other daring assaults and stout defenses. Why, then, is it Picketts Charge at Gettysburg--and not, for example, Richardsons Charge at Antietam or Humphreys 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 Picketts 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 Picketts 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 nations past. A fresh look at the disastrous assault.--New Yorker A splendidly lively study of the manipulation, not necessarily deliberate or malign, of public opinion.--Atlantic Monthly Exceptionally lucid. . . . This fine book provides vivid evidence of just how far we will go to alchemize fantasy into fact.--Jonathan Yardley, Washington Post Well-written and meticulously researched, Picketts Charge in History and Memory utilizes first-rate scholarship to tell a fascinating story. . . . Should win a wide audience among general readers.--Civil War History Assessing the myths and facts surrounding Picketts Charge, Carol Reardon explores why this event endures so strongly in the American

imagination. She demonstrates that the story told today of the charge is really an amalgam of history and memory and that the evolution of that mix tells us much about how we come to understand our nations past.-->

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