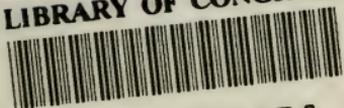


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HIGH TIDE AT GETTYSBURG, JULY 3, 1863

Gettysburg

A BATTLE ODE DESCRIPTIVE OF THE
GRAND CHARGE OF THE THIRD DAY

JULY 3, 1863

BY

ROBERT WM. DOUTHAT

(Now Professor in the West Virginia University)

*The Gettysburg Battle Lecturer, one of Pickett's Captains,
and the only one of the Ten Captains in his Regiment
who came out of the Charge unhurt*



NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON
THE NEALE PUBLISHING COMPANY

1905

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Dedication

TO EVERY MAN OF EVERY NATION
WHO ADMIRES HUMAN COURAGE
EXERCISED IN FAVOR OF HIS COUNTRY
THIS BATTLE ODE

“ GETTYSBURG ”

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
BY THE AUTHOR
WHO WAS A PARTICIPANT IN “ THE CHARGE ”

Introduction

“THE Charge,” generally known as “Pickett’s Charge,” might be called “The Pickett-Pettigrew-Trimble Charge,” but, rather than give it so long a name, the world has chosen to give it the name of the commander who led the right wing, partly because Pickett’s three brigades were made up of fresh troops, and as such were intended to give direction to the assault; and partly because in the charge Pickett’s three brigades suffered most.

As a Virginian I scorn the boast that Pickett’s Virginians were in anywise more gallant than the Tennesseans or North Carolinians or Mississippians who were also in the assault. These latter had been in the terrible battle of the first day, and Pickett’s men had not been in either the first or second day’s battle. Tennesseans, North Carolinians, and Mississippians had suffered greatly on the first day, losing over half their men, and many of those who had been wounded in the battle of the

first day went into the Great Charge on the third day with bandages on their heads or arms, at sight of which the imperturbable Lee is said to have shed tears.

Heaven forbid that Virginians should ever arrogate to themselves the glory that comes from this Charge! The glory belongs equally to the men of sister States, and there is certainly glory enough in the Charge for all, for no assault was ever made in all the annals of war more gallant and glorious than

*The Grand Charge of July 3d, 1863, Against
Cemetery Hill!
Across the Broad Valley of Death,
Through a Hail of Deadly Missiles,
Against an Avalanche of Fire,
Over the Breastworks of a Stubborn Foe,
Into the Center of Overwhelming Masses of Fed-
eral Infantry!*

Here was a "devotion" of which the Roman of old had never dreamed; here was a "holocaust" of sacrificial victims, such as Greece had never known! The men who at Marathon and Leuctra bled were not greater heroes than those who fell at Gettys-

burg. Napoleon's " Old Guard " never went more grandly to death than did Confederates " against the roaring crown of those dread heights of destiny," nor did Wellington command better soldiers than those who under the Stars and Stripes met and repulsed this terrible assault.

The Charge described in the " Battle Ode " following this Introduction was preceded by a terrific artillery duel of three hundred guns, and this duel lasted about two hours.

If you could imagine three hundred thunderstorms, all raging at once, and you yourself with ten thousand other persons in a forest and the lightning striking every other tree and killing every other man, you would have some idea of how we felt, if not of how we fared, during those two long hours. It was a period of awful suspense, such perhaps as no body of troops in any part of the world ever had to endure. The roar of the battle was heard for more than a hundred miles and mother earth trembled as from an earthquake. Multitudes were killed and wounded on both the Seminary and Cemetery Hills ; and while to those under fire agony seemed to reign supreme, to those at a distance the awful sublimity of the crash and

roar was as that which shall come "in the wreck of matter and the crash of worlds."

Some of the things said by Federals concerning the " Artillery Duel " :

(1) *Col. Norman J. Hall, U. S. Army, comd'g Brig., 2d Corps :*

" The experience of the terrible grandeur of that rain of missiles and that chaos of strange and terror-spreading sounds, unexampled, perhaps, in history, must ever remain undescribable, but can never be forgotten by those who heard it."

(2) *Gen'l Winfield Scott Hancock, U. S. Army, comd'g 2d Corps :*

" The number of the enemy's guns is variously estimated at from 115 to 150. The air was filled with projectiles, there being scarcely an instant but that several were seen bursting at once. No irregularity of ground offered much protection, and the plain in rear of the line of battle was soon swept of everything movable."

(3) *Col. Chapman Biddle, U. S. Army, 121st Penn., 1st Corps:*

" The fury of the unparalleled artillery fire."

(4) *Gen'l O. O. Howard, U. S. Army, comd'g 11th Corps :*

" There was safety on Cemetery Hill nowhere : shells were exploding in the earth, in the air, in the rock fences, among the tombstones, and in the caissons—in front, in rear, around us, under us, above us; and one of the Confederate shells killed and wounded twenty-seven Federal soldiers in one regiment."

While many men and horses were killed and wounded on the Confederate side during the two hours' cannonade, yet the terror and agony were not all on the one side.

Capt. Jno. G. Hazard, 1st Rhode Island Light Artillery, comd'g Brigade, says, "So great was the loss in officers and men and horses, that it was found necessary to consolidate five batteries into three. In several of these batteries, *every officer* was either killed or wounded." Cushing's Battery was so completely disabled, that fifty men had to be detailed from 71st Penn. Inf. to help work the guns; and finally Cushing, wounded in both legs and having only one gun left, had that gun pushed to the front and was held up until "he could serve his last canister into the enemy's ranks."

Men were decapitated, disemboweled,—wounded in every conceivable manner,—and one Federal cannoneer, J. F. Chase, Steven's Fifth Maine Battery, was wounded forty-eight times.

If our 6,000 shells had each done the same amount of damage, there would have been few Union soldiers left to tell of this the mightiest artillery contest that the world has ever known.

The artillery battalions and batteries of the

Confederates which took part in the artillery duel preceding "The Charge":

I. Those belonging to Longstreet's Corps, extending for one mile in a slight curve, arranged in order from left to right of this page, as one would look at them from the Union side:

(1)	(2)	(3)
Maj. H. W. Henry's Battalion,	Col. E. P. Alexander's Battalion, Commanded by Maj. Frank Huger,	Maj. B. F. Echleman's Battalion, Washington (La.) Artillery,
18 Guns,	16 Guns,	8 Guns and 2 in reserve,
Branch (N. Car.) Bat.	Ashland (Va.) Bat.	1st Company
German (S. Car.) Bat.	Bedford (Va.) Bat.	2d Company
Palmetto (S. Car.) Bat.	Brooks (S. Car.) Bat.	3d Company
Rowan (N. Car.) Bat.	Madison (La.) Bat.	4th Company
	A Virginia Battery	
	A Virginia Battery	
(4)	(5)	
Maj. Jas. Dearing's Battalion,	Col. H. C. Cabell's Battalion,	
18 Guns,	11 Guns, and 4 in reserve,	
Fauquier (Va.) Bat.	1st N. Car., Bat. A	
Hampden (Va.) Bat.	Pulaski (Ga.) Bat.	
Richmond Fayette Bat.	1st Richmond Howitzers	
A Virginia Battery	Troup (Ga.) Battery	

II. Those belonging to A. P. Hill's Corps, continuing the first mile curve at least another mile, arranged in order from left to right of this page, as one would look at them from the Union side :

(1)

Maj. W. J. Poague's
Battalion,

10 Guns,
and 6 in reserve,
Albemarle (Va.) Bat.
Charlotte (N. Car.) Bat.
Madison (Miss.) Bat.
A Virginia Battery

(2)

Maj. W. J. Pegram's
Battalion,
Commanded by
Captain Brunson,
16 Guns,
and 3 in reserve,
Crenshaw (Va.) Bat.
Fredericksb'g (Va.) Bat.
Letcher (Va.) Bat.
Pee Dee (S. Car.) Bat.
Purcell (Va.) Bat.

(3)

Maj. D. G. McIntosh's
Battalion,

17 Guns,

Danville (Va.) Bat.
Hardaway (Ala.) Bat.
2d Rockbridge (Va.) Bat.
A Virginia Battery

(4)

Maj. John Lane's
Sumter Battalion,
17 Guns,

Company A.
Company B.
Company C.

(5)

Lt. Col. J. J. Garnett's
Battalion,
9 Guns,
and 6 in reserve,
Donaldsonville (La.) Bat.
Huger (Va.) Bat.
Lewis (Va.) Bat.
Norfolk (Va.) Bat.

The troops engaged in the Charge, from left to right, looked at from Union side, were as follows :

Kemper's Brigade, 1-3-7-11-24 Va.	}	Pickett's Division,* Longstreet's Corps.
Armistead's Brigade, 9-14-38-53-57 Va.		
Garnett's Brigade, 8-18-19-28-56 Va.		
Archer's Tenn. Brig., 1-7-14 Tenn.; 13 Ala.; 5 Ala. Bat.	}	Heth's Division, A. P. Hill's Corps.
Pettigrew's N. Car. Brig., 11-26-47-52 N. Car.		
Davis's Miss. Brig., 2-11-42 Miss. and 55 N. Car.		
Brockenbrough's Va. Brig., 40-47-55 and 22 Bat.		

As supports for Pickett's right flank, there were,

Wilcox's Ala. Brig., 8-9-10-11-14 Ala.	}	R. H. Anderson's Div., A. P. Hill's Corps.
Perry's Fla. Brig., 2-5-8 Fla.		

As supports for Archer's, Pettigrew's, and Davis's Brigades,

Lane's N. Car. Brig., 7-18-28-33-37 N. Car.	}	Pender's Division, (Com. by Gen. J. R. Trimble), A. P. Hill's Corps.
Scale's N. Car. Brig., 13-16-22-34-38 N. Car.		

* Corse's Brigade of Pickett's Division was not in the Charge, having been left behind to help guard the approaches to Richmond, Va.

Some of the things said by Federal officers concerning the "Charge":

1. *Maj. Gen'l Henry J. Hunt, Chief of Federal Artillery :*

"The enemy advanced magnificently, unshaken by the shot and shell which tore through his ranks from McGilvery's Battery."

2. *Maj. Gen'l Winfield Scott Hancock, U. S. Army, commanding 2d Corps :*

"Their lines were formed with a precision and steadiness that extorted the admiration of the witnesses of that memorable scene."

3. *Brig. Gen'l John Gibbons, U. S. Army, commanding 2d Div., 2d Corps :*

"As the enemy's front line came up, it was met by such a withering fire of canister and musketry as soon melted it away, but still on they came from behind, pressing forward to the wall."

4. *Col. Norman J. Hall, U. S. Army, commanding 3d Brig., 2d Corps :*

"Twenty battle-flags were captured in the space of 100 yards square."

5. *Capt. Andrew Cowan, 1st Independent Bat., New York State Vols :*

"Our artillery fire was quite accurate and did much execution; still, the rebel line advanced in a most splendid

manner. I commenced firing canister at 200 yards, and the effect was greater than I could have anticipated. My last charge (a double-header) literally swept the enemy from my front, being fired at less than 20 yards."

6. *Maj. T. W. Osborn, 1st N. Y. Light Artillery Brig., 11th Corps:*

"We used, according to distance, all descriptions of projectiles, * * * The enemy's advance was most splendid."

7. *Brig. Gen'l Alexander Hays, U. S. Army, commanding 3d Div., 2d Corps:*

"Their march was as steady as if impelled by machinery, unbroken by our artillery, which played upon them a storm of missiles. When within 100 yards of our line of infantry, the fire of our men could no longer be restrained. Four lines rose from behind our stone wall, and when the smoke of our first volley had cleared away, such a field was presented as could be produced only by the angel of death."

8. *Maj. Theodore G. Ellis, U. S. Army, 14th Conn., 2d Corps:*

"The spectacle of their advance was magnificent."

9. *Capt. Henry C. Coates, U. S. Army, 1st Minn., 2d Corps:*

"The enemy marched resolutely in the face of a withering fire up to our lines, and succeeded in planting their colors on one of our batteries."

Battle Ode

•

I. THE ARTILLERY DUEL

Three hundred guns in rage have striven,
Three hundred guns the skies have riven,
And muttering thunders strong and deep
Have rolled along in mighty sweep.
This hurricane's rush has ceased its roar,
And Alexander sounds the note
For charge against the central host :
"Go, Pickett, now ; the charge begin ;
Go only now : a victory you 'll win
Renowned Forevermore !"

Pickett, gallant, gladly waiting,
Accepts the lull as omen bright
For added fame ; and as courtly knight
On hurrying steed, of chief inquires
If Longstreet now the Charge desires ;
But Longstreet, sad o'er loss foreseen,
Turns head away, as though he 'd say,
“ I 'd rather much this move forego,
For from such* charge fame can not flow
Onward Forevermore !”

With ardor that shall burn in story
While hearts yet thrill to deeds of glory,
Says Pickett, “ Up and form your lines :
To-day *your battle* saves our cause ;
To-day *this charge* destroys the foe's :
Now knit the brow and clench the teeth ;
With muscles tense and hearts aglow,
This charge must sure the center break ;
This charge the South's fair name shall make
Brilliant Forevermore !

* Reference to Napoleon's Charge at Waterloo.

“ With God o’erhead and gun in hand,
No force can stay your Spartan band !
This day your foe awaits in dread
The reckless, rapid, martial tread
Of legions brave as men e’er led !
Onward ! Steady ! though storm shall blow
A fiercer gale, still onward go,
And breast the billows from yonder’s shore,
For on your heads shall honors pour
Ceaseless Forevermore !

“ On left brave Tennesseans wait,
And choicest troops of the Old North State,
With Mississippians true and tried,
And more to swell Virginia’s tide ;
On right our Alabama’s pride
And best of Florida abide !
Hence, onward go ! and trust that Lee
By matchless skill shall make you see,
That from this field your wreath shall be
Fadeless Forevermore !

“This plain far more than others brings
To you of fame which poet sings :
Your double-quick in peerless dash
Shall be the wonder of the world,
And men who see your flags unfurled
'Gainst fiery blasts from out the throat
Of guns that belch a leaden hail,
Of guns that breathe a roaring flame,
Shall gladly give to you a name
 Illustrious Forevermore !”

II. THE CHARGE

Ten thousand Southrons now rise to the test,
And form their lines out to the west
Of "Seminary's" famous crest —
A ridge whose top was swept by fire,
Whose sides were torn by cyclone's ire,
Whose breast received the dreadful shock
Of storm that made the mountain rock,
And sent the awful thunders down,
Reverberations of a vast renown.

Echoless? — Nay : Nevermore !

Across the ridge as legions move,
Both shot and shell their courage prove ;
Then grape and canister the guns employ
These braves to assail, these braves to destroy :
“Close in your ranks,” the captains cried,
“To fill the gaps where men have died ;
Close in to left, but do not crowd !
Steady ! Think not of battle’s din !
In impact close the prize you ’ll win
Precious Forevermore !”

“Onward ! Steady !”—“He ’s fallen !”—“Never
mind !

Hospital men your friends shall find !
Your faces forward ! Hold your fire !
In yonder’s angle yet shall rage
The fiercest fight brave men can wage :
There must you meet a stubborn foe ;
There must be shown a strength unknown
In former years ; and, though all go down,
To all shall be the hero’s crown
Glittering Forevermore !”

Nearer now and deadlier still
Shell and shrapnel rake the hill ;
Nearer yet and fiercer grew
The tempest which grape and canister blew ;
Nearer yet and thicker fall
The double canister's deadly pall ;
Deafening the roar and deepening more
The storm—the flood, yet none the less
Onward our braves for honor press
Brightening Forevermore !

Still onward rush the gallant few,
Still onward as with courage new,
Still onward, though the field is filled,
The front, the flank, the hill, the plain,
With hurrying horse and fiercer flame,
With Federal lines now crowding straight
To meet their foe, to meet their fate,
To meet and conquer here or die,
Whence fame shall rise and praises be
Endless Forevermore !

Brave Kemper 's down and Garnett too,
The colors fall, the colonels die,
While captains and lieutenants lie
Wounded or dying outside the wall :
Meanwhile across the works have sprung
Men as heroic as Homer has sung,
And Armistead grand e'en unto death,
With cap on sword, in loudest breath,
Calls, "Onward, men! this day shall be
Cloudless Forevermore !"

Onward they go as rising tide
That rolls far up the mountain side ;
Cemetery's crest they reach at last,
But as broken waves, their limit passed,
Backward they 're hurled by hosts here massed.
Brave Tennessee is here to die,
And Carolina always true,
Far to the front with Pettigrew,
Supports our left and glory gains
Priceless Forevermore !

Cushing's last gun at length is reached,
And Armistead's hand toward muzzle stretched;
He calls aloud, "Cushing, surrender!"
The gun replies, "Armistead, no: never!"
The gallant Cushing had begged to fire
This only gun now left entire;
And as the fuse he cuts once more,
His soul heroic goes out to fame,
And by his death he makes his name
Memorable Forevermore!

And now they meet us hand to hand:
The gathering foe our lines have hemmed;
All loading stops, but lo! the strife,
With clubbed muskets waged for life,
Grows fiercer still till all is lost
IN THE LAST ONE HUNDRED A HOLOCAUST;
But dying groans bravely suppressed,
And smiles yet bright from features calm
Have won for these the hero's palm
Glorious Forevermore!

Conclusion

Had this charge been supported by 10,000 more troops, and had all parts of the Confederate lines moved at one time against the Federals, north, east, and south, WHILE OUR CHARGE WAS IN PROGRESS FROM THE WEST, there is little doubt that Meade's army would have been cut in twain and routed; but, while the charge was going on, the other parts of the Confederate line were holding their breath, filled with amazement at so terrible an onset against the very center of an entrenched foe; and so troops were allowed to concentrate from all quarters against the little band that had broken over the Union breastworks. From such encircling hosts and murderous fire escape was impossible, and men must die or surrender to the maddened might of a successful and determined enemy.

Pickett lost his three brigadiers and all his field officers but one lieutenant-colonel ; and after the charge, regiments were commanded by beardless captains and companies by sergeants and corporals, so great had been the loss. Some of the North Carolina companies were almost annihilated. This was particularly true in the 26th North Carolina, *which suffered more than any one regiment*, North or South.

Meade found himself so crippled by the three days' battle, that he could not agree to carry out the Washington policy, and follow vigorously after Lee in the retreat from Gettysburg. He knew that Lee was not any more really whipped than himself, and hence he preferred to merely keep up the appearance of pursuit, while he studiously avoided any direct assault upon Lee's battered and bruised, but brave men, who, if they did not now cling so tenaciously to the Cause they loved, yet loved their commander with a devotion that would still have held them to a losing battle or a lingering death. GETTYSBURG WAS NOT A WATERLOO ; for, after Waterloo, Napoleon's troops deserted him, but Lee's men, 40,000 strong, were yet ready to die with him. Gettysburg was, however, THE

MOST DECISIVE BATTLE OF THE WAR. The flower of Southern chivalry was here so blasted by the North wind's breath, that it never rebloomed to decorate again the rank and file of the Confederate army. 27,739 brave men of our army were gone and their places could not be filled, but the 23,049 lost to the Union army could soon be replaced from foreign countries, if not from the North, by double and quadruple the loss at Gettysburg. Hence the might of overwhelming numbers must ere long decide what courage and skill had hitherto been powerless to accomplish.

The BEGINNING OF THE END was already seen. Confederate boundaries were being contracted, supplies were diminishing, men who had suffering families at home were growing more and more dissatisfied, desertions increased, and finally Lee's veterans of a hundred battle-fields, cooped up in Richmond and Petersburg, were only waiting for the bursting of a storm that had been gathering for months, a storm that should lay open these two strongholds in the East and scatter the remnants of proud and puissant armies that for four long years had resisted successfully every attempt to enter these citadels.

Battles had been fierce and furious all along the way from the Potomac to the James and the Appomattox, but Confederate soldiers were fighting more in desperation than in hope, more for honor than for success; and,

Hope's star so long before their eyes,
Encircled quite by rainbow's dyes,
Soon passed forever from out the skies.

THE AUTHOR.

West Virginia University,
Morgantown, W. Va.,
August 31, 1905.

A Few Testimonials of Lecture

Prof. C. H. Cole, Supt. of Schools, Martinsburg, W. Va.:

“Never have I heard or read anything to equal the vivid language of Dr. Douthat, who was a participant in the great struggle.”

Rev. W. S. Neighbors, D. D., Pastor State Street M. E. C., South, Bristol, Tenn.:

“Prof. Douthat’s lecture on the Battle of Gettysburg is worthy a place in the classic literature of this country. For loftiness of statement, clear presentation, manliness of spirit toward all parties, I have never heard anything equal to it.”

Huntington (W. Va.) “Advertiser,” June 24, 1902 :

“He had a great story to tell,—the story of one of the fiercest and bloodiest battles in all human history,—and he told it with luminous clearness and simplicity.”

Monroe (W. Va.) “Watchman,” July 2, 1903 :

“Capt. Douthat’s lecture is a revelation of historic truth in the style that thrills and enthralls.”

St. Joseph (Mo.) “News-Press,” July 1, 1905 :

“It has been frequently said that no impartial history of the Civil War has been written. Whether this be true or

not, no one could have listened to Capt. Douthat's lecture last evening in the Lyceum Theater and believe that an unbiased account of the Battle of Gettysburg has not been written * * * He held the attention of the audience every minute he spoke, and certainly a plainer, more graphic description of the battle could not have been given."

Rev. W. S. Neighbors, D. D., Bristol, Tenn., August, 1902 :

"Having heard Prof. Douthat's lecture, I shall carry with me always a higher regard for both the Blue and the Gray."

Rev. Chas. S. Trump, St. John's Lutheran Church, Martinsburg, W. Va.:

"The lecture was clear, sympathetic, edifying, and entertaining. Not a word of prejudice or uncharity fell from Dr. Douthat's lips."

Huntington (W. Va.) "Advertiser," June 24, 1902 :

"It was fitting that the Gettysburg story should be told in a house of worship, for charity, love, and reconciliation breathed in its every word."

Bristol (Tenn.) "Courier," August 2, 1902 :

"The lecture was above prejudice, being on the plane of a true patriot's thoughts—a plane above hate and malice and high up in the atmosphere of true affection and reverence for bravery and soldierly qualities in whatever cause they may be exercised."

Prof. L. J. Corbly, Prin. Marshall College, Huntington.
W. Va., Sept. 1, '04 :

"After hearing Dr. Douthat's Gettysburg lecture, July 26, 1904, I remarked to a friend: 'I have read everything available bearing upon the history of that dreadful conflict, but now feel for the first time that I know something definite, something fixed about it.'"

Judge W. I. Wallace, Lebanon, Mo., July 10, '05 :

"I don't know when I have been so pleased and instructed as I was by Dr. Douthat's lecture in this city on June 28, 1905. I regard it a masterpiece in the lecture field and so commend it to people everywhere, North, South, East and West, as most able, eloquent and entertaining."

Parkersburg (W. Va.) "Sentinel," Feb. 21, '03 :

"As has been said, the lecture is free from sectional prejudice, and is an interesting review for the old soldiers and their friends on both sides. It is an instructive and thrilling story for the young, a compliment to Northern steadiness and an illustration of Southern impetuosity."

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