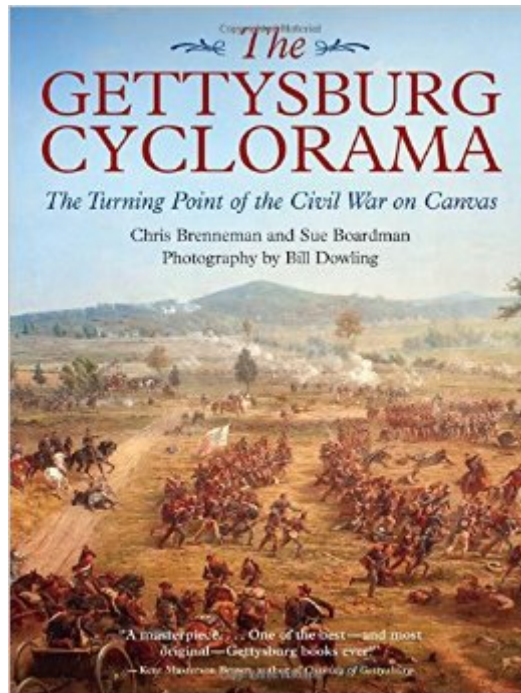


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# The Gettysburg Cyclorama: The Turning Point Of The Civil War On Canvas



## Synopsis

Thousands of books and articles have been written about the Battle of Gettysburg. Almost every topic has been thoroughly scrutinized except one: Paul Philippoteaux's massive cyclorama painting *The Battle of Gettysburg*, which depicts Pickett's Charge, the final attack at Gettysburg. *The Gettysburg Cyclorama: The Turning Point of the Civil War on Canvas* is the first comprehensive study of this art masterpiece and historic artifact. This in-depth study of the history of the cyclorama discusses every aspect of this treasure, which was first displayed in 1884 and underwent a massive restoration in 2008. Coverage includes not only how it was created and what it depicts, but the changes it has undergone and where and how it was moved. Authors Chris Brenneman and Sue Boardman also discuss in fascinating detail how the painting was interpreted by Civil War veterans in the late 19th Century. With the aid of award-winning photographer Bill Dowling, the authors utilized modern photography to compare the painting with historic and modern pictures of the landscape. Dowling's remarkable close-up digital photography allows readers to focus on distant details that usually pass unseen. Every officer, unit, terrain feature, farm, and more pictured in the painting is discussed in detail. Even more remarkable, the authors reveal an important new discovery made during the research for this book: in order to address suggestions from the viewers, the cyclorama was significantly modified five years after it was created to add more soldiers, additional flags, and even General George Meade, the commander of the Union Army! With hundreds of rare historic photographs and beautiful modern pictures of a truly great work of art, *The Gettysburg Cyclorama: The Turning Point of the Civil War on Canvas* is a must-have for anyone interested in the Battle of Gettysburg or is simply a lover of exquisite art.

**REVIEWS** For generations, millions of Gettysburg's visitors have experienced "Pickett's Charge" through the canvas of Paul Philippoteaux's massive Cyclorama. But the full story of the painting's creation, restoration, and ongoing interpretation has never before been fully told. Authors Chris Brenneman and Sue Boardman, along with photographer Bill Dowling, have used their behind-the-scenes access to create a colorful and lively guide that will appeal to Gettysburg students, scholars, and lovers of fine art.

• James A. Hessler, *Gettysburg Licensed Battlefield Guide*, author of *Sickles at Gettysburg* (2009) and *Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg* (2015) • "The Gettysburg Cyclorama of Pickett's Charge by Paul Philippoteaux is the most famous and iconic work of art about the battle. This beautifully illustrated and superbly researched book is quite simply the most thorough exploration of the painting's fascinating history and subject matter ever written."

• D. Scott Hartwig, former Supervisory Historian for Gettysburg National Military Park, and the author of *To Antietam Creek: The Maryland Campaign of September 1862* • "Few works of art are more

important or more fascinating than the Gettysburg Cyclorama, Paul Philippoteaux's mammoth painting documenting Pickett's Charge on the afternoon of July 3, 1863. Here, for the first time, Gettysburg Licensed Battlefield Guides Chris Brenneman, Sue Boardman, and Bill Dowling examine every detail of this epic painting, including its restoration in the early 2000s, the changes made to it, and the politics, history, and accuracy behind its fascinating detail. Scores of photographs in both color and black and white enhance this book which is a must-read for anyone interested in the Battle of Gettysburg and how it is remembered.

• Eric J. Wittenberg, award-winning author of *Gettysburg's Forgotten Cavalry Actions* (Savas Beatie, 2011) and *The Devil's to Pay: John Buford at Gettysburg: A History and Walking Tour* (Savas Beatie, 2014)

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I expect this book to be a finalist if not the winner of the Bachelder-Coddington award. This is a gorgeous, loving, and full-color look at a national treasure that is part of the construction of how we see this battle. The whole is contained in a physically handsome oversized book that is a pleasure to hold. This is both a history of and a close look at the restored Gettysburg Cyclorama that is on display at the park. Cycloramas are huge oil paintings, 40 by 400 feet, which were very popular prior to movies. Displayed in specially constructed buildings, patrons use a covered walkway to enter the viewing room. From a platform about 12 feet high, surrounded by the battle, most were awe struck. The first two chapters cover the creation of a cyclorama and how their display. These paintings weigh about six tons and require a team of artists months to complete. Paul D. Philippoteaux painted

four Gettysburg cycloramas for display in America. These chapters cover the *à œfor profit* • business and what happened to these cycloramas when the profit ended. Lastly, they tell us about the restoration project that restored the current Gettysburg cyclorama to its <sup>TM</sup> original condition. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 tell about the hidden portraits and details of the Gettysburg cyclorama. As Philippoteaux learns about the battle and to sell tickets, he made changes to the existing cycloramas. Changing the painting caused changes to the souvenir program too. However, since it is easier to change a program than a painting, differences accumulate and the author gives us some intelligent ideas on these. The balance of the book is a detailed look at the cyclorama based on the ten Tipton photographs.

Long story alert! Many years ago, a friend invited me to attend a series of art appreciation classes held at a beautiful Summit Hill home in St Paul. I thought I should go and expand my knowledge of art beyond the poker playing dogs hanging in my basement and he was paying. After a short happy hour, we arrived to our first class by bus. We were greeted on the steps by a snooty and snotty woman who looked like Frau Blucher (think Young Frankenstein). Noticing our jeans, arrival by bus and our beer breath, she sniffed the air with distain as she escorted us to the chairs in the far back. Frau was "teaching" the first class and she spoke with a monotone and at length about a Renaissance looking man with his hand held up. Apparently, this hand had great meaning and she asked everyone what they thought. My friend whispered to me that he thought the subject in the painting was preparing to flip Frau off. I suppressed a giggle only to snort loudly, twice. Everyone turned to look and Frau Blucher, after a long pause, sighed and gave us the stink eye. When she finished her class to rousing applause, we left hanging our heads in shame. We attended a couple more classes. No longer fueled by Budweiser, we still could not get into it. It was presented to us in a boring way and meant for those who already had an eye for art. Everyone else, including the homeowner, indicated they were available to answer questions and were very nice. But, I already had a bad attitude and became judgmental the moment I arrived because of one person. I decided I disliked art. I am smart enough but have an easily distracted mind. My friend was no dummy. He was an MD and a nerdy brainiac.

I must start out by saying that I have come to appreciate the art in the many national parks and battle fields across the country. Many fail to see the art that is contained in these locations. It is like an outdoor art museum. Then there are the paintings and cycloramas. These are indeed treasures that will likely never be duplicated in our lifetime or in the next one either. The Gettysburg

Cyclorama, what can one say about such a magnificent depiction of the turning of the high tide of the Confederacy? Paul Pilipoteaux's masterful artistry brings to life the epic event. It is an amazing book that gives the history of the creation of the work and details its travels and display. There is a chapter on Cycloramas: The Basics, a large chapter on the Cycloramas in America, it is loaded with details from mapping, to preservation and restoration. There are changes to the original painting, and details of what and when things happened to both the painting as well as what is depicted on the field. I absolutely love the slick color pages, and the many "Keys" to the painting, buttressed by period and modern photographs. It makes the whole work so much more meaningful to know who is what position, which officer is on a certain horse, whose battery is firing at a given time etc. It also includes photos of the many monuments related to the battles events. The best part is, it all comes full circle. Everything ties to the battlefield that is depicted in the painting. One can view the painting and walk out onto the field and stand in the same spot and view the modern landscape. That is an amazing detail.

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