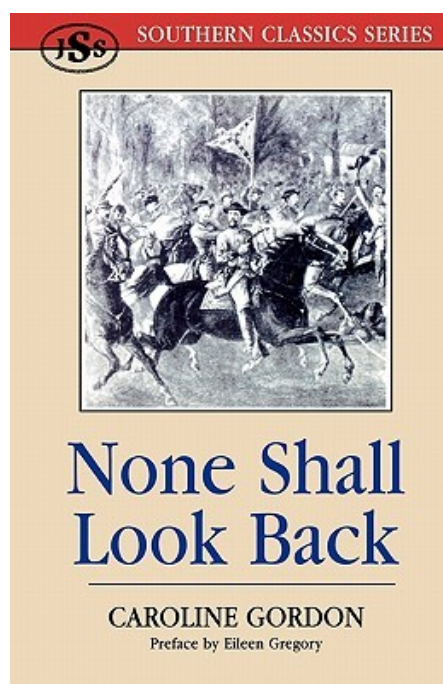




None Shall Look Back

Caroline Gordon

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A study of the hero in his archetypal struggle against death, this novel follows the Civil War in the West through the career of Confederate Rivers Allard, a Kentuckian who rides with Forrest. Southern Classics Series.

None Shall Look Back Details

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From Reader Review None Shall Look Back for online ebook

Peggy says

I read just about everything Caroline Gordon wrote starting 1992 when we moved into the Clarksville house she and Allen Tate lived in from 1932. For some reason I've been moved to read much of her work again recently. I remember loving NONE SHALL LOOK BACK, but I realize now I'm confusing it with PENHALLY and perhaps other works as well. I give high marks to almost everything Caroline Gordon writes, and this book is no exception; however, I feel the need to make a distinction regarding it's comparison to GONE WITH THE WIND.

This is Gordon's major Civil War novel that came out in 1937 shortly after Margaret Mitchell's GONE WITH THE WIND. Apparently it has been thought that timing would have made all the difference... in other words, that if NONE SHALL LOOK BACK had beat Mitchell's book to the press it would have enjoyed the that success. I don't agree with that conclusion.

NONE SHALL LOOK BACK has been touted by some as a major Civil War novel, perhaps surpassing Mitchell's. I recognize it is phenomenal in coverage of battles, details of the soldiers' lives and struggles. Gordon did her research and has written an exemplary book in that sense, a description of battles that is historically correct but fictionalized by adding her own characters and a bit of plot about how they were affected by the war. GONE WITH THE WIND, on the other hand, is a love story that takes place within and around the setting of the Civil War and its aftermath. There really is no comparison. Mitchell's book is always going to have the upper hand in terms of romantic poignancy and character development, while Gordon's book is a masterpiece from the historian's point of view.

El says

I've been vaguely interested in General Nathan Bedford Forrest after visiting Memphis and seeing a statue of him a few years back. My father explained that there was a lot of controversy over that statue - one argument fought to have the statue removed as he was an early leader of the KKK while another argument was that he was a Civil War hero and deserved to be recognized for his contributions to society.

This story focuses primarily on the Allard family in the South during the Civil War. Not quite as grand in scope as *Gone With the Wind*, though not published very far apart, it failed to draw me in the same way as Mitchell's masterpiece. Gordon's love scenes were much more saccharine, and though I am impressed any time a woman can write a decent war scene, I still felt entirely too far removed from even the most grim descriptions.

Jessica says

I love books written pre-1950 and this book did not disappoint. Great Civil War novel that concentrates on the western theater, specifically on Gen. Forrest. Historically accurate and intense. Loved it.

Nancy Midgette says

Interesting to read from the 1937 perspective in which it was written. Story itself seemed a bit artificial. Don't believe that character of N. B. Forrest that comes through.

Joan Colby says

The best Civil War, no strike Civil, War period, novel I've read. Gordon's depiction of battles, the plight of the soldiers, the horrors of war for both combatants and civilians, is stunning. Her portrayal of the Kentucky plantation, Brackets, and its inhabitants, particularly patriarch Fountain Allard, is convincing and realistic. She pulls no punches. I was shocked to learn that publication of this book was delayed in order not to compete with the earlier published *Gone With the Wind*. They are simply not comparable. Kudos to Southern Classic Series for reissuing *None Shall Look Back*.
