



# Falling Upwards: How We Took to the Air: An Unconventional History of Ballooning

*Richard Holmes*

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**\*\*Time Magazine 10 Top Nonfiction Books of 2013\*\***

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In a dazzling fusion of history, art, science, and biography, *Falling Upwards* resurrects the daring men and women who first risked their lives to take to the air in balloons.

Richard Holmes gives us another of his unforgettable portraits of human endeavor, recklessness, and vision, weaving together exhilarating accounts of early balloon rivalries, pioneering ascents over Victorian cities, and astonishing long-distance voyages. The terrifying high-altitude flights of James Glaisher helped to establish the science of meteorology as well as the notion of a fragile planet, while balloons were also used to observe the horrors of modern battle during the American Civil War. Here too are the many writers—Mary Shelley, Edgar Allan Poe, Charles Dickens, Jules Verne, and more—who felt the imaginative impact of flight and allowed it to soar in their work. Holmes tells the history of ballooning from every angle—scientific to poetic—through the adventurers and entrepreneurs, scientists and escapists, heroes and fools who were possessed by the longing to be airborne.

(With 24 pages of color illustrations, and black-and-white illustrations throughout.)



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