

Experience history through courageous horses' eyes during the Great War.

Leather to Steel

by Clint Goodwin

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LEATHER TO STEEL

Experience American history through horses' eyes.



CLINT GOODWIN

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Second Edition

Also by Clint Goodwin

Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory
U.S. Civil War Horse Perspective: 1861-1865.
ISBN 978-163492-533-4

Experience key U.S. Civil War battles through the eyes of a black stallion whose future generations will carry notable military leaders into American wars. *Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory: A U.S. Civil War Horse Perspective: 1861–1865* is the first book in a series of historical fictions used to pay tribute to the American men who served honorably for our country. The main character, Lucky, finds the will to survive battles that defined America.

Mine Eye Have Seen the Glory reminds its readers that the U.S. Civil War was not that long ago. With a dose of imagination, the key book characters saw the same defeats and triumphs the men experienced fighting for their respective sides—North or South.

Comanche's Wars
ISBN 978-1-63492-341-5

Award-winning *Comanche's Wars* delivers a story about a young black stallion from Virginia embarking on a journey of self-discovery during America's aggressive push to the West. Stonewall's journey will parallel that of a nation's story that embraces tribulations and triumphs on the battlefields. The book's key characters' fight for their land, cultures, traditions, and ways of life. *Comanche's Wars* highlights the struggles between American progress and peace.

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Bloodline Reflections

Peace

As a proud black stallion, I can attest seven generations forged my family's legacy of unrelenting courage, enduring strength, and a spirited will to live. Thankfully, each generation produced horses who found a way to keep our bloodline going. Such was the case with my sixth-generation sire—Stonewall— and his chosen mare, Cinnamon. Both united in Southwest Texas during the Comanche Wars. Otherwise, I would not be telling this story. Thanks to them, my family's legacy continued well into the Great War.

My story begins with the saga of my father's great-great-grandfather, Tough Guy, who lived to serve our great nation on the Western Front. His spirit surrounds my every move today as the twentieth century nears its end. I am all that is left of him and our family's bloodline. My name is Peace. I am dedicated to telling the valiant heroics of great stallions and mares who have served our nation since the mid-nineteenth century. Their sense of duty is the rock I stand upon. I neigh loudly and boldly, "Proud to be an American."

Old blood runs through my veins. I have been told that my breeding comes with a trace of a warm blood and thoroughbred breeds that defined my stature. Standing over seventeen hands high, the United States Army charged me with the humble honor of pulling, with five other horses, caissons loaded with flag-draped caskets of America's heroes.

We serve the Third U.S. Infantry Regiment (Old Guard), Third Squad Caisson Platoon at the Fort Myer army base in Arlington, Virginia. Twenty-four of us—twelve black and twelve white

horses—reside at the Old Guard stables. Each of our stalls has brass plaques engraved with our names in black lettering.

Army regulations require six horses to pull one caisson. At the Old Guard, there are twenty-four of us horses assigned. We are divided into four teams of six. It takes six horses to pull one black-lacquered twenty-four-hundred-pound caisson. The first two horses on leather are called “wheel horses” because they are closest to the caisson’s front wheels. The strongest horses perform that job. I am a wheel horse. Swing horses work the team’s center. Lead horses take the front. All six of us move together in perfect concert.

It is our job to get the deceased veteran from church to their assigned burial plot reserved in the Arlington National Cemetery. The ceremony begins with the deceased veteran’s fellow service members gracefully lifting the closed casket off our caisson. In rehearsed perfection, the soldiers, sailor, or marines carry their brother or sister to a final resting place—where heroes quietly sleep—in America’s sacred ground. I am privileged to participate in this ceremony. I am saddened it occurs twice a day, seven days a week, three hundred and sixty-five days a year.

My assignment to the Old Guard is a long story. It began six generations ago with our family’s patriarch, Lucky, who served during the U.S. Civil War. Evidence of his legacy persists, as I stand here in a Fort Meyer horse stall waiting patiently for my caretaker, Sergeant Major Kuiken.

I live in a stable most horses would consider spacious. For me, standing over seventeen hands high, it feels small to me. Comforts being not expected. As long as I have a roof over my head, water to drink, and food to eat, I won’t complain.

I often wonder how a horse stable in Arlington, Virginia became the centerpiece of American history. Sacred ground where American history ends for so many who served. Horses before me said serving with the Old Guard came with an agreement to honor and respect those who paid dearly for freedom. For many soldiers and marines, the Old Guard was their farewell assignment. I hope the Old Guard was not mine. I still have fight left in my gut.

Our stable manager, Jim Kuiken, Sergeant Major, United States Marine Corps says the president of the United States handpicks honor horses assigned to Fort Meyer. I am not sure about that claim, but I certainly know many horses served here much longer than I. With that said, there is much Old Guard tradition and honor treading on this hallowed ground at Arlington Cemetery. I am humbled and honored to serve.

Between ceremonies, my handler takes me outside into the paddock to stretch my legs. Before entering the ring, I stop to resist the handler. He tugs and I don't move. I always stop for a few minutes to look down a narrow-paved street running east. It winds downhill toward the Arlington Cemetery main entrance. Each time I look down on the hill, I imagine a lone rider on my back; the same ghost that comforted me in Afghanistan. All I know is that my heart fills with appreciation and gratitude for the United States Army.

The U.S. Army—like the Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard—deploys brave Americans around the world to fight and defeat those who wish to do our country harm. A fine example of those servicemen is Sergeant Major Kuiken. He was willing to pay the ultimate sacrifice during multiple wars to protect our country. For that very reason, I serve an army that has provided my family a home for over 150 years. On this soil is where my family's story began.

For generations, our family has pulled machines of war since 1861. My dad, Rusty, told me many war stories about our family's military exploits since the U.S. Civil War. While under fire, Rusty himself carried a famous army officer across deep rice paddies during the Vietnam War in the late '60s. My grandmother, Reckless, carried artillery and brave U.S. Marines up and across the muddy valleys of Osan during the Korean War.³ Both of them learned from Jubal Early.

My great-grandfather, Jubal Early, pulled key artillery pieces out of the muddy German-held valleys of France and Belgium during the wars. My great-great-grandfather, Tough Guy and his son Jubal Early both served with the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery Brigade

and American Expeditionary Force (AEF) during the Great War. This story is about them.

My father, Rusty told many stories about Tough Guy's father, Stonewall who served during the Comanche Wars and the Spanish-American War. He frequently reminded me that However, all of my father's fathers recognize and pay homage to the memories of our family patriarch, a famous black warhorse, Lucky who wrote the first chapter of the family's history during five major U.S. Civil War battles fought between 1861 and 1865. Lucky, indeed set the bar high.

During my tour with the Old Guard, my fellow horses have listened to me talk about Lucky and Stonewall. My friend Blackie graciously lends an ear when others turn away. Today, my team is off duty. I neighed at Blackie standing in the stall across from me.; "Ready for another story? This one is about the Great War. You may remember Jeremiah Bates and Allison Drayton."

"Sure do, sonny. Jeremiah was a Buffalo Soldier and Allison was the young girl whose family owned the Magnolia Plantation down in South Carolina. Where your family bloodline began."

"You actually listen to me."

"Peace. I can eat and listen at the same time. Like an old mare. How about later this week? I have to pull this afternoon. Missy threw a shoe."

"No worries Blackie. We can connect next week." Blackie snorted and went back to eating his oats.

A week's time has passed since winter closed her eyes for the year. Spring in Washington DC did not fail expectations. The wet and windy months made life miserable for humans. However, inclement weather was never a problem for me. Nature gave horses the ability to grow the right amount of coat to keep us cool or warm for each season.

Across the stable aisle from me was my other friend, Lucy. Her closed eyes and long breaths told me she was napping. That old white mare worked hard during the day, but needed her sleep to do

so. For me, morning naps help me catch up on sleep I lost during the night. A full night's sleep was not possible since after I returned from the war. Three o'clock in the morning comes quickly. I wish it were not that way.

Our stable manager, Sergeant Major Kuiken opened the stable doors at exactly zero four thirty every morning. He wore his weathered woodland utility uniform every day, except on Sunday. A set of gold wings were centered and pinned over his last name embroidered above the left blouse pocket. He always wore his uniform in perfect order.

The sergeant major bellowed out to us. "Ladies, today is Saturday, April 30. This day will be a somber day for our nation. We will bury the partial remains of U.S. Navy commander, Michael J. Smith, the shuttle's pilot in a common grave. Sadly, the other seven *Challenger* astronauts will be intermingled with his. You need to do your best. President Ronald Reagan will make an appearance to help comfort the families and friends left behind by the deceased astronauts. It will be a sad day, indeed. A sad one to remember."

I did not care for sergeant major calling all of us ladies, since he knows darn well I am a stallion. No matter. I always let the levity go, knowing he has more combat experience than all the horses and men together serving with the Old Guard.

Many a late night he would come sit by my stall and talk to us horses. He told stories of being in multiple wars. He was wounded twice and kept returning to service, keeping the marine faith, *Semper fidelis*—*Semper fi* for short—meaning "always faithful." His unchallenged devotion to our country inspired us.

After we buried two astronauts in the morning, we returned to the stables. The soldiers unhitched our leathers and returned us to our stalls. The afternoon caisson team waited in the paddock for our team

to get secured. Team White was tacked up and ready to go for the next burial.

The soldiers looked subdued. I watched sergeant major wipe tears from his eyes. He rarely showed emotion. That evening, the stable was silent out of respect for brave patriots. The nation's sudden loss of seven astronauts was almost unbearable for America.⁴

In the mornings that followed, the sun rose earlier and earlier as the spring season reached its lunar limits above the nation's capital. The sun signaled to the living that summer would be here in Arlington before long. Until then, infrequent morning frosts would coat the grass with a sparkling glaze that looked inviting for a hungry horse. The mornings would be brisk for my friends and me.

The sun decided to suspend itself closest to the earth on the summer solstice. Last night, the soldiers put us up for the night without blankets on our backs. When I woke up, I could feel the wet dew on my back. I wanted nothing more than to go outside into the paddock and roll in the dirt. A horse's way of drying off, which made me feel hungry. We all started snorting in the barn. Before too long, like clockwork, the sergeant major would enter the stable.

Hearing the heavy stable double doors open, I stuck my neck out over the black metal stall guard to catch a fleeting glimpse of the sergeant major before he walked into the tack room. He reemerged and shuffled toward our stalls carrying a tin bucket of oats in one hand and cotton horse leads in the other. I noticed he left the stable doors open to allow the morning sunshine parse darkness from the stable.

While he filled our feed buckets, six other soldiers walked toward their assigned tack rooms to perform their duties. Each soldier polished every brass fitting on the black McClellan saddles and leathers hand crafted by the Old Guard's saddler.

I neighed anxiously towards the sergeant major. "Good. Sergeant Major Kuiken brought our oats and water. I hoped he put molasses in mine. The taste of molasses adds flavor to an otherwise dry meal." My father once proclaimed, "Peace, you will never have a

sick day in your life, as long you eat a teaspoon of molasses.” I know he was right. I have yet to catch a cold during my first six years of life. Something in the molasses has kept me strong. The sergeant swears it’s the iron, which is good for the blood. I have no idea what he means.

I liked the sergeant major. He was much older than the other soldiers attached to the Old Guard. He was not chatty around the younger men. However, when he’s alone with us horses, he speaks much about his past. There are many days when he remained silent. During silent times, the sergeant major was reflecting. I could sense the trouble in his soul.

I come to know the sergeant major best during those he would come into the stable and sit down on the floor with his back to my stall door. I looked down at the top of his head. To get his attention, I tried to nibble at his short-cropped hair. He would ignore me most of the time when he was drinking. I could sense his pain. He must have sensed mine. I was the only Old Guard horse that had seen battle.

On one of those occasions, he looked up at me and said, “Peace. Who the hell gave you that name?” I could smell the whiskey on his breath. I neighed back, “The navy man who rode me bareback during a firefight.” He raised his fingers up towards my muzzle. He carefully scratched my nose. He whispered, “Your shrapnel wounds are just like mine.” He never said one word to me from that point on. We understood the pain of war.

The Old Guard soldiers called Sergeant Major Kuiken a hero, which he downplayed with indifference. I’ve overheard the young soldiers talking about how he bravely fought in many battles. He saved lives. They said he was an American hero.

For his heroism, the sergeant major earned the right to choose his last duty station before retirement. He worked a deal with the U.S. Marine Corps and the U.S. Army to let him serve his last year as a burial guard leader with the Old Guard.

I overheard two junior officers talk about Sergeant Major Kuiken. The officers discussed how the sergeant major willingly put himself in the enemy’s line of fire during several campaigns. The officers also spoke of why Marine Sergeant Major Kuiken wanted to be near

his friends laid to rest in Arlington Cemetery. A poignant act of his respect for the fallen.

Military leaders and peers could sympathize and understand his compelling need to not let go of those who sacrificed their lives to protect our nation's freedom. Sergeant Major Kuiken understood the unwanted feelings of a combat veteran of foreign wars. The battle scars and the wounds in both mind and body never go away.

My old friend Blackie told me that he once met my father Rusty. I appreciated his reflections of a stallion I barely knew when I was a colt. He did not say it, but he acted as if he had heard my stories before. I tested the waters. I got his attention with a big snort and neighed, "Blackie, do you want to hear another family story"?

He neighed back, "Go ahead young feller. It has been some time since I heard about Lucky and his offspring."

I added, "You will like this story. It is about a war that forever changed the moral conscience of future human generations to come. The year is 1895. The year Lucky's grandson, Tough Guy was born. From that day on, his life's events would take him to the Western Front. Tough Guy was not to be alone on that journey. Others who loved him, played a role in his future. Let us get started."

Tough Guy Recalls

Tough Guy

On Thursday morning, April 13, 1895—my mother—Cinnamon—gave me life. She was the proudest Texas mare alive at the time. Standing over me in a cold stable south of San Antonio, mother nudged me to get up. It took some time for my wobbly legs to push myself upright on all four hooves. But I managed to do it. I was cold and wet. She licked me clean and nudged me away from the drafty stable aisle. Taking a step back, she neighed, “Son. You look just like your father. Solid black and built like a cannonball.”

Unfortunately, I was sold to the U.S. Army and did not get to know him when I was a colt. My mother said life just works out that way. Questions go unanswered. I had many of them that only a father-son discussion could address. In my heart, I knew fate would not abandon me. I kept faith that the answers to my questions would be delivered. Years later, they would be delivered.

My existence began on a southwestern Texas ranch owned by an old man the locals knew as Mister Bill Black. He began his working life as a Texas cattleman. He started as a drover and ended his career as a trail boss. Within ten years, he made a small fortune driving cattle herds from Texas to Kansas City during the mid-nineteenth century. Mister Black pushed herds until he got too old and worn out for the trail. He made a change.

In 1886, Mr. Black purchased the old Baker Ranch for \$3,000. His ranch spanned three thousand acres situated twenty-five miles southeast of San Antonio. His property abutted to the Zapata Ranch. The purchase was intentional. He formed a business partnership with his neighbor and friend, retired U.S. Army Colonel Clemente Zapata. The old men figured raising and selling horses to the army was a safer bet, than going after Comanche, or losing cattle to the unpredictable wrath of Mother Nature. Through their partnership, my

parents, Stonewall and Cinnamon, came together. Ten years later, I was born.

Mister Black had a long history with Colonel Zapata who owned my father, Stonewall, a large black stallion standing seventeen hands. A cavalry horse, Stonewall was an experienced veteran of the Comanche Wars and the Spanish-American War. Always alert and always faithful to his trooper, Stonewall said he never let a man down, except once. Fortunately, during the Battle of Tule Canyon in 1874, the Comanche warrior could not get a kill shot on Stonewall's trooper, Sergeant Abercrombie. My father never lost focus on the battlefield thereafter.

Mister Black owned and raised my mother, Cinnamon. She was a beautiful sorrel standing fifteen hands high. She was not a veteran of war. Instead, she served as a brood mare—a job she did not care for until she met my father, Stonewall. According to her, it was love at first sight.

My mother and my father's union took place during the spring of 1895 at the Fleur de lis Ranch. Mister Black asked Colonel Zapata to bring my father, Stoney, to meet Cinnamon. It was not as easy a union as one might think. Dad said my mother played hard to get. He also said the bigger problem was another stallion living on the Black ranch. A Palomino stallion who challenged my father. It was no contest. My father demonstrated domination over the Palomino. Eleven months later, the result of Stonewall's union with Cinnamon gave me life.

My mother told me Stonewall served as a proud U.S. Army cavalry horse during the Texas Red River War. Battles fought on Texas soil between Comanche tribes and several U.S. cavalry regiments between 1873 and 1875. During this time, she said he was not just any cavalry horse. He never backed away from a fight, nor did he waver from serving the nation during his last chapter in life. He and his trooper, Colonel Zapata, volunteered to serve the nation one last time. They both fought during the 1898 Spanish-American War.

Mother said Stonewall demonstrated great courage carrying the Rough Riders commander—Colonel Theodore Roosevelt— during

the Battle of San Juan Hill, Cuba, in July 1898. I was told Colonel Roosevelt never forgot how Stonewall avoided enemy fire while charging up the famous hill. The future president of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt vowed to locate my father and his trooper Colonel Zapata after the war. However, only my father would live on.

Colonel Zapata died of old age at his Texas ranch in January 1901. He left a will directing his worldly possessions transferred to his only son, Manny Zapata. The colonel's property was not easily transferred to his son Manny living thousands of miles away to the east with his wife, Lucinda, near Arlington, Virginia. Knowing my father was old, the colonel willed Stonewall to Mr. Black. However, a different plan took effect after the colonel's death. My father would travel back east to live with Manny and Lucinda. A key turning point in our lives.

It began with Mr. Black and Manny exchanging cables that led to Stonewall loaded on an eastbound train to Richmond, Virginia. Once at the Richmond train depot, the plan was for Manny to take charge of Stonewall. As fate would have it, the United States Army put me on the same east-bound train.

I never forgot the day Stonewall and I met in the train's last boxcar. I will always remember how we spent the first day studying each other from opposite sides in the boxcar. Those tense moments defined our future. I recall how the minutes passed by like hours. While we were staring each other down, the silence divided us. But somehow during that two-day trip, we found a way to get beyond ourselves.

The boxcar we rode was unforgiving. It was dusty, noisy, and rattled as we rolled on down the track. Our movements were limited. Short leads kept us secured to D-rings bolted to the floor. All we could do was stand and look at each other through shadows. Between us, not one sound was made, except for an occasional heavy sigh.

At the time, I sensed my father knew me as his son. However, he did not acknowledge the fact during the first day of travel. My gut told me it was stubbornness that delayed the inevitable. He was simply too prideful to approach me. Not sure what to make of the situation, we both just stared at each other. A knife could have cut the air between us.

Toward the end of the second day, the locomotive bellowed steam while whistling three times, indicating its final destination was near. During those last few miles of track, I watched the old black stallion raise his head up. He turned aside to peer out at the morning sunrise quickly making its appearance over the eastern horizon. The sunlight slipped through the boxcar's wooden slats. The light reflected off floating dust swirling inside the car. The glimmering flecks of dust reminded me of fireflies.

As the sun moved higher over the horizon, the yellow-hue light moved across Stonewall's chiseled long face and broad chest. He must have sensed me staring at him. He turned his head toward me. Stonewall's eyes shined through the shadows casted upon his face. I stood tall to make sure Stonewall knew I was not afraid of him, though somewhat intimidated by his battle scars, which spoke of a warrior.

Minutes before the train stopped at the station, the daylight subdued the boxcar's shadows. The sight of him made me nervous. Stonewall was an impressive-looking stallion. Raised scars formed diagonally across his neck, chest, and withers. I wondered how he got them. How did he get those wounds? Stonewall raised his head to the ceiling and arched his neck to form a high carriage.

I stepped closer toward him. Silver whiskers and coat encircled Stonewall's muzzle. He had aged. The gray muzzle made his nose brighter than the rest of his head. I heard him make a heavy sigh. He neighed, "You look just like me, but act like your mother. She never did back down from me. She was a stubborn mare." I looked into my father's eyes and knew he was the one. I replied in a smart way. "Funny. At least she was around to raise me. I had to learn the hard way. Where have you been?" Before he could answer, the train's

breaks squealed. The train came to a full stop at the Richmond rail yard.

Several minutes passed. Stonewall neighed, “Son, I would have been there for you, if not for the wars. There is much family history to share with you.” I neighed back, “How do I know it is you?” Several more minutes of silence passed. I had mixed feelings about him. At that moment, my first inclination was to bow my head to the stallion that made me. However, my second instinct was to challenge him to a fight for leaving my mother—Cimmy—alone. Fortunately, the later subsided from my heart.

My father took a couple of steps towards me. He stopped. Holding his neck high and arched, he shook his head north and south, snorted, and said, “Your mother’s name was Cimmy. She was my mare.” His words caused my eyes to water. Tears ran down my cheek. A sense of joy prevailed.

I tried to break free from the D-ring to get closer to him. It was impossible to do so. The wire rope kept me secured to the boxcar deck. It could not stretch. The steel leader buckles rattled as I struggled to move toward Stonewall. The corporal handling me woke up from his deep slumber. He stood up and uttered, “Calm down, boy. They will be opening the boxcar door before long.” He had no idea why I was getting excited.

A platoon of U.S. Army troopers watched the stock unload into the livestock corrals. Each trooper secured one horse with a lead. Once on tether, myself and the rest of the purchases formed up into a two-column formation. A sergeant led the mounted platoon out of the rail yard onto the main street leading toward the city center.

We covered two miles over asphalt, the platoon halted alongside a thirty-foot bronze statue of a Confederate soldier mounted on a horse reared up on his two hind legs. The cavalry officer held a saber in his right hand. He extended the sword over his horse’s ears, pointing toward the statue. The rest of the troopers remained motionless and silent in their saddles.

The sergeant bellowed out, “Men! In front of us stands the greatest cavalryman to fight on the battlefields during the U.S. Civil War. His name was General James Ewell Brown Stuart, a Confederate. He is mounted on a courageous horse that General Stuart’s men knew as Lucky. Remove your covers!”

The troopers turned their horses right to face the memorial, then removed their slouch hats. For me, the movement brought into view more than just bronze heroes. My father, Stonewall, stood proudly on the other side of the monument circle. He arched his neck and pointed his ears up and toward me.

I could see my father’s eyes fill with pride and approval. We both gazed at each other while the sergeant continued to narrate the history of General Stuart. Then without warning, my father jerked the lead from his new owner’s hand. He took two steps forward and reared up on his hind legs. While extending his hooves toward me, he snorted and neighed. I acknowledged him. “I will do my best.” Stonewall neighed out, “Son, I am proud of you. Soldier on. Soldier on.”

Stonewall returned his hooves to the ground and bent his left front knee on the ground. The poignant moment stirred a hidden love in my heart. He showed me the precious gift of respect. From that day forward, I kept my hopes alive that we would meet again.

We were physically closer now to our family’s monarch born on the Magnolia Plantation near Charleston, South Carolina. Providence was indeed at work. Only the Father knows what the future holds.

While Tough Guy began his military training in Virginia, Allison Drayton transformed her Magnolia Plantation to better support America’s quest for peace and tranquility. No longer would cotton serve as the Magnolia’s economic mainstay. An opportunity for change was presented to Allison Drayton and her mother, Elizabeth, and they seized it. Together, they worked hard to transform the Magnolia Plantation into a horse farm. A farm that produced highly sought-after horses bred for strength, agility, and endurance.

Allison and her mother were business partners. Allison took care of the horse training while Elizabeth ran the breeding business. They both traveled all over the country, —from Kentucky to Texas and all states in between—to purchase the best-of-best horse breeds. Eventually, they settled on a tried-and-true mixture of warmbloods and Thoroughbreds. Her colts and fillies became highly desirable horses amongst ranchers, farmers, and eventually... the United States Army cavalries.

After her mother's untimely death in 1888, she became a recluse. She made faint efforts to be social with men. Over a twenty-year period, she did have one or two close relations, but resisted committing to a life she called *servitude*. She did not need a man in her life. In spite of it, Allison became a wealthy woman who defied traditional thinking.

Allison did not mind the locals calling her a redheaded spinster. She paid no attention to what was socially expected of a Southern lady. However, she did pay plenty of attention to her Magnolia Horse Farm. There was always plenty of work to keep her busy. She managed the breeding and training of world-class horses, the animals she loved dearly as a child and continued to do so as a grown woman.

Each spring on the Magnolia brought new worries for Allison. The spring of 1904 was no different. She worried about the mares foaling during the night. It was springtime now. The mares impregnated in the previous year would be foaling soon.

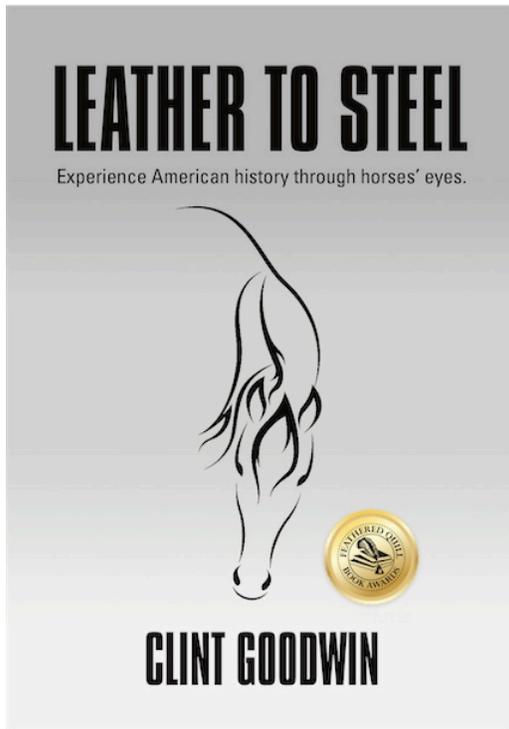
For five straight sleepless nights, she would do it alone. If absolutely need be, she could hire a local veterinarian to help her. However, she rarely called for help during foaling season. She already had the knowledge and the skills. Having graduated from Boston University with a degree in medicine, she became an expert horse doctor and trainer. Those skills paid for her education, and then some.

Life events helped transform Allison's societal beliefs. Her insatiable determination for equality drove her to reconcile how women should

be treated. Her Irish blood forged her tenacious diplomatic skills. Too many times, she encountered gender discrimination that challenged her horse business. Through determination, unwavering business acumen, and self-reliance, she found a way to successfully assert herself into the Southern gentry world.

Allison knew horses did not care if a man or a woman's hand held the reins. Horses responded to handlers who understood how to respect a horse's abilities and limitations subjecting the animal's ability to perform in an arena or on the battlefield. The latter had never been tested, except for one horse Allison loved during the Civil War. His name was Lucky.

Her middle-aged years, equestrian expertise, and wisdom would serve her well during an ever changing world. The turn of the twentieth century already felt the effects of the industrial revolution. Allison anticipated the effects on farm and ranch. She chose not to raise farm horses. Instead, she pursued breeding the perfect horse built for speed and endurance. Only two professions required both, polo and war. The later would bring the Magnolia Horse Farm onto a world stage.



Experience history through courageous horses' eyes during the Great War.

Leather to Steel

by Clint Goodwin

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