

## *Wiregrass Chronicles*

### *Long Rows to Hoe*

The early Wiregrass settlers of Southeast Alabama understood better than those in more fertile regions that farmers had many a long row to hoe: overcoming the natural barriers of vast forests of pine that had to be cleared, farming soil inhospitable to the cotton seed, and living in uneasy proximity to indigenous people fiercely battling to keep their land. *Long Rows to Hoe* recounts the struggles, the failures, and the successes of the first settlers and their descendants who faced rigorous struggles of their own:

Jackson Knightley, one of the few Confederates who served from Manassas to Appomattox, returns to the Wiregrass; but he may never be able to cleanse his memory of that infamous day at Cold Harbor, when Union troops were slaughtered in a bloodbath that was not war, but murder.

Ephraim Tanner, heartbroken at the death of his Creek wife in Oklahoma, must choose between leaving his newborn son to be raised by her tribe or risking that the infant will be rejected by his white family in the Wiregrass.

Keziah Cates, the daughter of slaves, must balance her distrust and dislike of whites with her love for the Tomlin children, who have won her heart.

The cotton farmers of the new cash-crop era late in the nineteenth century, dragging their long sacks down the interminable rows, hands bloodied by the prickly burs, backs and arms aching, dare to dream of what this long-desired crop can do for them.

And Nora Waldron, healer and preacher's wife, family matriarch, must suddenly take on the parenting of grandchild Theora, a feisty, self-assured handful who defies barriers and may be facing a hazardous future in the segregated South.

These are just a few of the characters who people *Long Rows to Hoe*. This first book in the *Wiregrass Chronicles* series will appeal to lovers of historical fiction, Civil War buffs, and those who admire strong women and men who do not flinch when confronted with danger or adversity. Filled with uplifting stories about overcoming hardship and surviving against great odds, *Long Rows to Hoe* recounts tales, both heartrending and hopeful, with compassion, humor, and an unerring depiction of the people of the Wiregrass from the Creek Wars to World War I.