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See How One Man's March for Peace Heals a Bruised and Divided Nation
in Post-Civil War America.

The Ones They Left Behind is being called “a page-turner, insightful, and riveting.” Based on a true story, *The Ones They Left Behind* is an uplifting Civil War story that shows how one man marched for peace and changed an entire nation. Filled with historical fact and multidimensional characters, *The Ones They Left Behind* pulls the reader into a time long-forgotten, but still relevant today.

Set in post-Civil War America, Author Antonio Elmaleh's novel contains many parallels between America during Reconstruction and America today. These similarities include: the divisiveness of partisan politics; the breakdown of civil discourse, the erosion of civil rights, challenges facing veterans coming home from war, the emergence of women taking on traditional male responsibilities during times of war, and the overwhelming challenges of caring for wounded soldiers upon their return home. “I would like readers to discover that some of the answers we are looking for today can be found in our very own past,” says Elmaleh.

James M. McPherson, Pulitzer Prize winning author of *Battle Cry of Freedom*; Frank DeLuca, the Senior VP of The Civil War Trust in Washington D.C.; and best-selling author Thomas Steinbeck all agree that *The Ones They Left Behind* is a must-read for every American of all ages.

If you would like to receive a review copy, arrange an interview, or need any additional information, please contact me at JoeMarich@MarichMedia.com, or you may call me at 323-952-7339.

ADVANCE PRAISE FOR *THE ONES THEY LEFT BEHIND*:

A moving story of a Union Civil War veteran who makes an apparently quixotic journey through Georgia in 1867 reprising his march with Sherman's army, this time in a quest for peace and reconciliation to knit a divided North and South into one nation again. It is a page-turner that keeps the reader on the edge of his seat until the final pages reveal the outcome.

James M. McPherson
Pulitzer Prize winning author, *Battle Cry of Freedom*

The Ones They Left Behind is a riveting and compelling read about a former Union soldier, Harriman Hickenlooper, who sets out on a personal odyssey to save his farm and heal the great wounds of the Civil War. Along the way, each person he encounters in this hostile environment reveals something of the bad and the good angels of our nature and forces Harriman to confront, prejudice, fear, danger and violence. In his first novel, Antonio Elmaleh lifts our spirits as basic human decency prevails and a good man finds redemption and love.

Frank DeLuca
Senior Vice President, The Civil War Trust
Washington, D.C.

It takes a unique courage to go to war since the odds of survival do not hail out to the brave, and it takes a great deal more, to make the journey home again. Antonio Elmaleh's insight and empathy concerning just such a saga are wonderfully invoked and marvelously illustrated in this volume, "The Ones They Left Behind." I for one am still on that journey and can attest to its authenticity of emotion.

Thomas Steinbeck
Author, *Silver Lotus*

SYNOPSIS:

The Ones They Left Behind is a sweeping and engrossing historically accurate account of post-Civil War America told through the eyes of one man, Harriman Hickenlooper, a Civil War veteran, who single-handedly begins to heal the wounds of a country, bitter and divided by war as well as his own heartbreak, by recreating Sherman's March to the Sea. This time, instead of carrying a gun, Harriman will carry a flag. Instead of marching for war, he will march for peace.

His journey is fraught with danger, pain, and healing -- not only for himself, but for an entire nation. *The Ones They Left Behind* is a story every American needs to read. The parallels of our country's bloodiest war to the current divisiveness in today's America are clear. *The Ones They Left Behind* is more than an historical novel, it is a blueprint for healing America today.

Harriman's fictionalized journey is inspired by an actual Union veteran soldier's march for peace in post-Civil War America.

A brief Q&A with author Antonio Elmaleh about his new book, *The Ones They Left Behind.*

We asked author Antonio Elmaleh to answer a few questions for us regarding his new book, *The Ones They Left Behind*.

The Ones They Left Behind is a riveting and compelling Civil War story that shows an America unable to heal itself until one man chooses to revisit the horrors of war in order to find peace for himself and his country. *The Ones They Left Behind* is a beautifully written story with multi-dimensional characters, intense battle scenes, and a lot of heart. James M. McPherson, Pulitzer Prize winning author of *Battle Cry of Freedom*, calls the book “a page-turner that keeps the reader on the edge of his seat until the final pages reveal the outcome.”

The protagonist’s fictionalized journey is inspired by an actual Union veteran soldier’s march for peace in post-Civil War America.

Q. *The Ones They Left Behind* is based upon a true story. How did you come upon this story, and why did it impact you enough to write a book about it?

Antonio: I have read about the Civil War since I was a boy, but I had not read the book of Civil War ghost stories that caught my eye in the Charleston SC Airport convenience shop. One thing stood out - one story didn't belong in that book. It was a story, as I later learned, not about a ghost, but about a real person. And what it showed were two things: that one man can make a difference and, that in the aftermath of our greatest national tragedy, someone stood up for values we claim we want to live by - community, forgiveness, justice, compassion, even common decency - but which are not practiced exactly when they are needed most, when things get tough.

Q. Do you think Harriman, your protagonist, would become a celebrity today like he did in the 1860's?

Antonio: I don't like to admit it, but it's a stretch to believe that an odyssey like Harriman's could capture the popular imagination today. There is too much inane information and dark reality TV choking the airwaves and numbing people's sensibilities – and sensitivity.

Q: Why do you think historical fiction so important?

Antonio: When a writer succeeds in infusing yesterday's events with an immediacy that makes those events important and instructive to his readers today, then readers experience what went before in such a way that they can see not only where they were, but also where they are now and where they are going in the future.

Given that 'historical' (facts) seems to clash with 'fiction' (make believe), it is obligatory to research the history of the story so that the writer has a command of the world in which the story lives. Only through understanding and tracing the effects and implications these true events have on made-up characters can those events 'come alive'. When a character does and says things that resonate so personally that they drop your reader right into the shoes of those characters, readers live through what the characters do, feel and say. That reader is entertained, has been moved and has also learned something all at once.

Q. Why do you think this story resonates with readers?

Antonio: I believe people sense fundamental disconnection in their lives. Their government, their religion, their schools, their workplace, the institutions that were reflections of their sense of community, are in profound disruption, with no vision of what will replace or transform them. Into this

void, it is easier for people to take positions that either promise such new vision, or harken back to an idealized past that never existed. Each position excludes anything that confuses, distorts or challenges it. Hence, people stop talking to each other, stop agreeing to disagree and only listen to echo chambers of the ones that agree with them.

This story asks us to stand in people's shoes that are not at all like us on face value, follow the truth wherever it takes us, seek unity with humility with the ones we don't agree with, and lead by example, not by lecture.

Q. What do you think we, as a country, failed to learn from our experience of the Civil War?

Antonio: "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

Q. Will you continue with Harriman's story or will your next book be something completely different?

Antonio: My next book follows the ghosts of people Harriman never met on his way, only heard about from the ones that were left behind. And no, it is not a "ghost story" of the Civil War.