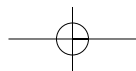
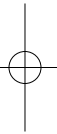
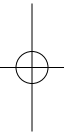


HARD

FIGHTING

SOLDIER



HARD
FIGHTING
SOLDIER

Finding God in Trials, Tragedies, and Triumphs

CHETTE WILLIAMS

Chaplain, Auburn University Football Team

with
DICK PARKER



Looking Glass Books

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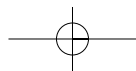
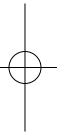
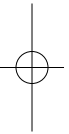
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*For Lakeba, my rock in this world,
and my parents,
Katie and Calvin Williams Sr.,
and Lakeba's mother,
Stella Hibbler*



FOREWORD

By Tommy Tuberville

Head Football Coach, Auburn University

It's almost game time. The players have gone through their pregame stretches on the field and heard last-minute instructions from their position coaches. Now they're back in the locker room making final mental preparations. Over to one side I see Chette Williams, "Brother Chette," the players call him, kneeling in prayer with a player. When he says amen, another steps over. Prayer has become a vital part of these young men's lives, even in the final moments before each game.

When I came to Auburn as head football coach in 1999, I accepted responsibility for helping 120 young men grow into conscientious adults—the whole person, not just the athlete. It's an ongoing process from the time they come here until they leave, and even thirty years from now they can still call on us. I knew my assistant coaches and I would need help, and what better person to have than a man of the Lord who played football at Auburn and knows what these players go through? Chette Williams understands their aches and pains, their problems away from football, and all the situations and temptations that can arise. He's been there. Now Chette's ministry is a major part of how we build a football team and help young men grow to young adults.

Chette has a special way of reaching others. He doesn't spend a lot of time preaching sermons. Instead, he listens. He comes to practices,

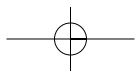
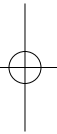
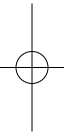
HARD FIGHTING SOLDIER

workouts, and team meetings, making himself available when players need a guide. They all know they can call Brother Chette or come see him any time. He's not a miracle worker. He's just a man who understands and who knows the Lord. Ask a player what Chette means to him, and he's likely to say, "He's like a father. He's always there for me." In that way Chette is modeling our Lord and leading these young men into a closer relationship with Him.

In *Hard Fighting Soldier*, Chette tells how God has changed his life and continues to touch the lives of players and coaches. Read it and let Him touch your life as well.

CONTENTS

A Prodigal	1
The Rotten Nature of Self Reliance	5
When We Were the Least of These	9
The Elusive Big Time	13
Recruiting for the Lord	20
Putting the Temple on Display	23
God's Game Plan	29
Into the Desert	37
Bridging the Chasm	42
Through Kyle's Eyes	46
One Day at a Time	50
Seeking Comfort in the Death of a Teammate	55
Restoring the Years	61
Changing Seasons	65
Time to Give It All	72
Packing Heat in New Orleans	76
Singing a New Song in Unison	84
God's Plans	87
Loose the Bonds	93
A New Day Dawning	98
Calling on His Name	105
From the Mountaintop of Prayer To the Valley of Temptation	113
He Will Not Forget	117
Don't Come Home Empty-Handed	123
A Handful of Mustard Seeds	128
Surrender and Trust	133
Learning to Forgive	138
Hard Fighting Soldiers	142
A Bigger Stage	147
Praise Report at Twenty	150
An Audience of One	160
Sending Forth	173



HARD FIGHTING SOLDIER

Football is a violent game, and Chette was a violent man—a very aggressive football player. His effort and personality on the football field were exactly what you’re looking for. But he had that same personality off the field, and sometimes that’s not conducive to getting along.

Pat Dye

Auburn head football coach, 1981–92

I’m sitting there as a graduate assistant coach working with the scout team, and I look over and see that Chette is almost in a physical fight with [coach] Wayne Hall. And I think, *That is the most miserable-looking young man I have ever seen.* As the scene unfolds, my next thought is, *This guy’s got to go. He’s just got an attitude.*

John Gibbons

Auburn graduate assistant coach, 1982

Chette was intimidating when I was a freshman at Auburn. I thought he’d be the one in prison. I’m telling you, I was scared of Chette.

Demetrius Cotchery

Auburn linebacker, 1982

Inmate No. 214437, Staton Correctional Facility

Chette lockered next to me in the walk-on locker room. He was a mean, bitter, angry-looking guy. And a little scary. I tried to talk with him, and he wouldn’t even respond. I told the other guys in FCA that I was going to pray for Chette, and they said, “You’ve got to be kidding! Come on, you don’t need to pray for that guy. He’s a lost cause. Pray for somebody you can have some success with.”

Kyle Collins

Auburn running back, 1982–85