



Our Land Before We Die: The Proud Story of the Seminole Negro

Jeff Guinn

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"A remarkable story brilliantly told." (Bill Bryson)

"In *Our Land Before We Die*, Jeff Guinn embarks on a personal quest to explore the heartbreaking--yet ultimately inspiring--legacy on the Seminole Negro Indians in their search for freedom. The result is a triumph of oral storytelling, thwarting past efforts to erase these people from the land and history itself." (Iris Chang, author of *The Rape of Nanking*)

"Jeff Guinn recounts an important American story here that has long needed telling, and he tells it with passion, skill and humor." (James McBride, author of *Miracle at St. Anna* and *The Color of Water*)

Every September the Seminole Negro Indians hold a tribal gathering in the town of Brackettville, Texas. After a short parade down Brackettville's four-block main street, one hundred or so men, women, and children gather in the one-acre Seminole Scout Cemetery and tell the story of their people. In *Our Land Before We Die*, Jeff Guinn echoes their voices as he traces the little-known history of the runaway slaves who fled to the Florida Everglades to live beside the Seminole Indians.

Deeply rooted in oral tribal history and based upon extensive interviews with descendants, *Our Land Before We Die* describes the incredible circumstances of a people who sought shelter in the shadow of a tribe whose land and welfare already hung in the balance. And yet in their tireless journey--from Florida to Indian Territory in Oklahoma; on the seven-hundred-mile flight from persecution that took them across the Rio Grande into Mexico; and then back across the Rio Grande to Texas--they never surrendered the hope of one day attaining land of their own.

Our Land Before We Die brings to life the largely forgotten history of a courageous people and the descendants for whom this story is their only legacy.

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