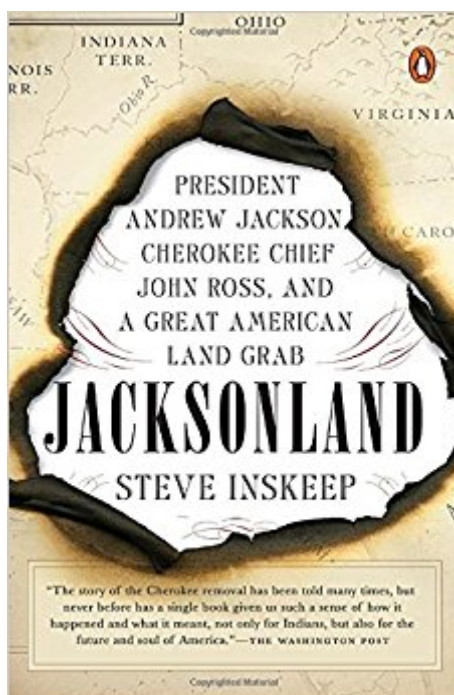


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Jacksonland: President Andrew Jackson, Cherokee Chief John Ross, And A Great American Land Grab



Synopsis

The story of the Cherokee removal has been told many times, but never before has a single book given us such a sense of how it happened and what it meant, not only for Indians, but also for the future and soul of America. "The Washington Post" Five decades after the Revolutionary War, the United States approached a constitutional crisis. At its center stood two former military comrades locked in a struggle that tested the boundaries of our fledgling democracy. One man we recognize: Andrew Jackson "war hero, populist, and exemplar of the expanding South" whose first major initiative as president instigated the massive expulsion of Native Americans known as the Trail of Tears. The other is a half-forgotten figure: John Ross "a mixed-race Cherokee politician and diplomat" who used the United States' own legal system and democratic ideals to oppose Jackson. Representing one of the Five Civilized Tribes who had adopted the ways of white settlers, Ross championed the tribes' cause all the way to the Supreme Court, gaining allies like Senator Henry Clay, Chief Justice John Marshall, and even Davy Crockett. Ross and his allies made their case in the media, committed civil disobedience, and benefited from the first mass political action by American women. Their struggle contained ominous overtures of later events like the Civil War and defined the political culture for much that followed. "Jacksonland" is the work of renowned journalist Steve Inskeep, cohost of NPR's Morning Edition, who offers a heart-stopping narrative masterpiece, a tragedy of American history that feels ripped from the headlines in its immediacy, drama, and relevance to our lives. "Jacksonland" is the story of America at a moment of transition, when the fate of states and nations was decided by the actions of two heroic yet tragically opposed men.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Jacksonland: President Andrew Jackson, Cherokee Chief John Ross and a Great American Land Grab tells the story of the intersecting lives of Andrew Jackson and John Ross, and how the historically shameful Indian Removal Act came about. In a book of Goldilocks proportion (not too long, not too short, just right) author Steve Inskeep follows the lives of Jackson, of whom we know much about, and Ross, a little known but equally fascinating historic figure. There is much more to the story of the forced removal of Native American who lived in the American southeast than we are told about in history texts. Inskeep gives an interesting account of the nations who lived in this region in the first part of the 19th century prior to their forced removal, most of which one is never told about in standard history fare. The Cherokee Nation, led by John Ross, took steps on their own to assimilate into American culture, lived peaceably among their neighbors, had a comparable system of government and even had a constitution that sounded very similar to the one Andrew Jackson was supposed to follow. In a very engaging style, Inskeep explains how southerners' coveting of Cherokee land (and land belonging to other First Nations) evolved, how greedy land speculators and politicians (Andrew Jackson falling in both categories) sacrificed principle in their unscrupulous land grab, and how John Ross bravely struggled in vain for a peaceful resolution to the problem. The story is full of fascinating historical figures, many of whom are virtually unknown even to modern history geeks. There are good guys and bad.

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