

A Synopsis



The Gripping saga of Isaac Rice is a hero's journey. [Don't] be surprised if *First Dark* ends up as a popular movie.
-- *Baltimore Post-Examiner*

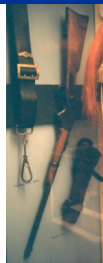
First Dark is a character-driven historically correct 19th century coming of age quest for seven teenagers. In an epic journey, the central character, Isaac Rice, a young ex-slave and Buffalo Soldier, struggles to overcome bitter family losses, enemies, and forces of nature. High adventures await Isaac, his friends, and enemies amid the violence of the American Civil War, Indian Wars, Reconstruction, and spillover bloodshed from a Mexican Revolution.

They meet entrepreneurs; argue the issues of their time; fall in love; struggle to survive violence, experience loss, and finally, redemption. Sourced from original 19th century documents and over a hundred books, their trails and trials unfold across South Carolina, Mississippi, Missouri, Kansas, Indian Territory (Oklahoma), Texas, New Mexico, and Chihuahua.

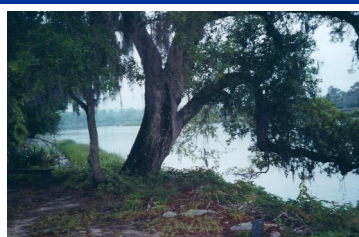
The voices of Isaac and his contemporaries reveal the mores, cultures, greed, genius, and ignorance of their peoples. Along with tragedy and horror, they bring history and humor into Isaac's life.



Carrizal, Chihuahua, Estados Unidos Mexicanos



Apache Chief Victorio



Willtown Bluff, Charleston County, SC, USA

Product Details

- Paperback: 516 pages
- **Publisher:** Booklocker.com, Inc. (September 1, 2015)
- **Edition:** Sesquicentennial
- **Language:** English
- **ISBN-10:** 1634906950
- **ISBN-13:** 978-1634906951
- **Product Dimensions:** 6 x 1.2 x 9 inches
- **Shipping Weight:** 1.7 pounds
- **Average Customer Review:** 5.0 (6 Reviews)



What People Are Saying...

Bryan Haynes, University of North Carolina School of the Arts

Bob has a beautiful, lyrical writing style that would "make an Irish poet tear". I loved the story and the depth Bob put into characters.

Dave Miller, CEO, American Red Cross National Testing Laboratory

I thoroughly enjoyed **First Dark**, a roller coaster thriller about the life of Isaac Rice, a former slave. The book is rich in historical detail and scenic descriptions that allow you to taste, feel, smell, see and hear the events in the book. At first, I would check references for historical accuracy as I read. When, every check I made proved Bob's research to be correct, I stopped checking and went ahead to learn new facts as I enjoyed the story and his characters.

E.S. Tennent

First Dark is a well researched work of historical fiction, set during and just after the Civil War. This engaging story centers on Isaac Rice, a run-away slave who eventually joins a Buffalo Soldier's unit of the Union Army in the West and intertwines his life and experiences with those of such diverse people as plantation owners, US congressmen, army units operating behind enemy lines, hostile Indians and Mexican combatants. It accurately reflects the attitudes and prejudices of the times and presents both villains and heroes. Rogers makes this novel extremely readable and entertaining as a book of fiction that is based upon actual events and deeds of real people. I thought it was great and I highly recommend **First Dark**.

Alice Dinizo for Readers Favorite

First Dark is a powerful story of the underbelly of American history that has been carefully researched and then written. It covers the horrors of bigotry from the points of view of several different characters and brings everything together at the end of the story. Characters are well-developed and believable, and the dialogue and description throughout the book are brilliant, bringing the reader right into the story. The author's creation of characters who blend well with actual historic figures from that era is spectacular.

Barbara P. Grainger

First Dark, by Bob Rogers, tells the epic story of a young slave, Isaac Rice, as he moves toward manhood as a volunteer in the Union Army during the Civil War. Isaac's story stretches across a large section of the American landscape. It is filled with exploits that are often dangerous and complex. He meets men and women from various stations in life and learns broad lessons about the man's inhumanity to man and conversely about man's endearing concern for his fellow man, regardless of race or station. He loves women and is loved in return. Isaac's adventures cause him to mature into a man whose soul is truly evolved and is in a more majestic place than the common man.

Cast of Characters

ISAAC RICE is an enslaved sixteen year old blacksmith apprentice on a prosperous South Carolina rice plantation along the South Edisto River. His lover is the twenty-three year old widow, Bianca, who chose the handsome and strong Isaac as her mate. In early 1863, two years into the Civil War, Isaac is fed up with the news of Confederate victories and decides to run away and become a Union soldier. After the war, he joins the new black Tenth U.S. Cavalry – its soldiers are later called Buffalo Soldiers.

RACHEL BLACK is enslaved on the Bender Plantation in Jasper County, Mississippi where cotton is the major crop. Rachel is five feet tall and weighs one hundred one pounds. At seventeen, Rachel is a dark skinned brown eyed beauty. She is secretly taught arithmetic and reading as a child by the plantation owner's daughter playing school. After the war, Rachel, Isaac's betrothed, participates in Mississippi's 1868 Constitutional Convention.

WILLIAM DUKE joins the Thirty-eighth Mississippi Volunteer Infantry Regiment and sees action at Corinth and Vicksburg. After the Confederate surrender of Vicksburg, Billy forms a band of guerillas that raid Union outposts and Freedmen's farms in West Central Mississippi until the end of the war. Billy is an avid fan and disciple of Confederate Vice President Alexander Stephens.

ORTEGA is a skinny sixteen year old and fears that Mescalero Apaches will settle down and become farmers before he can become a warrior. He wants to join chiefs who are willing to fight the white eye invaders. He joins the aging famous Chief Cochise and is disappointed when Cochise makes peace. Ortega and his best friend, Jorge, then join the Chihenne Chief Victorio to fight the whites again.

JAMES DARBY is the son of an English immigrant farmer in Illinois when the Civil War starts. An expert horseman and Union cavalryman, James is captured during a raid in southern Mississippi. After parole from a Confederate prison in Virginia, James fights again as a cavalryman at Appomattox Court House. After the war, James serves with the Fourth U.S. Cavalry in the west where he joins forces with Isaac.

ALEJANDRA LUNA plows and plants with her father, a poor sharecropper, in the Mexican state of Chihuahua. Alejandra's brothers beat a rich unwanted suitor for her. As a result, she and her older brother escape to the south and a new life starts for Alejandra when she is adopted by a physician and his wife. A few years later, she becomes an accomplished nurse and midwife.

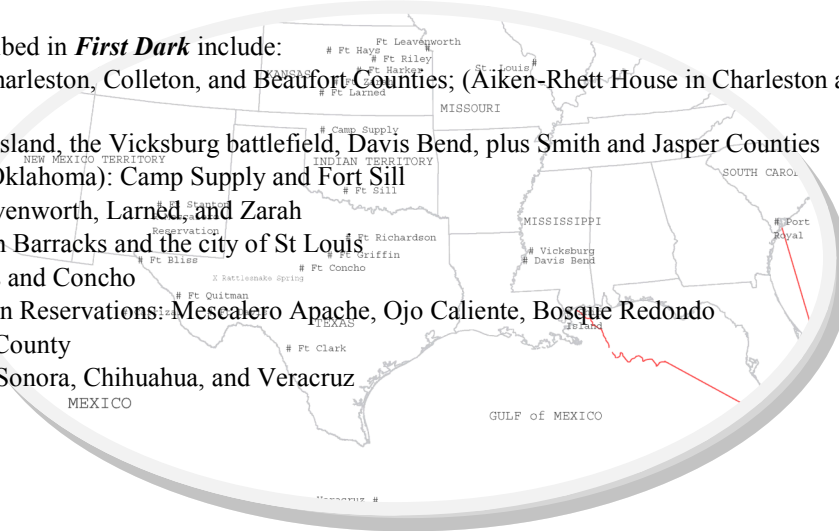
Period

May 1863 – April 1882

Locations

Places of note described in ***First Dark*** include:

- South Carolina: Charleston, Colleton, and Beaufort Counties; (Aiken-Rhett House in Charleston and Jehossee Island);
- Mississippi: Ship Island, the Vicksburg battlefield, Davis Bend, plus Smith and Jasper Counties
- Indian Territory (Oklahoma): Camp Supply and Fort Sill
- Kansas: Forts Leavenworth, Larned, and Zarah
- Missouri: Jefferson Barracks and the city of St Louis
- Texas: Forts Davis and Concho
- New Mexico Indian Reservations: Mescalero Apache, Ojo Caliente, Bosque Redondo
- Arizona: Cochise County
- Mexican states of Sonora, Chihuahua, and Veracruz



About the Author

Bob Rogers is an author, playwright, entrepreneur, past IBM intrapreneur, speaker, and volunteer Information Technology instructor. Bob is a former army captain, paratrooper, and combat veteran of the Vietnam War. He is a member of the 9th and 10th (Horse) Cavalry Association. His Alma Mater is South Carolina State University.

Bob tends his spring and fall gardens in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Also by Bob Rogers:

- ***Hitting Life's Curveballs*** (a novel)
- ***Sacrifice at Shiloh Church*** (a novelette)
- ***Buffalo Soldier Christmas Story*** (a short story)
- ***Lieutenant Flipper's Trial*** (a one act play)
- ***The Laced Chameleon*** (a novel)