



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 11/13/23  
UPDATED ON 11/14/23

For Inquiries, Contact Hannah Greene  
[Communications@whereismyland.org](mailto:Communications@whereismyland.org)

## **CORRECTION: Darden Family Demands the Return of their Stolen Ancestral Land, Mineral Rights and Wealth**

**Union Country, AR:** The Darden Family, descendants of “Old Joe”, a formerly enslaved man from Union County, Arkansas, are fighting to restore their rights to their ancestral land and the interest gained from it. The generational wealth due to them was stolen in the 20th century by lawyers who were charged with helping Old Joe’s descendants determine rightful heirship and distribution amounts. Instead, the rapacious attorneys preyed upon Old Joe’s descendants, by colluding with the government and oil companies, binding them to unjustifiable contracts.

“The lawyers, who were charged with defending the JW’s heirs’ rights nearly eight decades ago, preyed on the Black family instead, and now receive more royalties than any of his kin. This injustice cannot be allowed to continue any further,” says Kavon Ward, Founder and CEO of Where Is My Land and Justice for Bruce’s Beach.

The ancestral land in question was bought by Jim “JW” Edwards, one of Old Joe’s sons. By the end of his life in 1946, JW had accumulated 417+ acres of both acquired and inherited land and was rumored to be the wealthiest man in Arkansas, a remarkable feat even by today’s standards. However, he and his wife, Ida, left no children behind- leaving the children of his half-siblings bore by his Father, “Old Joe” and his two enslaved wives as heirs. The Darden Descendants are descendants of “Old Joe” and Patsy Gant Edwards.

Attorneys cunningly wrote contracts that allowed them to walk away with 99% of both the Susan Wroten and Patsy Gant line’s interest in JW Edwards’ land, money, and mineral rights. The royalties granted by the attorneys are nearly 1200% times more than what the heirs receive themselves.

Instead of working in the best interest of JW Edwards’ heirs, attorneys preyed upon them, stealing the promise of generational wealth afforded to them by their ancestors.

“The systemic racist laws and good old boy network allowed for the theft of our inheritance. The Darden’s were targeted and treated less than human, for no other reason than being BLACK,” decried Kimberly Ann, a direct descendant of JW Edwards.

# # #

## **Support the Darden Descendants**

[Sign the petition!](#)

Listen to the Dardens tell their story across our social media platforms

**Instagram:** [@DardenDescendants](#)

**Facebook:** [Darden Descendants](#)

**TikTok:** [@DardenDescendants](#)

**#Justice4JW #DardenDescendants**



DONATE