



Course/Grade Level: U.S. History (11th grade)

Lesson Title: Tracing the Black Hawk War Through Northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin

Teacher: Rick Elston

1. Set Induction: I like to use this lesson as part of a larger study of U.S. westward expansion and U.S./Native American conflict. Where I used to stress the Cherokee Trail of Tears or the Plains Indian Wars to illustrate the main unit themes, now I use the experiences of the Sauk and Mesquakie Native Americans leading up to the Black Hawk War of 1832 to emphasize local history in the context of the larger study of westward growth and the subjugation of native groups. I find it easiest to start with a discussion of what we had already learned about the differences between how Native Americans and Europeans/Americans thought about land, civilization, and progress. Many students seem to relate to questions about how they would feel if they were told to leave their homes and roots. Many also relate to prejudice and how that can often negatively affect relationships between groups of people. This type of general discussion can then be guided towards local Native American history. Usually one or more students will quickly bring up Black Hawk, but most students don't know much about him at all, except that he has a statue or the Chicago hockey team is named for him.

2. Aims/Objectives and Standards: The entire lesson's objective is to learn more about the Sauk and Mesquakie tribes and their place in local history, while seeing how their experiences mirror in many ways the larger experiences of Native American groups dealing with the expansion of European/American settlement at different times. There are three main sections of the lesson and each has a specific objective. The objective of the first part of the lesson, the history and culture of the Sauk and Mesquakie tribes, is for students to understand the early migrations and cultural patterns of these groups and to compare and contrast them to other groups of Native Americans they have studied. The objective of the second part of the lesson, the life of Black Hawk, is for students to experience, through the life of one man, the changes and stresses to Native American cultures, which were felt throughout the Americas, brought on by increased contact with whites through the westward growth of the U.S. The objective to the final part of the lesson, following the events of the Black Hawk War through our region, is for students to develop a greater knowledge and appreciation for the local history in their own backyards, while recognizing how similar events can be seen repeated again and again in the larger history of American westward expansion. Parts of this lesson touch on themes of the following ISBE standards: 14.B.4, 14.D.5, 14.E.4, 14.F.4a, 14.D.4a, 15.D.5b, 16.A.5a, 16.B.5b, 16.C.5b, 16.E.4b, 16.E.5b, 17.A.4b, 17.C.5a, 18.A.5, and 18.C.4a.

3. Procedures, Assessments and Materials Required: The power-point used in this lesson is attached. Depending on the time available, and desired scope, any or all of the three parts of the power-point (Sauk/Mesquakie history and culture, life of Black Hawk, and tracing the Black War through the region) can be used. I have three activities/assessments I generally use with the three sections, but many others can be developed and substituted. The teacher can decide on the specific implementation and grading of these ideas. For the first section, I like to have the students do an illustrated wheel, or timeline, showing the major events in the life of the Sauk/Mesquakie Native Americans during the different seasons. Students can cut out, label, and make illustrations on a circular wheel or they can do the same thing, but put the events on a timeline of the year. For the second section, there are several options students could do to demonstrate their knowledge of the life of Black Hawk. A few ideas would include: hypothetical journal entries from the perspective of Black Hawk relate important events in his life, a character sketch where important events, traits, items could be shown in a drawing of Black Hawk, or write a compare/contrast piece looking at Black Hawk's life and the life of any other well-known Native American leader, and many others could be developed. For the third section, I have found that a great way for students to link events of the Black Hawk War to local geography is to have them create an illustrated map that follows Black Hawk's band, and the militia/army pursuit, through Illinois and Wisconsin with drawings and labels marking important events and battles. This way, students see how these events moved directly through our area and how most were within the distance of an afternoon's drive today.

4. Resources and Scholarship: Please see the list of published sources and web sources at the end of the power-point for more information. Many local museums and historical groups are great resources for specific Black Hawk related sites.

5. Conclusion/Lesson Wrap-up: Wrap up can consist of sharing projects of willing students with the class to stress the main objectives of the unit. Throughout the larger westward expansion unit and beyond, continue to make connections to this lesson, and the local history of the Black Hawk War, to illustrate and emphasize larger historical trends and themes.



The Black Hawk War

Tracing the Black Hawk War
Through Northern Illinois
and Southern Wisconsin

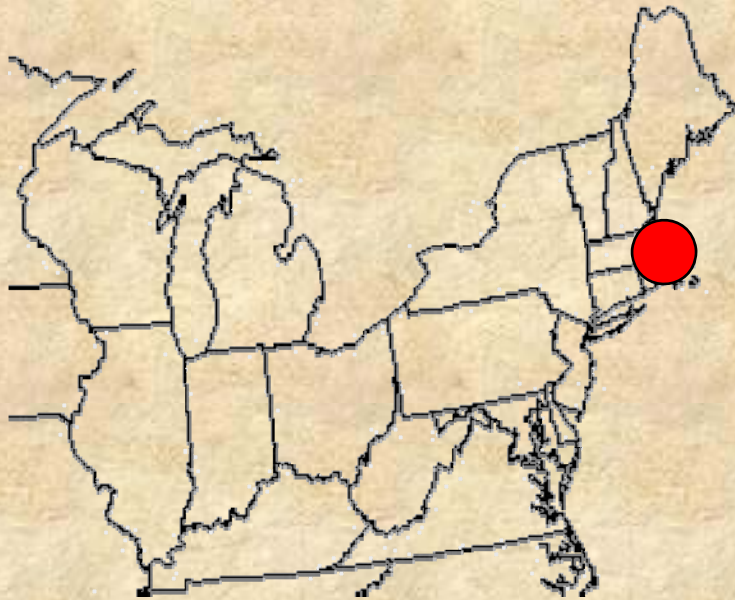
For five months in 1832, Black Hawk and his band of more than 1,600 Sauk (Sac), Mesquakie (Fox), and Kickapoo followers defied the U.S. Army, Illinois State and Michigan Territory militias, and white settlers by attempting to return to their summer home in northwestern Illinois at the junction of the Mississippi and Rock rivers.



History of the Sauk and Mequakie Tribes

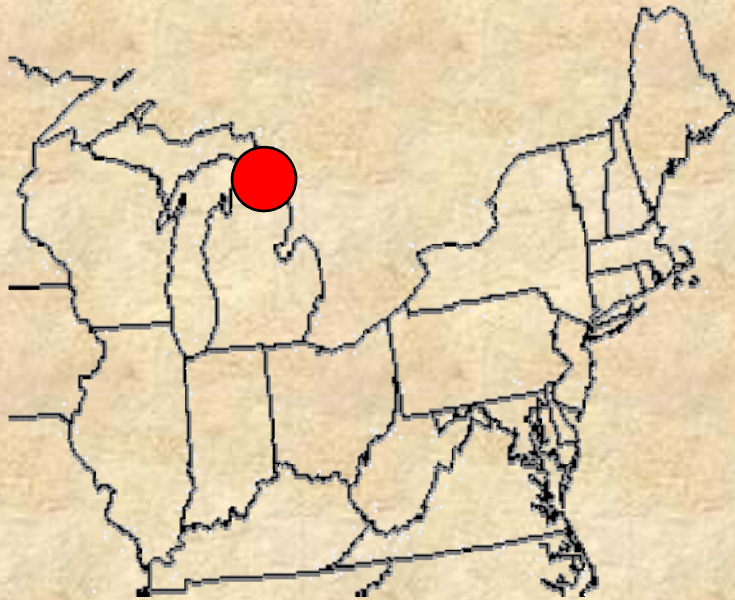
Early Migrations

Pre-European Contact



According to Sauk and Mesquakie oral traditions, their tribes originally lived on the east coast, possibly in the modern-day Massachusetts-New Jersey area.

Prior to 1600



The Sauk and Mesquakie tribes had migrated to the area near the present-day Michigan-Canadian border.

Iroquois Wars



By the end of the 1640's, pressure from the powerful Iroquois Confederacy over the fur trade pushed the Sauk and Mesquakie tribes west near present-day Green Bay, Wisconsin.

Contact With The French



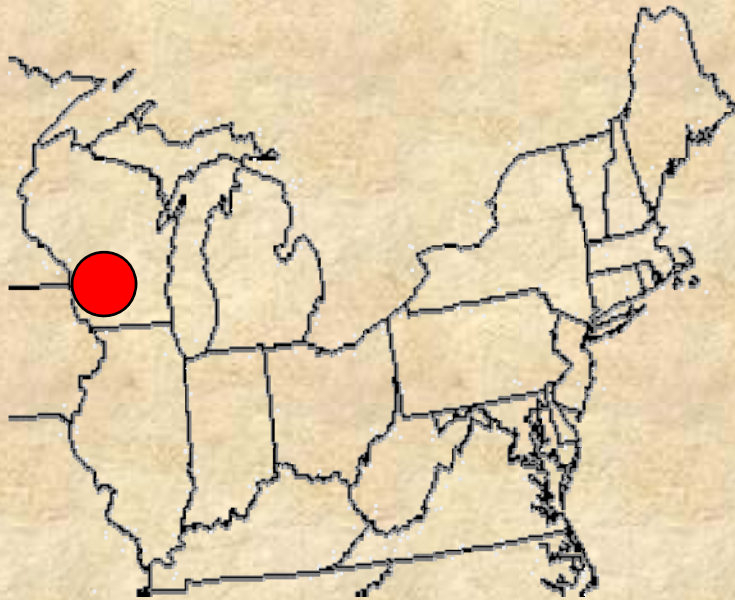
Near Green Bay is where Father Claude Allouez, a Jesuit missionary, found the Sauk and Mesquakie tribes during a French expedition in 1667.

Father Allouez's Impressions

Because of their warlike ferocity, Allouez said the Sauk “above all others can be called Savages”.

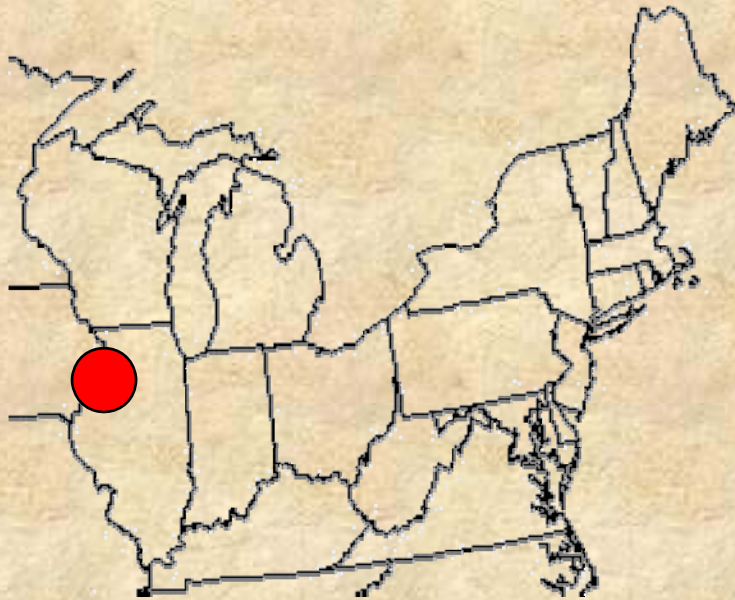


Fox Wars 1712-1738



During these wars against the French, the Sauk were greatly weakened and the Mesquakie nearly annihilated. By 1738, the Sauk and Mesquakie had intermingled and moved near the Wisconsin River.

French and Indian War



In the mid 1760's, shortly after siding with the losing French against the British in the French and Indian War, Sauk scouts reported favorable lands to the south with only the weak Kaskaskia tribe to overcome.

Saukenuk: City of the Sauk

The Sauk and Mesquakie tribes quickly moved into the Rock River Valley and pushed the Kaskaskia out. They established a major village, Saukenuk, at the confluence of the Rock and Mississippi rivers. Although the Sauk and Mesquakie had many villages in the area, Saukenuk became their people's population center and the tribes' spiritual home.

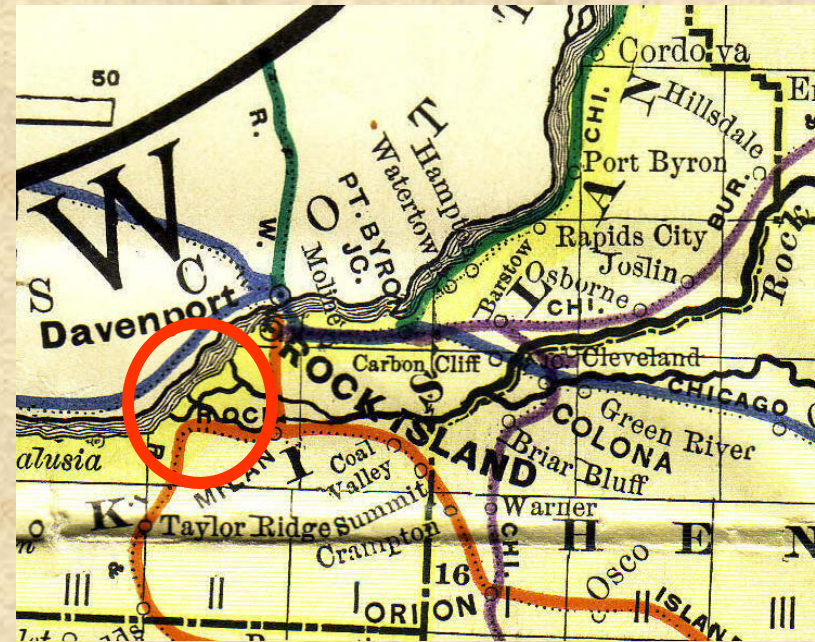


Sauk and Mesquakie Life

Living With Nature's Cycles

Saukenuk: Center of the World

Saukenuk was located on the north bank of the Rock River where it flows into the Mississippi River, about 2 miles from present day Rock Island, IL. The land was extremely fertile and the area rich in resources.



Spring Return to Saukenuk



Each April, the Sauk and Mesquakie would return from their winter hunt west of the Mississippi, and maple their sugar camps, and gathered at Saukenuk. With a population of over 6,000, this made Saukenuk the largest settlement, native or white, in the Upper Mississippi Valley.

Saukenuk: Sacred Ground

The Sauk and Mesquakie returned home with their dead from over the winter. They repaired their summer lodges, dug up their food caches buried the previous fall, and buried their dead in Chippionnock (City of the Dead), a large cemetery on a ridge above Saukenuk.



Spring Planting



Women dug and planted hundreds of acres of corn, beans, melons, squash, and many other crops. All crops were grown together in family fields. Women tended the crops and were in charge of all aspects of farming.

Spring Trading

Men would finish trading their remaining pelts and furs from the winter hunt. They would keep their finest furs until spring to receive the best prices from the white fur traders. They also traded surplus maple syrup and sugar.



Saukenuk Summer Homes



In Saukenuk, the Sauk and Mesquakie lived in large, bark covered lodges. Large, extended, clan families slept in these homes. Most time in Saukenuk was spent outdoors. These lodges could hold twenty people or more.

Saukenuk: A Village of Clans

Both the Sauk and Mesquakie tribes were each divided into 12 hereditary clans. Civil leaders all came from one clan and civil leadership passed from father to son. War leaders could come from any clan, but war leadership was based on warrior status rather than birth.



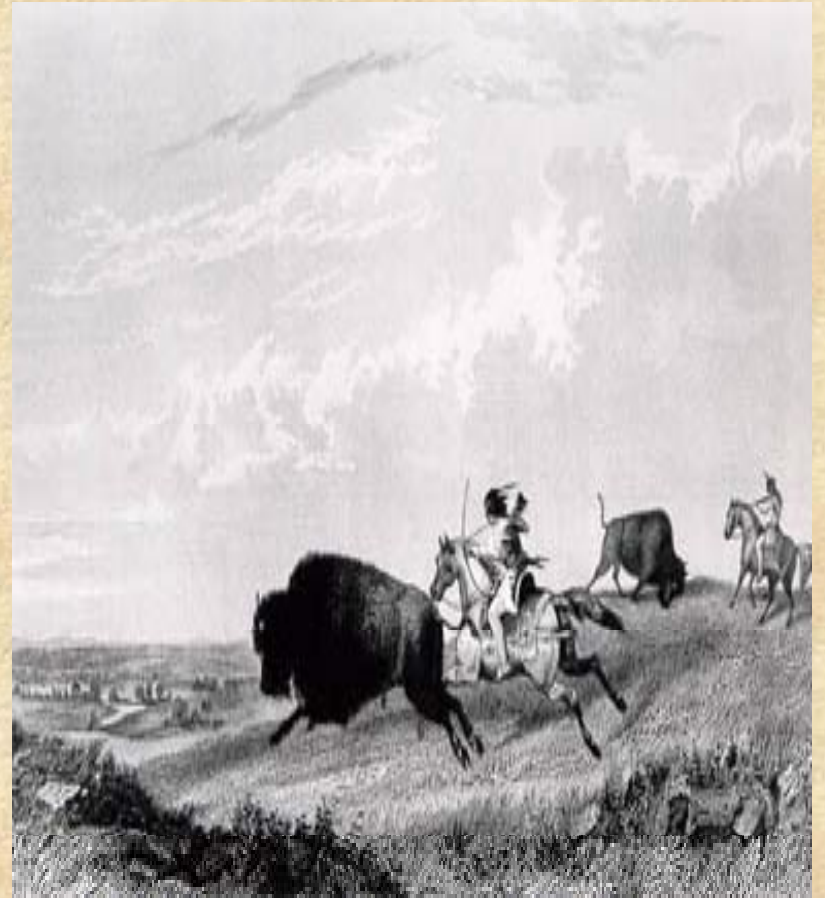
Late Spring: Celebration and Courtship



After the spring planting and trading, the Sauk and Mesquakie put on their best clothes and held the Crane Dance Festival. During this celebration, youths played music and danced while parents arranged marriages. Sauk and Mesquakie women could turn down a marriage match if they did not approve.

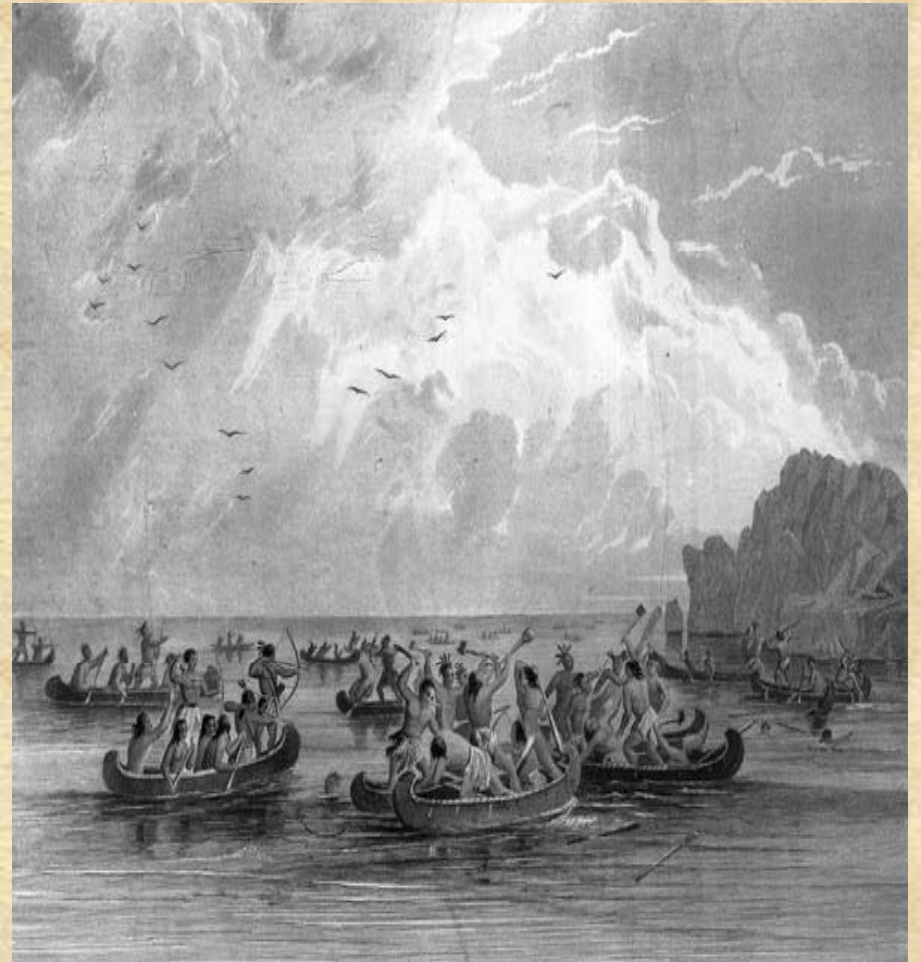
Summer Hunt

In mid-July, after the National Dance celebration, the young men rode off for a month of hunting the plains west of the Mississippi River. Here, they killed as many buffalo and other animals as they could carry back to Saukenuk. If hunting was good, and time allowed, the young men raided Sioux camps for horses and scalps.



Inter-Tribal Warfare

Warfare against other tribes was common among the Sauk and Mesquakie. Only through war could a man achieve, and maintain, his status. It also gave individuals the opportunity for loot and showed enemies that the tribes could protect their lands.



Summer at Saukenuk



While the young men were away hunting, old men and children fished and gathered rushes and reeds that the women wove into mats to use as the flooring and covering for the winter wigwams. Each woman usually made about 300 mats every summer.

Summer Lead Mining

Many women moved north, near present-day Galena, IL, to mine lead. Since the 1700's, lead mining had become an important part of Sauk and Mesquakie economics. Much of the lead would be traded to white traders. White settlers would later claim the lead country.



End of Summer Revelry



By mid-August, young men returned from the hunt and the women returned from the lead mines. For almost three weeks, as the crops ripened, the Sauk and Mesquakie would feast, sing, play lacrosse, and gamble.

Fall Harvest

By the end of August, it was time to harvest the corn, squash, melons, and other crops. The Sauk and Mesquakie women grew 7,000-8,000 bushels of corn per year. Some was set aside for winter and some was cached in bark lined holes at Saukenuk along with other crops.



Fall Trade



Traders arrived by boat at Saukenuk in early September. Each year, the Sauk and Mesquakie sold them about 1,000 bushels of corn. Most importantly, the traders brought them the traps, guns, gunpowder, axes, and other tools they needed for the winter hunting and trapping season.

The Credit System

The Sauk and Mesquakie received their winter supplies on credit from the French and later, the British. They would pay off their debt with furs and skins as the traders followed them and set up near their winter camps. Trouble getting winter supplies on credit from the Americans was a source of tension.

A very important element of Sauk and Mesquakie life was their economic relationship with the fur traders. Beginning in 1667, Sauk and Mesquakie hunters met each year with traders from French, British, or American fur companies to exchange pelts for manufactured goods.

Leaving Saukenuk



After the fall trading was completed, the Sauk and Mesquakie hid their food caches, packed, and left Saukenuk. They moved west of the Mississippi for their winter hunting and trapping grounds on the upper Iowa and Des Moines rivers.

The Tribes Disperse

Upon arriving at the winter grounds, the tribes broke-up into small groups of a few related, immediate families. Through the winter hunt, they lived in small wigwams made by the women. They set up their wigwams in wooded valleys to protect them from wind and storms.



The Winter Hunt



Sauk and Mesquakie men hunted for food and deer, buffalo, and bear skins. Their main job was to trap as many mink, otter, raccoon, muskrat, and lynx as possible for trading purposes. During the 1819-1820 hunting season, the tribes sold more than 60,000 pelts.

Long Winter Nights

During the winter, Sauk and Mesquakie boys fasted and darkened their faces with ashes to try to receive powerful dreams. Everyone else spent long nights in the warm wigwam telling old tales of their people and funny stories to entertain each other.



Maple Sugaring



In March, the small bands of Sauk and Mesquakie began to make their way to the sugar camps on the Mississippi River. They made enough to annually trade about 2,000 pounds of maple syrup and sugar. Old friends who had been separated since the beginning of winter were reunited.

Return to Saukenuk

In April, as soon as the sap ceased running and their kettles cooled, the Sauk and Mesquakie prepared to return to their home in Saukenuk. As Black Hawk said, “In this way the year rolled round happily.”



Life of Black Hawk

Traditional Life Faces Growing
American Expansion

Birth of Black Hawk



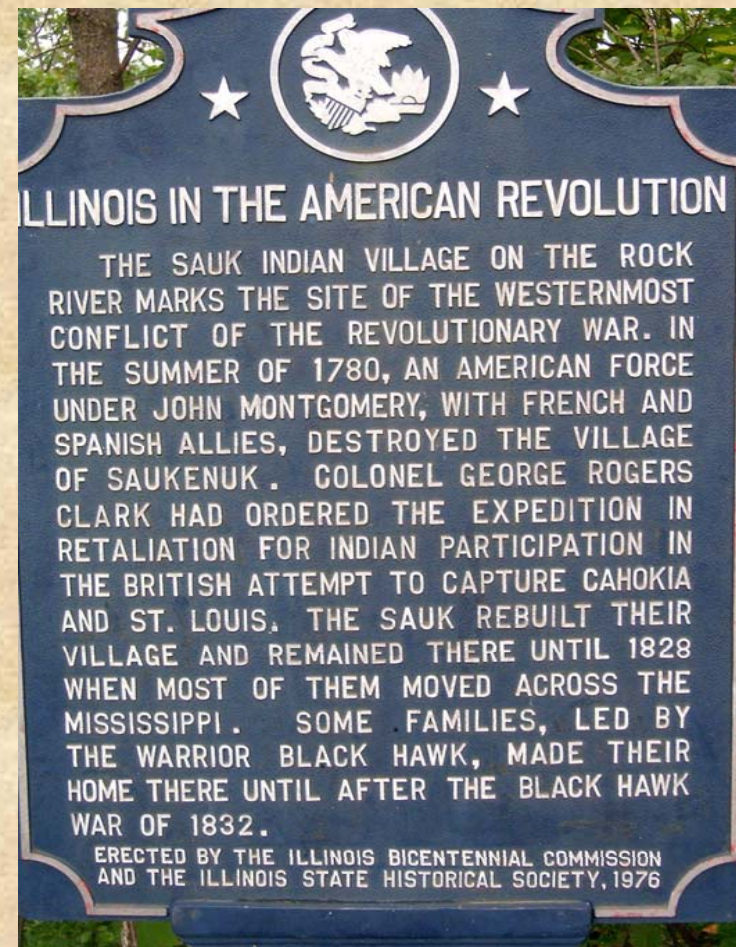
MA KA-TAI-ME-SHE-KIA-KIAK.

BLACK HAWK.

Ma-Ka-Tai-Me-She-Kia-Kiak, or Black Sparrow Hawk, (known to history as Black Hawk) was born in the Sauk and Mesquakie village of Saukenuk around 1767. He appears to have been the only child of his father, Pysea, and his mother, Summer Rain.

Saukenuk During the American Revolution

During the American Revolution, while Black Hawk was still a boy, the Sauk and Mesquakie sided with the British because of their extensive trade ties. In response, the Americans burned Saukenuk, which the Sauk and Mesquakie had fled, in 1780. This was the western-most military action of the American Revolution.



Black Hawk Becomes a Brave



At the age of 15, around 1782, Black Hawk first went to war and managed to wound an opponent. He was now allowed to wear the paint and feathers of an adult Sauk warrior. He was distinguished by the skin and tail feathers of the sparrow hawk, which he wore around his waist. He believed this allowed him to share the hawk's power. Soon after, he killed his first enemy in battle, an Osage warrior.

United States Creates the Northwest Territory

After the American victory over the British in the American Revolution, the U.S. government organized its new territory, including Saukenuk and other Sauk and Mesquakie lands, into the Northwest Territory.



Black Hawk's Father Is Killed



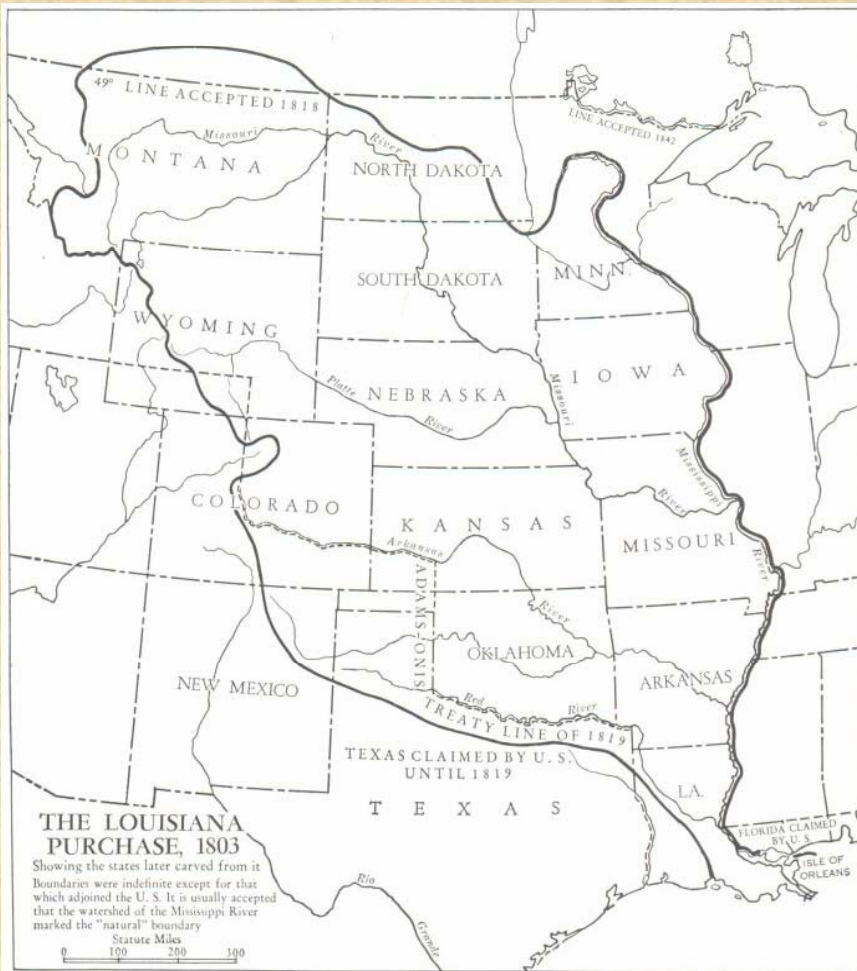
When Black Hawk was 19 and an accomplished warrior, around 1786, he went with a war party led by his father, Pysea, against the Cherokee tribe. Black Hawk saw Pysea go down, took command, slew three warriors personally, and won the victory. However, his father died of his wounds and for five years Black Hawk gave up war and went into solitary grieving.

Black Hawk's Medicine Bag

After his father's death, Black Hawk claimed his father's medicine bag which had been passed down from his great-great grandfather, to his great-grandfather, Na-an-me-kee, a famous Sauk war leader. For Black Hawk, this medicine bag was a magical object that contained the heart of the Sauk nation.



1803-1804



These were crucial years for the Sauk and Mesquakie tribes. First, the U.S. purchased the Louisiana Territory from the French. Soon, U.S. officials arrived at St. Louis to claim the Upper Mississippi Valley. Shortly after, a Sauk warrior killed a white settler north of St. Louis. U.S. officials demanded that the local leaders turn over the warrior. The warrior was locked up in Jefferson Barracks, St. Louis.

Treaty of 1804

The Sauk and Mesqakie leaders sent four chiefs to St. Louis to deal with the matter. The four Sauk leaders believed they were going to St. Louis to arrange the release of the accused warrior after making proper restitution to the slain man's family. Instead, William Henry Harrison, Governor of Indiana Territory (which included Illinois), pressed a treaty on the four leaders, after reported heavy drinking by the Sauk delegation.



A Disputed Treaty

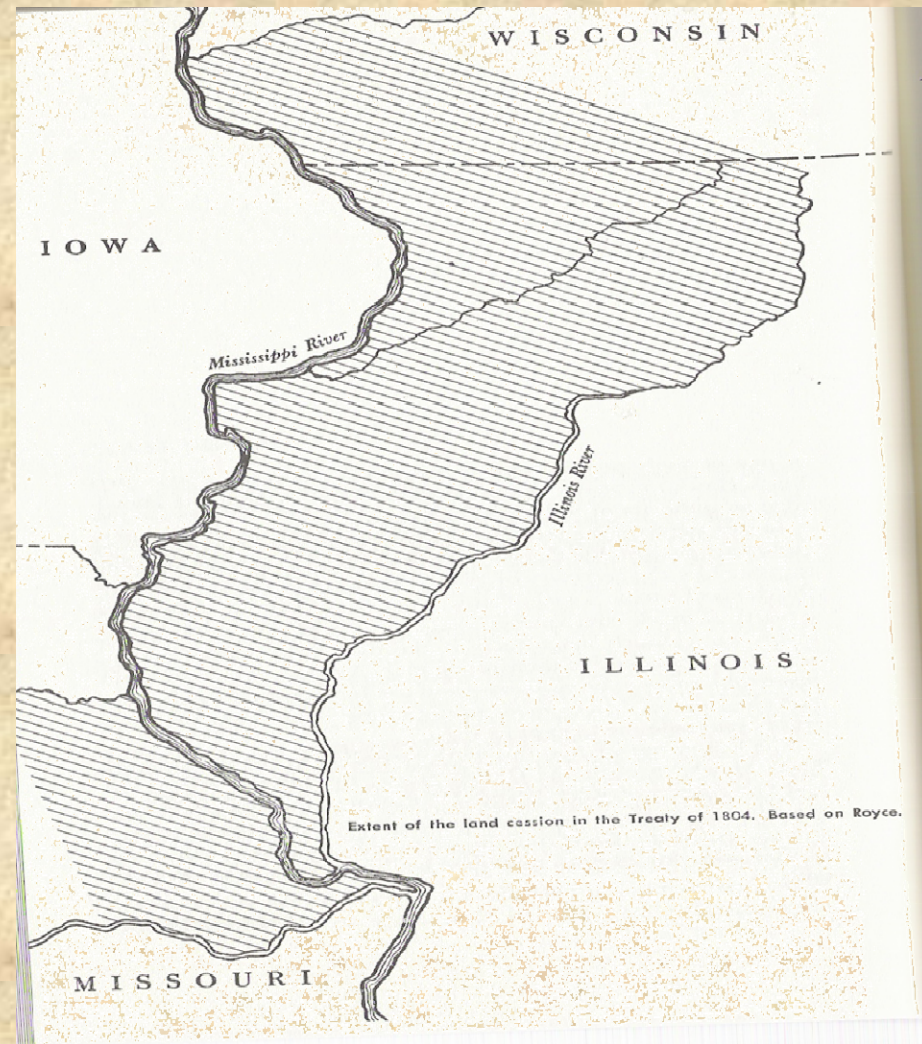
TREATY WITH THE SAUK AND FOXES, 1804.

ART. 7. As long as the lands which are now ceded to the United States remain their property, the Indians belonging to the said tribes, shall enjoy the privilege of living and hunting upon them.

On learning of the treaty signing, the Sauk and Mesquakie tribes tried to dispute the treaty, saying the four leaders did not have authority to sign for the tribes. Also, Article 7 of the treaty caused many Sauk and Mesquakie to believe they had only agreed to share their lands with the U.S. government.

Results of the 1804 Treaty

Although not immediately enforced, the 1804 Treaty, which the U.S. insisted was legitimate, officially ceded millions of acres of Sauk and Mesquakie lands, including Saukenuk and all their lands in Illinois. It also set the stage for later conflict.



Fort Madison



In 1808, the U.S. government built Ft. Madison (present-day Ft. Madison, IA) in Sauk and Mesquakie territory, on the west bank of the Mississippi, over 150 miles downriver of Saukenuk. In late 1811, Black Hawk led a Sauk, Mesquakie, and Ho-Chunk (Winnebago) war party that besieged the fort for nearly two days before low ammunition forced Black Hawk to withdraw.

War of 1812: Whose Side To Join?

As the War of 1812 approached, the U.S. government wanted to keep the natives of the Northwest Territory neutral. Despite promises that the fall credit system would continue, the Sauk and Mesquakie were denied credit by the Americans at Ft. Madison. On return to Saukenuk, they found British trade boats promising credit and urging the Sauk and Mesquakie to join the British side in the coming conflict.



Black Hawk in the War of 1812



Black Hawk led 200 Sauk and Mesquakie warriors to Green Bay, where he was made general of all northwest natives fighting for the British. He fought at the Battle of Raisin River in January of 1813, and other battles. He again fought for the British in the spring and summer of 1813 but became tired of British military leadership and returned to Saukenuk in the fall of 1813. His band was now being called the “British Band” by the U.S. government.

A Rival Within: Keokuk

While Black Hawk and his “British Band” were away fighting the Americans, many Sauk and Mesquakie moved west of the Mississippi. The leaders who remained feared U.S. troops and planned to abandon Saukenuk. Keokuk, although not a civil or war leader, promised that, if put in charge of a war party, the village would “sleep in safety.” Although Keokuk found no U.S. troops, he began to be seen as a leader among the pro-peace Sauk and Mesquakie.



Keokuk

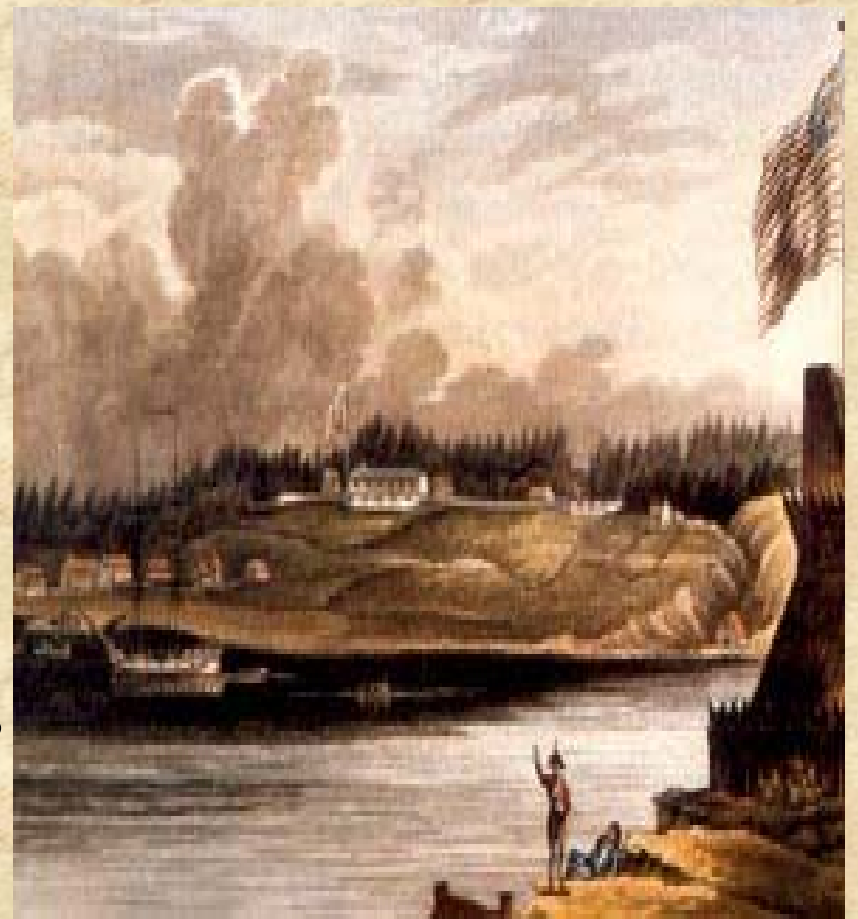


Keokuk, a skilled orator, would become Black Hawk's main rival among the Sauk and Mesquakie tribes. Dazzled by presents from the U.S. and awed by U.S. military strength, Keokuk became a favorite of the U.S. government because he was willing to give up lands to avoid conflict.

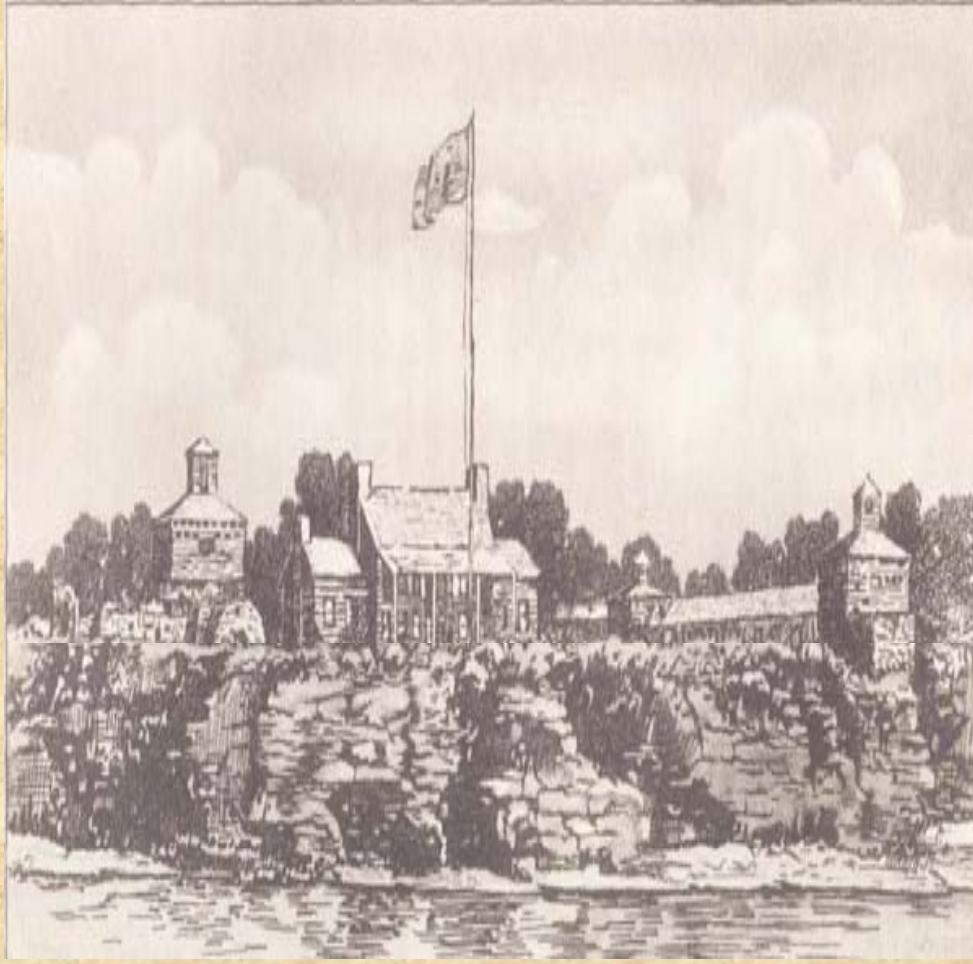
End of the War of 1812

U.S. victory in the War of 1812 surprised Black Hawk because of his success defending Sauk and Mesquakie country from U.S. forces under Zachary Taylor in the summer of 1814.

Although the U.S. was technically in control of the area, many of the “British Band”, including Black Hawk, continued to meet, and trade, with the British at Fort Malden, near Detroit.



Growing American Presence



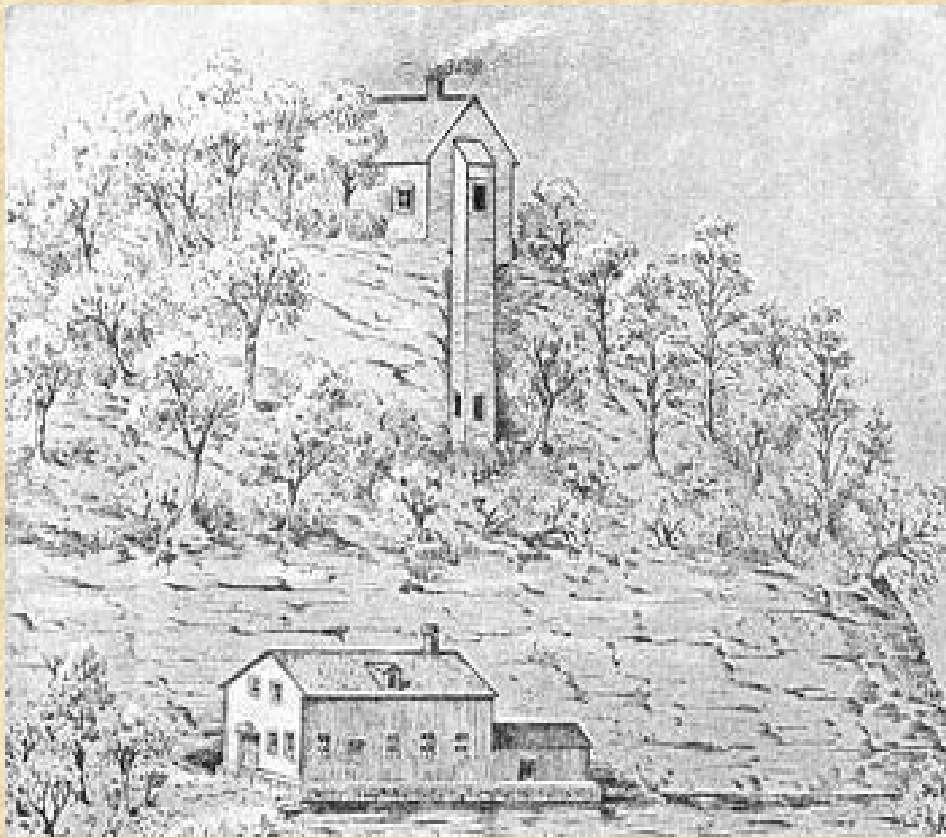
The years after the War of 1812 saw thousands of settlers stream into Illinois Territory. In 1816, the U.S. government built Fort Armstrong (present-day Rock Island, IL), just four miles north of Saukenuk. This had been the area used by the Sauk and Mesquakie as berry patches for generations.

Illinois Statehood

In 1818, Illinois became a state. White settlement increased, even pushing into previously unsettled Sauk and Mesquakie lands. Many of these settlers were War of 1812 veterans who had received land grants for their military service.



1822: Lead Mines Lost



Col. James Johnson, a War of 1812 veteran, received a federal mining grant. As lead mining operations began at Sauk and Mesquakie mines in July 1822, under U.S. Army protection, the Sauk and Mesquakie lost their mines, an important part of their trade economy.

1822: Fur Trade Monopolized

In the summer of 1822, Jacob Astor's American Fur Company received almost total control of the fur trade in America from Congress. Prices were now controlled in favor of the company and its agents. Whiskey was traded to the tribes in violation of U.S. policy. In Sauk and Mesquakie country, agent George Davenport controlled the fur trade and by 1829, he had put the Sauk and Mesquakie tribes \$40,000 in debt through his accounting of the fur trade.



GEORGE DAVENPORT, ASSISTANT
QUARTERMASTER.

A Culture in Crisis



By 1828, the Sauk and Mesquakie culture and economy were under attack. They had lost the valuable lead mines to hordes of white miners. The once lucrative fur trade had actually put them into debt, while white settlements expanded, and American traders spread liquor freely, which soon began to devastate some of the tribe.

Black Hawk After the War of 1812

Shortly after receiving the bitter news of the British surrender, Black Hawk suffered personal tragedy with the death of his oldest, adult, son and youngest daughter due to disease. He mourned for several years and then retreated from Sauk and Mesquakie public life and attended to his family.



Early Ally: Wabokieshiek



WABOKIESHIEK, THE PROPHET

In the Summer of 1828, Wabokieshiek, called “the Prophet”, complained to U.S. officials bitterly American abuses of Illinois natives by settlers. The Prophet, half Ho-Chunk (Winnebago) and half Sauk, led a small, mixed band in a village (present-day Prophetstown, Il) 30 miles up the Rock River from Saukenuk. He was a friend and advisor to Black Hawk.

Banishment From Saukenuk

In late summer, the U.S. Indian Agent for the Sauk and Mesquakie, Thomas Forsyth, relayed the message from the U.S. government: Do not return to Saukenuk in the spring! Instead, they were urged to join the “Missouri Band” of Sauk and Mesquakie, who had already moved west of the Mississippi.



Saukenuk Occupied



In the winter of 1828-1829, rumors spread through the scattered wigwams that whites had moved into the Saukenuk lodges. Black Hawk, age 62, traveled home alone to find the truth. When he found even his own lodge occupied, he began to angrily ask them to leave. When the whites, who could only understand the old man was upset, refused to listen to his protests, he left to seek advice from the Prophet, Wabokieshiek, at his village on the Rock River (present-day Prophetstown, IL).

Wabokieshiek's Advice

The Prophet, Wabokiesheik, advised Black Hawk to return to Saukenuk in the spring, saying the whites would never attack them in Saukenuk if they remained peaceful and did not molest white settlers or resist soldiers. Everyone else Black Hawk sought counsel from, including fur agent George Davenport, advised him to never return to Saukenuk and move west of the Mississippi or soldiers would force him out.



1829: Tensions Increase



While most of the Sauk and Mesquakie remained west of the Mississippi, Black Hawk and other Sauk and Mesquakie returned to Saukenuk in the spring, as they always had. Keokuk was there as well, sent to try to keep Black Hawk's group from causing trouble. There were constant problems between natives and settlers throughout the summer. In September, U.S. Indian Agent Forsyth told them, again, not to return in the spring. While Black Hawk defiantly stated he would return, Keokuk promised to stay away.

Sale of Saukenuk

In October 1829, Saukenuk and other lands in northwest Illinois were put up for sale by the U.S. government. Immediately, fur agent George Davenport bought Saukenuk and the surrounding 3,000 acres.



Spring 1830



Feeling betrayed by Davenport's purchase of Saukenuk, Black Hawk and a band of over 1,000 returned to Saukenuk. Due to shrinking lands, fighting increased between the Sauk/Mesquakie and the Sioux/Ho-Chunk (Winnebago) and other tribes. On May 5, a small, unarmed, Mesquakie peace delegation was slain by Menominee and Sioux warriors. Rumors of a general native war swept through Illinois and Michigan Territory (Wisconsin).

Fall 1830

Black Hawk, despite increasing pressure, vowed to return to Saukenuk in the spring. The new Illinois governor, John Reynolds, spurred by exaggerated complaints from settlers, pushed the state legislature to call for the immediate removal of Black Hawk's "British Band" and asked for military aid from the U.S. government. Washington, and the U.S. Army, began to take notice of events in northwestern Illinois.



GOV. JOHN REYNOLDS.

Spring 1831



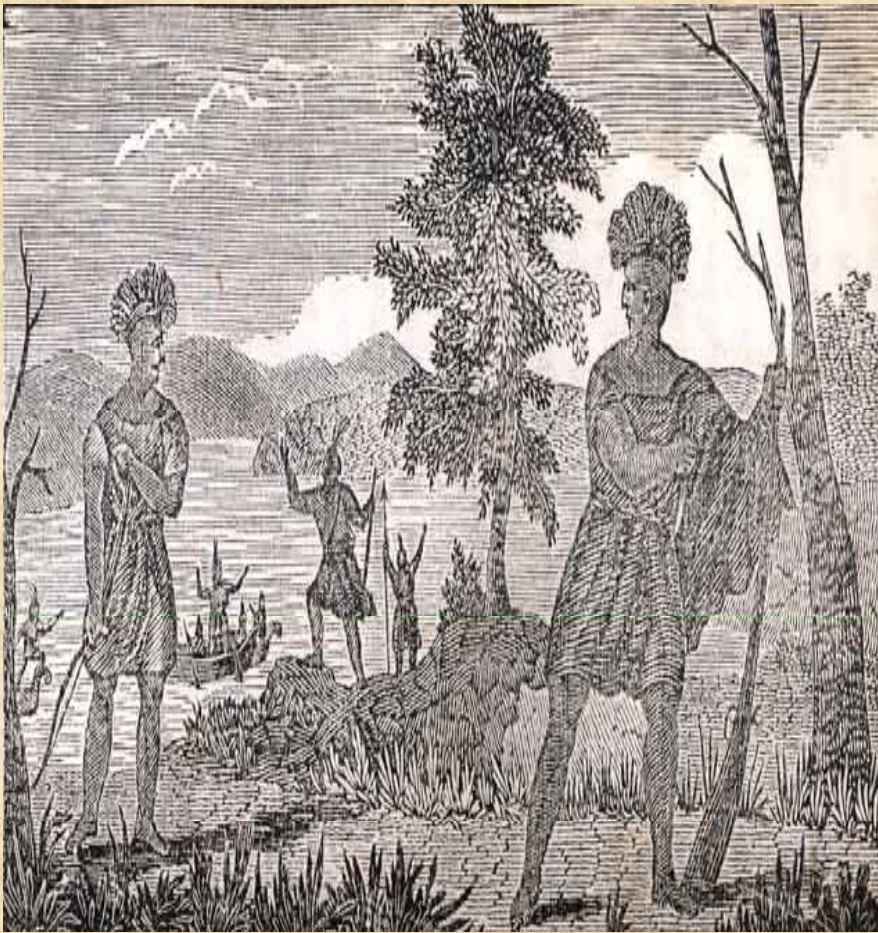
Black Hawk, and other Sauk and Mesquakie leaders, again returned to Saukenuk. His band had grown to nearly 1,600 as many women wished to return to the rich cornfields. U.S. Indian Agency interpreter Antoine le Claire, and others, warned him that troops would come to Saukenuk if he refused to leave.

Saukenuk Is Attacked

After an unsuccessful attempt to urge Black Hawk to leave Saukenuk, U.S. Army General Edmund P. Gaines took action. He removed settlers to Ft. Armstrong. On June 26, 1831, with U.S. troops and Illinois militia, he prepared to attack Saukenuk. He found the village abandoned. The militia burned lodges and desecrated the Sauk and Mesquakie graveyard.



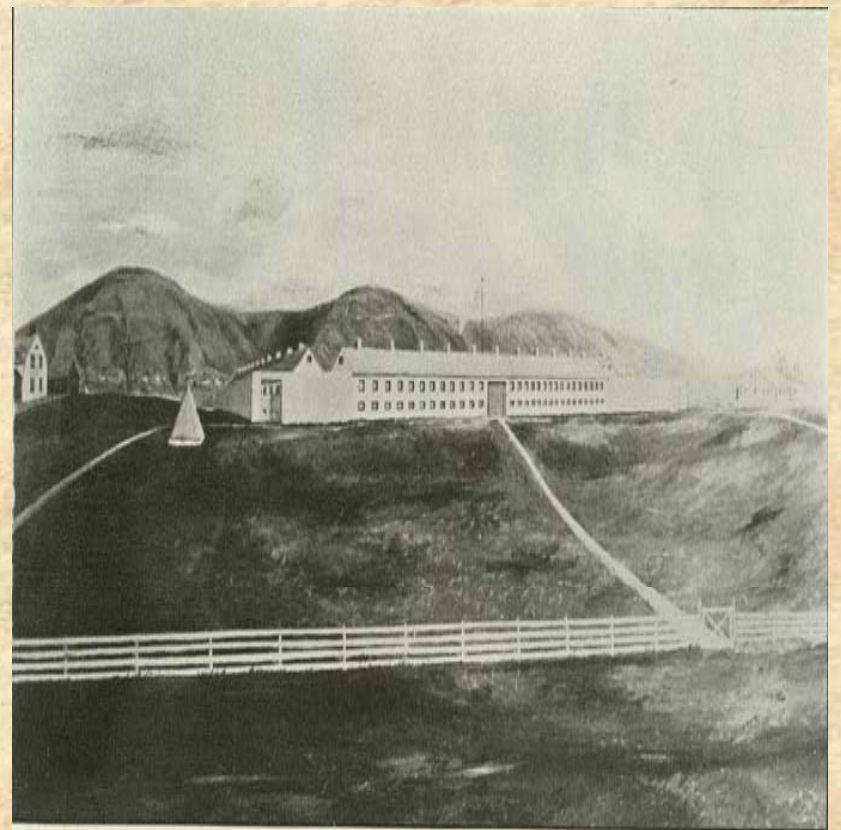
Articles of Capitulation 1831



On July 11, 1831, after fleeing Saukenuk ahead of the soldiers, Black Hawk's band surrendered to Gen. Gaines and signed a treaty agreeing to never return east of the Mississippi. Black Hawk and 28 other warriors and chiefs signed this agreement. Black Hawk and the "British Band" prepared to leave Illinois, apparently forever.

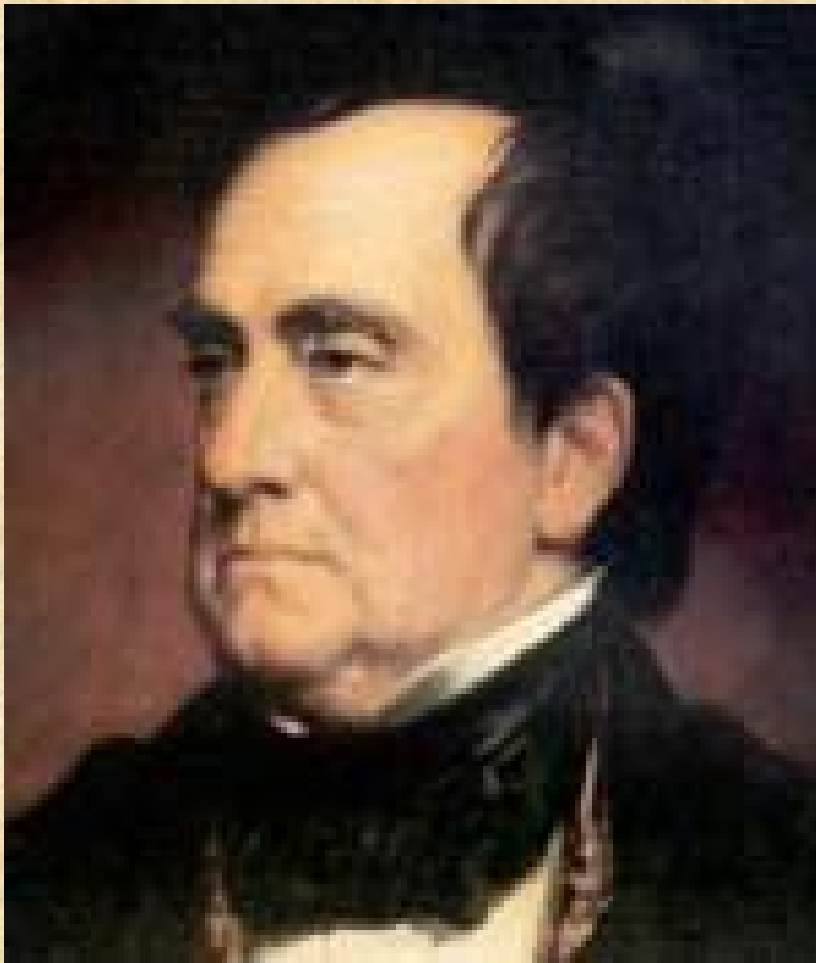
Attack at Fort Crawford

Although U.S. officials thought their problems with the Sauk and Mesquakie were over, on July 31, 1831, a large Sauk and Mesquakie war party killed 25 Menominee encamped outside Fort Crawford (near present-day Prairie du Chien, WI). The attack occurred silently, in the pre-dawn hours, while the soldiers in the fort slept. This attack was retaliation for the Sioux/Menominee attack on the Mesquakie peace delegation the year before.



FORT CRAWFORD.

Washington Fears Indian War



Fearing a general outbreak of hostilities, President Jackson's Secretary of War, Lewis Cass, ordered the U.S. Army to capture the natives involved in the attack outside Ft. Crawford. Cass wanted the military to keep order among the tribes in Illinois. Black Hawk and his "British Band" were blamed by many officials in Illinois for the attack on the Menominee.

Neapope Joins Black Hawk

The Sauk and Mesquakie involved in the attack on Ft. Crawford found refuge with Black Hawk, who saw the attack as none of the government's business. Meanwhile, Neapope, the most important civil chief in the "British Band", returned from visits to the British, at Ft. Malden, and Wabokieshiek's village. He brought reports of possible aid from the British or tribes like the Potawatomis.



Black Hawk Returns to Illinois



Angry with the U.S., and encouraged by Neapope's news of possible allies, Black Hawk, now 65, prepared his band to return to Illinois. Unknown to the U.S. government, by April 6, 1832, he and the other anti-U.S. Sauk and Mesquakie leaders led their people across the Mississippi River about 50 miles south of Saukenuk (present-day Oquawka, IL). His group had grown to over 1,600 with nearly 600 warriors, all intent on reclaiming Saukenuk, their home.

U.S. Troops Reinforce Fort Armstrong

Unknown to Black Hawk, on April 12, 1832, General Henry Atkinson arrived at Fort Armstrong, two miles north of Saukenuk, with 220 men. Atkinson was filling in for Gen. Gaines who was on leave. His mission was to capture those responsible for the Ft. Crawford attack and to try to prevent a general war between the Sioux/Menominee and Sauk/Mesquakie tribes. Instead, a sequence of events led to the conflict known as The Black Hawk War.

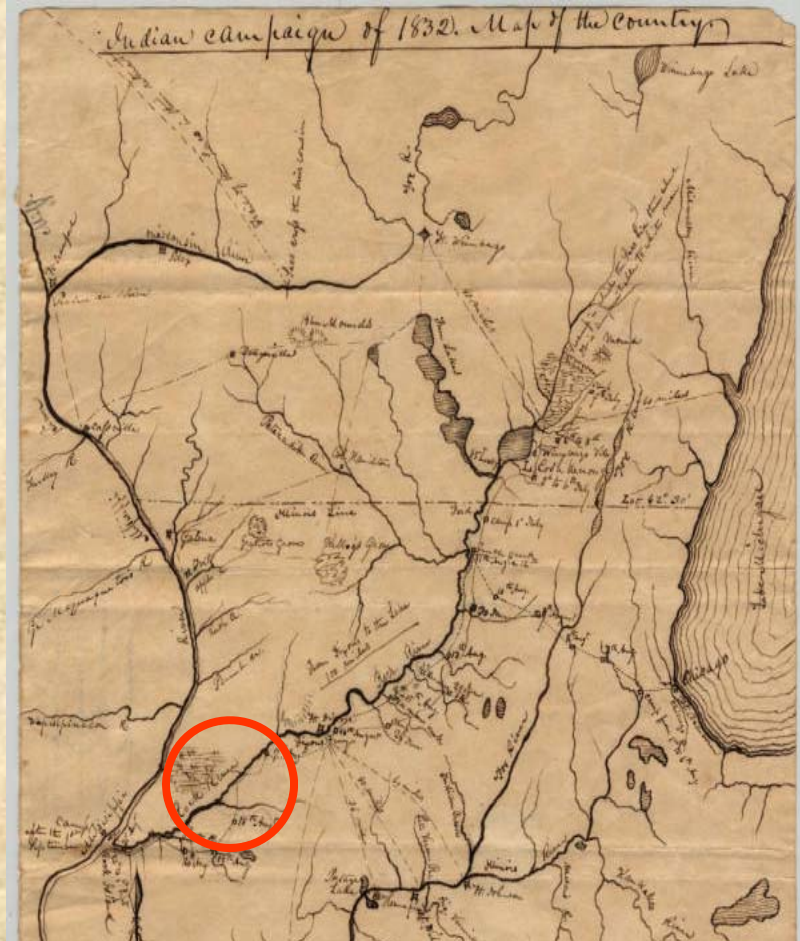


The Black Hawk War 1832

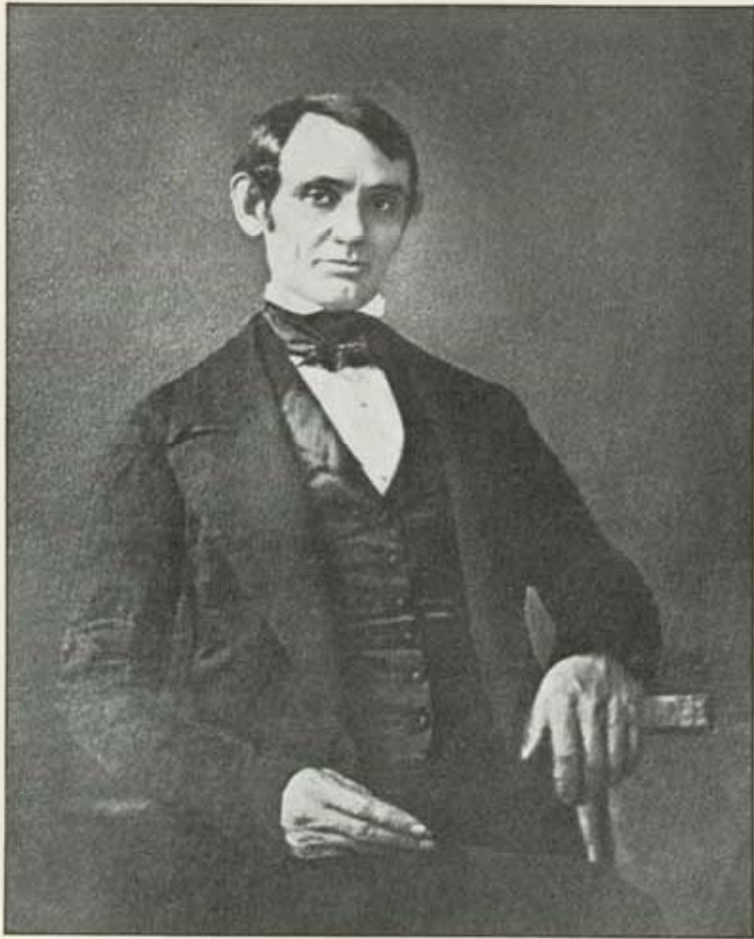
Chase Through Northern
Illinois and Southern
Wisconsin

Black Hawk Moves to the Prophet's Village

Aware of Black Hawk's presence, Atkinson met with Keokuk at Ft. Armstrong. Keokuk blamed all of the trouble on the Prophet, Wabokieshiek. The Prophet himself met Black Hawk's group shortly after their crossing. He informed him of the soldiers at Ft. Armstrong and invited Black Hawk to his village (present-day Prophetstown, IL) which was about 30 miles upstream of Saukenuk on the Rock River.



The Militia is Called Up



CAPT. ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

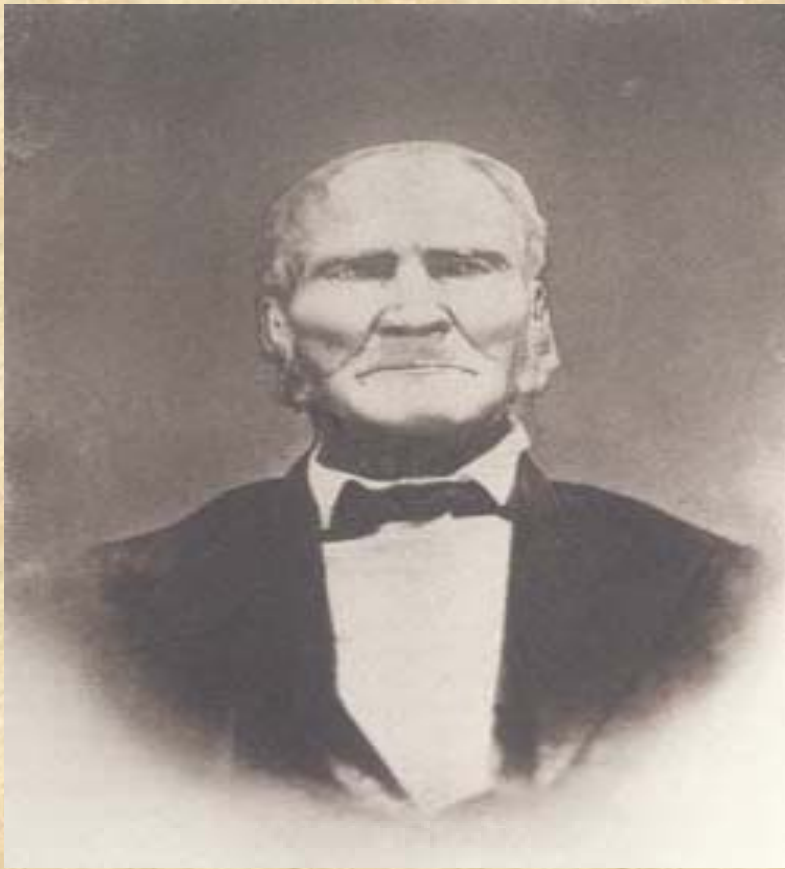
Gen. Atkinson asked Gov. Reynolds for help. On April 16, Reynolds ordered the Illinois Militia to assemble at Beardstown, IL. A week later, Atkinson asked Col. Henry Dodge of Galena to assemble as many mounted Michigan Territory (Wisconsin) volunteers as possible. Atkinson planned to use Dodge's cavalry as scouts and to prevent Black Hawk from moving north. An unemployed Abraham Lincoln promptly joined the militia and was elected captain of his unit from Sangamon Country.

Peace Conference Fails

At the request of Gen. Atkinson, on April 23, Henry Gratiot, U.S. Indian sub-Agent and friend of the Prophet, met with Black Hawk at the Prophet's village. Black Hawk angrily refused to listen to Gratiot, threatened the peace party, and promised war if White Beaver (Atkinson) attacked. Gratiot, at the Prophet's urging, made a night escape with his small party.



U.S. Forces Begin the Hunt

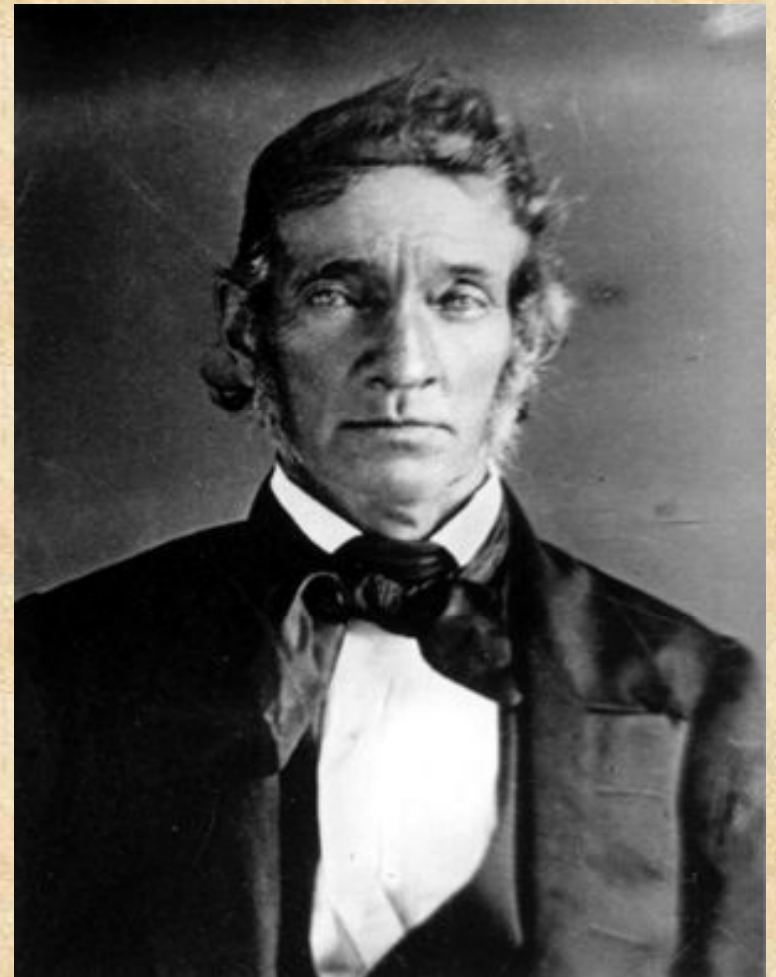


Brig. Gen. Whitesides

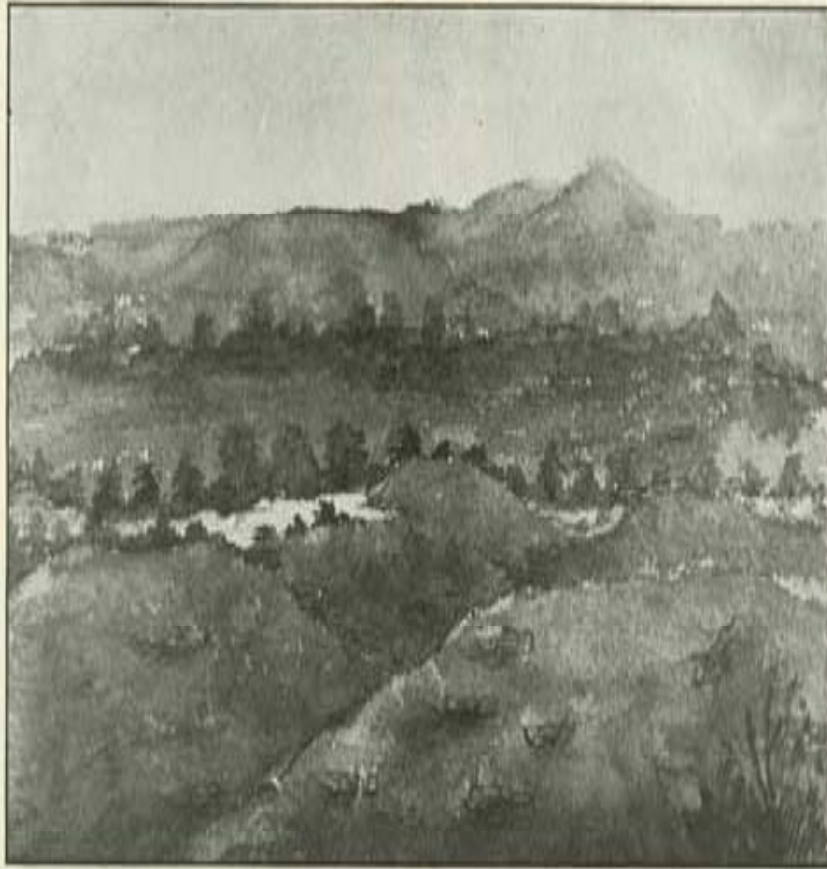
After mustering in 600 mounted and 200 infantry volunteers, Gen. Atkinson prepared his forces. He put Col. Zachary Taylor in command of 340 U.S. Army Regular Infantry. Gov. Reynolds made Samuel Whitesides Brig. Gen. of the 800 Illinois volunteers. On May 10, they left Ft. Armstrong heading up the the Rock River. Whiteside's mounted volunteers were the first to enter the abandoned Prophet's village, which they destroyed. This was the first hostile act of the Black Hawk War.

Collision at Old Man's Creek

Maj. Isaiah Stillman, under orders from Gov. Reynolds, led 275 mounted militia north after Black Hawk. Black Hawk had moved ahead of the troops to a camp on the Kishwaukee River (present-day Atwood Park south of Rockford, IL) where he tried to convince the Potowatomis to join him, which they refused. On May 14, in the late afternoon, Stillman's men made camp at Old Man's Creek, (present-day Stillman Valley, IL) less than 8 miles from Black Hawk's camp.



Surrender Becomes Battle



STILLMAN'S BATTLEFIELD.

Aware of the soldier's presence, Black Hawk decided to parley. Neapope sent 3 unarmed men into the soldiers camp to talk. Black Hawk sent 5 mounted, and armed, warriors to observe from a distance. The 3 peace messengers entered Stillman's camp, but there was no interpreter. Stillman's men, many drunk, spotted the 5 warriors observing and suspected a trick. Some rode after the mounted warriors, others fired at the peace group. 1 of the peace delegation, and two of the mounted warriors, were killed.

Stillman's Run

When the survivors rode into camp with the news, an enraged Black Hawk immediately gathered the 40-50 warriors at hand and attacked as dusk fell. Most of his warriors were away hunting for food. The militia broke and ran for Dixon's Ferry, believing hundreds of warriors were attacking. Only a covering action by Capt. John G. Adams, with eight men, prevented the rout from becoming a massacre. Adams and all his men were killed and mutilated.



Black Hawk's Victory



That night, while his braves celebrated, Black Hawk realized any peaceful solution was gone and he prepared to move north. The next day, Brig. Gen. Whitesides arrived in force. A burial detail, reportedly including Abraham Lincoln, was shocked by the condition of the bodies. The Illinois Militia had been shamed, while suffering twelve dead, and was ready for revenge.

Terror Spreads Through Northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin

Attacks by Black Hawk's war parties, and other natives taking advantage of the conflict, spread. As fear grew, settlers fled or "forted" themselves in settlements. Three good examples of these attacks are the Galena Trail Ambush(A), the Indian Creek Massacre(B), and the Spafford Farm Massacre(C).



Galena Trail Ambush



On May 19, a five-man party rode from Galena, IL with dispatches for Gen. Atkinson who was at Dixon's Ferry, which had become Ft. Dixon. The men were ambushed at Buffalo Grove (present-day Polo, IL) and William Durley was killed. The survivors rode back to Galena, where a fort was immediately begun. Durley's mutilated body was found and buried three days later.

Indian Creek Massacre

On May 21, a 50-man Kickapoo war party attacked settlers at Indian Creek (present-day Shabbona State Park near Harding, IL). Black Hawk's band was blamed although the war party was actually not with his band, but was only settling an old score with one of the settlers. 15 settlers were massacred, 2 escaped, and 2, the Hall sisters, were captured. The sisters were ransomed May 30, with the help of Col. Dodge.



Spafford Farm Massacre



On June 14, six militia volunteers left Ft. Hamilton (present-day Wiota, WI) to work the fields at Spafford's farm (present-day South Wayne, WI). They were attacked by a small Kickapoo war party from Black Hawk's band. 4 volunteers were killed, including the farm's owner, and 2 escaped back to Ft. Hamilton.

Battle at Peconica River

The same 17-man Kickapoo war party that had attacked Spafford farm two days earlier killed settler Henry Apfel near Ft. Hamilton on June 16. Col. Dodge had just arrived at the fort and pursued with 29 volunteers. They killed six Kickapoo during the chase towards the Peconica River.



Gen. Carter, 1834.

Photo. Munroe & Hill, Burlington.

*H. B. Dodge C.O.
Commander U.S. Dragoon.*

Bloody Horseshoe Bend



SITE OF THE BATTLE OF THE PECONICA.

Col. Dodge trapped the remaining 11 Kickapoo warriors against a bend of the river. Dodge ordered his men to dismount and charge. In a fierce fight, the militia killed all of the warriors while suffering one dead and three wounded. This was the first victory of the U.S. over Black Hawk's band and Dodge emerged a hero.

Stephenson's Fight at Yellow River

On June 18, Capt. James Stephenson, from Galena, chased a Sauk war party that had stolen 10 horses near the Apple River settlement. His 21-man party chased the Sauk into a thicket. Stephenson ordered his men to charge three times, suffering one volunteer killed in each charge. When Stephenson himself received a serious wound during the third charge, he ordered a withdraw after killing 5 Sauk warriors.



CAPT. JAMES W. STEPHENSON.

Black Hawk Attacks at Apple River



About the time of Stephenson's fight, Black Hawk had a dream of his band feasting after a victory. On Jun 24, he personally led nearly 200 warriors against the Apple River settlement and fort (present-day Elizabeth, IL). The settlers fled to the undermanned fort. During the fierce attack, the settlers and soldiers in the fort were rallied by Elizabeth Armstrong. After raiding the settlement buildings for supplies, thus fulfilling his dream, Black Hawk withdrew. One settler was killed.

Apple River Fort Rebuilt Today

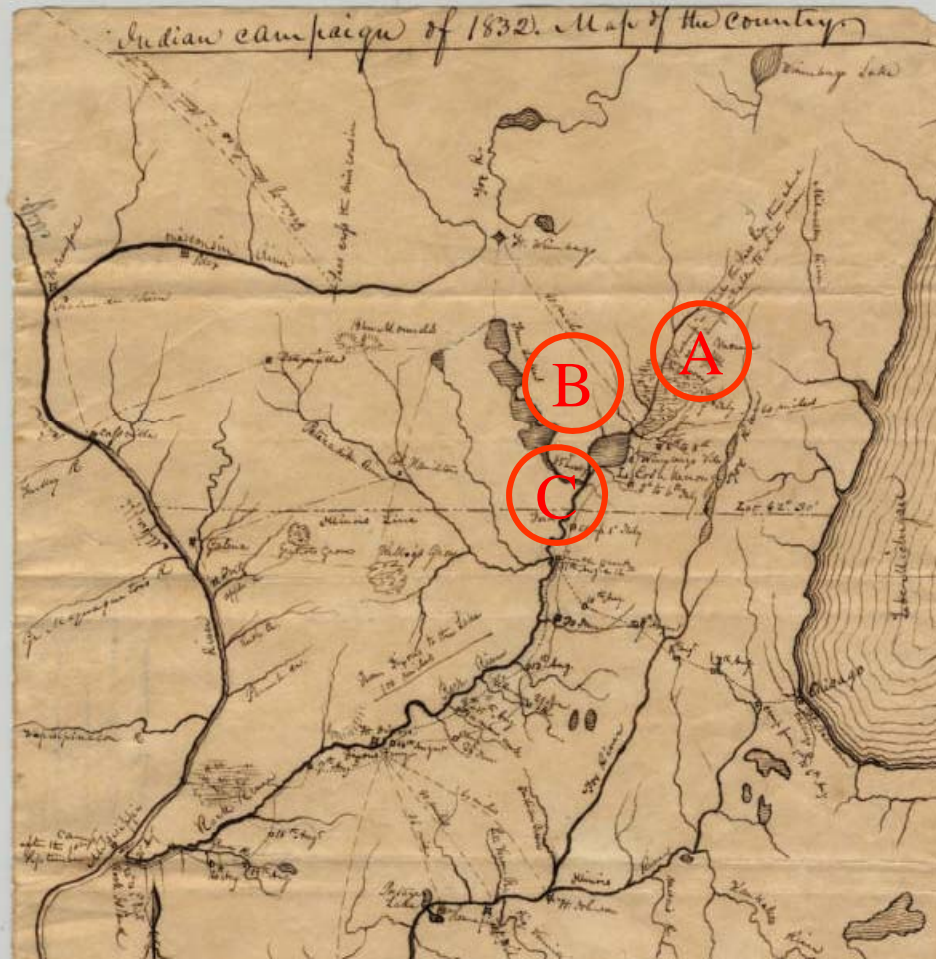


Battle at Kellogg's Grove

The next day, June 25, Black Hawk and his warriors approached Kellogg's Grove (present-day Kent, IL). Maj. John Dement was in the area with 120 Illinois militia. His men, spotting some of Black Hawk's scouts, charged headlong into Black Hawk's force. Dement rallied his men to prevent a rout but lost five men, and half of his horses, before Black Hawk withdrew. In his autobiography, Black Hawk praised Dement's courage.



U.S. Chases Black Hawk Out of Illinois



Increasing U.S. military pressure caused Black Hawk to lead his hungry group north, out of Illinois. He was still hoping for help from other tribes or the British. Black Hawk moved to the northwest(A), while Col. Dodge pursued(B). Gen. Atkinson's army reached Turtle Creek (present-day Beloit, WI) on June 30(C).

Chasing A Shadow

Although U.S. forces were closing in on Black Hawk, he managed to hide his group in, and around, the swamps surrounding Lake Koshkonong (present-day Horicon Marsh, WI). Command squabbles, terrain, and supply problems brought the U.S. pursuit to a crawl. However, Black Hawk could find no help for his desperate group from the British or any native tribes and decided try to lead his group west of the Mississippi.



Dodge Discovers Black Hawk's Trail



Finally, on July 18, Col. Dodge located a large trail, obviously Black Hawk's band, near Rock River rapids (present-day Hustisford, WI). He sent word to Gen. Atkinson and prepared to follow the trail with his men. The trail consisted of a main path with two flanking paths. It was an easy trail to follow as Black Hawk's band hastily discarded equipment to try to keep ahead of the soldiers.

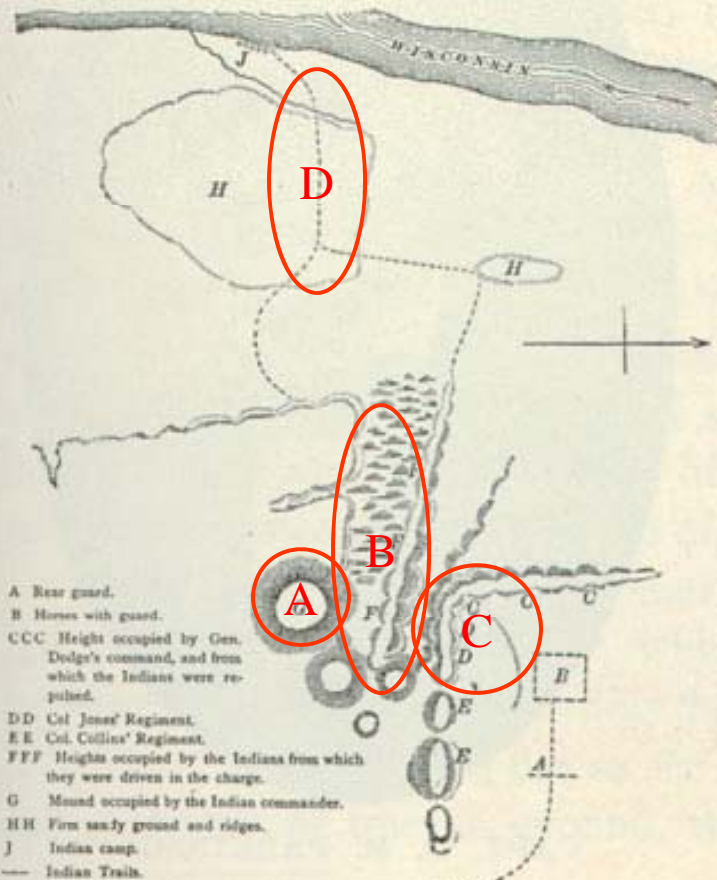
Trapped at the Wisconsin River

By July 21, Black Hawk's band had reached the Wisconsin River and prepared to cross (south of present day Sauk City, WI). Around 3 P.M., Col. Dodge's troops engaged their rear guard. About an hour later, Black Hawk personally led about 50 warriors against Dodge's advance troops. The Battle of Wisconsin Heights had begun as the Sauk and Mesquakie women and children began to cross the river.



WISCONSIN HEIGHTS BATTLEFIELD.

Battle of Wisconsin Heights



BATTLE OF WISCONSIN HEIGHTS, JULY 21, 1832.

Black Hawk, mounted on a white horse, positioned himself on a high hill(A) to direct his warriors on the heights(B) in front of him. By 6 P.M., Dodge's men formed into line(C) and attacked the warriors on the heights. The warriors were slowly pushed off the heights and fled towards the river(D). The battle, the largest of the war, ended about 7 P.M. and Dodge did not pursue because of darkness. The militia suffered 1 dead and 7 wounded. As the militia gathered scalps on the battlefield, Black Hawk had lost between 40-50 warriors. He and his band slipped over the river during the night.

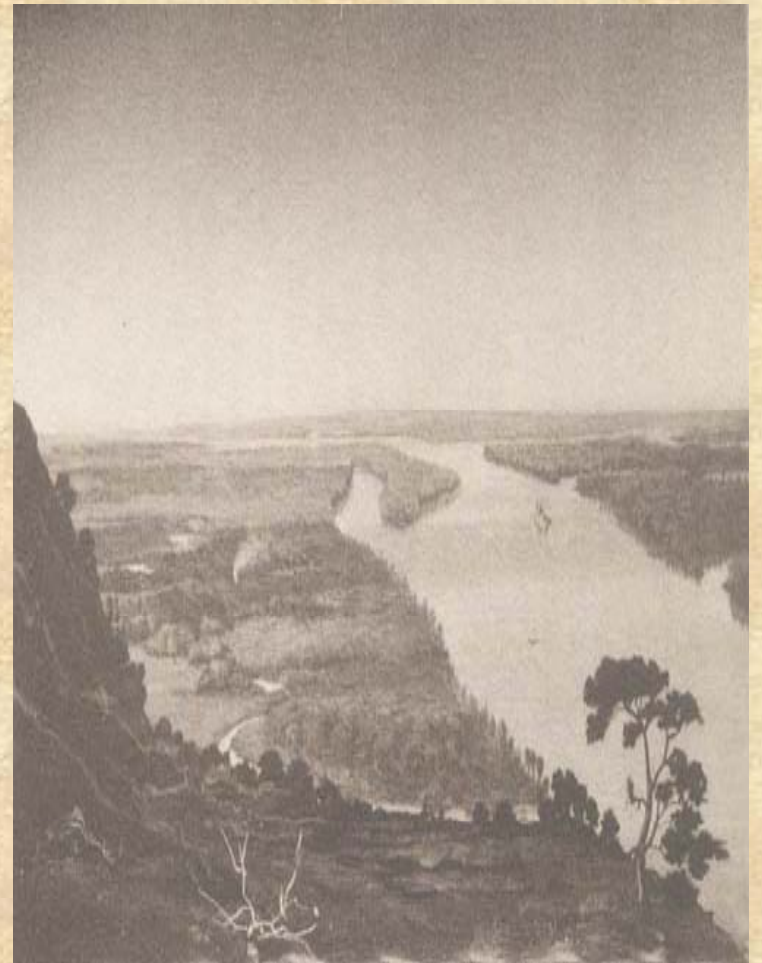
U.S. Moves To Cut Off Black Hawk's Escape

Black Hawk's band, now killing horses for food, sped towards the Mississippi River with Dodge and Atkinson in hot pursuit as the band abandoned the dead and wounded along their trail. Meanwhile, at Ft. Crawford (near present-day Prairie du Chien, WI), the new steamboat *Warrior* was sent north to recruit pro-American Sioux to cut off Black Hawk's possible escape to the west bank of the Mississippi River.

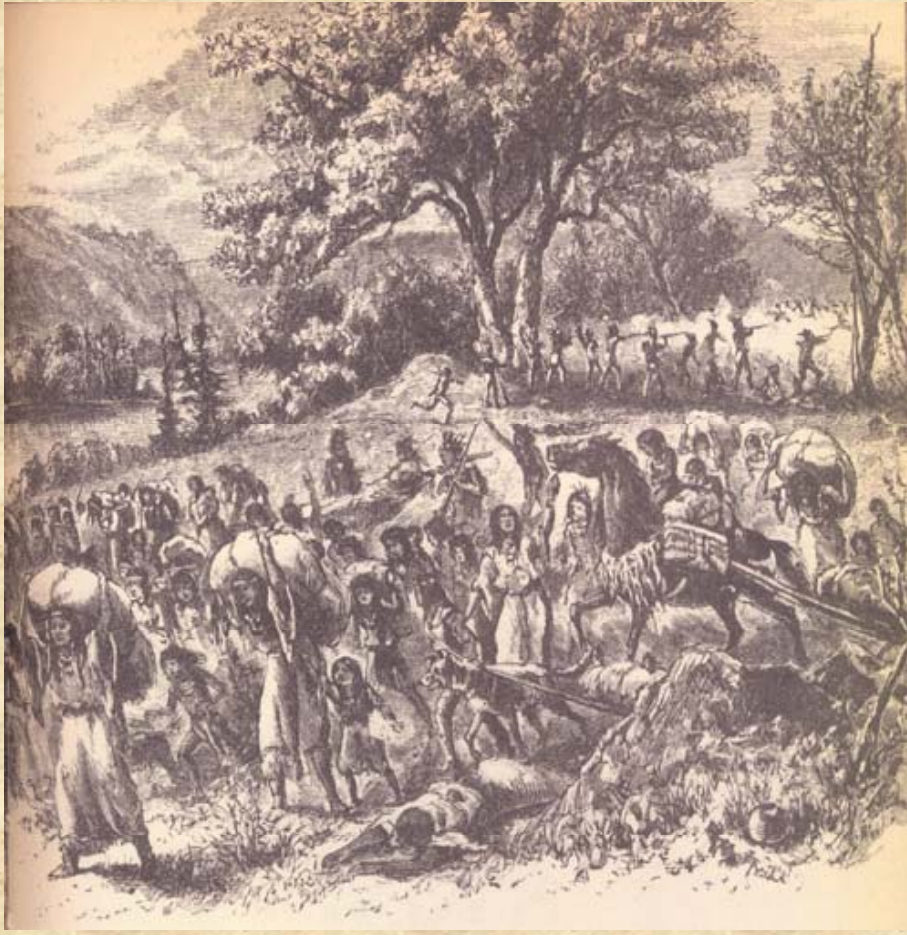


Black Hawk Reaches the Mississippi

Black Hawk's band reached the Mississippi near the Bad Axe River, about 40 miles north of Ft. Crawford, on August 1. When the steamboat *Warrior* arrived, Black Hawk tried to surrender. The cannon and troops opened fire, killing 25 warriors. That evening, Black Hawk informed his band he planned to head north to Chippewa lands. Only 6 lodges left with him, including the Prophet, Wabokieshiek, and their families. The rest decided to cross the river the next day. Black Hawk organized a rear-guard war party and departed.

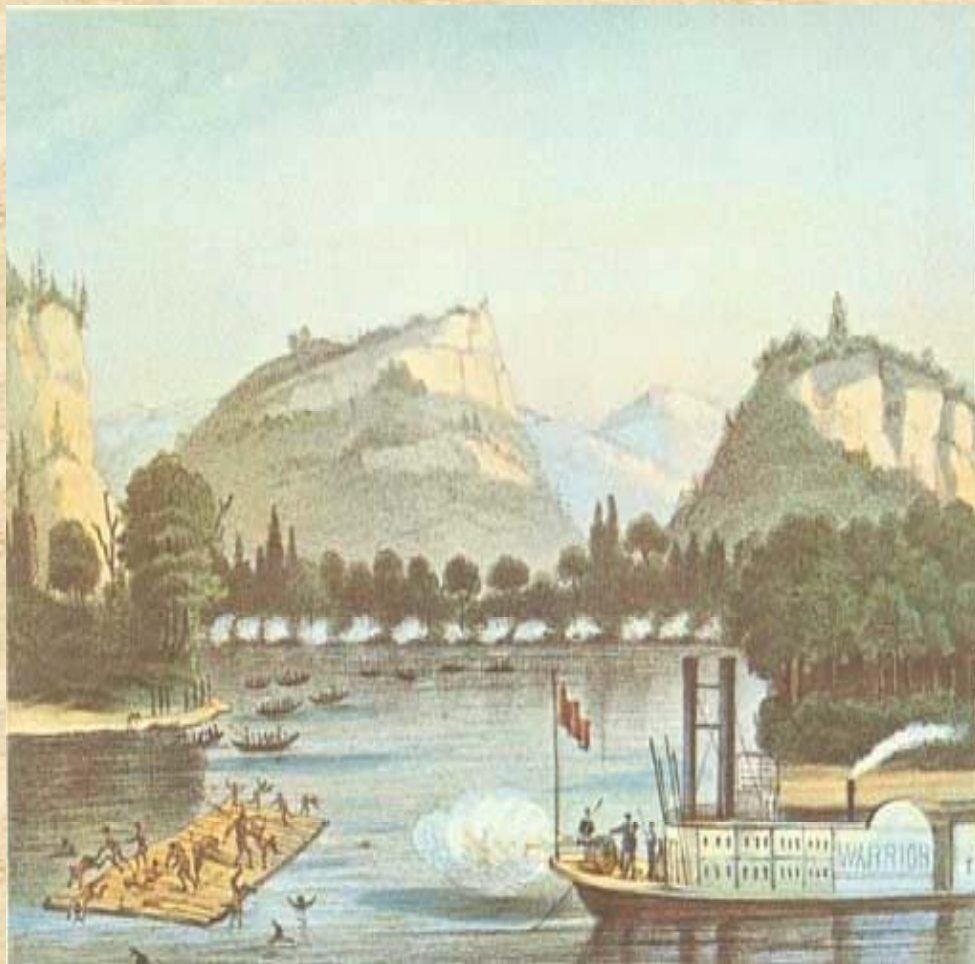


Battle of Bad Axe



Gen. Atkinson's and Col. Dodge's forces prepared in the early morning on August 2. Atkinson was fooled, at first, by the rear-guard actions devised by Black Hawk. Unfortunately, soldiers stumbled on the true trail of the band and trapped the Sauk and Mesquakie against the river. A fight erupted on the bank, while women and children attempted to swim across the river.

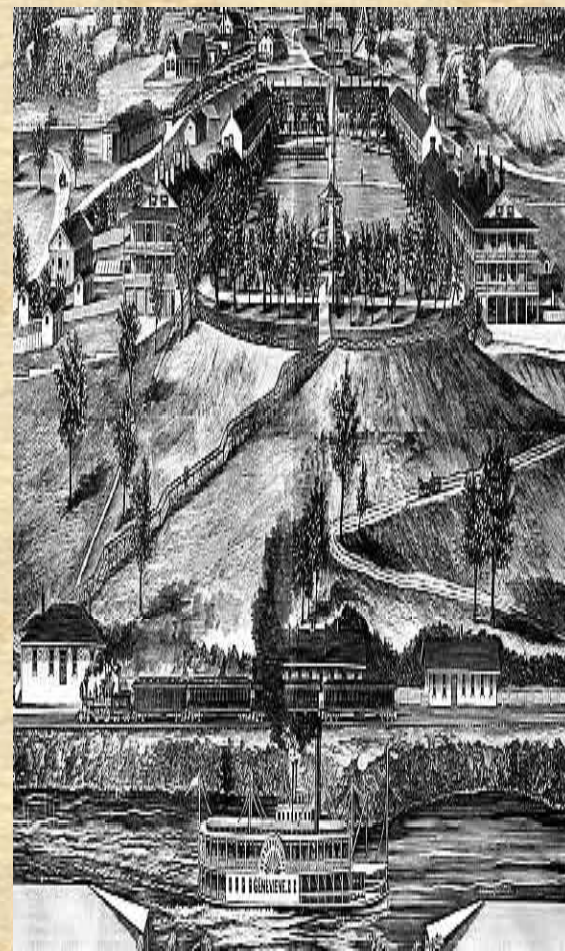
Massacre at Bad Axe



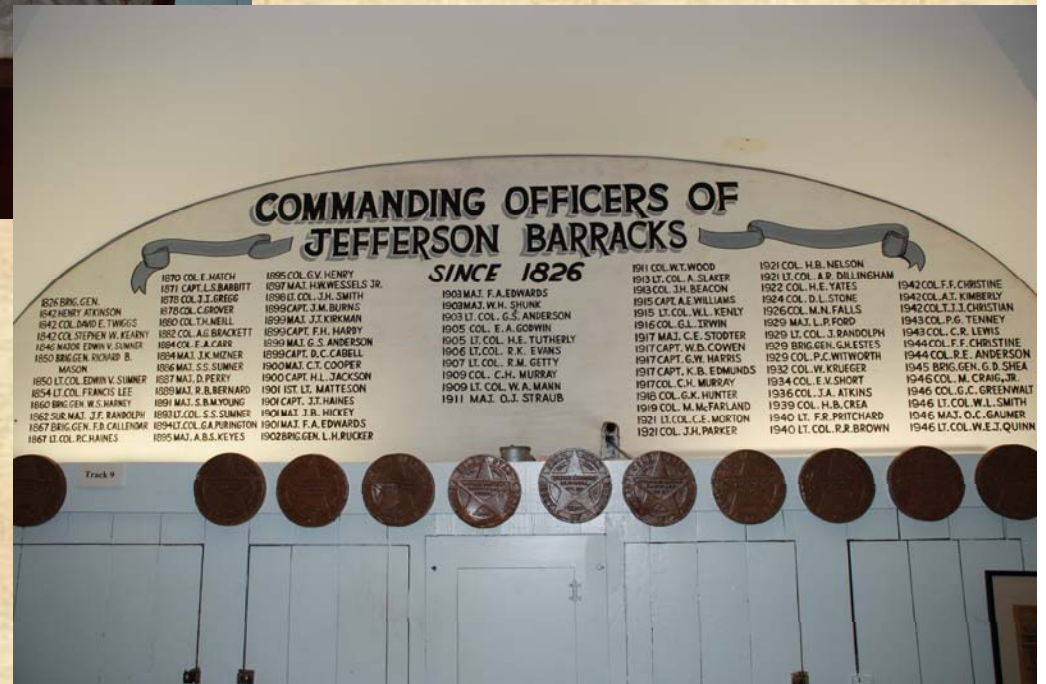
Around 10 A.M., the steamboat *Warrior* arrived and began firing at the Sauk and Mesquakie on the bank and in the river. By 12 P.M. the battle was over. Most of those who reached the west bank of the Mississippi were hunted down by the Sioux. Only about 150 escaped, less than 13% of Black Hawk's original band.

Surrender: End of Resistance

Within a month, Neapope, who had left the band before the Battle of Wisconsin Heights, was captured by Keokuk and taken to Ft. Crawford. Two days later, after leaving his medicine bag with a Ho-Chunk chief for safe-keeping, Black Hawk and his small party surrendered to U.S. forces at Ft. Crawford. Black Hawk and the other “British Band” leaders, including the Prophet, Wabokieshiek, and Black Hawk’s son, Whirling Thunder, were sent in chains to Jefferson Barracks, in St. Louis, under the supervision of Lt. Jefferson Davis and Lt. Robert Anderson. The Black Hawk War, and native resistance east of the Mississippi, ended.



Jefferson Barracks Museum



Triumph of Keokuk



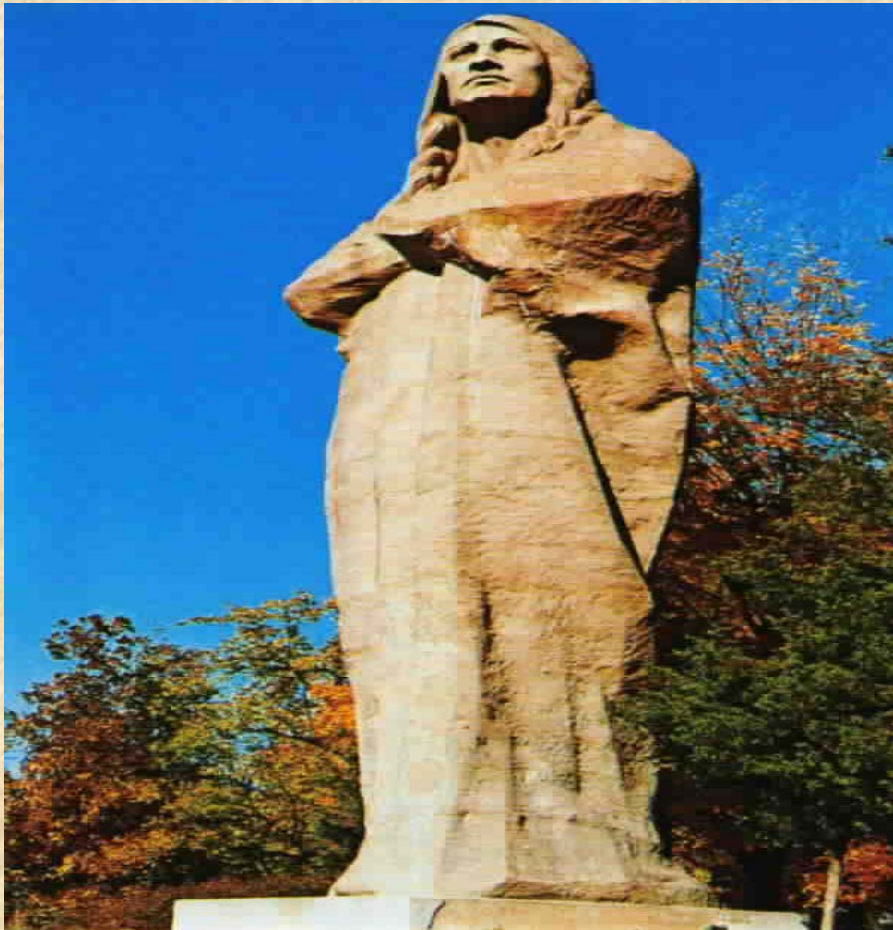
In September of 1832, Keokuk and other Sauk and Mesquakie leaders signed another treaty at Ft. Crawford. They gave away six million more acres in present-day Iowa. The U.S. government officially proclaimed Keokuk to be head civil chief of the Sauk and Fox, now banished from Illinois and Wisconsin.

Death of Black Hawk

After a trip to Washington D.C. in the summer of 1833, Black Hawk and the other leaders were released into Keokuk's custody. The Sauk and Mesquakie had moved to lands on the Des Moines River in Iowa. Here, under Keokuk's supervision, Black Hawk passed his last years in shame and bitterness until his death on Oct. 3, 1838. His grave was robbed and his bones put on display in Burlington, IA. A fire destroyed the building in 1855, finally laying his bones to rest.



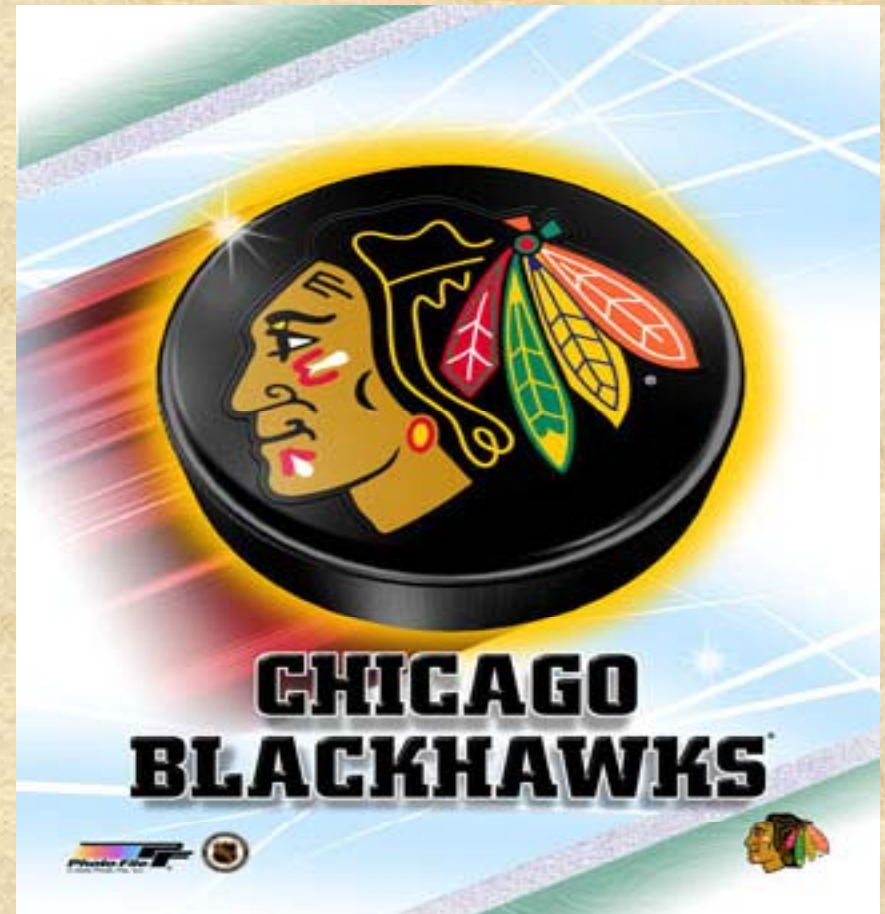
Romanticized Legacy of Black Hawk



Today, Black Hawk has become a symbol of noble, and heroic, Native American resistance. This view of Black Hawk can be seen in Leonardo Taft's Black Hawk Statue in Lowden State Park, overlooking the Rock River, near Oregon, IL.

Commercialized Legacy of Black Hawk

Today, Black Hawk's name and image is used throughout northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin on everything from banks to apartment houses. He is recognized by sports fans everywhere as the name for Chicago's professional hockey team, the Chicago Blackhawks.



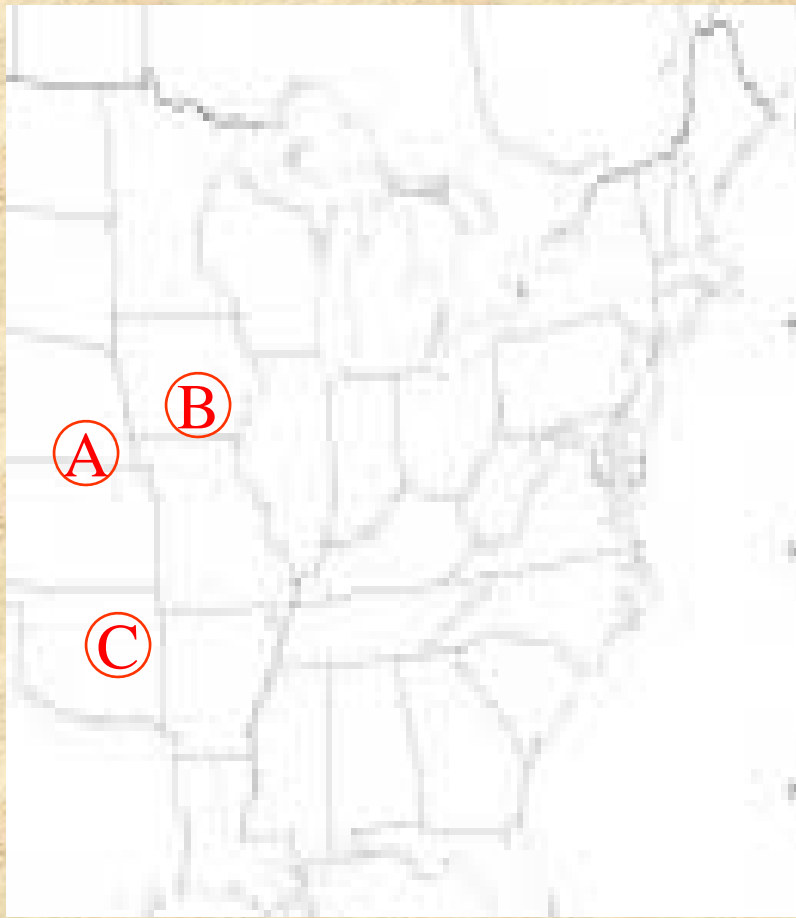
Who Was Black Hawk?



BLACK HAWK

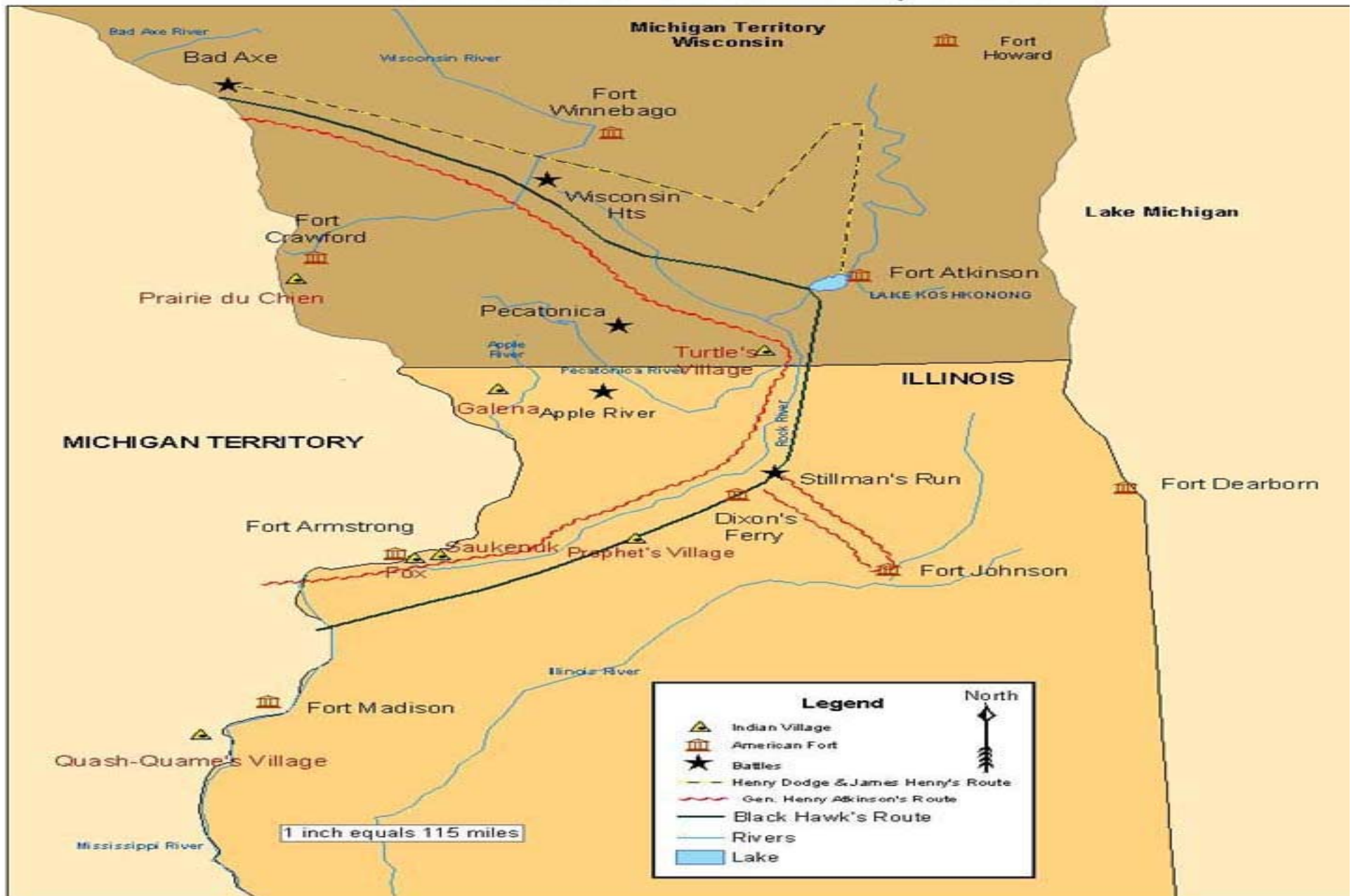
Black Hawk was a strict traditionalist who, in his old age, desperately wanted to hold to his people's way of life and their home, Saukenuk. His armed resistance to white encroachment, that he could not stop or control, led to the end of the Sauk and Mesquakie way of life in Illinois and, eventually, in the United States.

Descendants of Black Hawk Live On



There are currently 3 bands of Sauk and Mesquakie recognized by the U.S. government. The Missouri band has a very small reservation on the Kansas-Nebraska state line(A). There is a group that bought land in Iowa in 1859. That group now owns 5,000 acres there(B). The main Sauk and Mesquakie reservation is in Oklahoma, east of Oklahoma City(C). In these places the people, and true legacy, of Black Hawk continue.

The Black Hawk War, 1832



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