

The Sword of Black Hawk

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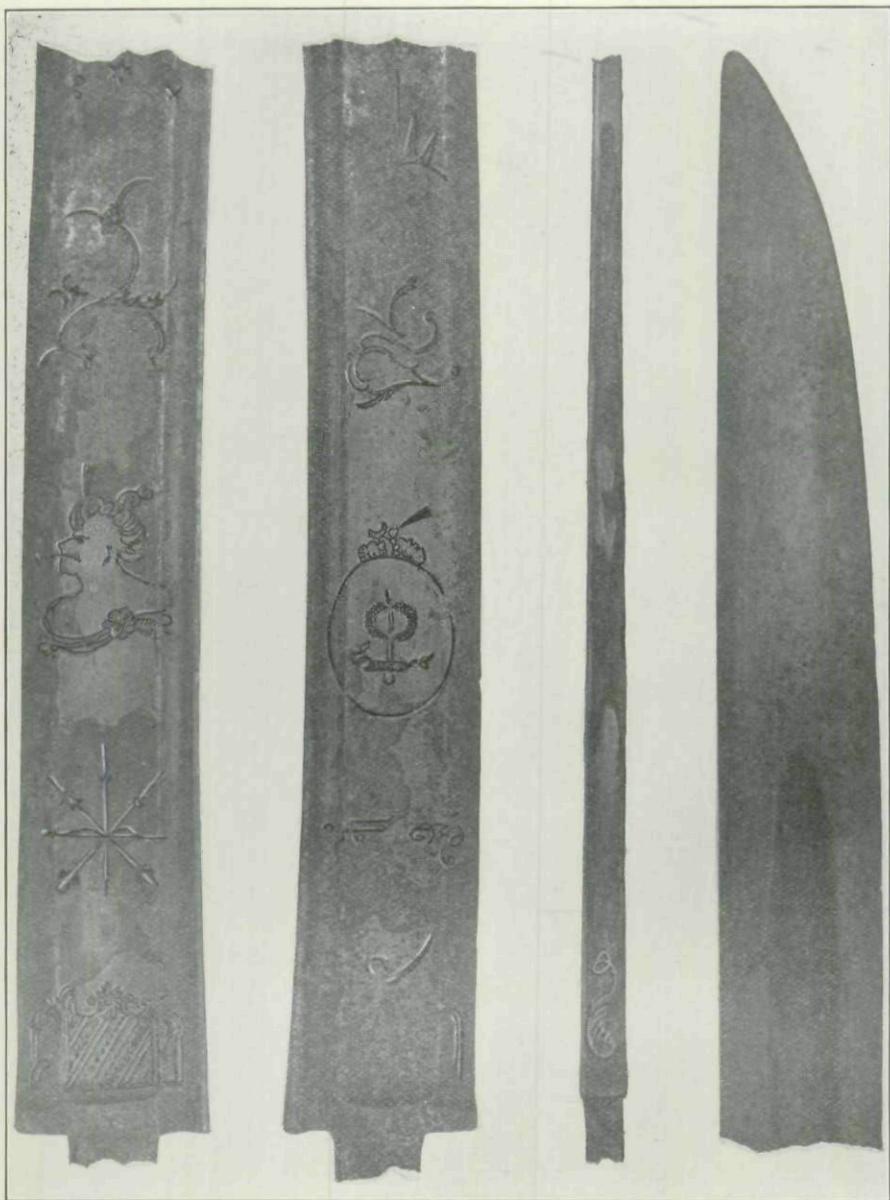
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The Black Hawk Sword.

THE SWORD OF BLACK HAWK.

BY D. C. BEAMAN.

From 1861 to 1874 I lived at Independent (now Selma) on the Des Moines river, in Van Buren county, Iowa, two miles below the farm of James H. Jordan, and one mile below the town of Iowaville, where was fought the last battle between the Sacs and Foxes and the Iowas, in which the latter were practically exterminated.

Mr. Jordan was Indian post trader at Iowaville in 1833 and subsequent years, when Black Hawk had quit fighting and had built a lodge on Jordan's farm, where he died and was buried. I often conversed with Mr. Jordan about the incidents of Black Hawk's later life. These were written up by me in 1873 for the Old Settlers Memorial, a journal then published by Thomas Gregg at Keokuk.

It was generally known, notwithstanding the final destruction of Black Hawk's skeleton in a fire in Burlington, Iowa, and the destruction or loss of the medals and swords given him by others, that the sword given to him by General Jackson was not found with Black Hawk's remains, but it has not been generally known since then what became of the sword.

For some years I have been trying to locate it, but without success until last October I learned it was in the possession of Arthur Hinkle, Jordan's grandson, at Selma, and he consented to its deposit with the Historical Department of Iowa.

From Mr. Jordan's statements to me and information by others, the following I believe is its true history.

In April, 1833, Black Hawk was taken as a prisoner to Washington, and presented to President Jackson, who so impressed him with the futility of further warfare, that he

promised to be good. He was then given this sword by Jackson. Others gave him some jewelry for his wife—all in token of the new formed friendship.

He returned to Iowa and lived on Mr. Jordan's farm near Iowaville until his death, September 15, 1838. The day before his death he gave this sword to Mr. Jordan.

During the 50's it came into the possession of the Eureka Masonic Lodge in Iowaville by purchase from a resident of that vicinity, and the tyler of the lodge used it as his official arm. Where it had been since 1838, and how it got out of Jordan's immediate possession, I have not been able to ascertain. Jordan learned of it, however, and immediately recognized it as the Jackson sword, but made no effort to get it, and it remained there until the lodge became defunct.

Hon. Robert Sloan, now of Keosauqua, was secretary of the lodge, and kept the sword and took it with him to Keosauqua, where he turned it over to the Masonic Lodge at that place. It remained there until 1871 or 1872, when the lodge building was burned, and the scabbard and hilt of the sword were destroyed or lost in the ruins, and nothing now remains of it but the fire-scarred blade, which is shown by the accompanying illustration.

Mr. Hinkle obtained it from the lodge in 1889.

In Mr. Hinkle's possession is the account book of Mr. Jordan, his grandfather, kept by him in Iowaville in 1833, and years following, and in which are entered many accounts against the Indians, then on their reservation near Iowaville.

On the first page appears an account against the Indian Chief Keokuk, of date October 1st, 1833. Some of it is not very legible. One item is for a "strowd" (proper spelling stroud) which perhaps everybody may not know is a coarse blanket used by the Indians. The breech clouts, tomahawks and powder horns need no definition.

It seems that Keokuk also purchased at one time 45 handkerchiefs at 75c each. Just what the old fellow needed of so many handkerchiefs is not apparent, as it was generally supposed that he did not have that many wives.

20th Nov

W. H. W. C. monthly 100⁰⁰

1	Red Green Blanket	77	
1	Blue Blanket	77	
1	White	6	20
1	Fancy Coat	9	4
1	Strawl		5
2	Brush Cloths	9	23
2	Blankets	176	2
1	Blanket	176	20
1	Green Blanket		7
1	Blanket		7
14	Yas Calico	3	Ray
1	Strawl		3
1	Say Legging		1
1	Brush Wagon		1
	Credit	1834	7

Ke. L. L.

1	Blanket	19.50
1	Blanket	13.25
2	Small Blankets	6.00
1	Bay of Red Rabbit	5.00
1	Silk Grey Kilt	42.50
1	Silk Blanket	1.50
1	White Blanket	5.00
1	Buffalo Skin	5.00
1	Porcelain Lamp	2.00
2	Gallons whiskey	2.00
1	Box of Soap	4.00
1	Buffalo Skin	5.00
1	Blanket for Sake west	5.00

Page of account with the Indians.
 From the collection of James H. Jordan of Iowa.

It will also be noticed that whiskey was then only \$1.00 a gallon, but that was before the days of the Civil War revenue tax.

The last item in the account is a blanket for Jake West, who was a half-breed famous among other things for having a hand almost as large as that of Divine Providence, and feet which would crowd each other in the narrow way. A portion of his history I wrote up some years ago in *The Keosauqua Republican*. This half-breed's name was really Chequest, and a creek near Iowaville was named after him, but his name became corrupted to Jake West.

The second page shows a purchase in 1835 by a bunch of Indians, but the items are not given. Its principal feature of interest is the names of the Indians, among which again appears that of Keokuk.

There are a good many pages of the account book showing purchases by many other Indians, whose names are given, but they do not seem of sufficient interest to justify their reproduction.

I had hoped to find in the book an account against Black Hawk, but was unable to do so. He must have been a cash customer.

Denver, Colo., June 7, 1910.

A CORRECTION.

Fortunately no draft [during the civil war] was required in Floyd county nor in Iowa. (*Annals of Iowa*, 3d ser. V. 9, No. 5, p. 331.)

From the History of Floyd County, Interstate Publishing Co., Chicago, 1882, we quote:

E. A. Teeling, of Charles City, was appointed Provost Marshal for this district to conduct the conscription. On the 20th of October, 1864, twenty-six names were turned out for Floyd county by the wheel of chance at Decorah, the first thirteen of which * * * were of those who had either to go to war or hire a substitute.

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