

ASC History Newsletter

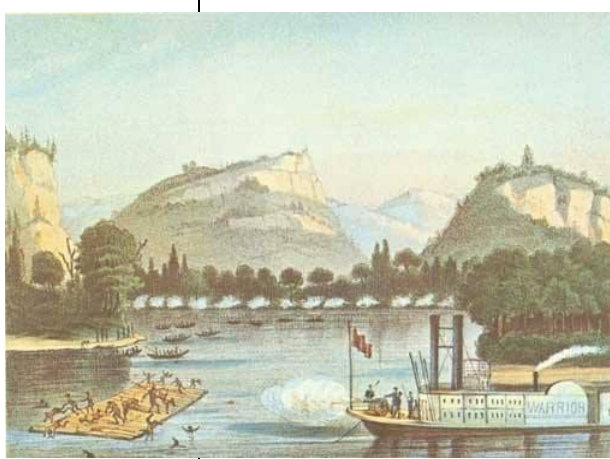


Battle of Bad Axe- End of the Black Hawk War

The Black Hawk War was a four-month conflict that ended any hopes of the Sauk and Fox that they could reclaim their lands lost to the U.S. in 1804. In April 1832 Black Hawk led his followers into Illinois. By mid-July he realized his goal was hopeless and he attempted to escape back across the Mississippi. On 21 July he fought a successful delaying action at Wisconsin Heights, but on 1 August U.S. forces caught up with him. On 1 and 2 August 1832 the battle of Bad Axe completely destroyed Black Hawk's force. On 1 August Blackhawk and his group were attempting to cross the Mississippi River from Wisconsin to Iowa. As they were preparing canoes for the crossing, the steamboat *Warrior* arrived.

Black Hawk attempted to surrender, but Soldiers on the *Warrior* opened fire. This engagement left some 23 dead Sauk. During the night, Black Hawk proposed moving north, but most of his followers disagreed and opted to again try to cross the Mississippi. Black Hawk and some 20 warriors turned north, leaving the main band. On 2 August, the American ground forces came upon the remaining band and engaged them. Black Hawk tried to return to the battle, but was blocked by another US force. The *Warrior* also returned to the battle. The Ameri-

cans shot at anything that moved- warriors, women, children, and the elderly included. In the end, over 250 Sauk died at the scene and over 100 more in the next several days. Bad Axe was the last US-Native American battle east of the Mississippi and provided a secure area for settlers in western Illinois.



This MONTH in military history...

- **1782:** Geo Washington creates the Purple Heart
- **1794:** Battle of Fallen Timbers
- **1832:** Battle of Bad Axe—end of Black Hawk War
- **1862:** Battle of Cedar Mountain
- **1877:** Nez Perce fight Battle of Big Hole
- **1898:** US troops land in Puerto Rico
- **1914:** US proclaims neutrality in WWI
- **1934:** US ends occupation of Haiti
- **1944:** US begins air raids on Philippines
- **1945:** Atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima
- **1964:** Gulf of Tonkin incident
- **1969:** Apollo 11 astronauts awarded Presidential Medal of Freedom
- **1971:** Nixon administration acknowledges secret army in Laos
- **1990:** US troops deploy for Operation Desert Shield
- **2002:** UN Weapons Inspectors invited to Baghdad for technical talks
- **2007:** Al-Qaeda suicide bombers kill 800 Yazidi in Kahtaniya, Iraq

US Army & Strike Breaking



Blockade of Engines in Martinsburg, West Virginia, 1877

Throughout its history, the US Army has not only been involved in overseas conflict, but has also been called upon to intervene in labor conflicts. Especially from 1875 to 1925, military intervention in labor conflicts was common. In fact, between 1877 and 1892 at least 30 percent of the militia's active duty assignments involved strikes. One of the best known examples of "strikebreaking" occurred during the Great Railroad Strike of 1877. In response to their wages being cut for a second time in one year, workers of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad company refused

to load cars or allow the railroad to operate. Railroad workers in other cities followed suit, with violent strikes breaking out throughout the United States. Throughout the course of the Great Railroad Strike of 1877 over 45,000 militiamen were called upon in eleven states and more than 100 strikers were killed.

Eastern cities were not the only ones affected by the Great Railroad Strike of 1877. For the first time in its history, the Rock Island Arsenal was seriously threatened by mobs of angry and hostile citizens. Due to the violence breaking out across the

country, the Arsenal was besieged with requests from Governors and Mayors for supplies of arms and ammunition for the militia. The Arsenal worked discreetly to pack the supplies needed to supply the militia in order to not attract the attention of the public, with much of the transfer and shipping executed at night. However, strikers soon learned of the Arsenal's involvement and marched to the Rock Island and Davenport gates to attempt to stop the shipments. The strikers broke into many railroad cars but did not find the ammunition or supplies they were looking for. Frustrated by their inability to find the supplies the Arsenal had been shipping to militia troops, the strikers then threatened to seize the grounds of the Arsenal. The Commander immediately took measures to secure the Arsenal grounds and no violence followed.

The role of the military, and later the National Guard, as an industrial police force continued into the 20th century, but subsided in the late 1920's and all but disappeared after World War II. The military's role in labor disputes remains controversial, but demonstrates the many missions upon which the Army has been called to serve.