

**IOWA PAST TO PRESENT TEACHERS GUIDE**  
**Revised 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition**

**Chapter 2: American Indians: The Earliest People in Iowa**

**CONTENT OBJECTIVES**

Following the completion of the readings and activities for this chapter, students will have acquired the following understandings:

- a. Archaeologists believe that people first arrived in what is today Iowa approximately 12,000 years ago. These people were the ancestors of the American Indians of today.
- b. The first Iowans used the earth's resources for food, clothing, and shelter.
- c. The Federal government tried to control American Indians through treaties and forced land sales. As a result, tribes frequently moved into and out of Iowa.
- d. The Mesquakies, one of the most enduring Iowa tribes, still live on their settlement near Tama.

**VOCABULARY TO KNOW**

ancestors	nomads
archaeologist	tributary rivers
mound builders	

**PEOPLE AND PLACES TO IDENTIFY**

Black Hawk	Nicolas Perrot
Ioway	Sauk
Keokuk	Saukenuk
Mesquakie	Sioux
Mississippi River	Tama

## **FOR FURTHER STUDY**

1. A tour of the Effigy Mounds National Monument near McGregor is a rewarding and educational experience.

2. A visit to the Living History Farms near Des Moines will help students better understand Iowa's Indian populations.

3. A visit to a special festival, such as the Tama Indian Powwow held each August, will provide students with a firsthand cultural experience of Indian origin.

4. Teachers may also want to take advantage of local citizens of Indian descent. These individuals can share customs and traditions with students, which will add a practical dimension to the study of this important group of people.

5. *From Ackley to Zwingle: A Collection of the Origins of Iowa Place Names.* Harold E. Dilts, et al. (Carter Press, Inc., Ames, Iowa. 1975) provides an interesting explanation of the origins of Iowa's county names. These names, many of which are of Indian origin, can be used as anecdotal information to increase students' interest in the study of their state.

## **Activity 2-1: MIGRATION OF THE IOWAY TRIBE**

**Skills.** Map Reading

**Materials.** Schoolcraft map and account of Ioway migrations (in textbook) and handout 2-1 Migration of the Iowa Tribe.

### **Procedure**

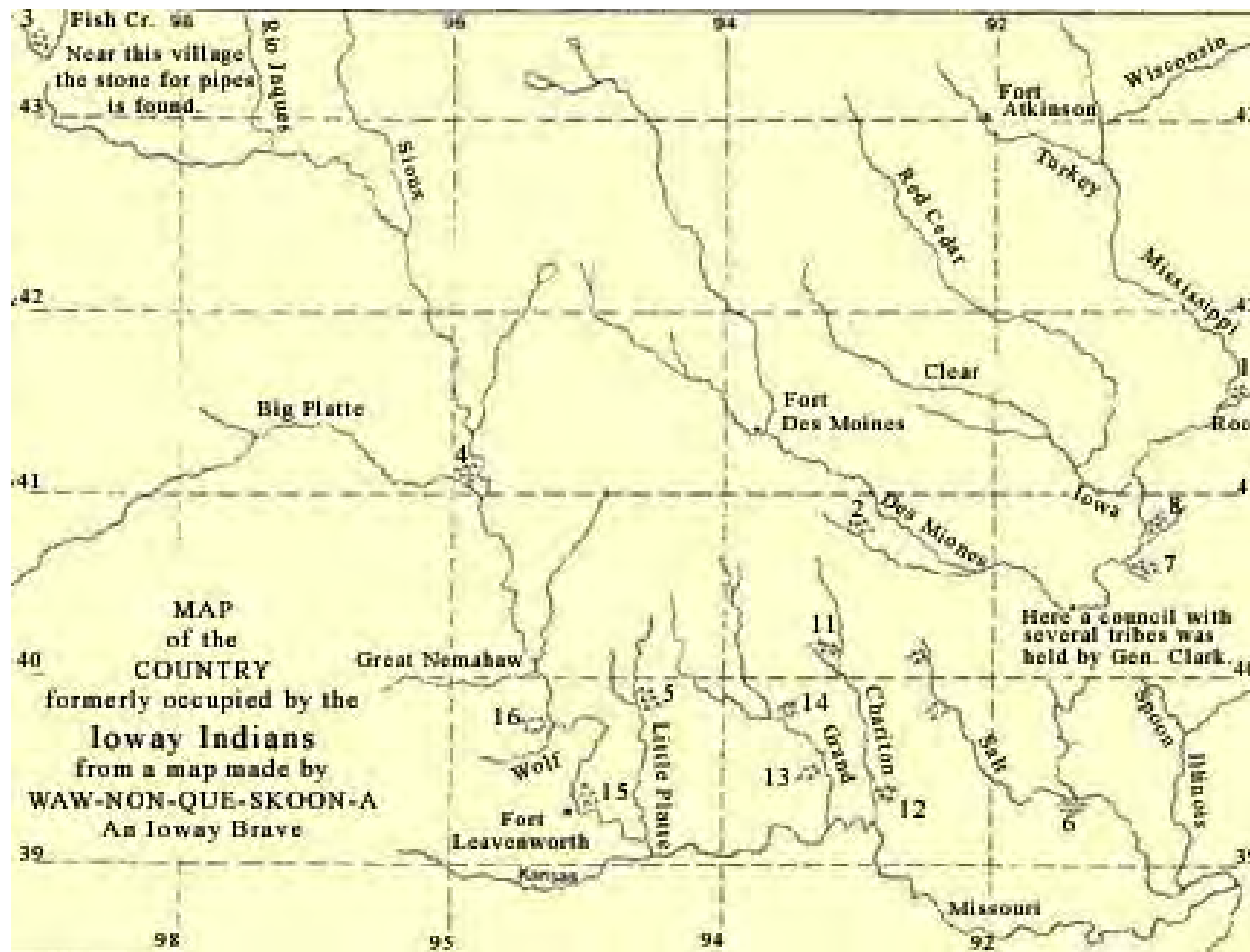
1. Introduce the lesson by reviewing the material on the Ioway Indians in the textbook.

2. Locate the map of the Ioway Indians in textbook. Distribute copies of handout 2-1—Migration of the Iowa Tribe. Emphasize that this selection was based on the recollections of an Ioway Indian. Have students follow along on their maps as the material on their migrations is read to the class. Using the information in the last paragraph, have students estimate the approximate date of the writing of this selection.

3. Conclude the lesson by having students locate and, if possible, draw the present-day state boundaries on their maps (handout 2-1). Discuss the great amount of territory the Ioway Indians covered in this segment of their history. Consider some reasons for these migrations (availability of food, supply of bark and firewood, etc. ).

Handout 2-1  
MIGRATION OF THE IOWA TRIBE

[http://www.uni.edu/iowahist/Frontier\\_Life/IATribe\\_migration/tribemigration.htm](http://www.uni.edu/iowahist/Frontier_Life/IATribe_migration/tribemigration.htm)



## **PRIMARY MATERIAL: Henry Schoolcraft's Account of the Migration of the loway Tribe {unabridged}**

The object of Waw-non-que-skoon-a was to denote the places where the lowas had lived using the sixteen migrations which preceded their residence at their present location, the Missouri; and, in truth, it nearly exhausts their history. The marks to denote a fixed residence are a symbol for a lodge. These are carefully preserved, with their exact relative position. Their order, as given, is also preserved by figures. Could eras be affixed to these residences, it would give entire accuracy to the modern part of their history. As it is, it depicts some curious facts in the history of predatory and erratic tribes, showing how they sometimes crossed their own track, and demonstrates the immense distances to which they rove.

The earliest date to which their recollection extends, as indicated by location No. 1, is at the junction of Rock River with the Mississippi. This was, manifestly, in or very near Winnebago territory, and confirms the traditions of several of the Missouri tribes. From this point they migrated down the Mississippi to the river Des Moines and fixed themselves at No. 2, on its south fork. They next made an extraordinary migration, abandoning the Mississippi and all its upper tributaries, and ascending the Missouri to a point of land formed by a small stream, on its east shore, called by the Indians Fish Creek, which flows in from the direction of, and not far from, the celebrated Red Pipe stone quarry, on the heights of the Coteau des Prairies, No. 3.

They next descended the Missouri to the junction of the Nebraska, or Great Platte River, with that stream, No. 4. They settled on the west bank, keeping the buffalo ranges on their west. They next migrated still lower down the Missouri and fixed themselves on the headwaters of the Little Platte River, No. 5.

From this location, when circumstances had rendered another change desirable, they returned to the Mississippi, and located themselves at the mouth of Salt River, No. 6. Here passed another period. They next ascended the Mississippi and settled on its east bank, at the junction of a stream in the present area of Illinois, No. 7. Their next migration carried them still higher on that shore, to the junction of another stream, No. 8, which is well nigh to their original starting point at No. 1.

They receded again to the south and west, first fixing themselves on Salt River, No. 9, above their prior site, No. 6, and afterwards changing their location to its very source, No: 10. They then passed, evidently by land, to the higher forks of the river Chariton, or Missouri, No. 11 and next descended that stream to near its mouth, No. 12. The next two migrations of this tribe were to the west valley of the Grand River, and then to its forks, No. 14. Still continuing their general migrations to the south and west, they chose the east bank of the Missouri, opposite the present site of Fort Leavenworth, No. 15, and finally settled on the west bank of the Missouri, between the mouth of the Wolf and Great Namahaw, No. 16, where they now reside.

These migrations are deemed to be all of quite modern date, not exceeding the probable period to which well known tradition could reach. They do not, it would seem, aspire to the area of their ancient residence on the lower and upper Iowa Rivers, and about the region of St. Anthony's Falls.

We are taught something by these migrations. They were probably determined by the facility of procuring food. They relied, ever, greatly on the deer, elk, and buffalo. As these species are subject to changes, it is probable they carried the Indians with them. It is not probable that their locations were of long continuance at a place-not over a dozen years at a location, on the average. It might be longer at some places, and less at others. This would not give a period of more than 180 years, before their arrival at their present place. Marquette found them, in 1673, at the mouth of the Des Moines. This, it is seen, was their first location.

FROM: Henry R. Schoolcraft. 1853. *Information Respecting the History, Condition and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States* III. Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo and Company. 256-58.

## Activity 2-2: INDIAN PLACE NAMES

**Skills.** Identifying specific counties on Iowa maps

**Materials.** Student copies of handout 2-2, resource materials containing information on Iowa Indians, Iowa road maps (optional)

### Procedure

1. Introduce the lesson by reviewing with students that Iowa was first inhabited by various American Indian groups such as the Ioway, the Sioux, Winnebagos, the Otos, and the Omahas. Have students name several of these groups.

2. Distribute copies of handout 2-2. Have students skim the map for county names of Indian origin. The following list identifies county names and the tribe with which each is associated. Students will be able to identify others as well.

Appanoose –Sauk

Pocahontas -Powhatan

Black Hawk –Sauk

Pottawattamie-an Indian tribe

Cherokee -an Indian tribe

Tama -Mesquakie

Chickasaw -an Indian tribe

Wapello –Mesquakie

Keokuk –Sauk

Winnebago -an Indian tribe

Mahaska –Ioway

Winneshiek –Winnebago

Osceola –Seminole

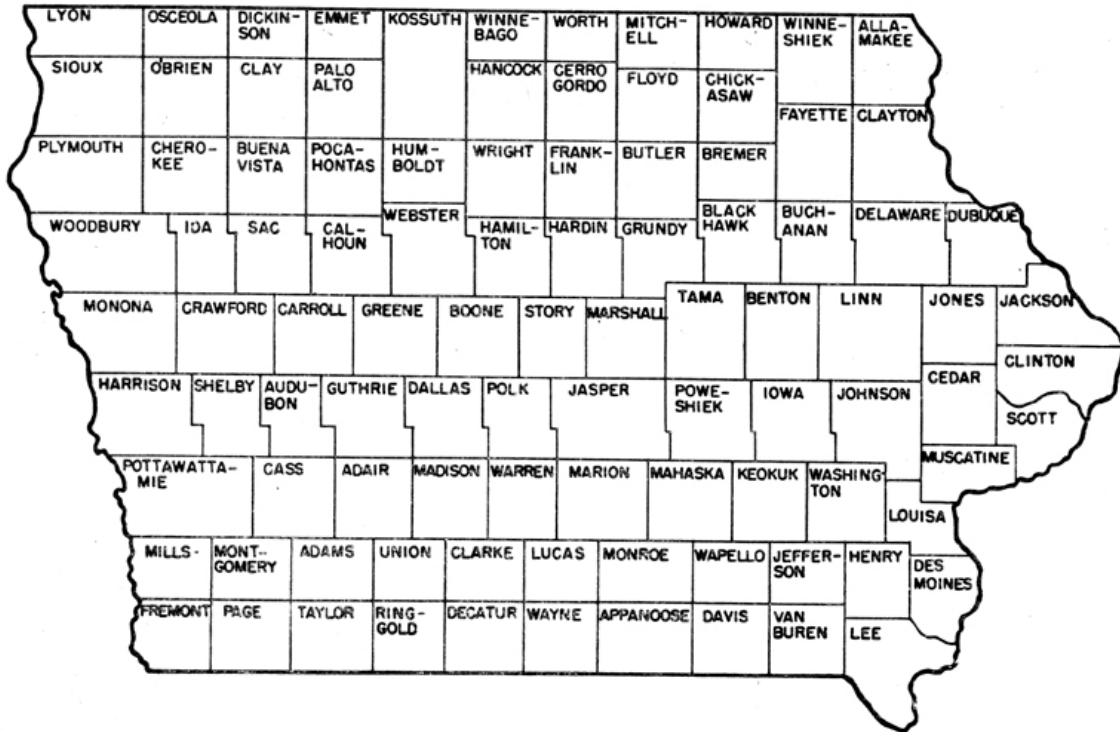
3. Compile a list of county names. Using the textbook and online resource materials, have students identify the tribe with which each name is associated.

4. If time permits, have students compile a list of town and city names of Indian origin using the Iowa road maps.

5. Culminate the lesson by posting the county and town names on charts to be displayed in the room.

Handout 2-2 County Map of Iowa

# IOWA





### **Activity 2-3: THE DEATH OF BLACK HAWK**

**Skills.** Reading and comparing primary and secondary accounts

**Materials.** Student copies of handouts 2-3a and 2-3b

#### **Procedure**

1. Introduce the lesson by distributing copies of handout 2-3a. Read and discuss this selection together as a class.

2. Have students turn to the account of Sarah Nossaman (handout 2-3b). Read and discuss this selection together, identifying on an Iowa map the locations she mentions.

3. After discussing the difference between a primary and secondary source, ask students to compare and contrast these two accounts of Black Hawk's death. Focus discussion on the strengths and liabilities of personal accounts of historical events.

**THE DEATH OF BLACKHAWK**

Following the Black Hawk War of 1832, Chief Black Hawk was put in prison for a short time, first in St. Louis and then in Virginia. When President Andrew Jackson arranged for his release, Black Hawk returned to Iowa, the land he loved. Iowa was Black Hawk's last home. He built a home along the Des Moines River in central Iowa.

Black Hawk died in October of 1838. But even in death he was not free from humiliation. During his life, Black Hawk's land had been taken by pioneer settlers moving west. Now in his death they robbed his grave. His body was dug up and plans were made to display his skull and bones like a circus sideshow. Some of Black Hawk's friends appealed to Governor Robert Lucas, who demanded that the bones be returned from Illinois to Iowa. They were placed, in a Burlington museum, which burned in 1855.

**SARAH NOSSAMAN'S STORY**

These recollections of pioneer life were written by Sarah Welch Nossaman so that her children would have some record of her early life. She recalls her family's move to Indiana in 1831 when she was only six years old. In 1835 her family moved again to Bonaparte, Iowa, where her father built a pottery. In 1841 they moved again to Fairfield, Iowa, where she married. In 1842 Sarah and her husband moved to a new settlement near Pella, Iowa. Unfortunately, her record ends abruptly in 1844 and does not chronicle the Nossamans' later efforts at hotel-keeping and storekeeping in Pella.

On the following April the Black Hawk War broke out, and some of our neighbors were killed near us, but we were providentially spared. While the war was raging at its hottest my mother urged my father to go to Jacksonville, the county seat of Morgan County, Illinois, and get his brother, which is old Uncle Johnny Welch of this place, to come and take us down to Jacksonville where he lived. ...In 1835 my father moved to what is now Iowa, but at that time it was part of Wisconsin Territory. We settled one mile below where Bonaparte now is, in Van Buren County. We had but few neighbors, among them being old Uncle Sammy Reed and his brother Isaac, and an Indian trader by the name of Jordan. ...It was here we had for neighbors Black Hawk, Keokuk, Wapello, Hard Fish, Kishkakosh, Naseaskuk and a score of others of the Sac and Fox Indians. Here we had hard times and often went hungry. We lived there five years. ...While we lived there Black Hawk and his son were frequent visitors and often partook of my father's hospitality.

In 1837 or 1838, I don't remember which, Black Hawk died of malaria fever. One of our neighbors, Dr. James Turner, thought if he could only steal Black Hawk's head he could make a fortune out of it by taking it east and putting it on exhibition. After two weeks' watching he succeeded in getting it. Black Hawk's burial place was near old lowaville, on the north side of the Des Moines River, under a big sugar tree. It was there Dr. Turner severed the head from the body. At the time it was done I was taking care of his sick sister-in-law, Mrs. William Turner. The doctor made his home with his brother. We knew the evening he went to steal the head and sat up to await his coming. He got in with it at four o'clock in the morning and hid it till the afternoon of the same day, when he cooked the flesh off the skull. So I can say that I am the only one now living that witnessed that sight, for it was surely a sight for me. If the rest of Black Hawk's bones were ever removed it was a good many years after his head was stolen.

The second morning after their ruler's head was stolen ten of the best Indian warriors came to William Turner's and asked for his brother, the Doctor. They were painted war style. He told them he did not know where his brother was. They told him they would give him ten days to find

his brother, and if he did not find him in that time he would pay the penalty for his brother's crime. But he knew where his brother was. He was at the home of a neighbor named Robb, Uncle Tommy Robb as he was called by everyone, on the south side of the Des Moines River. But he did not want to find his brother and sent a boy to tell him to fly for Missouri, which he did. The Indians returned to Iowaville to hold council and conclude what to do, and while they were holding council William Turner and his wife made their escape in a canoe down the river. William Turner kept a little store in new Lexington. He got his neighbors to pack and send his goods after him.

But the Indians demanded their ruler's head, and for three weeks we expected an outbreak every day, but through the influence of their agent and the citizens together they gave up hostilities for a time. The whites told them they would bring Turner to justice if he could be found. The sheriff chased Turner around for awhile, which only give him the more time to get out of the way. The Turner family finally all went to St. Louis where the Doctor was found again, and to keep the Indians quiet the sheriff went to St. Louis in search of him, but he did not find him. He did not want to find him. But Turner got frightened and took Black Hawk's skull to Quincy, Illinois, and put it in the care of a doctor there for safe-keeping (I forget the doctor's name) till the Indians would get settled down, and then he intended to take it east. But when he got ready to go east with it the doctor in Quincy refused to give it up, and he did not dare to go to law about it, so after all his trouble and excitement he lost Black Hawk's skull, and not only made Turners endless trouble, but put the lives of all settlers in jeopardy for months. We lived principally on excitement and that was a poor living. But they finally got over it till all was peace and then we were happy. The doctor that had the head took it to Burlington and sold it to a museum and the museum burned down, so Black Hawk's skull is not now in existence. The Turner family were warm friends of my father's family. They stayed in St. Louis two or three years, I don't remember just how long, and they all three died with the cholera. So I am left alone to tell the story.

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FROM: Sarah Welch Nossaman. "Pioneering at Bonaparte and Near Pella." *Annals of Iowa* 13 (1922). 443-45.