

## *Life of Ma-ka-tai-me-she-kia-kiak or Black Hawk - Dictated by Himself*

by Black Hawk; J. B. Patterson (editor)

This PDF is provided by [www.Flutopedia.com](http://www.Flutopedia.com) as part of a collection of resources for the Native American flute. The full citation for this digital copy of the original source material is provided below, as well as the specific details of the source of this reference and how it was digitized (if known).

As part of the Flutopedia effort, extensive metadata (title, author, citation, etc.) has been encoded into this file. Select File/Properties in any Adobe product to view this information. You also can use text search on this document, based either on the OCR encoding done during the original digitization or during Flutopedia document preparation using the OCR facility of Adobe Acrobat 9 Pro.

Based on our best efforts, we believe that providing this material from [www.Flutopedia.com](http://www.Flutopedia.com) to users in the United States does not violate any legal rights. However, please do not assume that it is legal to use this material outside the United States or for any use other than your own personal research and self-enrichment. Also, we cannot offer guidance as to whether any specific use of this material is allowed.

If you have any questions about this document or issues with its distribution, please visit <http://www.Flutopedia.com/> for information on how to contact us.

### Citation

[BlackHawk 1834] Black Hawk; J. B. Patterson (editor). Life of Ma-ka-tai-me-she-kia-kiak or Black Hawk - Dictated by Himself, published by Russell, Odiorne, & Metcalf, Boston, 1834, 155 pages, retrieved December 27, 2009.

Contributing source: Bentley Historical Library  
Digitizing sponsor: Google, Inc.  
Digitized by: Google Books on July 28, 2009





**BLACK HAWK**

**LIFE**  
**OF**  
**MA-KA-TAI-ME-SHE-KIA-KIAK**  
**OR**  
**BLACK HAWK,**

**EMBRACING THE**  
**TRADITION OF HIS NATION—INDIAN WARS IN WHICH HE HAS**  
**BEEN ENGAGED—CAUSE OF JOINING THE BRITISH IN THEIR**  
**LATE WAR WITH AMERICA, AND ITS HISTORY—DE-**  
**SCRIPTION OF THE ROCK-RIVER VILLAGE—MAN-**  
**NERS AND CUSTOMS—ENCROACHMENTS BY**  
**THE WHITES, CONTRARY TO TREA-**  
**TY—REMOVAL FROM HIS**  
**VILLAGE IN 1831.**

**WITH AN**  
**ACCOUNT OF THE CAUSE AND GENERAL HISTORY**  
**OF THE**  
**LATE WAR,**

**HIS**  
**SURRENDER AND CONFINEMENT AT JEFFERSON BARRACKS,**  
**AND**  
**TRAVELS THROUGH THE UNITED STATES.**

---

**DICTATED BY HIMSELF.**

---

**J. W. Patterson, of Rock Island, Ill Editor and Proprietor.**

---

**BOSTON**

**1834**

**Beaumont Newhall**  
**Library**

Digitized by Google

## INDIAN AGENCY,

Rock-Island, *October 16, 1833.*

I DO HEREBY CERTIFY, that Mâ-ka-tai-me-she-kiâ-kiâk, or Black Hawk, did call upon me, on his return to his people in August last, and express a great desire to have a History of his Life written and published, in order, (as he said) "that the people of the United States, (among whom he had been travelling, and by whom he had been treated with great respect, friendship and hospitality,) might know the *causes* that had impelled him to act as he has done, and the *principles* by which he was governed." In accordance with his request, I acted as Interpreter; and was particularly cautious, to understand distinctly the narrative of Black Hawk throughout—and have examined the work carefully, since its completion—and have no hesitation in pronouncing it strictly correct, in all its particulars.

Given under my hand, at the Sac and Fox Agency, the day and date above written.

ANTOINE LECLAIR,

*U. S. Interpreter for the Sacs and Foxes.*

## NE-KA-NA-WEN.

MA-NE-SE-NO OKE-MAUT WAP-PI MA-QUAI.

WA-TA-SAI WE-YEU,

Ai nan-ni ta co-si-ya-quai, na-katch ai she-ke she-he-nack, hai-me-ka-ti ya-quai ke-she-he-nack, ken-e-cha we-he-ke kai-pec-kien a-cob, ai we-ne-she we-he-yen; ne-wai-ta-sa-mak ke-kosh-pe kai-a-poi qui-wat, No-ta-wach-pai pai-ke se-na-mon nan-ni-yoo, ai-ke-kai na-a-pen. Ni-me-to sai-ne-ni-wen, ne-ta-to-tà ken ai mo-he-man tà-ta-que, ne-me-to-sai-ne-ne-wen.

Nin-à-kài-ka poi-pon-ni chi-cha-yen, kai-kà-ya ha-ma-we pa-she-to-he-yen. Kài-nà-ya kai-nen-naip, he-nok ki-nok ke-chà-kai-ya, pai-no-yen ne-ket-te-sim-mak o-ke-te-wak ke-o-che, me-ka ti-ya quois na-kach mai-quoi, à-que-qui pà-che-qui ke kan-ni tà-men-nin. Ke-to-tà we-yen, à-que-kà-in-co-te she-tai-hai yen-nèn, chai-chà-me-co kai-ke-me-se ai we-ke ken-ne-tà-mo-wat, ken-na-wà-ha-o mà-co-quà-yeai-quoi. Ken-wen-na àk-che-màn wen-ni-ta-hai ke-men-ne to-tà-we-yeu, ke-kog-hai ke-ta-shi ke-kài nà-we-yen, he-na-cha wai-che-we to-mo-nan, ai pe-che-quà-chi mo-pen mà-me-co, mài-che-we-tà nà-mo-nan, ne-ya-we-nan qui-a-hà-wa pe-ta-

kek, a-que-yeàr tak-pa-she-qui à-to-tà-mo-wat, chi-ye-tuk he-ne cha-wài-chi he-ni-nan ke-o-chi-tà mow-tà-swee-pài che-quà-que.

He-ni-cha-hài poi-kài-nen nà-na-so-si-yen, ai o-sà-ke-we-yen, ke-pe-me-kai-mi-kat hài-nen hac-yái na-na-co-si-peu, nen-à-kài-ne-co-ten ne-co-ten ne-ka chi-a-quoi ne-me-cok me-to-sai ne-ne wak-kài ne-we-yen-nen, kài-shài mà-ni-to-ke ka-to-me-nak ke-wa-sài he-co-wai mi-à-me kà-chi pài-ko-tài-hear-pe kài-cee wà-wà-kià he-pe hà-pe-nach-he-chà, na-na-ke.nà-way ni-taain ai we-pa-he-weà to-to-nà cà, ke-to-ta-we-yeak, he-nok mià-ni ai she-ke-tà ma-ke-si-yen, nen-a-kai nà-co-ten ne-ka-he-nen é-ta-quois, wà-toi-na-ka che-mă-ke-keu nà-ta-che tài-hài-ken ai mo-co-man ye-we-yeu ke-to-towé. E-nok mà-ni-hài she-ka-tà-ma ka-si-yen, wen-e-cha-hài nài-ne-mak, mài-ko-ten ke-kà-cha mà-men-na-tuk we-yowé, keu-ke-nok ai she-me ma-nà-ni tà-men-ke-yowé.

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

Ma-taus-we Ki-sis, 1833

[TRANSLATION.]

## DEDICATION.

TO BRIGADIER GEN'L. H. ATKINSON.

SIR,—The changes of fortune, and vicissitudes of war, made you my conqueror. When my last resources were exhausted, my warriors worn down with long and toilsome marches, we yielded, and I became your prisoner.

The story of my life is told in the following pages; it is intimately connected, and in some measure, identified with a part of the history of your own; I have, therefore, dedicated it to you.

The changes of many summers, have brought old age upon me,—and I cannot expect to survive many moons. Before I set out on my journey to the land of my fathers, I have determined to give my motives and reasons for my former hostilities to the whites, and to vindicate my character from misrepresentation. The kindness I received from you whilst a prisoner of war, assures me that you will

vouch for the facts contained in my narrative, so far as they came under your observation.

I am now an obscure member of a nation, that formerly honored and respected my opinions. The path to glory is rough, and many gloomy hours obscure it. May the Great Spirit shed light on your's—and that you may never experience the humility that the power of the American government has reduced me to, is the wish of him, who, in his native forests, was once as proud and bold as yourself.

BLACK HAWK.

10th Moon, 1833.



## ADVERTISEMENT.

---

It is presumed no apology will be required for presenting to the public, the life of a Hero who has lately taken such high rank among the distinguished individuals of America. In the following pages he will be seen in the characters of a Warrior, Patriot and a State-prisoner—in every situation he is still the Chief of his Band, asserting their rights with dignity, firmness and courage. Several accounts of the late war having been published, in which he thinks justice is not done to himself or nation, he determined to make known to the world, the injuries his people have received from the whites—the causes which brought on the war on the part of his nation, and a general history of it throughout the campaign. In his opinion, this is the only method now left him, to rescue his little Band—the remnant of those who

fought bravely with him—from the effects of the statements that have already gone forth.

The facts which he states, respecting the Treaty of 1804, in virtue of the provisions of which Government claimed the country in dispute, and enforced its arguments with the sword, are worthy of attention. It purported to cede to the United States, all the country, including the village and corn-fields of Black Hawk and his band, on the east side of the Mississippi. Four individuals of the tribe, who were on a visit to St. Louis to obtain the liberation of one of their people from prison, were prevailed upon, (says Black Hawk,) to make this important treaty, without the knowledge or authority of the tribes, or nation.

In treating with the Indians for their country, it has always been customary to assemble the whole nation; because, as has been truly suggested by the Secretary of War, the nature of the authority of the chiefs of a tribe is such, that it is not often that they dare make a treaty of much consequence,—and we might add, never, when involving so much magnitude

as the one under consideration, without the presence of their young men. A rule so reasonable and just ought never to be violated—and the Indians might well question the right of Government to dispossess them, when such violation was made the basis of its right.

The Editor has written this work according to the dictation of Black Hawk, through the United States' Interpreter, at the Sac and Fox Agency of Rock Island. He does not, therefore, consider himself responsible for any of the facts, or views, contained in it—and leaves the old Chief and his story with the public, whilst he neither asks, nor expects, any fame for his services as an amanuensis.

THE EDITOR.

## LIFE OF BLACK HAWK.

---

I WAS born at the Sac Village, on Rock river, in the year 1767, and am now in my 67th year. My great grandfather, Na-nà-ma-kee, or Thunder, (according to the tradition given me by my father, Py-e-sa,) was born in the vicinity of Montreal, where the Great Spirit first placed the Sac Nation, and inspired him with a belief that, at the end of four years, he should see a *white man*, who would be to him a father. Consequently he blacked his face, and eat but once a day, (just as the sun was going down,) for three years, and continued dreaming throughout all this time whenever he slept;—when the Great Spirit again appeared to him, and told him, that, at the end of one year more, he should meet his father,—and directed him to start seven days before its expiration, and take with him his two brothers, *Na-mah*, or Sturgeon, and *Pau-ka-kum-ma-wa*, or Sun Fish, and travel in a direction to the left of sun-rising. After pursuing this course five days, he sent out his two brothers to

listen if they could hear a noise, and if so, to fasten some grass to the end of a pole, erect it, pointing in the direction of the sound, and then return to him.

Early next morning, they returned, and reported that they had heard sounds which appeared near at hand, and that they had fulfilled his order. They all then started for the place where the pole had been erected; when, on reaching it, Na-na-ma-kee left his party, and went, alone, to the place from whence the sounds proceeded, and found that the white man had arrived and pitched his tent. When he came in sight, his father came out to meet him. He took him by the hand, and welcomed him into his tent. He told him that he was the son of the King of France—that he had been dreaming for four years—that the Great Spirit had directed him to come here, where he should meet a nation of people who had never yet seen a white man—that they should be his children, and he should be their father—that he had communicated these things to the King, his father, who laughed at him, and called him a Ma-she-na—but he insisted on coming here to meet his children, where the Great Spirit had directed him. The King told him that he would neither find land nor people—that this was an uninhabited region of lakes and mountains; but, finding that he would have no peace without it, fitted out a na-pe-quâ, manned it, and gave it to him in charge, when he immediately loaded it, set sail, and had now landed on the very day that the Great Spirit had told him, in his dreams, he should meet his chil-

dren. He had now met the man who should, in future, have charge of all the nation.

He then presented him with a medal, which he hung round his neck. Na-nà-ma-kee informed him of his dreaming,—and told him that his two brothers remained a little ways behind. His father gave him a shirt, blanket, and handkerchief, besides a variety of presents, and told him to go and bring his brothers. Having laid aside his buffalo robe, and dressed himself in his new dress, he started to meet his brethren. When they met, he explained to them his meeting with the white man, and exhibited to their view the presents that he had made him—took off his medal, and placed it upon Nàh-ma, his elder brother, and requested them both to go with him to his father.

They proceeded thither,—were ushered into the tent, and, after some brief ceremony, his father opened his chest and took presents therefrom for the newcomers. He discovered that Na-nà-ma-kee had given his medal to Nàh-ma. He told him that he had done wrong—he should wear that medal himself, as he had others for his brethren: That which he had given him was a type of the rank he should hold in the nation: That his brothers could only rank as *civil* chiefs,—and their duties should consist of taking care of the village, and attending to its civil concerns—whilst his rank, from his superior knowledge, placed him over them all. If the nation gets into any difficulty with another, then his puc-co-hà-wà-ma, or sovereign decree, must be obeyed. If he declared war, he must

lead them on to battle: That the Great Spirit had made him a great and brave general, and had sent him here to give him that medal, and make presents to him for his people.

His father remained four days—during which time he gave him guns, powder and lead, spears and lances, and showed him their use;—so that in war he could chastise his enemies,—and in peace they could kill buffalo, deer, and other game, necessary for the comforts and luxuries of life. He then presented the others with various kinds of cooking utensils, and learned them their uses,—and having given them a large quantity of goods, as presents, and every other thing necessary for their comfort, he set sail for France, after promising to meet them again, at the same place, after the twelfth moon.

The three newly-made chiefs returned to their village, and explained to Muk-a-tá-quet, their father who was the principal chief of the nation, what had been said and done. The old chief had some dogs killed, and made a feast, preparatory to resigning his sceptre, to which all the nation were invited. Great anxiety prevailed among them, to know what the three brothers had seen and heard,—when the old chief rose, and related to them the sayings and doings of his three sons; and concluded by observing, that “the Great Spirit had directed that these, his three children, should take the rank and power that had been his,—and that he yielded these honors and duties willingly to them,—because it was the wish of the

Great Spirit, and he could never consent to make him angry!" He now presented the great medicine bag to Na-nà-ma-kee, and told him, "that he cheerfully resigned it to him—it is the soul of our nation—it has never yet been disgraced—and I will expect you to keep it unsullied!"

Some dissension arose among some of them, in consequence of so much power being given to Na-nà-ma-kee, he being so young a man. To quiet this, Na-nà-ma-kee, during a violent *thunder storm*, told them that he had *caused* it! and that it was an exemplification of the *name* the Great Spirit had given him. During this storm, the *lightning* struck, and set fire to a tree, close by; (a sight they had never witnessed before.) He went to it, and brought away some of its burning branches, made a fire in the lodge, and seated his brothers thereby, opposite to each other; whilst he stood up, and addressed his people as follows:

"I am yet young—but the Great Spirit has called me to the rank I now hold among you. I have never sought to be any thing more than my birth entitled me. I have not been ambitious—nor was it ever my wish, whilst my father lives, to have taken his place—nor have I now usurped his powers. The Great Spirit caused me to dream for four years,—he told me where to go and meet the white man, who would be a kind father to us all. I obeyed his order. I went, and have seen our new father. You have all heard what was said and done. The Great Spirit directed him to come and meet me, and it is his order that places



courage us to make a good hunt, and not go to war. They would then start with their furs and peltries for their homes. Our old men would take a frolic, (at this time our young men never drank.) When this was ended, the next thing to be done was to bury our dead, (such as had died during the year.) This is a great *medicine feast*. The relations of those who have died, give all the goods they have purchased, as presents to their friends—thereby reducing themselves to poverty, to show the Great Spirit that they are humble, so that he will take pity on them. We would next open the caches, and take out corn and other provisions, which had been put up in the fall,—and then commence repairing our lodges. As soon as this is accomplished, we repair the fences around our fields, and clean them off, ready for planting corn. This work is done by our women. The men, during this time, are feasting on dried venison, bear's meat, wild fowl, and corn, prepared in different ways; and recounting to each other what took place during the winter.

Our women plant the corn, and as soon as they get done, we make a feast, and dance the *crane* dance, in which they join us, dressed in their best, and decorated with feathers. At this feast our young braves select the young woman they wish to have for a wife. He then informs his mother, who calls on the mother of the girl, when the arrangement

is made, and the time appointed for him to come. He goes to the lodge when all are asleep, (or pretend to be,) lights his matches, which have been provided for the purpose, and soon finds where his intended sleeps. He then awakens her, and holds the light to his face that she may know him—after which he places the light close to her. If she blows it out, the ceremony is ended, and he appears in the lodge next morning, as one of the family. If she does not blow out the light, but leaves it to burn out, he retires from the lodge. The next day he places himself in full view of it, and plays his flute. The young women go out, one by one, to see who he is playing for. The tune changes, to let them know that he is not playing for them. When his intended makes her appearance at the door, he continues his *court-  
ing* tune, until she returns to the lodge. He then gives over playing, and makes another trial at night, which generally turns out favorable. During the first year they ascertain whether they can agree with each other, and can be happy—if not, they part, and each looks out again. If we were to live together and disagree, we should be as foolish as the whites! No indiscretion can banish a woman from her parental lodge—no difference how many children she may bring home, she is always welcome—the kettle is over the fire to feed them.

The crane dance often lasts two or three days. When this is over, we feast again, and have our

*national* dance. The large square in the village is swept and prepared for the purpose. The chiefs and old warriors, take seats on mats which have been spread at the upper end of the square—the drummers and singers come next, and the braves and women form the sides, leaving a large space in the middle. The drums beat, and the singers commence. A warrior enters the square, keeping time with the music. He shows the manner he started on a war party—how he approached the enemy—he strikes, and describes the way he killed him. All join in applause. He then leaves the square, and another enters and takes his place. Such of our young men as have not been out in war parties, and killed an enemy, stand back ashamed—not being able to enter the square. I remember that I was ashamed to look where our young women stood, before I could take my stand in the square as a warrior.

What pleasure it is to an old warrior, to see his son come forward and relate his exploits—it makes him feel young, and induces him to enter the square, and “fight his battles o’er again.”

This national dance makes our warriors. When I was travelling last summer, on a steam-boat, on a large river, going from New York to Albany, I was shown the place where the Americans dance their national dance [West Point]; where the old warriors recount to their young men, what they have done, to

stimulate them to go and do likewise. This surprised me, as I did not think the whites understood our way of making braves.

When our national dance is over—our corn-fields hoed, and every weed dug up, and our corn about knee-high, all our young men would start in a direction towards sun-down, to hunt deer and buffalo—being prepared, also, to kill Sioux, if any are found on our hunting grounds—a part of our old men and women to the lead mines to make lead—and the remainder of our people start to fish, and get mat stuff. Every one leaves the village, and remains about forty days. They then return: the hunting party bringing in dried buffalo and deer meat, and sometimes *Sioux scalps*, when they are found trespassing on our hunting grounds. At other times they are met by a party of Sioux too strong for them, and are driven in. If the Sioux have killed the Sacs last, they expect to be retaliated upon, and will fly before them, and vice versa. Each party knows that the other has a right to retaliate, which induces those who have killed last, to give way before their enemy—as neither wish to strike, except to avenge the death of their relatives. All our wars are predicated by the relatives of those killed; or by aggressions upon our hunting grounds.

The party from the lead mines bring lead, and the others dried fish, and mats for our winter lodges. Presents are now made by each party; the first, giving to the others dried buffalo and deer, and they, in