



# Black Hawk: The Battle for the Heart of America

*Kerry A. Trask*

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## **Black Hawk: The Battle for the Heart of America** Kerry A. Trask

A stirring retelling of the Black Hawk War that brings into dramatic focus the forces struggling for control over the American frontier

Until 1822, when John Jacob Aster swallowed up the fur trade and the trading posts of the upper Mississippi were closed, the 6,000-strong Sauk Nation occupied one of North America's largest and most prosperous Indian settlements. Its spacious longhouse lodges and council-house squares, supported by hundreds of acres of planted fields, were the envy of white Americans who had already begun to encroach upon the rich Indian land that served as the center of the Sauk's spiritual world. When the inevitable conflicts between natives and white squatters turned violent, Black Hawk's Sauks were forced into exile, banished forever from the east side of the Mississippi River.

Longing for what their culture had been, Black Hawk and his followers, including 700 warriors, rose up in a rage in the spring of 1832, and defiantly crossed the Mississippi from Iowa to Illinois in order to reclaim their ancestral home. Though the war lasted only three months, no other violent encounter between white America and native peoples embodies so clearly the essence of the Republic's inner conflict between its belief in freedom and human rights and its insatiable appetite for new territory.

Kerry A. Trask gives new and vivid life to the heroic efforts of Black Hawk and his men, illuminating the tragic history of frontier America through the eyes of those who were cast aside in the pursuit of the new nation's manifest destiny.

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