

Native americans and the civil war in arkansas



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The First Settlers

The fascinating history of Arkansas began centuries before the earlier settlers' step foot on the unexplored North American soil. The First settlers to step onto Arkansas knew it had potential due to its vast lands and they saw that as an opportunity to invest in crops for their people. Before the Settlers could make Arkansas their home, they had to deal with the inhabitants of the Natural State. There were four different tribes of Native Americans that lived on Arkansas soil. They were known as the Cherokee, Caddo, Osage, and Quapaw. Also, the Native Americans sought after Arkansas when they inhabited the land for the same reason as the Europeans. Each of these tribes used Arkansas' immense countryside for gathering nuts and berries, hunting wildlife, and fishing. Although there were 4 main tribes that established their residence in Arkansas, Quapaw was the primary tribe settle here. The Quapaw immigrated from another tribe in Ohio where they lived in the river valleys. Actually, they are successors of a group of Native Americans called the Dhegihan-Siouan. They moved from Ohio due to lack of food and other resources. Also, since there were many other tribes in the area, they were tired of fighting for the resources. They began their relocation and ended up near the Mississippi River in Arkansas where they sought new lands to hunt and more crops. Eventually, the Native Americans separated into other tribes; in effect, was how the Quapaw tribe began.

Exploration of America

Leif Eriksson was considered to be one of the first European explorers to discover the new lands in America. According to several historians, many

believe that European Vikings discovered America many years before Leif Eriksson. The Vikings were some of the first two to have ever set foot on the foreign land, but there are no records of this event ever happening.

Christopher Columbus is widely known as the man that had discovered America, but in return landed on vast number of islands throughout the Caribbean. Surprisingly, Christopher Columbus never set foot in North America. When the news came back to Europe of a new land to the west that has miles upon miles of unsettled property, explorers flocked to the opportunity. Eventually, the Europeans landed in Arkansas, which is where the story of the Native Americans versus the settlers began. Many explorers started to set up upon the east coast of North America and many others began to journey West into the great Valleys. A Spaniard of the name of Hernando de Soto was one of the first men to have set foot in central Arkansas around the late 16th century.

Exploration of Arkansas

Two French voyagers set sail down the Mississippi to explore the Arkansas Territory. They befriended the Quapaw Indians and eventually settled in their lands. During this time, the French sold the Louisiana territory to the United States, which included Arkansas. One of the most important areas of Arkansas was called the Arkansas post, which was founded by Henri de Tonti. It was started on the land of the Quapaw Native Americans. The Arkansas post operated as a trading post and a stopping point for people traveling throughout the Mississippi River for years. The Arkansas post was also the capital of Arkansas for many years, before it was changed to Little Rock in 1821.

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The Native American treaty's

In 1818, the Quapaw agreed to a treaty that forced them to give up their land up to one million acres across the northeast to the southwest between the Ouachita and Arkansas Rives. After the original treaty in 1818, the Europeans settlers thought the lands were so valuable that they wanted more land from the Native Americans. In 1824, the Quapaw signed a treaty that gave the United States full ownership over the rest if the reservation. As compensation for their efforts, the Quapaw's were given lands along the Red River on Caddo in the Northwestern part in Louisiana. They also received \$4000 in goods and \$2000 in annuity for the next eleven years. Arkansas later detach themselves from the Missouri territory and forming the Arkansas territory which include much of Oklahoma. With Arkansas became its own territory 1819, the Arkansas post became the state capital due to its vast size, importance and popularity. The United States Congress enforced separating boundaries between Indian territories from Arkansas, sending the tribes west. Then began the removal of the Five Citizen tribes from the southeastern areas throughout the Indian territories into Arkansas. The government started to relocate all of these tribes West towards Oklahoma to make further room for excavation of resources and settlements around the south eastern areas. Finally, Arkansas gained its independence by becoming the 25th State of the United States on June 15, 1836.

The beginning of the Civil War in Arkansas

Since Arkansas is a large state with different types of land, there were many differing people, too. In Northern Arkansas, there were farmers, people who

lived off the land and agriculture. In Southern Arkansas, this is where the slave owners that lived on plantations lived. Basically, they did not understand why Lincoln was starting to free slaves and they thought they earned the slaves, so they have the right to keep them. When the Civil war began, there was a hard negotiation between the north and south of Arkansas to decide which side to fight for. Even though most the inhabitants of Arkansas wanted to fight for the Union, they ultimately fought for the Confederates during the civil war. Due to this choice, the organization called the Arkansas Peace Treaty arose. Eventually, they were forced to enlist into the confederates or be treated and convicted as traitors. Apparently, right behind Tennessee, Arkansas was the second confederate state with soldiers who fought for the Union.

A major reason as to why Arkansas thought they played big part in controlling the Civil War is because Arkansas had control over the Mississippi River. It seems like they did not think that the Union could defeat them on their soil, but they easily won. There were numerous battles fought on Arkansas soil. A majority of those battles were Union victories, which was not surprising since there were many confederates who wanted to fight for the Union. The largest battle fought in Arkansas was the Battle of Pea Ridge. The Native American tribes were a large help in strategizing and fighting in this battle. The confederate soldier's strategy was to push the Union back up into Missouri. Even though there were more confederate troops during this battle, the Union kept pushing and won with great victory. After this battle, the confederates had to retreat, which hurt their hopes of gaining control of the war.

The Native Americans fighting

One of the most interesting topics when it comes to the Civil War is the fact that some Native American's fought in these battles. Why did they choose to fight in a war that they did not start? Native Americans could have taken this war as an opportunity to rise up and revolt against the people who took their land. Instead, they ultimately decided to join them, which was surely a tough decision. According to Hauptman, there were 20, 000 Native Americans who fought for the Union and confederacy during the Civil War. I believe that the Native Americans thought they would be rewarded by the white leaders if they fought their battles for them. The Quapaw had close ties with many of the European explorer, which made their decision to fight easier. Also, since the Quapaw were located and familiar with the rivers, the troops figured they would know good battle strategies to use against the Union, who did not know the region well.

The end of the War

The Union eventually won the Civil war. In conclusion, I do not think the Native Americans needed to fight the battles that the settlers started. In the end, it worked out well for all inhabitants of Arkansas. Eventually, the Civil war ended, which freed the slaves years later. The Native Americans were able to live in peace with the settlers, they moved into Oklahoma territory and the fighting ended. Again, while I do not think that the Native Americans had to risk their own lives for the people that took their land, they decided to do so to help end the fighting and to have favor with the Europeans.

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