

BLACK HAWK

THE END OF HIS TRAIL



A DRIVING TOUR OF THE TRAIL THROUGH VERNON COUNTY WISCONSIN

A PROJECT OF
WISCONSIN HUMANITIES COUNCIL
WISCONSIN DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION
VERNON COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPT.
U.S. CORPS OF ENGINEERS AT
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Dr. C.V. Porter (1849–1931)
-- Inspiration and Thanks --



Dr. Charles Porter, a Vernon County doctor, dairyman, and local historian, was the force behind these eleven markers. Interpretations of historic events reflect the time in which one lives. When Porter studied the Black Hawk War in the 1880's, he used some of the most pro-Indian accounts ever produced, in contrast to the anti-Indian texts of 1830–1870 and 1890–1920. Dr. Porter's markers, erected in 1930, coincided with historians' attempts to describe the war dispassionately.

In his time, Dr. Porter was the Secretary of the Battle Island Association and was also a historical columnist for the *Vernon County Censor*. An early dairyman, he was the first in Vernon County to have a cream separator and was one of the first in the region to test milk for butterfat.

This plaque is posted at each site so as to disclaim any language used which might prove offensive to anyone:

The State of Wisconsin recognizes Dr. Porter's Markers as a part of Vernon County history but does not condone the language or prejudicial inferences used on the Markers. Dr. Porter used descriptive, interpretative language which he researched and felt was acceptable for his era.

OTHER MARKERS BY C.V. PORTER
[Boxes contain wording from the markers]

Marker A — Lucy Stone *in Viroqua's Pioneer Cemetery, Rock St.*

Here on July 4, 1856, Lucy Stone, "Morning Star of the Woman's Rights Movement," delivered the first woman's rights address and anti-slavery speech ever given by a woman in the great northwest. The platform broke down. Rising unhurt, she cried, "So will this nation fall unless slavery is abolished."

Marker B — Liberty Pole *west of Liberty Pole on Hornby Hollow Rd.*

Near here John McCulloch in 1844 erected the first permanent cabin in this county. He sold in 1852, went to Calif., and died on the plains in 1853. Sept. 4, 1848 Democratic Nominating Convention held here for Crawford County.

Original pole marker on nearby farm reads as follows:

Here, in 1856 a presidential demonstration took place — Freeman (Republican) versus Buchanan (Democrat). Freeman's supporters erected a 160 ft. flag pole. The flag at its pinnacle could be seen for miles. Because of its fame the name of the village was changed from Bad Axe to Liberty Pole.

Marker C — Site of Red Bird's Village *on Hwy. 35*

June 28, 1827 First Battle of the Bad Axe was fought opposite, between 37 Winnebagos, on Minnesota and Wisconsin Islands, and crew of keelboat O.H. Perry grounded on sand bar. Fatalities: 4 whites, 7 Indians. The same day Red Bird killed Lip Cap and Gagnier at Prairie du Chien. He died in prison there.

Marker D — Winneshiek's Landing *on Hwy. 35*

Winneshiek's Landing — 1820–1854. Named De Soto in 1855. The first Winnebago Chief Winneshiek fought with British at Mackinac in 1812, at Sandusky in 1813, and helped McKay take Prairie du Chien from U.S. in 1814. He died at Lansing, Iowa, in 1848. Legend since 1855 claims his burial on Mt. Winneshiek. The second chief of this name was removed to Nebraska. De Soto is built over an Indian cemetery and undoubtedly here lie braves who, led by Charles de Langlade, fought Braddock in 1775 and at Quebec in 1759, when Wolfe and Montcalm were slain.