



Most wars leave people hurt and dead, and cause much damage. The Toledo War was an exception. It was not an official war. No one died in the war and there was little damage. The war was waged between Michigan and Ohio in 1835 over a small piece of land called the Toledo Strip. Both wanted to develop the city of Toledo into a great commercial port.

The war began in the spring of 1835 when Ohioans

started to **survey** the border between Michigan and Ohio. At the time, Ohio was a state and Michigan was a territory trying to become a state. Because existing laws were unclear about the boundaries between future states, both Michigan and Ohio claimed the Toledo Strip.

In April 1835 a Michigan sheriff's **posse** of thirty men surprised a smaller group of Ohio surveyors working in Michigan's Lenawee County. Nine Ohioans were captured and imprisoned at Tecumseh, Michigan. They were charged

with violating Michigan's Pains and Penalties Act. This law said no one but Michiganians could operate as public officials in the Toledo Strip.

Several Ohio surveyors escaped capture. They returned to Ohio and told Governor Robert Lucas that "an armed force of several hundred men" stretched across the border between Michigan and Ohio.

The Toledo War had begun.

In midsummer, tensions grew. On July 15, 1835, Monroe County deputy sheriff Joseph Wood arrived in Toledo to arrest an Ohioan who had violated the Pains and Penalties Act. The Ohioan resisted arrest and stabbed Wood. The wound was not serious and Wood recovered. He was the only casualty of the Toledo War.

In **retaliation** for wounding Wood, Michigan governor Stevens T. Mason ordered a posse of 200 men to Toledo. When they arrived in Toledo the Michiganians discovered the Ohioans had fled to the safety of Ohio.

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Stevens T. Mason, the "Boy Governor"

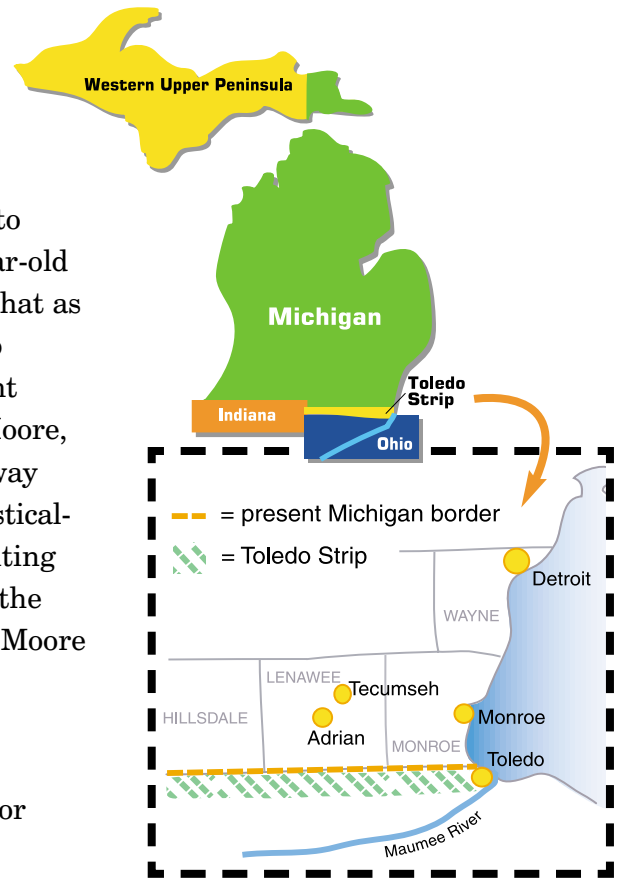
armed Michiganians into Toledo. Twenty-one-year-old J. Wilkie Moore wrote that as they marched to Toledo they "had a vast amount of fun." According to Moore, the farmers along the way "welcomed us enthusiastically because we were fighting for Michigan." Despite the **gaiety** of the moment, Moore expected "bloodshed."

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The **climax** of the Toledo War occurred in early September 1835. On the first Monday in September the Ohioans planned to hold a session of court in the Toledo Strip. They hoped that doing this would make the land part of Ohio.

Governor Mason responded by leading a force of 1,000

When Mason's men arrived in Toledo they found no Ohio soldiers or government officials. The Michiganians returned home thinking they were victorious. What really happened was that the Ohioans had held their court session quietly and quickly and



returned to Ohio before the Michiganians reached Toledo.

When Mason returned to Detroit he learned that President Andrew Jackson had fired him as governor of the Michigan Territory. He was replaced by a new governor who favored the Ohioans. That autumn, the Ohioans surveyed the border with Michigan without any problems.

The Toledo War had ended, but more than another year passed before Michigan became a state. In the end, Michigan was forced to give up the Toledo Strip in exchange for the western Upper Peninsula and statehood. ■



The Michigan militia carried this box during the Toledo War. Today it is at the Michigan Historical Museum in Lansing. For more information, telephone (517) 373-3559 or visit www.michiganhistory.org.

THE

TOLEDO WAR

Shifts to Washington

The Toledo War ended in the fall of 1835, but discussion on the future of the Toledo Strip was debated in Congress during the early months of 1836.

Some congressmen took Ohio's side. Senator John M. Clayton believed that the Toledo Strip belonged to Ohio. The Delaware senator concluded, "Ohio appeared to be entitled not only to the territory in dispute, but perhaps much more." Clayton added that the borders of territories were only temporary and Congress had a right to adjust them as they saw fit.

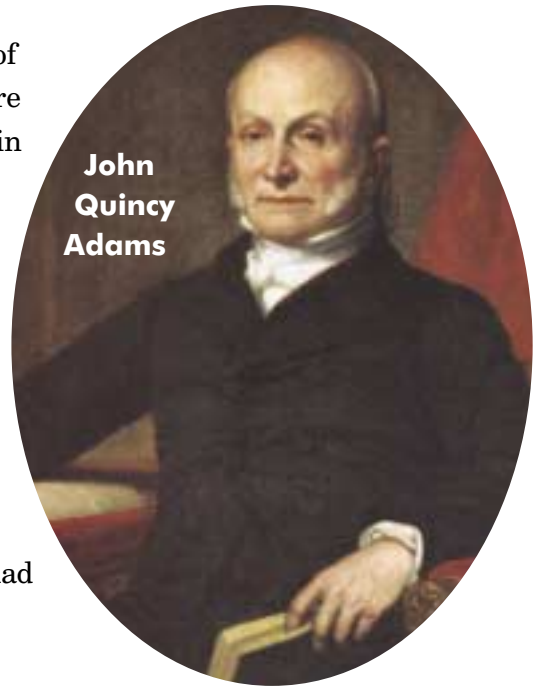
Michigan had its defenders.

Senator John M. Niles of Connecticut declared,

"Why are the people of Michigan to be vexed and harassed. . . . They feel they are treated harshly; that great injustice is done them. They have been opposed and resisted in every course they have pursued to obtain admission into the Union; and you have now divided their territory."

Michigan's most **eloquent** supporter was Congressman John Quincy Adams of Massachusetts. The former president stated: "Never in the course of my life have I known a controversy of which all the right was so clear on one side and all the power so overwhelmingly on the other."

As the debate came to an end, Congress insisted that Michigan give up claim to the Toledo Strip. To comfort the loss, Congress offered Michigan the western Upper Peninsula. The mineral riches in the western U.P., which were unknown at the time, made this a great deal for Michigan.



What Did You Learn?

BONUS:

Who was wounded in the Toledo War?

- a. Stevens T. Mason
- b. Robert Lucas
- c. Joseph Wood

1. *When did the Toledo War take place?*

- a. 1837
- b. 1835
- c. 1861

2. *Who was president during the Toledo War?*

- a. Andrew Jackson
- b. Abraham Lincoln
- c. Theodore Roosevelt

3. *What did Michigan get in exchange for the Toledo Strip?*

- a. one million dollars
- b. the western Upper Peninsula
- c. Mackinac Island

Vocabulary WORDS



Survey: to determine the boundaries, features, and area of land

Posse: a group of people called together by a sherriff

Retaliate: to respond with action, to pay back a wrongdoing

Gaiety: merry or joyful activity

Climax: a high point or turning point in an event

Eloquent: skillful, powerful speech

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Find the following words

- LENAWEE**
- MASON**
- MAUMEE**
- MICHIGANIAN**
- OHIOAN**
- POSSE**
- TOLEDO**