

Spring Warmth Brings Early Skirmishes on Many Fronts

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On April 13, 1864, Adm. Porter reached the Grand Ecore on the Red River of Louisiana, but was forced to retreat due to a decreasing water level and enemy harassment. This retreat also included the ground troops led by Banks, who would not be able to renew the campaign. In Arkansas, fighting broke out at Richland Creek on the Spring River close to Smithville. A column of Federal troops was attempting to join Banks on the Red River, but were held down in Moscow, ID. Other skirmishes on the day occurred at Columbus, KY, Mink Springs, TN, Decatur, AL, Paintsville, KY and Nokesville, VA. In Virginia, Federals went out on expeditions from Portsmouth to Blackwater, and from Norfolk to the Isle of Wight County.

On April 14th, the Confederate cavalry, under the direction of Nathan Bedford Forrest, pushed toward the Ohio River and met Union forces at Paducah, KY. In Arkansas, skirmishes occurred at Bayou Saline, Dutch Mills and White Oak Creek. One skirmish at Taylor's Ridge in Georgia occurred along with fighting at Half Mountain on the Licking River in eastern Kentucky. In Charleston, SC, Confederate forces from Fort Moultrie fired on the U.S. tug *Geranium* during the night, the *Geranium* survived the firefight.

April 15th. On the Red River, the U.S.S. *Eastport* ran upon a mine and was brutally damaged. Despite several attempts to escape, the ship continually ran aground and was finally destroyed on April 26th. In Charleston Harbor, SC, Federals demonstrated their gunnery powers against Battery Island. Small skirmishes popped up near Camden and Roseville, AK, Baton Rouge, LA, Greeneville, TN, and Bristoe Station and Milford, VA.

April 16th. The Red River Campaign began with a skirmish at Grand Ecore, LA. A Confederate torpedo in St. John's River, FL, destroyed U.S. transport *General Hunter*. Skirmishes broke out at Camden, AK, Rheatown, TN, Salyersville, KY, and Catlett's Station, VA. A Federal report came out declaring that since the beginning of the war, Federals had captured 146,634 Confederates.

April 17th. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant declares that there shall be no further exchanges of prisoners until the Confederates balance the Federal releases. This is an important move for the Northerners because it limited the manpower of the South. Confederates landed and attacked at Plymouth, NC, under the command of Gen. Robert Frederick Hoke with the C.S.S. *Albemarle* close behind. Skirmishes occurred at Beaver Creek, NC, Ellis' Ford, VA, Holly Springs, MS, Limestone Valley and Red Mount, AK.

April 18th. Attacks continue at Plymouth, NC, while more fighting transpired at Hunnewell, MO, Decatur, AL, and Citrus Point, VA. Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard was moved from his station at Charleston, SC, to lead the Dept. of NC and Southern VA. Another blow to the Red River Campaign came with the abandonment of 198 wagons at Poison Springs, AK, where Confederate forces forced John S. Marmaduke to withdraw.

April 19th. The C.S.S. *Albemarle* joined the fighting at Plymouth, NC, where it was rammed and sank the U.S.S. *Smithfield*. More fighting happened in Leesburg, VA, Marling's Bottom, WV, King's River, AK, Waterhouse's Mill and Boiling Springs, TN. Nebraska Territory is permitted to join the Union with legislation approved by the U.S. Congress.