

Red River Campaign, Part 31 – Aftermath

In terms of territory, both sides ended back at the starting lines they held before the campaign began, both in Louisiana and Arkansas.

As far as personal and material losses are concerned, combining both the Louisiana and Arkansas campaigns, the resulting balance of losses are as follows:

Killed/Wounded/Missing/Captured:

Union: 8,162

Confederate: 6,575

Guns (net gain/loss)

Union loss of 57 (including 28 naval guns)

Confederate gain of 17 to 26 (# salvaged is uncertain).

Wagons:

Union: loss of 822 (government-owned only)

Confederate: loss of approx. 50 (net gain of about 600)

Horses & Mules:

Union: 3,700 est.

Confederate: 700 est.

Vessels:

Union: 9 (including 3 gunboats)

Confederate 3 (river steamers)

Source: Johnson, Id. @ 278.

Uncounted is the value of the buildings burned by the Union army during it's march, or the amount of cotton burned by the Confederates to keep it from being captured, or by the Union troops upon their retreat. Although very little made it back into Union lines, neither was it available to the Confederates, either.

One of the interesting things about this campaign is the number of recriminations made

on both sides.

On the Union side, there were Congressional investigations. Bank's military and political career had hit a wall, as had Steele's and Franklin. Only Bailey and A.J. Smith had prospered as a result of the campaign.

On the Confederate side, Richard Taylor was loud and frequent in the criticisms of his commander, Kirby Smith. He insisted that Smith should have concentrated all his efforts against Banks, which he felt would have resulted in the capture or destruction of Banks' army as well as Porter's fleet. The exchange of correspondence between the two officer grew in animosity, and on June 5th Taylor wrote to Kirby Smith:

"Your strategy has riveted the fetters of both... The same regard for duty which led me to throw myself between you and popular indignation and quietly take the blame of your errors compels me to tell you the truth, however objectionable to you. The grave errors you have committed in the recent campaign may be repeated if the unhappy consequences are not kept before you. After the desire to serve my country, I have none more ardent than to be relieved from longer serving under your command."

Kirby Smith could no longer tolerate such insubordination, so he placed Taylor under arrest and on June 10th forwarded the correspondence to Richmond for further charges. But on that same date, the Confederate Congress enacted a resolution giving thanks to Taylor for saving Louisiana and Shreveport specifically from the Union forces under Banks, and specifically commending his actions at Mansfield and Pleasant Hill – actions which went specifically against the spirit of Kirby Smith's orders to Taylor, if not the letter. Instead of preferring charges against Taylor, Taylor was transferred.

A.J. Smith's 10,000 troops never did get to join Sherman in his campaign against Atlanta, being sent to put out one fire or another in the West until they participated in Thomas' repulse of Hood at Nashville, and later in Canby's seizure of Mobile in April of 1865. Pope was able to reinforce Johnston with 15,000 men, meaning that the Union odds against Johnston were 108,000 against 65,000, instead of 118,000 against 50,000, possibly contributing to the delay in capturing Atlanta.

AFTERMATH FOR PRINCIPLE CHARACTERS:

Maj. Gen. Frederick Steele

After the Red River Campaign/Camden Expedition, Steele remained in command of his department at Little Rock until he was transferred to the Dept. of the Gulf in Feb. 1865. He led a division of troops in the Union operations against Mobile, Alabama in March/April of 1865. At the close of the war he was transferred to Texas where he was placed in command on the Rio Grande, and from Dec. 21, 1865 he had charge of the Dept. of the Columbia. He was promoted to the permanent rank of Colonel in the regular army on July 28th, 1866 and given command of the 20th Infantry.

Steele took an extended leave in California from Nov. 23, 1867, where he suffered an “attack of apoplexy” and fell from the carriage he was driving, resulting in his death.

Lt. Gen. Richard Taylor

On August 15, 1864, Maj. Gen. Richard Taylor took control of the Dept. of Alabama and Mississippi departments. He managed to delay the capture of Mobile, Alabama until April, 1865. After learning of the surrender of Robert E. Lee and Joseph E. Johnston, Taylor arranged the surrender of the remaining forces in his department on May 4, 1865 at Citronelle, Alabama.

After the war, Taylor returned to New Orleans. He fought against reconstruction, and wrote a book “Destruction and Reconstruction” in 1879, which was published a week before his death.

General E. Kirby Smith

Kirby Smith remained in control of his now-isolated, but vast department of the Trans-Mississippi, known as “Kirby Smithdom” Unable to send troops eastward due to Union control of the Mississippi, he sent Maj. Gen. Sterling Price, along with all available cavalry, on an unsuccessful invasion of Missouri. Thereafter there were no major military actions by either side, other than the “last battle” of the civil war in Texas. Smith surrendered his forces at Galveston, Texas on May 26, 1865. Learning that an indictment was being prepared against Gen. Robert. E. Lee, Smith fled to Mexico and then to Cuba, but he eventually came back to the U.S. in November 1865 when it was clear that Confederate military leaders were not going to be prosecuted for treason.

Smith became president of an insurance and telegraph company, which (like many others of that era) failed. He then became president of the University of Nashville from 1870-1875, after which he taught mathematics at the University of the South at Sewanee, Georgia for eighteen years. At Smith's death, he was the last surviving full general of the Confederacy, and the father of eleven children.

Maj. Gen. William B. Franklin

After the Red River Campaign, Maj. Gen. William B. Franklin was sent on recuperative leave for the leg injury he received at Sabine Crossroads. As his train approached Washington D.C., it was waylaid by Confederates attached to Gen. Early's campaign on the Union capital, and he was captured, although he managed to escape the following day. In part because of his wound and part due to politics, he held no major commands thereafter.

After the war Franklin moved to Connecticut where he became general manager of the Colt Firearms Manufacturing Company, where he worked for 22 years, displaying a talent for engineering and administration. He served on the electoral college in the 1876 presidential election, and as a U.S. Commissioner for the Paris Exposition of 1888. He is buried near his birthplace in York, Pennsylvania.

Lt. Col William Bailey

Bailey received high honors for saving Porter's Navy at Alexandria, and was promoted to Brig. General of Engineers. He was assigned to command the Engineer Brigade in the XIX Corps in the Dept. of the Gulf from June through August 1864, and then commanded the District of West Florida from August 1864 until November 1864, and then the District of Baton Rouge and Port Hudson. In March 1865 he was brevetted as a major general. After the war he became sheriff of Nevada, Missouri, where he was gunned down in 1867 while attempting to make an arrest.

Maj. Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks

Banks' return to New Orleans was rather anti-climatic, as on May 7th his department along with four others had been merged into a much larger department of consisting of

all military matters west of the Mississippi, under the command of General E.R.S. Canby. Banks was now merely an administrator of what Louisiana territory was still held by the Union (west and south-western Louisiana, principally New Orleans and Port Hudson). His political ambitions for the presidency having been crushed by the failure of the Red River Campaign, he was given leave by Pres. Lincoln to return to Washington in order to campaign for Lincoln's reconstruction plans. He mustered out of the army in August of 1865.

Banks returned to his seat in Congress representing his Massachusetts district, and held important committee positions and within the Republican Party. He was a proponent of Manifest Destiny, and was instrumental in getting the Alaska Purchase ratified. In 1872 he lost his seat due largely to the split within the Republican Party as a result of the scandals of the Grant Administration (Banks joined the Liberal Republican party and supported Greeley for President). He tried his hand at starting a railroad in Kentucky, but that business collapsed in the Panic of 1873. In 1874 he was re-elected to Congress and held that post until defeated for re-election in 1878. He was appointed U.S. Marshall for Massachusetts from 1870 until 1888, when he was again re-elected to Congress for one more term. He died in 1894 and is buried in Waltham, Massachusetts.

Rear Admiral David D. Porter -

Admiral Porter was instrumental in the campaign to capture Fort Fisher. Immediately after the war, he became superintendent of the Naval Academy. He was promoted to full admiral in 1870, and remained active as a serving officer until he died in 1891.

Maj. Gen. Andrew Jackson (A.J.) Smith

Smith was promoted to Major General for his role in the Red River campaign (effective May 12, 1864), one of the few Union high-ranking army officers to be favorably recognized for his role in the campaign. For the next few months he became the "fireman" in the West, being sent to deal with any perceived emergency. In July 1864 Smith led a campaign against Forrest in Mississippi, giving battle on July 14th which failed to capture Forrest but put him in a bind for a while. In the fall Smith was ordered by Grant to Nashville to head off Wheeler's raid into East Tennessee. Then Smith was sent to deal with Price's raid into Missouri. Sherman telegraphed Smith on Sept. 12,

1864: “I have been trying for three months to get you and Mower to me, but am headed off at every turn. Halleck asks for you to clear out Price. Can’t you make a quick job of it and then get to me?” But Smith was never to join Sherman’s army again – when Hood started his campaign against Nashville, Smith’s army had to make a hard march across Missouri in the winter to finally arrive at Nashville just in time to participate in Thomas’ victory against Hood on Dec. 15th & 16th and the subsequent pursuit of Hood to the Tennessee River. Smith requested that his command received an official designation as an Army Corps, which was granted and Smith was now commander of the XVI Corps (Note: the corps were re-organized from time-to-time, causing some difficulty in following corps designations). Smith’s corps participated in the capture of Mobile, Alabama in April 1865 under Canby.

After the war, Smith remained in command of the District of Montgomery until the fall of 1865, when he was transferred to the District of Western Louisiana. He was mustered out of the volunteer service in Jan. 1866, and was given a command in the regular army as Col. Of the 7th Cavalry in July of that year, which he held until May of 1869 when he resigned from the army and President Grant appointed him Postmaster of St. Louis. He was re-appointed to the Army as a Colonel in January 1889 in order to be retired at that rank as of the same day. A.J. Smith died in 1897 at the age of 82.

(Next: Conclusions, Assessments, & Bibliography)