1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: **CAMDEN EXPEDITION SITES:**
Elkins' Ferry, VICINITY OF PRESCOTT, NEVADA & CLARK COUNTIES
Prairie De Ann Battlefield, VICINITY OF PRESCOTT, NEVADA COUNTY
Poison Spring Battlefield, VICINITY OF CHIDESTER, OUACHITA COUNTY
Marks' Mills Battlefield, VICINITY OF NEW EDINBURG, CLEVELAND COUNTY
Jenkins' Ferry Battlefield, VICINITY OF LEOLA, GRANT COUNTY
Fort Lookout, CAMDEN, OUACHITA COUNTY
Fort Southerland, CAMDEN, OUACHITA COUNTY
Confederate State Capitol, WASHINGTON, HEMPSTEAD COUNTY

Other Name/Site Number: Battle of Elkins' Ferry/NE0052
Battle of Prairie De Ann/NE0037
Battle of Poison Spring/OU0051
Battle of Marks' Mills/CV0001
Battle of Jenkins' Ferry/GR0016
Redoubt A/OU0032
Redoubt E/OU0049
Second Hempstead County Courthouse

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: **PLEASE SEE ATTACHED SITE DESCRIPTIONS** Not for publication: N/A
City/Town: Various Vicinity: X
State: Arkansas County: Clark, Cleveland, Grant, Hempstead, Nevada, & Ouachita
Code: AR Zip Code: Various

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property
Private: X
Public-Local: X
Public-State: X
Public-Federal: ___

Category of Property
Building(s): X
District: ___
Site: X
Structure: ___
Object: ___

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	47	buildings
6	___	sites
2	8	structures
___	3	objects
9	58	Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 9
Name of Related Multiple Property Listing:

4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ____ nomination ____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Signature of Certifying Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ Entered in the National Register
___ Determined eligible for the National Register
___ Determined not eligible for the National Register
___ Removed from the National Register
___ Other (explain):

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

6. FUNCTION OR USE

ELKINS' FERRY BATTLEFIELD:

Historic:	Landscape Defense	Sub:	Forest Battlesite
Current:	Landscape	Sub:	Forest

PRAIRIE DE ANN BATTLEFIELD:

Historic:	Landscape Agriculture/Subsistence Defense	Sub:	Unoccupied Land Agricultural Field Battlesite
Current:	Agriculture/Subsistence Landscape	Sub:	Agricultural Field Forest

POISON SPRING BATTLEFIELD:

Historic:	Agriculture/Subsistence Landscape Defense	Sub:	Agricultural Field Forest Battlesite
Current:	Landscape Recreation & Culture Landscape	Sub:	Park Monument/Marker Forest

MARKS' MILLS BATTLEFIELD

Historic:	Landscape Defense	Sub:	Forest Battlesite
Current:	Landscape Recreation & Culture Landscape	Sub:	Park Monument/Marker Forest

JENKINS' FERRY BATTLEFIELD

Historic:	Agriculture/Subsistence Landscape Defense	Sub:	Agricultural Field Forest Battle Site
Current:	Landscape Recreation & Culture Landscape	Sub:	Park Monument/Marker Forest

FORT LOOKOUT

Historic:	Landscape	Sub:	Forest
	Landscape		Unoccupied Land
	Defense		Fortification
Current:	Landscape	Sub:	Forest

FORT SOUTHERLAND

Historic:	Landscape	Sub:	Forest
	Landscape		Unoccupied Land
	Defense		Fortification
Current:	Landscape	Sub:	Park

CONFEDERATE STATE CAPITOL

Historic:	Government	Sub:	Courthouse
			Capitol
Current:	Recreation & Culture	Sub:	Museum

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Greek Revival (Confederate State Capitol)

MATERIALS:

Foundation: Brick
Walls: Wood frame
Roof: Cedar shake
Other: N/A

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

ELKINS' FERRY BATTLEFIELD

SUMMARY

The Elkins' Ferry Battlefield is located on both banks of the Little Missouri River that divides Clark and Nevada counties, approximately ten miles north of Prescott (Nevada County). Middle Creek and Howard Creek flow through the southern portion of the battlefield, on the south bank of the river. The remote rural area is heavily wooded and flood-prone, just as it was on April 4, 1864, when Steele's Federals met their first heavy resistance of the Red River Campaign in attempting to cross the Little Missouri River at Elkins' Ferry and advance toward Washington and Shreveport beyond. Only a handful of intrusions are currently extant on the battlefield, which is excellently preserved.

ELABORATION

The Elkins' Ferry Battlefield has excellent integrity of setting, feeling, assocation and location, and represents an excellently preserved element of the Red River Campaign in southern Arkansas. The only major intrusions within the proposed boundaries of the battlefield are the remains of a collapsed wooden automobile bridge that replaced the river ferry in the 1920s, the washed out remains of a smaller mid-20th century concrete bridge across Middle Creek, and a few dirt roads traversing the area. Nevada County Road 37 that travels south from the river approximates the route of the Washington-Arkadelphia Road that Steele's army was following in an attempt to avoid the heavily fortified Confederate stronghold of Camden; once the river had been forded, the Union troops straddled this road in an attempt to maintain their bridgehead on the southern bank against its Southern defenders. Although the southern bank of the river included an orchard and an open field in 1864, today the area is dominated by a mixture of pine and hardwood trees and undergrowth. The Little Missouri bottoms, with an elevation of just 210 feet, remain low and flood prone.

The Elkins' Ferry Battlefield is located between the Little Missouri River to the north and Middle and Howard creeks to the south in the Little Missouri River bottoms, near where Elkins' Ferry crossed that river on the Washington-Arkadelphia Road. The probable ferry crossing is visible as a deep cut in the bank leading to the Little Missouri River, a few feet west of the current Nevada County Road 37. The northern, Clark County bank of the river, from which Col. William E. McLean ordered his Federals to take the river's southern bank, is similarly wooded and free of intrusions. Ironically, the collapse of the Elkins' Ferry bridge in the 1950s or 1960s and the development of Interstate 30 to the southwest altered transportation patterns between Clark and Nevada counties, contributing to the preservation of the Elkins' Ferry battlefield. Today, the location of the battle is little known, relatively inaccessible, rarely visited by any but deer hunters, and very well preserved.

Overall, the Elkins' Ferry Battlefield has excellent integrity. As a result of the battlefield's position in the Little Missouri river bottoms, the area is damp and prone to flooding, and thus unsuitable for major construction or development; this, as well as the collapse of the Little Missouri bridge and the afore-mentioned shifts in transportation patterns, have helped

to ensure the site's continued integrity. The land remains heavily forested with a combination of old- and new-growth timber. Today, the bottomlands in which Colonel McLean established a Union bridgehead on the southern bank of the Little Missouri River in the face of staunch Confederate opposition would be easily recognizable to a soldier who had participated in the battle in 1864.

PRAIRIE DE ANN BATTLEFIELD

SUMMARY

The Battle of Prairie De Ann took place over more than five thousand acres in and around the modern town of Prescott in northern Nevada County. Although portions of the battlefield and the virgin prairie that were extant in 1864 have been lost to the growth of the city of Prescott and the development of Interstate 30 and the Prescott & Northwestern Railroad line, the majority of the site, although divided into two noncontiguous portions, is intact and interpretable. Only a handful of intrusions are currently extant on the intact portions of the battlefield, which have been excellently preserved.

ELABORATION

The Prairie DeAnn Battlefield has excellent integrity of setting, feeling, association and location, and represents an important element of the Red River Campaign in southern Arkansas. Although a portion of the site has been lost to the postbellum development of Prescott, the majority, as well as the most significant elements, of the large battlefield remain extant, and the town itself is not visible from the majority of the site. The largest portion of the extant battlefield lies to the northwest of Interstate 30 and the town of Prescott, while the location of the Union rearguard action protecting the Federal retreat to Camden (alternately referred to as the Battle of Moscow) is southeast of the modern community. Elevations vary from 350 to 400 feet on the northwestern portion of the battlefield to approximately 250 feet near the Moscow church.

In 1864, Prairie DeAnn was a 25-30-square-mile open region, largely unoccupied and surrounded by forests. The natural prairie was a well-known landmark in southwestern Arkansas at that time and something of a crossroads on the Southwest Trail; the Confederate state capital lay to the west in Washington, the heavily fortified and militarily important city of Camden was approximately forty miles east, while the strategic Red River lay to the southwest. The village of Moscow (later absorbed into the City of Prescott) lay on the extreme eastern portion of the gently rolling prairie, while a few small farms were scattered throughout the area. A small wooded area known as the Gum Grove, a well-known regional landmark, stood near the present intersection of Interstate 30 and the Prescott & Northwestern Railroad line. Most of the battlefield has been in farmland and pasture for many years, and although evidence of trenches and battlements remain to the north of the battlefield (along Steele's route from the Little Missouri River to Prairie DeAnn), none are within the proposed boundaries of the battlefield.

The only major intrusions and non-contributing resources within the proposed boundaries of the northwestern portion of the battlefield are: Interstate 30 (which separates the extant portions of the battlefield from Prescott and constitutes the proposed southwestern boundary of the battlefield); the Prescott & Northwestern Railroad line, bisecting the battlefield from the northwest to the southeast along the approximate Confederate battle lines, and constitutes the proposed southwestern boundary of the battlefield; and approximately 20 houses and agricultural outbuildings sparsely scattered throughout the open fields. State Highway 19, which constitutes the proposed northwestern boundary of the battlefield, is lightly developed, with a gas station and two other small modern commercial structures extant. Improved dirt roads and driveways cross the battlefield itself, and some scattered trees and undergrowth are present along barbed-wire fence rows. An underground natural gas pipeline traverses the battlefield from the southwest to the northeast. Electrical power lines are extant on the southwestern side of State Highway 19. Currently, the land is primarily in soybean and hay cultivation and remains clear and open, although fences do delineate fields and property lines.

The southeastern portion of the battlefield, in which the Confederates attacked the rear of the Union army as it left the prairie and was making its way toward Camden, is alternately known as the Battle of Moscow, although it is best understood as an element of the larger Battle of Prairie DeAnn.

Topographically, the area is very similar to the rest of the battlefield, with the gently rolling prairie now in cultivation or in open fields. The historic postbellum Moscow church and an attendant cemetery are at the approximate location of the Confederate positions, while three agricultural outbuildings are located on the southwest extremity of the Moscow portion of the battlefield. A barn, two sheds, and a modern ranch house and outbuilding are at the southeastern extremity of the proposed boundaries. Finally, three houses, three outbuildings, and a barn are located near the proposed northern boundary of the battlefield. No other permanent structures are located within the proposed battlefield boundaries and, other than the intrusions mentioned, the battlefield closely resembles its condition in 1864.

Overall, the Prairie DeAnn Battlefield has excellent integrity, despite the fact that the town of Prescott has developed on a portion of the site and urban and industrial development remains a threat. The land remains primarily in agricultural use, as open fields or for soybean and hay production, with some scattered residences and agricultural outbuildings extant. Today, the vast natural prairie on which Maj. Gen. Sterling Price's Confederates halted General Steele's advance on the Red River and Shreveport would be easily recognizable to a soldier who had participated in the battle in 1864.

POISON SPRING BATTLEFIELD

SUMMARY

The Poison Spring Battlefield is located along State Highway 76 about 14 miles northwest of Camden. The Poison Spring Battlefield State Park, a simple roadside park with picnic facilities, a nature trail, a historic marker, and an interpretive display, is located on a portion of the site, but the majority of the battlefield is covered in the pine woods that were

prevalent in the area in 1864. Other than the state park itself, the only intrusions extant within the defined boundaries of the battlefield are a water tower, a fire tower, and a residence on the western portion of the site. Otherwise, the battlefield is excellently preserved.

ELABORATION

The Poison Spring Battlefield has excellent integrity of setting, feeling, association and location, and represents an excellently preserved and important element of the Red River Campaign in southern Arkansas. The battlefield itself is located roughly 14 miles northwest of Camden along State Highway 76, which approximates the course of the Washington-Camden Road on which the Union forage train was attacked on April 18, 1864. The only major intrusions within the proposed boundaries of the battlefield are the two-lane State Highway 76; the state park itself, which includes a gravel parking area, a split rail fence, a covered pavilion, an interpretive display, a nature trail, and picnic facilities; and a water tower, fire tower, and residence on the western extreme of the battlefield. Electrical power lines run along the northern side of State Highway 76 on the eastern portion of the battlefield, crossing over to the southern side of the road as one moves west.

The Battle of Poison Spring occurred soon after Steele's army occupied Camden following the Battle of Prairie DeAnn, when a Union forage train of 198 wagons, 875 infantry soldiers, 90 cavalrymen, and four pieces of artillery was ambushed by 3,100 Confederate cavalrymen and eight cannon led by Generals Samuel Bell Maxey and John S. Marmaduke at the approximate location of the current state park. In the fierce battle that ensued, the Southerners attacked all along the train's flank from the woods and orchards that were along the southern side of the Washington-Camden Road in 1864. The Federals were ultimately routed and pursued through the swamp and pine forests north of the Washington-Camden Road for as far as two miles.

The Washington-Camden Road is currently extant in the form of State Highway 76, which follows virtually the same route as the historic road. The landscape and surrounding forests, almost completely in pine, are much as they were at the time of the battle in 1864. The terrain varies from 175 foot elevations in the bottomlands of Bragg Mill Creek and Poison Spring Branch on the northern portion of the battlefield to almost 300 feet at the location of the Poison Spring lookout tower on the western extreme of the site. Although the orchard and cleared fields that were extant to the south of the road in 1864 are no longer present, the pine woods that currently cover virtually the entire battlefield are not inappropriate and have protected the battlefield from erosion. Much of the land is currently protected as a state forest.

Overall, the Poison Spring Battlefield has excellent integrity. The relative isolation of the site has protected the battlefield from many of the development pressures that have threatened similar resources. The historic road is extant in the form of State Highway 76, and the land remains mostly forested, just as it was in 1864, while the orchard and cleared areas that are no longer extant could be easily recreated. Today, the site of the devastating Confederate ambush that would eventually presage Steele's abandonment of Camden and retreat to Little Rock would be easily recognizable to a soldier who had participated in the battle in 1864.

MARKS' MILLS BATTLEFIELD

SUMMARY

The Marks' Mills Battlefield is located at the junction of State Highways 8 and 97 about ten miles southeast of Fordyce in Cleveland County. A simple roadside park with picnic facilities and two historic markers is located on a portion of the site, but the majority of the battlefield is covered in the pine woods that predominated in 1864. Roughly 21 structures and houses are extant on various portions of the battlefield as intrusions, but otherwise the battlefield is excellently preserved.

ELABORATION

The Marks' Mills Battlefield has excellent integrity of setting, feeling, association and location, and represents an excellently preserved and important element of the Red River Campaign in southern Arkansas. The battlefield is currently located approximately ten miles southeast of Fordyce, and two miles northwest of New Edinburg. The only major intrusions within the proposed boundaries of the battlefield are the two-lane State Highways 8 and 97, which merge and continue on to the southeast as Highway 8, and roughly 21 structures and houses sparsely scattered along both highways. The Marks family cemetery is extant and well preserved on the eastern portion of the battlefield; several of the graves predate the Civil War, and the only intrusions other than postbellum burials are a shed and two covered picnic pavilions. The site of the Hastings Marks house, extant at the time of the battle and used as a hospital by the Confederates, is well maintained by descendants of the Marks family.

The Battle of Marks' Mills occurred when a Union supply convoy guarded by three infantry regiments en route to Pine Bluff from Camden was ambushed by four Confederate cavalry brigades led by Brig. Gen. James Fagan, on the Pine Bluff-Mount Elba Road. The Southerners used similar tactics as those used at Poison Spring, stopping the Union train's advance near the Marks' Cemetery, then attacking all along the train's flank from the south. The Union defeat suffered at Marks' Mills is generally considered to be the worst the Federals suffered in the Trans-Mississippi West. The remnants of the Pine Bluff-Mount Elba Road are evident in many places, although the entire length is not currently traversable. One portion is extant as a rutted dirt road that leads south from the Marks' house site through a wooded area until it emerges onto State Highway 97. Another portion continues on to the north of the cemetery as a graded dirt road, while west of the battlefield state park other traces of the historic road are evident to the southwest of State Highway 8.

Residential intrusions within the boundaries of the battlefield are minimal. A modern residence is located approximately one-half mile due north of the Marks cemetery on Cleveland County Road 6, a dirt road that follows the approximate route of the Pine Bluff - Mt. Elba Road. Approximately eight residences and structures, apparently dating from the 1970s and 1980s, are found at irregular intervals on either side of State Highway 97 north of the battlefield park. South of the junction of State Highways 8 and 97 are three noncontributing residences, each with two to four associated agricultural outbuildings. The Morgan cemetery on the western portion of the battlefield dates from the postbellum period

and is considered noncontributing. The battlefield park itself, at the junction of the two state highways, consists of a number of picnic tables with an accompanying covered pavilion, a 1936 historic marker, and a post-World War II historic marker. Electrical power lines run along the west side of State Highway 97 and the east side of State Highway 8, merging onto the east side of the road as the two highways converge. No other permanent structures are located within the proposed battlefield boundaries and, other than the intrusions mentioned above, the battlefield closely resembles its condition in 1864.

The landscapes and forests, a mixture of pine and hardwoods, are much as they were at the time of the battle in 1864. The terrain is one of gently rolling hills, with land elevations ranging from 250 to 300 feet. State Highway 8 parallels the approximate route of the Pine Bluff-Mount Elba Road, although the historic road did not angle so sharply to the north. State Highway 97 is a postbellum development, while the eastern elements of the Pine Bluff-Mount Elba Road are now only little-used rural graded dirt roads.

Overall, the Marks' Mills Battlefield has excellent integrity. As a result of the low population density in Cleveland County, the battlefield has been spared many of the development pressures that threaten other battlefields; this has helped to ensure the site's continued integrity. The land remains mostly forested, just as it was in 1864. Today, although the roadbeds of State Highway 8 and 97 are somewhat altered, the location of the Pine Bluff-Mount Elba Road and the site of the worst Union defeat west of the Mississippi River would be easily recognizable to a soldier who had participated in the battle in 1864.

JENKINS' FERRY BATTLEFIELD

SUMMARY

The Jenkins' Ferry Battlefield is located in the river bottoms southwest of the Saline River, along State Highway 46 approximately 12 miles southwest of Sheridan. Cox Creek winds its way along the northwestern portion of the battlefield, which is heavily wooded except for one area that has been recently clear cut. Jenkins' Ferry Battlefield State Park, on the northeastern bank of the Saline, features three interpretive signs, a monument commemorating the battle, and picnic facilities. Only a handful of intrusions are currently extant on the battlefield, which is excellently preserved.

ELABORATION

The Jenkins' Ferry Battlefield has excellent integrity of setting, feeling, association and location, and represents an excellently preserved element of the Red River Campaign in southern Arkansas. The only major intrusions within the proposed boundaries of the battlefield are State Highway 46, the modern bridge crossing the Saline River, and the electrical power lines along the northern side of the two-lane State Highway 46. Jenkins' Ferry Battlefield State Park lies on the northern bank of the Saline at the approximate location of the ferry site the Federals used in crossing the river in their flight to Little Rock from Camden, and features a small visual display, a restroom building, a covered pavilion with picnic tables, a utility structure, and a historic stone monument commemorating the

battle. No other permanent structures are located within the proposed battlefield boundaries and, other than the intrusions mentioned above, the battlefield closely resembles its condition in 1864.

In 1864, the Saline River bottoms extended about two miles northeast and southwest of the river itself, and consisted of damp, muddy canebrakes and wet marshes with thick underbrush. On the southwest side of the river was a band of virgin forest, then wet marshes, and finally a series of open agricultural fields (the Kelly field, the Cooper field, and the Jiles field) separated by bands of timber. Cox Creek, which the 40th Iowa crossed in an attempt to surprise the attacking Confederates on their left flank, winds its way along the northwestern side of the battlefield before its confluence with the Saline. The Union rearguard line, which was located along the northeastern side of the Cooper field, is currently marked by a private dirt road extending into the forest. The Confederate lines, approximately 2,200 feet to the southwest, are similarly forested. The swampy nature of the lowlands was exacerbated by the steady rain that fell on April 30, 1864, and was reflected in the battle that took place there; some reports note that combatants were knee deep in mud and water during the melee.

At the time of the battle, the bottoms northeast of the Saline were more flooded than those to the southwest, and the Union wagons soon bogged down once across the river. Many wagons were abandoned, and General Steele ordered all unnecessary baggage destroyed. Wagons, ammunition, clothing, and other supplies were all dumped into the muck along the route, and there were even reports of contraband slaves accompanying the caravan abandoning their babies in the mire; extensive amateur archeological investigations of the river bottoms have yielded many relevant artifacts and confirm that this was the route the Union train followed. Because the battle took place south of the Saline, the northern banks are not included in the proposed battlefield boundaries.

The Saline River bottomlands southwest of the ferry site, where the Federal rearguard troops positioned themselves to defend the Union crossing against the pursuing Southerners, remain mostly wooded in pine, with some pieces of land partially denuded of timber as a result of relatively recent clearcutting activities. The Saline River bottomlands remain low and swampy, at an elevation of just 190 feet as opposed to the 260 foot elevation at Leola, approximately four miles southwest of the Saline and outside of the river bottom. Ironically, it is the swampy nature of these lowlands that has been responsible for the battlefield's continued integrity by ensuring that the area is unsuitable for major development; significantly, the Saline River is the only major river in Arkansas that has not been dammed or otherwise controlled. State Highway 46 roughly parallels the Princeton Road that Steele was following in his route back to Little Rock.

Overall, the Jenkins' Ferry Battlefield has excellent integrity. As a result of the battlefield's position in the lowlands of the Saline river bottoms, the area is damp and prone to flooding, and thus unsuitable for major construction or development; this has helped to ensure the site's continued integrity. The land remains partially forested, just as it was in 1864, although the Kelly, Cooper, and Jiles fields have largely grown over and returned to timber. Although the land is leased by hunting clubs, evidence of occasional clear cutting belies the area's primary use as timberland. Today, the bottomlands in which Kirby Smith and Sterling

Price attempted to halt Frederick Steele's desperate efforts to cross the Saline and return to Little Rock would be easily recognizable to a soldier who had participated in the battle in 1864.

FORT LOOKOUT

SUMMARY

Fort Lookout, also known as Redoubt A, is the northernmost of the defensive earthworks erected along the periphery of Camden. The redoubt sits atop an approximately 50-foot high bluff overlooking a bend in the Ouachita River to the north. Fort Lookout itself was rectangular in shape and held six or more pieces of field artillery. Extending immediately west of the redoubt, commanding two fords below the bluff as well as the approach of Gravel Pit road from the northwest, was an L-shaped earthwork capable of mounting six or more guns.

Although a portion of the midsection of Fort Lookout was razed in the late twentieth century for the construction of a house, the remainder of the redoubt and its supporting trenches and earthworks are remarkably intact.

ELABORATION

Fort Lookout, also known as Redoubt A, has excellent integrity of setting, feeling, association and location, and represents an excellently preserved example of urban Civil War defensive earthworks. The only major intrusion on this, the northernmost portion of Camden's Civil War defenses, are a modern home on a portion of the redoubt's midsection. Another modern home lies on Van Buren Road beyond the southern terminus of the extant trenches that extend south and west from Fort Lookout, and a gravel plant is located at the base of the bluff 50 feet below the earthworks; neither of these later developments significantly detracts from the integrity of the resource. The Gravel Pit and Van Buren roads were both extant in 1864.

Although the hills and ridges surrounding Camden to the west and south were largely denuded of trees under the Confederate and Union occupations of 1864, Redoubt A is currently heavily wooded, protecting the site from erosion. Redoubt A has not been significantly damaged or altered through timbering or urban development, and has thus maintained a high degree of integrity as an urban defensive earthwork.

From January through March 1864, hundreds of Confederate soldiers and slaves under the command of Brig. Gen. Alexander T. Hawthorn were employed clearing fields of fire and erecting defensive earthworks around the periphery of Camden in anticipation of an expected Federal attack from Little Rock. Although he had no previous experience in military engineering, Hawthorn had been a lawyer in Camden prior to the war and may have been entrusted with such a project because of his familiarity with the city and its surrounding areas. When completed, the Camden fortifications consisted primarily of five unconnected redoubts protecting the western and southern approaches to the town. Often referred to

incorrectly as "forts," these redoubts consisted of relatively small closed or semi-enclosed strongpoints located along the main lines of the town's defenses designed to withstand attacks from three and perhaps even all four sides.

Each of the Camden redoubts, originally labeled Redoubts A, B, C, D, and E, was a massive earthen structure encircled or fronted by a deep ditch. Perhaps indicative of Hawthorn's lack of military or engineering expertise, the Camden defenses initially lacked the network of trenches and sprawling forts that were generally to be found protecting important cities. Redoubts B, C, and D have been largely lost due to Camden's postbellum development, and today only Redoubts A and E retain any semblance of their original integrity.

Redoubt A, also known as Fort Lookout, was the northernmost of the Camden defenses. Erected atop a high bluff overlooking a bend in the Ouachita River, Redoubt A was rectangular in shape and was capable of holding six or more pieces of field artillery. Immediately west of the redoubt extended an L-shaped redoubt mounting another battery of six or more guns, overlooking two fords below the bluff as well as the approach of Gravel Pit Road from the northwest. Ironically, when Steele occupied Camden on April 15, 1864, the town's earthworks were unmanned. Although initial Federal reports described the city as "strongly fortified" and that "all approaches to the place [are] capable of being well defended," later assessments of the efficacy of the town's defenses were less generous. As Steele's engineers inspected and mapped the Confederate fortifications, a number of weaknesses became apparent. Although the five redoubts were easily defended individually and well placed to make use of the high ground surrounding the city, the Federals determined that the defenses were simply too small, too few in number, and too far apart to effectively defend Camden in the event of a Confederate attack. Steele's engineers concluded that the absence of a cohesive network of infantry trenches encircling the town and connecting the redoubts limited the effectiveness of the defenses and deprived Camden's defenders of the protection normally enjoyed by a fortified garrison. Finally, despite earlier Federal reports that "an immense amount of [Confederate] labor has been expended in...cutting away the forests," on further analysis Federal engineers noted that, in places, attacking troops could approach dangerously close to the redoubts without leaving the "fresh green forests" surrounding the town.

Following the Union defeat at Poison Spring on April 23 Steele ordered his engineers to correct the deficiencies that had been identified in the Camden fortifications. Over the following three days, thousands of Federal soldiers were employed along the northwestern portion of the Camden perimeter digging trenches in relays around the clock along the military crest of the long, rolling ridge. Parties were sent out beyond the perimeter to fell trees and expand fields of fire below the ridge. Special attention was accorded the sector between Redoubts A and B, an area which even the Confederates had regarded as a weak point in the Camden defenses. Steele's decision on April 26 to abandon Camden and return to Little Rock rendered this frenetic burst of activity pointless. Steele was disappointed at having to abandon Camden without forcing the Confederates to test the town's stiffened defenses. "If we had been supplied at Camden," the general later wrote, "I could have held the place against Kirby Smith's entire force...."

Following their re-occupation of Camden, the Confederates spent the following months of 1864 attempted to complete the improvements to the town's defenses begun under the Federals. In October 1864, four idle infantry divisions were employed in erecting earthworks along the previously unprotected banks of the Ouachita. When completed at the end of 1864, the five original redoubts were connected by a largely continuous trench across the southern and western perimeters of the city, anchored on the Ouachita River at both ends. Redoubts A and E are the only surviving elements of this network that have survived.

Overall, Fort Lookout/Redoubt A has excellent integrity. Logistically, the ridge remains on the northern outskirts of the city of Camden overlooking the Ouachita River, just as it did in 1864. The land is heavily forested, protecting the trenches and earthworks that follow the ridge line for more than 1,500 yards. Nevertheless, the trenches and earthworks are clearly visible, as is the strategic nature of the ridge line. The Redoubt A battlements have maintained a sufficient degree of integrity that a soldier stationed in Camden in 1864 would have no difficulty recognizing the battlements today.

FORT SOUTHERLAND

SUMMARY

Fort Southerland, also known as Redoubt E, is the southernmost of the defensive earthworks erected along the periphery of Camden. Redoubt E, excellently preserved as the centerpiece of a municipal park, is roughly oval-shaped and capable of holding three artillery pieces. The redoubt covers the Bradley Ferry Road, connecting Camden with the Confederate outposts in Warren and Monticello. Fort Southerland's mission was to protect Camden against the unlikely possibility of a Federal crossing of the Ouachita River below town.

ELABORATION

Fort Southerland, also known as Redoubt E, has excellent integrity of setting, feeling, association and location, and represents an excellently preserved example of urban Civil War defensive earthworks. The bowl-shaped redoubt, overlooking the Bradley Ferry Road connecting Warren and Monticello, was well-placed by the Confederates to protect Camden against the unlikely possibility that the Federals would cross the Ouachita River below the town. The earthen fort is oval-shaped (approximately 2,000 feet by 1,000 feet by 2,000 feet by 500 feet, encompassing a full city block) and was capable of holding three artillery pieces. Redoubt E is preserved today in excellent condition as the centerpiece of Fort Southerland Park in the southern portion of the city of Camden. Although the site was well south of the city proper in 1864, urban encroachment has brought residential development to the north and west of the redoubt, while a four-lane highway bypass lies to the south and southeast. The redoubt itself encompasses one city block. Although the hills and ridges surrounding Camden to the west and south were largely denuded of trees under the Confederate and Union occupations of 1864, Redoubt E is currently dotted with several trees, protecting the site from erosion. Despite urban encroachment, Redoubt E has been well-preserved and maintains its historic spatial relationship to both Camden and the city's

southern approaches. Overall, Fort Southerland/Redoubt E has excellent integrity. The Redoubt E battlements have maintained a sufficient degree of integrity that a soldier stationed in Camden in 1864 would have no difficulty recognizing the battlements today.

From January through March, 1864, hundreds of Confederate soldiers and slaves under the command of Brig. Gen. Alexander T. Hawthorn were employed clearing fields of fire and erecting defensive earthworks around the periphery of Camden in anticipation of an expected Federal attack from Little Rock. Although he had no previous experience in military engineering, Hawthorn had been a lawyer in Camden prior to the war and may have been entrusted with such a project because of his familiarity with the city and its surrounding areas. When completed, the Camden fortifications consisted primarily of five unconnected redoubts protecting the western and southern approaches to the town. Often referred to incorrectly as "forts," these redoubts consisted of relatively small closed or semi-enclosed strongpoints located along the main lines of the town's defenses designed to withstand attacks from three and perhaps even all four sides.

Each of the Camden redoubts, originally labeled redoubts A, B, C, D, and E, was a massive earthen structure encircled or fronted by a deep ditch. Perhaps indicative of Hawthorn's lack of military or engineering expertise, the Camden defenses initially lacked the network of trenches and sprawling forts that were generally to be found protecting important cities. Redoubts B, C, and D have been largely lost due to Camden's postbellum development, and today only redoubts A and E retain any semblance of their original integrity.

Redoubt E, also known (perhaps erroneously) as Fort Southerland, was the southernmost of the Camden defenses, atop a steep hill well over a mile southeast of Redoubt D. The oval-shaped bulwark overlooking the Bradley Ferry Road held three artillery pieces, and was placed in order to protect Camden against the possibility that the Federals would cross the Ouachita River below the town. Ironically, when Steele occupied Camden on April 15, 1864, the town's earthworks were unmanned. Although initial Federal reports described the city as "strongly fortified" and that "all approaches to the place [are] capable of being well defended," later assessments of the efficacy of the town's defenses were less generous. As Steele's engineers inspected and mapped the Confederate fortifications, a number of weaknesses became apparent. Although the five redoubts were easily defended individually and well placed to make use of the high ground surrounding the city, the Federals determined that the defenses were simply too small, too few in number, and too far apart to effectively defend Camden in the event of a Confederate attack. Steele's engineers concluded that the absence of a cohesive network of infantry trenches encircling the town and connecting the redoubts limited the effectiveness of the defenses and deprived Camden's defenders of the protection normally enjoyed by a fortified garrison. Finally, despite earlier Federal reports that "an immense amount of [Confederate] labor has been expended in... cutting away the forests," on further analysis Federal engineers noted that, in places, attacking troops could approach dangerously close to the redoubts without leaving the "fresh green forests" surrounding the town.

Following the Union defeat at Poison Spring, on April 23 Steele ordered his engineers to correct the deficiencies that had been identified in the Camden fortifications. Over the following three days, thousands of Federal soldiers were employed along the northwestern portion of the Camden perimeter digging trenches in relays around the clock along the

military crest of the long, rolling ridge. Parties were sent out beyond the perimeter to fell trees and expand fields of fire below the ridge. Special attention was accorded the sector between Redoubts A and B, an area which even the Confederates had regarded as a weak point in the Camden defenses. Steele's decision on April 26, upon receipt of news of the Mark's Mills disaster, to abandon Camden and return to Little Rock rendered this frenetic burst of activity pointless. Steele was disappointed at having to abandon Camden without forcing the Confederates to test the town's stiffened defenses. "If we had been supplied at Camden," the general later wrote, "I could have held the place against Kirby Smith's entire force...."

Following their re-occupation of Camden, the Confederates spent the following months of 1864 attempted to complete the improvements to the town's defenses begun under the Federals. In October 1864, four idle infantry divisions were employed in erecting earthworks along the previously unprotected banks of the Ouachita. When completed at the end of 1864, the five original redoubts were connected by a largely continuous trench across the southern and western perimeters of the city, anchored on the Ouachita River at both flanks. Redoubts A and E are the only elements of this network that have survived.

CONFEDERATE STATE CAPITOL

SUMMARY

This building, which became the Confederate State Capitol in September 1863, is a two-story wood frame structure with brick foundation walls and piers that was erected in 1836 to serve as the Hempstead County Courthouse. It was the second courthouse to be built in Hempstead County; the first, built in 1824, was of hewn logs.

ELABORATION

This two-story wood frame building has brick foundation walls and piers supporting 8" x 8" and 12" x 12" solid sills and beams. The studs are 4" x 4", the floor joists 3" x 12", and the ceiling joists are 3" x 10". It is finished on the exterior with horizontal beveled siding and corner boards.

The roof is a medium pitched hip; the shingles are cedar shake.

The basic plan dimensions are 44'2" wide and 34'5" deep. The entire first floor is allocated to an open courtroom, which currently contains a number of museum display materials. The second floor is supported on the interior span by two round, solid, hand carved tapered columns supporting a 10" x 12" hand hewn beam. The second floor contains a Masonic Hall 38'3" long by 21'6" wide and several small ancillary spaces.

The windows are double-hung sash with a 6 x 6 pattern of lights. The wood surrounds are molded. The windows are shuttered with louvered blinds.

The main entrance is protected by a one-story, one bay, pedimented Greek Revival portico. The portico is supported by square tapered columns having molded capitals and bases. The entrance door is flanked by pilasters of similar design. The four-paneled entrance door has molded trim and a transom above. The 7'6" high door is constructed of raised panels.

There are two outside end chimneys. They are laid of running bond brick and have corbeled caps. Two fireplaces are located at either end of the courtroom. They are stack bond brick with wood surrounds. The side surrounds have a raised pilaster design supporting a simple mantel.

The town of Washington bought the building in 1875 and used it as a schoolhouse until 1914. After 1914, it served as a residence and Justice of the Peace's office until about 1928 when the Cleburne Chapter of the United States Daughters of the Confederacy conceived the plan of restoring it. In 1929 the Arkansas General Assembly created the Wartime Capitol Commission, which was charged with the responsibility of restoring and maintaining the old building. The legislature provided a small appropriation for restoration and maintenance.

The building continued to be administered by the Wartime Capitol Commission until 1947 when it was placed under the aegis of the newly created Arkansas Commemorative Commission. It has been maintained and operated as an historic building museum since that time, but came under the administration of the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism in the 1970s.

The Confederate State Capitol is in deteriorating condition. The Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism recently received funding for archeological work to determine the locations of former outbuildings and fences in order to restore the 1836 appearance. The building's appearance today reflects the result of a 1929 restoration.

A noncontributing outbuilding lies behind the building on the south side. It is a square one-story restroom built in 1978 which is constructed with similar siding and roofing materials to that of Confederate State Capitol.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:
Nationally: X Statewide: ___ Locally: ___

Applicable National Register Criteria: A X B X C ___ D ___

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F ___ G ___

NHL Criteria: 1, 2

NHL Theme(s): VI. Civil War
C. War in the West

Areas of Significance: Military

Period(s) of Significance: March 23, 1864—May 2, 1864

Significant Dates:

Elkins' Ferry Battle:	April 3-4
Prairie De Ann Battle:	April 9-12
Poison Spring Battle:	April 18
Marks' Mills Battle:	April 25
Jenkins' Ferry Battle:	April 30

Significant Person(s): Sterling Price
Edmund Kirby Smith
Frederick Steele

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: N/A

State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

SUMMARY

The Camden Expedition (March 23-May 2, 1864), an essential component of the Red River Campaign (March 2-May 20, 1864), is a nationally significant series of military engagements and marches. Union forces in Little Rock and Fort Smith, under the command of Maj. Gen. Frederick Steele, were to march toward Shreveport, Louisiana, where they would link up with an amphibious expedition under command of Maj. Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks and Rear Adm. David D. Porter that had advanced up the Red River Valley. If all went as planned and the forces converged at Shreveport and then advanced deep into east Texas, the war in the Trans-Mississippi West would be over and the North could then concentrate its resources on the early capture of Mobile. But what seemed to be a certainty to the Federal proponents soon became a nightmare for them.

The amphibious forces in Louisiana, after thrusting to within 40 miles of Shreveport, were turned back. The retreat of the Louisiana-based Yankees enabled the Confederates to concentrate against General Steele's army in Arkansas. Southwestern Arkansas in time and distance was not far from the frontier. Roads were few and unimproved, the population sparse, and the region most inhospitable for traditional campaigning. A harsh environment challenged the soldiers and their leaders. Just to feed the troops and their horses and mules was a major concern.

The trans-Mississippi battles, although involving less troops, were, for numbers engaged, as costly in human lives as the bloodiest battles waged in Virginia or elsewhere in the Confederate heartland. In western Arkansas and Missouri, eastern Kansas, and the Indian Territory passions dating to "Bleeding Kansas" and the Indian removals of the late 1830s led to "war to the knife and the knife to the hilt." At Poison Spring, on April 18, the First Kansas Colored—which battled the Confederates at Island Mound, Missouri, six months before the 54th Massachusetts of "Glory" fame was mustered in—fought for its life against overwhelming odds. In this struggle no quarter was asked or given. If Fort Pillow was a massacre, so was Poison Spring.

The Camden Expedition, its hardships, its marches and battles and its significance must be measured against this desperate context. Long distances (the distance between Little Rock and Shreveport being twice that between Washington and Richmond), foul weather and poor roads slowed the march of Steele's columns. Confederate horse soldiers had the opportunity to gather their forces and call in reinforcements from the Indian Territory. At Prairie de Ann, in the second week of April, the Confederates in a series of clashes, so delayed the Union army—compelling the troops to exhaust their rations—that Steele was forced to reassess his options. Instead of pushing on to the town of Washington—then serving as the Confederate State capital—and Shreveport, the army changed the direction of its march more than 90 degrees and occupied the strategic town of Camden on the Ouachita River. Unable to secure adequate provisions and supplies as a result of battles at Poison Spring and Marks' Mills, Steele abandoned Camden and retreated toward Little Rock with a Confederate army in pursuit. After a delaying action fought at Jenkins' Ferry, which saved his army from disaster, Steele's columns returned to Little Rock.

Three of the officers associated with the Camden expedition are of national significance. They are Confederate generals Sterling Price and Edmund Kirby Smith and the Union commander Maj. Gen. Frederick Steele.

Edmund Kirby Smith of Florida graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1845. A veteran officer with service in the Mexican-American war and on the western frontier, Smith, a major in the elite 2nd U.S. Cavalry, resigned from the U.S. Army on April 6, 1861. Wounded at First Manassas, July 21, 1861, he, in mid-August 1862, spearheaded the Confederate invasion of Kentucky. At Richmond, Ky., on August 30, Smith and his troops crushed a Union army. In October 1862, he was promoted to lieutenant general and placed in command of the vast Trans-Mississippi Department. His administrative responsibilities were greatly increased in July 1863, when the loss of Vicksburg and Port Hudson gave the Union control of the Mississippi River from Cairo, Illinois, to the Gulf. The Trans-Mississippi Department was isolated from Richmond and Smith became, in effect, its viceroy. As commander of what became known as "Kirby Smithdom," Smith, in February 1864, was promoted to the rank of general, becoming one of only eight Confederate officers to hold that rank.

Currently, there are no National Historic Landmarks with which Kirby Smith was associated. The battle of First Manassas, where he was not a major figure, is a unit of the National Park System.

Sterling Price, Virginia-born and educated, moved to Missouri in 1831, where he became a major player in the political fortunes of the state and in the secession crisis of the nation, first as state legislator, then congressman, governor from 1853-57, and finally as president of the state convention and commander of the pro-secession Missouri State Guard. From the first fight at Boonville, on June 17, 1861, until the conclusion of Price's raid in December 1864, Price commanded Confederate troops in many battles. Most of these were in the trans-Mississippi. But, on two occasions, he led Rebel troops in major battles east of the river in the state of Mississippi, at Iuka (September 19) and Corinth (October 3-4, 1862).

Price held important commands at two battles—Pea Ridge and Wilson's Creek—that are commemorated at National Park System units and at the Siege and Battle of Corinth National Historic Landmark, but not as an independent commander as he was in the Camden Expedition.

Frederick Steele, a New Yorker and 1843 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy, was a soldier all his adult life. He first saw Civil War combat as a captain and battalion commander at Wilson's Creek, August 10, 1861. He led a division in the Army of the Tennessee during his classmate U.S. Grant's Vicksburg Campaign. A leader of a detached force that became the Seventh Corps, he advanced out of the Helena enclave and in mid-September 1863 captured Little Rock. In the winter of 1864, following the failed Camden Expedition and his failure to keep Sterling Price bottled up south of the Arkansas River, Steele was ordered to Pensacola. As a corps commander, he participated in the campaign that led to the storming of Fort Blakely and the April 12, 1865, surrender of Mobile.

There is no National Historic Landmark with which General Steele is associated. The only Federal battlefield parks at which he had commands are Wilson's Creek National Battlefield and Vicksburg National Military Park, but these were when he served in subordinate roles.

RATIONALE FOR SELECTION OF NOMINATED PROPERTIES

The Elkins' Ferry, Prairie De Ann, Poison Spring, Marks' Mills, and Jenkins' Ferry battlefield sites; Forts Lookout and Southerland, the two surviving redoubts of the five that girded the city of Camden; and the Confederate State Capitol in Washington are important and well preserved historic resources associated with the Camden Expedition Civil War Campaign. They are nominated for National Historic Landmark desigation under NHL Criteria 1 and 2.

BATTLESITES

Although the battles of the Camden Expedition were minor ones when considered individually in the context of the Civil War as a whole, their true importance is evident when they are placed in the larger historic context of the Red River Campaign of spring 1864. In this campaign, Union forces in Little Rock under the command of Maj. Gen. Frederick Steele were to move toward Shreveport, Louisiana, where they would join forces with an amphibious force under the command of Maj. Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks and Rear Adm. David Porter. The Red River Campaign had its impetus in the desires of New Englanders to invade and occupy Texas in order to establish a free-soil cotton growing state to supply northeastern textile manufacturers with raw materials. The possibility of French intervention in Mexico also concerned the Lincoln Administration, which felt that a stronger Union presence on the Rio Grande might discourage Napoleon III's dreams of empire in the Western Hemisphere.

Ultimately, the Red River Campaign's failure to achieve any of its objectives in Arkansas, Louisiana, or Texas, provided a much-needed morale boost to the Confederate military leadership in the Trans-Mississippi West, which subsequently authorized the disastrous Price's Raid into Missouri that Fall.

THE CAMDEN FORTS

The Camden redoubts, Fort Lookout and Fort Southerland, in Ouachita County, Arkansas, are important elements of the Camden Expedition National Historic Landmark nomination for they are the two intact defensive elements of the Camden fortifications that figured in the campaign.

The Battle of Prairie DeAnn had effectively halted the Federal army's advance on the Confederate state capital of Washington and the Red River beyond, and General Steele opted instead to capture the strategic but undefended city of Camden. The Confederates had constructed an elaborate system of redoubts surrounding the Ouachita River port to the west and south, and soon after the Union occupation, Steele ordered his engineers to improve on these defenses. Steele's supply difficulties continued while in Camden, and would lead eventually to the Union disasters at Poison Spring and Marks' Mills and his retreat to Little Rock, effectively giving up on the ambitious Red River Campaign.

In late 1863, Lt. Gen. Theophilus Holmes of the District of Arkansas had ordered Brig. Gen. Alexander T. Hawthorn, a Camden native, to clear fields of fire and erect a series of defensive earthworks along the southern and western approaches to Camden. Hundreds of Confederate soldiers and local slaves labored on the project from January to March 1864. By the early spring and the beginning of the Red River Campaign, Camden's defenses consisted primarily of five redoubts, massive earthen strongpoints enclosed or at least fronted by deep ditches at various points around the city's perimeter. The Camden earthworks varied in size and shape and were irregularly placed along the town's periphery.

Although Camden had enjoyed a reputation among the Federals as a formidable and well-defended stronghold prior to its occupation, as Steele's engineers inspected and mapped the Confederate fortifications they found a number of alarming deficiencies in the city's defenses. The five redoubts, although well-positioned on high ground, were too small, too few in number, and too widely spaced to defend Camden against a concerted assault. Furthermore, the almost complete absence of infantry trenches between the redoubts left most of the city's defenders extremely vulnerable to enemy fire. Finally, despite Steele's initial reports that the hillsides had been denuded of trees, Federal engineers discovered that, in places, attacking troops could approach dangerously close to the redoubts under cover of the "fresh green forests" surrounding the town. Despite these concerns however, Steele focused his army's attentions on the procurement of food and forage.

The stunning reversal at Poison Spring forced Steele to reexamine Camden's defenses and to reassess the wisdom of remaining in the occupied city. Federal campsites surrounding the city were abandoned and relocated within the defensive perimeter, and infantry and artillery were redeployed in and around the redoubts to prepare for a Confederate assault. Outnumbered and isolated, Steele attempted to correct the deficiencies in the Camden fortifications that his engineers had identified. On April 24, thousands of Federal soldiers were put to work digging defensive earthworks between the redoubts. Trenches were traced along the crest of the ridge overlooking the Ouachita by laying boards end to end. On the northwestern perimeter (near Fort Lookout), the Third Brigade, Third Division, was employed erecting earthworks using picks and shovels requisitioned from the local Camden populace. The various regiments worked in shifts around the clock and through the night, while parties of troops cautiously ventured out beyond the perimeter to fell trees and expand the fields of fire below the ridge.

As Federal efforts to bolster Camden's defenses continued, Steele made the decision to evacuate the occupied city and return with his army to Little Rock. Steele was disappointed that he had been forced to abandon his prize without forcing the Rebels to test its improved defenses. Following the city's return to Confederate control, the defenses were further bolstered. In October, the men of four idle infantry divisions were put to work shoring up the fortifications and erecting earthworks along the Ouachita waterfront. By the end of 1864, the Camden fortifications were complete, with the five original redoubts connected by a more or less continuous trench anchored at the river on both flanks. They were not to be tested again.

CONFEDERATE STATE CAPITOL

This modest building, which served as the Hempstead County Courthouse from 1840 until a new brick structure was built in 1874, is significant as an intermediate goal of Maj. Gen. Frederick Steele's Camden Expedition. The Camden Expedition might well also be dubbed the Washington Expedition, for one of its goals was the capture of the Confederate State government then headquartered in this building and it was fully expected that the town would be besieged. Steele, however, failed to drive the Confederates from this stronghold in the southwestern part of the State and this building continued to serve as the Confederate capitol of the State until the war ended in 1865.

Little Rock, occupied by Union forces on September 10, 1863, was the fourth Confederate state capital city to be occupied by the Federal soldiers. Nashville, Tennessee, evacuated on February 25, 1862; Baton Rouge, Louisiana, surrendered in the second week of May 1862; and Jackson, Mississippi, captured on May 14, were the three earlier ones. Union forces soon evacuated Jackson, but the State government did not return until the summer of 1865. Unlike Jackson and Baton Rouge, Nashville and Little Rock became key Union bases and depots.

In 1863, upon the capture of Little Rock on September 10, Governor Harris Flanagin established the State capitol in this building in the town of Washington. Two or more sessions of the Arkansas legislature were held in this building. From it, Governor Flanagin and his advisors administered that part of the state that remained in Confederate hands.

With the cessation of hostilities after Gen. Edmund Kirby Smith's surrender of Confederate troops in the Trans-Mississippi Department on May 26, 1865, the building concluded its service to the Confederacy.

HISTORY

I. WHY THE CAMDEN EXPEDITION?

A. The Lincoln Administration's 1864 Military Goals

In late winter of 1864, the Lincoln administration planned four major campaigns aimed at ending the terrible fratricidal war that had lasted nearly three years and had claimed thousands of lives. The campaigns envisioned by Northern leadership depended for their success on the capture of four key cities—Richmond, Atlanta, Mobile, and Shreveport—and of the Confederate armies committed to their defense. By mid-May one of the four campaigns that the Lincoln government had scheduled to crush the Confederates before the November election had foundered. The failure to capture Shreveport and rout Confederate armies in southern Arkansas and western Louisiana caused the Federals to postpone their campaign aimed at Mobile.

B. Post Vicksburg and Port Hudson Campaigning in the Trans-Mississippi Sets the Stage

Confederate defeats in the Vicksburg Campaign, culminating in the July 4, 1863, surrender of this key city and its 29,500 defenders to U.S. forces led by Maj. Gen. Ulysses E. Grant, and at Port Hudson, Louisiana, where on July 9, the last Confederate river bastion was formally yielded to Union troops led by Maj. Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks, had far reaching and important repercussions. Strategically and psychologically the most significant of these was highlighted by President Abraham Lincoln's words, "The father of waters again goes unvexed to the sea." To lend emphasis to the President's statement, the unarmed steamboat *Imperial* reached New Orleans from St. Louis on July 16, the first vessel to do so since the firing on Fort Sumter, more than 27 months before.

With the North in effective control of the 1000 miles of Mississippi River between Cairo, Illinois, and the Gulf of Mexico, there were two Confederacies—the trans-Mississippi and the cis-Mississippi. The Confederate Heartland and capital were east of the river, but until the beginning of the spring campaigns of 1864 in Virginia and northwest Georgia the trans-Mississippi commanded much attention on the part of the Lincoln administration. In the months following the Vicksburg and Port Hudson victories, troops from Grant's Department of the Tennessee, led by his West Point classmate Maj. Gen. Frederick Steele, broke out of the Helena, Arkansas, enclave. Advancing across the Grand Prairie and beyond Devalls Bluff, Steele's columns, having larger numbers, outmaneuvered Confederate troops led by Maj. Gen. Sterling Price and entered Little Rock on September 10. Several days before, the state government, headed by Governor Harris Flanagin had relocated to Washington, then the Hempstead county seat, on the direct road to Shreveport. Some two weeks before, Union forces from Kansas, under Maj. Gen. James G. Blunt, who had thrust deep into the Indian Territory, turned east and seized Fort Smith. By the first of October, Union soldiers, except when stung by Confederate raiders and partisans, controlled the one-half of the state north of the Arkansas River, as well as enclaves south of the river at their Fort Smith, Little Rock, and Pine Bluff depots.

In Louisiana, General Banks, his army reinforced by the Army of the Tennessee's XIII Corps sent from Vicksburg, moved against the Louisiana and Texas Confederates. Supported by the navy, Banks's troops landed on the Texas coast and took possession of Brazos Santiago, Brownsville, Rio Grande City, Aransas Pass, Matagordo Island, and a few other places in the face of feeble resistance by a few Confederates. Plans by Banks to put a large force ashore at Sabine Pass were frustrated on September 8, when Lt. Dick Dowling and a handful of determined Texas stood tall and the Union navy lost its nerve. An autumn campaign by a large Union army led by Maj. Gen. William Franklin up the Bayou Teche in Louisiana came to naught. The country through which Franklin marched his columns was destitute of provender, the outnumbered Confederate defenders led by Maj. Gen. Richard Taylor were active, and the Federals, soon after reaching Opelousas, abandoned their expedition and returned to Berwick Bay.

C. Political, Diplomatic, and Economic Goals Dictate a Campaign

This was not what the Lincoln administration had in mind insofar as Texas was concerned. The administration's goals were much more far reaching and had vital political, diplomatic, and economic concerns. The political was aimed at organizing and installing loyal state governments in Louisiana, Texas, and Arkansas. United States forces since the spring of 1862 had held New Orleans and Baton Rouge, and in the months since then they had established their presence in other Mississippi River parishes and in the Lafourche country. Between them Steele's and Blunt's troops were in nominal control of one-half of Arkansas. And, although Union efforts to restore the "stars and stripes" to large areas of Texas had been disappointing, a military governor had set up headquarters in Brownsville. With a presidential election to be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November 1864, President Lincoln, the politician, looked toward having loyal governments in place in the three trans-Mississippi states that would support his candidacy in the electoral college against a Democratic challenger.[1]

On the diplomatic front, since 1862 there had been increasing concern in Washington over the growing threat to American security and the sanctity of the Monroe Doctrine caused by the intervention of the French government of Emperor Napoleon III in Mexico. In June 1863 French troops had entered Mexico City and President Benito Juarez and his government had fled. Rumors abounded of a Franco-Confederate rapprochement and it was known that the port of Bagdad, in Mexico, just south of the Rio Grande, was a major leak in Mr. Lincoln's naval blockade of the South. War materiel and consumer goods valued at millions of dollars were landed at Bagdad and cotton, the white gold of the Confederacy, exported.[2]

Then there was economics, and it may have been most important. It was known by Union business, military, and government leaders that stockpiled in the trans-Mississippi Confederacy were millions of bales of cotton owned by the Rebel government. There were said to be Confederate officers who were agreeable, for a price, to see that the cotton was not burned upon the approach of Union armies, as required by Confederate law. General Banks saw this as an opportunity to secure hundreds of thousands of cotton bales that could be sold at a huge profit for the benefit of the U.S. Treasury. This would bolster his post-war political ambitions, which focused on the Presidency and pour millions of dollars into straitened public coffers. Massachusetts mill owners, interests that were politically powerful in the "Bobbin Boy from Waltham's" home state, wanted cotton to keep the mills of Lowell and other textile towns spinning, and their agents were close to Banks and his associates.[3]

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1 Ludwell H. Johnson, *Red River Campaign: Politics and Cotton in the Civil War* (Baltimore, 1958), pp. 13-16; J.G. Randall, *The Civil War and Reconstruction* (Boston, 1953), pp. 699-703.

2 Johnson, *Red River Campaign*, pp. 34-39; Randall, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, pp. 660-663.

3 Johnson, *Red River Campaign*, p. 47.

II. HIGH LEVEL PLANNING—WASHINGTON TRIUMPHS

A. Halleck Calls the Shots

Cotton, politics, foreign affairs, and the insistence by Union General-in-Chief Henry W. Halleck that the war be carried into Texas by way of Red River and northwestern Louisiana triumphed. Plans for an advance into Texas by way of the Red River Valley to be reinforced and supported by a powerful column led by General Steele, commanding in Arkansas, received high priority from the Lincoln administration in the months before Ulysses S. Grant's March 9, 1864, assignment to command of all Union armies. Steele's role in the forthcoming campaign was to march southwest from Little Rock and rendezvous with Banks on Red River.[4]

In addition to General-in-Chief Halleck and Generals Banks and Steele, Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman was keenly interested in the campaign. Sherman was then in command of more than 20,000 troops who had marched from Vicksburg to Meridian, Mississippi. In mid-February, Maj. Gen. U.S. Grant, Sherman's and Steele's immediate superior, was informed by General Halleck that Banks and Sherman were to advance via the Red River Valley, while Steele marched on Shreveport from the north. Sherman had agreed to this, but Steele had not been heard from. This was the first that Grant knew that troops from his Department were to be committed to the campaign, and he was not a happy camper.

Sherman, on his return to Vicksburg from Meridian in early March, traveled downriver to New Orleans to confer with General Banks. At his meeting with Banks, Sherman agreed to send 10,000 XVI and XVII Corps veterans of the Meridian Expedition up Red River in time to rendezvous with General Banks's XIII and XIX Corps at Alexandria by March 17, in concert with Rear Adm. David D. Porter's Mississippi Squadron. Sherman, in view of Grant's lack of enthusiasm, stipulated that the Army of the Tennessee troops must not go beyond Shreveport and must be returned to him by mid-April.[5]

B. Steele: A Reluctant Participant

General Steele was now the only principal who had not spelled out his commitment to the "grand strategic combination" being engineered by Generals Halleck and Banks to accomplish the Lincoln administration's military, economic, political, and diplomatic imperatives in the trans-Mississippi. Steele was beset by many problems. He could not take the field as early as Banks desired, because an election of state officers for a loyal government was slated for March 14, and Steele protested:

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4 *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880-1901), Series I, Vol. XXVI, pt. 1, pp. 397, 683, 807. Cited hereinafter as *O.R.*

5 *O.R.*, Series I, Vol. XXXII, pt. II, pp. 169, 180-90, 201-02, 224-25, 270-71; *Official Records-Navies*, Series I, Vol. 26, pp. 747-48; Johnson, *Red River Campaign*, pp. 82-84.

> the President is very anxious it should be a success. Without the assistance of the troops to distribute the poll-books, with the oath of allegiance, and to protect the voters at the polls, it cannot succeed.[6]

Sherman, when he saw Steele's communication, noted only, "If we have to modify military plans for civil elections, we had better go home."[7]

In addition, a number of Steele's VII Corps soldiers had gone home on furlough earned on their willingness to enlist for the duration, and as "matters in the Army are influenced so much by political intrigue, it is not certain that these troops will return to my command."

There were no macadam roads in Arkansas, and under the best of conditions, the roads were bad and during seasonal rains all but impassable. Partisans were active, and the country between Little Rock and Arkadelphia was known to be destitute of forage. So great and numerous were the obstacles Steele foresaw that he sought to pull back on his offer of direct cooperation and proposed instead to make a demonstration, a feint toward Washington, in expectation it would either hold in Arkansas Rebel troops or, better yet, draw off forces that Confederate Gen. Edmund Kirby Smith could use to resist the amphibious thrust up the Red River Valley.[8]

By this time Halleck had been superseded as lieutenant general commanding by Grant. Although Grant had not championed the campaign, he did not mince words in giving Steele his marching orders. He telegraphed Steele on March 15: "Move your force in full cooperation with General N.P. Banks' attack on Shreveport. A mere demonstration will not be sufficient."[9]

The orders from Grant left Steele no alternative, and he made preparations to march on Shreveport via Arkadelphia and Washington. On March 17, Steele sent word to Brig. Gen. John M. Thayer, commanding Union forces at Fort Smith, to set out with 3,600 troops of his Frontier Division and meet the main column at Arkadelphia, 170 miles away, on April 1.

Col. Powell Clayton, commanding at Pine Bluff, would continue to guard the lower Arkansas River and scout as close to Camden as possible. Thayer left Fort Smith for Arkadelphia on March 21.[10]

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6 *O.R.*, Series I, Vol. XXXIV, pt. II, p. 448.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 516.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 576.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 616.

10 Johnson, *Red River Campaign*, pp. 170-171. Following the war, Clayton during the Reconstruction years was first Republican governor and then U.S. Senator from Arkansas, and a major political powerbroker in the state for decades thereafter. He also later served as U.S. Ambassador to Mexico from 1897 to 1905.

III. THE BATTLES OF OKOLONA AND ELKINS' FERRY

Steele marched out of Little Rock via the Benton Road on March 23, 1864, with Brig. Gen. Frederick Salomon's Third Division, Seventh Corps, and two brigades of cavalry under the command of Brig. Gen. Eugene A. Carr, a total of 6,800 effectives. Brig. Gen. Nathan Kimball remained behind commanding the Little Rock garrison and the arsenal. Steele ordered the issuance of half-rations on the second day of the expedition. The column reached Rockport on the easily forded Ouachita River on March 26. A bridge was hastily constructed to guard against a sudden rise in the shallow river and the column pushed on toward Arkadelphia to the southwest, arriving there on the 29th.[11]

The Union forces remained encamped at Arkadelphia for two days awaiting the arrival of Thayer's column from Fort Smith. Steele, however, was concerned that he could not wait indefinitely while consuming his limited supplies, and on April 1, with no word as to Thayer's whereabouts, the Union column left Arkadelphia, taking the Old Military Road toward Washington.[12]

While Steele continued on toward Shreveport, Maj. Gen. Sterling Price, recently placed in command of the Confederacy's District of Arkansas, prepared to counter his advance. He had available, following the withdrawal from the district of his two infantry divisions to oppose General Banks' Red River advance, five cavalry brigades, of which two, led by Brig. Gen. James Fagan, were east of the Saline River near Monticello and Mount Elba. Brig. Gen, John S. Marmaduke led the other three. Brig. Gen. Joseph O. Shelby's "Iron Brigade" and Col. Colton Greene's were with Marmaduke at Camden. The fifth, Brig. Gen. W.C. "Old Tig" Cabell commanding, was on Red River 16 miles west of Washington. Although Marmaduke's three brigades numbered only 3,200, they were seasoned and well-trained.[13]

On receiving news of Steele's advance, Price ordered Shelby to Princeton and Cabell's brigade to march for Tate's Bluff, at the confluence of the Ouachita and Little Missouri rivers north of Camden, where he would rendezvous with Marmaduke and Greene's brigade. Cabell and Greene were to harass Steele's vanguard while Shelby attacked Steele's flanks and rear. Marmaduke was to harry the enemy column until it reached the Little Missouri, and then seek to prevent the Federals from crossing. On arriving at Tate's Bluff and learning that the Yanks were en route toward Arkadelphia, Marmaduke ordered Shelby to cross the Ouachita and attack Steele's rear. General Price, fearful that Steele was advancing on Washington, diverted Cabell to Antoine.[14]

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[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 171-172.

[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 172-175.

[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 172-173. On March 30, Dockery's brigade was surprised and routed at Mount Elba by a small expedition from Pine Bluff under Powell Clayton.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 173.

Skirmishing was fierce as Cabell's brigade countered Steele's advance toward Washington on April 1. That night, as Steele camped near Hollywood (also known as Spoonville or Witherspoonville), Marmaduke ordered Greene to proceed with most of his brigade to Cottingham's Store, three miles south of the Little Missouri River on the Old Military Road. The following day, Cabell's brigade withdrew to Cottingham's Store as well, leaving one regiment near Antoine as a rear guard. Falling back slowly, this regiment delayed the Federals' advance at Wolf Creek on April 2, then rejoined Cabell's brigade south of the Little Missouri.

Early on the afternoon of April 2, Confederate scouts brought word to Cottingham's Store that the Federals had left the Old Military Road and were marching toward Elkins' Ferry on the Little Missouri by way of Okolona. General Salomon's infantry division had the lead on April 2, as Steele's column trudged ahead and the rear guard held off Shelby's horse soldiers nipping at the army's rear. The sun climbed higher in the sky and the dull boom of artillery showed that the rear guard was hard pressed, and the importance of seizing and holding the Elkins' Ferry crossing of the Little Missouri became apparent to General Salomon. This called for a forced march by Col. William E. McLean's brigade. By nightfall his troops had reached the Little Missouri, and a squadron of cavalry crossed at the ferry and established a bridgehead south of the river.

On April 3 Colonel McLean reinforced the bridgehead, as General Shelby's Iron Brigade again hammered Steele's rear guard as the army closed up on the Little Missouri and the pioneers positioned their pontons. The next day, Steele began crossing his main column. To counter this move and seek to best the foe while his army was divided by a river, Marmaduke dismounted and deployed Greene's and Cabell's brigades on a ridge overlooking the river bottom. The Confederates drove in the Union skirmishers, but were beaten back when they came up against the Yankees' main line of resistance, supported by artillery. Satisfied that he was outnumbered and outgunned, Marmaduke recalled his two brigades and abandoned his effort to beat the Federals in detail. Casualties on both sides in the Elkins' Ferry fight were slight. That evening Shelby crossed the Little Missouri at another ford and linked up with Greene's and Cabell's brigades. The next morning (the 5th) Marmaduke retreated 16 miles southward to Prairie De Ann.[15]

IV. THE PRAIRIE DE ANN PAUSE AND BATTLES

Prairie De Ann, a well-known landmark 100 miles southwest of Little Rock, was a 25- to 30-square mile open grassland bounded by gloomy forests. Some 17 miles to the west was Washington, since the previous September the capital of Confederate Arkansas; 40 miles to the southeast was Camden, a fortified town and depot on the navigable Ouachita River; while 110 miles to the southwest was Shreveport, on Red River, where Steele and Banks planned to rendezvous preparatory to carrying the war into East Texas. Except for scattered farmsteads and the village of Moscow on its eastern marge, the prairie was sparsely populated. Marmaduke's Confederates dismounted and took position behind a frail line of earthworks on the western marge of Prairie De Ann to protect the approach to Washington and await the arrival of reinforcements.

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15 *O.R.*, Series I, Vol. XXXIV, pt. 1, pp. 693-694, 705-706.

On April 6, the Yanks received word of the approach of Thayer's Frontier Division from Fort Smith by way of Hot Springs, and Steele decided to await its arrival on the Cornelius farm, a short distance south of the Little Missouri. Heavy rains fell that evening, flooding the bottomlands and washing away bridges. Working parties relaid the Little Missouri ponton bridge, preparing for the passage of Thayer's wagon train. Thayer's Division came up with Steele's command on April 9, four days after the Elkins' Ferry fight. One of Steele's people recalled that it was "a nondescript style of reinforcement," including two regiments and one battery of African Americans. They arrived destitute of supplies, and the delay they had caused the rest of the army had resulted in the consumption of rations sufficient to have seen the column through to Shreveport, had the march been more rapid. Steele was compelled to send word back to General Kimball at Little Rock to send forward a wagon train with 30 days' rations for 15,000 soldiers.[16]

Marmaduke's position on the Confederate side was strengthened with the arrival on April 6 of Brig. Gen. Richard M. Gano's Texas cavalry brigade, a part of Samuel Bell Maxey's division from the Indian Territory. Sterling Price, known to his men as "Old Pap," came up on the 7th, along with Brig. Gen. Fagan's two-brigade (Crawford's and Dockery's) cavalry division that had been posted east of the Saline. Price took charge of Confederate operations amid growing concerns as to the effectiveness of the general's military decisions thus far. Anticipating a Union attack on Washington, Price had pulled most of the Confederate troops out of Camden and deployed them on Prairie De Ann. On April 10, Salomon's division, spearheaded by Col. Adolph Englemann's brigade, advanced westward across Prairie De Ann, driving the Confederate horse soldiers, who fought dismounted, before them. By late afternoon the skirmishing escalated, as the belligerents called up artillery. At dark, Salomon, his men having gained the high ground, called a halt, but that did not put a stop to the fighting.[17] General Shelby recalled that:

> For three hours more the fight went on, the whole heavens lit up with bursting bombs and the falling flames of muskets. Their advance was checked for the night, and at 12 P.M. I drew off after eight hours of severe fighting.[18]

Toward midnight, some of Price's men mounted an assault against a Federal battery but were repulsed, and soon thereafter cannonading ceased for the night.

The following morning, April 11, except for occasional skirmishing and cannon fire, passed quietly. Then, at 2:30 p.m., the Yanks deployed in battle line that extended for several miles and advanced across the prairie. But by then it was too late to bring on a general engagement, and the bluecoats returned to their camps of the previous evening. Shelby and Marmaduke also pulled their forces back to Prairie De Rohan twelve miles to the south, and Sterling Price withdrew most of the rest of the Confederates to a point about eight miles east

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16 Johnson, *Red River Campaign*, p. 176.

17 J.H. Atkinson, "The Action at Prairie de Ann," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, Volume XIX, Number 1 (Spring 1960), pp. 46-47.

18 *O.R.*, p. 838.

of Washington to better defend the capital from the advancing Federals. A small contingent was left to defend the Confederate entrenchments on the western marge of Prairie De Ann.[19]

Dawn on April 12 found the Union army again on the move. The Yanks advanced in battle line with their habitual caution across the prairie toward the Confederate entrenchments to the west. The Confederates withdrew, evacuating their works and falling back to rejoin Price's army near Washington. On reaching the western edge of the Prairie, the bluecoats found "nearly a mile of rifle pits with positions for artillery, and nearly a mile of felled timber thrown up as breastworks."[20] Union cavalry pursued the retreating Rebels down the Old Washington Road. Then came a surprise. Feinting with his horse soldiers as if he intended to march on Washington, as the next step on the road to Shreveport, Steele countermarched his troops and turned them toward Camden, a two-day march in the opposite direction. That night the vanguard camped on Terre Rouge Creek.[21] This decision was dictated by Steele's need to resupply his army. Until rations and forage could be sent out from Little Rock and Pine Bluff, a farther advance was stymied. He now looked to make Camden his advanced supply depot. The Federals' situation was bleak. Writing to Chief-of-Staff Henry W. Halleck, Steele carped:

> Our supplies were nearly exhausted, and so was the country. We were obliged to forage from 5 to 15 miles on either side of the road to keep our stock alive.[22]

On half-rations for almost three weeks, Steele's soldiers ignored their commander's strict orders against unauthorized foraging.[23]

On April 13, General Maxey arrived from the Indian Territory with the rest of his division—Col. Tandy Walker's Second Indian Brigade. Price then advanced and assailed Thayer's rear guard at the eastern border of the prairie, near Moscow. Spearheading the Confederates were Col. Thomas Dockery's Arkansans, who captured and then lost two guns manned by the 2nd Indiana Battery.[24]

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19 Atkinson, pp. 48-49.

20 *O.R.*, p. 675.

21 Atkinson, p. 49.

22 Johnson, p. 179.

23 *Ibid.*

24 Atkinson, pp. 44-46.

V. THE MARCH TO CAMDEN

Steele's army pushed on toward Camden. The road at times seemed bottomless. Long stretches had to be corduroyed to make it passable. East of Cypress Bayou there was a marked improvement in the road. On the afternoon of April 14 Steele heard rumors that the Rebels planned to establish a roadblock somewhere between White Oak Creek and Camden. Whereupon, Salomon's lead infantry brigade was ordered to make a forced march. At 8 p.m., Brig. Gen. Samuel A. Rice's foot soldiers reached White Oak Creek, 18 miles west of Camden, and reinforced Brig. Gen. Eugene A. Carr's cavalry. The next morning—April 15—Steele's vanguard encountered a roadblock manned by Marmaduke's butternuts, who had ridden out of Washington on the morning of the 13th, made a 60-mile detour south of the road followed by the Yanks, and had come out on the direct Washington-Camden road, 14 miles from the latter place.[25]

After such a grueling gait, the Confederates were ill-prepared to resist the advancing Federals. After a two-hour skirmish, Marmaduke pulled back. He then rushed a detachment into Camden to destroy as much public property as possible lest it fall into enemy hands, then withdrew his command to a position eight miles southwest of Camden. Price joined Marmaduke shortly thereafter and established headquarters for his 6,000 effectives 16 miles west of Camden at Woodlawn, posting his forces to cover the western and southern approaches to the town. As the sun set on the evening of the 15th, Rice's infantry brigade marched into, and encountering no resistance, occupied Camden, twenty-three days after leaving Little Rock.[26]

Gen. Edmund Kirby Smith, on April 15, received word at his Shreveport headquarters in Louisiana that Steele had ceased his southward advance at Prairie De Ann, and had struck east toward Camden. Smith sensed that the Federals were in retreat, but he could not discount the possibility that Steele meant to link up via the Ouachita with General Banks, who had lost his nerve at Pleasant Hill on April 9 and was currently regrouping at Grand Ecore on Red River. Sensing that the Union campaign in Louisiana was a failure, Smith hoped to keep Steele in the dark as to Banks's problems on Red River. By striking swiftly, Smith planned to disrupt Steele's supply lines; compel him to evacuate Camden; and then pursue, harass, and destroy his retreating columns before they reached the security afforded by the Little Rock fortifications. If Little Rock could be taken, the road to Missouri and St. Louis would be open. Intending to lead personally the pursuit of the Federals, Smith set out for Camden with three of his four infantry divisions, and, on April 17, established his headquarters at Calhoun (Columbia County), which was connected by telegraph with Shreveport.[27]

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[25] Johnson, pp. 179-180.

[26] *Ibid.*, pp. 179-180.

[27] *Ibid.*, pp. 182-183.

VI. THE BATTLE OF POISON SPRING AND THE FIRST KANSAS COLORED

The Federals' defeat at Mansfield (April 8) and the retreat from Pleasant Hill (April 10) in Louisiana had checkmated Banks's advance on Shreveport, and Steele chose to remain in Camden to await further developments rather than pressing on toward Red River. Steele's supply problems were not alleviated by the capture and occupation of Camden. Worse, the Federals were compelled to provide food from their diminishing stores for the starving residents of the city. The Ouachita River was so low that it would be impossible, unless there were heavy rains, to send steamboats upriver from Union bases on the lower Mississippi.

On April 17, a train of 198 wagons left Camden under the command of Col. James M. Williams, traveling west on the Washington Road to collect corn that had been discovered on White Oak Creek farms during the army's advance on Camden three days earlier. Williams's command included 438 men of the 1st Kansas (Colored); 193 cavalry from the 6th Kansas, 2nd Kansas, and 14th Kansas; and two guns from the 2nd Indiana Battery manned by 33 artillerists.[28]

A. The 1st Kansas Colored Infantry—Fighters from the Start

The 1st Kansas Colored had been recruited and organized at Fort Scott, Kansas, from the swelling numbers of fugitive slaves from Missouri and Arkansas who had fled to Kansas in 1861 and 1862. The state's reputation as a bastion of abolitionism inspired antipathy among many Southerners, and the concept of blacks in uniform was especially loathsome to them. Many Northerners were equally uncomfortable with the notion of whites fighting alongside blacks, although the regiment's extraordinary conduct under fire soon tempered such concerns. Privates in the 1st Kansas were paid ten dollars a month, three dollars less than white privates received. As was the case in most black combat units throughout the war, all of the officers of the 1st Kansas were white, although the noncommissioned officers were black.[29]

The Confederates had been furious at the news of the formation of the 1st Kansas Colored. Southern troops in Arkansas and Missouri spoke with loathing of the "First Nigger" Kansas regiment, and general orders were issued that such "crimes and outrages" (the utilization of black soldiers) required "retaliation." A captured white officer commanding black troops was to be "executed as a felon," while it was made clear that Southern troops would take no black prisoners. At best, a captured 1st Kansas soldier could expect to be returned to slavery. On one occasion, under a flag of truce in Indian Territory, Confederate forces exchanged a number of white prisoners with the 1st Kansas, but refused to turn over any black prisoners. When Williams later received reports of the murder of one of the black

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28 Glenn L. Carle, "The First Kansas Colored," *American Heritage*, Vol. XLIII, No. 1 (February/March 1992), 79-82.

29 *Ibid.*

prisoners, the 1st Kansas' commanding officer ordered the execution of one of his Confederate prisoners. Williams's ruthlessness convinced the Confederates to stop murdering their black prisoners, at least for a number of weeks.[30]

The 1st Kansas Colored became the first black regiment to see combat in the war in a victorious skirmish at Island Mound near Butler, Missouri, on October 29, 1862. The following year, on July 1-2, the unit had carried the day in the Battle of Cabin Creek in modern-day Oklahoma with only eight casualties, saving Fort Gibson and ensuring a continued Federal presence in Indian Territory throughout the remainder of the war.

The 2,200 Indians and Texans deployed against the 1st Kansas Colored at Cabin Creek that day carried a grudge against the black unit for almost a year before they met again at Poison Spring. In the weeks that followed Cabin Creek, the 1st Kansas Colored played a key role in the Battle of Honey Springs in Indian Territory, on July 17, 1863, and in Maj. Gen. James G. Blunt's efforts to drive the Confederates out of northwest Arkansas. Blunt later remarked "I never saw such fighting as was done by that Negro regiment....they make better soldiers in every respect than any troops I have ever had under my command." This mettle would be tested again under most ferocious conditions at Poison Spring.[31]

B. Poison Spring—Battle or Massacre?

Foolishly, Steele had ordered no reconnaissance to ascertain the whereabouts of the Confederate cavalry before the Union forage train's April 17 departure. Eighteen miles west of Camden, the train dispersed to forage in the countryside, then returned to camp at White Oak Creek at midnight loaded with corn. The following morning, the train began its return trip to Camden; reinforcements arrived en route back in the form of 383 men of the 18th Iowa; 96 cavalry troopers from the 6th Kansas, 2nd Kansas, and 14th Kansas; and 25 artillerists with two mountain howitzers, all under the command of Capt. William Duncan. This reinforcement gave Colonel Williams 1000 men and four guns with which to guard the nearly 200 heavily loaded wagons.[32]

The Confederates were aware of the train's whereabouts and mission. On the morning of April 18, General Marmaduke rode northward from Woodlawn at the head of 2,000 Confederates drawn from Greene's, Cabell's, and Crawford's brigades. Turning into the Camden-Washington road, the Rebel encountered Williams's train some 14 miles west of Camden at a place known as Poison Spring. As Marmaduke was positioning his command to block the road, additional Confederates sent by General Price to bolster Marmaduke's command arrived. Numbering more than 1,500, the newcomers included Maxey's division and the 14th Missouri Cavalry Battalion. These additional units gave the Confederates a decisive bulge—their 3,100 officers and men outnumbering the Federals three to one.[33]

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30 *Ibid.*, p. 84-86.

31 *Ibid.*, pp. 87-90.

32 *Ibid.*, pp. 87-90.

33 Johnson, pp. 184-185; Richards, "Battle of Poison Spring," pp. 343-344.

Maxey was the senior Confederate officer present. But, believing that Marmaduke, having arrived first, was familiar with the lay of the land, he gave to Marmaduke tactical command of their combined forces. Marmaduke's plan called for Maxey's division—Walker's Choctaws and Col. Charles De Morse's Texans—to form, south of and parallel to the Camden-Washington road. Crawford's and Cabell's brigades manned the roadblock, while Greene's Missourians were in reserve.[34]

As soon as contact was made with the Rebels blocking the road, Colonel Williams had the teamsters close up and double park their wagons, and called to the head of the column the 1st Kansas Colored. The African-Americans were posted in line by their white officers, while the Kansas horse soldiers guarded the regiment's flanks. Captain Duncan and his Iowans were responsible for protecting the train's rear. Unfortunately for the Rebels. Colonel Williams became aware that Maxey's Texas and Indians were south of the road, and he redeployed a battalion of the 1st Kansas on the double to counter this threat. What might have been a brief fight became a battle of attrition. Williams also called on Duncan for reinforcements at the head of the column to assist in breaking the roadblock, but the messenger returned with the grim news—the rear guard was so hard pressed it could spare no Iowans.[35]

Marmaduke's artillery began booming, with a destructive crossfire, while his horse soldiers, fighting dismounted, assailed the stalled train and its defenders' front and rear. South of and parallel to the Camden-Washington road, Maxey's people occupied a wooded ridge. They then advanced, swept down the ridge, jogged across an old field, and worked their way through a ravine choked with alder thickets. As they closed on the road, the Texans and Indians opened fire on the train's defenders. Now assailed from the south as well as in front and rear, the outnumbered Yanks, after a desperate close-range fight, gave way. One of General Cabell's colonels recalled: "Away trotted the poor black men into the forest, clinging to their rifles but not using them, while the Confederates cut them down right and left."[36]

Colonel Williams saw that he was outnumbered, but he determined to defend the wagons to the bitter end, in the hope that reinforcements might be sent out from Camden. The Federals fought on and even counterattacked as the fight raged for the parked wagons. But there were too many Confederates. As Walker's Indian brigade advanced, Pvt. Dickson Wallace mounted a captured Union howitzer, from which he "gave a whoop, which was followed by such a succession of whoops from his comrades as made the woods reverberate for miles around."[37]

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[34] Edwin C. Bearss, *Steele's Retreat from Camden and the Battle of Jenkins' Ferry* (Little Rock, Arkansas: Eagle Press, 1966), p. 25.

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 28.

[36] *Ibid.*, pp. 31-32.

[37] Johnson, *Red River Campaign*, p. 186. Col. Tandy Walker later wrote in his report: "I feared that the train and its contents would prove a temptation too strong for these hungry, half-clothed Choctaws, but had no trouble in pressing them forward, for there was that in front and to the left more inviting to them than food or clothing—the blood of their

Duncan's Iowans closed ranks as the Choctaw assault forced him to pull his soldiers out of the field north of the road and place them along the edge of the woods. Artillery was redeployed to cover the Union infantry's withdrawal as the 18th Iowa joined the 1st Kansas in retreat across Lee's plantation to escape capture. Confederate pursuit of the retreating Yanks continued for as many as two and a half miles, and, although there was isolated Union resistance on Lee's plantation north of the Washington road to slow the pursuit, all firing ceased by 2:00 p.m., as the bluecoats retreated through hollows and swamps back to Camden. Union losses might have been more severe had General Maxey not pulled rank on Marmaduke. Marmaduke had ordered an all-out pursuit of the fleeing Federals. Maxey countermanded this order, allowing fragments of Williams's force to return to Camden.[38]

The Confederates scored an overwhelming victory at Poison Spring and Steele's supply difficulties in Camden worsened. Union losses at Poison Spring totaled 301 killed, wounded, and missing. The 1st Kansas bore the brunt of the Union casualties, losing 42 percent of its strength, 182 killed and wounded out of 438 engaged. Union reports noted that the Confederates shot wounded black soldiers without mercy, and it is significant that the Southerners reported that only four black soldiers were captured. Lending credence to a conscious Confederate massacre of African-American troops is Cabell's report that "Morgan's regiment killed at least eighty Negroes," although Morgan's unit did not participate in the battle, but was stationed between Poison Spring and Camden to intercept the fleeing Yanks.[39]

The 1st Kansas had been savaged at Poison Spring, with almost half its men killed in four hours at the hands of the same Texans they had defeated at Cabin Creek nine months before. The Texans' revenge was brutal. White soldiers taunted the wounded blacks with shouts of "Where is the First Nigger now?" answered by "All cut to pieces and gone to hell by bad management," before they were shot or bayoneted. Blacks survivors vowed never again to take prisoners, and for the rest of the war "Remember Poison Spring" was a rallying cry for the 1st Kansans. By the war's end, the 1st Kansas Colored had seen more combat than any other black Civil War regiment.[40]

Confederate losses were less than those of the Federals; 114 killed, wounded, or missing, a mere three percent of Marmaduke's force. Almost two hundred wagons loaded with forage, as well as four Union cannon, fell into the Southerners' hands. The Rebels had won their

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despised enemy. They had met and routed the forces of General Thayer, the ravagers of their country, the despoilers of their homes, and the murderers of their women and children...." *O.R.*, Series I, Vol. XXXIV, pt. 1, p. 849. Cabell also claimed credit for capturing the Union guns.

38 Richards, "Battle of Poison Spring," pp. 346-348. The reasons for Maxey's puzzling behavior are unclear. In his report, the general claimed that he wanted to escort the captured wagon train to safety before Steele could react and send reinforcements. It is unlikely, however, that all the cavalry would have been necessary to escort the train through Confederate territory, and one regiment from Cabell's brigade had in fact been stationed watching the road to Camden to prevent such a surprise Union attack.

39 *Ibid.*, pp. 348-349.

40 Carle, "The First Kansas Colored," pp. 90-91.

first victory of the Camden Expedition, and Price's troops' morale soared. Steele's supply difficulties worsened, and the bluecoats would remain on the defensive for the remainder of the ill-fated campaign.[41]

VII. THE BATTLE OF MARKS' MILLS

General Steele, in the aftermath of the Battle of Poison Spring, was confronted with a precarious supply situation. He concluded that foraging parties were ineffective. "It is useless to talk of obtaining supplies in this country for my command," he wrote of the surrounding countryside, "[it] is well-nigh exhausted and the people are threatened with starvation."[42] His soldiers wondered why he had sent out such an important foraging party with so little protection. Although meat was still issued and Camden's steam and hand mills were in constant operation grinding cornmeal, hardtack had given out and the Union soldiers were becoming increasingly demoralized over their situation. These conditions were alleviated somewhat on April 20 upon arrival of the anxiously awaited supply train from Pine Bluff carrying mail and ten days' supply of half-rations.[43]

Exacerbating the discontent in Camden were rumors that General Banks had been defeated and forced to fall back to Grand Ecore. Steele was not optimistic as to how this might affect the campaign. "Although I believe we can beat Price," he wrote Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman, his immediate superior, on April 22, "I do not expect to meet successfully the whole force which Kirby Smith could send against me, if Banks should let him go." Steele, on the 23rd, received a communication from Banks informing him of the Louisiana campaign's difficulties and urging him to bring his army south to Red River. Steele dismissed this suggestion as unworkable given the Camden Expedition's tenuous logistical situation and resolved to defend the line of the Ouachita rather than push on toward Red River. He was certain that he could hold heavily fortified Camden if the navy could send a convoy up the Ouachita; otherwise, the Arkansas River would have to remain the Federals' supply route.[44]

Kirby Smith, meanwhile, arrived at Woodlawn in advance of his infantry to take command of the Confederate forces investing Camden. On the 21st, Smith's command was strengthened by the arrival of 8,000 infantry, organized into three divisions led by Brig. Gens. M. M. Parsons, John G. Walker, and Thomas J. Churchill, to reinforce the 10,000-12,000 cavalry and mounted infantry already at his disposal. Confederate artillery pounded Federal outposts west of the city, and an attack on Camden appeared imminent.

Smith now told Price to send a cavalry force east of the Ouachita to stop Federal foraging, as well as to harry the Union supply and communication lines to the north. General Fagan commanded the 4,000 soldiers sent to carry out this mission. He would place his force

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41 Richards, "Battle of Poison Spring," p. 349.

42 Bearss, *Steele's Retreat*, p. 45.

43 Johnson, *Red River Campaign*, pp. 187-188.

44 *Ibid.*, pp. 188-189.

between Steele and Little Rock to prevent the Federals' retreat to safety. In Smith's opinion, this would ensure the destruction of Steele's army because "[n]either man nor beast could be sustained in the exhausted country between the Ouachita and White Rivers."

General Shelby's brigade left the Confederate camp on April 19, crossed the Ouachita above Camden, and swept southward toward El Dorado Landing, 26 miles downriver (near modern-day Calion), skirmishing and driving in Union patrols as the Missourians rode. Following arrival of Churchill's and Parsons' infantry divisions at Woodlawn, the remaining three brigades of Fagan's column broke camp on April 22, riding south on the middle Camden road. Fagan's command rendezvoused with Shelby's brigade guarding the floating bridge at El Dorado Landing, and Fagan learned from Shelby's scouts that Steele's supply train had departed Camden on the 23rd en route back to Pine Bluff.[45]

Despite his concern over the muddy road through Moro Bottom and reports that Shelby's Iron Brigade was in the vicinity, Steele had ordered 211 government wagons back to Pine Bluff, 70 miles away. Lt. Col. Francis M. Drake of the 36th Iowa Infantry was tapped to command the train's escort, 1,200 foot soldiers; 240 mounted troopers of the 1st Indiana Cavalry and 7th Missouri Cavalry; and two sections of Company E, 2nd Missouri Light Artillery. In addition, 520 officers and men of the 1st Iowa Cavalry returning to their homes on furlough would accompany Drake over part of his route, and 350 troopers of the 5th Kansas Cavalry based at Pine Bluff joined the train later. Upon arrival in Pine Bluff, the train was to be loaded with supplies and Drake was to escort the wagons on their return to Camden. A number of private wagons and citizens, cotton speculators, refugees, and contraband blacks joined the entourage for the hazardous journey to the Arkansas River. The train camped that night eighteen miles east of Camden.[46]

Leaving El Dorado Landing on April 24, Fagan divided his command into two divisions under Shelby and Cabell and began a 45-mile forced march paralleling the Camden-Pine Bluff road. He expected to intercept the Union train before it reached the Mount Elba crossing of the Saline River. The Confederate column halted at midnight eight miles south of Marks' Mills, a local landmark at the intersection of the Camden-Mount Elba-Pine Bluff roads. Fagan's scouts brought word before dawn on the 25th that the Union train had not yet reached Marks' Mills, and Fagan decided to attack the Federals at that point. As the Confederate column approached the road on which the Yankee train was traveling, Fagan ordered Shelby's and Crawford's mounted brigades to the east to place themselves between the bluecoats and the Saline River.[47]

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45 Bearss, *Steele's Retreat*, pp. 47-51. Bearss notes that Smith had ordered Fagan to get between Little Rock and Camden so as to cut Steele's potential retreat by felling trees across the roads. Fagan's attack on the Union train at Marks' Mills was in violation of these orders. Had Fagan carried out his assigned mission, Steele's column could have been destroyed at Jenkins' Ferry. Drake's defeat at Marks' Mill ultimately proved the salvation of Steele's army.

46 *Ibid.*, pp. 55-56.

47 Ira Don Richards, "The Engagement at Marks' Mills," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* Vol. XIX, No. 1 (Spring 1960), 55-56. Marks' Mills was named for Hastings Marks, who had built several grist mills in the area.

The Union train covered seventeen miles on April 24, stopping to camp on the edge of the Moro bottom. The following morning, April 25, the train lurched into motion again, the 43rd Indiana out in front as the train and its escort entered Moro Bottom. Maj. Mark McCauley's Indianans, with one section of artillery, proceeded to the Marks' Mills road intersection five miles ahead to guard against a Confederate ambush.[48]

Cabell's division, on the morning of April 25, rode northward via the Warren road, while Shelby took position between Marks' Mills and the Saline River. Fagan's battle plan called for Cabell and Shelby to attack the Union train simultaneously, a difficult maneuver even for seasoned troops such as Fagan's. While Shelby's men remained mounted, Cabell was to dismount as he neared the intersection and have his men form line parallel to the Camden-Pine Bluff road, to the right of Dockery's brigade. Unfortunately for the Confederates, Dockery's brigade was late in taking up its position along the road, and the Federals arrived before Dockery.[49]

Skirmishing between the 43rd Indiana and Cabell's vanguard broke out to the west before Cabell caught sight of the wagon train approaching Marks' Mills. Disregarding Fagan's orders for a coordinated Confederate attack, Cabell launched his attack without contacting Shelby and with Dockery not yet on the field. Dockery, while en route from his night's bivouac, had discovered forage at a nearby farm and ordered his troops to suspend their march and feed their animals. One of Dockery's brother officers later observed:

> [n]either orders nor cannon-shots seemed to disturb that equanimity which he always carried with him into battle. Jolly, energetic, yet absolutely devoid of nervous sensibility, he appeared to have perfect immunity from both fear and anxiety."[50]

Upon arrival at Marks' Mills, Drake realized that the Confederates had ambushed the train. To avoid being flanked, Drake had the 43rd Indiana extend its skirmish line. Maj. Wesley Norris threw out two more companies to reinforce the three already engaged. The 36th Iowa came up on the double. As the Iowans arrived, Drake had Norris reinforce his skirmish line with his five remaining companies, while holding the 36th Iowa in reserve.[51]

Cabell soon drove back the Union skirmishers, but awaited Dockery's arrival before attempting to engage their main force. On learning of Cabell's success, Fagan sent word for Cabell to attack the train. Cabell's brigade surged forward, overwhelming the opposing Union cavalrymen and capturing a number of wagons as they reached the road. Cabell now saw that the Yanks had massed on his left, and, counterattacking the 43rd Indiana, compelled the 1st Arkansas Cavalry on his left to pull back. Cabell, to counter this Union success and to gain time, about-faced his battle line and moved up in support of the 1st Arkansas. One

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48 *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

49 *Ibid.*, "Engagement at Marks' Mills," pp. 57-58.

50 Bearss, *Steele's Retreat*, pp. 65-66.

51 *Ibid.*, p. 62.

hundred and twenty minutes of close and determined fighting ensued. The Confederates suffered from the small arms fire of the 43rd Indiana and the 36th Iowa and the canister-belching guns of Company E, but "Old Tig" Cabell and his people bit the bullet and held the roadblock.

Dockery's errant brigade finally came up, and General Fagan dismounted and deployed the newcomers on Cabell's left and sent them in. "Old Tig's" people joined in the charge and the Federals were compelled to seek shelter among some wagons and several log cabins.[52]

General Shelby, after having dispatched the 1st Missouri Cavalry Battalion to take and hold the Saline River crossing, had turned west on the Mount Elba road to participate in the Marks' Mills fight. As Shelby approached the battlefield, the sounds of artillery and small-arms fire were heard and the Confederates encountered and gobbled up Union stragglers and wagons en route to the Mount Elba crossing.[53]

As the column approached Marks' Mills, Capt. Richard A. Collins unlimbered the four guns of his Missouri battery and fired two blank cartridges to alert Fagan to Shelby's arrival. Shelby's division deployed from column into battle line and swept down on the Federals' left and rear. Whereupon, Cabell ordered his dismounted troopers to charge the Union position. The Arkansans stormed the guns of the 2nd Missouri Light Artillery, forcing the cannoneers to abandon their posts and seek shelter under a nearby log cabin, there to be surrounded by Rebels and eventually surrender. Colonel Drake, wounded earlier and unconscious, was carried from the building on a stretcher. Bitter fighting, hand to hand in places, continued for a short time, and then white flags appeared here and there on the field. The 43rd Indiana and the 36th Iowa surrendered.

The Confederates now turned their attention to the 77th Ohio, which, having been the rear guard of the column, had been unable to join the rest of Drake's forces. Probably realizing they were in a hopeless position, soldiers of this regiment put up an indifferent fight and were soon overwhelmed, most of them being captured. The Southerners then clashed with 500 men of the 1st Iowa Cavalry, veterans going home on furlough, who had been marching from Camden several miles behind the wagon train. Fagan's troops quickly drove back the Iowans and then the day's fighting ended.[54]

The Battle of Marks' Mills lasted five hours and involved 1,600 Federal effectives (not including the 1st Iowa Cavalry), of whom at least 1,300 were captured. The Southerners' strength had been diminished by the need to detail one-fourth of Cabell's and Dockery's men to hold mounts, while Elliott's battalion had been stationed at the Mount Elba crossing. There were about 2,500 Confederates on the field, and their losses were fewer than 500 casualties. Union losses were much higher. Although less than 100 Federals were killed, total casualties, including captured and wounded, approached 1,500. Colonel Drake also

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52 *Ibid.*, pp. 65-71.

53 *Ibid.*, pp. 70-71.

54 *Ibid.*, pp. 72-78. When Drake regained consciousness, he was questioned by General Fagan. "Can you not arrange for [the Union brigade's] surrender?" Fagan asked. "I am no longer in command," Drake replied.

reported that "a large number" of blacks and pro-Union Arkansans accompanying the Union train had been "inhumanly butchered by the enemy." The Union dead were buried on the Marks' Plantation. Following the war, many were disinterred and returned to their home states for burial. Confederate surgeons examining Colonel Drake pronounced his wound mortal, and Fagan allowed the colonel and other Union wounded to be returned to Camden under a flag of truce.[55]

In assessing the Confederate victory, Fagan found that he had captured a large number of ambulances, hundreds of small arms, 150 contraband slaves, four James rifled guns, and more than 300 wagons, many of which had been partially burnt. Personal property that the Union troops had looted from farms along the road was found in the captured wagons, including many prized family possessions belonging to Arkansans who had participated in the battle. Important and sensitive military documents and returns detailing Steele's troop strengths were captured. The wagons and Union prisoners were escorted under heavy guard back into Confederate territory across the Ouachita, the prisoners bound for the prison camp at Tyler, Texas. Responding to reports of another Union train en route from Princeton to Little Rock, Fagan departed early on April 26 with his reduced command up the west bank of the Saline River.[56]

Confederate casualties in the fight were disproportionately high and questions as to Fagan's judgment and tactics surface. The lack of coordination among Cabell's, Dockery's, and Shelby's commands hampered the effectiveness of the Confederate attack. Aside from this, the Confederate strategy and tactics at Marks' Mills were similar to those which had proven so effective at Poison Spring one week earlier.[57] In nine days, Steele had lost 440 wagons, prompting one observer to write that Steele "supplied the rebels with trains nearly as generously as General Banks ever did Stonewall Jackson." Marks' Mills represented one of the worst defeats the Federals suffered west of the Mississippi River.[58]

VIII. THE BATTLE OF JENKINS' FERRY

Steele's command was thrown into disarray as the first survivors to arrive brought word of the devastating defeat at Marks' Mills. The Confederate victory made the Federal presence in Camden untenable, and it became clear that Steele's army would never rendezvous with General Banks's army on Red River. Even supplying the troops with food and forage was now impossible. Of the 9,000 horses and mules the Federals had in Camden, available forage was sufficient to feed only 1,000. On the evening of April 25, as stragglers and wounded arrived in the beleaguered town, Steele convened a council of his generals. Intelligence indicated that the Confederates, bolstered by Smith's three infantry divisions, had a superior force on Camden's western approaches. Generals Salomon, Carr, and Thayer advised an immediate retreat to the Arkansas River, while General Rice suggested destroying

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55 *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.

56 *Ibid.*, pp. 78-79.

57 Johnson, *Red River Campaign*, p. 193.

58 Richards, "The Engagement at Marks' Mills," pp. 59-60.

all bridges over the Ouachita and falling back to Hampton, twenty-five miles to the east. Weighing his options, Steele chose to cut his losses and retreat to Little Rock to avoid starvation and possible capture. The Camden Expedition had failed.[59]

Preparations for withdrawal from Camden began immediately. Supplies that could not be taken along were destroyed. These included tents, mess chests, cooking utensils, harnesses, ninety-two wagons, and excess hardtack and bacon too cumbersome to carry back to Little Rock. Soldiers were issued rations barely sufficient to last them to Little Rock: many received just two pieces of hardtack and half a pint of cornmeal. To mislead Confederate scouts watching the western approaches to Camden, tattoo sounded at eight o'clock and taps at nine. By midnight, Steele's train had slipped out of the town and across the Ouachita River on the ponton bridge. Carr's cavalry and Thayer's infantry divisions followed the train across the river, then Salomon's 1st Brigade under Samuel Rice crossed. Colonel Engelmann's brigade, holding the Camden perimeter, abandoned the works at 1 a.m. The 2nd and 6th Kansas Cavalry Regiments patroled the streets, maintaining calm and preventing the destruction of private property as the bluecoats departed. The ponton bridge was taken up at daybreak and Steele's army headed north toward Jenkins' Ferry. A halt was called on the evening of the 26th, a few miles north of Camden, the exhausted Federals sleeping where they dropped.[60]

Kirby Smith seized on the arrival from Louisiana of Maj. Gen. John G. Walker's Texas Division as an opportunity to relieve Sterling Price of his duties and assume personal command of the Army of Arkansas. Price—his physical and mental vigor sapped by three years of war—was placed in charge of Churchill's and Parsons' infantry divisions. Several hours passed before the Confederates discovered the Federals' escape, and it was late on the morning of April 26 before General Price occupied the abandoned town with Churchill's and Parsons' foot soldiers. Walker's Texans entered Camden that afternoon.[61]

Because Smith's army had no ponton train, pursuit of the fleeing Federals by infantry was impossible for the time being, although Marmaduke led a small cavalry force across the Ouachita early the following morning. Confederates pioneers completed construction of a floating bridge by the evening of the 27th, and the following morning the Southerners crossed the Ouachita in pursuit of Steele's army. Before Camden, Kirby Smith—concerned about reports of a thrust deep into the Choctaw and Chickasaw nations by Maj. Gen. James G. Blunt's army based on Forts Smith and Gibson—detached Maxey's division and sent it back to Indian Territory. Smith's rationale for this drastic reduction of his cavalry strength is unclear. Although Smith's control over Tandy Walker's poorly disciplined Indian troops may have been minimal, the opportunity to destroy Steele's army should have been more important than any hypothetical Union threat to the Choctaw and Chickasaw nations.[62]

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59 Johnson, *Red River Campaign*, pp. 193-194.

60 *Ibid.*, p. 194.

61 Bearss, *Steele's Retreat*, pp. 92-93.

62 Johnson, *Red River Campaign*, pp. 194-195.

With Smith in pursuit, Steele's army hurried along the Princeton road toward Jenkins' Ferry on Saline River and Little Rock beyond, Carr's cavalry in the vanguard. Rumors were rampant that Smith's army had interposed between the Yanks and Little Rock. On the evening of April 27, Steele's army camped at Freeo, thirteen miles south of Princeton and seventeen miles from the Ouachita, where there were several good springs and a nearby farm with hundreds of bushels of corn. The army was on the march again before dawn the next morning, but stopped for camp near Princeton that afternoon.[63]

The ponton bridge completed, General Price sent Churchill's and Parsons' divisions across the Ouachita at sunrise on the 28th, followed by Walker's Texans. Speed was essential if Steele's army, with more than a day's lead over the Southerners, was to be overtaken. Steele's trail was easy to follow, as the road was strewn with "cast-off garments, and the property and plunder abandoned" by retreating Yanks. The Confederate march was spartan. Supply wagons were left behind and each soldier carried his own rations and ammunition. Ambulances and the artillery were the only wheeled vehicles. Price's two infantry divisions camped at the springs near Freeo where the bluecoats had stopped the night before, while Walker's Texans halted for the night three miles farther back.

Marmaduke, in command of Greene's cavalry, had ridden most of the day, passing through White Hall and Bucksnort in an attempt to cut off the Federals. It was after dark by the time Marmaduke gained the Military Road, to find that the bluecoats had passed and were now encamped at Princeton to the north. Marmaduke decided to bypass the sleeping Federals, slip his exhausted cavalry to the east, then re-enter the Military Road between Princeton and Tulip and set up a roadblock. But, by the time Marmaduke re-entered the Military Road, the Federals had again passed. Meanwhile, Major Elliott and his 1st Missouri Mounted Battalion, ordered by General Shelby on the morning of the 28th to reconnoiter toward Princeton and rendezvous with Fagan at Pratt's Ferry, skirmished with Carr's cavalry north of Princeton but failed to establish contact with Fagan.[64]

Steele's column was on the road at 4 a.m. on the 29th. Carr's cavalry division was in the lead, while Salomon's infantry division brought up the rear as the Federals marched north toward Tulip and Jenkins' Ferry beyond. Rain began to fall around noon, and soon became a deluge that lasted for the next 18 hours. As it neared the Saline, the Military Road, the route of Steele's march, descended a bluff and entered a swamp which extended to the river. North of and parallel to the narrow, constricted road was Cox's Creek, while to the south lay three fields separated by belts of timber. Trees were felled by the Federals along the eastern edge of the middle field (Kelly's) to form log breastworks and abatis. The road became a

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[63] Bearss, *Steele's Retreat*, pp. 93-97. Hours before Steele's army arrived on the 27th, Fagan and his command had crossed the Princeton road headed north from Marks' Mills to attack Union bases on the Arkansas River. Unaware that Steele had abandoned Camden, Fagan attempted to ford the swollen Saline River in several places, but finally turned back at Pratt's Ferry below Benton and, having received no orders from Smith, headed toward Arkadelphia on the morning of the 29th in search of food and forage.

[64] *Ibid.*, pp. 97-100.

hopeless mire as rain beat down, swallowing wagon wheels to their hubs and soldiers to their knees, slowing the train's progress as it neared the Saline. Steele ordered the road across the bottom corduroyed.[65]

On reaching the Saline at Jenkins' Ferry, Steele's chief engineer saw that the swollen river was too deep to ford and that pontons were necessary. That afternoon, the pontons were positioned and the wagons began crossing the river. Carr's cavalry was the first over in order to reconnoiter the river bottom to the east of the Saline and then proceed on to Little Rock. So many wagons had bogged down by 9:20 p.m. that the chief engineer asked Steele to halt the crossing for the night, but the general refused. His rear guard (Engelmann's brigade) had been in contact with Confederate cavalry since afternoon, and Steele wanted his train safely across the river before the Southerners brought up infantry and artillery. Despite their efforts, the bluecoats moved only half their train and artillery across the Saline before daybreak on April 30. Steele now knew that a holding action would be necessary to ensure the successful crossing of all his wagons.[66]

Jenkins' Ferry was not an optimum location for a battle. Except for the three fields near the road, Colonel Engelmann described the locale as "a majestic forest, growing out of the swamp, which it was very difficult to pass through on horseback, the infantry being most of the time in water up to their knees." The Military Road from Princeton descended from low lying hills into the morass two miles from Jenkins' Ferry. One hundred yards beyond the tangled undergrowth gave way to Jiles' field, one-quarter mile square and plowed. A 300-yard swath of timber separated this field from the much larger Kelly's field that extended to within a mile of the river. Beyond was the third field, Cooper's. Salomon chose a slough-like hollow running north and south through Kelly's field to establish his defense line and awaited the anticipated Confederate dawn attack. Cox's Creek, with steep, impassable banks, was on the right flank of the Union's defensive line, while a heavily wooded swamp protected the Federals to the south.[67]

On the night of the 29th, Engelmann's brigade—less the regiment (the 43rd Illinois Infantry) and the two guns manned by the Springfield Light Artillery—halted in Jiles' field near the foot of the bluff. The Illinois foot soldiers and artillerists were posted behind the crest of the ridge south of the Jiles house.

That afternoon, there had been a running fight between Engelmann's brigade guarding the army's rear and Marmaduke's cavalry out in front of Price's infantry. Artillery was employed by both the blue and the gray, as Engelmann's infantry faced the Rebels at Guesses Creek and bought time for Steele's columns.

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65 Johnson, *Red River Campaign*, pp. 197-198.

66 Bearss, *Steele's Retreat*, pp. 100-102.

67 Ira Don Richards, "The Battle of Jenkins' Ferry," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* Volume XX, Number 1 (Spring 1961), pp. 7-9.

The distant sound of cannon fire from the Guesses Creek fight was audible to Steele's people as they had descended into the Saline River bottom and pushed toward the river. Word was sent to Engelmann to hold the ridge overlooking the river bottom on the south with one regiment and a section of artillery. Steele's other infantry commands bivouacked as follows: Thayer's division, on one-quarter rations since leaving Camden, in the swamp along Military Road about a mile from Jenkins' Ferry, and Rice's brigade in Cooper's cornfield.[68]

Marmaduke's horse soldiers at dawn, on the 30th, advanced and, fighting dismounted, engaged and slowly pushed back Engelmann's pickets.

Marmaduke's troopers had engaged the enemy for more than two hours when Churchill's division arrived on the scene. After confusing and contradictory orders from Price, Brig. Gen. James C. Tappan's brigade was formed in line of battle and sent forward. It crossed Jiles' field and the belt of timber and met the enemy's skirmishers in the middle of Kelly's field. These were quickly pushed back to the main Union line at the far edge of the field, and by 8 a.m. Tappan was heavily engaged. He soon called for help, so hot was the fire. Churchill sent in Brig. Gen. A.T. Hawthorne's brigade, which arrived about 8:45 and Tappan took position on the right of these troops. In the meantime a regiment of Dockery's infantry (the 19th Arkansas), temporarily attached to Churchill's division, was sent across Cox's Creek by Kirby Smith to attack the enemy's right flank. After marching down the left bank of the stream for half a mile, Lt. Col. H.G.P. Williams, commanding the 19th Arkansas, opened a raking fire on the Federals on the south side. He was soon engaged by a force on the north bank consisting of the remnants of the brigade Fagan had demolished at Marks' Mills and two companies of the 29th Iowa.

South of Cox's Creek, where the serious fighting was taking place, the remaining brigade of Churchill's division, Col. Lucien C. Gause's, was sent into action to support Tappan and Hawthorne. By ten o'clock the Confederate line was pressed so heavily that it was necessary to send in Parsons's division. While in the belt of woods between the fields Parsons met General Price, who directed him to form on Churchill's right and advance on the enemy. As he was en route to execute this order, Parsons met Churchill himself, who said that unless his left or center was supported he would have to retreat. Parsons accordingly sent Brig. Gen. John Clark's brigade to take position on Gause's left, while he took Col. Simon Burns's brigade and formed on Gause's right. The Confederate first line now consisted of, from right to left, Tappan and Hawthorne, and the second line of Burns, Gause, and Clark. The fighting was savage. The Southerners advanced repeatedly, only to be repulsed each time. A thick layer of fog and gunsmoke covered Kelly's field like a woolen blanket making it necessary to stoop and look under the layer before taking aim. On the right of Steele's line, the 2d Kansas (Colored) captured three guns of Ruffner's Missouri battery, which had approached the regiment under the impression that it was a Confederate unit, demonstrating how poor the visibility was.

With ammunition in many commands running short, and the enemy fire from front and flank becoming unbearably hot, the two Southern divisions fell back in confusion. Seeing his men faltering, at 11:30, "Pap" Price ordered Churchill and Parsons to withdraw to the foot of the

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[68] Bearss, *Steele's Retreat*, pp. 105-106.

bluff at the western end of the Jiles field. They were followed by a small number of Federals, but there was no serious pursuit. Kirby Smith also directed Williams to recross Cox's Creek and rejoin his division.

Meantime Walker's division had come up and Kirby Smith ordered Brig. Gen. William R. Scurry and Col. Horace Randal to take their brigades and attack the Federals' left flank. Brig. Gen. Thomas Waul's brigade was held in reserve at the bluff. Churchill and Parsons were withdrawn before Walker could make contact with the enemy. Waul's brigade then moved up through Jiles' field and was placed on the left of Randal. Parsons was sent to Waul's support but drifted off to the right and was not seriously engaged. The Texans attacked the enemy with spirit but failed to make any impression on their lines. All of Walker's brigadiers were wounded, Scurry and Randal mortally. Elements of Churchill's battered division were sent in to reinforce Waul's left, but no progress could be made on that part of the field. Finally at 12:30 p.m. the Confederates retired to the western edge of Kelly's field, and the battle was over. After the fighting ended, Fagan arrived. He had been thirty-four miles away late the previous night when word came that the Union army was bayed at Jenkins' Ferry, and in spite of a forced march he was unable to get to the field in time to participate in the action.[69]

The Battle of Jenkins' Ferry was over and the Confederates had failed to stop the Union crossing of the Saline. When the firing ceased, General Salomon ordered his troops to fall back and cross the ponton bridge. As the fighting raged, the Federals had been moving the remainder of their wagon train across the river. By 11 a.m. only the infantry and one section of artillery remained on the west bank. By two in the afternoon the last of the infantry was across. Artillery and infantry were posted on the east bank to protect the bridge, which remained in place for two hours more to allow stragglers and the wounded the opportunity to cross and then was destroyed. The trains struggled through the same river bottom conditions on the east side of the Saline toward higher ground. With no pontons, Kirby Smith saw the Saline was too dangerous to attempt to ford and ordered pursuit of Steele's army ended.[70]

Both armies paid dearly for the carnage of Jenkins' Ferry. The Confederates reported 86 killed, 356 wounded, and one missing, a total of 443 casualties. The numbers would doubtless have been much higher, perhaps 800 to 1,000, if Walker's Texas Division's losses were known. Walker filed no report on the battle. Union casualties were listed as 63 killed, 413 wounded, and 45 missing, 521 casualties. Again, the Union total is incomplete, as General Thayer filed no report.[71]

The Battle of Jenkins' Ferry was a Union victory: the Federals held back the attacking Confederates and allowed their wagons time to cross the Saline. Kirby Smith's last, best hope to destroy Steele's army was dashed. He and Price, fearful that the Federals would escape, attacked piecemeal, throwing in their units as they came upon the field instead of in a

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69 Johnson, *Red River Campaign*, pp. 198-200; *O.R.*, Series I, Vol. XXXIV, pt. I, pp. 697, 725, 801-802, 808, 811-812, 825-830; Sperry, *33rd Iowa*, p. 91.

70 Richards, "The Battle of Jenkins' Ferry," p. 14.

71 *Ibid.*, p. 13.

concentrated all-out attack. The Confederates in their haste failed to reconnoiter and to capitalize on the Union's vulnerable left flank, choosing instead to pursue frontal assaults across Kelly's field, where the Southern line was devastated by Union small arms fire.

IX. THE CAMDEN EXPEDITION ENDS

Despite the success of the Federals' delaying action, Steele faced many difficulties in returning his command to Little Rock. The river bottom to the east of the Saline was worse than that to the west, and Steele's weary men and mules were often waist deep in water and mud, while the horse and mules were belly deep in the slime. Wagons that became stuck were burned rather than allow them to fall into Confederate hands, animals too weak to be led were set free, and there were reports of the accompanying contraband blacks abandoning their babies in order to keep up with the train. From mid-afternoon on April 30 until 4 a.m. the following morning, the harried and hungry Yanks maintained their grueling pace by the light of fires cavalry details kindled along the road. By mid-afternoon on May 1, the column reached the Benton road, and an hour later a train of provisions arrived from Little Rock. At ten-thirty on the morning of May 2, Steele's tattered Union columns marched into Little Rock, with the campaign's few trophies of a number of bedraggled prisoners and three captured cannons prominently displayed.[72]

His attempt to capture and destroy Steele's army a failure, Kirby Smith and his army spent the night of April 30 encamped near the battle site. On May 3, Smith ordered his three infantry divisions to return to Camden, and a few days later the Confederate infantry headed south in an effort to assist General Taylor's forces in their campaign against General Nathaniel Banks's army and to destroy Admiral Porter's fleet that had been compelled to halt their retreat at Alexandria, Louisiana, because low water had closed the Red River falls to navigation. Despite the lackluster Confederate performance at Jenkins' Ferry, the Confederate campaign against Steele's Camden Expedition through southwest Arkansas was a success. The Federals had retreated in disarray only ten days after the capture of Camden, and had suffered 2,750 casualties as opposed to the Confederates 2,300. More than 600 wagons and 2,500 mules were lost by the Yanks, while the Southerners' only loss of materiel was a train of 35 wagons burned at Longview on March 30 and the three guns captured at Jenkins' Ferry. These Confederate losses were more than offset by the nine Union cannon captured at Poison Spring and Marks' Mills. Sterling Price failed to distinguish himself against the invading Federals, taking too long to concentrate his cavalry against the Union column and mishandling his infantry at Jenkins' Ferry, although he must be accorded some of the credit for the Confederate victories at Poison Spring and Marks' Mills that forced Steele to abandon Camden and return to Little Rock.[73]

The reasons for the failure of Steele's 40-day Camden Expedition as are myriad. The lack of a consistent and dependable source of supplies dogged the Federals throughout their expedition, a result of the poverty of the region and the tenuous supply lines from the Union

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[72] Johnson, *Red River Campaign*, pp. 201-202.

[73] *Ibid.*, pp. 203-204. Churchill and Parsons remained in Arkansas and joined Sterling Price's expedition into Missouri later that year.

depots. In the face of active resistance to his march on Shreveport, Steele's army was compelled to consume its scarce resources and was unable to continue toward Red River. On record as opposed to the campaign from the start, Steele cannot be held solely responsible for its failure. Nevertheless, his decisions to allow his supply trains to leave Camden without adequate troop protection were responsible for the loss of the Union trains at Poison Spring and Marks' Mills. To Steele's credit, the Union advance from Little Rock and the successful rear-guard delaying action at Jenkins' Ferry were well-executed.[74]

The Camden Expedition of 1864 ended as it had begun, with Steele's army, the worse for wear, safely ensconced in Little Rock while the obstinate Confederates retained control of southwestern Arkansas and the Red River valley. The Camden Expedition was a Union failure, with none of its goals achieved. The War in the West would drag on for another year, and Sterling Price would even take the fight deep into Union Missouri from Arkansas in the fall of 1864, before the guns would fall silent in the Trans-Mississippi West.

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[74] *Ibid.*, pp. 204-205.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

___ Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
_X_ Previously Listed in the National Register.
___ Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.
___ Designated a National Historic Landmark.
_X_ Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: #AR-32-3 [Confederate State Capitol]
___ Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

_X_ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State Agency
___ Federal Agency
___ Local Government
___ University
___ Other (Specify Repository):

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ELKINS' FERRY BATTLEFIELD:
Acreage of Property: Approx. 575

UTM References: Zone Northing Easting

A	15	467480	3754190
B	15	468440	3754190
C	15	468260	3754820
D	15	467060	3755850
E	15	466150	3755000

Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at a point on Nevada County Road 37, approximately four-tenths (0.4) of a mile south of the Little Missouri River [Okolona South Quadrangle, UTM point A]; proceed east approximately seven-tenths (.07) of a mile to a point on the western bank of the Little Missouri River [Okolona South Quadrangle, UTM point B]; proceed north-northeasterly, across the river, approximately one-half (0.5) mile to a point [Okolona Quadrangle, UTM point C]; proceed northwesterly, across the river, approximately one (1) mile to a point on the western bank of the Little Missouri River [Okolona South Quadrangle, UTM point D]; proceed southwesterly approximately seven-tenths (0.7) of a mile to a point [Okolona South Quadrangle, UTM point E]; proceed southeast approximately eight-tenths (0.8) of a mile to the point of origin. This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the Battle of Elkins' Ferry.

Boundary Justification:

Based on the *Official Records* and staff research, this boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the Battle of Elkins' Ferry.

PRAIRIE DE ANN BATTLEFIELD:
Acreage of Property: 2,673 acres

UTM References:

		Zone	Easting	Northing
Prairie DeAnn	**A**	15	463450	3743670
	B	15	463170	3743120
	C	15	461540	3741700
	D	15	460430	3742240
	E	15	458120	3743680
	F	15	458930	3743780
	G	15	461040	3745410
	H	15	461610	3745390
	I	15	462070	3745110
	J	15	463020	3744270

Moscow	**A**	15	466120	3737980
	B	15	466760	3737340
	C	15	466720	3736360
	D	15	465430	3736530

Verbal Boundary Description:

Battle of Prairie De Ann

Beginning at the northwestern corner of the intersection of the west-bound entrance ramp of Interstate 30 intersects with State Highway 19 [Prescott West Quadrangle, UTM point A]; proceed north approximately one-half (0.5) mile to a point on the southwestern side of State Highway 19 [Prescott East Quadrangle, UTM point B]; proceed west-northwest approximately three-quarters (0.75) of a mile to a point on the southwestern side of State Highway 19; proceed northwest approximately four-tenths of a mile to a point on the southwestern side of State Highway 19 [Prescott East Quadrangle, UTM point C]; proceed west approximately four-tenths (0.4) of a mile to a point [Prescott East Quadrangle, UTM point D]; proceed southwesterly approximately one and six-tenths (1.6) of a mile to a point on the Prescott and Northwestern Railroad line [Prescott East Quadrangle, UTM point E]; proceed southeast along the northeastern side of the Prescott and Northwestern Railroad line approximately two-tenths (0.2) of a mile to a point on the northern side of the railroad tracks [Prescott East Quadrangle, UTM point F]; proceed southeast approximately one and two-tenths (1.2) mile along the northeastern side of the railroad tracks to a point [Prescott East Quadrangle, UTM point H]; proceed southeast approximately three-quarters (0.75) of a mile to a point where the Prescott and Northwestern Railroad line intersects with Interstate 30 [Prescott West Quadrangle, UTM point I]; proceed northeasterly along the western side of Interstate 30 approximately one and three-tenths (1.3) of a mile to a point where the Interstate 30 joins the west-bound entrance ramp onto Interstate 30 from State Highway 19 [Prescott West Quadrangle, UTM point J]; proceed north approximately three-tenths (0.3) of a mile along the western side of the Interstate 30 west-bound entrance ramp to the point of origin. This boundary includes all of the extant portions of the property historically associated with the Battle of Prairie DeAnn that retain their integrity, with the exception of that portion of the battlefield known as the Battle of Moscow, described below.

Battle of Moscow

Beginning at a point on Nevada County Road 23 approximately one-half mile north of the intersection of Nevada County Roads 23 and 257 [Prescott East Quadrangle, UTM point A]; proceed southeasterly approximately six-tenths (0.6) of a mile to a point [Prescott East Quadrangle, UTM point B]; proceed south approximately four-tenths (.04) of a mile, across Nevada County Road 257, to a point [Prescott East Quadrangle, UTM point C]; proceed west approximately seven-tenths (0.7) of a mile to a point [Prescott East Quadrangle, UTM point D]; proceed north-northeasterly approximately eight-tenths (0.8) of a mile to the point of origin. This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the southeast portion of the Battle of Prairie DeAnn, alternately referred to as the Battle of Moscow.

Boundary Justification:

Based on the *Official Records* and staff research, this boundary includes all of the extant portions of the property historically associated with the Battle of Prairie DeAnn that retain their integrity, including that portion of the battlefield known as the Battle of Moscow.

POISON SPRING BATTLEFIELD
Acreage of Property: 1,120 acres

UTM References:

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	15	500090	3721900
B	15	499480	3721360
C	15	496380	3722900
D	15	496960	3723950
E	15	499610	3722710
F	15	500120	3722860

Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at a point on State Highway 76 approximately four miles west of the intersection with State Highway 57 [Bragg City Quadrangle, UTM point A]; proceed southwesterly approximately one-half (.05) mile to a point [Chidester Quadrangle, UTM point B]; proceed northwesterly two and one-tenth (2.1) mile to a point [Chidester Quadrangle, UTM point C]; proceed north three-quarters (0.75) of a mile to a point [Chidester Quadrangle, UTM point D]; proceed southeasterly approximately one and eight-tenths (1.8) of a mile to a point [Chidester Quadrangle, UTM point E]; proceed east approximately two-tenths (0.2) of a mile to a point [Bragg City Quadrangle, UTM point F]; proceed south approximately six-tenths (0.6) of a mile to the point of origin. This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the Battle of Poison Spring.

Boundary Justification:

Based on the *Official Records* and staff research, this boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the Battle of Poison Spring.

MARKS' MILLS BATTLEFIELD
Acreage of Property: 1,742 acres

UTM References:

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	15	568320	3739240
B	15	569400	3739990
C	15	570280	3739980
D	15	570280	3736950
E	15	569440	3736270
F	15	567540	3737650
G	15	567530	3738550

Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at a point at the northeast corner of the intersection of Cleveland County Road 6 and State Highway 97 [Kingsland Quadrangle, UTM point A]; proceed northeasterly approximately eight-tenths (0.8) of a mile to a point [New Edinburg Quadrangle, UTM point B]; proceed east approximately five-tenths (0.5) of a mile to a point [New Edinburg Quadrangle, UTM point C]; proceed south approximately one and nine-tenths (1.9) of a mile to a point [New Edinburg Quadrangle, UTM point D]; proceed southwesterly approximately seven-tenths (.07) of a mile to a point [New Edinburg Quadrangle, UTM point E]; proceed northwesterly approximately one and one-half (1.5) mile to a point [Kingsland Quadrangle, UTM Point F]; proceed north approximately six-tenths (0.6) of a mile to a point on State Highway 8 [Kingsland Quadrangle, UTM Point G); proceed northeasterly approximately seven-tenths (.07) of a mile to the point of origin. This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the Battle of Marks' Mills.

Boundary Justification:

Based on the *Official Records* and staff research, this boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the Battle of Marks' Mills.

JENKINS' FERRY BATTLEFIELD
Acreage of Property: 1,900 acres

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing

A	15	541400	3785620
B	15	537560	3784050
C	15	539510	3782000
D	15	542050	3784840
E	15	542270	3785230

Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at a point where State Highway 46 crosses the southwestern bank of the Saline River, proceed northwest approximately one-quarter (0.25) mile along the southern bank of the Saline River and Brush Creek to the point at which Cox Creek and Brush Creek join [Leola Quadrangle, UTM point A]; proceed west-southwesterly approximately 2.7 miles to a point [Leola Quadrangle, UTM point B]; proceed southeast approximately 1.9 miles, across State Highway 46, to a point [Leola Quadrangle, UTM point C]; proceed northeasterly approximately 2.7 miles to a point on the Saline River [Leola Quadrangle, UTM point D]; proceed northeast, across the river, approximately one-half (0.5) mile to a point [Leola Quadrangle, UTM point E]; proceed southwest, across the river, approximately three-tenths (0.3) mile to the point of origin. This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the Battle of Jenkins' Ferry.

Boundary Justification:

Based on the *Official Records* and staff research, this boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the Battle of Jenkins' Ferry.

FORT LOOKOUT
Acreage of Property: 7 (seven) acres

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing

A	15	515340	3717740
B	15	515490	3717620
C	15	515320	3717500
D	15	515280	3717550

Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at a point on the northwestern terminus of Gravel Pit Road in the City of Camden [Camden Quadrangle, UTM point A]; proceed northeast approximately 800 feet to a point on the western side of the northern terminus of Monroe Road [Camden Quadrangle, UTM point B]; proceed southwest approximately 1,000 feet to a point [Camden Quadrangle, UTM point C]; proceed northwest approximately two hundred feet to a point [Camden Quadrangle, UTM point D]; proceed north approximately 800 feet to the point of origin. This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with Fort Lookout, also known as Redoubt A.

Boundary Justification:

Based on the *Official Records* and staff research, this boundary includes all of the property historically associated with Redoubt A, Fort Lookout.

FORT SOUTHERLAND
Acreage of Property: 6 acres

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing

A	15	516860	3714790
B	15	517030	3714790
C	15	517030	3714630
D	15	516860	3714660

Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at a point on the southwest corner of the intersection of Lear Avenue and Bradley Ferry Road in the city of Camden [Camden Quadrangle, UTM point A]; proceed east along the southern side of Bradley Ferry Road approximately 800 feet to the intersection of Bradley Ferry Road and Progress Street [Camden Quadrangle, UTM point B]; proceed south along

Progress Street approximately 600 feet to the point at which Progress Street turns west [Camden Quadrangle, UTM point C]; proceed west along Progress Street approximately 600 feet to the northeast corner of the intersection of Progress Street and Lear Avenue [Camden Quadrangle, UTM point D]; proceed north approximately 250 feet to the point of origin. This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with Fort Southerland, also known as Redoubt E.

Boundary Justification:

Based on the *Official Records* and staff research, this boundary includes all of the property historically associated with Redoubt E, Fort Southerland.

CONFEDERATE STATE CAPITOL
Acreage of Property: less than 1

UTM References: A 15 435101 3405086

Verbal Boundary Description:

Lots 1, 2, 3, and 4, Block 0, Original Town of Washington.

Boundary Justification:

Lots historically associated with this building.

11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: Don Baker, Planning Officer
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

as edited by

Edwin C. Bearss, Chief Historian
National Park Service
History Division (418)
P.O. Box 37127, Suite 310
Washington, DC 20013-7127
Telephone: 202/343-8174

Date: November 9, 1993

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: U.S. ARSENAL

Other Name/Site Number: Old Arsenal; Arkansas Museum of Science and History

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 601 East 9th Street Not for publication:___

City/Town: Little Rock Vicinity:___

State: AR County: Pulaski Code: 119 Zip Code: 72202

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property
Private:___
Public-Local: X
Public-State:___
Public-Federal:___

Category of Property
Building(s): X
District:___
Site:___
Structure:___
Object:___

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
1	0	Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 1

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing:

4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ____ nomination ____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Signature of Certifying Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ Entered in the National Register
___ Determined eligible for the National Register
___ Determined not eligible for the National Register
___ Removed from the National Register
___ Other (explain):

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic:	Defense	Sub:	Arms Storage
Current:	Recreation & Culture	Sub:	Museum

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION:

MATERIALS:
Foundation: Other (Rubble)
Walls: Brick
Roof:
Other: Wood

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

SUMMARY

The Old Arsenal is a two-story, brick, rectangular structure 122' long and 42' wide, with a full basement. Its two 3-bay wings flank a three-story crenellated tower, octagonal in shape and 25' in diameter. The tower projects from the center of the north side of the building and is entered from a single centered door.

A two-story veranda runs along the north side from both ends of the building to the octagonal tower in the center of the structure. On the south side, a wood veranda runs the full length of the first floor, the roof being supported by braced wood columns spaced approximately 17' on centers.

ELABORATION

Rubble exterior walls, 3'11" thick, rise from the foundations to the first floor level. Above this point exterior walls are brick, averaging 2' 9" thick. All interior partitions are wood frame. First and second floor joists are 3"x12"s on 13" centers. First floor joists are supported by heavy wood girders supported by wood posts. The roof structure consists of heavy wood trusses spaced approximately 10" on centers, supporting 8"x10" purlins and 3"x6" rafters 16" on centers, and 3"x4" ceiling rafters 16" on centers.

The building is in excellent condition, having undergone exterior restoration in the late 1960s and again in 1993. While the basic brick structure has remained unaltered over the years, there have been changes in the wooden verandas and exterior stairways. It is entirely possible that the building was built without verandas. An 1863 *Harper's* engraving shows no veranda on the rear of the building. Photographs of the building prior to 1900, however, show the verandas on the front of the building much the same as they are today. Photographs and measured drawings made during a 1935 Historic American Buildings Survey show the two verandas, but the second floor veranda was without a roof at that time. The restoration conforms to the pre-1900 appearance. Some balustrades have been removed from the first floor verandas and new exterior steps to the central first-floor door of the octagonal tower have been installed in order to better channel the flow of visitors into the main entrance.

Gen. Douglas MacArthur was born in 1880 in one of the rooms on the first floor in the west wing of the building, which then formed the officers' quarters at the post. The exact room is not known. There are three rooms on each level in that wing, one room on each level in the east wing, single rooms in the central tower on both the first and second floors, an added room on the upper level of the tower, and several rooms in the basement. The only interior change of note has been the addition of new partitions to form the basement rooms.

The Arsenal houses Little Rock's Arkansas Museum of Science and History.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:
Nationally: X Statewide:___ Locally:___

Applicable National Register Criteria: A X B X C___ D___

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A___ B___ C___ D___ E___ F___ G___

NHL Criteria: 1

NHL Theme(s): VI. The Civil War
C. The War in the West

Areas of Significance: Military

Period(s) of Significance: March 23-May 2, 1864

Significant Dates:

Significant Person(s):

Cultural Affiliation:

Architect/Builder: John Warmley Walker

State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

SUMMARY

The Little Rock Arsenal was a strategic point in both the Confederate defense of Arkansas and in the subsequent Federal occupation and administration of the State, but its national importance derives from its association with Steele's Camden Expedition. It supplied the arms and ammunition that supported the expedition; it had served as the headquarters of Brig. Gen. Samuel A. Rice, who left from it on March 23, 1864, to march out of Little Rock with Steele's other legions; and, during the absence of the Union main force on the Camden Expedition, it served as the headquarters of Brig. Gen. Nathan Kimball, who had remained behind to garrison the City.

HISTORY[1]

There had been much talk before 1836 of establishing a Federal arsenal in the Territory of Arkansas, but little was done. Just after Arkansas was admitted into the Union, Gov. James Sevier Conway made a plea to the War Department in which he said,

> We trust that the enlightened members of that body (meaning Congress) will not forget the claims of Arkansas upon the public revenue. We are a frontier people exposed to savage invasions and are often in pressing need of assistance and protection which only the Federal government can afford.

The governor also pointed out that many Indians were constantly passing through on their way to lands further west.

The War Department responded and appropriated the sum of $14,000 for an arsenal to be built at Little Rock. They then sent Lt. F.L. Jones of the U.S. Army to select the site. The site which he chose is the same which today makes up MacArthur Park.

The next two years were spent drawing up the agreements for the building supplies. Then in 1838 all was ready to begin. John Warmley Walker, a government employee, was sent from Baton Rouge, where he was supervising the building of another arsenal, to Little Rock to serve as supervisor and master builder for the job. He liked Arkansas so well that, after completion of the Arsenal, he decided to make his home in the State.

From the time of the Arsenal's completion in 1840 until the outbreak of the Civil War, little happened to disturb routine life at the post. Then came the frantic months before the outbreak of the war. The secession movement was growing. Several states had already seceded and in Arkansas the sentiment was gaining ground. In November 1860, Company F, Second United States Artillery, was transferred to Little Rock from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, with Capt. James Totten in command.

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1 This historical discussion is largely based on that found in the National Register of Historic Places nomination form prepared by Jack E. Porter of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program in 1969.

With the secession of South Carolina on December 20, 1860, Arkansas took steps to secure the Arsenal. On February 8, 1861, Captain Totten surrendered the Arsenal, intact, to Gov. Henry M. Rector. The land and buildings of the arsenal were valued at $100,000 and contained machinery for the repair of arms, 10,000 stand of arms, ammunition and several cannon.

On the 6th and 7th of March 1862, Union forces under Maj. Gen. Samuel Curtis defeated the Confederate forces under Maj. Gen. Earl Van Dorn at the Battle of Pea Ridge. This defeat led Van Dorn to withdraw across the Mississippi River in April. Van Dorn stripped Arkansas of men and military supplies and even removed machinery from the arsenal.

In the latter part of May 1862, Maj. Gen. Thomas C. Hindman took command of the Confederate forces in the State. Under General Hindman's aggressive leadership there was a 180 degree change in Confederate fortunes in Arkansas. At the time of his arrival as newly appointed commander, Union troops advancing from Batesville had reached Searcy, less than 60 miles northeast of Little Rock and Confederate resistance had seemingly collapsed.

A vigorous application of the conscription and impressment laws by Hindman turned the situation around. New regiments were organized, equipped, and mustered into Confederate service. Key to this reversal of Confederate fortunes was Hindman's ability to establish an armaments industry in the state that centered on the Little Rock Arsenal.

The machinery in the arsenal for the manufacture of ammunition had been operative until its removal by Van Dorn. Confederate troops routed through Little Rock had used the machinery to manufacture cartridges for themselves. Hindman endeavored to make the arsenal operative again. He secured materials for making ammunition from the citizens of Little Rock by means of purchases, impressments, and donations. He re-established a laboratory at the arsenal to manufacture ammunition. He employed or conscripted gunsmiths, impressed or purchased tools and began to utilize the shops of the arsenal to repair damaged small arms. In August 1862, the Little Rock Arsenal became an official Confederate Ordnance Station. The arsenal was built up and did considerable manufacture of ammunition and repair of small arms. With the fall of Little Rock to Union forces on September 10, 1863, the Confederates were forced to evacuate the arsenal and to move their munitions operations to Arkadelphia, Ark., and later to Tyler, Texas.

Under Union occupation, various public buildings and private residences in the City were confiscated or commandeered by their forces.[2] The Arsenal served as headquarters for the District of Arkansas and as an ordnance depot. The building and its dependencies provided the arms and ammunition that supported the Camden Expedition. Before leading his troops out of Little Rock on March 23, 1864, with Maj. Gen. Frederick Steele, Brig. Gen. Samuel A. Rice and his staff also occupied it. During the absence of the Union main force, Brig. Gen. Nathan Kimball, who commanded the District during Steele's campaign, maintained his

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2 A list of those properties used can be found in Charles G. Williams, "Houses Used by the Union Army in the City of Little Rock, Arkansas," Pulaski County Historical Society Review, Summer 1985.

headquarters there. The Arsenal, which remained in Union hands until the end of the war, represented Union authority in the State from the initial occupation of Little Rock until the inauguration of the reconstructed State government.

After the Civil War the Arsenal settled into the uneventful life of a peacetime military post. Douglas MacArthur was born in the building on January 26, 1880, during his father's service at the post. In 1892, the arsenal and grounds were exchanged by the Federal government for 1000 acres of ground north of the Arkansas River, which was owned by the citizens of Little Rock. The arsenal was turned over to the city with the stipulation that the grounds be "forever exclusively devoted to the uses and purposes of a public park."

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Washington: 1880-1901, Series 1, Vols. I, XIII, XXXIV.

Williams, Charles G. "Houses Used by the Union Army in the City of Little Rock, Arkansas," *Pulaski County Historical Society Review*, Summer 1985.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

___ Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
_X_ Previously Listed in the National Register.
___ Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.
___ Designated a National Historic Landmark.
_X_ Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: #AR-332-12
___ Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

___ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State Agency
___ Federal Agency
_X_ Local Government
___ University
___ Other (Specify Repository):

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: Less than one (1) acre.

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing
A 15 567280 3844090

Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at a point formed by the intersection of a line running parallel to the northern elevation with a perpendicular line running parallel to the eastern elevation of the building and located 25 feet to the east thereof, proceed southerly along said line for a distance of approximately 200 feet to a point formed by its intersection with a perpendicular line running parallel to the southern elevation of the building. Thence proceed westerly along said line for a distance of approximately 200 feet to a point formed by its intersection with a perpendicular line running parallel to the west elevation of the building. Thence proceed northerly for a distance of approximately 200 feet along said line to a point formed by its intersection with a perpendicular line running parallel to the northern elevation for a distance of approximately 200 feet to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification:

The original lot has been subdivided during the nonhistoric period, resulting in an indefinite current lot boundary. This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the Arsenal that retains its integrity.

11. FORM PREPARED BY

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Date: November 29, 1993