

THE CONFEDERATED TRIBES LANGUAGE LESSON

Root Digging is a time of ceremony and remembrance. So, in the spirit of celebration of a time and people who came before us, here is a historical version of current events: What happened on this day in history? Read on to find out!

April in North American Indian History
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April 1st

- 1536: After being shipwrecked in Galveston, Texas, Cabeza de Vaca and a few men march across the continent to California. They will be the first "white men" to visit many Indian tribes. Today, Cabeza de Vaca will reach "civilization" again at San Miguel in New Galicia.
- 1880: Captain Eli Huggins, and Troop E, Second Cavalry, from Fort Keogh, in east-central Montana, surprise a band of "hostile" SIOUX today. During a brief battle, the soldiers capture 5 Indians, 46 horses, and some weapons. Lt. John Coale, and Troop C, 2nd Cavalry, from Fort Custer, in south-central Montana, had a skirmish with SIOUX on O'Fallon's Creek. One soldier is killed in the fighting. According to Army reports, some of these Indians were believed to have been involved in the theft of Crow Indian scout horses, from Fort Custer, on March 24, 1880. For his part in cutting off the Indians' herd of ponies through the use of "fearless exposure and dashing bravery," second lieutenant Lloyd M. Brett was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Captain Huggins will also be awarded the medal of honor for his actions in the fighting today.

April 2nd

- 1513: Today, according to some sources, Ponce de Leon will "discover" Florida and land south of the St. John's River. He will claim Florida for Spain. There is considerable debate as to the exact date of this event.
- 1885: An incident in the Second Riel Rebellion takes place today.
- 1975: A 3 day National Conference on Indian Water Rights is convened today in Washington, D.C. Representatives from almost 200 tribes will attend the meeting.

April 3rd

- 1730: Today, in the CHEROKEE village of Nequassee, modern day Franklin, North Carolina, Sir Alexander Cuming will oversee a ceremony making Chief Moytoy the "Emperor of the CHEROKEES." This will be his final step in having the CHEROKEES acknowledge the sovereignty of King George II of England.
- 1861: White settlers have started moving onto SIOUX lands, near New Ulm, Minnesota. In an effort to improve their illegal standing, today, they petition President Lincoln for protection against the Indians.

April 4th

- 1840: Today, COMANCHE Chief Piava arranges an exchange of 2 prisoners with the residents of San Antonio. Two captives from each side are released.
- 1879: According to Army files, a group of Indians stole almost 30 horses from Countryman's ranch, on the Yellowstone River. Local citizens, and "friendly" CROW Indians pursued them. They would be found on April 22, 1879.

April 5th

- 1832: After being removed from Illinois in 1831, Black Hawk, and his SAC followers lived in Iowa. Wanting to return to their old home land, today, Black Hawk, and almost 1000 of his tribe, will cross the Mississippi River back into Illinois. Not much later, they will be attacked by the whites. (See 4/6)
- 1879: Having been cast out of Little Wolf's Band of CHEYENNE for killing 2 of their fellow Northern CHEYENNE, a group of 8 Indians are moving on their own. Today, they will attack a sergeant, and a private, of the 2nd Cavalry, on Mizpah Creek. The sergeant will be seriously wounded, and the private will be killed.

April 6th

- 1792: Today, CHICKAMAUGA Chief Captain Bench, and followers, will attack settlements near Holston. After killing 4 people, he will have a declaration of war beside the bodies. A former friend to Europeans, the death of his great uncle, Old Tassel, at the hands of whites, turned his heart to war.
- 1875: Black Horse in one of several Southern CHEYENNE Indians being sent to prison from the Cheyenne and Arapaho Agency (later called Fort Reno) in west-central Indian Territory, to St. Augustine, Florida, for his part in the uprisings in Indian Territory, and Texas. While handcuffed, he attempts to escape into the rest of his tribe. He is pursued, and mortally wounded, by the Army guards under Captain Andrew Bennett, 5th Infantry. Several of the shots at Black Horse miss him, and hit other Indians in the crowd. The Indians retaliate with a hail of bullets and arrows. Almost half of the CHEYENNE flee the agency, to some hills south of the Canadian River. Lt. Col. T.H. Neill, and 1 company of Infantry, and the troops of Cavalry, pursue the CHEYENNE. A fight begins when the soldiers catch up to the CHEYENNE. The fight continues until after sunset. The next day, 11 Indians were found dead. Nineteen Indians were wounded in the engagement. Most of the CHEYENNE would, eventually, return to the agency. Another group of 60 to 70 CHEYENNEs, characterized as some of the worst criminal elements of the tribe by the Army, flee north to the Platte River country.

April 7th

- 1830: President Jackson has submitted a bill that would call for the removal of most of the Indians in the southeast to lands west of the Mississippi. In a speech today, Senator Theodore Frelinghuysen, denounces the bill. He asked the Senate when was it ever proclaimed "that the right of discovery contained a superior efficacy to all prior titles?"
- 1873: In a MODOC council in the lava beds, Hooker Jim, Black Jim, Schonchin John and others tell Captain Jack that the peace commissioners are just buying time to bring in more soldiers. They say the commissioners just want to trick the MODOCs. They demand that Captain Jack, as tribal Chief, kill Commissioner General Canby during the peace conference. Captain Jack is against the idea, but he agrees to do so.
- 1984: The first meeting between the eastern and western CHEROKEES since the 1800s is held today.

April 8th

- 1756: Today, Governor Robert Morris will declare war on the DELAWARE and SHAWNEE Indians. As a part of his declaration, he will offer the following bounties: prisoners: men over 12=150 Spanish pieces of eight, women or boys=130; scalps: men=130, women and boys=50. The bounty on scalps will lead to the killing of many innocent Indians who were members of neither tribe. The legislation for this would be called "The Scalp Act".
- 1944: Ernest Childers gets the Medal of Honor today.

April 9th

- 1772: Whites can now buy Indian land in Oklahoma without government approval.
- 1884: A woman, identified by local missionaries as Sacajawea, dies today in Wyoming. If this is the Sacajawea of the Lewis and Clark expedition, she would be almost 100 years old.

April 10th

- 1837: As part of the treaty signed on March 6th, the SEMINOLEs were to report to Tampa Bay no later than today for transport to the Indian Territory. Prior to today, General Jesup reneged on one of the provisions of the treaty. He allowed whites to come among the Indians to seek out blacks whom they claimed as runaway slaves. This would make the SEMINOLEs doubt if the United States would live up to this agreement. Many of the SEMINOLEs would disappear into the woods.
- 1871: On this date, APACHEs raid the San Xavier mission, south of Tucson, and steal livestock.

April 11th

- 1968: The American Indian Civil Rights Act is passed.
- 1859: The QUINAULT and QUILEUTE treaties signed on July 1, 1855 and January 25, 1856 will be officially proclaimed by the President of the United States.

April 12th

- 1836: Since April 5, 1836, a blockhouse 12 miles from the mouth of the Withlacoochee has been staffed by Captain Holleman and 50 volunteers from the Florida militia. Today, they will be attacked by up to 1,000 SEMINOLE warriors. The attacks on the block house will continue to be attacked for the next 2 months.
- 1875: Sergeant Alchesay, Corporal Elsatsoosu, Kelsay, Kosoha, Machol, Nannasaddie and Nantaje in the Indian Scouts, will be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor today for their service to the U.S. Army as a scout during "campaigns and engagements with APACHEs" during the winter of 1872 and 1873.

April 13th

- 1946: Congress will create the Indian Claims Commission today. The commission is established to hear and decide claims made by Indians based on land losses from treaties.
- 1846: The 2 CHEROKEE factions (old settlers and new emigrants) continue to feud over who has legal control of the CHEROKEE Nation. Based on appeals from the old settlers and the agreement of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, President James Polk asks Congress to approve the creation of separate reservations for the two sides. The new emigrants will oppose the proposal. An agreement will be reached by both sides on August 6, 1846.

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