

☆☆☆☆☆☆ 150th ANNIVERSARY | THE BATTLE OF LYNCHBURG ☆☆☆☆☆☆

Confederate deception leads to Union confusion

BY JON NESS • THE NEWS & ADVANCE

The Battle of Lynchburg took place June 17-18, 1864, as part of Hunter's Raid, an offensive ordered by Union Gen. Ulysses S. Grant aimed at destroying the Shenandoah Valley and railroad network link in Lynchburg that supplied the Confederate army around Richmond. Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee ordered Lt. Gen. Jubal Early's Second Corps to stop Union Maj. Gen. David Hunter's advance to Lynchburg. The battle occurred in a number of spots in the city, including the Quaker Meeting House, Fort Early and Fort McCausland.

Old Jube vs. Black Dave

CONFEDERACY

Lt. Gen. Jubal Early
» **Born:** November 3, 1816 (Franklin County, Va.)
» **Died:** March 2, 1894 (Lynchburg, Va.)

- » **War experience**
- » Seminole Wars
 - » Mexican-American War
 - » Civil War
 - » First Battle of Bull Run
 - » Battle of Williamsburg
 - » Seven Days Battles
 - » Northern Virginia Campaign
 - » Battle of Antietam
 - » Battle of Fredericksburg
 - » Battle of Chancellorsville
 - » Battle of Gettysburg
 - » Overland Campaign
 - » Battle of Lynchburg (Valley Campaigns)
 - » Battle of Waynesboro

» After the Confederate surrender, Early escaped to Cuba, then Canada, where he worked on his memoir. He was pardoned by President Andrew Jackson in 1868 and returned to Virginia in 1869, where he was a strong proponent of the Lost Cause movement.
» Early is buried at Spring Hill Cemetery.

UNION

Maj. Gen. David Hunter

» **Born:** July 21, 1802 (Troy, N.Y.)
» **Died:** Feb. 2, 1886 (Washington, D.C.)

- » **War experience**
- » Second Seminole War
 - » Mexican-American War
 - » Civil War
 - » First Battle of Bull Run
 - » Battle of Fort Pulaski
 - » Battle of Piedmont
 - » Battle of Lynchburg

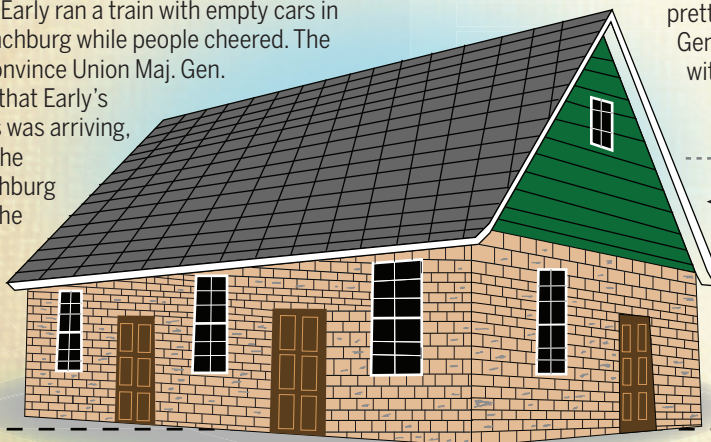
» In May 1862, he gave an unauthorized order to free slaves in Georgia, Florida and South Carolina. President Abraham Lincoln rescinded the order, saying it was up to the government to make the decision.
» Hunter was criticized for his hesitation during the Battle of Lynchburg and resigned in July 1864.
» Hunter also served as president of a military commission trying conspirators involved in Lincoln's assassination.

Track conditions derail Confederates

» The Orange & Alexandria Railroad from Charlottesville to Lynchburg was in poor condition, allowing half of Lt. Gen. Jubal Early's men to arrive June 17, according to the Battle of Lynchburg driving tour. The other half would arrive the evening of June 18 after the battle had concluded.

Early tricks Union troops

» On the evening of June 17, it is said Confederate Lt. Gen. Jubal Early ran a train with empty cars in and out of Lynchburg while people cheered. The plan was to convince Union Maj. Gen. David Hunter that Early's Second Corps was arriving, according to the Battle of Lynchburg driving tour. The deception worked, making Hunter much more cautious.

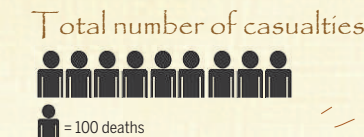
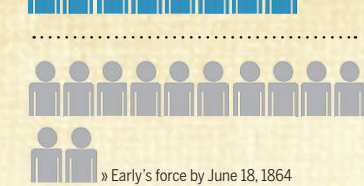
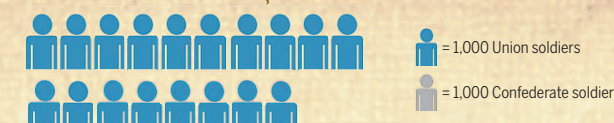


Quick history of Quaker Meeting House

- » In 1791, a stone building was constructed after Sarah Lynch, mother of Lynchburg's founder, John Lynch, donated land for the meeting house.
- » Today, it is also known as the South River Meeting House.
- » Sarah and John Lynch are buried in a cemetery adjacent to the house.
- » The structure, which has been restored to its 18th century appearance, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

"The enemy is retreating in confusion and, if the cavalry does its duty, we will destroy them." — Lt. Gen. Jubal Early, in a report to Gen. Robert E. Lee, dated June 19, 1864 (from "The History of Lynchburg, Virginia, 1786-1945," by Philip Lightfoot Scruggs)

Number of troops involved in battle



*Historic Sandusky director Greg Starbuck says he has heard anywhere from "200 to 900" casualties.

LOCAL HELPS STALL HUNTER AT BEDFORD

» Confederate Col. J.W. Watts, of Liberty (now Bedford), was assigned to a group of troops that blocked Union Maj. Gen. David Hunter's advance from Buchanan to Peaks of Otter, according to "Campaign and Battle of Lynchburg, Va." He also fought with Brig. Gen. John McCausland and Brig. Gen. John Imboden at the Quaker Meeting House.

CAMPBELL MAN SCOUTS FOR SOUTH

» Maj. Robert Saunders, of Campbell County, scouted Union Maj. Gen. David Hunter's position in the South, according to "Campaign and Battle of Lynchburg, Va." He also fought with Brig. Gen. John McCausland and Brig. Gen. John Imboden at the Quaker Meeting House.

EARLY'S RIGHT-HAND MAN

» John Warrick Daniel, of Lynchburg, was Jubal Early's chief of staff during the Civil War. He arrived with Early on the first train to Lynchburg to defend the city from Union forces, according to the Battle of Lynchburg video tour. Daniel would go on to become a five-term senator.

6 Old City Cemetery serves as 'resting place'

» Built in 1806, the cemetery is the oldest in Lynchburg and includes Civil War soldiers from the South, and for a short time, some Union troops, according to the Battle of Lynchburg driving tour. The cemetery still is in use today.
» The Inner Defenses ran through the cemetery, and on the nights of June 17 and 18, the VMI Cadets Corps, which took part in the battle, slept in the area.
» A monument dedicated to fallen Confederate soldiers (left) sits in the Confederate section of the cemetery.

Hunter vs. McCausland: Part I

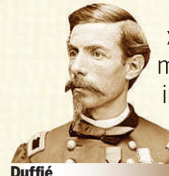
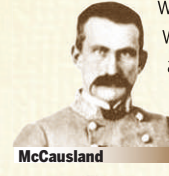
» On June 15, Hunter's army passed through the Peaks of Otter and reached Liberty, according to the Battle of Lynchburg driving tour. Hunter's army, which was made up of two infantry divisions, two cavalry divisions and six artillery batteries drove back Confederate Brig. Gen. John McCausland's much smaller forces, setting up the showdown in Lynchburg.

5 Downtown Lynchburg vital to Confederates

» During the Civil War, downtown Lynchburg served as a major supply station for goods needed by Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee's forces in Petersburg, according to the Battle of Lynchburg driving tour.
» It was the target of Maj. Gen. David Hunter's attack and had it been successful, the attack probably would have sped up the end of the war.
» Downtown Lynchburg also contained a number of warehouse hospitals that housed wounded Confederate soldiers.

4 McCausland clashes with Duffié, holds left flank

» On June 18, Union Brig. Gen. Alfred Duffié advanced along Old Forest Road and was met by Confederate Brig. Gen. John McCausland and his troops. The Union move was part of Maj. Gen. David Hunter's concurrent attacks up the middle at Fort Early and on the left flank at Fort McCausland, according to the Battle of Lynchburg driving tour.
» McCausland and his troops had moved from the Quaker Meeting House to defend the left flank of the defense line, located on what is now Langhorne Road.
» During the two-hour fight, the Union faced massive resistance from Confederate troops, including cannon fire. McCausland and his troops defended a nearby railroad bridge that crossed the Blackwater Creek and served the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad line. Union troops withdrew after unsuccessfully crossing the bridge.
» As Duffié continued to battle McCausland, it is said he heard train whistles coming in and out of town, believing the deception by Lt. Gen. Jubal Early. When Duffié heard Hunter had retreated, he followed suit.



UNION STRATEGY Grant goes on offensive

Gen. Ulysses S. Grant (above) sent three Union armies toward Richmond to battle the Confederates, according to the Battle of Lynchburg driving tour.

- 1) Army of the Potomac under Maj. Gen. George Meade moved toward Richmond to battle Gen. Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia.
- 2) Second army under Maj. Gen. William Sherman drove toward Georgia to battle Confederates in Tennessee.
- 3) Maj. Gen. David Hunter's army moved toward Lynchburg to cut off the Confederates' supply route to Lee's army in Petersburg.



Key sites on Confederate outer defense line

- A Fort Early: Earthen protection center.
- B Fort McCausland: Located west of Fort Early, the earthen site was more than two miles in length and defended the left flank.

1 Union seizes Sandusky for headquarters on June 17

» The Sandusky house, owned by Maj. George Hutter, was important to the Union operation in Lynchburg, serving as Maj. Gen. David Hunter's command post, according to the Battle of Lynchburg driving tour. Future presidents Rutherford B. Hayes and William McKinley were among the troops who stayed there. Other famous people who stayed at the house included another president — Thomas Jefferson.

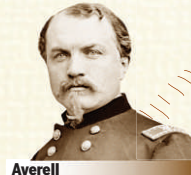


A bond that began in the Civil War

» Rutherford B. Hayes' style in dealing with the troops impressed William McKinley, beginning a friendship that would continue until Hayes' death in 1893, according to "Major McKinley: William McKinley and the Civil War." Hayes also became McKinley's mentor during and after the Civil War.

2 Shots fired at Quaker Meeting House

» On June 17, the Battle of Lynchburg began as Union troops under Brig. Gen. William Averell advanced north on Salem Turnpike (Fort Avenue) from the town of Liberty (known today as Bedford). They faced resistance from Confederate Brig. Gen. John McCausland and Brig. Gen. John Imboden, both of whom occupied the high ground at the meeting house. According to the Battle of Lynchburg driving tour, the skirmish was pretty even until Union Brig. Gen. George Crook arrived with reinforcements.



HUNTER

» On June 17, Confederate divisions led by Maj. Gen. Stephen Ramseur, Maj. Gen. John Gordon and Lt. Gen. Jubal Early took train cars to Lynchburg to help protect the city from the Union attack, according to "Campaign and Battle of Lynchburg, Va." by Charles Minor Blackford.

» A division led by Lynchburg native Maj. Gen. Robert Rodes, who is buried at Presbyterian Cemetery, marched on a county road near the railroad track. Since the Orange and Alexandria railroad was in poor condition, only half of Early's command made the trip to Lynchburg, which took about six hours, instead of the usual three-hour trip, according to the Battle of Lynchburg driving tour.

» At one point, Rodes demanded that his division be sent ahead to his native city. His request was denied by Early, sparking angry words between the two generals.

» This would not be the first time Rodes and Early would have been at odds during the Civil War. During the Battle of Gettysburg, Rodes was delayed in a coordinated attack with Early on Cemetery Hill and Culp's Hill, leading to a major defeat on the second day of the battle. Early called Rodes' misstep "the solitary instance of remissness on the part of any portion of the corps in the battle."

» The citizens of the town also presented McCausland with a sword (left) in June 1864. The U.S. model 1850 Staff and Field Officer's sword and scabbard were altered and etched by Boyle, Gamble, and Company in Richmond, according to the Lynchburg Museum System. It is on display at the Old City Courthouse museum in downtown Lynchburg.

» Although it's commonly referred to as "Fort Early," the brick building that houses the Fort Hill Women's Club on Fort and Memorial avenues was not completed until 1922, nearly 60 years after the Civil War ended. The site of the actual Fort Early is the land that surrounds the building.

AFTER THE BATTLE
McCausland and his men honored by city

» According to "Campaign and Battle of Lynchburg, Va." Brig. Gen. John McCausland and his men were recognized by the City Council of Lynchburg, "for their gallantry in opposing for ten days the march of a greatly superior force, thereby retarding the advance of the enemy on our city until a proper force could be organized for its defence."
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Sources: Battle of Lynchburg driving and video tours, Historic Sandusky Foundation, Lynchburg Museum System, Southern Historical Society papers (Vol. 30), Library of Congress, Civil War Trust (civilwar.org), "Campaign and Battle of Lynchburg, Va." by Charles Minor Blackford, "The History of Lynchburg, Virginia, 1786-1945," by Philip Lightfoot Scruggs, Freedman & Southern Society Project, Wikipedia
Map source: Historic Sandusky Battle of Lynchburg driving tour • Photos: Library of Congress

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE LYNCHBURG MUSEUM SYSTEM

Hunter's Raid

Union applies scorched earth tactics

» Maj. Gen. David Hunter led about 18,000 Union troops into the Battle of Piedmont on June 5, 1864. From there, the troops went through Staunton, Lexington (where they seized VMI's bronze statue of George Washington) and Buchanan, burning down buildings and other structures along the way, according to "Hunter's Raid: Defending Hearth and Home."

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» A monument dedicated to fallen Confederate soldiers (left) sits in the Confederate section of the cemetery.

» It was the target of Maj. Gen. David Hunter's attack and had it been successful, the attack probably would have sped up the end of the war.
» Downtown Lynchburg also contained a number of warehouse hospitals that housed wounded Confederate soldiers.

» On the morning of June 18, Union Maj. Gen. David Hunter attacked Fort Early, which was manned by Confederate artillery and infantry forces. Hunter's troops faced stiff resistance, according to the Battle of Lynchburg driving tour. Union Brig. Gen. George Crook and his men attempted to break the Confederate line on the right flank, but failed and fell back with Union forces attacking the center.
» Lt. Gen. Jubal Early's Confederate forces launched a counterattack toward the center of the Union push, surprising Hunter and Brig. Gen. Jeremiah Sullivan.
» Sullivan and Crook broke part of the Confederate line in the mid-afternoon. Again, they faced resistance from Confederate forces, which drove the Union troops back. It would be the last attack by the Union in Lynchburg.

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