



Welcome to Scourge of War – Lynchburg

Features:

- 5x5 mile map covering the Lynchburg battle area, including General Hunter's headquarters "Sandusky", The Quaker Meeting house, and other historic structures.
- Five Union and Confederate historic and "what if" scenarios covering the action.
- Historic Order of Battle
- Historic unit flags used during the battle
- One multiplayer scenario covering the action of July 18th, 1864
- In-game Lynchburg splash screens

Background on the Lynchburg campaign of 1864

The Civil War came to Virginia's Shenandoah Valley in dramatic fashion during the summer of 1864. This was to be the hardest year of the war yet. Near Richmond, Virginia Union commander Ulysses S. Grant attacked Confederate armies knowing he could easily replace lost men and supplies while Gen. Robert E. Lee and the south could not. In one month, Grant's army would suffer 52,000 casualties.

Hoping to distract Lee and open another front in Virginia, Grant ordered General David Hunter and his army of 18,000 soldiers to lay waste to the Shenandoah Valley, known as the "breadbasket of the Confederacy," and then proceed to Lynchburg, an important Confederate supply and transportation center.

Hunter and his Army of West Virginia marched south along the Shenandoah Valley. He first met resistance at Piedmont and on June 5th defeated Confederate forces led by Gen. William E. "Grumble" Jones. Hunter marched on to Staunton where he destroyed depot buildings, warehouses, and railroad lines.

Hunter continued south, reaching Lexington on June 11th. He met minor resistance there and, once these defenders were driven off, Hunter's men sacked the town. "We remained as quiet as possible all the afternoon while the town was alive with soldiers plundering and robbing the inhabitants," one resident noted.

While in Lexington, Hunter's men looted the Virginia Military Institute, seizing the bronze statue of George Washington as a war trophy (it was later returned). Then the Military Institute was set ablaze, "The burning of the Institute made a grand picture, a vast volume of black smoke rolled above the flames and covered half the horizon," a Union officer noted.

General McCauslandAfter three days in Lexington, Hunter continued to Buchanan, a sleepy little town on the James River. A small Confederate force under the command of General John McCausland burned the Buchanan bridge to slow the Union advance. Hunter's men forded the river and entered the town burning foundries, warehouses, and supplies. One resident noted that Buchanan was "a desolate looking place, fit only for owls and bats."

The blue column continued marching eastward, passing through the Blue Ridge Mountains at Peaks of Otter on June 15th. At Liberty (present day Bedford) McCausland and his men, a few thousand, made another stand, slowing Hunter briefly. Hunter drove McCausland out of Bedford and resumed burning warehouses and tearing up railroad lines. Other men plundered private homes, and in some cases, burned them to the ground.

Aware of the threat that Hunter's army posed, Robert E. Lee detached a part of his army under Gen. Jubal A. Early to face Hunter. Under cover of darkness, Lee's Second Corps, 8,000 strong silently left their trenches at Cold Harbor near Richmond and began marching to Lynchburg's defense.

Meanwhile, Hunter's army skirmished again with Confederate Gen. John McCausland's force at New London, a small settlement a few miles west of Lynchburg. Hunter's advance on Lynchburg had been doggedly delayed by McCausland's small band at Buchanan, Bedford, and New London. These delays bought valuable time for Early who, when he reached Charlottesville, loaded his men on rail cars for a hurried journey to Lynchburg.

After one more engagement with McCausland near an old Quaker Meeting House on June 17 the Union army went into bivouac. Hunter made his headquarters at a nearby home named "Sandusky," the family living there were made prisoners of their own house.

While Hunter and his men camped just a few miles west of Lynchburg, Early's troops began arriving by train and marched directly into defensive positions around the city. Hunter

and his men could hear the sound of military bands, and cheering crowds as the Confederate soldiers disembarked.

By the next morning, June 18, Early's had a force numbering about 12,000 soldiers made up of his own veterans, the home guard soldiers, and convalescents from the Lynchburg military hospitals. They stood ready to defend Lynchburg using two earthen forts that were connected by trenches and rifle pits dug during the night.

At dawn, the artillery of both sides opened up and for several hours cannon shells flew fast and thick. Some fell into downtown Lynchburg. Later in the afternoon, the infantry were engaged in a seesaw battle that lasted for several hours. By late afternoon Union forces fell back and went into camp.

As Hunter made his plans for the next day's action, he became convinced that his enemy had been heavily reinforced and was now twice his number. Hunter made plans for a retreat and in the darkness of night, his army withdrew from Lynchburg, marching back in the direction he came.

The next morning, Early's men awoke expecting another day of battle. Instead, they found that Hunter's men had fled so they immediately began pursuing the Federal army. Two days later Early caught up with Hunter's rear guard at Hanging Rock, a bottleneck near Salem, where a short battle was fought. Hunter soon reached Union held West Virginia and safety. Early, finding the valley of Virginia open, marched his army north and within a few weeks was threatening Washington, D.C

A month following the raid, Hunter resigned from command of his army; he suffered severe criticism for failing to complete his mission. He never again commanded an army in the field.

His raid had a noticeable and lasting impact on the Valley however. In his memoirs, Jubal Early wrote:

"The scenes on Hunter's route from Lynchburg had been truly heart-rending. Houses had been burned, and women and children left without shelter. The country had been stripped of provisions and many families left without a morsel to eat. Furniture and bedding had been cut to pieces, and old men and women and children robbed of all clothing except what they were wearing. We now had renewed evidences of outrages committed by the commanding general's orders in burning and plundering private houses. The time consumed in the perpetration of those deeds was the salvation of Lynchburg, with its stores, foundries and factories, which were so necessary to our army at Richmond."

"Hunter's Raid - The Lynchburg Campaign: The Story of General David Hunter's 1864 Raid."
Hunter's Raid- The Lynchburg Campaign: The Story of General David Hunter's 1864 Raid. N.p.,
n.d. Web. 01 Dec. 2012.
<<http://www.huntersraid.org/story.html>>.

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