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Battle of Glendale was fought on June 30, 1862, in Henrico County, Va, as a next-to-last episode of the Seven Days Battles, during the Peninsula Campaign.

After the Battle of Gaines' Mill, the Union Army of the Potomac, commanded by Major General George B. McClellan, was retreating toward the James River, looking for support of the federal gunboats, and the possible way of evacuation from the Virginia Peninsula.

Intention of General Robert E. Lee, Commanding General of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, was to cut off their line of retreat somewhere between the White Oak Swamp and Malvern Hill.

Lee wanted to strike the extended line of the retreating enemy, with Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson's Division pressing hard the Union's rear guard at the White Oak Swamp, and three other divisions (Huger's, Longstreet's and A. P. Hill's) launching the main attack.

His plans were executed poorly, to say the least. Arrival of the Huger's Division was

significantly delayed by obstacles made by Federal pioneers. He was forced to waste a significant amount of time, chopping a new path through the woods; his efforts became later known as the "Battle of the Axes". Meanwhile Jackson, surprisingly passive, launched only a minor attack against the positions of Federal VI Corps. His assault is usually described as a separate confrontation, the Battle of White Oak Swamp.

About 2 P.M. President Jefferson Davis, visiting the troops and accompanied by Lee, with officers of his staff, arrived on the field of battle, waiting for the expected Huger's attack. The group was shelled by the federal long-range artillery, and two of the officers were wounded. A.P. Hill, a senior officer in this sector, ordered President Davis and General Lee to the rear, and both of them obeyed his order. Longstreet commanded an assault on the Federal batteries, positioned near the small community of Glendale, and in this unexpected manner the battle began.



Longstreet's Division was supported only by A. P. Hill. Their 20 000 men assaulted the Federal forces, about two times so numerous, but stretched and mostly surprised. The main opposing force was one of the V Corps' divisions, commanded by Brigade General George A. Mc Call, and consisted of three brigades.

Longstreet, typically well known from his efforts to concentrate his assaults, this time was not faithful to this principle, and commenced the attack by echelons. Confederate force entered the battle brigade by brigade, with significant intervals, commanders did not cooperate. The effect was predictable.

The assault was led by the Kemper's Brigade, composed by enthusiastic, but totally inexperienced Virginians. They broke the main defensive line and captured eighteen cannons, but later were involved in long and brutal hand-to-hand combat. Longstreet sent his other two brigades as reinforcement, but the enemy force grew stronger as well. Union commanders tried to organize a counterattack, but with only limited success. The main reason was the absence of the commanding general on the field of battle. McClellan, well aware of the fight, decided to stay on board of the Union gunboat "Galena", personally overseeing insignificant skirmish with some Confederate artillery.

Near Glendale, both sides were sending fresh troops to fight, as soon as they arrived on the field of battle, but none of the opponents was able to acquire a significant advantage. During the struggle two of Federal and three of Confederate generals were wounded. McCall, who mistakenly took the advancing Confederate pickets for his own men, was taken prisoner. Finally, short before 9 P.M., in complete darkness, struggle came to an end.

The battle is regarded by most historians as inconclusive. Lee gained the field, but failed to cut off the Federal route of retreat. Most of the Union troops took strong defensive positions on Malvern Hill. The casualties of opponents were comparable – Union army lost about 3 800 men, Confederate force slightly less than 3 300.

Next day both armies once more engaged each other, in the last of the Seven Days Battles, at Malvern Hill.

