



**THE SEVEN DAYS**—The Union Army of the Potomac and the newly-named Confederate Army of Northern Virginia fought for seven days in the heat and swamps of the Peninsula in front of Richmond—from June 25 through July 1, 1862. When at last the guns fell silent, the names of 36,464 Americans were added to the Civil War casualty lists. The results: Gen. R. E. Lee, directing his first big battle, had driven the Union

Army back from the gates of Richmond; Gen. George McClellan, also directing his first big battle, lost the Peninsula campaign, but had saved his army from what appeared to be certain disaster, to fight another day. Above, from the Library of Congress collection, is an Alfred Waud drawing of the Battle of Gaines' Hill, one of the battles fought during the Seven Days. (UPI)

... Unable to believe it, they rode into McClellan's headquarters to protest. McClellan listened, but refused to be convinced. Obsessed by the idea that he was being attacked by an overwhelming force, McClellan already had telegraphed Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton that he must retreat to save the army.

**Unique Telegram**  
His telegram to Stanton was unique in American military history. Dated at 12:20 a.m. June 28 it read in part: "... I have lost the battle because my force was too small. I again repeat that I am not responsible for this. ... You must send me very large reinforcements, and send them at once. ... I know that a few thousand more men would have changed this battle from a defeat to a victory. As it is, the government must and cannot hold me responsible for the result. ... If I save this army now, I tell you plainly that I owe no thanks to you or to any other person in Washington. ... You have done your best to sacrifice this army." McClellan seemed determined to be defeated.

... into the night around Frayser's farm and Glendale, again failing to break the Union lines of retreat. Again Jackson took only a small part in the fighting, shooting at Sumner across the swamp with his artillery. The trains now were safe and establishing a new base at Harrison's Landing on the James.

... Again the Union army withdrew overnight, this time to Malvern Hill on the James above Harrison's Landing. McClellan massed his artillery in a semi-circle and posed his troops in strong supporting positions. To reach the Union position the Confederates had to advance over cleared fields into the teeth of artillery and musket fire. This they did late in the afternoon of July 1 without

much artillery support. The Confederates attacked vigorously but the Union fire was too heavy and after two hours they withdrew. That two hours cost Lee 5,000 men. **Attack Described**  
Porter, who directed the battle - McClellan having gone to inspect his new base - described the attack: "... As if moved by reckless disregard of life, with a determination to capture our army or destroy it by driv-

ing us into the river, regiment after regiment, brigade after brigade, rushed at our batteries, but the artillery mowed them down with shrapnel, grape and canister, while our infantry, withholding their fire until the enemy were within short range, scattered the remnants of their columns." Confederate Gen. D. H. Hill summed up: "It was not war - it was murder."

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**THIS WAS THE CIVIL WAR**  
**The Battle of Seven Days**

By MERTON T. AKERS  
UPI Correspondent

The Union Army of the Potomac and the newly named Confederate Army of Northern Virginia fought for seven days in the heat and swamps of the Peninsula in front of Richmond - from June 25 through July 1, 1862. When the last gun fell silent after this memorable Seven Days' battle, the names of 36,464 Americans were added to the Civil War casualty lists.

And for what? Gen. Robert E. Lee, directing his first big battle, was successful in that he drove back the Army of the Potomac from the gates of Richmond, the Confederate capital.

Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan, also directing his first big battle, had saved his Union army from what appeared to be certain disaster to fight another day but he lost the Peninsula campaign, the brainchild on which he had pinned his hopes for fame.

Faint Herald  
The first day's fighting - June 25 - was only a faint herald of what was to come. The fighting was inconclusive. What McClellan did not know was that Lee had picked the next day - June 26 for his offensive.

Lee's carefully planned drive was north of the Chickahominy where McClellan had left one corps commanded by Maj. Gen. Fitz-John Porter.

Especially for this offensive Lee had brought Maj. Gen. Thomas J. (Stonewall) Jackson's army from the Shenandoah valley. This was Lee's "secret weapon" and designed to be the crusher. Jackson's part in the battle was to be a strike at dawn in the rear of Porter's corps.

But Jackson, brilliant in the Valley, lost his touch this week. Lee with 47,000 troops wanted to hit Porter's right flank when Jackson's artillery opened fire.

He waited all morning - no Jackson. At 3 p.m. Lee ordered the assault anyway. Maj. Gen. A. P. Hill flung his division against Porter's entrenched lines and splintered them just before dark.

That night Porter withdrew three miles to a position near Gaines' Mill. The next day, June 27, Lee sent 65,000 men - more than twice as many as Porter had - into the fight. Porter's line crumbled, almost collapsed, but with fresh troops from the main Federal army south of the Chickahominy, he was able to withdraw across the river in fairly good order.

'Show' by Magruder  
South of the river, meantime, "Prince John" Magruder was staging another one of his "shows." With much bugle blowing and marching and counter-marching, Magruder bemused the four Union corps in front of him all through the 26th and the 27th.

As Lee had hoped, Magruder's theatricals had convinced McClellan that the main attack was coming south of the river - that the fighting north of the river merely was a demonstration.

But by the evening of the 27th, two Union generals on Magruder's front began to see

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