

Glendale, SC is located in southeastern Spartanburg County in South Carolina. The Glendale town limit is three miles from the city limit of Spartanburg, and the center of town is about six miles from the center of Spartanburg. Textile manufacturing began in what is now called Glendale in 1832 when John Bivings purchased land and formed the Bivingsville Cotton Manufacturing Company. The rapids on Lawson's Fork Creek provided the water power required for the operation of a textile manufacturing plant. Bivingsville was changed to Glendale with the construction of adjacent manufacturing plants in the mid and late 1800s (the "old" mill and the "new" mill). D. E. Converse was the most significant owner of Glendale Mills. He and his brother-in-law, Albert H. Twichell, became the manager and majority owner just after the Civil War. Converse College in Spartanburg was founded by D. E. Converse in 1889, and Twichell is honored on the campus to this day (Twichell Auditorium). The mills ceased operations in the 1960s, and mysteriously burned in March 2004. The remaining buildings that were part of plant "complex" include the company office, the company store, a warehouse, and a gymnasium. Also remaining are two smoke stacks and two brick towers.

The houses constructed for workers and owned by the company passed to private ownership after World War II. Almost all of the original ones still stand and generally are occupied by residents who are either retired or work elsewhere in (mainly) Spartanburg County. There has been considerable interest in the Greek-columned superintendent's house (plantation style) and in an adjacent plant manager's house (Victorian). There are four church buildings in Glendale: United Methodist, Southern Baptist, Wesleyan, and Pentecostal. All remain intact as structures, but only the Baptist and Wesleyan congregations are active. Glendale Grammar School stood for years near the top of the hill between the Baptist and United Methodist Churches. A modern fire department (EMS) stands in its place. The elementary school that originally replaced Glendale Grammar is on the edge of the village and is now the headquarters of Spartanburg County School District Three. Although the village has been in somewhat of a depressed state in need of re-invigoration, its geography is mountainous in character and naturally beautiful with a spectacular "river" running through it. It is truly and most certainly a "diamond in the rough!"

Also in Glendale is the Revolutionary War iron works. Glendale's major environmental resource, of course, is Lawson's Fork Creek, which is more like a river than a creek. It begins in northern Spartanburg County and empties into the Pacolet River about three miles below Glendale. There is a reservoir created and sustained at Glendale by a large concrete dam with four, screw-operated flood gates. Just below the dam is an impressive series of shoals that routinely attract picnickers, sun worshipers, kayakers, and fishing enthusiasts. An old iron bridge, no longer used for cars and trucks, but open to pedestrian and bicycle traffic, spans the reservoir near the dam. Across the Creek from the mill site are 13 acres already owned and protected by the Spartanburg Area Conservancy (SPACE).

An outdoor leadership school has been established in the discontinued (2005) United Methodist Church by the Palmetto Conservation Foundation (PCF) with funding from the Mary Black Foundation. The Glendale Outdoor Leadership School (GOLS) features hiking, fishing, kayaking, rock climbing, and trail seminars. The six-acre flood plain of the mill property of nineteen acres has been donated to PCF by mill owner Glyn Morris for use as trails and a park. Three acres including the Mill Office, dam, and shoals have been donated to Wofford College for establishing its Environmental Studies Institute. The Mill Office is being renovated to become the Institute's headquarters with construction and landscaping scheduled for completion by January 2009. Renovation of the old iron bridge by PCF and Spartanburg County (pedestrian and bicycle) should be complete by year's end. It will be stripped, repaired, painted, floored with wood, and lighted to become a magnificent and useful trail and community feature. Glendale was selected by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) for study in 2006-2007, and the Urban Land Institute (ULI) chose Glendale to be studied along with Pacolet as a "corridor" by one of their teams in April 2008. Glendale has been selected along with Johnsonville for the 2008 Blueprint SC Award presented by the American Institute of Architects. A neighborhood association, Friends of Glendale, has been established to determine, seek, and encourage interests, talents, creativity, and support.