



AMERICAN  
BATTLEFIELD  
TRUST ★ ★ ★

PRESERVE. EDUCATE. INSPIRE.

Dear Fellow Dedicated Preservationist,

As the threats to our nation's hallowed battlefields are multiplying by the hour, I'm writing to you today because I have rarely felt a greater sense of urgency to save our endangered history ... before it's too late.

Especially when we get the opportunity to save crucial tracts of land at Gettysburg, we can't hesitate.

You'll recall that I wrote to you in June about saving the first of these two tracts, the 4 acres of land near Culp's Hill known as the Military Museum.

Now, we also have a new opportunity to save a second smaller, nearly 1-acre tract at the often-neglected South Cavalry Field.

I ask for your urgent help today so we can buy and restore these 5 key acres of battlefield land at Gettysburg.

These two special tracts of land have a total value of \$2.24 million. That's a huge number!

But the good news is that thanks to previously received contributions from generous supporters like you, combined with anticipated government grants and a few large private gifts, about 83% of the needed funds are lined up. But we're not there yet.

**The Trust still needs to raise the remaining \$384,720 to save this land forever. That is no easy task, and we must hurry to do it.**

My friend, when you know that landowners are receiving weekly mailed solicitations and phone calls from developers and land speculators, offering to buy their battlefield land with cash on the barrelhead, you hear the clock ticking.

When you read news reports of local governments approving zoning changes to allow new, massive data centers, warehouse distribution centers, solar farms, and housing developments, all heading toward open and pristine battlefield land, you feel the pressure.

And when you understand that our children, grandchildren, and future generations may lose the chance to walk the battlefields that created and shaped our country ... to know what really happened ... and to feel proud of being an American, you know you must act.

As a generous supporter of the American Battlefield Trust, I'm sure you feel these threats to our national memory as deeply as I do.

**And because you've given so generously before, I'm reaching out to you for your crucial support now. What gives me hope is that when you account for the funds we've received and the grants and gifts we anticipate, every \$1 you donate today will be multiplied by \$5.83 in value for this once-in-a-generation opportunity!**

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AMERICAN BATTLEFIELD TRUST

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**BATTLEFIELDS.ORG**

Plus, if you can donate \$50 or more, I'll send you our newest limited-edition 2021 Gettysburg Challenge Coin. I collect challenge coins as I know many folks do, and this will be an exclusive one to add to your collection. I'll tell you more about the challenge coin in a moment.

**First, let me tell you why this land is so important.**

Our first tract is a 4-acre, exceptional piece of historic land, which figured prominently on the second day of the Battle of Gettysburg. This property is known to generations of Gettysburg visitors as the site of the Military Museum.

The tract is located near both Culp's Hill and East Cemetery Hill, abutting the Baltimore Pike and sitting just below the crest of the Union artillery position on Stevens Knoll, near a structure labeled "McKnight" on your map.

Today, the four acres contain the large, 1960s-era Military Museum. The family that has owned this property for many years has given the Trust a once-in-a-generation opportunity to purchase the property for preservation and the eventual restoration of the land.

I'm sure that James and Margaret Ann McKnight — who in 1860 purchased their house along with a barn and five acres of land around it, including the parcel to the east called McKnight's Hill, or Stevens Knoll — could never have imagined that, just three years later, the largest battle ever fought in North America would sweep over their farm.

Tens of thousands of Union troops marched right in front of, paused on, passed over, or fought on McKnight's property and the four-acre tract the Trust is now working hard to save. Here's how events unfolded that fateful day, July 2nd, 1863:

As Union troops met with disaster north and west of Gettysburg on the first day, other Federals fell back to and fortified Cemetery Hill. Union General Winfield Scott Hancock ordered Captain Greenleaf Stevens' 5th Maine Battery to occupy McKnight's Hill.

Shouting "Fifth Battery, forward," Stevens led his troops to James McKnight's house, and moved around his stone walls to get into position atop the hill.

In case the unsupported battery met with disaster, Stevens' men created gaps in the stone walls to facilitate an easier escape. But support came quickly.

Remnants of the Iron Brigade — comprised of men from Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin — took position on Stevens' right on Culp's Hill, and the 33rd Massachusetts Infantry took position along one of McKnight's stone walls, its right flank on the very tract we want to preserve and restore.

Early on the evening of July 2nd, Confederate troops under General Jubal Early made a ferocious assault on East Cemetery Hill. Early's Louisiana and North Carolina soldiers broke the center of the Union position and captured nine cannons. But the 33rd Massachusetts and Stevens' Battery held firm. Their stalwart defense bought critical time for Union reinforcements to arrive and push the now-outmatched Southerners back.



Scene on Culp's Hill from a sketch made July 4, 1863, by Edwin Forbes. Library of Congress



The War Museum as seen from up the slope of East Cemetery Hill.

The National Park Service has restored the historic wood line around Stevens Knoll, making this four-acre parcel we want to save even more visible and important.

Here's what concerns me:

**Several years ago, a Comfort Suites hotel was built on the Baltimore Pike opposite this property. I fear that if we fail to act now, another name-brand hotel or other commercial structure could be built there. Or maybe a residential developer would scoop up the property and attempt to have it re-zoned for an apartment building or townhouses.**

This would be a devastating blow to our years-long preservation efforts there.

Along the Baltimore Pike, together you and I have completed nine transactions totaling more than \$3.1 million, permanently protecting almost 40 acres! Each acre we preserve along the Pike prevents developers from gaining a foothold to commercialize this hallowed landscape.

Our vision is to buy this pivotal piece of battlefield ground and restore it to its near-original condition such that, if General George Meade's troops were to somehow march up to the site again, they would know exactly where they were.

In addition, we have been given the opportunity to purchase an additional tract of land at Gettysburg if you can help us raise the funds needed.

**This second 1-acre tract would add to the 83+ acres we have already preserved together at South Cavalry Field — where infantry and cavalry, North and South, struggled before and after Pickett's Charge on July 3rd, 1863.**

The target tract is not large, but it would be devastating if we weren't able to save it. Developers are hungry to snatch it up and put a "McMansion" on it. Anything short of protecting this land would ruin the viewshed of that part of the battlefield, which is right where Union General Wesley Merritt's cavalymen advanced toward waiting Confederate soldiers.

This was such important land that the War Department erected informational markers and tablets on an adjacent tract more than a century ago, but I'll wager that few people have ever seen them. The problem is access.

There is currently no safe place to park, walk the ground, and read those markers. By saving this one small tract, we can at last provide a safe access point to this part of South Cavalry Field. The Gettysburg National Military Park is interested in providing this access point if they can get the funds to acquire the tract from us.

As you know, we can only buy privately owned battlefield land from willing sellers, and we often must wait decades — sometimes generations — for properties to become available.

So, we can't miss this opportunity to save these two important tracts of hallowed ground at Gettysburg.

Now, I turn to you, as a valued friend, to ask for your help.

Will you help save forever these two endangered parts of the Battle of Gettysburg before they fall prey to development?

Will you help me protect this hallowed ground for our children, grandchildren, and future generations, so they can know and cherish our country and its history?

To remind you, we still must raise \$384,720 to save this land.

**And please remember that each \$1 you give will be multiplied by \$5.83 in value to help save these irreplaceable 5 acres of battlefield.**

For your gift of \$50 or more, you will receive the first-ever American Battlefield Trust Gettysburg Challenge Coin. This special commemorative coin is only the second in the Trust's series of challenge coins and a wonderful keepsake to honor the soldiers who gave the ultimate sacrifice on this land for our great nation.

So add to your collection, or begin your collection today. I hope you will carry this beautiful reminder with you wherever you go, as a constant reminder that you took action to preserve and protect endangered American history.

If you prefer to donate securely online, please visit our website at [battlefields.org/getcoin](http://battlefields.org/getcoin) for far more information about this effort than I could ever hope to fit into an envelope.

Or, simply send back the enclosed donation reply with your urgent gift.

My friend, I cannot thank you enough for your dedication to preserving, protecting, and defending our nation's hallowed ground, especially now. Please let me hear from you as soon as possible. Thank you.

Yours, 'til the battle is won,



David N. Duncan  
President

P.S. The threats arising against unprotected battlefield land are the worst we've seen in years. And of course, the prices are skyrocketing, making our work even more difficult. But we cannot give up. Future generations are counting on us ... this is our fight, we cannot escape it. This is our time, we cannot defer it. And this is our duty ... we cannot deny it. Please help protect our country's legacy of courage, honor, and sacrifice at Gettysburg with your vital gift today.

P.P.S. Remember, each \$1 you donate will be matched \$5.83 to help protect forever these 5 irreplaceable acres of endangered battlefield at Gettysburg! And if you give \$50 or more, we'll rush you our new limited-edition 2021 Gettysburg Challenge Coin. See the enclosed reply sheet for details.