



AMERICAN  
BATTLEFIELD  
TRUST ★ ★ ★  
PRESERVE. EDUCATE. INSPIRE.

Dear Fellow Dedicated Preservationist,

In more than twenty years of work to preserve America's hallowed ground, I cannot recall more than a time or two where we had the opportunity to save land that was part of both Revolutionary War and Civil War actions.

That's why I am so excited today to tell you about a chance to save a total of 239 acres at a \$12.50-to-\$1 match of your donation dollar, which will save crucial acres associated with both conflicts.

Six years after the start of the American Revolution, following the Battle of Guilford Courthouse in North Carolina, British Lt. Gen. Charles Lord Cornwallis marched his army to Virginia, opposed by a Continental force under the Marquis de Lafayette.

When Cornwallis moved out of Petersburg, Virginia, Lafayette abandoned his position around Richmond and marched north to shield the vital logistical center of Fredericksburg from the British. On June 3, 1781, Lafayette moved his command along the southern and eastern portions of a sizable 141-acre tract in Spotsylvania County, shown on your map. Although they never met in a pitched battle, Lafayette's skillful maneuvers helped to wear down Cornwallis during that fateful summer, ultimately leading to the British surrender at Yorktown that October.

Now, let's fast forward to 1864 ...

West of the intersection of Brock and Catharpin Roads sat a one-and-a-half-story inn known as Todd's Tavern. On the night of May 7, 1864, Union Generals Grant and Meade rode south along Spotsylvania's Brock Road, skirting the Todd's Tavern tract and stopping briefly at the tavern. A few days later, on May 14, Confederate Brig. Gen. Thomas Rosser's cavalry brigade spent the night at Todd's Tavern. The next day, Rosser marched east on Catharpin Road and engaged the 2nd Ohio Cavalry and 23rd Regiment, United States Colored Troops, in a skirmish southeast of Chancellorsville.



*"The Army marching past Todd's Tavern"*  
Alfred R. Waud sketch, 1864

And it is here that Union General Philip Sheridan and Confederate General Fitzhugh "Fitz" Lee waged one of the most intense and important cavalry battles of the Overland Campaign.

Today, you and I have a special opportunity to save this irreplaceable battlefield land that was once the site of the historic Todd's Tavern. (The tavern was later destroyed in 1884.)

Put simply, this remarkable landscape overflows with both Civil War and Revolutionary War history!

**And believe it or not, my news gets even better.**

You and I also have the opportunity to protect forever an additional 98 acres of hallowed ground, on two tracts, near a second "tavern" — the Globe Tavern south of Petersburg, Virginia. Both tracts played very important roles in two battles for the strategically vital Weldon Railroad, the first in June 1864 and the other in August of that same year.

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AMERICAN  
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TRUST ★ ★ ★  
PRESERVE. EDUCATE. INSPIRE.

Your support as a Color Bearer  
is an important part of  
saving crucial acres that are  
uniquely part of two wars.

Dear Friend and Color Bearer,

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A portion of one of our targeted tracts actually adjoins the historic railroad track itself and sits between the battle lines of Union General John B. Parke's Ninth Army Corps and Confederate troops under the command of Generals William Mahone and Henry Heth.

**Now, here's what I think you may find the most remarkable news of all:**

Thanks to grants from the federal government and the Commonwealth of Virginia, funding from partner organizations Central Virginia Battlefields Trust and the Petersburg Battlefields Foundation, and a large contribution from a generous donor and members like you, we can save all this land — 239 acres, having a total transaction value of \$1,725,000 — for just \$137,500!

Yes, you read that correctly. If you will join me in this critically important effort today, you can take advantage of a \$12.50-to-\$1 match of your donation dollar, multiplying your generosity more than twelve times over!

***Put another way, we believe we already have fully 92.2% of this crucial effort paid for, but to put these 239 priceless acres into the “saved forever” column, we still need to raise the final 7.8%.***

It is up to preservationists like you and me to make certain that we raise the final dollars needed to ensure that all 239 acres of this sacred battlefield land are saved in perpetuity. I believe it is our duty to protect ... add to ... and pass on, whole and intact, our nation's hallowed ground for future generations.

Today, we have the opportunity to do just that — and, frankly, we may be just in the nick of time because the threats to the land around Todd's Tavern and Globe Tavern appear to be growing almost daily.

Developers are encroaching farther and faster into Virginia's beautiful countryside, repeatedly turning farms, fields, and woods into housing subdivisions, utility-scale solar farms, and massive warehouse distribution centers to support the explosion of online retail operations.

As I've long said, the American Battlefield Trust is **not** anti-development. **But**, we most certainly are for keeping development where it belongs, and it doesn't belong on or near the pieces of irreplaceable hallowed ground I'm writing to you about today.

Now, let me relate some additional history of the three tracts we are working so diligently to save, and explain how much happened on each. I'll begin with Todd's Tavern; at 141 acres, it is the largest tract of the three that, with your help, we will be able to preserve.

While Union and Confederate infantry were engaged in a death struggle in the Wilderness, cavalry units were vying for control of Brock Road at Todd's Tavern, which you'll see on your enclosed battle map. Union horsemen led by General David Gregg had held the intersection of Brock and Catharpin Roads in the early stages of the battle, but at noon on May 6, cavalry chief Phil Sheridan ordered Gregg's horsemen back to the north to better protect a ponderous Federal wagon train laden with food and supplies.



*Todd's Tavern, 1866*

Confederate General Fitzhugh “Fitz” Lee, the nephew of Robert E. Lee, and his horsemen took immediate advantage of Gregg's move north and seized Todd's Tavern. The next day, Sheridan was ordered to retake the intersection at once.

Sheridan had General Wesley Merritt's division, including Brigadier General George Armstrong Custer's brigade, menace Fitz Lee from the north, along Brock Road, and dispatched Gregg's horsemen

to outflank Lee. Threatened from multiple directions, Lee had no choice but to fall back and throw up log defenses. Sheridan attacked those defenses, and a stiff battle ensued. But then, inexplicably, Sheridan ordered his troops back to Todd's Tavern that night, allowing Fitz Lee to reoccupy and strengthen the barricades he had relinquished earlier in the day.

That same day, Sheridan was ordered to retake the intersection at once and secure the route to Spotsylvania Court House. Sheridan failed to communicate with Gregg and Merritt, and as a result, when Generals Ulysses S. Grant and George Meade arrived at Todd's Tavern around 1 a.m., they found Gregg's troops camped around the building.

Meade angrily aroused Gregg's men from their slumber and sent them galloping west to clear the road. But again, the Union horsemen found Fitz Lee's cavalymen blocking their path. Unable to dislodge them, Federal cavalry stepped aside and gave Warren's infantry the lead. Lee, along with General J.E.B. Stuart, delayed the Fifth Corps throughout the morning, allowing infantry to arrive and block the Union march to Spotsylvania.

The second and third tracts the Trust has targeted for protection, one 73 acres and the other 25 acres, played very important roles in two separate fights for control of the Weldon Railroad, one in June 1864 and the other in August 1864, both part of the Petersburg Campaign. The Weldon connected Richmond and the rail hub of Petersburg to the South's last Atlantic port, Wilmington, North Carolina, and Grant desperately wanted to wrest control of the railroad from the Confederates.

The First Battle of Weldon Railroad — you may also know it as the Battle of Jerusalem Plank Road — was the initial conflict in the Petersburg Campaign, aimed at extending Union lines to the west and cutting the rail lines. Grant used both cavalry and a significant infantry force involving his army's Second Corps and Sixth Corps.

The plan of attack was for the Second Corps, temporarily commanded by General David B. Birney, and Sixth Corps, led by General Horatio G. Wright, to cross the Jerusalem Plank Road then pivot northwest to reach the railroad. However, difficult terrain — swamps and thickets — slowed their advance, and by the morning of June 22, a gap opened up between the two corps.

Confederate General William Mahone, a railroad engineer before the war who had personally surveyed this area south of Petersburg, was familiar with a ravine that could be used to hide the approach of a Confederate attack column. Robert E. Lee approved Mahone's clever plan and mid-afternoon on June 22, Mahone's men emerged in the rear of a Second Corps division commanded by General Francis C. Barlow, hitting the Union line near Johnson Road and rolling the stunned Federals back toward Jerusalem Plank Road.

The 73-acre tract the Trust seeks to preserve is on or very near the location where Mahone struck the right flank of the Union's Second Corps. Encroaching residential development, which you can see on the top portion of your battle map, along with zoning for heavy industry, pose double threats to this historic land.

Our third tract, while the smallest of all, is a key component of the Second Battle of Weldon Railroad (or the Battle of Globe Tavern), the Union Army's second attempt to capture the railroad, following its failed June effort. The encounter took place August 18-21, 1864.

Before dawn on August 18, Grant sent his Fifth Corps, commanded by General Warren, westward with orders to destroy a section of track and hold it if he could. Warren's men left heated rails twisted in the shape of the Maltese Cross, Fifth Corps' insignia, in their wake before withstanding a fierce counterattack from three Confederate brigades led by General Henry Heth. The next day, William Mahone's division sliced between Warren's right flank and the left of General John Parke's Ninth Corps, inflicting an embarrassing tactical defeat on the Yankees.



All told over the four-day battle, the Federals suffered 4,279 casualties and had more than 2,500 men taken prisoner, yet they managed to destroy enough track to force the Confederates to transport their supplies 30 miles by wagon in order to bypass new Union lines to the south and the west.

The Trust's goal is to preserve the historic 25-acre property you'll find on your battle map just to the north of Globe Tavern. It was on this very tract that Mahone defended the Weldon Railroad and pushed the Union line back, before a Federal counterattack drove over the land as well. Because the land is located near Fort Wadsworth, it has been deemed a top preservation priority for the Petersburg National Battlefield.

So there you have it my friend, three crucial tracts of hallowed ground ... 239 combined acres ... with a total transaction value of a whopping \$1,725,000 ... and you and I can protect them forever for just \$137,500 — an incredible match of \$12.50 for your donation dollar!

As impressive as that matching amount is, please understand that what you are doing for your country and its future is so much more than just getting “bang for your buck.” Imagine a day when your grandchildren have the chance to walk in the footsteps of those who formed our nation's history on these lands. Imagine having the opportunity not only to read about but see, and experience, the places where great generals and citizen-soldiers alike gave their all, fighting and dying.

These sites, these acres, have much to teach us about our past, and it is our duty to ensure that future generations have the opportunity to learn from these unparalleled outdoor classrooms.

As a native Virginian, it pains me personally to think of losing any part of the three hallowed tracts I've written you about today. My home state witnessed many of our nation's Civil War battles, and over the course of my life, I've seen firsthand how too many sacred battle sites have been encroached upon and even completely lost to development.

Each and every piece of a battlefield is important to telling the story of what transpired on our nation's hallowed ground! I'm sure you will agree with me on that.

And now, will you stand beside me in the fight for these three historic tracts with your most generous gift today? I thank you in advance for all you are doing for this great cause, and for all you are doing for American history.

With warmest regards,



David N. Duncan  
President

P.S. Remember, if you act today, you can multiply the power of your donation a remarkable 12 times over, taking advantage of a \$12.50-to-\$1 match opportunity and helping us raise the \$137,500 we need to get over the finish line and make sure this hallowed ground is saved for all time. If you would like to donate securely online, please visit the special appeal page we have created on our website at [battlefields.org/239acres](http://battlefields.org/239acres).

P.P.S. I'm sure you've noticed the sheet of our American Battlefield Trust address labels, which I have also included for you. I encourage you to use them on your personal letters and bills to show your support for saving America's irreplaceable hallowed ground. Thank you again for all you do!



# CIVIL WAR BATTLE SPOTSLYNIA COURT HOUSE, VA

MAY 7-21, 1864

MAY 7 - TODD'S TAVERN  
Presented by the American Battlefield Trust

## LEGEND

### TROOP MOVEMENTS

Confederate

Union

AM POSITIONS

PM POSITIONS

LAND FEATURES & PRESERVATION

19th-Century Woodline

19th-Century Structures

19th-Century Roads

19th-Century Roads

no longer in existence

19th-Century Fences

Modern Roads

Preserved by Fredericksburg-

Spotsylvania NMP

Preserved by other

Organizations

Target Property

UPDATED JULY 2021

AMERICAN

BATTLEFIELD

TRUST

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