



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

The part of the Chancellorsville battlefield known as "Jackson's Flank Attack" has never been more threatened, never been more expensive, and the competition to buy it has never been more intense.

Dear Fellow Preservationist,

It's a story I am sure you know well ...

With dawn on May 2, 1863, still hours away, Generals Robert E. Lee and Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson, seated on crates in a small clearing in the woods, studied a hastily drawn map and decided to do the unthinkable.

Lee had already violated established military doctrine by dividing his forces in the face of an enemy, leaving a substantial portion of his army to guard the river crossings at Fredericksburg.

Now, following a day of heavy fighting which resulted in the Union Army of the Potomac pulling back to the Chancellorsville crossroads, Lee proposed to split his forces once again.

By the low light of a small campfire and a few flickering candles, Lee traced the vague outline of the movement he wished Jackson to make. "Old Jack's" entire corps, about 28,000 strong, would follow a series of country roads and paths to attempt to reach the Union right flank, which was reported to be "in the air," or unprotected.

Lee, with his army's scant remaining 14,000 soldiers (facing four or five times as many Federals), would noisily demonstrate and hopefully divert the attention of Union General Joseph Hooker so Jackson could march his troops into position unnoticed and ready them to smash the Federal flank.

It took the increasingly exhausted Confederates most of the day to cover the more than 12 miles to reach the point of attack. In the late afternoon, Jackson's men slowly and silently deployed into battle lines along the Orange Turnpike. It was an awe-inspiring front that measured nearly a mile on either side of the Turnpike.

At approximately 5:15 p.m., bugles echoed notes up and down the Confederate line. Then, with the suddenness of a summer thunderstorm, waves of sweat-soaked soldiers rolled forward, screaming like banshees and driving all manner of animals — deer, rabbits, squirrels, birds, and more — ahead of them. Astonished Federals were sent reeling. "Along the road it was pandemonium," recalled a Massachusetts soldier, "and on the side of the road it was chaos."

I'm retelling the story of Jackson's historic march because, today, you and I have an urgent opportunity to save three historic tracts of land across which that battle raged.

Taken together, these three parcels of hallowed ground add up to 45 acres and total \$1,656,000 in transaction value. The good news is that you and I can save these truly historic lands today for only \$157,500 — a \$10.50-to-1 match of your preservation dollar!

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In other words, through anticipated federal and state matching grants and other gifts, we believe we have secured nearly 90% of the funding, but we must raise the final 10% before it's too late.

Developers are champing at the bit to get their hands on any property they can in this part of Virginia. Decades ago, this area was identified as one of the fastest growing areas in the nation; today, it is even worse. With unprecedented demand for open land for residential subdivisions, huge new data centers, warehouse distribution complexes, and utility-scale solar farms, we are truly running out of time at our nation's most important battlefields.

But my friend, as you and I know, this isn't just "any" piece of open land. This is the very ground which many call Robert E. Lee's greatest military victory ... very near where Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson was mortally wounded ... a battle that is still studied today by military personnel all over the world.

It is hallowed ground. It is a crucial part of our history. And we must save it.

As Jackson's wave broke upon the exposed Union right and rear, many boys in blue fought valiantly to stem the tide. Near Dowdall's Tavern (which was located on one of the properties you and I can now preserve), New Yorkers and Pennsylvanians under the command of Colonel Adolphus Buschbeck made a stand along with the Ohio battery of Captain Hubert Dilger. The brave Federals formed what is now known as the "Buschbeck Line" and fought with great ferocity before they, too, were overwhelmed by the Confederate onslaught.



1866 photo looking southwest at "Dowdall's Tavern." Photo from the US Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle, Penn.

Sunset and the confused intermingling of Jackson's brigades compelled the general to call a temporary halt to reorganize. But even as darkness grew, Jackson was determined to renew the assault if possible, believing he could trap Hooker's Army of the Potomac and destroy it.

You know what happened next: In the gloom of the darkening forest, after a long and trying day, a North Carolina regiment mistook as the enemy Jackson's small scouting party, which had ridden out beyond the lines to reconnoiter the Union position which lay ahead.

A few scattered shots and then a volley burst forth in the blackness, and Jackson reeled in his saddle, struck by three bullets, requiring the emergency battlefield amputation of his left arm. He would die eight days later. In literally the hour of his greatest triumph, Jackson had been struck down.

Over the years — thanks primarily to you — the Trust, along with our good friends at the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust, has been able to save 1,322 acres of the Chancellorsville Battlefield, including most of the preserved land at Jackson's Flank Attack. But other important pieces have remained unprotected and at risk for decades.

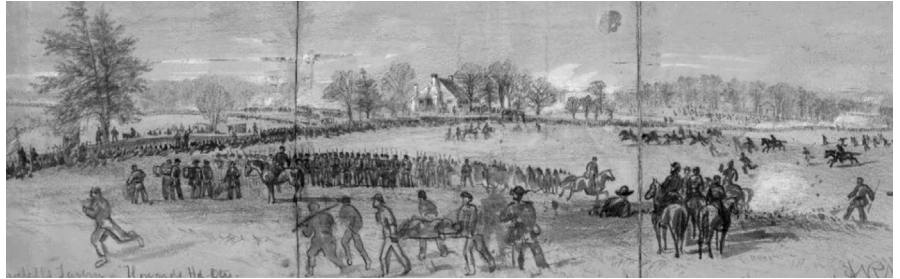
Now, after months of diligent work behind the scenes, you and I have the very real chance to preserve three crucial tracts that will help preserve forever even more of the Chancellorsville Battlefield.

And as I mentioned to you before, if you act quickly, we can turn every \$1.00 you give into \$10.50 to secure 45 acres of this incredibly important hallowed ground.

As you'll see on the battle maps I enclosed for you, the first and largest of the three tracts is 42 acres and includes the site of the historic Dowdall's Tavern.

In May of 1863, the Tavern served as the home of Reverend Melzi A. Chancellor, pastor of Wilderness Baptist Church. (You can find the church near the middle of your enclosed battle maps.) The tavern was a prominent landmark during the battle, with Union General Oliver O. Howard, commander of the Union's 11th Corps, establishing his headquarters at the house, and Buschbeck's men positioned in entrenchments on the southern edge of the property. Late on May 2nd, four Georgia regiments of Doles's Brigade charged violently across the tract. Kirk Bissell of the 4th Georgia described attacking Federal guns near Dowdall's Tavern: "a yell and a dash and over and around and on we flew."

In the aftermath of the Confederates' attack, Dowdall's Tavern, like every other home, barn, or church for miles around, became a field hospital.



A sketch of the Battle of Chancellorsville made by Alfred Waud. Looking southwest, Dowdall's Tavern is visible in the center background. Sketch from the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Given its size and prime location on the Orange Turnpike (now the dangerously busy Virginia State Route 3), it's a miracle this tract hasn't already been developed. But don't take my word for it; historian Robert K. Krick, who probably knows more about this battle and Jackson's Flank Attack than anyone alive today, said "the survival, undeveloped, of a tract this large in this crucial location is nothing short of miraculous. Saving it would be a spectacular preservation coup."

The next two tracts are smaller but no less important, for they help fill in key gaps and extend the areas of the battlefield we can preserve. A nearly 2-acre tract, surrounded by land preserved by the Trust, partner organizations, and the National Park Service, is a critical puzzle piece of preservation. An Alabamian in O'Neal's Brigade, which stormed through this tract, described a jubilant advance so overpowering that "Lucifer with his host" could not have halted it.

Finally, the small one-acre tract highlighted on your map between the Orange Turnpike and the Orange Plank Road is a key project by the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust, and they have asked for our help in funding the transaction. I don't know about you, but where I come from, when a friend asks for help, you do everything in your power to lend them a hand.

By securing these two additional puzzle pieces, we will succeed in preserving a contiguous stretch of preserved battle land that will be saved forever.

But we're not there yet.

As I mentioned, the threats to these properties, and thousands of acres of additional hallowed ground just like them, are multiplying exponentially. If you drive between Richmond and Washington, D.C., today, you will see that billions of dollars are being spent to widen Interstate 95, adding mile upon mile of multiple toll lanes ...

... all designed to handle the explosion in traffic from the new housing subdivisions popping up everywhere, not to mention the convoys of trucks flowing from the e-commerce warehouse distribution centers, meeting the soaring demand for next-day or even same-day deliveries.

I recently saw one advertisement that proclaimed, in capital letters, the area between Richmond and Washington as "THE WORLD'S DATA CENTER HOTSPOT."

The bottom line is this: No unpreserved hallowed ground within 150 miles of Richmond and Central Virginia is safe! Unprotected battlefield lands — like the three tracts at Chancellorsville — have never been more threatened. At the same time, the land has never been more expensive, and the competition to buy it has never been more intense.

So those of us who care about saving our country's history must do this, and we must do it now.

I know asking you to help me raise \$157,500 is asking a lot. But I hope I have convinced you that this could be a last-chance opportunity, which makes it worthy of our very best effort.

Remember, my staff and I have already worked behind the scenes for many months to line up \$1,498,500 in anticipated government matching funds, special grants, and large private donations so that every \$1 you contribute turns into \$10.50 in preservation power.

Maybe you would consider sending a gift today of \$45 in support of the land we're working to save. Or perhaps double that to \$90 if you can. Whatever the amount you can spare, you will be helping to secure this hallowed ground, as well as highly threatened battlefield land all across America, forever!

In the end, my friend, whether you have a Billy Yank or Johnny Reb (or both!) in your family tree, or if you just enjoy studying about the people and events surrounding this formative time in our nation's history ...

... wouldn't you like to say you had a hand in saving — for future generations — 45 key acres at the site of one of the most studied, and most successful, military actions in world history, Jackson's Flank Attack at Chancellorsville?

Please help us take full advantage of this opportunity, raising the final \$157,500 we need to save this crucial land. I can't thank you enough for all of your help, and I look forward to your quick and generous reply.

Very sincerely yours,



David N. Duncan
President

P.S. I sincerely hope I have done a good enough job to convince you of how very important this land at Chancellorsville is, and how hard the Trust has worked to make it possible for you to turn every \$1 you send today into \$10.50.

Now I place the future of these three historic tracts in your hands. You can see their importance for yourself on the maps I've sent, and you can visit the Trust's website, battlefields.org/45acres, for even more information about the land.

Please remember that, in the end, you will be saving historic, hallowed ground not just for yourself, but for your grandchildren and their grandchildren. As members of the Trust, you and I are in the "forever" business. Your generosity today saves something important that will last forever, for all time. And so, again, I thank you a thousand times over for your wonderful generosity.