



AMERICAN
BATTLEFIELD
TRUST ★ ★ ★

PRESERVE. EDUCATE. INSPIRE.

Dear Friend and Fellow Preservationist,

I ask you to imagine something for me ... picture an open field where battle lines of thousands of American soldiers are marching shoulder to shoulder, bravely approaching the opposing line, regimental flags flapping in the breeze as cannons roar ...

... but instead of being able to imagine this scene, you see ... a rusting, weed-infested, abandoned auto repair shop and former gas station ... an old, dangerous, and derelict tract house ... long-neglected, rotting, and unsafe farm buildings, shacks, and sheds.

I suspect you would have the same reaction I have: *These non-historic and often hazardous structures are ruining the battlefield landscape and marring the historic value of this hallowed ground. Why can't someone get rid of these?*

To fully preserve America's hallowed battlefields, I hope you will agree that it is our responsibility — in fact, our duty — not only to save hallowed, but also to restore those lands to their authentic wartime appearance, so they can fulfill their destiny as true outdoor classrooms.

And while some might say that we should defer any restoration work until all the endangered battlefield land is saved, the hard truth is that in many cases, we cannot wait. Often, we are required to restore the land before we can transfer it to another entity, such as the National Park Service or a state park.

That is exactly what we are facing at three major battlefields, Antietam, Fredericksburg, and Harpers Ferry. This year marks the 160th anniversary of all three battles, and we have significant restoration projects that must happen right away at all three.

When we purchased the land (with the generous support of good folks like you), we agreed that we would remove all non-historic structures and restore the property to its original appearance within 3 to 5 years. Now facing looming deadlines, we must begin work on these projects by the end of September. Let me quickly tell you about them:

First, at Fredericksburg, where elements of Union General George Meade's Pennsylvania Reserves penetrated the "boggy gap" in General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's lines on December 13, 1862, we must demolish and remove five houses before turning the land over to the National Park Service for inclusion in the adjacent Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park. You can see the details on the special report I've enclosed for you.

Taking down the houses will return the battlefield to its original view, plus it has the added benefit of allowing more people to reach the famous Meade Marker. The Meade Marker is the impressive stone pyramid standing 23 feet high and 30 feet square that marks the location where Meade's men made their courageous assault.

This work is not cheap, and is getting more expensive by the hour, it seems: we estimate it will take fully \$125,000 to demolish the structures, haul away the debris, and restore the land.

Next, at Harpers Ferry, the site of a vital Union garrison and a key fight in General Robert E. Lee's Antietam Campaign, we must honor the preservation agreement we signed by removing an ugly auto repair shop and former gas station and a commercial office building from the property. That project's total cost will be no less than \$90,000, I am told.

Finally, at Antietam, there is an empty, rapidly degrading non-historic house and some outbuildings literally a stone's throw from the Visitor Center, at the heart of the battlefield. This land was fought over, marched over, and fired over for most of that fateful day, still the bloodiest in our country's history. To restore this incredible land will require another \$25,000.

So, we're facing a total bill of approximately \$240,000. It's a substantial sum to be sure, which is why raising the money and completing the work on time has been weighing heavily on my mind.

Rather than divert scarce funds needed for land purchases, we have created a special **Battlefield Restoration Fund** to make a special all-out push to raise the money required to complete all three restoration projects on time, as well as others that are looming at many sites all across the nation.

I don't often ask for your help on restoration projects, but we simply can't do this work without you. Any amount you can contribute today will help, and I will be extremely grateful.

If you agree that a gift to mark the 160th anniversary of these three important battles would be appropriate, then would you please consider a special gift of \$160, or a portion thereof, say \$80 or even \$40? Or, if possible, maybe you would be able to consider a "multiplier" gift of \$320 (\$160 x2), \$640 (x4), or perhaps even \$1,600 (x10)?

These crucial and necessary restoration projects are not only sizeable, but we are required to complete them by year's end — structures removed, soils remediated, and land re-graded. The clock is ticking.

Plus, if you can send a generous gift today, I can tell you that, hopefully soon, I will be able to say that your generosity has been matched dollar for dollar. That's because the same federal government matching grant program that matches our gifts for land preservation will now also match — dollar for dollar — gifts for battlefield land restoration!

The only challenge is that — even though Congress has already appropriated up to \$2 million for the program! — the government has not yet released the formal regulations for it. So even though the funds are there, we cannot apply for them just yet! But rest assured, the moment we can, we will apply for those matching funds for projects like these, fully doubling the value of any gift you can give today!

My friend, if you and I save hallowed ground but allow abandoned, dilapidated, unsafe, ramshackle structures to create a dangerous nuisance on our property, well, visitors won't visit and government officials will lose interest in helping us save these places in the future.

That's why our restoration efforts are a critical step in the overall preservation process, and that's why I need your help today on this absolutely crucial part of our mission.

I am enormously grateful to you for your dedication to saving and restoring our nation's hallowed ground. You truly are the heart and soul of the American Battlefield Trust, and you are doing something for your country that will last for as long as we have a country. That's a tremendous legacy for you, and I thank you once again.



With warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David N. Duncan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

David N. Duncan
President

P.S. If you would prefer to give to our **Battlefield Restoration Fund** online, please go to battlefields.org/restore2022 to make your gift. The sooner we can raise the needed dollars, the sooner we can put them to work, restoring these hallowed landscapes at places like Antietam, Harpers Ferry, and Fredericksburg. Thank you again!