



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

HELP SAVE 29 CRITICAL ACRES OF HALLOWED GROUND IN VIRGINIA.

Dear Dedicated Preservationist and Patriot,

It was the spring of 1862, and the commander of the Army of the Potomac, General George B. McClellan, faced immense pressure from President Lincoln to take the war to the Confederates — and with the Peninsula Campaign in Virginia, he did just that.

Lincoln knew his presidency depended on reunifying the nation, and he believed that could only be achieved by decisively defeating the Confederacy.

But to do so would take pressure. *Unrelenting pressure.*

The stakes were high. Though the Union had achieved successes in the West, the Union war effort had stalled in the East — a reality made more complicated by the Confederacy's appointment of Robert E. Lee as commander of the newly dubbed Army of Northern Virginia in June 1862.

What followed was the Seven Days Battles — a series of engagements over the course of a week that saw gains and losses for both sides. In the end, the battles produced more than 34,000 casualties — 19,000 for the Confederates and 15,000 for the Union.

Fast forward to the present day, and these hallowed battlegrounds are now facing relentless modern-day threats, and our country's irreplaceable history is hanging in the balance.

As I'm sure you know, the demand for land in East-Central Virginia, in and around the capital of Richmond, is so high right now that residential developers will pay almost anything and build almost anywhere — including on hallowed battlefield acres.

Developers and mega-companies — who are looking to expand their footprint and who can literally build their housing subdivisions anywhere — are trying to do so in locations that encroach upon sacred battlefields that are part of the American story. Battlefields situated in desirable suburban locations only make the threat ever more real and dangerous to the survival of our shared history.

We're in need of new victories — preservation victories — to secure the future of our nation's battlefields, which is why I'm writing to you urgently today about **29 acres of battlefield land in Virginia, at Glendale, and at Gaines' Mill/Cold Harbor** that we have the opportunity to save in perpetuity.

I'll cut right to the chase:

The cost to purchase these tracts is more than \$1.1 million. But, thanks to anticipated help from federal and Virginia state grants, every dollar you give will be matched more than five times in value! To be more precise, each **\$1 you give will be worth \$5.40!**

Will you help us raise \$209,500 to save these hallowed grounds forever?

While I won't pretend to understand what General McClellan felt as he launched his Peninsula Campaign in 1862 to capture the Confederacy's capital of Richmond (or what General Grant felt as he launched his Overland Campaign on much of the same ground in 1864), I can understand what it's like to feel pressure on these acres and to feel the bitter sting of lost opportunities...

It wasn't long ago that a developer purchased more than 200 acres of pristine battlefield land in Virginia, close to the tracts I'm sharing today. That developer is building houses where soldiers — in blue and gray alike — shed blood and even died. Despite pleas and appeals to the owner over the years to do right by history, the land was sold to a developer and the construction has begun. It's heartbreaking!

Recently we lost a vote over land use at another battlefield that could result in up to *5,000 new homes and millions of square feet of industrial infrastructure like data centers and distribution warehouses being built in a development called "Wilderness Crossing."* We are appealing the decision, but our success is not assured.

The vote loss is another painful reminder that we must keep fighting, against all odds, to secure every victory we can, including the hallowed ground we have a chance to save today.

We don't get to decide when to purchase these tracts. We must patiently wait for owners to decide to sell. We work closely with the sellers and hope that they allow us to purchase the land — and preserve history forever. But sometimes (not often, thank goodness!) they sell to developers willing to pay almost anything.

Faced with such opponents, it often feels like we're in an epic battle, fighting a Goliath. The pressure is intense, knowing that if we can't come up with the funds, we will likely never have the chance again to save these lands where so many American men and boys lost their lives.

Now, turning back to the tracts of hallowed ground I want to share today! Let me tell you a little more about the threats that each of them faces...

The **Battle of Glendale** was a result of relentless pressure by Lee and his army, and McClellan's decision to hand the initiative to the Confederates. McClellan abandoned his plan to capture Richmond and withdrew south, only to be engaged by Confederate divisions in an attempt to cut them off from reaching the safety of the Union Navy. On June 30th, General James Longstreet, along with A.P. Hill, broke through Union defenses, nearly rolling them up in the process. Timely Union counterattacks saved the Federal line from a total collapse and allowed them to continue their retreat along the Willis Church Road to take up positions on Malvern Hill.



View of Nelson Farm at Glendale, saved by the Trust in 2007 and now owned by the Richmond National Battlefield Park. ©Robert James, American Battlefield Trust

This very tract plays a key role in the Battle of Glendale. On the afternoon of the 30th, Brigades from Longstreet's division advanced from west to east across the tract in an assault against General Philip Kearny's Union division. The attack was turned back by the Federals, and several subsequent assaults as well. All were repulsed and the Confederates suffered heavy casualties.

The historical integrity of the land is largely intact and appears much like it would have at the time of the battle. Today, we can protect it with your help, and continue our efforts to tell the complete story of the Battle of Glendale. Because this land runs along an important roadway and is considered prime for residential development, the pressure on the landowner to sell is significant. *The urgency is real!*

We simply cannot lose this irreplaceable history!

At **Gaines' Mill/Cold Harbor**, we face another real and present danger. These nearly 17 acres span critical territory from both battles and have long been sought by the Richmond National Battlefield Park to tell the complete story of the Seven Days Battles and Overland Campaign.

You may remember that thanks to dedicated preservationists just like you, we have our Gaines' Mill/Cold Harbor Saved Forever Campaign, which is still ongoing. This 17-acre tract is a new and critical piece to the entire battlefield puzzle! Don't let this become lost to development!



Gaines' Mill. ©Rob Shenk, American Battlefield Trust

I'm sure you also remember that Gaines' Mill was General Robert E. Lee's first victory as commander of the Army of Northern Virginia. Here, Lee's 57,000 men attacked and mauled General Fitz John Porter's isolated V Corps, inflicting nearly 7,000 casualties and forcing Porter and his survivors across the Chickahominy River.

This tract is also important to the story of Cold Harbor. Part of General Grant's Overland Campaign, Cold Harbor was fought just 10 miles northeast of Richmond from May 31-June 12, 1864, between Grant's massive Union army of 108,000 and Lee's entrenched 62,000 Confederates. Repeated Union assaults against prepared Confederate defenses would see the Confederates emerge victorious while inflicting more than 12,000 casualties on Grant's army. Grant himself would reflect on Cold Harbor: "I have always regretted that the last assault at Cold Harbor was ever made ... No advantage was gained to compensate for the heavy loss we sustained."

This must-have property contains excellent II Corps entrenchments on the property's southern edge, plus lunettes farther to the north. The lunettes likely represent mortar positions; the 4th New York Heavy Artillery operated those weapons from positions just behind General Joshua T. Owen's brigade.

As you will see on the enclosed map, the yellow swath of land is literally part of the Union line and must be secured for posterity. **We must add this important land to the already saved 280 acres that patriots like yourself have worked so hard to protect!**

The current landowner has constructed a modern residence and amenities on the property, while fortunately avoiding existing earthworks and lunettes. What an incredible opportunity!

If we don't secure this land, additional houses and other structures can be built on the property and the earthworks bulldozed. Securing this land today is critical to the protection of these historic resources.

Don't let it slip by!

There is a reason history books are written *after the fact*, my friend. Today we know the outcome of the Civil War, and we know that the Peninsula Campaign was a failed campaign to capture Richmond, while the Overland Campaign is considered a strategic Union victory.

But in June 1862 and May-June 1864, there were many moments when the final outcome did not seem assured at all. The story of the Civil War was still unfolding, day by day, battle by battle, moment by moment. It was personal to everyone in some fashion.

In fact, the battlefields we're working to save today, Glendale and Gaines' Mill/Cold Harbor, were scenes of some of the bloodiest fighting of the entire war, often with inconclusive outcomes. Taken together, these three sites bore witness to over 40,300 total casualties.

We too find ourselves in the midst of a battle, not knowing what the future will hold and wondering what our story will be when the history of battlefield preservation is decisively recorded many years from now...

I've depended upon you so many times before. So often, in fact, I have been honored and deeply grateful to write to you and share stories of our victories together — lands we have saved, battlefields we have preserved.

The pressure we face is unprecedented, and we must take action now while we still can.

*Battlefield lands are a vitally important living testament to the valor and honor of America's soldiers, reminders of our history and heritage, lessons of the past and for the future, and an enduring statement about **what we value** as a nation, and as a people.*

I believe I know what you value, without any doubt. I consider you a loyal friend and partner to our cause. And I hope you will contribute today, giving as much as you can — be it some or a lot — knowing every dollar will be matched in impact by 5-to-1. Thank you!



'Til the battle is won,

David N. Duncan

David N. Duncan
President

P.S. The pressure to develop on battlefield land is unrelenting. But our will to win is **unending** and **uncompromising**. Please give what you can today to help me raise \$209,500 to conserve 29 critical battlefield acres at Glendale, Gaines' Mill, and Cold Harbor.