



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

Every leader has tasted defeat — *It's what we do in those moments that defines our character.*



SHERMAN



GRANT

After a tough day of fighting at Shiloh, Gen. Sherman said to Gen. Grant, “*Well, Grant, we’ve had the devil’s own day, haven’t we?*” But Grant didn’t hesitate. He drew his cigar from his mouth, blew a puff of smoke, and declared boldly:

**“YES.
LICK EM
TOMORROW
THOUGH.”**

Dear Friend of History,

I don’t know about you, but I sometimes look to the great Civil War generals for inspiration in my own life and work.

To the courage and character they showed ... to their leadership, their determination, and their humanity. Above all, their willingness to fight on against long odds.

Like the odds we face now. Last year, Tennessee had its largest population growth in 15 years, placing a major strain on Western Theater battlefields, including the two I’m writing to you about today.

If you look at an aerial map of Murfreesboro, where the Battle of Stones River took place, you’ll see housing tracts and shopping malls sprouting up like weeds after a spring rain.

Seeing them rends my heart. **But we must fight on.** Like Grant at Shiloh, I say: *We’ll lick ‘em tomorrow.* I’ve spent the last few months strengthening our “forces,” working to secure expected funding for one of our most critical Western Theater campaigns at Shiloh and Stones River in Tennessee!

Today, I’m bringing this exciting opportunity to you. And because you know your history, I know you’ll recognize the significance of these transactions — *two of the most important battles of the Western Theater, and two of the bloodiest battles of the entire Civil War.* And I’m talking about one of the best chances **we will ever have** to hold the developers at bay and secure two decisive preservation victories!

I’m thrilled to share that we anticipate more than \$8 million in government grants and pledged gifts, leaving us only \$421,000 to raise. This means **your gift to the American Battlefield Trust will be multiplied by a factor of 20!**

But we must act now!

And to thank you for your gift of \$50 or more, I’ve commissioned our first-ever ***Western Theater: Shiloh & Stones River Challenge Coin*** to commemorate this amazing opportunity. But we’re only minting a very limited number, and I’d sure like you to receive one. Please send your gift today, if you possibly can, so you don’t miss out!

Sometimes, I don't know what those big developers are thinking. Maybe they think Americans don't appreciate their history. *Or maybe they think we don't care.*

They've recently snatched up some big parcels of land in Tennessee, especially around Stones River. And they are eyeing acreage near Shiloh as well. When you give bulldozers to developers, it seems like nothing is sacred.

The lands where men fought, bled, and died, and the places where America's history was shaped and defined, are deeply sacred to me, and I know they're sacred to you, too.

Besides, history teaches that the opening days of a battle don't always determine the victor. That's true of Shiloh, and it's true of Stones River as well. And the two large parcels of land we're working to acquire and preserve right now both played crucial roles in those early hours and days when no one knew what the outcome of the battles, and the Civil War itself, would be!

Let me begin by telling you more about 152 acres at Shiloh that we have the chance to save today.

When Civil War veterans came together to create Shiloh National Military Park in 1894 — decades before the modern Park Service existed — they clearly recognized the enormous significance of this very tract. They erected position markers for the two Confederate field batteries here, while public dirt roads provided access to these battle locations.

Back then, veterans of the war could have parked their buggy on Federal land, taken their child or grandchild by the hand, and walked them on those very historic acres to teach them their history.

Then the land changed hands, and access was cut off. For most of the last century, you would have been trespassing to see the original markers.

But that will soon change if we can buy it now!

And what a victory it would be. Most of the land is heavily forested and looks just the same as it did in the spring of 1862. That's when, on April 6, after his Confederate forces overran Union camps, Confederate General Albert Sidney Johnston was alerted to the presence of a Union force that lay poised to attack his right flank.

Unknown to Johnston, the force in question was the actual left front of the Shiloh encampment comprising General Ulysses S. Grant's Army of the Tennessee. The Union troops camped at this location were part of a detached brigade of three infantry regiments under the command of Colonel David Stuart, which was assigned to the division of General William T. Sherman.

A series of tactical maneuvers took place, punctuated by heavy bombardment of Stuart's camp and hours of fierce fighting. Soon, Stuart was forced back 300 yards to a ridge where the Union commander, *despite being all but isolated from direct support of other elements of Grant's army*, bravely maintained his position until nearly 2:00 p.m.



The Battle of Shiloh allowed Union troops to penetrate the Confederate interior. ©Mike Talplacido, American Battlefield Trust

It seemed hopeless. But the Confederate advance stalled in Stuart's camps, impeded by the arrival of a Union brigade commanded by General John McArthur which occupied a steep ridge line north and west of Stuart. *And by the afternoon of the next day, a portion of the defeated Confederate army retreated.*

It was but one day, in one battle. But the story of the Civil War cannot be told without it. By the time Shiloh was over, there were nearly 24,000 casualties, General Johnston was dead, and the Confederacy's hopes of blocking the Union advance into Mississippi were dashed.

The acquisition of this unprotected tract inside Shiloh's legislated battlefield park boundary would again permit public access to this hallowed land. Visitors could appreciate and understand the events that transpired at Shiloh, and once again, you'll be able to take a child by the hand and lead him or her there to teach them their nation's history and the enormous sacrifice that was made to secure it. ***It's been nearly a century, but finally the battle for access can be won!***

In addition to the impressive tract mentioned above, we also have the chance to save 32 acres at Stones River.

At Stones River, and at this crucial site in particular, we see again that the earliest hours of an engagement do not always determine the battle's outcome.

This tract witnessed some of the critical opening moments of battle. The day after Christmas 1862, General William S. Rosecrans's Army of the Cumberland departed Nashville with 44,000 men, marching toward Confederate General Braxton Bragg's Army of Tennessee at Murfreesboro, 30 miles to the south.

But the cautious Rosecrans left some 40,000 men in and around the Tennessee capital to guard his communication and supply routes, creating a potential advantage for Bragg.

At dawn on December 31, 1862, the Confederate division of General John McCown struck the right flank of the U.S. Army of the Cumberland at a point just south of this tract. McCown's movements threatened to create a gap in the Confederate line, forcing General Patrick Cleburne to commit his brigades much earlier than anticipated. At 7 a.m. on December 31, 1862, the brigades of Generals Lucius E. Polk and Bushrod Johnson collided with Colonel Sidney Post's Union brigade on this tract.

A fierce struggle raged on this ground for nearly a half hour until Post's men finally broke and retreated, but the cost was high. Confederate General Bushrod Johnson reported that "More than half of the whole loss of this brigade, in my opinion, occurred in this conflict." *In fact, of the major battles in the Civil War, Stones River had the highest percentage of casualties on both sides.*

The battle raged through New Year's Day. Many mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers, who had hugged their loved ones goodbye in 1862 would never get to see them alive again in the new year. Ultimately, the bloody Union victory set the stage for campaigns into the heart of the Confederacy while



At Stones River, the Union squeaked out a victory in a bloody conflict that boosted morale in the North and gave the Federals control of central Tennessee. ©Buddy Secor, American Battlefield Trust

providing a much-needed northern morale boost and support for the Emancipation Proclamation.

Now, we have the chance to save this hallowed ground. It's one of the single largest undeveloped tracts remaining on the battlefield! The land was recently listed for sale as prime commercial property, and the surrounding area is overrun with commercial, industrial, and residential development. Murfreesboro is one of the fastest growing cities in the United States, and there is a huge and growing demand in this exact area! If we don't win it now, it could be gone forever.

You and I must stand together and say **NO!** We will not let this history become lost to development! I still feel the weight of every acre that has been left unprotected, or that has slipped through our fingers since our founding. We have suffered defeats in the past, but as Grant said at Shiloh: *we will lick 'em tomorrow*, and permanently protect the hallowed ground where our history was made!

To do that, I will need your help. And as a small token of my appreciation, I'm glad to offer you our limited-edition *Western Theater: Shiloh & Stones River Challenge Coin!* Rush your gift of \$50 or more to help save 184 acres of Western Theater Battlefield, and I'll make sure YOU receive one to collect and treasure.

We've often faced long odds, you and me. I know we will again. *But this time, the odds could be in our favor.* Thanks to an anticipated \$8,000,000 provided by government partners who share your commitment, we now need to raise just over \$400,000 to secure **BOTH** the Shiloh and Stones River properties. In other words, your impact will be multiplied 20-to-1 when you make your gift now.

We've waited more than a century since the battle to save these lands began. But with your help, victory is at last in sight! Please tell me I can count on you today.



'Til the battle is won,

David N. Duncan

David N. Duncan
President

P.S. I know you don't expect anything in return for your generosity. I get that. You do it for the same reasons I do, including a love for history and a sense of patriotism. But the Challenge Coins are being minted now, and I honestly feel you're one of the people who deserves one most. Mail your gift at once, please, or go online to battlefields.org/save184. **If you can, please consider giving more than \$50.** Thank you!



The South's defeat at Shiloh ended the Confederacy's hopes of blocking the Union advance into Mississippi. © Mike Talplacido, American Battlefield Trust

¹ <https://tnsdc.utk.edu/2023/03/14/breaking-down-the-2022-population-estimates-what-drove-tennessees-big-gain-last-year/>