



AMERICAN
BATTLEFIELD
TRUST * * *
PRESERVE. EDUCATE. INSPIRE.

The cost of preserving battlefield land is not cheap.
But losing our history is a price we cannot afford.

**HELP SAVE IMPORTANT
BATTLEFIELD LAND AND HAVE
YOUR GIFT MATCHED \$3-TO-\$1.**



Dear Loyal Friend and Member of the Trust,

War is a costly business.

There is the financial cost, funded by governments, of weapons and equipment.

There are the societal costs. Damage inflicted upon cities, farmlands, homes, and other infrastructure, from which it can take decades to recover.

And there's the human cost of war. Most tragically, the loss of human life, be it a soldier or civilian, but also the sacrifices made by those who carry wounds on with them — both physical and mental — for the rest of their lives. It's a cost that can never be repaid ... those who made those sacrifices can only be honored and remembered.

The cost of war is high. And saving hallowed ground comes at a great price as well. But I know that you believe, like I believe, that these courageous soldiers — along with the wars that defined our nation — must always be remembered and honored.

Today, we have the chance to do just that at three battlefields — Spotsylvania Court House in Virginia, and Corinth and Champion Hill, both in Mississippi.

The tracts of land I'm asking for your help to preserve today are not cheap. Their total value is more than \$687,000.

The good news, however, is that we are anticipating about a third of the money in state and federal matching grants. This means that if we can raise the final **\$215,300** with all of the potential matching funds in place, **your generosity today would be multiplied by \$3-to-\$1!**

Yes, \$215,300 is still a lot of money, no doubt, but battlefield land at these historic places is seldom available, and if we don't save these acres now, we may never get the chance again.

The battles at Spotsylvania Court House, Corinth, and Champion Hill carried an especially heavy cost. Combined, they resulted in approximately 45,000 casualties — a tremendous number of lives, limbs, and livelihoods lost. Many of these Americans paid the ultimate price, and we owe it to all future generations to preserve their memory and our history.

AMERICAN BATTLEFIELD TRUST

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Will you make a donation today to help honor those heroes? As a special gift and a token of my gratitude, if you make a gift of \$60 or more today, I'll send you a copy of the Trust's newest book, *The Cost of War: A Visual Summary of Civil War Devastation*. This is a newly published work exclusively available to American Battlefield Trust members. You won't want to miss out on this limited-time offer featured only here.

Turning back to those three tracts, let me tell you a little more about the threats that face each.

As you know, **Spotsylvania Court House** was the second battle of the Overland Campaign, and with more than 31,000 casualties, became one of the bloodiest ever fought on American soil. On May 12, 1864, the fifth long day of fighting, more than 22 hours of close-quarters combat followed a massive Union attack.

The two-acre target tract is surrounded by land that has already been protected, which makes it all the more urgent that we fill the so-called hole in the donut — just adjacent to the property is the site where the respected and beloved Union General, John Sedgwick, was killed by Confederate sharpshooters after joking that “They couldn't hit an elephant at that distance.” Grant famously described Sedgwick's death as “greater than the loss of a whole division of troops.” Sarah Spindle, a 40-year-old widow, fled her home on the adjacent property after the Confederate shelling on May 8, and lost everything in the ensuing fire. For soldier and civilian alike, the cost of war was high.

The tract we have the chance to save today plays a crucial role in telling the complete story of Spotsylvania Court House. If we don't save this land now, just imagine the hungry developers who will come in and build some massive mansion right in the middle of protected battlefield land.

The Battle of Champion Hill, according to our friend Terry Winschel, the former Chief Historian at Vicksburg National Military Park, was “the largest, bloodiest, and most significant action of the Vicksburg campaign.”

Today, we have an opportunity to save five acres of bloodstained hallowed ground that witnessed Confederate troops advancing and retreating throughout the course of the fighting on May 15, 1863. Preserving these acres now would add to the decades of important work we've accomplished together to preserve the site of a critical engagement in one of the most important campaigns of the war.

But just like at Spotsylvania Court House, these much sought after and unprotected acres at Champion Hill are surrounded by preserved battlefield land and highly desirable to developers — if we lose this chance, a new housing development could be built and forever mar the landscape. If we purchase the land, we preserve and protect it so that all future generations can walk across the battlefield and look out over the crest of Champion Hill. They can imagine the fierce back and forth between Union and Confederate troops — fighting that spanned more than seven hours and was some of the hardest of the entire war.

The third target tract is at **Corinth**. Early in the war and fresh from their victory at Shiloh, Union forces advanced and laid siege to the city of Corinth, Mississippi. The Confederates evacuated but tried and failed to recapture Corinth a few months later, amassing 7,200 casualties. An impressive network of earthworks and trenches remain. Today, we can preserve three acres and add to the battlefield landscape that is already protected.

Now, you may be thinking: *Ten acres does not sound like much land*. And I would say, *I agree, it's not*.

You may be feeling like *\$215,300 is a lot of money*, and *I wholeheartedly agree, it is!*

And maybe you're wondering, in the larger scheme of things, *is it worth it?*



American Battlefield Trust was able to secure the purchase of this Spotsylvania Court House property. © American Battlefield Trust



This tract of land (house and sign in background) is directly across the street from Spotsylvania Court House Battlefield interpretation signs. © American Battlefield Trust

It's a fair question, to which I would say: *The cost of preserving battlefield land is not cheap. But not saving our history is a price we cannot afford.*

When the Spotsylvania Court House property came on the market, there were seven bidders on the first day, including the Trust. By the end of that day, the land was under contract, and — thanks to a couple of real estate agents sympathetic to the cause of preservation — the Trust secured a contract.

Yes, things can move that quickly. It's been that way for a while now and it keeps getting more challenging. The pressure from developers to pay over market price so they can build new houses, data centers, warehouses, and solar farms is intense. Even with your generosity, we don't have the bottomless funds to compete with these investment companies, whose pockets are deep!

But we do have something they don't have — we have fiercely loyal members like you who care about the future of our country and want to protect and preserve our past.

We haven't always been on the winning side of these battles, as seen by recent development activity at a number of important battlefields.

What I do know is that the world is changing, and in order for us to continue our mission of preserving history for generations to come, ***we have to be ready to move fast.***

The mission of the American Battlefield Trust is to preserve America's hallowed battlegrounds and educate the public about what happened there and why it matters.

We are the only organization doing this kind of work on a national level. No other national nonprofit is engaged in both saving land and delivering the tools required for a fact-based, unbiased history education.

Like war itself, there is a high cost to this work. But as I've heard it said, time and time again: ignorance is also very costly!

Think about it for a moment — what is the cost of NOT saving hallowed ground? Of NOT making it possible for future generations to experience these battlefields and learn these lessons of valor and courage firsthand?

What is the cost of NOT teaching our young people about our nation's history and its defining moments? Or of the sacrifices of all those whose lives were forever changed by these pivotal and often devastating events?

What kind of citizens will they be? What kind of leaders will they produce? I don't think it's hyperbole to say that nothing less than the future of our nation is at stake.

It's no secret, the state of history education in America is on the decline. I hear it all the time from numerous corners — academics, politicians, donors, and concerned citizens like yourself. As disconcerting as this situation is, the American Battlefield Trust offers a beacon of hope. It's why we do what we do, and we're so grateful to people like you for making it possible.

That is why I'm hoping I can count on you to help us raise the \$215,300 we need today while having your gift matched \$3-to-\$1. You'll help purchase these irreplaceable 10 acres of battlefield land and continue to bring the history of America to all generations.

And don't forget — if you can send \$60 or more, I will make sure you receive the Trust's exclusive new book available only to members, *The Cost of War: A Visual Summary of Civil War Devastation*.

Together we'll not only preserve the battlefield tracts at Spotsylvania Court House, Corinth, and Champion Hill, we'll help ensure that the invaluable lessons of history are never forgotten.



'Til the battle is won,

David N. Duncan

David N. Duncan
President

P.S. I have written quite a bit about the cost of war (and of ignorance) today. We only have one chance to save this battlefield land forever. Please give what you can to help me raise \$215,300 to preserve 10 acres at Spotsylvania Court House, Corinth, and Champion Hill today. As a token of my gratitude for your gift of \$60 or more, I'll send you a copy of *The Cost of War: A Visual Summary of Civil War Devastation*. This new book is made exclusively available to Trust members. Thank you in advance for your fierce loyalty and commitment.

P.P.S. I know you love the Trust's maps! I've enclosed battle maps of Champion Hill and Spotsylvania Court House. But please don't forget to visit us online at www.battlefields.org/costofwar for two additional maps of the Battle of Corinth and to explore related articles and videos.



The Battle of Champion Hill was fought on May 16, 1863, and was a key event in the Vicksburg campaign. © Mike Talplacido, American Battlefield Trust

