



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

Two major Civil War campaigns concluded on the same day, and changed the course of history.

You can help save over 1,000 hallowed acres today — and have your gift matched by an astonishing **\$26-to-\$1!**

*We've reached a turning point. We could make history together! But time is running out, and I need your help now.
~David*

Dear Fellow Preservationist and Patriot,

It was a turning point in the Civil War.

Momentum shifted, and the course of history changed.

*I suspect you already know that **Gettysburg** and **Vicksburg** were two of the most consequential campaigns of the war, and taken together, must be considered one of its great tipping points.*

Here at the American Battlefield Trust, we're also at a turning point. We're now poised to save 1,006 acres associated with the Vicksburg Campaign (*in the heart of Chickasaw Bayou*) and 84 acres associated with the Gettysburg Campaign — some at Gettysburg and 9 more at Brandy Station — 1,099 acres of hallowed ground in all!

If we can secure them all — and I'll need **your** help to do it — we will have officially saved 60,000 acres since our founding. I still remember when we reached 30,000 acres, and then 40,000, and 50,000 — milestones we had dreamed of. And now we have the chance to reach a moment that is truly historic!

As is the match opportunity I'm now able to share with you.

You see, over the past several months, the Trust and preservation groups have been working on these very important projects. Those partners, together with state and federal grants, are expected to generate an amazing \$4,076,500 in grant and matching funds.

That leaves just the last \$162,500 for us to raise in the next 60 days to save these 1,099 acres.

In short, that's a match of \$26-to-\$1 on every dollar you give today. It's a chance to leverage your generosity in a BIG way to achieve a truly remarkable turning point in our history, and American history.

Will you consider making your best preservation gift now?

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Take a look at your enclosed maps. You can see the land we're trying to save and study the regiments that fought and died on these acres. You'll understand that all three battlefields are critical to telling our Civil War history.

Let me begin with the Chickasaw Bayou battle near the start of the Vicksburg campaign because, quite frankly, *it's not only an extraordinary opportunity, but the culmination of a multi-year plan ...*

And you know the story of the Civil War cannot be told without Vicksburg.

As you may recall, President Lincoln proclaimed that *"Vicksburg is the key! The war can never be brought to a close until that key is in our pocket."* President Davis understood its importance as well, calling Vicksburg *"the nail head that holds the South's two halves together."*

Which is why, when the Confederacy surrendered at Vicksburg on July 4, 1863, it marked an extraordinary turning point in the war. It divided the South in two and cut the Confederacy off from its primary conduit for supplies and communication — the Mississippi River.

Since 1899, Americans have visited Vicksburg National Military Park to honor the fallen and learn more about this major turning point in the war.

*And yet, despite its importance, little work has been done to preserve land from the earlier stages of the Vicksburg Campaign. Just four years ago, **next to nothing** had been saved at Chickasaw Bayou, the site of a crucial Confederate victory that kept Vicksburg in Rebel hands and preserved the Mississippi as their supply route for another six months!*

At Chickasaw Bayou, in December of 1862, Confederate troops under Gens. John Pemberton and Stephen Lee soundly defeated Gen. William Sherman's Union forces. In fact, there's a famous photo of the site that's long been called ***"Where Sherman Failed."***

Over the last few years, we've secured a few individual tracts, some of them less than an acre. Some people wondered why we were purchasing such small and sometimes scattered parcels. **But we had a vision ...**

The two tracts at Chickasaw Bayou are now under contract to save a total of **1,006 acres** and comprise *the largest section of battlefield ever preserved at Chickasaw Bayou*. It's been our goal to see a battlefield park created here, and now we've taken a huge step toward making it happen.

Just one look at the maps I've enclosed will show you that the battlefield land we'll be saving is right on the shores of the Yazoo River and in the heart of the fighting. General Francis P. Blair, Jr.'s brigade skirmished with the 46th Mississippi here, and the 17th Louisiana retreated over these acres. And on the final day of battle, regiments from Col. John DeCourcy's brigade attacked across the tract, supporting Sherman's final, but unsuccessful, assault on Vicksburg.



Silent sentinels: cannons of Vicksburg stand as reminders of a pivotal Civil War battle.

© Melissa A. Winn, American Battlefield Trust

All the while, an unsung hero of the battle was Chickasaw Bayou itself. Some 50 yards wide and dense with thickets that limited the line of sight and hampered communication, the bayou was a substantial impediment to Sherman's intended advances — it may as well have been a mile wide! *Without it, Vicksburg might have fallen six months sooner.*

Today, we have the opportunity to preserve more than a thousand acres that help tell the story of this battle, the results of which altered the course of the Vicksburg Campaign and paved the way for a major turning point in the war.

Saving Critical Pieces of the Gettysburg Campaign

The next tract of land we need to save is located on the Brandy Station Battlefield. As you know, this major cavalry battle marked an important early phase of the Gettysburg Campaign. We're working to protect these nine acres that are, very likely, the ones facing the most urgent development threat.

That's because the property at Brandy Station is in the process of being sold by the heirs of the family that has long owned it. For generations, they have held development at bay, protecting acres that were part of the largest cavalry battle ever fought in North America.



Help save hallowed ground at Brandy Station.
© Tim Weikert, American Battlefield Trust

Following his victory at Chancellorsville in May 1863, Robert E. Lee launched his second Northern invasion. As Confederate forces moved northward, Gen. J.E.B. Stuart's cavalry acted as a screen to conceal their movements. His forces were detected by Union Gen. Alfred Pleasonton, and on June 9, the cavalry divisions clashed. Like Chickasaw Bayou, Brandy Station demonstrated the increasing difficulty the Confederacy faced as it sought to parry all Union thrusts and offensives.

This land hosted fighting in the initial Federal attack, and we know that three Union regiments later withdrew across the property while being chased by pursuing Confederates. *How's that for history?*

Yet if we don't preserve it, you can be sure someone else will buy it.

Remember, *this is in Virginia*, which is becoming one of the most expensive real estate markets in the country, where it seems like every field, undeveloped acre, **and, yes, unprotected battlefield** is being targeted for housing, roads, shopping malls, and data centers.

That's why here, as elsewhere in America, we'll soon be reaching a turning point of another kind. Pressures are quickly mounting with relentless development threats. If we don't save what we can now, it's all but certain that increased prices could put the last available battlefield lands out of our reach.

That brings me to our final tract, one that witnessed the Battle of Gettysburg. Gettysburg is, without a doubt, another of the most important battles ever fought on American soil, and one of the biggest turning points in U.S. history.

As filmmaker Ken Burns has said,

***“Gettysburg is central to the whole United States.
Everything kind of led up to this in the Civil War,
and everything comes out of it.”***

Yet what’s less well-known is that the skirmishing for this land didn’t end when the battle did. While the acquisitions of land to create Gettysburg National Military Park began just 30 years after the war, the construction of the park still left tens of thousands of battlefield acres unpreserved.

Instead of memorials to valor, many of these acres became monuments to commerce and tourism — a highway here, a motel there, a mini-golf course there, along with thousands of homes. Today, we are doing all that we can to ensure that this tract doesn’t meet the same fate.

The 84 acres we are saving greatly expands the preservation of South Cavalry Field — where before, during, and after Pickett’s Charge, Union cavalry forces showed again they could stand toe to toe (and hoof to hoof) with Confederate cavalry.

Troop movements took place on these very acres, yet up until now there hasn’t been so much as a sign posted on this tract to honor, in the words of President Lincoln, *“the brave men, living and dead, who struggled here.”* **Now, at last, there can be.**

Your gift today can be matched \$26-to-\$1 to save sacred ground that has waited nearly 162 years for its rightful preservation and honor. Together, we can make it happen!

My friend, we must do everything we can to preserve these 1,099 acres. Each of these tracts adds to the tremendous preservation work you’ve already made possible at these battlefields.

And what’s more, reaching 60,000 acres together will be a milestone, and will announce to the world (or at least to those who don’t already know it!) that the American Battlefield Trust is a *force to be reckoned with* — thanks to our partners, and thanks to preservationists like you!

Please make your gift now to support the preservation of these turning points of the Civil War. We have only about 60 days to reach the funding goal, and we urgently need your help to do it. **Thank you!**



‘Til the battle is won,

David N. Duncan

David N. Duncan
President

P.S. When the Trust was founded, saving 60,000 acres seemed like a far-off dream. That we could soon reach that incredible milestone is a testament to all our amazing partners and our founding vision. Above all, it’s a testament to the commitment, generosity, and fighting spirit of folks like you. *I’m so very grateful for your support.* **Please give now to have every dollar matched \$26-to-\$1!**