

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES!

**Momentum can
change. Odds
can be overcome.
History is made.**

What a difference
you can make when
you give today —
to help save three
battlefields from
what may be *the
most momentous
12 months of the
Civil War.*



Dear Friend and Fellow Preservationist,

In November of 1863, at the Battle of Ringgold Gap in Georgia, Gen. Joseph Hooker's Union army had the chance to control more of northwest Georgia and cut off a critical Confederate supply line with substantial numerical superiority.

The surprising victory by the vastly outnumbered Rebel forces under the command of Gen. Patrick Cleburne ("The Stonewall of the West") put the Union on its heels and gave the Confederates new hope and momentum ...

But what a difference a year makes.

By the end of the next year, Gen. Ulysses S. Grant would take command of Union forces and relentlessly pursue Gen. Robert E. Lee's army to Richmond ... Gen. William T. Sherman's capture of Atlanta would cripple the South and help revive Northern morale to secure President Lincoln's reelection ... Cleburne would lose his life at the Battle of Franklin ... *and Sherman's unstoppable March to the Sea* would drive another stake into the heart of the struggling Confederacy.

Today, you and I find ourselves in a historic march of our own. For our work together at the American Battlefield Trust is more than a series of battles. It's really something much bigger — a long and fierce campaign to preserve something sacred and enduring, and essential to who we are as Americans.

Sometimes, the odds against us are long. But we never stop fighting, because we know hallowed ground is at stake!

Right now, we're fighting for a total of 77 acres in Georgia that witnessed the Battles of Ringgold Gap, Rocky Face Ridge, and Kennesaw Mountain. The properties in these three consequential Western Theater battlefields are valued at a combined \$2,368,600. I know that's a lot of money, *but fortunately, with anticipated federal grants, funding from partner organizations, and private donations, we can save these battlefield lands for posterity if we raise just \$107,000.*

That means every dollar you donate is worth \$22 — an incredible \$22-to-\$1 multiplier that increases the value of your gift. So please donate today to help save 77 acres of battlefield land and preserve them forever.

I'm so grateful for all you do to save battlefield land and ensure that our history is preserved. To thank you for all you do, I've enclosed personalized battlefield address labels for you. I hope you'll use the very first one on the enclosed envelope when you send back your gift today.

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In a moment I'll tell you more about those three battlefields — *their role in history and the urgent threats they are facing*.

But first, I want to share some exciting news about how the American Battlefield Trust, with your support, is not only waging battles in the present day, but also arming ourselves for future preservation efforts.

As you know, Ringgold Gap, Rocky Face Ridge, and Kennesaw Mountain are all in Georgia, where — despite heroic preservation efforts to date by the American Battlefield Trust, the Georgia Battlefields Association, and others — large swaths of battlefield history remain unprotected, and are not accessible to the public.

I hate to say it, but part of the reason is because it's in the Western Theater! Although some of the most consequential battles of the Civil War took place there, the battlefields tend to be less well-known than those in the Eastern Theater for many Americans.

Even during the War, the Western Theater seemed to receive less attention — while brave men were fighting and dying, and history was being made.

But that's why I'm hoping I can count on you to help us raise the \$107,000 needed to secure these battlefields today.

Our goal is to continue saving battlefields in the Western Theater, *including in Georgia*, and soon we'll have reinforcements!

You may know the name Vince Dooley. For years, he coached college football in Georgia with great distinction. But I knew him in a different capacity — as a dedicated preservationist and a board member of the American Battlefield Trust for nine years!

Well, I'm very pleased to announce that Georgia has established a preservation grant program in his name. Once it's fully funded, it will be available to support campaigns like ours.

Through this program, and other state preservation funds we've helped establish, we continue to strengthen our resources and plan for future preservation efforts. We know there are many more battles ahead!



BUT NOW, LET'S TAKE OURSELVES BACK TO THE BATTLES OF TODAY — STARTING WITH 13 ACRES AT RINGGOLD GAP ...

The battle took place on November 27, 1863 — *the day after the first National Day of Thanksgiving, as declared by Abraham Lincoln several weeks before*. And Union troops thought they had a lot to be thankful for.

Gen. Joseph Hooker's men had the numbers, and they knew control of the railroad at Ringgold Gap was crucial to the Confederate supplies.

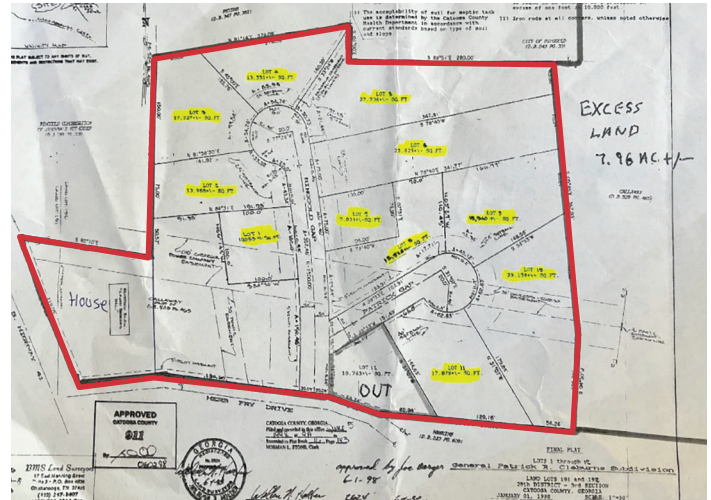
Hooker's forces dispersed along the rocky slopes of the ridge, reducing their advantage in numbers. Below the ridge, Confederate General Patrick Cleburne's men fought with valor, against the odds, but after five hours they were nearly out of ammunition.

That's when Cleburne pulled back and burned the railroad bridge on the east side of the ridge after the trains had safely crossed. *Because of Cleburne's tough defense of Ringgold Gap, the retreating Confederate*

*army survived to fight on for **another nine months** in the North Georgia hills.*

Today, a sculpture of Gen. Cleburne stands at Ringgold Gap. But rapidly encroaching development is threatening to surround it. A potential residential subdivision poses an immediate risk to the 13-acre tract — we even have the plat in hand for the houses that could be built there! But now, with funding from the Georgia Battlefields Association and an expected federal grant, there is an opportunity to preserve this land before it is lost forever.

We can't lose this property to development. Now, or ever. Please make your gift today!



Tract at Ringgold Gap subdivision plat reveals 13-acre residential housing plan, with proposed housing lots shown within the red boundary.



62 ACRES AT ROCKY FACE RIDGE — THE FIRST BATTLE OF THE ATLANTA CAMPAIGN

By the spring of 1864, the Union army was on the move again, pressing deeper into Georgia. Gen. William T. Sherman's soldiers pushed toward Gen. Joseph Johnston's defenses near Dalton. Sherman was relentless. While part of his force kept Johnston fixed in place, another swept through the valleys to threaten his lifeline at Resaca. With Union troops closing in from multiple directions, Johnston realized his position was hopeless and pulled back after days of hard fighting.

For the men who fought here, the clash was massive and unrelenting, echoing across hills and valleys filled with smoke and fire. These 62 acres lie close to the heart of the struggle, where earthworks for a six-gun battery still stand as silent reminders of the ferocity of those days and the determination that drove the Union ever southward.

This pristine property was ripe for residential development. But, thanks to the dedicated efforts of the Save the Dalton Battlefields and the Trust, as well as grant funding from the Open Space Institute and the American Battlefield Protection Program, we now have a chance to preserve it forever, if we can raise the remaining funds in time to secure this property.



THREE ACRES AT KENNESAW MOUNTAIN

For weeks, Sherman and Johnston had been battling, and mighty armies moved closer to Atlanta, fighting the battles of New Hope Church, Pickett's Mill, and Marietta along the way. The fighting at Kolb's Farm on June 22 convinced Sherman that Johnston's line was overstretched and led him to formulate his first major frontal attack of the campaign.

The plan called for the Army of the Tennessee and the Army of the Cumberland to assault the Confederate right and center respectively, while the Army of the Ohio acted as a diversion on the Confederate left.

If all went well, Johnston's army would be dispersed or destroyed, and the door to Atlanta would swing wide open.

But it was not to be. After four hours of fierce fighting, including deafening combat with the two lines barely 400 yards apart, not far from the lands we're seeking to preserve now, the Union attack failed. At Kennesaw Mountain, the Confederates held their ground!

Of course, you know what will happen next. *What a difference a year makes!*



Big Kennesaw at Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park. © American Battlefield Trust

As I noted, this has been a remarkable year for the American Battlefield Trust, with thousands of acres of battlefield land preserved forever. I want to thank you personally for your crucial role in securing these successes.

But as I look to the year ahead, do you know what I see? I see land values continuing to rise sharply. I see development pressures continuing to mount.

I see deals being cut to build more housing and data centers on battlefield land in Northern Virginia, in Georgia, in Tennessee, and in other states, which means we will be fighting day after day, throughout the year, to stop more of our history from being lost forever. While the Trust is not opposed to these essential parts of our modern infrastructure, we cannot allow them to be built on hallowed ground!

But those are our battles for next year. I need your help to see this campaign to victory, right here and now.

We don't have all the funds in hand, and I'm guessing the developers would like to see us fail. But we won't let that happen, will we?

Please make your best gift to the American Battlefield Trust today to take advantage of this extraordinary \$22-to-\$1 match. Thanksgiving is next month, and I'd be deeply thankful for any contribution you can make today to our worthy cause.



'Til the battle is won,

David N. Duncan

David N. Duncan
President

P.S. Not every American understands the importance of the Western Theater in American history. But you know that the battlefields we're fighting to save today, and all the battlefields throughout the Western Theater, have enormous significance in shaping the war and forming our nation. It falls to us, as our sacred duty, to save them from the bulldozer and the steamroller. I truly hope I can count on your help once again.

*Every dollar you give today is worth \$22!
So, please act now to have your preservation
gift matched. And, please enjoy and use your
personalized address labels!*