



AMERICAN
BATTLEFIELD
TRUST ★ ★ ★

HELP SECURE THE MISSING PIECE AT APPOMATTOX AND DEFEND SACRED GROUND AT GAINES' MILL AND COLD HARBOR.



**This holiday, give a lasting gift to America,
and multiply your impact \$4-to-\$1!**

Dear Friend of History and Preservation,

You know, every year around this time, I find myself searching for meaningful gifts — perhaps something small in size, but filled with heart. You know the saying: *Good things come in small packages*. Well, this year, I think I've found the gift ... in the form of two small tracts totaling 2.4 acres of battlefield land that have enormous significance. I bet they would fit right into my Christmas stocking!

Now, I know what you might be thinking — just *2.4 acres*? That's a postage stamp compared to some of the battlefield lands we've saved together.

But here's the thing: these are not just any acres.

One is the *last unprotected parcel* in a sea of preserved land (check out your map!) that we've worked so hard to save at **Appomattox Court House** — yes, *that* Appomattox. The place where our nation began to reunite after years of bloody conflict. Preserving this spot feels like placing the final piece in a puzzle we've been assembling for decades. It's a non-negotiable in my opinion.

The other tract? It's at the famous **Old Cold Harbor crossroads** and offers one of the most powerful interpretation opportunities on any Virginia battlefield. Time is running out to save this land as it's *incredibly threatened* — and *incredibly valuable* to our shared story.

Together, these small parcels represent an outsized opportunity: to protect the past, connect the dots across sacred ground, and give future generations a fuller, richer picture of American history.

That's why I'm reaching out to you today — because **we have a chance to save these two critical pieces of history** ... and do it for just a fraction of their full value.

Combined, these tracts are appraised at **\$680,000**. But thanks to state and federal matching grants, and a seller's deferred payment schedule on the Cold Harbor property, we need to raise **\$172,500** by January.

That means **every dollar you give today will be matched \$4-to-\$1**.

Think about that — your \$100 gift has the power to protect \$400 worth of hallowed ground. That's one heck of a return on investment ... and one heck of a holiday gift to future generations.

These acres may be small, but their stories are monumental: The brutal losses at Cold Harbor and Gaines' Mill ... the final stand at Appomattox ... these lands stand testament to the footsteps of some of the greats — Generals Grant, Lee, Custer, McClellan, Jackson, Stuart ... and the tens of thousands of soldiers who never made it home.

I hope you'll send a donation today and make it your holiday gift to preserve America's rich history and future generations!

From Resistance to Resignation

Perhaps no one in American history would have understood the significance of these two battlefields better than Gen. Lee. For in many ways, they tell Lee's story from the height of his resistance to the eve of his resignation.

So let us start at the Battle of Cold Harbor, fought on land which overlaps with the Battle of Gaines' Mill — two major conflicts just two years apart. The land we're fighting to save today is central to both. And in 1864, it was the scene of the climactic battle of the storied Overland Campaign.

You'll likely remember our Gaines' Mill–Cold Harbor Saved Forever Campaign over the last few years. Well, thanks to your generosity, in the last few weeks we have made our final payment! I'm proud to tell you that those acres are saved forever!

But there is more battlefield land to save there.

This new property we need to save sits in the triangle of 18th-century roads known as the Old Cold Harbor crossroads, directly across from where the Old Cold Harbor Tavern stood.

You can see on the map I'm enclosing that it's small; but historically, it's gigantic. This little lot is a critically important unprotected property that is tied to both the 1862 and 1864 battles. Its strategic location also helps safeguard against reconfiguration and development of the modern intersection.

Here's what renowned historian Robert E.L. Krick had to say about it:

"... admittedly the tract is a tiny slice of real estate. But it possesses tremendous value as a Civil War landmark, and sky-high potential as one of the best interpretive spots on any Virginia battlefield. Standing on it and looking in any of the four directions provides vistas connected to multiple sites and stories associated with both campaigns."

What more can I say?

In 1862, Gen. Lee's army used this very intersection as a vital corridor to launch the first major



This 1864 drawing by Edwin Forbes shows the tavern at Cold Harbor used by General Winfield Scott Hancock for his headquarters. © Library of Congress

Confederate counteroffensive of the war during the Seven Days Campaign. “Stonewall” Jackson and D. H. Hill rallied their men here. J. E. B. Stuart and Jackson observed the battlefield from their “headquarters tree.” And Union Gen. George McClellan camped at this very spot just days before.

Fast forward to 1864, when this ground once again surged with troops. Lee’s soldiers fought tooth and nail to repel Union attacks, even as the tide of the war was turning. The crossroads saw cavalry charges and infantry deployments. Nearly every Union soldier crossed its shell-swept landscape on the way to the front; many crossed it again, wounded, as they passed back behind Federal lines.

This ground was fought over, bled on, and marched across by tens of thousands of men. And its fate is still not settled.

Currently a home and an unoccupied garage and country store sit on the property. But rumblings among real estate developers envisioned a convenience store or a gas station instead — another piece of irreplaceable history paved over for profit.

Thankfully, we were able to convince the owner to sell it to us instead. But here’s the catch ...

The seller has generously agreed to a five-year payment schedule, but if we miss a single payment — including the first one, due next month — ***we lose the land and every dollar we’ve invested.***

Standing on this property and looking in any of the four directions, you can literally ***see history all around you***, including battlefield acres your previous generosity has helped save! That’s why I’m asking for your help again. This land has waited more than 160 years for someone to protect it. Let’s not let this moment slip away.

Appomattox Court House

I’m sure you raised your brow when you read the name Appomattox. Civil War history doesn’t come any richer and more resonant than what happened on this site, and it’s been seven long years since we’ve been able to save a property here. I call it historic destiny!

Take a look at the map I’m enclosing and see where this plot is.

Look closely. It’s that little yellow square on the map of preserved battlefield. **It’s the missing piece.** These are the opportunities we dream about.



The Battle of Appomattox Court House led Lee to surrender the Army of Northern Virginia, leading to the end of the Civil War.
© Mike Talplacido, American Battlefield Trust

On the map you can see how centrally located the property is to the action. As the Battle of Appomattox Court House unfolded, Union infantry moved to flank and pressure Lee’s exhausted forces. Gen. George Custer’s division advanced east along LeGrand Road, driving toward Confederate lines. And then, near the very ground we’re trying to save, a moment of profound consequence occurred:

A white flag appeared — carried by Confederate courier Robert Simms — and passed through Union lines.

Rather than destroy his army and sacrifice the lives of his soldiers, Lee surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia. Three days later, a formal ceremony marked the disbanding of Lee's army and the parole of his men, ending the war in Virginia. The Grant-Lee agreement served not only as a signal that the South had lost the war but also as a model for the rest of the surrenders that followed.

The long, painful journey to national reconciliation had begun.

So yes, maybe we can breathe a sigh of relief for what ended here. But in our fight to preserve this ground, we cannot rest.

This is an important piece to save. The hole in an otherwise protected battlefield that tells the story of surrender, sacrifice, and national healing. We've saved so much already, but this spot is the literal and symbolic gap in the lines. And it's time to close it.

Let's not leave history incomplete. That's why I hope you'll join me in raising the \$172,500 we need by the end of January to secure these two small, yet significant properties.

Of course, I know it's a busy time of year. And I hope you'll take time to celebrate the holiday season with people you love and give thanks. I know I will.

But I also know the most important gifts we'll give and receive aren't the kind that can be wrapped with paper and tied in a bow. In so many ways, our work in battlefield preservation is a gift to future generations of Americans. We are giving now, so that our children and grandchildren will not miss out on the chance to see and understand our history in the very places where lives were lost, valor was shown ... and history was made.

We can do it if you help. Please make your tax-deductible preservation gift now because when you do, every dollar you give will be *quadrupled* in impact!



'Til the battle is won,

David N. Duncan

David N. Duncan
President

P.S. The total value of these two Virginia properties is \$680,000. But our generous partners have already chipped in the lion's share. We just need to raise \$172,500 before the end of January. That's a \$4-to-\$1 match and an incredible opportunity to save land at Cold Harbor and Appomattox — the bookends of Lee's war. Please help us close the final gap before it's too late.

Wishing you a happy, healthy holiday season! Thank you for being a loyal member who values history. I can't wait to share more stories of the victories you have helped make possible.