



**SHENANDOAH
VALLEY
BATTLEFIELDS**
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Shenandoah Valley
Battlefields Foundation

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The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation is the managing entity of the federally designated Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District.

KEVEN M. WALKER
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Dear Friend of American History,

I have important news to share with you from here in the Shenandoah Valley, and I could hardly wait to do it.

We can now announce that 131 additional acres of core battlefield land can be saved – and we can finalize this deal before the end of the year! 2018 has been marked by preservation victories throughout the Valley, including 392 acres we just preserved at Tom’s Brook. Now we have the chance to get another deal on the books and save more hallowed ground at Tom’s Brook before the year is through.

After several years of discussions, we have reached an agreement that **will protect 131 acres in the middle of the Toms Brook Battlefield and provide the first permanent interpretive access ever on this battlefield!**

The property we have an opportunity to preserve was the site of heavy fighting and a flanking movement that helped decide the outcome of the battle. When added to the 974 acres already preserved at Toms Brook, protecting this property will bring the total acres preserved on this battlefield to a staggering 1,105 – not to mention, this deal will provide the best interpretive opportunity ever available on this battlefield.

This property must be preserved, and you can help get it done.

When I visited the property earlier this month I was struck by how vital a project this is. This landscape, with its historic significance and beauty, begs to be preserved. The scene has changed little since 1864; as I walked with the owner and described the fighting that took place on his farm, it was easy to imagine the battle unfolding in front of you. **This is exactly the type of core battlefield land that must be preserved** so that future generations can experience the battlefield like I did – little-changed since the war. When you stand along the little stream from which the battle takes its name, or at the top of the target property’s commanding knoll, you get a very real sense of what that spot and the entire

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Valley must have been like in 1864. It is an amazingly beautiful farm, and it sits at the absolute center of the battlefield.

The Battle of Toms Brook was one of the comparatively few all-cavalry fights of the war, and arguably the worst day that the cavalymen of the Army of Northern Virginia experienced in any campaign. This engagement that unfolded on the morning of October 9, 1864, was sharp and decisive, with some of the best cavaliers the world had ever seen pitted against each other. The result was a rout that would long be remembered as the “Woodstock Races” because of the running fight that ensued when the Confederate lines were broken, and the Confederates ran their horses miles south through the town of Woodstock and beyond. They didn’t stop until reaching the relative safety of Rudes Hill and the rest of Confederate Gen. Jubal A. Early’s forces just north of New Market.

“The air was lively. My pistols were empty except for two shots which I sent as straight as my fool horse would let me.”

Confederate Pvt. Thomas Ranson, 12th Virginia Cavalry, Battle of Tom’s Brook

Preserving these 131 acres will cost just under \$500,000. And let me tell you, having just walked this ground, I can assure you that this is a small price to pay for what is being preserved.

We are already off to a great start, having just received word that we’ve been awarded \$220,000 for this project! Virginia’s Department of Historic Resources has awarded these funds as a dollar-for-dollar matching grant as part of this year’s disbursement of the Virginia Battlefield Fund. We are also going to apply for Federal funding to help complete the purchase, but at the end of the day, even if we are awarded all that we apply for, you and I and our friends across the country are going to **need to come together to raise \$58,235**. \$58,235 to preserve 131 acres means that **every \$445 raised will save an acre of hallowed ground**.

The Battle of Toms Brook was a turning point for the storied Confederate cavaliers; never again would they dominate the field as they once had. Legend and lore surround these southern horseman, and tales of their glorious exploits and daring raids have long outlived them, but after Tom’s Brook the blue-clad troopers of the Federal cavalry surpassed their Confederate counterparts as the most effective mounted fighting force anywhere in Virginia.

Just like in 1864, Toms Brook can be a turning point in our fight. We can make a stand on the same hill where the Laurel Brigade made theirs, and together we can achieve a victory on behalf of battlefield preservation. We can win the day and preserve one more priceless piece of our history;

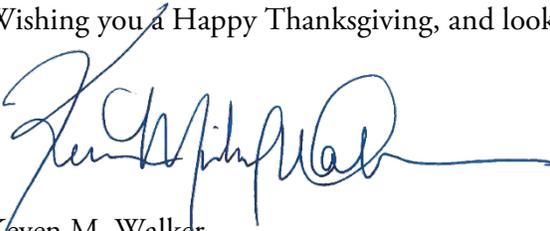
131 acres of hallowed ground. I really can't describe to you how stunning the ground is. I can't wait to take my wife and children to visit the site.

Coincidentally, my wife had an ancestor who rode with the Laurel Brigade and fought on this property that we now have the chance to save. This personal connection is a poignant reminder to me that the men who fought and the men who died there were real people with hopes and dreams and joys and fears. They had families, and many have descendants. Protecting these places helps teach future generations about their connections to the past – about the sacrifice that veterans from throughout our history have made to make our country what it is today.

I'm asking you to do what you can to help save this property. **Every \$445 given to this effort saves an acre of hallowed ground at Tom's Brook.** Less than \$450 to save an acre of Civil War battlefield? It's hard to beat that for impact – and for making a lasting difference.

We can't rely on anyone else to get this job done. If this irreplaceable battlefield land is going to be saved, you and I are going to have to do it. I've decided make a stand along the banks of Toms Brook – will you stand with me?

Wishing you a Happy Thanksgiving, and looking forward to hearing from you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Keven M. Walker', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Keven M. Walker
Chief Executive Officer