



Battlefield Land Saved at Cold Harbor!

ADDITIONAL ACREAGE PRESERVED

This Spring, the Richmond Battlefields Association purchased an additional seven acres of core battlefield land at Cold Harbor (highlighted in blue). This newly acquired land is adjacent to the tract RBA purchased in 2008 (highlighted in yellow). This brings the total battlefield land preserved by RBA at Beulah Church to 15 acres.

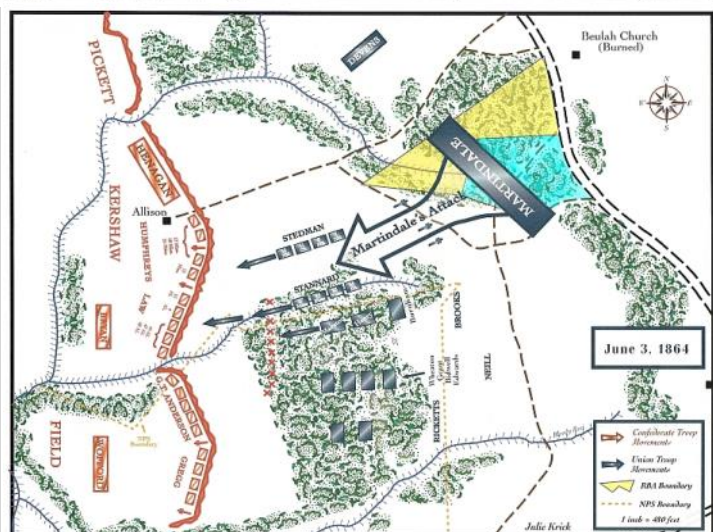
At the time of the first purchase, RBA asked for and was granted right of first refusal for any future land offerings by the landowners. When the family decided to sell off additional property late last year, RBA was in a position to act quickly. The Civil War Trust stepped up and pledged to support our cause with a generous donation. The quick response of the RBA coupled with the strong support of the CWT once again proved to be a winning combination for battlefield preservation!

In 1864, the Beulah Church area saw heavy action on both June 1st & 3rd. Late in the day on June 1st, Federal forces from Brig. Gen. Horatio G. Wright's VI Corps and Maj. Gen. William F. "Baldy" Smith's XVIII Corps moved forward. Exploiting a gap in the Rebel line, they overwhelmed Wofford's Brigade. However, Confederate reinforcements soon drove the exhausted Federals back and retook much of their lost works.

At daybreak on June 3rd men from the Union 18th Corps again attacked across these fields. The result was one of the costliest and most infamous repulses of the entire war. The unfavorable terrain channeled Federal troops into the ravines feeding the Gaines Mill pond. Emerging in front of the Confederate line the

I have always regretted that the last assault at Cold Harbor was ever made... At Cold Harbor no advantage whatever was gained to compensate for the heavy loss we sustained.

— Gen. Ulysses S. Grant



RBA ANNUAL MEETING & TOUR

Saturday, June 8, 2013

10:00 AM

Beaver Dam Creek

Details inside

Federals were mowed down by intense rifle fire and double-canister artillery. Grant's army suffered thousands of casualties in a matter of minutes and the Cold Harbor offensive faltered.

Next year, visitors to the 150th commemoration of the Battle of Cold Harbor will be able to walk this historic ground due to the continued preservation efforts of the Richmond Battlefields Association. ❖

**2013 RBA ANNUAL MEETING & TOUR
BEAVER DAM CREEK BATTLEFIELD
— JUNE 8 AT 10:00 A.M.**

The Richmond Battlefields Association annual meeting will be held on Saturday, June 8th at our new Beaver Dam Creek property. The meeting will start at 10:00 a.m. Mike Andrus, our resident historian, will lead a walking tour of the property. RBA's annual business meeting will follow the tour. The event is free and open to the public. Bring a chair, bring a friend!

The RBA Beaver Dam Creek site is 0.5 miles east of Mechanicsville Turnpike (US-360) at 7454 Cold Harbor Road (GPS 37.599, -77.362). ❖



**PENNSYLVANIA MONUMENT
AT COLD HARBOR**

In October of 1909, Richmond prepared for an event the city's newspaper called *"one of the most notable of its kind in the history of the present generation."* In what was the largest gathering of Union veterans south of the Mason-Dixon Line, hundreds of old soldiers from Pennsylvania were in the former capital of the Confederacy for the dedication of a monument to honor their fallen comrades at Cold Harbor.

The 55th Pennsylvania Memorial Association had lobbied for a regimental monument at Cold Harbor.

As association president, W.S. Conrad noted *"We soon found that there still remained twelve other Pennsylvania regiments whose dead were not yet honored on any Southern battlefield, and in order to get the appropriation we had to include them, and, of course, we were glad to do so."* So, in 1907 the Pennsylvania General Assembly authorized the monument at a cost of \$4,350. One year later the lawmakers passed a bill providing free transportation for the veterans of those thirteen regiments to attend a dedication ceremony in Richmond. Of the 1,700 surviving veterans, 859 made the trip.

Gov. Stuart headed the Pennsylvania delegation. Special trains from Harrisburg and Philadelphia conveyed the aging veterans to Richmond. On the morning of the dedication, 500 Union veterans gathered at Murphy's Hotel. Escorted by the Richmond Light Infantry Blues Band, they marched to the Southern Railway Station and boarded a train for Fair Oaks. From that point carriages and farm wagons of every sort conveyed the visitors six miles to the Cold Harbor National Cemetery.

After an opening benediction, the band struck up "Dixie". Mrs. Juliet Watson, daughter of the late Col. White, commander of the 55th Pennsylvania, pulled the cord and unveiled the monument as the crowd cheered to the refrains of the "Star-Spangled Banner".



The monument stands 30 feet 3 inches high surmounted by a 7 foot statue of an infantry soldier at parade rest. It commemorates the fallen and the 79 regiments who took part in the battle:

"Erected by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to all Pennsylvania regiments which participated in the operations from May 31 to June 13, 1864. Incident to and during the Battle of Cold Harbor, Virginia, June 1-3, 1864."

After all the music and oration had ended, many of the veterans walked the battlefield pointing out the spots where they had been wounded or had seen comrades die. Though 45 years had passed, most remembered the lay of the land and their regimental positions. Many wandered through the cemetery looking for the names of fallen comrades.

That night, the Pennsylvania regiments held their annual reunions. Camp fires were lit at different points in the city around which the gray-haired old men could relive those momentous days of their youth. As one of the famed Pennsylvania Bucktails recalled, *"I got to Mechanicsville, where our regiment really began the Seven Days' Fight. We fought for seven long days and got licked every damned day. We participated in every battle fought by the Army of the Potomac after First Bull Run until our time expired, and for all of those three years we tried to get to Richmond, and yet I never saw the city until today."* ❖

BEADLES'S BEHAVIOR DISGRACES VIRGINIA

So read the Richmond newspaper headline. During the Cold Harbor ceremony, Cary L. Beadles, a Hanover County justice of the peace, "made himself extremely annoying to a large concourse of people". He was "rough to women" and threatened to place people, including Pennsylvania veterans, "under arrest if they failed to obey his incredible behests." With the complicity of the County Sheriff, Beadles levied a license tax of \$5.75 on food and souvenir vendors. Several prominent Richmond citizens were outspoken in their disgust at what they termed Beadles' most outrageous conduct. Despite the bitter complaints lodged against the magistrate, Beadles continued to hold office for many years. Rest assured modern Hanoverians are much more hospitable. ❖

*Masthead photo on page 1:
Cold Harbor Battlefield collage*



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Published for the RBA membership

Richmond Battlefields Association
P.O. Box 13945
Richmond, VA 23225

Phone: (804) 496-1862
Email: 1862rba@gmail.com

www.saverichmondbattlefields.org

The RBA is chartered as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All contributions are tax deductible. A financial statement is available, upon request, from the Virginia Office of Consumer Affairs.

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ELLIE MAE — “THE BEAVER DAM HAM”

Last November, RBA purchased eight acres of core battlefield land along Beaver Dam Creek. A long-time resident of the property was a young pot-bellied pig named “Ellie Mae”. Hanover County animal control officers were well acquainted with this porcine playmate in that she enjoyed wandering off with a neighbor’s dog. Since the land transfer, Ellie Mae has found a new home in western Hanover County thanks to the kindness of RBA president Ben Brockenbrough. She has adjusted well to her new surroundings, making many new four-legged friends. “She has been an absolute delight” reports Ben. And should RBA ever need a mascot, we have one waiting in the wings. ❖

ONE SOLDIER’S STORY

Earlier this year, Jay & Renae Hollenbeck of Colorado visited RBA’s Fussell’s Mill property as part of a week-long quest to understand the ordeal endured by Jay’s Civil War ancestor. His great-uncle was a soldier in the 152nd New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment and died as a result of wounds received at Fussell’s Mill. Solomon Hollenbeck, a farmer from Herkimer County, enlisted in

the fall of 1862. He was seriously wounded in the Battle of the Wilderness. Three months later, he returned to duty at Petersburg with the new rank of Corporal. On August 14, 1864, after a grueling trip from the Petersburg front to Deep Bottom, his unit took part in the late day assault by Macy’s Brigade at Fussell’s Mill.

Reaching the Confederate trenches, he was wounded in the thigh and captured. Confederate field surgeons removed his leg and sent him to a hospital in Richmond. There he underwent a second amputation. In late August Solomon was paroled at Aiken’s Landing and transported to a Union hospital in Annapolis. Within days, the 29-year-old soldier succumbed to pneumonia. He left behind a wife and two young daughters. Corporal Solomon is buried in Van Hornesville Cemetery outside his hometown of Stark, NY.

After literally walking in the footsteps of his soldier ancestor, Jay expressed great appreciation for RBA’s preservation efforts. Walking the ground provided a unique perspective on the battle unattainable in written accounts. The Hollenbecks returned home to Colorado content to “let it all sink in.” ❖

RICHMOND DISPATCHES – 150 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

DRURY’S BLUFF. — An extensive village has sprung up at this famous place. It is rarely the case that soldiers are so well accommodated as they are here. The commanding officer of the post is a brother of Gen. Lee. The natural beauty of the Bluff, situated as it is on an angle commanding a view of the river and surrounding country for many miles, has been much enhanced by the industry of man. – There are to be seen the defensive works, (the most complete in the country,) and the white tombstones erected over the remains of those who fell when the Yankees attacked the place. The trees are putting forth their leaves, and soon the whole place will wear a vernal aspect. Thousands of our citizens have visited the Bluff on the steamer *Schultz*, Capt. Hill, and all have returned pleased with their visit. Indeed we never heard of any visitors returning dissatisfied save the Yankees; but they came the wrong way.

- *The Daily Dispatch*: May 1, 1863.

A year had passed since the repulse of the Union Navy. This Confederate outpost had expanded into a substantial military installation containing barracks, a chapel, a post office, a hotel, and even a Masonic lodge. Here, the Confederate States Naval Academy was established along with Camp Beall, the Marine Corps camp of instruction. With the arrival of Spring, civilians from Richmond traveled downriver to picnic, socialize, and watch the young men drill. Drewry’s Bluff quickly became a very popular destination.

Yes!

I WANT TO HELP PRESERVE OUR NATION’S HERITAGE, PLEASE SIGN ME UP.

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