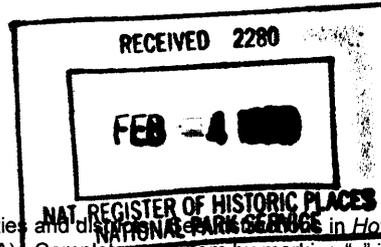


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name "W" Road
other names/site number NA

2. Location

street & number "W" Road from Spring Street east 0.4 miles to end of rock wall N/A not for publication
city or town Walden N/A vicinity
state Tennessee code TN county Hamilton code 065 zip code 37377

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Herbert L. Hays
Signature of certifying official/Title

1/25/99
Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Mary M. ...
Signature of the Keeper

3/19/99
Date of Action

"W" Road
Name of Property

Hamilton County, Tennessee
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

Contributing

Noncontributing

		buildings
		sites
1		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: road related (vehicular)

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: road related (vehicular)

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone

walls stone

roof N/A

other asphalt

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations N/A

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** moved from its original location.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 year of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation

Period of Significance

circa 1893-1935; 1940

Significant Dates

1892-3

1927

Significant Person

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Long, Marcus B., engineer

Walker, W. T., project supervisor

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

"W" Road
Name of Property

Hamilton County, Tennessee
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than 1 acre FAIRMOUNT, TENN 105-NE

UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>16</u>	<u>653520</u>	<u>3890220</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Karen L. Daniels/Historic Preservation Planner
organization Southeast Tennessee Development District date April 1998
street & number 25 Cherokee Blvd.; Post Office Box 4757 telephone 423/266-5781
city or town Chattanooga state TN zip code 37405-0757

Additional Documentation

submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 0r 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO) or FPO for any additional items

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Town of Walden, c/o Elizabeth Akins, Mayor
street & number Post Office Box 335 telephone 423/886-7953
city or town Signal Mountain state TN zip code 37377

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

"W" Road
Hamilton County, Tennessee

Narrative Description

The "W" Road in Walden, Hamilton County, Tennessee is a 3.3 mile long road originally constructed in 1892-1893 through Roger's Gap in Walden's Ridge to the base of the Ridge at Mountain Creek, at a cost of \$11,000. The section of the road that is being nominated for the National Register of Historic Places is a 0.4 mile long section which includes the portion that contains the "W" and the stone retaining walls. The road was designed by Hamilton County engineer Marcus B. Long to run at a 6% grade. Construction began in 1892 and took 335 days to complete. During construction, as many as eighty-three prisoners from the County Workhouse worked on the road at one time. Construction was supervised by W. T. Walker, the assistant superintendent of the workhouse.

A dirt road when constructed in the 1890s, around 1911 or 1912 the road was laid with crushed rock and gravel to improve the surface. At the time, two points on the road had wood shields that protected travelers from spray from streams coming off the mountain.

During 1927 a major renovation of the road occurred when most of the road was widened to twenty feet; the switchbacks were widened to fifteen feet. The road was paved, drains installed for the stream, and the original mortar-less stone walls were replaced by substantial walls laid with mortar. The stone walls were built on the downhill side of the road, while the uphill side of the road was cut into the ridge. The stone walls were built approximately twenty-four inches high in rough courses with stone posts with caps spaced on level sections of the road. The stone walls begin just below where Anderson Pike and Spring Street meet and the "W" Road begins. The walls continue until just past the site of Hanging Rock. The grand reopening of the road occurred on November 11, 1927, and was attended by 500 people.

In 1940 the road was widened again to be at least twenty-four feet wide. (Some places had been only fifteen feet wide.) The rock walls that had been removed during the widening were rebuilt using stone from the original walls and additional stone from the same quarry. A series of maintenance and improvements to the lower section of the road, past the "W", occurred throughout the next thirty years. The "W" Road, itself, maintains a high degree of integrity.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

"W" Road
Hamilton County, Tennessee

Statement of Significance

The "W" Road in Walden (1990 pop. 1,523), Hamilton County, Tennessee is being nominated for the National Register of Historic Places under criterion A for significance in transportation during the last part of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century. During this period, the "W" Road was the only public road providing access to the top of Walden's Ridge which contained two summer communities and a few year round residents. Without the "W" Road, this part of Hamilton County would not have been developed.

Prior to 1893 access to the top of Walden's Ridge had been via toll roads. The first toll road was operated by David Walling, who operated in the 1830s. It is believed that the name Walden's Ridge is a corruption of Walling's Ridge. In 1839-1840 the rights to the turnpike road were given to J. M. Anderson. Anderson operated the turnpike until Tom Conner purchased it. Tom Conner sold his rights to the turnpike to \$300 to a group of Walden's Ridge residents who did not wish to continue paying the toll fee each time they passed Hanging Rock, a landmark in the area.

Walden's Ridge was a popular place for summer houses, but there were a few year round residents of the ridge as well. The Town of Signal Mountain and Summertown were begun as a way to escape the heat and disease of the Chattanooga summer. They grew quickly after the yellow fever and cholera epidemics in the 1870s.

In 1888-1889 residents of Walden's Ridge applied to Hamilton County for the construction of the road. The County Commission authorized expenses of \$11,000 and the use of workhouse labor for the construction. County engineer Marcus B. Long designed the road. Long had previously worked as an engineer for the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad. To combat the steep slopes of Walden's Ridge, particularly at the palisades, he designed a series of switchbacks near the top. The road was designed to take advantage of gentler slopes at Roger's Gap. The road took 3.3 miles to ascend 1,100 feet. The *Daily Times* reported on July 19, 1892 that:

A new road up Walden's Ridge has been surveyed, the county stockade has been built and it is thought work will commence on it within a fortnight.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

"W" Road
Hamilton County, Tennessee

The road will ascend the mountain at a 6 percent grade and will be entirely free of corduroys or any dangerous places.

The overall project design was also supervised by Superintendent Joe Dobbs of the county workhouse. In 1892 construction began on the "W" Road under the direct supervision of W. T. Walker, the assistant superintendent of the county workhouse. He began with seventeen prison workers; by the end of the construction he had eighty-three men working. Construction of the road took 335 days. The "W" Road was less steep than the toll road route and, as a result, a longer route. The new road was considered a great improvement over the toll road since the "W" shape of the road allowed for a less steep grade.

Because this was a new route several large rocks had to be broken to clear the route. In May 1893 a crowd gathered to watch the explosion of dynamite that would remove the Hanging Rock, one of the larger boulders along the route. At one time a store, dance pavilion and post office were located at the top of the "W", these structures have been demolished. When the "W" Road was first opened, hacks charged fifty cents for a ride up Walden's Ridge. The area was still primarily a resort or summer community, but would later develop into a year round community. In addition to resort travel, the "W" Road was used for commerce, since it was the only access road.

The road opened in 1893, and stayed open until a renovation in 1927. On November 10, 1927, an article in the *Chattanooga Times* stated that "Reopening of Road to be Celebrated, Ceremonies to be Held on Signal Mountain at Noon Tomorrow." The Fairmont Parent-Teacher Association sponsored a barbecue. Several individuals who had homes on Walden's Ridge were organizing activities and the county highway commissioners were the guests of honor at the fete. In 1948 another celebration was held commemorating the "W" Road. During the centennial year of the road in 1993, signs were placed commemorating the hundredth year of the "W" Road.

In the first part of the twentieth century, the "W" Road, along with nearby Signal Mountain Boulevard, was considered part of the interstate Dixie Highway. While not noted in the Minutes of the Dixie Highway Association as part of the Dixie Highway, postcards called the road part of the Dixie Highway. The switchbacks of the "W" Road made a very scenic diversion for the traveler.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

"W" Road
Hamilton County, Tennessee

From 1893 until 1935 the "W" Road was the only route up Walden's Ridge. In 1935 the William Howard Taft Highway was completed through the Shoal Creek gap and through the town of Signal Mountain up to the top of Walden's Ridge. Today, this part of Taft Highway is also known as Signal Mountain Boulevard and Ridgeway Avenue.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 5

"W" Road
Hamilton County, Tennessee

Geographical Information

Verbal Boundary Description

The section of the "W" Road nominated for the National Register of Historic Places begins at the intersection of Spring Street and Anderson Pike and runs for 0.4 miles of "W" Road. The section of road is marked on the accompanying Signal Mountain, Hamilton County, Tennessee tax map number 98. It includes the road, the right-of-way and the historic stone walls adjacent to the road.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property contains all of the switchback of the road that was historically known as the "W" Road. It retains a high degree of integrity.

The map scale for this nomination is 1" = 400'. This is the only scale tax map available for this area.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 6

"W" Road
Hamilton County, Tennessee

Bibliography

Carver, Martha. "Drivin' the Dixie: Automobile Tourism in the South." Draft tour booklet. 1998.

Gaston, Kay Baker. *The Story of the "W" Road*. Chattanooga, TN: Chattanooga Printing, 1980.

"New Walden's Ridge Road." *Daily Times*. 19 July 1892.

"Reopening of Road to be Celebrated." *Chattanooga Times*. 10 November 1927, p.5.

Park, Irby. "Signal's Historic W Road Celebrates Centennial Year" *Chattanooga News - Free Press*. 31 October 1993, p. A-10.

"W' Road Closed for two Weeks." *Chattanooga Times*. 17 September 1994, p. B1.

"Recalls History of "W" Toll Gate." *Chattanooga Times*. 13 November 1927, p. 48.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number photos Page 7

"W" Road
Hamilton County, Tennessee

Photo Log

"W" Road
Walden, Hamilton County, Tennessee
Photo by: Annette Dooley and Shane Webb
Date: July 1998
Neg: Tennessee Historical Commission
Nashville, Tennessee

#1 of 7
Overview of "W"

#2 of 7
Top of "W," first switchback from above

#3 of 7
Top of "W," first switchback from above

#4 of 7
Second switchback from above

#5 of 7
Second switchback from below

#6 of 7
Third switchback from above

#7 of 7
Third switchback from below

