

PH0664405

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

MAR 8 1978

DATE ENTERED

AUG 24 1978

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Chattanooga, Harrison, Georgetown & Charlestown Railroad Tunnel

AND/OR COMMON

Missionary Ridge Railroad Tunnel

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Below North Crest Road

__ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Chattanooga

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Third

STATE

Tennessee

CODE

47

VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Hamilton

CODE

65 ✓

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

 DISTRICT BUILDING(S) STRUCTURE SITE OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

 PUBLIC PRIVATE BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

 IN PROCESS BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

 OCCUPIED UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

 YES: RESTRICTED YES: UNRESTRICTED NO

PRESENT USE

 AGRICULTURE MUSEUM COMMERCIAL PARK EDUCATIONAL PRIVATE RESIDENCE ENTERTAINMENT RELIGIOUS GOVERNMENT SCIENTIFIC INDUSTRIAL TRANSPORTATION MILITARY OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

The Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum, Inc.

STREET & NUMBER

2202 N. Chamberlain Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Chattanooga,

VICINITY OF

STATE

Tennessee

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Hamilton County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Chattanooga

STATE

Tennessee

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Tennessee Historical and Architectural Survey

DATE

January 1977

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR

SURVEY RECORDS

Tennessee Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

Nashville

STATE

Tennessee

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR
 DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Missionary Ridge Tunnel is located in eastern Chattanooga. It is 980 feet long and has a bore which measures 12.5 feet (at its narrowest point) by 19 feet (at its lowest point, measured from roof to floor). The total volume of the tunnel is 210,000 feet.

The interior of the tunnel was constructed using three types of material: brick, solid rock, and stone masonry. Starting at the western or Chattanooga end of the tunnel there is a 98-foot lined section, 56 feet of solid rock, another 49-foot lined section, 170 feet more solid rock, and finally, still another 611-foot lined section. The lined portions are, for the most part, composed of limestone masonry sides with brick arched overheads. The stone was obtained from local stone quarries.

As originally constructed the tunnel was hewn out of the rock and remained unlined. The stone and brick sections were the result of needed repairs which were accomplished in the 1870s.

The tunnel portals were constructed in the shape of a horseshoe. Both portals are 14 feet wide at the base and 15.5 feet at the widest point and 17 feet high.

Southern Railway inspected the tunnel in 1954 and noted the following structural problems:

1. the west portal has separated from the lining, leaving a gap of 1.5 inches which extends from the north spring line to a point halfway between the crown and the south spring line;
2. there is a bulge in the lining, which measures three to four feet wide and projects one-half inch; the bulge is located fifty feet east of the west portal and extends from the spring line to the crown; water seeps through this defect. This condition appears to have stabilized; no further deterioration has been observed during the past twenty-four years. Except for the defects noted above and the fact that a few portal stones have fallen, the tunnel appears to be in good condition.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1856-1858

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

When it was constructed, the tunnel represented a long sought gateway between Chattanooga and points to the north, east and south. By 1855, the East Tennessee & Georgia Railroad Company had trains running from Knoxville to Dalton, Georgia. As early as 1850, plans were made for a link from Chattanooga to the East Tennessee & Georgia Railroad near Cleveland, Tennessee, but construction was not actually undertaken for six years.

The Chattanooga, Harrison, Georgetown & Charleston Railroad Company began construction in 1856. This tunnel was one of the earliest, if not the earliest, constructed in Tennessee. The bore was cut by hand drilling holes into the rock face; these holes were filled with black powder and ignited.

The limestone came from local quarries and was set by hand. The tunnel portals were constructed in the shape of a horseshoe, and this is believed to be the only tunnel with a horseshoe portal in the state.

The tunnel was completed, and the Cleveland to Chattanooga opened in 1859. At this time the Chattanooga, Harrison, Georgetown & Charleston Railroad was taken over by the East Tennessee & Georgia Railroad.

In 1863, during the battle of Chattanooga, General William T. Sherman found the tunnel a disconcerting factor in his assaults upon Confederate lines atop Missionary Ridge. Sherman's men either overlooked or disregarded the tunnel opening as they charged up the western slopes of the ridge. Confederates under General Pat Cleburne entered the tunnel from the east and emerged from the west portal of the tunnel after Sherman's men had already advanced further up the slope. The Confederates attacked the Federals from the rear and withdrew after a sharp engagement, retreating through the tunnel. Sherman blockaded the western opening preventing similar attacks.

In November 1869 the East Tennessee & Georgia Railroad became part of the East Tennessee, Virginia & Georgia Railroad. The East Tennessee, Virginia & Georgia merged with the Richmond & Danville Railroad to form the Southern Railway, the nucleus of today's Southern Railway System, on July 1, 1894.

The tunnel saw the first installation of welded rail on the Southern Railway. Welded rail eliminates the joints between lengths of rail thus reducing track wear. As the size of freight cars increased throughout the 1940s the Southern gave serious consideration to the enlargement of the tunnel. With the completion of Citico yard, however, the tunnel was abandoned in July 1954.

In 1961 the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum (TVRM) was founded as a nonprofit educational corporation dedicated to the preservation, restoration and operation of locomotives and

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

The Chattanooga Times, July 1, 1954.

Prince, Richard. Steam Locomotives and Boats of the Southern Railway System (1965)
Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum files

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2

QUADRANGLE NAME East Chattanooga

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 16 | 660600 | 3881380

B 16 | 660260 | 3881500

C [] | [] | []

D [] | [] | []

E [] | [] | []

F [] | [] | []

G [] | [] | []

H [] | [] | []

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property nominated is centered in a rectangular area which measures 1200 feet by 75 feet.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Timothy Andrews

ORGANIZATION

Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum

DATE

June 1977

STREET & NUMBER

Box 5263

TELEPHONE

615-622-5908

CITY OR TOWN

Chattanooga

STATE

Tennessee

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Herbert L. Hays

TITLE

Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

DATE

3/2/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

W. H. ...

DATE

8/29/78

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

8-23-78

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAR 8 1978

DATE ENTERED AUG 24 1978

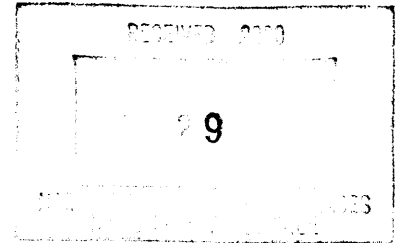
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

passenger equipment. From its inception, the TVRM looked for a site to locate a permanent museum. In 1971 the site at Chamberlain Avenue and the right-of-way through the tunnel was donated to the TVRM by the Southern Railway. After clearing the line the museum returned the tunnel to service carrying weekend passengers.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

AD



National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). 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 Chattanooga, Harrison, Georgetown, & Charleston Railroad Tunnel (Additional Documentation)
other names/site number Missionary Ridge Railroad Tunnel; Chattanooga and Cleveland Railroad Tunnel

2. Location

street & number Below North Crest Road N/A not for publication
city or town Chattanooga N/A vicinity
state Tennessee code TN county Hamilton code 065 zip code 37421

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. Hanger 1/18/01
Signature of certifying official/Title 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:) Additional Documentation Accepted
Signature of the Keeper Edson H. Beall Date of Action 2/22/01

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.)

Chickamauga-Chattanooga Civil War-Related Sites, 1863-1947

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

1

6. Function or Use**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/rail related

DEFENSE/battle site

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/museum

TRANSPORTATION/rail related

7. Description**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A

walls N/A

roof N/A

other Brick, rock, limestone masonry

Narrative Description

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

see continuation sheet

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

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

Property is: N/A

- 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 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION

MILITARY

ENGINEERING

Period of Significance

Circa 1854-1859, 1863

Significant Dates

1863

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

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 (8/24/78)
- 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:

Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Battlefield

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately 2 acres

UTM References (from original nomination)
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>16</u>	<u>660600</u>	<u>3881380</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>16</u>	<u>660260</u>	<u>3881500</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 Abbey Christman and Peggy Nickell
organization Center for Historic Preservation date 11/15/99
street & number Box 80, Middle Tennessee State University telephone (615) 898-2947
city or town Murfreesboro state TN zip code 37132

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 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 Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum
street & number 4119 Cromwell Road telephone (423)894-8028
city or town Chattanooga state TN zip code 37421

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

Chattanooga, Harrison, Georgetown, and Charleston Railroad
Tunnel (Additional Documentation), Hamilton County

VII. Narrative Description

The Chattanooga, Harrison, Georgetown, and Charleston Railroad Tunnel is located in eastern Chattanooga at the northern end of Missionary Ridge. It is also referred to as the Chattanooga and Cleveland Railroad Tunnel and the Missionary Ridge Railroad Tunnel. The Chattanooga, Harrison, Georgetown, and Charleston Railroad was formed to link Chattanooga to the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad, which ran through Cleveland, Tennessee. Construction on the tunnel began in 1856 and was completed in 1859. However, this date is controversial. According to Steve Freer of the Tennessee Railroad Museum, the tunnel was actually built between 1854 and 1856. The capstone located on the top western end of the railroad tunnel was misdated about 30 years ago. In 1859 the tunnel's ownership was transferred to the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad. In 1869 this line merged with the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad to become the East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia Railroad. In 1894 the East Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia Railroad became part of the Southern Railway. Currently the section of track that runs through the tunnel is used by the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum.

The tunnel is cut through the northern end of Missionary Ridge. It is 980 feet long and its bore measures 12.5 feet (at its narrowest point) by 19 feet (at its lowest point, measured from roof to floor). The total volume of the tunnel is 210,000 feet. The tunnel portals were constructed in the shape of a horseshoe. Both portals are 17 feet high, 14 feet wide at the base, and 15.5 feet wide at the widest point.

The tunnel is composed of solid rock, brick, and masonry limestone from local quarries. The tunnel was originally hewn out of the rock and unlined. Brick and masonry stone lining was added to sections of the tunnel c. 1870 as the East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia Railroad carried out needed repairs.

Starting at the western or Chattanooga end of the tunnel, there is a 98 foot lined section, 56 feet of solid rock, a 49 foot lined section, a 170 foot section of solid rock, and then a 611 foot lined section. The lined portions are mostly composed of limestone masonry sides with brick arched overheads. The stone was obtained from local quarries.

The Southern Railway inspected the tunnel in 1954 and noted the following structural problems: 1) The west portal has separated from the lining, leaving a gap of 1.5 inches which extends from the north spring line to a point halfway between the crown and the south spring line 2) There is a bulge in the lining, which measures three to four feet wide and projects one-half inch. The bulge is located fifty feet east of the west portal and extends from the spring line to the crown. Water seeps through this defect, but this condition appears to have stabilized. Except for these defects and the fact that a few portal stones have fallen, the tunnel appears to be in good condition.

In March 1960, it was proposed that the railroad tunnel now abandoned be used as bomb shelter. The railroad tunnel was denoted as being a "natural" location for a bomb shelter.¹ No other evidence has been found to verify if this proposal was accepted.

¹ Chattanooga Times (Chattanooga), 14, March 1960.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

Chattanooga, Harrison, Georgetown, and Charleston Railroad
Tunnel (Additional Documentation), Hamilton County

VIII. Narrative Statement of Significance

The Chattanooga, Harrison, Georgetown, and Charleston Railroad Tunnel was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on August 24, 1978, for its local significance under criterion A and C for the engineering, military, and transportation history of Chattanooga and Hamilton County. This nomination contains additional documentation of the property's significance in the engineering history of Chattanooga and Hamilton County as well as its military significance during the American Civil War. In that conflict, Chattanooga's railroad network made the city strategically vital, with both sides vying for control of railroads. The tunnel not only was a significant component of the eastern railroad corridor, but also was a site of significant military action during the Battle of Missionary Ridge in November, 1863. The railroad tunnel is located on the site of a battle at the north end of Missionary Ridge, where Confederate forces under General Patrick Cleburne repulsed repeated attacks by Union forces under General William T. Sherman on November 25th. The original nomination stated that Cleburne's Confederates actually entered the tunnel and used it during the fighting for concealment and fighting, but a careful reading of the official records of the battle do not offer confirmation that the tunnel was used in this manner. However, Confederate artillery took up a position on top of the tunnel during the fighting and used this position to good advantage in its defense of the Confederate line. The tunnel meets the registration requirements for Transportation-related properties listed in the Chickamauga-Chattanooga Civil War-Related Sites, 1863-1947 Multiple Property Submission.

Engineering and transportation significance

African-American slaves, hired under contract for the project or owned outright by the railroad company, in tandem with white laborers, probably constructed the tunnel as early as circa 1854 - 1856. The structure has been identified as one of the earliest, if not the earliest, railroad tunnel constructed in Tennessee.² The laborers cut the bore by hand-drilling bores into the rock face. Then they filled these holes with black powder, ignited them and raced for safety. It was extremely dangerous and difficult work. The limestone they used in the construction came from local quarries and was set by hand. The tunnel portals were constructed in the shape of a horseshoe, and this is believed to be the only tunnel with a horseshoe portal in the state. When the tunnel was first constructed, the profession of engineering in the United States was still in its infancy, with the American Society of Civil Engineers having been founded just four years before in 1852. As a hard-rock tunnel of almost one thousand feet in length, the Missionary Ridge Tunnel was an engineering landmark when it opened to rail traffic and an important example of the use of slave labor in a southern industrial venture.

Once opened, the tunnel played a significant role in local transportation history by allowing Chattanooga to be tied to eastern railroad lines. The first railroad to arrive in Chattanooga came from the south, the State of Georgia's Western & Atlantic Railroad in 1850. It was followed by a railroad from the north, the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad in 1854 and a railroad from the west, the Memphis and Charleston in 1857. The East Tennessee & Georgia, organized in 1847 and completed in 1855, ran from Knoxville, Tennessee to Dalton, Georgia, where it connected with the Western & Atlantic. This was soon linked to the East Tennessee & Virginia Railroad, the first railroad to cross the Appalachian Mountains. The railroad, however, did not pass through Chattanooga due to the difficult terrain. Goods and passengers bound for Chattanooga had to travel south to Dalton, Georgia and then transfer to the Western & Atlantic Railroad, which took them north to Chattanooga. A shortcut was proposed between Chattanooga and Cleveland, Tennessee, on the East Tennessee & Georgia line. The Chattanooga, Harrison, and Cleveland Railroad was organized for this purpose in 1850 and was succeeded by the Chattanooga, Harrison, Georgetown, and Charleston Railroad. The first project was the construction of the line's railroad tunnel. Once the tunnel was completed, the construction of the rail

² The South Tunnel (determined eligible on 11/24/00) was completed by the Louisville and Nashville Railroad in 1859.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

Chattanooga, Harrison, Georgetown, and Charleston Railroad
Tunnel (Additional Documentation), Hamilton County

line, "complicated and impeded by the many ridges which stood in the way," began in 1856.³ It was completed in 1859 and taken over by the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad. Chattanooga finally had its eastern railroad link. Together, the four major lines into the city brought commerce and industrial development to Chattanooga and made it an important transportation hub.

Military significance

The Chattanooga, Harrison, Georgetown, and Charleston Railroad Tunnel is also significant for its association with the Civil War campaign at Chattanooga in 1863. Confederate and Union forces were engaged in a fierce contest for control of the strategically vital Chattanooga, which was considered the gateway to the Deep South. Union strategists considered the control of the city essential to successfully launching an invasion into the heart of the Confederacy.

Confederate General Braxton Bragg's Army of Tennessee defeated Union General William Rosecrans' Army of the Cumberland in the Battle of Chickamauga in September 1863. Rosecrans' forces, however, were able to retreat to Chattanooga where they took up a defensive position. Bragg's Confederates then undertook a siege of the city, cutting off the major supply routes by rail, river, and road with their occupation of Missionary Ridge, Lookout Mountain, and Raccoon Mountain. In late October, the Union forces in Chattanooga, now under the command of Ulysses S. Grant, were able to reopen the Tennessee River to their supply boats and began to plan an assault on the Confederate positions. On November 24, 1863, a force under Union General Joseph Hooker successfully pushed the Confederates from Lookout Mountain and Union General William T. Sherman began his assault on the northern end of Missionary Ridge.

From his position, Sherman threatened the tracks of the Western & Atlantic which passed to the north of Missionary Ridge and the East Tennessee & Georgia Railroad which passed through Missionary Ridge via the C, H, G, & C tunnel. It was essential for the Confederates to hold on to the East Tennessee & Georgia line because it was their only link to the Confederate forces under General James Longstreet campaigning against Union General Ambrose Burnside in East Tennessee. Sherman's force did not meet much resistance on the 24th, and they entrenched in the evening, hoping to move quickly along Missionary Ridge the next day, rolling up Bragg's army.

Sherman's force would face much greater resistance on the 25th. The Union force had mistakenly taken up a position on Billy Goat Hill, adjacent to the north end of Missionary Ridge rather than on the ridge itself. And during the night a Confederate force under the command of General Patrick Cleburne, which had been at Chickamauga Station awaiting transfer to East Tennessee, was recalled and sent to the north end of Missionary Ridge to protect the right flank of the Confederate army. Cleburne established a strong defensive position on Tunnel Hill, a 250-foot hill at the north end of Missionary Ridge, named for the Chattanooga, Harrison, Georgetown, and Charleston Railroad Tunnel, which runs just south of it. Cleburne would use the ridge's rugged terrain of ravines and steep slopes to his advantage. His forces' location on the hill meant only a small number of Federals could advance on them at a time, and Cleburne skillfully rebuffed these attacks in one of the most skillful defenses carried out by a Confederate general during the battles for Chattanooga.

The Chattanooga, Harrison, Georgetown, and Charleston Railroad Tunnel was an important feature during the battle for the northern end of Missionary Ridge. The railroad tunnel was referenced in Union General Grant's orders, which stated that after Sherman had crossed the Tennessee River near the mouth of the Chickamauga, he was "to secure the

³ James W. Livingood, *A History of Hamilton County, Tennessee* (Memphis: Memphis State University Press, 1981), 136.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Chattanooga, Harrison, Georgetown, and Charleston Railroad
Tunnel (Additional Documentation), Hamilton County

heights from the northern extremity to about the railroad tunnel.”⁴ The tunnel was an important landmark during the battle that was repeatedly referenced in the official reports of both Confederate and Union officers.

The tunnel also became a part of the battlefield. Cleburne placed some of his artillery atop the Chattanooga, Harrison, Georgetown, and Charleston Railroad Tunnel. In the afternoon, as some of Cleburne's troops moved down the hill to try to dislodge the Union attackers, a fold in the hill led the Union soldiers to mistakenly believe that the Confederates had come out of the railroad tunnel. A Texas regiment charged down the hill, catching the flank of an Iowa regiment by surprise. Lieutenant Samuel Byers of the Fifth Iowa recounted the attack:

Some cried, “Look to the tunnel! They're coming through the tunnel.” Sure enough, through a railway tunnel in the mountain the graycoats were coming by the hundreds. They were flanking us completely.

“Stop them!” cried our colonel to those of us at the right. “Push them back.” It was but the work of a few moments for four companies to rise to their feet and run to the tunnel's mouth, firing as they ran. Too late! An enfilading fire was soon cutting them to pieces.⁵

Byers was captured during the Confederate attack.

The railroad embankments of the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad (outside the nominated boundaries) were held by Union Colonel John C. Loomis's brigade in the afternoon and used for the limited shelter they provided.

Cleburne eventually abandoned his positions at and around the railroad tunnel as he pulled his troops southward to protect the rear of the Army of Tennessee as it was pushed off Missionary Ridge. In their retreat, the Confederates did not damage or block the tunnel and for the remainder of the war, Union commanders used the tunnel to ferry soldiers and supplies from the east to their campaign in Georgia.

After the war, ownership of the tunnel changed twice. In 1869 the East Tennessee & Georgia Railroad joined with the East Tennessee & Virginia Railroad to become the East Tennessee, Virginia & Georgia Railroad. In 1894 the East Tennessee, Virginia & Georgia Railroad became part of the Southern Railway Company, which operated the tunnel for the next sixty years.

The Southern Railway improved the track through the tunnel, but made no alterations in the tunnel itself, although it considered widening the tunnel in c. 1940. The Southern abandoned the tunnel in 1954 after the completion of the new Citico railroad yard meant that regular traffic would bypass the tunnel. In 1971, the Southern Railway donated the right-of-way through the tunnel to the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation, restoration, and operation of locomotives and passenger equipment. The museum's excursion trains currently use the line through the tunnel.

⁴ Report of Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, November 23-27, 1863, *The Civil War CD-ROM* (Carmel, IN: Guild Press of Indiana, Inc. 1996).

⁵ Peter Cozzens, *The Shipwreck of Their Hopes: The Battles for Chattanooga*. (Urbana and Chicago: The University of Illinois Press, 1994), 236

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