

1431

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in "Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms" (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

## 1. Name of Property

**historic name** Western and Atlantic Railroad Tunnel at Tunnel Hill  
**other names/site number** Chetogeta Mountain Tunnel, Tunnel Hill Tunnel

## 2. Location

**street & number** Western and Atlantic Railroad  
**city, town** Tunnel Hill ( ) vicinity of  
**county** Whitfield **code** GA 313  
**state** Georgia **code** GA **zip code** 30755

( ) not for publication

## 3. Classification

### Ownership of Property:

- ( ) private
- (X) public-local
- ( ) public-state
- ( ) public-federal

### Category of Property:

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

### Number of Resources within Property:

#### Contributing

#### Noncontributing

<b>buildings</b>	0	0
<b>sites</b>	0	0
<b>structures</b>	1	0
<b>objects</b>	0	0
<b>total</b>	1	0

**Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register:** N/A

**Name of previous listing:** N/A

**Name of related multiple property listing:** N/A

**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria. ( ) See continuation sheet.

Richard Cloves  
Signature of certifying official

11-6-01  
Date

*for* W. Ray Luce  
Historic Preservation Division Director  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

In my opinion, the property ( ) meets ( ) does not meet the National Register criteria. ( ) See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency or bureau

**5. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

Edson Beal 1.11.02

determined eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_\_\_

determined not eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_\_\_

removed from the National Register

\_\_\_\_\_

other, explain:

\_\_\_\_\_

see continuation sheet

[Signature]  
Keeper of the National Register Date

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## 6. Function or Use

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### Historic Functions:

TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

### Current Functions:

WORK IN PROGRESS (being converted to RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor recreation)

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## 7. Description

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### Architectural Classification:

No style

### Materials:

**foundation** stone  
**walls** stone, brick  
**roof** brick  
**other**

### Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The Western and Atlantic Railroad Tunnel at Tunnel Hill is a quarter-mile-long antebellum railroad tunnel under Chetoogeta Mountain (Tunnel Hill Ridge) in northwest Georgia (photograph 1). It is located about one-half mile east of the small community of Tunnel Hill and about five miles northwest of Dalton, the nearest large community, in Whitfield County. Whitfield County is situated in the ridge-and-valley province of northwest Georgia which is characterized by long, narrow, steep, north-south trending ridges and valleys. The tunnel, which is no longer in use for railroad transportation, is located on a short abandoned stretch of the former Western and Atlantic Railroad line next to an active early 20<sup>th</sup>-century rail tunnel which superseded it. The Western and Atlantic Railroad was built to connect Atlanta, Georgia with Chattanooga, Tennessee; it is now operated under lease as part of the CSX Transportation system.

The Western and Atlantic Railroad Tunnel at Tunnel Hill was built in 1848-50. It is 1,477 feet long and just wide enough for a single railroad track. It runs straight, in an east-west direction, and almost level, with a slight elevation in grade from east (835 feet above mean sea level) to west (840 feet above mean sea level), approximately 200 feet beneath the highest point of the ridge. The tunnel was cut through limestone, chert formations, clay, gravel, and mud.

The tunnel structure consists of parallel supporting walls and a continuous barrel vault (photographs 5-7). The vertical walls consist of exposed bedrock, rough limestone masonry, and brick masonry. The masonry walls are more than three feet thick. Four brick-lined, brick-arched alcoves or "stand-ins" are built into the walls; they provided places of refuge for persons caught in the tunnel when a train was passing through. The round-arched tunnel vault is constructed of brick, laid in English bond near the tunnel ends, and in common bond elsewhere. The vault masonry is more than five feet

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Section 7--Description

thick. The tunnel floor is compacted fill and bedrock. Rails and cross ties have been removed.

Each end of the tunnel features a portal with lateral gravity retaining walls (photographs 2, 8). Each portal consists of a round-headed arch of limestone blocks featuring single-block voussoirs on vertical haunches. The retaining walls are constructed of rough-faced limestone ashlar, with pilasters to either side of the portal, a beltcourse or cornice above the portal, and a parapet wall with inset marble plaques (photographs 3, 4). These plaques, original to the tunnel, provide information about its construction; for example, the plaque on the west (Tunnel Hill) end, in two sections, reads as follows (photograph 3):

<p>THE EXCAVATION OF THE WEST END BEGUN JULY 15, 1848 &amp; FIRST OPENING EFFECTED OCT. 31, 1848 THE FIRST TRAIN OF CARS PASSED THROUGH MAY 9, 1850 LENGTH OF EXCAVATION IN THIS END 575 FEET &amp; OF THE TUNNEL 1477 FEET</p>	<p>HIS EXCELLENCY GEORGE W. TOWNS GOVERNOR WM L. MITCHELL, ESQ. CHIEF ENGINEER MR. BENJ. C. MORSE PRINCIPAL ASSISTANT ENGINEER MR. B. E. WELLS ASSISTANT ENGINEER JNO. D. GRAY &amp; CO. CONTRACTOR</p>
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Extending from the portals are low limestone masonry retaining walls called "stem" walls flanking the former rail bed. Those on the west end are lower and run straight, parallel to the rail bed, for approximately 400 feet (photographs 1-3). Those on the east end are higher and follow the approach curve to the tunnel for approximately 300 feet (photograph 8). An 1855 engraving showing the west end of the tunnel records a small, narrow building just outside the northern stem wall; no evidence of this building survives today, and its location appears to have been infilled with dirt, possibly during construction of the parallel railroad tunnel in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. This engraving also shows the original stone Tunnel Hill depot some distance beyond the north retaining wall.

Immediately north of this tunnel is a second parallel tunnel, built in 1927-28, which still carries rail traffic on the former Western and Atlantic Railroad, now operated by CSX Transportation (this early 20<sup>th</sup>-century tunnel is not included in this nomination) (photographs 9-10). As a result of the construction of the new tunnel, the 19<sup>th</sup>-century tunnel and short stretches of rail bed including the flanking stone retaining walls at either end of the tunnel were bypassed and abandoned.

The land around and above each end of the nominated tunnel is a largely undeveloped ridge, with steep and eroded slopes, and narrow valley floors (photographs 9-11). Half a mile west of the tunnel, and separated from it by Tanyard Creek, agricultural fields, and a large agri-business along the railroad, is the small community of Tunnel Hill. Land at the east end of the tunnel remains largely undeveloped. The land on the top of the ridge above the tunnel is being developed into a small

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subdivision of single-family houses on relatively large lots. Immediately upslope of the western end of the tunnel is a series of shallow terraces and ditches. There also are ditches in the side hills roughly parallel to the approaches to the tunnel (photographs 12-13). The terraces and some of the ditches appear to be for erosion-control and drainage. Other ditches may be the remnants of Civil War fortifications in the vicinity of the tunnel. The tunnel is known to have been fortified during the Civil War, several skirmishes were fought at the western end of the tunnel, and the tunnel changed hands several times during the war. However, there has been no intensive field study of these possible Civil War fortifications, and no archaeological investigations have been done. About 2000 feet west of the west portal of the tunnel is the remnant portion of the original stone depot at Tunnel Hill; this much-altered former building is now embedded in a large, modern, agri-business complex.

After being bypassed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the tunnel was abandoned. Rails and crossties were removed, and the ends of the tunnel were partially blocked with dirt fill and fencing. Over the years, the tunnel fell into disrepair. Portions of the brick vault deteriorated and the retaining walls became overgrown with kudzu. Trenching to bury a fiber-optic cable allowed water to seep upwards onto the tunnel floor. In 1996, the State of Georgia transferred ownership of the abandoned tunnel and short stretches of its approaches to the City of Tunnel Hill which plans to restore the tunnel and open it to the public as a recreational and historical site. Recently, using grant funds from the state historic preservation office and other sources including the Georgia Department of Transportation (Transportation Enhancement grants), the City of Tunnel Hill and the Tunnel Hill Historical Foundation have prepared a master plan for restoring and interpreting the tunnel, cleared overgrown vegetation, stabilized the tunnel vault, and controlled water seepage. A small visitor's center is about to be constructed on vacant land adjacent to the west approach to the tunnel.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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**Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:**

nationally       statewide       locally

**Applicable National Register Criteria:**

A       B       C       D

**Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):**  N/A

A       B       C       D       E       F       G

**Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):**

Engineering  
Transportation

**Period of Significance:**

1850-1928

**Significant Dates:**

1850

**Significant Person(s):**

n.a.

**Cultural Affiliation:**

n.a.

**Architect(s)/Builder(s):**

William L. Mitchell, Esq., Chief Engineer  
Benjamin C. Morse, Principal Assistant Engineer  
B. E. Wells, Assistant Engineer  
Jonathon (John) D. Gray & Co., Contractor

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

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**Statement of significance (areas of significance)**

The Western and Atlantic Railroad Tunnel at Tunnel Hill is significant in the areas of transportation and engineering. When it was built in 1848-50, this tunnel was the last link in Georgia's state-owned railroad from Atlanta to Chattanooga. Chartered in 1836, surveyed in 1837, and under construction in 1838, the Western and Atlantic Railroad was completed in 1850 with the opening of this tunnel. In addition to opening up the northwestern part of the state to white settlement, this railroad also provided the first direct rail connection between the Mississippi and Tennessee river valleys and the Atlantic Ocean and virtually guaranteed Atlanta's future as a railroad transportation center. The Western and Atlantic Railroad Tunnel at Tunnel Hill also was the first railroad tunnel in Georgia and the South; today it stands as the longest of about a half dozen historic railroad tunnels believed to exist in the state. Built largely by hand, making extensive use of slave labor, and employing largely experimental techniques, it ushered in a new era of railroad engineering and construction. The tunnel also played a significant role in the Civil War, prized and protected by both Confederate and Union forces in succession, targeted unsuccessfully by Andrew's Raiders (the Great Locomotive Chase), and fortified at each end and elsewhere with trenches and gun emplacements, some evidence of which may still exist in the eroded hillsides around the tunnel's portals.

Engineering

The Western and Atlantic Railroad Tunnel at Tunnel Hill is significant in the area of engineering as the first railroad tunnel built in Georgia and the antebellum South. As such, it stands today as the oldest extant railroad tunnel in the region. In Georgia, it is the oldest of less than half a dozen documented railroad tunnels built or attempted in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and it is the second-longest historic railroad tunnel ever built in the state (eclipsed by only 36 feet by the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century replacement tunnel that parallels it). As described by the 1974 Historic American Engineering Record Inventory card, it is "the most impressive engineering structure" on the Western and Atlantic Railroad; apart from the rail bed itself and excluding depots, it is the only intact antebellum railroad structure on the entire rail line. It also appears to be a rare surviving example of an intact antebellum railroad tunnel in the country.

As the oldest extant railroad tunnel in the region and the first to have been built, the Western and Atlantic Railroad Tunnel at Tunnel Hill represents the pioneering era of railroad engineering, design, and construction in Georgia and the South. By virtue of its being the first of its kind, its engineering, design, and construction were innovative. At a time when there were no other tunnels in the region, it was successfully designed by engineers with little practical experience in tunnel design, its construction was capably supervised by men with apparently no practical experience in tunnel construction, and it was built well by workers including enslaved African-Americans who most likely had never worked on such a construction project before.

As a historic structure built in 1848-1850, the Western and Atlantic Railroad Tunnel at Tunnel Hill clearly represents the "state-of-the-art" in terms of railroad tunnel design and construction at mid-century. Its character-defining engineering features include its straight alignment and nearly level

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

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elevation, its substantial stonemasonry retaining walls and portals, its thick stone and brick interior walls, its unique brick vaulted roof, and the use of exposed native bedrock for interior walls wherever possible. In terms of architectural design, the tunnel is distinguished by its classical "Roman" portals with their simplified triumphal-arch motif comprised of the round-arched tunnel opening enframed by pilasters supporting a parapet; such an architectural design was not an engineering necessity and served to emphasize the landmark significance of the structure along the Western and Atlantic Railroad line. Similarly, the use of ceremonial plaques embedded in the stonemasonry of the portals--the tunnel's equivalent of a building's cornerstone--served to further identify this structure as a railroad landmark and is typical of major public works from this as well as other eras.

The way in which the tunnel was built represents the prevailing construction techniques and practices of its era. The tunnel was cut from both ends, or faces, meeting in the middle, with less than 1/16 of an inch variation in the centerline--a testimonial to the confidence of mid-19th-century civil engineers and the precision of their work. The way the tunnel was actually built, largely by hand, using picks and shovels and hand-drills, along with horse- or mule-drawn wagons, illustrates the manner in which virtually all major public works prior to the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century were built, and it contrasts dramatically with the subsequent introduction of heavy equipment and machinery and the industrialization of the construction trades

The fact that the tunnel remained in heavy service for three quarters of a century and was made obsolete not by its design, engineering, or construction but rather by increases in the size and speed of trains, stands as a testimonial to the success of its innovative design, precise engineering, and sound construction.

Transportation

The Western and Atlantic Railroad Tunnel at Tunnel Hill is historically significant in the area of transportation as the last link in Georgia's state-chartered Western and Atlantic Railroad which connected Atlanta, Georgia, and Chattanooga, Tennessee. This railroad was critical to Georgia's emerging railroad network and played a crucial role in the transportation history of the region. Earlier railroads in Georgia were working their way inland and upland from the coast and the Savannah River, headed toward an eventual connection through northwest Georgia with the Tennessee and lower Mississippi river regions. The Western and Atlantic Railroad with its tunnel at Tunnel Hill would provide this vital connection.

Chartered in 1836, surveyed in 1837, and under construction by 1838, the Western and Atlantic Railroad was completed in 1850 with the opening of the tunnel at Tunnel Hill. True to its intent, it provided a direct rail connection between the convergence point of several intrastate railroads at Atlanta through northwest Georgia to Chattanooga, Tennessee. When completed, the railroad running through this tunnel not only opened northwest Georgia for white settlement but also provided the first direct rail connection between the Tennessee and Mississippi river valleys and the Atlantic seaboard. In doing so, it helped fulfill Georgia's "manifest destiny" to settle all lands within the state boundaries formerly occupied by Native Americans, it virtually guaranteed Atlanta's future as a



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Section 8--Statement of Significance

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regional railroad transportation center, and it similarly guaranteed the continued vitality of Georgia's port cities, especially Savannah. As the last link in this growing regional railroad network, the tunnel at Tunnel Hill was an innovative solution to the problem of creating a direct and uninterrupted rail line through the challenging geography of northwest Georgia. Once created, this rail line proved immediately and phenomenally successful, and the northwest Georgia rail line remains today one of the busiest freight rail lines in the southeast United States.

Note on Civil War Associations

The Western and Atlantic Railroad Tunnel at Tunnel Hill also played an important role in the Civil War. It was prized and protected by both Confederate and Union forces: targeted unsuccessfully by Andrew's Raiders in the Great Train Chase, fortified by the Confederate army at each end with trenches and gun emplacements, seized and used by the Union army in the opening of the Atlanta Campaign, and subsequently attacked by numerous Confederate raiding parties. However, the physical features directly associated with these Civil War events--the trenches and gun emplacements in particular--have not been clearly identified or mapped through detailed field study or archaeological investigation. Identification of these features is made all the more difficult by the eroded nature of the hillsides bordering the tunnel and by a seemingly ad hoc system of erosion-control terraces and drainage ditches. Determining the presence, significance, and National Register eligibility of these Civil War sites will require additional field work and analysis.

**National Register Criteria**

The Western and Atlantic Railroad Tunnel at Tunnel Hill meets National Register Criterion A for its direct associations with and contributions to the history of railroad transportation in Georgia and the South. When it was built in 1848-50, this tunnel was the last link in Georgia's state-owned railroad from Atlanta, Georgia, to Chattanooga, Tennessee. Chartered in 1836, surveyed in 1837, and under construction in 1838, the Western and Atlantic Railroad was completed in 1850 with the opening of this tunnel. In addition to opening up the northwestern part of the state to white settlement, this railroad also provided the first direct rail connection between the Mississippi and Tennessee river valleys and the Atlantic Ocean and virtually guaranteed Atlanta's future as a railroad transportation center.

The Western and Atlantic Railroad Tunnel at Tunnel Hill meets National Register Criterion C as a rare and innovative example of an antebellum railroad tunnel in the South. It was the first railroad tunnel constructed in Georgia and the South; today it stands as the longest of about a half dozen historic railroad tunnels believed to exist in the state. Built largely by hand, making extensive use of slave labor, and employing largely experimental techniques, it ushered in a new era of railroad engineering and construction.

**Criteria Considerations (if applicable)**

n.a.

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

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**Period of significance (justification)**

1850--construction completed, placed in service

1928--abandoned due to construction of adjacent bypass tunnel

**Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)**

The one contributing structure is the tunnel with its portals and approaches including the "stem" walls and railbed.

**Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)**

The Western and Atlantic Railroad Tunnel at Tunnel Hill was built between 1848 and 1850 as the last link of the state-owned railroad which connected eastern and southern railroads in Atlanta to Chattanooga, Tennessee and, by doing so, Georgia's Atlantic seaboard with the Tennessee and Mississippi river valleys.

In 1834 the Georgia legislature resolved to build a railroad connecting the projected northwest Georgia termini of railroads from Augusta, Macon, and Savannah to the Tennessee River port city of Chattanooga, Tennessee, just over the Georgia state line in the extreme northwest corner of the state. Its purpose in doing so was to open the northwest portion of the state to white settlement (the Cherokee Indians having been recently removed to Oklahoma) and to capture freight transportation to and from the Tennessee and lower Mississippi river valleys. In 1836 the state legislature chartered the state-owned Western and Atlantic Railroad. Surveys for the rail line were carried out in 1837 under the direction of Stephen H. Long. In 1838, construction began, starting at the terminus or "zero milepost" (listed in the National Register) in what would become downtown Atlanta. By mid-1847 the railroad had reached Dalton, some 90 miles northwest of Atlanta, and construction was proceeding south from Chattanooga, Tennessee. By 1848, the only missing link in the rail line between Atlanta and Chattanooga was the tunnel at Chetogeta Mountain, northwest of Dalton.

When the route for the Western and Atlantic Railroad was first surveyed in 1837, the most challenging terrain was encountered northwest of Dalton. In this area, the projected rail line had to cross several long, steep, narrow ridges. While several gaps in other ridges presented opportunities for rail crossings, such as Mill Creek Gap just northwest of Dalton or Ringgold Gap north of Tunnel Hill, the Chetogeta Mountain presented an almost unbroken obstacle. After considering several alternatives which required lengthy bypasses or steep grades and sharp curves, Stephen Long decided upon a tunnel through Chetogeta Mountain. Construction was started in 1848 and completed in 1850. The chief engineer was William L. Mitchell, the construction chief or "chief tunneller" was Charles Linton, the chief mason was William Gray, and the contractor was Jonathan D. Gray and Company. During construction, freight from both northbound and southbound trains was unloaded and transported by wagon up and over the mountain or by a temporary bypass rail line (records conflict on this point and in fact both methods of temporary transportation may have been

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

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utilized at different times). Rail passengers had to rely on stagecoaches for the stretch between Dalton and Chattanooga. Virtually all construction work on the tunnel and its approaches was done by hand, using picks, shovels, and hand-drills, and horse- or mule-drawn wagons moved fill and overburden. Many of the workers were enslaved African-Americans.

The first train traveled through the tunnel on May 9, 1850. Once the tunnel was completed, the Western and Atlantic Railroad more than met the expectations of its promoters. It became a phenomenally successful transportation corridor between the Tennessee and lower Mississippi river valleys through northwest Georgia to the junction of Georgia railroads in Atlanta, 90 miles to the southeast. Atlanta itself grew at an equally phenomenal rate to quickly become one of the largest and most important cities in the state and the southeast. Georgia's port cities, especially Savannah, thrived on the constant freight service.

Because of its importance in regional transportation, the Western and Atlantic Railroad and its tunnel at Tunnel Hill became of strategic interest during the Civil War. The railroad was a key link in the Confederacy's regional railroad network, and it became a prime target for Union forces. In 1862, in what became known as the "Great Train Chase," the train stolen by Andrew's Raiders passed through the tunnel, although the closely pursued Union raiders had no time to block or destroy it. After the Battle of Chattanooga, with the Confederate army holding out at nearby Ringgold Gap, the tunnel was fortified with entrenchments and minor gun emplacements and a signal tower was erected on the ridge above the tunnel; ironically, both the fortifications and the signal tower were later taken over and used by Union forces. Just prior to the opening of the Atlanta Campaign in 1864, retreating Confederate troops destroyed sections of railroad in the vicinity of the tunnel but no damage was done to the tunnel itself. In late 1864, the opening artillery salvos of the Atlanta Campaign were fired from Union gun emplacements on the ridge above the tunnel. For the next two years, the tunnel was held by Union forces, although Confederate raiders launched harassing guerilla-type attacks from time to time.

Following the Civil War, the railroad was rebuilt and the tunnel remained in service. Operation of the railroad was leased to the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railway (precursor of the regional Louisville and Nashville, or "L & N," Railroad), but the state of Georgia retained ownership of the land and the railroad itself. The Atlanta-Chattanooga line quickly re-established itself as the busiest in Georgia and the southeast.

By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the tunnel at Tunnel Hill and its approaches, especially from the east, were restricting rail traffic. To accommodate larger and faster trains, the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railway built a new, parallel tunnel in 1927-1928. The new tunnel, just north of the historic tunnel and virtually parallel to it, accommodated larger railroad engines and cars and was approached from the south by a more gradual curve. Thirty-six feet longer than the first tunnel, and built of reinforced concrete, the "Chetoogeta Mountain Tunnel No. 2" remains in service today on one of the region's busiest freight rail lines.

After being bypassed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the original Chetoogeta Mountain tunnel was

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

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abandoned. Rails and crossties were removed, and the ends of the tunnel were partially blocked with dirt fill. Over the years, the tunnel fell into disrepair. Portions of the brick vault deteriorated and the retaining walls became overgrown with kudzu. Trenching for a buried fiber-optic cable allowed water to seep upwards onto the tunnel floor. Recently, using grant funds from the state historic preservation office and other sources including the Georgia Department of Transportation, a master plan for restoring the tunnel has been prepared, overgrown vegetation has been cleared, stabilization work has been done to the tunnel vault, and water seepage has been controlled. Now owned by the City of Tunnel Hill, the tunnel is open to the public as a local heritage attraction.

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## 9. Major Bibliographic References

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### Primary Source of Information

This nomination is based in large measure on the following report: "Historic Property Information Form: The Old Western and Atlantic Railroad Tunnel," prepared by Larry C. Thornton and Marvin Sowder for the Tunnel Hill Historical Foundation, 1997, on file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Incorporated into the "Historic Property Information Form" is an undated manuscript entitled "The Tunnels on the Western and Atlantic Railroad: A Living Part of Georgia History" containing an extensive bibliography, reproduced below:

### Documents

*Georgia Laws*, 1846-1847.

Georgia State Archives, "Correspondence Book of the Chief Engineer of the Western and Atlantic Railroad," 1848-1849.

Herr, Kincaid A., "Louisville and Nashville Railroad," Public Relations Department, Louisville and Nashville Railroad, 1964.

Moody, Mrs. M. F. (Berthel), Untitled document of the Ablasom Foster family who were among the early settlers of Tunnel Hill, c.1972.

Shope, Helen, "The Tunnel," c.1990.

### Newspapers and Magazines

"Chetoogeta Mountain Tunnel History Interestingly Told," *Daily Citizen-News*, Dalton, Georgia, February 3, 1944.

Connell, Moody, "South's Oldest Rail Tube is Tunnel Hill Site," *Daily Citizen-News*, Dalton, Georgia, June 26, 1967.

Garrison, Webb, "Joseph Emerson Brown: A Georgian First and Last," *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, Atlanta, Georgia, June 3, 1990.

Harris, Pamela, "Tunnel Hill Controversy Surrounds Historic Tunnel," *The Catoosa Post*, Ringgold, Georgia, August 20, 1986.

-----, "Tunnel Hill--A 19<sup>th</sup> Century Historical Event: A Well-Kept Secret Needs to be Told," *The Catoosa Post*, Ringgold, Georgia, August 27, 1986.

Johnson, C. H., "Opening of New Tunnel on Western and Atlantic Railroad at Tunnel Hill, Ga.," *The N.C. & St. L. Ry. News Item*, (newsletter of the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad), Vol. XI, No. 1, January 15, 1928.

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Section 9--Major Bibliographic References

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Moody, M. F. "Tunnel through Hill Gave Town It's Name," *Daily Citizen-News*, Dalton, Georgia, May 8, 1972.

Shope, Helen, "Dalton Developed during Big Push of Railroad," *Daily Citizen-News*, Dalton, Georgia, January 20, 1976.

"Tunnel Hill Named for Rail Tube," *Daily Citizen-News*, Dalton, Georgia, May 17, 1975.

"Tunnel Hill's Namesake may be Drawing Card for Tourism," *Daily Citizen-News*, Dalton, Georgia, October 13, 1988.

Turner, Nancy, "Tunnel Hill Incorporated in 1848; Among 1<sup>st</sup> in State," *Daily Citizen-News*, Dalton, Georgia, May 30, 1975.

-----, "Tunnel Hillians Thrilled at Seeing Sunday's Train," *Daily Citizen-News*, Dalton, Georgia, May 20, 1975.

### **Books**

Clark, William Henry Harrison, *History in Catoosa County*, self-published, 1972.

Johnson, James Houston, *Western and Atlantic Railroad of the State of Georgia*, Atlanta, Georgia: Georgia Public Service Commission, 1931.

White, Rev. Georgia, N.A., *Historical Collections of Georgia*, New York: Pudney and Russell, 1855.

### **Maps**

Cartwright, H. H. (real estate agent for Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railway), "Map Showing Additional Land Acquired for the Construction of a New Tunnel on W&A RR. near Tunnel Hill," Nashville, Tennessee, 1927.

"Sectional Survey Map of the Western and Atlantic Railroad--Showing Tunnel Hill Area," c.1900, at Georgia Department of Archives and History.

### **Interviews**

Holcomb, Kenneth. Tunnel Hill resident and historian. Tunnel Hill, Georgia, February 4, 1991.

Moody, Mrs. M. F. (Bethel). Long-time Tunnel Hill resident and historian. Tunnel Hill, Georgia, February 19, 1991.

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Section 9--Major Bibliographic References

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Sowder, Marvin. Member of Whitfield-Murray Historical Society, Dalton Civil War Roundtable, and The United Sons of Confederate Veterans. January 24, 1991.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):** ( ) N/A

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

HAER Inventory Card, "Chetogeta Mountain Tunnel, Tunnel Hill, Whitfield County, Georgia," prepared by James E. Brittain, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, Georgia, September 28, 1974.

**Primary location of additional data:**

(X) **State historic preservation office:**

"Historic Property Information Form: The Old Western and Atlantic Railroad Tunnel," prepared by Larry C. Thornton and Marvin Sowder for the Tunnel Hill Historical Foundation, 1997, on file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Draft National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form, "Western and Atlantic Railroad Tunnel, Tunnel Hill, Whitfield County, Georgia," prepared by Denette Lake (graduate student at Middle Tennessee State University), September 9, 1986.

- ( ) **Other State Agency**
- ( ) **Federal agency**
- ( ) **Local government**
- ( ) **University**
- ( ) **Other, Specify Repository:**

**Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** N/A

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## 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property**      2.5 acres approximately

### UTM References

(A) centered on face of western portal:    Zone 16 Easting 679600 Northing 3856740

(B) centered on face of eastern portal:    Zone 16 Easting 680040 Northing 3856710

### Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated property includes:

- (1) the tunnel itself (underground) (this area not factored into acreage, above);
- (2) the east and west portals including the full extent of their lateral retaining walls;
- (3) the east “stem” walls, approximately 300 feet long, along both sides of the rail bed, and the west “stem” walls, approximately 400 feet long, along both sides of the rail bed, within an approximately 75-foot-wide historic right-of-way for the rail line;
- (4) an irregularly shaped tract of land west of the west portal and south of the historic rail bed encompassing the intact south-side slopes of the tunnel approach (the original north-side slopes were excavated for construction of the “new” parallel tunnel in the mid-1920s);
- (5) two small irregularly shaped tracts of land east of the east portal, to either side of the historic rail bed, encompassing the intact north-side and south-side slopes of the tunnel approach.

### Boundary Justification

The proposed boundary includes the historic tunnel itself, its portals, and the immediate railbed approaches and intact side slopes. These are the resources and features most closely associated with the tunnel as a historic engineered transportation structure.

No land directly above the tunnel over the ridge is included in the nominated property. Upslopes above the tunnel portals are not included because of apparent disturbance from the 1920s tunnel construction and from severe erosion and erosion-control measures including terracing and ditching.

While the larger ridge-and-valley setting contributes to the significance of the tunnel, it has not been included in the nominated property.

The former Tunnel Hill depot, located approximately 2,000 feet west of the west tunnel portal on the north side of the railroad, has not been included because the formerly free-standing building has been altered and embedded within a modern agri-business industrial complex, resulting in a loss of integrity of design and setting.

No attempt has been made to encompass land that might include possible Civil War-related sites including entrenchments and gun emplacements. While it is likely that some physical evidence of



National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 10--Geographical Data

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these structures still exists, no detailed field examination or archaeological investigations have been conducted to support their inclusion at this time. A future National Register nomination focusing on Civil War-related sites in the Tunnel Hill area could well include land in the vicinity of the tunnel along with the tunnel itself.

*NOTE: The boundary for the nominated property associated with the tunnel was developed during the initial phases of this National Register nomination in consultation with Marilyn Harper and other staff at the National Register of Historic Places in Washington, DC, during November 1997.*

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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**State Historic Preservation Office**

**name/title** Richard Cloues, Survey and Register Unit Manager  
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**Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable)**      ( ) not applicable

**name/title** Larry C. Thornton and Marvin Sowder  
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**city or town** Tunnel hill      **state** Georgia      **zip code** 30755  
**telephone** 706-673-5152  
**e-mail**

- ( ) **property owner**
- ( ) **consultant**
- ( ) **regional development center preservation planner**
- (X) **other:** Tunnel Hill Historical Foundation

**Property Owner or Contact Information**

**name (property owner or contact person)** Mayor  
**organization (if applicable)** City of Tunnel Hill  
**mailing address** P. O. Box 159  
**city or town** Tunnel Hill      **state** Georgia      **zip code** 30755  
**e-mail (optional)**

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Photographs

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**Name of Property:** Western and Atlantic Railroad Tunnel at Tunnel Hill  
**City or Vicinity:** Tunnel Hill  
**County:** Whitfield  
**State:** Georgia  
**Photographer:** James R. Lockhart  
**Negative Filed:** Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
**Date Photographed:** January 1998

**Description of Photograph(s):**

Number of photographs: 13

1 of 13. West portal of tunnel and "stem" retaining walls along rail bed; photographer facing east.

2 of 13. West portal of tunnel; photographer facing east.

3 of 13. West portal of tunnel; photographer facing east.

4 of 13. West portal of tunnel; close-up; photographer facing northeast.

5 of 13. Interior of tunnel, from west portal; photographer facing east.

6 of 13. Interior of tunnel, west end, detail of brick and stone masonry; photographer facing south.

7 of 13. East portal of tunnel from interior; photographer facing east.

8 of 13. East portal of tunnel; photographer facing southwest.

9 of 13. West portal of tunnel (right) and west portal of 1920s replacement tunnel (left); photographer facing northeast.

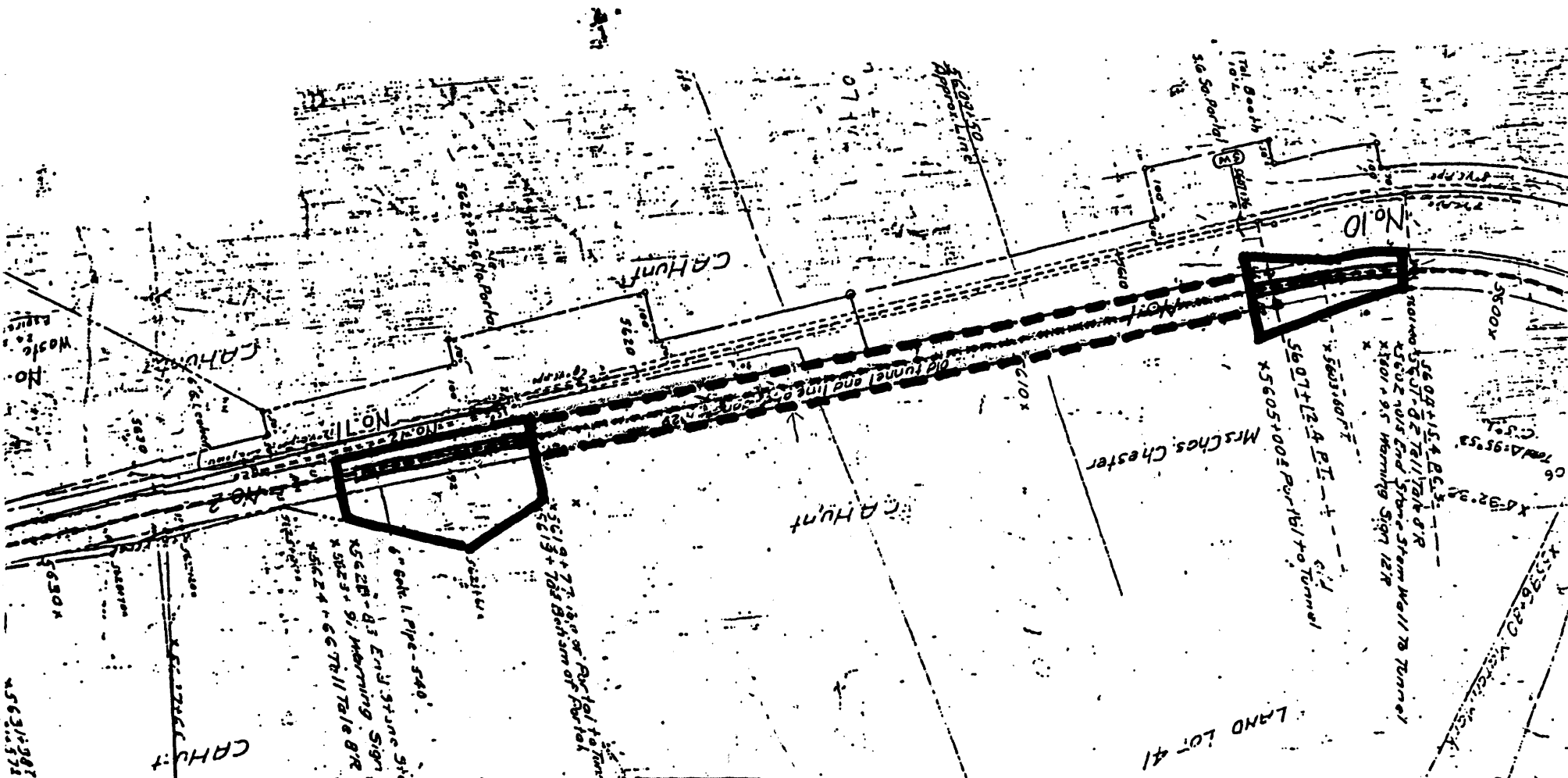
10 of 13. West portal of tunnel (right) and west portal of 1920s replacement tunnel (left); photographer facing southeast.

11 of 13. West portal of tunnel and south-side slopes; photographer facing east.

12 of 13. Drainage ditches on south-side slope; photographer facing east.

13 of 13. Ditch on south-side slope; photographer facing east.

(HPD WORDPERFECT form version 11-02-01)




Western and Atlantic Railroad Tunnel at Tunnel Hill  
Whitfield County, Georgia

**PROPERTY SKETCH MAP**

North: 

Scale: 1" = 300'

Tunnel (underground): 

Land associated with tunnel portals, "stem" walls,  
railbed approaches, and intact side slopes: 