

G E O R G I A

BATTLEFIELDS

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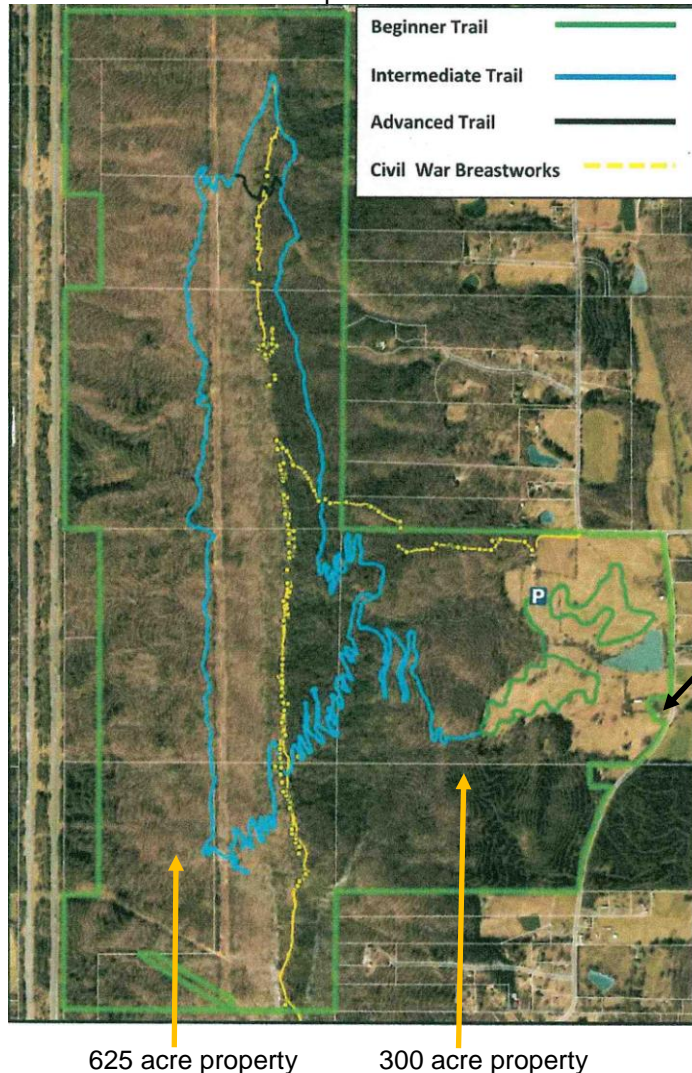
Rocky Face Ridge property status

The last two newsletters have included articles about a 300 acre property north of Dalton. GBA had pledged \$45,000 towards its purchase through Civil War Trust, which has also made the property subject of a fund raising campaign that includes other western battlefields.

In late July, GBA became aware that Whitfield County, ultimate owner of the property, had agreed to allow a mountain biking organization to put several trails on the property and on an adjacent 625 acres along Rocky Face Ridge. The bike trail plan raised serious questions about damage to existing earthworks and to the property's potential as a historical site. Consequently, GBA president Charlie Crawford met with Whitfield County Commission Chair Mike Babb on 24 August to discuss modifications to the trail plan. Reacting to the concerns raised by GBA and others, Chairman Babb indicated the beginner trail (see top right map) on the 300 acre property would not be built. Also, the trails on the 625 acre property would be installed under supervision of a historic preservation planner to avoid the rock trenches and earthworks.

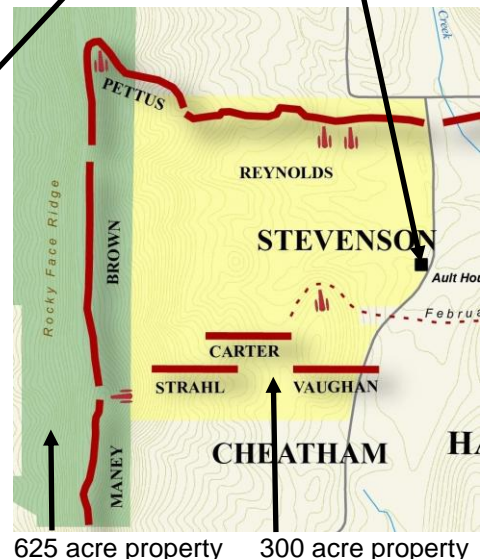
In a discussion among the GBA trustees, we were especially influenced by a trustee who had seen off-road bike trails attract not only responsible bikers but also those who view earthworks, rock formations, and ecologically sensitive sites as challenges on which to hone their biking skills. We concluded that damage to the rock trenches on the top and the slope of Rocky Face Ridge was likely and would be impossible to reconstruct accurately, despite the existence of conservation easements requiring the repair of any damage. Consequently, the trustees voted to withdraw our contribution towards purchase of the 300 acre property, and we notified Civil War Trust accordingly. We don't take this lightly, and we continue to correspond with Civil War Trust and other parties involved.

Overall mountain bike trail plan



Detail of original trail plan

Ault house (shown for orientation)



Atlanta History Center: Cyclorama and *Texas* update

On 7 August, the Atlanta Civil War Round Table (CWRT) held its summer BBQ at the Atlanta History Center (AHC). Gordon Jones, AHC curator and CWRT president for the 2016-2017 campaign year, and Grant Moseley, CWRT vice president and architect of AHC additions that will house the cyclorama and the locomotive *Texas*, gave a tour of the construction site. The new construction will be named the Lloyd and Mary Ann Whitaker Building to recognize their \$10,000,000 gift that was crucial to AHC being able to pursue relocation of the painting, locomotive, and other artifacts from Grant Park. <http://saportareport.com/a-10-million-gift-by-lloyd-and-mary-ann-whitaker-led-to-cyclorama-moving-to-atlanta-history-center/>

Jones and Moseley anticipate the circular portion of the addition will be externally complete in April 2017, at which point the painting will be moved from its current building to the new one. Jones hopes *Texas* will be ready to go on display in the connecting corridor about that time. Conservation of the painting will occur in the new building, and the painting will not be routinely accessible to the public until April 2018, though special showings of the conservation process may be possible. www.atlantahistorycenter.com/explore/coming-soon-atlanta-cyclorama

The *Texas* is being restored at the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer (adjacent to Salisbury: I-85 exit 79). The engine has not had such a thorough dismantling and restoration for over 100 years. Most of its components were discovered to be post-Civil War. Museum visitors can see the restoration process. www.nctrans.org/Events/The-Texas-Locomotive.aspx.



Civil War Round Table members gather at the framework of the new building.



Architect Grant Moseley (left) explains features of the new building. History Center curator Gordon Jones is in dark green shirt at right.



Viewing platform framework
Gordon Jones explains the building site.

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Address correction requested
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