



GILBERT TOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT PRESERVATION PLAN

RUTHERFORD COUNTY NORTH CAROLINA

**PREPARED FOR RUTHERFORD COUNTY AND
AMERICAN BATTLEFIELD PROTECTION PROGRAM
(GA-2255-07-016)**

2009



**THOMASON AND ASSOCIATES
PRESERVATION PLANNERS
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....1

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF GILBERT TOWN.....8

LAND USE, 1782-2009.....12

LANDSCAPE TREATMENT OPTIONS.....19

CHARACTER OF CULTURAL RESOURCES.....26

LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENTS.....31

INTERPRETATION AND ACCESS.....57

TOURISM PROMOTION.....72

GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION.....80

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....82

**APPENDIX A - FUNDING AND ASSISTANCE
SOURCES.....84**

**APPENDIX B: THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF PRESERVING
HISTORIC MILITARY SITES.....90**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thomason and Associates produced this report for the government of Rutherford County, North Carolina, and the American Battlefield Protection Program, National Park Service. This material is based upon work assisted by a grant from the Department of the Interior, National Park Service (GA-2255-07-016). Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of the Interior.

Thanks are due to Jerry Stensland, Recreational, Cultural & Heritage Planner of Rutherford County for his assistance. Thanks are also due to Paul Carson, Superintendent of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail for his guidance. Charlyne Smith of North Carolina State University prepared maps showing the OVNHT route through Gilbert Town. Thanks also go out to the property owners in the Gilbert Town Historic District for their cooperation and help during this project.

The Gilbert Town Historic District Preservation Plan owes much to the preservation efforts and dedication of local historian Nancy Ellen Ferguson. Ms. Ferguson passed away in May of 2008 after devoting many years of research and study to Gilbert Town and Rutherford County.



INTRODUCTION

Gilbert Town is a historically significant site associated with the early settlement of Rutherford County and it played an important role in the Kings Mountain Campaign during the Revolutionary War. Settled by William Gilbert in 1772, it was a small community comprised of a few buildings and structures when it was used as a campsite, hospital and prison during the war. It was the campsite of the Tory army under the command of Major Patrick Ferguson in September of 1780 and was later used as a camp by the patriot forces known as the “Overmountain Men.” Following Ferguson’s defeat at the Battle of Kings Mountain in October, Gilbert Town served the patriots as a campsite, hospital and prison for Tory and British prisoners. At the end of the war, the site once again reverted to agricultural use and much of the landscape remains in fields and woodlands into the 21st century. Because of its role in the Revolutionary War and settlement of the county, the Gilbert Town Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on August 23, 2006.

The Gilbert Town Historic District is located three miles northeast of downtown Rutherfordton, North Carolina. Rutherfordton is located in the central section of the county and serves as the Rutherford County seat (2000 pop. 4,131). Gilbert Town is accessed by two two-lane paved roads: Rock Road, also known as Oak Springs Road and State Road 1520, and Old Gilbert Town Road, also known as State Road 1539. Rock Road bisects the center of the historic district in a north-south direction and approximates the historic roadbed which extended through Gilbert Town in the 18th century. Old Gilbert Town Road intersects Rock Road in the center of the district. Despite its name, Old Gilbertown Road was not constructed until the early-20th century. The district is composed primarily of cultivated fields along the valley floor adjacent to Cathey’s Creek and along wooded ridges. Cathey’s Creek is a shallow tributary of the Second Broad River and extends through the eastern edge of the historic district in a north-south direction. The Cathey’s Creek valley is at an elevation of approximately 860’ and the adjacent ridges extend to over 1,000’ in height. The most prominent high ground in the district is Ferguson’s Ridge west of Cathey’s Creek and Rock Road, which rises to an elevation of approximately 1,040’ in height. The Gilbert Town Historic District encompasses 459.5 acres, most of which remain in cultivation or woodlands.

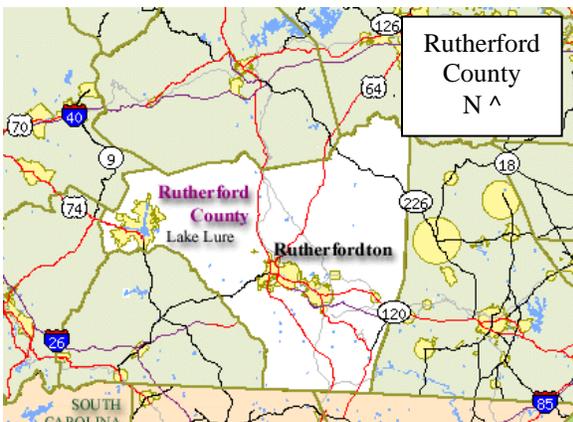


Figure 1: Rutherford County is located on the South Carolina state line with Rutherfordton as the county seat.

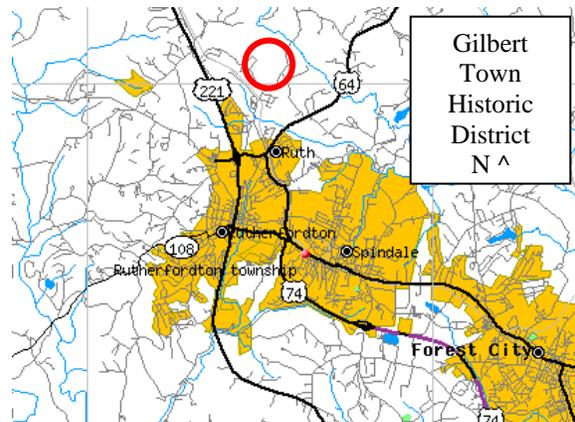


Figure 2: Gilbert Town is located three miles northeast of downtown Rutherfordton on Rock Road between US 221 and US 64.

The Gilbert Town Historic District was listed on the National Register as a result of a nomination prepared in 2004-2005 through the assistance of the Rutherford County Historical Society and the American Battlefield Protection Program of the National Park Service. The Gilbert Town Historic District contains one contributing archeological site (31RF128) with eight distinct loci dating from its period of significance of 1776 to 1790. From 1776 to 1783, Gilbert Town was an important trading center, served as a camp for both Patriot and Tory forces, and was associated with prominent settler William Gilbert, whose dwelling was used as the Rutherford County Courthouse for a period in the early 1780s. Archeological investigations conducted in 2004 identified a site which may be the location of his dwelling. Gilbert died in 1790 and is buried in a cemetery within the district boundary. Since 1790, much of this land has remained in either woodlands or cultivation and it has a high degree of integrity. Within the historic district are also 36 non-contributing buildings and four non-contributing structures. Most of these non-contributing buildings are located on the periphery of the district boundary; they are primarily dwellings built in the 20th century and associated outbuildings. Most of these dwellings are located on large lots or farms facing Rock Road and Old Gilbert Town Road.

A National Park Service study of Revolutionary War sites and battlefields completed in 2007 identified Gilbert Town as a site with the highest ranking of importance to the war and facing a high degree of threats. Gilbert Town was given a “Class A, Priority I” ranking which denotes sites which are the most historically significant and the most endangered. These sites “require immediate preservation action before they are destroyed or damaged. Threats are expected to affect these sites within the decade. All levels of government and national organizations should focus their immediate attention on these threatened Class A and B sites.”¹ Gilbert Town was identified as the

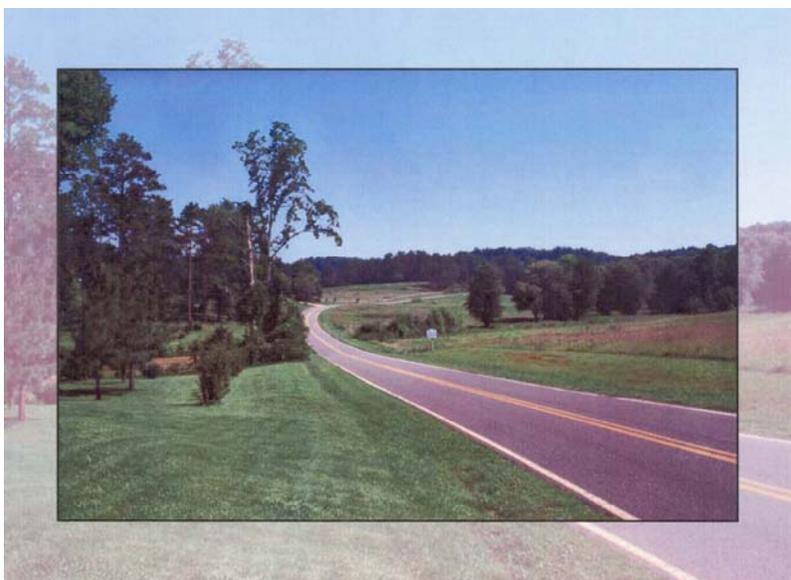


Figure 3: Gilbert Town was featured in the National Park Service study on page 100, and identified as being largely intact but highly threatened.

only Class A, intact and largely unprotected Revolutionary War site in North Carolina.² Gilbert Town is also an important location along the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail (OVNHT). The OVNHT is part of the National Trails System of the National Park Service (NPS) which has developed a 330-mile commemorative motor route along public highways. The historic road and trail system used by the Overmountain Men in 1780 has been researched and located by the NPS. It is the eventual goal of the NPS to develop a 330-mile non-motorized route for hiking, horseback riding and bicycling that approximates the historic 1780 route. This trail is still being developed and a segment of the trail planned for under development extends through the Gilbert Town Historic District.

¹ *Report to Congress on the Historic Preservation of Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Sites in the United States*, (Washington DC: National Park Service, 2007), 45.

² *Ibid*, 73.

Recognizing its importance and potential for heritage tourism, Gilbert Town has been a focus of the Rutherford County Historical Society, the Rutherford County government, the NPS and other organizations. While the site has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this designation provides only limited protection to its resources. The Gilbert Town Historic District Preservation Plan is an additional step to provide recommendations for its preservation and protection.

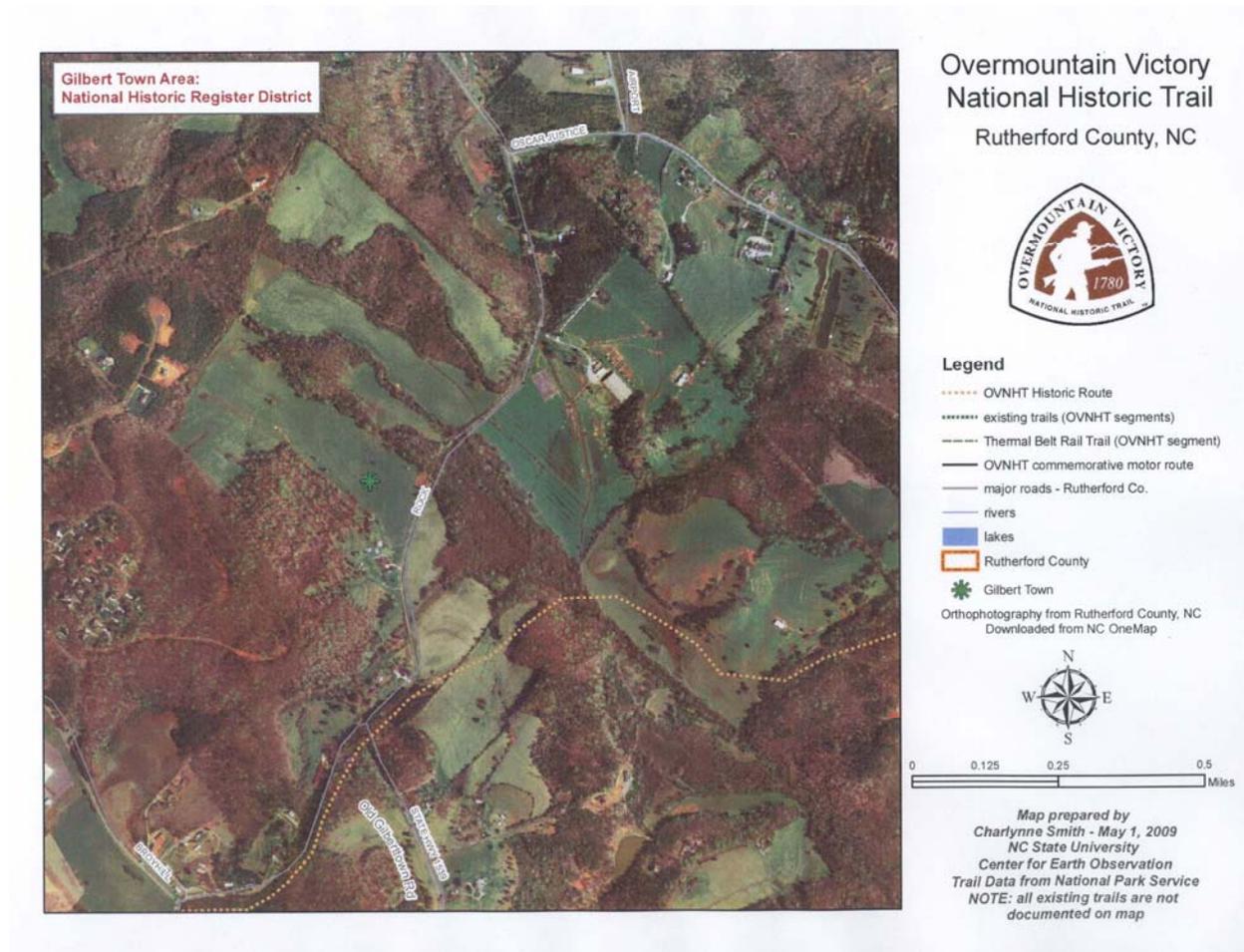


Figure 4: Location of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail through the Gilbert Town area. (Courtesy National Park Service).

Purpose of the Gilbert Town Historic District Preservation Plan

This plan was initiated in accordance with the community's intent to provide a comprehensive long-range strategy to acquire, preserve, maintain, and interpret for future generations property associated with the historic Revolutionary War site of Gilbert Town. The author designed the plan to be a useful preservation and marketing tool for the Rutherford County government as well as to complement the tourism and recreational efforts of the county. It is also designed to further the goals of the Overmountain Victory Trail Association and the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail as well as compliment tourism efforts at other regional Revolutionary War sites. The plan also provides guidance for historic preservation, land acquisition and management, and site interpretation. Strategies for tourism development and visitation are also important components of this plan. The plan includes both short-term and long-term goals which can be accomplished in response to changing circumstances and opportunities.

Project Area and Justification



Figure 5: The Gilbert Town site retains much of its rural character.

The boundary for the project area includes all of the contiguous properties retaining integrity which encompass the historic settlement of Gilbert Town and are included within the National Register boundary of the Gilbert Town Historic District. The boundary encompasses the woodlands and cultivated fields containing all eight known archeological sites identified at Gilbert Town as well as other parcels with archeological potential. On the north, the boundary extends to include the bottomlands along Cathey's Creek. These parcels may contain areas used as campsites during the Revolutionary War and have the potential to yield archeological information in the future. The northeastern boundary runs along Cathey's Creek and incorporates land known to have been owned by William Gilbert in the 18th century and sites associated with his occupation. On the south, the boundary is drawn to include properties along Rock Road and Old Gilbert Town Road. On the edge of this boundary are a number of non-contributing buildings, however, several of these are on large parcels which extend to include known and potential archeological sites. The west boundary includes the western slopes of Ferguson's Ridge. To the west of these parcels is extensive residential development. Within the boundary of the district is the approximate route of the historic trail used by the Overmountain Men in 1780 although no discernable remnants of this roadbed have been identified. The boundary for the historic district encompasses the known archeological sites historically associated with the settlement of Gilbert Town.

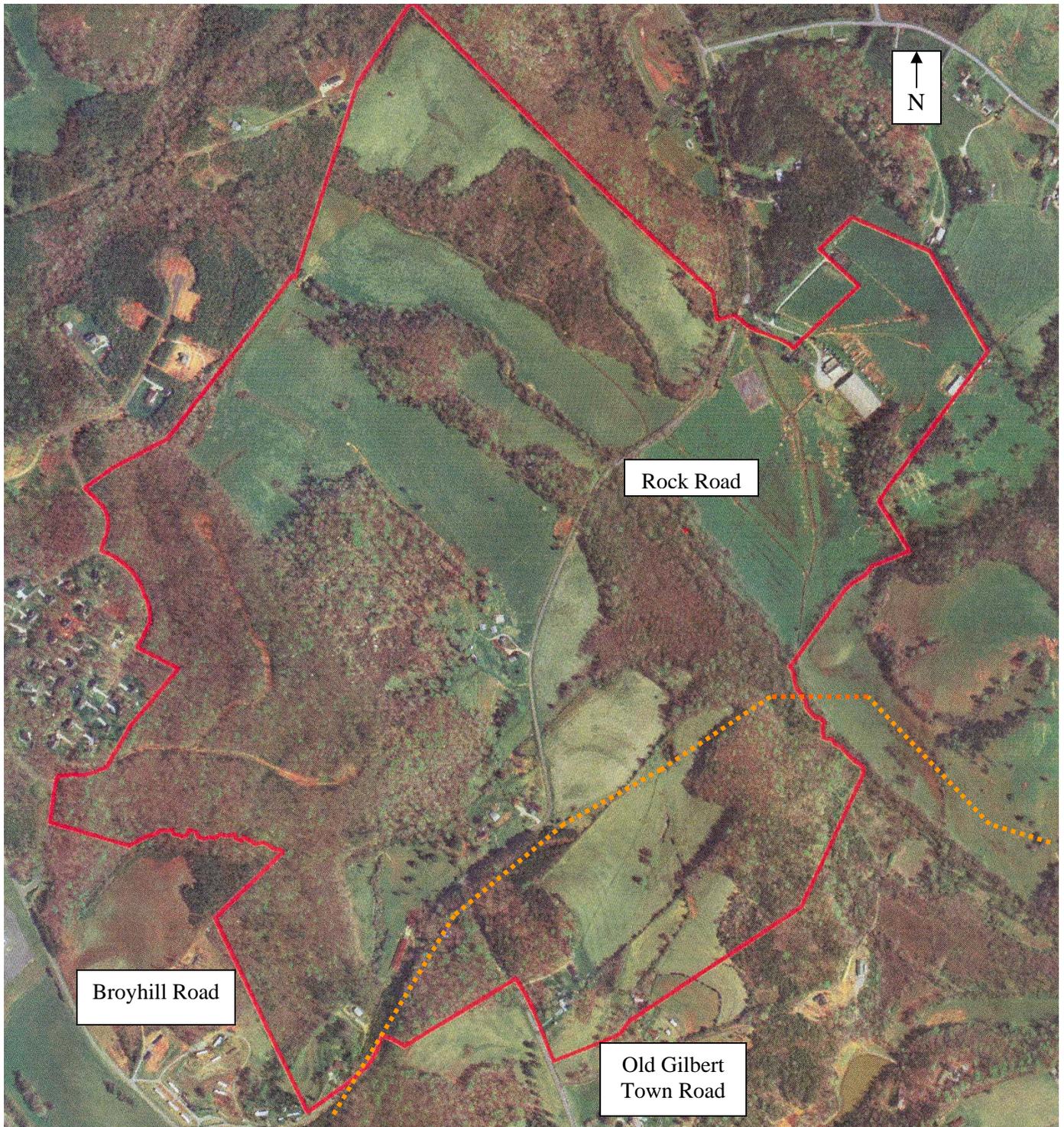


Figure 6: This figure shows the boundary of the National Register-listed Gilbert Town Historic District. The majority of the property remains in woodlands or farmland. The dashed line identifies the approximate location of the historic route of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail through the Gilbert Town area.

Public Participation

Public participation concerning the future of Gilbert Town began in 2004 when two public meetings were held in Rutherfordton to discuss National Register listing for the site. The majority of property owners within the proposed Gilbert Town Historic District boundary supported the listing of the district on the National Register and also expressed concerns over further protection and preservation of the site. Following the successful completion of the nomination and listing of the district on the National Register, the Rutherford County government submitted a grant request to the American Battlefield Protection program (ABPP) for the preparation of a Historic Preservation Plan for Gilbert Town. The intent of this grant was to prepare a plan outlining steps to preserve, protect and interpret Gilbert Town in accordance with the desires of the property owners and residents in the area.

As part of the preservation planning project, a series of meetings was held to inform the public about the goals of the project and solicit opinions. The first public meeting was held on Monday, April 19, 2008 at the County Annex Building. The meeting was attended by a dozen property owners and interested citizen, as well as a news reporter for the *Rutherford County Daily Courier*. Two days prior to this meeting, an article in the *Daily Courier* discussed the project and the upcoming meeting with the headline “Gilbert Town’s Place in History May Be Preserved.” The article provided information on the grant and quoted consultant Phil Thomason on the importance of Gilbert Town and the opportunities for preservation and tourism.

After the public meeting the following actions were taken to develop the draft plan and achieve the community’s long-range vision for the site.

- A. Data Collection of information on the Gilbert Town site
 1. Current status of the land (parcels, ownership, conditions and integrity).
 2. Historical significance of the land.
 3. Viewsheds from the major vantage points.
 4. Existing exhibits and interpretation.
 5. Existing tourism information.
 6. Photography of cultural resources.

- B. Evaluation and ranking of lands
 1. Assessing property for its historical significance.
 2. Applying criteria of integrity to each parcel.
 3. Evaluating and documenting the physical features of each parcel.
 4. Applying the ranking criteria.

- C. Development of preservation strategies
 1. Review of available preservation tools in Rutherford County (easements, zoning etc.).
 2. Coordination with regional Revolutionary War sites.
 3. Connecting the significant locations in Gilbert Town (driving tours, walking trails).
 4. Tourism enhancements and interpretation.
 5. Overall site management, both Cultural Resources & Natural Resources Management
 6. Potential sources of assistance and funding.

From the three public meetings held from 2004 to 2008 as well as interviews with eight individual property owners, the following goals and recommendations were identified:

- **Protect** approximately 317 acres within the historic district boundary either through acquisition or easements allowing for county management.
- **Create** a local non-profit group to serve as an advocacy organization for Gilbert Town. Such an organization would assist in raising funds, obtain grants, and work with the Rutherford County Government, the Overmountain Victory Trail Association and the National Park Service on overall stewardship and site promotion.
- **Enhance** the information on Gilbert Town on the county's tourism website.
- **Add** an optional driving tour on the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail Commemorative Motor Route to direct tourists and visitors through Gilbert Town.
- **Complete** archeological investigations in additional depth and additional locations to more clearly confirm the site of Revolutionary War and settlement-era occupation sites associated with Gilbert Town.
- **Install** historic markers and wayside exhibits at the recommended sites.
- **Create** parking areas and walking trails to connect with the Colonial Cemetery, Gilbert Cemetery, Ferguson's Ridge and the Gilbert House site.
- **Promote** visitation to Gilbert Town through coordination with regional sites, adding directional signage along biking trails in the county, and encouraging reenactments and promotion of Gilbert Town as part of the Overmountain Victory Trail.
- **Install** signs on the roads and streets connecting Gilbert Town with downtown Rutherfordton.
- **Produce** a walking and driving tour brochure for Gilbert Town.
- **Enhance** displays and exhibits at the County Office Building or any future Heritage Center.
- **Manage** Gilbert Town as part of Rutherford County's park system and with cooperative agreements from property owners. The county should also promote tourism initiatives with assistance from the National Park Service.

Based upon these recommendations and goals, the Gilbert Town Historic Preservation Plan was prepared and reviewed by the Rutherford County government and ABPP. An additional public meeting to discuss the final draft was held on April 22, 2009. This meeting was attended by twelve property owners and interested citizens who voiced support for the above outlined goals and recommendations for Gilbert Town.



HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF GILBERT TOWN

William Gilbert and the Development of Gilbert Town

William Gilbert, a prominent 1770s settler of the Rutherford County region, purchased extensive local acreage strategically located along a main artery of 1770s transportation through southwestern North Carolina. A small settlement evolved around William and his wife Sarah Gilbert's tavern and lodging operation and blacksmith shop. William Gilbert himself became an important figure in local politics, and the frontier center called Gilbert Town became the Rutherford County seat for several years in the early 1780s.

Role in the Revolutionary War

In the early days of the Revolutionary War, the upland areas of North and South Carolina were contested territory between patriots, who favored independence from England and aligned themselves with the Whig party, and loyalists, who retained allegiance to England and identified with the Tory party. The lightly populated section contained citizens with both allegiances, and local fighting broke out among these factions as early as 1776. Between 1776 and 1782, various loyalist and patriot commands used Gilbert Town as a staging ground and campsite.³

In September of 1780, British Major Patrick Ferguson occupied Gilbert Town as part of his campaign to subdue the patriot forces in the upland areas of the Carolinas. Using Gilbert Town as his base of operations, Ferguson led his men in pursuit of patriot forces, clashing with them at nearby Cane Creek; constructed holding pens to house and shelter prisoners; and rallied hundreds of men in the region to join his army. As historian Lyman Draper noted, those who came to Gilbert Town to proclaim their loyalty to the crown did so for a number of reasons.

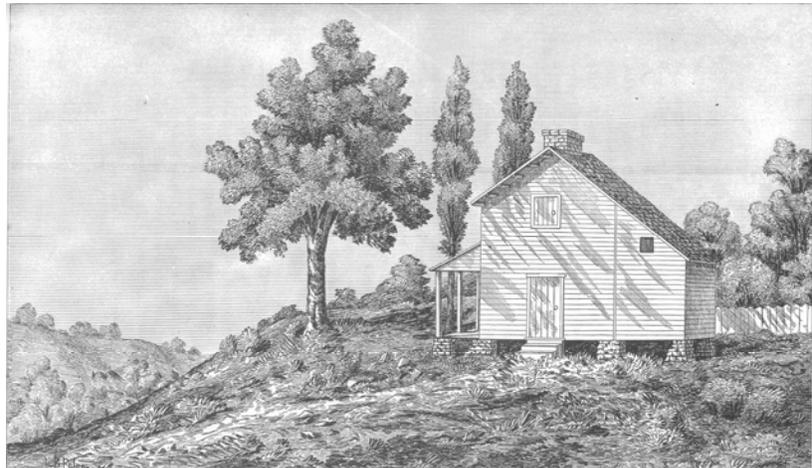


Figure 7: Illustration of Ferguson's Headquarters from Lyman Draper's 1881 Book

³ Irene Roach Delapino, "The Role of Greater Gilbert Town in the American Revolution, (Manuscript on file with the Rutherford County Historical Society, Rutherfordton, North Carolina, 2004), 2; Bobby Gilmer Moss, *The Patriots at Kings Mountain*, (Blacksburg, South Carolina: Scotia-Hibernia Press, 1990), 20; Nancy Ellen Ferguson, Personal Communication, 11 October, 2005; and David Lee Russell, *The American Revolution in the Southern Colonies*, (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 2000), 184.

For many miles around people wended their way to the head-quarters of this noted representative of the British crown; thinking, as Charleston had fallen, Gates been defeated, Sumter surprised and dispersed, and the various detachments lately in force in the Spartanburg region were disbanded or scattered, that the Whig cause was now utterly prostrate and hopeless. Many of those who now took the oath of allegiance to the British Government, subsequently excused their conduct on the plea that the country was overrun, and that this was the only course by which they could save their property, secure themselves and families from molestation, and at the same time preserve the stock of the country for the supply of the needy patriots thereafter.⁴

While at Gilbert Town, Ferguson also paroled patriot Samuel Phillips and told him to notify the patriots over the mountains in what is now East Tennessee that “if they did not desist from their opposition to the British arms, he would march his army over the mountains, hang their leaders, and lay their country waste with fire and sword.” Conveyed to Patriot leaders, its effect was the opposite of what Ferguson intended, encouraging 1000 militiamen to gather at Sycamore Shoals at present-day Elizabethton to organize opposition to Ferguson. Under the command of John Sevier, Isaac Shelby, William Campbell, and Charles McDowell, this force was well armed and traveled lightly and quickly. Known as the Overmountain Men, this militia force began their march to confront Ferguson on September 24th.⁵



Figure 8: Battle of Kings Mountain, painted by Don Troiani and used courtesy of Historical Art Prints.

Ferguson retreated from Gilbert Town in late September, and the Overmountain Men set up camp at the settlement by October 4th. Following the defeat of Ferguson’s command at King’s Mountain three days later, a significant southern reversal for British and loyalist forces, Gilberttown housed a temporary prison for captured British and loyalist fighters. Poorly fed and suffering from the cold, the loyalist prisoners were moved shortly after to Biggerstaff’s Plantation, approximately seven miles northeast of Gilbert Town. At this location, a trial condemned 24 of the Loyalists to death in retaliation for their crimes committed earlier along the frontier. Nine were hanged before these revenge killings were stopped. The

hospital at Gilbert Town remained until the end of the war, treating patriot fighters wounded at King’s Mountain and the later battle at Cowpens, and soldiers were stationed there to protect the settlement.⁶

Gilbert Town also figured prominently in the death of a well-known loyalist officer, Major James Dunlap. Commissioned a captain in 1776, by the time Dunlap came south with Ferguson, he had “rendered himself infamous by his barbarity” and “incensed the people against him.” In March of 1781 near Beattie’s Mill, patriots captured Dunlap and several other officers and men, and took them to Gilbert

⁴ Bobby Gilmer Moss, *Journal of Capt. Alexander Chesney, Adjutant to Major Patrick Ferguson*, (Blacksburg, South Carolina: Scotia-Hibernia Press, 2002), 19 and Draper, *King’s Mountain*, 147.

⁵ Lyman C. Draper, *King’s Mountain and Its Heroes: History of the Battle of King’s Mountain, October 7th, 1780, and the Events Which Led to It.* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company Inc., 1881, reprint ed. 1971), 169 and Moss, *Journal*, 108.

⁶ Delapino, “*Greater Gilbert Town*,” 8; Moss, *Journal*, 33 and 72; and Russell, *American Revolution*, 196.

Town. At the home of William Gilbert, Dunlap was attacked and died on March 28th. According to one account, five members of the Georgia militia entered the house and shot Dunlap as he lay asleep.

Five of the Rebel Militia entered the Room about eleven O Clock at night & came over the bed with a lighted Candle & immediately discharged two pistols at his head the Explosion of which woke those officers that were Sleeping with him & finding Capt Dunlap shot, they impostured (sic) the Rebels not to murder them....some time after the Officers with Capt Dunlap finding the Rebels had entirely left the house went to Capt Dunlap & found him still alive and able to Speak, desiring Capt Cozens to dress his wounds adding he though he might live if good care was taken of him, the Officer dressed his wounds in the best manner they could, and sat up with him 'till morning & then dress'd him again by his own desire, but could afford him no further assistance being march'd away immediately, but got leave for a corporal to take care of him, but the same party came into the room at two o'clock in the day with one Arthur Cob (sic) who did everything he could to distress Capt Dunlap by telling him he must be mov'd etc. and on Capt Dunlap's begging of them for God's sake to let him die easy, Cob Shot him through the body with a rifle as he was sitting up in bed supported by the Corporal, this the Corporal related on joining us the next day.⁷

The battles of King's Mountain and Cowpens helped to turn the tide against the British forces in the South. After his costly victory at Guilford Courthouse in North Carolina in March of 1781, Lord Cornwallis moved his army to Yorktown where he was forced to surrender in October. Following the surrender of Yorktown, most of the fighting in the Carolinas ended. It appears that the soldiers stationed or hospitalized at Gilbert Town returned home by the summer of 1782.

Those passing through revolutionary-era Gilbert Town left descriptions and drawings of the place. New York loyalist Lieutenant Anthony Allaire, who fought with Ferguson during this campaign, described Gilbert Town as containing "...one dwelling house, one barn, a blacksmith's shop, and some out-houses." Another account of Gilbert Town described it as "a small village, composed of a number of rather well-built and comfortable log houses." One 1881 publication contains drawings of sites and individuals prominent in the King's Mountain campaign. The provenance of one drawing titled Ferguson's Head-Quarters is unknown, but the inference is that the building was used by Ferguson at Gilbert Town.⁸

⁷ Draper, *King's Mountain*, 59; Bobby Gilmer Moss, *Uzal Johnson, Loyalist Surgeon, A Revolutionary War Diary*, (Blacksburg, South Carolina: Scotia-Hibernia Press, 2000), 65 – 67 and Moss, *Journal*, 149.

⁸ Draper, *King's Mountain*, 147 and 160-161 and Griffin, *History*, 80.

The Rutherford County Courthouse at Gilbert Town

In addition to its role as a hospital, Gilbert Town also served as the seat of Rutherford County during the early 1780s. Rutherford County was formed from Tryon County in 1779, and the General Assembly authorized the selection of a site for the courthouse. This first courthouse was to be built on Shepherd's Creek but this site proved inadequate and court was first held in the home of John Walker. The court was later held in the homes of Thomas Morris, John Flack, James Holland and William Gilbert until a new courthouse was completed in 1783 on James Holland's property in the vicinity of the confluence of the two forks of Shepherd's Creek (now known as Holland's Creek). Within a few years there were complaints among county residents that this location was not convenient and that it was sited in a low swampy area. In response, a new site to the south on Cleghorn's Creek was chosen on property owned by James Adair, and court was held in this new courthouse on October 11, 1785. This new courthouse site evolved into the community of Rutherfordton.⁹

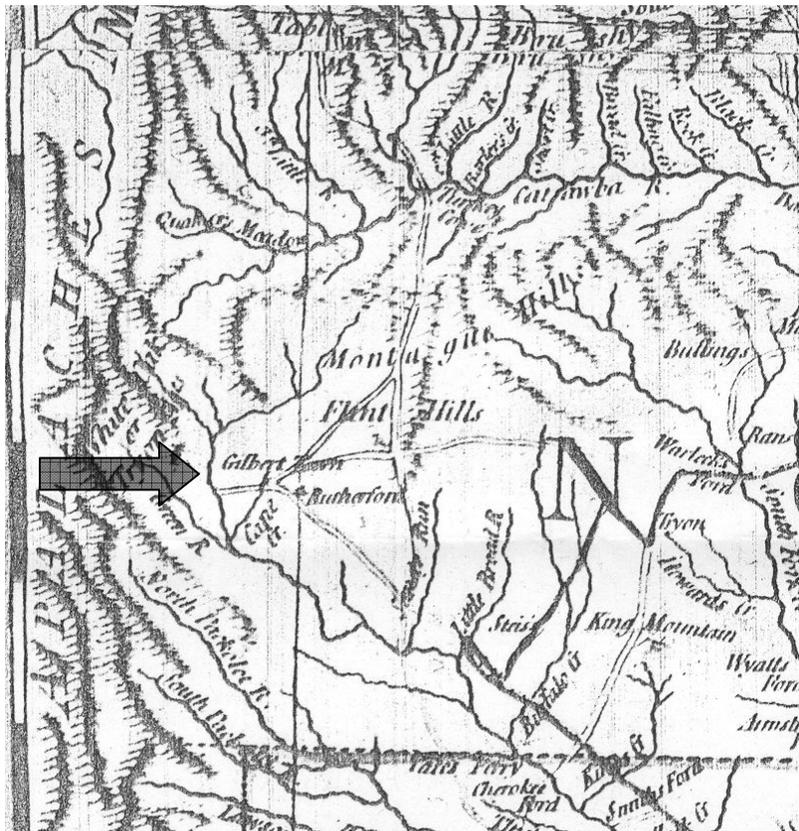


Figure 9: 1785 William Eaden Map of North Carolina showing the convergence of roads at Gilbert Town

⁹ *Rutherford County, Minutes of Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, October, 1781, court page 43; January, 1782, court page 44; January, 1783, court page 153; October, 1783, court page 58 and 158; and July, 1782, court page 74; and Bynum, ed. *The Heritage of Rutherford County, North Carolina, Volume I, 1984, 29.**



LAND USE, 1782 - 2009

Few historic landscapes from important Revolutionary War sites remain intact in North Carolina. Gilbert Town has been fortunate to remain largely in agriculture and woodlands over the past 200 years maintain a sense of time and place. Land uses in Gilbert Town have remained largely consistent since colonial times, resulting in great potential for archeological research and landscape preservation. Local planning efforts can assist in protecting this unique resource.

Debts coupled with several lawsuits forced William Gilbert to sell much of his property before his 1790 death. The house built by William Gilbert, along with 300 acres, was sold to Jonathan Hampton in 1787 and, according to Draper, remained standing until the 1870s. In 1831, owner Jonathan Hampton took visitor Colonel Silas McDowell to the Gilbert house and pointed out a bloodstain on the floor, reportedly that of Major James Dunlap, who was killed at the house in March of 1781. Jonathan Hampton deeded the property to his son, Samuel S. Hampton, in 1843. A two-story frame dwelling was built on Hampton's property around 1840; unknown is whether Jonathan Hampton or his son Samuel built this house. The Hampton-McKinney House, built ca. 1840, remains extant at 1001 Rock Road across the road from where the William Gilbert House stood until the 1870s. Two years later Hampton sold his property to John Gray Bynum. In 1855, Robert G. Twitty purchased the property from Bynum for 4,000 dollars. James A. Forney purchased the property in 1873 and according to Draper, demolished the deteriorated Gilbert House around 1878. Draper states that Forney preserved the blood-stained floor plank, but no other information on this relic is known.¹⁰

The demolition of the Gilbert House in the 1870s is also confirmed by Solomon Gallert, an attorney who practiced law in Rutherfordton in the early-20th century. In 1905, Gallert sent a letter to Francis D. Wilson, the Lieutenant Governor of North Carolina, which described the Gilbert House history. Gallert wrote:

The gavel is made of a piece of wood cut from an old apple tree which was several years cut down in front of the house formerly occupied by William Gilbert and which marked the settlement once known as Gilberttown in Rutherford County. The old house, which was the first building in which the courts of Rutherford County were held, when about to fall from age, was torn down by its owner, the late J.A. Forney, esq., about the year 1878 and nothing now remains to mark its site but the grown sprouts of Lombardy Poplars which originally shaded its yard.¹¹

Following the death of James A. Forney, this tract containing 603 acres and the entire Gilbert Town site was sold at auction to James M. McKinney in January of 1898. James M. McKinney sold sections of the

¹⁰ Bynum, ed. *The Heritage of Rutherford County, North Carolina, Volume I, 1984*, 28; Draper, *King's Mountain and Its Heroes*, 160 – 161; General Assembly Papers, Tax Lists, Rutherford County, 1782, North Carolina State Library and Archives; and Christine Trebellas, “*Gilbert Town and the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail*,” (Atlanta, Georgia: Southeast Support Office, National Park Service, 1997), 7.

¹¹Horton, “*Assessment of the Twitty-McKinney House*,” 2 - 3.

property to his son, George C. McKinney, and his daughter, Anna Lee McKinney. Anna Lee married Judson Walker in the early-20th century and they constructed a frame bungalow at 900 Rock Road around 1920. Another dwelling was built ca. 1900 on property sold to the Cowen family at 1103 Rock Road. The majority of this property continues to remain in cultivation and much of this acreage remains in the ownership of the descendants of James M. McKinney. Since the 1950s, descendants of the McKinney family and other property owners have built several dwellings along Rock Road. In 1950, Old Gilbert Town Road was paved and several dwellings were built in this area.

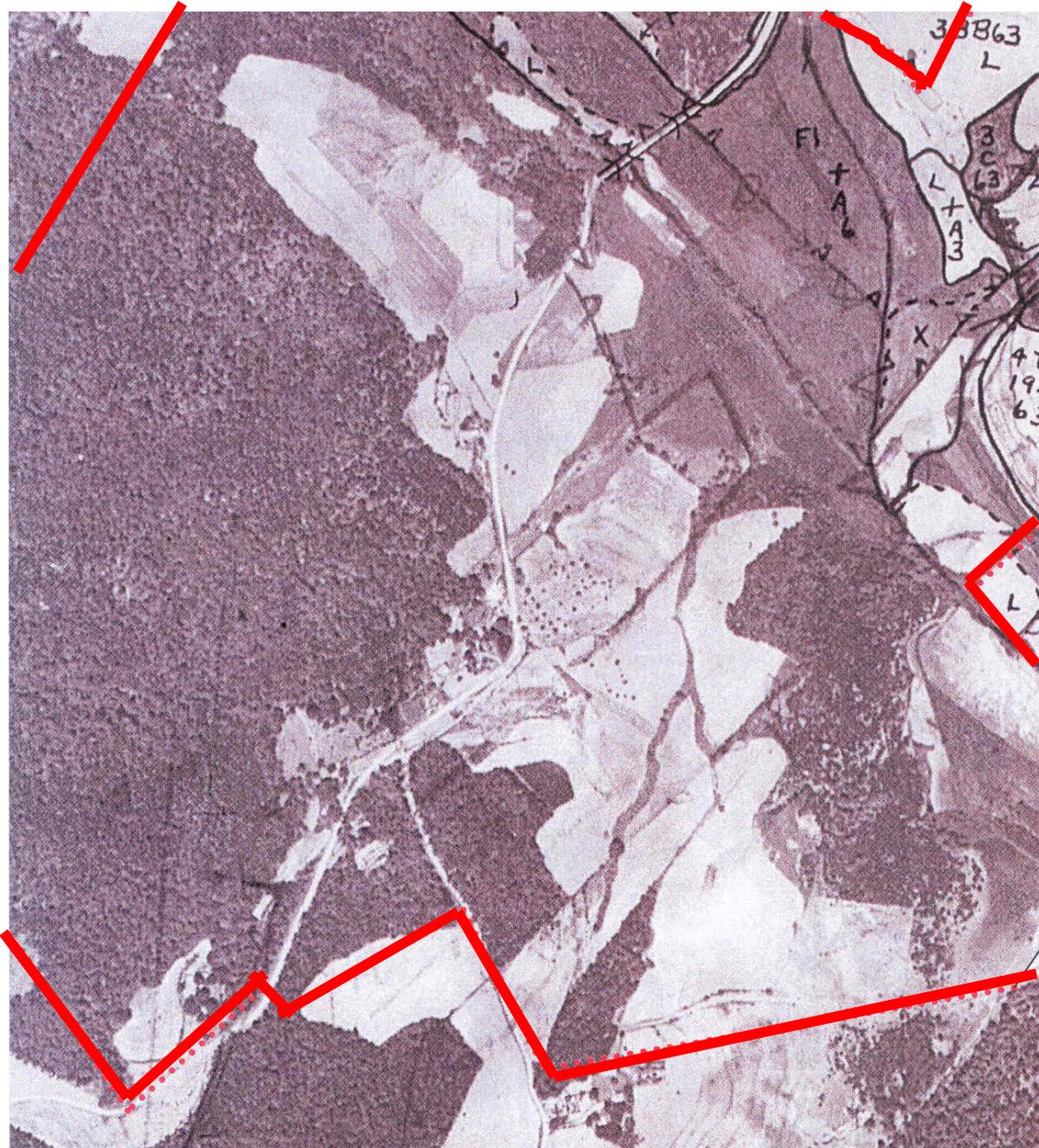


Figure 10: This 1938 USGS aerial photograph shows the Gilbert Town area remaining primarily in woodlands and farmland. The red line shows the approximate boundary of the Gilbert Town Historic District.

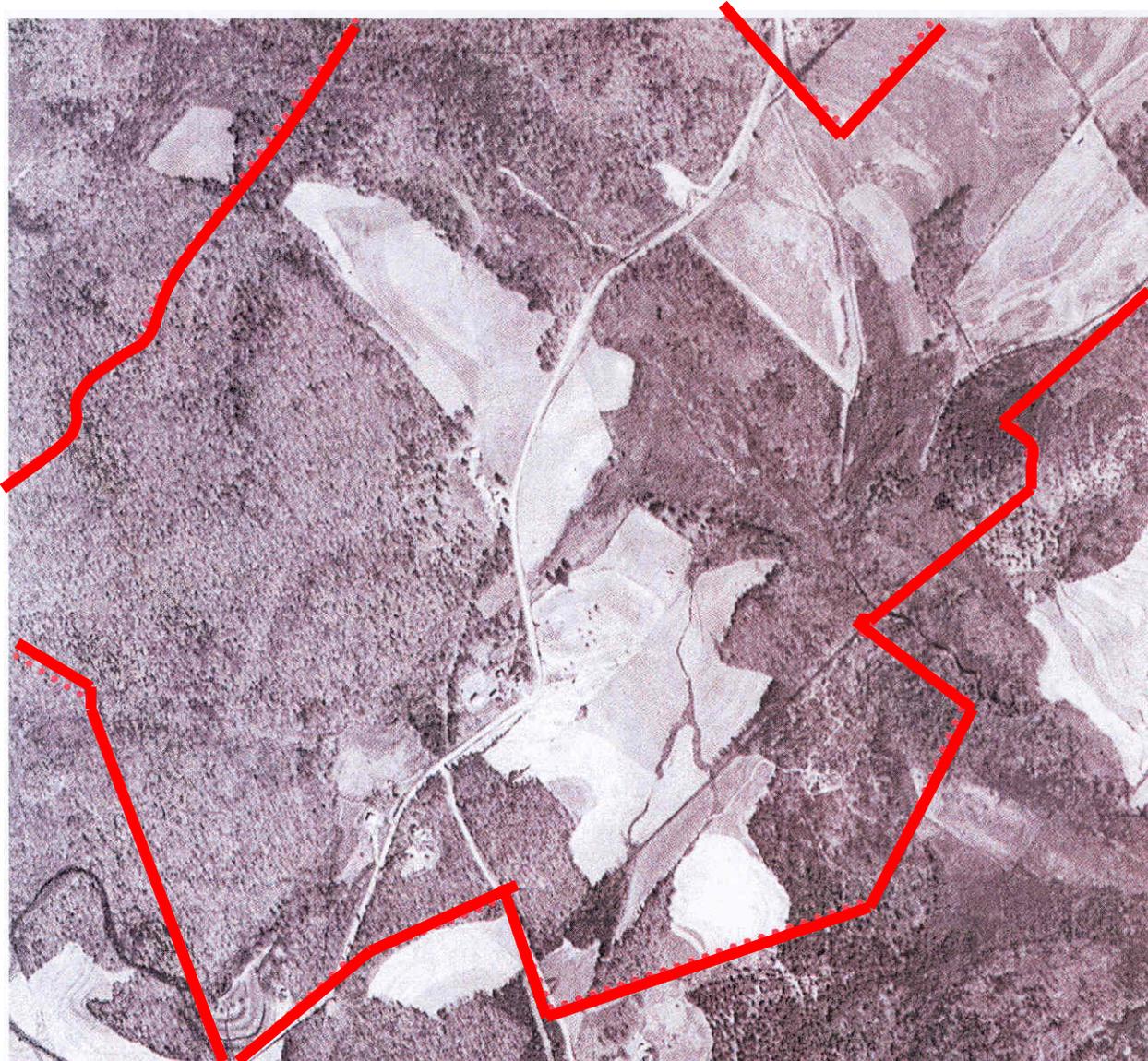


Figure 11: This 1956 USGS aerial photograph shows the Gilbert Town area. Between 1938 and 1956 several dwellings were built along Rock Road in the district. The red line shows the approximate boundary of the Gilbert Town Historic District.

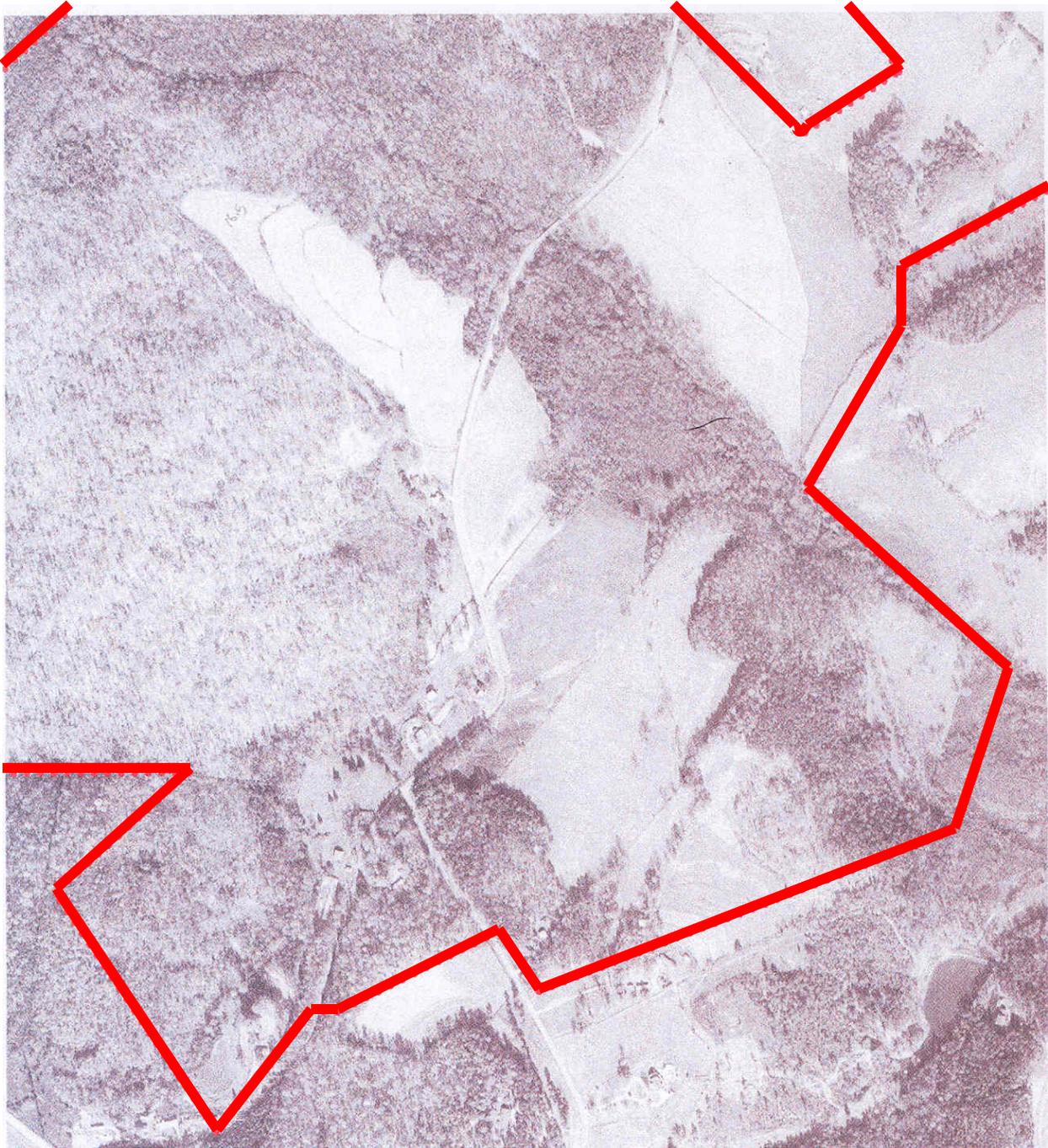


Figure 12: This 1988 USGS aerial photograph shows the Gilbert Town area. Between 1956 and 1988 several new dwellings and outbuildings were constructed along Rock Road and Old Gilbert Town Road. The red line shows the approximate boundary of the Gilbert Town Historic District.

Threats

Though in the past several decades the rate of growth in Rutherford County has been below the statewide average, it was during the 1990s that subdivisions began to be developed on the outskirts of Rutherfordton, and property in the Gilbert Town area was purchased for this use. The Gilbert Town Estates was platted in these years on the western edge of Ferguson’s Ridge, and dozens of new dwellings were constructed. A second phase of this development has been platted along the west slope of Ferguson’s Ridge but no construction has occurred on this parcel to date. A third development, Gilbert

Town East, was subdivided and construction is presently occurring on several lots. This new subdivision is located to the south of the original Gilbert Town Estates and also includes the western slopes of Ferguson’s Ridge. Then and now, there is no zoning in most of Rutherford County including the area in and around Gilbert Town. At this time, no other subdivisions or proposed development has been identified within the boundary of the Gilbert Town Historic District, however, the lack of zoning in the area allows for residential, commercial or industrial use inconsistent with rural and agricultural heritage of Gilbert Town.



Figure 13: Entrance to the Gilbert Town Estates on Broyhill Road.



Figure 14: Street and dwelling in the Gilbert Town Estates. Ferguson’s Ridge is in the distance.



Figure 15: The Gilbert Town East development is located on the western slope of Ferguson's Ridge.

The population of Rutherford County was estimated at 64,155 in July of 2008, and over the next three years the population is expected to increase by less than 1,000 residents.¹² The rate of development has also slowed in recent years, according to real estate data and Rutherford County Realtor Brent Washburn.¹³ With the overall slowdown in home construction, development pressures are easing in the county. Rural land such as that in Gilbert Town is currently selling for around 5,000 to 6,000 dollars per acre.

A proposed Rutherfordton bypass on US 221 from US 74 to SR 1366 (Roper Loop Road) was under consideration in Rutherford County in 2009. One of the alternates, Alternate 6, had the potential for causing adverse effects to the Gilbert Town Historic District due to its proximity to the district and impacts on projected traffic patterns. However, following public comment and review, Alternate 6 was dropped from consideration and the alternates currently under consideration are located sufficient distances to result in no effects to the Gilbert Town Historic District. Future transportation projects in the county should continue to be assessed regarding potential impacts to Gilbert Town.



Figure 16: Alternate 6 of the Rutherfordton Bypass would have been located directly west of the Gilbert Town Historic District which is shown as the shaded area. As of May of 2009, this alternate was no longer under consideration.

¹² Rutherford County North Carolina Chamber of Commerce Demographic Information, July 2008, 5.

¹³ Brent Washburn, Washburn Real Estate, Telephone Interview, 23 July 2008.

Existing Planning Efforts

Planning efforts in the rural areas of Rutherford County have been limited in recent decades. There is currently no zoning in most of the county including the area in and around Gilbert Town. The county has ordinances which regulate subdivisions and a commission which provides oversight as to their location, however, that is the extent of land use oversight in rural areas of the county. The most comprehensive planning effort in the county was the completion of the *Rutherford County Land Use Plan* in 2001. This plan is general in nature and basically provides an overview of the county's resources, demographics and overall goals and objectives. Goals of the *Rutherford County Land Use Plan* include tourism development through the Tourism Development Authority and Chamber of Commerce, the development of additional greenways and trail systems and efforts to preserve and protect the county's cultural and historical resources. The plan's goals and objectives lack specifics concerning historic resources such as Gilbert Town and other Revolutionary War sites. Beyond this plan, no other significant planning efforts on a county level have been undertaken in recent years.

Summary

The Gilbert Town site has largely remained a pastoral valley surrounded by wooded ridges from the 18th century to the present. The valley along Cathey's Creek has also remained in agriculture, supporting cultivation commonly found in this section of the state. James Womack, who grew up in the Gilbert Town area, recalls that from the 1930s to the present the fields to the east and south of Ferguson's Ridge were planted in corn, wheat, and peas.¹⁴ Overall, the Gilbert Town site is a rare example of a landscape that continues to project much of its appearance and feeling of colonial North Carolina. Although Gilbert Town continues to maintain its integrity, extensive residential development has occurred nearby and there are presently no zoning restrictions or other land use planning efforts that address preservation and protection of this resource.

¹⁴ James Womack, Personal Interview, Rutherfordton, North Carolina, 7 July, 2004.



LANDSCAPE TREATMENT OPTIONS

Essential to good management of cultural resources like the historic landscape at Gilbert Town is determining and executing appropriate treatment. In the United States, the Secretary of the Interior is charged with establishing professional standards and providing advice on the preservation of cultural resources listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. In order to provide broad access to the standards and guidance, the Department of the Interior published the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. The *Standards* establish four types of recommended treatment for historic properties - preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction - and provides guidance about how to apply the treatments to buildings, structures, sites, objects, districts, and landscapes. Another Department of the Interior document, the *Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*, applies the *Standards* specifically to cultural landscapes such as the Revolutionary War site at Gilbert Town. Other publications, the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archeological Documentation* and the *Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Archeological Documentation*, establish guidance for treating archeological resources.

Options for Treatment of Historic Properties

The *Standards* outline four types of recommended treatment for historic properties: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. Important considerations in deciding which treatment is appropriate are the resource's relative importance in history, its physical condition, its proposed use, and mandated code requirements that may affect it. According to the *Standards*:

- Preservation focuses on the maintenance and repair of existing historic materials and retention of a property's form as it has evolved over time.
- Rehabilitation acknowledges the need to alter or add to a historic property to meet continuing or changing uses while retaining the property's historic character.
- Restoration depicts a property at a particular period of time in its history, while removing evidence of other periods.
- Reconstruction re-creates vanished or non-surviving portions of a property for interpretive purposes.

Each type of treatment has its own associated standards for execution. The treatment selected should be appropriate for the circumstances of the particular resource involved.¹⁵

Preservation

Preservation may be an appropriate treatment when the property's distinctive materials, features, and spaces are essentially intact and thus convey its historic significance without extensive repair or replacement; when depiction at a particular period of time is not appropriate; and when a continuing or new use does not require additions or extensive alterations. The standards for preservation are:

¹⁵ National Park Service Technical Preservation Services, The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, accessed 28 January 2009 at http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standards_guidelines.htm.

1. A property will be used as it was historically, or be given a new use that maximizes the retention of distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships. Where a treatment and use have not been identified, a property will be protected and, if necessary, stabilized until additional work may be undertaken.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The replacement of intact or repairable historic materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Work needed to stabilize, consolidate, and conserve existing historic materials and features will be physically and visually compatible, identifiable upon close inspection, and properly documented for future research.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. The existing condition of historic features will be evaluated to determine the appropriate level of intervention needed. Where the severity of deterioration requires repair or limited replacement of a distinctive feature, the new material will match the old in composition, design, color, and texture.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.¹⁶

Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation may be an appropriate treatment when repair and replacement of deteriorated features are necessary; when alterations or additions to the property are planned for a new or continued use; and when its depiction at a particular period of time is not appropriate. The standards for rehabilitation are:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

¹⁶ National Park Service Technical Preservation Services, Standards for Preservation, accessed 28 January 2009 at <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standards/preservation.htm>.

8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.¹⁷

Restoration

Restoration may be an appropriate treatment when the property's design, architectural, or historical significance during a particular period of time outweighs the potential loss of extant materials, features, spaces, and finishes that characterize other historical periods; when there is substantial physical and documentary evidence for the work; and when contemporary alterations and additions are not planned. Prior to undertaking work, a particular period of time, i.e., the restoration period, should be selected and justified, and a documentation plan for restoration developed. Standards for restoration are:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use which reflects the property's restoration period.
2. Materials and features from the restoration period will be retained and preserved. The removal of materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize the period will not be undertaken.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Work needed to stabilize, consolidate and conserve materials and features from the restoration period will be physically and visually compatible, identifiable upon close inspection, and properly documented for future research.
4. Materials, features, spaces, and finishes that characterize other historical periods will be documented prior to their alteration or removal.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize the restoration period will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated features from the restoration period will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials.
7. Replacement of missing features from the restoration period will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence. A false sense of history will not be created by adding conjectural features, features from other properties, or by combining features that never existed together historically.
8. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
9. Archeological resources affected by a project will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
10. Designs that were never executed historically will not be constructed.¹⁸

Reconstruction

Reconstruction may be an appropriate treatment when a contemporary depiction is required to understand and interpret a property's historic value (including the re-creation of missing components in a historic

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ National Park Service Technical Preservation Services, Standards for Restoration, accessed 28 January 2009 at <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standards/restoration.htm>.

district or site); when no other property with the same associative value has survived; and when sufficient historical documentation exists to ensure an accurate reproduction. Standards for reconstruction are:

1. Reconstruction will be used to depict vanished or non-surviving portions of a property when documentary and physical evidence is available to permit accurate reconstruction with minimal conjecture, and such reconstruction is essential to the public understanding of the property.
2. Reconstruction of a landscape, building, structure, or object in its historic location will be preceded by a thorough archeological investigation to identify and evaluate those features and artifacts which are essential to an accurate reconstruction. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
3. Reconstruction will include measures to preserve any remaining historic materials, features, and spatial relationships.
4. Reconstruction will be based on the accurate duplication of historic features and elements substantiated by documentary or physical evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different features from other historic properties. A reconstructed property will re-create the appearance of the non-surviving historic property in materials, design, color, and texture.
5. A reconstruction will be clearly identified as a contemporary re-creation.
6. Designs that were never executed historically will not be constructed.¹⁹

Application for Landscapes

Individual features in the landscape should never be viewed in isolation, but in relationship to the landscape as a whole. Features might include topography; vegetation; circulation; water bodies; boundary demarcations (such as fences, tree lines, and walls); and structures, street furnishings, or objects (such as monuments and statues). Overall, it is the arrangement and the interrelationship of these character-defining features as they existed during the period of significance that is most critical to consider prior to treatment. As such, landscape features should always be assessed as they relate to the property as a whole.²⁰

Deciding on a Landscape Treatment

When thinking about landscape treatment, it is important to consider several factors, notably: the role of change and continuity, the relative significance to history, geographical context, use, archeological resources, natural systems, management and maintenance, interpretation, accessibility, health and safety, and environmental protection.

Both change and consistency exist in all cultural landscapes. Changes may sometimes be slight, as with gradual erosion of hard surfaces, or extreme, as with the process of plant competition and succession. At the same time, a property can retain historic form, order, use, features, or materials. Particular changes since the 18th century evident in the Gilbert Town Historic District include the decay and demolition of buildings, minimal alterations in the balance and location of treed areas and pasture, the paving of roads, and the construction of new buildings and adaptation of their surroundings. Significant continuities

¹⁹ National Park Service Technical Preservation Services, Standards for Reconstruction, accessed 28 January 2009 at <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standards/reconstruction.htm>.

²⁰ National Park Service Technical Preservation Services, Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes: Organization of the Guidelines, accessed 28 January 2009 at http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/hli/landscape_guidelines/organization.htm.

include the area's topography, and its agricultural use and the landscape order that comes from cultivation, and these should be considered and supported in treatment.²¹

A cultural landscape can gain significance as the host of an important landscape design, the site of an important event, its reflection of cultural traditions, or its connection to area settlement or some other important land use. The particular significance of the Gilbert Town Historic District is derived from its connection to military and political events occurring between 1776 and 1790 and to an important individual of that period, William Gilbert. Treatments should consider and support connections to the period and events that contribute to significance.²²

The surroundings of a cultural landscape may contribute to its significance and its historic character and should be considered prior to treatment. The landscape context can include the overall pattern of the circulation networks, views and vistas into and out of the landscape, land use, natural features, clusters of structures, and division of properties. The Gilbert Town district's surroundings are largely rural, with limited suburban development on some edges. Because the district was rural at the time it achieved significance, treatment should seek to maintain its rural setting.²³

The historic, current, and proposed uses of the cultural landscape directly affect its significance and integrity. The predominant historic and current use of the Gilbert Town Historic District has remained in agriculture, though military activities were an important use during part of its period of significance. The affect of modern farming techniques to the historic landscape and the repercussions of introducing new uses should both be considered when determining appropriate treatment.²⁴

Archeological resources are an important component of Gilbert Town's cultural landscape and a comprehensive archaeological program is recommended to be developed either prior to, or in tandem with, a cultural landscape report. The Gilbert Town site has already yielded important artifacts and information concerning its 18th and 19th century heritage. Numerous artifacts are on display at the Rutherford County Courthouse Annex in Rutherfordton. Development of a comprehensive archaeological program for Gilbert Town should include the following:

- A review of past archaeological investigations and results.
- An analysis of land uses and the potential for archaeological investigations throughout the district.
- Recommendations to discourage intense use or visitation on parcels and areas prior to archaeological investigations.
- Recommendations for working with property owners on prohibiting or restricting relic hunting.
- Prioritization of archaeological investigations for specific areas and parcels.
- Scopes of work and recommended procedures for archaeological investigations.
- Recommendations for artifact curation and display.
- Recommendations for books or articles on Gilbert Town's archaeological record.

²¹ National Park Service Technical Preservation Services, Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes: Factors to Consider When Selecting an Appropriate Treatment, accessed 28 January 2009 at http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/hli/landscape_guidelines/factors.htm.

²² Ibid

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

Archaeological resources not only have historical value, but can also reveal significant information about a cultural landscape. The appropriate treatment of a cultural landscape includes the identification and preservation of significant archeological resources.²⁵

Cultural landscapes often derive their character from human response to existing features and systems such as geology, hydrology, plant and animal habitats, and climate. At Gilbert Town, where cultivation has been an important part of area development, inhabitants have interacted particularly with the district's topography, soil, climate, and water systems. These interactions are an integral part of the cultural landscape and must be considered when selecting an appropriate treatment.²⁶

Long-term, comprehensive management strategies are key elements to landscape preservation plans. Maintenance tasks can be day-to-day, seasonal, or cyclical, as determined by management strategies. Though many maintenance tasks, such as mowing and weeding or re-laying pavement or curbs, may appear routine, such activities can cumulatively alter the character of a landscape. Well-conceived management and maintenance activities can sustain character and integrity over an extended period. Determining capabilities for ongoing maintenance is a very important consideration in choosing a treatment.²⁷

Interpretation is the way by which people understand the landscape and its significance. Interpretive goals should relate to the landscape's significance and historic character. Interpretive goals for Gilbert Town should reflect its historic connections to military and political history and to William Gilbert. Tools and techniques of interpretation include guided walks, self-guided brochures, computer-aided tours, exhibits, and wayside stations. Interpretive goals should inform decisions about how to use and treat a landscape.²⁸

Landscape modifications may be necessary in order to broaden the range of individuals who may access the site, to bring the site into compliance with Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, to provide for the protection of important environmental elements and character-defining features, and to provide for the greatest efficiency in energy use possible.²⁹ At Gilbert Town, features to protect include topography, existing and potential archeological sites, landscape vistas, the historically open and wooded character of site components, and the general quality of air, water, and soil. However, any parking areas, trails (some ADA compliant), and wayside exhibits should be incorporated into Gilbert Town to combine the highest level of access, code compliance, environmental protection, and energy efficiency possible with the lowest possible impact on the historical integrity of the landscape.³⁰

Related Further Action

Further archeological studies will provide additional results for the Gilbert Town site, assisting in the creation of a Cultural Landscape Report. A Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) is the principal statement that defines the history, significance and treatment of a cultural landscape. A CLR assesses the integrity of the landscape in the context of any changes over time to its geography, features, materials, and use. A

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ It is often necessary to look beyond the "letter" of code requirements to their underlying purpose; most modern codes allow for alternative approaches and reasonable variance to achieve compliance. Working with code officials at relevant state, county, or municipal levels should help achieve appropriate compliance with the letter and intent of requirements.

³⁰ Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes: Special Requirements, accessed 28 January 2009 at http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/hli/landscape_guidelines/special.htm.

CLR assists advocates of the landscape's preservation by addressing threats to the landscape's character-defining features and solutions to those threats. These may include neglect of the landscape, resulting in alterations to physical structures or looting of archaeological artifacts; and also the potential physical impact resulting from the very goal of increased recognition of and visitation to the landscape.

As visitation to Gilbert Town increases, there is greater risk of surpassing the capacity of the sites to sustain its physical integrity. Those responsible for managing the site will need to educate property owners and site visitors on the importance of stewardship of the landscape. For property owners this could include minimal ground disturbance to preserve the archaeological record and posting signs to discourage or prohibit relic hunting. For visitors such instruction could take the form of signage reminding them to park in designated areas only, stay on walking trails, leave no evidence of their visit, take nothing from the site, and generally respect the historic significance and natural beauty of the landscape through these actions, ensuring that others will have the same opportunity.

A CLR for Gilbert Town should also address the impact of "living history" events, such as military re-enactments, where thousands of footsteps, human and perhaps equine, could damage the terrain. Based on archeological investigations and an archaeological program, areas of Gilbert Town may be deemed more appropriate for re-enactments and intense visitation than other areas. The CLR should note the practices of established living history groups in determining the best course for the Gilbert Town site, including the addressing of parking issues, litter collection, and the impact of foot traffic across the terrain.

The purpose of a CLR is to provide managers with information needed to guide appropriate management decisions. These related efforts would help to identify resources and inform rehabilitation efforts. Such studies would assist in understanding in more detail the appearance of Gilbert Town in the 18th century as well as the remaining archeological record.



CHARACTER OF CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural Resources within the Project Area

The Gilbert Town Historic District consists of a landscape which retains its historic agricultural and wooded character from the revolutionary period. No buildings or structures which date to Gilbert Town's period of significance have been identified in the district. The only 19th-century structure in the district is the Hampton-McKinney House, which dates to ca. 1840 and has no known associations with the earlier occupation of Gilbert Town. The remaining buildings and structures within the historic district are 20th-century dwellings and farm outbuildings and are non-contributing to the district. The landscape itself, which retains so much of its historic character, is the primary cultural resource.

Archeological Resources

The Archeological Survey of 2004

Within the district is one archeological site with eight distinct loci. During the summer of 2004, an archeological survey was completed as part of the preparation of the Gilbert Town Historic District National Register nomination. This study was funded by the Rutherford County Historical Society and assisted by a grant from the American Battlefield Protection Program. This report was published as the "*Archaeological Reconnaissance of Historic Gilbert Town, 31RF128, Rutherford County, North Carolina,*" and authored by Steven D. Smith and James B. Legg of the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of South Carolina.

The overall goal of the archeological project was to assist in the development and submittal of a National Register of Historic Places nomination form for Gilbert Town. The archeological potential for Gilbert Town was unknown except for two existing cemeteries. To ascertain the eligibility of the site it was necessary to complete a reconnaissance level survey as part of the nomination process. Because of limited funding and time frame, it was not a goal of the project to test excavate any discovered sites or features to the extent normally necessary to determine the eligibility of the archeological component. The goal of the archeological investigation for the project was simply to demonstrate an archeological presence at the site known as Gilbert Town.

Fieldwork for the combined historical and archeological investigation began on July 7, 2004 and continued until July 9, 2004. An archeologist, a metal detector specialist, and an assistant made up the field team. The archeological effort was coordinated and conducted simultaneously with a review of historic materials and local historians. The archeological team met with local officials, historians and informants who wanted to share their knowledge of Gilbert Town. Upon completion of this meeting, metal detecting and interviewing continued for the rest of the day. Two days of investigation followed, consisting of additional interviews with local historians, checking courthouse records and other sources of historical documentation, and archeological investigations that included shovel testing and metal detecting.

Methods

To reveal the archeological components at Gilbert Town, a reconnaissance survey was planned, using both limited shovel testing and metal detecting at selected landforms determined through a combination

of historic research, informant testimony, oral history and tradition, and archeological experience at other military sites. While the areas selected and tested were positive for 18th-century occupation, the success of finding the 18th-century components rapidly and efficiently was thanks to Mr. Dale Williams, a relic collector from Marion, North Carolina, who was willing to share his knowledge of the sites. Mr. Williams also accompanied the survey team during the field work and assisted with his metal detector.



Figure 17: Archeological Testing at the Possible Gilbert House Site in 2004

Shovel testing was conducted at two sites. Shovel tests were excavated to sterile soils, and soils were to be screened through a .25 inch screen. Modern artifacts were recorded and returned to the shovel tests, while artifacts dating to the 18th century, or suspected of being from the 18th century, were collected. Artifacts were bagged and labeled with provenience information for final processing at the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology. While shovel testing is the traditional method for archeological survey, metal detecting is the most efficient means of discovery and preliminary assessment at military sites. Because of the limited time frame, it made more sense to address each of the selected areas with a few hours of detecting, to recover a small sample of diagnostic metal material, or to establish that no substantial Gilbert Town component was present. A metal detector was used by the archeology team - coverage in each area was informal, and in each case only a small percentage of the area was detected. In Loci 1 and 2, coverage was confined to lanes mowed in the dense cover of weeds. As with the shovel testing effort, post-18th-century material was generally not collected, except where it reflected continued, 19th-century use of an 18th-century location. Artifacts that were collected were bagged and the find-spot was marked with a pin flag; both bag and flag were marked with a common field number. Each field number location was then recorded using a GPS instrument.

Results

Prior to the archeological survey of 2004, Gilbert Town was given an archeological site number (31Rf69) by architectural historian Kimberly I. Merkel, who conducted a survey of Rutherford County in 1979. This work had recorded both prehistoric and historic components. However, only one location was given a number; this number was assigned to Locus 1 during the 2004 survey. As a result of the 2004 investigation, the site expanded significantly. It includes at least eight distinct Loci with findings described as follows.

Locus 1

This site is located near the Hampton-McKinney House. Archeological surveyors used shovel testing and metal detecting at this site, and located 25 metal objects and other items from the 18th and 19th centuries. Notable artifacts include wrought nails, cut nails, a possible scabbard tip, cream ware and pearl ware sherds, and a fragment of a glass bead. In the past, Mr. Williams found numerous wrought nails, wrought door hardware, 18th- and early-19th-century buttons, 18th century coins including a quarter section of a Spanish milled dollar, gun parts, musket balls and other lead shot, iron vessel fragments, and a portion of a silver 18th-century knee buckle. When the field was plowed, black (dark olive green) glass and ceramic sherds were abundant on the surface. The present owner of the property has also stated that field stone foundation piers stood on the site well into the 20th century, but they were ultimately pushed down hill (north) into the tree line with heavy equipment. The site may be the location of the William Gilbert House based on information provided by local historians and oral history that places his dwelling in this general area.



Figure 18: Musket Balls, Nail and Fork Excavated in 2004 at Gilbert Town

Locus-2

Locus 2 is located in the floodplain of Cathey's Creek. The survey team metal detected a narrow, mowed path through the overgrown site and recovered two wrought and three cut nails. Mr. Williams found large numbers of wrought and cut nails in Locus-2, many of them burned and very well preserved. He also recovered two iron grape or canister balls, as used in field artillery. Mr. Neal Roberson states that a long-abandoned barn or other structure stood on this site into the 20th century. The area is associated with the 18th-century Gilbert Town occupation, but its exact function remains unknown.

Locus-3

Locus-3 overlooks Cathey's Creek. Metal detecting by the survey team yielded one wrought nail, one cut nail, an unidentified iron object (possibly a knife or fork handle), and a lead shot sprue. No shovel testing was done. Given the slope and the shallowness of the soils, it is unlikely that shovel testing would have added any information to that provided by the metal detecting. Mr. Williams reported recovering 18th-century buttons, quantities of wrought nails, a few lead shot, and at least two table knife blades. Mr. Williams suggested that Locus-3 represented a small domestic site or a military camp, perhaps both.

Locus-4

Locus-4 is also above Cathey's Creek. Metal detecting here recovered two wrought nails and a cut nail and two iron vessel fragments; no shovel testing was completed. Mr. Williams found 18th and early-19th-century buttons, musket balls, gun parts including a trade gun trigger guard, iron vessel fragments, and quantities of wrought nails. Mr. Williams believes that Locus-4 is the site of a military camp, albeit one associated with a contemporary domestic site or other structure.

Locus-5

Locus-5 is west of the Gilbert Town site. Metal detecting was very successful in confirming the presence of an 18th-century military camp, recovering nine musket balls, three wrought nails, and other materials. No shovel testing was completed. In the past, the area has yielded numerous unfired musket balls, including many in the appropriate British caliber (.75"), musket parts, a musket combination tool, a brass shoulder belt buckle, shoe buckles, eighteenth century buttons, a brass sword guard, and wrought nails. The area covered by metal detecting was 120-by-60 meters, however, Mr. Williams indicates that the scatter of musket balls and other materials extends east to Locus 7. Mr. Williams believes that Locus-5 is the main camp of Ferguson's command, and the artifacts recovered there during the field effort support that conclusion.

Locus-6

Locus- 6 is located in proximity to the Hampton-McKinney House. A total of nine shovel tests were excavated here ranging from five centimeters to 30 centimeters. No colonial artifacts, except a single 18th-century alkaline glazed stoneware sherd, were recovered. A surface examination of surrounding areas found no 18th-century artifacts and surprisingly few modern glass and ceramic sherds. To the east, another area was metal detected and no colonial period artifacts were found. It was also clear that this area had been stripped of its topsoil. Part of the site had clearly been terraced and this was confirmed in an interview with the owner, who stated that the land surface had been modified with heavy equipment numerous times.

Locus-7

Locus-7 is on a spur of Ferguson's Ridge. This site, a cemetery, was not metal detected or shovel tested. It contains graves marked with fieldstones and at least two depressions indicating additional burials. The graves are oriented towards the east and the cemetery is currently somewhat overgrown with various small trees and other vegetation interspersed among the fieldstones. The only identified grave has a stone that was added within the past several decades. The remaining graves are marked with granite fieldstones and no names, dates or other inscriptions are visible.

Locus-8

Locus-8 is south of Gilbert Town. No shovel testing or metal detecting was completed at this site. Historical accounts and oral tradition suggest that this cemetery may contain the remains of Tory Major James Dunlap who was killed at William Gilbert's house in March of 1781.³¹ These accounts state that his grave was set apart from the other graves and had a large headstone and footstone. This configuration of graves remains visible and in addition to this grave, there are also six other graves marked by smaller

³¹ Nancy Ellen Ferguson and Irene Delapino, Personal Interview, Rutherfordton, North Carolina, 7 July 2004.

granite headstones and footstones in a row running approximately north to south and facing east. No inscriptions are visible on any of the headstones. Local historians believe that these graves are those of soldiers who died at the hospital at Gilbert Town following the Battles of King's Mountain and Cowpens.³² Two other depressions without gravestones are also visible and it is very possible more graves are in the vicinity. Locus- 8 is suspected to be a colonial cemetery.

Summary

The Gilbert Town Historic District's significance is due to its retention of both its archeological components and, particularly, the high level of integrity retained by its historic landscape. The known archeological and funerary resources of Gilbert Town are limited to the eight loci identified in the archeological survey of 2004, and no buildings or structures associated with Gilbert Town have survived to the present.

The archeological survey conducted in 2004 was limited in scope and duration and a more formal archeological investigation of Gilbert Town is recommended for the future. The archaeological survey work undertaken thus far at the Gilbert Town site successfully yielded ample evidence of 18th and 19th century domestic and military presence to warrant a more formal survey. Further archeological work is likely to identify building foundations and locations, artifacts associated with the occupation of Gilbert Town during the Revolutionary War period and other artifacts associated with the 19th and 20th century agricultural use of the landscape.

³² Ibid.



LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENTS

Since the 18th century, the majority of the Gilbert Town site has remained largely undeveloped and retains a great deal of its revolutionary-period character. Because of its historic significance and integrity of historic landscape, the National Park Service listed the 459.5-acre site in the National Register of Historic Places in 2004 as the Gilbert Town Historic District. The topography of the landscape is very nearly the same as it was in the revolutionary period, and the landscape's appearance, of cultivated low lands and wooded ridges, remains very similar as well. The following section discusses preservation tools and suggests preservation treatment for the parcels within the district.



Figure 19: The Gilbert Town site is composed largely of open fields and woodlands and is bisected by the two-lane, paved Rock Road. This view is to the north in front of the Hampton-McKinney House.

Landscape Preservation Criteria

The parcels within the Gilbert Town Historic District have been rated using the system developed by the Civil War Preservation Trust used for rating individual parcels within a battlefield or military site with characteristics similar to that of Gilbert Town. The criteria are based upon the following:

- Historical Significance
- Existing Integrity
- Physical Features

More specifically, the three criteria are considered as described in detail below:

Historical Significance (S)

Historical significance is the only criterion not tied to contemporary conditions, but rather tied directly to the period of the Revolutionary War. There are four separate levels of historic significance in the rating scale:

- *S-1* - Tracts containing virtually all of the key ground of the military site.
- *S-2* - Tracts containing ground on which some key activities to the site's use and occupation occurred.
- *S-3* - Tracts where minor occupation or use occurred.
- *S-4* - Tracts where no occupation or use occurred but which provide continuity of the viewshed setting or buffer lands.

The presence of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail should be considered in evaluating the historical significance of tracts of the Gilbert Town site. The 330-mile trail traces the route of patriot militia originating in Tennessee in the pursuit of retreating British troops. It was at Gilbert Town that the Overmountain Men turned the tide in the favor of southern opposition, capturing loyalist prisoners at Gilbert Town, fatally wounding British military Captain Dunlap, and sending British troops fleeing. The OVNHT should be included with S-1 tracts.

Existing Integrity (I)

A property's integrity level is based upon the degree to which it has or has not been altered since the time of its historical significance. Alterations can include the construction of dwellings, changes in crop patterns and landscape features, and removal of archeological features. There are three separate levels of integrity as follows:

- *I-1* - Agricultural land or woodlands with no visible intrusions.
- *I-2* - Land with moderate visible intrusions.
- *I-3* - Land containing significant physical intrusions.

Physical Features (F)

Physical features are historic landscape components from the time of the battle such as roadbeds, cultivated fields, woodlands, and water courses. Physical features also include potential archeological resources. There are three levels of physical features and they are weighted as follows:

- *F-1*- Parcels containing one or more features important to the site and potential archeological resources.
- *F-2* - Parcels containing one or more features that contribute to the site and potential archeological resources.
- *F-3* - Parcels containing no known significant historic features related to the site and low potential for archeological resources.

Using this criterion, the report evaluated the parcels within the Gilbert Town Historic District for their historical significance, integrity, and physical features.

Landscape Protection - Options for Preservation

Main options for preserving Gilbert Town’s historic landscape include conservation easements and fee simple purchases. Both conservation easements and fee simple acquisition should be pursued to protect Gilbert Town. Additional preservation tools that can temporarily preserve landscapes are also discussed below.

Conservation easements allow current owners to retain ownership, but restrictions are placed on development and other activities that might otherwise damage the integrity of the lands. While conservation easements might save land from development, they do not provide to the easement holder the other benefits of full ownership, such as access and the ability to make physical improvements. Conservation easements are most typically used in cases in which fee simple acquisition is cost prohibitive or the owner wants to continue ownership. Since much of the property in Gilbert Town is in agricultural use or woodlands, landowners may be particularly amenable to conservation easements that allow continued farming or selective logging.

While easements can prevent future development, only fee simple ownership can provide cohesive management, public access, and interpretation. Fee simple is the direct purchase of properties by a public or private preservation organization. Ownership provides for greater flexibility in utilizing the property for public access and exhibits. It also allows the owner to transfer or sell the property in the future with protective controls. Fee simple purchase is recommended because it provides the owner with more direct control of the land.



Figure 20: Conservation easements could protect property such as Ferguson’s Ridge while allowing continued timber harvesting and agricultural use.

Land Protection – More about Conservation Easements

A conservation easement is a legal transfer of rights to use all or part of a property for a certain purpose. The agreement is between a property owner and a third party such as a land trust, public agency, or preservation organization, and it generally restricts the type and amount of development that may take place on the property. In a conservation easement agreement, a landowner sells or gives away some rights while retaining others. For example, these rights may include the right to construct buildings, harvest timber, restrict access, or subdivide the land.

Easements are often given to protect various environmental spaces such as wetlands, forests, and endangered species habitats. They are also useful in protecting farmland, scenic areas, and historic sites from inappropriate development. Organizations and governments use easements to acquire green space in an area that is being developed quickly. The easement is a binding legal agreement that remains with the land and applies to all subsequent owners of the property. This insures that the land will be protected indefinitely.

An important point about easements is that property owners maintain private ownership of the property. The owner retains the right to sell, give away, or transfer ownership of the property. The owner can continue to live on the property, keep any subsurface mineral rights, and develop any portion of the property excluded from the easement. Generally what the owner relinquishes is the right to develop, improve, or modify the property defined in the easement.

Easement restrictions are tailored to the interests of the property owner and the unique qualities of the particular property. Restrictions are made to protect significant values of that property. Construction and activities may be restricted completely, or limited to certain types. For example, for a natural area, all construction may be prohibited. If the land serves as a farm, the easement may allow for structures and activities related to agriculture while subdivision and other development of the land are prohibited.

Landowners typically decide whether or not the property is to be open to the public. Access rights that allow activities such as hunting, fishing, or hiking are sometimes given. In order to receive a tax deduction, however, some easements require access. Public access is required if an easement is given for recreational or educational purposes. Scenic easements require that most of the property be visible to the public, but physical access is not required. Easements should include protection of archeological resources and efforts to prevent looting.

Interest in conservation easements has grown as property values, and subsequently tax burdens, in many areas have soared leaving property owners "land rich, but cash poor." Even landowners who wish to keep their land undeveloped often are forced to sell or subdivide their property to pay the property taxes. Conservation easements can help landowners preserve their land, reduce taxes, and maintain ownership.

Donating easements to a non-profit group can bring a property owner added tax benefits. If an easement is donated exclusively for conservation purposes and is perpetual, it qualifies as a tax-deductible charitable gift. The value of the easement is determined by the difference between the value of the land prior to the easement and its value after the easement is in effect. For example, a property valued at \$300,000 prior to an easement may be reduced to \$150,000 with a conservation easement. The difference, \$150,000, is the value of the easement. This amount may be deducted from the donor's income for purposes of calculating federal income tax. Donors can deduct an amount equal to up to 50% of their adjusted gross income each year until the easement valuation is used or for a period of up to sixteen years.

Because a property subject to a conservation easement is reduced in value, it often will benefit from lower real estate taxation. Many state laws allow lands with permanent conservation easements to have a lower

real estate assessment that reflects the easement's restrictions. Thus, substantial local real estate tax benefits are gained. Conservation easements can also reduce estate taxes. The value of the easement is deducted or subtracted from the value of the property prior to taxation. This subtraction or deduction from the value of estate property is available whether the easement was donated or sold.

Conservation easements are excellent tools for preserving spaces such as battlefields. They secure the historic property from improper development while allowing the individual landowner to retain ownership. Easements that are donated also provide ample tax benefits to property owners. Most importantly, easements are a means of preserving historic landscapes for future generations.

Landscape Protection - Tools That Buy Time

When attempting to protect historic properties, it is often necessary to buy time until easements, donations, zoning, historic designation, or other options can be arranged. Common tools used to buy time in these cases are option, right of first refusal, lease, and management agreement.

An option is the right to purchase a property at a specific price by a specified time. Options are important preservation tools that give groups time to raise money and temporarily secure the land from other buyers. In an option, the landowner and preservation group or other buyer enter a contract in which they agree on a sale price at a set time in the future. If the group can raise the funds during that time, the option is exercised. If the group does not raise the funds, the option is allowed to expire. During the time of the option, the landowner cannot sell to any other buyer, and the preservation group is under no obligation to buy if they cannot raise the necessary funds. Options are also economically feasible as they usually can be purchased for a fraction of the land purchase price, or sometimes at no cost at all. A land trust or preservation group can also purchase a right of first refusal. This agreement between the landowner and the land trust gives the land trust a certain amount of time to match an offer on a property before it is sold. This method can be used to prevent the sale of property to developers while funds are raised to buy the land.

Another time-buying tool is to lease a property temporarily. Leases typically grant exclusive access rights to properties and thus assure that historic and environmental resources will be cared for. Leasing is a good option if a landowner does not want to sell the property or convey an easement. Management agreements are similar to leases. In this type of contract, the preservation organization contracts to maintain portions of a property in exchange for access rights.

Landscape Assessments

Recommendations for landscape preservation seek to protect the historic character of the overall site, as the district's historic landscape is its primary cultural resource. Archeological resources are also significant within the district, and preservation recommendations consider existing and potential archeological sites. No 18th-century buildings or structures remain extant above the ground. All known historic sites associated with Gilbert Town are included within the Gilbert Town Historic District with the exception of the 1781 – 1786 Rutherford County Courthouse site and the site of William Gilbert's Mill on Holland's Creek.

The Gilbert Town Historic District contains sixteen tax parcels encompassing 459.5 acres. These parcels collectively constitute the contributing archeological site with eight distinct loci, 36 non-contributing buildings, and four non-contributing structures. It is possible that professional archaeological surveys may yield influential data in determining the historic value of areas currently deemed non-contributing. These areas should not be dismissed until further archaeological investigation, and evaluation of historic significance based thereon, have been conducted. Upon such assessment, the appropriate parcels are

recommended for purchase or easements during the next five years. Appropriate parcels should contain the known and potential archeological sites, as well as the open space necessary to retain the integrity and sense of time and place of the Gilbert Town Historic District.



1. Camp
2. Hughes
3. Huntley
4. Balley
5. Owens
6. Moore/Cross
7. Gary
8. Stamey/Young
9. Edgerton
10. Glover
11. Long
12. Epley
13. Monteith
14. Long
15. McKinney
16. Roberson

Figure 21: Owners and Parcels within the Gilbert Town Historic District Boundary. The dashed line shows the approximate route of the historic OVNHT.

Parcel Number	Acreage for Acquisition	Acreage for Easement	Unaffected Acreage
1 (S)	80	22.1	0
1 (N)	0	80.8	0
2	0	47.8	0
3	Approximately 41.9	Approximately 10	0
4	0	27.5	0
5	0	0	1
6	0	Approximately 6	Approximately 11.8
7	0	22.1	0
8	Approximately 4	0	Approximately 33.9
9	Approximately 5	0	Approximately 27.1
10	8.3	0	0
11	9.1	0	0
12	5.5	0	0
13	3.2	0	0
14	3.2	0	0
15	Approximately 5	Approximately 2.5	0
16	0	0	1.5
TOTALS:	165.2	218.8	74.3

Figure 22: Recommendations for acquisition or easement

PARCEL 1 (SOUTH SIDE OF CATHEY’S CREEK) - DESCRIPTION

Address: 1103 Rock Road (Tax Map 133, Parcel 7-A)

Acreage: 102.1 acres

Historic Significance – S-2 This tract, the largest parcel under single ownership in the Gilbert Town Historic District, contains two archeological sites, both of which contain materials associated with an 18th-century military camp. All of this property is associated with the Gilbert Town settlement of the 18th century.

Existing Integrity – I-2 This parcel has been impacted by the construction of a 20th-century dwelling and outbuildings near Rock Road. A dwelling built in 2007 is located within the forested area on the eastern edge of the property and is not readily visible from Rock Road.

Physical Features – F-1: This parcel contains two archeological sites that have yielded military artifacts and are associated with the 18th-century occupation of Gilbert Town. The property has high probability for other archeological resources and future archeological investigations are recommended.

The parcel also includes nine non-contributing buildings. Associated with the often-remodeled ca. 1900 dwelling at 1103 Rock Road are seven 20th-century outbuildings including: a ca. 1940 frame barn; a ca. 1930 frame storage building; a ca. 1996 frame storage building; a ca. 1996 frame barn; a ca. 1996 frame tractor shed; a ca. 1996 implement shed, and a ca. 1996 frame garage. To the west of the house and outbuildings is a wooded ridge that extends to 1,040 feet in height. To the north of the house at 1103 Rock Road is a large pasture, which extends up a slight knoll above Cathey’s Creek. Known as Ferguson’s Ridge, this has traditionally been identified as the campsite of British Major Patrick Ferguson’s army in September of 1780. A dwelling built in 2007 by the owners is located on the east end of this property near Cathey’s Creek.

Discussion: This large tract is an essential component to the Gilbert Town Historic District and it contains at least two significant archeological sites. Retaining the farm’s open space is highly recommended as is either the removal or adaptive reuse of the dwelling at 1003 Rock Road.

Preservation Recommendations: Protecting approximately 80 acres of this property through acquisition is recommended while the remaining 22.1 acres should be protected through an easement. The 22.1 acres recommended for easement acquisition contains the new dwelling at the east end of the property. This dwelling is located in a dense cluster of trees, and is not readily visible from vantage points along Rock Road. The property warrants formal archaeological survey prior to determining its historic value.



Figure 23: Dwelling at 1103 Rock Road



Figure 24: Dwelling Built in 2007



Figure 25: View of the open fields to the north of 1103 Rock Road. Ferguson's Ridge is located beyond the dwelling and outbuildings.

PARCEL 1 (NORTH SIDE OF CATHEY'S CREEK) - DESCRIPTION

Address: Rock Road (Tax Map 734, Parcel 3)

Acreage: 80.8 acres

Historic Significance – S-4: No known archeological or military sites are associated with this property. In the late 18th century it was part of the property owned and cultivated by William Gilbert.

Existing Integrity – I-1: This parcel appears to have been in continuous use as either farmland or woodlands since the late-18th century. No buildings or structures are within this parcel.

Physical Features F-3: This parcel is located on the north side of Cathey's Creek and northwest of Rock Road, and is composed of both pasture and woodlands. No known archeological sites are associated with this property, however, no testing was undertaken during the archeological survey of 2005 and archeological investigations are recommended.

Discussion: This tract was part of the William Gilbert property in the late-18th century, but no archeological sites are known to be on this parcel. The property was included within the National Register nomination to provide continuity to the view shed. Most of the land along Cathey's Creek is within the Rutherford County flood zone which limits development.³³

Preservation Recommendations:

This 80.8 acre parcel is recommended to be protected through an easement in order to protect the viewshed along Cathey's Creek. An archeological survey should be conducted on this property to identify any sites associated with the Gilbert Town settlement.



Figure 26: View of the property to the northwest from Rock Road.

³³ Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance of Rutherford County, p. 14, accessed at http://www.rutherfordcountync.gov/dept/planning/_Ordinances.php

PARCEL 2 - DESCRIPTION

Address: Rock Road (Tax Map 734, Parcel 8)

Acreage: 47.8 acres

Historic Significance – S-4: No known archeological or military sites are associated with this property. In the late-18th century it was part of the property owned by William Gilbert and cultivated as part of his farm.

Existing Integrity – I-2: This parcel appears to have been in continuous use as either farmland or woodlands since the late-18th century. Along the creek the property remains under cultivation or in pasture. The northeast section of the parcel contains several modern agricultural buildings.

Physical Features – F-3: No known archeological sites are associated with this property. No testing was undertaken on this parcel during the archeological survey of 2005, but archeological investigations are recommended.

Located on the north side of Cathey's Creek and southeast of Rock Road, this parcel is composed primarily of open pasture for livestock grazing. Along the creek are woodlands. There are modern agricultural buildings located in the northeast section of this lot. Most of the property along Cathey's Creek is within the creek's flood zone.

Discussion: This tract was part of the William Gilbert property in the late-18th century but no archeological sites are known to be on this parcel. The property was included within the National Register nomination to provide continuity to the view shed. Most of the land along Cathey's Creek is within the flood zone, which limits development.

Preservation Recommendations: This 47.8-acre parcel along Cathey's Creek is recommended to be protected through an easement to preserve the creek's viewshed. An archeological survey should be conducted on this property to identify any sites associated with the Gilbert Town settlement.



Figure 27: View of Cathey's Creek Bridge and open fields on either side of the bridge. The bridge is to be replaced in the near future and the county should work with the North Carolina Department of Transportation to develop a context sensitive design suitable for the historic district.

PARCEL 3 - DESCRIPTION

Address: Old Gilbert Town Road (Tax Map 133, Parcel 5)

Acreage: 51.9 acres

Historic Significance – S-2: This property is significant to the history of Gilbert Town and contains two archeological sites, one associated with a blacksmith’s shop and the other with the Colonial Cemetery. Within this parcel is the approximate historic route of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail.

Existing Integrity – I-2: This parcel contains a 20th-century dwelling and outbuildings in the western section of the lot. The hillside to the northwest of the dwelling remains in woodlands and to the northeast of the house is a large pasture and woodlands along Cathey’s Creek. The parcel also extends north along Cathey’s Creek and is an essential part of the view shed for the Gilbert Town site.

Physical Features – F-1: This parcel contains two of Gilbert Town’s known archeological sites as well as a large amount of acreage with additional potential for archeological resources. Also on the parcel are a ca. 2000 frame dwelling and an associated frame storage shed sited just off of Old Gilbert Town Road. To the rear of the dwelling is a large pasture that extends down the ridgeline to end in a line of trees. The parcel also encompasses a wooded ridge at the east end of the lot near Cathey’s Creek. No discernible remnants of the historic 1780 road or trail that ran through Gilbert Town have been identified on this parcel.

Discussion: The property at 498 Old Gilbert Town Road is a key resource component related to Gilbert Town. The parcel contains open fields and woodlands that are part of the historic landscape as well as two archeological sites. This house and its associated outbuildings occupy a small section of the parcel. Of particular importance is the protection of the archeological sites.

Preservation Recommendations: With the exception of approximately 10 acres comprising the house and its immediate surroundings at the western edge of the parcel, the remaining tract of approximately 41.9 acres is recommended for acquisition. The remaining 10 acres around the house should be acquired via an easement. A more comprehensive archeological survey is recommended for this parcel.



Figure 28: Dwelling at 498 Old Gilbert Town Road



Figure 29: View to the Northeast from the Rear Yard of 498 Old Gilbert Town Road

PARCEL 4 - DESCRIPTION

Address: 448 Old Gilbert Town Road (Tax Map 133, Parcel 4-A)

Acreage: 27.5 acres

Historic Significance – S-4: This property is located to the southeast of the Colonial Cemetery and the Gilbert Town site. No specific use or occupation of this property is known.

Existing Integrity – I-2: This parcel contains a 20th-century dwelling and outbuildings in the western section of the lot. The central and east section of the lot remains in pasture and woodlands.

Physical Features – F-3: This parcel does not contain any known features or sites associated with Gilbert Town, and its archeological potential is unknown. The majority of its acreage is composed of woodlands and pasture. Facing Old Gilbert Town Road is a one-story, prefabricated dwelling built ca. 1960, and adjacent to this dwelling are five non-contributing outbuildings: a ca. 1960 frame tobacco shed with a metal gable roof; a ca. 1940 corn crib moved to this site by the present owner; a ca. 1965 frame barn with a metal gable roof and metal siding; a ca. 1965 frame shop building; and a ca. 1970 metal storage building. To the east of this cluster of buildings, an open field and woodlands extend northeast to Cathey’s Creek. This section of the parcel includes the eastern slopes of a knoll overlooking Cathey’s Creek. This area is just east of Locus-3 and likely experienced 18th-century use and occupation.

Discussion: No archeological survey took place on this parcel in 2005 but such a survey is recommended, particularly on the acres recommended for acquisition, as they may have experienced 18th-century use and occupation. This property is important to the viewshed of the Gilbert Town site.

Preservation Recommendations: The central and east sections of this parcel containing approximately 20 acres are recommended for protection through an easement. These sections of the parcel may contain archaeological resources and a survey of this tract is recommended.



Figure 30: Dwelling at 448 Old Gilbert Town Road



Figure 31: Outbuildings at 448 Old Gilbert Town Road

PARCEL 5 - DESCRIPTION

Address: 476 Old Gilbert Town Road (Tax Map 133, Parcel 5-A)

Acreage: One acre

Historic Significance – S-4: This property is located to the southeast of the Colonial Cemetery and the Gilbert Town site. No specific use or occupation of this property is known.

Existing Integrity – I-3: This parcel contains a 20^t-century dwelling and outbuildings.

Physical Features – F-3: This parcel does not contain any known features or sites associated with Gilbert Town and its archeological potential is unknown. The parcel contains a Ranch-style dwelling built in 1979 and several storage buildings.

Discussion: This property was included in the Gilbert Town Historic District boundary as a contiguous parcel along Old Gilbert Town Road. The parcel has a high level of ground disturbance and archeological resources are considered unlikely.

Preservation Recommendations: No acquisition or easement for this property appears warranted.



Figure 32: Dwelling at 448 Old Gilbert Town Road

PARCEL 6 - DESCRIPTION

Address: 900 Rock Road (Tax Map 133, Parcel 8)

Acreage: 17.8 acres

Historic Significance – S-3: Located on Rock Road, this parcel contains a ca. 1920 dwelling, a dwelling built in 2007, and numerous agricultural outbuildings on both sides of the road. Just south and east of Rock Road is the approximate location of the historic route of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail but no remnants of this road have been identified. No other known occupation or use of this property during the period of significance is known.

Existing Integrity – I-3: This parcel has been extensively developed with two dwellings and numerous agricultural outbuildings. To the west and north of the agricultural buildings on the west side of the road are open fields containing approximately six acres.

Physical Features – F-3: No known historic features or archeological sites are associated with this property. This parcel extends along the northwest and southeast sides of Rock Road. The section of the parcel on the east side of the road has been disturbed for the construction of two dwellings and outbuildings. The Judson and Anna Walker House, built ca. 1920, is a one-story frame bungalow and has a gable crimped-metal roof, an exterior of board-and-batten siding, and a concrete-block foundation. Adjacent to the house are four outbuildings: a ca. 1950 hen house, a ca. 1950 concrete-block garage, a ca. 1950 concrete-block well house, and a ca. 1950 concrete-block tenant house. Across the road from the house are four more outbuildings: a ca. 1960 frame shed, a ca. 1950 concrete-block barn, a ca. 1950 egg-sorting house, and a ca. 1960 chicken house. Also on the property is a frame dwelling built in 2007 at 890 Rock Road. On the west side of the road past the agricultural buildings are fields that extend to the base of Ferguson's Ridge. No discernible remnants of the historic 1780 road or trail that ran through Gilbert Town have been identified on this parcel.

Discussion: The property at 900 Rock Road has had extensive ground disturbance due to the construction of two dwellings and numerous outbuildings. The fields to the west of the outbuildings on the west side of the road comprise important open space and have some archeological potential.

Preservation Recommendations: The approximately six acres west of the outbuildings on the western side of the road are recommended to be protected by an easement, and a more comprehensive archeological survey is recommended before the remaining 12.8 acres are deemed non-contributing.



Figure 33: Judson and Anna Walker House at 900 Rock Road.



Figure 34: Agricultural Buildings across the road from 900 Rock Road.



Figure 35: Dwelling at 890 Rock Road Built in 2007.

PARCEL 7 - DESCRIPTION

Address: 781 Rock Road (Tax Map 133, Parcel 9)

Acreage: 22.1 acres

Historic Significance – S-4: Located on Rock Road, this parcel contains a dwelling facing the road and woodlands at the rear of the lot that extend to the southwest section of Ferguson’s Ridge. No known occupation or use of this property during the period of significance is known.

Existing Integrity – I-2: This parcel contains a 20th-century dwelling facing Rock Road and dense woodlands to the rear of the house. While the southern section of the lot has been cleared around the house and road, the property at the rear of the house appears to have been wooded since the early-20th century.

Physical Features – F-3: No known historic features or archeological sites are associated with this property. The south section of the parcel containing the driveway and brick dwelling that replaced a ca. 1920 frame dwelling ca. 1985 has had some site disturbance, but the wooded lot at the rear of the house may have some potential for archeological resources.

Discussion: The property at 781 Rock Road was included in the National Register boundary because of the large acreage remaining in woods adjoining Ferguson’s Ridge. This wooded area, comprising approximately 15 acres, is recommended to be protected through an easement to provide a compatible buffer area for Ferguson’s Ridge.

Preservation Recommendations: Approximately 15 acres are recommended to be protected through an easement, and a more comprehensive archeological survey is recommended before the remaining 7.1 acres are deemed non-contributing.



Figure 36: Dwelling at 781 Rock Road.

PARCEL 8 - DESCRIPTION

Address: Rock Road Vicinity, Gilbert Cemetery (Tax Map 133, Parcel 51)

Acreage: 37.9 acres

Historic Significance – S-2: This parcel contains a portion of the western and southern sections of Ferguson’s Ridge. Also on the eastern edge of this property is the Gilbert Cemetery containing the graves of William Gilbert and his family. On the western slopes of the ridge a residential development is currently underway.

Existing Integrity – I-2: The current residential development on this parcel is concentrated on the west and central portions of this tract. As of July of 2005, there was no construction extending into the western and southern slopes of Ferguson’s Ridge. The crest of Ferguson’s Ridge currently remains in woodlands. A metal fence has been erected along the eastern property line of this parcel.

Physical Features – F-1: This wooded parcel contains a portion of two archeological loci, and both are essential components in the history and occupation of Gilbert Town. The cemetery contains the marked grave of William Gilbert, approximately nine graves marked with fieldstones, and at least two depressions indicating additional burials. The cemetery is currently somewhat overgrown with various small trees and other vegetation interspersed among the fieldstones. The only marked grave is that of William Gilbert. In the past year the west and central sections of the tract have been subdivided for residences as part of the Gilbert Town East development.

Discussion: This property is under development for residential use and the current plans call for subdivision of the entire parcel with the exception of a half-acre set aside to encompass the Gilbert Cemetery. The development of the crest of the ridgeline would result in the loss of the important site. It is recommended that a buffer zone be created along the crest of the ridge and run along the eastern boundary of the property. This buffer zone would contain approximately four acres and the development of a walking trail along the ridgeline within this buffer zone recommended.

Preservation Recommendations: An additional archeological survey of both archeological sites is recommended, and approximately four acres are recommended for protection through an easement.



Figure 37: The Gilbert Town East development is now underway on the lower slopes of Ferguson’s Ridge.

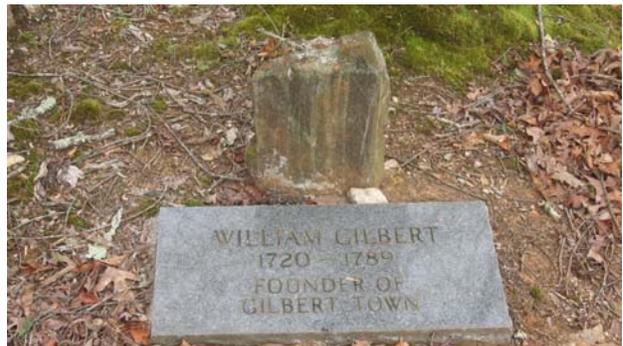


Figure 38: William Gilbert Grave at the Crest of Ferguson’s Ridge

PARCEL 9 - DESCRIPTION

Address: Rock Road Vicinity (Map 133, Parcel 52)

Acreage: 32.1 acres

Historic Significance – S-2: This parcel contains a portion of the western section of Ferguson’s Ridge, the campsite for the British army under the command of Major Patrick Ferguson in 1780.

Existing Integrity – I-1: This wooded tract has remained in woodlands since the early-20th century. This property is currently planned for development as part of the Gilbert Town subdivision but the only construction occurring to the present is a dirt road into the center of the tract. The crest of Ferguson’s Ridge remains in woodlands.

Physical Features – F-1: This parcel is composed of woodlands along the western slopes of Ferguson’s Ridge. No buildings or structures are currently on this parcel, however, this property is planned for future residential development. The parcel contains a portion of one of the archeological loci.

Discussion: Planning for the subdivision and development of this tract is underway, although no construction is planned in the near future. The development of the crest of the ridgeline would result in the loss of the important site of Ferguson’s camp. It is recommended that a buffer zone be created along the crest of the ridge to protect as large an area of this campsite as possible. Such a zone would run along the eastern boundary of the property and contain approximately five acres. The development of a walking trail along the ridgeline is recommended.

Preservation Recommendations: The protection of the crest of Ferguson’s Ridge is important to preserving the Gilbert Town site. The acquisition of approximately five acres along the ridge crest is recommended. An additional archeological survey of this site is recommended.



Figure 39: The wooded area on Ferguson’s Ridge in the distance is planned for residential construction as part of the Gilbert Town subdivision.



Figure 40: Ferguson’s Ridge is covered with dense woodlands.

PARCEL 10 - DESCRIPTION

Address: Rock Road (Map 133, Parcel 6-G)

Acreage: 8.3 acres

Historic Significance – S-2: This property is adjacent to Rock Road and is located in the center of the area known as Gilbert Town. The parcel does not contain any known archeological sites, but its proximity to other sites and the intensive occupation of this area during the period of significance suggests that there is potential for archeological resources within the tract.

Existing Integrity – I-1: This parcel is composed of open pasture as well as woodlands along the eastern edge of the tract. There are no modern buildings or other intrusions.

Physical Features – F-2: It is composed primarily of pasture with a tree line along its eastern edge. No buildings or structures are on this property with the exception of a small Overmountain Victory Trail marker.

Discussion: This parcel remains in open space and is important in maintaining the sense of time and place of Gilbert Town's period of significance. It contains a small Overmountain Victory Trail marker.

Preservation Recommendations: This parcel is located in the center of the Gilbert Town site and the acquisition of the entire parcel is recommended. It holds potential for archaeological resources as well as being highly important in preserving the viewshed of the site. This parcel would also be recommended for inclusion as part of a protected park area for Gilbert Town.



Figure 41: This parcel contains an open field and an Overmountain Victory Trail marker.

PARCEL 11 - DESCRIPTION

Address: Rock Road (Map 133, Parcel 6-F)

Acreage: 9.1 acres

Historic Significance – S-2: This property is adjacent to Rock Road and is located in the center of the area known as Gilbert Town. The parcel contains two archeological sites, one of which may be the site of the William Gilbert residence, a focal point of the community.

Existing Integrity – I-1: This parcel is composed of open pasture as well as woodlands just to the west of Cathey’s Creek. There are no modern buildings or other intrusions.

Physical Features – F-1: Located on the eastern side of Rock Road, this parcel is composed both of pasture and of woodlands. This site contains one non-contributing object, an historical marker erected in 1999, two archeological sites, and other potential archeological resources associated with the occupation and history of Gilbert Town.

Discussion: This parcel is one of the most significant in the Gilbert Town Historic District. The archeological survey conducted in 2005 found sufficient 18th-century artifacts in two locations to suggest that the site was occupied by a buildings associated with Gilbert Town’s period of significance. Locus-1 has a high probability of being the location of William Gilbert’s house based on historical accounts and oral tradition.

Preservation Recommendations: This parcel is located in the center of the Gilbert Town site and the acquisition of the entire parcel is recommended. It contains at least one important archaeological site as well as being highly important in preserving the viewshed of Gilbert Town. This parcel would also be recommended for inclusion as part of a protected park area for Gilbert Town.



Figure 42: This parcel contains the Gilbert Town historic marker on the east side of Rock Road.

PARCEL 12- DESCRIPTION

Address: Rock Road (Map 133, Parcel 6-E)

Acreage: 5.5 acres

Historic Significance – S-2: This property is adjacent to Rock Road and is located in the center of the area known as Gilbert Town and is part of the property owner and cultivated by William Gilbert in the 18th century. The parcel does not contain any known archeological sites, but there is potential for archeological resources within the tract.

Existing Integrity – I-1: This parcel is composed of open pasture as well as woodlands along the eastern edge of the tract. There are no modern buildings or other major intrusions.

Physical Features – F-2: This parcel is located on the east side of Rock Road across from the dwelling at 1103 Rock Road. It is composed primarily of pasture with a tree line along its eastern edge. No buildings or structures are on this property with the exception of a small Overmountain Victory Trail marker.

Discussion: This parcel remains in open space and is important in maintaining the sense of time and place of Gilbert Town’s period of significance. It contains a small Overmountain Victory Trail marker.

Preservation Recommendations: This parcel is located in the center of the Gilbert Town site and the acquisition of the entire parcel is recommended. It holds potential for archaeological resources as well as being highly important in preserving the viewshed of the site. This parcel would also be recommended for inclusion as part of a protected park area for Gilbert Town.



Figure 43: This parcel contains an open field and an Overmountain Victory Trail marker east of Rock Road.

PARCEL 13 - DESCRIPTION

Address: Rock Road (Map 133, Parcel 6-D)

Acreage: 3.2 acres

Historic Significance – S-2: This property is adjacent to Rock Road and is located in the center of the area known as Gilbert Town and the property owned and farmed by William Gilbert in the 18th century. The parcel does not contain any known archeological sites, but its proximity to other archeological sites and the intensive occupation of this area during the period of significance suggests that there is potential for archeological resources within the tract. Within this parcel is the approximate historic route of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail.

Existing Integrity – I-1: This parcel is composed of open pasture as well as woodlands along the southern side of the tract. There are no modern buildings or other intrusions.

Physical Features – F-2: This parcel has the potential to contain archeological resources associated with the occupation and history of Gilbert Town. This parcel is located on the eastern side of Rock Road across from the Hampton-McKinney House. This parcel contains a historic marker commemorating the Kings Mountain campaign. No other buildings or structures are on this property and it is composed of a large cultivated field. At the curve of Rock Road is a dirt parking area adjacent to the historic marker. No discernible remnants of the historic 1780 road or trail that ran through Gilbert Town have been identified on this parcel.

Discussion: This parcel remains in open space and is important in maintaining the sense of time and place of Gilbert Town's period of significance. It contains an historic marker and presently serves as the unofficial pull-off for visitors to access the site.

Preservation Recommendations: This parcel is located in the center of the Gilbert Town site and the acquisition of the entire parcel is recommended. It holds potential for archaeological resources as well as being highly important in preserving the viewshed of the site. This parcel would also be recommended for inclusion as part of a protected park area for Gilbert Town.



Figure 44: This parcel contains the Kings Mountain campaign historic marker on the east side of Rock Road. The rest of the parcel is composed of an open field with a scattering of trees.

PARCEL 14 - DESCRIPTION

Address: Old Gilbert Town Road and Rock Road (Map 133, Parcel 6-C)

Acreage: 3.2 acres

Historic Significance – S-4: This property is adjacent to Rock Road and within this parcel is the approximate historic route of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail which was the historic roadbed extending through Gilbert Town. No traces of a historic road have been identified on this property and the parcel consists of woods along the hill slope.

Existing Integrity – I-1: This parcel is composed of a tree-covered hillside. There are no intrusions and this hill has remained wooded since at least the early-20th century.

Physical Features – F-3: No archeological sites or other historic features are known to be associated with this parcel. This tract adjoins Parcel 3, and on the southern slope of this hill is the Colonial Cemetery. Located at the southeast corner of Rock Road and Old Gilbert Town Road, this parcel is composed of woodlands. There are no buildings or structures on this parcel and it is located on the north slope of a hill. No discernible remnants of the historic 1780 road or trail that ran through Gilbert Town have been identified on this parcel.

Discussion: No known significance is associated with this property but it remains important because of providing continuity in the approaches to Gilbert Town from the south. While the land to the west of the road is farmland, this tract has remained in timber since the early-20th century. Acquisition or an easement on this property is recommended since it is one of the gateways to Gilbert Town and shares the same hill with Parcel 3 and the Colonial Cemetery.

Preservation Recommendations: This parcel on the direct approaches to the Gilbert Town site and the acquisition of the entire parcel is recommended. It holds potential for archaeological resources as well as being highly important in preserving the viewshed of the site. This parcel would also be recommended for inclusion as part of a protected park area for Gilbert Town.



Figure 45: Woodlands on Parcel 14.

PARCEL 15 - DESCRIPTION

Address: 963 Rock Road (Tax Map 133, Parcel 6-A, 6B, 7B)

Acreage: 7.5 acres

Historic Significance – S-4: No known occupation or use of this property during the period of significance is known.

Existing Integrity – I-3: This parcel contains a 20th-century dwelling at 963 Rock Road and dense woodlands to the rear of the house. While the section of the lot facing the road has been cleared, there are approximately two acres at the rear of the house along the base of Ferguson’s Ridge that remain in woodlands. Several acres of this parcel also are located to the north of the Hampton-McKinney House, at 1001 Rock Road on Parcel 16; this acreage is composed of open fields and woods along a small watercourse that drains into Cathey’s Creek.

Physical Features – F-2: No known historic features or known archeological sites are associated with this property. The section of the parcel containing the dwelling, outbuilding and driveway has had some site disturbance, but the remainder of the parcel has potential for archeological resources. This dwelling was constructed ca. 1975 as the residence of James C. McKinney, grandson of James M. McKinney who purchased this property in 1898 and is a one-story frame Ranch-style dwelling with a gable roof. To the east of the house is a ca. 1970 prefabricated metal storage building. To the north of the house are woodlands that extend to the base of Ferguson’s Ridge.

Discussion: The property at 963 Rock Road has been largely disturbed and developed, but the wooded area at the rear of the lot and the open field to the north of the Hampton-McKinney House are important site components with archeological possibilities.

Preservation Recommendations: Approximately five acres of this parcel are recommended to be protected through acquisition with the balance of the property protected by an easement. This area would encompass the wooded area behind the house at 963 Rock Road and the open field north of the Hampton-McKinney House. An archaeological survey of this property is also recommended.



Figure 46: Dwelling at 963 Rock Road.



Figure 47: Open Field North of the Hampton-McKinney House, Looking To Ferguson’s Ridge.

PARCEL 16 - DESCRIPTION

Address: 1103 Rock Road (Tax Map 133, Parcel 6)

Acreage: 1.5 acres

Historic Significance – S-3: This parcel contains the Hampton-McKinney House which was built ca. 1840 and extensively remodeled in 1996. A large paved parking area is located to the rear of the house. No known occupation or use of this property during the period of significance is known, and archeological testing of this site in 2005 did not recover any artifacts from the 18th century.

Existing Integrity – I-3: This parcel contains a 19th-century dwelling facing Rock Road. There has been extensive ground disturbance to this parcel and there is no integrity remaining from the 18th-century occupation or use.

Physical Features – F-3: No historic features or intact archeological sites are associated with this property. This property has been extensively disturbed since the 18th century and the archeological testing conducted in 2005 did not identify any artifacts from the period of significance. The parcel includes the ca. 1840 Hampton-McKinney House, a garage built in 1996, and one non-contributing archeological loci. The Hampton-McKinney House is a two-story frame I-House built ca. 1840 and extensively remodeled in 1996 with the addition of vinyl siding, vinyl windows, and a rebuilt shed-roofed porch with square wood columns and balusters.

Discussion: The Hampton-McKinney House reflects the 19th-century settlement and occupation of this area and does not have any known direct connections with Gilbert Town. The historic roadbed runs in front of the property, but this is now the paved Rock Road and does not have integrity from the period of significance. The archeological testing conducted at this property in 2005 determined that there had been extensive ground disturbance as well as removal of some of the topsoil in the front and side yards.

Preservation Recommendations: No additional archeological investigations of this parcel are recommended. None of the property is recommended for acquisition or easement.



Figure 48: Hampton-McKinney House at 1001 Rock Road.



INTERPRETATION AND ACCESS

Interpretative Themes

The historical events and people connected to Gilbert Town and its landscape suggest several interpretive themes related to regional settlement and the Revolutionary War. Below are several statements that should be considered in landscape treatment and interpretation.

- A. The important role William Gilbert played during the settlement of Gilbert Town and points beyond illustrates the processes by and extent to which large landowners could dominate local political and commercial life.
- B. The tavern, lodging, and blacksmith operations run by William and Sarah Gilbert demonstrate key institutions and services that supported settlement of Gilbert Town and points beyond.
- C. The importance of transportation arteries to settlement is illustrated in the road that passed through Gilbert Town.
- D. The process of site selection and construction of the county courthouses and the records of early meetings illustrate the individuals and demographic able to claim power during Gilbert Town's settlement.
- E. Gilbert Town's agricultural past exemplifies the role agriculture played in colonial and revolutionary life.
- F. Political, economic, and social forces of the revolutionary era affected life in and around Gilbert Town and contributed to support of the respective loyalist or patriot causes.
- G. Military activity in Gilbert Town led to events that culminated in the Battle of Kings Mountain, a significant event in the Revolutionary War.
- H. The military operations in and around Gilbert Town reflect period logistics and tactics.
- I. Revolutionary-era military needs affected civilian life and the Gilbert Town landscape.

Interpretive planning and devices used at Gilbert Town should reflect one or more of these interpretive themes.

Interpretive Tools

Parks and historic sites use a variety of tools to interpret their landscapes and themes. Common tools include wayside exhibits, museum exhibits, driving tours, walks, talks, slide shows, videos, living history, dramatic presentations, and other public programming. All of these tools serve to increase engagement with and understanding of the broad historical themes and specific landscape present at a particular site.

Access

Providing access enables interpretation and visitor engagement with the site. Typical means of access include directional signs; roads; parking areas; trails; and facilities such as restrooms, water fountains, and informational stations.

Current Condition

The Gilbert Town site is currently in private ownership and there are no lands which are open to the public. An “unofficial” pull-off area is located across Rock Road from the Hampton-McKinney House to allow access for visitors to read the two existing historic markers along this section of the road. The markers as well as the several small Overmountain Victory Trail Association (OVTA) markers within the district are on private property and have been erected with the consent of the owners. There are presently no trails or other signage within the historic district. Outside of the historic district are two related historic markers; one marker, for Ferguson’s Ridge, is located on private property at the entrance to the Gilbert Town subdivision off Broyhill Road, while the second marker commemorates the possible location of one of the early county courthouses on Shepherd’s Creek.

Within the Gilbert Town Historic District are two steel freestanding historic markers and several small metal OVTA markers. The two freestanding historic markers are located across from the Hampton-McKinney House on Rock Road. One sign has a brief history of the King’s Mountain campaign while the other has a short discussion of Gilbert Town. The OVTA signs are approximately two feet in height and five of these are within the district boundaries.

In addition to these signs, there are also two steel freestanding signs associated with Gilbert Town outside of the boundary of the historic district. One of these is located off Broyhill Road at the entrance to the Gilbert Town subdivision and has information on the historic site of Ferguson’s Ridge. The other is located to the south of the historic district at Shepherd’s Creek and has information on one of the possible early courthouse sites. With these exceptions, there are no other markers or signage providing information on the historic site of Gilbert Town.

A section of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail has been identified and mapped through Gilbert Town. The future plans of the National Park Service are to create a non-motorized trail following the approximate route of the historic roadbed.



Figure 49: Just off Rock Road is the historic sign for Gilbert Town, as well as a small OVTA marker.



Figure 50: This historic marker for Ferguson's Ridge is located outside the Gilbert Town boundary off Broyhill Road.



Figure 51: This sign provides a brief summary of the King's Mountain campaign and is located in the curve off Rock Road.



Figure 52: Several other OVTA markers are in front yards and fields in the Gilbert Town Historic District.



Figure 53: A freestanding sign for the possible site of the Rutherford County Courthouse is located just south of the historic district at Shepherd's Creek.

Recommended Parking

There is presently no parking area available for visitors to Gilbert Town. Property owners do allow “unofficial” parking in their fields during OVTA events and other historical celebrations. In order to read the two historic markers on Rock Road, visitors must either slow down considerably or park in the field in the curve of Rock Road across from the Hampton-McKinney House. This pull-off area is not only limited in size and difficult to access but its location in the curve is also dangerous. Using information gained through the recommended further archeological survey and the very specific treatment of landscape components generated in the recommended cultural landscape report, locations and designs should be generated for parking that is safe and minimally impacting to landscape integrity. Possible locations include:

- Off Rock Road within Parcel 13 but to the southwest of the existing pull-off location. This parking area should be sited to avoid any disturbance of archaeological resources of the OVNHT that extends through this parcel. A parking area at this location could avoid the Rock Road curve, provide easy walking access to the King’s Mountain campaign sign, provide a vista of the Gilbert Town site, and connect with additional walking trails to Ferguson’s Ridge and the Gilbert Cemetery. This wayside/pull-off would be allowed to address the following interpretative themes from the list above:
 - A. The important role William Gilbert played during the settlement of Gilbert Town and points beyond illustrates the processes by and extent to which large landowners could dominate local political and commercial life.
 - B. The tavern, lodging, and blacksmith operations run by William and Sarah Gilbert demonstrate key institutions and services that supported settlement of Gilbert Town and points beyond.
 - C. The importance of transportation arteries to settlement is illustrated in the road that passed through Gilbert Town.
 - E. Gilbert Town’s agricultural past exemplifies the role agriculture played in colonial and revolutionary life.
 - G. Military activity in Gilbert Town led to events that culminated in the Battle of Kings Mountain, a significant event in the Revolutionary War.
 - H. The military operations in and around Gilbert Town reflect period logistics and tactics.



Figure 54: The existing “unofficial” pull-off to access Gilbert Town’s historic markers is in a dangerous curve on Rock Road. A formal, paved parking area is recommended for the area on the south side of the road 100’ to 150’ west of the curve.

- In the woods on Parcel 3 just off Old Gilbert Town Road. A parking area at this location could connect with a new walking trail in the woods to lead to the Colonial Cemetery and eliminate the use of the private driveway and circuitous cemetery access. This wayside/pull-off would be allowed to address the following interpretative themes from the list above:
 - F. Political, economic, and social forces of the revolutionary era affected life in and around Gilbert Town and contributed to support of the respective loyalist or patriot causes.
 - G. Military activity in Gilbert Town led to events that culminated in the Battle of Kings Mountain, a significant event in the Revolutionary War.
 - H. The military operations in and around Gilbert Town reflect period logistics and tactics.



Figure 55: A second parking area is also recommended to be located just to the north of this private driveway on Old Gilbert Town Road. Such a parking area could be connected to the Colonial Cemetery via a walking trail.

- At the site of the existing Camp House at 1103 Rock Road on Parcel 1. This parking area could provide a trail head for a walking trail with direct access to Ferguson’s Ridge without having to cross Rock Road. This wayside/pull-off would be allowed to address the following interpretative themes from the list above:
 - E. Gilbert Town’s agricultural past exemplifies the role agriculture played in colonial and revolutionary life.
 - F. Military activity in Gilbert Town led to events that culminated in the Battle of Kings Mountain, a significant event in the Revolutionary War.
 - G. The military operations in and around Gilbert Town reflect period logistics and tactics.
 - H. Revolutionary-era military needs affected civilian life and the Gilbert Town landscape.



Figure 56: A third parking area is recommended to be added at or near the existing house and outbuildings at 1103 Rock Road. This parking area would connect with the walking trail leading to Ferguson's Ridge.

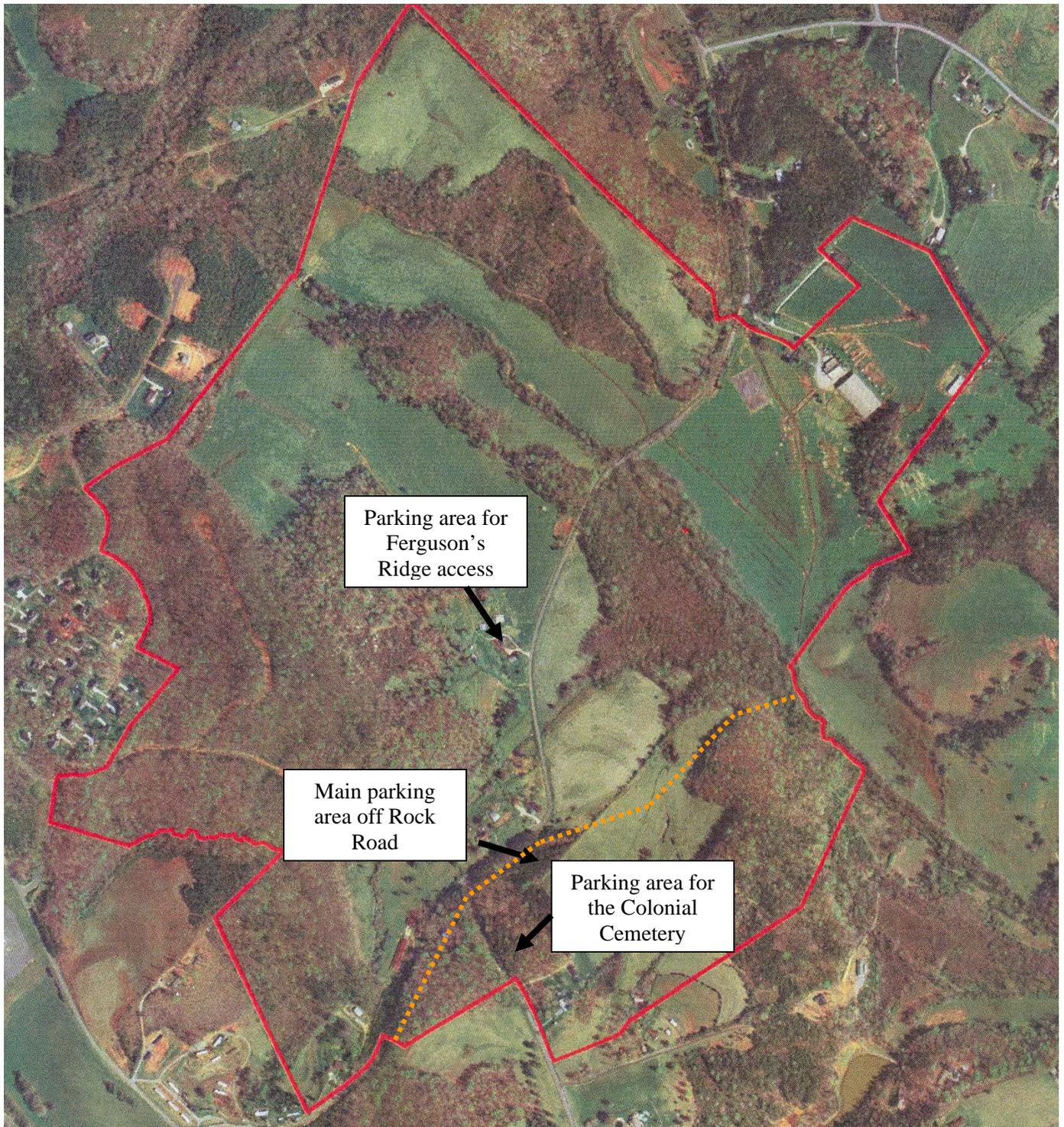


Figure 57: Possible locations for parking areas at Gilbert Town. The dashed line shows the approximate location of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail.

Recommended Trails

The Gilbert Town Historic District lacks any formal walking trail system. There are several rough paths leading to the two cemeteries but otherwise visitors walk through the open fields in order to read the existing historic markers. The fields are made accessible by property owners who cultivate and mow them. The existing signs are maintained by the OVTA. The creation of a walking trail system in Gilbert Town is recommended to provide visitors with access to the various sites in the district and to provide a safe and pleasant experience. Planning for trails should incorporate the information gained through the recommended further archeological survey and the very specific treatment of landscape components generated in the recommended cultural landscape report. Such a trail system should connect parking areas with the Gilbert House site, Ferguson's Ridge, and the two cemeteries. Along this walking trail could be wayside exhibits and other interpretive information relating to the history of Gilbert Town and its role in the Revolutionary War. As part of this system would be the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail (OVNHT) which would follow the approximate route of the 1780 road that extended through Gilbert Town. The NPS plans to develop this segment as part of its overall 330-mile non-motorized trails system for the OVNHT.

The trails should avoid defining landscape features and archaeological features. The appearance of the trails should not detract from the historic character of the landscape. Though most of the trail system could be of dirt or mulched paths, consideration should also be given to using a liquid soil solidifier such as PolyPavement to provide broader access while retaining a historic appearance. Trail sections near the parking areas should be compliant with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); in areas determined by archaeological survey and landscape assessment to contain no significant cultural resources, surfaces and grading should be considered in order to allow wheel chair access to the Gilbert Town vista and Colonial Cemetery.



Figure 58: Example of a walking trail with a wayside exhibit.

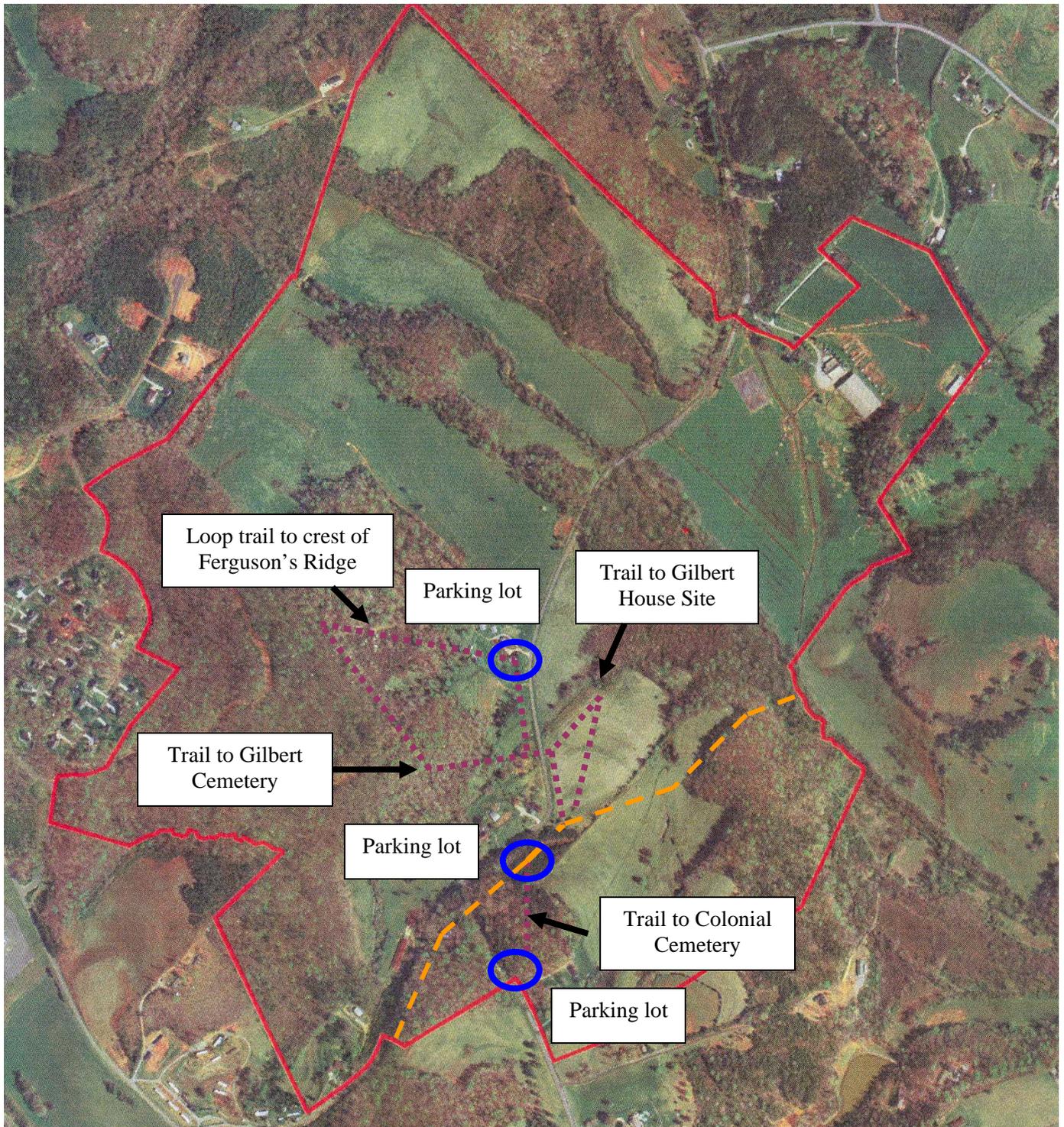


Figure 59: The purple dashed line shows a possible trail system to connect the Gilbert House site, the two cemeteries and the crest of Ferguson's Ridge. The orange dashed line shows the approximate route of the OVNHT through the Gilbert Town Historic District which is planned to be created by the NPS and used as a non-motorized trail.



Figure 60: Walking trails should be marked by adequate signage and clear directions.



Figure 61: All or parts of the trails system should be made ADA compliant with appropriate surfaces.

Recommended Wayside Exhibits

Interpretation of the Gilbert Town site is presently restricted to three historic markers, two on Rock Road in the historic district boundary and one outside the boundary on Broyhill Road. These markers are not adequate to convey the history and significance of Gilbert Town to visitors. As part of the site enhancements a number of wayside exhibits should be considered for the Gilbert Town site. Wayside exhibits should be considered for the following locations and priorities:

1. Gilbert Town Vista Site: From the proposed main parking area off Rock Road a walking trail could connect with an overlook and vista at the top of the rise with the view into the valley below. This exhibit would provide information on the overall history and significance of Gilbert Town and identify the locations of the possible Gilbert House site, Ferguson's Ridge and the two cemeteries. The exhibit would also outline the location of the trail system and other parking areas and how to access these sites. As an information center, the exhibit should address Interpretive Themes A-I to some extent, pointing out specific sites relating to individual themes.
2. Colonial Cemetery: A wayside exhibit at this location would be accessed either through the main parking area or the secondary parking area off Old Gilbert Town Road. This exhibit would discuss the death of Major James Dunlap and provide information on the use of Gilbert Town as a hospital and the possible identities of the other graves. The exhibit would address the significance of military activity at Gilbert Town to the Revolutionary War and on the culture of the town, Interpretive Themes G-I.
3. Gilbert House Site: A walking trail is recommended to connect with the possible Gilbert House site and then with the existing historic marker for Gilbert Town. The wayside exhibit at the house site could include additional information on William Gilbert as well as the drawing of the Gilbert House depicted in Lyman Draper's book. The exhibit's focus on William Gilbert's role in this late eighteenth-century landscape addresses Interpretive Themes A and B.
4. Ferguson's Ridge Parking Area: A wayside exhibit at this location would provide information on the Revolutionary War campsite of Ferguson's Ridge. This exhibit would also provide information on the walking trail connecting with the ridge and the Gilbert Cemetery. This site and the one below would address The exhibit would address the significance of military activity at Gilbert Town to the Revolutionary War and on the culture of the town, Interpretive Themes F-I.
5. Ferguson's Ridge: At the crest of the ridge a wayside exhibit would provide additional information on the use of Ferguson's Ridge. This information could include a discussion of weapons and equipment used by both the Tory and Patriot forces and the kind of artifacts uncovered on the ridge.
6. Gilbert Cemetery: A wayside exhibit at the Gilbert Cemetery would provide information on the cemetery's use and known graves, addressing Themes A, B, and F. This exhibit would be accessed by the walking trail running along the crest of Ferguson's Ridge and connecting with the parking area.

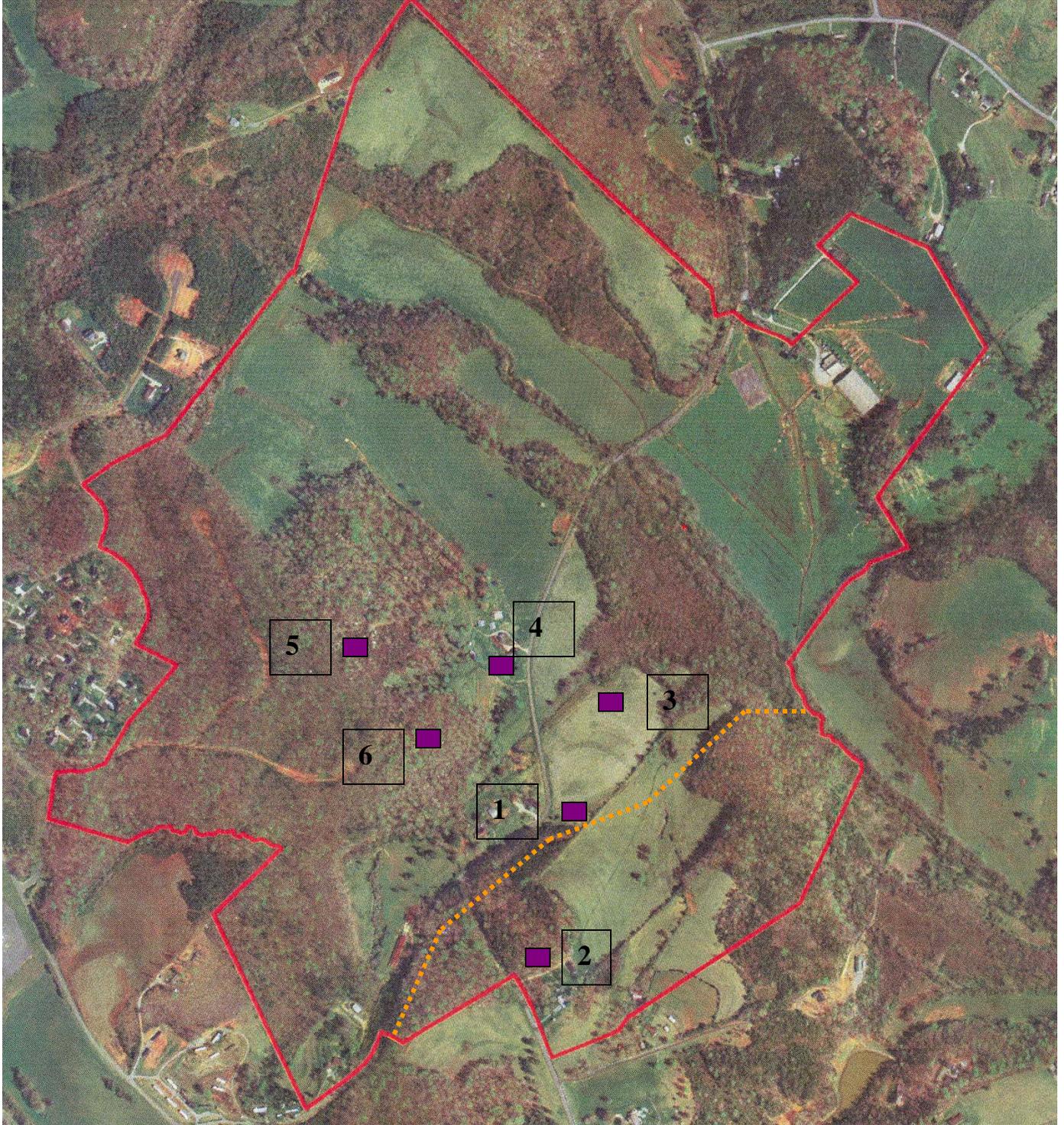


Figure 62: Possible wayside exhibit locations. The dashed line shows the approximate route of the historic roadbed identified as part of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail:

1. Gilbert Town Vista Site
2. Colonial Cemetery
3. Gilbert House Site
4. Ferguson's Ridge Parking Area
5. Ferguson's Ridge
6. Gilbert Cemetery



Figure 63: A wayside exhibit at this location off the main parking area could provide a vista of the Gilbert Town valley and information on the possible Gilbert House site, Ferguson’s Ridge and the two cemeteries. A walking trail could connect with the possible Gilbert House site and the existing Gilbert Town historic marker.



Figure 64: A wayside exhibit at the Colonial Cemetery could provide information on the use of Gilbert Town as a hospital and the possible identities of those buried here.



Figure 65: This dwelling is expected to be razed by the owner and could provide an opportunity for a parking area and wayside exhibit at the base of Ferguson’s Ridge to provide information on Ferguson’s Ridge and connect with a trail leading to the crest of the ridge.



Figure 66: A wayside exhibit could be placed along the crest of Ferguson’s Ridge to discuss the Revolutionary War campsite and its use.



Figure 67: The Gilbert Cemetery should also be recognized and could be interpreted through a wayside marker and accessed from a walking trail on Ferguson’s Ridge.



Figure 68: Wayside exhibits should be similar in design and materials to those currently used at other OVTA sites such as this exhibit at Sycamore Shoals at Elizabethton, Tennessee.

Related Further Action

If all or part of the Gilbert Town Historic District becomes a park, a general management plan should be created to detail plans for creating and maintaining means of access like informational signage, roads, parking areas, trails, and facilities. A crucial dynamic of the plan will be the interplay between site access and site integrity. There will also need to be coordination and cooperation with the NPS and the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail. A section of the trail passes through Gilbert Town and it is the intent of the NPS to create a non-motorized trail system following the approximate route of the 1780 roadbed. Future actions could include the creation of the trail itself as well as associated markers and wayside exhibits.

A formal interpretive plan can further assess the thematic framework suggested here and explore the possibilities for interpretive tools such as the wayside exhibits discussed above and others such as a visitors center, museum exhibits, museum exhibits, driving tours, walks, talks, slide shows, videos, living history, dramatic presentations, and other public programming.



TOURISM PROMOTION

Gilbert Town has the potential to be a significant tourist site in Rutherford County. It is a certified site along the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail (OVNHT) which extends from Abingdon, Virginia, to Kings Mountain National Military Park in South Carolina. Gilbert Town is one of many sites identified on the maps and promotional materials of the Overmountain Victory Trail Association and the National Park Service. Gilbert Town is located in close proximity to the related Revolutionary War battlefields of Cowpens and Kings Mountain. In addition, other tourism initiatives in Rutherford County are underway such as the development of the nearby Bechtler Mint site, an important 19th-century gold mining operation. Rutherford County also boasts an attractive historic district along Main Street that appeals to heritage tourists.

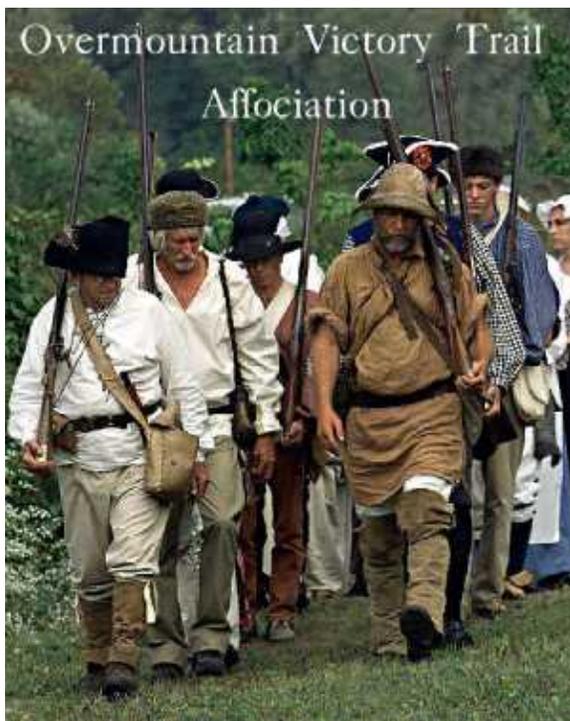


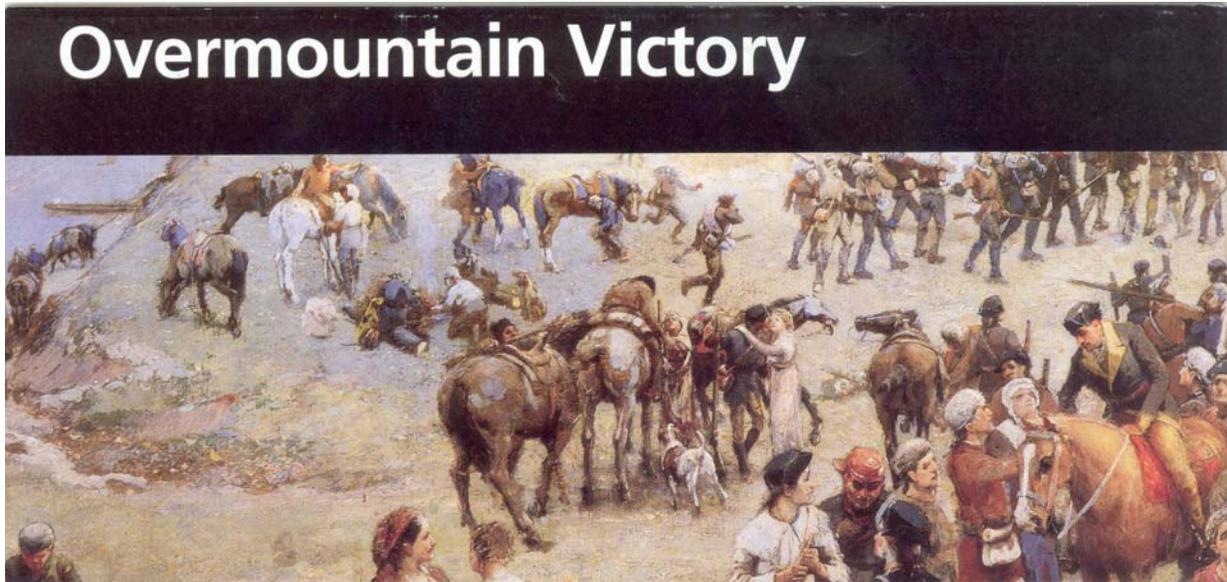
Figure 69: The Overmountain Victory Trail Association is active in promoting commemorative events for sites such as Gilbert Town.

Presently, few visitors come to Gilbert Town. There are no driving tours of the county to orient visitors to the site, and Gilbert Town is not mentioned on the county's tourist website. In addition, the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail Commemorative Motor Route does not connect with Gilbert Town and instead follows US 64 into Rutherford County east of Rock Road. While Gilbert Town is shown on the current map of the Commemorative Motor Route, there is scant information on its history and significance and no directions to access the site. A variety of actions are recommended to occur in conjunction with the development of walking trails, wayside exhibits and other site enhancements. Tourism throughout the region may be enhanced in the future through the proposed enactment of the Southern Campaign of the Revolution Heritage Area.

One of many proposed heritage areas across the country, the Southern Campaign of the Revolution Heritage Area would promote regional heritage, marketing and tourist efforts. This proposal is under currently under consideration following the completion of public meeting and discussions in the region.

Provide an alternate route to Gilbert Town from the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail Commemorative Motor Route

The Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail commemorative motor route presently follows US Highway 64 approximately 1.5 miles east of Gilbert Town. Providing tourists with an optional route via signage and added brochure and website information through Gilbert Town should be considered. Such a route could be accomplished via a loop from US 64 along Oscar Justice Road to Rock Road and then down Old Gilbert Town Road back to US 64. This would be a relatively minor deviation from the motor route and would provide an easy loop through Gilbert Town and back to US 64. This optional route should occur once sufficient site enhancements are completed.



Figures 70 and 71: Gilbert Town is part of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail which is administered by the National Park Service. The current commemorative motor route follows US 64 while the historic trail route extends through Gilbert Town on Rock Road. An optional motor route through Gilbert Town is recommended.

Prepare Tour Brochures and Add Gilbert Town to the County's Tourism Website

Over the next several years as site enhancements are created at Gilbert Town, a priority for tourism and interpretation should include adding a PDF of this preservation plan document to the county's website. Another priority should be the preparation of high quality walking and driving tour brochures. Such brochures would assist in increasing public awareness of the importance of Gilbert Town, build support for purchasing lands, help interpret the site, and provide an overall context of the importance of the site and its association with the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail and other Revolutionary War sites.

As site enhancements progress at Gilbert Town, the website of the Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority should add Gilbert Town as an attraction and historic site. The addition of Gilbert Town on the website could provide information on its importance, directions to the site, and links to the Kings Mountain National Military Park, the Overmountain Victory Trail Association and associated regional sites. Such a web site could be updated on a regular basis to provide information on additional land acquisition, preservation and special events.

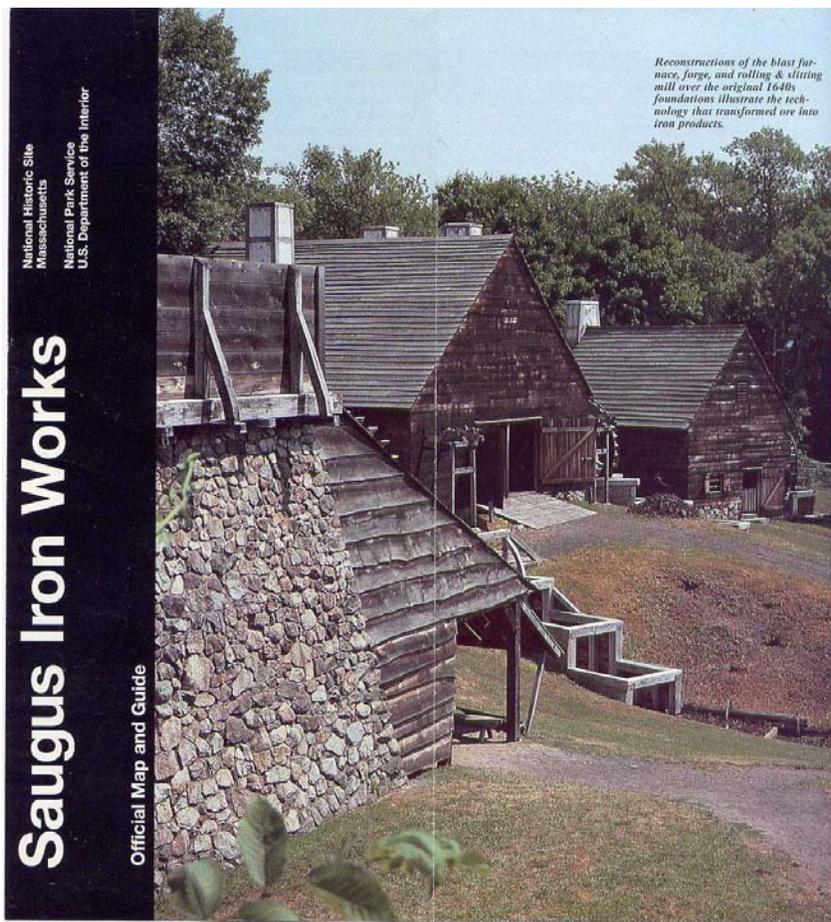


Figure 72: Sample walking tour brochure for the Saugus Iron Works in Massachusetts.

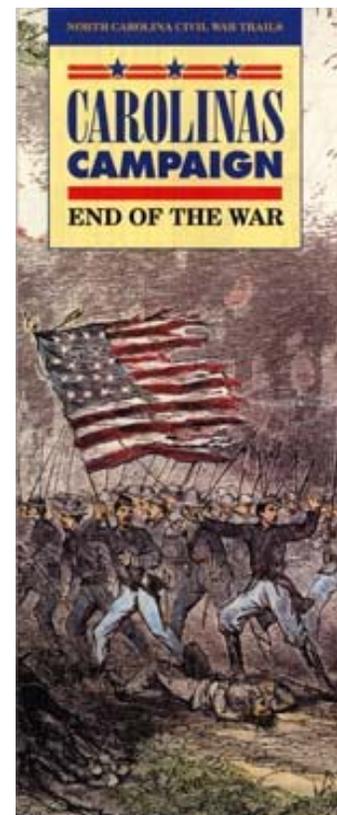


Figure 73: Sample driving tour brochure for the Civil War Carolinas Campaign in North Carolina.

Coordinate Visitation with Regional Revolutionary War and Historic Sites

As enhancements are created at Gilbert Town, information on the site should be made available through brochures and the county's website. Copies of the brochures should be distributed at Cowpens, Kings Mountain and other regional Revolutionary War battlefields and sites. The county's website on Gilbert Town should also provide links to these sites and information on Gilbert Town should also be linked on the related NPS websites.

The Rutherford County government is also seeking to acquire and interpret the related Revolutionary War site of Biggerstaff's Old Fields where revenge killings took place in October of 1780 following the Battle of Kings Mountain. It is anticipated that a wayside exhibit and other improvements would be added to this site and coordinated with visitation to Gilbert Town. An additional related site under development is the creation of a park at Alexander's Ford on the Green River south of Rutherfordton. This was the campsite of the Overmountain Men the day after they camped at Gilbert Town. The Bechtler Gold Site and historic buildings in Rutherfordton are also nearby attractions. These and other related sites should be coordinated through regional brochures and driving tours.

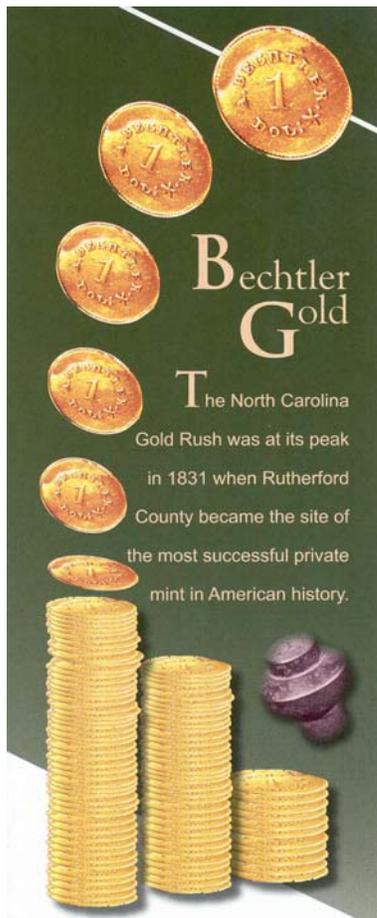


Figure 74: The Bechtler Gold site is planned to be a nearby attraction.

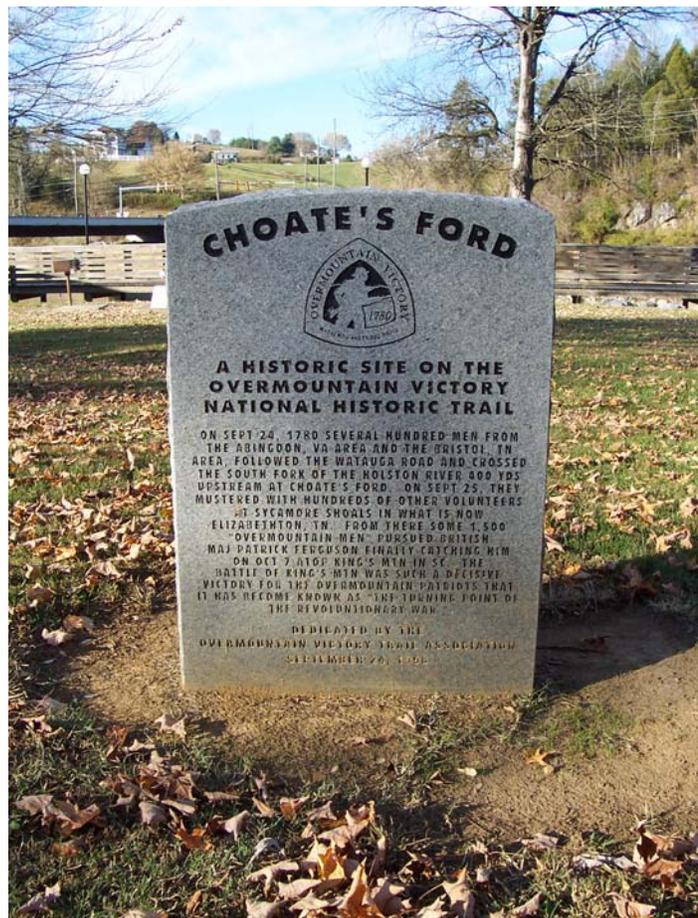


Figure 75: Choate's Ford is one of many sites being recognized with historic markers as part of the King's Mountain Campaign.



Figure 76: St. John's Episcopal Church is one of many notable historic buildings in Rutherfordton.



Figure 77: Much of downtown Rutherfordton is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is also attractive to heritage tourists.

Encourage Reenactments and Promotion of Gilbert Town as part of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail

Each year members and friends of the Overmountain Victory Trail Association (OVTA) hold a commemorative march and driving tour along the trail. For the past several years some have camped at Gilbert Town as part of this march. As site enhancements are completed at Gilbert Town, an official annual festival or celebration of the site should be considered by the Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority. This could include living history exhibits, craft sales, period reenactments and other related events. This festival or commemoration could be tied to the Overmountain Victory Trail march or be held at a different time of the year. Such a festival would highlight the importance of Gilbert Town and assist in increasing heritage tourism in the area. The OVTA also emphasizes education and plans to have more student involvement in its future programs.

The Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail is part of the National Park Service and future plans call for the creation of a non-motorized trail along the approximate route of the historic 1780 roadbed through Gilbert Town. As part of this program the NPS may provide funding for markers, wayside exhibits and other commemoration of the Gilbert Town site.



Figure 78: Overmountain Victory Trail members camping at Gilbert Town in October of 2005.



Figure 79: The OVTA holds reenactments as part of its efforts to protect, preserve, and interpret the trail.

Create and Enhance Gilbert Town Exhibits

Artifacts and information related to the Gilbert Town site are presently on display at the Rutherford County office building in downtown Rutherfordton. This exhibit is located in display cases inside the main entrance. This building is not designed to serve as a museum or visitor center and the exhibit is considered temporary until a more suitable location is found. The current exhibit is currently not adequate to convey the importance of Gilbert Town or to display the available artifacts uncovered at the site.

One proposal under consideration is to create a heritage center in Rutherfordton which would provide space for more expansive exhibits as well as providing venues for the arts. Such a heritage center could serve as a county visitor center as well and contain various exhibits on Gilbert Town and related Revolutionary War sites. Some artifacts from Gilbert Town are located at Kings Mountain as well as the county office building, and the consolidation of these artifacts at a future heritage center would assist in more fully telling the story of Gilbert Town.



Figure 80: Artifacts from Gilbert Town should be consolidated and interpreted at an accessible visitor's center.

Encourage Recreational Visitation and Use

Bicycle routes have been created on a number of rural roads in the county by the Rutherford Outdoor Coalition. Two of these, the Camp Creek Loop and the Tanner Double Loop, are routes that extend through Gilbert Town on Rock Road. This route brings a number of bicyclists through the historic district, especially on weekends. As trails and wayside exhibits are developed, it is anticipated that some of those passing through Gilbert Town will stop and enjoy the site enhancements. Just to the south of the historic district is the Rails to Trails bikeway along the abandoned Southern Railway. This crosses Rock Road just south of Broyhill Road. This bikeway is presently eight miles long but it is expected to be increased in the future. Signs should be placed where the trail crosses Rock Road to direct users to visit Gilbert Town. The NPS also plans to create a non-motorized trail in the future along the approximate location of the 1780 roadbed through Gilbert Town. Such a trail would likely tie in with existing and proposed trail systems in the area.



Figure 81: OVTA marker at the Rails to Trails bikeway on Rock Road.



Figure 82: Signs at the bikeway and Rock Road should direct bikers to visit Gilbert Town.



GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION

The goals and implementation strategies developed for the Gilbert Town Historic District emerged through public meetings and discussions with local officials. Public participation concerning the future of Gilbert Town began in 2004 when two public meetings were held in Rutherfordton to discuss National Register listing for the site. With the majority of property owners supporting the nomination, the Gilbert Town Historic District was listed on the National Register in 2006. Concurrent with the listing of Gilbert Town on the National Register, Rutherford County created a governmental office promoting tourism development. Gilbert Town is recognized as one of the county's most historic sites and the county funded the preparation of a preservation plan for the site with assistance from the American Battlefield Protection Program.

Additional meetings and interviews with property owners and citizens in 2008 resulted in the identification of specific goals and objectives for the Gilbert Town Historic District. These goals and objectives follow as well as potential funding sources listed in Appendix A.

Short-Term Goals (1 to 5 Years)

Priority Level One

- **Purchase** approximately 165 acres within the Gilbert Town Historic District. Acquisition of these parcels would result in the protection of property which have known or highly probable archaeological resources. This property would also serve as the location for a county park to promote tourism. (Potential sources: Rutherford County Government, the Trust for Public Land, Preservation North Carolina, Conservation Trust for North Carolina, Foothills Conservancy of North Carolina)
- **Obtain** easements on 219 acres within the Gilbert Town Historic District. Protecting these parcels through easements would result in the preservation of important viewsheds and the approaches to the Gilbert Town site. (Potential sources: Rutherford County Government, the Trust for Public Land, Preservation North Carolina, Conservation Trust for North Carolina, Foothills Conservancy of North Carolina)
- **Create** a local non-profit group to serve as an advocacy organization for Gilbert Town. Such an organization would assist in raising funds, obtain grants, and work with the Rutherford County Government, the Overmountain Victory Trail Association and the National Park Service on overall site promotion.
- **Establish** a comprehensive archeology program for the site. (Potential sources: American Battlefield Protection Program, North Carolina SHPO)
- **Create** a Cultural Landscape Report for the site. (Potential sources: American Battlefield Protection Program, OVNHT - National Park Service, North Carolina SHPO)
- **Enhance** the information on Gilbert Town on the county's tourism website. (Potential sources: Rutherford County Government)

- **Provide an optional route** of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail Commemorative Motor Route through Gilbert Town. (Potential sources: Overmountain Victory Trail Association, OVNHT - National Park Service, Rutherford County Government)

Priority Level Two

- **Complete** archeological investigations to more clearly confirm the site of Revolutionary War and settlement-era occupation sites associated with Gilbert Town. (Potential sources: North Carolina SHPO, American Battlefield Protection Program)
- **Install** historic markers and wayside exhibits at the recommended sites. (Potential sources: the Rutherford County Government, SAFETEA-LU Transportation Program, the American Battlefield Protection Program, OVNHT - National Park Service)
- **Create** parking areas and walking trails to connect with the Colonial Cemetery, Gilbert Cemetery, Ferguson’s Ridge and the Gilbert House site. (Potential sources: Rutherford County Government, SAFETEA-LU Transportation Program)
- **Promote** visitation to Gilbert Town through coordination with regional sites, adding directional signage along biking trails in the county, and encouraging reenactments and promotion of Gilbert Town as part of the Overmountain Victory Trail. (Potential sources: Overmountain Victory Trail Association, OVNHT - National Park Service, Rutherford County Government)
- **Install** signs on the roads and streets connecting Gilbert Town with downtown Rutherfordton. (Potential sources: Rutherford County Government, SAFETEA-LU Transportation Program)
- **Consult** with the North Carolina Department of Transportation in developing a context sensitive design for the scheduled replacement of the Rock Road bridge over Cathey’s Creek. (Potential Sources: Rutherford County Government and North Carolina Department of Transportation)

Priority Level Three

- **Produce** a walking and driving tour brochure for Gilbert Town. (Potential sources: the American Battlefield Protection Program, OVNHT - National Park Service, SAFETEA-LU Transportation Program)
- **Enhance** displays and exhibits at the County Office Building or any future Heritage Center. (Potential sources: Rutherford County Government)

Long-Term Goals and Implementation (5 to 10 Years)

- **Manage** Gilbert Town as part of Rutherford County’s park system and tourism initiatives with assistance from the National Park Service. (Potential sources: Rutherford County Government, OVNHT - National Park Service)
- **Complete** the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail through Gilbert Town with a trail system following the approximate route of the 1780 historic roadbed and interpret the trail through markers and wayside exhibits. (Potential sources: Rutherford County Government, OVNHT - National Park Service)



BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bynum, William B., ed. *The Heritage of Rutherford County, North Carolina, Volume I, 1984*. Winston-Salem, North Carolina: Hunter Publishing Company, 1984.
- Delapino, Irene. Personal Interview, Rutherfordton, North Carolina, 7 July 2004.
- Delapino, Irene Roach. “*The Role of Greater Gilbert Town in the American Revolution*.” Manuscript on file with the Rutherford County Historical Society: Rutherfordton, North Carolina, 2004.
- Draper, Lyman C. *King’s Mountain and Its Heroes: History of the Battle of King’s Mountain, October 7th, 1780, and the Events Which Led to It.* Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company Inc., 1881, reprint ed. 1971.
- Eaden, William. “The Marches of Lord Cornwallis in the Southern Provinces Now States of North America Comprehending the Two Carolinas, 1785.” Map on file at the North Carolina State Library and Archives.
- Ferguson, Nancy Ellen. “History of Rutherford County.” 1990. Accessed on March 19, 2008 at <http://www.rutherfordcountync.gov/history.php>
- Ferguson, Nancy Ellen. Personal Communication. Rutherfordton, North Carolina. 11 October 2005.
- Ferguson, Nancy Ellen and Irene Delpino. Personal Interview. Rutherfordton, North Carolina. 7 July 2004.
- Griffin, Clarence W. *History of Old Tryon and Rutherford Counties, North Carolina, 1730-1936*. Asheville, North Carolina: The Miller Printing Company, 1937.
- Horton, John. “*Assessment of the Twitty-McKinney House*”. Unpublished Report, North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, August 18 1997.
- Lucus, Jr., Reverend Silas Emmett. *Deed Abstracts of Tryon, Lincoln, & Rutherford Counties, North Carolina, 1769-1786*.
- Moss, Bobby Gilmer, *Journal of Capt. Alexander Chesney, Adjutant to Major Patrick Ferguson*. Blacksburg, South Carolina: Scotia-Hibernia Press, 2002.
- Moss, Bobby Gilmer. *The Patriots at Kings Mountain*. Blacksburg, South Carolina: Scotia-Hibernia Press, 1990.
- Moss, Bobby Gilmer. *Uzal Johnson, Loyalist Surgeon, A Revolutionary War Diary*. Blacksburg, South Carolina: Scotia-Hibernia Press, 2000.

- North Carolina Revolutionary Army Accounts, Secretary of State Treasurer's and Comptroller's Papers. Journal "A" (Public Accounts) 1775-1776.* Durham, North Carolina: Wyenette Parks Haun, 1989.
- Powell, William S. ed. *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, Volume 2 D-G.* Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1986.
- Price-Strother Map of North Carolina, 1808. Map on file at the North Carolina State Archives.
- Rutherford County. Minutes of Court of Pleas and Quarter Session.* October, 1781.
- Rutherford County. Minutes of Court of Pleas and Quarter Session.* January, 1782.
- Rutherford County. Minutes of Court of Pleas and Quarter Session.* July, 1782.
- Rutherford County. Minutes of Court of Pleas and Quarter Session.* January, 1783.
- Rutherford County. Minutes of Court of Pleas and Quarter Session.* October, 1783.
- Russell, David Lee Russell. *The American Revolution in the Southern Colonies.* Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 2000.
- Trebellas, Christine, "Gilbert Town and the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail,"(Atlanta, Georgia: Southeast Support Office, National Park Service, 1997), 7.
- Tryon County Inferior Court of Pleas and Quarters Sessions Minutes, October 1770.* Tryon County Records, North Carolina State Archives.
- Tryon County Inferior Court of Pleas and Quarters Sessions Minutes, October 1771,* Tryon County Records, North Carolina State Archives.
- United States Department of Agriculture. *Aerial Maps, 1938, 1956, and 1988.* Rutherfordton, North Carolina.
- Wooley, James E. and Vivian. *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Wills and Miscellaneous Records, 1783-1868.* Easley, South Carolina: Southern Historical Press, 1984.

APPENDIX A- FUNDING AND ASSISTANCE SOURCES

National Park Service, Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail



U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service

The Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail (OVNHT) extends 330 miles through Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina and South Carolina, retracing the route of patriot militia as they tracked down the British army under the command of Major Patrick Ferguson. Eventually the two forces clashed, ending in patriot victory at the battle of Kings Mountain. As a unit of the National Park Service, the OVNHT could provide technical and financial assistance for a variety of projects at Gilbert Town. Financial assistance is available from the park's budget as well as a portion of Challenge Cost-Share Program funding (currently \$30,000 annually). The NPS can also provide assistance from regional offices for the design of exhibits, markers and trails. The Harpers Ferry Center of the NPS also provides planning services and the preparation of management plans. For Gilbert Town, the OVNHT could assist in the preparation of landscape and management plans and assist in supporting grants and other financial sources. The OVNHT could also help design and create displays and wayside exhibits.

Contact: Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail
Superintendent
2635 Park Road
Blacksburg, SC 29702
(864) 936-3477
www.nps.gov/ovvi/

National Park Service, American Battlefield Protection Program



U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
American Battlefield Protection Program

The American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) is a program of the National Park Service. The ABPP promotes the preservation of significant historic battlefields and military sites associated with wars on American soil. In recent years, the ABPP has helped to preserve battlefields through its partnership grant program. This program awards funds to organizations that sponsor planning and educational projects at historic battlefields. Since 1990, the ABPP and its partners have helped protect and enhance more than 100 battlefields and military sites by co-sponsoring 360 projects in 41 states and the District of Columbia. Individual project funding has ranged from \$5,000 to \$75,000; the average grant is about \$32,300. The ABPP encourages, but does not require, matching funds or in-kind services to these projects. Partners include preservation organizations, state and local governments, battlefield friends groups, and other organizations. Most projects include matching funds or in-kind services from partnering groups.

The ABPP supports a variety of preservation and enhancement projects such as cultural resources or archeological surveys, National Register documentation and nominations, and public education programs. ABPP also provides funds for historical research, battlefield condition and threat assessments, battlefield acquisition and preservation plans, local land use strategies, and technical assistance for organizations which need help to protect battlefields. This report is funded in part through a grant by the ABPP.

For the Gilbert Town site, several key recommendations could fall within the types of planning and educational grants awarded by the ABPP, including: creation of a comprehensive archeological report, production of walking tour and driving tour brochures, and design of additional signs and markers.

Contact: American Battlefield Protection Program, National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, 6th Floor, Washington, DC 20205
202-343-1005
www.nps.gov/history/hps/abpp

SAFETEA-LU Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users



One of the largest potential sources of funding for military site preservation and interpretation is the transportation enhancement provision of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). Initially called the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and later the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21, the federal transportation bill provision sets aside 10% of the Surface Transportation Program for "transportation enhancement activities." The provision recognizes that roads and railways can sometimes have a detrimental effect on historical and cultural resources, and it sets aside funds to protect and preserve such resources. From 1992 to 1997 this action fostered \$45 million in battlefield and military site preservation.

In 2005, Congress reauthorized TEA-21 as SAFETEA-LU. Proposed projects eligible for SAFETEA-LU funding must have some relationship to transportation systems. The property must either serve as a transportation route, be located next to or visible from a transportation route, or be affected by a transportation route. The types of enhancements that can be funded through SAFETEA-LU funds fall into ten categories: pedestrian and bicycle facilities; acquisition of scenic easements and historic sites; scenic or historic highway programs; landscaping and scenic beautification; historic preservation; rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation facilities; preservation of abandoned railway corridors; control and removal of outdoor advertising; mitigation of highway runoff and provision of wildlife under crossings; and establishment of transportation museums.

Several enhancement projects recommended for the Gilbert Town site following the completion of a Cultural Landscape Report and site-wide archeological survey program fall within the parameters for SAFETEA-LU grants, including: allocation of funds for the creation and improvements of walking trails, funding for the creation of walking tour and driving tour brochures, and assistance with the purchase of property.

SAFETEA-LU funded components for historic properties include historical markers, roadside pull-offs, the acquisition of historic sites, detailed brochures, maps, and radio transmissions describing local events. State Departments of Transportation distribute SAFETEA-LU funds. Deadlines and procedures vary from state to state, but local government and community support are always important.

Contact: NCDOT Federal Funds Administration Enhancement Unit
1514 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1514
919-715-5522
<http://www.ncdot.gov/programs/Enhancement/> (North Carolina Department of Transportation)
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tea21/> (United States Department of Transportation)

North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office



The North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) assists private citizens, private institutions, local governments, and agencies of state and federal government in the identification, evaluation, protection, and enhancement of properties significant in North Carolina history and archeology. The agency carries out state and federal preservation programs and is a component of the Office of Archives and History, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources. The office serves as the staff of the state historic preservation officer, who is the Deputy Secretary for the Office of Archives and History, and as staff of the North Carolina Historical Commission in the review of state and federal development projects that might affect historic North Carolina properties.

Over the past few decades, limited amounts of federal and state funds have been available to local governments, local organizations, and academic institutions for certain types of historic preservation projects. Projects have included architectural and archeological surveys, National Register nominations, publications, preservation planning, restorations of historic buildings, and archeological excavations. For Gilbert Town, the SHPO could provide assistance in the completion of archeological surveys and excavations. Grants may also be used to create displays and exhibit artifacts found at Gilbert Town.

Contact: North Carolina State Historic Preservation Officer
4610 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-4610
919-807-7280
<http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/>

Preservation North Carolina

Preservation North Carolina (PNC) was founded in 1939 and is the state's only private non-profit historic preservation organization. Its mission is to protect and promote buildings, landscapes and sites important to the diverse heritage of North Carolina. Through its Endangered Properties Program, PNC acquires endangered properties such as buildings and historic landscapes. More than 2,000 acres have been placed under PNC's protective covenants which restrict inappropriate development.

Preservation North Carolina could assist Gilbert Town through assistance in property acquisition or easement services.

Contact: Preservation North Carolina
Post Office Box 27644, Raleigh, NC 27611-7644
919-832-3652
www.presnc.org

The Trust for Public Land



Formed in 1999, its founders created the Trust for Public Land to preserve America's natural landscapes and historic character for future generations. The Trust, a non-profit organization, works exclusively with willing landowners to find ways to preserve forever the scenic, natural, and historic values of their land. Conservation easements are the primary tool of the organization; these allow owners to keep ownership of their

land, preserve their scenic and historic landscapes, and obtain significant tax advantages. The Trust for Public Land provides assistance to educate property owners on the advantages of conservation easements and accepts easement donations.

Contact: The Trust for Public Land
116 New Montgomery Street., 4th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105
415-495-4014
www.landtrust.com/welcome.html

Foothills Conservancy of North Carolina



The Foothills Conservancy of North Carolina was incorporated as a nonprofit land trust dedicated to serving the Blue Ridge Foothills region - an eight-county area in the Blue Ridge Mountains of western North Carolina - and includes the headwaters of three major rivers in the area: Catawba, Broad and Yadkin. The Foothills Conservancy is one of almost two dozen regional land trusts that works with the Conservation Trust of North Carolina.

For the Gilbert Town site, the Foothills Conservancy could assist through consultations on easements and other land uses with property owners and the Rutherford County government.

Contact: Foothills Conservancy of North Carolina
Post Office Box 3023, Morganton, NC 28680
828-437-9930
www.foothillsconservancy.org

Conservation Trust for North Carolina



The Conservation Trust for North Carolina is a non-profit statewide conservation organization. The group's mission is to protect the state's land and water through statewide conservation and cooperative work with land trusts to preserve our natural resources as a legacy for future generations. The Conservation Trust works directly with landowners, local land trusts, and government agencies to protect land and water resources most important to local communities throughout the state.

The Conservation Trust for North Carolina protects land and water resources through direct protection efforts with willing landowners and assistance to the state's network of 23 local and regional land trusts. The Conservation Trust's dual approach as a land trust and a land trust service center allows the organization to act in a variety of capacities to ensure highly threatened natural areas in the state are protected.

The Conservation Trust facilitates statewide land protection programs and regional land protection projects across the state and, when invited by other land trusts, partner on direct land protection work elsewhere in the state. The Conservation Trust also partners with local land trusts when land trusts need an easement partner to serve as a co-holder of such agreements or hold a land protection agreement on property they own to strengthen their commitment to a protected property. The Conservation Trust also provides services to the land trusts such as policy advocacy, public relations, training, and facilitation of government programs that provide funding to local and regional land trusts so they can increase the pace of land and water protection in their communities.

For the Gilbert Town site, the Conservation Trust could assist through consultations on easements and other land uses with property owners and the Rutherford County government.

Contact: Conservation Trust for North Carolina
1028 Washington Street, Raleigh, NC 27605
919-828-4199
www.ctnc.org

APPENDIX B: THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF PRESERVING HISTORIC MILITARY SITES

In recent decades, interest in the preservation of America's battlefields and other military sites has increased significantly. Every year, publishers print hundreds of books, articles, and manuscripts concerning some aspect of America's military heritage. In particular, visitation to Civil War and Revolutionary War sites has increased significantly and reenacting battles from these periods is one of the fastest growing hobbies in the country. Interest in preservation is also due to ongoing threats to battlefields and military sites from urban sprawl, rural development, and other land uses.

The land comprising America's battlefields and related military sites is our most direct link to history. These lands are part of our national identity and heritage. Military sites provide a tangible connection to the past, allowing us to stand on the ground where soldiers marched, camped, fought and died. Military sites provide us with a sense of time and place and what the landscape was like for those who were there. These battlefields and military sites are testaments to history and are unique cultural and educational resources that cannot be replaced.

America's battlefields and military sites are also economic generators for nearby businesses and municipalities. Hundreds of thousands of visitors each year travel to the nation's military parks and sites. Of the top 15 most visited sites in 2008, the majority are Civil War or Revolutionary War parks. Civil War parks in the top 15 include Gettysburg, Vicksburg and Chattanooga-Chickamauga. But also in the top 15 are the Revolutionary War sites of Valley Forge (#7 with 1,230,618 visitors), Minute Man National Park, (# 8 with 1,093,352 visitors) and the Guilford Courthouse Battlefield in North Carolina (# 14 with 447,469 visitors). Other Revolutionary War sites in the South also attract large numbers of tourists including Kings Mountain (270,000 per year) and Cowpens (225,000 per year).

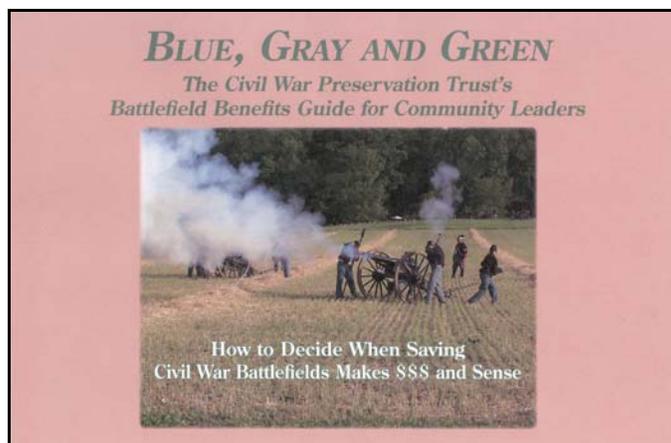
Visitors to battlefields and associated military sites can have an important positive impact on a local community's economy. In recent years, two major studies outlined the economic benefits of historic preservation. The National Trust for Historic Preservation completed the first of these in 1994 when it published "*The Dollar\$ and Sense of Battlefield Preservation.*" The second was "*Blue, Gray and Green, The Civil War Preservation Trust's Battlefield Benefits Guide for Community Leaders,*" published in 2005. This guide provides communities with additional data which supports the economic benefits of battlefield preservation. Among the findings of both reports are:

- ✓ **Community leaders and developers can attract new business by positioning the area as a good job market based on tourism. Tourists help maintain a healthy and steady job market.**
- ✓ **Battlefield and military sites visitors generate new state and local tax revenues.**
- ✓ **Battlefield and military sites visitors are generally active, affluent, and interested visitors and often stay in an area longer than other tourists.**
- ✓ **Battlefield and military sites visitation generates business for the local economy. Not only do they stay longer but these kind of tourists spend an average of \$50 per person, per day.**

This economic study noted three areas in which battlefields and military sites contribute to a community: as income generators, as historic open space, and as fiscal assets. Battlefields and military sites that are open to the public generate income through tourism since they draw visitors from outside the area who spend money on the local community. These visitors purchase food, gas, hotel accommodations, and other goods and services while in the area. This money is multiplied when these local businesses buy goods and services from

other local firms. Tourism in turn can create a variety of jobs in restaurants, motels, museums, theaters, and other industries. Local governments benefit further with revenue generated through sales tax and other fees. The study noted the battlefields of New Market and Fredericksburg/Spotsylvania as generating hundreds of thousands of dollars in state and local revenue each year. Preserved battlefields and military sites are permanent "income generators" that won't leave or shut down when business is low. These properties do not use precious natural resources or endanger the environment. They contribute strongly to the character of a community and can foster identity and pride among its members.

Preservation of historic open spaces can also benefit a community. Not only do these spaces provide an immeasurable value as attractive and educational assets, they can increase local land values. Lands adjoining preserved open spaces often have a higher average property value than lands elsewhere. These properties are also fiscal assets to a community primarily because as open space they require less public expenditures for services than developed areas. The information contained in the *Blue, Gray and Green* report also provides various formulas local leaders and officials can use to determine how their community can directly benefit from battlefield, military site and open space preservation.



The Blue, Gray and Green report provides economic data on the importance of battlefield and military site preservation. (Source: Civil War Preservation Trust, 2005)