

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL ASSESSMENT FORM

Type of Memorial (check all applicable)

☐ Monument ☐ *with* Sculpture ☐ without Sculpture ☐ with Cannon ☐ standalone Cannon
☐ Historical Marker ☒ Plaque ☐ Other (flag pole, G.A.R. buildings, stained glass windows, etc.)

Note: try to record items separately. Cannons near monuments should be recorded & photographed separately, etc. Thank you.

Affiliation

☐ GAR ☐ MOLLUS ☐ SUVCW ☐ WRC ☐ ASUVCW
☐ LGAR ☐ DUVCW ☐ Other

If known, record name and number of post, camp, corps, auxiliary, tent, circle or appropriate information of other groups:

Original Dedication Date 24 May 1890 Please consult any/all newspaper archives for a local paper's article that would have information on the *first* dedication ceremony and/or other facts on the memorial. Please submit a copy of your findings with full identification of the paper & date of publication. Thank you.

Location

In the vestibule of the original entrance to Memorial Library (right hand side)

The Memorial is *currently* located at:

Street/Road address or site location 486 Main St. GPS Coordinates N42.48636 W71.43328

City/Village &/or Township Acton

County Middlesex State MA Zip Code 01720

The front of the Memorial faces: ☐ North ☒ South ☐ East ☒ West

Government Body, Agency, or Individual Owner

Name Town of Acton, Massachusetts

Dept./Div. Acton Memorial Library

Street Address 486 Main St.

City Acton State MA Zip Code 01720

Contact Person Maria Palacio (Director) Telephone (978) 929-6532 ext

Is Memorial on the National Register of Historic Places ☐ Yes ☒ No ID # if known

For Monuments with/without sculpture:

Physical Details

Material of Monument or base under a Sculpture or Cannon = ☐ Stone ☐ Concrete ☐ Metal ☐ Other

If known, name specific material (color of granite, marble, etc.)

Material of the Sculpture ☐ Stone ☐ Concrete ☐ Metal ☐ Other Is it hollow or solid?

If known, name specific material (color of granite, marble, etc.)

For Historic Marker or Plaque: Stone (marble?)

Material of Plaque or Historical Marker / Tablet = _____

For Cannons with/without monument:

Material of Cannon = _____ Bronze _____ Iron _____ Type of Cannon (if known) _____ Rifled _____ Yes _____ No

Markings: Muzzle _____ Base Ring/Breech _____

Left Trunion _____ Right Trunion _____

Is inert ammunition a part of the Memorial? _____ Yes _____ No

[For camp/department monuments officer's use: Cannon on list of known ordnance] _____ Yes _____ No

For Other Memorials: (flag pole, G.A.R. buildings, stained glass windows, etc.)

What best describes the memorial _____

Materials of the Memorial _____

Complete for All Memorials

Approximate Dimensions (indicate unit of measure) - taken from tallest / widest points

66 _____ Height 50 _____ Width 2 _____ Depth or _____ Diameter

For Memorials with multiple Sculptures, please record this information on a separate sheet of paper for each statue (service, pose, etc) and attach to this form. Please describe the "pose" of each statue and any weapons/implements involved (in case your photos become separated from this form). Thank you!

Markings/Inscriptions (on stone-work / metal-work of monument, base, sculpture)

Maker or Fabricator mark / name? If so, give name & location found _____

Please attach legible photographs of all text &/or Record the text in the space below. Please use the addendum – narrative sheet if necessary.

OUR HONORED DEAD

1861 1865

{left column}

BARKER CYRUS E

BARKER FRANK J

CONANT ELBRIDGE

HALL EUGENE L

HANSCOM SAMUEL C

HARRIS J STILLMAN

HOWARD JOHN A

KINSLEY FRANCIS

KNIGHTS GEO WARREN

LENTELL JAMES R

LOVERING DANIEL A

MINER MARIVAN

ROBINS LUKE

WHITE JOHN H P

WRIGHT JAMES M

Environmental Setting

(The general vicinity and immediate locale surrounding a memorial can play a major role in its overall condition.)

Type of Location

☐ Cemetery ☐ Park ☐ Plaza/Courtyard ☐ "Town Square" ☐ Post Office
☐ School ☒ Municipal Building ☐ State Capitol ☐ Courthouse ☐ College Campus
☐ Traffic Circle ☐ Library Other: _____

General Vicinity

☐ Rural (low population, open land) ☐ Suburban (residential, near city) ☒ Town ☐ Urban / Metropolitan

Immediate Locale (check as many as may apply)

☐ Industrial ☐ Commercial ☐ Street/Roadside within 20 feet ☐ Tree Covered (overhanging branches)
☒ Protected from the elements (canopy or enclosure, indoors) ☐ Protected from the public (fence or other barrier)

Any other significant environmental factor _____

[To detail the condition of a monument used the addendum form for *Monument's Condition*]

Submission of this form requires at least one type of identification so that you may be contacted regarding the information on this form. This information will most likely be in the public domain. Your name is required; please include one (or more) pieces of contact information.

1. If a member of an Allied Order, the name of your camp, auxiliary, tent, circle or corps; along with your department;
2. Physical Address;
3. Phone Number
4. E-Mail address.

By submitting this, you are allowing the posting of this information on the internet.

Inspector Identification _____ Date of On-site Survey 16 April A. D. 2025
 Your Name Sumner Gary Hunnewell
 Address 2030 San Pedro Dr.
 City Arnold State MO Zip Code 63010
 Telephone (636) 464-3856 E-Mail HildifonsTook@prodigy.net

Are you a member of the Allied Orders of the G.A.R.? If so, which one?

SUVCW

Supplemental Background Information

In addition to your on-site survey, any additional information you can provide on the described Memorial will be welcomed. Please label each account with its source (author, title, publisher, date, pages). Topics include any reference to the points listed on this questionnaire, plus any previous conservation treatments - or efforts to raise money for treatment. Photographs & GPS Co-ordinates are very much desired.

Pages 4 & 5 attached to this electronic file are the Monument's Condition and the Narrative forms. Only the Monument's Condition form is required if you are requesting grant money using form CWM-62 *SUVCW Memorial Grant Application Form and Instructions*.

Please mail (or e-mail pdf, and picture files) to:

Walt Busch, PDC, Chair, 1240 Konert Valley Dr., Fenton, MO 63026, cwmemorials@suvchw.org (314) 630-8407

Thank you for your help, and attention to detail.

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War - Civil War Memorials Committee.

>This form may be photocopied.<

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SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR
CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL ASSESSMENT FORM
ADDENDUM – MONUMENT'S CONDITION

Completion of this form is required when requesting grant money using form CWM-62 *SUVCW Memorial Grant Application Form and Instructions*.

Condition Information

Structural Condition (check as many as may apply)

The following section applies to Monuments with Sculpture, and Monuments without Sculpture including the base for Monuments with Cannon. Instability in the sculpture and its base can be detected by a number of factors. Indicators may be obvious or subtle. Visually examine the sculpture and its base.

	Sculpture	Base
If hollow, is the internal support unstable/exposed? (Look for signs of exterior rust)	_____	_____
Any evidence of structural instability? (Look for cracked joints, missing mortar or caulking or plant growth)	_____	_____
Any broken or missing parts? (Look for elements (i.e., sword, musket, hands, arms, etc. - missing due to vandalism, fluctuating weather conditions, etc.)	_____	_____
Any cracks, splits, breaks or holes? (Also look for signs of uneven stress & weakness in the material)	_____	_____

Surface Appearance (check as many as may apply)

	Sculpture	Base
Black crusting	_____	_____
White crusting	_____	_____
Etched, pitted, or otherwise corroded (on metal)	_____	_____
Metallic staining (run-off from copper, iron, etc.)	_____	_____
Organic growth (moss, algae, lichen or vines)	_____	_____
Chalky or powdery stone	_____	_____
Granular eroding of stone	_____	_____
Spalling of stone (surface splitting off)	_____	_____
Droppings (bird, animal, insect remains)	_____	_____
Other (e.g., spray paint graffiti) - Please describe...	_____	_____

Does water collect in recessed areas of the Memorial? ____ Yes ____ No ____ Unable to tell

Surface Coating

Does there appear to be a coating? ____ Yes ____ No ____ Unable to determine

If known, identify type of coating.

____ Gilded ____ Painted ____ Varnished ____ Waxed ____ Unable to determine

Is the coating in good condition? ____ Yes ____ No ____ Unable to determine

Basic Surface Condition Assessment (check one)

In your opinion, what is the general appearance or condition of the Memorial?

____ Well maintained ____ Would benefit from treatment ____ In urgent need of treatment ____ Unable to determine

Briefly describe the Memorial (affiliation / overall condition & any concern not already touched on) .

Inspector's Name Sumner Gary Hunnewell

Date 29 April A. D. 2025

SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR
CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL ASSESSMENT FORM
ADDENDUM – NARRATIVE

[Generally used to record the text of monuments, but may be used for any other useful information, such as if the monument has been moved or if you have information about the day of dedication. May repeat use of page as often as necessary.]

The Memorial is *currently* located at: In the vestibule of the original entrance to Memorial Library (right hand side)

Street/Road address or site location _____

486 Main St. GPS Coordinates N42.48636 W71.43328

City/Village and/or Township Acton

County Middlesex State MA Zip Code 01720

TEXT

{right column}
BARKER EBEN
BOWERS LUKE W
CONANT ALBERT
HANDLEY FRANK
HANSCOM JAMES P
HOSMER AUGUSTUS W
HUGGINS ERI
KINSLEY THOMAS JR
LAZELLE HENRY W
LOKER WILLIAM H
MC KINNEY MATHEW
REED WILLIAM B
WHEELER WARREN R
WILSON SAMUEL E

Inspector's Name Sumner Gary Hunnewell Date 29 April A. D. 2025



OUR HONORED DEAD

BARKER CYRUS E
BARKER FRANK J
CONANT ELBRIDGE
HALL EUGENE L
HANS COM SAMUEL C
HARRIS J STILLMAN
HOWARD JOHN A
KINSLEY FRANCIS
KNIGHTS GEO WARREN
LENTELL JAMES R
LOVERING DANIEL A
MINER MARIVAN
ROBBINS LUKE
WHITE JOHN H P
WRIGHT JAMES M

BARKER EBEN
BOWERS LUKE W
CONANT ALBERT
HANDLEY FRANK
HANS COM JAMES P
HOSMER AUGUSTUS W
HUGGINS ERI
KINSLEY THOMAS JR
LAZELLE HENRY W
LOKER WILLIAM H
MC KINNEY MATHEW
REED WILLIAM B
WHEELER WARREN R
WILSON SAMUEL E

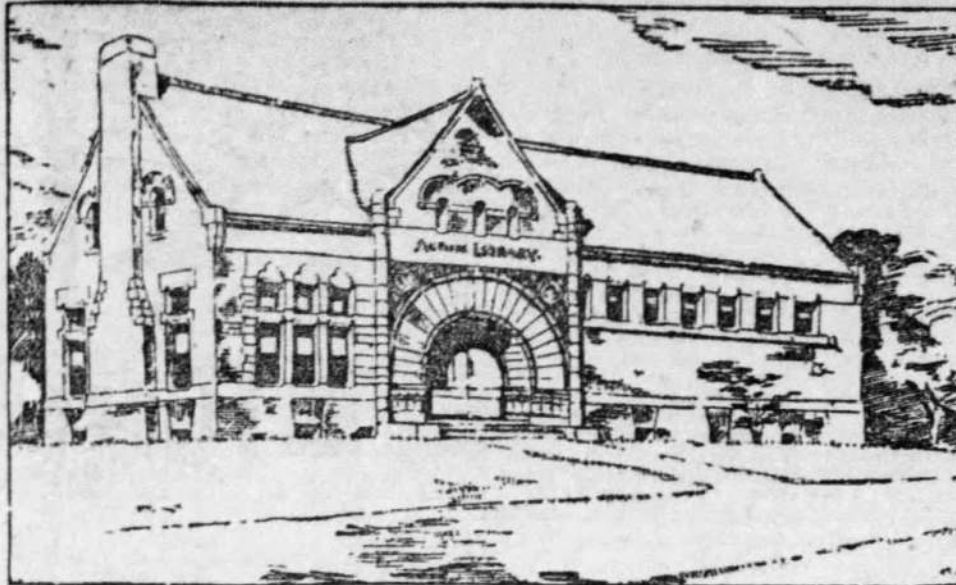
OUR HONORED DEAD

BARKER CYRUS E
BARKER FRANK J
CONANT ELBRIDGE
HALL EUGENE L
HANS COM SAMUEL C
HARRIS J STILLMAN
HOWARD JOHN A
KINSLEY FRANCIS
KNIGHTS CEO WARREN
LENTELL JAMES R
LOVERING DANIEL A
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HUGGINS ERI
KINSLEY THOMAS JR
LAZELLE HENRY W
LOKER WILLIAM H
MC KINNEY MATHEW
REED WILLIAM B
WHEELER WARREN R
WILSON SAMUEL E

THE BOSTON DAILY GLOBE—

MEMORIAL LIBRARY AT ACTON.



The citizens of Acton will shortly dedicate the Acton Memorial Library, now completed, and only to be duly dedicated in order to have it pass into the hands of trustees and become of great value to the people of this community.

The memorial building is the gift of Hon. William A. Wilde, a native of the town, now a resident of Malden and a business man of Boston.

The library stands on the north side of Main street, quite opposite the granite revolutionary war monument. The location is a picturesque one. It is adjacent to a double row of majestic old elms, the pride and joy of the people of "the centre."

The donor, desirous of showing that he had a full appreciation of the place of his nativity, gives to the town where he first saw the light of day not only the library building completed and the land upon which it stands, but equips it with a library of 5000 volumes. The total cost of Mr. Wilde's benefaction represents \$30,000.

The corporators are: Luther Conant, Adelbert Mead, Moses Taylor, Hiram J. Hapgood, Delette H. Hall and D. James Wetherbee, who also are constituted trustees for life.

The structure is one story in height and is constructed of red brick and brownstone. Its extreme length is 66 feet 6 inches, and

the depth from north to south is 32 feet 10 inches.

The main entrance opens on the south through a large arch of solid freestone, with enriched mouldings and carved spandrels, within which are to be placed memorial tablets, commemorative of the soldiers in the war of the rebellion.

Upon entering the building there is observed on the left the reading-room, the dimensions of which are 16x25 feet. This apartment has a heavy beamed ceiling and a wide brick fireplace. Both walls and ceiling are tastefully decorated. Above the fireplace is a tablet recording the fact that the building is a gift to the town from Hon. W. A. Wilde.

To the right, and directly opposite the reading-room, is the book room, 32 feet 6 inches in length, 24 feet 6 inches wide with a height of 20 feet, a spacious apartment. Along the sides of the room are arranged book alcoves, two tiers high, with light connecting galleries for the second tier, which is reached by a stairway at the right and left of the librarian's desk.

The desk is so arranged that the one in charge commands a full view not only of the book-room, but also of the reading-room opposite, the latter opening into the central reading space, not by an open partition and doors, but by a large open archway.

To the north of this central waiting space is the trustees' room, 13x15 feet, with a large light on the north. Opening out of this is a fire-proof vault.

Hon. John D. Long has been invited to deliver the dedicatory address, and Congressman Greenhalge has been invited to be one of the speakers at the dedication.

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GREAT DAY FOR ACTON.

Wilde Memorial Library Dedicated.

Benefactor of the Public Lauded by
Hon. John D. Long.

Gov. Brackett, Judge Hoar and Others
Participate.

ACTON, Mass., May 24.—The exercises attending the dedication of the free public library and memorial tablets to the soldiers were held today.

All are the gift to the town of Hon. William A. Wilde of Malden, who was born in this place.

Gov. Brackett and a party arrived at noon, and after a collation at the Town Hall, the Isaac Davis Post, G. A. R., did escort duty to the new building, where, at 2 o'clock, the memorial tablets were dedicated. They bear the names of 29 of the town's honored dead and 125 of the citizens who participated in the war.

The library with its 5000 volumes cost about \$30,000 and is a magnificent structure.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilde and several near relatives, and his daughter, Miss Alice Wilde, whom Gov. Brackett gallantly escorted in the procession, witnessed the dedication exercises at the library building, at the conclusion of which the line was reformed and moved to a large tent on the mall near the mammoth granite shaft erected in honor of revolutionary heroes.

Seated on the platform were: Mr. and Mrs. Wilde, Miss Alice Wilde, His Excellency Gov. J. Q. A. Brackett, Hon. John D. Long and daughter, Judge E. Rockwood Hoar, Rev. A. A. Miner, Senators Hosmer and Palmer, ex-Senators J. Varnum Fletcher and Luman T. Jeffs, Editor E. A. Winship, Col. J. A. Harwood, Hon. Horace G. Wadlin and wife, President of the day F. C. Nash, Luther Conant, Charles Harrington, James Tuttle, Samuel Hosmer, George C. Wright, Rev. F. P. Wood, Enoch Hall, Marshal Dr. Isaiah Hutchins, Commander Delette H. Hall, Rev. George W. Stearns, Rev. Theodore C. Pease and wife of Malden, Chairman of the Selectmen H. B. White, Rev. Dr. Knowlton, Mrs. F. C. Nash, Rev. Alexander Blackburn of Lowell, Hon. Henry L. Parker, Rev. Mr. Heath, G. A. Southworth of Somerville, Warden Russell of the state prison, Edwin Gunn of Boston, G. A. Plympton, T. H. Barnes, master of the Gaston school at South Boston, and a host of other distinguished persons, together with the business, political and personal friends of Mr. Wilde.

The invocation was by Rev. Theodore C. Pease, and was followed by scriptural readings by Rev. George W. Stearns. The Adelphi quartet, composed of G. N. Salisbury, first tenor; Edgar A. Hall, second tenor; Arthur W. Taylor, barytone; Amory Maynard, bass, rendered several selections during the exercises.

The president of the day, F. C. Nash,

introduced Mr. Wilde, who was greeted with loud applause.

In presenting the deeds of the library to the town, Mr. Wilde made a pleasing address, referring at some length to the interest that he took in his schoolmates and the boys in blue, saying that he felt a delight in consummating a long-cherished purpose, that of showing by some suitable token his regard for the place of his birth and his schoolmates and fellow-townsmen.

Upon concluding his remarks three cheers were given with a will by the members of the post, and the prettiest part of the exercises took place in the presentation to Mr. Wilde on behalf of the ladies of Acton of a beautiful bouquet by Mrs. Charles W. Pitman, while little Miss Zelia Cutler in a modest speech expressed the thanks of the children to Mr. Wilde and handed a large bouquet of cut flowers to Mrs. Wilde.

Howard B. White, chairman of the board of selectmen, responded briefly and in turn transferred the gift to Luther Conant, president of the board of trustees, who accepted the same in trust.

A dedicatory prayer was made by Rev. Dr. Knowlton, and the orator of the day, Hon. John D. Long, made an eloquent address. Others who spoke were Judge E. Rockwood Hoar, Chaplain Blackburn, Hon. H. L. Parker and several townsmen. An original poem was read by Mrs. F. C. Nash.

SEIZED BY HIS MANIA.

South Boston Man Confined as Insane
at Baltimore.

Word was received in this city, yesterday, that John R. Brownell, living at 382 Broadway, South Boston, was suffering from a violent fit of insanity on board the schooner W. K. Roberts at her wharf in Baltimore.

Mr. Brownell is a retired commission merchant, and has been suffering mildly from mania for several months, and was confined in an asylum for a short time, but his condition improving his family engaged passage for him on board the schooner, thinking the sea voyage would benefit him. The patient was very tractable until the schooner entered Baltimore harbor Thursday afternoon, when he became so violent it was found necessary to confine him.

He was finally quieted and released, but on Friday night it was found necessary to place him under restraint again.

Mrs. Brownell was then telegraphed for at her home in South Boston, and left immediately. One of his daughters said last evening that it would be impossible to say what action the family would take until Mr. Brownell's return to this city.

Winchester's Ankle Crushed.

EVERETT, May 24.—Edward Winchester, of this town, 34 years of age, jumped from the 5.50 outward bound train from Boston this evening, near the junction of the Saugus branch track and the main line. He fell under the cars and the wheels crushed his right ankle. He was taken to the Massachusetts General Hospital.

William Sherlock Dead.

William Sherlock, a compositor, formerly employed by THE GLOBE, died in Denver, May 16. His people, up to February last, resided in Lowell, whence they moved to Boston. Friends of Mr. Sherlock say that he did not know the address of his people nor they his, and that it is not likely they have yet learned of his death.

4 MAR 2

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION
SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR

CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL ASSESSMENT FORM

PLEASE:

- Type or print, using a ball-point pen, when filling out this form. Legibility is critical.
- Do not guess at the information. An answer of, "Unknown," is more helpful.
- Include a photograph of each viewable side and label it with name & direction of view.

- Thank You.

Type of Memorial

☐ Monument *with* Sculpture ☐ Monument with Cannon
☐ Monument *without* Sculpture ☐ Historical Marker ☒ Plaque

LIBRARY BUILDING GIVEN BY MR WILDE

Affiliation

WITH CIVIL WAR TABLETS (2) IN FRONT FOYER

☐ G.A.R. (Post Name & No. _____) ☐ M.O.L.L.U.S.
☐ W.R.C. (Corps Name & No. _____) ☐ Other Allied Order
☐ SUVCW (Camp Name & No. _____) (Please describe below)
☐ DUVCW (Tent Name & No. _____)
☐ Other: _____

Original Dedication Date1890⁺

Please consult any/all newspaper archives for a local paper's article that would have information on the first dedication ceremony and/or other facts on the memorial. Please submit a copy of your findings with full identification of the paper & date of publication. Thank you.

LocationThe Memorial is *currently* located at:

Street/Road address or site location 486 MAIN ST.
 City/Village ACTON Township _____ County MASS.

The front of the Memorial faces: ☐ North ☐ South ☒ East ☐ West

Government Body, Agency, or Individual Owner (of private cemetery that Memorial is located in)...

Name TOWN OF ACTON Dept./Div. _____
 Street Address ACTON TOWN HALL
 City ACTON State MA Zip Code 01720
 Contact Person DEAN CHARTER Telephone () _____

If the Memorial has been moved, please list former location(s)...

Physical Details

Material of Monument or base under a Sculpture or Cannon = ☐ Stone ☐ Concrete ☐ Metal ☐ Undetermined
 If known, name specific material (color of granite, marble, etc.) _____

Material of the Sculpture = ☐ Stone ☐ Concrete ☐ Metal ☐ Undetermined
 If known, name specific material (color of granite, marble, etc.) _____
 If the Sculpture is of metal, is it solid cast or "hollow?" _____

Material of Plaque or Historical Marker / Tablet = 2 SLATE TABLETS

Material of Cannon = ☐ Bronze ☐ Iron - Consult known Ordnance Listing to confirm
 Markings on muzzle = _____

Markings on Left Trunion _____ Right Trunion _____
 Is inert ammunition a part of the Memorial? ☐ If so, describe _____

Approximate Dimensions (indicate unit of measure) - taken from tallest / widest points

Monument or Base: Height _____ Width _____ Depth _____ or Diameter _____
 Sculpture: Height _____ Width _____ Depth _____ or Diameter _____

For Memorials with multiple Sculptures, please record this information on a separate sheet of paper for each statue and attach to this form. Please describe the "pose" of each statue and any weapons/implements involved (in case your photos become separated from this form). Thank you!

Markings/Inscriptions (on stone-work / metal-work of monument, base, sculpture)

Maker or Fabricator mark / name? If so, give name & location found _____

The "Dedication Text" is formed: ☐ cut into material ☐ raised up from material face

Record the text (indicate any separation if on different sides...) Please use additional sheet if necessary.

Environmental Setting

(The general vicinity and immediate locale surrounding a memorial can play a major role in its overall condition.)

Type of Location

<input type="checkbox"/> Cemetery	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Plaza/Courtyard
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> "Town Square"	<input type="checkbox"/> Post Office	<input type="checkbox"/> School
<input type="checkbox"/> Municipal Building	<input type="checkbox"/> State Capitol	Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Courthouse	<input type="checkbox"/> College Campus	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Traffic Circle	<input type="checkbox"/> Library	_____

General Vicinity☐ Rural (low population, open land)☐ Suburban (residential, near city)☒ Town☐ Urban / Metropolitan**Immediate Locale** (check as many as may apply)☐ Industrial☐ Commercial☒ Street/Roadside within 20 feet☐ Tree Covered (overhanging branches)☒ Protected from the elements (canopy or enclosure, indoors)☐ Protected from the public (fence or other barrier)

Any other significant environmental factor _____

Condition Information**Structural Condition** (check as many as may apply)

The following section applies to Monuments *with* Sculpture, and Monuments *without* Sculpture - including the base for Monuments with *Cannon*. Instability in the sculpture and its base can be detected by a number of factors. Indicators may be obvious or subtle. Visually examine the sculpture and its base.

	Sculpture	Base
If hollow, is the internal support unstable/exposed? (look for signs of exterior rust)	_____	_____
Any evidence of structural instability? (look for cracked joints, missing mortar or caulking or plant growth)	_____	_____
Any broken or missing parts? (look for elements (i.e., sword, musket, hands, arms, etc. - missing due to vandalism, fluctuating weather conditions, etc.)	_____	_____
Any cracks, splits, breaks or holes? (also look for signs of uneven stress & weakness in the material)	_____	_____

Surface Appearance (check as many as may apply)

	Sculpture	Base
Black crusting	_____	_____
White crusting	_____	_____
Etched, pitted, or otherwise corroded (on metal)	_____	_____
Metallic staining (run-off from copper, iron, etc.)	_____	_____
Organic growth (moss, algae, lichen or vines)	_____	_____
Chalky or powdery stone	_____	_____
Granular eroding of stone	_____	_____
Spalling of stone (surface splitting off)	_____	_____
Droppings (bird, animal, insect remains)	_____	_____
Other (e.g., spray paint graffiti) - Please describe...	_____	_____

Does water collect in recessed areas of the Memorial? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unable to tell

Surface CoatingDoes there appear to be a coating? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unable to determine

If known, identify type of coating.

☐ Gilded ☐ Painted ☐ Varnished ☐ Waxed ☐ Unable to determineIs the coating in good condition? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unable to determine**Basic Surface Condition Assessment** (check one)

In your opinion, what is the general appearance or condition of the Memorial?

☐ Well maintained ☐ Would benefit from treatment ☐ In urgent need of treatment ☐ Unable to determine**Overall Description**

Briefly describe the Memorial (affiliation / overall condition & any concern not already touched on) .

SEE TYPE OF MEMORIAL

Supplemental Background Information

In addition to your on-site survey, any additional information you can provide on the described Memorial will be welcomed. Please label each account with its source (author, title, publisher, date, pages). Topics include any reference to the points listed on this questionnaire, plus any previous conservation treatments - or efforts to raise money for treatment. Thank you.

Inspector Identification

Date of On-site Survey _____

Your Name _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____ Telephone () _____

Please send this completed form to:

Douglass R. Knight, Camp Commander
 William Tabor Camp #162 (Methuen)
 Department of Massachusetts
 Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
 Post Office Box 955
 Salem, N.H. 03079

Thank you for your help, and attention to detail.

SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR
 National Civil War Memorials Committee



POST OFFICE BOX 389
 ACTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01720

HAROLD PHELAN HISTORY OF ACTON 1954

was brought up again a month later and again failed of a majority. Consequently oxen continued to be used by those who preferred them. To the modern reader this action may appear hopelessly reactionary but back of it lay a deal of sound sense. Oxen to be sure are slow of motion, far slower than horses, but they have their points. Horses are highly nervous and even a well trained and willing pair will not pull for more than a few seconds on a hitch that fails to move. Consequently in clearing stump land, or plowing where stubborn roots prevail, the constant stopping and continued annoyance soon drive them into a frenzied lather. In some cases even though they may survive the first day they will never respond again under similar circumstances.

A lusty pair of willing oxen, on the other hand, particularly if drawing with a Dutch¹ yoke, can pull tremendously. They almost never get excited and if the load fails to move they just quietly lay into it and increase the strain for an interminable time, until even the witnesses sometimes wonder how long they will persist. Horses want to do most of the pulling with the leg muscles whereas oxen seem to sense instinctively that the trick is to constantly increase the body angle and let their huge weight do the work. Many of the author's own generation can remember the familiar sight of Mr. Frank Pratt and his pair of Holsteins drawing boulders on a stone drag under conditions that would have driven a pair of horses beyond control. In spite of their deliberateness capable oxen were, in an earlier era, the counterpart of the modern bulldozer.

In 1889 the long burning question of a town library came to a brisk and unexpected climax through the generosity of Mr. William A. Wilde, a native son. The present beautiful brick and brownstone structure was the result of his enduring pride in the place of his birth and his desire to do something tangible for it. On February 27th, 1890 Mr. Wilde addressed to the selectmen the following letter:

Malden, Mass., Feb. 27, 1890

"To the Selectmen of Acton:

Gentlemen, — For a long time past it has been my intention, if ever I was able to do so, to remember my native town by the gift of some memorial to the memory of those brave and patriotic men of Acton who so freely gave their time, strength, and health — and many of them their lives — in the War of the Rebellion, 1861-65.

To carry out this plan in what seemed to me the most

¹The ordinary American yoke lay across the back of the neck and had bows hanging below. The Dutch yoke, on the other hand, was specially designed for rugged service. The beam was lashed to the horns and lay across the foreheads of the oxen. In this hitch there were no bows to choke and no chance to gall the shoulders or neck.

advantageous and permanent method possible, I have purchased the estate of the Rev. James Fletcher, adjacent to the Town House, and erected thereon a Memorial Library, placing upon its shelves some four thousand volumes, more or less, and I beg the privilege of presenting this property to the town as a free gift, only stipulating that it shall forever be kept as a Memorial Library, and free to all citizens of the patriotic old town of Acton, which I shall always love and be proud of.

If it shall please the town to accept this gift I shall be glad to pass all necessary papers for the transfer of the property to whom and at such time as the town shall direct.

I am, gentlemen, yours truly,

WILLIAM A. WILDE

This letter was read to the citizens of Acton convened in town meeting March 3, 1890 by Mr. Howard B. White, chairman of the Board of Selectmen. Thereupon Rev. James Fletcher presented the following resolutions which were unanimously adopted, forwarded to Mr. Wilde, and also inscribed upon the town records.

"WHEREAS a charter of incorporation has passed the Legislature and been signed by his Excellency Gov. J. Q. A. Brackett incorporating the Memorial Library, and Hon. William A. Wilde, a native of Acton — now a resident of Malden — has signified his readiness to deed to the town the Memorial Library Building just completed at his expense, and the land on which it stands, and all the appurtenances thereof, including books already selected, the Memorial Room and the town vault for the archives of the town, —

"Resolved 1st, We, the inhabitants of the town of Acton, in town meeting assembled, do accept the trust and authorize the Selectmen, in behalf of the town, to sign all papers and perform all the acts necessary to complete the transfer of the property to the care of the trustees.

"Resolved 2nd, In passing this vote we wish to express to Mr. Wilde — in behalf of the present inhabitants of the town; in behalf of all future generations who may be resident here, and participants in the benefits to be enjoyed; in behalf of the soldiers of the War of the Rebellion, whose memory and valor he has so tenderly cherished in the name and arrangement of the structure — our profound appreciation of his generous gift.

"We assure him of our hearty thanks for remembering

of the library and with the Grand Army Post as escort marched down the common and returning to the library building performed the dedicatory services for the tablets on either side of the arched vestibule. Commander Hall, at the conclusion of the simple exercises appointed a guard of honor under Adjutant Samuel R. Guilford and Herbert E. Preston, officer of the guard, who made a stack of arms, surmounted by the national ensign in the vestibule, over which stood as guard a comrade in full uniform armed with musket and fixed bayonet. A passage of scripture was read; the exercises were declared ended and the procession reformed and marched back to the tent.¹

Mr. William A. Wilde, the donor of the library, was born in Acton July 11, 1827, at the home of his father Joseph Wilde, who lived in the house that sets in the Y formed by Parker St. and the prolongation of Concord St. that goes out toward Sinking Pond.² His grandfather lived on the old Deacon Fletcher homestead now the residence of Mr. Jorgen Larson. Mr. Wilde married three times. The first wife was Lois Mace of Pepperell, the second Lydia Jane Bride of Berlin, Mass., and the third Celestina Dona Hoyt of Wentworth, N. H. There were three children by the second marriage and two by the last. Mr. Wilde was a prominent publisher in Boston. Among other items his company issued the Sunday School Quarterlies that were used almost universally in the Congregational churches of New England at that time. He was educated at Groton and Pepperell Academies. He taught school for twelve years, was superintendant of the Malden schools, represented the city for two terms in the legislature, and was chairman of the House Committee on Education. In addition he was a trustee of the Malden library for eight years and was one of the Prison Commissioners of Massachusetts.

The style of architecture is Romanesque and the external appearance and the internal arrangements and furnishings are in harmony with this idea. The materials are red brick and brownstone. The extreme length is sixty six feet six inches and the width thirty two feet ten inches. The principal entrance opens toward the south and through a large, solid freestone arch with rich mouldings and carved spandrels. Once through this main arch, the observer finds on either hand two immense slate tablets. On one, under the heading, "OUR HONORED DEAD" are inscribed the names of the twenty nine sons of Acton who lost their lives in the Civil War³ On the other appears the names of those who were fortunate enough to survive. On entering the building, a reading room, sixteen by twenty five feet is found at the left. Directly ahead is a room originally designed for the trustees but now used mostly as a repository for important town relics. The

¹ The tent stood between the town hall and Woodbury Lane.

² Now the home of Mr. Edward Howard.

³ See Appendix XVI.

stack room, thirty two feet by twenty four, has alcoves on two levels.

The dedication exercises cost the town two hundred and seventy eight dollars, an insignificant sum by present standards, but at that time it encompassed the expenses of the speaker, Hon. John D. Long, his entertainment by Dr. Charles B. Sanders, the rental of a huge tent and the cost of its erection, a drum corps, printing and postage and twelve teams for the transportation of the crowds in attendance.¹

Previous to the opening of the library in June of 1890 Miss Hattie E. Tuttle, Miss Susan Conant and Mrs. Frank Fisk assisted in the cataloging and readying the general facilities. Mrs. Fisk still lives just a stone's throw from the scene of her early activities and is an interested and alert student of Actonaria. On the opening day there were 3973 volumes on the shelves. The first librarian was Miss Ida Hale who retired from duty in 1896. She was followed by Miss Viola S. Tuttle until her retirement because of ill health in 1902. Miss Flora Reed then served for several months but did not care to continue in the work and was followed by Mr. Arthur F. Davis who was elected by the trustees in May of 1902.

One of the first donations received for the library by one other than the donor was a check for one hundred dollars from Mr. Alvin Lothrop of South Acton and Washington, D. C. to be expended in the purchase of a suitable clock. With it was purchased the fine hall clock that has marked the passing hours ever since. At about the same time friends of Mr. Wilde in Malden had a life sized crayon portrait made by William T. Robinson and this has constantly hung in a prominent place in the reading room.

While not a gift in the ordinary sense Mr. Moses Taylor showed his interest and generosity by assuming the expense of moving the Fletcher buildings and clearing the land upon which the library stands. He also donated two swords, one carried by his grandfather at the battle of Bennington and the other by Silas Jones at South Boston in 1812. Edwin J. Piper and brother of Springfield, Mass. sent the drum and sword originally belonging to Major Josiah Piper of Acton. Silas Hosmer presented a paper cutter made from wood from the timbers of the Old North Bridge. At about this time also Mr. Wilde donated a fine stain proof engraving of General U. S. Grant.

In 1891 Mr. Moses Taylor gave a picture of Libby Prison as it appeared in Richmond in 1863. The portrait of General George B. McClellan came from Mr. Wilde as did also the fine steel engraving entitled "The Last Cartridge" which represents an episode in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. On the evening of April 20th, 1891 Mr. Wilde in the town hall presented the Isaac Davis Post G. A. R.,

¹ Town report of March, 1891, gives itemized account.