



SOLDIERS' MONUMENT

Town Green
23 Center Street
Prospect, CT

Dedicated: May 30, 1907

Type: Granite pedestal and figure with bronze rifle

Supplier: Thomas F. Jackson

Height: Approximately 16 1/2'

Historical Significance

SOLDIERS' MONUMENT, Prospect, is significant historically because it is a symbol of respect and honor paid by the community to its sons who served in the Civil War and other wars. The reason for the relatively late date of the monument is not known. Funds for its erection in the amount of \$1,000 were provided by the General Assembly. At the dedication, former Representative Clark recalled that the state had been reluctant to provide the money, but found persuasive the fact that the 75 men Prospect sent to the Civil War were more than half the number (145) of its voters and one-sixth of its population. \$1,000 was also raised within the community.

The monument was erected in the fall of 1906, too late in the season for ceremonial dedication exercises. At the official unveiling on May 30, 1907, the Wadhams Post, No. 49, Grand Army of the Republic, of Waterbury and the Isbell Post from Naugatuck, headed by the Naugatuck Fife and Drum Corps, played important roles. The Cheshire Band was on hand and Company C, Boys Brigade, St. Paul's Church, was in the line of march.

Principal orator was the Reverend Sherrod Soule of Naugatuck, who discussed states rights and slavery, in which respects his remarks were unusual for such ceremonies, and exhorted his audience with the words, "May this monument be an inspiration to you who abide here and your children and your children's children and the generations unborn," which was a conventional sentiment for orators on such occasions.

Artistic Significance

SOLDIERS' MONUMENT, Prospect, is significant artistically because it is an example of the traditional pedestal-and-figure composition with two unusual features: the Neo-Classical Revival architectural details and bronze rifle. The classical Doric frieze at the top of the pedestal reflects the fashionable acceptance of the Neo-Classical Revival which was championed by the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. By 1906 this influence reached Prospect in the well-executed correct frieze of the monument.

The combination of stone and bronze in the figure is unusual, perhaps unique, in Connecticut. Customarily, the rifle is the same material as the figure; here it is not. The bronze rifle was technically well-executed because there are no metallic stains on the stone a century after it was erected. Other details of the figure also are unusual, including the trousers gathered at boot tops, the far right position of the rifle in the parade rest position, the horizontal forearms, and jacket rather than overcoat. While the standard-bearer figure

(see **SOLDIERS MONUMENT**, Unionville in Farmington) usually is dressed in a jacket, the soldier at parade rest usually wears an overcoat.

According to *The Waterbury Republican* for May 31, 1907, Thomas S. [sic] Jackson was the "builder" of the monument. Thomas F. Jackson was a practitioner from nearby Waterbury, Connecticut, of "Artistic Monumental and Cemetery Work" (*Waterbury Directory*, 1907, page 739). Nevertheless, it seems unlikely that he cut the statue. Conceivably, he made the pedestal and bought the figure, but this is conjecture. The light color of the stone suggests that it may have come from a Barre, Vermont, quarry. Jackson may have been agent or local broker for a Barre quarry for all or part of the monument.

Description

SOLDIERS' MONUMENT, Prospect, is located in the center of a small green a block south of the main east-west highway, SR 68, within view of the Congregational Church, historical society, grange, school, and library. The monument consists of granite Neo-Classical Revival pedestal and figure of a soldier. The monument is dedicated to Prospect soldiers who served in all wars.

A solid plinth supports the base of the pedestal. Three moldings, torus, cyma reversa, and torus, provide transition from pedestal base to the die. Bronze plaques are affixed to three faces of the die, as recorded below. The plaque on the south, listing World War I names, is a ca.1920 replacement of the original trophy of crossed rifles, symbol of the infantry. The 1920 plaque is the only one with some decoration, which consists of vertical lines of anthemias at each side. The badge of the G.A.R. is on the north depicting, in bronze, the eagle, flag, and figures of men shaking hands surrounded by circle and star. The top of the die has a classical Doric frieze of triglyphs over taenia between metopes embellished with rosettes. The cornice molding is a cyma reversa.

The figure is supported by a two-stage base. His left foot is forward, resting on a raised surface, perhaps a stone. The butt of his bronze rifle is perpendicular to the direction of the feet. Trousers are gathered at the top of his boots. He wears a jacket, not the usual overcoat. Both arms are raised to make the forearms horizontal, with hands on the barrel of the rifle, left over right. The jacket belt holds a cap box over the right hip, while a cartridge box slung over the right shoulder is suspended at the left hip, just behind the bayonet. The soldier's collar is open. He is clean-shaven, looking to his left, and wears a kepi.

A flagpole rises about 15' north of the monument.

Lettering

Front (west) face of dado, raised caps on 30 1/2" x 45" bronze plaque:

(Seal of Connecticut)
PROSPECT
1906
TO THE LOYAL SONS
OF PROSPECT
WHO SERVED IN THE WARS
OF OUR COUNTRY.
"THE NOBLEST MOTIVE
IS THE PUBLIC GOOD."

South, 20" x 36" plaque:

**OUR
WORLD WAR
VETERANS**

—
(25 names)

East, 30 1/2" x 45" plaque:

**SOLDIERS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY
AND OTHER WARS**

(2 columns of 7 and 1 column of 8 names)

SOLDIERS OF THE CIVIL WAR

(2 columns of 23 and 1 column of 24 names)

Evergreen shrubs are planted in front of the monument. In front of the evergreen shrubs is a low stele with the incised caps:

**IN HONOR OF OUR
PROSPECT VETERANS
OF WORLD WAR II
KOREAN AND VIETNAM
WARS**

DEDICATED THE 30TH DAY OF MAY 1977