

A Brief History of the War Memorial (Monument Park)

On May 30th, 1924, this Memorial was dedicated to honor Wilton's veterans who served in all wars, from the [French and Indian War], through the Revolutionary War, and on up to the recent World War. The ground on which we stand, which was once the site of Claflin's Livery Stable, was donated to the town by Henry L. Emerson, himself a veteran of the Civil War.

The day started with a parade led by Joseph S. Buckley as Marshall, and included the Nashua City Band, members of the American Legion and other orders, and Wilton's teachers and schoolchildren. They marched down Main Street and wound their way up Russell Street to Maple Street; turned up Prince Street to Livermore Street; and then around the Flat back to Park, and down again to Maple and back to Prince; finally to Main Street where they proceeded to the Boston and Main Railroad Station to greet the speaker for the dedication ceremony, Col. William Sullivan of Nashua. They escorted him along Main Street, pausing by the cannon on the Common (now Cooley Park) where a wreath was laid. The procession continued on to Whiting Pond (site of the police station and parking lot today) where a service for the sailor dead was conducted, concluding with the strewing of flowers into the water of the pond by the schoolchildren.

The unveiling of the new monument followed. In addition to Henry Emerson, a second Civil War veteran, Major D.E. Proctor, was present, as well as squads from the American Legion and delegations from other orders who surrounded the Memorial Tablet during the ceremony. Colonel Sullivan then delivered a stirring speech; and afterward, the schoolchildren sang. Finally, the venerable Major Proctor called for three cheers which resounded from the assembled crowd with a will. Marchers then fanned out to the town's cemeteries where the graves of the fallen were decorated.

In 1949, a rededication ceremony was held when a tablet for the veterans of World War II was attached. Separate monuments have been added for more recent conflicts, including the most recent -- an Eagle Scout project, by Jonathan Schultz, for the post-Vietnam era up to 9/11.