

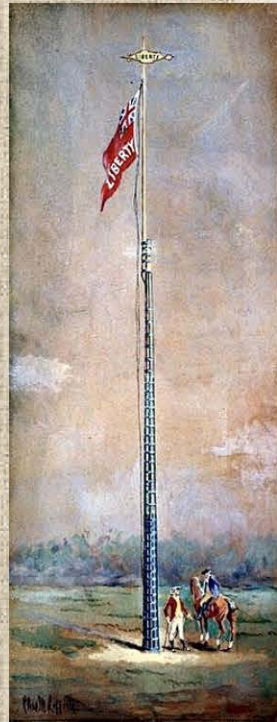
# Hidden in Plain Sight: The Civil War Memorial

Rae Shropshire |  
Preservation Institute  
Nantucket

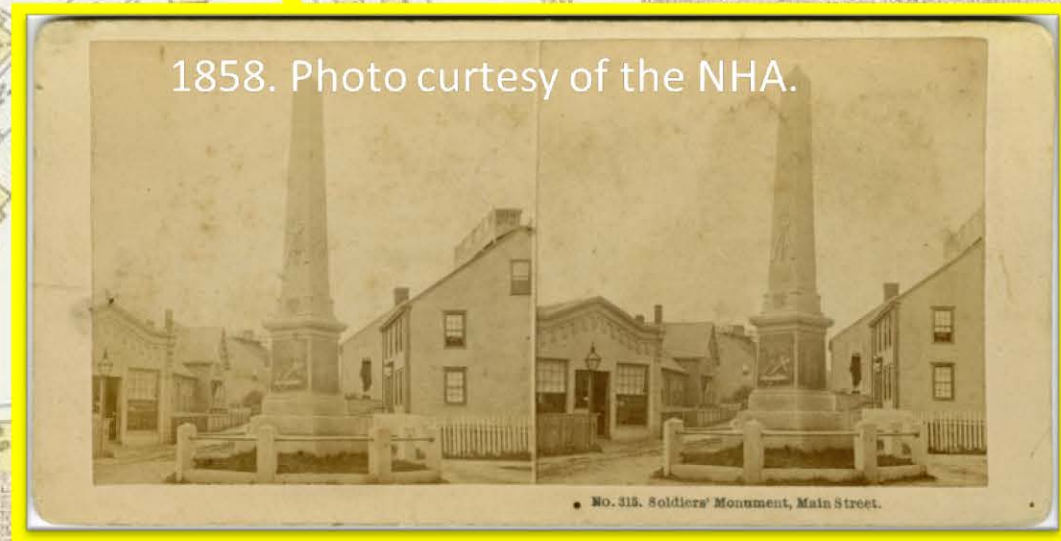


# History of the Memorial

- Erected in 1874
- Commemorates the Union Soldiers & Sailors who fell during the Civil War
- Located at the intersection of Main, Gardner, and Milk Street at the old center of town
- Grocery, Town Building with court room, and Liberty Pole



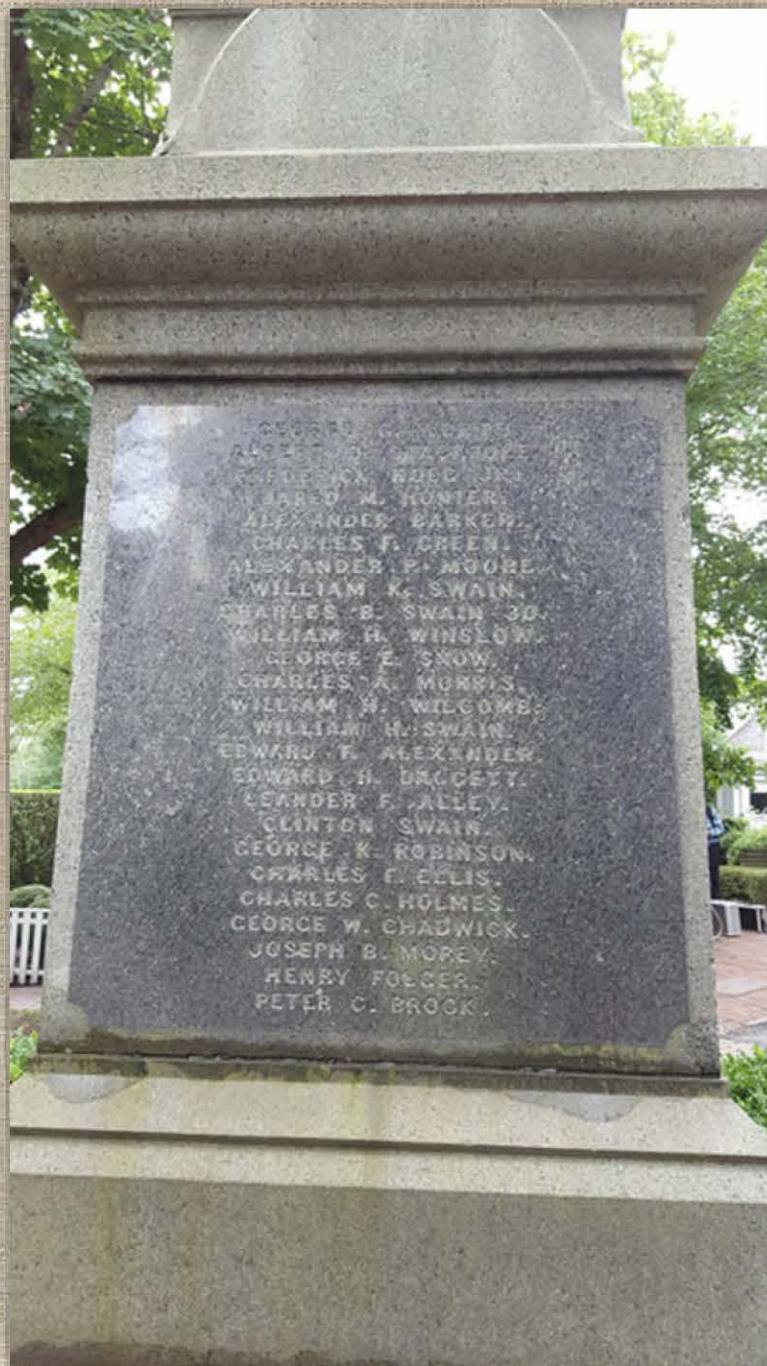
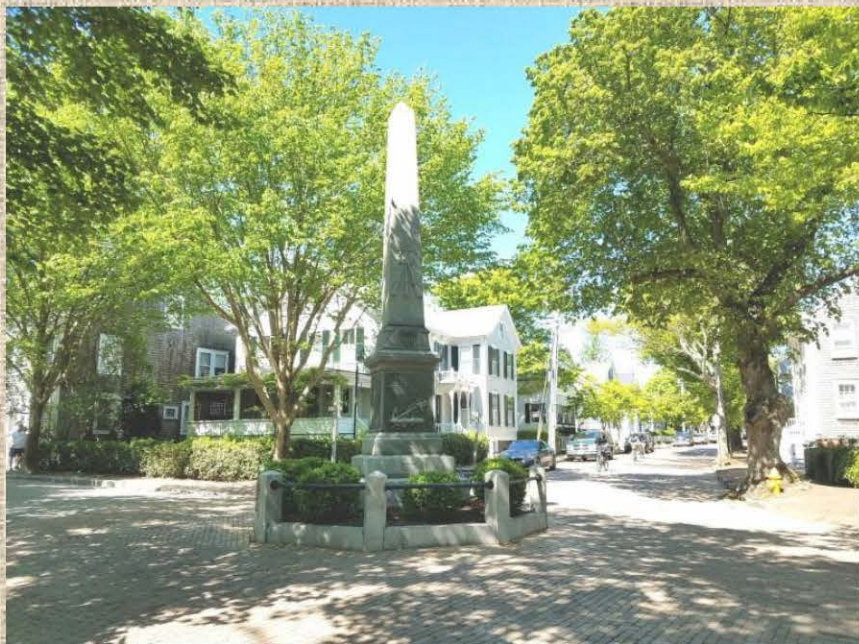
Fifth Liberty Pole,  
New York Commons



1858. Photo curtesy of the NHA.

No. 315. Soldiers' Monument, Main Street.

- 339 Soldiers and Sailors from Nantucket enlisted in the war, with only 26 names on the memorial



# Previous Research

- 1980
- “Civil War Memorial and Monument Square.” by David E. Sands
- Basic history of the memorial and architectural analysis of historic landscape

CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL  
AND  
MONUMENT SQUARE



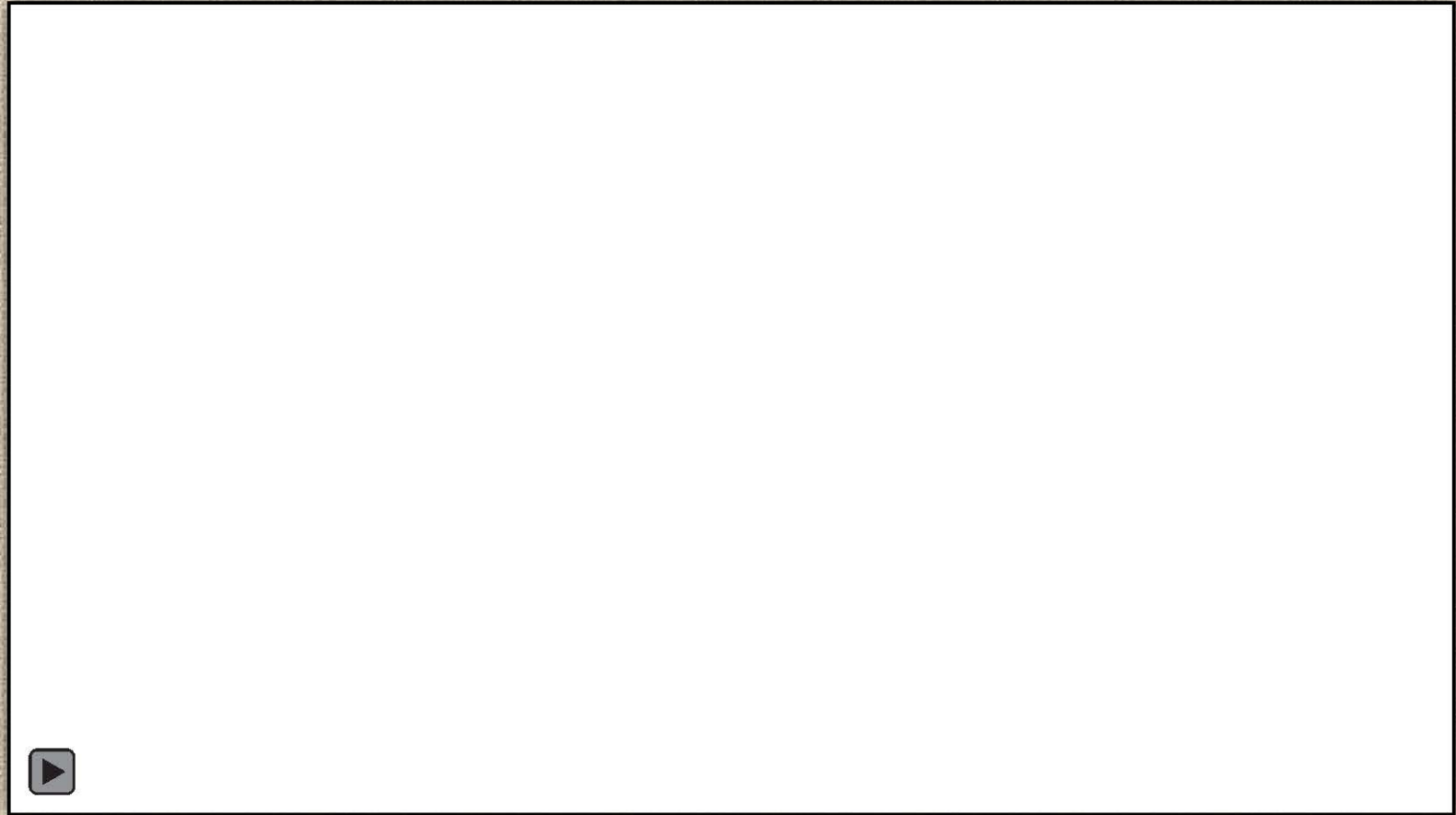
DAVID E. SANDS  
ARC 5800  
PIN 1980

**“One hundred years ago our ancestors rounded Cape Horn in the greatest of gales, and in our time, if we cannot navigate a horseless carriage around a stationary object in a flat calm, we should not be allowed to drive it in the first place.”**

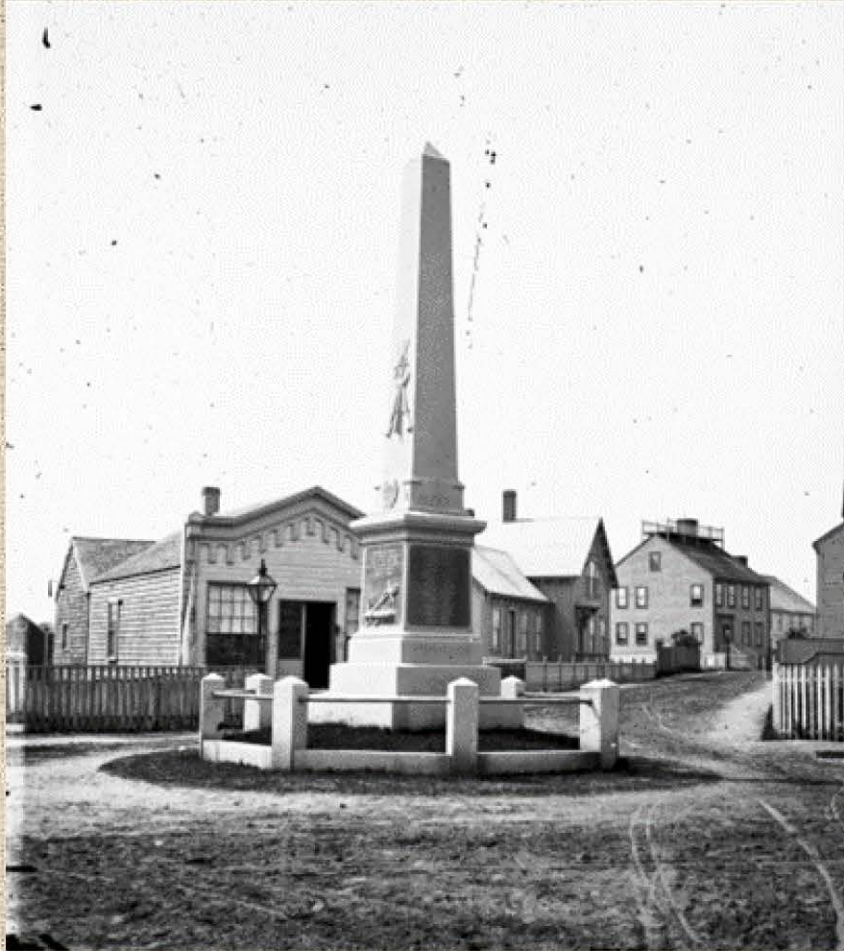
**– Mary Starbuck (early 1900)**

# Traffic Issues at the Memorial

- “The Civil War Memorial and Monument Square in which it stands presents a space that works well for pedestrians and cyclists– a space to which automobiles must accommodate themselves...” (Sands, 1980, page 2)



# Change in Access



★ 1890



1900

Soldiers Monument, Nantucket, Mass.



1910, 20.



July 1959





# Narrative Gaps & Opportunity

- Expanding the narrative to soldiers that lived, therefore left off the Memorial
- Twenty African-American Union Soldiers listed their homes as Nantucket
- No commemoration in Nantucket thus far



Group portrait of veterans of the Civil War, taken at the side of the Atheneum on Federal Street. 1890s.

# Project Objectives

- Examining current issues in accessing the Civil War memorial and its narratives safely
- Expanding the memorial's narrative



Postcard image of houses near the Civil War monument at Monument Square. 1890-1900.

# Expanding the Narrative: Hiram Reed

- Enslaved in Missouri and working a Mississippi River Steamboat when it was seized by the Union Army
- Enlisted in the Massachusetts 5th Cavalry Regiment in March 1864 to return to the south and fight for equality



"As tough as Witchet."

## Civil War Memoranda

### Deed of Manumission

Whereas Thomas L. Seward, of the City and County of St. Louis, State of Missouri, has been taking active part with the enemies of the United States in the present insurrectionary movement against the Government of the United States. And therefore, I, John Charles Fremont, Major General Commanding the Western Department of the Army of the United States, by authority of law, and the power vested in me, as such Commanding General, before Hiram Reed, do hereby hold to, receive, and forever discharge from the bonds of servitude, giving him full right and authority to bear arms and to do what he may think proper, without any accountability whatever to me, and Thomas L. Seward, as my agent, to whom he may be reported and treated by all persons, and in all Courts of law, as the full and complete evidence of the freedom of said Hiram Reed.

In testimony whereof, this act is done at Head Quarters of the Western Department of the Army of the United States, in the City of St. Louis, State of Missouri, on this twelfth day of September, A. D. Eighteen Hundred and Sixty Four, as evidenced by the Departmental Seal here offered by my order.

H. Fremont,  
Maj. Gen. Commanding



Photo by Universal Photo Shop  
The Enrollment of the Reserve Militia in District No. 44, Made by Captain Oliver Cushman, Dated Nantucket, March 15, 1865, has the name of this same Hiram Reed listed as a Nantucket member of the Reserve. (The Original of both the letter and Deed of Manumission are on file in the Historical Museum.)

- Married Isabella Draper following the war and lived on Pleasant Street
- Elected a charter member of the Nantucket Post of the Grand Army of the Republic



*R.* | **5 Cav. (Col'd.)** | **Mass.**

*Hiram W. Reed*.....  
 ....., Co. *A*., 5 Reg't Mass. Cav. (Col'd.)

Appears on  
**Company Descriptive Book**  
 of the organization named above.

**DESCRIPTION.**  
 Age *23* years; height *5* feet *3* inches.  
 Complexion *Brown*.....  
 Eyes *Black*.....; hair *Black*.....  
 Where born *St. Louis, Mo.*.....  
 Occupation *Farmer*.....

**ENLISTMENT.**  
 When ..... *Mar, 7*, 186 ....  
 Where *Nantucket*.....  
 By whom *J. Mitchell* ; term *3* y'rs.  
 Remarks: .....

.....  
 .....

*H. G. Thomas*.....  
 (Scribe) ..... Captain

"Grand Army of the Republic" members. Veterans of the Civil War. 1909.

- Commemorated on the Washington D.C African American Civil War Memorial
- Opportunity for his and other stories to be told using the memorial



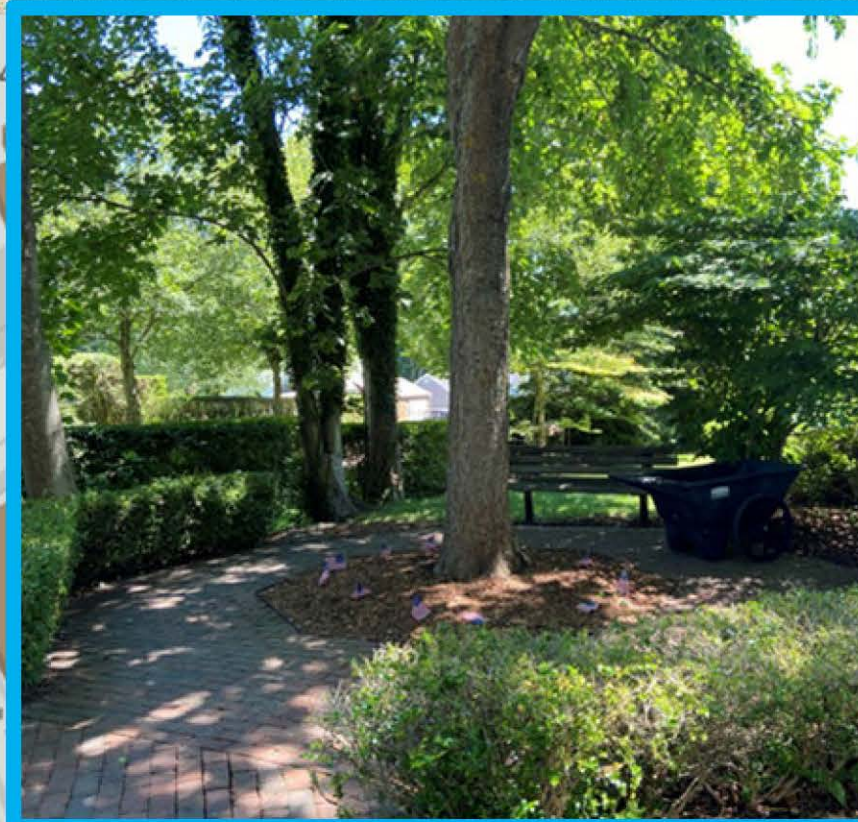
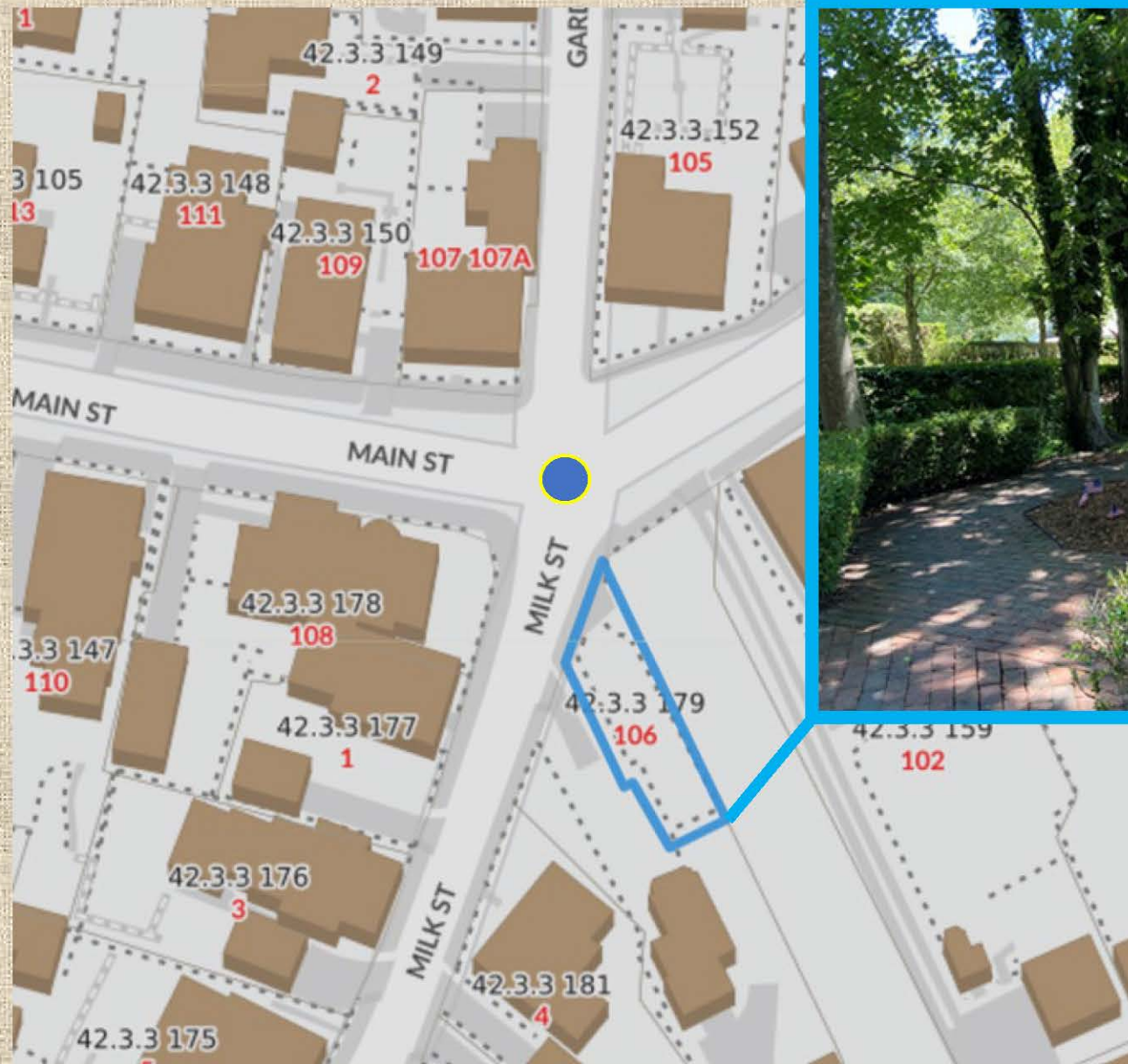
**How do we fix  
the current  
issues in  
accessing the  
monument?**

**How do we  
expand the  
Memorial's  
narrative?**



# Moving the Memorial

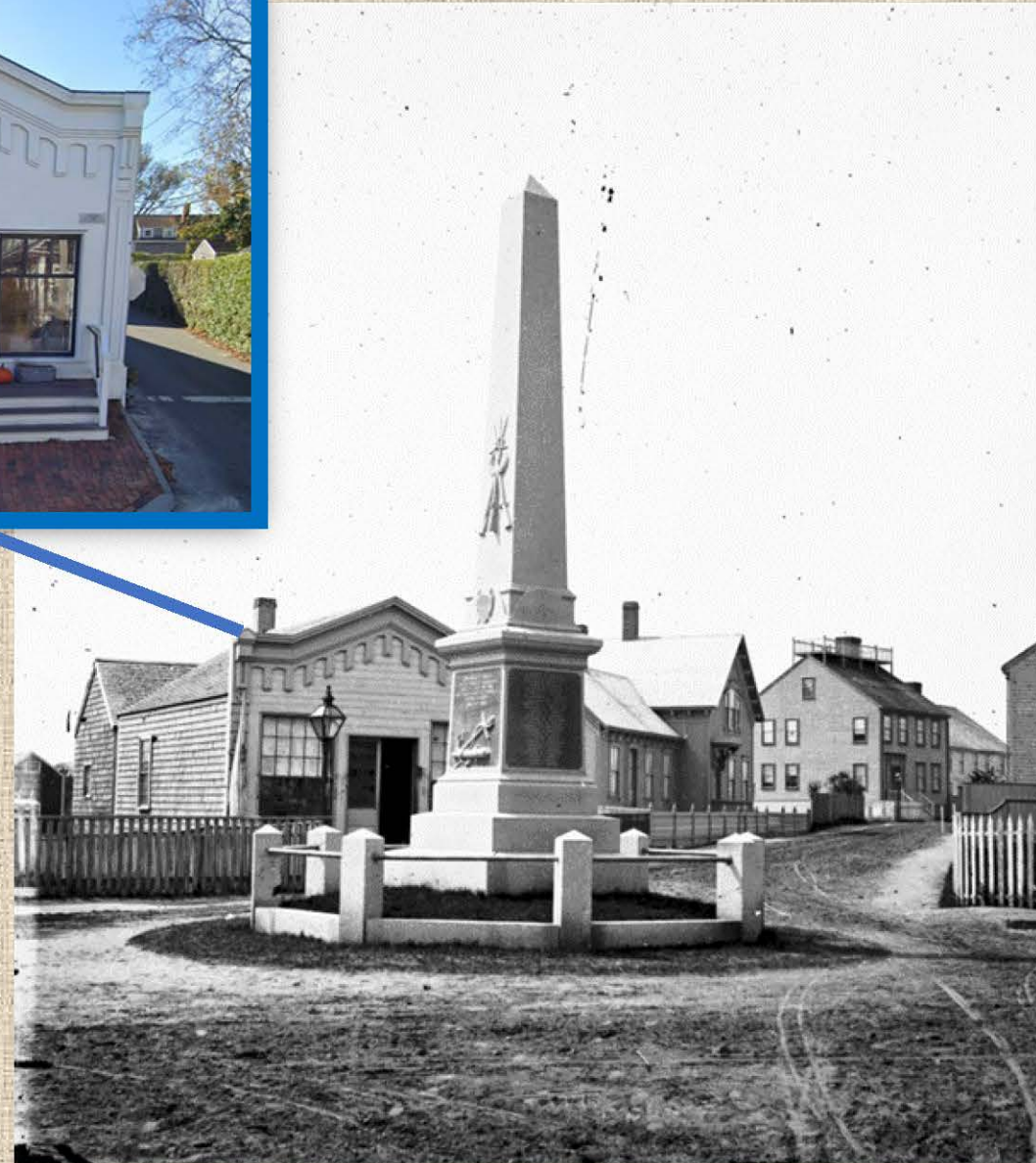
- Current location -> Land Bank
- Keeps Memorial in Monument Square while eliminating traffic block



- **Historic precedent for moving landmarks in Monument Square**
- **Grocery, Town Building, and Liberty Pole no longer located in Monument Square**



79 Orange Street



1890



# Monument Park



- Room for the Memorial, Interpretive Signage, and pedestrian activities
- Allows the public to have full access to the Memorial and its narratives



On the day of arrival, a special town meeting authorized county commissioners “to procure and set off land where it will be placed.” One suggestion was to remove the two-story “South School House” from its site on Orange Street and replace it with a “Monument Park.” The schoolhouse, built in the 1850s, was thought by many “a prodigious elephant,” too large for its purpose, inefficient, unsafe, unsightly and costly to maintain. A smaller school would be sufficient and town offices better placed closer to the town’s center. The site’s advantage for a monument was “a fine sea-view from the verge of the bank,” making it visible to anyone entering the harbor. But this site was soon rejected. The schoolhouse may have been an “elephant,” but it was still a useful elephant. Its removal would require building another schoolhouse that might cost more than retaining the old one. The South School House was saved and remained on Orange Street until 1931.

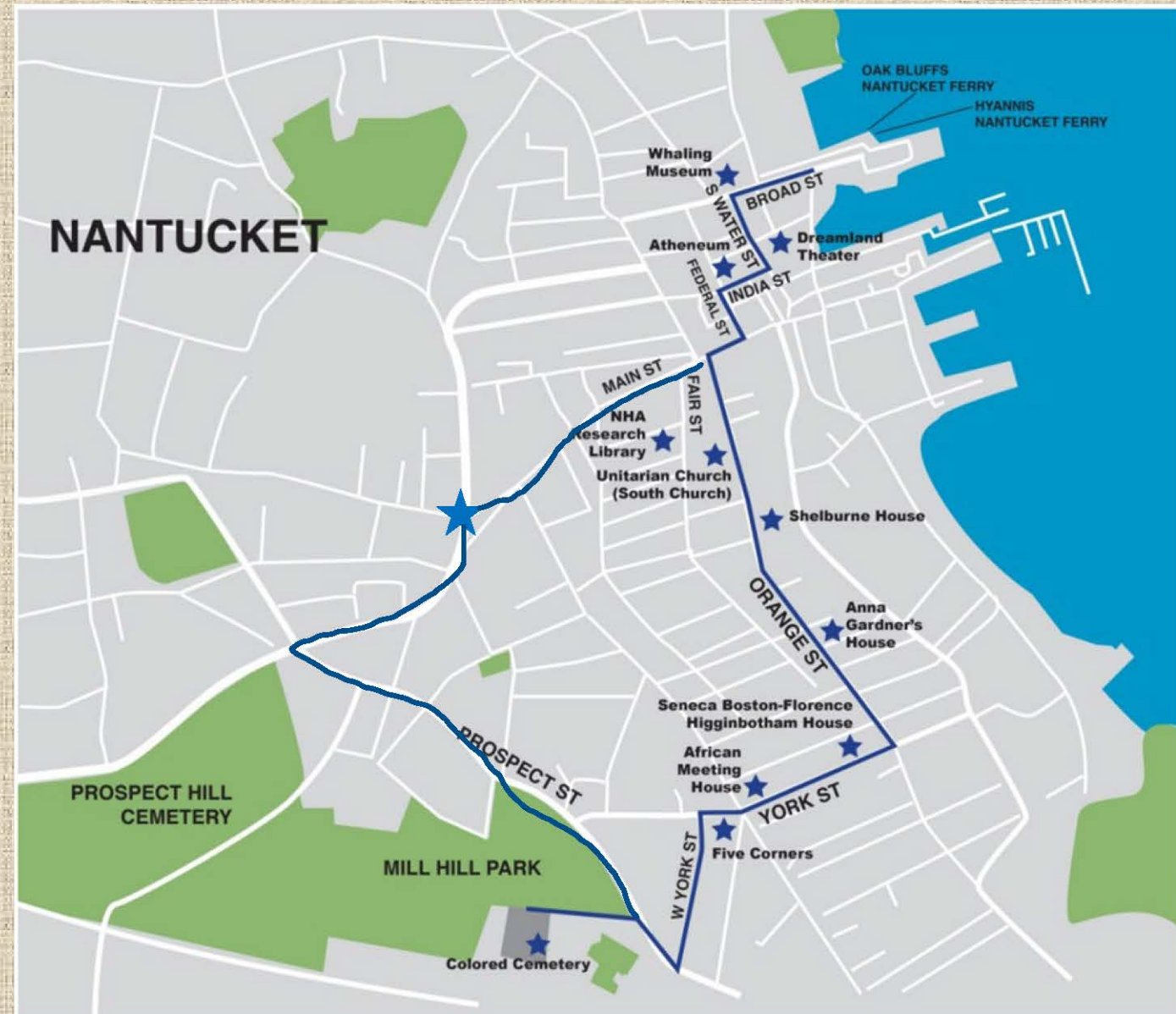
# Signage

- Simple signage and historic photos
- Inscriptions in one place for easy reading
- QR code connecting Memorial to Nantucket Black Heritage Trail
- Opportunity to add left off Veteran names + Narratives



# Nantucket Black Heritage Trail

- Full color photos on pamphlet with longer narratives
- Connects the Memorial to the island's Black History
- Potential to expand the Heritage Trail and its narratives past the main Town



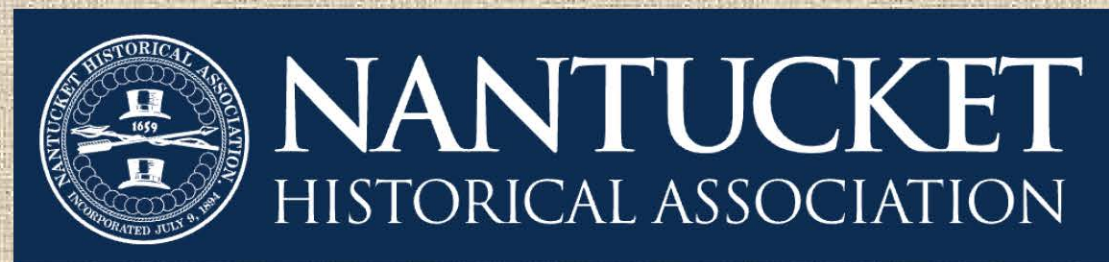
# Park Proposal

- Move Memorial to Land Bank area
- Use signage cohesive to the Nantucket Black Heritage Trail
- Retain foliage, bike rack, and benches
- Mark historic location with a simple brick outline



# Next Steps

- Nantucket Land Bank
- American Legion
- Nantucket Historical Association
- African American Meeting House



# Significance

- Brings back public access to the Civil War Memorial
- Alleviates a historic traffic issue at the intersection
- Expands Black History on Nantucket



1900s



1974

# References

- Karttunen, Frances. “Unsung Heroes of the Civil War.” Yesterdays Island, Todays Nantucket, May 28, 2015. <https://yesterdaysisland.com/unsung-heroes-of-the-civil-war0520151234/>
- Morral, Frank, and Barbara White. Hidden History of Nantucket. Arcadia Publishing Inc, 2015.
- Photos Curtesy of the Nantucket Historical Association