

**FORM H - PARKS  
AND LANDSCAPES**

Assessor's number USGS Quad Area(s) Form No. Forms within

47-4	Newburyp	O	911	932-937
------	----------	---	-----	---------

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town Newburyport

Place (neighborhood or village)

Address or Location Pleasant/Green/Titcomb

Ownership  Public  Private

Type of Landscape (check one):

- park
- green/common
- garden
- boulevard/parkway
- other (specify)
- farm land
- mine/quarry
- training field

Date or Period 1802

Source Currier, History of Newburyport

Landscape Architect none

Location of Plans NA

Alterations/Intrusions (with dates) 1893 -  
Garrison Statue; 1950, 1979 - war memorials

Condition good

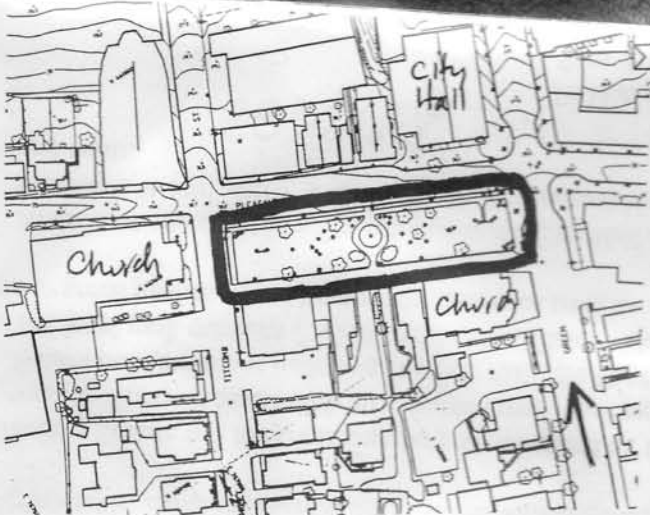
Acreage 25,660 SF

Setting small urban park fronting City Hall

Recorded by Lisa Mausolf

Organization Newburyport Historical Comm.

Date (month/year) July 1999



## PARKS AND LANDSCAPES FORM (Brown Square)

### VISUAL/DESIGN ASSESSMENT

*Describe topography and layout. Note structures such as bandstands, gazebos, sheds, stone walls, monuments, and fountains. Note landscaping features such as formal plantings, agricultural plantings, and bodies of water. If possible, compare current appearance with original.*

Brown Square is a long, rectangular park bordered on the north by Pleasant Street on the east by Green Street and on the west by Titcomb Street with an unnamed road marking the southern boundary. A mix of residential, commercial and institutional buildings including the City Hall, the Baptist Church and the Central Congregational Church all face the park. The level park contains 25,660 square feet of land. The park consists of a level piece of land dotted by flowering shrubs and evergreen bushes with a number of deciduous trees around the perimeter.

At the east end of Brown Square, facing the City Hall and with arborvitae is a granite, three-part monument commemorating the City's World War I, World War II, Korean and Vietnam Veterans (MHC#932). The monument was dedicated in 1979 and reads:

To Honor our Dedicated and Brave  
Sons & Daughters Who Served in  
The Armed Forces in This Century  
We, the People of Newburyport Proudly and Gratefully Erect  
This Memorial.

Slightly to the west, a group of three low granite markers (c.1970) are arranged near the flagpole against the backdrop of shaped evergreen bush. The pink granite stone (MHC#933) was erected by the Bradbury-Doyle Post 1745 while the gray granite markers were installed by the Eugene A. Twoney Sr. Chapter 40 Disabled American Veterans (MHC#934) and the other was dedicated by the American Legion Post 150 (MHC#935). Near the sidewalk, facing City Hall is a boulder with a bronze plaque recording the landscaping of the park by Botanical Science Students of Turning Point, Inc., funded by a grant from LMVREB in the Summer of 1994.

Near the center of the park, a circular paved sidewalk outlines the statue of William Lloyd Garrison (MHC#936). Set above a Rockport granite pedestal which is ten feet high, the larger than life-size (eight feet, five inches) bronze figure is dressed in a double-breasted cloak with his right hand extended and the left by his side. The die is highly polished and the other parts are finely hammered. This work was done by J.M. Littlefield & Son of Newburyport. The front die facing City Hall is inscribed "1805 - 1879/ Garrison the Liberator/ Presented by/ William H. Swasey/ July 4, 1893". The remaining faces are inscribed with excerpts from Garrison's writings including "Neither God nor the world will judge us by our professions but by our practices" (west side); "I solicit no man's praise, I fear no man's censure; The liberty of a people is the gift of God and nature: (rear); and "I am in earnest - Will not equivocate - I will not excuse - I will not retract a single inch and I will be heard" (east side). The statue bears the names of both its sculptor, D.M. French, and the casting company, Henry Bonnard Bronze Co., as well as the date, 1893. Two wooden benches face the statue and at four corners around the statue there are islands planted with rhododendrons, tiger lilies and evergreens.

At the west end of the park a slate path leads to a rough granite tablet about seven feet high with a shaped bronze plaque facing Pleasant Street. The memorial (MHC#937) is nearly obscured by two large round evergreen bushes. The inscription reads:

(see continuation sheet)

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attached a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

## INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town  
NewburyportProperty Address  
Brown Square  
Area(s) Form No.Massachusetts Historical Commission  
Massachusetts Archives Building  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

0	<del>934</del>
---	----------------

911

## VISUAL/DESIGN ASSESSMENT (continued):

USWV  
In memory and  
Grateful Appreciation  
of the Men of  
Newburyport  
and  
Vicinity  
Who Served in the  
War with Spain,  
the  
Philippine Insurrection  
and the  
China Relief Expedition  
1898-1902  
This Tablet is Erected  
by the City of  
Newburyport  
1950

(The rear of the tablet is without inscription).

Early photographs show that the park was originally outlined by a line of log posts set between trees. The log posts were later removed and trees outlined the perimeter of the park.

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

*Discuss history of use. Evaluate the historical associations of the landscape/park with the community.*

Brown Square was established in 1802 by Moses Brown (1742-1827), a prominent Newburyport merchant who built a three-story, brick Federal house fronting the square (MHC#421). Brown began his career as a chaisemaker. In 1792 he purchased what was later known as Brown's Wharf and erected store houses and a distillery. He was also a philanthropist. After the fire of 1811 Brown was the second largest individual contributor, donating \$1500. Among his gifts was a fund for grammar schools. The small park was given to the town by Brown for the "public enjoyment".

In 1802 the park was laid out, trees were set out and grading was done. Over the years, many celebrations have been held at Brown Square. On the 50th anniversary of the founding of the United States, July 4, 1826, the Newburyport Artillery Co., the Washington Light Infantry Company and companies from Ipswich and Bradford encamped on Brown Square. In 1841 a memorial service was held after the death of President William Henry Harrison. Memorial services were held in honor of Abraham Lincoln in 1865 and Caleb Cushing in 1879. In 1884 a celebration of the return of the survivors of the Arctic expedition commanded by Lt. Adolphus Greeley (a native of Newburyport) was held here.

The present City Hall was constructed on the north side of Brown Square in 1850-1. In 1883 the road on the north side of the Square became an extension of Pleasant Street.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town  
Newburyport

Property Address  
Brown Square  
Area(s) Form No.

0	911
---	-----

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
Massachusetts Archives Building  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE (continued):

The statue of William Lloyd Garrison (MHC#936) was given to the city by William H. Swasey (1823-1915), a well-known Newburyport businessman. Swasey came to Newburyport in 1840 and in 1844 formed the partnership of Sumner and Swasey, later Sumner, Swasey and Currier, commission merchants located on Water Street. Swasey retired in 1870 and served as treasurer of the Towle Silver Manufacturing Company, a director of the Mechanics Bank, a trustee of the Institution of Savings and treasurer of the Anna Jaques Hospital.

The statue was unveiled July 4, 1893. The sculptor was David M. French who had a studio at 40-50 Pleasant Street. French was born in Newmarket, New Hampshire and in 1857 went to Boston to study under sculptor Robert Stevenson and went on to study at the Boston Art Museum. French lived in Portsmouth for two years and while there completed a marble bust of the Rev. Dr. Burrows, rector of St. John's Episcopal Church. Upon moving to Newburyport, French completed busts of John Greenleaf Whittier, Caleb Cushing, Henry Longfellow, Charles Coffin and Josiah Little, the founder of the Newburyport Library. The clay model of Garrison was cut in plaster by John H.A. Walthausen of New York. The bronze was cast by the Henry Bonnard Bronze Co. of New York in 1893.

Abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison was a native of Newburyport. His parents arrived in 1803 and Garrison was born on School Street on December 5, 1805. He addressed a large gathering outside the meetinghouse on Titcomb Street (now the site of the Central Congregational Church) on September 28, 1830 but was met by unkind and uncivil treatment from his former friends and townsmen. Legend has it that the statue was erected in Brown Square, opposite City Hall, because in his lifetime, Garrison was denied a public forum in Newburyport.

The erection of the statue was also somewhat controversial. Critics argued that David M. French was not an artist of sufficient merit or renown to do the statue. Boston newspapers criticized French's work and Swasey's choice of French. The Newburyport Improvement Society withdrew its support. In the end, the donor of the statue did not attend the dedication on July 4, 1893.

The Spanish War memorial (MHC#937) on the west end of Brown Square was installed in 1950. The War Memorial opposite City Hall (MHC#932) was dedicated on May 28, 1979.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Colby, Grace L. "Garrison Statue David French's Labor of Love", Daily News, July 24, 1970.  
 Currier, John J. *History of Newburyport, Massachusetts, 1764-1906*, vols. 1 & 2. Newburyport: 1906 & 1909.  
 Hoyt, Alvah. "The Parks of Newburyport", Newburyport Daily News, December 28, 1937.  
 Irving, Ron. Unpublished research on Pleasant Street.