

to go with Bldg form #105
105

(F) 105A

FORM C - MONUMENTS
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

Town Sturbridge
Street Fiske Hill Road
Name First Well on Fiske Hill

STATUE _____
BUST _____
MARKER X _____
RELIGIOUS SHRINE _____
GROUP COMPOSITION _____
MONUMENT _____
FOUNTAIN _____
MILESTONE _____
BOUNDARY MARKER _____

Original Owner Henry and Daniel Fiske
Present Owner Richard J. Flynn
Date Constructed Well dug in 1730's
Plaque put on in 1949
Date Dedicated _____

Monument has historical connection with the following themes: (See also reverse side)

- X Agriculture
- Architecture
- Art/Sculpture
- Education
- Literature
- Music
- Government
- Commerce/Industry
- Science/Invention
- Travel/Communication
- Military Affairs
- Indians
- X Development of Town/City
- Religion/Philosophy

Source of Date Channing Wells & others
Designer or Sculptor Channing Wells (then owner of present Flynn residence)
Individual or group responsible for monument if other than owner Channing Wells

CONDITION: Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Moved* Altered _____

IMPORTANCE of monument to area: Great Moderate None Not noticed perhaps by many;

MONUMENT endangered by: _____ but much valued by those interested in town history.

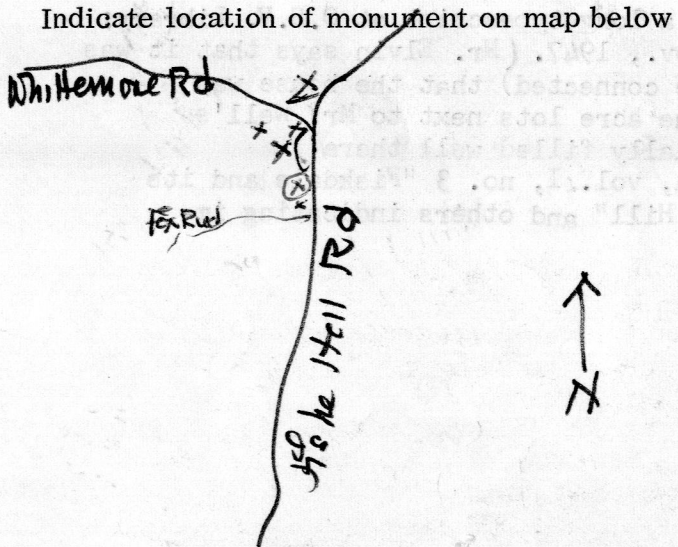
LOCATION OF INSCRIPTION: Plaque on wall, of well, house, post; base of monument; other

ENTIRE INSCRIPTION on monument:
1731 Daniel and Henry Fiske built the first dwelling nearby
First Well A lgg cabin in 1731
on
Fiske Hill Erected by Channing McGregory Wells
1949

DESCRIPTION**
Foundation: Pedestal Base None Material _____
Material: Bronze Stone Marble Granite Wood Other _____
Setting (surroundings) Entrance to driveway; stone walls along road; trees
Size (approximate) 2 x 1 ft.

Recorder Anna S. Wilkin
For Sturbridge Historical Commission
(Name of Organization)

Photo _____ Date Received Oct. 1973



* If the monument has been moved, indicate the original location on the reverse side.
** Describe the monument on the reverse side

RECEIVED

JUN 7 1974

GIVE A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECT MATTER AND/OR DESIGN OF MONUMENT

GIVE A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF HISTORIC IMPORTANCE OF MONUMENT. (Refer to the theme circled on front of form. What happened? Who was important? Comment)

Henry and Daniel Fiske were sons of Nathan Fiske of Watertown, a proprietor of New Medford (as Sturbridge was at first called), but he never came here. The brothers came in 1731, seven years before the incorporation of Sturbridge, and were among its very first settlers, though not the first to winter over. They began by making the long journey from Watertown each spring by foot to clear the land and to build. They were indeed important in the history of Sturbridge. They were good farmers, active in the church and in town government. Their very numerous progeny settled along the whole length of the hill named for the original brothers, and the family continued to be of great importance to the town -- in agriculture, in religion (Baptist), the professions, government, and --by the 1820's and 30's -- industry, most notably in Fiskdale.

The monument is in the acknowledged general area of the first Fiske settlement well deserving of commemorating; but one could quarrel with wording, though not spirit, of the inscription: 1. The date seems too early. (It is unlikely the Fiskes dug a well the first year, especially since the hill has very numerous springs. In any case, according to Elvin, this may not have been the first well.) 2. Whether the original Fiske dwelling was actually very nearby is also a subject of dispute; and 3. That this was a log cabin is open to question.

REFERENCE: (Where was this information obtained? What book, records, etc.)

Chase, Nellie, articles in "Southbridge Press," April and May, 1938. (In one for May 6, Miss Chase (daughter of Levi Chase, the historian, who had access to Fiske papers not now available) says the house was about where the Channing Wells (now Flynn) house stands and that it was two stories with lean-to.)

Davis, George, "A Historical Sketch of Sturbridge and Southbridge," 1856, especially Ch. II, Fiske Hill.

Elvin, Joseph B. "Brooks Family of Fiske Hill," a long typescript at O.S.V. Library; also, his letter to Miss Helen Holey, Nov., 1947. (Mr. Elvin says that it was the opinion of his mother's family (Fiske connected) that the house was located in a field "to the west of the one acre lots next to Mr. Well's present home," and that there was a partially filled well there.)

Quinabaug Historical Society Leaflets, 1895-1914, vol. I, no. 3 "Fiskdale and its industries;" no. 5 "The Church on Fiske Hill" and others indicating importance of the Fiske family.

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