

9. CPA SUMMARY PROJECT FORM

[CPC Use Only: Date Received 10/16/2021 By: SAMMIE KUL
Assigned CPC #2028-03]

This form may be copied. Please type or print clearly, answer all questions, use "N/A" if not applicable. Use additional paper as needed.

1. a.) Applicant Name: Last Wheatley First George, and Kara Fossey
and Organization(s) (if appropriate) Historic Commission and Groton History Center

b.) Regional Project: Yes or No? no If Yes, Town/Organization: _____

2. Submission Date: _____

3. Applicant Address: St 172 Main Street, Groton MA 01450
City/ State: _____ ZIP: _____

4. Ph. # 978 448-0092 Email: info.historycenter.org

5. CPA Purpose. Check all that apply:

Community Housing: ☐ Affordable Housing: ☐ Historic Preservation*: ☒

Open Space: ☐ Recreation: ☐

* As per MA General Law Chapter 44B, proposed historic projects that are not on the structures listed on the state's registry of historic places require a determination by the Groton Historic Commission that the proposed project is of historic significance.

6. Project Location/Address: 172 Main Street, Groton

7. Project Name: Prescott Stone Project

8. Community Preservation Plan Objectives - use codes from Section 5 to indicate all that apply:
5.1.2. Protect cultural and historic resources.

9. Project basic description: The Groton History Center and the Historical Commission working together, will provide a secure and stable setting for the Prescott Stone. It will be located at the Governor George Boutwell House in the side yard, protected from weather and available for viewing by Groton citizens. It will sit in a shallow pit, surrounded by a pea stone bed and balanced using stone shims. In addition, some structure will be built to provide some protection from the weather so the writing will not further erode. At this point in time we have someone who may volunteer the labor necessary to complete the work. Please see attached, an article by Al Collins regarding the Prescott Stone. Right now we believe this could cost \$5000 to \$6000.

George Wheatley phone number 978 448 5620

A Stone With a Story

Al Collins

In the late 1600s, Jonas Prescott had a farm on the northwestern side of today's Old Ayer Road. As most inhabitants did back in the early years of Groton, Jonas most likely cleared his fields of rocks & stones and used these stones to build boundary stonewalls. It is believed Jonas placed a stone in one of his walls with the inscription "I P 1680", most likely marking the date he constructed the wall. As years passed, ownership of Jonas' property transferred to his grandson Oliver Prescott. It's believed at some point Oliver rebuilt the wall and in doing so, updated Jonas' inscription by adding "Rebuilt by O P 1784". Further on in time, the property transferred to Stuart J. Park who must have carried on the tradition of maintaining this wall and rebuilt it. Once again the inscription was updated by adding "Rebuilt by S J Park 1841".

In 1875 the property was conveyed from the Park Family to Willard Giles. Willard decided to build a new barn on his property and in doing so needed many stones to build a foundation. There happened to be perfect stones close by in the above stonewall so Willard decided to use some of these stones, including the inscribed stone, to build the barn foundation. A noted Town Historian, Dr. Green, noticed the inscribed stone missing and investigated what Willard had done. It was determined, the stone was now part of the barn foundation so with the blessing of Willard Giles, Dr. Green enlisted the help of two masons who spent two days taking down foundation walls until they came across the Prescott stone.

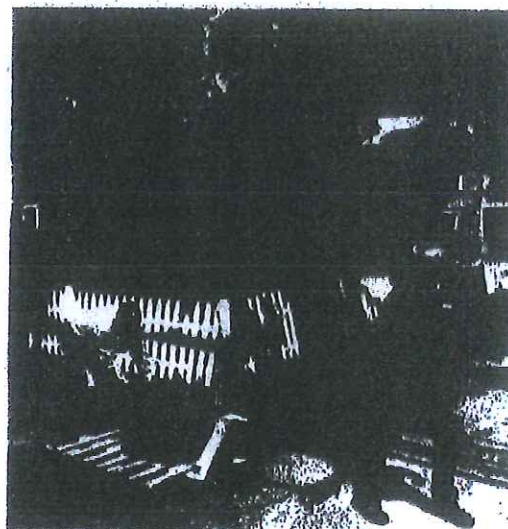
Dr. Green wanted to preserve this piece of history, so it was given to the son of James Lawrence to be placed in a stone wall at the Lawrence Homestead at the corner of Farmer's Row and Long Hill Rd. Through the years trees grew along the wall. One tree in particular wrapped its roots around the stone forcing it to protrude outward from the wall. As the Farmer's Row sidewalks were improved, soil was placed along the sides to raise the grade, covering the bottom inscription on the stone. If nothing were to be done to save this stone, it would one day be face down, covered with dirt and be gone forever.

The Groton Historical Commission recently raised concern to the Lawrence Family Estate that this historic stone could be broken or lost as the forces of both man and nature take their toll. In working out a solution, the Lawrence Estate graciously gifted the Prescott stone to the Commission with the stipulation it be placed either at Town Hall or at the Groton Historical Society. It was decid-

ed the best place to archive this stone would be the Historical Society's History Center with the big remaining question being, how do we remove and transport it, without destroying this piece of history.

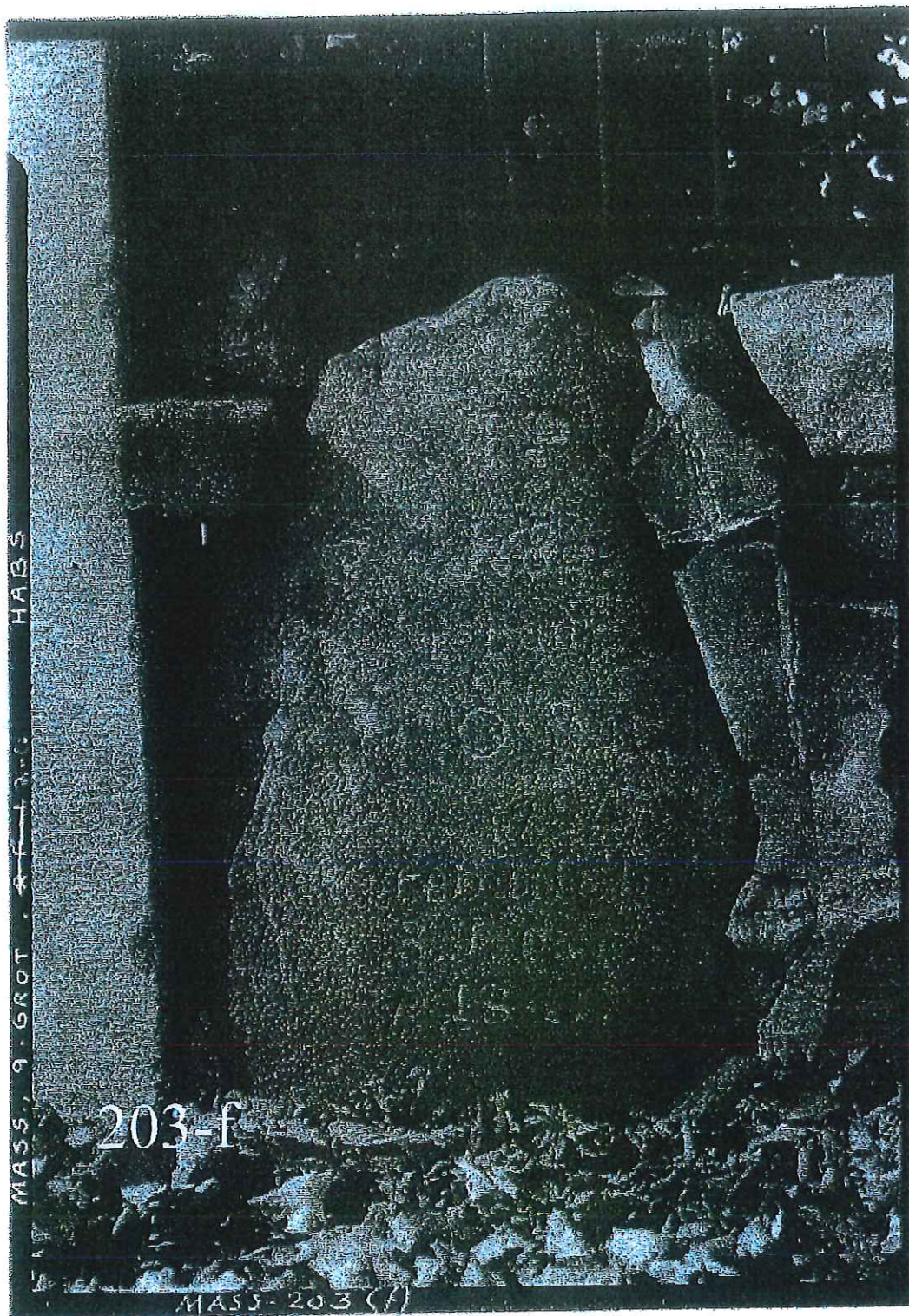
At the direction of George Wheatley and Michael LaTerz, both members of the Historical Commission, Peter Benedict and Al Collins embarked on extracting the stone from the wall. With much effort and 2 hours of hard work, they were able to remove the 600 pound stone and maneuver it onto a wooden pallet. This was a great milestone but now what? Peter happened to be in possession of a pallet jack, so it was decided Peter and Al would muscle their way up and down the sidewalks, along the 3/4 mile route to the History Center on Main Street. George and Michael stopped traffic as the stone made its way across the various intersections. Once in front of Town Hall, Peter and Al mustered up what little energy they had left, pulled the pallet jack as fast as they could across Main St and up onto the driveway, resting the pallet onto a grass area of the History Center.

As many may know, to the rear of the History Center's Boutwell House, the Groton Business Association, along with many volunteers, has been working hard to create a garden for the enjoyment of the general public. The infamous Prescott stone will likely find a permanent resting place within the public garden becoming part of a stone-wall maze. Everyone is invited to volunteer in this public effort to create a serene place at the History Center where people can enjoy wildflowers with views of Gibbet Hill, as well as a Stone with a Story.



George Wheatley and Al Collins moving the Prescott Stone from Farmer's Row to its new home at the Boutwell House.

HABS 203-f



MASS. 9. GROT. REF. 100. HABS

203-f

MASS-203 (f)

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no text or other markings on the paper.

Karakosse

Date: 11/4/21

George W. H. Safety

Date: 17-05-21

Date: _____

