

The Mystery of the Missing Eagle

If you look across Crescent Street opposite the Town Hall, you will see three handsome granite monuments bearing bronze plaques with the names of the Hill veterans who served their country during the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, the First World War (called the “Great War”), the Second World War, in Korea and in Vietnam. You may notice a bronze Eagle, perched on a ball on top of the largest central stone... or you may not. There is a story why this is the case.

After the “Great War” ended, the town honored its sons who had gone off to defend their country with celebrations and parades. In 1928, the town erected and dedicated a monument bearing those veterans’ names, as well as those of young men who had served in previous wars. On top of the monument was a bronze Eagle. When the town of Hill was moved to its present location above the flood plain, the monument and the Eagle were moved, too.

Then in the late 1980’s, the eagle disappeared. Almost 10 years passed. One day, Martin Judd was visiting a scrap metal shop in Franklin, buying copper pipes, when he spotted the Eagle sitting on a shelf. The bird was missing a wing. Martin persuaded the shop’s owner to sell it to him, and he carried the metal bird back to Hill.

A little later, as luck would have it, Martin was working on some plumbing in the basement of the Jennie D. Blake School when he noticed the Eagle’s missing wing, broken in several pieces, behind the furnace. He took all of the pieces to Victor McAdam in Bristol. The Eagle was cleaned and restored just in time to again perch on the central monument at the dedication on November 11, 2000 of the two additional monuments honoring the veterans of the Second World War, the Korean War and Vietnam Conflict.

Now the town’s Eagle is displayed on Memorial Day, Veterans’ Day and the 4th of July, and on a few other occasions. Fearing that someone might decide to swipe him again and that acid rain might further damage his delicate structure, the Selectmen keep the Eagle safely in the Town Hall the rest of the year.

