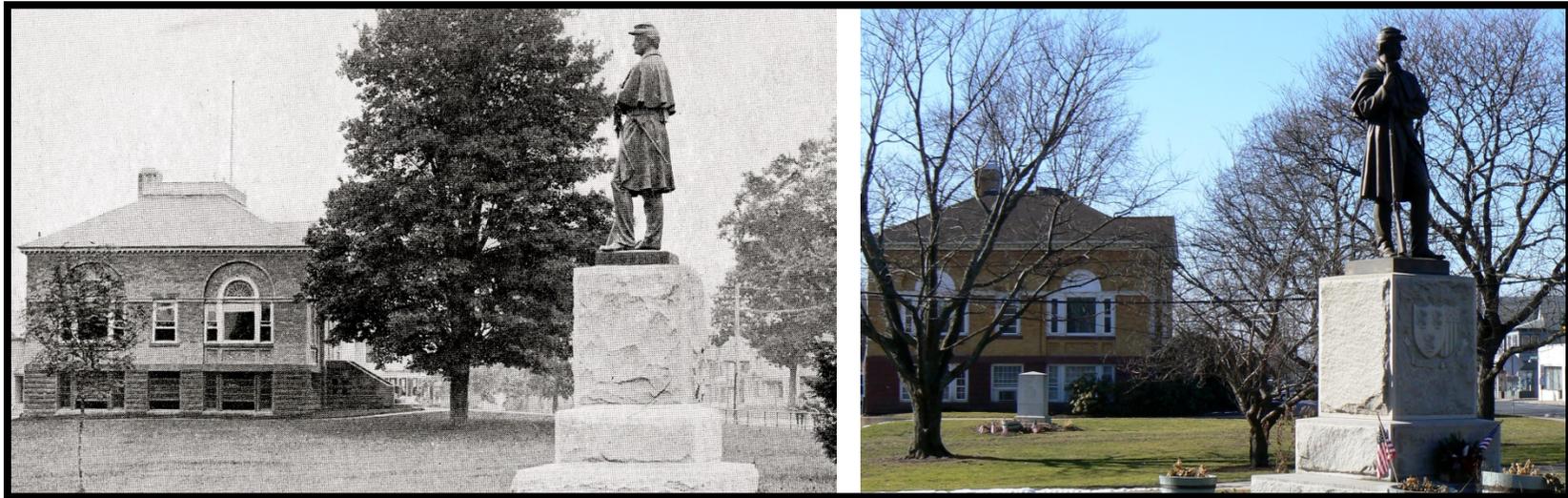


DID YOU KNOW?

THE CIVIL WAR MONUMENT DIDN'T ALWAYS FACE NORTHEAST.



On the left: Monument as it appeared 1877-1965 **On the right:** Monument as it appears today. Note the Probate Court in the distance.

If you were living in Manchester before 1965, you may recall that the Civil War Monument in Center Memorial Park faced a different direction. If you're younger or new to town, maybe you've heard stories about it having been "turned around" or "moved". The bronze cast monument, sculpted by artist Charles Conrads, was erected in 1877 as a memorial to Manchester's Civil War veterans. For nearly 90 years, the soldier stood facing south. In March of 1965, at the behest of the Manchester Memorial Day Committee and at a cost of \$1100.00 (about \$8200.00 in modern currency), Arrigo H. Aimetti of the Manchester Monument Company, pivoted the base and statue 135 degrees to face its current northeast direction. So, why would anyone move an extremely heavy monument? In a Hartford Courant interview from April 1, 1965, Memorial Day Committee Secretary Laura Loomis provided the answer, stating that *"the statue was originally placed facing south to overlook Chestnut street, which in the early days of the town, extended through Center Park to Main Street... When the park...was bequeathed to the town under the terms of the Cheney will, the street was terminated at Linden Street."* This left the statue facing a missing roadway, no longer allowing passersby to admire it as once intended. Repositioning the statue toward the very busy Center and Main Street intersection gave the monument more prominent visibility as well as the dignity it deserved by displaying its proper front side toward passing vehicular and foot traffic.

– D. Beal