

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

DRAFT

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name The Red Rock Monument

other names/site number _____

name of related multiple property listing _____

Location

street & number 321 County Route 24

city or town East Chatham

state NY code 36 county Columbia code 21 zip code 12516

X

not for publication

vicinity

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

 entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

 other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

☐ private
☒ public - Local
☐ public - State
☐ public - Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

☐ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☒ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing
	buildings
	sites
	structures
1	objects
1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE-
MONUMENT/MARKER-
COMMEMORATIVE MONUMENT

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE-
MONUMENT/MARKER-
COMMEMORATIVE MONUMENT

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

NO STYLE

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: _____

walls: _____

roof: _____

other: **STONE, MARBLE**

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

Red Rock is a small rural hamlet in the Town of Canaan, Columbia County, New York. The Red Rock Monument is located on a 0.03-acre parcel along County Route 24, the three-mile-long thoroughfare that roughly parallels Indian Creek. On September 14, 1860, the people of Red Rock dedicated the Red Rock Monument commemorating the 110th anniversary of the hamlet's founding and official naming. The monument consists of a 12-foot-tall obelisk carved from Stockbridge marble, fixed atop a distinctive 250-ton red rock boulder. This boulder is where the name of the hamlet originated. The rear side of the boulder sits on the banks of the Indian Creek. There are a few residential homes and public buildings neighboring the monument. The closest building is the original 1930s Red Rock Firehouse to the north. The monument was commissioned by a committee led by Dr. Elias Bostwick, but it is unknown who created the obelisk.¹ It was constructed using Stockbridge marble from quarries just over the border in Western Massachusetts. The monument features an inscription in the middle of its shaft, "Red Rock Settled 1750," and another at the base, "Erected 1860." Today, the monument still stands tall as a symbol for the hamlet of Red Rock, a testament to its well-executed design.

Narrative Description

Location and Setting

The hamlet of Red Rock is located eight miles east of Chatham, twelve miles south of New Lebanon, and shares its southern border with Austerlitz and its eastern border with Massachusetts. The Red Rock Monument is situated alone between County Route 24 and the Indian Creek (See Figure 2). The site of the monument is separated from Country Route 24 by a non-contributing guardrail. County Route 24 was a well-used stagecoach route between Stockbridge, Massachusetts, and Hudson, the Columbia County seat. The monument faces south and sits at the bottom of a steep valley of the Taconic range with wooded hillsides to the south and north. The Red Rock Firehouse is four tenths of a mile to the north. The rest of the hamlet along County Route 24 is essentially unchanged and remains a rural hamlet that is now exclusively residential. The existing residences were built between the late eighteenth century and the early twentieth century. Although the site of the monument is isolated and not located in the center of the hamlet, it has a prominent position along the main road, serving as a reminder of the sense of pride the Red Rock community has in its history and identity.

Design and Construction

The Red Rock Monument is a site-specific monument with a simple design that was carved to appear naturally in its setting. It is a light grey-colored, twelve-foot obelisk, handcrafted from a single block of Stockbridge marble using simple hand tools, and is fixed atop a 250-ton boulder. The obelisk and boulder are two separate components that form a single object, designed to be viewed as a unified

¹ Helen Golden, "Hamlet of Red Rock." *Chatham Courier*, August 8, 2022, 7.

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monument that rises approximately 20 feet above street level. The precisely aligned placement of the obelisk atop the rock is an excellent example of design and engineering. There are no visible anchoring systems, and it has not tipped over or even moved in 165 years. The dates of the hamlet's founding and the monument's erection are hand-chiseled on the shaft, "Red Rock Settled 1750," and at the base, "Erected 1860."

The 650-million-year-old boulder is exceptionally rare, as it was transported to the site by a glacier from the Burlington, Vermont area approximately 10,000 to 20,000 years ago.² The red colored rock is the most distinct feature, and no other boulders like it exist in the area. The boulder has been on this site for thousands of years. The Department of Geology at Hamilton College was unable to identify the boulder's formation, but they were successful in determining that it was brought during an ice age.³

Statement of Integrity

The Red Rock Monument has remained unchanged since its erection in 1860, and it still sits atop the original red rock boulder. Apart from the paved County Route 24, which was once a wagon trail, the setting remains essentially unchanged. The wooded hillsides surrounding the monument were grazing pastures for the local Merino sheep farms in the mid-to-late nineteenth century, but the monument's overall rural and isolated setting remains largely intact.⁴

There were only a few minor changes to the monument itself as a result of restoration efforts. The monument was vandalized with spray paint graffiti in 1992; however, the methods used to repair it led to the growth of lichen and moss on the Stockbridge marble. Nevertheless, a successful restoration project was undertaken in 2021 to restore the marble to its original appearance using gentle solvents, light brushing, and multiple rinses. The restoration also required the repair of a large crack at its top, which was masterfully executed, leaving the repair invisible to the eye. The only new marble incorporated was a small pyramid-shaped finial to seal the reception hole for the long-lost original finial. The crack was formed by the hole where the missing finial resided, which was repeatedly filled with rainwater, which continued to freeze and thaw.

Since the monument retains its original location, setting, workmanship, and design, its feeling and association naturally follow. It continues to embody nineteenth-century commemorative monument design, serving as a visual marker for the hamlet's founding, just as it did in 1860.

² "Summertime is Almost Here," *Chatham Courier*, June 14, 1990.

³ The Hamilton College Department of Geology conducted an informal and unpublished study in 2011 as a favor to the Red Rock Historical Society and author Craig Dillon.

⁴ Anna Duhon, "A Window into Sheep," *Hawthorne Valley Farmscape Ecology*, April 15, 2010.
<https://www.hvfarmscape.org/nuggets/kypps-sheep.htm>

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☒ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ART, ARCHITECTURE

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1860-1950

Significant Dates

September 14, 1860- The monument's erection and dedication ceremony

1900- Celebration of the 150th anniversary of the founding of Red Rock at the monument

1950 – Celebration of the 200th anniversary of the founding of Red Rock at the monument

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance is the date of the monument's construction in 1860 and ends in 1950 with the founding of Red Rock's 200th anniversary celebration at the monument site.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

The Red Rock Monument meets criteria consideration F as a locally significant and rare example of a commemorative monument that celebrates the founding of Red Rock and its official naming. The site

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of the monument has been the location of many local commemorative events and celebrations since its erection on September 14, 1860, up to the 200th anniversary of the founding of Red Rock celebration on August 12, 1950.

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Red Rock Monument in the Town of Canaan, Columbia County, is eligible for the State and National Registers of Historic Places under Criterion A for Social History, Criterion C for art and architecture, and Consideration F as a commemorative property. It is significant as an artistic monument crafted from a single portion of Stockbridge marble from Berkshire County, Massachusetts. The monument was erected in 1860 and fixed atop a distinct 250-ton red rock boulder and carved entirely by hand, including its inscriptions. This configuration of a monument is rare, as there are no other known examples in the region. Its construction also demonstrates a remarkable feat of engineering at the time, as the monument has not shifted since its erection 165 years ago. Since its erection on September 14, 1860, the monument has played a role in commemoration as it was built to honor the founding of the hamlet in 1750 and the establishment of Red Rock's official name in 1825. The site also hosted the celebrations for the 150th and 200th anniversaries of the hamlet's founding in 1900 and 1950. The monument has been an important visual symbol and a source of pride for the Red Rock community ever since. However, the monument was vandalized and then immediately cleaned in 1992. It faced neglect and underwent complete restoration in 2021. It possesses a high degree of historic integrity and remains an essential part of the Red Rock community.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Settlement of Red Rock

The hamlet of Red Rock was one of the earliest settlements in Northeast Columbia County. It is located in the Town of Canaan, but was established before the town was founded in 1759.⁵ In 1750, Jonathan Ford arrived in the area later known as Red Rock by ox-pulled wagon with his wife and infant child. They came from Pembroke, Massachusetts, and according to oral tradition, "the Ford family passed the nearby Mohican encampment, then followed a trail up a hill where they turned their wagon upside down for shelter and camped."⁶ Ford then built a large brick home on this land, which is approximately 1 mile north of the monument off Cemetery Road and is still extant today.⁷ The property remained in the Ford family for several generations and is now owned and occupied by the artist William Thompson.

⁵ Ruby Belding et al., *Bi-Centennial: Commemorating Settlement of Canaan Area 1759*. (Unpublished manuscript, 1959).

⁶ Gladys Vickery, Red Rock: Stockbridge Indians Once Camped Along Stream that Flows Through Tiny Hamlet," *Chatham Courier*, November 2, 2000, 12.

⁷ Franklin Ellis, *History of Columbia County, New York with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Some of Its Prominent Men and Pioneers* (J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1878), 319-326.

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The land that constitutes the hamlet of Red Rock was initially inhabited by the indigenous Stockbridge-Munsee tribe, a Mohican people who camped along Indian Creek during the summer.⁸ The early settlers purchased 3,840 acres from the tribe.⁹ From 1750 to 1775, the hamlet was referred to as Macedonia, named after a trail near the property where the Fords settled. The combination of the Indian Creek and the Macedonia trail attracted settlers to the area, including the Barrett, Parke, Benjamin, Bishop, Goodrich, Powell, and Harmon families, who mostly came from Northern Connecticut and Western Massachusetts.¹⁰

More than thirty years before Columbia County was carved out of Albany County (1786), the name of the hamlet changed to South Canaan. This name change occurred after parts of the Town of Canaan were subdivided, forming the towns of Chatham, New Lebanon, and Austerlitz.¹¹ According to local legend, in circa 1810, a peddler named Silvanus Cunningham was passing through the area when his wagon overturned. The settlers helped him gather his wares, and he stated in his travel journal that “not all his belongings were returned to him.” As a result of the alleged theft, he referred to the area as the derogatory name, “Pilfershire.”¹² Despite its negative connotation, the name stuck. In 1825, the residents of Pilfershire gathered at a meeting in Ezra Park’s local store to decide on a formal name for the hamlet that did not have a negative association. The name “Red Rock” was chosen because the prominent boulder was a distinctive geographical feature cherished by the community.¹³

At the start of the nineteenth century, businesses powered by the Indian Creek started to grow and the population increased. By 1840, the Town of Canaan had 2,000 residents and Red Rock had about 100 residents.¹⁴ Throughout the nineteenth century, the hamlet was home to a variety of industries, including grain mills, sawmills, fulling mills, oil mills, small distilleries, a general store, and a schoolhouse.¹⁵ (See Figure 1). It also had several hotels since the stagecoach road from Hudson, New York, to West Stockbridge, Massachusetts, followed Indian Creek through Red Rock.¹⁶ Additionally, in the nineteenth century, Columbia County and its neighboring Berkshire County, Massachusetts, began raising Merino sheep. At least seven women who resided in Red Rock were operating looms.¹⁷ Red Rock had become a bustling agricultural hamlet.¹⁸

⁸ Gladys Vickery, Red Rock: Stockbridge Indians Once Camped Along Stream that Flows Through Tiny Hamlet,” *Chatham Courier*, November 2, 2000, 12.

⁹ Allison Guertin Marches, *Hidden History of Columbia County* (Arcadia Publishing, 2014), 43-44.

¹⁰ The Red Rock Historical Society documented the names on the headstones of the hamlet’s founding families during their ongoing cemetery preservation efforts.

¹¹ “Red Rock: The legends of ‘Pilfershire’ and the Devil,” *Chatham Courier*, September 18, 1975.

¹² Helen Golden, “Hamlet of Red Rock.” *Chatham Courier*, August 8, 2022, 7.

¹³ Betty Ford, “History of Red Rock” (unpublished manuscript, ca. 1943-1945, 21-22.)

¹⁴ Franklin Ellis, *History of Columbia County, New York with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Some of Its Prominent Men and Pioneers* (J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1878), 319.

¹⁵ “Red Rock: Picturesque Community Settled in 1750 Boasts a Rich Historical Heritage.” *Chatham Courier*, October 24, 1963.

¹⁶ Ruby Belding et al., *Bi-Centennial: Commemorating Settlement of Canaan Area 1759*. Unpublished manuscript, 1959.

¹⁷ “Red Rock: The legends of ‘Pilfershire’ and the Devil,” *Chatham Courier*, September 18, 1975.

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The mills and factories had closed by the early to mid-twentieth century, and Red Rock emerged as a summer destination for people from New York City, Boston, and other urban centers. Although not documented, it is widely presumed that the hamlet became less traveled when the railroads came through just eight miles north of Red Rock in the mid-nineteenth century. Over time, the mills and factories faltered and were demolished, likely due to the decline in visitors and the loss of a lucrative economy associated with transportation hubs. With the mills and factories gone, Red Rock became an exclusively residential neighborhood. The last business, Arthur Lee's real estate firm, closed in 2023. Early twentieth-century homes were purchased and renovated to meet contemporary residential standards while still preserving their historic character.

History of the Red Rock Monument

When the name of the hamlet was officially changed to Red Rock in 1825, the residents painted the boulder a bright shade of red and installed a wooden post on top of it to commemorate the newly selected name.¹⁹ They recognized the importance of the boulder to their community's identity and chose it specifically to honor the name. However, the wooden post started to deteriorate over time. In 1860, the community formed a committee led by Dr. Elias Bostwick and decided to replace the wooden post with a marble obelisk from neighboring Stockbridge stone quarries in Berkshire County, Massachusetts.²⁰

The dedication ceremony for the monument's erection was held on September 14, 1860, at the site of the monument. The obelisk was installed at 8:00 a.m., and at 10:00 a.m., the site was filled with hundreds of attendees from all over the county and region. The commissioners of the ceremony were H.D. Ford, Col. P.W. Bishop, J.C. Ford, G.H. Crane, and Dr. Elias Bostwick. The keynote speaker was Congressman Charles L. Beale, who was born in Canaan. H.D. Ford gave an address about the history of Red Rock from the top of the boulder. Following Ford's address, Col. Bishop led a procession to the Christian Church at the Red Rock Cemetery to hear Congressman Beale's address at noon.²¹ H.D. Ford gave an address about the history of Red Rock from the top of the boulder. Following Ford's address, Col. Bishop led a procession to the Christian Church at the Red Rock Cemetery to hear Congressman Beale's address at noon.²² The Chatham Four Corners Fire Department, along with the Wilcox band, participated in the ceremony as well. Immediately following the ceremony was a large dinner for all in attendance.

¹⁸ New York Secretary of State. *Manual for the Use of the Legislature of the State of New York for the Year 1865*. (Weed, Parsons & Co., 1865), 8.

¹⁹ "Red Rock Day: A Glorious Occasion." *Chatham Courier*, October 17, 1900.

²⁰ Ruby Belding et al., *Bi-Centennial: Commemorating Settlement of Canaan Area 1759*. Unpublished manuscript, 1959.

²¹ "Monument Raising and Anniversary Celebration!" September 12, 1860. News clipping from an Unknown Source. Columbia County Historical Society.

²² "Monument Raising and Anniversary Celebration!" September 12, 1860. News clipping from an Unknown Source. Columbia County Historical Society.

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The sole purpose of this massive undertaking was to obtain official recognition of the name "Red Rock." The local community referred to itself as Red Rock, but their goal was to establish it as the official name for the hamlet.²³ This mission was formally accomplished with the establishment of the U.S. Post Office of Red Rock in August of 1860.²⁴ Additionally, the Hamlet was listed as "Red Rock" on all maps going forward.

On Wednesday, October 10, 1900, the inhabitants of Red Rock came together and held another large celebration honoring the 150th anniversary of the hamlet's founding. Hundreds of attendees from both Columbia and Berkshire Counties attended. According to newspaper reports, a speaker podium was constructed next to the boulder for the ceremony, and the Hon. John Cadman and Chatham School Commissioner, Hugh I. Fish, were the keynote speakers.²⁵ A large American Flag was hung by a wire and fastened to nearby trees on the hillsides to the north and south of the monument. The southern hillside formed a natural amphitheater, providing a seating area for the attendees. Various sporting contests were held in the afternoon, followed by a clam bake for all in attendance.²⁶

On Saturday, August 12, 1950, another large celebration was held for the hamlet's 200th anniversary. It was described as "the largest gathering in Red Rock since the 1900 commemorative event."²⁷ The celebration included track and field competitions for local children, followed by a basket luncheon at noon.²⁸ At 2:00 p.m., the formal ceremony commenced from a truck bed parked next to the monument (See Figures 6 and 7). Reverend George Montrose gave the invocation, and the event chair, Mrs. Charles Pultz, introduced Canaan Supervisor H.S. Johnson to speak. Senator Ernest I. Hatfield of the 33rd district delivered the keynote address. Hatfield praised the residents of Red Rock for their "success at self-sufficiency, religious faith, modest needs, production for one another, and instilling in their children love and respect for their community, state, and nation."²⁹ At 4:00 p.m., a parade took participants to the Methodist Church, where objects relating to Red Rock's history were on display.³⁰

Stockbridge Marble Quarry Industry

The Red Rock Monument's Stockbridge marble obelisk represents the history of quarrying in the neighboring Berkshires, which, in and of itself, is a testament to a long-gone local industry. According

²³ Ruby Belding et al., *Bi-Centennial: Commemorating Settlement of Canaan Area 1759*. Unpublished manuscript, 1959.

²⁴ "New Post Office," *Rhinebeck Gazette*, August 7, 1860.

²⁵ "Red Rock Day: A Glorious Occasion." *Chatham Courier*, October 17, 1900.

²⁶ Hundreds See Parade, Pageant, As Hamlet Notes Birthday With An All-Day Celebration," *Chatham Courier*, August 17, 1950.

²⁷ "Red Rock Observes 200th Anniversary," *Chatham Courier*, August 17, 1950.

²⁸ "Hundreds See Parade, Pageant, As Hamlet Notes Birthday With An All Day Celebration," *Chatham Courier* August 17, 1950.

²⁹ "Hundreds See Parade, Pageant, As Hamlet Notes Birthday With An All Day Celebration," *Chatham Courier* August 17, 1950.

³⁰ "Hundreds See Parade, Pageant, As Hamlet Notes Birthday With An All Day Celebration," *Chatham Courier* August 17, 1950.

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to Conrad Hanson, "The marble industry in the Berkshires was one of the region's major economic engines for over a century, and it was exported throughout the Northeast and Middle Atlantic States for use in the construction of hundreds of major buildings, monuments, and cemeteries."³¹ The marble was quarried by hand or water-powered tools by early European settlers and used initially on a local level. Hanson states, "By 1803, a quarry in Alford [Massachusetts] was supplying the marble for Manhattan's new City Hall, while other local quarries were providing building materials for projects in Philadelphia and Boston."³²

The process for extracting the marble was extremely labor-intensive and even dangerous. Hanson describes the process as:

The marble was extracted from the earth in giant blocks, forming giant steps or benches as they went deeper down, leaving open pits a hundred feet deep in some places. On site at former quarries, [there were] a number of structures built for specialized functions, including finishing mills where large blocks were cut into smaller, uniform sizes, and cutting rooms where architectural pieces were carved and finished, to blacksmith shops where iron tools were forged and repaired.³³

These Berkshire County quarries played a direct role in Columbia County's economy. The first railroad connecting West Stockbridge to New York was built in 1838 to facilitate the transportation of marble. The builders of the Red Rock Monument chose Stockbridge marble in 1860, demonstrating it was locally available and a popular building material for the time. Although a lucrative industry that spanned three centuries, the Great Depression brought the marble industry to a halt, and Portland cement began to replace marble as the preferred building material.³⁴ Therefore, the use of Stockbridge marble for the Red Rock Monument is significant, serving as a reminder of the once-prosperous local quarrying industry and its history.³⁵

³¹ Conrad Hanson, "Car Trip: Tracing the Fascinating History of the Berkshires Marble Industry, Once a Main Driver of the Local Economy," *The Berkshire Eagle*, March 18, 2021.

³² Conrad Hanson, "Car Trip: Tracing the Fascinating History of the Berkshires Marble Industry, Once a Main Driver of the Local Economy," *The Berkshire Eagle*, March 18, 2021.

³³ Conrad Hanson, "Car Trip: Tracing the Fascinating History of the Berkshires Marble Industry, Once a Main Driver of the Local Economy," *The Berkshire Eagle*, March 18, 2021.

³⁴ Conrad Hanson, "Car Trip: Tracing the Fascinating History of the Berkshires Marble Industry, Once a Main Driver of the Local Economy," *The Berkshire Eagle*, March 18, 2021.

³⁵ According to Conrad Hanson's article, "Car Trip: Tracing the Fascinating History of the Berkshires Marble Industry, Once a Main Driver of the Local Economy," while there are currently no available records indicating who built the Red Rock Monument or from which quarry the marble came, master mason Verne Tower of Berkshire County has identified the material and has worked with similar Stockbridge marble on several occasions.

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Comparative Analysis of Regional Monuments

There are several other monuments in Columbia County, and while many are similar in design, the Red Rock Monument's distinctive red rock boulder and its dedication to the founding and official naming of a hamlet distinguish it from the others and make it exceptionally rare.

One nearby monument is located in the Town of Canaan at the intersection of County Route 5 and State Route 295, approximately 7 miles from the Red Rock Monument. It was erected in 1941 and is also an obelisk. Unlike the Red Rock Monument, it sits atop a manmade base and is dedicated to the veterans of Canaan. The shaft has an engraved eagle and an inscription "Dedicated to the Memory of those Who Have Served Our Country in All Wars. Town of Canaan, New York. Erected 1971" (See Figure 10). There is another monument, almost identical in design, located in New Lebanon, with a similar inscription and erected three years later in 1974 (See Figure 11).

About 30 miles south of Red Rock, the Town of Ancram has a monument honoring its Civil War veterans. The monument is situated on the median at the intersection of County Route 7 and State Route 82. The names of the veterans are engraved on a bronze plaque affixed to a rectangular granite block (See Figure 12). Located nearby is another monument dedicated to Ancram's World War I veterans, which is almost identical in appearance to the World War I monument (See Figure 13).

A rarer memorial is also located in New Lebanon that does not reference a war. The Mohican Blessing Fountain monument honors the Mohican people for sharing the healing waters from the thermal springs.³⁶ The monument was commissioned in 1941 and sculpted by artist Henry Kitson. It features a bronze sculpture of a Mohican drinking water from cupped hands, mounted on a chiseled, rusticated boulder (See Figure 14). The monument was installed in the 1940s and then relocated to the George Otis-Rockwood Memorial Park on Route 22 in 1982-83.³⁷

Like the Red Rock Monument, all these monuments are essential parts of their communities and their histories. There is no question, though, that a monument erected to honor a town's founding as well as its naming is rare in Columbia County. There are also no other monuments like the Red Rock Monument due to its uncommon red rock boulder as its base. These distinguishing traits make it historically significant and exceptional.

Later History

Continuing the tradition of commemoration, a celebration was held in 2000 to mark the 250th anniversary of Red Rock's settlement. The event began with a meeting at the Red Rock Historical Society's building, the former Methodist Church, followed by a parade to the monument. Attendees included descendants of two of the early settlers, the Fords and the Briggs, as well as descendants of

³⁶ Kevin Fuerst, "Mohican Blessing Fountain," Revised October 12, 2024.
<https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=135096>.

³⁷ Kevin Fuerst, "Mohican Blessing Fountain," Revised October 12, 2024.
<https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=135096>.

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Red Rock Revolutionary War patriots (see Figure 9). The county sheriff closed the road for the parade to and from the monument. Refreshments were served at the historic Methodist Church after the parade. The celebration took place one week after a severe storm caused widespread flooding in Red Rock and destroyed one of the bridges over Indian Creek. The whole community worked together to clean up the damaged areas. At the celebration, Ginny Nightingale of the Red Rock Historical Society delivered a speech on the importance of community.³⁸

Over the centuries, the inhabitants of Red Rock continuously cherished their monument, but it was unfortunately vandalized with graffiti in December of 1992 (See Figure 8).³⁹ Reliable Hydro Cleaning of Tivoli immediately repaired it, but their cleaning methods resulted in the accumulation of lichen and mold on the Stockbridge marble.⁴⁰ As a result, the monument further deteriorated, and a major restoration project in 2021 restored it to its original appearance.

Even though the monument was erected in 1860 on private property, the people of Red Rock have always considered it a public site. Following the restoration in 2021, a discussion with the local landowners resulted in the donation of a small parcel, on which the monument sits, to the Town of Canaan in December 2023. This act allowed for the monument's maintenance to be conducted by the Red Rock Historical Society and the Town of Canaan, officially establishing the monument's public ownership. The size of the parcel is simply what the landowners were willing to part with, but it suits the site's needs.

Red Rock is, and has always been, a small and close-knit community that cares deeply about its history and heritage. The Red Rock Monument is an integral part of this community, serving as a symbol for the hamlet and a site that has hosted commemorative events throughout the centuries. The monument's restoration was a grand effort that demonstrates the community's dedication to preserving its past.

³⁸ Virginia Nightingale (President of Red Rock Historical Society), In-person conversation with author Craig Dillon, 2022.

³⁹Ellen Pellnat, "Red Rock Monument is Being Cleaned," *Chatham Courier*, December 24, 1992.

⁴⁰ Ellen Pellnat, "Red Rock Monument is Being Cleaned," *Chatham Courier*, December 24, 1992.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Red Rock Monument

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Red Rock Monument

Name of Property

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☒ Other

Name of repository: Columbia County, Canaan, and Red Rock Historical Societies

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.03

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS: 1984 _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 42.357454 | Longitude: 73.506552 |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary is indicated by a heavy line on the enclosed map with scale. The boundaries of the parcel are County Route 24 to the south and the edge of the Indian Creek to the north. From the Red Rock boulder to the Western property line of the next parcel, the distance is approximately 4 feet. From the east side of the Red Rock boulder, the distance is approximately 6 feet. The property from which the parcel was created is 321 County Route 24 East Chatham, NY.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nomination boundary contains the entirety of the monument, originally built on private property, then donated to the Town of Canaan in 2023.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Craig Dillon (Project Manager of Red Rock Monument Restoration), Edited by Julie Maresco (SHPO)

organization Red Rock Historical Society date 05/15/2025

street & number 18 Madison Ave, PO Box 157 telephone 518-392-6198

city or town East Chatham state NY zip code 12060

e-mail craig@craigdillon.com

Red Rock Monument

Name of Property

Columbia County, NY

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: The Red Rock Monument

City or Vicinity: Canaan/Red Rock

County: Columbia State: NY

Photographers: Craig Dillon and Julie Maresco

Date Photographed: 2021 and 2025

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 5. Front view of the monument depicting damage from previous restoration, Craig Dillon, 2021.
- 2 of 5. Front view of the monument, depicting the 2021 restoration, Craig Dillon, 2021.
- 3 of 5. Angled view of the monument, Craig Dillon, 2021.
- 4 of 5. Detail of the Inscription on the monument, Craig Dillon, 2021.
- 5 of 5. View of the monument from County Route 24, Julie Maresco, 2025.

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Town of Canaan, New York State

street & number 1647 County Route 5 telephone 518-781-3144 Ext. 2

city or town Canaan state NY zip code 12029

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

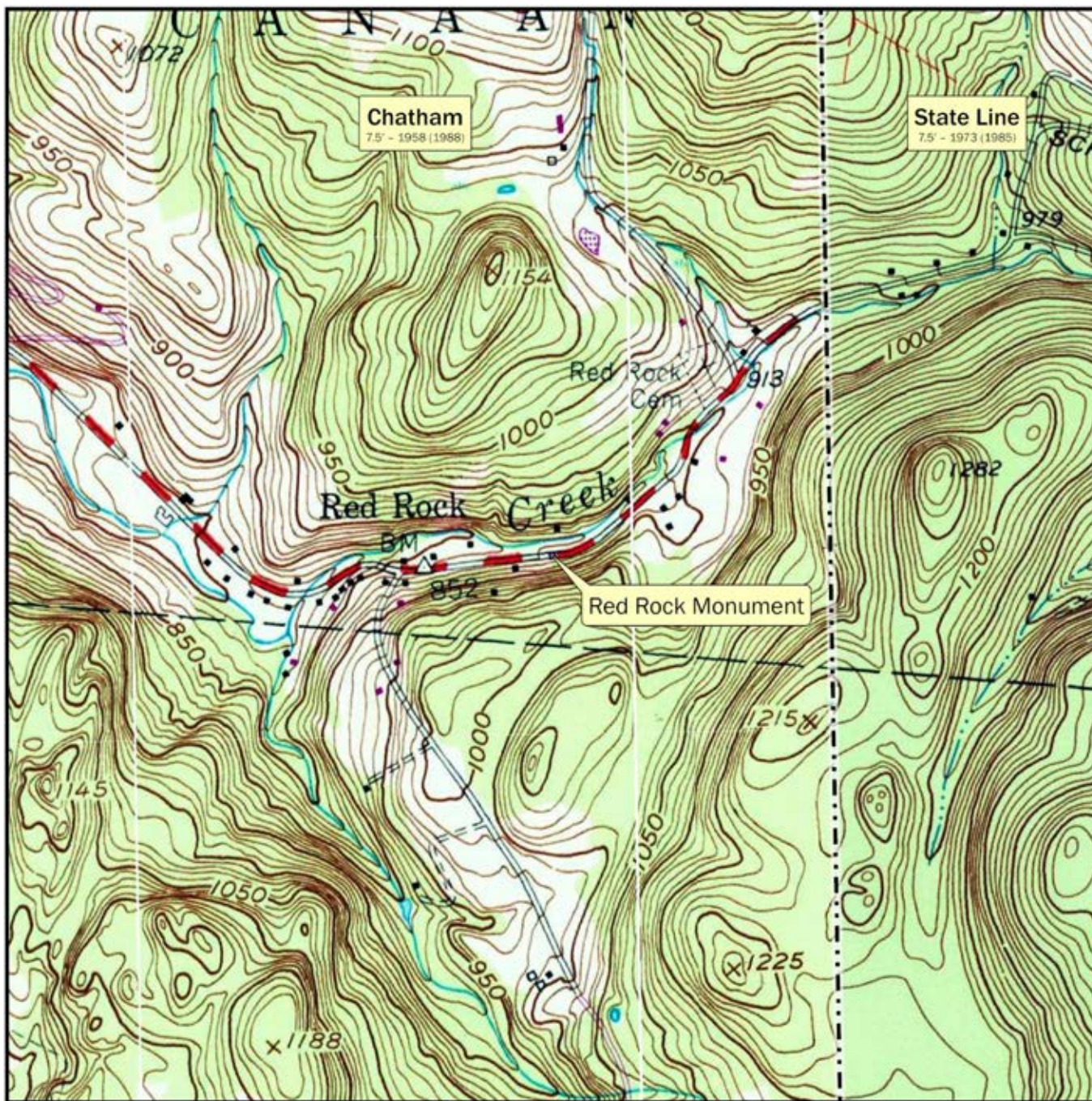
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Red Rock Monument

Name of Property

Columbia County, NY

County and State



1:12,000

0 500 1000 ft



Red Rock Monument



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation

Projection: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 18N

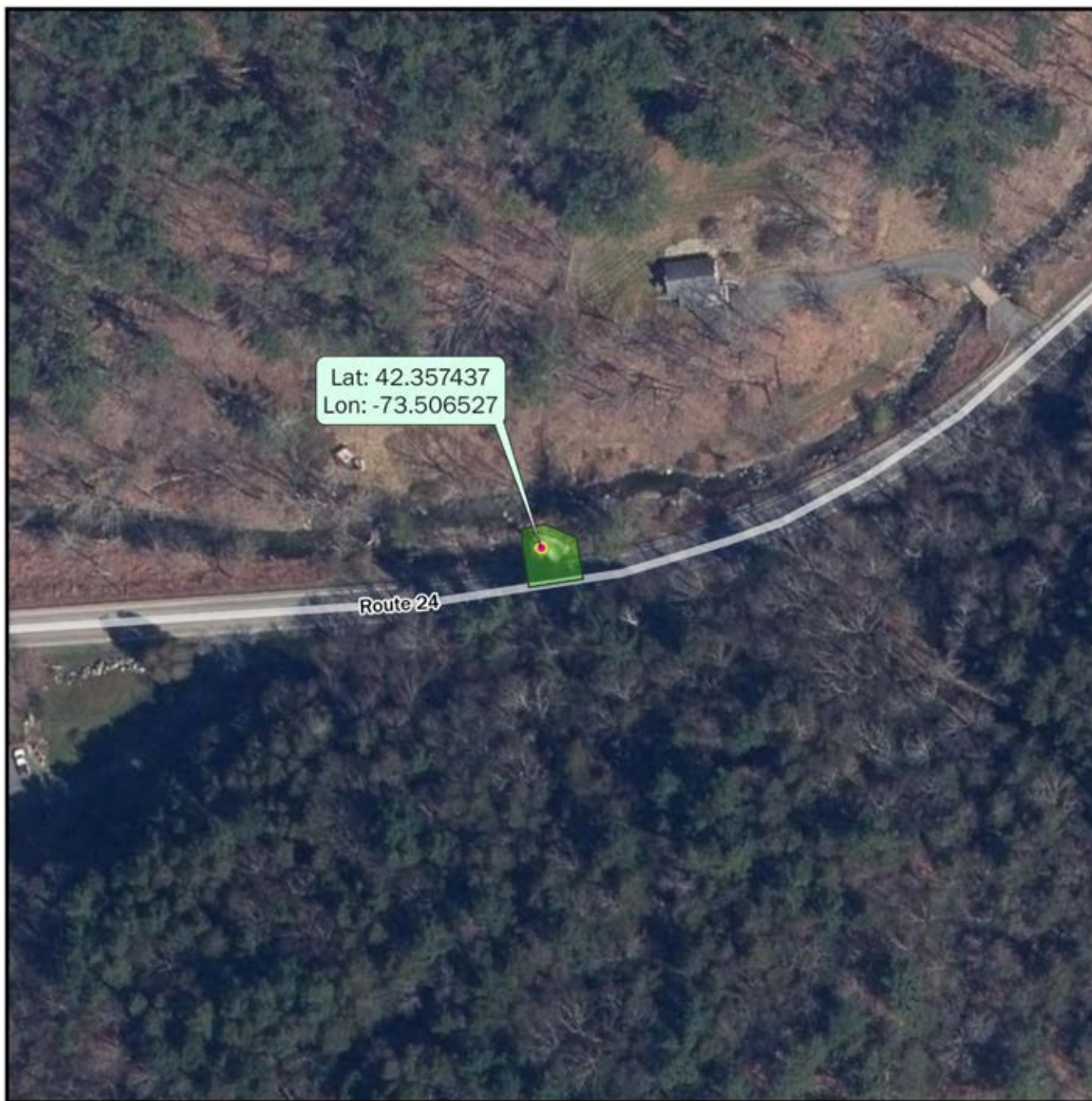
Mapped 05/07/2025 by Matthew W. Shepherd, NYSHPO

Red Rock Monument

Name of Property

Columbia County, NY

County and State



1:1,200

0 50 100 ft

Projection: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 18N



Nomination Boundary (0.03 ac)

New York State Orthoimagery Year: 2023



**New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation**

Mapped 05/07/2025 by Matthew W. Shepherd, NYSHPO

Red Rock Monument

Name of Property

Columbia County, NY

County and State



1:3,600

0 100 200 300 ft

Projection: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 18N



Nomination Boundary (0.03 ac)



Tax Parcels

Columbia County Parcel Year: 2024

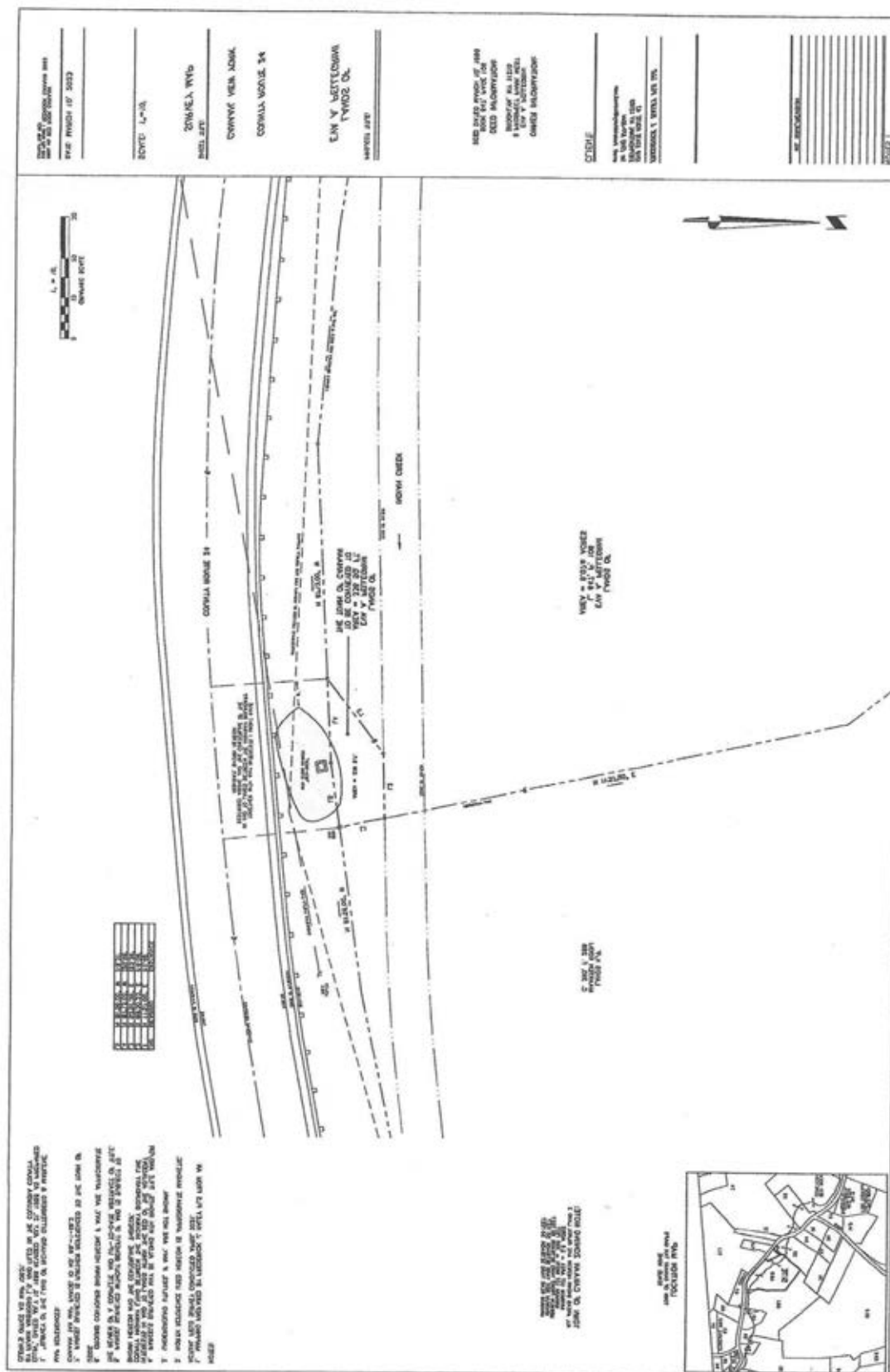


New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation

Mapped 05/07/2025 by Matthew W. Shepherd, NYSHPO

Columbia County, NY
County and State

Name of Property



Red Rock Monument

Name of Property

Columbia County, NY

County and State

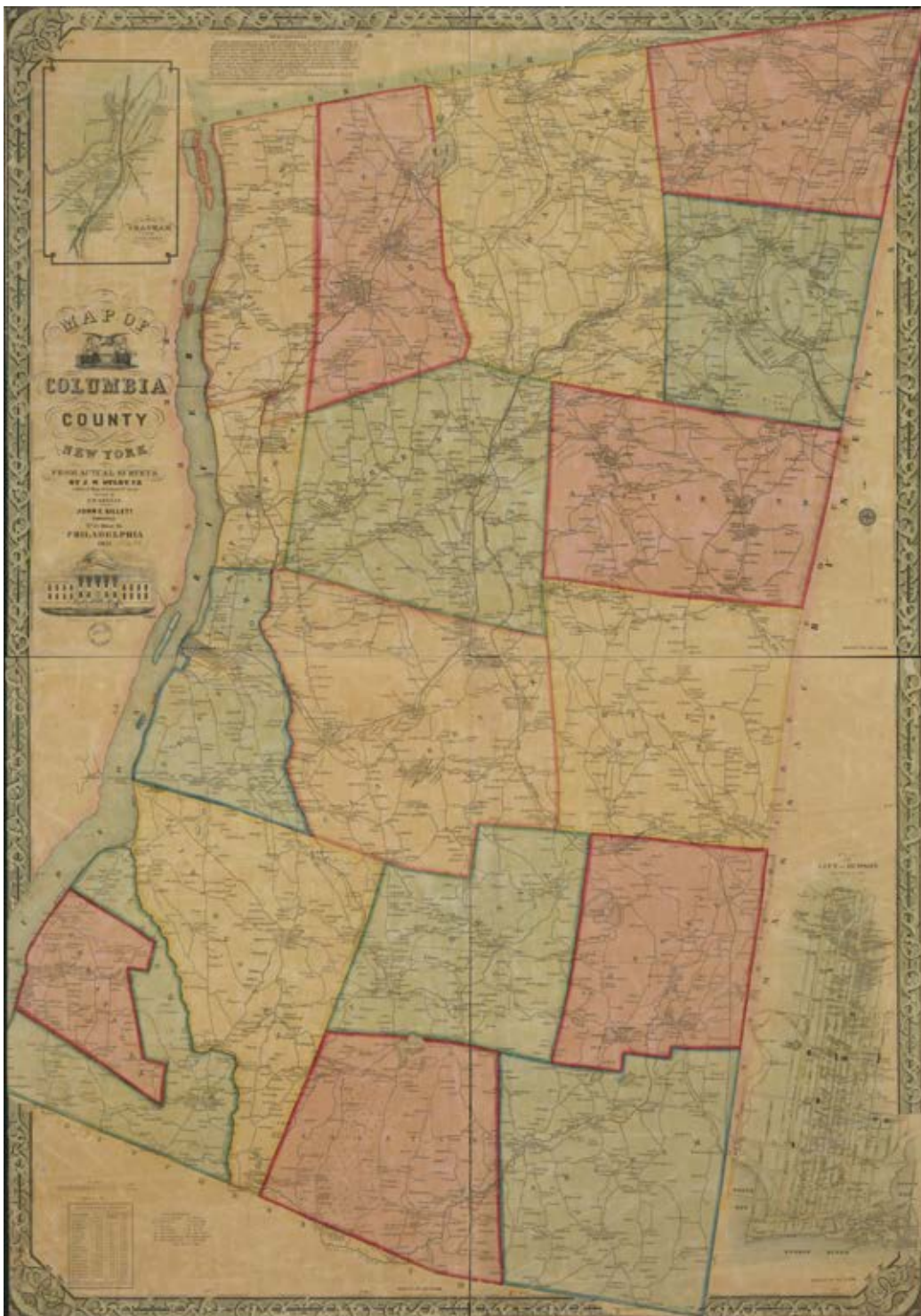


Figure 1. Map of Columbia County. J.W. Otley, 1851. The Library of Congress.

Red Rock Monument

Name of Property

Columbia County, NY

County and State

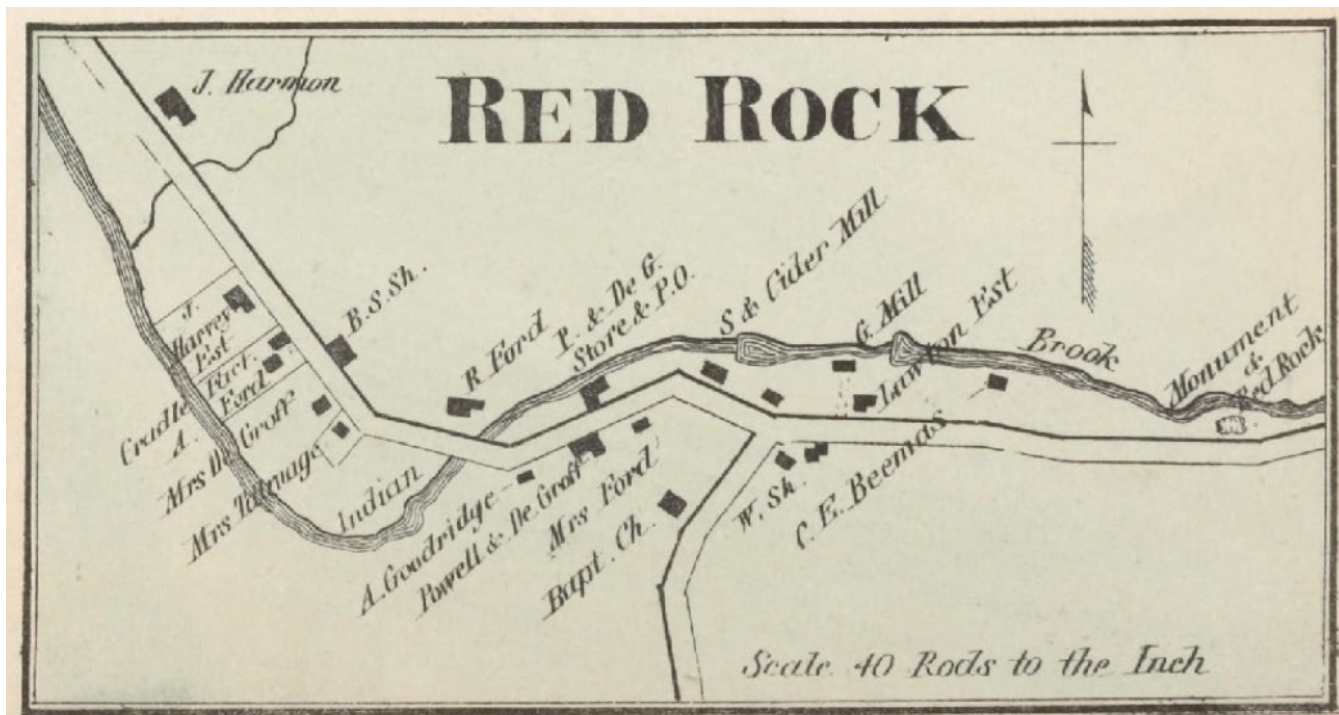


Figure 2. Atlas Map of Red Rock. 1873. Columbia County Historical Society.

Red Rock Monument

Name of Property

Columbia County, NY

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Figure 3. Photograph of the Red Rock Monument. Photographed by John Eberle, ca. 1900.
Columbia County Historical Society.

Red Rock Monument

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Figure 4. Photograph of Civil War Veteran Alonzo Reynolds with the Red Rock Monument.
Photograph attributed to John Eberle, ca. 1900. Columbia County Historical Society.

Red Rock Monument

Name of Property

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Figure 5. Photograph of the Red Rock Monument.
Photographed by John Eberle, ca. 1900. Columbia County Historical Society.

Red Rock Monument

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Figure 6. Photograph of the 200th Anniversary Celebration at Red Rock Monument.
Unknown photographer, 1950. Red Rock Historical Society.

Red Rock Monument

Name of Property

Columbia County, NY

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Figure 7. Photograph of the 200th Anniversary Celebration at Red Rock Monument.
Unknown photographer, 1950. Red Rock Historical Society.

Red Rock Monument

Name of Property

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Figure 8. Newspaper Clipping Depicting the Vandalized Red Rock Monument. *Chatham Courier*, December 10, 1992. Columbia County Historical Society.

Red Rock Monument

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Figure 9. Photograph of the 250th Anniversary Celebration at the Red Rock Monument, featuring (front row, left to right) Anna Mary Dunton (Canaan Historian), Wee Bell Robinson, Helen Briggs, and Ken Ford (Descendants of Red Rock's Founding Families). Photographed by Michael Fredericks, 2000. Red Rock Historical Society.

Red Rock Monument

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Figure 10. Town of Canaan War Memorial. Steve Stoessel, February 9, 2020. Courtesy of the Historical Marker Database.

Red Rock Monument

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Figure 11. Town of New Lebanon War Memorial. Photographed by Steve Stoessel, June 8, 2019. Courtesy of the Historical Marker Database.

Red Rock Monument

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Figure 12. Ancram's Civil War Veterans- Honor Roll. Photographed by Steve Stoessel, August 17, 2019.
Courtesy of the Historical Marker Database.

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Figure 13. The Men of Ancram Who Served In The World War- Honor Roll. Photographed by Steve Stoessel, August 17, 2019. Courtesy of the Historical Marker Database.

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Figure 14. Mohican Blessing Fountain. Photographed by Steve Stoessel, June 8, 2019.
Courtesy of the Historical Marker Database.

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National Park Service

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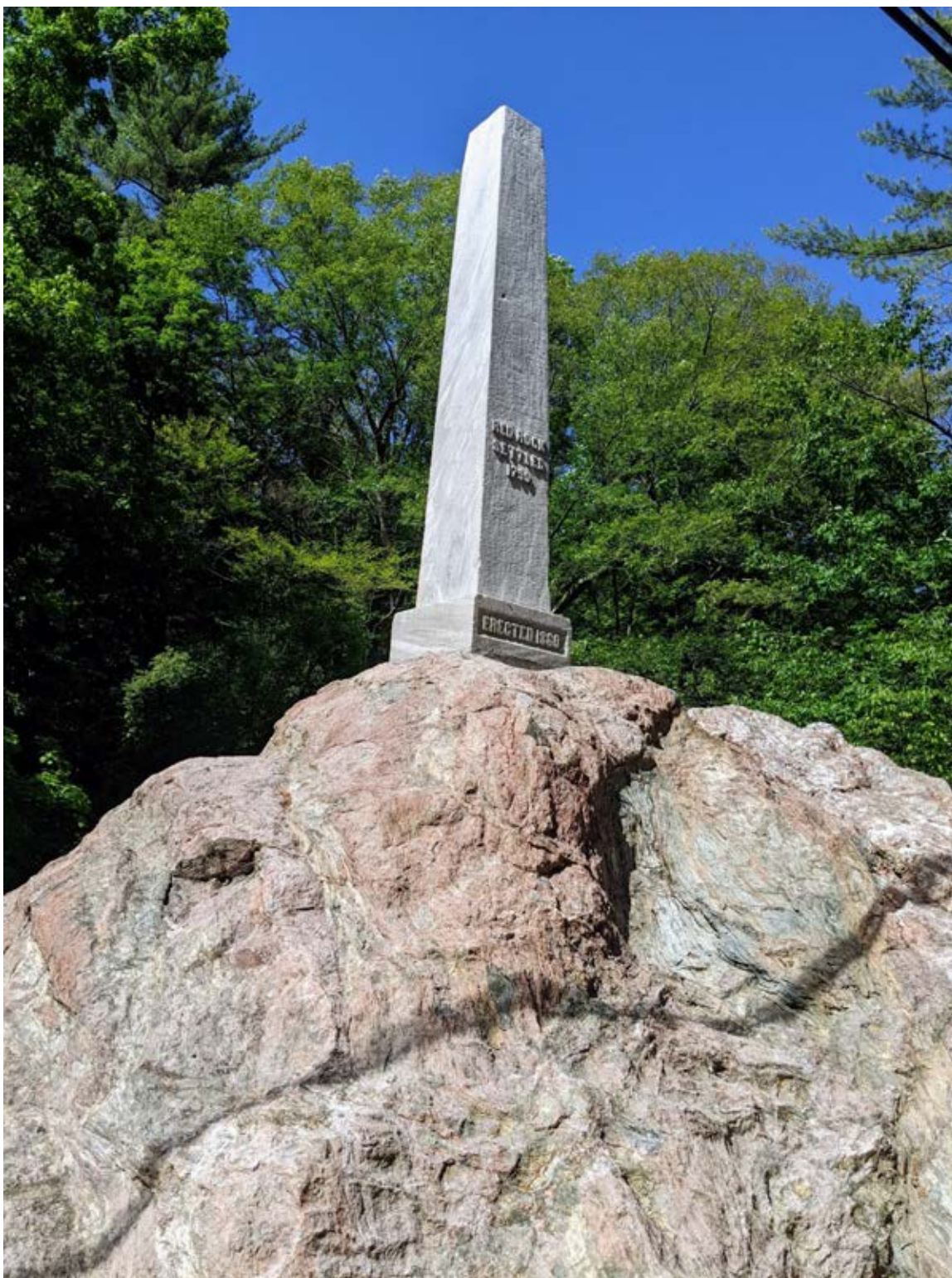
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

