



Additional information regarding the Faculty Application to relocate War Grave at Holy Trinity Hurdsfield

1. Introduction

In addition to the information included in the main faculty report, we would ask that the DAC also consider the following information and updates that we have obtained since that report was submitted for informal advice in Jan 2020.

The information included in this report includes:

- advice from the Chancellor regarding the relocation request
- confirmation of agreement to our proposals from Private Ryder's living relatives
- a review of the position of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission
- a clarification for the marking of the original headstone site

2. Advice from the Chancellor

We have now received confirmation from Lisa Moncur, Diocesan Registrar, of advice from the Chancellor regarding our application. The advice confirms that the CWGC do not have right of veto over the Chancellors decision. Therefore we continue to ask for the valuable support of the DAC regarding this petition. A copy of the advice from the chancellor (received in an email from the Registrar on 03/02/2020) is included below:

Dear James

In October 2018 the Chancellor advised as follows:

- *The CWGC should receive formal notice of any petition in the usual way.*
- *Any heirs of the deceased who can reasonably be identified or traced should also receive formal notice.*
- *The CWGC has no veto over the faculty. Their views will need to be heard, respected, and put into any balance.*
- *Normally, of course, it is entirely right that a memorial should be associated directly with remains - but stones do get moved for a whole variety of reasons.'*
- *There will also be the usual 28 day public notice period and, if relatives of the deceased cannot be traced, an advert in the local paper may be required.*

I hope this helps, but if you require any further advice please let me know

Kind regards,

Lisa Moncur

Solicitor

Registrar for the Diocese of Chester

3. Confirmation of agreement of family of Private W Ryder

We are pleased to say that we have managed to trace some living relatives of Private W Ryder:

- Mr Gordon Ryder (88 years old) who is Private Ryder's nephew and
- Pam Hudson, Gordon Ryder's daughter, who is Private Ryders great niece.

We have been trying to trace living relatives of Private Ryder for a long time with no success. However, last week a member of our congregation, Lynn Nancollis, who is friends with Pam Hudson, was discussing our plans for the church site improvements with her and the connection with Private Ryder was made.

Since then, I have spoken to Pam Hudson who confirmed that she had talked to Gordon (her father) and they, nor any of the other family members, would have any objection to the headstone being moved. They were very pleased to hear of our plans for improving the site and understood our reasons for requesting that the headstone be moved to a nearby location.

Pam confirmed that none of the remaining relatives visit the gravesite now and were very pleased that we are wanting to care for the long-term care of the site and the headstone and were happy to support our plans. I have agreed that I will keep her up to date with any plans that we progress if permission for its relocation is granted.

We have also contacted the CWGC and the Royal Welsh Regiment to enquire of any information regarding Private Ryder but to date have received no response.

4. Review of the position of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The position of the CWGC states that *"unless we cannot maintain the grave of Private Ryder in its current location or if there is an overriding public necessity we would not support exhumation or agree to re-locating of the headstone of Private Ryder whilst leaving the remains in situ."*

As we (the PCC, myself and our church buildings group) have considered the situation over the last months we have become increasingly convinced of the 'overriding public necessity' for the relocation of this headstone. We have outlined these concerns in detail in the main report, but wanted to highlight this aspect of the CWGC's response as it does indicate that they do accept that there are occasions when there are clear grounds for relocation.

Further to this, looking at the CWGC's website (<https://www.cwgc.org/learn/horticulture-and-works/conservation-management>) they state that their philosophy is underpinned by a series of Heritage Principles including:

- The sites must have a sense of dignity and inspiration
- The Historic Estate will be sustainably managed
- The cemeteries and memorials must look cared for

As we have presented our position, we would suggest that relocating the headstone will:

- give a more prominent and dignified position for the headstone (a dedicated location rather than the corner of a grass area used for football...)
- enable us, as the custodians of the site where the grave is located, to manage the safety of the site in the future, and finally
- mean that the headstone will be more cared for in a location that is set apart and protected for the headstone.

5. Proposal for marking on the grave site

As noted in Appendix 4c of the original report, we propose that the remains will be left in their current location with a plaque being placed in the pathway to mark the old position of the headstone. We believe that this will both honour and mark the original location while allowing people to safely access the site using the new footpath.

James Gibson
Vicar, Holy Trinity Church
Hurdsfield

8 February 2020