

IN THE CONSISTORY COURT AT LINCOLN

In the matter of the St Denys, Aswarby

**Judgment**

1. This is an application for a faculty brought by the Petitioner in respect of a family grave in the churchyard at St Denys', Aswarby. The existing grave is a double headstone within a double kerb surround for the Petitioner's grandparents Eliza Ann Blades and James Henry Blades who farmed in the village. (I have taken the family relationships from the application for a dispensation prepared by Mrs Gough on 15/4/19, rather than the Petition for a faculty prepared by William Kent Memorials Ltd dated 21/8/19 which I think has them incorrectly). From the photograph of the memorial and the grave I am unable to read the inscription and so cannot confirm the date of this grave. This grave with a double kerb surround would now fall outside the diocesan churchyard regulations.
2. This grave is a true family grave because the cremated remains of the Petitioner's late husband Arthur Rush Gough who died in 2018 have been interred within this grave, as were the remains of the Petitioner's 15 year-old sister Dorothy Curtiss who died in 1944, as were the remains of her parents William Herman and Dora Curtiss who died in 1976 and 1991 respectively. Quite understandably the Petitioner now seeks to have a memorial for the names of her family members who are interred within this grave, to accompany the names of her late grandparents whose grave it was alone until joined by other family members.
3. Additionally, the Petitioner seeks some remedial work to the stone memorialising her grandparents.
4. I begin by recording that when a grave in a churchyard is a true family grave as this one is, the church welcomes such demonstrations of family unity, as well as the responsible use of land and space within the churchyard. I note that the PCC support this application as does the acting priest in charge Revd Cameron Watt. The application has been made by way of a faculty Petition which requires the proposal to be advertised and gives a right to anyone to object to this application: no objection or concerns have been received. I required a faculty process to be adopted rather than dealing with it by way of dispensation (where

no publication of the proposal would be required) because of the extent of the works to this grave all of which fall outside the diocesan churchyard regulations.

5. The proposal in respect of the 3 memorial tablets is that they should be in Cornish grey granite described as 'rustic memorial tablets' slightly raised at one end. They would all be placed within the kerb surround. The size of each tablet is 4 inches splayed to 2 inches x 18 inches x 18 inches. The reason for the slight raising of each of these tablets is to reduce the impact of weathering on the enamelled lettering. The lettering will be common to each tablet and their size reflects the necessary space required for 2 names to be recorded on one of the tablets (and space left for a further name on the tablet for Mr Gough).
6. I am content with what is proposed in this Petition save for one particular. I note a common way of recording the parents and Dorothy's 'dates' is to inscribe the date of death, as for example 'Dec 15<sup>th</sup> 1976' or 'Feb.6<sup>th</sup> 1991' or 'March 25<sup>th</sup> 1944'. However, for Mr Gough the dates are recorded entirely numerically with stops and a hyphen. Given this grave is expressing family unity and so much thought has been given to the memorials in expressing such unity, my view is that Mr Gough's memorial should record his date of death in the same way as on the other stones including if so desired his age. It would thus be

'Died July 5<sup>th</sup> 2018

Aged 84'

7. The additional words can still be incorporated.
8. I also agree the proposal to centre the memorial stone for Mr and Mrs Blades with the work to the existing lettering that is proposed. I also approve the use of new grey granite chippings.
9. Subject to what I have set out at paragraph 6 above, I approve this Petition. I am sure this memorial will be a fitting tribute to the Petitioner's family interred within the churchyard of this ancient church where her grandparents farmed and will be a powerful expression of family unity.

The Reverend and Worshipful Chancellor His Honour Judge Mark Bishop

17<sup>th</sup> November 2019