

Case Name: St Laurence's Church War Memorial, Frodsham

Case Number: 1450842

Background

The war memorial at St Laurence's Church, Frodsham, is being assessed for listing as part of Historic England's First World War Commemoration project.

Asset(s) under Assessment

Facts about the asset(s) can be found in the Annex(es) to this report.

Annex	Name	Heritage Category
1	War memorial cross in the churchyard of St Laurence's Church, Frodsham	Listing

Visits

Date	Visit Type
none	No Visit / Data from other sources

Annex 1

The factual details are being assessed as the basis for a proposed addition to The National Heritage List for England.

Factual Details

Name: War memorial cross in the churchyard of St Laurence's Church, Frodsham

Location

The churchyard, St Laurence's Church, Church Road, Frodsham, Cheshire, WA6 6AD

County	District	District Type	Parish
	Cheshire West and Chester	Unitary Authority	Frodsham

History

The aftermath of the First World War saw the biggest single wave of public commemoration ever with tens of thousands of memorials erected across England. This was the result of both the huge impact on communities of the loss of three quarters of a million British lives, and also the official policy of not repatriating the dead which meant that the memorials provided the main focus of the grief felt at this great loss. One such memorial was raised at St Laurence's Church, Frodsham, as a permanent testament to the sacrifice made by 105 members of the local community who lost their lives in the First World War.

Paid for by public subscription, the memorial was sculpted by Alec Millar who was also involved in producing the memorial at Chester Cathedral Close (Grade II) and several other listed war memorials including those at Millom (Cumbria), Saintbury (Gloucestershire), and Lickinge (Oxfordshire) (all Grade II). The architect was Harold S Rodgers of Oxford, who also designed a number of war memorial tablets and screens, and the masons were Messrs Unsworth and Rutter. The design incorporating a crucifixion was not without controversy, but a design having been displayed in the church during 1918, the memorial was dedicated in 1921 by the Bishop of Chester. Later, a further 31 names were added to the war memorial of those who had been killed in the Second World War.

Alec Miller (1879-1961). An Arts and Crafts designer, Miller trained as a woodcarver in Glasgow apprenticed to Miss CP Anstruther, later joining CR Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft in 1902, just as it moved from London to Chipping Campden in Gloucestershire. He stayed in Campden after the failure of the Guild, widening his activities to include carving, sculpting and other elements of design and craftsmanship, in particular portrait sculpture. Miller emigrated to California in c1929.

Details

The memorial stands in the churchyard of the Church of St Laurence (Grade I), in close proximity to the Grade II-listed sundial and Wright tomb. It takes the form of a tall sandstone cross. The cross head, with trefoils at the interstices of the cross arms forming a pierced wheel, bears the figure of Christ crucified. The cross head rises from a moulded collar on a plain octagonal shaft, which stands on an octagonal plinth with a slightly projecting cornice.

The front and rear faces of the plinth are recessed, in which blind arcading is ornamented with a shield, charged with a Latin cross, appearing to be suspended from the arcading by a buckled strap. The remaining six sides of the plinth carry slate plaques bearing the names of the fallen, arranged in alphabetical order. Around the base of the plinth is the dedicatory inscription, starting on the front face and reading 1914 – 1918/ IN MEMORY/ OF ALL THE/ MEN OF THIS/ PLACE WHO/ GAVE THEIR/ LIVES IN THE/ GREAT WAR

The plinth stands on a three-stepped octagonal base with slightly projecting treads. The front riser of the upper step is inscribed with the dates of the Second World War, 1939 – 1945, with

the names of those who lost their lives in the Second World War recorded on a slate plaque fixed below in the riser of the middle step. An inscription carved into the front riser of the lowest step records details of the memorial's erection, reading ERECTED 1921/ ARCHITECT H.S. ROGERS OXFORD/ SCULPTOR A. MILLER CHIPPING CAMPDEN/ ERECTED BY F. UNSWORTH FRODSHAM/ ASSISTANT MASON J. RUTTER FRODSHAM.

Selected Sources

Websites

War Memorials Online, accessed 24 October 2017 from <https://www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk/memorial/194617/>
War Memorials Register, accessed 24 October 2017 from <http://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/10024>

Other

'Frodsham War Memorial', Chester Chronicle, 11 May 1928, p2
'Alec (Alexander) Miller', Mapping the Practice and Profession of Sculpture in Britain and Ireland 1851-1951, University of Glasgow History of Art and HATII, online database 2011 [http://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/person.php?id=msib6_1232987006, accessed 24 October 2017]

Map**National Grid Reference:** SJ5210477274

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The above map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. For a copy of the full scale map, please see the attached PDF – 1451843_1.pdf.