

“EDGBASTON WAR MEMORIAL”

A Faculty Petition was submitted by The Rev Rosslyn Bruce on 13th May 1921 in which it was proposed that “a war memorial in the form of a column in Portland stone” be erected.

At a meeting held on 25th November 1919 it was resolved “that the committee appointed be empowered to proceed with the war memorial as proposed”

Mr R. J. Morcom, Turret Studios, The Newark, Leicester, an architect doing his own work, to carry out the task.

The cost of £550 to be paid for by subscriptions from parishoners. At the time of the Petition, £500 was in hand and a further £100 promised from two ex-Churchwardens.

More about J. H. Morcom:

Joseph Herbert Morcom ARCA

Born 31 May 1871

Died 28 February 1942

Country of birth and death: Wales

Sculptor, teacher, business proprietor

Born outside Minera, near Wrexham, Denbighshire. His father, Joseph Bickford Morcom (born c.1844) was captain of the local lead mine and died in 1880. Joseph worked first for a local firm of stonemasons, later securing a position with Norbury, Paterson & Co. of Liverpool. In the early 1890s he enrolled at Liverpool School of Architecture and Applied Art. By 1904 he had been appointed assistant modelling master at the School. He won various awards including first prize at the National Eisteddfod of 1909. In 1910 was appointed modelling master at Leicester School of Art. Four years later he bought Pearson and Shipley, a firm of Stonemasons and Monumental Sculptors, based in The Newark, which he renamed The Plasmatic Company. Thereafter he continued to work for the firm as well as sculpting independently and teaching at the Leicester School of Art.

To accompany the Petition, Dr Bruce wrote the following letter:

“The proposed monument does not represent an urn but rather a column. It is surmounted by the symbolic flame, representative of eternal life.

The angels hold wreaths of laurel and the whole embodies the severest simplicity.

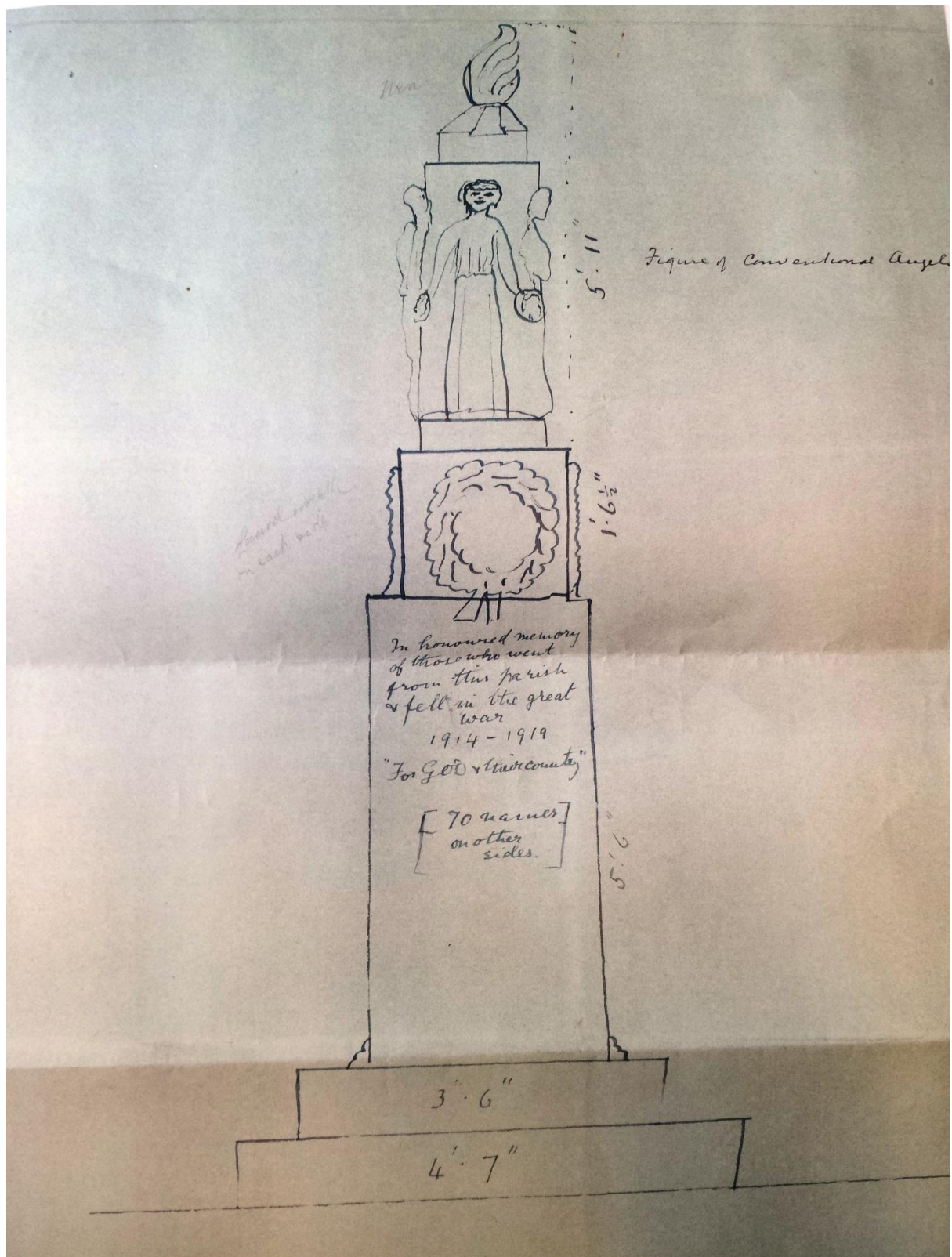
The purpose has been kept that the view of meeting the wishes of many bereaved parents of many differing “denominations” to whom symbolism means little; and we trust the

Chancellor will regard the column rather in the spirit which he would deal with the design.

We have relied upon the judgement of Sir Whitworth Wallis and Mr Bidlake, one of our leading architects, who selected the design from those tendered from all over the country, in all matters of detail.

The lettering of the inscription (of which copies have been sent to you) has been approved by them, and examples of it will, if you wish it, be submitted for your approval”

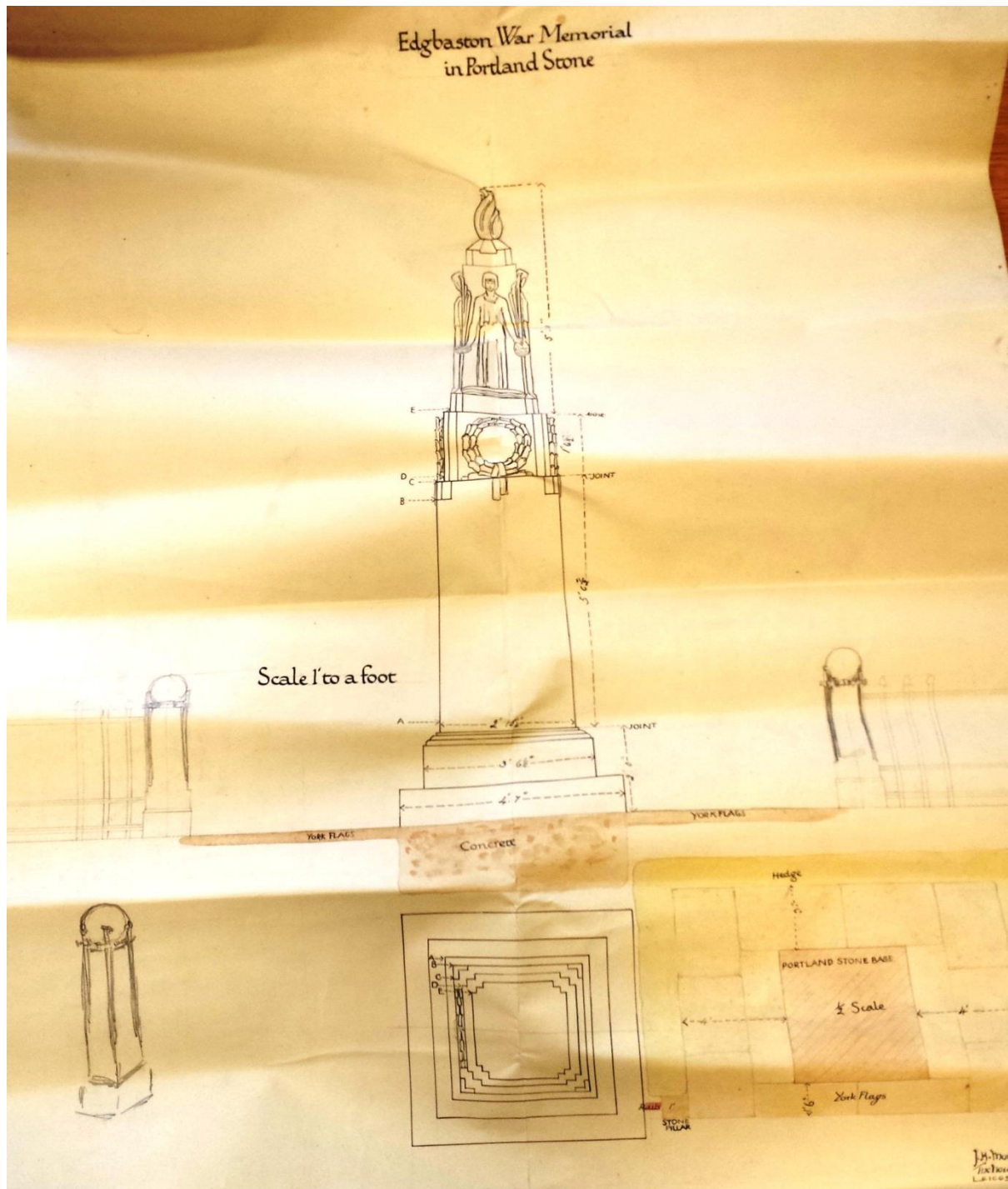
This was the sketch that accompanied the Petition:



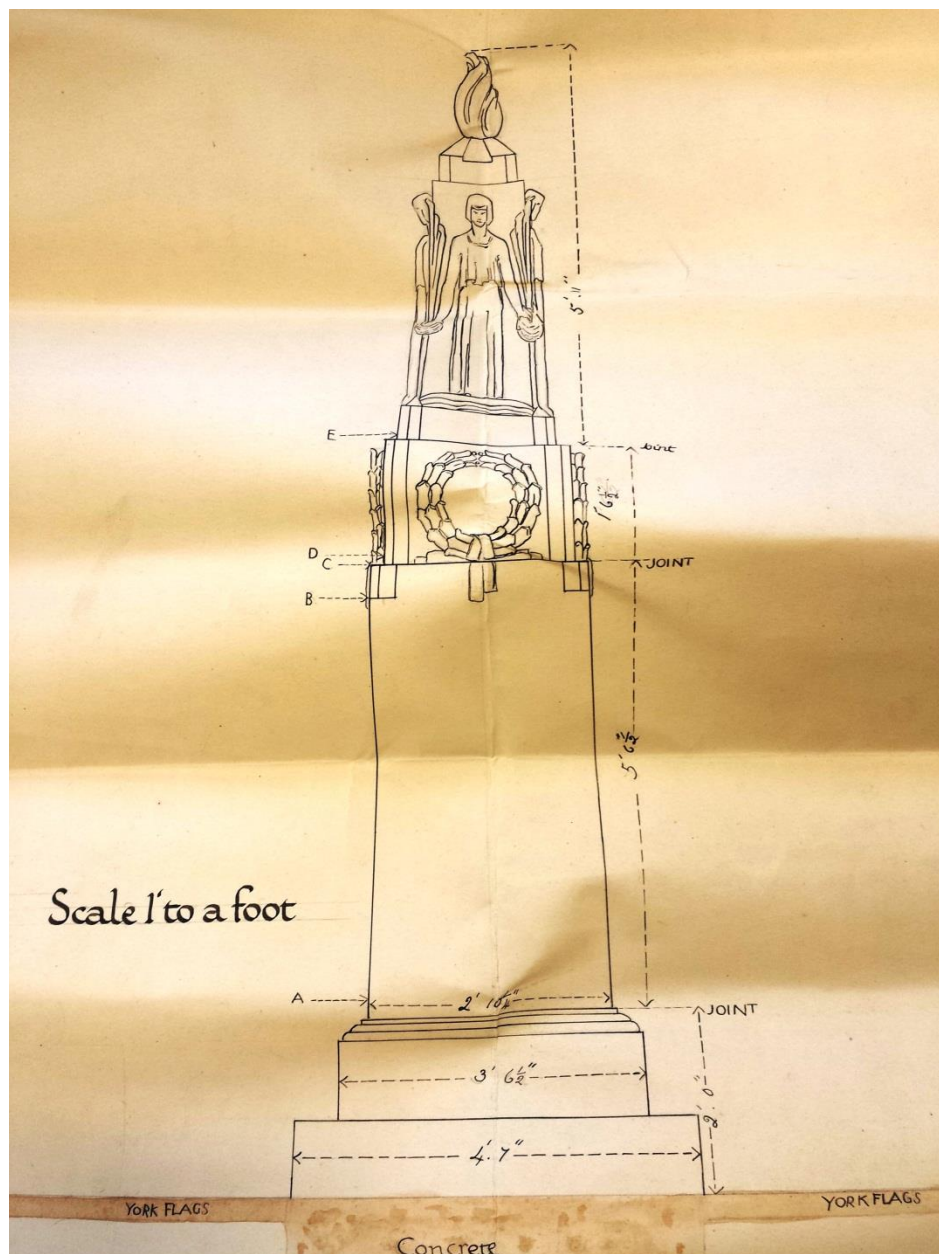
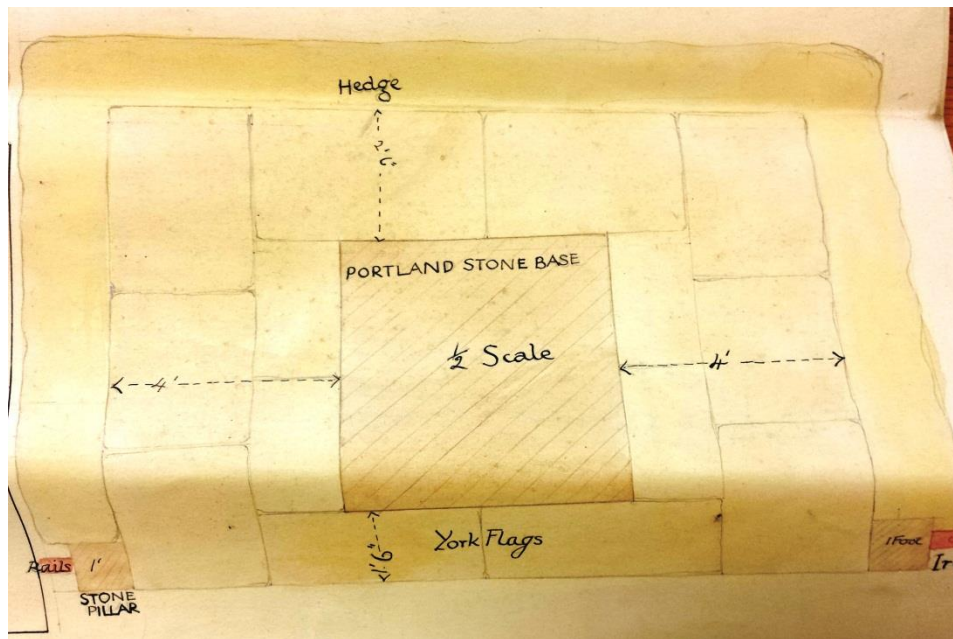
The Chancellor, Edward Hansell, wrote back on 16th May to say:

"The rough sketch is altogether inadequate and full descriptions and tracings to scale must be submitted with full details of the figure & urn & specimen of lettering. So far as can be judged from the present sketch, the design appears top heavy and a specimen of pagan rather than Christian art. There should also be a full specification. When these are supplied I will consider the case."

Mr Morcom was promptly asked for a scale drawing and this was supplied as follows:



It can be seen that the Faculty included a paved area of York stone flags, a hedge and two stone pillars set with four swords set downwards, with railings. This setting of the memorial was never completed.



The Faculty was granted on 24th June 1921