



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

**Diocese of St Edmundsbury
and Ipswich**

Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches

MEMORIALS IN CHURCHES

It is happily true in many parishes that each generation sees examples of devoted and meritorious service which clearly deserve to be kept in remembrance. Often instead of a memorial tablet, an accepted mode of commemoration maybe the provision of some article or feature suitably inscribed which can be dedicated as a permanent addition to the contents or perhaps structure of the church, e.g. memorial windows, paneling, pews, candlesticks, communion plate, altar frontals, dossals, font covers, lecterns and many other articles. Sometimes, however, a request is made for a memorial tablet. This does require a Faculty as indeed do most of the suggested alternatives. Early consultation is recommended.

It should be emphasised that the placing of a plaque or tablet in Church is not a right but is a special privilege reserved for exceptional cases. Before a Faculty will be granted evidence will be required that the person to be commemorated has rendered outstanding service to the Church and/or the community as a whole. Even then the granting of the permission will not follow as a matter of course and among other considerations the Chancellor will bear in mind:-

- a. the character of the church
- b. the design of the proposed memorial
- c. the availability of suitable wall space
- d. the recommendation of the Diocesan Advisory Committee.

It may sometimes appear to applicants that the strictness with which the Chancellor exercises his discretion may on a short term view appear excessive. It is, however, the Chancellor's duty to protect the interest of future generations. If Faculties were freely granted, albeit in deserving cases, the walls of a church might in the course of years become crowded with tablets to the detriment of that church's appearance.

If a Petitioner feels that he has an appropriate case it is suggested that before he goes to the expense of a Faculty and a detailed drawing of the plaque, that the application should receive preliminary consideration. The Registrar will, on receiving details (including any information on all the points mentioned above), place the matter before the Diocesan Advisory Committee and the Chancellor for a preliminary view. If a Petition is presented a substantial burden of proof will normally rest on the Petitioner and even in the absence of formal objection by other parties, a hearing in Court may be required.

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