

The lych-gate at Christ Church, Totland

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THE BISHOP OF WINCHESTER AT TOTLAND BAY

DEDICATION OF A NEW AISLE AND LYCH-GATE AT CHRIST CHURCH

[Part of a long article.]

For some considerable time past the need has been felt for additional accommodation for worshippers at Christ Church, Totland Bay, in order to meet the extra requirements during the summer season, when there is a large influx of visitors to this favourite Island resort. Towards the accomplishment of this object a fund was started, with the happy result that a sufficient sum of money was raised to enable the more urgent part of the work to be proceeded with, and this portion of the scheme of enlargement has just been completed at a cost of over £1800...

...As has already been stated, this work marks the completion of the first portion of an extensive scheme for enlarging Christ Church from the designs of Mr Percy Stone, F.S.A., F.R.I.B.A., which embraces an additional aisle on the north side of the church, a lengthening eastward of the chancel, and the erection of a tower at the north-west. In addition to the improvements outlined above, a lych-gate of 15th century design has been placed at the north-west angle of the churchyard, forming a charming feature at the junction of the roads. It is the gift of Mrs Burnett, of Bournemouth and Totland Bay, as a memorial to her late husband, Mr F. W. Burnett, who was one of the oldest residents in Totland Bay, and who died about 18 months ago. The following is the inscription on this brass plate, which is placed on the inner beam: "To the glory of God and in dear memory of Frederic Wildman Burnett, at rest July 26th, 1904. 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.'" The lych-gate is the admirable work of Mr King, of Blackwater, carried out from the design of the architect, and this and the iron gates certainly do credit to our Island craftsmen. It may be added that a considerable portion of the oak used in the construction of the lych-gate was taken from H.M.S. *Nettle*. It is of the 15th century period. On one of the overhead beams at the entrance the Latin inscription "*Ego sum resurrectio et vita*" is cut in the solid wood. Below are a pair of elegant little oak braces, supporting a collar beam, and outside of these are the two curved barge boards with billeted edges, on the tower ends of which – one on either side – are the angels of prayer and praise, beautifully carved in the solid oak. A style of oak panelling known as the old "linen" pattern, very little used hitherto for exterior decoration, has been adopted with good effect by the architect for each side of the entrances, and for the floor some old Isle of Wight octagonal tiles have been used. The stonework and carving has been executed by Messrs Garrett and Haysom, the well-known firm of East-street, Southampton, and the general work has been very satisfactorily carried out by Mr R. D. Medway of Station Works, Freshwater. Mr C. Noble, of Bournemouth, was the clerk of the works, and his duties were discharged very capably.

Saturday last was a memorable day to Church people at Totland Bay, for on that day the new aisle and lych-gate were dedicated by the Bishop of Winchester, the interesting and impressive service being attended by a large congregation. The

“naval” associations of the lych-gate, coupled with the singular fact that Chief Officer Cooper and others of the local Coastguard had during their Naval career served on the old derelict *Nettle*, was the primary reason for a contingent of the Totland Coastguard attending the dedication ceremony and forming a guard of honour. In charge of their Chief Officer, the Coastguard lined either side of the main gateway, and as the Bishop, accompanied by his chaplain, passed through into the church his lordship was saluted...

[The newspaper article then goes on to describe the service conducted inside the church by the Bishop of Winchester.]

...The hymn “O Lord of heaven, and earth, and sea,” was then sung and the offertory taken, after which the Bishop pronounced the Benediction. Mr U. H. Morey ably presided at the organ. Accompanied by the clergy and choir, the Bishop then proceeded outside the church and dedicated the lych-gate. At the close of the service the Bishop asked for the Chief Officer of the Coastguard, and, shaking hands with Mr Cooper, his lordship said he was very glad of the Coastguards’ presence. He understood there was a special link between that lych-gate and the Coastguard, and he hoped it would be an enduring one. He asked Chief Officer Cooper to convey to the other members of the Coastguard his thanks for their attendance...

Info on HMS *Nettle* (launched as HMS *Thunderer* in 1831) from Wikipedia

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| Name: | HMS <i>Thunderer</i> |
| Ordered: | 23 January 1817 |
| Builder: | Woolwich Dockyard |
| Laid down: | April 1823 |
| Launched: | 22 September 1831 |
| Renamed: | HMS <i>Comet</i> , 1869 |
| | HMS <i>Nettle</i> , 1870 |
| Fate: | Sold to be broken up, 1901 |
| Notes: | Hulked, 1863 |

HMS *Thunderer* was a two-deck 84-gun [second rate ship of the line](#), a modified version of the [Canopus/Formidable-class](#) launched on 22 September 1831 at [Woolwich Dockyard](#).^[1]

She was constructed with diagonal framing and improved underwater lines on the principles of Sir [William Symonds](#), [Surveyor of the Navy](#). In 1840, HMS *Thunderer* fought in the [Syria](#) campaign, taking part in the battle of [Sidon](#), which was the last fleet action conducted purely by wooden ships of the line under sail. In the same year she acted as flagship at the bombardment and capture of the fortress at [St. Jean d'Acre](#), which was the first action at which steam vessels were present, albeit as support vessels rather than fighting ships. She was fitted with iron-clad plate in 1863 for trials of new armour-piercing guns.^{[[citation needed](#)]}

She was [hulked](#) in 1863 as a target ship at [Portsmouth](#).^[1] *Thunderer* was renamed twice in quick succession: first in 1869 to *Comet*, and again in 1870 to *Nettle*. HMS *Nettle* was sold in December 1901 to Messrs. King & co, of Garston, to be broken up.^[2]

Therefore, the timbers are not from HMS *Thunderer* that took part in the Battle of Trafalgar. That ship was launched in 1783, whereas the later ship, renamed HMS *Nettle* in 1870, was launched in 1831. The brass plaque inside the lych-gate unfortunately says:

THE WOOD OF
THIS LYCHGATE
WAS TAKEN FROM
THE TIMBERS OF
HMS THUNDERER
74 GUNS WHICH
FOUGHT ON THE
LEE LINE AT
TRAFALGAR

From Wikipedia on HMS *Thunderer* that was launched in 1783 and was at the Battle of Trafalgar.

Name: HMS *Thunderer*
Ordered: 23 July 1781
Builder: John & William Wells,
[Rotherhithe](#)
Laid down: March 1782
Launched: 13 November 1783
Commissioned: January 1793
Fate: Broken up, March 1814
Notes: Participated in:

[Glorious First of June](#)

[Battle of Cape Finisterre](#)

[Battle of Trafalgar](#)

[Dardanelles Operation](#)