

Dedication of the Smithson Memorial Lychgate at Allerton Bywater Church, Dec. 10th, 1939.

DESCRIPTION OF LYCHGATE.

The new Lychgate is erected in memory of the late Mr. Hugh F. Smithson, who for thirty years was General Manager of the Airedale Colliery Co., whose head office is at Allerton Bywater. The word Lych (or lich) is of Anglo-Saxon origin and literally means Corpse, and Lych Gates (ancient and modern) are to be found in many parts of England, beneath which the bearers pause when bringing a corpse for interment in the Churchyard. This fine Lychgate was designed to suit the present gateway, with its massive monoliths each computed to weigh about three tons. The Lychgate is 11 feet long, 10 feet wide and 14 feet high to the Ridge. Two new stone walls have been erected up to the monoliths to support the super-structure, which is built up of oak and put together with solid mortices and tenons and pegs, without any nails being required, and the roof is covered with Canadian cedar wood shingles, instead of tiles or slates. The front and rear openings are crowned with four centred shaped arches of oak, which give an appearance of the Tudor style of Gothic architecture. Above the arches and on the tie beams the following inscriptions are carved with sunk letters, deeply incised—"DEATH the GATE of LIFE" (facing the road), and—"IN MEMORY of HUGH SMITHSON" (facing the Church). The date of erection "1939" is also inscribed on one of the beams. There are four openings at each side of the structure with shaped heads in keeping with the two ends, and new folding gates of oak similar to the rest, with wrought iron fittings, now take the place of the old iron gates attached to the monoliths. Its value is estimated at £250.

The Vicar (Rev. James Bell) wishes to express his profound gratitude to the following generous benefactors, who made its erection possible:—

- (1) The Airedale Collieries, Ltd., for supplying free of cost the valuable and well seasoned oak timber and cedar wood shingles for the roof, on the authority of Mr. Harald Peake.
- (2) Messrs. L. J. Gallagher and Sons, Builders, Castleford, for providing the labour free of charge for its construction and erection.
- (3) Messrs. R. A. Easdale and Son, Architects, Castleford, for gratuitously designing this most beautiful structure and supervising its completion.
- (4) The Parochial Church Council for making itself responsible for the cost of the Faculty, the carving of the inscriptions, for the stone required for building the wall and other items.

This is a worthy memorial to one most worthy of remembrance, and people will have to travel far to see a finer specimen of a Lychgate.