

Great Britain: Launch of Boer War Battleship H.M.S. Powerful

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Form: Circular with attached loop

By: C.G. Iliffe of Barrow

Date: 1895

Ref: Laidlaw: 0679a;

Variations:

Size	Metal	Mass	Value
31.9 mm	Silver	13.4 gm	\$90

Edge: Plain.

Obverse: Port broadside view of battleship at sea steaming to the left. Legend: "H.M.S. POWERFUL". In the exergue: "C.G. ILIFFE JEWELLER / BARROW".

Reverse: Across: "BUILT / BY THE / N.C. & A.CO. / BARROW IN FURNESS / (ornamental line) / LAUNCHED / JULY 24 / 1895".

Notes: HMS Powerful was built by the Naval Construction and Armaments Company Limited (later Vickers) at their yards in Barrow-in-Furness and launched on July 24, 1895 by the Duchess of Devonshire.

HMS Powerful and her sister ship, HMS Terrible, are best known for the land action of their Naval Brigades during the Boer War. HMS Powerful, under the command of Captain Hedworth Lambton, was on her way home from China when ordered to Durban on 26 October 1899. On arrival there the naval guns, specially modified for use on land, were urgently transported to Ladysmith reaching there on 30 October. The siege of the town commenced two days later, isolating the Naval Brigade. Their guns forced the Boers to keep their distance until the siege was relieved on 28 February 1900.

A silver tribute medal (Laidlaw 0795) was awarded to the naval brigades of the two sister ships by the City of Portsmouth. Similar medals (Laidlaw 0679b) also commemorate the launch.