



St John

The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John

2025 Banner and Flag Handbook



Introduction

A Banner is a square or rectangular heraldic flag which has the Arms across its whole surface and the word flag is a general term and covers all types of banners, standards, colours, and the many other types that exist. A Colour is a flag flown by a ship or carried by a Royal Navy Establishment, Army Regiment, or Royal Air Force squadron. It has a military connotation. St John Ambulance uses Colours. In St John we generally use the term 'banners' when carrying and 'flags' for flying from a fixed flagpole. Some establishments or units may also refer to their flags as 'standards' or 'colours'.

In the Order of St John context a Banner represents either the Order, an Establishment (the Banner of a Priory, Commandery, the Eye Hospital Group, or Association), or an individual (Personal Banner). It carries the approved arms of the Establishment or of the individual and where appropriate under Statutes of the Order, includes the arms of the Order. Banners are mounted on a staff and carried by an individual. The Banners of Priories, Commanderies and Bailiffs and Dames Grand Cross (Grade Is) hang in the Priory Church of the Priory of England and the Islands.



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Flags are hoisted up a flag pole outside a building to signal that part of St John is based at this location, or that the person that they represent is present in the building.

Banners and Colours must always be treated with reverence and dignity. They can be dedicated, ie received, and blessed by a member of the Clergy.

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The Great Banner of the Order



The Great Banner of the Order displays the ancient arms of the Order and bears an augmentation of honour, being embellished with a representation of the Sovereign's Crest in the first quarter, an especial mark of Royal favour granted by His Majesty King George V.

The Great Banner of the Order shall be 89.5cm in height, 111cm in width with a 5cm fringe of alternate white and red sections 5cm wide bordering the Banner on three sides. The limbs of the cross thereon shall be 23.5cm wide and the representation of the Sovereign's Crest in the first quarter shall be depicted as large as may conveniently be placed in that quarter. The Great Banner of the Order shall be flown from a staff on the top of which shall be a representation of the Sovereign's Crest

The Great Banner of the Order shall be flown:

- at all times at the headquarters of the Order (St John House, Charterhouse Mews, Clerkenwell, London, EC1M 6BB, United Kingdom);
- at all times, where practicable, over the headquarters of each Priory and Commandery, and at the Eye Hospital;
- when practicable, over the headquarters of each St John Association;
- on other places on St John's Day and on 8 September each year (being the anniversary of the relief of Malta in 1565); and



- by the Sovereign Head, Grand Prior and the Lord Prior whenever and wherever they think fit, but by no other Member of the Order.

A flag similar to the Great Banner but without the fringe, or a flag bearing the Priory Arms, may be flown in place of the Great Banner, in which case the staff need not carry the finial representation of the Sovereign's Crest. The dimensions of the flag will vary, and it is to be at a 3:2 ratio in regard to width/height.

The Great Banner of the Order may be carried or flown when in procession or in session by:

- the Grand Council;
- the Executive Committee; and
- Priory and Commandery Chapters.

When carried a cross belt should be used as it is heavy. It is always carried vertically upright with dignity and poise by a suitably robed member of the Ceremonial Staff. The staff is held in the right hand, with the bottom corner of the Banner also being held. This stops the flag from 'flying' and hence causing control issues with the staff. White gauntlet gloves should be used at all times when handling the Great Banner.

Great Banner and other flags at half-mast

All Order members are listed on a roll held by an Establishment, or the Central roll held by the Order Chancery. On the death of any member of the Order, the Chancery of the Establishment in which the member is listed should be notified as soon as is practical so that it can be recorded.

If the member is a Grade I Bailiff or Dame Grand Cross, the Order Chancery and the Chancery of the Priory of England and the Islands should also be informed of their passing. The tradition of the Order is that the flags at Charterhouse Mews and St John's Gate are lowered to half-mast or if that is not practical, a black mourning ribbon is attached. The Priors of Priories are responsible for the protocols concerning the flying of flags at half-mast in their territories.

Half-mast refers to a flag flying below the summit of the pole. It is a symbol of mourning and respect. It is common for the phrase to be taken literally and for a flag to be flown halfway up the flagpole. This is the custom in many territories. In St John, as a general rule the flag should be lowered by the width of a flag allowing room for an 'invisible flag of death' flying above. On all occasions the flag should be hoisted to the summit and then lowered to the half-mast position.

Subject to any special rules or commands which may apply in any territory as to flag etiquette flags should be flown at half-mast on the announcement of the death and until the funeral of:

- the Sovereign Head (except on Proclamation Day);
- a member of the Royal Family styled 'Royal Highness';
- other members of the Royal Family;
- the Grand Prior;
- Bailiffs and Dames Grand Cross; and
- on such other occasions as the Grand Prior or the Lord Prior may direct.

Also, at the discretion of the Prior of a Priory (or, in a Vice Regal Priory, the person as delegated by the Prior to make such decisions on their behalf), Priory flags may be lowered for national mourning and for the death of very senior officials. The same discretion is given to the Chair of the Eye Hospital Group, the Commander of a Commandery, and the Chair of an Association for their establishment flags.

When flags of the Order are at half-mast, other flags on the same stand of flagpoles should also be at half-mast or not flown at all. Equally, when other flags are at half mast, the flags the Order should be flown at half-mast.

Other procedures relating to flags

When the Great Banner of the Order is being flown with other flags of the Order or an Establishment, each flag should be the same size (or have the same width – the measurement from top to bottom) and should fly from a separate flagpole. The Great Banner of the Order should be raised first and lowered last unless all the flags can be raised and lowered simultaneously. Flags must be raised and lowered in a dignified manner.

The Senior Flag should always fly from the senior flagpole, which is either the tallest or the furthest to the right (from the point of view) of the flagpole.

At the discretion of the Grand Prior or Lord Prior, the Great Banner of the Order can be used as a pall for a coffin. It should be placed so that the top left corner of the flag is over the deceased's left shoulder. The Great Banner of the Order should be removed before interment or cremation and folded. The same discretion is given to the Chair of the Eye Hospital Group, the Commander of a Commandery, and the Chair of an Association for establishment banners

Banners and flags of the Sovereign Head, Grand Prior, The Princess Royal, and The Duchess of Edinburgh.

The banners of the Sovereign Head, Grand Prior and The Princess Royal display their Arms with the Arms of the Order in chief. In addition to the Great Banner of the Order, they may be flown at any St John premises on those days on which it is the intention of the Sovereign Head, the Grand Prior or The Princess Royal to visit those premises. The



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flag of the Grand Prior or The Princess Royal shall be flown at half-mast on days of national mourning, and on other occasions as directed. The flag of the Sovereign Head is never flown at half-mast.

Precedence of personal banners and flags within the Order is as follows:

- Sovereign Head;
- Grand Prior;
- any other member of the Royal Family who is also a Grade I member of the Order;
- Lord Prior;
- Great Banner of the Order;
- Priory flag;
- flag of St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital;
- Commandery flag;
- flag of St John Association; and
- flag of St John Ambulance.



The Banner of the Sovereign Head HM King Charles III



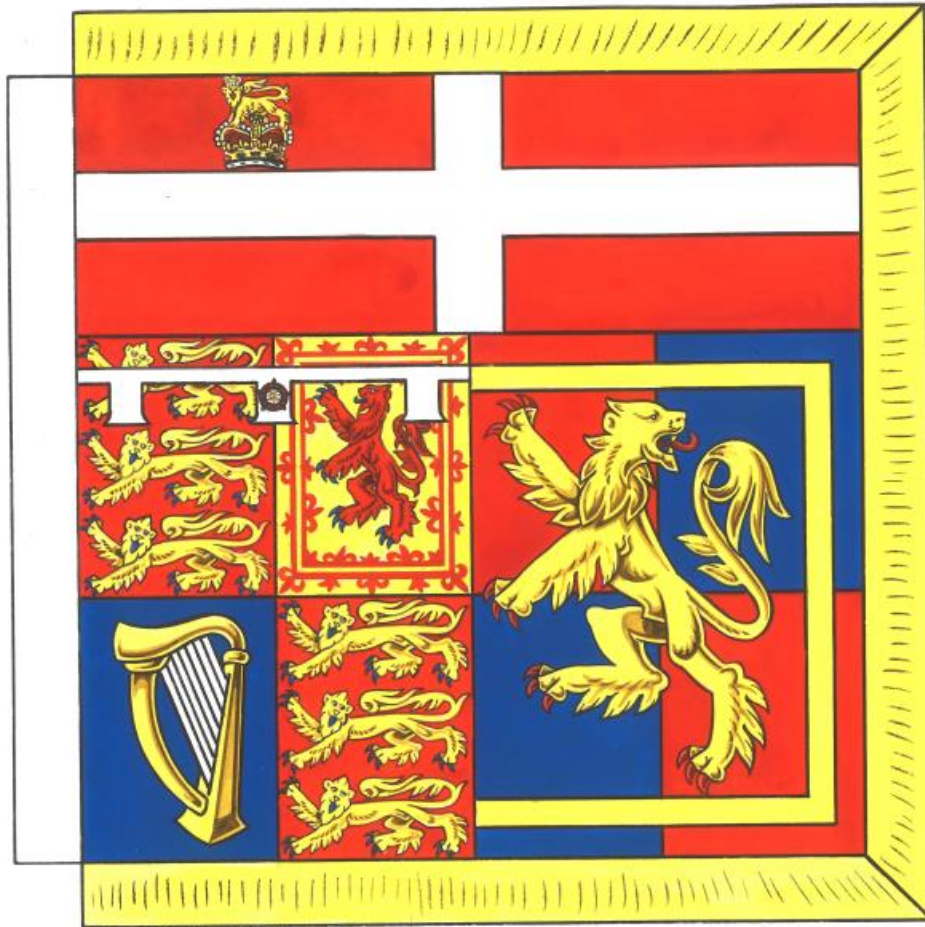
The Banner of the Grand Prior HRH Prince Richard The Duke of Gloucester



The Banner of HRH Princess Anne The Princess Royal



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The Banner of HRH Sophie Helen The Duchess of Edinburgh

Personal Banners

A personal banner depicts an armigerous person's arms. An armiger is a person entitled to bear arms. Such a person is said to be armigerous. Bailiffs and Dames Grand Cross being armigerous are entitled to a personal banner depicting his or her Arms with the Arms of the Order in chief. Personal banners may not be displayed, and should not be processed, until they have been formally presented to HRH The Grand Prior, or his representative.

Grade I Bailiffs or Dames Grand Cross, Priors (Chancellors of Vice Regal Priories of New Zealand, Canada, and Australia), and the Chair of the Eye Hospital Group who are armigerous are entitled to have their banner carried immediately after them at a ceremony at which robes are worn.

Personal banners shall be 91.5cm (36 in) square with the Arms of the Order in chief 28cm in height and 91.5cm in width, the dimension of the white cross shall be 5cm. The 2 alternate colour fringe can be 4cm deep.



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Banner of the Lord Prior

In addition to the Great Banner of the Order, the banner of the Lord Prior may be flown at any St John premises on those days on which it is the intention of the Lord Prior to visit those premises.



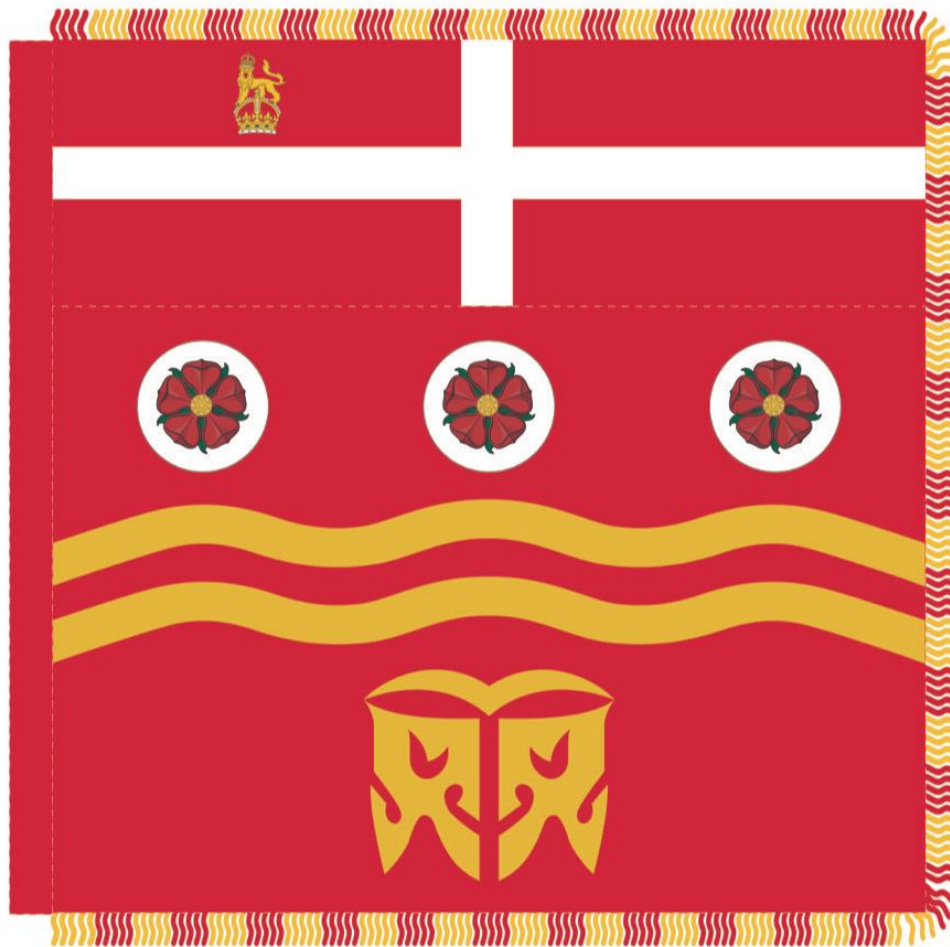
The Banner of the Lord Prior Professor Mark Compton AM

The top third depicts the Order's Arms-in-Chief (the Royal Crest and the white cross on a red background). The **green background** is the universal colour of healthcare. The **red cross** in the centre is from the Arms of the state of New South Wales, Mark's home. The **sun at the centre** of the cross is the heraldic symbol of learning and enlightenment. (Mark is honoured to have spent his life teaching and learning.) The **four Amalfi/Maltese crosses** represent Mark's lifetime in St John, and the four generations of the Compton family (so far) who have been (or continue to be) active members of St John.



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Banners of other Great Officers



Banner of Archbishop Emeritus Sir David Moxon KNZM

Red for courage and **gold** for generosity. They are also the most common colours in many Maori meeting houses. The **three roses** of my shield. They show the red rose of Lancaster and the white rose of York, with the red superimposed as is traditional in heraldry. My father's people on his father's side were originally from Yorkshire and my mother's people were originally from Lancaster and carried that name as a surname. The three roses represent my two parents and me in Anglo Saxon terms.

The **wavy line** below represents the Mohaka River in Aotearoa New Zealand where my wife's Māori tribal people are from. This river is well known for its length, and its river stones for earth oven cooking. My children all relate to this heritage in language and custom. Their ancient marae (meeting house and courtyard) sits above the river mouth where the river meets the Pacific Ocean.



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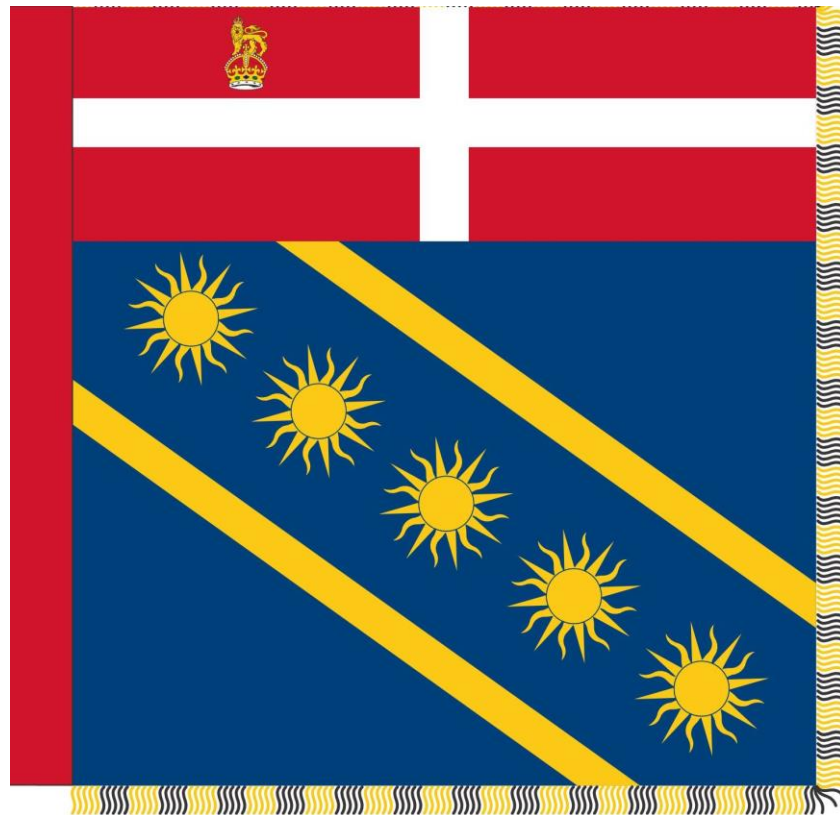


Banner of the Chancellor Tom Budd

The banner contains a simplified version of the family's arms, which depict the **blue waters** of the Pacific Ocean on the north coast of New South Wales where Tom grew up, with **three humpback whales breaching**. The whales migrate along the coast in large numbers in July and August each year and can be seen from the beaches and headlands.



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Banner of the Sub Prior Dr Michel C Doré

Blue is associate with water as an essential element to life and health. It is also a colour associated with health services and prehospital care. Blue symbolises peace and balance as well in emergency management. The blue also reflects the French origin of my family.

Yellow, or d'or in heraldry, is associated with the sun also an essential element of life and health. D'or is also a reflection of my family's name.

The **five suns** represent my lifetime commitments to prehospital care, emergency management, search and rescue, public health and teaching. The two lines represent the two primary components of governance: stewardship, and value creation.

On a more personal note, the flag also represents the family, our five children central to our parenting life.



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Banners of The Former Great Officers



The Banner of The Hon Dr Neil Conn AO

The **reversed white chevron** replicates the front gable of Government House, Darwin, replete with finial/lightning conductor, signifies Dr Conn's service as Administrator of the Northern Territory and the referees to his period as the Deputy Prior of the Order for the Northern Territory. **The three stars** represent Dr and Mrs Conn's three children and may also be seen as bright stars in a Northern Territory summer night; and the **blue background** represents Mrs Lesley Conn's maiden name of Flood and the enormous contribution she has made to her husband's career of public service.



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The Banner of the Right Reverend John (Jack) Nicholls

The chosen colours are red and white to represent **the red and white roses of Lancaster and York**. Jack is a Lancastrian by birth, breeding and conviction but served as a missionary in Yorkshire, teaching at the College of the Resurrection, Mirfield and latterly as Bishop of Sheffield. Three of our four children were born in Lancashire, one in Yorkshire. **The four roses** represent his four grandsons. **The sheaf of arrows** is symbolic of Sheffield, being part of the city's coat of arms.



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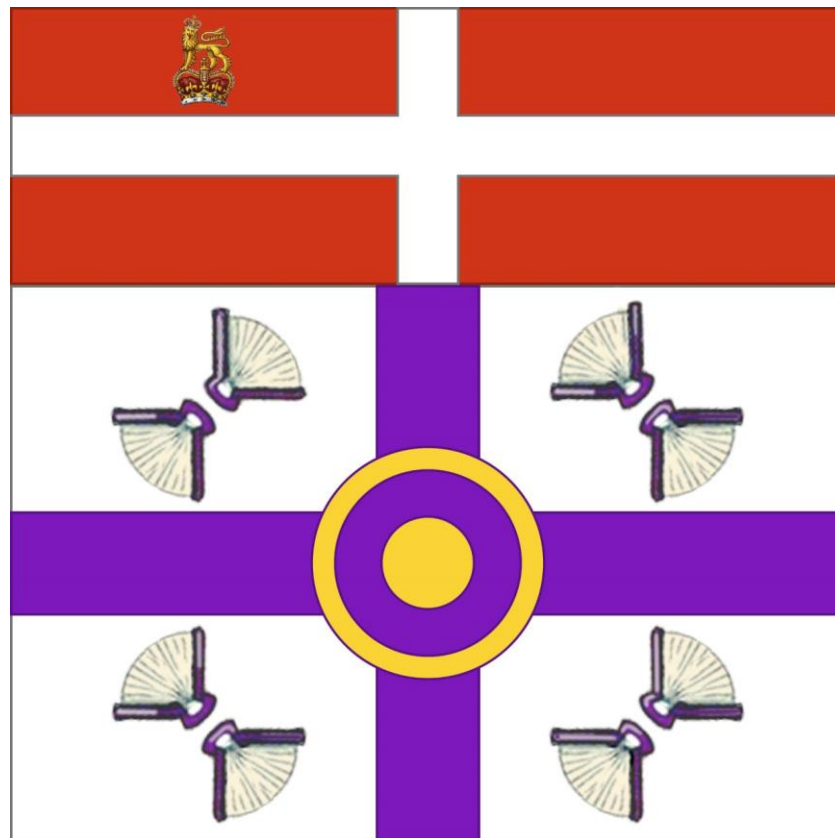


The Banner of Captain Sir Norman Lloyd-Edwards KCVO RD

The **two Celtic harps** symbolise Wales and refer to Norman's parents who were both musicians and to their two sons. They are **gold on a red background** above a **Bishop's mitre** which is also **gold on a blue background** (referring to his time as Chapter Clerk to Llandaff Cathedral, his involvement in Church life, and his father who was a Church Warden). The **red** is to symbolise Wales and **blue** the sea his Naval connections.



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Banner of Dr Gillian Willmore

The overall structure of the banner, a **cross in palatinate purple**, alludes to the Cuthbert Cross of the County, University and Cathedral of Durham and an ancient Christian heritage. **The flying open books** express lifelong interest in English and European literature as well as Theology, and dedication to teaching. **The central golden circles** at the centre allude to family life and the Willmore Conjecture which relates to the energy of a torus (a doughnut shape), a mathematical insight which has resulted in internationally creative work in geometry and many sciences.



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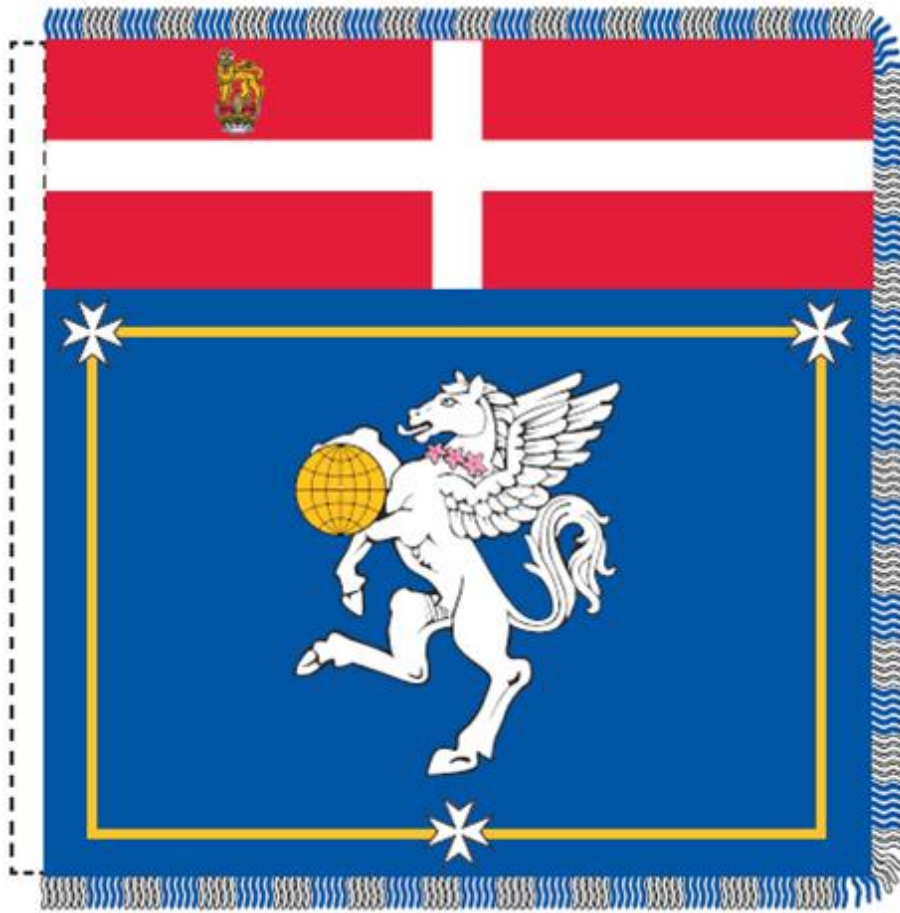


The Banner of Patrick Burgess OBE DL

The Arms are family Arms. The **green and yellow chevrons** recall Somerset from whence Patrick's family hails, **the tower** stands for fortitude and strength of purpose, and the **cross crosslets** (not Jerusalem crosses) stand for faith.



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The Banner of John Mah CD QC



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The Banner of Stuart Shilson LVO



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Banners of The Other Bailiffs and Dames Grand Cross



The Banner of Lady Elizabeth Godsal MBE DL



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The Banner of Brigadier John Hemsley OBE

The bugle horn knots have been redesigned to represent the Amalfi (or Maltese) Cross of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem. **The green blue and yellow** are the colours of the Somerset Light Infantry.



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The Banner of Major Ian Allan Crowther JCD MBE

The Crowther family used "*gules*" (**red**) a "*bend*" (**blue**) wavy "*Or*" (**gold**) *vaire*, hundreds of years ago. I am adapting this to my work in Central Africa as follows:

The chiefs who I encouraged and guided in Central Africa, were: Kalindawalo, Nyampande, Sandwe, Mwape, and Nyalugwe who lived across the Luangwa River to which one went by dugout. I encouraged these chiefs towards gaining Zambia's Independence.



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The Banner of Mr F Richard Bruce MOM



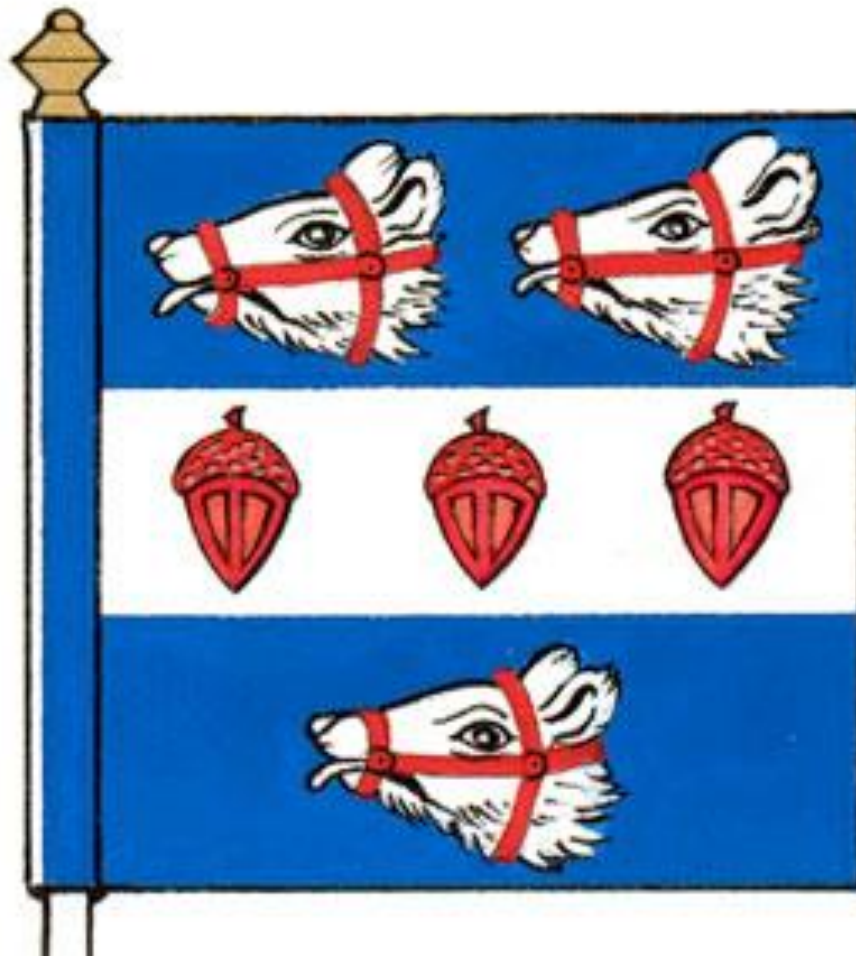
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The Banner of Mr A Marshall Acuff Jr



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The Banner of Mairi Christina Arthur

The **blue field with the three heads of bears** is based on those of the chief of Clan Forbes of Scotland, Mairi's birthplace and Forbes being her birth name. **The acorns** signify strength and allude to oak trees surrounding her house. The **red and white colours signify Canada**, her place of residence and citizenship.



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The Banner of Robert White

The **predominant white colour** of the shield is emblematic of Robert's family name. Symbolizing purity, it also represents his service and kindness for others. The **disc in the centre** refers to him and the central place of volunteerism in his life, while the **branches** allude to its positive effects spreading to all parts of society – represented by the border – and beyond.



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The Banner of Anne Cable



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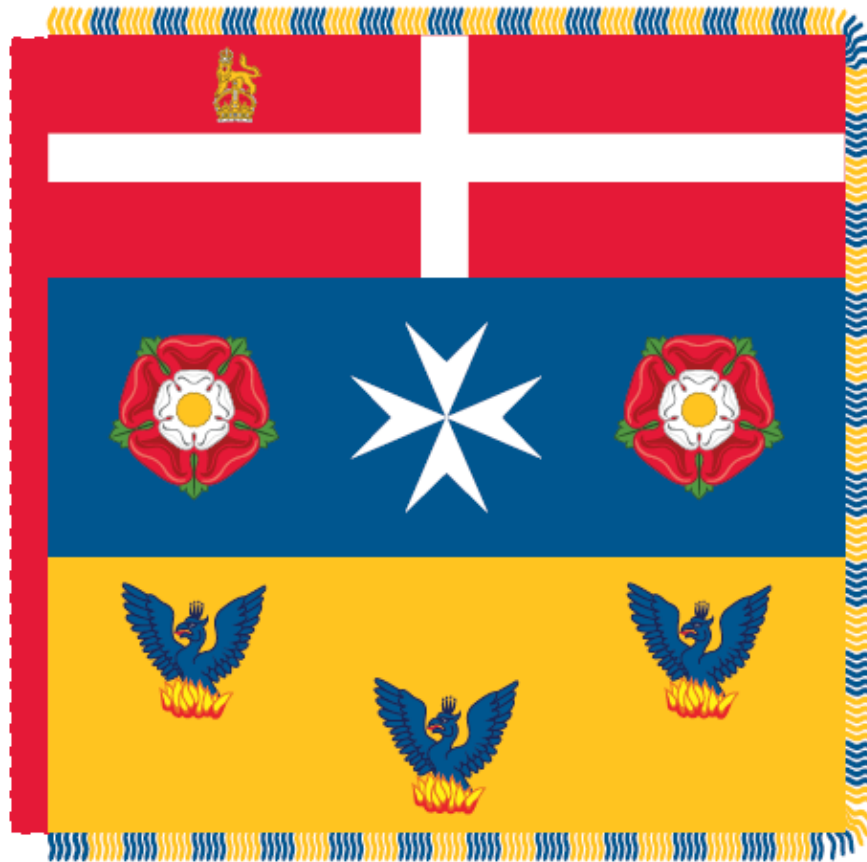
Banner of Sir David Hempleman-Adams KCVO OBE DL

The colour is predominantly **green** as that was my house colour at school. On 1998 I became the first person to achieve the Explorers Grand slam. Climbing the highest mountain on each continent and reaching both the Geographical and magnetic poles

In 2000 I was the first person to fly a balloon the Geographical North Pole. The **polar bear holding onto the red balloon** is a little humour, symbolising this feat.



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The Banner of Stuart Waetzel

The **Blue** (Azure) traditionally symbolises loyalty, truth, and strength and reflects my commitment to integrity and service tied to my employment as well as my membership in the Order of St John. The **Gold** (Or) represents generosity and elevation of the mind, as well as Gauteng (the province in which I live in South Africa: Gauteng is the Sotho word meaning “for place of gold”).

The **white Maltese Cross** is signifying my membership of the Order, and the **Tudor Roses** represent maternal and paternal predecessors’ links back to the United Kingdom and reflect a personal commitment to harmony and resolution.

The **Phoenix** symbolises rebirth and resilience. It represents my personal growth, elevation in rank and grade within my St John journey as well as perseverance and an enduring legacy.



The Banner of the Priory of England and the Islands



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The Banner of the Priory of Scotland



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*The Order of St. John
Standard of the
Priory for Wales*

Approved

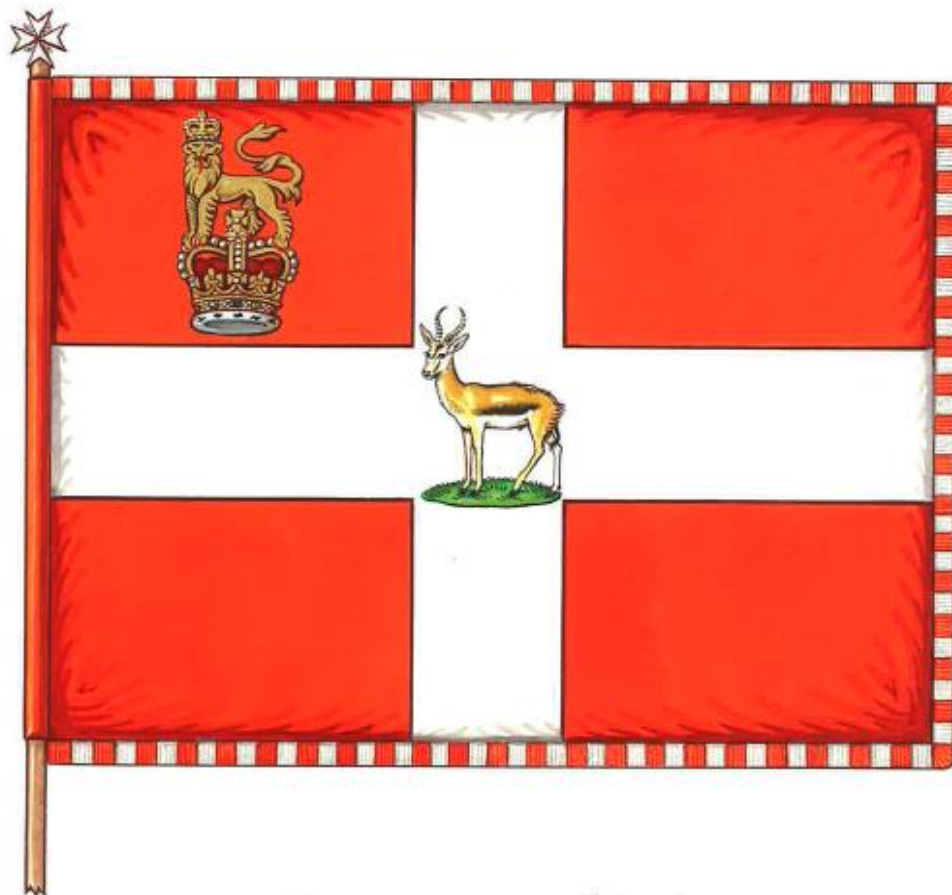
Henry.

Grand Prior.

The Banner of the Priory for Wales
(Grand Prior's Certificate)



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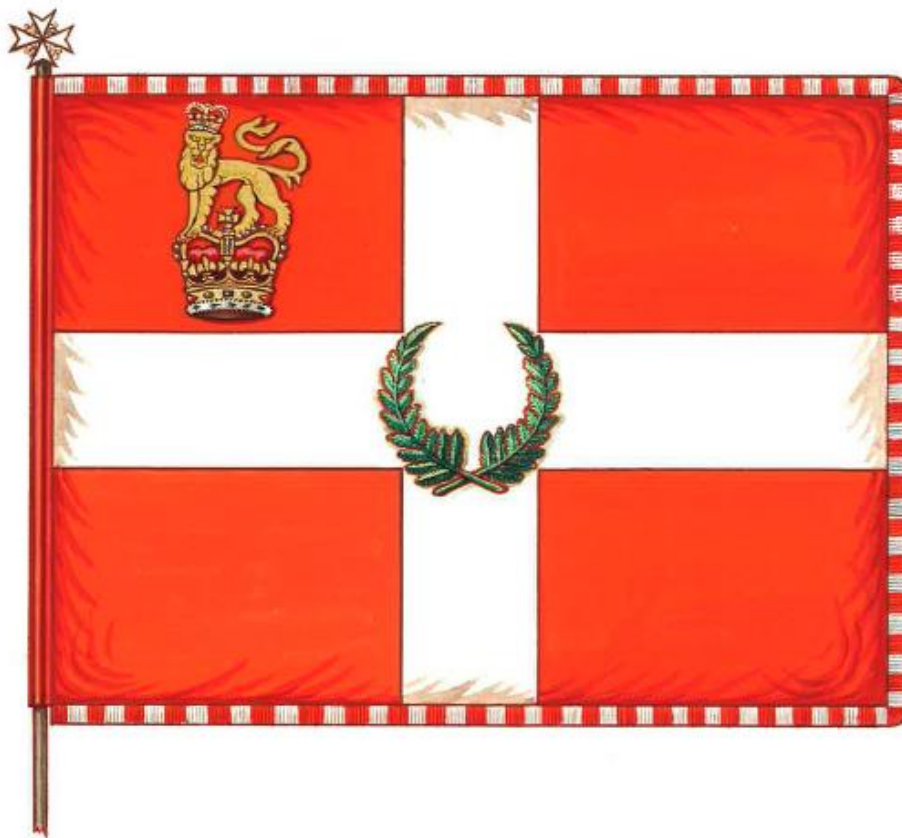
The Order of St. John
Standard of the Priory in Southern Africa

Approved
Henry
Grand Prior

The Banner of the Priory for South Africa
(Grand Prior's Certificate)



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The Order of St. John
Standard of the Priory in New Zealand

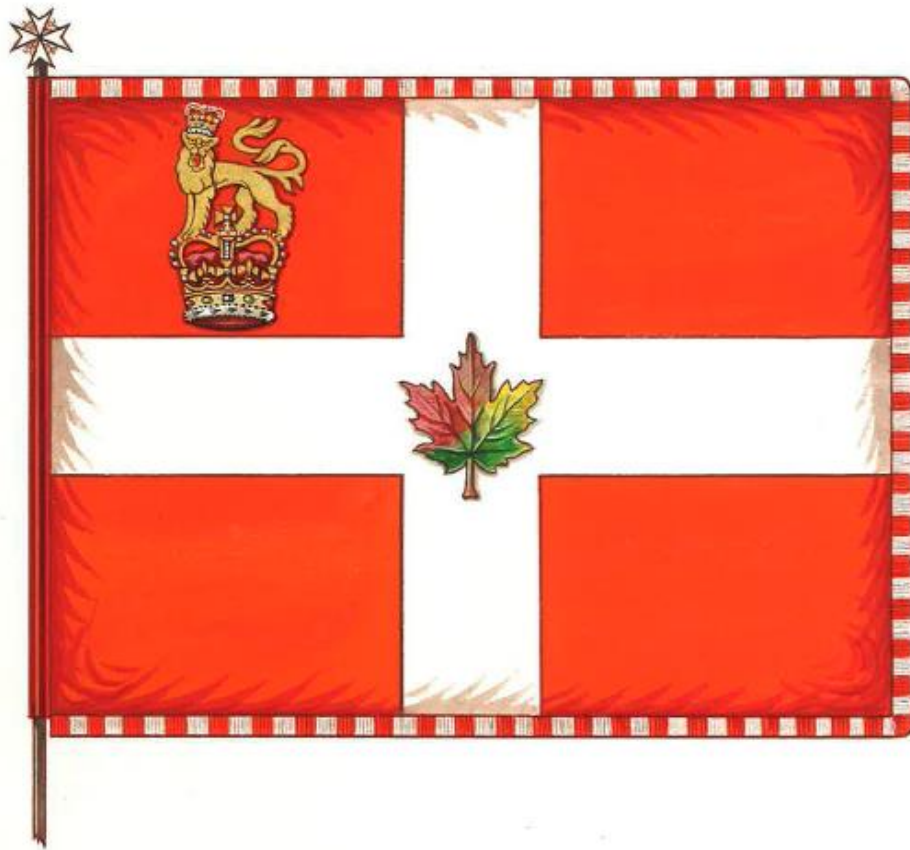
Approved

Henry.
Grand Prior.

The Banner of the Priory in New Zealand
(Grand Prior's Certificate)



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The Order of St. John
Standard of the Priory of Canada

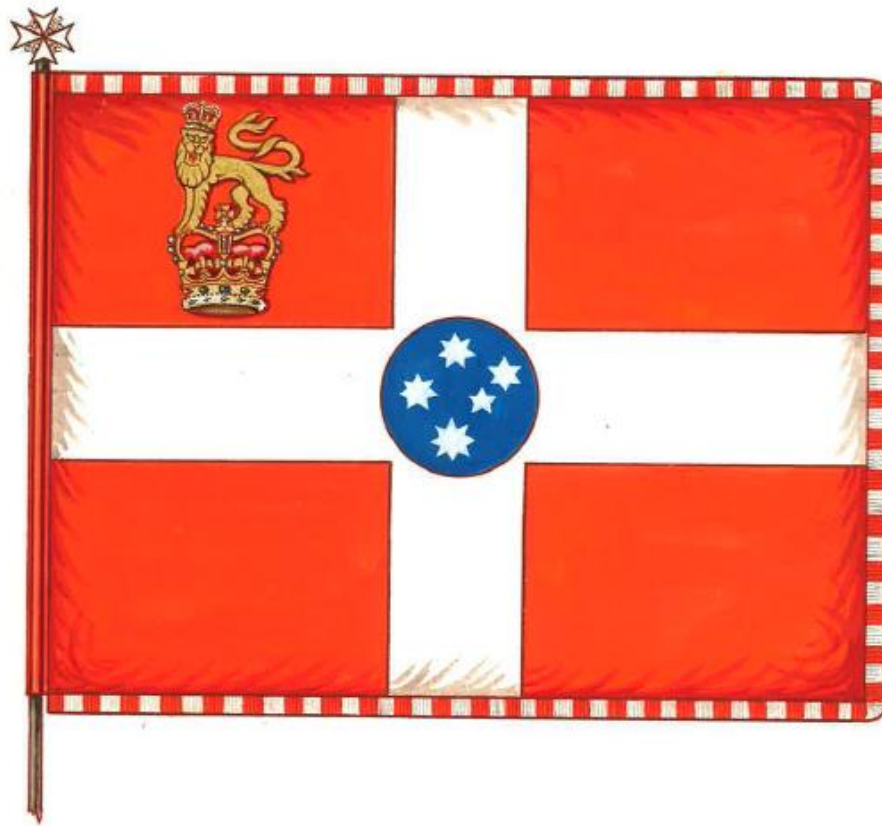
Approved

Henry.
Grand Prior

The Banner of the Priory of Canada
(Grand Prior's Certificate)



St John



The Order of St. John
Standard of the Priory in Australia

Approved

Henry.
Grand Prior.

The Banner of the Priory in Australia
(Grand Prior's Certificate)



St John



The Banner of the Priory in the United States of America



St John



The Banner of the Priory of Kenya





St John

The Banner of the Priory of Singapore



The Banner of the Priory of Hong Kong



St John



The Banner of the Eye Hospital Group



St John



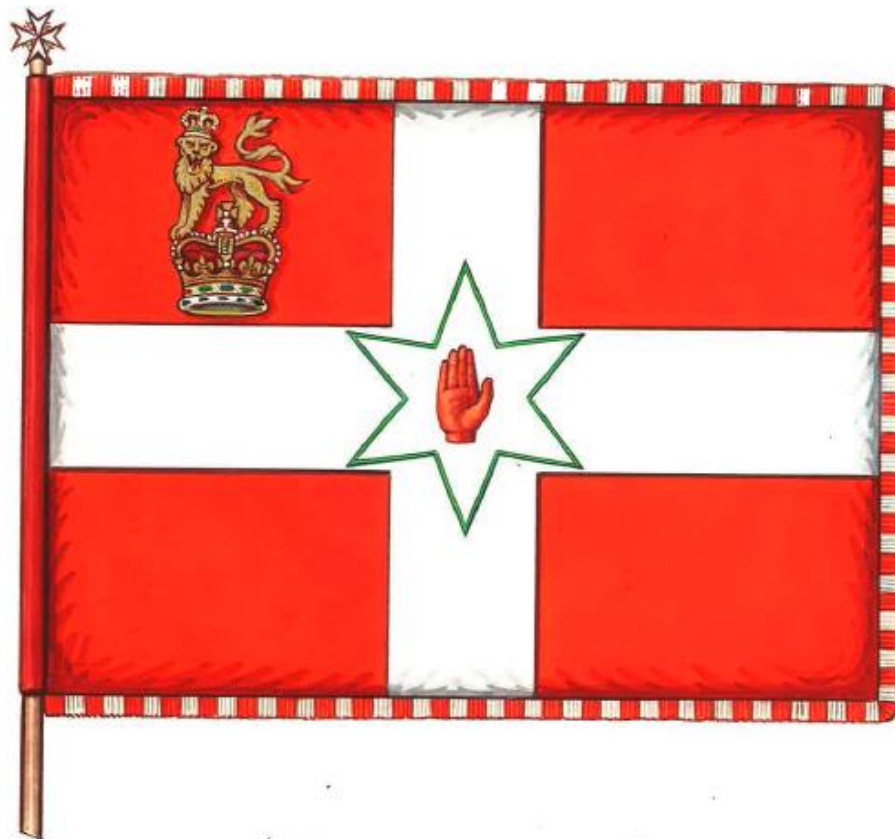
The Order of St. John
Standard of the Commandery of Western Australia

Approved
Henry.
Grand Prior

The Banner of the Commandery of Western Australia
(Grand Prior's Certificate)



St John



The Order of St. John

Standard of the Commandery of Ards in Northern Ireland

Approved

Henry.
Grand Prior

The Banner of the Commandery of Ards in Northern Ireland
(Grand Prior's Certificate)



St John



The Banner of the Commandery of Jersey



The Banner of the Commandery of Guernsey



St John



The Banner of the Commandery of the Isle of Man