

FOR SERVICE IN THE CAUSE OF HUMANITY

The Life Saving Awards of
the Order of St John



Edited by
Roger Willoughby & John Wilson

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of
Humanity**



HM Queen Victoria (1819-1901), painted by Ernest Dudley Heath in 1898 (source: LDOSJ 1746)

In 1888, Queen Victoria made the Order of St John a Royal Order of Chivalry in recognition of its good humanitarian work. From this point, the reigning monarch has been the Sovereign Head of the Order.

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**Edited by
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Forward by the Grand Prior, HRH The Duke of Gloucester



**Worcestershire Medal Service
in association with
The Order of St John**

Published by

Worcestershire Medal Service Ltd,
56 Broad Street, Sidemoor, Bromsgrove, B61 8LL, UK

First published 2024
© Roger Willoughby and John Wilson 2024

ISBN 978-0-9955531-4-9

Printed in Great Britain by Bookvault

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Dedicated to the
1,394 people recorded herein
whose heroism has been recognised by
the Order of St John

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A work such as this inevitably relies on the generous help of many individuals. The book started with a chance conversation with Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Mark Williams, the then Head of Chancery at St John International, during the 2015 Annual Court of the Royal Humane Society, and developed subsequently through a series of meetings with Abigail Cornick, the Curator and Volunteer Coordinator at the Museum of the Order of St John, and other officers of the Museum of the Order of St John. We are grateful to them all for their enthusiastic support and encouragement, without which the work would not have been possible. Abi has written an outline of the Order's history that appears here as chapter one. She has further chased down innumerable queries for us. Jessica Swift and Nigel Hankin have helped tracking down obscure information on 'missing' files in the museum and archives, especially during the final stages of the research. Of the volunteers working directly with Abi at the Museum, Ferenc Kovács has undertaken the mammoth task of reading through decades of St John annual reports and other publications to compile a database which indexes St John life saving award recipients mentioned therein. This has identified otherwise unavailable information and has considerably added to the completeness of the present volume.

Numerous officers of the Order have given their time, advice and support to the research and the resultant book, including Steven Wilson, the current Head of Chancery at St John International and Robert Millington, Manager of Ceremonial Events, Honours and Awards at the Priory of England and the Islands. Internationally too we have been fortunate in receiving generous help from a number of people. Patricia Kearney, the Priory Secretary and Registrar with the Priory of Canada, has assisted with details of several Canadian awards. Matthew Glozier, the Australian Priory Librarian, has assisted with the Australian awards. Todd Skilton, the New Zealand Priory Librarian, has been very generous with his help and has shared much of his own research material with us, as has his colleague Guy Marks, the Lead Archivist with the Northern Region, St John New Zealand. Pádraig Allen, Head of Archives and Heritage at St John Ambulance Ireland, has likewise very kindly helped with details of Irish related awards during both visits to him and through correspondence over several years. In the USA, Jeff Ritsick and Executive Director Michele Blair have assisted generously supported us with information on the recent ground-breaking award made there.

The project drew heavily on the substantial archival work of Dr Colin Dawson, who compiled a partial roll of the Order's life saving medal awards. With the agreement of the Order and Dr Dawson we have been able to make use of this ground-breaking work as a first draft of the roll of medal awards up to 1974. It has been of enormous help in progressing this book within a manageable timescale and we want to here warmly acknowledge the debt this work owes to Dr Colin Dawson and his earlier labours in researching the circumstances that resulted in the medal awards during the first 100 years of their issuance.

Three friends have made material contributions to the book. The late Norman Gooding, a long-time member of the Order and a keen historian and authority on its awards, contributed to the writing of section two of the present volume and assisted with many queries and suggestions over the duration of the project. Bob Scarlett has helped in a myriad of ways: assisting with the photography, supplying images of medals he has photographed over the years, undertaking new photography and editing some other photographs, as well as coordinating the typesetting and design of the final book. His encouragement and knowledgeable support during the writing of the present work has also been very important. And thirdly, Julian Hocking has devoted many hours to assisting us with proof reading the final text. We are very grateful to them all.

Numerous people (including archivists, curators, award administrators, members of the Life Saving Awards Research Society, the Orders and Medals Research Society and the British Medal Forum) have contributed in various ways to the book. So too have some of the recipients themselves and the families of some of the women and men whose acts and lives are discussed in this book. We wish to explicitly and warmly thank the following for their generous help and support: Neil Bagshaw; Craig Barclay; Berney Bedyk; Jessica Bradley; Richard Brocklesby; James Butler; Joel Chandler at Bonhams Auctioneers; Peter Chandler; William Close-Ash; Vicki Ellis, Senior Archives Assistant, Island Archives, Guernsey; Linda Fiske; Vincent Grima; Liam Hackett; Robert Hancock; Sarah Harrison, Archivist at the Port River Archive, at the Museum of London; Roger Hawley; Glen R Hodgins; Doug Henderson, Collections Officer, The Gurkha Museum Trust; Liane Horder of the Carnegie Hero Fund Trust; James Kemp; Martyn Lovell; David McDiarmid; Ian Midgley; Gareth Murfitt, Executive Officer of the RHS of NZ; Phillip Murphy; Paul Murray; Anthony Pamm; Patrick Poland; Juliet Pouteaux of the Guernsey Press; Christine Pullen, Curator of the Royal Green Jackets Museum, Winchester; Jeff Ritsick; Alan Sharkey, the Honours and Awards Manager of the Combined and Army Cadet Forces; Dean Sharrocks; Jeff Simpson; Richard Spedding; Munroe Swirsky; and Fred Walter.

We wish to thank Christie's Auctioneers, London, Noonans, and Spink & Son, London, for providing photographs and for their kind permission to reproduce these in the present work.

Our final thanks go to our families, who have supported us with patience and good humour across the seven years this work has taken to bring it to fruition. Any shortcomings as well as errors and omissions contained in the work are, of course, the responsibility of the editors.

The Order of St John and the editors would very much welcome hearing from anybody who may have further information on the Order's life saving awards as dealt with in this book, or indeed comments or corrections with respect to the text. Such information will help consolidate the Order's records and can be considered in potential future editions of this work. Please send all correspondence to museum@sja.org.uk.

FOREWORD

by the Grand Prior

From:
HRH The Duke of Gloucester KG GCVO



KENSINGTON PALACE
LONDON W8 4PU

The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem has ancient roots, though its present foundation dates from the nineteenth century. With clear philanthropic, humanitarian, and social aims, the re-established Order has sought to bring practical aid to sick and injured people, especially through its provision of first-aid training and an institutionalised body of trained volunteers, who might also render effective first-aid in the United Kingdom and internationally.

The Order's Life Saving Medal and Certificate of Honour emerged as a way of recognising and promoting humanitarian actions in more extreme situations, where going to others' aid often entailed some degree of risk to the would-be rescuer's life or health. The present book, edited by Roger Willoughby and John Wilson, wonderfully contextualises and describes in minute detail the history, politics, and numismatic aspects of this system of recognition, before going on to recount the public-spirited bravery of the 1,394 people across 44 countries, known to have received these awards so far. The latter section forms the core of the book, which importantly marks the first 150 years of the history of these awards. Each account commemorates and preserves the stories of men, women, and children who have gone beyond – often far beyond – what might be normally expected of people to help others in a selfless way.

A landmark contribution to the history of the Order of St John, *For Service in the Cause of Humanity*, has taken seven years' work to bring it to fruition. The book should find a wide readership both among all those ever associated with the Order, and with those interested in social history, humanitarian actions, and the recognition of civil bravery. It is a fine book which records fine actions, and I am pleased to recommend it to everyone.

ABBREVIATIONS

ADC	Aide-de-Camp	SAMC	South African Medical Corps
AED	Automated External Defibrillator	SGM	Sea Gallantry Medal
AFC	Association Football Club	SJA	St John Ambulance
ARRC	Associate of the Royal Red Cross	SJAA	St John Ambulance Association
B&DHS	Bolton and District Humane Society	SJAB	St John Ambulance Brigade
BMA	British Medical Association	SPLF	Society for the Protection of Life from Fire
BMJ	British Medical Journal	TAVR	Territorial Army Volunteer Reserve
BRCS	British Red Cross Society	TNA	The National Archives
BWM	British War Medal	USAAF	United States of America Air Force
CB	Companion of the Order of the Bath	VAD	Voluntary Aid Detachment
CBE	Commander of the Order of the British Empire	VF	Volunteer Force
CHFT	Carnegie Hero Fund Trust	VM	Victory Medal 1914-1919
C-in-C	Commander-in-Chief	WD	War Department
CMG	Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George	WRAC	Women's Royal Army Corps
CVO	Companion of the Order of the Royal Victorian Order		
DSO	Distinguished Service Order		
GNRI	Great Northern Railway of Ireland		
GWR	Great Western Railway		
IDSM	Indian Distinguished Service Medal		
IOM	Indian Order of Merit		
KCB	Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath		
KCIE	Knight Commander of the Order of the Indian Empire		
KCMG	Knight Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George		
KPM	King's Police Medal		
KStJ	Knight of the Order of St John		
LFB	London Fire Brigade		
LSARS	Life Saving Awards Research Society		
LS&GC	Long Service and Good Conduct (Medal)		
LSM	Life Saving Medal (Order of St John)		
MID	Mentioned in Despatches		
MVO	Member of the Royal Victorian Order		
NCB	National Coal Board		
NCO	Non Commissioned Officer		
NFS	National Fire Service		
OBE	Officer of the Order of the British Empire		
OMRS	Orders and Medals Research Society		
PC	Police Constable		
QFSM	Queen's Fire Service Medal		
RA	Royal Artillery		
RAMC(V)	Royal Army Medical Corps (Volunteer)		
RAN	Royal Australian Navy		
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police		
RE	Royal Engineers		
REME	Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers		
RHS	Royal Humane Society		
RIAC	Royal Irish Automobile Club		
RMA	Royal Malta Artillery		
RN	Royal Navy		
RNLI	Royal National Lifeboat Institution		
RSPCA	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals		
RSPLF	Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire		
SAC	South African Constabulary		

PREFACE

The Life Saving Medal of the Order of St John was established in 1870, following the suggestion of Sir Edward Lechmere, and was soon supplemented by an additional award, the Certificate of Honour, both of which continue to be issued to this day. Their original purpose was to recognise bravery and public spiritedness exhibited in efforts to save lives on land, especially in mines and industrial settings. Over the ensuing 150 years this has expanded to include life saving and humanitarian efforts in a far wider range of settings across the globe, from armed conflicts to natural disasters, from high profile emergencies to little known local events, from Australia to Zambia.

The editors, who have studied and documented the histories of life saving awards for many years, wanted to write *this* book for a long time. We knew that the Museum of the Order had archives relating to the earlier awards but from the 1930s records were rather haphazard and details of awards made were often not centralised and sometimes misplaced or otherwise unavailable to the public. In 2015 we serendipitously met the then Head of Chancery at St John International, Lieutenant Colonel (Ret'd) Mark Williams and casually mooted the idea with him. Within weeks, Mark invited us to a meeting at St John's Gate to discuss the ideas further and we met Abigail Cornick, the Museum Curator and Volunteer Coordinator at the Museum of the Order of St John, at the same time. As a result of the discussions, it was agreed that we would assemble the authorised history of the Order's Life Saving Medal and Certificate of Honour, while at the same time documenting every person known to have received such an award. Mark provided us with recommendations for awards held by the International Office from 2000 onwards and Abi hugely facilitated our own research in the Order's Museum and Library, as well as passing us copies of all the citations that could be found in the Museum. In this collaboration, confidentiality and data protection have been given careful consideration, with principles agreed and the final text being reviewed, edited and approved by the Order.

Inevitably, not all of the previously recorded data proved reliable. The spelling of names and places were sometimes inaccurate, as occasionally were dates. Sometimes places and dates were not recorded at all. As editors, we sought to cross check and verify the data using other archival material and secondary sources, such as newspaper archives. We liaised with the Priors to clarify wherever possible award details from their records. Conflicting information often necessitated detailed investigation in order to arrive at what we believe are accurate accounts of the events herein recorded. Incomplete and missing records were particularly troublesome and it may be that, despite our efforts, a few awards have gone unnoticed due to such gaps in the records.

Throughout the research, we have gathered a large number of photographs of awardees, their medals and many of certificates and these are to be found throughout the book. Some originate from established sources (e.g., museums, auction catalogues, websites, etc.), but many are from privately held sources and do much to enhance the value of this book.

The book is divided into three main sections as follows. Section one, written by Abigail Cornick, gives a succinct account of the history of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem and its structures, allowing readers to better position the Order's life saving awards. Section two, written by Norman Gooding, Roger Willoughby and John Wilson, describes in detail the emergence of the Life Saving Medal and Certificate of Honour and its 150 year evolution to date. Beginning with an account of the establishment of these awards and the politics involved therein, the section proceeds to give a detailed description of the medals, of which four distinct designs have been issued across the period surveyed. The types of events for which awards were made are reviewed, as are characteristics of the 1,394 awards recipients. The third section of the book, compiled by Roger Willoughby and John Wilson, occupies the majority of the present volume. Details are included here of every known event for which these awards were granted. Alphabetically organised according to the names of the recipients, each entry has been meticulously researched. Details of the circumstances of the awards are given, building wherever possible on original documents preserved in the Museum of the Order and cross-checked and supplemented by other (published and archival) material. The appendices that follow include lists of award recipients arranged according to each of the 44 countries where the acts materialised and according to the type of rescue, together with a list of the 138 female recipients of these awards.

Finally, as we noted in the acknowledgements, the Museum and Archives of the Order of St John and the editors would very much welcome hearing from anybody who may have further information on the Order's life saving awards as dealt with in this book, or indeed comments or corrections with respect to the text. All such information will help consolidate the Order's Archives and can be considered in potential future editions of this work. We hope you will enjoy browsing this book as much as we did writing it.

Roger Willoughby & John Wilson
February 2024

SECTION I

THE ORDER OF ST JOHN

Abigail Cornick, MSJ

The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, known as the Order of St John, is an international humanitarian charity, Royal Order of Chivalry and Christian confraternity. Working in over 40 countries across the world, the Order delivers a variety of health care services to meet the needs of local communities. Perhaps best known for first aid delivery and training through St John Ambulance, the Order is also active in ophthalmic care, disaster preparedness, ambulance provision, mother and baby programmes and community health care, to name but a few examples. Related to these charitable outputs, the Order recognises acts of bravery in the cause of humanity through a system of honours and awards, within which sits the Life Saving Medal of the Order, and the Certificate of Honour.

The Order's motto, *Pro fide, pro utilitate hominum*, 'For the Faith, and in the Service of Humanity', is clarified in the objects and purposes of the Order. These include the encouragement of the spiritual and moral strengthening of humankind, and the promotion of work to relieve those persons in sickness, distress, suffering or danger, without distinction of race, class or faith.¹ The time and commitment of volunteers is frequently central to these endeavours.

The history of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem is subject to debate, and continues to be interpreted and presented in differing ways. The emphasis on caregiving can, however, at the very least be said to have been inspired by the work of the Hospitallers over 900 years ago, in 11th century Jerusalem.

As early as the 1070s, the hospital of St John operated in the vicinity of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, offering the very best care to the sick and needy, regardless of faith, nationality, gender or wealth.² Over the coming decades, the role of the Hospitallers expanded to include military support in the defence and furtherance of Christian interests in the Latin East, primarily through the protection of pilgrims, at the time of the crusades. They became known as the Knights of the Order of St John, or the Knights Hospitaller.

Gifts of property, land, and money, as well as revenue from an expanding property portfolio were important in supporting the continued delivery of care, and the growing military functions. Priors based across Europe would act as administrative centers, facilitating the delivery of funds, equipment, and manpower to the Knights, sourced from commanderies and properties around the country.³ In around 1140 a parcel of land in Clerkenwell, near London, was gifted to the Knights by Jordan and Muriel de Briset. This allowed them to found the Priory of England. A magnificent site, with a large church, gatehouses (St John's Gate) and all necessary amenities, the Priory evolved to reflect the growing wealth, importance and power of the Knights.³ In 1541 the Priory in Clerkenwell was dissolved, one of the last religious houses to be closed in the course of Henry VIII's suppression of the monasteries. Although briefly reinstated in the reign of Catholic monarch, Mary I, the Reformation effectively marked the end of the Knights in England. This fate was not representative, however, of their status on the continent, where they continued to enjoy the favour and funding of the great and good, and benefit from the vast estates that they had accumulated.

By the end of the eighteenth century, however, as a result of the turmoil in Europe – wars, revolutions and uprisings – and the loss of lands across Europe, the power and influence of the Knights had diminished greatly. After many decades of negotiation with European powers and with the Roman Catholic Church, the Knights were able to re-establish a stable presence in Europe, and they abandoned their military function in favour of an exclusively humanitarian remit.⁴ Today this direct continuation of the Knights of the Order of St John is known as the Sovereign Order of Malta, an Order of the Roman Catholic Church. The Sovereign Order has its headquarters close to the Vatican in Rome and is active in humanitarian and charitable works in over 120 countries around the world.

In the 1820s, there was a desire, pursued by French Knights of the Order of Malta, to reinstate the Order of St John in England.⁵ The French Knights had identified the Order as an institution 'efficacious for promoting in all countries social happiness and tranquility', which they believed was greatly needed in Europe following many years of unrest. By bolstering the reach and strength of the Order through re-establishing a presence in its historic centres, they aimed to be a force for good in turbulent times. A particular aim of this venture was to gather sufficient funds and support to facilitate the return of the Order to Rhodes following the revolt of the Greeks against the Ottoman Empire in 1821. In the 1830s, 32 members had been admitted to the Order in England.⁶ In these early years, the requirement to be of a prominent position and of notable moral or social standing –

¹ *Royal Charters and Statutes of The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem*, 2018, pp.8-9.

² For further detail on the early history of the Hospitallers, including specific privileges, see Helen Nicholson *The Knights Hospitaller*, Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2001, pp.1-17, and Jonathan Riley-Smith *Hospitallers: The History of the Order of St John*, London and Rio Grande: The Hambledon Press, 1999, pp.18-88.

³ For a comprehensive analysis of the development of the Priory site see Barney Sloane and Gordon Malcolm *Excavations at the priory of the Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem*, Clerkenwell, Museum of London Archaeology, 2004.

⁴ For more information on the Order in the decades following 1798 see Helen Nicholson *The Knights Hospitaller*, Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2001, pp. 138-146 and H J A Sire *The Knights of Malta: A Modern Resurrection*, London: Third Millennium Publishing, 2016.

⁵ This Langue was to include the Grand Priors of Scotland, Ireland and Wales.

⁶ *The Statutes of the Sovereign and Illustrious Order of St John of Jerusalem Anglia: with a list of the members, the form of reception, and an historical memoir of the langue*, London: OSJ, 1862, pp. 4 and 13-17.

significant enough to 'attend the court of their sovereign' or 'to promote the interests and add to the lustre of the institution' – was still included in the conditions for admission, by election, to the Order. All paid an admission fee and annual oblations, and this was one of the means of achieving the revenue required, but in reality, numbers and income remained low.



The crypt of the Priory Church (source: © David Nash)

The crypt is the only surviving structure from the first buildings of the Priory site, and it is a rare survival of Norman architecture in London. Built in the 1140s, and extended and altered again in the 1170s, the crypt would have been exquisitely decorated, with rich colour and ornaments.

The desire of the French and English Knights to formally revive the Order in the following decades proved a challenging aspiration, particularly in the face of political wrangling and disunity, resulting in no small part from a proliferation of parallel but unrecognised branches of the Order. The English Knights were not immune to this, and they experienced great difficulties in re-establishing themselves.⁷

Following encouragement by some French members of the Order in the years 1826 to 1831, on 12 January 1831 the English Priory (Langue) was inaugurated. In 1834, the English Knights attempted to officially revive the Order in England by utilising the 1557 Letters-Patent of Philip and Mary at the Court of King's Bench.⁸ These letters had restored the corporate identity of the Order in England, and in following reigns were not revoked, despite the Order failing to regain ground in Mary's short reign. An 1841 pamphlet published by the Order 'clarifying' the historic foundations of the 'resuscitated' Venerable Langue of England, optimistically it would transpire, stated that:

The Venerable Langue of England is revived upon the ancient and original constitution of the Order, so far as is compatible with the existing state and usages of British Society, and without reference to political feeling, or religious differences.⁹

The English Knights aspired to be accepted as Knight Hospitallers and recognised as a branch of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. This goal was laid to rest in 1858, following the refusal of lieutenant-master Candida. His judgement concluded that the English Knights' commitment to admit members of both the Catholic and Protestant faith was incompatible with an institution ultimately answerable to the Pope.¹⁰ Undeterred, the English Knights continued and, decades later, officers of the Order were still engaged in oftentimes ill-tempered and public exchanges, played out in the newspapers, with those who disputed the legitimacy of the reformed Order.¹¹ It was not until 1961, when the Alliance of the Orders of Saint John of Jerusalem was established, that a mutual understanding and cooperation was formalised.

Based at prestigious establishments such as the Clarendon Hotel on Bond Street, famed for its fine cuisine and distinguished clientele, following the setbacks of the 1830s and 1840s, for a time the founding members of the reformed Order were principally occupied with the romanticised pursuits of the knightly ideal, with no humanitarian or charitable output discernible. Days were filled with river cruises and society dinners. In the 1860s this was to change, however, as members of the Order sought to translate

7 See Jonathan Riley-Smith 'The Order of St John in England, 1827-1858', in Malcolm Barber (ed.) *The Military Orders: Fighting for the Faith and Caring for the Sick*, Aldershot and Brookfield: Variorum, 1994, pp. 121-138.

8 The charter reinstated the Knights and their Priory in England, following its dissolution by Henry VIII, see OSTJ Museum ref: LDOSJ K28/36.

9 Richard Broun *Venerable British Langue of The Sovereign Order of St John of Jerusalem*, 1841, p. 5.

10 Helen Nicholson *The Knights Hospitaller*, Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2001, p.143 and A letter from Sir E A H Lechmere to the Editor of the *Morning Post*, 24 April 1873, in *Reprint of letters published in the 'Morning Post' and 'Spectator' in the months of March and April 1873*, p. 9.

11 See *Reprint of letters published in the 'Morning Post' and 'Spectator' in the months of March and April 1873*, which includes the responses of Sir E A H Lechmere to various items published in these papers. Even at this late date the status of the Order in England was contentious (Museum of the Order of St John, Pamphlet Box 36).

the good intentions of its members into philanthropic action.¹²

Sir John Furley, a central figure in the development of the charitable outputs of the Order,¹³ had represented the Order of St John at the First International Geneva Convention in 1864, as well as at the Second and Third International Conferences. Here, he had listened and contributed to discussions concerned principally with medical provision for the sick and injured in conflict.¹⁴ In the twentieth century the role of the Order in supporting the medical needs of the armed forces and civilians in the First and Second World Wars would be profound. The foundations for this important work were laid by the proactive role senior officers of the Order played in the establishment and work of organisations such as the International Red Cross movement and the British National Society for Aid to Sick and Wounded.¹⁵

At this time, it was also becoming increasingly apparent that the need for medical provision was not confined to the battlefield, and that there was a very real need in a civilian context in peacetime. Order members discussed the needs of growing industrial communities and the work of the newly founded Red Cross. Annual reports from the decade show a widespread concern and desire to initiate a positive output, but quite what form this would take was still to be decided. In 1869 it was resolved:

that we [the Order] would, if possible, establish a branch of our charitable work amongst the neglected poor, and victims of severe accidents in the mining and pottery districts.¹⁶

While not the first charitable work in the name of the Order in England, the seed of an ambulance service had certainly been sown. By 1874 the first ambulance system in the mining and colliery districts had been established.¹⁷ In this same year, St John's Gate, the historic home of the Hospitallers, was acquired by Sir Edmund Lechmere and a room given over for the use of the Order.¹⁸ The Order's presence at St John's Gate gave a tangible link to the heritage of the Hospitallers, and the historic caring ethos that underpinned the revived Order's endeavours. The acquisition of this building, and the development of much of what would become the collections of the Museum of the Order of St John, was arguably an important aspect of supporting the Order's narrative of its ancient roots. Indeed, the great importance and symbolism attached to St John's Gate was emphatically summarised by Major Francis Duncan, a founding member of the St John Ambulance Association, a few years later:

...the historic Gate still stands, and the faith of the knights of to-day in their work is as strong as the archway itself. No longer do they keep themselves apart from the world for a special purpose; they do better – they carry their purpose into the world. They sanctify their leisure and their energies to the relief of suffering; and their belief is invincible that, in working pro utilitate hominum, they are also working pro gloriâ Dei!¹⁹



St John's Gate from the South Side, W.P. West (active 19th century), oil on canvas 1880 (source: LDOSJ 1811)

St John's Gate was one of the few surviving structures from the medieval Priory site of the Hospitallers. For many years the Order shared the use of the buildings with an inn and various shops, before fully acquiring and developing the building and surrounding site.

12 Jonathan Riley-Smith *Hospitallers: The History of the Order of St John*, London and Rio Grande: The Hambledon Press, 1999, p. 130. For a full account of the variety of charitable outputs and achievements of the Order through the St John Ambulance Association and Brigade from 1864 until 1937 see N Corbet Fletcher *Annals of the Ambulance Department: Being the History of the St. John Ambulance Association and Brigade*, 2nd ed., London: SJAA, 1949.

13 For information on Sir John Furley see Ronnie Cole-Mackintosh *A Century of Service to Mankind: The Story of St John Ambulance Brigade*, 2nd ed., London: OSJ, 1994, pp. 18-19 and Joan Clifford *For the Service of Mankind: Furley, Lechmere and Duncan, St John Ambulance founders*, London: Hale, 1971.

14 For further information see John Hutchinson *Champions of Charity: War and the Rise of the Red Cross*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1996, and Pierre Boissier *From Solferino to Tsushima: History of the International Committee of the Red Cross*, Geneva: Henry Dunant Institute, 1985.

15 Sir John Furley would be instrumental in the establishment of the Central British Red Cross Committee in 1898. Sir John sat on the Committee as a representative of the St John Ambulance Association.

16 *Annual Report of the Secretary General, submitted to the Chapter-General on the festival of St John Baptist, 1869.*

17 *Report of the Chapter of the Order of St John of Jerusalem in England, on St John Baptist's Day 1874*, London: OSTJ, 1874, p. 6.

18 *Ibid.*, p. 10.

19 Francis Duncan 'Hospitaller Work at St John's Gate in 1880', *The Gentleman's Magazine*, October 1880, p. 463.

It was in this context, with its emphasis on *action* and *engagement*, that the Life Saving Medal emerged. The award was initially sanctioned by the Chapter General in 1870, though it took several years for a final design to emerge. This materialised in 1874, when an offer of funding for the dies was made and the project itself was linked to the wider philanthropic aspirations of the Order. It was thus reported to the Annual General Meeting that:

Connected with the ambulance service, is a proposal to establish a system of rewards for bravery in saving life in accidents in mines and collieries. Sir E Lechmere has offered the die for a suitable medal, and has consulted the Earl of Dudley, a large colliery proprietor, who highly approves of the ambulance system, and believes that when that is generally carried out, the plan for giving the honorary medal will very properly follow.²⁰

The introduction of the Life Saving Medal was to be a very significant act for the Order in a number of ways. One, which perhaps does not immediately come to mind, is the opportunity of using the award as a means of promoting and publicising the Order's wider aims and objectives, which were quickly taking shape at this time. A desire to expand the ambulance service would be well served by greater awareness of the system and its merits, and this particularly needed to be highlighted in industrial areas where accidents were common.

One of the earlier opportunities for promotion afforded to the Order through this award was the presentation of five Life Saving Medals in silver to men from the Tynewydd Colliery, in Pontypridd in 1878. The presentation of the awards by Major Francis Duncan, Director of the Ambulance Department of the Order of St John, in front of 50,000 people including the Lord Lieutenant of Glamorganshire, Lord Aberdare (representing the Queen), and the Lord Mayor of London,²¹ must have surely fulfilled the Order's aspirations for publicity to surround this occasion, and to create an opportunity to increase awareness of the aims and objectives of the Order in this sizeable colliery and mining district.²²

There are many examples in the archive of the Museum of the Order of St John of senior members of the Order sending newspaper cuttings and reports of happenings in their locale that may merit the honour of a Life Saving Award. The Order was known to encourage a nomination, where someone had perhaps not been aware of the award or of its suitability for the individual concerned.²³ This can be seen both as an effort to ensure such good deeds were acknowledged and (given the oxygen of publicity) as a means of improving the prospects of expansion for the Order's other charitable outputs.

The importance of influential people in helping to draw in crowds for the occasion of the presentation in Pontypridd is also of interest. The Order's network at this stage was certainly a prestigious, wealthy, and influential one, which was growing rapidly. At first glance this has the appearance of a rather elitist club, but the benefits of such contacts to the Order are illuminated by a passing piece of correspondence found in the nomination paperwork for Mr P M Beachcroft, a prospective member of the Order. In 1928 it was observed that:

As for Mr P M Beachcroft [...] I think that it is as Secretary of the Royal Masonic Institution for Girls that he may be of use to the Order. I talked about him to the Receiver General last night after a masonic meeting and suggested that Mr Beachcroft, who has a great deal of influence in the Craft would use that on our behalf and might be able to arrange for our [training?] to be given to selected members of the older classes in the Institution for Girls.²⁴

This was not a network being developed purely for personal gain, but one being developed with a view to extending the charitable aims and objectives of the Order as far as possible.

In 1877 the St John Ambulance Association was formally established, a further development following the introduction of an ambulance system in 1874. The purpose of the St John Ambulance Association Centres that quickly began to proliferate through the country, was to provide courses in first aid for men and women. Each centre would organise and run a course of lectures in first aid, culminating in an examination, and a qualification for those who attained sufficient marks. In the first six months of the Association, centres in Woolwich, the metropolitan area of London, Sevenoaks, Maidstone and Worcester were established and welcomed over 1000 pupils.²⁵ In addition to this, the Association distributed the first aid materials and equipment required in order to respond to cases of sudden injury and illness. Among such resources was the St John Ambulance Association's textbook, *Aids for Cases of Injuries and Sudden Illness* (later entitled *First Aid to the Injured*), the first edition published in October 1878. The term 'first aid' would first be used in the 1879 *Annual Report* of the Order.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, proactive members of the Order sought to spread the good work of the Association. A legacy of the British Empire and the frequent presence of Order members and their acquaintances in the governance of these places, it is perhaps not surprising that the Order still has a particularly active presence in the Commonwealth. In a guidance document, first issued by the Order in 1880, for Chairmen, Treasurers and Honorary Secretaries of Centres, an appendix is devoted specifically to the process for forming foreign centres and classes, where 'Detached' classes²⁶ or Centres could be formed

20 *Report of the Chapter of the Order of St John of Jerusalem in England, on St John Baptist's Day 1874*, London: OSTJ, 1874, p. 8.

21 *Order of St John of Jerusalem in England Ambulance Department Annual Report of Central Committee, St John's Day 1878*, London: OSTJ, 1878, p. 7.

22 *Report of the Chapter of The Order of St John of Jerusalem in England: Read and adopted at the General Assembly, on Monday, the 25th June, (the day following St John Baptist's Day)*, London: OSTJ, 1877.

23 A file entitled 'Medal Cases wanting to complete' dating 1899 and 1909 can be found in the closed archive at MOSJ and includes details of cases that were identified as suitable for the Life Saving Award but could not be progressed due to a lack of nomination. The Order was alerted to these cases by members of the Order, but suitable people could not be persuaded to complete a nomination form.

24 A letter of 11 February 1928, from Harry Pirie Gordon to the Secretary General, nomination paperwork for Mr P M Beachcroft, Museum of the Order of St John, London, closed archive.

25 *Order of St John of Jerusalem in England Ambulance Department Annual Report of Central Committee, St John's Day 1878*, London: OSTJ, 1878, pp. 5-18.

26 A detached class could be arranged in a locality not within the area of a Centre – usually in a suburb or rural area. This was a temporary measure, pending the formation of a Centre.

End of the present selection

SECTION II

THE LIFE SAVING MEDAL and CERTIFICATE OF HONOUR

Norman Gooding, CStJ, Roger Willoughby & John Wilson

Origin and Development

The decision by the Chapter General of the Order of St John in 1870 to institute a medal for award to those who had saved or attempted to save life on land needs to be seen in two contexts; that of the history of the Order itself and of the availability at that time of civilian decorations for gallantry.

After some success in assisting with the wounded in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, the Order was beginning to look for an area where it could exercise its declared charitable and hospitaller function. Eventually, of course, this proved to be the area of civilian first aid, first in the teaching and later in the practice. The institution of the Life Saving Medal (and subsequently the Certificate of Honour) falls into this period and is, perhaps, the earliest attempt to initiate a wider sphere of action for the Order in its home country.

By the 1870s the practice of awarding bravery medals to the military and naval forces of the Empire was well established. The Victoria Cross was instituted during the Crimean War of 1854-56 and extensively awarded during the Indian Mutiny of 1857-59. Also available to those of non-commissioned rank in the army was the Distinguished Conduct Medal and, in the navy, the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal. Civilians, however, were poorly served and, though there were medals available to reward various acts of gallantry, these were almost entirely awarded by nationally recognised charitable organisations rather than the State. They were also heavily biased towards bravery on or in water. The Royal Humane Society, founded in 1774, gave most of its awards for acts in rivers, docks and harbours and the medals of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and the Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society are self-explanatory. Practically the only exception was the medal of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, founded in 1836, but this was of obviously limited application. The Board of Trade Medal for Gallantry in Saving Life at Sea (more commonly known as the Sea Gallantry Medal), instituted by an Act of Parliament in 1854, was a large medallion, which was not at that time specifically designed for wear. The only wearable State decoration awarded for civilian gallantry was the Albert Medal, instituted in 1866 for saving life at sea.

The Life Saving Medal

There was, therefore, at the time when the Order's Life Saving Medal was instituted, a need for a medal which could be awarded for life saving acts of gallantry on land, and particularly in those areas of employment where the vast majority of deaths seemed to occur – mines and other extractive works, potteries, factories and railways.¹ It is to the credit of Sir Edmund Lechmere (1826-94), Secretary-General, that the Order was able to spot this gap and fill it.

The suggestion that the Order should award medals first surfaced as part of a paper read by Lechmere in 1869 at a meeting of the Hanley Castle (Worcestershire) Commandery of the Order. After first discussing the benefits which might flow from the establishment of an ambulance system in colliery and mining districts, he continued:

Another useful branch of such a work would be the recognition by the Order...of those who had distinguished themselves by acts of personal bravery and humanity on occasions of accident and danger. This might be done either by parchment testimonials or by medals of bronze, and occasionally of silver. The Order of St John would thus occupy the same position in reference to accidents on land as the Royal Humane Society, the Royal National Life Boat Institution and the Royal Shipwrecked Mariners' Society [*sic*], do to those on the sea and on our coasts.²

The following year, the proposal was put forward to the Chapter of the Order, a discussion documented in the *Report to Chapter General* thus:

[A] suggestion has been made by the Secretary relative to the establishment of means for rendering the Order of St John useful in cases of accident in the mining and pottery districts, and generally for granting a medal for acts of gallantry in saving life on land, as is done by the Royal Humane Society in cases of disaster on water.³

The proposal was approved at the meeting of Chapter General held on St John's Day, 24 June, of the same year. This marks the official founding in 1870 of the Order's Life Saving Medal. At that time, a revision of the Statutes of the Order was in progress and the opportunity was taken to incorporate the following in its objects:

VI. The award of silver and bronze medals for special services on land in the cause of humanity, especially for saving life in mining and colliery accidents.⁴

The whole project then appeared to sink without trace for some four years. Why this was so can only be speculated upon but, in the latter part of 1870 and the first half of 1871, the attention of the Order would have been mainly focused on its activities in the

¹ *Order of St John of Jerusalem: A Brief Notice of its Foundation and Constitution and its Objects in England*, London: Charles Cull & Son, 1878, p. 11.

² *Order of St John of Jerusalem in England: Descriptive History of Medals and Grants for Saving Life on Land by Special Acts of Bravery*, London: Harrison and Sons, 1876, p. 3; the references to the RNLI and SFMRBS were added in a footnote.

³ *Report of the Chapter General*, 1870, p. 17.

⁴ *The Statutes of the Order of St John of Jerusalem in England*, 1871, p. 4.

Franco-Prussian War, and the revision of Statutes seems to have occupied a considerable amount of attention during 1871 and 1872 as does a re-design of the insignia of the Order. The initial system of rewards, consisting of silver and bronze medals, received the reiterated approval of the Chapter General in 1874, with Certificates of Honour following as a third level award in 1885.

In order to further the project, on 15 December 1874, Lechmere generously offered to present to the Order dies for the medals.⁵ The following year, the design of these was 'carefully re-considered, the Donor desiring that the Medal of the Order should be as perfect as possible, both in design and execution,'⁶ though what precise features of the design or initial specimen strikings were thus reviewed is unstated. It is still not clear who was actually responsible for the end product, but a rather charming water-colour of St John's wort held by the Order Museum has the following statement written on the back of the mount:

I painted this for my father when he first became Secretary-General of St John... I studied the St John wort and also designed the medal with the flower design for 'saving life on land' which is given by the Order about the same time.⁷

The handwritten statement is signed 'Alice M. Cecil' and the painting is identified by the initials AMTA. This is Alicia Margaret Tyssen-Amherst (1865-1941: later Mrs Cecil), whose father was the Member of Parliament William Amhurst Tyssen-Amherst (1835-1909) who, in 1893, became Lord Amherst of Hackney. Whilst it would be pleasant to make this attribution for the first time, there is a problem. Amherst was Secretary-General of the Order from 1891 to 1893 and no changes were made to the medal during this period. However, he was Genealogist of the Order from 1884 to 1891 and was involved with its re-design following the 1888 Charter (see below). It is very doubtful whether Alice would have been involved with the original design of the medal as her father did not at that time have any connection with the Order and she would have been a very young girl. Perhaps she painted the new designs of 1888 which were, however, heavily based upon the then existing pattern.

There does seem to have been some confusion at first as to which side of the first type medal was the obverse and which the reverse. This was complicated by the fact that the ribbon had embroidered upon it the badge of the Order as it existed at that time (i.e. without the lion and unicorn between the arms of the cross). The first illustration of the medal, published in 1876, shows the side bearing the St John's wort design on the left of the page pendant from the ribbon bearing the embroidered white badge. On the right of the page appears the other side, with the badge of the Order at the centre of the design, pendant from a plain black ribbon.⁸ Neither side is labelled but the obvious assumption is that the obverse is on the left. In *later* illustrations, probably to save having a new block cut, the position of the two faces has been reversed and the St John's wort side is labelled 'reverse' (illustrated below).



An engraving of the first type medal

This action had the unhappy effect of showing the embroidered white cross on the ribbon of the reverse. The result of this would mean that the cross would always face the coat when the medal was worn and would never be seen. Though, in practice, the medal would have been presented with the white embroidered cross showing to the front, this illustration caused some consternation

⁵ *Order of St John of Jerusalem in England: Descriptive History of Medals and Grants for Saving Life on Land by Special Acts of Bravery*, London: Harrison and Sons, 1876, p. 4.

⁶ *Report of the Chapter of the Order of St John of Jerusalem in England, on St John Baptist's Day, 1875*, p. 10.

⁷ Museum of the Order of St John, London.

⁸ *Order of St John of Jerusalem in England: Descriptive History of Medals and Grants for Saving Life on Land by Special Acts of Bravery*, London: Harrison and Sons, 1876, p. 5.

when a new design was considered at the time of the granting of the Royal Charter. The confusion was evidenced by a letter from the Genealogist, Lord Amherst, to Sir Herbert Perrott:

6th Nov 1887

My Dear Perrott

The details are very difficult to arrange. It appears there is no description (and I take it all from the printed form) of the material of the medal. Are there not also two kinds Bronze and Silver and are not both struck from a die? The obverse is the side that shows and on this is I believe the eight-pointed cross of the Order commonly known and described as the 'Maltese Cross'. In that case the said Maltese Cross on the riband is useless as it would not be seen, but if it is right that the words 'For Service in the cause of Humanity' should be on the obverse and the legend awarded by the OSJJ on the reverse – the legend had better be changed from one side to the other, so described, and a new die struck. It looks as if for some reason the reverse was to be shown in front and as the Maltese Cross would not then appear it was put on the ribbon. That would be very well if it did not appear on the medallion – as it does it should be on the obverse and always show. If it does not matter which legend is outside let the die stand and simply as I have done describe the obverse as having the Maltese Cross... Have Messrs Wyon of Regent Street the die in their charge? If not where is it?⁹

Amhurst's suggestions were mostly adopted and the redesigned medal which arose out of the Royal Charter of 1888 reflected the logic of his remarks, of which more later.

The dies for the original, or first type, medal which Lechmere sponsored in December 1874 were executed by the London firm J. S. & A. B. Wyon, with the first medals being struck the following year. The design, described in detail later in this chapter and illustrated in image 2.1, incorporated an eight-pointed Maltese cross on the obverse circumscribed by the wording 'AWARDED BY THE ORDER OF ST JOHN OF JERUSALEM IN ENGLAND', reflecting the title of the Order as introduced in the statutes of 1871. The reverse design centred on a sprig of St John's wort, with two ribbons interlaced, bearing the words 'JERUSALEM', 'ACRE', 'CYPRUS', 'RHODES', and 'MALTA', circumscribed by the legend 'FOR SERVICE IN THE CAUSE OF HUMANITY'. Both obverse and reverse dies carried the name of the Wyon company, Alfred Benjamin Wyon (1837-84) being probably responsible for their execution, his brother Joseph Shepherd Wyon (1836-73) having died by the time of this commission. The Wyon company appear to have produced the initial medals, several examples being known in their monogrammed cases, with production moving to Phillips Bros and Son by 1885.

The first medals *presented* went to two coal miners, Elijah Hallam and Frederick Vickers, for bravery in the rescue of a group of miners trapped in the Albert Colliery, in Newbold, near Chesterfield, on 6 September 1875. Approved on 13 October 1875 and presented on 18 November that year, these appear as medals number one and two in the Order's Register of Life Saving Awards. The third medal in the Register was something of an anomaly. Awarded to John Smith Young for rescuing a wounded Prussian soldier during the siege of Paris in December 1870, this was in fact the earliest act recognised by the Order and the first medal approved by the Chapter General (on 11 May 1875), though its presentation was delayed until 17 March 1876. Subsequent awards appear in the Registers more or less chronologically according to dates of approval (which generally closely follow the date of the acts). In total, just 34 silver and 18 bronze medals of this original type were issued prior to the Charter of 1888.¹⁰ In publicising these early awards, emphasis tended to be placed on elite elements in each case. Thus, for example, in an 1878 brochure by the Order, Young, as an officer, gets mentioned by name as does the fact that his medal was presented by Major-General HSH Prince Edward of Saxe-Weimar, while a group of miners (see the entry for William Beith and colleagues) who all received silver medals go unnamed, their receipt of Albert Medals being the signifier that got emphasised.¹¹ Such publicity was arguably strategic, in promoting the status of the Order and shoring up its legitimacy. It inevitably also reproduced existing social hierarchies.¹²

Shortly after the institution of the Life Saving Medal, the need for such a national reward became obvious even to government and, in 1877 in the wake of the Tynewydd Colliery disaster, the Albert Medal was extended to acts of courage on land. The Tynewydd disaster itself led the Order to issue five silver medals,¹³ the recipients of four of these also receiving the Albert Medal in gold. While Edmund Lechmere had publicised a proposal that the Order might also grant bronze medals and parchment certificates on this occasion,¹⁴ none were forthcoming, although a further 21 Albert Medals in bronze were also awarded by the State for these events as well as awards by various other bodies. The Order's flagship Life Saving Medal was thus suddenly competing in a turf war, the field crowded with non-governmental awards by various societies and now the State's Albert Medals in gold and bronze. With respect to the Order's medal, Lechmere argued these were rewards for:

...acts of bravery in saving life on land – and more especially with those connected with accidents in mines and collieries – on a system in every way similar to that pursued by the Royal Humane Society and [the Royal National] Lifeboat Institution in cases of saving life on water.¹⁵

This assertion about the scope of the Order's medal, that it was for saving life on land, and his situating the awards of the RHS and RNLI as for 'water' rescues, sought to demarcate spheres of operations for the Order and those competing supposedly parallel bodies. It was, however, a unilateral decision and – with respect to the RHS at least – did not absolutely reflect the full range of

9 Lord Amherst, to Sir Herbert Perrott, 6 November 1887, Archives of the Order of St John, London.

10 Edwin J King *The Knights of St John in the British Empire: Being the Official History of the British Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem*, London: St John's Gate, 1934, p. 223.

11 *Order of St John of Jerusalem: A Brief Notice of its Foundation and Constitution and its Objects in England*, London: Charles Cull & Son, 1878, p. 11.

12 C P Barclay *Heroes of Peace: The Royal Humane Society and the Award of Medals in Britain, 1774-1914*, University of York PhD thesis, 2009, p. 351.

13 The awards going to William Beith, John William Howell, Isaac Pride, Daniel Thomas and Thomas E Wales, the latter being omitted from the list of Albert Medal recipients.

14 *Eddowes's Journal*, 2 May 1877, p. 6; *South Wales Daily News*, 27 April 1877, p. 3.

15 *South Wales Daily News*, 27 April 1877, p. 3; see also *The Order of St John of Jerusalem: A Brief Notice of its Foundation and Constitution and its Objects in England*, London: Charles Cull & Son, 1878, p. 11.



Image 2.1: First type medal obverse and reverse
(source: Spink, London)



Image 2.2: Second type medal obverse and reverse
(source: DNW, London)



Image 2.3: Third type medal obverse and reverse
(source: OstJ Museum, London)



Image 2.4: Fourth type medal obverse and reverse
(source: Roger Willoughby)

End of the present selection

SECTION III

ALPHABETICAL ROLL OF RECIPIENTS

Roger Willoughby & John Wilson

Introduction

The roll that follows documents all the recipients of the Order of St John gold, silver and bronze Life Saving Medals and the Order's Certificates of Honour awarded for acts of gallantry in saving (or attempting to save) lives in the 150 years between 1870 and 2020, to which has been added the bronze medal awarded to Sean Livingston for a January 2021 rescue, the last award promulgated at the time of writing. As we have discussed in the last chapter, the primary source material used consisted of two medal registers documenting awards granted up to November 1931, (excluding 1912-27), the so-called Dawson transcript (covering awards up to 1974), and a range of St John archives and published sources. With this diversity of sources compiled by many people over 150 years, we have chosen to moderately synthesise and in some cases summarise the material, standardising dates and spellings to make a more accessible text. The resultant synthesis, we hope, nevertheless retains a flavour of the original historical accounts. The latter should not be read as a catalogue of currently recommended life saving practices and neither the editors nor St John International endorse unsafe practices in any way.

Entry layout:

† indicates the award was made posthumously.

Surname, first names (in bold), location of incident (italicised and in brackets, using the contemporary names of the countries) and type of award.

Award: A synthesis of the original recommendation or citation details from the OStJ Archives; newspaper and other accounts and additional sources; details of the procedural route and the presentation where known; archival and other references.

Provenance: Details of museums, collections and past sales within which the awards appeared. Where auction prices are quoted, these generally *exclude* any buyer's premium and tax.

A

Abraham, Albert (England)

Bronze Medal

Award: On 13 July 1884, Albert Abraham of Condurrow, Cambourne, Cornwall, gallantly rescued a playfellow Edward Bartle, who was injured by a fall from a cliff and rendered helpless at Condurrow. Abraham, with difficulty, considerable intrepidity and courageous self-devotion, reached Bartle, removed him out of the way of the advancing tide and humanely tended him during the night until both were rescued. A fuller and more sobering account of the events was reported by Robert Baden-Powell, thus: "Three boys were climbing up some cliffs from the seashore, when one of them fell to the bottom and was very badly hurt. Another climbed up the rest of the cliff and ran away home, but told nobody for fear of getting into trouble. The third one, Albert Abraham, climbed down again to the assistance of the boy who had fallen, and he found him lying head downwards between two rocks, with his scalp nearly torn off and his leg broken. Abraham dragged him up out of reach of the tide, for where he had fallen, he was in danger of being drowned, and then replaced his scalp and bound it on, and also set his leg as well as he could, and bound it up in splints, having learned the "First Aid" duties of the St John's Ambulance Society. Then he climbed up the cliff and gathered some ferns and made a bed for the injured boy. He stayed with him all that day, and when night came on, he still remained with him, not did he desert him even when a great seal climbed on to the rocks close to him and appeared to be rather aggressive. He drove it off with stones. Parties went out and eventually rescued both boys, but the injured one died soon after, in spite of the efforts that Albert Abraham had made to save him" (1908, p. 283). The Chapter General of the Order approved the award of its bronze medal to Albert Abraham on 9 December 1884 and the award was presented at a Volunteer Dinner at Cambourne on Easter Monday 1885, Captain Harvey presiding. See also R Baden-Powell *Scouting for Boys*, London: Horace Cox, 1908, p. 283.

Provenance: Abraham's medal, engraved in upright serif capitals: 'ALBERT ABRAHAM 1884', was sold on ebay.com by a US seller on 5 February 2020, £394.

Acheson, Nora (England)

Certificate of Honour

Award: On 21 November 1939, the 2,500-ton Hull steamer *Geraldus* was wrecked by a mine off the coast at Aldeburgh, Suffolk. The crew were seen clinging to the wreckage and the local lifeboat went out to rescue them. Dr Nora Acheson, a SJAB Divisional Surgeon, volunteered to go out with the crew. The coxswain hesitated as he thought it was not a job for a woman, but she insisted on going. The lifeboat was out for five hours in a strong wind and driving rain, and it was dark when it returned. None of the crew of the steamer was brought ashore by the lifeboat as they had been rescued by a warship. The risk to the crew of the lifeboat was very great as they had to take it through an area which had been mined. When the lifeboat returned Mrs Acheson stepped ashore and said 'Oh well, it is all in the day's work. I loved it'. See also the *Daily Sketch*, 22 November 1939.

Acornley, Harold (Canada)

Bronze Medal

Award: On 18 October 1964, an electricity fault occurred causing a failure of the supply to Algonquin Island. Soon after 8 pm it was noticed that there was a dense column of smoke arising from equipment mounted on a hydro pole and located east of the bridge from Algonquin Island to Centre Island. The pole was roughly 25 feet high and carried the main hydro wiring to Algonquin Island. A Mr Alan D Edmonds stated how: 'Curious, I walked to the street where a Land Rover fire truck and a Toronto Hydro repair truck were parked beneath the pole'. Harold Acornley, of the Toronto Hydro-Electric System, explained that a transformer was 'out' and that they had known about it for some time but had had to wait for a ferry to take a repairman to the island. 'I heard a fireman ask whether he and his men were needed. I heard both Mr Acornley and Mr Seabrooke reply to the effect that no, they weren't, that they had to cut the transformer. Their attitude was that of men performing a routine function. Mr Seabrooke climbed the pole and became enveloped in the smoke from the transformer. I was startled, since I would have expected a man in this position to at least wear breathing apparatus. As far as I could see he wasn't. Mr Acornley stood beneath the pole, directing the spotlight upwards so Mr Seabrooke could see what he was doing. At this point I returned to my home. I had barely closed the screen door when I heard a man screaming. I distinctly heard 'don't leave me...for Christ's sake don't leave me'. I think I heard him scream 'I'm stuck' or words to that effect. I ran back to the street and found the hydro pole, which carried a complex of wiring, had become a gigantic flaming torch. I learnt afterwards that the transformer had exploded



Albert Abraham's OSTJ bronze medal

and splattered blazing oil around. I assume oil was spread over the whole structure and, presumably Mr Seabrooke. When I arrived, Mr Acornley had already reached Mr Seabrooke. He had climbed the ladder until he stood directly behind Mr Seabrooke, who, [moving frantically], was trapped by his own safety strap. Both men seemed almost totally enveloped in flames. I watched as Mr Acornley struggled around Mr Seabrooke and freed the safety strap. Then Mr Acornley helped Mr Seabrooke down to the ground. By now I had instructed a passing youth to run to the Fire Station, since it was only 150 yards away from the bridge and was quicker than finding a telephone. As Mr Seabrooke reached the ground, he staggered a little. Mr Acornley, myself and a passer-by [who] had reached the scene as the men climbed down, helped Mr Seabrooke remove his smouldering coat and gloves. He claimed to be 'alright'. At this point I realised the high-tension wires passed dangerously close to my home, so I left the scene and evacuated my family. On returning, Mr Seabrooke was receiving first aid treatment as he lay across the front seats of the Toronto Hydro repair truck. Mr Acornley was apparently supervising the final efforts to ensure the hydro pole and wiring was effectively out and safe. I saw him radio to his headquarters. I spoke to him and asked if he was hurt, and he said that his face was burning. Until this time he had not sought aid for himself. A local doctor saw him and after examining Mr Acornley's face said quietly 'nasty'. The length of time of the incident from the arrival of the repair crew to the removal of both men to hospital took no longer than 40 minutes. The Chapter General of the Order approved the award of its bronze medal to Harold Acornley on 21 July 1965. Harold Acornley was also awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) for gallantry and the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission's silver medal and a monetary award. See also A Edmonds 'The hero hunters always get their man', *Maclean's*, 22 January 1966, pp. 25-31 and the *London Gazette*, 4 May 1965, p. 4357.

Adam, William ('Billy') (Canada) Bronze Medal
Award: At about 2 pm on 18 November 1992, a woman was babysitting two children, both aged three at the time of the incident, in her house in Saskatchewan, Canada. The children found a butane lighter and started playing with it, setting fire to the curtains. The woman was working in the kitchen and felt the heat of the fire and rushed into the living room. She grabbed one child, ran outside and placed her on the ground. She immediately ran back inside to find the other girl, but initially couldn't find her as she had ran into a bedroom. She was soon found by the woman and quickly taken outside. However, the first child had, unknown to the woman, ran back into the house. By this time, the house was filled with dense black smoke. A member of the local RCMP, tried to enter the house but was driven back by the smoke and heat. A window blew out and a sofa could be seen burning, and bystanders started to throw snow onto the sofa, as the volunteer fire fighters had not yet arrived, and people were told not to enter the house because of the smoke. As the fire department arrived it was found that William Adam (36) had entered the house and crawled along the floor, through the house until he had found the girl. He immediately ran out of the building and was met by the RCMP Corporal and the local nurse. The young girl was barely alive and was rushed to hospital where she was treated for smoke inhalation. Mr

Adam also suffered from smoke inhalation. The Chapter General of the Order approved the award of its bronze medal to William Adam on 28 September 1994.

Adams, Albert Edward John (England) Certificate of Honour
Award: See the entry for Harry Lush.

Adams, Gerald (Wales) Bronze Medal
Award: On the evening of 4 July 1971, Sergeant Gerald Adams, of the Barry SJA Lifeguard Division, East Glamorgan District SJAB, was down at the Beach Inspector's Office discussing the day's patrol with a number of lifeguards. Adams saw a small group of people in the water. He then noticed that two girls, who had been swimming in the water, had swum some 200-250 yards out to sea and were now stationary, though, due to the tidal situation and current, were in actual fact drifting quite fast up channel. They then continued swimming out to sea and must have realised how far they had gone for they both turned and tried to head for shore, but one girl gave obvious signs of distress. Adams rushed down to her aid, stripping off to his underpants and proceeded to swim out to her. When he reached her, it was apparent that she was very distressed and was fully clothed. He then effected a rescue and started to tow her back to the beach. They were some 300 yards out at this time, coming back against the current, and the girl blacking out frequently. Three members of the public arrived at this time to help but were unable to help as they could not execute any kind of tow. When Adams eventually landed the girl on the beach, the Beach Inspector had resuscitation equipment ready, and oxygen was administered for five minutes. The girl was then transported by ambulance to Barry Accident Hospital. The patient was later discharged fit and well, with no aftereffects. The Chapter General of the Order approved the award of its bronze medal to Gerald Adams on 17 November 1971. See also *Touch: The University Hospital of Wales Bulletin*, October 1971, p. 1.



Gerald ('Gerry') Adams

End of the present selection

APPENDIX A: FEMALE RECIPIENTS

The following appendix lists all 138 female recipients of the Order's Life Saving Medal and Certificate of Honour awarded to date (December 2022).

Acheson, Nora	Foote, Jessie Ann	O'Neill, Katherine
Addison, Mary Winifred	Foster, Karen	Outram, Kate
Alant, Helen	Freeman, Elizabeth	Paarman, Leoni
Allesbrook, Jane Patience Pole	Fry, Phyllis	Pascoe, Sylvia
Anderson, Mary	Graham, Rachel	Phillips, Coralie Elizabeth
Appleby, Cheral	Harris, Penny	Pigott, Kathleen
Archer, Wilhelmina H	Hatcher, Julia	Pomp, Louisa Claire
Austin, Shirley	Hayes, Michelle	Poole, Adelaide
Baloun, Myra Dawn	Heppell-Marr, Constance	Poole, Emily
Beckwith-Smith, Honor Dorothy	Hignett, Dorothy	Pritty, Ellen
Bills, Grace	Holder, Joanna	Rausch, Karen
Bird, Charlotte	Irving, Margaret	Reilly, Florance
Blandford, Eileen Florence	Jones, Karen	Renny-Taylor, Florance
Blood, Dora Lloyd	Joyce, Marjorie	Rolfe, Catherine Anne
Booth-Jones, May	Kellard, Charlene	Rowley, Katrina Maria
Bradley, Jessica Olivia	Kellard, Tamie	Sankey, Alice M
Brockbank, Pauline	Kelly, Karen	Saul, Olive
Brown, Michaela	Knox-Gore, Sybil Saunders	Saunders, Muriel
Buntain, Constance	Lambert, Molly	Scally, Marjorie
Butler, Winifred	Lehre, Margaret	Selby, Prideaux Elizabeth
Cant, Hazel	Leone, Michele	Sherratt, Judith
Catcheside, Florence Wilson	Lifely, Lila	Shields, Jean
Chaytor, Edith	Lindsay, Diane	Smit, Janet Joy
Clarke, Margaret Campbell	Lindsay, Edith	Smith, Marion
Cole, Claire Anne	Loftus, Annie	Smythe, Mary Louisa
Comiskey, Geraldine	Lord, Patricia	Sproule, Anna
Conroy, Katherine	Luke, Samantha	Staines, Rita
Cowe, Elizabeth	Lumsden, Caroline	Stanford, Mavis
Crawfurth-Smith, Clarice	MacCartney, Eileen	Stanley, Miriam
Davey, Stephanie	McGinley, Mary	Starr, Lilian Agnes
Davies, Victoria	McQuillan, Elizabeth	Stewart, Heather
De Lacy, Catherine M	McVittie, Violet	Thomas, Sybil
Deobel, Gabrielle	Macartney, Mabel	Timms, Julie
Dignam, Julia	Manilal, Saras	Trant, Hope
Dreghorn, Margaret	Milestone, Evelyn Stone	Tweddle, Lilian Featherstone
Dyer, Helen Marion	Miller, Joyce Margaret	Uytenbogaardt, Elizabeth Jacoba
Edwards, Janet	Mooney, Emily A	van Riel, Seretha
Ennis, Susan	Mooney, Susan F	Vickers, Dianne
Fagan, Brenda Beth	Moore, Adelaide	Webb, Ella
Fagnan, Tanya	Moreau, Emilienne	Williams, Mary Myrtle
Fairfax, Majorie Joyce	Mowbray, Edith Susan	Winters, Barbara
Ferguson, Hilary	Munro, Kerryn	Wood, Lily Madeline
Figgis, Ruby	Ndomeni, Gertrude	Woodhouse, Muriel Eileen
Finlay, Mona	Newnes, Sandra	Woods, Mary
Fitzpatrick, Ethel	Newsome, Rebekah	Worrad, Aimee
Flannery, Janie Levina	O'Brien, Jane	Wrede, Amy Hodgson

APPENDIX B: RECIPIENTS BY COUNTRY

The following appendix lists the recipients of awards alphabetically, by the country or jurisdiction in which the rescue or act took place. The country names cited here are those that were in use at the time of the award and do not take into account subsequent name changes or shifting borders. Where an award was made posthumously, we have placed a cross (†) before the recipient's surname. The granting of a subsequent award is indicated by an asterisk (*) placed after the names (second awards have only been made to recipients in Guernsey to date).

At Sea (3)

Lindsay, Michael Henry

Trousselot, Henri W F

van Hoydonck, Constant

Australia (26)

Adams, James Bryan

Knowles, Gordon William

Thain, David Sinclair

Austin, Shirley

McLoughlin, William

Thomson, Colin W

Bourne, Colin Stainer

Martyn, Frederick

Thorogood, Frank Edward

Briner, Edward

Nicholls, Edward

Thorpe, Cuthbert F

Connor, Michael Joseph

Peters, Gregory William

Timms, Luke Christopher

Crawford, John

Quin, Alfred James Ralston

Toshach, Robert James

Cullen, Leonard

Smith, Alan M

Young, Arthur

Dyer, Helen Marion

Smith, Henry Robertson

Zahra, Frederick

Hughes, Francis Herbert

Stanley, Miriam

Austria (2)

Davey, Stephanie

MacRae, Paul

Bolivia (1)

Cant, Hazel

Botswana (1)

Street, Stephen

Canada (215)

Acornley, Harold

Buckle, David Wallace

Deschenes, Joel

Adam, William (Billy)

Bushie, Ashley

Devuono, Jerald

Adamson, James

Button, Kyle Patrick

Dickinson, Alexander

Anderson, Mark

Byrd, David

Dickson, S John B

Anderson, Stanford

Byrd, Michael

Doan, Richard

Anglin, Stanley Anthony

Cameron, Hugh Charles

Dorman, Charles E

Angus, Stewart

Cameron, Terence

Doyle, J Andrew

Arney, Cecil

Canova, Glen

Duguay, Alm

Baker, Christopher

Carpenter, Ken

Duncan, Ian G

Baloun, Myra Dawn

Caton, Wayne

Dunlap, Robert Peter

Bardy, George

Chanasky, Orest

Ehni, Paul Donald

† Bartley, Erroll Dane

Chandler, Peter David

Endress, William Helmut

Bates, Ben

Chapman, James Robert

Ennis, Susan

Bedyk, Berney

Cheverie, David Gordon

Erikson, Randolph

Bélanger, Gilles

Conlon, David Christopher

Erlich, Andrew

Bell, Michael

Conrad, Donald

Fagan, Brenda Beth

Berube, Alain

Conrad, Stephen Douglas

Fagnan, Tanya

Black, Norman Albert

Cook, Gregory

Fatur, Ivan Edward

Blackwood, John

Cooper, John

Ferkranus, Timothy John

Blanchette, Leslie

Crerar, David Frederick

Fernandez, Milton

Boisvert, Laurier Andre

Cumben, Clyde

Figueira, Bryan

Boncheff, William

† Dahlquist, Claes

Fillmore, Frank Beverley

Bowen, John

Daniels, Ivan Antoine

Fillmore, Robert Welsford

Brausen, Ralph

Danilis, Trif Peter

Fisher, George

Brown, Cory

Davis, Alister

Fleming, Bryan William

Brunnelle, Pierre

Dent, Brian Frederick

Foote, Jessie Ann

End of the present selection

APPENDIX C: RECIPIENTS BY TYPE OF RESCUE

This final appendix lists recipients according to the type of rescue, the types being arranged into 20 broad clusters. Where an award was made posthumously, we have placed a cross (†) before the recipient's surname to indicate this.

Air Accidents (21)

Addison, Mary Winifred	Giesbrecht, Gordon	Manamela, Samuel
Beckwith-Smith, Honor Dorothy	Hondai, Gabriel	Mtembu, Michael
Bullock, Alan	Howe, Charles Thomas Hearl	Shai, Petrus
Cowe, Elizabeth	Knowles, Gordon William	Smit, Brian
Crerar, David Frederick	Lucas, Ricky John	Smit, Janet Joy
Cumben, Clyde	Maidment, Ernest Lloyd	Tilley, Jon Warwick
Gibson, Thomas Campsie	Makwala, Samuel	Weston, Michael

Animals (34)

Allesbrook, Jane Patience Pole	Gale, Andrew Charles	Outram, Kate
Baloun, Myra Dawn	Gall, Alexander Robert	Parrott, Richard Charles
Boyle, Francis Kevin	Greatorex, Joshua Frederick	Patmore, George
Clarke, Margaret Campbell	Hatcher, Julia	Roffey, Alfred George
Clarkson, Charles Christopher	Hayes, Michelle	Rosenberg, Julius
Corson, William	Hildebrand, Michael	Stewart, Heather
Coulson, William	Kilhams, Sidney	Street, Stephen
Cutcliffe, Michael Alan	Lifely, Lila	Tucker, William Henry
Durrant, Brian Henry	Morris, Alfred Charles	Tweddle, Lilian Featherstone
Edwards, Janet	Munro, Kerryn	Wilkinson, Leslie
Elder, Jack	Nelson, Robert	
Fisher, John	Nokas, John	

Armed Conflict (War, Terrorism, Civil Unrest) (186)

Acheson, Nora	Carnegie, William C	Fry, Phyllis
Andrews, A M	Cassidy, Patrick J	Gourlie, John
Andrews, Blair Kingsley	Chaytor, Edith	Graham, Rachel
Archer, Wilhelmina H	Chaytor, Herbert Stanley	Greaves, Joseph
Asquith, Norris Joseph	Clarke, Thomas	Greville, Johnathan W
Baker, Arthur Wyndowe Willert	Coe, Walter Ernest	Gully, John
Bamford, Joseph	Cole, Victor C	Haffield, Paget
Baron, John	Connor, Anthony James	Hall, Frederick
Bedlow, William J	Conroy, Katherine	Harwood, Michael Leo
Bird, Charlotte	Cope, George P	Healy, John
Blair, David	Crawfurth-Smith, Clarice Maud	Helen, Robert J
Blandford, Eileen Florence	Darragh, Paul	Hely, Howard
Blood, Dora Lloyd	Deobel, Gabrielle	Heppell-Marr, Constance
Bolton, Robert H	Dreghorn, Margaret	Hignett, Dorothy
Booth-Jones, May	Elliott, William	Homan, John Francis
Bose, Profulla Kumar	Ellis, William	Horne, Frank J
Boyd, Walter H	Fairfax, Majorie Joyce	Hunt, Henry
Brown, Dean Niven	Farrell, Christopher	Hutchinson, Edward J
Brownbill, Harold James	Ferguson, Hilary	Hutson, James
Brunning, Stanley	Fetherstonhaugh, William	Iley, Charles Ernest
Brunwin, Alan Deed	Figgis, Ruby	James, Mathew
Burke, Granby	Finlay, Mona	Jameson, Robert W
Butler, Winifred	Fitzpatrick, Ethel	Jardin, David S
Button, Kyle Patrick	Francis, James	Jewell, Leonard W
Byrne, Peter	Freeman, Elizabeth	Johnson, Cyril D
Campbell, T C	French, Louis	Johnson, Joseph E

End of the present selection

REFERENCES

The following is a list of the principal published references cited in sections one and two and the common references referred to in section three. Details of interviews, archival material, newspapers and magazines, and *OSTJ Annual Reports, Statutes, Dress Regulations*, etc, which cumulatively extend to several hundred pieces, may be found in the relevant footnotes in Sections I and II and in entries in Section III.

The Order has recently digitised many *Annual Reports*, as well as copies of *First Aid* and other materials, and made these freely available online. These may be accessed at: <https://museumstjohn.org.uk/research/st-john-archive/>

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End of the present selection

For Service in the Cause of Humanity

For Service in the Cause of Humanity

Marking the one-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Order of St John's Life Saving Medal, and the subsequently introduced Certificate of Honour, *For Service in the Cause of Humanity* critically documents the previously untold story of these highly prestigious but little-known awards. Following a detailed discussion of the history and politics of the medals and Certificate of Honour, the book reveals the amazing circumstances behind the awards to the 1,394 people who gained them for their brave and humanitarian actions in 44 countries across the world. The book thus contributes to the enduring recognition of the public-spirited bravery of each and every recipient and offers at the same time a rich legacy to contemporary generations.

'A landmark contribution to the history of the Order of St John, *For Service in the Cause of Humanity* has taken seven years' work to bring it to fruition. The book should find a wide readership both among all those ever associated with the Order, and with those interested in social history, humanitarian actions, and the recognition of civil bravery. It is a fine book which records fine actions, and I am pleased to recommend it to everyone.'

**The Grand Prior,
HRH The Duke of Gloucester**

'Subjugation of self to the service of others is the *raison d'être* of the Order of St John and is perhaps best cited as "Service to our lords the sick and the poor" and in our second great motto, "Pro Utilitate Hominum". This excellent publication chronicles the highest levels of such service and sacrifice, with recipients of Order's life saving awards placing their own lives at considerable risk and on some occasions paying the ultimate price in the service of others. These moving accounts of great courage and selflessness are both confronting and hugely inspiring. I congratulate and thank those who have produced this book and I highly commend it to anyone who has an interest in service, bravery and what is possible in all of us when confronted by circumstances where others desperately need assistance.'

**Professor Mark Compton, AM, GCStJ
Lord Prior, Order of St John & Chairman, St John International**

'A thoroughly researched and most interesting book which adds much to our knowledge of this aspect of the history of the Order of St John.'

**Dr Matthew Glozier, OStJ, JP
Deputy Librarian of the Order & Librarian of the Priory in Australia**

'Too often we fail to recall important parts of our history. This wonderfully researched book recalls the dedication, faithfulness and above all the courage in service of some amazing officers.'

**John Whitehead, CNZM, KStJ
Chancellor Hato Hone St John
& Member of the Trustees Executive Committee of the Order**

'This book captures amazing stories of courage and commitment to protect and save the lives of others. It serves as an enduring reminder of their service and sacrifice.'

**Todd Skilton, OStJ, ED, JP
Librarian of the Order & Librarian of the Priory in New Zealand**

