

ST. JOHN AND THE ROYAL FAMILY

In the nineteenth century, around 400 years after Henry VIII had taken all the property of the medieval Order in England, there were moves to revive the Order. In 1888 HM Queen Victoria granted the Order a Royal Charter "in recognition of the excellent work performed by members of the Order of St. John during the past half century, especially the establishment of the St. John Ambulance Association." Since then, the reigning Monarch has always been the Sovereign Head of the Order. HRH Richard, Duke of Gloucester, is the current Grand Prior.



HM Queen Victoria holding the Order's Royal Charter

St. John Ambulance

The St. John Ambulance movement has enjoyed the patronage of the Royal Family from its beginnings. Queen Alexandra, as Princess of Wales, with Princess Victoria, Princess Beatrice, Duchess of

Connaught, Duchess of Albony and Princess Louise all qualified as First Aiders. Princess Louise also translated lectures in First Aid by Professor Esmarch from German into English. The design of the Service medal of the Order of St. John was taken from her bust of Queen Victoria.

On St. John's Day in 1888, the year the Order was granted its Royal Charter, Edward Prince of Wales became the President of the Association. At the unveiling of a memorial to the Duke of Clarence at



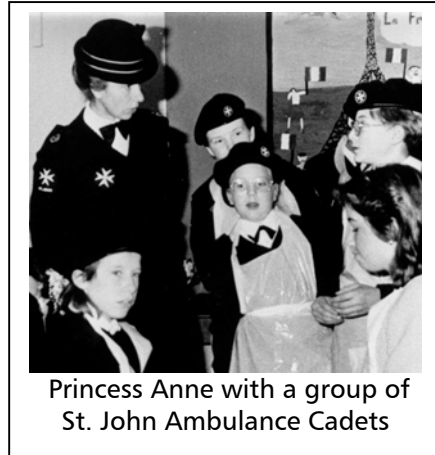
HM The Queen, who is the Sovereign Head of the Order, in ceremonial dress



The Queen Mother with two VAD nurses during World War 2

St. John's Gate, the Prince of Wales said of the St. John men standing by: "This is a good uniform. I believe much good will come of it."

Princess Christian gave her time and much help to the Brigade during the South African war. Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, was Commandant-in-Chief (Nursing) until her death in 2002 and was appointed when she was Duchess of York in 1928. Princess Marina (late Duchess of Kent) was Commandant-in-Chief for Wales from 1935 until 1968. Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester has been Deputy Commandant-in-Chief (Nursing) since 1937. Princess Margaret was Commandant-in-Chief Ambulance and Nursing Cadets from 1947 to 1970 and was Grand President from 1972 until her death in 2002. Princess Anne has been Commandant-in-Chief of the Ambulance and Nursing Cadets since 1970. Prince William of Gloucester was an ambulance member from 1958-60 and subsequently Commander-in-Chief (Ambulance). The Duchess of Gloucester is Commandant-in-Chief (Ambulance and Nursing Cadets) for the Priory of Wales.



Princess Anne with a group of St. John Ambulance Cadets