



A History of

Richard de Vernon Preceptory No: 52

1950 - 2000

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## Richard de Vernon Preceptory No: 52 Stationed at Dudley

1950 - 2000

As we celebrate the Millennium 2000, it offers an opportunity to look back fifty years, when Eminent Knight J. A. Nayler was *Eminent Preceptor* and Installed Companion William Eley Homer into the Preceptory in September 1950. As a young man the writer recalls sitting in Mr Nayler's office, representing Top Church ("St Thomas' Church") Dudley, prior to 1950 and thinking "What a wonderful fellow, I would love to emulate him". The *Registrar* was Eminent Knight Harry Cherrington, a local accountant, followed in 1951 by Eminent Knight William H. Turner, a local solicitor. The *Treasurer* was the Borough Engineer, Eminent Knight J. S. Evans and the *Equerry* was Companion Cooksey, the Verger at Netherton Church. The Right Eminent Knight F. T. Goodman was the *Provincial Prior*, who was Installed *Eminent Preceptor* of Richard de Vernon Preceptory No: 52, in February 1957, for the Centenary Celebrations. Most unfortunately, he received the Great Captain's Call five days before his eighty first birthday, one month before the Centenary Celebration was due to take place.

It is quite interesting to look at the names of those who joined. R. S. Goodman, who was *Registrar* for the Centenary; J. E. (Johnnie) Rowe, who was Head Server at Top Church ("St Thomas' Church") Dudley; Kenneth Buckler, for many years *Organist* of the Preceptory and organist at Netherton Church and later at St Edmund's Church, Dudley; Stanley Jennings of Netherton; George Armstrong from the Crown Hotel, who became *Equerry* in 1956, when Companion Cooksey received the Great Captain's Call; and Don Koden who became *Equerry* in 1957.

1955 saw that great and beloved Brother Knight Cyril Williams Allden become *Eminent Preceptor*. A local Bank Manager in Brierley Hill, he had already been for many years the great Samaritan for the area. Over many years he pressed for the Preceptory to have a Banner and for the names of members to be engraved on the Firing Swords (this had elapsed some years earlier).

Both these tasks were completed many years later. When Eminent Knight Bill Homer and the writer took the Banner to the Nursing Home for Very Eminent Knight Cyril to see it on the day it arrived from the makers, his eyes lit up and he raised his hand in pleasure. He received the Great Captain's Call the next day. These matters are reported more fully later.

We now move on to the period following the Centenary Celebrations, 1959 onwards. During the first ten years two names stand out - H. G. Heath and H. A. Nock, both of whom rendered great service not only to the Preceptory, but also to the Province. Two great names were prominent in the Province at this time - the very loveable *Provincial Prior*, the Very Eminent Knight Dr Bunting of Hardwick Manor, Worcester, and his *Sub Prior*, the Very Eminent Knight Frederick Hickton Griffiths, who had previously served for fifteen years as *Vice Chancellor* of the Province. He continued to serve for five years as *Sub Prior*, followed by twenty two years as *Provincial Prior*, a total of forty two years Service to the Province.

Serving the Province from the Preceptory at the time were the *Provincial Prelate*, Eminent Knight the Rev. R. H. Fowler; the *Provincial 2<sup>nd</sup> Constable*, A. E. Hunt; the *Provincial Deputy Marshal* and *Provincial Commander of the Bodyguard*, J. A. Nayler; the *Provincial Standard Bearer (VB)*, W. H. Turner; and two members of the *Provincial Bodyguard*, - Brother Knights Goodman and Pugh.

Over the next ten years many members were Installed who are still, or were recently serving and it now becomes difficult to highlight or not to mention names, but this has to be done. The first name in this period is Eminent Knight Dr. H. John White, our present *Almoner*; Eminent Knight W. H. Owen, who served for many years as *Deputy Marshal*; Eminent Knight C. G. Pagett, our present *Marshal*; Eminent Knights Dr. S. P. B. Way and J. N. Smith, who over the years have been very much involved in the work of the Preceptory. (J. N. Smith being for many years Chairman of the Board at Wellington Road and who also made and presented the stands and tables when the Preceptory decided to reintroduce its own Malta Ceremonies). At the end of the ten year period Eminent Knight M. B. Simpson, our present *Chaplain*, (following in the Masonic footsteps of his highly thought of Father, Worshipful Brother Birt Simpson); and Brother Knight A. G. Walker, who was *Organist* until a short time ago, were Installed into the Preceptory.

The next ten years, 1979 - 1989, could be said to be a bumper period with no less than 13 candidates being Installed as members. The first being Eminent Knight A. J. R. Evans, who served as *Eminent Preceptor* for two years - 1989/90. Some who never went through the Chair of the Preceptory were - Brother Knights Harty; Galbraith (the *Registrar* before the writer took over); Devonport; Dr. R. M. Jarratt; Bullas; Hipkiss (who went to New Zealand); Dean; Eminent Knight Bowen (*Past Eminent Preceptor of 421*); and Eminent Knight Canon Cade, a joining member from Kent.

However, those who played a major part in the Preceptory and some in the Province, were Eminent Knight J. Ball; Eminent Knight Graham Perkins, the present *Provincial Vice Chancellor*; Eminent Knight Finnis (who joined us from Malta); Eminent Knight Hayes, (recently the *Registrar*); Eminent Knights D. J. Jarratt; Ayling; and Angell; all of whom served both Preceptory and Province.

In 1991 we were privileged to have the 1990 Prestonian Lecturer to address the Preceptory. Eminent Knight Fredrick H. Smith was appointed *Great Sword Bearer* in 1979 and *Past Great Herald* in 1989 and *Great Registrar* in 1994, he was author of many books, more especially "Brethren in Chivalry 1751 - 1891".

The nineties, will probably be remembered for the amount of activity within the Preceptory and the involvement in the Province. The two leaders of the Province during this period, can without doubt be said to be the epitome of excellence. The Right Eminent Knight Robert Whitlock and the Right Eminent Knight John Denton, helped to make the Province a force to be recognised. Both were well supported by *Provincial Sub Priors* - John Denton to Robert Whitlock and Very Eminent Knights Woolley and Wright to John Denton. Eminent Knight Cedric Pagett was the *Provincial Organist* and he also presented the Preceptory with two very beautiful vases for the Altar.

1992 was an outstanding year, because on the 13<sup>th</sup> of February the Preceptory Banner was Dedicated. This marked the culmination of two years hard work by Eminent Knights Pagett and Bate, (the then *Eminent Preceptor*), in drawing up designs, considering costing, obtaining quotes and most of all obtaining the authority of Great Priory to proceed. At all times during this period the support of Right Eminent Knight Robert Whitlock was always forthcoming. The cost of the Banner was £822 50p and the Preceptory had adequate funds to cover this. However, a member (who requested anonymity) offered to cover the VAT. This was overheard by another member, who said he wished to contribute and as a result a fund was opened. By early February 1992, no less than £622.50p had been raised.

The Banner arrived a few days before the Dedication, as described earlier, and was taken for Very Eminent Knight Cyril Williams Alden to see. His son later telephoned the *Registrar* to say his father had left £200, to be made available to clear the cost of the Banner.

## The Banner.



Because the cost of the Banner had been cleared by subscription, the Preceptory was now in a position to consider another of Very Eminent Knight Cyril Williams Alden wishes - to have the names of members engraved on the Firing Swords. This practice had been abandoned many years previously, due to lack of funds. Thanks to the efforts of Eminent Knights Pagett, Jarratt, and Angell, this now became possible and was achieved in a very short time.

Brother Knight Lucjon L. Finnis became *Eminent Preceptor* and he was followed in turn by Brother Knight Graham L. Perkins (the present *Provincial Vice Chancellor*); Brother Knight Peter J. Hayes; Brother Knight L. Peter Hughes; Brother Knight David J. Jarratt; and Brother Knight Richard A. Ayling.

**Richard de Vernon Preceptory No: 52**

**Banner Dedication**

**13<sup>th</sup> of February 1992**



**Back Row**

Roger Reed; Peter Hughes; Granville Angell;

David Jarratt; Richard Ayling;; Arul Selvaratum;

**Middle Row**

Bill Owen; Paul Heynes; Cedric Pagett; Alan Evans; Jim Bate; Mike Simpson; Stephan Way;

**Front Row**

Bill Homer; Jim Ball; Graham Perkins; Lew Finnis; Peter Hayes; John White; Jack Smith;

The 12<sup>th</sup> of February 1998 saw Eminent Knight Granville Angell in the Preceptors Chair, when he not only exhibited (by kind permission of the *Right Eminent Provincial Prior*), his Banner as Lord of the Manor of Cannock, but also presented the Preceptory with a magnificent Crucifix. He had spent seven long years trying to locate and obtain a true Knight Templar Crucifix to present to the Preceptory, during his year in the Chair.

*'Under his wings shall thou take refuge:  
His truth is a shield and a buckler'  
Psalm 91:4*



### Knights Templar Crucifix

Presented to Richard de Vernon  
Preceptory No. 52

by the Eminent Preceptor  
Granville S. Angell

**THE CROSS OF CALVARY** is erected on three steps which symbolize the Christian and Knight Templar virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity. Their position, too, is significant.

**CHARITY** is the largest size and rests on the earth to inculcate charity to our fellow men. **HOPE** rests on Charity and is jointed to **FAITH** which attaches itself to the Cross - from which all depend.

**THE CRUCIFIX** until the seventh century, no figure was represented on the Cross, but a lamb was sometime placed at its foot.

The first figures of our Lord were draped; when the undraped figure was introduced a **Crown of Thorns** was added. Until the Twelfth Century the feet each had a nail, afterwards they were represented under one nail.

A **KNIGHT TEMPLAR CRUCIFIX** shows the head of Christ inclined towards his **left** shoulder.

In the past twelve years no less than eighteen members have been Installed into the Preceptory, including the 1999 *Eminent Preceptor* Arulampalan Salvaratnam, B.E.M. J.P. B.Sc., followed by the Millennium *Eminent Preceptor* Raymond Arthur Leadbeater, B.E.M.

We are honoured at this time in having no less than five members Provincially active - Eminent Knights Graham Perkins, *Past Deputy Great Sword Bearer, Provincial Vice Chancellor*; Eminent Knight Jim Bate, *Provincial 2<sup>nd</sup> Constable*; Eminent Knight Granville Angell, *Provincial Captain of the Guards*; and two members of the *Provincial Bodyguard* Brother Knight Tony Darlison and Brother Knight Ian Thorpe. Great Priory Officers at this time are : Eminent Knight Dr. H. John White, J.P., *Past Great Herald*, Eminent Knight William H. Owen, *Past Great Aide de Camp*, Eminent Knight Cedric G. Pagett, *Past Great Herald*, Eminent Knight Paul A. Heynes, *Past Great Chamberlain* and Eminent Knight Michael B. Simpson, *Past Deputy Great Sword Bearer*.

It is appropriate at this stage to conclude with a note, regarding the service of Eminent Knight William Eley Homer, MBE., whose outstanding service was recognised by the *Mos. Eminent and Supreme Grand Master* Leslie Felgate Dring, GCT., on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May 2000 when he was appointed to the rank of *Past Great Captain of Guards*.

As an ending to this short continuation of the History of Richard de Vernon Preceptory No: 52 and following on the active role of members in the Province of Worcestershire, it seems appropriate to acknowledge the support and involvement of the *Right Eminent Provincial Prior*, Right Eminent Knight John Denton, ably supported by his *Sub Prior* the Very Eminent Knight Alan Granville Wright, T.D., J.P., *Past Great Registrar*, (who will be retiring after the Provincial Priory Meeting, to be held at Worcester, on Saturday the 28<sup>th</sup> of October 2000).

This however provides an opportunity to pay tribute to his successor, Eminent Knight Leonard E. Goode, *Past Great Herald*, who not only provided the Preceptory with a most elegant picture frame for our Centenary Warrant but, also provided the photographs for the presentation and dedication of the Banner.

Eminent Knight E. J. Bate, MBE., *Provincial 2nd Constable*.

5<sup>th</sup> of October 2000.

Richard de Vernon Preceptory No: 52  
List of Members for the year 2000

Initials	First Name	Last Name	Rank	Date Installed	Office in 2000	Eminent Preceptor
H. C.	Bert	Heath	Past Provincial Chancellor.	01-Oct-62		1970
R. E.	Robert	Whitlock	Past Provincial Provost.			
<b>Knights.</b>						
W. E.	Bill	Homer	Past Great Captain of Guards.	01-Sep-50		1979
P. A.	Paul	Heynes	Past Great Chamberlain.	07-Oct-65		1985
Dr. H. J.	John	White	Past Great Herald.	03-Oct-68	Almoner.	1977
W. H.	Bill	Owen	Past Great Aide Camp.	01-Jun-72		1982
C. G.	Cedric	Pagett	Past Great Herald.	07-Jun-73	Marshal.	1983
J. N.	Jack	Smith	Past Provincial Chancellor.	05-Jun-75		1987
M. B.	Mike	Simpson	Past Deputy Great Sword Bearer.	07-Oct-76	Chaplain.	1986
A. J. R.	Alan	Evans	Past Provincial Chancellor.	07-Jun-79	Deputy Marshal.	1989 & 1990
E. J.	Jim	Bate	Provincial 2nd Constable.	06-Jan-83		1991
G. L.	Graham	Perkins	Past Deputy Great Sword Bearer, Prov Vice Chancellor.	16-Oct-85		1993
L. L.	Lu	Finnis	Past Provincial Herald.	J 13-Feb-86		1992
P. J.	Peter	Hayes	Past Provincial Banner Bearer.	05-Jun-86	2nd Constable.	1994
D. J.	David	Jarratt	Past Provincial Standard Bearer (B).	06-Oct-88		1996
R. A.	Richard	Ayling	Past Provincial Herald.	01-Jun-89		1997
G. S.	Granville	Angell	Provincial Captain of Guards.	05-Oct-89	(Commander) Arch of Steel.	1998
A.	Aral	Selvaratnam		10-May-90		1999
R. B.	Bob	Reed		04-Oct-90	1st Constable.	
R. A.	Ray	Leadbeater		17-May-92	Eminent Preceptor.	2000
A.	Arthur	Lambert		01-Oct-92	2nd Herald.	
H. S.	Stuart	Newsham		03-Oct-93		
D. C.	David	Cowell		05-Oct-93	1st Herald.	
G.	Gary	Merrell		29-Feb-96		
B. G.	Bruce	Littley		03-Oct-96	Standard Bearer (B).	
I. J.	Ian	Thorpe	Provincial Bodyguard.	13-Feb-97	Treasurer.	
A. J.	Tony	Darlison	Provincial Bodyguard.	02-Oct-97	Standard Bearer (VB).	
H. E.	Bill	Jones		03-Nov-97	Registrar.	
Dr. P.	Paul	Mycok		03-Nov-97	Captain of Guards.	
G.	Gary	Wood		12-Feb-98	Arch of Steel.	
D. F.	Daran	Pinnell		01-Oct-98	Arch of Steel.	
P.	Paul	Morrison		07-Oct-99	Arch of Steel.	
C. D.	Clive	Watson		05-Oct-00		