

the
HASLUCK
BANNER

by
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INTRODUCTION

Visitors to St George's Cathedral in Perth will find suspended above the door leading out of the south transept the heraldic banner of a Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter. The banner, with its vivid design of blue and yellow Catherine wheels, is a striking feature in this corner of the cathedral. It is probably the only Garter banner in Australia.

The brass plaque beside the cathedral door gives a brief description of the banner and of the device mounted on the wall beneath the supporting staff.

The banner of the Right Hon Sir Paul Hasluck which formerly hung above his stall in St George's Chapel, Windsor (1979-1993) was entrusted for safekeeping to St George's Cathedral on 17 September 1995 as a visible

reminder of the bond between the Anglican Church in Australia and its antecedents in the British Isles.

Sir Paul Hasluck (1905-1993) was born at Fremantle. His many public offices included a term as Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia. The Catherine wheels on the banner were taken from the Armorial Bearings granted to him by the College of Arms. The crest beneath the banner includes the seven-pointed Australian Commonwealth star and a formalised representation of the West Australian Xanthorrhoea.

In this small book, which I have called *The Hasluck Banner*, my aim is to enlarge upon some of the matters mentioned on the plaque. I will also provide a fuller account of Sir Paul Hasluck's career and of the steps taken to bring the banner to Perth for installation in St George's Cathedral.



The story of how the banner was brought to Perth is set out at some length in my essay *The Garter Box Goes Back to England* which forms part of this book.

In that essay, as Sir Paul Hasluck's son, I speak of travelling to England in order to return my father's insignia to the Queen and of the arrangements made with the Dean of Windsor to take possession of the banner. I corresponded also with the College of Arms. A copy of the letter to me from the Garter Principal King of Arms approving my proposal to transfer the banner to Australia is included in the book.

My essay was written in 1993, after my father's death, and within a few months of the State funeral that was held in St George's Cathedral to mark Sir Paul Hasluck's contribution to Australian life. It was open to me, no doubt, in preparing this book for publication many years later, to rewrite the essay, or simply to draw out of it various passages bearing directly upon the Most Noble Order of the Garter and the antecedents of the Hasluck banner. In the end, I came to the conclusion that the essay I wrote when these matters were at the forefront of my mind should be left in its original form, for

my essay sounds an echo of the elegiac mood that underlay my journey. I trust that this will help to show that a banner of this kind, hanging quietly in a far corner of St George's Cathedral, stands for more than meets the eye. It should not be characterised as an artefact or as an item of antiquarian interest. It is connected to contemporary times through family ties and forms part of an ongoing tale.

Nonetheless, I am conscious that changes have taken place since the essay was written that make it necessary for me to add this introduction to my reflections about the banner and its continuing relevance to Australian life. I like to think that this publication will be of interest not only to visitors to St George's Cathedral in Perth but also to Australian visitors to England who have been to Windsor Castle or who may spend a few hours in that ancient domain on some future occasion. It will therefore be useful to speak first of certain changes that have taken place at Windsor Castle in recent years.



Windsor Castle, the largest and oldest occupied castle in the world, is the home of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The castle's dramatic site encapsulates 900 years of British history, and its magnificent rooms including St George's Hall reflect the tastes of successive kings and queens. Moreover, within its walls lie St George's Chapel which is the resting place of ten previous monarchs including the father of Queen Elizabeth, King George VI. The Chapel and the buildings nearby comprising the College of St George occupy about one-fifth of the area of Windsor Castle.

It is a matter of common knowledge that on 20 November 1992 a serious fire broke out in the Queen's private chapel at the north-east angle of the upper ward of Windsor Castle. It is thought to have been caused by a spotlight igniting a curtain high above the altar. The fire spread quickly at roof level, destroying the ceiling of St George's Hall and the Grand Reception Room as well as gutting the private

chapel, State Dining Room, Crimson Drawing Room and various subsidiary service rooms.

The rooms worst affected by the fire were fortunately empty at the time as they were in the course of being rewired. This meant that few of the castle's artistic treasures were destroyed.

The work of repair and renovation began immediately after the fire and was completed five years later in time for Queen Elizabeth's and Prince Phillip's 50th Anniversary Ball. The new roof on St George's Hall is said to be the largest piece of gothic-style carpentry accomplished in Britain for more than 200 years.

The restoration of St George's Hall included provision for the names of the Knights of the Garter to be inscribed on panels attached to the walls for that purpose. Arrangements were made for miniatures of their coats of arms to be distributed throughout the Hall, in alcoves, window bays and on the ceiling.

A visitor to the restored St George's Hall will find Sir Paul Hasluck's name inscribed on one of

the wooden panels containing particulars of the various knights, flanked by the names of the two other Knights of the Garter appointed in 1979: Margarethe II Queen of Denmark and Henry Cecil John Baron Hunt.

The miniature of the Hasluck coat of arms is displayed in a window bay overlooking the lawn known as Upper Ward. It is the third bay from the representation of St George on horseback which occupies a commanding position at the far end of the Hall. The coats of arms in that window bay include: L9 — Anne Elizabeth Alice Louise, the Princess Royal (appointed 1994); 957 — Sir Paul Meernaa Caedwalla Hasluck (appointed 1979); 935 — William Philip Viscount De L'Isle, Baron De L'Isle and Dudley (appointed 1968); 914 — Haile Selassie I, Emperor of Ethiopia (appointed 1954), and 850 — Albert, King of the Belgians (appointed 1914). Viscount De L'Isle was a close friend of my father, having held office

as Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia in the years 1961-1965.



Garter Day is usually held in the month of June. The procession of Garter Knights in their dark blue robes, preceded by the Governor of Windsor Castle and the Heralds, winds down the slope from the Upper Ward to the Lower Ward of Windsor Castle where guests and members of the public are assembled. From there the procession moves into St George's Chapel. When the procession enters the inner Quire each knight goes to his or her appointed stall. The essence of the service itself is the singing of a "Soleum te Deum", being a thanksgiving to God for creating, renewing and sustaining the world.

The pattern of worship in St George's Chapel has not changed for many hundreds of years. When King Edward III founded the Most Noble Order of the Garter in 1348 he decided also to create a community

to be known as the College of St George at Windsor. From the beginning there was a two-fold purpose of knightly companionship with the sovereign and the fellowship of Christian worship.

The annual observances of the Order known as Garter Day culminate in a service in St George's Chapel, being a service attended not only by the Queen but also by various members of the Royal family. The close connection between the Order and the Chapel is evident also in a number of other ways. As I have indicated, the Chapel Quire – the traditional heart of a religious building – is devoted to the knights' stalls and insignia. The Dean of the College is the register of the Order. As part of the daily services in the Chapel prayers are offered for all members of the Order.

On admission to the Order each knight is allotted a stall in the Quire. This is reserved to the incumbent for the rest of his or her life with the relevant banner being suspended above the stall. As a perpetual record of the knight's occupancy a metal plate

bearing his or her coat of arms and an inscription is placed on the back of the stall. The number and variety of these heraldic plates, affixed during a period of six centuries, form the richest and largest single collection of its kind in the world. The only stall without any plates is that of the Sovereign, for the Sovereign lives on through his or her successor.

On the death of a knight the relevant banner is 'laid up' by being placed on the altar at a requiem for departed knights held each year. Later, it is handed to the knight's heir, who will usually provide for its safekeeping by confining it to an enduring institution such as a cathedral or a chapel. It was pursuant to this tradition that I arranged for my father's banner to be laid up at an Evensong service held on 28 May 1993 at St George's Chapel, Windsor.



The Evensong service for my father was conducted by the Dean of Windsor at that time, the Very Reverend Patrick Mitchell. The banner and crest