

Henry Spencer Stephenson

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The Reverend Canon **Henry Spencer Stephenson** (4 November 1871 - 4 June 1957) was a British minister and a member of the Spencer family. He served as Chaplain to King George VI and Queen Elizabeth II, participating in the coronation procession of Queen Elizabeth.

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Personal life and ordained ministry

Henry Spencer Stephenson was born on 4 November 1871 in Mahabaleshwar, India during the British Raj.^[1] He was the son of Lieut. Col. Sussex Vane Stephenson of the Scots Fusilier Guards and his wife, Augusta Melita Spencer.^[2] His father died of cholera in Bombay, India on 28 June 1872.^[3] In 1882 Stephenson's mother married the Reverend Edward Mallet Young, but there were no children from this marriage, leaving Stephenson an only child.^{[4][5]} Stephenson completed his undergraduate studies at Sherborne School, where his step-father was headmaster, graduating 4 October 1890.^[6] He subsequently studied at Trinity College, Cambridge where he received his B.A. degree in 1893, promoted to an M.A. degree in 1897.^{[1][6]} He was ordained a deacon in 1895 and a priest in 1896.^[1]

Stephenson's first religious appointment was as Curate of Willington, Durham from 1895-1900.^[1] His next assignment was as Rector of Allendale, Northumberland in 1900, serving there until 1909.^{[1][7]} He then moved to Gateshead to serve as Vicar of Christ Church from 1909 to 1914, then becoming Rector of Gateshead in 1914.^{[1][7]} Stephenson was a commissioner of Boy Scouts and chairman of his diocesan branch of the Church of England Temperance Society.^[7] For his religious service, he was made an honorary Canon of Durham in 1922 and a Freeman of Gateshead in 1946.^[1]

Stephenson died at the hospital at Newcastle upon Tyne, Durham, England on 4 June 1957.^[8]

Chaplain to two British monarchs

The Reverend Canon Henry Spencer Stephenson	
Born	4 November 1871 Mahabaleshwar, India
Died	4 June 1957 Newcastle upon Tyne
Education	Sherborne School and Trinity College, Cambridge
Parent(s)	Sussex Vane Stephenson and Augusta Melita Spencer
Church	Church of England
Ordained	1896
Title	Reverend Canon

Stephenson was appointed Chaplain to King George on 30 September 1938, replacing Canon Harold Costley-White, D.D., who resigned.^[9] After King George's death, he continued to serve as Chaplain to Queen Elizabeth, participating as Chaplain during her coronation in 1953.^[7]

Family connections

Through his mother, Stephenson was connected to the Spencer family of England and the Smalls of Dirnanear of Perthshire, Scotland. His maternal grandfather was General The Hon. Sir Augustus Almeric Spencer GCB, third son of Francis Almeric Spencer, 1st Baron Churchill^[10] and Commander-in-Chief of the Bombay Army between 1869-1875. Stephenson's father had been serving as his father-in-law's military secretary at the time of his death.^[3] A maternal great-grandfather was Perthshire native General Sir Archibald Campbell, 1st Baronet GCB,^[10] commander of British forces in the First Anglo-Burmese War and later administrator of the colony of New Brunswick, Canada.

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