

Historical Officers Report

January 2019

For their service during the First World War the men and Women were issued medals.



The 1914-15 Star was a campaign medal of the British Empire, for service in World War I.

The 1914-15 Star was approved in 1918, for issue to officers and men of British and Imperial forces who served in any theatre of the War between 5 August 1914 and 31 December 1915 (other than those who had already qualified for the 1914 Star).

The medal is a four-pointed star of bright bronze, ensigned with a crown, with a height of 50mm, and a maximum width of 45mm. The obverse has two crossed gladius (swords) with blades upwards and a wreath of oak leaves, with the Royal Cypher of King George V at foot and an overlaying central scroll inscribed "1914-15". The reverse is plain with the recipient's number, rank and name. The ribbon has the red white and blue colours of the Empire, in shaded and watered stripes. The same ribbon is used for the 1914 Star.

British War Medal



The British War Medal was a campaign medal of the British Empire, for service in World War I.

The medal was approved in 1919, for issue to officers and men of British and Imperial forces who had rendered service between 5 August 1914 and 11 November 1918. Officers and men of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, and Dominion and Colonial naval forces (including reserves) were required to have completed 28 days mobilised service – the medal was automatically awarded in the event of death on active service before the completion of this period.

The medal was later extended to cover the period 1919–20 and service in mine-clearing at sea as well as participation in operations in North and South Russia, the eastern Baltic, Siberia, the Black Sea, and the Caspian

The medal is a circular silver (or, in rare cases, bronze) design. The obverse shows a King George V bareheaded effigy, facing left, with the legend: GEORGIVS V BRITT: OMN: REX ET IND: IMP: (George 5th, King of all the Britain's and, Emperor of India)

The reverse shows St. George, naked, on horseback armed with a short sword (an allegory of the physical and mental strength, which achieves victory over Prussianism). The horse tramples on the Prussian shield and the skull and cross-bones. Just off-centre, near the right upper rim, is the son of Victory. The dates 1914 and 1918 appear in the left and right fields respectively.

The ribbon has a wide central watered stripe of orange, flanked by two narrow white stripes, which are in turn flanked by two black pin-stripes, further flanked by two outer stripes of blue. The colours are not believed to have any particular significance.

Victory Medal



The Victory Medal (also called the Inter-Allied Victory Medal) is a campaign medal - of which the basic design and ribbon was adopted by Belgium, Brazil, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Siam, Union of South Africa and the USA in accordance with decisions as taken at the Inter-Allied Peace Conference at Versailles as illustrated (a 'Winged Victory') but in a particular form of this historic Greek monument as determined by each nation, with the exception of the nations in the Far East who issued the medal but with a different design. The dates of the war were in every case 1914 to 1918, except that of the British Empire, which gave the dates as illustrated (1914 to 1919 with 1921 being the year in

which the war ended in point of Parliamentary law but in 1919 under common law relating to the status and functions of the monarchy.

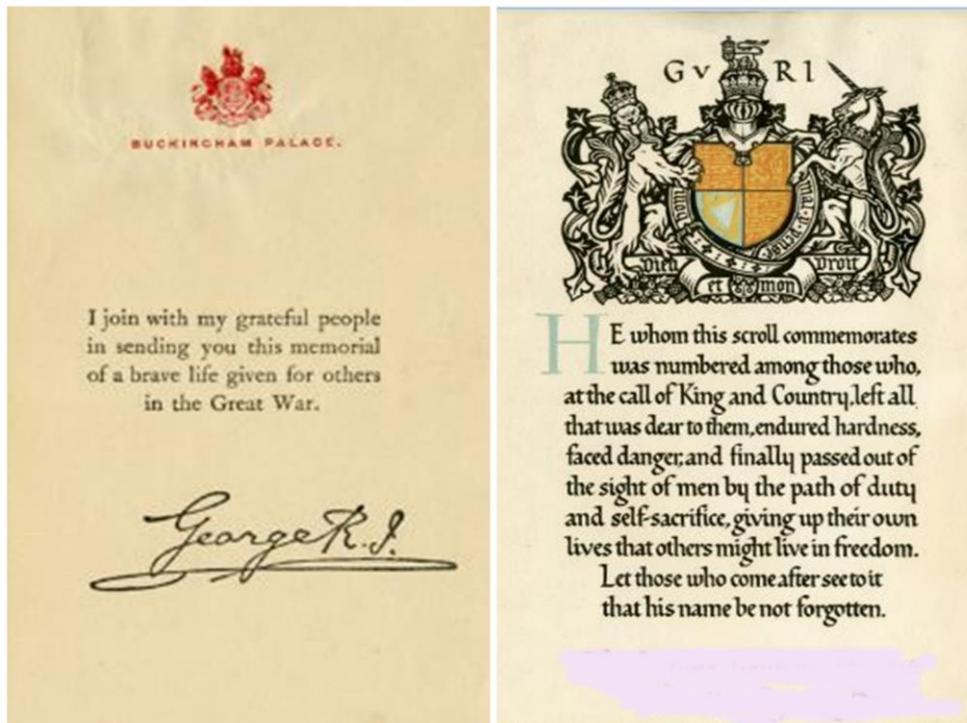
The medal was issued to all those who received the 1914 Star or the 1914-15 Star, and to most of those who were awarded the British War Medal - it was never awarded singly. These three medals were sometimes irreverently referred to as Pip, Squeak and Wilfred.

The Victory Medal is a 36mm diameter circular copper medal, lacquered in bronze. The obverse in the British Empire medal shows the winged, full-length, full-front, figure of 'Victory' (or 'Victoria'), also figuring in all other medals by the nations as cited, but in this case (the British Empire) with her left arm extended and holding a palm branch in her right hand, this being in common with the previously (pre-war) created British Empire statue in the Victoria Memorial, London (which contains also a statue of the Queen and Empress with the title 'VICTORIA REGINA IMPERATRIX').

The reverse has the words 'THE GREAT / WAR FOR / CIVILISATION / 1914-1919' in four lines, all surrounded by a laurel wreath.

The 39mm wide ribbon has a 'two rainbow' design, with the violet from each rainbow on the outside edges moving through to a central red stripe where both rainbows meet. Those personnel "Mentioned in Despatches" between 4 August 1914 and 10 August 1920 wear an oak leaf on the medal's ribbon.

Kings Memorial Scroll





Dead Man's Penny

The Memorial Plaque was issued after the First World War to the next-of-kin of all British and Empire service personnel who were killed as a result of the war. The plaques (more strictly described as plaquettes) were made of bronze, and hence popularly known as the "Dead Man's Penny", because of the similarity in appearance to the somewhat smaller penny coin.

Description

It was decided that the design of the plaque, about 5 inches (120 mm) in diameter and cast in bronze, was to be picked from submissions made in a public competition. Over 800 designs were submitted and the competition was won by the sculptor and medallist Edward Carter Preston with his design called Pyramus, receiving a first place prize of £250

This token includes an image of Britannia holding a trident and standing with a lion.

The designer's initials E.C.P. appears above the front paw. In her left outstretched hand Britannia holds an oak wreath above the rectangular tablet bearing the deceased's name cast in raised letters.

Two dolphins swim around Britannia, symbolising Britain's sea power, and at the bottom a second lion is tearing apart the German eagle.

Around the picture the legend reads (in capitals) "He died for freedom and honour", or for the six hundred plaques issued to commemorate women, "She died for freedom and honour".



Gallipoli Star

The Gallipoli Star is an eight pointed bronze star with a silver disc overlaid in the centre. This disc features, in relief, the king's crown in the centre encircled by the words 'GALLIPOLI 1914-15'. Suspension is by an integral ring from the top of the uppermost point of the star. The manufacturer's marking 'A.J.P' is impressed into the reverse. The ribbon comprises a central 9 mm blue stripe, flanked by 3 mm crimson stripes, the outer edges of 8 mm being gold on the right and silver grey on the left.

History / Summary

The Gallipoli Star and its ribbon were designed in 1917 by R K Peacock, but official approval from King George V for the proposed campaign medal was withdrawn after the ribbon, but not the medal, had been manufactured, because it was to have been presented only to Australians and New Zealanders, but not British or other Empire soldiers involved in the campaign. Some Anzac veterans are known to have been issued with lengths of ribbon during the war in anticipation of the medal's production.

In 1990, Mr Ross Smith, a former Australian Army Warrant Officer and Vietnam veteran, arranged, at his own expense, for dies from the original design to be manufactured, and for A J Parkes & Co Pty Ltd, of Brisbane, to strike 1000 examples of the medal. 200 of these stars were presented to surviving Australian and New Zealand Gallipoli veterans to mark the 75th anniversary of the campaign. The remainder were sold to the public. A further 1000 were later struck for sale to collectors. The design features an eight pointed star, representing the states and territories of Australia (seven points) and New Zealand. The colours of the ribbon are blue, representing the ocean, gold, representing Australian Wattle, silver grey, representing New Zealand fern, and red for the colour of Australian gum blossom and the New Zealand Rata flower.