World War I medals

The year 2018 marks 100 years since the end of World War I. The Great War, as it was then known, lasted four years and claimed the lives of more than 60,000 Australians.

Those who served in the Australian Imperial Force in World War I were generally, subject to individual circumstances, entitled to one or more of the following three medals if they met the eligibility criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medal Type</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1914-15 Star</td>
<td>1914-1915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British War Medal 1914-1920</td>
<td>1914-1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victory Medal</td>
<td>1914-1920</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What medals did my ancestors receive?

To check what medals a veteran was issued, you can access their service record through the Discovering Anzacs portal at https://discoveringanzacs.naa.gov.au. Discovering Anzacs contains not only original records from the National Archives collections, but also photos and stories added by users.

To access a service record, type the name of the person you’re searching for in the Search box at the top of the website.

If there are a lot of results (as there are for “John Simpson”) knowing the veteran’s service number will help. If you are unsure of the service number, the Name Search on the National Archives of Australia website (www.naa.gov.au) can help, as it displays more details in the search results, such as place of birth and next of kin.

Click on the appropriate result in the Discovering Anzacs portal to see a profile of that person, with the option to view a digitised version of their official record which appears on the right hand side of the screen.
In the Official Record look towards the back of the file and the document you need should look like the example below:

You will see at the bottom three stamps, one for each medal.

If the stamps are completed as they are in Private Simpson’s record (below left), with a date or other numbers, this indicates that the medals have been issued. If the stamp has been marked with the letters “NE” (as pictured below right in Sapper W J Geoghegan’s record), this signifies that the person named in the record has no entitlement to that particular medal.

Useful websites

Discovering Anzacs – https://discoveringanzacs.naa.gov.au
National Archives of Australia – www.naa.gov.au
Australian War Memorial – www.awm.gov.au

For further information call 1800 DEFENCE (1800 333 362) or visit www.defence.gov.au/Medals/