



World War I

Recognising Australian Service

Australia's involvement in the First World War (WWI) began when Britain and Germany went to war on 4 August 1914. Australia pledged full support for Britain at this time.

Those who served and met the eligibility criteria were commonly entitled to one or more of the following three medals:

		
1914-15 Star	British War Medal 1914-1920	Victory Medal

The 1914-15 Star was authorised in 1918 and was awarded for service in specified theatres of war between 5 August 1914 and 31 December 1915.

The British War Medal 1914-20 was instituted by King George V in 1919 to mark the end of the war and recognise the service given. The qualifying period of service between 5 August 1914 and 11 November 1918 was later extended to cover post-war mine clearance and service in Russia during 1919 and 1920. The medal was awarded for service in the Navy, Army, Mercantile Marine and other specified organisations.

The Victory Medal was authorised in 1919 to commemorate the victory of the Allied Forces over the Central Powers. The Victory Medal was awarded to prescribed classes of persons who entered a theatre of war on duty between 5 August 1914 and 11 November 1918.

In the majority of cases, a set of three medal stamps can be found within WWI service records. There are usually annotations inside and sometimes around each medal stamp. An annotation of 'N E' meant the member was not eligible to be issued that particular award. The remaining annotations reflect the administration of the medals by the Department immediately after the war, and sometimes for decades after the war, as shown in the following examples.





BRITISH WAR MEDAL
S/N.Y.
ISSUED
No. 46309
RETURNED
BY 3RD D. B.
10/5/28

21 SEP 1924 { **BRITISH WAR MEDAL** *Soldier*
Registered Post No. *9328* G. P. O. Melbourne

World War I Medals

Mercantile Marine War Medal

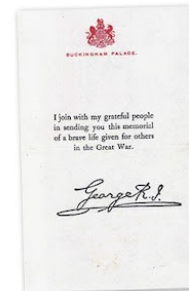
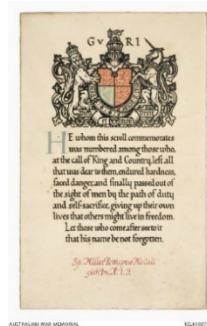
The Mercantile Marine War Medal was awarded to those who qualified for the British War Medal and could supply evidence of having served at sea on at least one voyage through a danger zone as merchant seamen.

**Anzac Commemorative Medallion**

The Anzac Commemorative Medallion was instituted 1967. The Medallion, with a lapel badge, was initially awarded to surviving members of the Australian forces who served on the Gallipoli Peninsula, or in direct support of the operations from close off shore, at any time during the period from the first Anzac Day in April 1915 to the date of final evacuation in January 1916. The picture below shows the obverse and reverse of the medallion. While Defence may replace, or gift previously unissued Medallions to an entitled family member, the lapel badge is not replaced or gifted.

**Memorial Plaque and Scroll**

The next of kin of members who were killed in action were issued with a Memorial Plaque and Scroll. The Plaque is bronze and approximately 11cm in diameter, inscribed with the name of the individual who died serving with the British and Empire forces. The Plaque and Scroll were posted out separately in 1919 and 1920 with a King's message enclosed with both. Defence cannot replace or gift these items.

**Honours**

Some WWI members received honours in recognition of gallant or conspicuous service. Details about such awards, although in many instances limited, may be found in the recipient's service record. The Australian War Memorial web site www.awm.gov.au lists honours issued to WW I service members. Defence cannot assess for eligibility to honours for WWI service, nor can the honours be gifted or replaced to relatives.

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