

# The British War Medal 1914 - 1920

## Navy

### Admiralty Order 3973/19 – 10/12/1919

His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to approve the issue of a medal to record the bringing of the War to a successful conclusion, and the arduous services rendered by His Majesty's Forces.

1. The Medal will be in silver.
2. The riband will be orange (watered) in the centre, with stripes of white and black on each side and with borders of Royal blue.
3. Provided the claims are approved by the Admiralty, the medal will be granted to those of the under mentioned classes who performed 28 days' mobilized service, or lost their lives in active operations before completing that period, between 5th August 1914 and 11th November 1918, both dates inclusive.
  - (a) Officers, warrant officers, petty officers, non-commissioned officers and men of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Royal Naval Air Service, Royal Indian Marine, Royal Naval Reserve (including Trawler and Fishery Sections), Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve and Dominion and Colonial Naval Forces.
  - (b) Mercantile Marine Officers and men serving in His Majesty's Commissioned Ships and Auxiliaries on Special Naval Engagements (T.124 and its variants, including T.299).
  - (c) Officers and enrolled members of the Women's Royal Naval Service who proceeded and served overseas.
  - (d) Members of Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service and Royal Naval Nursing Service Reserve, and recognised official nursing organisations, who served in a hospital ship at sea or proceeded overseas and served in a Naval Hospital abroad.
  - (e) Canteen staffs who served in a ship of war at sea.
  - (f) Non-nursing members of medical units, e.g. dispensers, storekeepers, clerks, wardmaids, etc, who served in a Hospital Ship at sea or proceeded overseas and served in a Naval Hospital abroad.

### Commonwealth Naval Order 108 of 1919

#### BRITISH WAR MEDAL AND VICTORY MEDAL

Permission is given to Officers and Men possessing the qualifications required by Admiralty Monthly Orders 3973/19 and 3974/19 to wear the ribands of the British War Medal and Victory Medal. As no general issue of the riband can yet be made, the wearing of ribands is optional.

2. With reference to Admiralty Monthly Order 3973/19, the following further instructions in regard to the 28 days' mobilized service referred to in paragraph 3, are promulgated for information:—

- (i) The classes specified in Clauses (a) and (b) of A.M.O. 3973/19, paragraph 3, will be eligible for the award of the British War Medal, provided they have had 28 days' mobilized service, whether such service was performed in Australia, at sea, or overseas.
- (ii) With regard to the classes specified in Clauses (c), (d), and (f) of paragraph 3, of the Admiralty Order, the 28 days' service required to qualify for the British War Medal must have been served actually overseas from Great Britain, or in a Hospital Ship at sea, or, in the case of corresponding classes of the Australian Naval Forces, overseas from Australia, or in a Hospital Ship at sea.
- (iii) The qualifications for Canteen Staffs are as stated in Clause (e), paragraph 3, of the Admiralty Order.

3. This preliminary authority for the wearing of the ribands is to be regarded as provisional only, and does not confirm the title of the recipient to the subsequent award of the Medals. The claims of individual Officers and Men of the Australian Naval Forces are being considered individually, and the Medals and ribands will be distributed in due course when received from the Admiralty.

(18/021.)

### **Commonwealth Naval Order 111 of 1920**

#### **BRITISH WAR MEDAL—AWARD TO BOYS UNDER TRAINING IN H.M.A.S. “TINGIRA.”**

With reference to Navy Order No. 107/1920 and Admiralty Weekly Order No. 720/1920, Boys who were under training in H.M.A.S. Tingira for 28 days or more, prior to 12th November, 1918, will be regarded as eligible for the British War Medal, provided their claim for this Decoration is not subsequently forfeited through desertion, &c., under clause 4 of Admiralty Weekly Order No. 3973/1919.

(18/021.) (*This Order will be reprinted for posting on Notice Boards.*)

### **Commonwealth Naval Order 147 of 1920**

#### **AWARD OF BRITISH WAR MEDAL.**

The following correction is to be made to Navy Order No. 111/1920 relative to the award of the British War Medal to Boys under training in H.M.A.S. *Tingira*:—

Line 1. For *Navy Order No. 107/1920*, read *Navy Order No. 108/1920*.

(18/021.)

### **Army**

#### **MO 503/1919 – 18/10/19 [reinstated by MO 230/1922]**

*[Explanatory note: MO 364/1920 and MO 7/1922 introduced Australian provisions allowing eligibility for those conscripted but did not serve overseas. These provisions were cancelled by MO 230/1922, which reverted to the provisions of AO 266 originally published in MO 503/1919. Some sources still publish the cancelled provisions and indicate eligibility. This is incorrect.]*

The following copy of Army Order No. 266, dated 16<sup>th</sup> July, 1919, is promulgated for information:-

1. His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to signify His pleasure that a medal be granted to record the bringing of the war to a successful conclusion, and the arduous services rendered by His Majesty's Forces.
2. The medal in silver will, provided the claims are approved by the competent military authorities, be granted to the undermentioned classes who entered on duty theatres of war, during periods and within spheres as defined in Army Order 391 of 1922 or, who left their places of residence and rendered approved service overseas, other than the waters dividing the different parts of the United Kingdom, between 5<sup>th</sup> August, 1914, and 11<sup>th</sup> November, 1918, both dates inclusive:-
  - a. Officers, warrant officers, attested non-commissioned officers and men of the British Dominion, Colonial and Indian Military Forces.
  - b. Members of women formations who have been enrolled under a direct contract of service for service with His Majesty's Imperial Forces.
  - c. All who served on staffs of military hospitals, and all members of recognised organizations who actually handled sick and wounded.
  - d. Members of duly recognised or authorized organizations.
  - e. Enrolled and attested followers on the establishment of units of the Indian Army.
3. The medal in bronze will be granted to all British subjects who were enrolled in Native Labour Corps units and who served in theatres of war.
4. The riband will be:- Centre orange, watered, with stripes of white and black on each side and with borders of royal blue.
5. Instructions as to the submission of claims and the disposal of the medals will be issued in due course.

Military Order No. 354/1919 is hereby cancelled.

#### **MO 2/1920 – 3/1/20**

With reference to M.O. 503/1919, promulgating Army Order No. 266/1919, relative to the grant of the British War Medal, advice has been received from the War Office authorities that "Draft Conducting" is held to come under the heading of "rendered approved service overseas," and that, provided an officer so employed, even though not gazetted as a Draft Conducting Officer; can produce an authority to show that he proceeded overseas on duty in charge of a draft he is to be awarded this Medal.

#### **MO 292/1920 – 3/7/20**

It is anticipated that preliminary supplies of the above will be available in Australia at an early date, and as soon as the necessary machines arrive inscribing will be put in hand at once.

It has been decided to adhere to the British Army practices in connexion with the inscriptions on the medals. Briefly these are:-

- a. Where members are eligible for both medals [BWM and Victory Medal] the rank shown will be the highest recorded rank held in a theatre of war for any period whatever, either substantive, acting or temporary,

unless reverted for misconduct, while the unit will be that with which the member first entered a theatre of war.

- b. Where members are eligible for the British War Medal only the rank shown will be the highest recorded rank held during service overseas, either substantive, acting or temporary, unless reverted for misconduct, while the unit will be that with which the member first served overseas.

No applications are necessary for these medals, which will be distributed, as they become available, in order of embarkation of units of the A.I.F. from Australia.

#### **MO 230/1922 – 1/7/22**

1. Military Order No. 364/20, Circular A3 of 28th September, 1920, and Military Order No. 7/22, are hereby cancelled.
2. It has now been decided that the British War Medal shall be issued in conformity with the instructions laid down in Army Order 266, dated 16th July, 1919.
3. Army Order 266 of 16th July, 1919, is promulgated for information:-

*[This order was previously promulgated vide MO 503/1919 above]*

#### **MO 37/1923 – 27/1/23**

The following amendment to Army Order 266, dated 16<sup>th</sup> July, 1919, promulgated by Army Order 392 of 1922, is republished for information:-

In lines three and four of paragraph 2 of Army Order 266 of 1919:- *For* ‘either entered a theatre of war on duty or’ *substitute* “entered on duty theatres of war, during periods and within spheres as defined in Army Order 391 of 1922 or”.

Army Order 391 of 1922 is re-published in Military Order 36/23. Military Order 503 of 1919 is amended accordingly.

#### **Notes:**

*MO 36/1923 defines the theatres of war for the Victory Medal and includes the Russian Theatre for the British War Medal. It is shown with the Victory Medal (Appendix A to MO 560/1919).*

*MO 503/1919 above incorporates this amendment]*

#### **Mercantile Marine.**

Awarded to the men and women of the Mercantile Marine who served at least six months at sea between 4th August 1914 and 11th November 1918. Licensed Pilots, Fishermen and crews of Pilotage and Lighthouse Authorities' Vessels, and of Post Office Cable Ships were also eligible.