

BRITISH GALLANTRY AWARDS

CURRENT STATUS OF BRITISH GALLANTRY AWARDS

This section describes the British Gallantry Awards as they were when they were awarded to Canadians. However, the British have abandoned the rank-related awards (crosses to officers, medals to men) and adopted the Canadian system where the determination of what award you receive is based on the degree of gallantry and not on the rank you hold. These changes were announced by the Secretary of State for Defence on 18 October 1993.

The process actually started in 1974 when Queen Elizabeth introduced the **Queen's Gallantry Medal** to replace the **Order of the British Empire** and **British Empire Medal** for gallantry. The Order of the British Empire and BEM were thereafter only awarded for meritorious service. The four levels of the civil gallantry awards now were:

- George Cross (GC)**
- George Medal (GM)**
- Queen's Gallantry Medal (QGM)**
- Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct (QCBC).**

The next change occurred in 1977 when the posthumous award of the civil gallantry honours could be made at all levels. This meant that the GM and QGM now could be awarded posthumously whereas until this time, only the GC and the QCBC could be awarded posthumously.

The military changed their system in 1979 allowing the **Military Cross (MC)**, **Distinguished Service Cross (DSC)**, **Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC)**, **Air Force Cross (AFC)**, **Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM)**, **Conspicuous Gallantry Medal (Sea and Air) (GCM)**, **Military Medal (MM)**, **Distinguished Service Medal (DSM)**, **Distinguished Flying Medal (DFM)**, and the **Air Force Medal (AFM)**, to be awarded posthumously.

The Royal Navy and British Army also extended the eligibility for the DSC and MC to cover all commissioned ranks, although it was not intended that they should be awarded to those above the rank of Commander and Major respectively, except posthumously. The DFC and AFC were already available to all commissioned ranks.

This change in posthumous status in 1979 posed a problem for the **Distinguished Service Order (DSO)**. Appointments to a British Order of Chivalry, which included the DSO, are deemed to be possible only for a living person. The expanded eligibility of the MC and DSC was one way to protect the DSO from being awarded posthumously.

In October 1993, the **Conspicuous Gallantry Cross** (CGC) was introduced as a second level military gallantry for all ranks. The cross pattée, imposed on a wreath of laurel with the royal crown in the centre, has a white ribbon with blue edges and a red central stripe. It was first awarded in 1995 to Corporal Wayne Mills of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment as part of UNPROFOR in Bosnia. The DSO was now restricted to awards for leadership and not for gallantry and theoretically was open to all ranks. The DSO continued to not be awarded posthumously.



With the introduction of the **CGC**, the medals, CGM, DCM, MM, DFM and AFM were deleted and all ranks could now receive the environmental crosses for bravery; MC, DSC, DFC and AFC. The **Air Force Cross** remained a puzzle. Since it was for non-operational gallantry, why was it not replaced by the Queen's Gallantry Medal? The reason appears to be that the RAF lobby was strong enough to retain the AFC. However, it was now available to all ranks and was only to be awarded for gallantry and not for meritorious

service as it had been in the past.

The final area of overhaul was for the Commendations. On 12 August 1994, the Central Chancery of the Orders of Knighthood announced that: "The Queen has graciously approved the creation of two new Commendations to be awarded solely in recognition of bravery. They are the **Queen's Commendation for Bravery (QCB)** and the **Queen's Commendation for Bravery in the Air (QCBA)**. They will be available to military personnel not in action against the enemy and to civilians. The use of the current **Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct** and **Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service in the Air** will be discontinued."

Another change is that the Military Cross, Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Force Cross and the Distinguished Service Cross are now issued named (previously only a date on the lower portion of the reverse). Thus F/L Hasler, DFC, a Canadian in the RAF, has a DFC with his name on it.

The **Mention in Dispatches** (MID) was retained but was now solely for gallantry.

The current gallantry awards available to the British Armed Forces and to civilians in Britain look like this:

ARMED FORCES and CIVILIAN GALLANTRY

Level of Award	% Chance of Death	Against the Enemy	Civilian or Military humanitarian
I	90 - 100	VC	GC
II	50 - 90	CGC	GM
III	20 - 50	DSC - Sea MC - Land DFC - Air	QGM AFC (military air)
IV	0 - 20	MID	QCB QCBA (military air)

The Armed Forces awards are available to all ranks and all awards can be awarded posthumously.

ORDER of PRECEDENCE for CURRENT BRITISH GALLANTRY AWARDS

- VC - Victoria Cross
- GC - George Cross
- CGC - Conspicuous Gallantry Cross
- GM - George Medal
- DSC - Distinguished Service Cross
- MC - Military Cross
- DFC - Distinguished Flying Cross
- QGM - Queen's Gallantry Medal
- AFC - Air Force Cross
- MID - Mention in Despatches
- QCB - Queen's Commendation for Bravery
- QCBA - Queen's Commendation for Bravery in the Air

NOTE

Canada got it right the first time with the CV, SC and MB awarded to all ranks and for civilians where the deed, not the rank of a person determines the award.

VICTORIA CROSS VC

TERMS



For most conspicuous bravery or some daring or pre-eminent act of valour or self-sacrifice or extreme devotion to duty in the presence of the enemy.

BAR

A bar is awarded for additional acts of bravery. Only 3 have been awarded, none to a Canadian.

DESCRIPTION

A cross pattée, 35-mm across, with a dark brown finish. Made from the cannons captured from the Russians in the Crimean War.

OBVERSE

The obverse displays the Royal Crown surmounted by a lion guardant. Below the Crown, a scroll bearing the inscription: FOR VALOUR.

REVERSE

Raised edges with date of the act engraved within a raised circle.

MOUNTING

A straight bar (ornamented with laurels), slotted for the ribbon, has a V-lug below. A small link joining the V-lug to a semi-circular lug on the top of the cross.

RIBBON

The crimson ribbon is 38-mm wide, and a miniature cross is worn on the ribbon in undress. The ribbon was dark blue for naval recipients until 1918 with Able Seaman William Hall, VC RN being the only Canadian VC winner to wear the blue ribbon.

NAMING

The recipient's rank, name, and regiment are engraved on the reverse of the mounting bar. Date of action on reverse of medal.

DATE

The medal was instituted on 05 February 1856 with awards retroactive to 1854. The first award to a Canadian was in February 1857, to Lieutenant Alexander DUNN, for the Charge of the Light Brigade.

ISSUED

There have been 1,354 Victoria Crosses and 3 bars awarded worldwide to February 2013.

Canadians have received 94 (Canadian-born or serving in the Canadian services or with a close connection to Canada) – No bars.

All 94 Canadian VC winners follow (full citations are recorded in *1000 Brave Canadians* published by the Unitrade Press):

Prior to South Africa (4)

DUNN, Alexander Robert
HALL, William
READE, Herbert Taylor
DOUGLAS, Campbell Mellis

The South African (Boer) War (4)

COCKBURN, Hampden, Z.C.
HOLLAND, Edward J.G.
RICHARDSON, Arthur H.L.
TURNER, Richard E.W.

WORLD WAR ONE (70)

ALGIE, Wallace Lloyd
BARKER, William George
BARRON, Colin Fraser
BELLEW, Edward Donald
BENT, Philip Eric
BISHOP, William Avery
BOURKE, Rowland R.L.
BRERETON, Alexander P.
BRILLANT, Jean
BROWN, Harry
CAIRNS, Hugh
CAMPBELL, Frederick W.
CLARKE, Leo
CLARK-KENNEDY, Wm Hew
COMBE, Robert Grierson
COPPINS, Frederick G.
CROAK, John Bernard
DE WIND, Edmund
DINESEN, Thomas
FISHER, Fred
FLOWERDEW, Gordon M.
GOOD, Herman James
GREGG, Milton Fowler

HALL, Frederick William
HANNA, Robert
HARVEY, Frederick M.W.
HOBSON, Frederick
HOLMES, Thomas William
HONEY, Samuel Lewis
HUTCHESON, Bellenden S.
KAEBLE, Joseph
KERR, George Fraser
KERR, John Chipman
KINROSS, Cecil John
KNIGHT, Arthur George
KONOWAL, Filip
LEARMONTH, Okill M.
LYALL, Graham Thomson
MacDOWELL, Thain W.
MacGREGOR, John
MackENZIE, Hugh
McKEAN, George Burdon
McLEOD, Alan Arnett
MERRIFIELD, William
METCALF, William Henry
MILNE, William Johnstone
MINER, Harry G.B.

MITCHELL, Coulson N.
MLULLIN, George Henry
NUNNEY, Claude J.P.
O'KELLY, Christopher P.J.
O'LEARY, Michael
O'ROURKE, Michael James
PATTISON, John George
PEARKES, George Randolph
PECK, Cyrus Wesley
RAYFIELD, Walter Leigh
RICHARDSON, James C.
RICKETTS, Thomas
ROBERTSON, James Peter
RUTHERFORD, Charles S.
SCRIMGER, Francis A.C.
SHANKLAND, Robert
SIFTON, Ellis Wellwood
SPALL, Robert
STRACHAN, Harcus
TAIT, James Edward
WILKINSON, Thomas O.L.
YOUNG, Francis
ZENGEL, Raphael Louis

WORLD WAR TWO (16)

BAZALGETTE, Ian W.
COSENS, Aubrey
CURRIE, David Vivian
FOOTE, John Weir
GRAY, Robert Hampton
HOEY, Charles Ferguson

HORNELL, David Ernest
MAHONEY, John Keefer
MERRITT, Charles C.I.
MYNARSKI, Andrew C.
OSBORN, John Robert
PETERS, Frederick Thornton

SMITH, Ernest Alvia
TILSTON, Frederick Albert
TOPHAM, Frederick George
TRIQUET, Paul

Victoria Cross Issued

1,358 Victoria Crosses in total (94 Canadian) since 1856.
16 VC winners are alive on 01 February 2013
3 fathers and sons have won the medal.
3 **first bars** have been awarded, two of them to physicians -
Surgeon Captain Arthur Martin-Leake Boer War VC, Captain Noel
Chavasse WWI and Captain Charles Upham WWII (Australian Army).
634 - World War One
182 - World War Two
14 - After World War Two (1 New Zealand - not included in total)
3 - Australian Victoria Crosses (not included in 1,357 total)
10 are still living in January 2016 including 1 WWII veteran

Korea War

Major Kenneth Muir, VC, Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders - 1950 (Posthumous)
Colonel James Carne, VC, DSO, Gloucestershire Regiment - 1951
Lieutenant Philip Curtis, VC, Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry - 1951
(Posthumous)
Private Bill Speakman, VC, Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment - 1951

Malaysia-Indonesia Confrontation

L/Cpl (later Captain) Rambahadur Limbu, VC, MVO, 10th Gurkha Rifles

Vietnam

WOII Kevin Wheatley, VC, Australian Army - 1965 (Posthumous)
Major Peter Badcoe, VC, Australian Army - 1967 (Posthumous)
WOII Ray Simpson, VC, DCM, Australian Army - 1969
WOII Keith Payne, VC, OAM, Australian Army - 1969

Falklands War (both Posthumous)

Lieutenant-Colonel Herbert ('H') Jones, VC, OBE, Parachute Regiment Sergeant
Ian McKay, VC, Parachute Regiment

Second Gulf War against Iraq

Private Johnson Beharry, VC, Princess of Wales Royal Regiment - 2005.

Afghanistan

Corporal Willie Apiata, VC, New Zealand SAS. (**New Zealand VC**)
Corporal Bryan Budd, VC, 3rd Battalion, the Parachute Regiment August 2006 -
Posthumous
Lance-Corporal Joshua Leakey, VC, 1st Battalion, the Parachute Regiment - 2015

Australian Victoria Cross - Afghanistan

Private Mark Donaldson, VC, Special Air Service Regiment - 2008
Lance Corporal Benjamin "Ben" Robert-Smith, VC, MG, Special Air Service
Regiment - 2010 (MG = Medal for Gallantry)
Corporal Daniel Keighran, VC, 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment - 2010

GEORGE CROSS
GC

TERMS

The cross was awarded for acts of the greatest heroism or of the most conspicuous courage in circumstances of extreme danger. It was intended primarily for civilians and award in the military services was confined to actions for which purely military honours were not normally granted and awarded for actions not in the face of the enemy.



The Empire Gallantry awards were exchanged for the George Cross.

In 1971, all Albert Medal winners were allowed to exchange their medals for the George Cross.

(One Canadian, Warrant Electrician Ernest WOODING, AM, RCNVR did not exchange his medal).

BAR

A bar was to be awarded for additional acts of gallantry; none were ever issued.

DESCRIPTION

A silver Geneva Cross, 45-mm wide.

OBVERSE

In the centre of the cross is a circular medallion showing St. George slaying the dragon and around this an annulus bearing the legend FOR GALLANTRY. In the angle of each limb of the cross, the Royal cypher GVI forming a circle concentric with the medallion.

REVERSE

The reverse is plain except for the naming and Date.

MOUNTING

A straight silver, laurel bar, slotted for the ribbon, with a ring lug below, made in one piece is joined to the cross by a small silver ring which passes through the ring lugs of the bar and the top of the medal.

NAMING

The name, rank and service (Serial Number for those not commissioned) and the date of the notification in the London Gazette are engraved shown on the reverse of the cross.

RIBBON

The garter blue ribbon is 38-mm wide. A miniature cross is worn on the ribbon in undress. Women may wear their cross from a bow.

DATE

The George Cross was created on 24 September 1940 and published in the London Gazette on 31 January 1941.

ISSUED

There have been 11 crosses (5 of them posthumously) awarded to Canadians: 8 military, 1 Merchant Navy, and one 1 woman.

GEORGE CROSS AWARDS TO CANADIANS

ASHBURNHAM-RUFFNER, Doreen	Civilian	Converted from AM
BASTIAN, Gordon	British Merchant Navy	Converted from AM
FROST, Ernest	Royal Air Force	Converted from EGM
GRAVELL, Karl	RCAF	Posthumous - Officer Cadet
GRAY, Roderick	RCAF	Posthumous - Flying Officer
HENDRY, James	Royal Cdn Engineers	Posthumous - Corporal
PATTON, John	Royal Cdn Engineers	Posthumous - Lieutenant
RENNIE, John	Royal Cdn Infantry	Posthumous - Sergeant
ROSS, Arthur	RCAF	Lost his hand
SPOONER, Kenneth	RCAF	Posthumous
WOODING, Ernest Alfred ¹	RCNVR	Warrant Electrician

Connected to Canada

McCLYMONT, John McIntosh	Royal Air Force	Moved to Hamilton
DAVIES, Robert	Royal Engineers	Cdn Army WW1
BUTSON, Arthur Richard ('Dick')	Royal Army Medical Corps Post War RCAMC	Lives in Hamilton GC OMM CStJ CD \ died 2015

All citations for the George Cross, Victoria Cross and the Albert Medal are published in the book **'1000 Brave Canadians'** published by the Unitrade Press.

2



¹ Considered a Canadian George Cross recipient but never traded his Albert Medal in for the George Cross.

² Medals of Air Commodore Arthur Ross, GC, CBE, CD, RCAF – Royal Military College
Doreen Ashburnham-Ruffner, GC (converted from Albert Medal) – Displayed in the British War Museum in London

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE ORDER

DSO

TERMS

The order was established for rewarding individual instances of meritorious or distinguished service in war. This is a purely military order for officers only, and while normally given for service under fire or under conditions equivalent to service in actual combat with the enemy, it was awarded between 1914 and 1916 under circumstances which could not be regarded as under fire. After 01 January 1917, commanders in the field were instructed to recommend this award only for those serving under fire. Prior to 1943, the order could only be given to officers Mentioned-in-Despatches. The order is generally given to officers in command, above the rank of Major. Awards to Majors and below usually indicate a high degree of gallantry just short of deserving the Victoria Cross. Not awarded posthumously and not awarded for gallantry after 1993.



BARS

A bar is awarded for an act which would have earned the order in the first place. The bar plain gold with an Imperial Crown in the centre. The year of the award is engraved on the reverse.

DESCRIPTION

A gold cross, 40-mm across, enamelled white and edged in gold.

OBVERSE

In the centre, within a wreath of laurel, enamelled green, the Imperial Crown in gold upon a red enamelled ground.

REVERSE

Within a wreath of laurel, enamelled green, the Royal Cypher in gold upon a red enamelled ground.

MOUNTING

A ring at the top of the medal attaches to a ring at the bottom of a gold bar ornamented with laurel. At the top of the ribbon is a second gold bar ornamented with laurel.

RIBBON

The red ribbon is 29-mm wide, with narrow blue edges. A rosette is worn on the ribbon in undress to signify the award of a bar.

DATES

The Royal Warrant was published in the London Gazette on 09 November 1886.

NAMING

Officially unnamed - some have privately had their names engraved on the back of the suspension bar.

ISSUED

There have been **1,220 Distinguished Service Orders, 119 First Bars** and **20 Second Bars** awarded to Canadians.

WAR	CDN ARMY	CDN in BA	RCAF	CDN in RAF	RAF in RCAF	RCN	CDN in RN	CDN in FAA
SUDAN	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
SOUTH AFRICA	20	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
WW1	702	13	0	16	0	0	8	5
WW2	351	1	73	3	8	8	0	0
KOREA	8	0	0	0	0	1	1	0

	CDN ARMY WW1	CDN ARMY WW2	CDN ARMY KOREA	CDN in RAF WW1	CDN in RAF WW2	RCAF WW2	RAF in RCAF	CDN FAA WW1	RCN	RN
1st Bars	89*	18*	0	5	1	4	2	2	0	0
2nd Bars	16*	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0

* = 1 Cdn in British Forces included / Total excludes RAF in RCAF

3



³ LGen E.L.M. Burns, CC, DSO, OBE, MC, CD in Cdn War Museum – LCol E.P. Thompson, DSO and bar, ED, CD in QOCH Museum - LCol G.C. Corbould, DSO, OBE, ED (Bronze Star) in Royal Westminster Regiment Museum – BGen Ian Johnston, CBE, DSO & Bar, ED, CD (CdeG) in 48th Highlanders Museum

**ROYAL RED CROSS / ASSOCIATE of the ROYAL RED CROSS
RRC / ARRC**

TERMS

MEMBER (First Class) RRC

The award is made to a fully trained nurse of the official Nursing Service who has shown exceptional devotion and competency in the performance of actual nursing duties, over a continuous and long period, or who has performed some very exceptional act of bravery and devotion at her post of duty. Up to two percent of the total establishment of nurses could receive the RRC.



ASSOCIATE of the ROYAL RED CROSS (SECOND CLASS):

The ARRC is awarded to a fully trained nurse, or an assistant nurse, probationer, or V.A.D. Nursing Member, who, belonging to one of the officially recognized Nursing Services, has shown special devotion and competency in the performance of nursing duties, over a continuous and long period, or who has performed some very exceptional act of bravery and devotion at her post of duty. Up to five percent of the total establishment of nurses could receive the ARRC. Associates may be elevated to Member as vacancies arise.



BAR

To recognize further exceptional devotion and competency in the performance of actual nursing duties or some very exceptional act of bravery and devotion at her post of duty, a bar may be awarded to a recipient of the RRC. ARRC recipients cannot receive a bar, but may be elevated to RRC. The bar is linked to the cross and is made in RED enamel. Four bars have been awarded to Canadians: Matron Annie HARTLEY, Matron Elizabeth RUSSELL, Matron Margaret SMITH, and Matron Evelyn WILSON received bars to the RRC in WW1.

DESCRIPTION

MEMBER A cross, 35-mm wide, enamelled red, and edged with gold, with a circular medallion at its centre.

ASSOCIATE A cross, 35-mm wide, frosted silver, with a Maltese Cross enamelled red superimposed thereon and a circular medallion in the centre.

OBVERSE

MEMBER Uncrowned effigy of the reigning monarch is in the centre, with the words **FAITH** (top arm) / **HOPE** / (left arm) / **CHARITY** (right arm) / **1883** (bottom arm) in gold on the arms of the cross.

ASSOCIATE Uncrowned effigy of the reigning monarch in the middle.

REVERSE

MEMBER The Royal Cypher of the reigning monarch appears in the centre, surmounted by a crown.

ASSOCIATE The Royal Cypher of the reigning monarch is in the centre, surmounted by a crown, with the words **FAITH** (top), **HOPE** (left), **CHARITY** (right), and **1883** (bottom) on the arms of the cross.

MOUNTING

There is a small ring at the top of the cross through which a larger ring passes. The badge may be worn from a bow or if worn with other medals, a third larger ring is added through which the ribbon passes.

RIBBON

The light blue ribbon is 26-mm wide, with red edges (6-mm). A rosette is worn on the ribbon in undress to denote a bar to the RRC. The ribbon is the same for both classes.

DATES

The RRC was instituted 23 April 1883 and the first award to a Canadian was made in 1902. The ARRC was instituted on 10 November 1915. The bar was instituted 15 December 1917. Men were allowed into the Order 30 December 1976 (no Canadian men have ever become members or associates in the order).

4



⁴ Matron Georgina Fane Pope, RRC (Boer War – Queen Victoria Medal)

Colonel Elizabeth Lawrie Smellie, CBE, RRC, Matron-in-Chief, RCAMC (1st Cdn Woman promoted to Colonel – both sets of medals in the Cdn War Museum)

NAMING

The badge is issued unnamed.

ISSUED

There have been 132 RRCs to Canadians (4 bars), and 446 ARRCs, with 21 elevations from ARRC to RRC:

WAR	CDN ARMY		CDN in SAMNS	RCAF		RCN	
	RRC	ARRC		RRC	ARRC	RRC	ARRC
South Africa	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
WW1	66	275	0	0	0	0	0
WW1 ELEVATIONS	-	17	0	-	0	-	0
WW1 BARS	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
WW2	56	134	1	1	20	6	16
WW2 ELEVATIONS	-	3	0	-	0	-	1
KOREA	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
KOREA ELEVATIONS	-	1*	0	-	0	-	0

SAMNS = the South African Military Nursing Service (Canadian)

* = elevation of ARRC winner from WW2

In WW2, Major Annie Black BOYD, RRC, RCAMC was elevated from an ARRC to RRC for an ARRC awarded in WW1 while with the British Army Nursing Service. Her elevation is not included above but is included in the RRC total for WW1.

The preceding are the correct numbers, verified from the London Gazette and Canada Gazette entries. The numbers given in previous editions and other sources copied errors from *History of the Canadian Army Medical Services in WW1*, by Sir Andrew MacPhail. ⁵



⁵ Matron Eula Winnifred Ledingham, RRC, RCN – Medals in CFB Esquimalt Museum
Nursing Sister T. Holland, ARRC – Medal in the Princes of Wales Own Regiment Museum