

WORLD WAR TWO STARS

TERMS

Described for each individual star. To award a star, a period of one month was deemed to be 30 days. Service curtailed by death, or disability due to service, also qualified for the award. A recipient of a decoration, Mention-in-Despatches or a King's Commendation, qualified for the award irrespective of the length of service. Service spent in qualifying for one star could not run concurrently with service qualifying for another. Prisoner-of-War time could count towards the 1939-45 Star but it would not count towards the earning of other stars unless the 1939-45 Star qualifying time had been completed before capture. No more than five stars could be awarded to any individual.



BARs

All of the stars had bars except the Italy Star. The bars represent either a special service connected with that star (such as the Battle of Britain with the 1939-45 Star) or denote that the person qualified for the award of another specific star after the award of the first star. Only one bar per medal is worn.

DESCRIPTION

A six pointed tombac (a yellow copper-zinc alloy) star, 45-mm across the points.

OBVERSE

The Royal and Imperial Cypher (GRI with VI below) appears in the centre of the obverse. The Cypher is within a circlet bearing the name of the particular star, with a Royal crown at the top of the circlet.

REVERSE

The reverse was plain on issue, but some had their names engraved privately.

MOUNTING

There is a ring on the top point of the star through which another ring passes.

RIBBON

The ribbons are 32-mm wide and differ for each star. A silver rose emblem on the ribbon signified the award of a bar to the star. Ribbon colours are described left to right when facing the ribbon.

DATES

Authorized by Canadian Army Routine Order #6919 (16 August 1946).

THE 1939-1945 STAR

TERMS



ARMY: to personnel who had six months (180 days) service in an operational theatre, provided such service was:

- (i) Northwest Europe or the Central Mediterranean theatres prior to 8 May 1945;
- (ii) the Southwest theatres prior to 2 September 1945.

NAVY: to personnel who had six months (180 days) service afloat in areas of active operations prior to 8 May 1945 or 2 September 1945.

RCAF (Aircrew): to those who took part in operations against the enemy subject to completion of two months (60 days) service in a fully operational unit or squadron, prior to 8 May 1945 or 2 September 1945.

RCAF: (Groundcrew): to those who served for six months (180 days) in an operational theatre prior to 8 May 1945 or 2 September 1945.

SPECIAL DATES:

In the following operations, service of 6 or 2 months qualifies for the award of the 1939/45 Star:

- (i) France from 30 September 1939 to 9 May 1940.

In the following operations, entry into operational service will qualify for the 1939/45 Star:

- (i) Belgium, France from 10 May 1940 to 19 June 1940;
- (ii) Holland from 12 May 1940 to 13 May 1940
- (iii) Dieppe on 19 August 1942 (1 day)
- (iv) India, Northwest Frontier
 - from 03 February to 24 May 1940
 - from 18 June 1941 to 26 August 1941
 - from 28 July 1942 to 18 August 1942

NOTE

The 1939/1945 Star was issued when operational service was terminated by death, wounds, or other disability due to service.

The 1939/45 Star was also awarded when an honour, decoration or mention in despatches was awarded to an individual who had not yet received the star.

BARS

BATTLE OF BRITAIN: This bar was awarded to those members of the crews of fighter aircraft who took part in the Battle of Britain between 10 July and 31 October 1940.

BOMBER COMMAND (Not for Canadians - see CVSM)

This bar was not one of the original bars to the eight stars originally awarded for WWII **but came almost seventy years** after the end of war. (Canadians wear it on the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal and all members of Bomber Command are eligible for this clasp, not just aircrew as is the case in Great Britain.)



For the RAF and other British personnel, the Bomber Command Clasp (which is worn on the 1939/1945 Star) recognizes those who between 03 September 1939 and 08 May 1945 (VE Day) who:

- a. Served as aircrew on a Bomber Command operational unit for at least 60 days, or completed a tour of operations; and
- b. Flew at least one operational sortie.

Note 1: The above criteria mean that eligible personnel will have already qualified for the 1939-45 Star.

Note 2: Special Cases - The clasp will usually also be issued in respect of Bomber Command aircrew who do not meet the above qualifying criteria but:

- (1) had their service brought to an end by death, wounds or other disability due to service; or
- (2) received a gallantry award for their Bomber Command service; or
- (3) were taken as a prisoner of war.

It was announced in late 2012 and formally approved by the Queen in early 2013. Bars began to be awarded in Britain in mid-2013.

RIBBON

The ribbon consists of three equal: dark blue, red and light blue (representing the navy, army and air force).

ISSUED

Canadians received 305,000 Stars

103 Bars Battle of Britain Bars. Of these, 23 Canadians were killed in the Battle of Britain that would have earned them the bar and another 30 who flew in the Battle of Britain were killed later in the war.

NOTE: CANADIANS WILL WEAR THE BOMBER COMMAND CLASP on the CVSM

THE 1939-1945 STAR

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¹ Peter Engbrecht, CGM, CD, RCAF – he would have earned the Bomber Command bar to his 1935/1945 Star (Commonwealth Training Plan Museum Brandon)

Wing Commander Paul Pitcher, RCAF, Number 1 Fighter Squadron in the Battle of Britain – 1939/1945 Star with bar Battle of Britain and an MID on his 1935/1945 Medal plus bars to his other two stars (Medals in the Museum at CFB Trenton)

THE ATLANTIC STAR

TERMS

a) **RCN and Canadian Army:** awarded to personnel who had six months (180 days) service afloat in the Atlantic or Home waters since 3 September 1939 to 8 May 1945;

b) **Flying Personnel:** awarded to personnel who have taken part in operations against the enemy in the Atlantic or Home waters, provided they completed two months (60 days) service in a fully operational unit.

NOTE

The 1939/45 Star must have been earned by completion of six (or two) months of service before a candidate could begin to earn the Atlantic Star.



SPECIAL RULE

There is a special rule in relation to the last six months of operational service (from 8 November 1944 to 8 May 1945). Persons who entered into operational service during the last six or two months (as the case may be) will, if they did not subsequently serve in another operational area, qualify for the Atlantic Star and the prior time qualifications of 6 or 2 months will not apply.

However, the 1939/45 Star will not be awarded in such cases in which total operational service amounted to less than 6 or 2 months.

Time spent as prisoner of war, by a Naval Officer or rating will **not** be counted towards the total qualifying period of 12 months unless the individual had completed his 6 months service for the 1939/45 Star and had begun to earn the Atlantic Star before being made prisoner.

Service for the Atlantic Star brought to an end by death, wounds or other disability due to service, or marked by an award of M.I.D. qualifies although it may not have amounted to 6 or 2 months as the case may be.

BARS

If later entitled to a second or third star, rather than wearing the star, a bar would be worn (but only one bar could be worn):

AIR CREW EUROPE or FRANCE AND GERMANY



RIBBON

The shaded and watered ribbon consists of three equal stripes: blue, white, and sea-green to represent the Atlantic Ocean.

ISSUED



There were 43,500 issued to Canadians.

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² Lieutenant Robert Hampton Gray, VC, DSC, RCNVR with Atlantic Star - MID on the 1939/45 Medal
Captain Andrew Ross, OMM, VRD, CD - former Commanding Officer, HMCS Discovery
- Medals displayed in the HMCS Discovery Museum in Vancouver, B.C.
- Note the RCNVR Officer Decoration (VRD) and the RCNVR Long Service Medal before his CD

THE ARCTIC STAR

TERMS

The Arctic Star recognizes any length of operational service (i.e. one day, or part of, or more) north of the Arctic Circle (66 degrees, 32'N) between 03 September 1939 and 8 May 1945 (VE Day).

This includes:

- a. Service by personnel of **any Service** on the 'Russian Convoys';
- b. Service in RAF/RCAF Coastal Command, other RAF/RCAF Squadrons and Fleet Air Arm crew who flew at least one sortie north of the Arctic Circle;
- c. Army personnel who took part in land operations north of the Arctic Circle;
- d. Army and Royal Marines personnel who served in His Majesty's ships or Merchant ships north of the Arctic Circle; and
- e. Merchant Navy personnel other than the Russian Convoys, who served north of the Arctic Circle.



Thus any length of service above the Arctic Circle, defined as 66° 32' North Latitude, by members of the British, Canadian and Australian Armed Forces and the Merchant Navy of these countries is eligible for this medal.

The Arctic Star **was not one of the eight stars originally awarded for WWII but came almost seventy years after the end of war.** It was announced in late 2012 and formally approved by the Queen in early 2013. Medals began to be awarded in Britain in mid-2013.

RAF / RCAF members are eligible if they landed north of the Arctic Circle or served in the air over this area. Non aircrew on operational service in the area or those sailing in Catapult Aircraft Merchant Ships are also eligible. Army personnel serving in His Majesty's ships or in defensively equipped Merchant ships qualify under the rules applying to the Navy or Merchant Navy. Personnel taking part in land operations north of the Arctic Circle are also eligible for award.

BARS

There is no bar to this medal.

RIBBON

The ribbon is 32-mm wide with equal stripes of light blue, dark blue, red, white (edged in fine black stripes), dark blue and light blue. The light blue represents the air force, the dark blue the navy, the red the merchant navy and the white with black edges the arctic.

ORDER of PRECEDENCE

The Arctic Star will be worn **between** the Air Crew Europe Star and the Africa Star.

This is because Second World War theatre stars are worn in chronological order of the start date of the operations in the theatre that the Stars represent. Royal Navy ships were at their war stations in the Atlantic the day the War started (thus the Atlantic Star is the first theatre star coming after the 1939/1945 Star). The first Royal Air Force bombing sorties took place over Germany on 4 September 1939, the second day of the War (Air Crew Europe comes after the Atlantic Star).

Chronologically, therefore, it is appropriate that the Atlantic Star takes precedence over the Air Crew Europe Star in the Order of Wear. Operations north of the Arctic Circle (not least the April-June 1940 Norway campaign) took place before operations which qualified for the Africa Star began on 10 June 1940.

DATES

Any length of service between 03 September 1939 and 08 May 1945 in the arctic qualify and individual. Most of the eligible recipients died before the medal was issued in 2013.

NOTE

The medal was primarily to recognize the hazardous conditions of the convoys to North Russia by the Merchant Marine Ships and the Navy.

ORDER of WEAR of the WORLD WAR II STARS and MEDALS to CANADIANS

1939/1945 Star
Atlantic Star
Air Crew Europe Star
Arctic Star
Africa Star
Pacific Star
Burma Star
Italy Star
France and Germany Star
Defence Medal
Canadian Volunteer Service Medal
1939/1945 War Medal

Arctic Star



Bruce Menzie wearing the Arctic star with Temple Anderson (left)
and Paula Hanson (right) - Bruce also received the Croix de
Guerre from the French Government