

WORLD WAR TWO MEDALS

THE DEFENCE MEDAL

TERMS

The medal was usually awarded to Canadians for six months service in Britain between 03 September 1939 and 02 September 1945.

The exact terms were:

- service in the forces in non-operational areas subjected to air attack or closely threatened, providing such service lasted for three or more years;
- service overseas or outside the country of residence, providing that such service lasted for one year, except in territories threatened by the enemy or subject to bomb attacks, in which case it was six months. Under the terms of this last condition, Canadians serving for one year in Newfoundland were eligible and Canadians serving for six months in Hong Kong were eligible.
- qualifying period in mine and bomb disposal was three months.
- service in West Africa, Palestine and India, other than operational air crew, qualified for this medal.
- those awarded the GC or GM for civil defence received this medal.
- Home Guard and others in Britain qualified for this medal.



BAR

There is no bar to this medal.

DESCRIPTION

A circular, silver (.800 fine) medal, 36-mm in diameter. The British issued medals were made of cupro-nickel.

OBVERSE

The obverse shows the bareheaded coinage effigy of King George VI, facing left, and the legend:

GEORGIVS VI D: BR: OMN: REX F:D: IND:IMP:

REVERSE

On the reverse, the Royal Crown rests on the stump of an oak tree, flanked by a lion and a lioness. On the top left is the date 1939, and at the top right, the date 1945. In the exergue, though not ruled off, is the wording: THE DEFENCE / MEDAL.

MOUNTING

A plain, straight, non-swivelling suspend with a single-toe claw.

RIBBON

The light green ribbon is 32-mm wide with a central stripe of orange (13-mm wide) and a narrow black stripe in the middle of each green stripe. The orange (flame colour) represents the enemy attacks on the green land of England and the black represents the black-outs.

DATES

The award was established on 16 August 1945.

ISSUED

There were 325,000 medals issued to Canadians.¹



¹ Major Charles Short, MC, a CanLoan Officer – note also MID for Korea – Photo taken at a Military Collector's Club of Canada Meeting
Lieutenant-Colonel Cecil Edwin Corrigan, DSO, ED, Canadian Army Medical Corps attached PPCLI – Medals in PPCLI Museum, Calgary, Alberta
Major Jack Arthur Forman, DSO, Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry Highlanders of Canada – Medals in Prince of Wales Own Regiment Museum

CANADIAN VOLUNTEER SERVICE MEDAL

TERMS

The medal was awarded:

(a) to a person of any rank in the armed forces of Canada, who voluntarily served after 02 September 1939 on active service

(i) for a period of not less than eighteen (18) months ending on or before 1 March 1947, and was honourably discharged or retired from such active service,

(ii) for a period of not less than six months, any part of which was served outside Canada, and was honourably discharged or retired from such active service, or

(iii) from which the person was honourably discharged or retired as a result of an injury or disease, or an aggravation thereof, that was attributable to or was incurred during such active service;

(b) posthumously, to the survivor of a person of any rank in the armed forces of Canada who voluntarily served on active service and was killed in action or died as a result of an injury or disease, or an aggravation thereof, that was attributable to or was incurred during such active service;

(c) to a person who was voluntarily serving on active service in the armed forces of Canada on 02 September 1945, but had not attained the person's nineteenth birthday by that date and was subsequently compulsorily honourably discharged, by reason of being under age, being before completing the minimum qualifying period of eighteen months.;

(d) to a person who signed an agreement in writing to join a manning pool of the Canadian merchant navy, established under Order in Council P.C. 13/3550 of 19 May 1941, and to serve at sea on foreign-going ships of Canadian registry for a period of not less than two years or the duration of World War II, whichever is the lesser period, and who voluntarily served in such a manning pool

(i) for a period of not less than eighteen months, ending on or before 01 March 1947, and was honourably discharged or retired from such service, or

(ii) from which the person was honourably discharged or retired as a result of an injury or disease, or an aggravation



thereof, that was attributable to or was incurred during such service;

(e) to any merchant navy veteran within the meaning of the **Merchant Navy Veteran and Civilian War-related Benefits Act** (added in June 1994);

(f) posthumously, to the survivor of any person mentioned in paragraph (d) or (e) who was killed in action or died as a result of an injury or disease, or an aggravation thereof, that as attributable to or was incurred during such active service;

(g) posthumously, to the survivor of any person who was eligible for the Medal pursuant to any of paragraphs (a) and (cd) to (e) but to whom the Medal was not awarded; and

(h) to any person mentioned in any of paragraphs (a) to (g), where the Medal awarded to that person has been lost, stolen or destroyed, and the person pays the cost of replacement.

PERSONS MADE ELIGIBLE IN 2001

AUXILIARY SERVICES which include personnel engaged and paid by the Canadian

Legion, Knights of Columbus, Salvation Army and the YMCA. The organizations provided canteens, recreational services and equipment to Canadian Forces personnel serving overseas.

CANADIAN FIREFIGHTERS who were members of The Corps of Canadian (Civilian) Fire Fighters for Service in the United Kingdom. These people helped fight fires during the Blitz.

OVERSEAS WELFARE WORKERS and the VOLUNTARY AID DETACHMENT which includes members of the Canadian Red Cross Society or the St. John Ambulance Brigade who worked either overseas or in Canada in medical support functions.

FERRY COMMAND which included the pilots and aircrew under contract to deliver aircraft from North America to Britain and to other theatres of War.

BRITISH COMMONWEALTH AIR TRAINING PLAN INSTRUCTORS are eligible. These include the civilian trainers who were not full-time members of the air force.

To qualify for the CVSM, the civilian required at least six months service, any part of which was outside Canada, and must have been honourably discharged or retired from their service.

Those who served under the Red Cross, St. John Ambulance or who were instructors under the Air Training Plan may qualify if they served for at least 18 months, regardless of location. Also qualifying are all volunteers who were honourably discharged or retired as a result of injury or disease attributable to or incurred during their service. The medal is also awarded to survivors of volunteers who were killed in action or died as a result of service-related injury or disease.

Persons who were voluntarily serving on active service in the armed forces on 2 September 1945, but had not attained their 19th birthday by that date and were subsequently compulsorily

honourably discharged before completing the minimum qualifying period of 18 months are also eligible for the medal.

NOTE

A person in receipt of the Newfoundland Second World War Volunteer Service Medal is not eligible for the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal. A period of service during World War II in any of the armed forces of His Majesty or the United States may be added to a subsequent period of voluntary service in the armed forces of Canada. The period of any analogous voluntary service during World War II in the merchant navy of any of His Majesty's realms and territories or the United States may be added to a period of time in the Canadian merchant navy as qualifying time for the medal.

BARS

Clasp The clasp, a silver bar with a maple leaf in the centre, was awarded for 60 days service outside of Canada or a person described in (b) above. A silver maple leaf is worn on the ribbon in undress. If one of the following two bars is also awarded, two silver maple leaf emblems would be worn on the ribbon in undress.



DIEPPE A silver bar, with the word DIEPPE in raised letters on a pebbled background, bearing an anchor surmounted by an eagle and a Thompson sub-machine gun was awarded in respect of persons who participated in the Battle of Dieppe on, off or above the shores of Dieppe on 19 August 1942. Instituted by PC 1994-1154 on 4 July 1994.



HONG KONG A silver bar, with the words HONG KONG in raised letters on a pebbled background, with a monogram HK on a circle in its centre was awarded in respect of persons who participated in the Defence of Hong Kong from 08 December 1941 to 25 December 1941. Instituted by PC 1995-1244 on 26 July 1995.



BOMBER COMMAND A silver bar, plain with a four engine airplane in the center. Recognizing that the successes of Bomber Command started on the ground and finished in the air over Fortress Europe, **ALL** Canadian Bomber Command Veterans who earned the CVSM, regardless of rank or role, are eligible for the honour.



(For the British Bomber Commander bar, you must have been aircrew and earned the 1939/1945 Star)

Note: Where two bars are worn, the bar for Dieppe, the bar for Hong Kong or the bar for Bomber Command, shall be worn above the bar for overseas service, the two being evenly spaced on the ribbon.

DESCRIPTION

A circular, silver medal (0.925 fine), 36-mm in diameter.

OBVERSE

Seven marching figures are depicted, representing men and women of the army, air force and navy and the nursing service. Around the rim the inscription reads:

1939 CANADA 1945 VOLUNTARY SERVICE VOLONTAIRE

with a small maple leaf before and after the word SERVICE and the word Service being at the bottom.

REVERSE

The reverse shows the coat of arms of Canada.

MOUNTING

The medal is linked to a straight suspender by a small ring passing through a small fixed ring at the top of the medal.

RIBBON

The ribbon is 32-mm wide with a royal blue centre (13-mm) flanked by two equal stripes of scarlet and dark green, the dark green being on the edges. The ribbon was issued during the war; the medal was issued after the war.

NAMING

The medal was issued unnamed.



DATES

The medal was established on 22 October 1943.

ISSUED

There were 1,183,000 eligible for the medal, with 650,000 medals and 525,500 clasps awarded.



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² Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Ridley Labatt, DSO, ED, CD – Royal Hamilton Light Infantry
Brigadier-General Denis Whitaker, DSO, CM, ED, CD – Royal Hamilton Light Infantry - Both medal groups displayed in the RHLI Museum, Hamilton, Ontario.
Note: BGen Whitaker has mounted his Dieppe bar on his 1939/45 Star and LCol Labatt has mounted his correctly on his CVSM. I think Whitaker's looks better and who is going to argue with a General! WOII George Bova, DFC, RCAF waits to receive his Bomber Command Clasp (Vintage Wings photo)