

Chapter 29

08 September 2017

British Meritorious Service Medal (MSM)

TERMS

YEARS	21 years service (awarded after discharge)
SERVICE	Permanent Forces
RANKS	Warrant Officers and senior NCOs
DATES	1902 to 1958 if enrolled on or before 01 September 1939
BARS	for additional acts of gallantry

The medal was awarded to Warrant Officers and Senior NCOs (Sergeant or above), who were discharged after 21 years service (18 if disabled), and had earned the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. The award was limited to 40 who could wear it at any given time. The number was increased to 75 in 1928 and to 100 in 1939. The medal was awarded for valuable and meritorious service.



FOR GALLANTRY

In 1916, the MSM was awarded to all ranks:

"duly recommended for the grant in respect of gallant conduct in the performance of military duty otherwise than in action against the enemy, or in saving, or attempting to save the life of an officer or soldier, or for devotion to duty in a theatre of war".

The gallantry portion was cancelled on 07 September 1928 as the British Empire Medal now served this purpose. The King's Regulations and Orders of 1939 listed the MSM and stated that it could be awarded to a soldier of the active militia who is recommended on account of gallant conduct in the performance of military duty (not necessarily on active service) or in saving or attempting to save the life of an officer or soldier, or for devotion to duty in a theatre of war.

DESCRIPTION

A circular, silver medal, 36-mm diameter in diameter.

OBVERSE

King Edward VII: An effigy in Field Marshal's uniform, facing left, and the legend: EDWARDVS VII REX IMPERATOR

King George V:

- (a) An effigy in Field Marshal's uniform, facing left, and the legend: GEORGIVS V BRITT:OMN:REX ET IND:IMP:
- (b) A bareheaded effigy, facing left, and the legend: GEORGIVS.V.D.G.BRITT.OMN REX.ET.INDIAE.IMP.

King George VI: A bareheaded effigy, facing left, and one of the legends:

- (a) GEORGIVS VI D:G:BR:OMN:REX ET INDIAE IMP: (1937 - 1948)
- (b) GEORGIVS VI DEI GRA:BRITT:OMN:REX FID:DEF: (1948 - 1952)

Queen Elizabeth II: An uncrowned coinage effigy, facing right, and the legend:

ELIZABETH II DEI GRATIA REGINA

REVERSE

The reverse displays the inscription in: **FOR / MERITORIOUS / SERVICE** in three lines, encircled by two laurel leaves (tied at the bottom with a bow and separated at the top by an Imperial Crown).broken at the top by an Imperial Crown. King Edward VII and King George V medals bear the word **CANADA** above the crown.

MOUNTING

An ornate scroll suspender is attached to the medal with a single-toe claw.

NAMING

The recipient's rank, name, and regiment are engraved around the rim.

RIBBON

The crimson ribbon is 32-mm wide. Because the ribbon was the same as that for the VC, white edge stripes (3-mm wide) were added in 1916. In 1917, a narrow white central stripe was also added. The Air Force ribbon had

the left side blue, right side crimson with white edge stripes and a white centre stripe.

ORDER of PRECEDENCE

Comes before all Long Service and Good Conduct Medals.

ISSUED

For Service

- 50 King Edward VII -
- 60 King George V (Field Marshal uniform to Air Force)
- 0 King George V (Admiral Uniform to the RCN)
- 1,427 King George V (Coinage head)
- 100 King George VI (two types)
- 40 Queen Elizabeth II (two types)

For Gallantry

- 1
- 2
- 25
-
-



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¹ Captain A.G. Meachem, MM, MSM, PPCLI (Commissioned 1939) – King George V MSM – PPCLI Museum
 Warrant Officer WO1 Reading, MSM, RCASC – Royal Canadian Corps of Signals Museum in Kingston, Ontario – Note: His MSM is a King George VI
 They both had a Colonial Permanent Forces Long Service and Good Conduct Medal – Reading’s medal is in the wrong sequence.
 Examples of groups with the Efficiency Decorations (ED) in them. Captain Chew has 3 Long Service Medals – ED, EM and CD