

## Military Campaigns and Expeditionary Medals: Special Ops VetCorps Policy Article

	<a href="#"><u>Afghanistan Campaign Medal</u></a>
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Listed here are 46 US Military Campaigns and Expeditionary Ribbons for which there are corresponding Medals. It's important for us to understand the relevancy of military campaigns and expeditions to the awarding of the SAR War Service Medal, especially as the U.S. moved away from declared wars and as we open the Special Ops Veterans Corps.

Although campaign and expeditionary medals are now commonplace in the Armed Forces, the concept has evolved slowly over many generations. In fact, the *purpose* and *nature* of campaign medals has changed considerably over the years. They were originally somewhat of a cross between prizes and decorations. They began as prizes to senior commanders in recognition of some notable victory. As prizes they were only one of a variety of methods commonly used to reward military commanders (others included titles, silverplate, swords, and cash). As decorations they were used to acknowledge superior or heroic performance. Since in this brief introduction it is not practical to present a full, detailed history of the development of campaign medals, the reader is asked to bear in mind that what follows only hits the highlights of their history and is based largely on their evolution in England, from which the United States owes much of its historical tradition.

### **Early Campaign Medals: The British Precedent**

At the battle of Dunbar on September 3, 1650, an army of eleven thousand men under Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658) defeated Scottish royalist forces consisting of about twenty thousand men under General David Leslie. Cromwell's army suffered fewer than thirty men killed, while Leslie's army sustained hundreds of casualties. On September 7, 1650, in recognition of this notable victory, the House of Commons granted medals to all troops who took part in the battle. The Commons particularly wanted

	<u><a href="#">First Nicaraguan Campaign Medal (Navy and Marine Corps)</a></u>
	<u><a href="#">Indian Wars Medal (Army)</a></u>
	<u><a href="#">Iraq Campaign Medal</a></u>
	<u><a href="#">Korean Service Medal</a></u>
	<u><a href="#">Korean War Service Medal (Korea)</a></u>
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	<u><a href="#">Liberation of Kuwait Medal (Kuwait) (First Gulf War)</a></u>
	<u><a href="#">Liberation of Kuwait Medal (Saudi Arabia) (First Gulf War)</a></u>
	<u><a href="#">Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal</a></u>
	<u><a href="#">Mexican Service Medal (Army)</a></u>
	<u><a href="#">Mexican Service Medal (Navy and Marine Corps)</a></u>
	<u><a href="#">Navy Expeditionary Medal</a></u>
	<u><a href="#">Philippine Campaign Medal (Army)</a></u>
	<u><a href="#">Philippine Campaign Medal (Navy and Marine Corps)</a></u>
	<u><a href="#">Philippine Defense Medal (Philippines) (World War II)</a></u>
	<u><a href="#">Philippine Liberation Medal (Philippines) (World War II)</a></u>
	<u><a href="#">Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal (South Vietnam)</a></u>

each soldier to receive a medal that bore Cromwell's likeness. Ultimately, officers received small gold medals while enlisted men were given a somewhat larger medal struck in silver. The medal was worn suspended from a chain around the neck. It is interesting to note that in 1773 the Island of St. Vincent in the West Indies gave a medal to all members of the local militia who participated in suppressing an insurrection by the Carib Indians. This medal is significant in that it was the first to be worn suspended from a ribbon. Although the Dunbar medal was awarded at public expense and under the authority of Parliament, the financing of future medals took a unique turn during the reign of Charles II (1660-1685). The Duke of York, who was also the Lord High Admiral, decreed that prize money obtained through military victories was to be used to finance the medals awarded to senior officers. The next medal awarded to all participants was created by Parliament in 1692 for those who participated in the naval victory over the French at La Hogue in May of 1692. This battle was fought over six days (May 19-24, 1692) and cost the French fifteen ships. This loss convinced Louis XIV that great naval armadas were a waste of money, thereby leaving the English and Dutch in contention for supremacy of the seas.

#### **The British East India Company (1600-1858)**

The British East India Company was chartered by the Crown in 1600 to conduct trade with Asia. The Company reaped great profits for Britain, and to secure its interests the Company was allowed to maintain its own army, which consisted mainly of native troops. The Company operated until the Sepoy Uprising (also known as the *Indian Mutiny*) in 1857, but was dissolved 1858 when the British government took over the administration of India. In a significant departure from the official Government practice of only giving medals to senior commanders,

	<b><u>Second Haitian Campaign Medal (Navy and Marine Corps)</u></b>
	<b><u>Second Nicaraguan Campaign Medal (Navy and Marine Corps)</u></b>
	<b><u>Sino-American Cooperative Medal (China) (World War II)</u></b>
	<b><u>Southwest Asia Service Medal</u></b>
	<b><u>Spanish Campaign Medal (Army)</u></b>
	<b><u>Spanish Campaign Medal (Navy and Marine Corps)</u></b>
	<b><u>United Nations Korea Medal (United Nations)</u></b>
	<b><u>Veterans of the Spanish-American War Medal (Cuba)</u></b>
	<b><u>Victory Medal (World War I)</u></b>
	<b><u>Vietnam Service Medal</u></b>
	<b><u>War on Terror Expeditionary Medal</u></b>
	<b><u>West Indies Campaign Medal (Navy and Marine Corps)</u></b>
	<b><u>Yangtze Service Medal (Navy and Marine Corps)</u></b>

first medal awarded by the Company was for service in Gujerat during the First Maharatta War (1778-1782) and for service in the Carnatic during the Second Mysore War (1780-1783) against Hyder Ali in the Deccan. The Company awarded another medal to all who participated in the Third Mysore War (1790-1792) against Tippoo Sahib, who was Hyder Ali's son and the Sultan of Mysore. Both the Deccan and Mysore medals were suspended by silk cords and were worn about the neck. Another noteworthy medal issued by the Company - also for fighting Tippoo Sahib - was the so-called Seringapatam Medal. When Tippoo Sahib sought to enlist the French in driving the British out of India, the Marquis of Wellesley (later the Duke of Wellington) laid siege to the fortress of Seringapatam. Wellesley's force included some regiments from the British Army as well as native troops. The campaign was a success; Tippoo Sahib was killed, and Britain's dominion over much of India was strengthened.

In 1808 the Company decided to present medals for this campaign. Although the Company wanted to give these medals to all of the soldiers who participated, the British government was reluctant to allow its soldiers to wear them. The medal was struck in a different metal for each class of recipient: in general, gold medals were presented to senior officers and native princes; silver-gilt medals were presented to field grade officers (major through colonel); silver medals were presented to junior officers; bronze medals were presented to British enlisted men, and pewter medals were presented to native soldiers. Just as the British Government continued to

limit the awarding of medals to senior officers, the Company continued to award its medals to all of its troops. For example, in 1795-96, English forces assisted by fewer than 200 Bengal native troops captured Ceylon. The Company authorized a medal for this action, and gold medals were awarded to Captains Barton and Clarke, the Ceylon Medal was awarded in silver to the 121 native soldiers, but the English soldiers who participated did not receive a medal. Medals were also prepared and awarded to those who participated in the battle of Alexandria in 1801 and to those who took part in the capture of Java in 1811. One of the last medals presented by the Company was the Burmah Medal (1824-1826) which was struck in silver for issue to native troops. The Burmah Medal is also noteworthy because it was the first medal issued in what we would now consider the standard size.

## **Privately Issued British Campaign Medals**

Even though the British Government did not routinely present medals to soldiers and sailors, from time to time certain field commanders awarded privately struck medals to their men. For example, General Eliott, the commander at Gibraltar, personally gave a medal to all members of the Hanoverian Brigade who assisted in the defense of Gibraltar between 1779 and 1782. Another case involved the so-called Davidson medals. Following the battle of the Nile (August 1, 1798), which resulted in the routing of the French fleet, Admiral Nelson was given a peerage and his senior officers were given gold prize money. When Alexander Davidson, Nelson's prize agent, learned that the petty officers and seamen were to receive nothing he obtained permission to present (at his own expense) a medal to everyone who participated in the battle. Ultimately, gold medals were given to senior officers; silver medals were given to junior officers, bronze-gilt medals were given to petty officers, and bronze medal were give to seamen and marines. The famous battle of Trafalgar (fought on October 21, 1805) likewise resulted in gold medals being awarded to captains and above. To provide recognition to lower ranking participants, Matthew Boulton of Birmingham, England prepared his own medals in silver, bronze-gilt and pewter and distributed them to all who participated in the battle aboard Nelson's flagship, Victory. Unfortunately, many of the seamen were less than enthusiastic about their pewter medals and threw them overboard.

## **The Peninsular Medals**

The Peninsular Gold Medal of 1810 was given to selected officers who participated in the Peninsular victories of 1808 and 1809 and is the first medal that could be given posthumously. The medal was issued in two sizes. The larger medal (two inches in diameter) was given to generals, while the smaller medal was normally given to field commanders who held the rank of lieutenant colonel or higher. The Peninsular Gold Medal was important for a novel reason: it was the first medal to employ a system of clasps. At first the medal was given for each major battle in which the officer participated in command. The medals were all the same, except that the name of the battle was placed within a circular wreath on the reverse. Eligibility for this medal was gradually extended to cover the entire Peninsular War, which lasted until 1814. As a result, a small number of officers accumulated multiple medals that were identical except for the name of the battle on the reverse. In 1813 the rules were changed to provide that only one medal would be issued for the entire war, and that medal was to be inscribed on the reverse with the first battle in which the officer had engaged the enemy. For each subsequent battle a bar bearing the name of the battle was to be attached to the ribbon. However, later in the same year it was decided that the gold medal would be given for the first citation, and that the number of bars would be limited to two. If an officer was cited a fourth time, his medal was to be replaced by a gold cross having the names of the four battles thereon (one on each arm of the cross) and subsequent engagements were to be denoted by clasps placed on the ribbon. The Duke of Wellington, who commanded the Allied armies in the Peninsula, had a cross with nine clasps, the greatest number awarded to any officer. This marked the origin of clasps, which have been in use by the British since that time. Each medal was also named on the rim, a practice that continues (with limited exceptions) in Great Britain to this day.

## **The Waterloo Medal**

The Napoleonic Wars ended on June 18, 1815, with the battle of Waterloo, which was fought near Brussels, Belgium. Napoleon abdicated on June 22, 1815, and Wellington's victory at Waterloo was considered a major triumph. Shortly thereafter - in 1816 - Britain established a medal for those who

participated in the battle. The Waterloo Medal was the first medal to be authorized by the British Government "to be conferred upon every officer, non-commissioned officer and soldier" since the Dunbar Medal and marked the beginning of officially giving the same medal to officers and men alike for participation in the same action. It was also identical for all recipients; officers did not receive a larger version, nor did they receive one in gold. Everyone got the same silver medal. Moreover, this was the first British medal to all ranks that was officially named on the rim. The Waterloo Medal was issued soon after it was authorized, and contrary to what its name implies, it was authorized for those who took part in the battles of Ligny (June 16, 1815); Quatre Bras (June 16, 1815) or Waterloo (June 18, 1815).

## **UNITED STATES CAMPAIGN MEDALS**

Like England, in its early years the United States also awarded special gold and silver medals to military and naval heroes to commemorate notable victories. Examples include the gold medals awarded by Congress to George Washington for the "recovery" of Boston on March 17, 1776; to John Paul Jones for his victory off Scotland on September 23, 1779; and to General Anthony Wayne for his storming of Stony Point on July 15, 1779. Similar medals were awarded to notable leaders during the undeclared war with France in 1800; the War with Tripoli in 1804; the War of 1812, the Mexican War, the Civil War and so on, right up to the Gulf War in 1991.

### **General Chaffee Sees British Medals...**

The move towards government-issued medals for campaign service actually started in China during the Boxer Rebellion. Major General Adna R. Chaffee, who was commander of the American forces deployed in the expedition, came into contact with military personnel from other countries who were also involved in the campaign. General Chaffee was particularly impressed with the campaign medals worn by the British. In 1904 Chaffee, then a Lieutenant General and the Army's Chief of Staff, wanted to explore the possibility of obtaining similar medals for American soldiers.

On September 19, 1904, Chaffee directed that a study be undertaken to deal with the question of "marking a soldier as a veteran of a campaign." The assignment was given to Brigadier General James T. Kerr of the General Staff. Kerr knew that the authority to grant medals was vested in the legislative branch of government, but he also knew that Section 1269 of the Revised Statutes provided that, "the President may prescribe the uniform of the Army and the quantity and kind of clothing which shall be issued annually to the troops of the United States." He assumed this included the authority to authorize certain "distinctive badges" as part of the uniform. Following this logic, General Kerr saw what he believed was an opportunity to establish campaign medals without having to seek the approval of Congress. He proposed that the President authorize the use of badges to denote the wearer as a veteran of a specific campaign, and that these badges be prescribed and worn as *part of the uniform*. The important point was that the "badges" were to be designated as part of the uniform, not personal awards for individual veterans.

The proposal was submitted to Brigadier Generals George B. Davis (the Judge Advocate General) and Charles F. Humphrey (the Quartermaster General). General Davis stated that the plan was in accord with law, and General Humphrey provided his enthusiastic endorsement. General Chaffee agreed, and the plan was submitted to the War Department. On January 4, 1905, Robert S. Oliver, Acting Secretary of War, concurred. Based on Oliver's favorable opinion, the first Army campaign medals (Spanish-American War; Philippine Insurrection; and the China Relief Expedition) were officially established in General Orders

Number 5 on January 12, 1905. They were followed by campaign medals for the Civil War and Indian Campaigns in General Orders Number 12 on January 21, 1907. Since the medals were designated as a part of the uniform they were not to be issued to anyone who was neither on active duty nor retired. Since those who had left the service were specifically prohibited from wearing their uniforms, it was deemed inappropriate to issue medals to veterans who were neither retired or on active duty.

The new campaign badges were to be issued to enlisted men for free, but officers had to pay for them. In an effort to discourage soldiers from wearing the medals of hereditary and patriotic societies, the Army ruled that the new campaign medals could not be worn on the uniform along with society medals. Thus, by wearing society medals the individual quickly labeled himself as not being a veteran of a significant campaign!

### **The Navy and Marine Corps Also Wanted Them...**

After the Army issued its first campaign medals, members of the Navy and Marine Corps who had served in the same campaigns applied for them as well. When the question was raised whether Navy personnel (including Marines) were eligible for these medals, the Army took the position that since the medals were part of the *Army* uniform, and since they were paid for out of Army appropriations, they were not authorized for wear by anyone who was not in the Army, including members of the Navy and Marine Corps. The solution to the Navy seemed obvious: establish its own medals and have them designated as part of the Navy and Marine Corps uniforms. The issue was taken to Colonel Frank L. Denney of the USMC Quartermaster's Department. Denney took a dim view of the whole business of campaign medals to begin with, stating that in his opinion the establishment of medals by this means was of doubtful legality in the first place, and that even it was legal, there was no money available for that purpose.

By 1907 members of the Army were wearing their newly-issued campaign medals, to the chagrin of sailors and marines who had served in the same campaigns but who were not eligible for any medals. On December 18, 1907, Brigadier General George F. Elliott, Commandant of the Marine Corps, proposed to the Navy Department that identical badges be adopted as part of the uniform of the Navy and Marine Corps. General Elliott also recommended that a decision be obtained from the Comptroller of the Treasury as to whether or not appropriations could be used to pay for these medals as part of the uniform. Elliott's proposal went to Victor H. Metcalf, Secretary of the Navy, who provided a favorable endorsement. Leander P. Mitchell, the Assistant Comptroller of the Treasury, ruled that if the medals were to be part of the uniform, their expense could be charged to the "Clothing and Small Stores Fund" of the Navy and to the clothing appropriation of the Marine Corps. This meant that the medals could be issued free to enlisted members, but that officers would have to pay for theirs. It also meant that, like the Army medals, none were to be issued to former members of the Navy or Marine Corps unless they were on retired status.

Based on the Comptroller's ruling, Secretary Metcalf directed that an appropriation be sought to purchase the medals. On May 13, 1908, Congress appropriated the funds and provided additional funding to cover the cost of medals to be issued to officers. The medals were authorized in Navy Department Special Orders 81 and 82 (for the Navy and Marine Corps, respectively) on June 27, 1908. By late October of 1908 the first Navy campaign medals were being distributed. The rules were later eased to allow them to be issued for free to former members of the Navy and Marine Corps (the Army subsequently adopted the same policy). Because of the early precedent, the Army and Navy continued to develop their own campaign medals independent of one another, a practice that continued up to World War II (with the



exception of the World War I Victory Medal).

Campaign medals are no longer seen as simply part of the uniform which designates the wearer as veteran, nor are they generally established independently by the separate services. Campaign medals have also become standard in their overall configuration: unlike decorations, they are almost always circular in shape, whereas decorations almost always follow some geometric pattern. The separate Services no longer establish unique campaign medals, although there has been a strong trend in the direction of establishing distinctive ribbons for which there are no medals.

### **The Move Toward Common Campaign Medals**

During World War II a series of area campaign medals were authorized for service in the American Theater, the Asiatic-Pacific Theater, and the European-African-Middle Eastern Theaters of war. These medals were the same for both the Army and Navy, and they inaugurated a trend that has continued to the present. Since the establishment of the Korean Service Medal, campaign medals have been of the same design for all services, and it is now standard practice for campaign medals to be authorized at the Department of Defense level rather than at the service component level. It is done this way because military operations now routinely involve the integrated deployment of all service branches, and it makes far more sense to establish campaign and expeditionary medals and to set their criteria at the Department of Defense level than for the individual services to do so on their own behalf. Unfortunately, when the Department of Defense was unwilling to create campaign medals for Afghanistan and Iraq, in a highly unusual step Congress, which was under pressure from constituents, created both medals.

### **What Are We Talking About: *Campaign, Expedition, or Service?***

Prior the Spanish-American War (1898), outside of some small naval actions America had little experience in fighting in foreign waters or on foreign soil. Although the Spanish-American War was a conventional war, many of the various American military interventions and expeditions that followed over the next forty-plus years were not. From the beginning of the Twentieth Century and up until World War II our military and naval forces were used mainly to protect American citizens and commercial interests abroad in the face of local insurrections or civil strife. Seventeen medals were created to recognize service in these events (thirteen by the Navy and four by the Army). Most of them were Navy medals that recognized actions that took place in the Caribbean, South America, and China. Nine of these medals were designated as *campaign* medals, three were *expeditionary* medals, another three were *service* medals, and two of them were *pacification* medals. What is the difference between a campaign, expedition, and a service?

### **Campaign Medals**

A campaign medal is generally awarded for participation in a military action in which:

- Service takes place in a clearly defined, broad area of operations
- Large-scale military operations are involved
- There are active, opposing, and hostile forces
- The risk of death or injury is clear and present
- Combat operations take place over a sustained period of time
- There is a specific and limited period of eligibility

- Deployment involves extended family separation and personal inconvenience
- Eligibility terminates with conclusion of major hostilities

### **Expeditionary Medals**

Some military events involve the limited use of military force for which a specific medal is not appropriate. In order to recognize limited service against an opposing force, in 1919 the Marine Corps established an "Expeditionary Ribbon." Two years later the Expeditionary Ribbon was "upgraded" to a medal. In 1936 the Navy created its own Expeditionary Medal (which, like the USMC Expeditionary Medal, was awarded for qualifying service as far back as 1874). The Navy and Marine Corps Expeditionary Medals were created to recognize personnel who landed on foreign territory and engaged in operations against armed opposition or who have operated under circumstances deemed to merit special recognition and for which no campaign medal has been awarded. Both medals continue to be awarded.

In 1961 President Kennedy established the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, which is awarded to members of the Armed Forces who, after July 1, 1958, participate in specified United States operations or those in direct support of the United Nations or friendly foreign nations.

In 2003 President Bush created the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, which is awarded to members of the Armed Forces who serve or who have served in military expeditions to combat terrorism on or after September 11, 2001.

The criteria for an *expeditionary medal* generally include:

- Service in a clearly defined but limited Area of Operations
- Conflict that involves small-scale or localized military operations
- Conflict that involves active (or potentially active) opposing hostile forces
- The risk of death or injury is clear and present
- Combat operations take place over a limited period of time
- There is a specific and limited period of eligibility
- Termination is based on completion of predicate military objective
- Deployment involves limited family separation and personal inconvenience

	<b><u>China Relief Expedition Medal (First Ribbon)</u></b>
	<b><u>China Relief Expedition Medal (Second Ribbon)</u></b>
	<b><u>Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal</u></b>
	<b><u>War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal</u></b>
	<b><u>Navy Expeditionary Medal</u></b>
	<b><u>Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal</u></b>



## [Campaign] Service Medals

There have been six campaign medals that have been called *service* medals. They are the:

- Mexican Service Medal (Navy)
- Yangtze Service Medal (Navy)
- China Service Medal (Navy)
- Korea Service Medal (all services)
- Vietnam Service Medal (all services)
- Southwest Asia Service Medal (all services)

If all six of these medals meet the criteria for a campaign medal (and they do), why are they called *service* medals? In all six cases the United States was involved in significant and protracted military and naval operations against armed opponents. However, in none of these cases did the United States declare war against the opponent; however, in each case the United States was allied with other nations against a common opponent.

The Korean War was ostensibly a United Nations action, and a multinational military force participated in operations against North Korean and Chinese aggressors under the U.N. umbrella. Even though the United States provided the majority of the combat personnel, since the United States did not declare war on either North Korea or China, the medal for American participation was called the "Korean *Service* Medal" to indicate United States "service" in support of the United Nations. This is apparently also why the ribbon employs only the U.N. colors.

The same thing happened during the Vietnam War. The United States did not declare war against North Vietnam but used its military forces in support of the South Vietnamese government. Therefore the medal for the Vietnam War was called the "Vietnam *Service* Medal," and the colors of its ribbon are simply those of the South Vietnamese flag.

The First Gulf War was fought against Iraq, and although the United States again provided the bulk of the military forces involved, it did not declare war on Iraq. It was again part of a coalition, and the campaign medal that resulted was euphemistically called the Southwest Asia *Service* Medal. Apparently, the "service" was in support of the coalition rather than a campaign against Iraq.

**Reference:** <http://www.foxfall.com/csm.htm>