

Serial Number 1954/97



ROYAL WARRANT AND REGULATIONS AS TO THE POLAR MEDAL

ROYAL WARRANT

ELIZABETH R.

ELIZABETH THE SECOND, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of Her other Realms and Territories, Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith, to all to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting!

WHEREAS a Medal for Arctic Discoveries was instituted by Our Royal predecessor, Her Majesty Queen Victoria, in 1857, and granted for service in specified expeditions in the period 1818 to 1855; and whereas Her Majesty subsequently instituted in 1876 a further Medal for arctic exploration in the years 1875 and 1876; and whereas Polar Medals in silver and bronze were instituted by Our Royal Great-Grandfather, His Majesty King Edward VII, in 1904, and have been granted on various occasions since.

AND WHEREAS We deem it expedient that the conditions for the award of the Polar Medal should be regularized and amended, in the light of present day circumstances and incorporated in a Warrant;

NOW THEREFORE We are pleased to make, ordain and establish the following rules and ordinances, which shall henceforth be inviolably observed and kept:—

Firstly: Style.—It is ordained that the Medal shall be styled and designated “The Polar Medal”.

Secondly: Description.—The Medal shall be in silver and octagonal in shape, bearing on the obverse the Effigy of The Sovereign and on the reverse a representation of the ship Discovery in winter quarters with, in the foreground, a sledging party on skis.

Thirdly: Riband.—The Medal shall be worn on the left breast suspended from a white riband one inch and a quarter in width.

Fourthly: Eligibility.—The Medal shall be conferred on those who take an active part in an expedition which makes notable advances in the exploration of the Polar Regions and who, in so doing, undergo the hazards and rigours set by the climatic conditions to life and movement, whether by land, sea or air. Only those who have participated in an expedition which has been either the responsibility of one or more Governments of Member countries of the Commonwealth, or has been recognized by one or more of such Governments, shall be

eligible. In the selection of those on whom it is proposed that the award shall be conferred due regard shall be had to the tradition that the Medal shall be granted as far as possible to all members of a team, not only in acknowledgment of individual service but also in recognition of the service of the team. The term "exploration" shall ordinarily be understood as including travel, but the notable acquisition of knowledge by means which do not depend upon travelling will also merit consideration. Exceptionally, an award may be made for a Polar achievement which did not require exploration or result in the advancement of knowledge; eligibility would then be restricted to those who took an active part in the furtherance of such an achievement and who also fulfilled the other qualifying conditions set out in this Our Warrant.

Fifthly: Service Required.—The period of service, within the geographical limits shown below, requisite to qualify for the Medal shall be twelve months, exception being made to this rule in special circumstances only, when a shorter period, or periods of broken service, may be held to qualify.

Antarctic: South of Latitude 60° S.

Arctic: North of Latitude 67° N., (exclusive of land inhabited by Europeans) with, in addition, the East Coast of Greenland and the Baffin Island Area.

Sixthly: Clasps.—Every Polar Medal to be awarded shall be accompanied by a Clasp to be worn on the riband of the Medal and bearing the appropriate description of the expedition and the date. When further service has been rendered by a holder of the Polar Medal, which under the terms of this Our Warrant would otherwise merit recognition by the award of the Medal, a second Clasp shall be awarded, and a further Clasp shall be granted in respect of each such additional period of service.

Seventhly: Posthumous Awards.—Awards of the Medal with Clasp or, as appropriate, of the Clasp alone, may be made posthumously.

Eighthly: Withholding of Award.—The Medal or Clasp shall not be awarded when service which would otherwise be qualifying service has been marred by misconduct or neglect of duty.

Ninthly: Recommendations.—Awards shall be made only on a recommendation to Us by Our First Lord of the Admiralty or, in the case of any oversea Member country of the Commonwealth the Government whereof shall so desire, on a recommendation by the appropriate Minister of State for the said country, in respect of nationals of such country.

Tenthly: Foreign Nationals.—Awards of the Medal with Clasp or, as appropriate, of the Clasp alone, may be made irrespective of nationality to members of a Commonwealth expedition, or to members of the Commonwealth part of a larger expedition organized jointly by two or more nations. A recommendation of a foreign person under this provision shall be made to Us, by Our First Lord of the Admiralty, or in the case of any oversea Member country of the Commonwealth the Government whereof shall desire to recommend a foreign person, on a recommendation by the appropriate Minister of State for the said country.

Eleventhly: Registration.—The names of those upon whom We may be pleased to confer the Medal and Clasp, or the Clasp, on the recommendation of Our First Lord of the Admiralty, not being foreign subjects, shall be published in the London Gazette and a register thereof kept in Our Admiralty. The publication and registration of awards to citizens of other Member countries of the Commonwealth shall be carried out by the Government concerned but the Admiralty shall be informed.

Twelfthly: Names of Recipients.—The name of a recipient shall be engraved or stamped on the rim of the Medal.

Thirteenthly: Order of Wear.—In the official list showing the order in which Orders, Decorations and Medals shall be worn, the Polar Medal shall be placed after War Medals and before the Royal Victorian Medal.

Fourteenthly: Miniatures.—Reproductions of the Medal and Clasp in miniature, which may be worn on certain occasions by those upon whom the Medal and Clasp have been conferred, shall be half the size of the Polar Medal and Clasp respectively, and a sealed pattern of the said miniature Medal and Clasp shall be deposited and kept in the Central Chancery of Our Orders of Knighthood.

Fifteenthly: Date of Application.—The terms of this Our Warrant shall apply to all qualifying service rendered since 1st January, 1943, exception being made in relation to any awards already granted.

Sixteenthly: Forfeiture and Restoration.—It is ordained that it shall be competent for Us, Our Heirs and Successors, by an Order under Our Sign Manual and on a recommendation to that effect by Our First Lord of the Admiralty, or in the case of any oversea Member country of Our Commonwealth, the Government whereof shall desire to submit such a recommendation, by the appropriate Minister of State for the said country, to cancel and annul the award to any person of the Medal and Clasp or Clasps, and that thereupon the name of such person in the Register shall be erased: provided that it shall be competent for Us, Our Heirs and Successors to restore the Medal so forfeited when such recommendation has been withdrawn.

Seventeenthly: Regulations.—It is ordained that the Medal and Clasp or Clasps shall be conferred under such regulations as to grant, forfeiture, restoration, and other matters, in amplification of this Our Warrant as may, with Our approval signified through Our First Lord of the Admiralty, be issued from time to time by Our Board of Admiralty, or as may with Our approval be issued by the appropriate Minister of State in any oversea Member country of the Commonwealth Our Government whereof shall so desire.

Lastly:—We reserve to Ourselves, Our Heirs and Successors, full power of annulling, abrogating, augmenting, interpreting or dispensing with these rules and ordinances or any part thereof by a notification under Our Sign Manual.

Given at Our Court at St. James's this 22nd day of January one thousand nine hundred and fifty-four in the second year of Our Reign.

By Her Majesty's Command.

J. P. L. THOMAS.

REGULATIONS UNDER WHICH THE AWARD OF THE
POLAR MEDAL MAY BE MADE

MADE under the terms of the Royal Warrant by the First Lord of the Admiralty with the concurrence of the Governments of other Member countries of the Commonwealth, which desire to be in a position to make recommendations, and approved by The Queen.

(i) *Eligibility*.—In amplification of the basic principles set out in the Fourth Clause of the Royal Warrant, the following examples are furnished for guidance:—

- (a) *On Land*: The members of parties which explore or acquire notable knowledge would be eligible. When a well-established site is manned for routine observations eligibility will be restricted to those based there who extend exploratory work in the field, although they may not travel extensively.
- (b) *At Sea*: Crews of ships which carry out extensive cruises of exploration in severe conditions which may or may not have required wintering in the ice would be eligible.
- (c) *Aircraft*: Air crews, when they are based in the area and make flights of exploration, would be eligible, as would also the ground crews (similarly based in the area) concerned in these flights. Exception may be made in favour of aircrews carrying out extensive exploratory flights which include landings within the qualifying area, although the base is outside it. A ground crew working from a well-established site would not be eligible.

(ii) *Recommendations*.—In amplification of the Fourth and Ninth Clauses of the Royal Warrant it may be stated that when an expedition has not been the responsibility of one or more Governments of Member countries of the Commonwealth, it would be appropriate for recommendations to the appropriate Commonwealth Government to be made by learned Societies or distinguished individuals who have examined the results, or have first-hand knowledge of the expedition's labours. A description of the expedition's achievements should be given together with the list of those persons who are recommended for award.

In relation to expeditions for which the United Kingdom Government are responsible, recommendations should be put before the Admiralty, that is to say, the Department making submissions to the Sovereign, by and only by, the United Kingdom Government Department responsible for the expedition.

When recommendations are made the names of persons otherwise qualified who, on account of misconduct or neglect of duty, are considered to merit disqualification, should be listed separately and the reasons given.