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AUSTRALIAN ARMY LONG AND MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL COMBINATIONS

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Medals for long service and meritorious service have been awarded to Australian servicemen in the army since late in the nineteenth century, but it was not until 1902 when Australia had become a Commonwealth that a degree of uniformity was reached on the subject.

On January 31, 1902, the Commonwealth Gazette published regulations regarding the issue of standardised awards for long service and good conduct and for meritorious service. The earlier State awards were sparingly issued and are very rare. In New South Wales from December 31, 1897, to January 31, 1902, only 25 long service medals were awarded, and for the corresponding period 13 MSMs were issued. Queensland awarded four LSGCs and one MSM, and there were three LSGCs issued in Tasmania. There appear to be no gazettings for other States. The purpose of this article is to produce a reasonably accurate estimate of the types of LSGC medal paired with an award of the MSM. Naturally the subject is open to debate as the exact cut-off date when one medal type was discontinued and the new award was introduced differed with each State according to the supply of obsolete awards. Without examining every

LSGC and MSM issued it is impossible to arrive at an exact figure for the types awarded. However, by cross-checking the date of gazetting of a soldier's LSGC with his MSM gazette date, a reasonably accurate survey can be obtained.

While many of the medals themselves are difficult to obtain, it is even harder when certain combinations of LSGC and MSM are sought.

There have been five varieties of the LSGC medal awarded in Australia to the regular army since 1902. They are the Edward VII LSGC (issued between 1902 and 1911), the Permanent Forces LSGC (1912 to 1934), the George V LSGC with suspension bar bearing the word Australia (1935 and 1936), the George VI variety (1937 to 1952), and the Elizabeth II type (1953 to 1975). I have not included in this list the George VI and Elizabeth II issues which bore changes to the legend on the obverse.

After 1975 the National Medal was issued for some years before it was superseded in 1982 by the Defence Force Service Medal. A few LSGC medals and MSMs were late gazettings up to 1985.

While the LSGC medals differed considerably in design over the years,

the MSM retained a common reverse - the words For Meritorious Service surrounded by a laurel wreath and crown below the embossed words Commonwealth of Australia. Only the sovereign's effigy changed with each MSM issue.

Many servicemen received the LSGC medal, but relatively few of them served the extra time to be awarded an MSM. The LSGC medal was awarded after 18 years' service and the MSM went to LSGC medal holders who had completed at least another four years' service of a meritorious nature.

With the death of King Edward VII in 1910, the LSGC medals and MSMs bearing his effigy became obsolete and were replaced with medals bearing the likeness of King George V. In the case of the LSGC, the medal's reverse was altered to bear the words Permanent Forces of the Empire Beyond the Seas in a circle around the edge, surrounding the words For Long Service and Good Conduct. This medal had been instituted in Britain in 1909. From its inception in Australia some time after 1911, it continued to be awarded until the end of 1934.

During 1935 and 1936 a new style of LSGC medal was introduced bearing the crowned head of King George V and a new reverse simply stating For Long Service and Good Conduct. The medal's suspension bar bore the word Australia. This variety was issued only for two years as King George VI ascended the throne in 1937 and a new obverse bearing his effigy was required. The George VI issue continued until by The end of 1952 when it was replaced an LSGC medal bearing the likeness of Queen Elizabeth II - a medal that

continued to be issued until the advent of the National Medal.

Various medal publications give a breakdown of numbers awarded for these long service medals. The publication Long Service and Good Conduct Medal, Meritorious Service Medal to Australia 1897-1985 by Robert Dalton is the most extensive of the works published on the subject, listing the Commonwealth Gazette notices for each award. However, he does not indicate the rarity when an LSGC medal is paired with an MSM. Dalton's figures for the LSGC medal (again, only an estimate) are: Edward VII, 167; Permanent Forces, 712; George V, George VI and Elizabeth II combined, 5858. His MSM figures are given as one total: 3053. A further breakdown of figures for both medals is given in Medals to Australia, third edition, by R.D. Williams. His LSGC medal numbers are: Edward VII, 167; Permanent Forces, 712; George V, 250; George VI, 376; Elizabeth II, 5252. His figures for the MSM are: Edward VII, 59; George V, 465, George VI, 193; Elizabeth II, 2336.

Taking into account the medals which have appeared on the market and the numbers awarded in the gazette, it is possible to produce figures which would indicate the relative scarcity of awards. Therefore, I have cross-checked the date of awards of the LSGC medals with the recipient's MSM to arrive at the following table.

Even armed with the knowledge that the following figures may be adjustable, its recipients are not noted as having been LSGC. Two of the men, Master Gunner J.W. Hallett and Warrant Officer R.M. Millar, were

LONG SERVICE**Combinations****MERITORIOUS SERVICE****Type**

Edward VII	34
Edward VII	69
Permanent Forces	4
Permanent Forces	340
Permanent Forces	2
Permanent Forces	2
George V	55
George V	17
George VI	52
George VI	89
Elizabeth II	1982

Edward VII
George V
Edward VII
George V
George VI
Elizabeth II
George VI
Elizabeth II
George VI
Elizabeth II
Elizabeth II

It is interesting to note that of the MSMs awarded since 1902, 186 of the recipients are not noted as having been awarded a Commonwealth of Australia LSGC. Two of the men, Master Gunner J.W. Hallett and Warrant Officer R.M. Millar, were awarded State long service medals - Hallett the New South Wales variety, and Millar a Tasmanian variety. The other 184 men were possibly former British Army men who had transferred to the Australian Army after gaining their LSGC medals, or men from other Commonwealth countries who had previously earned a LSGC medal.

On occasions gazette notices appear for a man's MSM before the gazetting of his LSGC medal. It is a possibility that these men had had prior service in the British Army and were in receipt of a long service medal. Bars for a further period of 18 years' service were not promulgated in Britain until 1944, so the award of a second long service medal was granted in some cases. The first bar to be issued in Australia was in

1948.

Many soldiers did not qualify for campaign awards to go with their LSGC and MSM, as in the case of SCSM Draper (medal illustrated), who served in the Royal Navy from 1877 to 1882.

Two men received Permanent Forces LSGCs coupled with an Elizabeth II MSM. Staff Sergeant Major A.R. Norris was awarded his LSGC medal on 13.11.30 and was gazetted with the MSM when he was a Lieutenant Colonel on the Retired List on 6.12.56. Between the awards of the two medals he had received a Military Cross and was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire.

Only five men appear to have been awarded two types of long service medals with an MSM. Warrant Officer F.W. Serister received his Permanent Forces LSGC in 1931, and in April, 1938, he was awarded a second long service medal - this time the George VI variety. In September of the same year he received a George VI MSM. I

believe this combination of awards to be unique. Sergeant S.G. Denyer's group appeared on the market in 1987 and again in 1992. It contained a Permanent Forces LSGC (26.7.28), Elizabeth II LSGC (1.12.55), and a George VI MSM (18.9.44). The group also comprised a British War Medal and Victory medal earned with the 82nd Siege Artillery Brigade and a War Medal and Australian Service Medal for World War II service. Denyer's appears to be the only group to contain this combination of long service awards.

Master Gunner J. Murray of the New South Wales Artillery was awarded a NSW type of LSGC in 1902 and received an Edward VII LSGC six years later. His Edward VII MSM was awarded on 18.7.08. It is possible the award of the Edward VII LSGC was a mistake and he was subsequently awarded the MSM, but there is no cancellation notice for the LSGC medal.

Lance Sergeant W.J. Wray, who served first with the artillery and then with the Australian Army Provost Corps, was awarded his Permanent Forces LSGC in 1930 and followed up with a second LSGC medal in May, 1942 (a George VI type) with his MSM notice appearing in the same gazette.

Corporal F.W. Turner, Royal Australian Engineers, received a LSGC medal in the gazette of 1.2.13 (probably an Edward VII variety even at this late date), and was gazetted a Permanent Forces LSGC in 1920, 10 months before the award of his George V MSM was gazetted.

Of the 17 Permanent Forces LSGCs I have noted on the market, the earliest gazetting was on 14.8.15 - the medal awarded to Corporal J. Brogan.

However, I have noticed the award of an Edward VII LSGC as late as 1918, and an Edward VII type MSM in December of the same year. This indicates quite clearly there was a large overlap in the change over from Edwardian medals to George V types.

There are examples of a George V MSM with a coinage head known to have been awarded to Australians. Fewer than 20 of this type is thought to have been issued. This variety was sparingly issued even in Britain, where the estimated figures given are 550.

I trust the research done for this article is of benefit to other collectors and students of military history, if only to give some indication of just how scarce these combinations are when awarded to Australians.

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All medals illustrated are from the author's collection.



Edwardian pair to Staff Company Sergeant Major J.E.Draper, Instructional Staff.



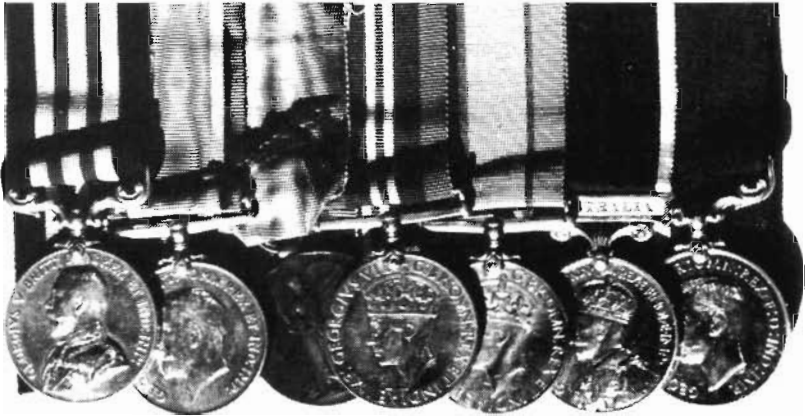
Reverse of Draper's pair.



Permanent Forces LSGC reverse



Permanent Forces LSGC paired with a George V MSM to Warrant Officer G.T.Pippard, Australian Instructional Corps.



George V LSGC with a George VI MSM to Warrant Officer N.W.Baker, MM, of the Royal Australian Artillery and Australian Instructional Corps.



George VI variety LSGC