

Decorations and Medals

OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA





A Brief History of Medals

An Emperor of China, in the First Century, A. D., gave his military commanders medals that appear to have been the first on record. From then until the time of Good Queen Bess medals must have been their own reward, for they rarely got their recipients into history books.

In 1588, Queen Elizabeth had three medals struck and issued to commemorate Britain's victory in the war with Spain. Again in 1650 medals were awarded to officers and men alike following the Battle of

Dunbar and in 1816 the British returned to the precedent with the Waterloo Medal for "every officer, non-commissioned officer and soldier..."

George Washington received the first medal from our government to commemorate the evacuation of the British from Boston in 1776. This medal is dramatically shown on the front page of this folder.

It was also George Washington who instituted in 1782 the first American decoration for individual meritorious service. It was for him to emphasize the democratic note in his order by recording "to cherish a virtuous ambition in his soldiers . . . whenever any singularly meritorious action is performed, the author of it shall be permitted to wear on his facings, over the left breast, the figure of a heart in purple cloth or silk". This was the original Purple Heart.

The Purple Heart soon fell into disuse, not to be revived in its present form until 1932, on the 200th anniversary of Washington's birth. In 1847, the Certificate of Merit was conceived and awarded, but no medal was struck until 1905. In 1861 the United States established the Medal of Honor, which for some 40 years was the only American military decoration. With the Spanish American War and ensuing events came new rank-and-file medals for wars and campaigns.

Today, wartime America has a well-developed system of medals, decorations, and ribbons. It is the purpose of this folder to show them and to explain their significance.



Combined service decorations

LEGION OF MERIT

For those in the armed service who have distinguished themselves since September 8, 1939.

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

Awarded for heroism or extraordinary achievements in an aerial flight.

AIR MEDAL

For meritorious achievement in an aerial flight in the national emergency since Sept. 8, 1939.

PURPLE HEART

For those wounded in action against the enemy, necessitating treatment by a medical officer.

LIFE-SAVING MEDAL-GOLD

For endangering their lives in saving or endeavoring to save lives from the perils of the sea.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL

Given merchant seamen displaying outstanding conduct in World War II.

MEDAL FOR MERIT

This is awarded to civilians who have rendered distinguished service in the national emergency since September 8, 1939.

Decorations of the Armed Forces

These emblems of recognition are called "decorations" since they are most frequently bestowed in recognition of some signal act of personal heroism and differ from "medals" in that they do not commemorate a particular event. They are divided into three groups for easy identification in the (1) Army, (2) Navy and (3) Combined service decorations, the latter composed of emblems which may be issued to any member of the armed forces.

Army Decorations

MEDAL OF HONOR

Awarded by Congress for gallantly risking life beyond duty during combat. This is the nation's highest award.

SILVER STAR

For gallantry in situations not warranting the Medal of Honor or the Distinguished Service Cross.

OAK LEAF CLUSTER

Indicating a second award of the same decoration; is to be worn on the original or service ribbon.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

For extraordinary military heroism in operations against an armed enemy.

SOLDIER'S MEDAL

For heroism not involving actual conflict with an enemy. This is mainly a peacetime medal.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL

For exceptional service in some duty of great responsibility.

GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL

Awarded to enlisted men after one year of honorable service.

Navy Decorations

MEDAL OF HONOR

Awarded by Congress for gallantly risking life beyond duty during combat or non-combatant action. This is the nation's highest award.

BREVET MEDAL (U. S. M. C.)

Indicates a Marine's Commission from the President for distinguished conduct against the enemy.

NAVY CROSS

Awarded to any person for distinguishing himself by service or extraordinary heroism in military operation against armed enemy.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL

For extraordinary service to the Government of the United States.

SILVER STAR MEDAL

Given for distinguished service in combat duty since December 6, 1941.

NAVY AND MARINE CORPS MEDAL

Awarded to anyone who has distinguished himself or herself by heroism not involving combat with enemy.

Good Conduct Medals

NAVY

Presented to enlisted men on completion of a period of enlistment showing good conduct.

MARINE CORPS

Given enlisted men on completion of enlistment period showing good conduct.

COAST GUARD

Given enlisted men on completion of enlistment period showing good conduct.

GOLD STAR

Indicating a second award of the same decoration, is to be worn on the original or service ribbon.

Service Ribbons of the Armed Forces

Since actual decorations and medals are worn only on dress occasions, strips of duplicate ribbon as attached to the original emblem are worn at other times to show that the wearer has received such recognition. These ribbons illustrated here are divided into three groups, and in each the most frequently seen ribbons have been highlighted for quick identification.

Army Ribbons



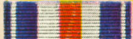
Medal of Honor



Distinguished Service Cross



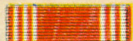
Distinguished Service Medal



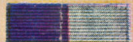
Silver Star



Soldier's Medal



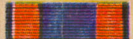
Good Conduct



Civil War Campaign



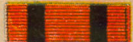
Spanish War Service



Philippine Campaign



Cuban Pacification



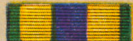
Indian Campaign



Cuban Occupation



Philippine Congressional



Mexican Service



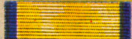
Organization Citation



Spanish Campaign



Puerto Rico Occupation



China Campaign

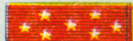


Mexican Border

Navy Ribbons



Medal of Honor



Marine Corps Brevet



Navy Cross



Civil War



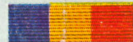
Manila Bay



Distinguished Service Medal



Silver Star



Navy and Marine Corps Medal



Sampson Medal



Spanish Campaign



Navy Good Conduct



Marine Corps Good Conduct



Presidential Unit Citation



Philippine Campaign



China Relief Expeditionary



Coast Guard Good Conduct



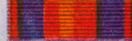
Navy Expeditionary



Campaign Participation



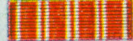
Cuban Pacification



Nicaraguan Campaign



Marine Corps Expeditionary



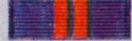
2nd Nicaraguan Campaign



Action in Engagements



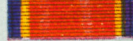
Mexican Service



Haitian Campaign



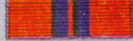
Yangtze Service



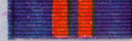
Naval Reserve



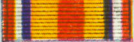
Defense of Wake Island



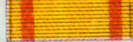
Dominican Campaign



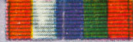
2nd Haitian Campaign



Marine Corps Reserve



China Service



NC-4



Byrd Antarctic Expeditionary



2nd Byrd Antarctic Expeditionary

Combined service ribbons



Distinguished Flying Cross



Gold Life Saving



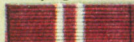
Air Medal



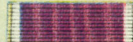
Legion of Merit



Army of Occupation of Germany



Medal for Merit



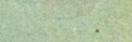
Purple Heart



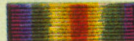
Silver Life Saving Medal



Distinguished Service Medal



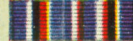
MERCHANT SEAMEN'S AWARDS



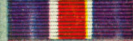
Victory



American Defense Service



American Theater



Distinguished Service Medal



Torpedoed Seaman



European-Africa-Middle East Theater



Asiatic Pacific Theater

Campaign Medals of the Armed Forces of the United States of America

These emblems most often stand for participation in a specific campaign or theatre of endeavor. They are shown here divided into three groups "Navy Medals", "Army Medals" and "Combined service medals". The approximate area of activity commemorated by the individual medal is graphically illustrated.

Army Campaign Medals



1 CIVIL WAR CAMPAIGN
For all serving in the Federal Forces from 1861 to 1865.

2 INDIAN CAMPAIGN
To all those who participated in the Indian Wars 1865 to 1898.

3 SPANISH CAMPAIGN
To veterans of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Philippine action.

4 SPANISH WAR SERVICE
For those not eligible for the Spanish Campaign Medal.

5 CUBAN OCCUPATION
For men of the Army of Occupation before May 20, 1902.

6 PUERTO RICO OCCUPATION
To Army of Occupation after the Spanish surrender.

7 PHILIPPINE CAMPAIGN
For combat service in the Philippine Islands, 1899 to 1913.

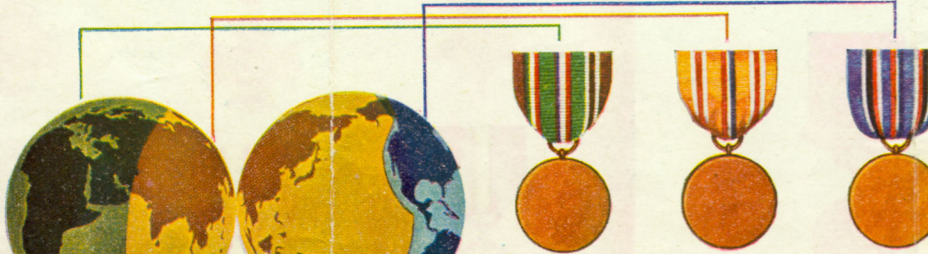
8 PHILIPPINE CONGRESSIONAL
For special Philippine service following end of Spanish War.

9 CHINA CAMPAIGN
Men in international expedition, 1900-1901.

10 CUBAN PACIFICATION
For all serving in the Cuban occupation from 1906 to 1909.

11 MEXICAN SERVICE
For service on the border and in Mexico from 1911 to 1919.

12 MEXICAN BORDER
For Army and National Guard in border, 1916 to 1917.



EUROPEAN-AFRICAN MIDDLE-EASTERN THEATER

ASIATIC-PACIFIC THEATER

AMERICAN THEATER

EUROPE-AFRICA MIDDLE EAST THEATER
Greenland to west and part of Russia bounded on east by 60°, including Africa and Iran.

ASIATIC-PACIFIC THEATER
Area between Russian 60° meridian on west, and east across Alaska.

AMERICAN THEATER
The American continent and waters, except U. S., Alaska, Greenland.



27 VICTORY
All service during 1917-1918, and in Russia, and Siberia, during 1919-1920.

28 ARMY OF OCCUPATION OF GERMANY
For occupation service from the Armistice to July 11, 1923.

29 AMERICAN DEFENSE SERVICE
For 12-month service, any part between Sept. 8, 1939, and Dec. 7, 1941.

Combined service campaign medals

Navy Campaign Medals



13 CIVIL WAR
To all in Navy and Marine Corps in the Civil War from 1861 to 1865.

14 MANILA BAY
Awarded to all in Asiatic Squadron under Commodore Dewey.

15 SAMPSON MEDAL WEST INDIES
Given to Navy and Marines participating from May 6 to August 14, 1898.

16 SPANISH CAMPAIGN
To all serving between April 20, 1898, and Dec. 10, 1898.

17 PHILIPPINE CAMPAIGN
Within various given dates on ship or shore in Philippines.

18 CHINA RELIEF
At Peking during Boxer Rebellion between April 5, 1900, and May 27, 1901.



19 CUBAN PACIFICATION
To all serving in tasks of reorganization between 1906-1909.

20 NICARAGUAN CAMPAIGN (1912)
To all sent to aid Nicaragua Government during an uprising.

21 MEXICAN SERVICE
For various services and engagements between the years 1911 and 1917.

22 HAITIAN CAMPAIGN
To all serving in Haiti between July 9 and December 6, 1915.

23 SANTO DOMINGO CAMPAIGN
To all serving between May 5 and December 4, 1916.

24 2nd HAITIAN CAMPAIGN
To those serving there from April 1, 1919 to June 15, 1920.



25 2nd NICARAGUAN CAMPAIGN
To all serving there between Aug. 27, 1926 and Jan. 2, 1933.

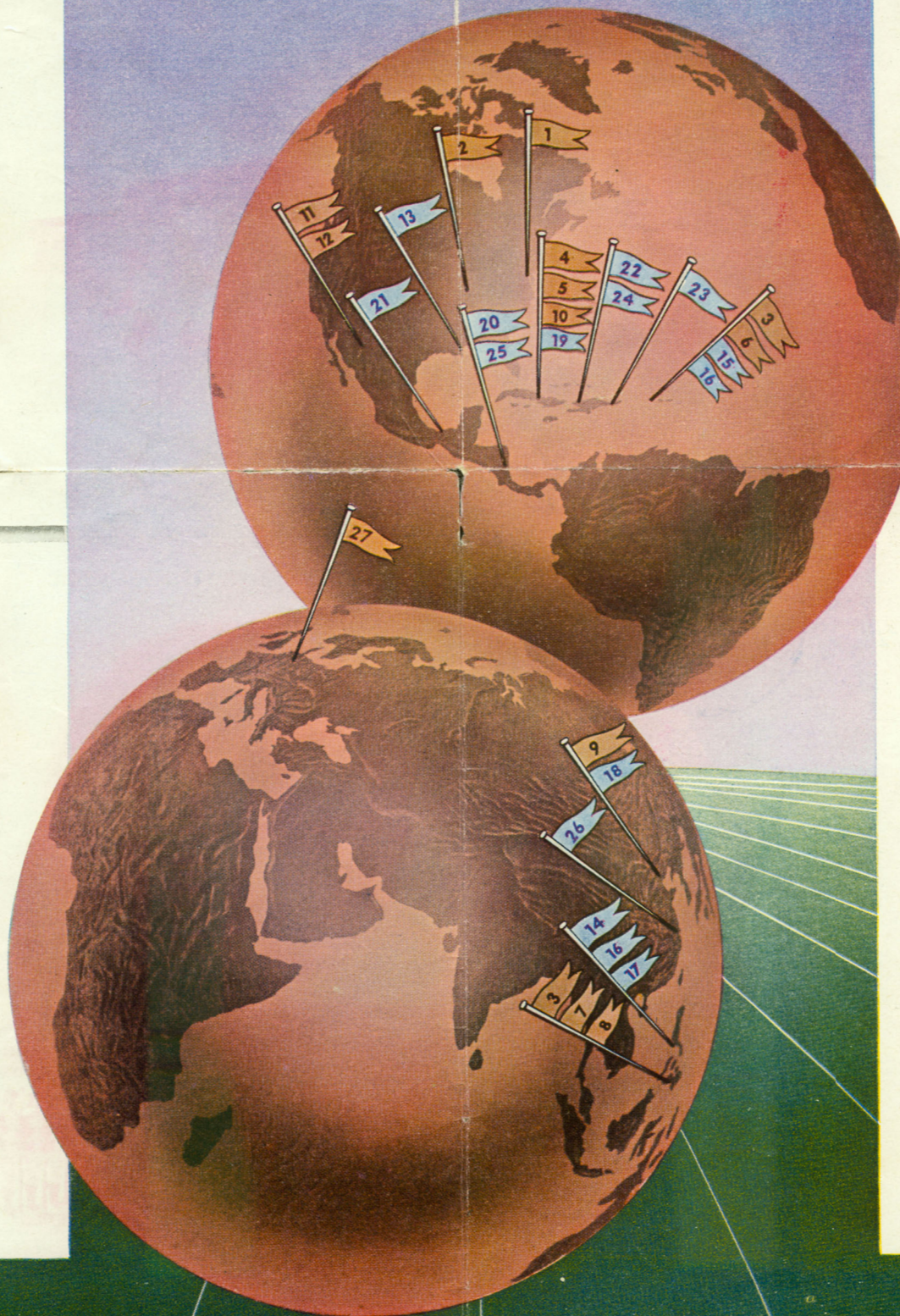
26 YANGTZE SERVICE
Between Sept. 3, 1926 and Oct. 21, 1927, March 1, 1930 and Dec. 31, 1932.

27 NAVAL RESERVE
Issued to Naval Reserve members for ten years consecutive service.

28 MARINE RESERVE
Issued to Fleet Marine Corps Reserve, for 10 years consecutive service.

29 NAVY EXPEDITIONARY
For specific campaigns not covered by other medals from 1874 to 1937.

30 MARINE CORPS EXPEDITIONARY
For specific campaigns not covered by other medals from 1874 to 1937.





THE GORGAS MEDAL, for distinguished service in preventive medicine for our Armed Forces whose recipients are selected by the Association of Military Surgeons of the U. S. It is endowed by John Wyeth & Brother, Inc., and carries honorarium of \$500. The medal was conceived in honor of General William Crawford Gorgas, who applied the discoveries of Major Walter Reed and freed the Isthmus of Panama of yellow fever.



THE MALTESE CROSS, a coveted clasp worn with the Victory Medal by members of the Navy Medical Corps and the Marine Corps who served in France with the A. E. F. during World War I.

For more than eighty years John Wyeth and Brother, Incorporated, have been privileged to serve the medical profession as manufacturers of fine pharmaceutical preparations for prescription use.

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