

Canadian  
Forces  
College

Collège  
des  
Forces  
Canadiennes



## Recognizing the Right Stuff: The Canadian Honours System and the Profession of Arms

Major David G. Jones

**JCSP 47**

**Master of Defence Studies**

### Disclaimer

Opinions expressed remain those of the author and do not represent Department of National Defence or Canadian Forces policy. This paper may not be used without written permission.

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, as represented by the Minister of National Defence, 2021.

**PCEMI 47**

**Maîtrise en études de la défense**

### Avertissement

Les opinions exprimées n'engagent que leurs auteurs et ne reflètent aucunement des politiques du Ministère de la Défense nationale ou des Forces canadiennes. Ce papier ne peut être reproduit sans autorisation écrite.

© Sa Majesté la Reine du Chef du Canada, représentée par le ministre de la Défense nationale, 2021.

CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE – COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES

JCSP 47 – PCEMI 47

2020 – 2021

MASTER OF DEFENCE STUDIES – MAÎTRISE EN ÉTUDES DE LA DÉFENSE

**RECOGNIZING THE RIGHT STUFF:  
THE CANADIAN HONOURS SYSTEM AND THE PROFESSION OF ARMS**

By Major D.G. Jones

*“This paper was written by a candidate attending the Canadian Forces College in fulfilment of one of the requirements of the Course of Studies. The paper is a scholastic document, and thus contains facts and opinions which the author alone considered appropriate and correct for the subject. It does not necessarily reflect the policy or the opinion of any agency, including the Government of Canada and the Canadian Department of National Defence. This paper may not be released, quoted or copied, except with the express permission of the Canadian Department of National Defence.”*

*“La présente étude a été rédigée par un stagiaire du Collège des Forces canadiennes pour satisfaire à l'une des exigences du cours. L'étude est un document qui se rapporte au cours et contient donc des faits et des opinions que seul l'auteur considère appropriés et convenables au sujet. Elle ne reflète pas nécessairement la politique ou l'opinion d'un organisme quelconque, y compris le gouvernement du Canada et le ministère de la Défense nationale du Canada. Il est défendu de diffuser, de citer ou de reproduire cette étude sans la permission expresse du ministère de la Défense nationale.”*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	ii
List of Tables	iii
Abstract	iv
Chapter	
1. Introduction	1
2. Honours for Duty; Duty for Honours	8
3. Creation and Evolution of the Canadian Honours System	21
4. Evaluation of the Canadian Armed Forces Recognition Framework	41
5. Implications for the Profession of Arms in Canada	65
Conclusion	87
Bibliography	90

**LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 4.1: Principles to be Observed in Instituting Canadian Honours	43
Figure 4.2: Canadian Campaign and Service Medals for Operation IMPACT	47
Figure 4.3: Commonwealth Recognition for Counter-Terrorism Activities in Syria and Iraq	49
Figure 4.4: Selected Examples from Qualification Service List for the SSM Expedition Bar	55

## ABSTRACT

A national system of honours aims to recognize individuals for exceptional behaviour and inspire others to emulate similar desirable attributes. While the use of honours to promote and reward military personnel for their service is an ancient practice, the rise of the profession of arms in the nineteenth century led to the creation of highly structured honours systems that remain in use today. The establishment of the Canadian Honours System in 1967 has led to the introduction of distinctly Canadian recognition policies, many of which have intentionally broken with several longstanding practices inherited from British tradition. This paper investigates the impact of honours on Canada's profession of arms following significant changes to the Canadian Armed Forces overseas recognition framework initiated within the last two decades. An exploration of the evolution of honours practices compared with an evaluation of modern campaign and service medals was used in this project to identify deficiencies within current recognition policies. The findings reveal that the introduction of new policies intended to increase the efficiency and flexibility of recognition practices has inadvertently created several new challenges related to the applicability, consistency, and accessibility of honours that negatively influence collective and individual identity within the profession of arms. The study concludes that when modifying recognition practices, practitioners should consider the professional attributes of identity inherent within the military to ensure that the value of honours remains effective.

## CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

*The object of presenting medals, stars, and ribbons is to give pride and pleasure to those who have deserved them. At the same time a distinction is something which everybody does not possess. If all have it, it is of less value ... A medal glitters, but it also casts a shadow.*

-Winston Churchill, Speech in the House of Commons, 22 March 1944<sup>1</sup>

### INTRODUCTION

There are few objects in existence that rival the symbolic and emotive embodiments of military medals.<sup>2</sup> Cherished by recipients and their families, revered by military cultures, respected by societies, and obsessed over by historians and collectors alike, medals serve as universally valued icons. For over a thousand years, the practice of recognizing individuals for their valour, bravery, meritorious contributions, and campaign service by the awarding of distinct insignia has become a customary practice shared amongst most nations and cultures.<sup>3</sup> While individual sovereign states have each developed their own unique honours systems, their common purpose is to recognize individuals for exceptional behaviour and inspire others to emulate similar desirable attributes for the nation's good.<sup>4</sup>

In 1967, during the centennial year of confederation, Canada made the audacious decision to create its own independent national honours system and detach itself from the

---

<sup>1</sup> Winston Churchill, "War Decorations and Medals," Parliament of the United Kingdom, House of Commons Debate, 22 March 1944, vol 398 cc872-1002, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1944/mar/22/war-decorations-and-medals>.

<sup>2</sup> When used in this context, the term 'medals' is used commonly in society as the generic colloquial representation of orders, decorations, and medals.

<sup>3</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/JD-010, *Canadian Honours and Awards Bestowed Upon Members of the Canadian Armed Forces* (Ottawa: Director of History and Heritage, April 2020), 3, <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/canadian-honours-awards-members-forces.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> The Governor General of Canada, "Canadian Honours," last accessed 11 April 2021, <https://www.gg.ca/en/honours/canadian-honours>.

longstanding British Imperial Honours System.<sup>5</sup> The establishment of a distinctly Canadian Honours Systems enabled complete autonomy over all aspects of its national recognition instruments and processes to better reflect the national values, culture, and identity. Steady growth and expansion of the honours system in Canada have established a distinctive national honours system that includes a full spectrum of orders, decorations, and medals that prides itself on being “respected around the world as a system of recognition that is merit-based, apolitical, and accessible.”<sup>6</sup>

With the founding of an independent national honours system, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) have significantly benefited from the deliberate growth and expansion of recognition available to reward military service to Canada.<sup>7</sup> Beginning with establishing the Order of Military Merit in 1972 to recognize exceptional devotion to duty, the honours system framework has gradually expanded with decorations to reward distinguishing acts of bravery, meritorious service, and military valour.<sup>8</sup> In keeping with the British tradition of recognizing military service on expeditionary operations, several distinctly Canadian campaign and service medals have been created to reflect the high operational tempo and diverse employment spectrum of the modern CAF operations. Today, Canada has a comprehensive, world-class national honours systems to enable efficient, meaningful, and memorable recognition to military personnel for their services rendered to the nation.

---

<sup>5</sup> Christopher McCreery, *The Order of Military Merit* (Ottawa: Director of History and Recognition, 2012), 6-7, <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/order-military-merit-part-1.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> The Governor General of Canada, “Canadian Honours.”

<sup>7</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/AG-001, *Canadian Forces Honours Policy Manual* (Ottawa: Director of History and Recognition, June 2019), 1-1, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/medals/cf-honours-policy-manual.html>.

<sup>8</sup> Christopher McCreery, *The Order of Military Merit*, 2.

Like other national honours systems within the Commonwealth and around the world, the Canadian Honours System is constantly changing. It continues to evolve by creating new honours and adopting qualification criteria changes as necessary to ensure the recognition of military service in modern wars and conflicts remains effective. Beginning in the early 2000s, the Canadian Honours System entered a period of significant expansion and reform to address many longstanding overseas recognition deficiencies. The introduction of new medals and bars, improved design and manufacturing quality, more frequent awarding of decorations for acts of meritorious service and military valour, improved awareness of the honours system, and streamlined administration processes led to a ‘recognition renaissance’ with the CAF.

Despite the many positive changes implemented to improve the CAF recognition framework in recent years, concerns regarding the applicability, consistency, and accessibility of honours now risk devaluing the role of the Canadian Honours System for the profession of arms. Overseas recognition is now determined by the theatre/geographic location deployed to and the type of service being performed, thereby replacing the longstanding tradition of awarding the same medal to all mission personnel, regardless of role. Moreover, changes to qualification criteria for some medals have removed the principal requirement for service to be performed under conditions of risk and rigour, thereby increasing the number of medals being issued to CAF personnel and diminishing the overall value of ‘hard-earned medals.’ While motivations for modernizing the recognition framework are justified by the desire to “simplify and standardize” practices, the proliferation of new medals, bars, and ribbons, combined with frequent



modification to criteria, have created an overly complicated system that risks jeopardizing the value of honours to the profession of arms.<sup>9</sup>

## **METHODOLOGY**

The focus of this study is to determine whether the expansion and evolution of recognition since the early 2000s has inadvertently eroded the legitimacy of the modern national honours system and, consequently, the value of honours to the profession of arms in Canada. The methodology used adopts a structured approach to include defining the origins and purpose of official recognition systems, examining the creation and evolution of honours in Canada, identifying the limitations of current honours for the CAF, and arguing the potential negative impacts to the profession of arms. After this introductory chapter, the study consists of four chapters and a conclusion.

Chapter Two uses the concept of honour within the military culture and the profession of arms to define the role of national honours systems. Focusing primarily on the ancient British system of honours from which the modern Canadian system has derived much of its inspiration and influence, it will reveal how the use of orders, decorations, and medals reinforce desirable behaviours of honour, loyalty, and courage. Specifically, this chapter highlights the continuous evolution of recognition practices throughout history adopted to meet the changing nature of warfare, particularly from the mid-eightieth century to today. Despite these changes over time, the primary purpose of recognition within the profession of arms remains constant.

---

<sup>9</sup> Department of National Defence, Canadian Forces General Message CANFORGEN 066/10 - New Overseas Recognition Framework, Chief of Military Personnel, 17 March 2010.

Chapter Three examines the origins and evolution of honours in Canada that lead to creating the Canadian Honours System in 1967. This exploration will show that despite replicating many of the core elements of the British/Imperial honours framework, Canada has successfully established an independent national recognition system that reflects the unique values of its citizens and culture. The extensive changes made to the overseas recognition framework beginning in the early 2000s will highlight the agility of the Canadian Honours System to respond to the changing requirements of recognition of the CAF to meet the rapidly evolving nature of expeditionary military operations.

Chapter Four provides an evaluation of the Canadian Honours System from the perspective of the CAF to identify shortcomings within the current recognition framework. Using the six guiding principles for creating and modifying Canadian honours, a comparative analysis of the most commonly awarded campaign and service medals will reveal several recognition deficiencies and inconsistencies.<sup>10</sup> Examples of the UK, Australian, and New Zealand honours systems will provide additional insight into how other like-minded Commonwealth nations have modernized their honours systems to meet changing demands of military service.

Chapter Five argues how deficiencies within the current recognition framework negatively influence the promotion of identity within the profession of arms. Using evidence from the previous chapters, the impacts resulting from the creation of a multi-tiered, complex honours system over the past two decades have led to challenges related to the applicability, consistency, and accessibility of honours risks devaluing the contribution to collective and

---

<sup>10</sup> The six guiding principles for the creation and modifying of Canadian Honours are compatibility, duplication, eligibility, respect, equitability, and credibility.

individual identities with the CAF. The essay will conclude with corrective recommendations for consideration that draw upon past Canadian and Commonwealth practices and recent solutions implemented by other nations.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Remarkably, despite the general interest in the subject of Canadian national honours, the historiography on the subject remains limited, with the body of works focusing primarily on reference materials about the physical honours themselves or anthologies chronicling the events of during past wars that led to the awarding of military valour decorations. Regarding the study of individual honours in the content of the profession of arms, the literature available does not explicitly link the concepts of ‘professional honour’ to ‘awards *of* honour.’ While these works serve as essential sources for general interest and historical reflection, there is a distinct void in the study of how national honours interact with the CAF and broader Canadian society.

For members currently serving in the CAF, the Directorate of Honours and Recognition (DH&R) has released several comprehensive publications – available free of charge – to promote a greater understanding of the modern Canadian Honours Systems. Furthermore, Canadian historian Dr. Christopher McCreery has published several modern works on Canada's Honours System with extensive research into honours, providing excellent in-depth reference and historical information on specific honours. Others, including Surgeon Captain John Blatherwick, provide invaluable repositories of data about Canadian personnel awarded various honours dating back centuries. Nevertheless, while readers of these works will appreciate the well-researched descriptions of the history, design, manufacture, administration, and even the politics that drove the creation of various orders, decorations, and medals, examination about how these awards influence the concept of honour within the profession of arms remains unexplored.

Consequently, there is a distinct absence of information about how the Canadian Honours System influences concepts of honour within CAF. Napoléon Bonaparte famously decried “a soldier will fight long and hard for a bit of coloured ribbon,” suggesting that recognition plays an important motivating factor for military forces.<sup>11</sup> This motivation is driven by the exclusivity the recipient garners from distinct recognition. If such distinction becomes all too common, the honour may lose its appeal and desirability. Publications such as *Duty with Honour* include few details of the interrelationships between the attributes of military ethos and the role of honours and recognition. This study aims to better understand the impact that the honours systems has on the CAF and how adjustments made with all good intentions can negatively affect attributes that contribute to the strengthening of military ethos. As this study will show, the introduction of new policies intended to increase the efficiency and flexibility of recognition practices has inadvertently created several new challenges related to the applicability, consistency, and accessibility of honours that negatively influence collective and individual identity within the profession of arms.

---

<sup>11</sup> Max Hastings, *Warriors: Portraits from the Battlefield* (New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2007), 3.

## CHAPTER 2 – HONOURS FOR DUTY, DUTY WITH HONOUR

### INTRODUCTION

The idea of recognizing individuals with honours to reward military service has existed for well over a thousand years and continues to this day. While the various forms of recognition have evolved considerably throughout history, the fundamental purpose of honours remains constant; "the simple and laudable wish to recognize exceptional service and achievement and to show gratitude publicly."<sup>12</sup> For professional military forces, the significance of national honours systems extends beyond just recognition of achievement and perpetuates the concepts of 'service before self' and performing ones' duty with honour. For military personnel, honours represent marks of achievement and embody the symbolic values expressed within military ethos.

The Canadian Forces publication *Duty with Honour* decrees, "ethos is the heart of the military profession and operational effectiveness," signalling that the reinforcement of behaviours that positively reflect military ethos represents a worthy endeavour.<sup>13</sup> Today, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) leverages the Canadian Honours System as the cornerstone of its recognition framework to promote and reward exceptional behaviours that reflect the Canadian military ethos represented by the attributes of duty, loyalty, integrity, and courage.<sup>14</sup> While the current national honours system offers various orders, decorations, and medals to recognize the contributions of individuals across all of Canadian society, many honours are available

---

<sup>12</sup> Hayden Phillips, *Review of the Honours System* (London: Cabinet Office Ceremonial Secretariat, July 2004), 15, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/203279/Review\\_of\\_the\\_Honours\\_System\\_Phillips\\_Review\\_2004.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/203279/Review_of_the_Honours_System_Phillips_Review_2004.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> Department of National Defence, A-PA-005-000/AP-001, *Duty With Honour – The Profession of Arms in Canada* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy – Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2009), 56, <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/duty-with-honour-2009.html>.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 31-32.

exclusively to military personnel.<sup>15</sup> The different types of honours that constitute the CAF recognition framework reflect the various attributes of military ethos and espouse the responsibility of "honourable service."<sup>16</sup> Accordingly, the honours system promotes and reinforces the desirable behaviours contained within the CAF military ethos as a vital contributor to sustaining the modern profession of arms in Canada. This chapter uses the concept of honour within the profession of arms to reveal how the honours system promotes and reinforces military ethos. Based on the notion that "honour itself flows from practising the military ethos," an examination of the origins and evolution of recognition practices throughout history will reveal that despite significant changes over time, honours fulfill a relevant purpose to the profession of arms.<sup>17</sup>

## ORIGINS AND EVOLUTION OF MILITARY HONOURS

Recognizing the accomplishments of military personnel for their service to the state has become a customary practice shared across most nations and cultures. While the exact origin of honours granted explicitly for military service is not precisely known, one prevailing theory suggests that the practise originated in the time of the Ancient Egyptian empire.<sup>18</sup> Societies from this era used various rewards to recognize military bravery and merit, including the awarding of horses, land, and decorative jewelry-like items for display on clothing during special occasions.<sup>19</sup> Later, starting in the fifth century BC, the Roman Republic introduced a range of awards granted

---

<sup>15</sup> Examples of honours intended exclusively for Canadian military personnel include the Order of Military Merit, Military Valour Decorations, Meritorious Service Decorations (Military Division), the Canadian Forces' Decorations, etc.

<sup>16</sup> Department of National Defence, Canadian Forces General Message CANFORGEN 184/14 – Honourable Service, Chief of Military Personnel, 20 October 2014.

<sup>17</sup> Department of National Defence, A-PA-005-000/AP-001, *Duty With Honour*, 34.

<sup>18</sup> Australian Defence Force, Defence Honours and Awards and Commendations Policy Report (Canberra: Defence Support Group – Assistance Secretary Personnel Support Services, 2008), 1, <https://www1.defence.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-08/review-honours-awards-commendation-policies-feb-08.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

on behalf of the state to acknowledge exemplary behaviour during military campaigns in the form of wearable crowns, wristbands, and ornamental emblems affixed to one's armour.<sup>20</sup> One of the highest decorations, the Corona Civica (awarded for lifesaving), took the form of a Greek-inspired laurel wreath, which remains a common design element in many of today's British, Canadian, United Nations (UN), and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) medals.<sup>21</sup> Following the demise of the Roman Empire in the fifth century AD, the awarding of state-level honours for military service did not see a reassurance until around the eleventh century with the establishment of various religious orders, such as the Knights Templar and the various knight hospitallers orders. Membership to these religious orders was based on the degree of accomplishment, dedication, selflessness, and honourable service that has been incorporated into many of the multi-level national orders still in use today, including the Order of Canada.<sup>22</sup>

Across Europe, many states developed their own honours systems, yet membership was primarily limited to the wealthy elites. While occasionally military leaders were granted membership into a national order, these occurrences were primarily linked to the members standing of nobility in society and not exclusively on their military exploits, nor 'honourable service' was not a given. Starting in the seventeenth century, medals and other forms of recognition rose in popularity. Awards commissioned to commemorate campaigns and battles such as the English Civil War (1641-1651) saw the use of medallic recognition to reward individuals for their loyalty, bravery or meritorious service displayed on the battlefield.<sup>23</sup> The

---

<sup>20</sup> Valerie Maxfield, *Roman Military Decorations* (London: Batsford Academic, 1981), 43; and Andrew Knighton, "11 Ancient Roman Military Decorations," War History Online, 01 February 2016, <https://www.warhistoryonline.com/ancient-history/11-ancient-roman-military-decorations.html>.

<sup>21</sup> The laurel wreath has been incorporated into the design of several modern Canadian orders, decorations, and medals as a symbol of honour.

<sup>22</sup> Australian Defence Force, *Defence Honours and Awards and Commendations Policy Report*, 2.

<sup>23</sup> Peter Duckers, *British Military Medals – A Guide for the Collector and Family Historian* (South Yorkshire: Pen & Sword Books Ltd., 2009), 12.

Dunbar Medal, authorized by the English Parliament in 1650, is credited with being the first-ever campaign medal distributed to all officers and soldiers purely for their loyalty and participation in their defeat of the Scots during the Third English Civil War.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, awards of this era did not emanate from the head of state or the Crown, specifically with the cost of production and distribution likely provided by the wealthy military commanders of the conquering armies.<sup>25</sup>

Throughout the eighteenth century, victorious military campaigns were commemorated with medallions (not intended for wear) made of various precious metals, usually given to officers for their distinguished leadership or gallantry. One example is the Louisbourg Medal (1758), created to commemorate the British recapturing of the fortress from the French during the Seven Years War.<sup>26</sup> Starting in the late 1700s, the English (later British) East India Company began issuing 'semi-official' standardized campaign medals to all Indian soldiers regardless of rank or social standing as a means to build loyalty with the ranks of the organization.<sup>27</sup> Notably, this era also introduced the practice of issuing 'battle honours' as a means for the sovereign to recognize a particular unit's contribution to a campaign or battle with the honour's emblazonment for display their unit/regimental standards, a practice that continues today.<sup>28</sup>

With the start of the Napoleonic Wars in the early nineteenth century, official state honours in the form of wearable medallic awards became increasingly common throughout many European countries. Following the French Revolution and abolishing French orders of chivalry,

---

<sup>24</sup> National Portrait Gallery, "Oliver Cromwell - The Dunbar Medal," National Portrait Gallery London, last accessed 30 April 2021, <https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portraitExtended/mw01595/Oliver-Cromwell-The-Dunbar-Medal>.

<sup>25</sup> Marvin Lessen, "The Cromwell Dunbar Medals By Simon," *British Numismatic Journal* 51 (1981), 127, [https://www.britnumsoc.org/publications/Digital%20BNJ/pdfs/1981\\_BNJ\\_51\\_8.pdf](https://www.britnumsoc.org/publications/Digital%20BNJ/pdfs/1981_BNJ_51_8.pdf).

<sup>26</sup> Duckers, *British Military Medals – A Guide for the Collector and Family Historian*, 12

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 16. BOOK: *British Military Medals*, pg 16

<sup>28</sup> John Boileau, "Canada's Battle Honours," *Legion Magazine*, 01 September 2003, <https://legionmagazine.com/en/2003/09/canadas-battle-honours/>.



in 1802, Napoléon Bonaparte instituted the multi-level Légion d'honneur as a reward for “outstanding merit acquired in the service of the nation in a civilian or military capacity.”<sup>29</sup>

Notably, individuals admitted into the Légion d'honneur were expected to remain in honourable standing and that “the honour can be revoked in the event of criminal conviction, or any action that is dishonourable or that may harm the interests of France” to preserve the reputation and principles of the order.<sup>30</sup>

Similarly, Britain saw the introduction of a multi-level national honour following changes made to The Most Honourable Order of the Bath in 1815, after the Peninsular Wars.<sup>31</sup> While the order’s origin dated back to 1725, it consisted of only a single-level limited membership to predominantly to persons of nobility. The updated regulations organized the order into three levels, allowing for officers to be recognized by the sovereign for their “eminent services during the late war . . . which they have so nobly earned.”<sup>32</sup> Specifically, the termination of one’s standing within the order could occur following actions that constituted “heresy, high treason, or fleeing from battle out of cowardice.”<sup>33</sup> As the preeminent military order of its time, the requirement to maintain one’s membership ensured that the integrity of the order was preserved and that members continued to fulfill their duty with honour.

---

<sup>29</sup> Grande chancellerie de la Légion d'honneur, “The Legion of Honor – Award Criteria,” last accessed 30 April 2021, <https://www.legiondhoneur.fr/en/page/award-criteria/405>.

<sup>30</sup> Grande chancellerie de la Légion d'honneur, “The Legion of Honor in 10 Questions,” last accessed 30 April 2021, <https://www.legiondhoneur.fr/en/page/legion-honor-10-questions/406#:~:text=%20The%20Legion%20of%20Honor%20in%2010%20questions,of%202%20800%20people%20can%20be...%20More.>

<sup>31</sup> The Gazette, 02 January 1815 – Amendments to the Most Honorable Military Order of the Bath (Whitewall: *The London Gazette* 4 January 1815), 17, <https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/16972/page/17>.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> Deputy Bath King of Arms, *Statutes of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath* (London: Nichols and Son Printers, 1787), 5, <https://archive.org/details/statutesofmostho00orde/page/n99/mode/2up>.  
<https://archive.org/details/statutesofmostho00orde/page/4/mode/2up?q=honour>.

## Expanded Recognition and Standardization

After the Napoleonic era, the idea of awarding an official standardized military campaign medal from the sovereign to recognize the service of all personnel who participated became a reality. While senior British field and general officers could qualify for the Army Gold Medal for their participation in the various battles of the era, these awards were awarded very sparingly.<sup>34</sup> However, the introduction of the Waterloo Medal to all ranks of British forces who served in the Battle of Ligny, Battle of Quatre Bras, and/or the Battle of Waterloo resulted in a total over 39,000 medals issued.<sup>35</sup> The medal is especially significant. It established the trend for future campaign medals to follow a similar size, design, material, and ribbon suspension features to allow recipients to display their honour on their uniforms and other articles of clothing with pride. Initially, the Waterloo Medal was unpopular in the British Army because veterans of previous military campaigns of the era felt that “such a public acknowledgement was unnecessary as. . . soldiers at the battle had simply done their duty.”<sup>36</sup> Nevertheless, this new type of official honour from the British sovereign was highly influential with such veterans who petitioned for the retroactive medals to recognize past campaigns and led to the creation of both the British Military General Service Medal and Naval General Service Medal in 1847.<sup>37</sup> These two medals recognized expeditionary service on land and at sea, with retroactive recognition to 1793. Between the two medals, a total of 260 different 'clasps' were made available to be affixed to the medal's suspender to denote participation in specific campaigns, engagements, and actions

---

<sup>34</sup> Peter Duckers, “Some British Awards for the Peninsular War - 1808-14,” *Spink Insider* 29 (January 2018), <https://www.spink.com/media/view?id=426>.

<sup>35</sup> John Mussell, *The Medal Yearbook 2013* (Devon: Token Publishing Limited, 2013), 128.

<sup>36</sup> Warwick and Warwick Ltd, “The History of the Battle of Waterloo - An In-Depth Guide to Waterloo Medals,” last accessed 30 April 2021, <https://www.warwickandwarwick.com/news/guides/an-in-depth-guide-to-waterloo-medals>.

<sup>37</sup> John Mussell, *The Medal Yearbook 2013*, 122-124 and 127.

deemed worthy of recognition.<sup>38</sup> Services performed in recognition of the General Service Medals have been not only for being physically present during the particular operation but also in accordance with the regulations with military service throughout increased professionalization of regular military forces. The regulations of the General Service Medal indicates the following:

Her Majesty having been graciously pleased to command that a medal should be struck to record the services of her fleets and Armies during the wars . . . be conferred upon every officer, non-commissioned officer and soldier of the army, who was present in any battle or siege . . . in conformity with the regulations of the service at that time . . .<sup>39</sup>

Consequently, these initial campaign medals established the trend of recognizing the conditions of risk and rigour on expeditionary operations and ensured that military service was performed in a manner that supported the embodiment of the attributes of duty, loyalty, and integrity.

### **Recognizing Long Service and Good Conduct**

In addition to standardized campaign medals, efforts to promote loyalty and retention within the British forces in the post-Napoleonic period led to the introduction of official awards to reward long service and good conduct. The first of these honours appeared in 1830 with the Army Long Service and Good Conduct Medal and the Naval Long Service and Good Conduct Medal to recognize at least 21 years of exemplary service of non-commissioned soldiers and sailors.<sup>40</sup> Even a slight disciplinary blemish on one's record could disqualify the member from attaining the award, ensuring only those personnel of superior behaviour qualified.<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup> Forces War Records, "Naval General Service Medal (1847)," last accessed 30 April 2021, <https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/medals/naval-general-service-medal-ngsm-1847>.

<sup>39</sup> Colburns United Services Magazine and Naval and Military Journal, "Naval and Military Register – From the Supplement of the London Gazette, General Order," (London: Horse-Guards, 01 June 1847), 447, [https://books.google.ca/books?id=C6sktnjjNBIC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q=medal&f=false](https://books.google.ca/books?id=C6sktnjjNBIC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q=medal&f=false).

<sup>40</sup> Forces War Records, "Long Service and Good Conduct Medal," last accessed 30 April 2021, <https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/medals/long-service-and-good-conduct-medal-lsgc-military>.

<sup>41</sup> Ministry of Defence, JSP 761 *Honours and Awards in the Armed Forces* (London: Defence Services Secretary - Assistant Chief of Defence Staff Personnel and Training, October 2016), 5B-2,

Interestingly, the criteria for the award and subsequent British long service and good conduct awards excluded officers from receiving the recognition. The original orders reckoned that "Regular Force officers were not eligible for any long service awards since, as they held a commission, they were expected to serve honourably and for a long period of time;" however, the restriction was repealed in 2016 to enable British officers to qualify onwards.<sup>42</sup> Recognition for long service and good conduct in keeping with the ideals of the honourable service remains an essential type of award that continues in use today across the Commonwealth and many other states.<sup>43</sup>

### **Recognizing Distinguished Service and Gallantry**

Following the end of the Napoleonic Wars, the Victoria Era (1837-1901) saw the introduction of new forms of official honours in the form of 'decorations' to recognize loyal behaviour and exceptional deeds. With the start of the Crimea War in 1854, technological advances introduced a host of innovations that changed the conduct of war and how engagements were planned and executed.<sup>44</sup> The integration of telegraph communications, railway transportation networks, and new weaponry resulted in a new era of warfare whereby the war correspondents updated continuously reported the soldiers' perils during the campaign back to Britain.<sup>45</sup> Particularly disturbing for the general British population, who had just enjoyed nearly four decades of peace, was the awareness of the "losses in battle, the inefficiency of the Army,

---

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/557785/JSP761\\_Part1.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/557785/JSP761_Part1.pdf).

<sup>42</sup> Forces War Records, "Naval Long Service and Good Conduct Medal," last accessed 30 April 2021, <https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/medals/naval-long-service-and-good-conduct-medal-1830-1848>.

<sup>43</sup> The Canadian Forces' Decoration, created in 1951, was unique within the Commonwealth for decades as it provided recognition of long service and good conduct to Regular Officers.

<sup>44</sup> National Army Museum, "Crimea War," last accessed 30 April 2021, <https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/crimean-war>.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

the poor food, and desperately bad medical arrangements, which all contributed to the suffering of the soldiers on active service."<sup>46</sup> Public outcry from the increased awareness led to calls for the establishment honours to recognize the exemplary actions of deserving individuals on the battlefield.<sup>47</sup> This led to the rapid introduction of three new honours amid the Crimea War recognized conspicuous acts of gallantry on the battlefield.<sup>48</sup> The first of these decorations, the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM), was instituted in 1854 to recognize "sergeants, corporals and privates for distinguished service and gallant conduct in the field."<sup>49</sup> In 1855, the Royal Navy introduced the naval equivalent of this decoration with the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal (CGM), also intended to be awarded to non-commissioned officers sailors.<sup>50</sup> Most notably, in 1856, the Victoria Cross (VC) was instituted by Queen Victoria to recognize the "for most conspicuous bravery, or some daring or preeminent act of valour or self-sacrifice, or extreme devotion to duty in the presence of the enemy."<sup>51</sup> Unlike the DCM and CGM, all ranks from the army and navy were equally eligible to receive this most prestigious recognition; particularly noteworthy is the VC's position within the order of precedence as it is placed ahead of all other British honours. In many respects, the VC transcended the social divisions of the British class-oriented society, highlighting the significance placed on recognizing individual acts of military valour.<sup>52</sup> Overall, the introduction of decorations to recognize distinguished service and gallantry in response to the dramatic changes in the ways and means that wars are conducted provided a

---

<sup>46</sup> Duckers, *British Military Medals – A Guide for the Collector and Family Historian*, 131.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> Similarly, for French forces involved in the Crimea War, distinguished acts of military valour and devotion to duty were recognized with the pre-existing Légion d'honneur for officers and the Médaille Militaire (created in 1852) for enlisted soldiers.

<sup>49</sup> The National Archives, Distinguished Conduct Medal, Submissions to Sovereign, War Office reference WO 146, 1855-1909, last accessed 30 April 2021, <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C14353>.

<sup>50</sup> Mussell, *The Medal Yearbook 2013*, 91.

<sup>51</sup> Ministry of Defence, JSP 761 *Honours and Awards in the Armed Forces*, 1A-1.

<sup>52</sup> The Gazette, "What is the 'Order of Wear' for British Honours, Decorations and Medals?" 25 November 2019, <https://www.thegazette.co.uk/awards-and-accreditation/content/103440>.

new method of promoting and rewarding the desired behaviours enshrined within the profession of arms.

## **ESTABLISHING A RECOGNITION FRAMEWORK**

With the termination of the Crimea War in 1856, the British system of honours had established the basis of the recognition framework that remains in use today across most of the former British Empire colonies, including Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. Four principal categories of official awards for military service included: orders of chivalry for offices to recognize leadership and devotion to duty, decorations for individual acts of valour or meritorious service on the battlefield, campaign and general service medals to mark honourable participation on expeditionary campaigns, and long service and good conduct medals to promote and reward military professionalism. In addition to the qualification requirements for each honour, services performed that merit recognition must be conducted in a manner that is in keeping with the expectations of professional military service. Dishonourable conduct while serving, or even after release from the armed forces, could result in a forfeiture of honours.

Any officer or member of the military forces or any former officer or former member of the military forces who has been dismissed from the Service with disgrace, or on conviction of treason, sedition, desertion during hostilities, cowardice, mutiny, or other great infamy, shall be liable at the discretion of the Defence Council, to forfeit any war medal and clasp and any medal and clasp . . . they may be in possession [of] or to which they may be entitled . . .<sup>53</sup>

Together, the various categories of honours formed the basis for a comprehensive recognition framework to reward and promote behaviours that reflect the fundamental attributes contained within military ethos.

---

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 9A-2.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the British system of honours had established a framework of orders, decorations, and medals to provide a range of recognition to the armed forces personnel; however, dramatic changes to warfare necessitated further expansion.<sup>54</sup> The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 introduced warfare on a scale and intensity like never before, requiring the mobilization of millions of military personnel from across the Commonwealth. As with the Crimea War, the British government deemed it necessary to expand the recognition framework by creating new awards to provide greater flexibility to reward military valour, bravery, and devotion to duty while also preserving the various honours' value in use. As a result, a range of new decorations was introduced below the VC, DSO, and DSM/CGM to promote and reward exceptional behaviours on the battlefield. Some of these new awards included the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC), Military Cross (MC), and Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) to recognize “acts of valour, courage or devotion to duty.”<sup>55</sup> Additionally, a new multi-level British order, The Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (military division), was instituted in 1917 to reward personnel for a range of exceptional service in support of the war effort.<sup>56</sup> By the conclusion of the First World War, millions of Commonwealth service personnel had been recognized by the British system of honours for their exceptional devotion to duty and self-sacrifice.

After nearly two decades of peace that followed the First World War, the use of honours to promote and reward individuals for professionally performing their duties returned. With the

---

<sup>54</sup> The addition of the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) in 1886 filled the requirement to recognize officers for their actions in battle that was below the threshold of the VC, similar to DSM and CGM available only to enlisted personnel.

<sup>55</sup> Veterans Affairs Canada, “Distinguished Flying Cross,” last accessed 30 April 2021, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/medals-decorations/details/46>.

<sup>56</sup> College of Arms, “The Order of the British Empire,” last updated 11 April 2017, <https://www.college-of-arms.gov.uk/news-grants/news/item/136-the-order-of-the-british-empire>.

start of the Second World War in 1939, Britain and its allies found themselves conducting multiple large campaigns spread over much of the globe. The processes of awarding honours returned unaltered from the First World War, with the same orders and decorations used to recognize various acts of distinguished conduct, exceptional service, or gallantry on the battlefield. One notable change was the expansion in the variety of campaign medals available to service personnel. In addition to War Medal 1939-1944, nine different campaign stars were created to recognize service in the various theatres of operation, including the Atlantic Star, the Pacific Star, the Africa Star, the Italy Star, Arctic Star, and others.<sup>57</sup> Consistent with other campaign medals of the past, the requirement for the performance of duties under conditions of risk and rigour was common across all Second World War campaign medals. Notably, the vast majority of the medals were manufactured of nickel or copper (rather than silver) and were issued without the recipient's name engraved on the medal to expedite manufacturing and distribution of awards.<sup>58</sup> While these changes broke with the longstanding tradition established since the early 1800s, they were necessary to ensure the timely dispatch of millions of medals. Additionally, many Commonwealth countries that contributed to the war advocated for nation-specific recognition for their service personnel who answered the call to arms and served with honour. Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Africa, India (and even the Dominion of Newfoundland) had volunteer war service medals created to provide specific recognition for the citizens from those nations who volunteered to serve during the war.<sup>59</sup> Overall, despite the introduction of additional campaign and service medals to meet the nature of global warfare, the

---

<sup>57</sup> Veterans Affairs Canada, "Medals and Other Decorations that Honour Canadians Who Have Served," last accessed 30 April 2021, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/medals-decorations>.

<sup>58</sup> Some nations, including Canada, produced this medal in silver; and some Commonwealth nations issued medals named with the recipient's details.

<sup>59</sup> Mussell, *The Medal Yearbook* 2013, 186-190.



recognition practices used during the Second World War continued to utilize the established honours framework that remains in use today.

## **CONCLUSION**

The concept of recognizing the desirable behaviours of military forces with honours is not new and dates back thousands of years. Most of today's modern honours systems can be traced as far back as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when medallic recognition became popularized, standardized, and accessible by more than just wealthy nobles and senior military officers. Since then, honours were used to recognize devotion to duty, meritorious service, long and good conduct, bravery, valour, and service under conditions of risk and rigour. As the scale and lethality of warfare evolved, so did the use of honours with the significant expansion of the variety of orders, decorations, and medals available to members of the profession of arms. Despite changes to the ways and means of how wars were fought, honours have remained essential instruments to promote and reinforce military ethos by rewarding personnel for their duty, loyalty, integrity, and courage.

## **CHAPTER 3 – CREATION AND EVOLUTION OF CANADIAN HONOURS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The use of official honours in Canada has existed for centuries, yet the government did not formerly establish its own honours system until the creation of the Order of Canada in 1967.<sup>60</sup> While Canada gained its independence from the United Kingdom (UK) a century prior, it continued to leverage the British system of orders, decorations, and medals until the latter half of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, with the rise of Canadian nationalism, fierce and frequent debate over the use of British honours led to the adoption of policies that significantly restricted the use of honours in Canada.<sup>61</sup> For the Canadian military, restrictions on the accessibility of honours were particularly concerning given the intrinsic role of recognition practices within the profession of arms and the longstanding connection of honours to military history and heritage. With the creation of an independent system of honours in Canada, the CAF has reclaimed a full spectrum recognition framework to promote and reward exceptional behaviours that reflect the military ethos represented by the attributes of duty, loyalty, integrity, and courage.

Today's modern Canadian Honours System still respects many of the longstanding practices inherited from the British system while also implementing many practices and features unique within the Commonwealth. This chapter examines the origins and evolution of honours in Canada that ultimately led to creating the Canadian Honours System. This exploration will reveal that despite replicating many of the British/Imperial honours framework's core elements, Canada has successfully established an independent national recognition system that reflects its citizens'

---

<sup>60</sup> Christopher McCreery, *Fifty Years Honours Canadians – The Order of Canada, 1967-2017* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2017), 15.

<sup>61</sup> Christopher McCreery, *The Order of Canada - Genesis of an Honours System* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018), 25.

culture, history, values, and identity. From there, a closer examination of the extensive changes to the CAF overseas recognition framework initiated in the early 2000s will highlight some of the unique methods that the Canadian Honours System has responded to the evolving recognition requirements of the profession of arms.

## EARLY HONOURS IN CANADA

It is important to note that indigenous peoples of North America have incorporated rituals of honour that significantly pre-dated the arrival of European traders and settlers.<sup>62</sup> The concept of honour remains an essential feature across all indigenous peoples in Canada and is deeply rooted in their culture and traditions. In terms of honours emanating from a recognized head of state, the first recorded official honours awarded to Canadians dates as far back as the late-seventeenth century by the King of France, Louis XIV, for service New France. In 1693, the king established the Order royale et militaire de Saint-Louis in 1693, specifically to “motivate and reward all the officers of his armies for outstanding and long services.”<sup>63</sup> This multi-level order was particularly noteworthy as membership was extended to some ‘non-nobles,’ a first of its kind with a total of nearly 300 Canadian and French-born officers serving in New France invested.<sup>64</sup> However, with the fall of New France following the capture of Louisbourg in 1758 and Quebec a year later in 1759, the use of honours of France ended in Canada. Following the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1763 that ended the Seven Years’ War, Canada officially became part of the British Empire leaving only the British system of honours.<sup>65</sup>

---

<sup>62</sup> Derek G. Smith, “Religion and Spirituality of Indigenous Peoples in Canada,” *Historica Canada*, 04 December 2011, last modified 19 April 2018, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/religion-of-aboriginal-people>.

<sup>63</sup> Christopher McCreery, *The Canadian Honours System* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2015), 27.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Colin G. Calloway, *The Scratch of a Pen: 1763 and the Transformation of North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 3.

With the establishment of the colony of British North America, official recognition from the British sovereign became increasingly prevalent in Canada. Thousands of Canadians served in British Army and Royal Navy units in Canada and earned campaign and general service medals for various expeditionary campaigns throughout the British Empire. Orders of chivalry, however, were significantly less prevalent for Canadian-born members of the armed forces.<sup>66</sup> Admission into the highest level of The Most Honorable Order of the Bath, Knight Grand Cross (GCB), was reserved to reward only the actions of the highest significance within the Empire, having only nine Canadians ever reaching this level.<sup>67</sup> Canadian GCBs include General Sir William Fenwick Williams for his gallant defence of the town of Kars during the Crimean War and the hero of the Battle of Châteauguay, Lieutenant-Colonel Charles de Salaberry, for repelling the American advance on Montreal during the War of 1812.<sup>68</sup> For the other two subordinate levels of the order, a total of 33 Canadians were granted Knight Grand Cross, and 156 Canadians made Companion for their military service.<sup>69</sup>

With Canada gaining independence following Confederation in 1867, proposals to institute an independent system of honours were quickly dismissed. Attempts to create a Canadian order of chivalry were unsuccessful as “the Colonial Office was not willing to all the new dominion to create such a potent symbol of national autonomy, and thus Canada continued

---

<sup>66</sup> Additionally, it is worth noting that 187 Canadian officers were recognized for their military achievements with membership into the multi-level Order of St Michael and St George from the 1870s until the end of the First World War.

<sup>67</sup> John F. Blatherwick, *Canadian Orders, Decorations, and Medals* (Toronto: Unitrade Press, 2003), 014-5, <https://www.blatherwick.net/canadian%20orders%20decorations%20and%20medals/>.

<sup>68</sup> P. B. Waite, “WILLIAMS, Sir WILLIAM FENWICK,” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 11, University of Toronto/Université Laval (2003), last accessed 01 May 2021, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/williams\\_william\\_fenwick\\_11E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/williams_william_fenwick_11E.html); and Parks Canada, “Canada’s Historic Places - de Salaberry House National Historic Site of Canada,” *The Canadian Register of Historic Places*, last accessed 30 April 2021, <https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=15708&pid=0>.

<sup>69</sup> Blatherwick, *Canadian Orders, Decorations, and Medals*, 014-5.

to work within the existing imperial honours system.”<sup>70</sup> Canadian military personnel served with distinction within North America in multiple campaigns, including the Red River Rebellion (1870), Fenian Raids (1866 and 1870) and the North-West Rebellion (1885), that lead to the creation of the Northwest Canada Medal and the Canada General Service Medal by the UK at the request of the Canadian government.<sup>71</sup>

### **Imperial Honours for Canadians**

While the admission of Canadians into British orders of chivalry specifically for military endeavours was of a limited nature and generally only accessible to senior officers, Canadians of all ranks were recognized with decorations for their outstanding achievements or actions. Of the 1,351 VCs ever awarded, Canadians earned a total of 94 to recognize their extreme acts of valour and devotion to duty.<sup>72</sup> Some of the most decorated individuals within the Commonwealth were Canadians, including pilots William George Barker and Billy Bishop. Today, the names of many of Canada's war heroes adorn schools, public places, military institutions, roadways, immortalizing their legacies. Canadian military personnel have also been awarded thousands of other prestigious decorations, particularly during the major conflicts of the first half of the twentieth century. Honours awarded to Canadians include over 1200 Distinguishes Service Orders, 2100 Distinguished Conduct Medals, 4400 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 3700 Military Crosses, 556 Distinguished Flying Medals, 13655 Military Medals, nearly 200 Distinguished Service Crosses, and over 15000 Mention in Despatches, with some individuals receiving these

---

<sup>70</sup> McCreery, *The Canadian Honours System*, 262.

<sup>71</sup> Christopher McCreery, *The Canadian Forces' Decoration* (Ottawa: Director of History and Recognition, 2010), 4, <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/canadian-forces-decorations-2010.pdf>; and Canadian Army, “General Order 22 – Medals,” 01 March 1899, [https://archive.org/details/cihm\\_55587/page/n7/mode/2up](https://archive.org/details/cihm_55587/page/n7/mode/2up).

<sup>72</sup> Veterans Affairs Canada, “Orders and Decorations - Canadian Victoria Cross Recipients,” last accessed 30 April 2021, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/medals-decorations/canadian-victoria-cross-recipients>.

honours multiple times.<sup>73</sup> Additionally, 4,336 members of the Canadian military were admitted into the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire until the creation of the Order of Military Merit in 1972.<sup>74</sup>

While the British Imperial system of honours was a sufficient means to provide a spectrum recognition to members of Canada's military forces during the First World War, the limitations of not having a distinct and separate Canadian system became evident in the period immediately following the conflict. "Canada's relationship with honours from the end of the First World War through the creation of the Order of Canada in 1967 is a story of controversy, discontent, and obfuscation."<sup>75</sup> The consequences of the Nickle Resolution (1919) and the Report of the Special Committee on Honours and Titles resulted in the Canadian military having no way to recognize meritorious or distinguished service until the mid-1930s.<sup>76</sup> Consequently, during the interwar years, only 15 Canadian military personnel were recognized with honours (mostly Order of the British Empire) shared across the three services and ranks.<sup>77</sup>

With the start of the Second World War in 1939 and Canada's involvement in the allied effort, the only honours accessible to the Canadian military were long service and good conduct, as well as any campaign medals that would be awarded for participation. This deficiency made Canada "the only belligerent that did not permit the bestowal of honours for gallantry, bravery or meritorious service."<sup>78</sup> Well aware of the restriction to bestow honours on Canadians for the war

---

<sup>73</sup> Blatherwick, *Canadian Orders, Decorations, and Medals*, Chapter 17.

<sup>74</sup> McCreery, *The Order of Military Merit*, 19.

<sup>75</sup> McCreery, *Fifty Years Honours Canadians – The Order of Canada, 1967-2017*, 13.

<sup>76</sup> The Nickle Resolution (1919) directed that Canadian could no longer accept or hold knighthoods and peerages from foreign countries, most notably the United Kingdom; and Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/JD-004 The Meritorious Service Cross 1984-2014, (Ottawa: Director of History and Recognition, 2014), 4, <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/meritorious-service-cross.pdf>.

<sup>77</sup> McCreery, *The Order of Military Merit*, 30.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

efforts, King George VI, as sovereign of Canada, became involved, leading to the Special Committee on Honours and Decorations of 1942 that eventually allowed the flow of honours to return.<sup>79</sup> The notable exception being the adherence to the Nickle Resolution that excluded Canadians from being admitted into the highest levels of orders of chivalry that granted knighthoods.<sup>80</sup> Nevertheless, the return of orders and decorations to the Canadian military during the Second World War “reminding many of the important role official recognition could play in fostering unity and common purpose.”<sup>81</sup> However, with the end of the Second World War, the availability of Imperial honours to Canadian military personnel all but ceased, except for long service and good conduct medals.<sup>82</sup> The flow of honours did not resume again until 1951 with the start of the Korean War, adopting a similar approach to the 1942 decision to allow personnel to receive orders and decorations for their war service.<sup>83</sup> Members of the Canadian military were once again able to “accept Imperial gallantry decorations and the Imperial non-titular levels of the orders of chivalry.”<sup>84</sup>

### **Canadian Honours for Canadians**

In the decade following the Korean War, the Canadian government laid the groundwork to create an independent honours system. While proposals for an Order of Canada dated as far back as 1942, it was not established until 1967 following decades of debate and delay.<sup>85</sup> Initially, the Order of Canada existed only as a single-level order. A Medal of Courage accompanied it to

---

<sup>79</sup> McCreery, *Fifty Years Honours Canadians – The Order of Canada, 1967-2017*, 26-27.

<sup>80</sup> McCreery, *The Canadian Forces' Decoration*, 22.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> It is worth noting that in the period leading up to the Korean War, the Canadian Forces' Decoration was first created to replace the plethora of Imperial long service and good conduct awards. The first medals were presented to Canadian Forces personnel in 1951, following decades of work to institute the honour.

<sup>83</sup> McCreery, *The Order of Military Merit*, 43.

<sup>84</sup> McCreery, *The Canadian Honours System*, 39.

<sup>85</sup> Christopher McCreery, *Fifty Years Honours Canadians – The Order of Canada, 1967-2017*, 31.

replace all imperial gallantry and bravery decorations (below the Victoria Cross and George Cross) and a Medal of Service for “achievement and merit of a high degree especially to Canada or humanity at large.”<sup>86</sup> With the creation of the Order of Canada and associated gallantry and merit awards, Canada had finally established the basis for an independent honour system on the centennial of the nation's Confederation.

Despite finally establishing an independent Canadian Honours System, the limitations of the single-level Order of Canada, gallantry, and merit award were soon identified. As these awards were designed to recognize the accomplishments of civilian and military personnel, awards to military personnel were minimal. The CAF “felt as though they were not receiving their share of appointments to the Order of Canada – with military appointments almost entirely going to retired generals and flag officers.”<sup>87</sup> As well, the consolidation of all gallantry awards into a single level did not afford the necessary flexibility to suitably differentiate acts of valour on the battlefield. Moreover, there was an absence of bravery decorations to provided recognition during peacetime or when not engaging an adversary. For the CAF, the new system of honours was void of many of the core elements of recognition that were well understood and integrated into Canada's military history and heritage.

In 1972, following the acceptance of the recommendations made in the *Report of the Working Group on Honours*, the young Canadian Honours System underwent a significant overhaul to improve the national recognition framework. The result was a restructuring of the Order of Canada into three levels to include Member, Officer, and Companion and the creation of three new bravery decorations – the Cross of Valour, the Star of Courage, and the Medal of

---

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 53-54.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 81.



Bravery. Most significantly, for the CAF, the Order of Military Merit (ORMM) was established. This new order included three levels – Member, Officer, and Commander, similar to the newly restructured Order of Canada. The intent of the ORMM being established “to provide a means of recognizing conspicuous merit and exceptional service by members of the Canadian Armed Forces, both Regular and Reserves.”<sup>88</sup> To promote the integrity of the order, appointments and promotions originating exclusively from within the military chain of command and were not influenced by political meddling.<sup>89</sup> Together these significant changes and expansion to the honour system resulted in establishing “a family of Canadian honours bound together by certain common design elements and each comprising three grades.”<sup>90</sup>

A decade later, further expansion to the Canadian Honours System, further modifications to specifically meet the recognition requirement of the profession of arms. While the multi-levelled ORMM and tiered system of bravery decorations filled gaps within the CAF recognition framework, there lacked a mechanism to reward short-term meritorious service and military valour in the face of an armed adversary. The first new addition came with the creation of the Meritorious Service Cross (MSC) in 1984 to recognize “short-term outstanding achievement.”<sup>91</sup> Unlike the British decorations that it emulated, the honour is accessible to all ranks within the CAF. The regulations specified that the MSC “shall be open to all ranks for the performance of a military deed or military activity in an outstandingly professional manner of such a rare and high standard that it brings considerable benefit to, or reflects great credit on, the Canadian Forces. . .”<sup>92</sup> In 1991, the MSC was joined with an accompanying award, the Meritorious

---

<sup>88</sup> McCreery, *The Order of Military Merit*, 77.

<sup>89</sup> McCreery, *Fifty Years Honours Canadians – The Order of Canada, 1967-2017*, 85.

<sup>90</sup> McCreery, *The Order of Military Merit*, 76.

<sup>91</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/JD-004 *The Meritorious Service Cross 1984-2014*, 7.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

Service Medal (MSM), to recognize similar short-term merit, but to a lesser degree.<sup>93</sup> Finally, starting in 1992, Canada re-introduced military valour decorations in the form of three different honours consisting of the VC, Star of Military Valour, and Medal of Military Valour.<sup>94</sup> The most notable of new decorations was the VC, replicated the British version (with only a minor change to the insignia inscription to Latin to reflect the bilingual nature of Canada), due to the prominence of the decoration's history within Canada.<sup>95</sup> Overall, the addition of decorations for meritorious service and military valour to the Canadian Honour System was a significant achievement for the CAF that reflects the historic recognition framework of the formerly used British honour system, but from a distinctly Canadian perspective.

### **International Organization Medals**

With the termination of hostilities and the ending of the Second World War, the United Nations (UN) was founded in 1945 with an overall objective the “maintenance of international peace and security.”<sup>96</sup> For a minimum of one-day of service on or over the Korean peninsula or 28-days offshore in a designated zone in 1950-1953, the awarding of the Korea Medal provided British and Commonwealth recognition.<sup>97</sup> However, given that the war was initiated under the auspices of the UN, that organization also awarded their own medal to all participants. The United Nations Korea Medal recognized 30-days of service on the Korean peninsula and other adjacent area for service between 1950 and 1954. Despite not being an official British or

---

<sup>93</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/JD-006 *The Meritorious Service Medal 1991-2016*, (Ottawa: Director of History and Recognition, 2016), 43, <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/meritorious-service-medal.pdf>.

<sup>94</sup> Ken Reynolds, *Pro Valore: Canada's Victoria Cross* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2008), 37, <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/popular/victoria-cross.pdf>.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>96</sup> United Nations, “How Does the United Nations Maintain International Peace and Security?” last accessed 30 April 2021, <https://www.un.org/en/sections/what-we-do/maintain-international-peace-and-security/index.html>.

<sup>97</sup> McCreery, *The Canadian Honours System*, 183-184.

Commonwealth honour, the UN medal was accepted and integrated into the order of precedence to be worn alongside the Korea Medal. This initiated a trend of accepting future UN mission and other international organization medals for wear with official British honours. All UN medals onwards have followed a simplified design, derived from the UN Korea Medal and the UN Emergency Force Medal whereby all medals share the same design and are only differentiated by the ribbon which typically incorporates colours representative of the location of where mission occurs. Similarly, another major international organization - the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) - introduced its first medal in 1994, following the organization's engagement in the Former Yugoslavia.<sup>98</sup> Since then, several NATO medals have been created and awarded to participating forces who served in NATO-led operations. While these medals are not an official honour of any one particular state, UN and NATO awards are adopted by a majority of nations and worn in conjunction with official honours. In the case of the British and Canadian honours systems, they are frequently used as the primary means of recognition and no specific British or Canadian medal is created. However, New Zealand, Australia, and most other nations award a specific national honour and accept the UN or NATO medal into their recognition systems.

## **TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY CANADIAN HONOURS**

In 2001, the start of Canada's large-scale deployment to Afghanistan as part of the international campaign against terrorism generated an urgent requirement to recognize CAF personnel for their contributions. With changes made to the Canadian Honours System throughout the 1970s to early 1990s, a full spectrum of awards was available to recognize

---

<sup>98</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "The History of NATO Medals," last accessed 30 April 2021, [https://www.nato.int/ims/docu/history\\_nato\\_medals.pdf](https://www.nato.int/ims/docu/history_nato_medals.pdf).

military valour, bravery, meritorious service, and devotion to duty. However, there was still the requirement to create a campaign or other similar medals to promote honourable service and recognize the operational risk and hardship of members deployed away from Canada. Given the nature of service being performed, the South West Asia Service Medal (SWASM) was proposed by the CAF and approved by the Queen of Canada in 2002.<sup>99</sup> As with the Somalia Medal created in 1996, the SWASM eligibility criteria specified the requirement for “honourable service” to be rendered to qualify for the award in addition to time and location parameters.<sup>100</sup> Unlike previous CAF operations in the decades proceeding, whereby most Canadian personnel were deployed to serve within the campaign ‘area of operations,’ an extensive global support and sustainment network was necessary to meet the high operational tempo of counter-insurgency warfare.<sup>101</sup> As a result, the SWASM was awarded to CAF members supporting Afghanistan operations for at least 90 days in various locations throughout the United States, Germany, Turkey, North Africa, and others.<sup>102</sup> This enabled broader recognition to those deployed and supported the operations, yet not directly in harm's way but still under a degree of full-time operational intensity. To distinguish those who served in the active theatre of operations for at least 30 days, the ‘Afghanistan Bar’ was awarded the medal to provide a subtle yet significant difference in recognition. This concept continues to be used today for the British Operational Service Medal since 2000, thereby promoting a concept of *one operation, one team, one medal*.<sup>103</sup> Overall the

---

<sup>99</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/JD-010, *Canadian Honours and Awards Bestowed Upon Members of the Canadian Armed Forces*, Annex M - Appendix 1: “South-West Asia Service Medal (SWASM) regulations, 2009.”

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>101</sup> Department of National Defence, “The Canadian Armed Forces Legacy in Afghanistan,” last updated 21 September 2018, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/recently-completed/canadian-armed-forces-legacy-afghanistan.html>.

<sup>102</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/JD-010, *Canadian Honours and Awards Bestowed Upon Members of the Canadian Armed Forces*, Annex M - Appendix 2: “South-West Asia Service Medal (SWASM) Eligible Service for Award of Medal,” 9M 2-1.

<sup>103</sup> Ministry of Defence, JSP 761 *Honours and Awards in the Armed Forces*, 8A-2.

rapid creation and introduction of the SWASM was a most suitable honour to recognize all who served in the initial phases of Canada's Afghanistan campaign while respecting many of the longstanding design and administrative traditions of past service medals.

The creation of honours to recognize honourable service in wars and other conflicts is a complex and time-consuming endeavour. The various steps required to complete from initial design to final production can take anywhere between 12 and 18 months or longer.<sup>104</sup> Additional steps such as engraving with the recipient's details, distribution, and scheduling of presentation ceremonies can add several months to the process. Moreover, for missions where the number of CAF members participating is low, the effort to produce recognition could be considered an inefficient use of resources. A solution put forth by the CAF led to the creation of two new honours in 2004, the General Campaign Star (GCS) and the General Service Medal (GSM). In a similar manner to the various British GSMs used since the 1800s, these awards would use specialized 'bars' to denote specific missions or locations.<sup>105</sup> The new GCS is reminiscent of previous medals awarded to Canadians, such as the 1914-15 Star and the various Second World War campaign Stars. As with these previous awards, the GCS would recognize service and the risk and rigour experienced on expeditionary missions in the presence of an armed adversary. The medal was initially issued with a bar, and subsequent recognition would come in the form of additional bars to be attached to the ribbon, similar to the Special Service Medal. Initially, two bars were approved; 'Allied Force' for service with the NATO air campaign over Kosovo in 1999 and 'ISAF+FIAS' for service with the NATO International Security Assistance Force

---

<sup>104</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/JD-010, Canadian Honours and Awards Bestowed Upon Members of the Canadian Armed Forces, 4.

<sup>105</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/JD-010, Canadian Honours and Awards Bestowed Upon Members of the Canadian Armed Forces, Annex N: "General Campaign Star and General Service Medal (GCS and GSM)."

(ISAF) in Afghanistan since 2003.<sup>106</sup> For the first time since the Korea Medal, Canadian medals would be issued with each recipient's personal identification engraved, thereby creating a more personalized and potent form of recognition.

The introduction of the GSM provided a type of recognition that is unique within the Commonwealth, as the medal is intended primarily to recognize deployed personnel providing support functions from outside of the mission area of operations. As an accompanying award to the GCS, the regulation specifies that it is intended for those "who deploy outside of Canada - but not necessarily into a theatre of operations - to provide direct support, on a full-time basis, to operations in the presence of an armed enemy" and there is a "credible risk, threat, hardship or operational intensity."<sup>107</sup> The same two bars were awarded for the GSM, with the intent to award future mission bars. Together, the two awards provided an efficient mechanism to provide distinct recognition and to distinguish the type of service rendered during a specific campaign. For example, personnel deployed to Kandahar, Afghanistan, were issued the GCS with the ISAF+FIAS bar, whereas personnel deployed to Dubai, The United Arab Emirates, to provide direct support to the Afghanistan-based mission were issued the GSM with the ISAF+FIAS bar. Overall, these new awards now provided the CAF with a more efficient and distinct mechanism to recognize all personnel who deploy to war-like campaigns and operations.

---

<sup>106</sup> McCreery, *The Canadian Honours System*, 415

<sup>107</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/JD-010, *Canadian Honours and Awards Bestowed Upon Members of the Canadian Armed Forces*, Annex N: "General Campaign Star and General Service Medal (GCS and GSM)."

## Changes to CAF Overseas Recognition

In 2010, following a major internal review, the CAF announced a series of significant changes to the CAF overseas recognition framework.<sup>108</sup> Building on the introduction of the SWASM, GCS, and GSM for the ongoing campaign against international terrorism, changes were implemented to “simplify and standardize overseas service recognition for members of the CAF and the defence team.”<sup>109</sup> During the review that led to the changes, the CAF indicated that “time was taken to safeguard the integrity of the Canadian Honours System and maintain the significance and purpose of the associated medals.”<sup>110</sup> Of particular note, these changes were implemented during a period of high operational tempo with the ongoing Canadian mission in Afghanistan, highlighting the responsiveness of DH&R to adjust and create policies to meet the recognition requirements of the CAF. Following these recognition changes, the amount of campaign, service medals, and rotation bars within the Canadian Honours System grew considerably. The first of these changes made recognition theatre-based rather than specific to mission name or service location. Given that the CAF was conducting multiple concurrent missions in the Middle East as part of the international campaign against terrorism, recognition by the geographical parameters allowed for a simplified approach. This change led to the modification of the GCS and GSM to discontinue mission/location bars and transition to the use of specific theatre-based ribbons, similar to UN medals and the British campaign stars of the Second World War. Consequently, three new GCS and GSM awards were created with different ribbons for each. For example, a member who was awarded both the Allied Force and ISAF+FIAS bars for their GCS would now have two medals with two distinct ribbons as the

---

<sup>108</sup> Department of National Defence, “Canadian Forces General Message CANFORGEN 066/10 - New Overseas Recognition Framework.”

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*

GCS-Allied Force and the GCS-South-West Asia. Within the Commonwealth, this approach to 'same medal different ribbon' has been applied to the British OSM, Australian OSM, and the New Zealand GSM, setting the trend of increasing the number of different medals available to members of the armed forces for service on expeditionary missions.

Another significant change to the honours system related to the desire to recognize multiple deployment rotations of the same campaign. This requirement stemmed from the ongoing mission in Afghanistan since 2001, whereby it was becoming increasingly common for CAF members to have served multiple tours yet were not afforded any subsequent deployment recognition beyond their initial award qualification. With CAF members familiar with the multi-tour numeral designation insignia available for UN, NATO, and other international operations, such devices were never previously integrated into Canadian or Commonwealth medals. "When it was stated that no such mechanism for Canadian awards, much dissatisfaction ensued."<sup>111</sup> The closest parallel being the British Accumulated Campaign Service Medal (ACSM) and subsequent ACSM 2011 instituted to recognize a minimum amount of cumulative service days attained over multiple deployments.<sup>112</sup> The solution implemented for Canada resulted in the adoption of "elegant and sensible" rotation bars to denote each subsequent accumulation of 180 days of service beyond the initial qualification period for the specified medal.<sup>113</sup> While the bars did not necessarily denote the number of deployments a recipient completed, they did enable an effective means to recognize a benchmark quantity of days served in theatre. For example, a member deployed to Afghanistan that qualified for the GSM-SWA could have two bars on the

---

<sup>111</sup> McCreery, *The Canadian Honours System*, 411.

<sup>112</sup> Ministry of Defence, "Qualifying time for Accumulated Campaign Service Medal reduced," 11 August 2011, last accessed 30 April 2021, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/qualifying-time-for-accumulated-campaign-service-medal-reduced>.

<sup>113</sup> McCreery, *The Canadian Honours System*, 411.



medal, denoting at least 390 (30+180+180) days total in theatre.<sup>114</sup> The rotation bars were applied to the SWASM, GCS, GSM, and eventually the OSM to promote consistency across the honours system.

In addition to the extensive adjustments to existing honours, a new award was introduced to fill overseas recognition gaps for CAF and other deployed Canadian government personnel. The Operational Service Medal (OSM) was instituted in 2010 to recognize those “who serve or provide support to an overseas operation for which no UN or NATO medals have been created.”<sup>115</sup> As well, it also serves to reward those Canadians who deploy in support of coalition operations that are ineligible for UN and NATO medals due to reporting chains.<sup>116</sup> This new medal provides a distinction of operations between the war-like GCS/GSM and the Special Service Medal, and to be eligible for the award, the service must be of a full-time nature, and there must be a “certain level of risk, threat, hardship or operational intensity.”<sup>117</sup> Like the GCS and GSM awards, the OSM would utilize a standard medal design that would include “theatre or task-specific ribbons,” of which six have been created thus far, with additional ribbons added as required in the future.<sup>118</sup> The obverse design of the medal features the effigy of the Queen of Canada, with the reverse featuring a global projection of the planet to represent the overseas

---

<sup>114</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/JD-010, *Canadian Honours and Awards Bestowed Upon Members of the Canadian Armed Forces*, 4-1.

<sup>115</sup> McCreery, *The Canadian Honours System*, 425.

<sup>116</sup> An example of this type of occurrence: a Canadian military police officer deployed to Mali in support of the UN mission, yet remains under the control of the CAF contingent and not assigned to the UN directly.

<sup>117</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/JD-010, *Canadian Honours and Awards Bestowed Upon Members of the Canadian Armed Forces*, Annex O: “The Operational Service Medal (OSM).”

<sup>118</sup> McCreery, *The Canadian Honours System*, 425.

nature of operations being recognized, a crown to reinforce service to the Canadian Crown, and “branches of laurel and oak leaves symbolize honour, strength and victory.”<sup>119</sup>

### **Generic ‘Expedition’ Versions of Medals**

Among the several additions and modifications to the CAF overseas recognition framework, a new flexible variant of awards was created that remains unique to Canada to this day. While the adoption of the ‘one medal - different ribbons’ approach provided an efficient means of creating and standardizing recognition, there remained the potential for CAF members to be excluded from being recognized for their service. For example, CAF members on exchange with the US and deployed to serve in the Iraq War (2003-2011) were not eligible to receive the US Iraq Campaign Medal, and the area of operations was outside of the geographical boundaries of the GCS-SWA qualification criteria.<sup>120</sup> To provide recognition of “service in missions which Canada makes a small contribution of personnel,” expedition variants of the GCS, GSM, OSM, and SSM were created.<sup>121</sup> Specifically for the OSM and SSM, this award created eligibility for a long list of expeditionary deployments dating back to 2003 and 2007, respectfully. Today, the expedition variants of awards are among the most frequently awarded to CAF personnel for ongoing operations around the globe. As a result of the introduction of the expedition variants across the range of campaign and service medals, CAF service personnel serving on almost any mission outside of Canada can now be recognized for their service.

---

<sup>119</sup> The Governor General of Canada, “Operational Service Medal,” Registration of Insignia: 15 September 2010, last accessed 01 May 2021, <https://reg.gg.ca/heraldry/pub-reg/projectpic.asp?lang=e&ProjectID=2066&ProjectElementID=7241>.

<sup>120</sup> McCreery, *The Canadian Honours System*, 419.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*

## Qualification Criteria Amendments (2010-2020)

Determining the qualification criteria for honours is challenging because every campaign will be different in some way. While countries such as the UK have instituted different criteria based on the phase of the mission served, driven by increased or decrease in hostilities for the adversary or changes to the operational environment, for the most part, Canada has implemented standardized criteria.<sup>122</sup> As part of the 2010 overseas recognition changes, the SWASM, GCS, GSM, and OSM qualification periods were standardized to 30 days cumulative service.<sup>123</sup> Almost a decade later, the qualification periods for medals were changed in 2018 and 2020 in response to a requirement contained in *Strong, Secured, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy* (SSE) "to ensure military members' service to Canada is recognized in a more timely and appropriate manner."<sup>124</sup> Retroactive to 2014, the qualification days criteria were reduced from 30 to 14 for the GCS, from 30 to 21 for the GSM and OSM, and from 180 to 45 for the SSM 'NATO' bar and 'Expedition' bar.<sup>125</sup> These changes are particularly noteworthy as the new GCS criteria make it easier for aircrew to qualify for the award. The new SSM criteria make the recognition available to personnel who participate in shorter duration deployments that fell short of the original 180 days.

Amendments were also made to the Sacrifice Medal to broaden the eligibility requirements for CAF personnel who have been killed while on duty or injured during overseas

---

<sup>122</sup> To qualify for the British OSM-Afghanistan, personnel must have served continuously for either 5, 21, or 30 days, depending on the operation and specified dates served. For Canada, one notable exception being the multiplication factor for the SSM-NATO for select missions/activities during the Cold War, which was discontinued in 2018 following the reduction from 180 days to 45 days.

<sup>123</sup> Department of National Defence, "Canadian Forces General Message CANFORGEN 066/10 - New Overseas Recognition Framework."

<sup>124</sup> Department of National Defence, "Changes to Service Medals Announced," last updated 08 January 2020, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/maple-leaf/defence/2020/01/changes-service-medals-announced.html>.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*

operations. Instituted in 2008, the Sacrifice Medal replaces the Wound Stripe and is unique within the Commonwealth, reflecting a commonality with the US Purple Heart and the France Medal for the War Wounded. While the criteria were expanded in 2009 to include all service-related deaths, further clarification in 2014 was given regarding injuries sustained irrespective of location or operations. Additional guidelines ensured that the medal remains a "combat award" for those who sustained physical or psychological injuries resulting from being directly targeted with hostile action from an adversary or friendly fire.<sup>126</sup> Furthermore, the guidelines clarify who may be excluded from the qualification criteria, such as first responders arriving after an attack or personnel that witnessed the action remotely, such as via camera or other sensors.<sup>127</sup>

## CONCLUSION

As early as the seventieth century, military personnel serving in Canada have been recognized with official honours, yet Canada did not establish its own honours system until modern times. Initial efforts in 1967 to provide the CAF with a suitable recognition framework has led to the continued expansion and growth of the Canadian Honours System that now includes a range of orders, decorations, and medals to promote and reward members of the profession of arms. Since the start of Canada's participation in the global campaign to combat terrorism, changes to the methods by which expeditionary warfare is conducted have resulted in creating several new campaign medals and frequent adjustments to qualification criteria that are unique to the CAF. Overall, since the establishment of an independent system of honours in Canada, the CAF has regained a comprehensive recognition framework that promotes and

---

<sup>126</sup> Department of National Defence, "Canadian Forces General Message CANFORGEN 185/14 – Sacrifice Medal - Additional Guidelines," Chief of Military Personnel, 20 October 2014.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

rewards exceptional behaviours that reflect the military ethos represented by the attributes of duty, loyalty, integrity, and courage.

## **CHAPTER 4 – EVALUATION OF THE CANADIAN ARMED FORCES RECOGNITION FRAMEWORK**

### **INTRODUCTION**

With the founding of an independent national honours system, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) have significantly benefited from the deliberate growth and expansion of recognition available to reward various attributes of military service. The introduction of the Order of Military Merit (ORMM), military valour and bravery decorations, meritorious service decorations, and a wide range of campaign and service medals enables comprehensive recognition and reinforcement of CAF military ethos across all ranks, genders, occupations, and types of service. At the same time, the Canadian Honours System still respects many of the longstanding practices inherited from the British/Imperial system while also applying many unique features and practices to reflect Canadian culture, history, values, and identity. Nevertheless, the system is constantly evolving by creating new honours and adjusting qualification criteria to ensure the recognition of military service in modern wars and conflicts remains effective. Beginning in the early 2000s, extensive changes to the CAF overseas recognition framework to improve the flexibility and efficiency of practices resulted in the introduction of several new campaign and service medals and criteria adjustments. While motivations for modernizing the recognition framework are justified by the desire to “simplify and standardize” practices, the proliferation of new medals, bars, and ribbons, combined with frequent modification to criteria, have created an overly complicated system that risks jeopardizing the value of honours to the profession of arms.

This chapter evaluates the Canadian Honours System from the perspective of the CAF to identify deficiencies within the current recognition framework. Given the extensive range of

orders, decorations, and medals available to members of the profession of arms, a complete assessment of all current honours is beyond the limitations of this essay. Therefore, the focus will be limited to evaluating the range of campaign and service medals introduced or modified since the early 2000s. These medals have been selected as they are by far the most commonly issued honours within the CAF, with many personnel now qualifying to receive at least one campaign or service medal during their careers. Moreover, these honours are of particular interest. Many of the solutions implemented are unique to Canada and break several of the longstanding recognition traditions inherited from the British system. Using the six guiding principles for creating and modifying official honours in Canada, a comparative analysis of the most commonly awarded campaign and service medals will identify several recognition deficiencies created due to recent changes related to the applicability, consistency, and accessibility of honours. Additionally, examples of the British, Australian, and New Zealand honours systems will be integrated throughout to provide insight into how other like-minded Commonwealth nations have modernized their honours systems to respond to similar demands of modern military service. Overall, this assessment will reveal the many positive changes made to the CAF overseas recognition framework; that being said, many of the solutions implemented have generated new challenges that now risk diminishing the value of honours to the profession of arms.

## **PRINCIPLES OF INSTITUTING HONOURS**

Canadian Forces Queen's Regulations and Orders (QR&O) outlines the process for the CAF to recommend to the Canadian Forces Honours Policy Committee for the creation of Canadian honours to provide suitable recognition in the performance of military service. Nascent within these regulations are the six principles to be observed in creating and modifying honours

to ensure processes adhere to the policy and “prevent the creation of new honours from diminishing the worth of existing Canadian honours.”<sup>128</sup> Like all human endeavours, the process to create new honours or amend existing regulations is subject to positive and negative influences such as bias, emotions, history, traditions, and knowledge. The principles listed in Table 4.1 provide a method to assess the impact of recent changes to the CAF overseas recognition framework.

**Table 4.1 – Principles to be Observed in Instituting Canadian Honours<sup>129</sup>**

<b>Principle</b>	<b>Definition as Related to Instituting Honours</b>
1. Compatibility	Any specific proposal must be compatible with the existing system of Canadian honours.
2. Duplication	No new military honour should duplicate the existing national honours.
3. Eligibility	No new military honour should adversely affect the eligibility of military personnel for existing awards.
4. Respect	Fundamental to the concept of honours is that they carry prestige. Their <i>raison-d'être</i> is to recognize an accomplishment commanding the respect of members of the military, the general public and the person honoured.
5. Equitability	Non-recognition of this factor could produce the negative effect of dissatisfaction rather than improve morale. If an honour is bestowed for duty under certain circumstances, similar duties and circumstances should also be rewarded.
6. Credibility	This factor is related to respect. To be credible, an honour must represent a worthy endeavour. It must not represent routine duty.

<sup>128</sup> Department of National Defence, *Queen's Regulations and Orders (QR&O)*, Volume I - Chapter 18 Honours (18.02 – Policy Aims), last updated 24 November 2017, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/policies-standards/queens-regulations-orders/vol-1-administration/ch-18-honours.html>.

<sup>129</sup> Source: Department of National Defence, *Queen's Regulations and Orders (QR&O)*, Volume I - Chapter 18 Honours (18.02 – Policy Aims), last updated 24 November 2017, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/policies-standards/queens-regulations-orders/vol-1-administration/ch-18-honours.html>.



Within the Canadian Honours System, campaign and service medals are the most common type of honour bestowed on military personnel.<sup>130</sup> The vast majority of CAF personnel will never be inducted into the Order of Military Merit or earn a decoration for meritorious service, bravery, or valour. Nevertheless, CAF members are frequently recognized for their long service and good conduct to the nation and their service on expeditionary operations around the globe. The Canadian Forces' Decoration (CD), first awarded in 1951, was unique in the Commonwealth. It provides a single medal to replace a range of eight long service and good conduct medals based on service, component, and rank.<sup>131</sup> For some CAF members, the CD is the only medal they will ever receive during their careers.<sup>132</sup> Beyond long service and good conduct awards, campaign and operational service medals have historically been the most accessible honours for military personnel. While orders and decorations hold seniority in order of precedence and convey considerable significance due to their inherent rarity, medals awarded to recognize participation in expeditionary military operations exude considerable importance and significance to the recipient. Receiving an honour for campaign or operational service allows the member to display the fact they have deployed and served under conditions of risk and hardship for a specified duration, which is an important facet in military culture and especially in the context of fulfilling one's duty. Moreover, as an object, the medal itself contains significant symbolic heraldic features to associate the nature, location, and even the intensity of military operations. In many ways, medals communicate the details of the recipients' career, experiences, and potentially hardships and sacrifices on expeditionary missions.

---

<sup>131</sup> McCreery, *The Canadian Forces' Decoration*, 99-100.

<sup>132</sup> While the name of the CD implies that it is a 'decoration,' the honour is more accurately categorized as a long-service and good-conduct medal.

The Canadian Gulf and Kuwait Medal (1991) was issued to those CAF members who served 30 cumulative days inside the Gulf War theatre of operations between 2 August 1990 and 27 June 1991; a silver bar was also awarded for the medal to distinguish those who participated in the hostilities between 16 January 1991 and 3 March 1991.<sup>133</sup> An individual who wears this medal displays that they were one of the 3,000 CAF members of an exclusive cohort that served during the active phase of the Gulf War. Even the first campaign medal created for Canada, the North West Canada Medal 1885, was a distinct medal issued to all participants, with additional recognition given to those who served during key battles through the addition of the Saskatchewan Clasp.<sup>134</sup> These distinctive medals and bars highlight the requirement to ensure medals represent the ‘who, what, when, where, and why’ of a particular military campaign or operation. Otherwise, the inherent motivational and exclusivity becomes reduced without these features, and the honour will lose its appeal.

The introduction of several new Canadian campaign and service medals starting in 2002 signalled a significant evolution of how CAF members are recognized for expeditionary service. The first of these, the South West Asia Service Medal (SWASM) and associated Afghanistan bar, generally followed longstanding recognition practices reminiscent of past British campaign service medals beginning the early nineteenth century. Likewise, changes to overseas recognition starting in 2004 added the General Campaign Star (GCS) and General Service Medal (GSM), which had many similarities to the British GSMs used to recognize campaign service as far back as the late 1700s. Since 2014, the Special Service Medal (SSM) has returned as a frequently awarded medal to CAF personnel following significant changes to qualifying criteria to the

---

<sup>133</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/AG-001, *Canadian Forces Honours Policy Manual* (Ottawa: Director of History and Recognition, June 2019), “Annex K – Appendix 1 Regulations Governing the Gulf and Kuwait Medal.”

<sup>134</sup> Blatherwick, *Canadian Orders, Decorations, and Medals*, 021-10.

NATO bar and the creation of the Expedition bar. The SSM is unique within The Commonwealth, as the service being recognized is not necessarily dictated by the attributes of risk, rigour, or intensity of operations, but by the service being rendered under “exceptional circumstances.”<sup>135</sup> Another recent addition came with creating the Operational Service Medal (OSM) in 2010 to provide yet even great flexibility in the ability to recognize overseas service. Despite these changes to the honours system, Canada still accepts many UN and NATO medals and integrates them into the Canadian order of precedence; however this practice is not always followed and is highly dependant on the nature of the operation.<sup>136</sup> When taken together, these honours form a tiered system of medals to recognize expeditionary service, summarized as follows:

- General Campaign Star (GCS): for war or warlike combat in the presence of an armed enemy (e.g. service in Afghanistan against the Taliban insurgency);
- General Service Medal (GSM): for directly supporting/contributing to the war or warlike actions but still under a degree of "credible risk, threat, hardship or operational intensity" (e.g. service in Qatar supporting operations in Afghanistan);
- Operational Service Medal (OSM): for "operations involving risk, threat, hardship or operational intensity but not in combat with an enemy" (e.g. peacekeeping, peace enforcement, anti-piracy, etc.); and
- Special Service Medal (SSM): for “operations or operational support where there may not necessarily be a risk, threat, hardship or operational intensity but where the service is performed under exceptional circumstances.”
- International Organization Medals: such as UN and NATO medals, may be awarded and accepted by CAF members for wear with Canadian honours instead of the GCS, GSM, OSM, or SSM. The requirements for these medals vary significantly, as determined by the issuing organization’s regulations.

---

<sup>135</sup> Department of National Defence, “Special Service Medal (SSM),” last updated 06 January 2020, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/medals/medals-chart-index/special-service-medal-ssm.html>.

<sup>136</sup> Typically, Canada accepts all UN mission medals for acceptance and wear; however, for NATO medals, the practice is much less consistent, given that CAF contribution is usually significant to warrant the creation of a specific Canadian honour.

This current system of overseas recognition is noteworthy, given that in previous CAF expeditionary operations, only one medal would be issued to all participants (e.g., Gulf and Kuwait Medal 1991). Table 4.2 provides a recent example of how the current tiered system of how the four different medals are applied to recognize various overseas service as part of Operation IMPACT, “Canada’s whole-of-government approach to the Middle East,” ongoing since 2014.<sup>137</sup>

**Table 4.2 – Canadian Campaign and Service Medals for Operation IMPACT<sup>138</sup>**

<b>Honour</b>	<b>Justifications</b>	<b>Service Locations</b>	<b>Days to Qualify</b>
General Campaign Star - Expedition	Risk, threat, hardship, exposure to enemy	Iraq, Syria	14
General Service Medal - Expedition	Direct support to forces exposed to enemy, credible risk, threat, hardship, operational intensity	Kuwait, Qatar, United Arab Emirates	21
Operational Service Medal - Expedition	Risk, threat, hardship, operational intensity	Jordan, Lebanon	21
Special Service Medal - Expedition Bar	Service performed under exceptional circumstances, from outside of Canada	United Kingdom, United States of America	45

## **Compatibility**

The introduction of new medals must be compatible with the existing system to avoid disrupting the established recognition framework or diminishing the value of other honours. The creation of the GCS and GSM ‘team’ of medals in 2004 provided a means to distinguish the level of risk and rigour experienced when deployed to conduct war or warlike operations. While previous recognition for similar expeditionary service following the longstanding practise of issuing a single campaign medal to all participants, the GCS and GSM introduced a new method of differentiating the type of service performed and the degree of risk and rigour sustained. As

<sup>137</sup> Department of National Defence, “Operation IMPACT,” last updated 30 March 2021, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/operation-impact.html>.

<sup>138</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/AG-001, Canadian Forces Honours Policy Manual (Ottawa: Director of History and Recognition, June 2019).

these two medals are intended to recognize service in the same operation (e.g. GCS-Allied Force and GSM-Allied Force), members within the same deployed task force may potentially earn different medals.<sup>139</sup> As the GCS is the superior award by design and placement in order of precedence, the use of two different medals creates a recognition division indicating that one group's service is marked superior to another. The potential for further division exists in situations where a force deploys from outside the area of operations to perform its mission against an armed adversary on a periodic or temporary basis. For example, during Operation IMPACT, aircrew based in Kuwait initially qualify for the GSM but are eligible to 'upgrade' to the GCS if they completed the required amount of sorties over Iraq or Syria. While these two medals intend to provide a means to recognize the differing levels of risk and during an operation, the use of distinctly different awards does not follow the established practices within the Canadian Honours System and the principle of compatibility. Commonwealth states for which Queen Elizabeth II is the head of state continue to apply a 'one mission, one team, one medal' philosophy for most of their recognition in war and warlike conditions. Table 4.3 depicts how other honour systems within the Commonwealth have addressed the requirement for differentiating recognition of risk and rigour for the operations in Syria and Iraq against international terrorism. When considering the GCS and GSM applications in current and past CAF operations, these two honours fail to achieve the principle of compatibility given that recognition is segregated, thereby devaluing the GSM (and its recipients) within the recognition framework.

---

<sup>139</sup> Operation ALLIED FORCE was the NATO military operation conducted in 1999 against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia during the Kosovo War.

**Table 4.3 – Commonwealth Recognition for Counter-Terrorism Activities in Syria and Iraq**

<b>Awarding State</b>	<b>Honour type(s)</b>	<b>Service in Iraq and/or Syria</b>	<b>Service outside of Iraq and Syria to directly support operations</b>	<b>Distinguishing feature(s) to indicate deployed location of service</b>
United Kingdom <sup>140</sup>	Operational Service Medal (OSM)	OSM - Iraq and Syria with 'Iraq and Syria' Bar	OSM - Iraq and Syria	Bar affixed to medal
Australia <sup>141</sup>	Operational Service Medal (OSM)	OSM - Greater Middle East Operations	OSM - Greater Middle East Operations	None
New Zealand <sup>142</sup>	General Service Medal (GSM)	GSM - Iraq 2015	GSM - Greater Middle East	Different ribbon
Canada	General Campaign Star (GCS) and General Service Medal (GSM)	GCS - Expedition	GSM - Expedition	Different medal and ribbon

## Duplication

The GCS and GSM are intended to provide more expeditious and flexible recognition to meet the differing levels of risk and rigour experienced by deployed personnel. The first two variants of these medals, established in 2004, recognized participation in the NATO Allied Force operation in Kosovo in 1999 with the GCS/GSM-Allied Force and the ongoing participation in the Afghanistan mission since 2001 with the GCS/GSM -South West Asia (SWA). However, in

<sup>140</sup> Ministry of Defence, “New Medal Awarded to Recognise the Changing Character of Warfare,” last updated 15 February 2019, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-medal-awarded-to-recognise-the-changing-character-of-warfare>.

<sup>141</sup> Governor General of Australia, “Australian Operational Service Medal (Greater Middle East Operation) Instrument 2015” (13 April 2015), 1-2, last accessed 30 April 2021, [https://www.gg.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-01/australian\\_operational\\_service\\_medal\\_greater\\_middle\\_east\\_operation\\_instrument\\_2015\\_-\\_20150413.pdf](https://www.gg.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-01/australian_operational_service_medal_greater_middle_east_operation_instrument_2015_-_20150413.pdf).

<sup>142</sup> Gerry Brownlee, “Recognition for Iraq and Middle East Service,” New Zealand Government, 20 July 2016, <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/recognition-iraq-and-middle-east-service>.

the case of both variants, recognition already existed within the honours system. Personnel who participated in Operation Allied Force were recognized with the NATO Medal for Kosovo (NATO-K) and personnel who participated in the Afghanistan mission with the SWASM. While the NATO-K medal was not specifically a Canadian honour, it was deemed suitable recognition and thus integrated into the Canadian order of precedence, as did other nations such as the UK.<sup>143</sup> As a result, some recipients of the NATO-K were required to return their medals in exchange for the GCS or GSM.<sup>144</sup>

Issues of duplication within the existing Canadian Honours System are also evident with the OSM. The medal was introduced to fill gaps in the recognition framework, specifically for instances where some CAF members did not qualify for UN or NATO medals or for operations where no such international medals are available as humanitarian relief operations. However, Canada possessed an effective honour already in place that provided suitable recognition to fill gaps when needed. The SSM, first awarded in the early 1990s, had various available bars that could be used, and new bars could be created if required. Specifically, the range bars previously created for the medal, including Peace, Humanitas, and NATO, were capable of addressing recognition shortfalls without the need to introduce new medals into the Canadian Honours System. The OSM-Expedition and the OSM-Humanitas simply replaced the previous SSM-Peace and SSM-Humanitas, respectively.<sup>145</sup> Additionally, the Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal (CPSM) is also available to be used as recognition for almost all UN missions and a

---

<sup>143</sup> Ministry of Defence, JSP 761 *Honours and Awards in the Armed Forces*, 8A-8.

<sup>144</sup> Department of National Defence, “General Campaign Star – ALLIED FORCE (GCS-AF),” last updated 01 June 2020, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/medals/medals-chart-index/general-campaign-star-allied-force-gcs-af.html>.

<sup>145</sup> Department of National Defence, “Special Service Medal (SSM),” last updated 06 January 2020, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/medals/medals-chart-index/special-service-medal-ssm.html>.

variety of NATO and other missions led by international organizations.<sup>146</sup> Consequently, the addition of the OSM to the honours system did little to improve recognition practices for the CAF, as it duplicated medals and bars that were already in existence.

## **Eligibility**

For the GCS and GSM created that related to operations in Afghanistan, the medals duplicated the existing SWASM and Afghanistan bar. Moreover, the new awards rendered members ineligible for the SWASM, which had become the established award issued for major operations in Afghanistan, such as Operation MEDUSA, which was “one of the deadliest operations in recent Canadian military history.”<sup>147</sup> The transition from the SWASM and the GCS/GSM occurred while operations were still ongoing, leading to confusion and tension among personnel about the different medals awarded for the same missions.<sup>148</sup> Moreover, some personnel qualified for both the GCS and the SWASM during the same deployment period, thereby receiving double recognition and obfuscating their service as compared to others who served in previous or later rotations. These issues detract from the prestige of the honours and perpetuate misunderstanding about what the medals were awarded to recognize. Matters of eligibility discrepancies resulting from can also be found within the qualification criteria for the OSM, particularly during United Nations (UN) peacekeeping missions. In most cases, depending on the position deployed, some personnel receive the specific UN mission medal while others

---

<sup>146</sup> Department of National Defence, “Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal (CPSM),” last updated 08 October 2018, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/medals/medals-chart-index/canadian-peacekeeping-service-medal-cpsm.html>.

<sup>147</sup> Valour Canada, “Afghanistan – Operation MEDUSA,” last accessed 01 May 2021, <https://valourcanada.ca/military-history-library/operation-medusa/>.

<sup>148</sup> Andrew Russell, “Afghanistan vets slam Canada’s military over failure to award service medal, Global News, last updated 26 September 2017, <https://globalnews.ca/news/3760685/afghanistan-vets-slam-canadas-military-failure-award-service-medal/>.



receive the OSM.<sup>149</sup> Issues regarding eligibility concerns over the OSM were noted within the end of mission report for Operation PRESENCE, Canada's recent contribution to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). The report noted that, "... there is a level of dissatisfaction because the ground perspective is that all are deployed in support of MINUSMA. . . should have received the MINUSMA medal or, the OSM-EXP . . ." highlighting the eligibility concerns raised by the application of the OSM.<sup>150</sup>

Consequently, the introduction of new medals, such as the GCS, GSM, and OSM, has generated a variety of eligibility concerns rewardingly their applicability that detract from the satisfaction of the recipients for which the honours are recognizing.

## Respect

With honours comes prestige, commanding the respect of members of the military, the general public and the person honoured. While individuals can earn respect via a variety of different methods, honours contribute to the gaining of respect by the ability to identify medals and their meanings. Take, for example, a recipient of the Medal of Bravery; members of the military, and the general public will give respect to the individual based on an understanding of the criteria for what the honour was awarded for. The recipient takes pride in wearing the honour for what it represents. This is especially important for campaign and service medals, as such honours must be identifiable for respect to be given and received. The colours of the ribbon and the design of the medallic disc or star differentiate medals so that each honour is easily identifiable. Since the standardization of British campaign medals in the nineteenth century,

---

<sup>149</sup> In addition, personnel also qualify for the Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal for a minimum of 30 days of cumulative service.

<sup>150</sup> C.A. McKenna, *Op PRESENCE (Mali) ROTO 0 – End of Tour Report – 09 July 2018 – 25 January 2019* (Task Force Mali: file 3350-1 Op PRESENCE (TFC), 16 January 2019, G-8/13.

these honours were differentiated and identified by the unique combinations of colours chosen for their ribbons that often had symbolic significance related to where the campaign was fought.

<sup>151</sup> The medallic discs would also further aid in identifying the medal by the inscriptions on the reverse or obverse. The introduction of the GCS, GSM and OSM using the 'same medal different ribbon' format was chosen to make the creation of future awards more efficient by only requiring a new ribbon that “identifies the specific type of service rendered or the geographic area in which the recipient served.”<sup>152</sup> This practice has become popularized in recent years, with the UK, Australia, and New Zealand adopting similar practices. Nevertheless, these honours are undeniably more efficient as they save significant valuable by just adding new ribbons rather than creating an entirely new medal each time honour is required. In Canada, the process of creating new ribbons and modifying criteria can be approved by the Governor General, thus greatly reducing the time required to create new honours.<sup>153</sup>

Since 2010, no additional ribbon variants for the GCS, GSM, or OSM have been created despite CAF participation in various new missions and operations around the globe. Consequently, the chosen solution for many new missions has been to leverage the ‘catch-all’ expedition (EXP) variants consisting of the GCS-EXP, GSM-EXP, OSM-EXP and since 2014, the SSM-EXP. These ‘expedition’ variants were created to cover “smaller operations” where Canada “makes a small contribution of personnel.”<sup>154</sup> The first scenarios where the expedition variants were chosen as the means for recognition was for the small amount of Canadian

---

<sup>151</sup> Forces War Records, “Canada General Service Medal (1866 – 70),” last accessed 30 April 2021, <https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/medals/canada-general-service-medal-1866-70>.

<sup>152</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/AG-001, *Canadian Forces Honours Policy Manual*, “Annex N – Appendix 1 General Campaign Star and General Service Medal (GCS and GSM) regulations (2009), Eligibility.”

<sup>153</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/AG-001, *Canadian Forces Honours Policy Manual*, 4.

<sup>154</sup> McCreery, *The Canadian Honours System*, 416 and 419.

personnel on exchange with the US serving in the 2003 Iraq War. From 2010 to 2013, a total of only 42 GCS-EXP and seven GSM-EXP medals were issued to recognize the small contribution of CAF personnel.<sup>155</sup> However, these variants are now being used to recognize larger operations involving significant contributions of CAF personnel and resources. Since the start of Canada's contribution in the fight to defeat Daesh in Syria and Iraq (Operation IMPACT), at a total of 3,462 GCS-EXP and 4,026 GSM-EXP medals were issued between 2014 and 2019, and continue to be issued to today.<sup>156</sup> The high number of these medals being issued suggests it counters the original intent of the expedition variants to recognize small contributions to small operations. Consequently, the use of these generic non-descript medals for major international operations has the inherently potential to reduce the significance of the honour and ultimately dilute the effects of respect, pride, and history that are represented within campaign and service medals.

Similarly, the SSM-EXP is now among the most commonly used medal to recognize a wide spectrum of CAF deployed service of varying locations, missions, and activities. As the Expedition bar to the SSM provides no distinguishing identification, the specifics of the service are not obvious, as indicated in Table 4.4. In recent years, members of the Canadian Army have communicated their dissatisfaction about the continued use of the expedition variant of the SSM awarded for the ongoing mission in Ukraine, recommendation that "mission-specific bars" be created to provide "unique recognition" reflective of the service being performed.<sup>157</sup> Overall, the SSM-EXP has become an increasingly common award, with a total of 4,365 issued since its

---

<sup>155</sup> Cumulative data taken from Department of National Defence, *Honours and Recognition for the Men and Women of the Canadian Forces* annual reviews: 2010 (p.87), 2011 (p.129), 2012 (pp.85-86), and 2013 (p.59).

<sup>156</sup> Cumulative data are taken from Department of National Defence, *Honours and Recognition for the Men and Women of the Canadian Forces* annual reviews: 2014 (pp.34-35), 2015 (pp. 26-27), 2016 (p.26), 2017 (pp.48-49), 2018 (p.23), and 2019 (p.53).

<sup>157</sup> W.H. Fletcher, *Request for Policy Update on the Implementation of Multiple Rotation Recognition Under The Special Service Medal* (1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group: file 5401-1 (G1 Svcs), 30 January 2018).

introduction in 2014.<sup>158</sup> The continued overuse of the expedition variants of all campaign and service medals indicates a troubling trend whereby most CAF expeditionary service is now being recognized with these non-descript honours that are incapable of indicating the particulars of the service performed.

**Table 4.4 - Selected examples from *Qualification Service List for the Special Service Medal – Expedition Bar*<sup>159</sup>**

Operation/Activity	Service Type	Location	Dates
Op CARIBBE	Counter-drug ops	Multiple locations in the Caribbean	2007 to present
Mission Support	Mission decompression location staff	Cyprus	2007 to present
Op FOUNDATION	Naval support and coordination	Bahrain	2010 to present
Mission Support	Logistical operational support hub	Germany	2010 to present
Op MOBILE	Operational support	Malta	2011
Op JAGUAR	Search and rescue and medical evacuation	Jamaica	2011
Op UNIFIER	Military assistance	Ukraine	2015 to present
Op IMPACT	Cyber support	USA	2015 to present
Op PROJECTION	Naval deployment	Various locations	2017 to 2019
Op PRESENCE	Mission support	Senegal	2018 to present
Op IMPACT	Full motion uninhabited aerial vehicle analysis	UK	2017 to present
Op OPEN SPIRIT	Removal of remnants of war explosives	Baltic Sea	2014 to present

## Equitability

The CAF is “required to achieve excellence across the full spectrum of military operations, from humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to peacekeeping, to combat.” To

<sup>158</sup> Blatherwick, *Canadian Orders, Decorations; and Medals*, 004-73; and Department of National Defence, *Honours and Recognition for the Men and Women of the Canadian Forces 2020* (Ottawa: Director of History and Heritage, March 2021), 32.

<sup>159</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/AG-001, *Canadian Forces Honours Policy Manual*, “Annex P – Appendix 8 Qualifying Service List for the Special Service Medal with Expedition Bar.”

recognize these efforts, the Canadian Honours System employs a ‘spectrum’ of medals for CAF members who serve honourably on operations outside of Canada. Nevertheless, determining the right type of recognition requires careful examination of the elements of risk, threat, hardship, operational intensity, and other factors imposed on deployed personnel when conducting operations. Anytime an honour is bestowed for service under certain circumstances, the expectation is that service under similar circumstances is recognized with a similar reward.<sup>160</sup> Matters of equitability for service rendered continue to challenge honours systems, which often extend to advocacy groups that bring inequities regarding recognition for past operations. Following a review of campaign medals in 2012, the UK established a series of “agreed guidelines on the conditions and the criteria surrounding the award of Military Campaign Medals,” that highlighted,

As part of the consideration of the case for a new campaign medal and the conditions for eligibility for it, and while recognizing that all campaigns have individual specificities, due account shall be taken of the need for consistency in criteria between such a medal and past medals for similar operations, including length of eligible service and geographical limits of eligibility, and for fairness between different groups.<sup>161</sup>

The creation of the Arctic Star and Bomber Command Clasp in 2012 to provide equitable recognition for service in the Second World War introduced new honours nearly 70 years after the events.<sup>162</sup> Another notable example is the Canadian General Service Medal created in 1899 to

---

<sup>160</sup> Department of National Defence, *Queen’s Regulations and Orders (QR&O)*, Volume I - Chapter 18 Honours.

<sup>161</sup> Government of the United Kingdom, “Agreed Guidelines on the Conditions and the Criteria Surrounding the award of Military Campaign Medals,” 2012, last accessed 30 April 2021, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/367159/Guidelines\\_on\\_military\\_campaign\\_medals.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/367159/Guidelines_on_military_campaign_medals.pdf).

<sup>162</sup> Government of Canada, “British Arctic Star Now a Recognized Military Honour in Canada,” Veterans Affairs Canada, last updated 30 April 2014, <https://www.canada.ca/en/news/archive/2014/04/british-arctic-star-now-recognized-military-honour-canada.html>.

provide an equitable reward for service during the Fenian Raids of 1876 and 1870 and the Louis Riel's first rebellion in 1870.<sup>163</sup>

New honours have led to issues of equitability that create dissatisfaction within the CAF. In early 2011, Canada authorized the deployment of Operation MOBILE to contribute to NATO Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR (OUP) in response to the Libyan Civil War. Op MOBILE was initiated with a non-combatant evacuation operation of Canadian designated persons out of Libya and followed with a joint combat operation with maritime and aerospace forces in March 2011.<sup>164</sup> Notable CAF contributions included naval frigates to enforce UN-sanctioned arms embargo, air-to-air refuelling aircraft to support Canadian and coalition combat aircraft, long-range patrol aircraft to conduct intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, and fighter aircraft to perform precision strike missions.<sup>165</sup> Following the conclusion of coalition operations in October 2011, NATO instituted the NATO Non Article 5 Medal for Operation Unified Protector – Libya, which Canada accepted awarded a total of 1573 to members of the CAF.<sup>166</sup>

While Canada has accepted NATO medals in the past, following the GCS, GSM, and OSM creation, the tendency shifted to award Canadian honours on most occasions. For the NATO-led mission in Afghanistan, Canada refused the NATO ISAF medal and instead awarded the GSC-SWA. A representative from the CAF explained the reasoning for the decision, saying "there was a strong feeling among the troops that the medal offered by NATO was not appropriate for the service in question; NATO medals being mostly associated, in their view,

---

<sup>163</sup> Canadian Army, "General Order 22 – Medals."

<sup>164</sup> Karl P. Mueller, *Precision and Purpose: Airpower in the Libyan Civil War* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2015), 242, [https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research\\_reports/RR600/RR676/RAND\\_RR676.pdf](https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR600/RR676/RAND_RR676.pdf).

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 240.

<sup>166</sup> McCreery, *The Canadian Honours System*, 505.

with peacekeeping service in the Balkans and not a combat mission."<sup>167</sup> Moreover, given that GCS and GSM variants were awarded to recognize similar combat service for Operation ALLIED FORCE in 1999 and Operation IMPACT since 2014, equitable recognition with a Canadian honour for OUP is warranted. Consequently, given the availability of Canadian honours for expeditionary service, the continued acceptance of international medals in lieu of Canada awards counters the maintenance of equitable recognition across all similar missions.

### **Credibility**

When an individual is recognized with an honour, it must represent a “worthy endeavour” beyond the call of normal routine duties.<sup>168</sup> Related to the concept of respect noted previously, honours serve as a method to display and communicate one's experiences performed under challenging conditions. The NATO strategy *Recruiting and Retention of Military Personnel* highlights that the importance of honours to be “clearly recognized and viewed with credibility” to contribute positively to the retention of personnel.<sup>169</sup> In the context of war and service medals, determining qualification criteria must be predicated on measurable parameters to ensure that the credibility of the honours system and the individual being recognized.

For some medals, this is relatively straightforward, with qualification criteria clearly defined and understood. The CD recognizes 12 years of long service and good conduct in the CAF, serving as a universally understood distinction by all members. For campaign and service

---

<sup>167</sup> David Pugliese, “Why did Canada refuse NATO’s Afghanistan medal for its troops?” Ottawa Citizen, 17 October 2016, <https://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/defence-watch/why-did-canada-refuse-natos-afghanistan-medal-for-its-troops>.

<sup>168</sup> Department of National Defence, *Queen’s Regulations and Orders (QR&O)*, Volume I - Chapter 18 Honours (18.02 – Policy Aims).

<sup>169</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *NATO Recruiting and Retention of Military Personnel* (Research and Technology Division: AC/323(HFM-107) TP/71, 2007), 2B-14, [https://www.nato.int/issues/women\\_nato/Recruiting%20&%20Retention%20of%20Mil%20Personnel.pdf](https://www.nato.int/issues/women_nato/Recruiting%20&%20Retention%20of%20Mil%20Personnel.pdf).

medals, given the variety of different medals, understanding exactly what the honour represents may not be obvious. While the UK has cemented their policy for war and service medals to be awarded to recognize "the exposure of deployed personnel to a significant degree of risk to life and limb, and to arduous conditions, over what might be expected as part of normal service duties, whether deployed or in the home base," Canada has taken a less restrictive stance regarding this requirement.

The creation of the SSM in 1984 during the final years of the Cold War introduced a new honour that was unique within the Commonwealth. Rather than focusing exclusively on the criteria of risk and rigour, the SSM is awarded for service conducted "under exceptional circumstances, in a clearly defined locality for a specific duration."<sup>170</sup> Individual bars denoting the specific service performed are attached to the medal, of which a total of seven have been created thus far. After considerable delay, the first bars were created in 1992 to recognize various missions and service that was uncharacteristically not combat or warlike. The honour has become one of the most commonly issued, with over 90,000 awarded as of 2019.<sup>171</sup> Among the first bars included the 'Peace' bar for service on UN peacekeeping missions not recognized by a UN or other international medal, the 'ALERT' bar for service at Canadian Forces Station Alert, the 'NATO' bar for NATO service after the Korean War, and the 'HUMANITAS' bar for service in humanitarian operations in response to a disaster or human conflict, rescue, relief and reconstruction operations.<sup>172</sup> The SSM and its associated bars greatly expanded the recognition

---

<sup>170</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/AG-001, *Canadian Forces Honours Policy Manual*, "Annex P –Special Service Medal (SSM)."

<sup>171</sup> Blatherwick, *Canadian Orders, Decorations, and Medals*, 004-55.

<sup>172</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/AG-001, *Canadian Forces Honours Policy Manual*, "Annex P –Special Service Medal (SSM)."



framework and were more reflective of the variety of operations or unique ‘special’ service undertaken by the CAF members other than strict warfighting.

While the SSM presented a departure from the traditional use of medals within the Commonwealth to recognize deployments conducted under conditions of risk and rigour, the credibility of the honour was upheld by the qualification criteria. For members to qualify for the Peace, Alert, or NATO

, a total of 180 days of honourable service was required to be completed. Compared with other campaign and service medals, such as the Gulf and Kuwait Medal that required 28 days in the non-combat phase or just one day during combat, the SSM criteria of six months was a method to uphold the medal's integrity.<sup>173</sup>

By 2010, many of the SSM bars were either replaced by other medals or had their qualification criteria amended. The bars - Pakistan, Peace, and Humanitas - were replaced by UN and Canadian medals, such as the OSM. As well, the NATO bar criteria were constricted considerably in 2004 to select NATO activities to those only those personnel serving “as part of or in direct support of a NATO operation or mission,” rather than simply being posted into any NATO position.<sup>174</sup> The result of these amendments left just two bars to be commonly issued - Ranger and Alert - which is particularly interesting as both of these honours recognize military activities undertaken within the borders of Canada.

---

<sup>173</sup> Note, multiplying factors were applied to some bars, such as the Peace Bar, whereby service days were counted as double to align the SSM qualification with that of the 90 day UN mission medals for those CAF members assigned to support but not eligible to receive the UN award.

<sup>174</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/AG-001, *Canadian Forces Honours Policy Manual*, “Annex P –Special Service Medal (SSM).”

Since 2014, a series of significant amendments made to the SSM has greatly reduced qualification criteria required for the honour to be bestowed. First, the creation of the Expedition bar in 2014 for 180 days of service deployed outside of Canada allowed the CAF recognition framework for smaller missions or smaller contributions of forces to be extended to SSM. Yet, like other SSM bars, the honour recognizes honourable service performed under 'exceptional circumstances' rather than risk and rigour.

While the General Service Medal and the Operational Service Medal cover many operations and operational support overseas, their criteria require a certain level of risk, threat, hardship or operational intensity. Because of how the CAF operates in the modern global context, there is an increasing number of operations and operational support that do not meet these criteria. However, this service is performed overseas and is critical to mission success and the CAF mandate. This new bar will provide formal recognition for this important service which is performed under exceptional circumstances, which is what the Special Service Medal was created to recognize.<sup>175</sup>

However, while the context of 'exceptional circumstances' is not specifically defined within the Canadian Honours System, the CAF regulations for the Expedition Bar clarified that such activities as "sent outside of Canada, temporarily, without family and effects, for the purpose of serving in or supporting approved operations."<sup>176</sup> While the credibility of the honour is still able to be maintained through the careful selection of operations or activities to be recognized, the current list of approved deployments includes a variety of service that is characteristically 'routine' and not 'exceptional' in nature. As a result, the Expedition bar recognizes most, if not all, activities conducted outside of Canada unless the service qualifies for another honour. This

---

<sup>175</sup> Department of National Defence, "New EXPEDITION Bar to the Special Service Medal," *Medals News* 7, no.1 (May 2014): 1.

<sup>176</sup> Department of National Defence, "Canadian Forces General Message CANFORGEN 086/14 – Special Service Medal Expedition Bar," Chief of Military Personnel, 22 May 2014.

feature now perpetuates an expectation that, at the very minimum, the SSM-EXP will be awarded for almost any deployment outside of Canada (see Table 4 for some examples).

The setting of precedence with recognition for duties that could be considered ‘routine’ in nature risks eroding the credibility of the honour. As of 2020, the list of qualifying service for the Expedition bar now includes planning and mission support personnel conducting routine activities within safe locations. For example, the Operation FOUNDATION Mission Support Clerk position to Florida, USA, is deployed temporarily to conduct routine administrative duties during normal working hours.<sup>177</sup> The distinguishing factor only being that the member assigned to this position is deployed without family and effects. This type of service is considerably less ‘exceptional’ than an isolated six-month deployment to the harsh northern remote environment of CFS Alert.

Changes made in 2017 to the NATO bar for the SSM supported this concept of providing recognition for routine activities. Added to the qualifying list of service was "CAF members deployed or posted to approved NATO organizations, outside of Canada, to provide direct support to ongoing NATO operations, including their planning and execution." As a result, most personnel posted to NATO positions across Europe are given an honour for traditionally routine service. Moreover, in 2018, the 180-day cumulative qualification criteria for the Expedition and NATO bars was reduced to just 45 days, retroactive to 2007 and 2004 respectfully, thus further reducing the credibility of the honour.<sup>178</sup> Following these changes, it has become the most

---

<sup>177</sup> Author’s personal reflection deployed on Op FOUNDATION in 2017 to Tampa, Florida.

<sup>178</sup> Department of National Defence, “Canadian Forces General Message CANFORGEN 021/18 –NATO and Expedition Bars to the SSM – Modification of Eligibility Criteria,” Chief of Military Personnel, 15 February 2018.

commonly awarded medal for operational service awarded to members of the CAF with a combined total of over 10,000 issued throughout 2018 and 2019.<sup>179</sup>

## CONCLUSION

With the establishment of an independent system of honours, Canada has gained autonomy over its recognition practices, leading to several new honours to recognize military service. However, despite the many positive changes implemented to simplify and standardize the CAF recognition framework in recent years, the solutions implemented have generated new challenges regarding the applicability, consistency, and accessibility of honours. An examination of some of the most recent campaign and service medals using the six guiding principles in instituting Canadian honours reveals several deficiencies that risk devaluing the role of the Canadian Honours System for the profession of arms. Issues of compatibility with the GCS and GSM methodology of multi-tiered recognition counter the previous longstanding policy of awarding the same medal to all personnel serving on the same mission, thereby introducing divisiveness among recipients. New medals have also created duplication concerns whereby the GCS, GSM, and OSM have replaced honours well-established honours, diminishing the value of previous recognition for similar activities. Complications arising for eligibility concerns of most new medals invite feelings of dissatisfaction among personnel as differing recognition is often provided for the same service rendered. The creation of expedition variants across all campaign and service medals, while allowing considerable flexibility to recognize smaller missions, is

---

<sup>179</sup> Department of National Defence, *Honours and Recognition for the Men and Women of the Canadian Forces 2018* (Ottawa: Director of History and Heritage, March 2019), 39-40; and Department of National Defence, *Honours and Recognition for the Men and Women of the Canadian Forces 2019* (Ottawa: Director of History and Heritage, March 2020), 54.

being relied upon too frequently to recognize a diverse range of service, thus harming the respect garner from distinct recognition. Inconsistent application of new honours has led to equitability, whereby decisions to use Canadian honours instead of NATO or UN medals diminishes the value of recognition, especially when applied inconsistently for similar-type missions. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the use of the SSM to recognize overseas service not conducted under conditions of risk and rigour jeopardizes the honours system's credibility, particularly as the frequency of recognition of this type continues. Overall, the presence of several issues indicates that the modifications to the CAF overseas recognition framework have created several deficiencies that risk undermining the value of the honours system to the profession of arms.

## CHAPTER 5 – IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PROFESSION OF ARMS

### INTRODUCTION

The use of official Canadian honours to recognize, reward, and motivate members of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) to perform their duties to the highest standards remains an essential feature within the profession of arms. While other professions in society leverage reward and recognition programs to promote employee performance and retention, these practices pale compared to official honours emanating from the Crown for military service. The modern Canadian Honours System traces its origins back centuries and fulfills a profoundly symbolic and emotive role within the profession of arms. The inherent nature of employment in the CAF remains rooted in the necessity of 'unlimited liability' that underscores the uniqueness of military service as compared with any other profession. The time-honoured mantra of 'service before self' is an implicit feature for those who chose to serve to defend the nation. As such, the bestowing of honours onto Canada's military personnel not only rewards individuals for their service but also helps to "promote national unity and pride by encouraging values such as patriotism, devotion to duty and service to society, and by inspiring people to serve their country."<sup>180</sup>

This final chapter argues how aspects of the current CAF recognition framework have negatively influenced the attributes of collective and individual identity within the profession of arms in Canada. Using evidence from the previous chapters, the impacts of the extensive expansion of the overseas recognition framework over the past two decades will highlight several issues related to the applicability, consistency and accessibility of honours that risks devaluing the significance of recognition in the CAF. Particular attention must be given to the

---

<sup>180</sup> Department of National Defence, *Canadian Forces Honours Policy Manual*, 1.

ever-increasing quantity that has promoted a disproportionate distribution of awards across the CAF, leading to the ‘overvaluing’ of some types of service above others. Consequently, such decisions have formed identity divisions that introduce challenges within the Canadian military ethos. This trend of particular concern, given that the nature of warfare continues to evolve, whereby a greater portion of forces engaged in operations are not confined by the traditional geographic limitations of the field of battle. Nevertheless, all contribute equally to the accomplishment of the assigned mission. Recognition practises must be capable of reflecting the value of all personnel while at the same time not creating divisions that undermine the collective nature of military operations.

As with all professions within Canada, the profession of arms is guided by the specific attributes bounded together by a vocational ethic to ensure that functions are competently and objectively discharged for the benefit of society.<sup>181</sup> In the CAF, given the unique features of military service, the vocational ethic is represented as the Canadian military ethos that acts as the ‘living spirit’ that “defines and establishes the desired institutional culture” whereby members “perform their mission and task to the highest professional standards, meeting the expectations of Canadians at large.”<sup>182</sup> For military ethos to be effective, it must be reinforced by the attributes of responsibility, expertise, and identity.<sup>183</sup> While each attribute fulfills an equally relevant role within the profession of arms, identity is the attribute most influenced by the Canadian Honours System. It is the method by which CAF personnel embody and reflect military ethos. Identity consists of two components, collective and individual identity, which each have a role to play in the positive promotion of military ethos.

---

<sup>181</sup> Department of National Defence, *Duty With Honour – The Profession of Arms in Canada*, 6-7.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

## COLLECTIVE IDENTITY

The concept of collective identity is a fundamental feature within the profession of arms driven by the overall collective nature of military service. Unlike other professions in Canadian society that rely on associational structures whereby practitioners primarily operate independently with their clients (e.g. family doctor, lawyer, etc.), the CAF operates as a collective to accomplish its purpose.<sup>184</sup> The successful execution of military operations and activities requires an assortment of occupations, skills, and expertise to work together to produce synergistic effects. As such, the collective success of military endeavours is contingent on the cooperative enabling contribution of all individual functions. The use of honours to recognize all participants on expeditionary operations, regardless of occupation or role, highlights this notion of 'one team, one mission.'

The traditional view regarding military honours is that campaign and service medals are "hard-earned, recognizing service, where life is at risk and conditions, are tough; and it should be seen to be so by all concerned so that it can be worn with special pride."<sup>185</sup> In the years following the creation of the Canadian Honours System in 1967, the CAF recognition framework continued the longstanding tradition of issuing distinct campaign and service medals, including the Gulf and Kuwait Medal, Somalia Medal, and South West Asia Service Medal (SWASM). However, with the introduction of the General Campaign Star (GCS), General Service Medal (GSM), and Operational Service Medal (OSM) beginning in the early 2000s, the Canadian Honours System has led to fragmentation of the collective identity of deployed personnel. Dissimilar recognition is based on a 'hierarchy' of campaign and service medals whereby the service with the same

---

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>185</sup> John Holmes, *Military Medals Review* (London: Cabinet Office Ceremonial Secretariat, July 2012), 7, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/61398/Medals-Interim-Report-July-12.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/61398/Medals-Interim-Report-July-12.pdf).



operation is recognized with different honours. As indicated previously with Operation IMPACT, some personnel are recognized with the more desirable gold-coloured GCS while others with subordinate ‘lesser’ honours such as the GSM, OSM, or even the Special Service Medal (SSM) despite collectively contributing to mission accomplishment. While these various tiered medals provide more efficient and flexible recognition in modern warfare, this approach has diminished the role of campaign and service medals in promoting collective identity.

The importance of using honours to promote collective identity has been a longstanding tradition for centuries and continues to today in many Commonwealth countries, including Canada. The use of the Canadian Forces’ Decoration (CD) as a “familiar and venerable mark of service” to recognize the long service and good conduct of all CAF personnel “in a uniform manner” regardless of rank, service environment, component, or occupation reflects the positive impact to collective identity a single honour can have.<sup>186</sup> Following the 1982 Falklands War, the United Kingdom (UK) issued more than 33,000 South Atlantic Medal (SAM) to those who participated in the campaign, regardless of their role fulfilled to promote the collective identity of all who deployed.<sup>187</sup>

All members of that Task Force are united in one thing. They, or their next-of-kin, received from Her Majesty’s Government the South Atlantic Medal. It was awarded to all personnel who took part in operations in the South Atlantic for the liberation of South Georgia and the Falkland Islands. To qualify, the recipient had to have at least one full day’s service in the Falkland Islands or South Georgia, or thirty days in the South Atlantic operational zone, including Ascension Island.<sup>188</sup>

Similar to many other Commonwealth campaign medals awarded throughout history, the SAM provided equal recognition in the form of a distinctive medal and ribbon that contributes to the

---

<sup>186</sup> McCreery, *The Canadian Forces’ Decoration*, 97.

<sup>187</sup> South Atlantic Medal Association 1982, “SAMA (82) History,” last accessed 30 April 2021, <https://www.sama82.org.uk/sama-82-history/>.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*

collective identity of all those who served in the Falklands War. Moreover, organizations such as the South Atlantic Medal Society that unites recipients of the medal further highlight the significance of the impact that equal recognition provides.

A return to the previous practice of issuing all personnel deployed on the same mission the identical campaign or service medal would better promote collective identity among CAF personnel. Instead of using a framework of different medals, creating a single honour will allow for more efficient and inclusive recognition for all members on future operations. In instances where it is deemed beneficial to recognize specific risk, hardship, or operational intensity, a distinguishing device (such as a bar) can be added to the medal without diminishing or detracting from the use of a unified, collective honour. In 2018, eligibility for the OSM - Iraq and Syria (without Iraq and Syria bar) was extended to remotely piloted aerial systems operators, permanently based at their home stations in the United Kingdom (UK). During the announcement, UK Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson spoke about the significance of this change, noting:

The campaign against Daesh is one that our Armed Forces can be extremely proud of. I am pleased that today those who have bravely fought against such untold evil will get the recognition they deserve. Reflecting the changing nature of warfare, I am pleased to announce that the medal will now recognize those making a vital contribution to Op Shader from outside the conventional area of Operations, for example, those Reaper pilots taking life and death decisions from back here in the UK.<sup>189</sup>

For Canada, a return to single medals for overseas operations will allow for better alignment with the 'one team, one mission' philosophy and positively contributing to the collective identity between those who served on a specific operation. While there will undoubtedly always be some personnel that are exposed to more significant operational risks and

---

<sup>189</sup> Forces Network, "Drone Crews To Receive New Operation Shader Medal," last updated 18 July 2018, <https://www.forces.net/news/drone-crews-receive-new-operation-shader-medal>.

dangers, recognition need not be a completely different honour from the rest of the assigned personnel. Notably, there are already CAF programs and policies in existence that provide financial compensation in the form of hardship and risk allowances “in recognition of the dangers and discomforts associated with a specific post.”<sup>190</sup> Moreover, as the nature of warfare continues to evolve, the geographical boundaries and areas of operation will be increasingly more difficult to define. With the expectation of increased international hybrid conflict, warfare becomes "societal in scope in terms of intended targets," the overlapping of conventional and irregular conflict across all physical and information domains not constrained by international borders will change how the CAF responds.<sup>191</sup> Considering this, the use of simplified recognition will ensure that the contributions of all CAF personnel are recognized equally with the same honour to promote and reward the collective efforts of the force, regardless of the role performed or location deployed.

When using honours to promote collective identity, recognition must reflect the specific nature of the service performed with distinguishable features. There are many fundamental methods used in honours to signify the type of recognition in the Canadian Honours System, including the use of different shapes, colours, symbolic elements, written script, and materials. While the current Canada campaign and service medals leverage many of these distinguishing features, the use of distinct ribbons is the most dominant discernable feature. The use of distinct ribbons is particularly significant for military personnel. In many cases, the 'use of undress ribbons' is used on some daily dress uniforms since the wearing of the actual physical medals is

---

<sup>190</sup> Department of National Defence, “Hardship and Risk Allowance for Deployed CAF Personnel,” last updated 10 September 2019, <https://www.forces.gc.ca/en/caf-community-benefits/know-your-benefits-articles/hardship-risk-allowance.page>.

<sup>191</sup> David Carment and Dani Belo, “War’s Future: The Risks and Rewards of Grey-Zone Conflict and Hybrid Warfare,” Canadian Global Affairs Institute, October 2018, 2, [https://www.cgai.ca/wars\\_future\\_the\\_risks\\_and\\_rewards\\_of\\_grey\\_zone\\_conflict\\_and\\_hybrid\\_warfare](https://www.cgai.ca/wars_future_the_risks_and_rewards_of_grey_zone_conflict_and_hybrid_warfare).

usually reserved for ceremonial or special occasions. With the GCS, GSM and OSM adopting the 'same medal, different ribbon' approach, this is now a common feature used for overseas recognition. With this approach now firmly established across the Commonwealth, the importance of selecting a suitable ribbon to reflect the location or nature of service has become increasingly important, given the medals follow a common design.

While initially, Canada introduced various ribbons across the GCS, GSM and OSM (e.g. OSM-Haiti, OSM-Sierra Leone, OSM-South West Asia, OSM-Sudan, etc.), the creation of the 'expedition' variants honours have eliminated the feature of distinction.<sup>192</sup> Since 2010, no new distinct ribbon variants have been created for any campaign or service medals, resulting in the overuse of the generic expedition variants to recognize various overseas missions and service. For the collective identity of the CAF, this has led to a situation where service is now recognized by 'same medal, same ribbon' in many cases, thereby providing no obvious identifying features that link the recipient to the deployment served. Also, medals fulfill a critical function of contributing to the emotive history and heritage of the organization and its sub-cultures by linking personnel to past events, particularly for operations of great historical significance. Promoting the connection between past and present provides an intangible motivational attribute that is an essential aspect of military tradition, vital for sustaining the profession.<sup>193</sup> The absence of recognition that reflects the ability to provide a descriptive representation of the service performed will diminish the positive effects of honours to promoting collective identity.

---

<sup>192</sup> No other Commonwealth country has created an 'expedition' variant of any campaign or service medal. The UK, Australia, and New Zealand continue to create distinct ribbons to reflect the location or type of service being recognized. See Chapter 4 -Table 3 for an example of different awards currently used for ongoing operations in Iraq and Syria.

<sup>193</sup> Department of National Defence, *Duty With Honour – The Profession of Arms in Canada*, 60.

## INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY

When considering how the Canadian Honours System influences the profession of arms, individual identity merits significant attention. It is how military personnel differentiate themselves from one another within the collective organization. For personnel serving in the CAF, many aspects, including environment, branch, occupation, component, and status as an officer or non-commissioned member (NCM), contribute to one's overall individual identity.<sup>194</sup> Beyond these primary divisions, personnel are further identified by several transitory factors that typically change throughout one's career, such as their assigned unit, sub-unit rank, position, and role. The Canadian Forces Identify System (CFIS) is one method by which personnel can display their individual sub-identities within the CAF. The use of distinct environmental uniforms (DEUs), badges, insignia, accoutrements, and other elements provide a mechanism for personnel to reveal key aspects of their individual professional identity.<sup>195</sup> While this identification system may seem confusing for non-military personnel, the CFIS is a well-understood 'language' of symbolic elements onto itself that is steeped in Canadian military tradition and shares many aspects with the identity systems of other military forces around the world. For example, each North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) nation's military force utilizes its unique rank insignia; however, common elements make it possible to identify one's specific rank, with chevrons usually denoting NCMs and bars/stripes or stars indicating officers.<sup>196</sup> Many military forces widely use other insignia such as 'wings' and 'dolphins' worn over the breast pocket to

---

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>195</sup> Department of National Defence, "Canadian Forces Identity System," last updated 20 January 2021, <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/defence/caf/military-identity-system.html>.

<sup>196</sup> Global Security.org, "NATO Rank Chart: Army," last accessed 03 May 2021, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/europe/army.htm>.

identify various specialized qualifications and skills.<sup>197</sup> The preservation of identity systems is a critical component to enabling personnel to reflect their individual associations within the profession of arms.

While the CFIS serves a central role in providing an efficient method for personnel to exhibit their various personal identities, the wearing of honours insignia enables enhanced information about the individual's experience and accomplishments. Individuals can take special pride in wearing their honours they have been personally awarded and likewise can garner respect from others within the profession of arms who understand the significance of particular orders, decorations, and medals. Chief Warrant Officer (CWO) Keith Mitchell CV, MMM, MSM, CD, who is the 'highest decorated' currently serving member in the CAF, highlighted the positive attention garnered by his Cross of Valour (CV) in his own words while reflecting back on his over 40 years of service;

I'm the highest decorated currently [serving] member of the Canadian Armed Forces. I'm a chief warrant officer. I'm happy. I'm healthy. I'm going out at the top of my game. When I walk in a room in full dress uniform, people do a double-take and ask questions—that's good because it's a history lesson that's not about me: it's about what the Cross of Valour represents – and what they, too, could do.<sup>198</sup>

Although CWO Mitchell's individual identity is defined by various attributes of the CFIS, such as his rank and occupation, the honours awarded to him in recognition for his valour, devotion to duty distinguishes his personal military service from others. Napoléon Bonaparte's famous words during the Napoleonic Wars, "a soldier will fight long and hard for a bit of coloured ribbon,"

---

<sup>197</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH 265-000/AG-001, *Canadian Armed Forces Dress Instructions* (Ottawa: Director History and Heritage, December 2017), 3-3-3 and 3-3-6, <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/documents/caf-dress-instructions.pdf>.

<sup>198</sup> Sara White, "Drive, Service a Way to Give Back," Royal Canadian Air Force, last updated 31 March 2021, <https://www.airforce.forces.gc.ca/en/article-template-standard.page?doc=drive-service-a-way-to-give-back/kmjrsrw2u>.

supports the role the important role that recognition serves in highlighting and differentiating individual achievements.<sup>199</sup>

In order for the Canadian Honours System to promote the positive effects of individual identity within the profession of arms, the applicability, consistency, and accessibility of recognition practices must be preserved. However, despite positive changes implemented to improve the CAF recognition framework beginning in the early 2000s, a disproportionate focus is now placed on expeditionary service outside of Canada. This now presents an honours dichotomy whereby there is a failure to recognize all similar service types equally. The impact of these changes has diminished the positive effects that honour has on promoting elements of individual identity within the CAF.

### **Applicability**

To reinforce military ethos, honours must be seen to have an inherent value that enhances individual identity. Looking to the past, when determining the qualification criteria for the various campaign medals to recognize service during the Second World War, Winston Churchill cautioned that while recipients take pleasure in receiving honours, such distinctions become less valuable if everyone possesses them.<sup>200</sup> A standard must be established and maintained to ensure the value of a recognition system is preserved. Over time, the continued 'slippage' of standards risks diminishing the utility of recognition if too easily achieved.

Since the early 2000s, the applicability of honours has been expanded for many campaign and service medals, as seen with modifying existing qualification criteria and introducing new

---

<sup>199</sup> J.L.H.D, "A Bit of Coloured Ribbon," *The Economist*, last updated 06 July 2012, <https://www.economist.com/whichmba/bit-coloured-ribbon#:~:text=A%20bit%20of%20coloured%20ribbon.%20%E2%80%9CA%20SOLDIER%20will,Linus%20Siming%20of%20Bocconi%20University%20in%20Italy%20>.

<sup>200</sup> Churchill, "War Decorations and Medals," Parliament of the United Kingdom, House of Commons Debate, 22 March 1944.

honours. This expansion has led to a 'growth industry' of recognition within the CAF that has resulted in a significant increase in the number of medals issued. Until recently, it was typical for personnel to complete a career of 30 or more years of service and only be awarded a Canadian Forces' Decoration (CD) and possibly a United Nations (UN) or NATO medal. Nowadays, it is common for personnel to be awarded several honours throughout their careers. This dramatic increase in the number of honours bestowed today on CAF personnel is evident in the vast array of ribbons worn by long-serving officers and NCMs today across all service environments. For example, the current Acting Chief of Defence Staff Lieutenant-General Wayne Eyre has been awarded a total of twelve different honours (plus two commendations), and he will likely receive more before he retires from the CAF.<sup>201</sup> Billy Bishop VC, CB, DSO & Bar, MC, DFC, ED, one of the greatest war heroes and significant icons in Canadian history, amassed a total of sixteen different British and foreign honours for service in two world wars.<sup>202</sup>

While the increased prevalence of the use of modern honours can partly be attributed to the increased operational tempo of the CAF over the past two decades, close examination of the criteria of current honours reveals that the applicability has been expanded to include service on expeditionary missions that do not meet risk and hardship thresholds. For example, in 2018, the SSM-NATO criteria were dramatically reduced from 180 days to 45 days. Eligibility was extended to several positions, including personnel posted to various NATO headquarters throughout Europe (with their families and personal household effects).<sup>203</sup> Such a significant

---

<sup>201</sup> Department of National Defence, "Chief of the Defence Staff – Biography, Lieutenant-General W.D. EYRE, CMM, MSC, CD," last updated 09 April 2021, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/organizational-structure/chief-defence-staff/cds-bio.html>.

<sup>202</sup> Canadian Museum of History, "Portraits of Billy Bishop," last accessed 04 May 2021, <https://www.historymuseum.ca/cmc/exhibitions/tresors/treasure/287eng.html>.

<sup>203</sup> Department of National Defence, "Canadian Forces General Message CANFORGEN 021/18 – NATO and Expedition Bars to the SSM – Modification of Eligibility Criteria," Chief of Military Personnel, 18 February 2018; and Department of National Defence, "Canadian Forces in Europe," last updated 02 August 2013, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/bases-support-units/canadian-forces-in-europe.html>.



change to the SSM devalues the recognition of other existing and previous service such as the SSM-Alert, which is awarded for an aggregate of 180 days service isolated at Canadian Force Station Alert, “the most northerly permanently inhabited location in the world.”<sup>204</sup> Similarly, the reductions in time qualification requirements and expanded criteria announced in 2020 for the GCS, GSM, and OSM to as low as 14-days, potentially allowing for a greater number of personnel to achieve the qualification criteria for these medals.<sup>205</sup> While DND indicates that these most recent changes “ensure that recognition is keeping pace with the evolving nature of current and future CAF operations and remains a worthy and attainable reward for personnel while preserving the symbolic value and respect for the service medals in question,” the overall value of some honours have been diminished.<sup>206</sup> As a result, the CAF recognition framework now provides medallic recognition for almost any deployment on a named operational mission outside of Canada, thus perpetuating an expectation of ‘automatic entitlement’ based on recent precedence. Consequently, if honours are perceived to be easily attained, then the intrinsic value to the recipients' identity is reduced.

The concept of preserving the value of honours is apparent in the various orders, such as the Order of Military Merit, limiting the amount of personnel admitted annually to preserve the integrity and value of the recognition.<sup>207</sup> This principle is one reason why the Victoria Cross (VC) has gained a reputation as one of the foremost military decorations in history, given its scarcity, with less than 1400 ever awarded since its inception by Queen Victoria in 1856.<sup>208</sup> Remarkably, since the end of the Second World War, no Canadian has been awarded the VC in

---

<sup>204</sup> Royal Canadian Air Force, “Canadian Forces Station Alert,” last updated 27 September 2019, <https://www.airforce.forces.gc.ca/en/alert.page>.

<sup>205</sup> Department of National Defence, “Changes to Service Medals Announced.”

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>207</sup> McCreery, *The Order of Military Merit*, 93.

<sup>208</sup> Victoria Cross and George Cross Association, “VC Award Statistics,” last accessed 02 May 2021, <https://vcgca.org/history>.

modern times. Only a small number of Star of Military Valour (SMV) and Medal of Military Valour (MMV) were awarded for military valour during the Afghanistan campaign.<sup>209</sup>

Nevertheless, in the context of campaign and service medals to recognize honourable service on expeditionary missions, the CAF should resume a more strict approach when determining the applicability of honours to ensure that the value of the recognition framework is maintained.

### **Consistency**

Honours policies must be applied consistently to ensure that the recognition framework promotes positive reinforcement of individual identity. CAF personnel expect that the Canadian Honours System will be applied fairly, equitably, and consistently across all applications. As a 'living system' governed by policies and influenced by evolving requirements of modern society and culture, care must be taken to ensure that any changes to recognition policies remain suitably consistent with historical precedence are compatible with the existing framework. The impacts of inconsistent application of recognition risk undermining the legitimacy of the honours system and can create discontentment amongst recipients, thereby negating the positive effects of recognition practices. Matters of consistency have generated emotional appeals for fairness regarding honours for generations. Even the first campaign medal for service in Canada had to update its regulations to include additional participating personnel excluded from recognition. The initial regulations for the North West Canada (1885) Medal were updated in 1886 to include members of the North West Mounted Police following the discontentment of those members who had served honourably but were initially excluded.<sup>210</sup> Consistency serves a critical function

---

<sup>209</sup> Remarkably, Canada had the highest 'ratio of casualties to served' within the Commonwealth in Afghanistan, yet did not award any VCs; and Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/JD-009, *The Military Valour Decorations 1993-2018*, (Ottawa: Director of History and Recognition, 2018), 48, <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/military-valour-decorations-1993-2018.pdf>

<sup>210</sup> McCreery, *The Canadian Honours System*, 146.

to positively reinforce individual identity by promoting fairness and equality within recognition processes.

The complexity of the current CAF recognition framework now presents a greater opportunity for inconsistencies to be generated. Whereas other Commonwealth countries, including UK, Australia, and New Zealand, have chosen to simplify their recognition systems by limiting the types of honours for all expeditionary service to just one type of award, Canada's tiered system has created confusion as to which award is most appropriate in each situation. The end of mission report for Operation PRESENCE, Canada's recent contribution to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), noted that the complexities in the recognition framework led to significant discontentment with many of the deployed personnel. Although all CAF members were deployed under the same Canadian mission, three different medals were used to recognize service.<sup>211</sup> In addition to the complexities of administering multiple medals, the report noted:

The natural tendency is to view medals in the context of the mission not, "service and location." This theatre requires extensive attention to medal tracking because there are multiple medals for service in the same location. . .there is a level of dissatisfaction because the ground perspective is that all are deployed in support of MINUSMA. . . the eligibility for three medals for some members is a difficult concept to grasp primarily because, as previously alluded to, there are other operations where this is not the case.<sup>212</sup>

Notwithstanding the complexities and dissatisfaction of the recognition chosen for Operation PRESENCE personnel, members were eligible to receive at least two medals for their deployment. While the concept of 'double medalling' for the same service is forbidden in the context of the CAF recognition framework, peacekeeping missions continue to be honoured with the Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal in addition to any other Canadian or approved

---

<sup>211</sup> The medals included the UN MINUSMA Medal, the OSM-EXP, and the Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal.

<sup>212</sup> McKenna, *Op PRESENCE (Mali) ROTO 0 – End of Tour Report...*, Annex G, Pg. 8.

international organization medal.<sup>213</sup> This continued application of ‘double medalling’ causes frustration among CAF personnel who were ineligible to receive the NATO Non Article 5 Medal in addition to the GCS or SWASM, as this practice goes against the established Canadian policy. Nevertheless, both Australia and New Zealand authorized their personnel to accept and wear the NATO medal in addition to their national medals awarded for service in Afghanistan.<sup>214</sup>

Care must also be taken when modifying criteria to ensure consistency across all honours to avoid the possibility of future issues arising. Changes made to the Canadian Honours System in 2009 led to the introduction of ‘Rotation Bars,’ allowing for the recognition of extended periods of service in a specific theatre. Given that the nature of recent international conflicts has led to longer campaigns, Rotation Bars are now used extensively on the GCS, GSM, and OSM to provide suitable means of recognition, especially for personnel who conduct multiple deployments of the same operation. However, the use of Rotation Bars has not been extended to the SSM, which continues to use distinct mission or service bars (NATO, Alert, Expedition, etc.). Ongoing CAF missions in Europe, notably Operation REASSURANCE and Operation UNIFIER, have now reached a point where many personnel have conducted multiple deployments without recognition for their subsequent service. This inconsistency in recognition has been identified as a major deficiency in the morale of CAF members that has led to senior leadership requesting that a "multiple-tour recognition system" be created for the SSM, similar to other existing honours.<sup>215</sup>

---

<sup>213</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/AG-001, *Canadian Forces Honours Policy Manual*, 5.

<sup>214</sup> The Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, “Accepting and Wearing of Foreign Awards by Australians (as of 01 December 2019),” last accessed 01 May 2021, <https://www.gg.gov.au/australian-honours-and-awards/accepting-and-wearing-foreign-awards-australians>; and Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, New Zealand, “Rules Relating to the Acceptance and Wearing of Commonwealth, Foreign and International Honours by New Zealand Citizens,” last updated 01 April 2011, <https://dpmc.govt.nz/our-programmes/new-zealand-royal-honours/new-zealand-royal-honours-system/rules-relating-to-acceptance-and-wearing>.

<sup>215</sup> Fletcher, *Request for Policy Update on the Implementation of Multiple Rotation Recognition Under The Special Service Medal*.

One approach to improving consistency is through the application of simple, repeatable processes. While the CAF recognition framework provided a range of different campaign and service medals dependant on the type of service and location, the consistent application has proven to be problematic, leading to discontentment among recipients and increased challenges administering honours. Although the current framework in place has been modified over time to meet the recognition requirements of the CAF, the use of too many different honours to try to meet specific service or geographical factors will continue to allow for opportunities for inconsistent application. From 1988 to 2012, the Australian Honours System employed an equally comprehensive recognition framework that included distinct campaign medals (e.g. Afghanistan Medal, Iraq Medal), the Australian Active Service Medal with bars (warlike), the Australian Service Medal with bars (peacekeeping and non-warlike), and various international organizational medals (UN, NATO, etc.).<sup>216</sup> Following an honours review in 2008 that found “widespread dissatisfaction” among serving Australian Defence Force personnel, the report recommended that a single medal be created to replace the system of tiered honours for expeditionary service.<sup>217</sup>

The Review Panel recommends that Defence adopt a single Operational Service Medal (OSM) for all operations worthy of medallic recognition. This medal would replace the Australian Service Medal and Australia Active Service Medal series currently awarded. Further, it is recommended that a combination of a general medal design and different ribbons for specific operations be used. Such a change enables the ADF to recognize operations worthy of medallic recognition regardless of location, domestic or overseas. It removes the problems associated with having two forms of service medal where one is more highly regarded than the other. It provides a flexible option to cater for future types of operations, particularly those where technology has fundamentally changed the nature of operational service, where some form of medallic recognition is warranted. However, the nature of service is significantly different depending upon the role performed. It also

---

<sup>216</sup> Australian Government, “Australia Operational Service Medal,” Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, last accessed 30 April 2021, <https://www.pmc.gov.au/government/its-honour/australian-operational-service-medal>.

<sup>217</sup> Australian Defence Force, *Defence Honours and Awards and Commendations Policy Report*, iv.

removes any issues regarding how to manage changes of the threat level of particular operations.<sup>218</sup>

This approach of utilizing a single honour differentiated by distinct ribbons has also been adopted by the UK and New Zealand honours systems to simplify and expedite recognition practices. By reducing the number of variables by limiting the amount of different honours possibilities, opportunities for inconsistencies to emerge are diminished. As a result, the recognition system adopts a more streamlined and repeatable process to determine suitable solutions that align with promoting individual identities.

### **Accessibility**

The Canadian Honours System derives its legitimacy because it is "merit-based, apolitical, and accessible."<sup>219</sup> To contribute positively to the creation and maintenance of individual identities within the profession of arms, recognition practices ensure that honours are accessible. In Canada, the various orders, decorations, and medals related to military service are equally accessible for all CAF personnel regardless of rank, service, branch, component, occupation, or other distinguishing attributes such as gender, religion, language, ethnicity, age, etc.<sup>220</sup> Many of the most prestigious honours within the Canadian Honours System, such as the Meritorious Service Cross, have been awarded to personnel from Master Corporals to Generals of varying backgrounds and experience.<sup>221</sup> Nevertheless, issues of accessibility have become prevalent following the expansion of the CAF recognition framework, resulting in a disproportionate emphasis on the recognition of expeditionary service. The creation of the SSM-EXP and modification to the SSM-NATO have resulted in recognition being given for

---

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>219</sup> The Governor General of Canada, "Canadian Honours."

<sup>220</sup> The different levels of the ORMM do have rank requirements for entry and promotion within the order.

<sup>221</sup> Department of National Defence, *The Meritorious Service Cross 1984-2014*, 28.

operational service not under the specific condition of risk and rigour. In some cases, the only requirement is that a member is deployed full-time on an operation without furniture and effects for at least 45 days.<sup>222</sup> This 'over accessibility' within the current system creates a discrepancy related to the the continued denial of honours for domestic operations. CAF personnel have and continue to serve on various domestic operations to protect Canadians from adversaries and respond to national emergencies. However, CAF personnel who conduct domestic operations do not receive specific recognition for their services. Those individuals who have had the opportunity to deploy on multiple expeditionary operations will likely have been recognized with several honours throughout their careers. In contrast, others who have deployed domestically will have no means of reinforcing their individual identity of having served. As an organization that highly values knowledge and experiences gained from operational service, displaying one's career is an important feature within the profession of arms.

Since the end of the Cold War, the CAF has been frequently engaged in domestic operations and is no longer only a 'standing military' waiting for an expeditionary mission assignment. Some notable significant domestic operations include the 1990 Oka Crisis, the 1997 Red River Flood, the 1998 Quebec Ice Storm, and the 2016 Alberta Wildfires. In the last five years, annual requests for assistance to the Department of National Defence (DND) for direct CAF support to provincial and territorial authorities for rapid specialized response to national disasters has increased three-fold, requiring frequent activation and deployment of Operation LENTUS.<sup>223</sup> During these domestic deployments, the operational risks, intensity, and exposure

---

<sup>222</sup> Department of National Defence, "Canadian Forces General Message CANFORGEN 021/18 –NATO and Expedition Bars to the SSM – Modification of Eligibility Criteria."

<sup>223</sup> Government of Canada, "Canadian Armed Forces Operations and Activities – Transition binder 2020 - Operation LENTUS."

to hazards in many cases are similar to those of international relief missions.<sup>224</sup> When conducting humanitarian operations outside of Canada, personnel are eligible to receive the OSM-Humanitas for “humanitarian missions conducted in response to a natural disaster or human conflict including rescue, relief and reconstruction outside Canada.”<sup>225</sup> Similar to expeditionary operations, the large size of the Canadian geographical landmass can result in personnel deploying thousands of kilometres from their home units and having to live in austere conditions for extended periods. As global climate change produces frequent dramatic weather events across the globe, it is expected that the CAF will continue to be called upon to conduct large-scale domestic relief operations.<sup>226</sup>

The use of service medals to recognize domestic service continues to be a debated subject across the Commonwealth. Thus far, only Australia has created an honour to recognize service on specific domestic operations. In 2011, the National Emergency Medal was created to recognize “significant or sustained service in a declared national emergency.”<sup>227</sup> The medal is awarded with a clasp to denote the specific event served in, with the most recently added qualifying service in the 2019-2020 Australian Bushfires.<sup>228</sup> Australia introduced the award following the 2008 Honours Review that concluded that a new honour to recognize specific domestic operations/activities would be better align with current and future anticipated ADF

---

<sup>224</sup> Christian Leuprecht and Peter Kasurak, “The Canadian Armed Forces and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief: Defining a Role,” Centre for International Governance Innovation, last updated 24 August 2020, <https://www.cigionline.org/articles/canadian-armed-forces-and-humanitarian-assistance-and-disaster-relief-defining-role>.

<sup>225</sup> Department of National Defence, “Operational Service Medal – HUMANITAS (OSM-HUM),” last updated 06 January 2020, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/medals/medals-chart-index/operational-service-medal-humanitas-osm-hum.html>.

<sup>226</sup> Government of Canada, “Canadian Armed Forces Operations and Activities – Transition binder 2020 - Operation LENTUS.”

<sup>227</sup> The Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, “National Emergency Medal,” last accessed 01 May 2021, <https://www.gg.gov.au/australian-honours-and-awards/national-emergency-medal>.

<sup>228</sup> The Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, “Bushfires 2019-20,” last accessed 01 May 2021, <https://www.gg.gov.au/australian-honours-and-awards/national-emergency-medal/bushfires-2019-20>.



mission while also improving fairness and satisfaction among personnel regarding recognition practices.

Historically, Defence has found it easy to recognize service 'overseas' but difficult to provide the same level of recognition for domestic operations. Given the current threat environment and the broader nature of conflict, this delineation is an anachronistic hangover from the time when Australia's military commitments were wholly expeditionary in nature. Increasingly, as the nature and tempo of operations continue to change, there will be greater pressure to recognize domestic service in a way that parallels the recognition given for overseas operations.<sup>229</sup>

In Canada, there have been repeated calls for creating a similar domestic humanitarian medal; however, efforts have been unsuccessful. In 2004, private member's Bill C-514, *An Act respecting the establishment and award of a Special Service Medal for Domestic Operations (SSM-DO)*, was first read in the House of Commons by Nova Scotia Member of Parliament Alexa McDonough.<sup>230</sup> More recently, in 2018, efforts to reintroduce the bill was met with the response from DND that "all military duty that is not performed as part of an overseas mission is recognized by the Canadian Forces Decoration . . .to recognize the special character of military service and the risk inherent to the military profession."<sup>231</sup> While this type of response continues to be used as the explanation to counter the calls for an official honour to recognize service on domestic operations, accessibility of recognition will be viewed as inconsistent and unfair when compared to medals available for similar service outside of Canada.

A key strength of the Canadian Honours System comes from its fundamental features of being accessible and merit-based. The over-emphasis of recognition for expeditionary service within the CAF is strikingly obvious when researching the written citations for the Meritorious

---

<sup>229</sup> Australian Defence Force, *Defence Honours and Awards and Commendations Policy Report*, 65. <https://www1.defence.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-08/review-honours-awards-commendation-policies-feb-08.pdf>.

<sup>230</sup> Parliament of Canada, *BILL C-514 - An Act Respecting the Establishment and Award of a Special Service Medal for Domestic Operations (SSM-DO)* (Ottawa: House of Commons, 02 April 2004), <https://www.parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/37-3/bill/C-514/first-reading>.

<sup>231</sup> Charlie Pinkerton, "Liberal MP Revives Idea of War Medals for Disaster Responders, last updated 22 October 2018, <https://ipolitics.ca/2018/10/22/liberal-mp-revives-idea-of-war-medals-for-disaster-responders/>.

Service Medal (MSM). From the perspective of CAF members, despite the understanding that decorations are inherently rare, they must also be understood to be equitable in recognizing meritorious service of all types that do not favour any particular rank, component, gender, occupation, or element. The military division of the MSM "recognizes the performance of a military deed or a military activity in a highly professional manner or of a very high standard that brings considerable benefit or honour to the Canadian Armed Forces." The broadness of the MSM criteria allows for the honour to maintain maximum flexibility to recognize a variety of circumstances from whether it be "one specific act or meritorious service performed over a specific period of time, be it a few minutes, days, a project, an operational rotation or a whole posting." Nevertheless, since the first presentation of the MSM, most recipients have been recognized for their meritorious service on expeditionary operations and international assignments. A review of available citations of CAF MSM recipients from 1991 to 2016 indicates that over 85% of all MSMs are awarded specifically for service performed outside of Canada.<sup>232</sup> In most cases, the recipient was recognized for their exceptional performance throughout a multi-month deployment on a specific mission, such as Afghanistan, Bosnia, Haiti, Gulf War, etc. Such a significant imbalance between domestic and expeditionary recognition of meritorious service suggests that duties performed in Canada are valued less by the CAF and fall under the expectations of normal duty. Put simply, the likelihood of a CAF being recognized with an MSM while serving in Canada is considerably less than a fellow CAF member deployed on expeditionary operations.

---

<sup>232</sup> Department of National Defence, A-DH-300-000/JD-006, *The Meritorious Service Medal 1991-2016*.

## CONCLUSION

The use of official Canadian honours to recognize, reward, and motivate members of the CAF to perform their duties to the highest standards remains an important feature within the profession of arms. The bestowing of honours onto Canada's military personnel rewards individuals for their service but also helps to promote national unity and pride by encouraging values such as patriotism, devotion to duty and service to society, and inspiring people to serve their country. When reinforcing the various attribute that reinforces military ethos, the Canadian Honours System plays a critical function in promoting the collective and individual identities contained within the CAF. Significant changes to the overseas recognition framework have resulted in introducing a multi-tiered system of campaign and service medals that harms the collective identity of the CAF that promotes divisiveness among deployed personnel serving on the same mission. As well, the continued reliance on generic 'expedition' variants of honours greatly reduces the efficacy of emotional connection between personnel and the history and heritage of the organization's past. Honours also play a significant role in supporting the various individual identities possessed by CAF personnel. The significant reduction in qualification criteria for campaign and service medals, particularly the SSM, results in recognition becoming all too common and reducing the value of one's identity. The expansion in the number of medals and overlapping criteria between some medals creates consistency challenges that undermine the understanding of recognition processes. Finally, the overemphasis on overseas recognition counters the contribution that personnel serving in major domestic operations, thereby undervaluing their role within the CAF. Overall, the many changes made to the overseas recognition framework over the last two decades have, in many ways, failed to contribute to the promotion of CAF collective and individual identities within the profession.

## CONCLUSION

This paper aimed to determine if the numerous changes made to the CAF overseas recognition framework over the past twenty years have inadvertently devalued the role of the honours system to the profession of arms. Based on a qualitative analysis of current recognition practices, it can be concluded that the introduction of new policies intended to increase the efficiency and flexibility of recognition have created several challenges related to the applicability, consistency, and accessibility of honours. The results reveal how introducing new practices negatively affects professional attributes that contribute to the promotion of military ethos. By analyzing the impacts on collective and individual identity, this thesis has shown how honours continue to play a crucial role within the Canadian profession of arms.

Four main conclusions can be captured from this essay, highlighting the importance of creating recognition policies conducive to promoting Canadian military ethos. First, the importance of longstanding traditions related to honours must be respected. The evolution of honours in Canada has been a deliberate, gradual process over generations and ingrained within military culture and concepts of identity. Significant policy changes can lead to confusion and resentment among personnel, thereby diminishing the legitimacy of the honours. Second, honours are unique distinctions used to promote and reward behaviours that express the values of honour, loyalty, and courage that reinforce military professionalism. If such distinction becomes all too common or easily achievable, honours lose their appeal and desirability. Recognition policies must reflect defined, repeatable high standards that allow recipients to take exceptional pride in their honours and motivate others to achieve similar recognition. Third, honours must not create unnecessary divisions within groups that have collectively performed assigned missions. The nature of the profession of arms requires adopting a 'one team, one mission'

approach, whereby all personnel contribute equally, regardless of role or function. Recognition for campaign or operational service must be conducted in a uniform manner that enables efficient and inclusive recognition and allows for additional distinction for those who perform their duty under conditions of additional risks or hardship. Finally, honours must clearly identify the particulars of the service being recognized. The overuse of generic ‘expedition’ variants of medals detracts from the ability of recipients to communicate the details of their past service. Policies must consider the role that distinct recognition plays in promoting collective and individual identities within the CAF. To conclude, for centuries, official honours have been used effectively to recognize an individual for their outstanding contributions to the profession of arms. As a result, the utmost care must be taken when introducing policy changes to ensure that recognition practices do not inadvertently diminish military ethos.

Change is never easy, and often the desired outcomes do not match the intended goals. Winston Churchill warned of the difficulties of creating honours policies that reflect many of the concerns relating to the profession of arms identified in this essay.<sup>233</sup> To rectify the deficiencies of the current CAF recognition framework, the Canadian honours system should be reformed as follows:

1. Return to the previous practice of issuing a single distinct campaign or service medal to all personnel assigned to a specific operation. For personnel who perform service under conditions of additional risk, hardship, or intensity, a distinguishing feature such as a mission or location 'bar' should be used to denote the difference in service.

---

<sup>233</sup> Churchill, “War Decorations and Medals.”

2. The use of generic ‘expedition’ variants of medals must be limited. New ribbons for the General Campaign Star, General Service Medal and Operational Service Medal and bars for the Special Service Medal should be created to reflect the location, mission, or type of service being recognized.

3. Review policies related to the acceptance and wear of United Nations and North Atlantic Treaty Organization medals. Inconsistent use of these medals within the recognition framework must cease. CAF personnel should receive Canadian honours for their service in addition to or instead of any international medals.

4. Introduce honours to recognize operational service performed within the borders of Canada. The Canadian Forces’ Decoration does not provide suitable recognition for significant domestic operations whereby personnel serve under conditions similar to expeditionary operations.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Australian Defence Force. *Defence Honours and Awards and Commendations Policy Report*. Canberra: Defence Support Group – Assistance Secretary Personnel Support Services, 2008. <https://www1.defence.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-08/review-honours-awards-commendation-policies-feb-08.pdf>.
- Australian Defence Force. *Defence Honours and Awards and Commendations Policy Report*. Canberra: Defence Support Group – Assistance Secretary Personnel Support Services, 2008. <https://www1.defence.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-08/review-honours-awards-commendation-policies-feb-08.pdf>.
- Australia. Governor General of Australia. “Australian Operational Service Medal (Greater Middle East Operation) Instrument 2015.” Last accessed 30 April 2021,. [https://www.gg.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-01/australian\\_operational\\_service\\_medal\\_greater\\_middle\\_east\\_operation\\_instrument\\_2015\\_-\\_20150413.pdf](https://www.gg.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-01/australian_operational_service_medal_greater_middle_east_operation_instrument_2015_-_20150413.pdf).
- Australia. The Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia. “Accepting and Wearing of Foreign Awards by Australians (as of 01 December 2019),” Last accessed 01 May 2021. <https://www.gg.gov.au/australian-honours-and-awards/accepting-and-wearing-foreign-awards-australians>;
- Australian Government. “Australia Operational Service Medal.” Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Last accessed 30 April 2021. <https://www.pmc.gov.au/government/its-honour/australian-operational-service-medal>.
- Australia. The Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia. “National Emergency Medal.” Last accessed 01 May 2021. <https://www.gg.gov.au/australian-honours-and-awards/national-emergency-medal>.
- Australia. The Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia. “Bushfires 2019-20.” Last accessed 01 May 2021, <https://www.gg.gov.au/australian-honours-and-awardsnational-emergency-medal/bushfires-2019-20>.
- Blatherwick, John F. *Canadian Orders, Decorations, and Medals*. Toronto: Unitrade Press, 2003. <https://www.blatherwick.net/canadian%20orders%20decorations%20and%20medals/>
- Boileau, John. “Canada’s Battle Honours.” *Legion Magazine*, 01 September 2003. <https://legionmagazine.com/en/2003/09/canadas-battle-honours/>.
- Brownlee, Gerry. “Recognition for Iraq and Middle East Service.” New Zealand Government, 20 July 2016. <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/recognition-iraq-and-middle-east-service>.
- Calloway, Colin G. *The Scratch of a Pen: 1763 and the Transformation of North America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

- Canada. Canadian Army. "General Order 22 – Medals." National Archives, 01 March 1899. Last accessed 30 April 2021. [https://archive.org/details/cihm\\_55587/page/n7/mode/2up](https://archive.org/details/cihm_55587/page/n7/mode/2up).
- Canada. Department of National Defence. "Changes to Service Medals Announced." Last updated 08 January 2020. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/maple-leaf/defence/2020/01/changes-service-medals-announced.html>.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. A-DH-300-000/JD-006, *The Meritorious Service Medal 1991-2016*. Ottawa: Director of History and Recognition, 2016. <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/meritorious-service-medal.pdf>.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. "Canadian Forces General Message CANFORGEN 066/10 - New Overseas Recognition Framework." Chief of Military Personnel, 17 March 2010.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. A-PA-005-000/AP-001, *Duty With Honour – The Profession of Arms in Canada*. Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy – Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2009. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/duty-with-honour-2009.html>.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. "Canadian Forces General Message CANFORGEN 184/14 – Honourable Service." Chief of Military Personnel, 20 October 2014.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. "The Canadian Armed Forces Legacy in Afghanistan." Last updated 21 September 2018. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/recently-completed/canadian-armed-forces-legacy-afghanistan.html>.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. *Queen's Regulations and Orders*. Volume I - Chapter 18: Honours - Policy Aims. Last updated 24 November 2017. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/policies-standards/queens-regulations-orders/vol-1-administration/ch-18-honours.html>.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. "Operation IMPACT." Last updated 30 March 2021. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/operation-impact.html>.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. "General Campaign Star – ALLIED FORCE (GCS-AF)." Last updated 01 June 2020. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/medals/medals-chart-index/general-campaign-star-allied-force-gcs-af.html>.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. A-DH-300-000/JD-010, *Canadian Honours and Awards Bestowed Upon Members of the Canadian Armed Forces*. Ottawa: Director of History and Heritage, April 2020. <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/canadian-honours-awards-members-forces.pdf>.



- Canada. Department of National Defence. A-DH-300-000/JD-004, *The Meritorious Service Cross 1984-2014*. Ottawa: Director of History and Recognition, 2014.  
<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/meritorious-service-cross.pdf>
- Canada. Department of National Defence. A-DH-300-000/AG-001, *Canadian Forces Honours Policy Manual*. Ottawa: Director of History and Recognition, June 2019.  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/medals/cf-honours-policy-manual.html>.
- Canada. The Governor General of Canada. "Canadian Honours." Last accessed 11 April 2021,  
<https://www.gg.ca/en/honours/canadian-honours>.
- Canada. Government of Canada. "Canadian Armed Forces Operations and Activities – Transition binder 2020 - Operation LENTUS." Department of National Defence, March 2021. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/transition-materials/caf-operations-activities/2020/03/caf-ops-activities/op-lentus.html>.
- Canada. The Governor General of Canada. "Operational Service Medal." Registration of Insignia, 15 September 2010. Last accessed 01 May 2021. <https://reg.gg.ca/heraldry/pub-reg/project-pic.asp?lang=e&ProjectID=2066&ProjectElementID=7241>.
- Canada. Parks Canada. "Canada's Historic Places - de Salaberry House National Historic Site of Canada." The Canadian Register of Historic Places. Last accessed 30 April 2021,  
<https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=15708&pid=0>.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. A-DH 265-000/AG-001, *Canadian Armed Forces Dress Instructions*. Ottawa: Director History and Heritage, December 2017.  
<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/documents/caf-dress-instructions.pdf>.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. A-DH-300-000/JD-009, *The Military Valour Decorations 1993-2018*. Ottawa: Director of History and Recognition.  
<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/military-valour-decorations-1993-2018.pdf>
- Canada. Department of National Defence. *Honours and Recognition for the Men and Women of the Canadian Forces 2010*. Ottawa: Director of History and Heritage, March 2011.  
<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/honours-recognition-2010.pdf>.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. *Honours and Recognition for the Men and Women of the Canadian Forces 2011*. Ottawa: Director of History and Heritage, March 2012.  
<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/honours-recognition-2011.pdf>.

- Canada. Department of National Defence. *Honours and Recognition for the Men and Women of the Canadian Forces 2012*. Ottawa: Director of History and Heritage, March 2013.  
<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/honours-recognition-2012.pdf>.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. *Honours and Recognition for the Men and Women of the Canadian Forces 2013*. Ottawa: Director of History and Heritage, March 2014.  
<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/honours-recognition-2013.pdf>.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. *Honours and Recognition for the Men and Women of the Canadian Forces 2014*. Ottawa: Director of History and Heritage, March 2015.  
<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/honours-recognition-2014.pdf>.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. *Honours and Recognition for the Men and Women of the Canadian Forces 2015*. Ottawa: Director of History and Heritage, March 2016.  
<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/honours-recognition-2015.pdf>.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. *Honours and Recognition for the Men and Women of the Canadian Forces 2016*. Ottawa: Director of History and Heritage, March 2017.  
<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/honours-recognition-2016.pdf>.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. *Honours and Recognition for the Men and Women of the Canadian Forces 2017*. Ottawa: Director of History and Heritage, March 2018.  
<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/honours-recognition-2017.pdf>.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. *Honours and Recognition for the Men and Women of the Canadian Forces 2018*. Ottawa: Director of History and Heritage, March 2019.  
<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/honours-recognition-2018.pdf>.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. *Honours and Recognition for the Men and Women of the Canadian Forces 2019*. Ottawa: Director of History and Heritage, March 2020.  
<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/honours-recognition-2019.pdf>.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. *Honours and Recognition for the Men and Women of the Canadian Forces 2020*. Ottawa: Director of History and Heritage, March 2021.  
<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/honours-recognition-2020.pdf>.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. “Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal (CPSM).”  
 Last updated 08 October 2018, <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-national->

[defence/services/medals/medals-chart-index/canadian-peacekeeping-service-medal-cpsm.html](https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/medals/medals-chart-index/canadian-peacekeeping-service-medal-cpsm.html).

Canada. Department of National Defence. “Canadian Forces in Europe.” Last updated 02 August 2013. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/bases-support-units/canadian-forces-in-europe.html>.

Canada. Department of National Defence. “Canadian Forces General Message CANFORGEN 021/18 – NATO and Expedition Bars to the SSM – Modification of Eligibility Criteria.” Chief of Military Personnel, 18 February 2018.

Canada. Department of National Defence. “Canadian Forces General Message CANFORGEN 086/14 – Special Service Medal Expedition Bar.” Chief of Military Personnel. 22 May 2014.

Canada. Department of National Defence. “Canadian Forces General Message CANFORGEN 021/18 – NATO and Expedition Bars to the SSM – Modification of Eligibility Criteria.” Chief of Military Personnel, 15 February 2018.

Canada. Department of National Defence. “Canadian Forces Identity System.” Last updated 20 January 2021. <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/defence/caf/military-identity-system.html>.

Canada. Department of National Defence. “Chief of the Defence Staff – Biography, Lieutenant-General W.D. EYRE, CMM, MSC, CD.” Last updated 09 April 2021. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/organizational-structure/chief-defence-staff/cds-bio.html>.

Canada. Department of National Defence. “Hardship and Risk Allowance for Deployed CAF Personnel.” Last updated 10 September 2019. <https://www.forces.gc.ca/en/caf-community-benefits/know-your-benefits-articles/hardship-risk-allowance.page>.

Canada. Department of National Defence. “New EXPEDITION Bar to the Special Service Medal.” *Medals News* 7, no.1 (May 2014):1-2.

Canada. Department of National Defence. “Operation MOBILE.” Last accessed 01 May 2021. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/recently-completed/operation-mobile.html>.

Canada. Department of National Defence. “Operational Service Medal – HUMANITAS (OSM-HUM).” Last updated 06 January 2020. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/medals/medals-chart-index/operational-service-medal-humanitas-osm-hum.html>

Canada. Department of National Defence. “Special Service Medal (SSM).” Last updated 06 January 2020. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/medals/medals-chart-index/special-service-medal-ssm.html>.

- Canada. Government of Canada. "British Arctic Star Now a Recognized Military Honour in Canada." Veterans Affairs Canada. Last updated 30 April 2014.  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/news/archive/2014/04/british-arctic-star-now-recognized-military-honour-canada.html>.
- Canada. Minister of Public Works and Government Service Canada. *Dishonoured Legacy – The Lessons of the Somalia Affair*. Ottawa: Canadian Government Publishing, 1997.  
[http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2015/bcp-pco/CP32-66-1997-eng.pdf](http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2015/bcp-pco/CP32-66-1997-eng.pdf).
- Canadian Museum of History. "Portraits of Billy Bishop." Last accessed 04 May 2021.  
<https://www.historymuseum.ca/cmc/exhibitions/tresors/treasure/287eng.html>.
- Canada. Parliament of Canada. *BILL C-514 - An Act Respecting the Establishment and Award of a Special Service Medal for Domestic Operations (SSM-DO)*. Ottawa: House of Commons, 02 April 2004. <https://www.parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/37-3/bill/C-514/first-reading>.
- Canada. Royal Canadian Air Force. "Canadian Forces Station Alert." Last updated 27 September 2019. <https://www.airforce.forces.gc.ca/en/alert.page>.
- Canada. Veterans Affairs Canada. "Distinguished Flying Cross." Last accessed 30 April 2021.  
<https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/medals-decorations/details/46>.
- Canada. Veterans Affairs Canada. "Medals and Other Decorations that Honour Canadians Who Have Served." Last accessed 30 April 2021.  
<https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/medals-decorations>.
- Canada. Veterans Affairs Canada. "Orders and Decorations - Canadian Victoria Cross Recipients." Last accessed 30 April 2021.  
<https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/medals-decorations/canadian-victoria-cross-recipients>.
- Canadian War Museum. "British War Medal 1914-1920." Last accessed 30 April 2021.  
<https://www.warmuseum.ca/tilston-medals-collection/medals/6/>.
- Carment, David and Dani Belo. "War's Future: The Risks and Rewards of Grey-Zone Conflict and Hybrid Warfare." Canadian Global Affairs Institute, October 2018.  
[https://www.cgai.ca/wars\\_future\\_the\\_risks\\_and\\_rewards\\_of\\_grey\\_zone\\_conflict\\_and\\_hybrid\\_warfare](https://www.cgai.ca/wars_future_the_risks_and_rewards_of_grey_zone_conflict_and_hybrid_warfare).
- Churchill, Winston. "War Decorations and Medals." Parliament of the United Kingdom, House of Commons Debate, 22 March 1944, vol 398 cc872-1002.  
<https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1944/mar/22/war-decorations-and-medals>.
- Duckers, Peter. "Some British Awards for the Peninsular War - 1808-14." *Spink Insider* 29, January 2018. <https://www.spink.com/media/view?id=426>.

Duckers, Peter. *British Military Medals – A Guide for the Collector and Family Historian*. South Yorkshire: Pen & Sword Books Ltd., 2009.

Fletcher, W.H. *Request for Policy Update on the Implementation of Multiple Rotation Recognition Under The Special Service Medal*. 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group: file 5401-1 (G1 Svcs), 30 January 2018.

Forces War Records. “Canada General Service Medal (1866 – 70).” Last accessed 30 April 2021. <https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/medals/canada-general-service-medal-1866-70>.

Forces War Records. “General Service Medal (1918).” Last accessed 30 April 2021. <https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/medals/general-service-medal-1918>.

Forces War Records. “Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.” Last accessed 30 April 2021. <https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/medals/long-service-and-good-conduct-medal-lsgc-military>.

Forces War Records. “Naval General Service Medal (1847).” Last accessed 30 April 2021. <https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/medals/naval-general-service-medal-ngsm-1847>.

Forces War Records. “Naval Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.” Last accessed 30 April 2021. <https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/medals/naval-long-service-and-good-conduct-medal-1830-1848>.

France. Grande chancellerie de la Légion d’honneur. “The Legion of Honor – Award Criteria.” Last accessed 30 April 2021. <https://www.legiondhonneur.fr/en/page/award-criteria/405>.

France. Grande chancellerie de la Légion d’honneur. “The Legion of Honor in 10 Questions.” Last accessed 30 April 2021. <https://www.legiondhonneur.fr/en/page/legion-honor-10-questions/406#:~:text=%20The%20Legion%20of%20Honor%20in%2010%20questions,of%202%20800%20people%20can%20be...%20More>.

Global Security.org. “NATO Rank Chart: Army.” Last accessed 03 May 2021. <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/europe/army.htm>.

Hastings, Max. *Warriors: Portraits from the Battlefield*. New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group 2007.

Holmes, John. *Military Medals Review* London: Cabinet Office Ceremonial Secretariat, July 2012. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/61398/Medals-Interim-Report-July-12.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/61398/Medals-Interim-Report-July-12.pdf).

J.L.H.D. “A Bit of Coloured Ribbon.” *The Economist*. Last updated 06 July 2012. <https://www.economist.com/whichmba/bit-coloured-ribbon#:~:text=A%20bit%20of%20coloured%20ribbon.%20%E2%80%9CA%20SOLDIER%20will,Linus%20Siming%20of%20Bocconi%20University%20in%20Italy%20>

- Knighton, Andrew. "11 Ancient Roman Military Decorations." *War History Online*, 01 February 2016. <https://www.warhistoryonline.com/ancient-history/11-ancient-roman-military-decorations.html>.
- Lessen, Marvin. "The Cromwell Dunbar Medals By Simon." *British Numismatic Journal* 51, 1981. [https://www.britnumsoc.org/publications/Digital%20BNJ/pdfs/1981\\_BNJ\\_51\\_8.pdf](https://www.britnumsoc.org/publications/Digital%20BNJ/pdfs/1981_BNJ_51_8.pdf).
- Leuprecht, Christian and Peter Kasurak. "The Canadian Armed Forces and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief: Defining a Role." Centre for International Governance Innovation. Last updated 24 August 2020. <https://www.cigionline.org/articles/canadian-armed-forces-and-humanitarian-assistance-and-disaster-relief-defining-role>.
- Maxfield, Valerie. *Roman Military Decorations*. London: Batsford Academic, 1981.
- McCreery, Christopher. *The Order of Canada - Genesis of an Honours System*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018.
- McCreery, Christopher. *The Canadian Honours System*. Toronto: Dundurn, 2015.
- McCreery, Christopher. *The Order of Military Merit*. Ottawa: Director of History and Recognition, 2012. <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/order-military-merit-part-1.pdf>.
- McCreery, Christopher. *The Canadian Forces' Decoration*. Ottawa: Director of History and Recognition, 2010. <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/honours/canadian-forces-decorations-2010.pdf>.
- McCreery, Christopher. *Fifty Years Honours Canadians – The Order of Canada, 1967-2017*. Toronto: Dundurn, 2017.
- McKenna, C.A. *Op PRESENCE (Mali) ROTO 0 – End of Tour Report – 09 July 2018 – 25 January 2019*. Task Force Mali: file 3350-1 Op PRESENCE (TFC), 16 January 2019.
- Mueller, Karl P. *Precision and Purpose: Airpower in the Libyan Civil War*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2015. [https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research\\_reports/RR600/RR676/RAND\\_RR676.pdf](https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR600/RR676/RAND_RR676.pdf).
- Mussell, John. *The Medal Yearbook 2013*. Devon: Token Publishing Limited, 2013.
- National Army Museum. "Crimea War." Last accessed 30 April 2021. <https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/crimean-war>.
- National Portrait Gallery. "Oliver Cromwell - The Dunbar Medal." National Portrait Gallery London. Last accessed 30 April 2021. <https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portraitExtended/mw01595/Oliver-Cromwell-The-Dunbar-Medal>.



- New Zealand. Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. "Rules Relating to the Acceptance and Wearing of Commonwealth, Foreign and International Honours by New Zealand Citizens." Last updated 01 April 2011. <https://dpmc.govt.nz/our-programmes/new-zealand-royal-honours/new-zealand-royal-honours-system/rules-relating-to-acceptance-and-wearing>.
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization. "The History of NATO Medals," last accessed 30 April 2021, [https://www.nato.int/ims/docu/history\\_nato\\_medals.pdf](https://www.nato.int/ims/docu/history_nato_medals.pdf).
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization. *NATO Recruiting and Retention of Military Personnel*. Research and Technology Division: AC/323(HFM-107) TP/71, 2007. [https://www.nato.int/issues/women\\_nato/Recruiting%20&%20Retention%20of%20Mil%20Personnel.pdf](https://www.nato.int/issues/women_nato/Recruiting%20&%20Retention%20of%20Mil%20Personnel.pdf).
- Phillips, Hayden. *Review of the Honours System*. London: Cabinet Office Ceremonial Secretariat, July 2004. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/203279/Review\\_of\\_the\\_Honours\\_System\\_Phillips\\_Review\\_2004\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/203279/Review_of_the_Honours_System_Phillips_Review_2004_.pdf).
- Pinkerton, Charlie. "Liberal MP Revives Idea of War Medals for Disaster Responders." Last updated 22 October 2018. <https://ipolitics.ca/2018/10/22/liberal-mp-revives-idea-of-war-medals-for-disaster-responders/>.
- Pugliese, David. "Why did Canada refuse NATO's Afghanistan medal for its troops?" *Ottawa Citizen*, 17 October 2016. <https://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/defence-watch/why-did-canada-refuse-natos-afghanistan-medal-for-its-troops>.
- Reynolds, Ken. *Pro Valore: Canada's Victoria Cross*. Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2008. <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/themes/defence/caf/militaryhistory/dhh/popular/victoria-cross.pdf>.
- Russell, Andrew. "Afghanistan vets slam Canada's military over failure to award service medal." *Global News*. Last updated 26 September 2017. <https://globalnews.ca/news/3760685/afghanistan-vets-slam-canadas-military-failure-award-service-medal/>.
- Smith, Derek G. "Religion and Spirituality of Indigenous Peoples in Canada." *Historica Canada*, 04 December 2011. Last modified 19 April 2018. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/religion-of-aboriginal-people>.
- South Atlantic Medal Association 1982. "SAMA (82) History." Last accessed 30 April 2021. <https://www.sama82.org.uk/sama-82-history/>.
- United Kingdom. Colburns United Services Magazine and Naval and Military Journal. "Naval and Military Register – From the Supplement of the London Gazette, General Order." London: Horse-Guards, 01 June 1847.

[https://books.google.ca/books?id=C6sktnjjNBIC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q=medal&f=false](https://books.google.ca/books?id=C6sktnjjNBIC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q=medal&f=false)

United Kingdom. College of Arms. “The Order of the British Empire.” Last updated 11 April 2017. <https://www.college-of-arms.gov.uk/news-grants/news/item/136-the-order-of-the-british-empire>.

United Kingdom. Deputy Bath King of Arms, *Statutes of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath*. London: Nichols and Son Printers, 1787.  
<https://archive.org/details/statutesofmostho00orde/page/n99/mode/2up>.

United Kingdom. Government of the United Kingdom. “Agreed Guidelines on the Conditions and the Criteria Surrounding the award of Military Campaign Medals.” Last accessed 30 April 2021.  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/367159/Guidelines\\_on\\_military\\_campaign\\_medals.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/367159/Guidelines_on_military_campaign_medals.pdf).

United Kingdom. Forces Network. “Drone Crews To Receive New Operation Shader Medal.” “Last updated 18 July 2018. <https://www.forces.net/news/drone-crews-receive-new-operation-shader-medal>.

United Kingdom. Ministry of Defence. “New Medal Awarded to Recognize the Changing Character of Warfare.” Last updated 15 February 2019.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-medal-awarded-to-recognise-the-changing-character-of-warfare>.

United Kingdom. Ministry of Defence. “Qualifying time for Accumulated Campaign Service Medal reduced.” Ministry of Defence, 11 August 2011. Last accessed 30 April 2021.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/qualifying-time-for-accumulated-campaign-service-medal-reduced>.

United Kingdom. Ministry of Defence. JSP 761 *Honours and Awards in the Armed Forces*. London: Defence Services Secretary - Assistant Chief of Defence Staff Personnel and Training, October 2016.  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/557785/JSP761\\_Part1.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/557785/JSP761_Part1.pdf).

United Kingdom. The Gazette. “What is the ‘Order of Wear’ for British Honours, Decorations and Medals?” *The London Gazette*, 25 November 2019.  
<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/awards-and-accreditation/content/103440>.

United Kingdom. The Gazette. “02 January 1815 – Amendments to the Most Honorable Military Order of the Bath.” Whitewall: *The London Gazette*, 4 January 1815.  
<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/16972/page/17>.

United Kingdom. The National Archives. “War Office: Distinguished Conduct Medal, Submissions to Sovereign.” Reference WO 146, 1855-1909. Last accessed 30 April 2021.  
<https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C14353>.



United Nations. “How Does the United Nations Maintain International Peace and Security?” Last accessed 30 April 2021. <https://www.un.org/en/sections/what-we-do/maintain-international-peace-and-security/index.html>.

Valour Canada. “Afghanistan – Operation MEDUSA.” Last accessed 01 May 2021. <https://valourcanada.ca/military-history-library/operation-medusa/>.

Victoria Cross and George Cross Association. “VC Award Statistics.” Last accessed 02 May 2021. <https://vcgca.org/history>.

Waite, P. B. “WILLIAMS, Sir WILLIAM FENWICK.” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 11, University of Toronto/Université Laval (2003). Last accessed 01 May 2021. [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/williams\\_william\\_fenwick\\_11E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/williams_william_fenwick_11E.html).

Warwick and Warwick Ltd. “The History of the Battle of Waterloo - An In-Depth Guide to Waterloo Medals.” Last accessed 30 April 2021. <https://www.warwickandwarwick.com/news/guides/an-in-depth-guide-to-waterloo-medals>.

White, Sara. “Drive, Service a Way to Give Back.” Royal Canadian Air Force. Last updated 31 March 2021. <https://www.airforce.forces.gc.ca/en/article-template-standard.page?doc=drive-service-a-way-to-give-back/kmjsw2u>.