

WAR MEDALS ISSUED FOR SERVICES IN INDIA, 1852-1924,
ALSO THE FIRST AND SECOND ISSUE OF THE MOST
EMINENT ORDER OF THE INDIAN EMPIRE.

BY CHARLES WINTER.

I.—INDIA GENERAL SERVICE.

HE refusal of the Burmese to fulfil the conditions of the Treaty made after the first Burmese war of 1826 caused a second clash of arms to take place in 1852 on Burmese territory.

On completion of the war a medal was issued in 1854 to those troops who were present. This is known as the General Service Medal 1854.

Silver.

Obverse.—Head of Queen Victoria diademed, left, by W. Wyon. Legend: VICTORIA REGINA.

Reverse by L. C. Wyon depicts Victory crowning with a laurel wreath a seated warrior who holds in his right hand a sword and in his left a scabbard.

In the exergue is a lotus flower with two leaves. No inscription is on the reverse it having been the intention presumably of the "Powers that be" to record the campaign for which the medal was granted by means of a bar. Twenty-three different bars were issued for services in many parts of India covering a period of 41 years, viz., 1854-1895.

The following are the names of the bars issued :—

Pegu
 Persia
 North-West Frontier
 Umbeyla
 Bhootan
 Looshai
 Perak

} It will be noticed that none of these has dates.

After the Perak issue dates were added to the bars.

Jowaki, 1877-8.
 Naga, 1879-80.
 Burma, 1885-7.

When granting the issue of the silver medal and bar for Burma, 1885, Queen Victoria was "pleased to command that a bronze medal and bar" of similar pattern be "issued to all authorised Government followers who accompanied the troops so engaged." The practice of issuing bronze medals has continued until the present day.

Sikkim, 1888.
 Hazara, 1888.
 Burma, 1887-89.
 Chin-Lushai, 1889-90.
 Samana, 1891.
 Hazara, 1891.
 N.-E. Frontier, 1891.

Hunza, 1891.
 Burma, 1889-92.
 Lushai, 1889-92.
 Chin Hills, 1892-93.
 Kachin Hills, 1892-93.
 Waziristan, 1894-95.

These bars were attached to a suspender formed of scrolls, being fastened to the medal by a clip and worn with a dark red riband with two dark blue stripes, thus forming five stripes of equal width. The number, name, rank, and regiment of the recipient are engraved on the edge as a rule, but in a few cases they are stamped. The medal was issued to both services.

2.—THE INDIAN MUTINY.

The India General Service medal seems to have been limited to the smaller affairs on the Frontiers, Burma, Persia, Afghanistan, etc., and a new design by L. C. Wyon was adopted for the reverse of the Indian Mutiny, also a new type of suspender.

Silver.

Obverse.—Head of Queen as on the coinage. Legend:
VICTORIA REGINA.

Reverse.—Britannia standing and holding out in her right hand a laurel wreath, on her left arm the Union Shield; above, INDIA. Exergue, 1857-58.

It is somewhat similar in design to the five-pound piece of Queen Victoria's first issue and may have been suggested by that coin. Five bars were issued:—

Delhi.

Defence of Lucknow.

Relief of Lucknow.

Lucknow.

Central India.

The shape of the bars differs from those used for other medals, having fish-tail ends and curved inwards at top and bottom. The same form of bars and suspenders were afterwards used for the second China medal of 1857-60.

The rank, name and regiment are stamped on edge.

Riband—white with two red stripes.

The medal was issued with one to four bars but only a very few of the latter were granted.

3.—INDIA GENERAL SERVICE, 1895.

The troubles in Chitral led to a change being made in the design of the India General Service of 1854 and the date 1895 being placed on the reverse, and became known as the India General Service Medal, 1895.

Obverse.—Bust of Queen Victoria, left, with diadem and veil, and wearing the Star and Sash of the Order of the Garter, by T. Brock, R.A., as on the coinage of 1893. Legend: VICTORIA REGINA ET IMPERATRIX.

Reverse.—The Union Jack supported by an English and an Indian soldier dividing the word "INDIA" and the date 1895.

Fitted with scroll suspender and clip, and worn with a dark red ribband with two green stripes.

Six bars were issued:—

Defence of Chitral, 1895.
Relief of Chitral, 1895.
Punjab Frontier, 1897-98.
Malakand, 1897.
Samana, 1897.
Tirah, 1897-8.

4.—EDWARD VII INDIA GENERAL SERVICE.

After King Edward came to the Throne the obverse was changed and the effigy of His Majesty by De Saulles, as on the King's South African Medal, took the place of the late Queen's, the date 1895 being deleted from the reverse. A bar inscribed Waziristan, 1901-1902, was issued with the medal. Although Queen Victoria died in January, 1901, and the services for which the Waziristan bar was granted was for those in November, 1901-February, 1902, yet the officers and men who were already in possession of the 1895 medal received the bar only.

The number, rank, name and regiment of the recipient were engraved on each of the above medals.

These medals, in bronze, were also issued to authorized followers.

5.—INDIA GENERAL SERVICE, 1908.

A medal was next granted for the troubles, in 1908, on the North-West Frontier.

Obverse.—Bust of King Edward VII by De Saulles.
Legend.—EDWARDVS VII KAISAR-I-HIND.

Reverse.—An Indian fort with mountains in the background; below, a panel inscribed INDIA between an oak and laurel branches tied with ribbon.

This is known as the India General Service medal of 1908, and is mounted with scroll, suspender and clip.

Riband.—Green with a wide centre stripe of dark blue.

The only bar issued is inscribed North-West Frontier, 1908. The number, rank, name and regiment of the recipient are engraved on the edge.

6.—KING GEORGE V INDIA GENERAL SERVICE, 1911.

A punitive force was sent into the Abor country to punish the villagers who had been party to the massacre of a Mr. Williamson and his party. His Majesty King George V having ascended the Throne a new style of portrait was introduced for the obverse of the 1911 India General Service Medal.

Obverse.—Bust of His Majesty, left, crowned and wearing the collar of the Most Noble Order of the Garter. Collar of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire and Grand Master's Jewel of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, over the Royal Robes. Below the Bust, a laurel branch. Legend: GEORGIVS V. KAISAR-I-HIND on a wide band.

Reverse.—As on the previous issues.

Up to the present bars have been issued for services :—

Abor, 1911-12.

Afghanistan, N.-W. F., 1919.

Mahsud, 1919-20.

Waziristan, 1919-21.

Malabar, 1921-22.

Waziristan, 1921-24.

Waziristan, 1925.

7.—THE MOST EMINENT ORDER OF THE INDIAN EMPIRE.

I thought perhaps it would be of interest to bring to your notice the first and second issues of the badges of the above Order as I am able to exhibit specimens of both types.

This Order was instituted by Her late Majesty, Queen Victoria, Empress of India "to reward service rendered to her and her Indian Empire," also to commemorate the Proclamation of Her Style and Title of Empress of India, on the 31st December, 1877. It consisted then of only one class (Companions) and was worn on the left breast.

A gold enamelled red rose of five petals divided by a green leaf, on each of the petals a gold letter forming the word INDIA. In the centre of the badge a gold bust of Her Majesty (as on the Gothic Crown) within a purple enamelled band inscribed VICTORIA IMPERATRIX. Above the rose an Imperial Crown, worn with a purple riband attached to a gold floral buckle.

Within a few months of the institution of the Order, Queen Victoria revoked part of the Royal Warrant, changing the name of the Order from that of the Order of the Indian Empire, to its present title, The Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire, and enlarged it. It now consists of three classes—Knight Grand Commanders, Knight Commanders and Companions.

The Knight Grand Commanders wear a Star, Collar with the badge of the Order attached, a purple riband sash and a silk mantle of the Order. The badge for this class is somewhat larger in size

than the first issue, the word INDIA being omitted on the badges of all three classes and IMPERATRICIS AUSPICIIS is substituted for VICTORIA IMPERATRIX.

The Knight Commanders wear a Star on the left breast and the badge of the Order by a purple riband round the neck. This badge is the size of that of the first issue.

Companions formerly wore a much smaller badge on the left breast; this is now worn round the neck, the Order being changed during the war, 1914-19.

