



National Service Medals . . . and finally!

27th July 1949 to 12th August 1951
by Stan Briggs

In my article called 'Roll of Honour', I mentioned that myself and many like me have found ourselves not eligible to receive Official Campaign Medals for our time served in the army. Also, as I mentioned previously, the MOD (Ministry Of Defence) have declared an official starting date of hostilities in Egypt of 16th of October 1951. As you will see from my dates above I was home by 12th August 1951.

This whole matter has been quite a point of contention as service men not only fought for their King and country before this date, but some of them even lost their lives doing so, yet even their families have not been afforded the recognition of their loved one's being lost in war.

Now, to commemorate the period of National Service in the lives of so many such people, the Royal British Legion has thought it appropriate that a medal be struck which can be worn with pride . . . NOT . . . alongside Campaign Medals or Gallantry Decorations, but separately and distinctively. Well it is not exactly what we wanted, but it is something and for now we know at least that our voices have been heard.

For the record: 10% of every £1 of the sale of Suez Medals goes to the Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society as the beneficiary of this project and 10% of every £1 etc., of the National Service Medal goes to the Poppy Appeal.

and last but not least . . .

"Bring back National Service" How many times have I heard that since I completed my two years service?

It sounds like a threat to the youth of today, but it isn't and shouldn't be thought of like that. The reason for my conscription to National Service, which started in 1939 and ended in 1960 was to defend our country in the event of invasion, and also to protect other less fortunate countries who were vulnerable from attack.

The very first thing that I was taught, was that the training I was about to receive would help me to develop something they described as 'soldierly qualities' such as initiative, leadership, fitness, endurance, teamwork, esprit - de - corps and independence. Sixty years on, my thoughts and comments remain unchanged "how right they were?

The training I received stood me in good stead, not only during my army life but also in my civilian life. It not only helped me gain courage and knowledge, more importantly it helped me gain the confidence to go after any opportunities that were to come my way, which of course in turn helped me with my future family life, work life and time spent at play.

I hope you have enjoyed this insight into 1949 to 1951 army life as much
as I have enjoyed recounting the experience

Gunner Briggs signing out . . .



My National Service Medal

GUNNER BRIGGS



My Suez Canal Medal

