

To make a posthumous Medal Application to the NZ Defence Force for World War 2 medals for your Grandfather, a seaman and member of the NZ Seaman's Union, crewing on a ship of the 'merchant navy of New Zealand' on New Zealand coastal voyages, during World War 2.

A seaman, employed as described above, should be eligible for the three 'standard' medals;

- **The 1939 – 1945 Star**
- **The War Medal 1939 – 1945**
- **The New Zealand War Service Medal**

- 1.1 You will need to go to Archives New Zealand, in Wellington, and look at the 'Merchant Navy War Medal Card Index', for World War 2, to confirm that there are no records of medals having been awarded in your Grandfather's name.
- 1.2 Take a copy of the Archives New Zealand search sheet, and make a note on the sheet that there were no medals.
2. Put together an application as follows:
 - 2.1 A cover sheet would be a good idea; brief chronological history, and list of attachments.
 - 2.2 Include a copy of the Archives New Zealand search sheet from 1.2.
 - 2.3 Include completed NZDF form 'MD1050 - Application/Declaration Form for NZ Military Personnel Records and/or Medal Entitlements", aka Form No 1.
<https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/assets/PAM/NZDF-PAM-Enquiry-and-Medal-application-form-Aug-2020.pdf>
 - 2.4 Include a copy of your Grandfather's Birth & Death Certificate.
 - 2.5 Include a copy of your Father's Birth & Death Certificate.
 - 2.6 Include a copy of your Birth Certificate; this will confirm the Grandfather/Father/Son relationship.
 - 2.7 A list of ships that your Grandfather has crewed on would be a good idea, in table format, giving; Vessel Name: Official Number: Owner (shipping company): Description of Voyage: Date of Engagement: Port of Engagement: Date of Discharge: Port of Discharge.
 - 2.8 If possible, include a copy of the front page of the Federated Seaman's Union of NZ Membership Book; this gives your Grandfather's details. The NZDF will use his union membership number as his 'Service Number'.
 - 2.9 Include the individual Certificate Of Discharge form for each ship that your Grandfather served on. The words 'Home Trade' or 'Coastal' will be written in the 'Description of Voyage or Employment' box on each form.
3. Submit your application to:
NZDF Personnel Archives & Medals
Private Bag 905
Upper Hutt 5140
New Zealand

Note a If your application is for medals for a relative other than your Grandfather, attach the appropriate birth & death certificates to confirm the relationship.

Note b If the Archives New Zealand 'Merchant Navy War Medal Card Index', for World War 2, indicates that your Grandfather has been awarded medals for his World War 2 service, and if these medals are some of or all of the medals that the application would cover, and you have no knowledge of the existence of the medals, then you need to have a discussion with the NZDF's Medals Research & Entitlement Advisor, phone: 04 527 5280, or, 0800 334 772 (select Option 2 during business hours).

Note c If you do not have Certificate Of Discharge forms then you will need to put together a collection of other documents (shipping company records, ships logs, crew listings,

etc) that the NZDF will accept as proof that your Grandfather crewed on a specific New Zealand ship (or ships) on New Zealand coastal voyages during World War 2.

- c1 The **New Zealand Defence Force** has previously advised; "The merchant navy was not a part of the Royal New Zealand Navy and New Zealand merchant sailors were not attested members of the New Zealand military. As such, neither service files nor medals for merchant sailors are held at NZDF Personnel Archives & Medals."

The Personnel Archives & Medals section of the NZDF website currently makes no mention of the Merchant Navy. You can see their website at:

<https://www.nzdf.mil.nz/nzdf/personnel-archives-and-medals/>

- c2 **Archives New Zealand** in Wellington hold numerous Merchant Navy records, eg:

7460: Seafarers' Records of Service

7461: Merchant Navy War Medal Card Index

7463: Index to Seafarers' Certificates

16633: Ships' Logs, Articles of Agreement & Crew Lists

16634: Index to Ships' Logs, Articles of Agreement & Crew Lists

<https://archives.govt.nz/search-the-archive/researching>

- c3 The **Wellington City Archives** hold some records of Union Steam Ship Company employees, mostly for the period after it moved its head office to Wellington in 1922:

<https://archivesonline.wcc.govt.nz/>

- c4 The **Hākēna Heritage Collections** catalogue holds some Union Steam Ship Company documents, but they are mainly administrative:

https://hakena.otago.ac.nz/scripts/mwimain.dll/144/DESCRIPTION/WEB_DESC_DET_REP/SISN%201340?sessionsearch

- c5 The **New Zealand Maritime Museum**, also referred to as the **Voyager** New Zealand Maritime Museum, does not hold crew lists or records of Merchant Navy service, but may be able to suggest locations for remaining shipping company archives.

<https://www.maritimemuseum.co.nz/collections>

Danielle Carter : Archives & Library Manager : Bill Laxon Maritime Library : NZMM

E: danielle@maritimemuseum.co.nz Phone: 09 373 0810

The **New Zealand Maritime Index** enables you to search for vessels, organisations, subjects, and people, mentioned in a number of publications currently being indexed by the NZMM. A good place to start if you have a ship's name &/or official number.

<http://www.nzmaritimeindex.org.nz/>

- c6 **FamilySearch** holds a collection of digitised passenger lists that also, in some cases, include crew lists. It can also be worth searching here, particularly if your relative was likely to have sailed to or from Wellington.

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1609792>

Note d If the word 'Foreign' is written in any of the 'Description of Voyage or Employment' boxes on any of the Certificate Of Discharge forms, then your Grandfather is probably eligible for at least one more medal (for example, the **Pacific Star**), depending on what documents you can put together that the NZDF will accept as proof that your Grandfather served as a NZ seaman on a specific New Zealand ship (or ships), in a specific Foreign area (for example, the Pacific), during World War 2.

4. I used some of the above sources for information required to compile the application for my father's medals. Having the original COD forms helped.

If you should find other sources that enabled you to gather information and documents to assist with a submission to the NZDF PAM, I would be grateful if you could provide me with the details of the source so that I can update this sheet.

Graeme Coufts: gncoufts@yahoo.co.nz

Bannatyne Ernest Taylor Coufts | b. Victoria Cottage, Walls, Sheffland, 1897 – d. Wellington, NZ, 1980
Merchant Seaman, World War 2 | 1939-1945 Star, Pacific Star, War Medal 1939-1945, New Zealand War Service Medal

The following is an extract from a 2014 version of the Personnel Archives & Medals section of the NZDF website. As previously noted, the current NZDF website (24 May 2021) makes no mention of the Merchant Navy.

Medals for Merchant Navy service during the Second World War

New Zealand Merchant Navy personnel are eligible for all of the Second World War campaign stars and war medals awarded to New Zealand Armed Forces personnel, with the exception of the Air Crew Europe Star and the Defence Medal.

The medals and campaign stars most commonly issued to New Zealand Merchant Navy personnel are:

1. The New Zealand War Service Medal - which is awarded for 28 days full time service in the New Zealand Armed Forces or 28 days service at sea by New Zealand Merchant Navy personnel between 3 September 1939 and 2 September 1945. This medal was instituted by the New Zealand government in 1948.
2. The War Medal 1939-1945 - Qualifying service in the Merchant Navy for this Commonwealth award is 28 days service anywhere at sea between 3 September 1939 and 2 September 1945. For Armed Forces personnel the equivalent qualifying criteria is also 28 days full time service.
3. The 1939-45 Star - which recognises 180 days 'service afloat in areas of active operations (dangerous waters)' between 3 September 1939 and 2 September 1945. From 10 June 1940 to 8 May 1945 'dangerous waters' are defined as 'anywhere at sea'.

Note that whether Merchant Navy personnel were based in New Zealand or at a port in a combat zone has no impact on their eligibility. It was the amount of time spent in 'dangerous waters' which is important. The 180 day requirement can be accumulated over a number of voyages through 'dangerous waters'.

4. The Atlantic Star - which, following entitlement to the 1939-45 Star, is awarded to personnel who served a further 180 days in Atlantic waters, including in the United Kingdom 'Home waters' and in the convoys to North Russia (including time spent as a Prisoner of War). This Star is also issued for any length of qualifying service in the last six months of the War in Europe (8 November 1944 to 8 May 1945).
5. The Arctic Star – This award was instituted by the British Government in February 2013. It is awarded for service of one day or more north of the Arctic Circle between 3 September 1939 and 8 May 1945. Merchant Navy personnel who served in the convoys to North Russia qualify for the Arctic Star.
6. The Pacific Star – which is awarded for service of one day or more in the operational areas of the Pacific between 8 December 1941 and 2 September 1945. For Navy and Merchant Navy personnel the 1939-45 Star (180 days service afloat in areas of active operations) needs to have been qualified for first, before the Pacific Star can be awarded. The Pacific Star is also

issued for any length of qualifying service in the last six months of the War in the Pacific (7 March 1945 to 2 September 1945).

7. Foreign awards - Some Merchant Navy personnel have also qualified for and received one or more foreign awards for their sea service – usually a Russian award(s) for the veterans of voyages to North Russia. These Russian commemorative medals (e.g. for the 60th anniversary in 2005) were not administered by the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF), were only issued to living veterans, and are no longer available from the Russian Embassy in Wellington.

How to apply (updated 24 January 2014)

New Zealand Merchant Navy veterans, and the families of deceased veterans, are still able to apply for the issue of any unclaimed British Commonwealth and New Zealand awards, including the recently instituted Arctic Star. Applications should be sent to the Medals Office, NZ Defence Force, Private Bag 905, Upper Hutt 5140.

Application forms can be downloaded from the NZDF Medals website, or a paper copy of the form can be requested by phoning (04) 527-5270.

Applications should include as much detail as known on Ship name(s), the name of the Ship's Captain, the name of any foreign shipping companies they may have sailed with, and enclose copies of any relevant documents.

NZDF does not hold files about New Zealand Merchant Navy service. The surviving information is in the Shipping Company records (when these records still exist). To try obtain information and/or documentation about your deceased relative's Merchant Navy service you can start by contacting Voyager New Zealand Maritime Museum in Auckland, who can provide contact details to you of New Zealand and foreign institutions which have archived records of crew members from New Zealand owned shipping companies.

If you have some information on the ships served on, or a partial name of a shipping company, this information may assist Voyager staff to identify the correct Shipping Company.

Please note there are thousands of shipping companies world-wide and not all of their records have survived.

End of extract

Re the reference to the Voyager New Zealand Maritime Museum in Auckland, refer to note c5 above on page 2.