

● Gold Medal Recipients

The Gold Medals (Founder's and Patron's Medals) originated as an annual gift of fifty guineas from King William IV. It was awarded for the first time in 1831, for the encouragement and promotion of geographical science and discovery. In 1839 the Society decided that this sum should be converted into two gold medals of equal value, to be designated the Founder's Medal and the Patron's medal. Today both medals are approved by Her Majesty The Queen.

Gold Medal winners are listed in full below:

1832

Founder's Medal - Richard Lander

For important services in determining the course and termination of the Niger

1833

Founder's Medal - John Biscoe

For his discovery of Graham's Land and Enderby's Land in the Antarctic

1834

Founder's Medal - Captain Sir John Ross

For his discovery of Boothia Felix and King William Land and for his famous sojourn of four winters in the Arctic

1835

Founder's Medal - Sir Alexander Burnes

For his remarkable and important journeys through Persia

1836

Founder's Medal - Captain Sir George Back

For his recent discoveries in the Arctic, and his memorable journey down the Great Fish River

1837

Founder's Medal - Captain Robert Fitzroy

For his survey of the coasts of South America, from the Rio de la Plata to Guayaquil in Peru

1838

Founder's Medal - Colonel Francis Rawdon Chesney

For valuable materials in comparative and physical geography in Syria, Mesopotamia and the delta of Susiana

1839

Founder's Medal - Thomas Simpson

For tracing the hitherto unexplored coast of North America

Patron's Medal - Dr. Edward Rüppell

For his travels and researches in Nubia, Arabia and Abyssinia

1840

Founder's Medal - Major Henry Rawlinson

For researches in Persian Guayana

Patron's Medal - Robert H. Schomburgk
For his perseverance and success in exploring the territory and investigating the resources of British Guyana

1841

Founder's Medal - Lieutenant H. Raper
For excellent work on Practical Navigation and Nautical Astronomy

Patron's Medal - Lieutenant John Wood
For his journey to the source of the Oxus and for valuable labours on the Indus

1842

Founder's Medal - Captain Sir James Clark Ross
For his brilliant achievement at the South Pole, to within less than 12° of which he safely navigated his vessels, discovering a great Antarctic continent

Patron's Medal - Rev. Dr. E. Robinson
For his valuable work 'Biblical Researches in Palestine, Mount Sinai and Arabia'

1843

Founder's Medal - Edward John Eyre
For his enterprising and extensive explorations in Australia, under circumstances of peculiar difficulty

Patron's Medal - Lieut. J. F. A. Symonds
For his triangulation over Palestine and for his determination of the difference between the level of the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea

1844

Founder's Medal - W. J. Hamilton
For valuable researches in Asia Minor

Patron's Medal - Professor Adolph Erman
For important geographical labours in Siberia and Kamstchatka

1845

Founder's Medal - Dr. Charles Beke
For his exploration in Abyssinia

Patron's Medal - Professor Carl Ritter
For his important geographical labours

1846

Founder's Medal - Count P. E. de Strzelecki
For exploration in the south eastern portion of Australia

Patron's Medal - Professor A. Middendorff
For explorations in Northern and Eastern Siberia

1847

Founder's Medal - Captain Charles Sturt
For explorations in Australia, and especially for his journey fixing the limit of Lake Torrens and penetrating into the heart of the continent to lat. 24° 30'S, long. 138° 0'E

Patron's Medal - Dr. Ludwig Leichhardt
For explorations in Australia, especially for his journey from Moreton Bay to Port Essington.

**1848**

Founder's Medal - Sir James Brooke

For his expedition to Borneo, and the zeal he has shown in promoting geographical discovery

Patron's Medal - Captain Charles Wilkes, USN

For the talent and perseverance he displayed in a voyage in the Antarctic regions ... and for splendid scientific work

1849

Founder's Medal - Austen Henry Layard

For important contributions to Asiatic Geography, interesting researches in Mesopotamia, and for his discovery of the remains of Nineveh

Patron's Medal - Baron Charles von Hugel

For his enterprising exploration of Cashmere

1850

Patron's Medal - John Charles Frémont of the U.S. Topographical Engineers

For his important geographical labours in the far West of the American Continent

Chronometer Watch presented to - Rev. David Livingstone, the enterprising missionary

For his journey to the great lake of Ngami

1851

Founder's Medal - Dr. George Wallin

For his interesting and important travels in Arabia

Patron's Medal - Thomas Brunner

For meritorious labours in exploring the Middle Island of New Zealand

1852

Founder's Medal - Dr. John Rae

For his survey of Boothia undermost severe privations ... and for his very important contributions to the Geography of the Arctic

Patron's Medal - Captain Henry Strachey

For extensive explorations and surveys in Western Tibet

1853

Founder's Medal - Francis Gallton

For fitting out and conducting in Expedition to explore the centre of Southern Africa

Patron's Medal - Commander E. A. Inglefield

For his enterprising Survey of the coasts of Baffin Bay, Smith Sound and Lancaster Sound

1854

Founder's Medal - Admiral William Smyth

For his valuable Maritime Surveys in the Mediterranean

Patron's Medal - Captain Robert McClure

For his remarkable exertions ... in navigating his ship through the ice of the Polar Seas, and for his discovery of the North West Passage

1855

Founder's Medal - Rev. David Livingstone

For his recent explorations in Africa

Patron's Medal - Charles Andersson
For travels in South Western Africa

1856

Founder's Medal - Elisia Kent Kane
For services and discoveries in the Polar Regions during the American Expeditions in search of Sir John Franklin

Patron's Medal - Heinrich Barth
For his extensive explorations in Central Africa, his excursions about Lake Chad and his perilous journey to Timbuctu

1857

Founder's Medal - Augustus C. Gregory
For extensive and important explorations in Western and Northern Australia

Patron's Medal - Colonel Andrew Scott Waugh
For geodetical operations, as remarkable for their extent as for their accuracy, whereby [India] has been covered by triangulation

1858

Founder's Medal - Captain Richard Collison
For discoveries in the Arctic Regions

Patron's Medal - Professor Alexander Bache
For extensive and accurate surveys of America

1859

Founder's Medal - Captain Richard F. Burton
For his various exploratory enterprises, and especially for his perilous expedition with Captain. J. H. Speke to the great lakes in Eastern Africa

Patron's Medal - Captain John Palliser for the valuable results of his explorations in the Rocky mountains of North America

1860

Founder's Medal - Lady Franklin
For self-sacrificing perseverance in sending out expeditions to ascertain the fate of her husband

Patron's Medal - Captain Sir F. L. McClintock
For the skill and fortitude displayed by him and his companion in their search for records of the lost [Franklin] expedition and for valuable coast surveys

1861

Founder's Medal - Captain John Hanning Speke
For his eminent geographical discoveries in Africa, and especially his discovery of the great lake Victoria Nyanza

Patron's Medal - John McDouall Stuart
For very remarkable explorations in the interior of Australia

1862

Founder's Medal - Richard O'Hara Burke
In remembrance of that gallant explorer who with his companion Wills, perished after having traversed the continent of Australia

Patron's Medal - Captain Thomas Blakiston

**1885**

Founder's Medal - Joseph Thomson

For his zeal, promptitude and success during two expeditions into East Central Africa

Patron's Medal - H. E. O'Neill

For his 13 journeys of exploration along the coast and into the interior of Mozambique

1886

Founder's Medal - Major A. W. Greely

For having so considerably added to our knowledge of the shores of the Polar Sea and the interior of Grinnell Land

Patron's Medal - Guido Cora

For important services as a writer and cartographer

1887

Founder's Medal - Lieutenant-Colonel T. H. Holdich

For zeal and devotion in carrying out surveys of Afghanistan

Patron's Medal - Rev. G. Grenfell

For extensive explorations in the Cameroons and Congo

1888

Founder's Medal - Clements R. Markham

In acknowledgment of the value of his numerous contributions to geographical literature ... on his retirement from the Secretaryship of the Society after 25 years' service

Patron's Medal - Lieutenant H. Wissmann

In recognition of his great achievements as an explorer in Central Africa

1889

Founder's Medal - A. D. Carey

For his remarkable journey in Central Asia during which he travelled 4750 miles through regions never visited by an Englishman

Patron's Medal - Dr. G. Radde

For a life devoted to the promotion of Scientific Geography

1890

Founder's Medal - Emin Pasha

For the great services he rendered to Geography during his twelve years' administration of the Equatorial Province of Egypt

Patron's Medal - Lieutenant F. E. Younghusband

For his journey from Machuria and Pekin to Kashmir, and especially for his route-surveys and topographical notes

1891

Founder's Medal - Sir James Hector

For investigations pursued as Naturalist to the Palliser expedition

Patron's Medal - Dr. Fridtjof Nansen

For having been first to cross the inland ice of Greenland ... as well as for his qualities as a scientific geographer

1892

Founder's Medal - Alfred Russel Wallace

The well-known naturalist and traveller and co-discoverer with Charles Darwin of the theory of natural selection, in recognition of the high geographical value of his great works

Patron's Medal - Edward Whymper
For his route-map and detailed survey among the Great Andes of the Equator

1893

Founder's Medal - Frederick Selous
In recognition of twenty years' exploration and surveys in South Africa

Patron's Medal - W. Woodville Rockill
For his travels and explorations in Western China and Tibet

1894

Founder's Medal - Captain H. Bower
For his remarkable journey across Tibet, from west to east

Patron's Medal - Elisée Reclus
For eminent services rendered to Geography as the author of Nouvelle Géographie Univerelle

1895

Founder's Medal - Dr. John Murray
For services to physical Geography, especially oceanography, and for his work on board the Challenger

Patron's Medal - The Hon. George Curzon
For travels and researches in Persia, French Indo-China, the Hindu Kush, and Pamirs

1896

Founder's Medal - Sir William MacGregor
For services to Geography in British New Guinea, in exploring, mapping and giving information on the natives

Patron's Medal - St. George Littledale
For important journeys in the Pamirs and Central Asia

1897

Founder's Medal - P. Semenov
For his long-continued efforts in promoting Russian exploration in Central Asia

Patron's Medal - Dr George M. Dawson
For exploration in the North West Territories and Alaska

1898

Founder's Medal - Dr Sven Hedin
For important exploring work in Central Asia

Patron's Medal - Lieutenant R. E. Peary, USN
For explorations in Northern Greenland, and especially for discovering the northern termination of the Greenland ice

1899

Founder's Medal - Captain G. L. Binger
For valuable work within the great bend of the Niger

Patron's Medal - Fernand Fouereau
For continuous exploration in the Sahara

1900

Founder's Medal - Captain H. H. P. Deasy
For exploring and survey work in Central Asia



1908

Founder's Medal - Lieutenant Boyd Alexander

For his three years' journey across Africa from the Niger to the Nile

Patron's Medal - HSH The Prince of Monaco

For oceanographical studies off the coast of Spitsbergen

1909

Founder's Medal - Dr. M. A. Stein

For his extensive explorations in Central Asia, and in particular his archaeological work

Patron's Medal - Colonel M. G. Talbot

For the large amount of excellent survey work done by him on the Afghan frontier and in the Sudan

1910

Founder's Medal - Colonel H. H. Godwin-Austen

For geographical discoveries and surveys along the North-eastern frontier of India, especially his pioneer exploring in the Karakoram

Patron's Medal - Dr. William Spiers Bruce

For explorations in the Arctic and Antarctic

1911

Founder's Medal - Colonel P. K. Koziuff

For explorations in the Gobi desert, Northern Tibet and Mongolia

Patron's Medal - Dr. J. B. Charcot

For his important expeditions to the Antarctic, during which he conducted investigations of high scientific value in geology, meteorology, magnetic conditions and biology

1912

Founder's Medal - Charles M. Doughty

For his remarkable exploration in Northern Arabia, and for his classic work in which the results were described

Patron's Medal - Douglas Carruthers

For important expeditions to Ruwenzori, Turkestan, Arabia and Mongolia

1913

The Founder's Medal was not awarded, but an inscribed casket was presented to Lady Scott containing the Patron's Medal and the Special Antarctic Medal awarded to her late husband.

Patron's Medal - The late Dr. E. A. Wilson

For his excellent work in the study of the zoology of the Antarctic ... and for his skill as an artist

1914

Founder's Medal - Professor Albrecht Penck

For his advancement of almost every branch of scientific geography, and in particular his idea of an International map of the world on the millionth scale

Patron's Medal - Dr. Hamilton Rice

For his meritorious work on the head waters of the Orinoco and the Northern tributaries of the Amazon

1915

Founder's Medal - Sir Douglas Mawson

For his conduct of the Australian Antarctic Expedition which achieved highly important scientific results

**1931**

Founder's Medal - Bertram Thomas

For geographical work in Arabia and his successful crossing of the Rub al Khali

Patron's Medal - Rear Admiral Richard E. Byrd, USN: "for his expedition to the Antarctic ... and for his flights over both North and South Poles".

1932

Founder's Medal - Henry George Watkins

For his work in the Arctic Regions, especially as leader of the British Arctic Air Route Expedition

Patron's Medal - HRH The Duke of Spoleto

For work in the Himalaya

1933

Founder's Medal - J. M. Wordie

For work in Polar explorations

Patron's Medal - Professor Erich von Drygalski

For researches in glaciology in the Arctic and Antarctic

1934

Founder's Medal - Hugh Ruttledge

For his journeys in the Himalayas and his leadership of the Mount Everest Expedition, 1933

Patron's Medal - Captain Ejnar Mikkelsen

For exploration in the Arctic and his work in Eskimo resettlement in Greenland

1935

Founder's Medal - Major R. A. Bagnold

For journeys in the Libyan Desert

Patron's Medal - W. Rickmer Rickmers

For long-continued travels in the Caucasus, culminating in his leadership of the Alai-Pamir Russo-German Expedition in 1928

1936

Founder's Medal - G. W. Murray

For explorations and surveys in the deserts of Sinai and Eastern Egypt, and his studies of the Badawin tribes

Patron's Medal - Major R. E. Cheesman

For explorations and surveys of the Blue Nile and Lake Tana

1937

Founder's Medal - Colonel C. G. Lewis

For surveys in Iraq, Syria and the Irrawaddy Delta, and for his work on the Afghan and Turco-Iraq Boundary Commissions

Patron's Medal - Lincoln Ellsworth

For his work in developing the technique of aerial navigation in the Polar regions, culminating in his successful flight across the Antarctic

1938

Founder's Medal - John Rymill

For the valuable scientific work of his British Grahamland Expedition

Patron's Medal - Colonel Daniel van der Meulen
For exploratory journeys in the Hadhramaut, and his contributions to the geography of Southern Arabia

1948

Founder's Medal - Wilfred Thesiger
For contributions to the Geography of Southern Arabia and for his crossing of the Rub al Khali desert

Patron's Medal - Thomas H. Manning
For exploration and survey work in the Arctic

1949

Founder's Medal - Professor L. Dudley Stamp
For his work in organising the Land Utilisation Survey of Great Britain and his application of Geography to National planning

Patron's Medal - Professor Hans Pettersson
For his leadership of the recent oceanographical cruise in the Albatross

1950

Founder's Medal - George F. Walpole
For contributions to the mapping of the Western Desert of Egypt

Patron's Medal - Professor Harald Sverdrup
For contributions to polar exploration and for oceanographic investigations

1951

Founder's Medal - Dr. Vivian E. Fuchs
For his contributions to Antarctic exploration and his research as leader of the survey 1948-50

Patron's Medal - Dr. Donald Thomson
For geographical exploration and studies in Arnhem land

1952

Founder's Medal - H. W. Tilman
For exploratory work among the mountains of East Africa and Central Asia

Patron's Medal - Paul-Emile Victor
For contributions to Polar exploration and for his geophysical investigations of the Greenland Icecap

1953

Founder's Medal - P. D. Baird
For explorations in the Canadian Arctic

Patron's Medal - Count Eigil Knuth
For exploration in Northern Greenland ... and for his contributions to Eskimo archaeology


1954

Founder's Medal - Brigadier Sir John Hunt
Leader of the British Mount Everest Expedition

Patron's Medal - Dr. N. A. Mackintosh
For research and exploration in the Southern Ocean

1955

Founder's Medal - Dr. John K. Wright
For services in the development of geographical research and exploration



Patron's Medal - Commander C. J. W. Simpson
Leader of the British Expedition to North Greenland

1956

Founder's Medal - John Giaever
Leader of the Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition, for contributions to Polar exploration

Patron's Medal - Charles Evans
For contributions to Himalayan exploration

1957

Founder's Medal - Professor Ardito Desio
For geographical exploration and surveys in the Himalayas

Patron's Medal - Sir George Binney
For contributions to Arctic exploration ... the pioneer use of the air survey technique ... and to the development of the university exploring expedition

1958

Founder's Medal - Dr. Paul A. Siple
For contributions to Antarctic exploration and research

Patron's Medal - Sir Edmund Hillary
For Antarctic and Himalayan exploration

1959

Founder's Medal - Commander W. R. Anderson, USN
For the first trans-Polar submarine voyage in command of USS Nautilus

Patron's Medal - Sir Raymond Priestly
For services to Antarctic exploration

1960

Founder's Medal - Phillip G. Law
For Antarctic exploration and research

Patron's Medal – Professor Theodore Monod
For geographical exploration and research in the Sahara

1961

Founder's Medal - Dr. Mikhail M. Somov
For Antarctic exploration and research

Patron's Medal - Dr. John Bartholomew
Editor 'The Times Atlas of the World', for contributions to cartography


1962

Founder's Medal - Captain Erwin McDonald, USN
For coastal explorations in the Bellingshausen Sea (Antarctica)

Patron's Medal - Tom Harrison
Government Ethnologist and Curator Sarawak Museum, for explorations in Central Borneo

1963

Founder's Medal - Capitaine Jacques-Yves Cousteau
For underwater exploration and research



Patron's Medal - Dr. Albert P. Crary
For Antarctic research and exploration

1964

Founder's Medal - Dr. L. S. H. Leakey
For palaeographical exploration and discoveries in East Africa

Patron's Medal - Dr. Thor Heyerdahl
For geographical explorations in the South Pacific Ocean

1965

Founder's Medal - Dr. E. F. Rootes
For Polar exploration and research, with special reference to the Canadian Arctic

Patron's Medal - Professor Lester C. King
For geomorphological exploration in the Southern Hemisphere

1966

Founder's Medal - Professor E. J. H. Corner
For botanical exploration in North Borneo and the Solomon Islands

Patron's Medal - Dr. G. Hattersley-Smith
For glaciological investigations in the Canadian Arctic

1967

Founder's Medal - Claudio and Orlando Vilas Boas
For contributions to exploration and development in the Mato Grosso

Patron's Medal - Professor Eduard Imhof
For contributions to cartography

1968

Founder's Medal - Dr. W. Brian Harland
For Arctic exploration and research

Patron's Medal - Professor Augusto Gansser
For geological exploration and mapping in the Himalaya

1969

Founder's Medal - Rear Admiral Rodolfo N. M. Panzarini
For services to Antarctic exploration and research and to international co-operation in Antarctic science

Patron's Medal - Drs. R. Thorsteinsson and E. T. Tozer
For contributions to exploration and economic development in the Canadian Arctic

1970

Founder's Medal - Walter William Herbert
For Arctic and Antarctic exploration and surveys

Patron's Medal - Dr. Haroun Tazieff
For volcanological research and exploration

1971

Founder's Medal - Sir George Deacon
For oceanographical research and exploration



Patron's Medal - Dr. Charles Swithinbank
For glaciological research and exploration

1972

Founder's Medal - Rear Admiral G. S. Ritchie
For hydrographical charting and oceanographical exploration

Patron's Medal - Dr. M. D. Gwynne
Leader, the RGS's South Turkana (Kenya) Expedition

1973

Founder's Medal - N. L. Falcon
Leader, the RGS's Musandam [North Oman] Expedition. For contributions to the geographical history of the Persian Gulf region

Patron's Medal - Professor E. H. Thompson
Professor of photogrammetry and surveying, University College London

1974

Founder's Medal - Christian J. S. Bonington
For mountain explorations

Patron's Medal - Gordon de Q. Robin
For polar research and exploration

1975

Founder's Medal - Sir Laurence Kirwan
For contributions to the geographical history of the Nubian Nile valley and Eastern Africa, and for services to exploration

Patron's Medal - Dr. J. P. Kuettnner
For explorations of the Earth's atmosphere and oceans

1976

Founder's Medal - Dr. Brian B. Roberts
For Polar exploration, and for contributions to Antarctic research and political negotiation

Patron's Medal - Rear Admiral Sir Edmund Irving
For services as Hydrographer of the Navy and for his encouragement of exploration

1977

Founder's Medal - Professor Michael Wise
For economic Geography, and for his contributions to international understanding in geographical teaching


Patron's Medal - Professor Kenneth Hare
For discoveries in Arctic Geography

1978

Founder's Medal - Major-General R. Brown
For services to the science of map-making

Patron's Medal - Professor Mieczyslaw Klirnaszewski
For his contributions to geomorphology and international understanding in Geography

1979



Founder's Medal - Dr. David Stoddart
For contributions to geomorphology, the study of coral reefs and the history of academic Geography

Patron's Medal - Robin Hanbury-Tenison
For leadership of scientific expeditions, including the Mulu Expedition, and for his work on behalf of primitive peoples

1980
Founder's Medal - Professor William R Mead
Patron's Medal - Professor Preston James

1981
Founder's Medal - Professor Keith J Miller
Patron's Medal - Professor Valter Schytt

1982
Founder's Medal - Mr Michael Ward FRCS
Patron's Medal - Mr Douglas Warren CMG

1983
Founder's Medal - Sir Peter Scott CBE DSC
Patron's Medal - Commander John Young NASA

1984
Founder's Medal - Sir Ranulph Twistleton-Wykeham-Fiennes Bt
Patron's Medal - Professor Pierre Gourou

1985
Founder's Medal - Mr David Attenborough CBE FRS
Patron's Medal - Walter Smith CB OBE

1986
Founder's Medal - Mr Timothy Severin
Patron's Medal - Professor Peter Haggett

1987
Founder's Medal - Dr Anthony Laughton FRS
Patron's Medal - Professor Richard J Chorley

1988
Founder's Medal - Professor Peter Hall FBA
Patron's Medal - Mr Nigel de N Winser

1989
Founder's Medal - Dr Monica Kristensen
Patron's Medal - Professor Keith Clayton CBE

1990
Founder's Medal - Dr John Hemming
Patron's Medal - Dr Richard Leakey

1991
Founder's Medal - Professor Andrew Goudie
Patron's Medal - Dr Helge and Dr Anne Stine Ingstad

1992



2003

Founder's Medal - Professor Mike Goodchild
For contributions to geographical information science

Patron's Medal - Harish Kapadia
For contributions to geographical discovery and mountaineering in the Himalayas

2004

Founder's Medal - Professor Leszek Starkel
For advancing international understanding of palaeohydrology and geomorphology

Patron's Medal - Sydney Possuelo
For contributions to Brazilian people's rights and explorations in Amazonia

2005

Founder's Medal - Professor Sir Nicholas Shackleton
For research on Quaternary palaeoclimatology

Patron's Medal - Professor Jean Malaurie
For a lifelong study of the Arctic and its peoples

2006

Founder's Medal - Professor Derek Gregory
For international leadership of research in human geography and social theory

Patron's Medal - Professor Jack Ives
For his role internationally in establishing the global importance of mountain regions

2007

Founder's Medal - Professor Roger Barry
For international leadership of research on climate and climate change

Patron's Medal - Professor Paul Curran
For international development of geographical science through remote sensing and earth observation

2008

Founder's Medal - Professor Julian Dowdeswell
For the encouragement, development and promotion of glaciology

Patron's Medal - Professor Jesse Walker
For the encouragement, development and promotion of coastal geomorphology

2009


Founder's Medal - Dr Alan Baker
For contributions to historical geography

Patron's Medal - Professor Lord Nicholas Stern
For contributions to climate change policy

2010

Founder's Medal – Professor Diana Liverman
For encouraging, developing and promoting understanding of the human dimensions of climate change

Patron's Medal – Jack Dangermond



For promoting geographical science through the development of Geographical Information Systems

2011

Founder's Medal – Professor David Livingstone OBE

For the encouragement and promotion of historical geography

Patron's Medal – Dr Sylvia Earle

For the encouragement, development and promotion of ocean science and exploration