

**T**he oldest award of the Royal Life Saving Society is also the best known – The Bronze Medallion. Instituted in 1892, the year after the Society was founded in England, the Bronze was first awarded in Canada to the twenty-five young men in A.L. Cochrane's life saving class at Upper Canada College in 1895.

The Bronze of seventy-five years ago was known as the Proficiency Bronze Medallion. The award consisted of a certificate and a bronze medal which looked very much like it does today. The test items, as you can imagine, were much different.

Candidates for the 1908 Bronze Medallion had to be 15 years of age and hold the RLSS Proficiency Certificate – the first prerequisite. Candidates performed the Schafer method of artificial respiration and answered a battery of theory questions based on the RLSS Handbook. Questions covered water safety, rescue technique and resuscitation theory.

Bronze candidates demonstrated "four methods of rescue and three of release." These methods were described in detail in the Handbook and were taught and executed by the drill method, first on land and then in the water. Candidates were trained to respond to the commands barked by the instructor. Here is how the 1946 Handbook describes the Rescue Drill on Land and the First Method of Rescue:

**The Bronze Medallion  
is 91 years old and  
going strong.**



## RESCUE DRILL ON LAND

The object of this drill is to teach the best methods of approaching, taking hold of and carrying to shore a person in danger of drowning. The front rank man will act throughout as the subject and the rear rank man as the rescuer.

### 1. **Tallest on the Right, Shortest on the Left – Fall In**

On the words "Fall In", the members will form up in single rank, according to size, and take up the position of "Stand at Ease."

### 2. **Attention**

### 3. **Right-Dress**

### 4. **Eyes – Front**

### 5. **From the Right in Twos – Number**

### 6. **Form Two – Deep**

On the word "Deep," even numbers will take a pace to the rear with the left foot, and a pace to the right with the right foot, covering the odd numbers correctly.

### 7. **From the Right – Extend**

On the word "Extend," the right-hand man of the front rank, standing fast, will raise his left arm in line with his shoulder, palm downwards. The remainder of the front rank will raise both arms and "ease off" to the left, by taking quick side steps, until each man's finger touches the fingers of his right and left-hand men. As soon as the distance is attained drop hands to the sides together, taking the time from the right. The rear rank, without raising their arms, will move with their front rank men and cover them correctly.

### 8. **Inwards – Turn**

On the word "Turn," the front rank "About Turn."

### 9. **Rescue Drill First Method – Ready**

On the word "Ready," the rear rank men will grasp the front rank men firmly by the arms immediately above the elbows, fingers outside, thumbs inside.

### 10. **One**

On the word "One," the rear rank man will push outwards with his right hand and draw inwards with his left until his front rank man has been turned facing the right flank, taking care to retain his grasp.

### 11. **Two**

On the word "Two," the rear rank man will release his grip, instantly interchange the position of his hands by passing his left arm behind the subject grasping the subject's left arm with the left hand and his right arm with the right hand. Then he will turn the front rank man until he faces the front.

### 12. **Three**

On the word "Three," the rear rank man will let go his hold and pass his hands up to the sides of the face of his front rank man, who leans his head slightly back. The upper arms of the rescuer must be against his sides and his hands with the fingers in line with the arms over the ears of the subject, whose head should rest on the rescuer's chest as close to the chin as possible.

### 13. **Disen-gage**

On the word "Disengage," all drop hands smartly to the sides and resume the position of attention.

### 14. **Inwards – Turn**

The class then went on in the same manner to the Second Method Of Rescue and so on.