

The Griffon Order of the Mecklenburg Grand Duchies— An Outline

I. Grade Structure and Nomenclature

Basic Grades—	Additional Numerical Designations In:	
	<i>1884 Statutes</i>	<i>Post-1904 Statutes*</i>
<i>Grand Cross</i> (1884-1918)	1.	Class 1.
<i>Grand Commander's Cross</i> + (1884-1918)	2.	Class 2a.
<i>Commander's Cross</i> (1884-1918)	2.	Class 2b.
<i>Honor Cross</i> (1884-1918)	3.	Class 2c.
<i>Knight's Cross</i> (1884-1918)	4.	Class 3.
<i>Dame's Cross</i> (?-1918)	n/a	n/a

(Not confirmed in the statutes—unlike the Dame's grades of the Mecklenburg House Order of the Wendish Crown—but at least one badge exists.)

Embellished Grades—

Grand Cross with Diamonds° (1884-1918)

Grand Cross with Swords (1884-1918)—In actual practice, conferred only upon princes of the reigning house.

Grand Cross with Diamonds and Swords (1884-1918)—A combination theoretically possible under the statutes, but not known to have been awarded.

Grand Cross with Swords and Oakleaves (c.1917)—A badge exists; almost certainly a unique wartime award by Friedrich Franz IV, Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, to his cousin, Grand Duke Adolph Friedrich VI of Mecklenburg-Strelitz.

Grand Commander's Cross with Diamonds (1884-1918)

Commander's Cross with Diamonds (1884-1918)

Knight's Cross with Crown (1904-18)

* = This nomenclature was introduced in the Prussian Army rank lists with the 1891 edition, and may have been adopted in the 1904 statutes of the Order as a matter of established common usage. No other explanation can be adduced for including the dissimilar Honor Cross in Class 2.

+ = The word "kreuz" is included in the statutory title of this grade, although the complete suite of insignia includes a breast star.

° = The term "*Diamanten*" is used in the statutes, rather than the more all-inclusive "*Brillianten*".

II. Chronology

Early 1880s—The foundation of such an order was conceived in Mecklenburg-Schwerin, but the proposal had not been implemented at the time of the death of Grand Duke Friedrich Franz II in 1883.

15 April, 1883—Grand Duke Friedrich Franz III, founder of the Order, accedes to the throne of Mecklenburg-Schwerin.

15 September, 1884—Griffon Order founded. The first three awards on the roll were Grand Crosses to Friedrich Franz III and his younger brothers, Duke Paul Friedrich and Duke Johann Albrecht.

25 October, 1884—The first ordinary bestowal of the Order is made, a Commander's Cross to Carl Conrad, Director of the Royal Prussian Mint in Berlin.

10 April, 1897—Death of Grand Duke Friedrich Franz III.

21 April, 1897—Duke Johann Albrecht of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, regent for his minor nephew, Grand Duke Friedrich Franz IV, institutes a silver commemorative medal honoring the life and reign of Grand Duke Friedrich Franz III. The

medals, 3,200 in all, were struck at the Royal Mint in Berlin, and awarded to members of the late grand duke's retinue, court officials and servants and official participants in the funeral services. The suspension ribbon chosen for the medal is a reduced-width (25mm, with 1.5mm edges) version of the Knight's Cross ribbon of the Griffon Order, "his" order.

- 31 January, 1902—Grand Duke Friedrich Franz IV amends Article 3 of the 1884 statutes to direct that the Grand Cross star be worn on the left breast rather than on the right, as originally provided. What had been a unique practice among the sash grades of German orders was thus brought into line with common usage.
- 7 June, 1904—Grand Duke Friedrich Franz IV amends Articles 1 and 3 of the original statutes to provide for the award of the Knight's Cross with a crown suspension "as a higher distinction, in isolated cases." The amendment was signed on the day of his marriage to Princess Alexandra, daughter of Ernst August, Duke of Cumberland and Duke of Braunschweig-Lueneburg.
- 22/23 August, 1904—By mutual agreement between Grand Duke Friedrich Franz IV and the new Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Adolph Friedrich V (acceded to the throne 30 May, 1904), the Order becomes common to both grand duchies under the name "Grand-ducal Mecklenburg Griffon Order." The 1884 statutes, as modified, were allowed to stand and new provisions adopted for the dual administration of the Order (see Section VI.).
- 14 November, 1918—Grand Duke Friedrich Franz IV abdicates his own throne and that of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, left vacant since 23 February, 1918, when the childless Adolph Friedrich VI committed suicide. It cannot be stated with certainty that there were no further amendments to the statutes of the Order after 1904, but none have come to light.

III. The Basic Insignia

- a. The badge is a gilt Maltese cross, the arms enamelled in transparent red with convex surfaces tapering down to the edges. The underlying metal is cut to take the enamel, in a *champlevé*-style pattern of dashed lines parallel to the arm edges and joining along a line bisecting the arms lengthwise. The circular center medallion shows a Griffon highly modeled in silver-gilt, facing heraldic right and surrounded by a plain (sometimes grooved) gilt ring. There is no reverse center medallion; instead, the reverse arm surfaces taper to the vanishing point, uncovering part of the rough-finished reverse of the obverse center medallion.

Grand Cross and (Grand) Commander's badges are fully enamelled on the reverse. As a pinback decoration, the Honor Cross has a plain concave reverse, finished in matte gift, with a vertical pin hinged at the top of the upper arm and the pin catch at the bottom arm. Although the fact is not mentioned in the statutes, the Knight's badge also has an unenamelled reverse, the slightly convex surfaces also being finished in matte gift, but outlined by a single groove.

The badges were successively reduced in size, according to grade. Grand Cross badges are generally in the range of 67mm to 70mm wide, with center medallions of about 20-22mm diameter; Grand Commander/Commander badges average around 60mm, with 18mm center medallions; Honor Crosses are slightly smaller at around 55mm, with 16-17mm center medallions; and Knight's Crosses are 42mm to 45mm wide, with center medallions of around 13mm.

- b. The Grand Cross breast star is on the small side, at an average of 85-86mm from opposite points of the longest rays. The blunt-ended rays of the eight-pointed silver star body show smooth ~~convex~~ surfaces with no edging or decoration of any kind.

CONCAVE

The center medallion, common to both the Grand Cross and Grand Commander's stars, shows the highly-modeled Griffon, surrounded by a transparent red-enamelled ring, bearing the motto of the Order, "Alitor Adversis" ("Enobled Through Adversity") in gilt block capitals, running clockwise from eight o'clock to four o'clock, the space at the bottom occupied by a dual spray of laurel. The motto ring is circumscribed on both sides by rope-patterned gilt rings. Custom-made stars may be found with applied motto letters, but the issue pieces typically seem to have had the motto and laurel spray die-struck into the ring in relief, their surfaces stoned smooth with the enamel.

The four-pointed body of the Grand Commander's star essentially reduces the diagonal ray bundles to vestigial form, leaving the horizontal and vertical rays at nominally the same length as in the Grand Cross star. In practice, the average extreme dimension of the Grand Commander's star is bit smaller, at 81-83mm. This, combined with a slightly *larger* average center medallion (around 37mm, as compared with about 34mm in the Grand Cross star), creates a visual effect in which the center medallion bulks much larger in relation to the star body.

- c. The Grand Cross badge was worn at the left hip, suspended from a sash of bright yellow with narrow red edges, looped over the right shoulder. The sash is described in the statutes as being "four inches" in width, but given that the metric system had not fully displaced the old measures at that time, this is subject to interpretation. Maximilian Gritzner, in his worldwide survey of orders published in 1893, gives the sash width as 90mm. This may have been based on the old Hanseatic "foot", four-twelfths ("inches" were one-tenth of a foot in some other places and contexts) of which would amount to 95.3mm. Four inches based on the old Prussian "foot", on the other hand, would equal 104.6mm. In practice, the issue sashes appear to run about 100mm to 105mm in width, with edges of about 6mm. The Grand Cross star was worn on the right breast until 1902, on the left breast thereafter.

Grand Commanders and Commanders wore their badges suspended about the neck on a cravat of about 55mm width with edges of 3-4mm. The Grand Commander's star was worn on the left breast throughout the life of the Order.

Breast suspension ribbons for the Knight's Cross averaged about 35mm in width, with 2mm edges.

- d. All badges except the pinback Honor Cross (worn on the left breast) have a semi-circular suspension fillet soldered into the notch of the upper arm. The stippled fillet has a broad, smooth curvilinear edge and a rimmed hole to take the suspension loop. In the sash and neck badges, the loop is a double-wound oval silver-gilt ring; a smaller version of this will sometimes be found on Knight's Crosses, but the more usual arrangement is a small, closed circular ring taking a normal ribbon ring.
- e. Issue cases for Griffon Order insignia have fruitwood carcasses covered in dark maroon leatherette, more heavily grained and darker in color on top of the lid than on the sides and bottom. The cases observed have had the crowned script monogram "FF" stamped in gilt in the center of the exterior lid, with a gilt outline around the margins of the lid. These, obviously, housed insignia bestowed by the grand dukes of Mecklenburg-Schwerin; presumably, an "AF" monogram was used on cases for insignia awarded by the grand dukes of Mecklenburg-Strelitz after 1904, but the author has never encountered one.

The author has in his files more detailed records for only two types of case, one for a Grand Cross set, the other for a Knight's Cross with Crown. The Grand Cross case is a compact "side-by-side" type, the interior purple velvet-covered pad having a nest cut for the star and its pin on the left, another for the badge on the

right, including a cut-through slot for the suspension loop. The balance of the interior is covered with purple silk. The pad rests on ledges built into the interior short sides of the case, and is thus removable to give access to the sash vault beneath. The rectangular Grand Cross case (dual-hinged on the long side, with a push-button catch on the fly end of the lid) has radiussed corners and the overall dimensions are $8\frac{1}{16}$ inches by $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches by $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches high. The padded silk interior of the lid is stamped in gilt with the full Mecklenburg-Schwerin coat of arms and the purveyor's name:

"H. ROSE/—.— /Grossherzoglich. Hofjuwelier/SCHWERIN i. M."

The case for the Knight's Cross with Crown is similar, except for size and shape, being hinged along the short side and measuring $4\frac{1}{16}$ inches in length, $2\frac{11}{16}$ inches in width and 1 inch high. The interior pad is fixed, with a defined nest for the badge and a rectangular space for ribbon at the top. The gilt-stamped maker's name on the lid interior is similar to that on the Grand Cross case, except that the last lines read: "/Grossherzoglicher/HOF-JUWELIER/und Hoflieferant/I.M.d. Konigin d. Niederlande/(cartouche)/Schwerin i. Mkl." The appointment of the Heinrich Rose firm as purveyor to the Dutch court dates from some point shortly after 1901, when Duke Heinrich of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, the youngest of Friedrich Franz III's two half-brothers, married Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands. (see Section IV., paragraph e.)

IV. Notes On The Design And Execution Of The Insignia

- a. The griffon, a mythical heraldic beast, is the second charge on the shield of the coats of arms of both grand duchies, appearing on a blue field and representing the County of Rostock. It also appears as one of the supporters of the shield, and in the upper half of the third charge on the shield, here representing (since 1658) the Principality of Schwerin, a formerly independent bishopric secularized after the Thirty Years War. The griffon is actually the oldest element of Mecklenburg heraldry, first appearing in the seals of the Princes of Mecklenburg and Rostock in the early 13th century.
- b. The severely plain design of the badge (no motto ring, no reverse medallion, no heraldic suspension device) betrays Prussian influence, perhaps through the Berlin firm of Godet, the principal makers of the insignia. The "pie-slice" suspension fillet is also reminiscent of such Prussian order badges as the Black Eagle, the Knight of the military division of the *pour le merite* and the Honor-Knight of the *Johanniter Order*.
- c. The breast stars, on the other hand, show a certain Russian influence, perhaps not unusual, given the close dynastic connections with the Romanov family. It is also worth mentioning in this context that the Mecklenburg families were the only post-Napoleonic German ruling houses of Slavic origins, being descended from the Obotriti, a Slavonic tribe subdued by Henry the Lion, Duke of Saxony, in the 12th century; some of the iconography of the medieval era was recalled in the insignia of the House Order of the Wendish Crown.

Most noticeable are the blunt-ended rays with "dished" or concave surfaces, as seen on some late Russian breast stars. These features also appear in the issue breast stars of the orders of some other Slavic states influenced by Russian design, such as the Bulgarian Order of St. Alexander (founded in 1881) and the Serbian Order of the Star of Karageorge (founded 1904). One of Friedrich Franz III's own stars is an exceptionally well-executed piece by Nikols & Plinke of St. Petersburg and may have been prototypical.

- d. With one exception, no Griffon Order badges in actual gold have ever been seen, and it may be safely assumed that all *issue* insignia were in silver-gilt. The one noted exception is a Dame's badge, bearing a Russian fineness mark for 14-karat gold. There may be other custom-made pieces in gold, in normal or extraordinary grades, but this is the only one that has come to light.

Breast stars, as well, have not been observed with other than silver-gilt centers, although a wider range of custom-made stars might be expected, since they were worn far more often than the badges, at least by Grand Cross holders. Even the fine Russian-made star attributed to Grand Duke Friedrich Franz III—more delicately-proportioned than the issue models and showing applied motto letters—has silver-gilt centers.

- e. Issue insignia were made by the Berlin firm of J. Godet & Sons, which at one time held an appointment as jeweler to the grand ducal court at Schwerin. Stars and pinback Honor Crosses are also found with the mark of the Schwerin firm of Heinrich Rose, which assumed the court jeweler's appointment sometime in the 1880s or 1890s. It is problematical whether Rose was an actual maker of insignia; more likely, the local firm acted as a purveyor, with Godet continuing to manufacture the insignia.

With one exception, no marked badge (other than Honor Crosses) has ever been observed, the exception again being the gold Dame's badge, which, in addition to the fineness mark (see paragraph d.), has the St. Petersburg city mark on the edge of the suspension fillet, along with an indistinct maker's mark "-O", probably for the Moscow firm of P. Ovchinnikov, which had a St. Petersburg branch.

Breast stars and the Honor Crosses routinely bear maker's marks, such as the familiar "GODET/IM/BERLIN" in an incused rectangular field in the center of the reverse plug of stars, or "H.ROSE/SCHWERIN I/MECKL" (in *sans serif* capital letters), impressed in the center of the blank reverse of Honor Crosses, in the center of the reverse plug of breast stars, or longitudinally on the central exterior surface of star pins.

The Rose mark is more common, and it could be speculated that the Godet-marked stars are the earlier ones, produced before the local firm entered the picture. Assuming that a star or badge can be confidently associated with a particular case (always somewhat problematical), additional maker's information sometimes appears on cases that may permit rough dating, e.g., the presence of a reference to Rose's warrant from the royal Dutch court (see Section III, paragraph e.) would place such a piece after the turn of the century.

- f. Among the embellished insignia, no badge or star with Diamonds has been observed, so their configuration can only be guessed at; most probably, the arrangement of the stones followed that of the similarly-shaped Prussian Black Eagle Order and Red Eagle Order Grand Cross badge: Around the center medallion, on the face of the suspension loop and perhaps along the curved edge of the suspension fillet. Breast stars could be expected to have the motto letters in stones and perhaps also the inner and/or outer margins of the motto ring.

The style of swords used in Grand Cross insignia so embellished is also a matter of some uncertainty, although the weight of the meager evidence seems to favor a Classical design very similar to those of the Prussian orders, except showing cross-hatched grips rather than the simulated one-way sharkskin wrapping. Perhaps not so incidentally, this is the style of sword used on Godet-made insignia of German orders that did not have a locally peculiar design, such as the Merit Cross of the Principality of Waldeck. The Classical type with cross-hatched grips appears on the

Griffon Order Grand Cross badge with Swords and Oakleaves, described more fully below, and was seen on a Grand Cross badge in a European catalog some years ago.

On the other side of the ledger, a Grand Cross badge appearing in a 1988 German catalog showed a style of sword theretofore associated only with the Mecklenburg House Order of the Wendish Crown. This is a two-handed heavy medieval type with a broad, tapering blade, exaggeratedly heavy grip wraps and a broad, flat pommel. The overall visual effect is entirely consonant with the early medieval "Crown of the Wends" (which was not a crown at all, but that is another story) that inspired the design of the insignia of the house order of that name, and seems out of place in any other context. Also, the Griffon Grand Cross badge with the Wendish Crown-style swords has only been observed in the catalog photographs; considering the numbers of copies of Wendish Crown Grand Cross badges that have appeared on the market in recent years—with and without Swords—one would want to examine this badge carefully before accepting it as evidence that swords of this type were used with the Griffon Order.

It is assumed that swords, of whatever type, were also applied to the Grand Cross star, but none has been seen—most likely, they were crossed behind the center medallion, in the usual fashion.

- g. Aside from the green-enamelled oakleaves, the salient feature of the Griffon Order badge with Oakleaves and Swords is the presence of a reverse center medallion. This stippled silver-gilt medallion bears the script monogram "ff/IV" in relief and has a raised, polished border. The badge itself is also silver-gilt, with a rather dull finish. The oakleaves are arranged between the arms of the cross to form an inverted triangle, bisected by the sword blades, with extensions towards the points and grips running along either side of the blades.
- h. The Knight's Cross with Crown—which is not especially uncommon—employs what the 1904 statute amendment calls "the grand-ducal crown", that is, a royal-style crown with eight bowed arches but no lining or cap. This open crown is modeled in gilded silver and its straight headband butts directly against the sheared-off suspension fillet. This joint may be soldered fixed, or, more usually, pinned laterally to allow movement of the crown through a range of 20 to 30 degrees. The hole in the suspension fillet is, of course, omitted and the ribbon ring passes laterally through a transverse hole in the orb of the crown.
- i. The gold Dame's badge mentioned at (d.) and (e.), above, is very much like a Knight's badge—including the unenamelled, matte-finished reverse—except that it is significantly smaller, at 34.3mm/33.9mm (horizontal/vertical dimensions); Knight's badges generally run about 42-45mm wide. The bow ribbon and suspension arrangement are clearly original to the purpose, and not a retroactive modification. The width of the ribbon is proportional to the size of the badge, at 28.3mm with 2.5mm edges.

V. Observations on the Bestowal of the Griffon Order

- a. A roll of members of the Griffon Order is available, covering the first 12 years of the Order's existence, to about the middle of 1896. Bestowals by grade and year are summarized in Table I. at the conclusion of this paper. The roll shows a total of 1,004 awards in all grades during the period 1884-96, and provides some insight into the practical purpose of the order—to satisfy the need to reward members of several growing constituencies while preserving the relative exclusivity of the House Order of the Wendish Crown. Bestowals of all grades of the Griffon Order during the

period under review average a little more than 87 per year; this compares with an average of about 22 bestowals annually in the Mecklenburg-Schwerin branch of the Order of the Wendish Crown over the *entire* period of its existence from 1864 to 1918 (2,154 awards in all grades, but about 45 percent of these were Gold and Silver Merit Crosses, which have no equivalent in the Griffon Order). Comparable statistics are not available for Mecklenburg-Strelitz bestowals of the Wendish Crown, but they would likely add about one-third to the annual average number of awards of the order. However, if the pattern observed in other German states orders (particularly in trend-setting Prussia) held true for the Griffon Order, the rate of bestowals increased substantially from the turn of the century to World War I, so that the ratio of frequency to the Wendish Crown was no doubt maintained at a level of three or four to one.

- b. One of the rising classes served by the Griffon Order was the professional officer corps of a standing army of a size and variety unlike anything that had existed before the French war of 1870-71. A perusal of the Mecklenburg-Schwerin State Calendar for 1906 shows that civilian officials of the grand-ducal court and civil government tended to have the Wendish Crown (insofar as they were decorated at all), while military officers had the Griffon. The pattern is generally one of mutual exclusion—only a few of the highest-ranking soldiers had any grade of the house order.

By far the largest concentration of Griffon Order awards in the 1906 State Calendar, in fact, is in the military establishment. The roll indicates that these recipients were not only—or even especially—those of Mecklenburg-Schwerin origins, but routinely included commanders and staff officers at higher echelons—corps, division and brigade—superintending Mecklenburg-Schwerin units. Officers of other units garrisoned in the grand duchy were also frequent recipients of the Griffon Order. A typical initial bestowal might be the pinback Honor Cross to a major, and military officers, in fact, account for a large share of the relatively large number of awards in that grade.

- c. The Order had little currency in Mecklenburg-Strelitz before it became a joint institution of the two grand duchies in 1904. The 1884-96 roll shows no Mecklenburg-Strelitz subjects, not even members of the ruling house. A quick review of the Mecklenburg-Strelitz State Calendar for 1903 shows only one member, and none among the grand ducal family.
- d. The early roll shows no awards in Diamonds or with Swords. The Griffon Order Grand Cross with Swords and Oakleaves belongs, of course, to the World War I era. This badge was seen in the context of a group of high-ranking German orders insignia—including multiple examples of the Wendish Crown—that had been purchased in the Netherlands in 1922. The unique reverse center medallion described at IV. (g.), above, indicates that Grand Duke Friedrich Franz IV of Mecklenburg-Schwerin was the presenter. Since the Grand Cross with Swords was restricted to male members of the grand ducal families, the logical recipient would have been Grand Duke Adolph Friedrich VI of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, who saw extensive field service as a cavalry colonel during the war, perhaps awarded on the occasion of his promotion to the rank of *general-major* on 6 November, 1917.
- e. The roll indicates that princes of the grand ducal house received the Grand Cross of the Griffon Order on or about their fifteenth birthday. Also quickly established was the practice of granting each prince a Knight's Cross for use as kind of *kleiner* decoration to represent the Grand Cross in mounted groups when full suites of insignia were not being worn.

- f. While the male members of the ruling house are included among the recipients in the 1884-96 roll (not always the case in such documents), the grand duchess and the duchesses are not. Since no ladies' grades or special insignia are mentioned in the statutes, this raises the question of whether the known badge might represent a private intra-household decoration that used the iconography of the Griffon Order but was not part of it, much in the fashion of the princesses' badges associated with the House Order of Albert the Bear of the Duchy of Anhalt or the Saxe-Ernestine House Order of the Saxon Duchies. The principal ladies' orders of the grand duchies were, of course, the statutorily-defined versions of the House Order of the Wendish Crown—the full-sized set of the Grand Cross with the Crown in Ore, in Diamonds, for the grand duchesses; the reduced-size badge of the same grade, in Diamonds, worn by the duchesses on a shoulder bow; and the reduced-size badge of the Grand Cross with the Crown in Gold, for other female recipients.
- g. Among the numerous foreign recipients of the Griffon Order shown in the 1884-96 roll (see Table II. at the conclusion of this paper), the salient fact to be noted is the high proportion of Russian knights. There is really no mystery in this, given the close dynastic relationship between the two ruling houses: The consort of Grand Duke Friedrich Franz III, the founder of the Order, was Grand Princess Anastasia, daughter of Grand Prince Michael and niece of Emperor Alexander II of Russia (married in St. Petersburg in 1879); Friedrich Franz III's sister, Duchess Marie, had previously married (in 1874) Grand Prince Vladimir, brother of Emperor Alexander III. Official and private visits between the two courts were frequent, accounting for the high number of protocol awards to Russian civil and military officials.

Perhaps the only other thing to be noted about foreign recipients is the relatively high concentration of French Knights Crosses: Grand ducal excursions to the watering holes of southern France can be closely charted by these awards whose recipients included mayors, postmasters, railroad freight agents and station-masters, police officials and casino bosses.

VI. Administration of the Griffon Order

- a. Just as the Griffon Order insignia are simple and direct in execution, so are the provisions for the administration of the Order and the privileges associated with it. By comparison, the more complex Wendish Crown Order statutes included such provisions as: Limitations on the numbers of domestic knights; eligibility requirements based on civil or equivalent military rank for admission to the grades of Grand Cross and Grand Commander; a requirement that candidates for admission be members of Christian confessions publically recognized in Germany; and provisions for integrating the insignia of the order into public and private heraldry (the Wendish Crown insignia appears in the coats-of-arms of both grand duchies; the Griffon Order does not.). There is none of that in the Griffon Order statutes; an abstract of the administrative provisions would include:
- Establishment of the reigning grand duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin as grand master of the Order, that office having the authority of final decision in all of its affairs. (After 1904, the grand duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz was also grand master, the office to be exercised independently in each state.)
 - Entrusting the day-to-day business of the Order to the chancellor of the House Order of the Wendish Crown, whose enumerated duties in respect to the Griffon Order include countersigning all bestowal documents; receiving returned Order insignia; and overseeing the maintenance of the roll of the Order. (The chancellor of the House Order of the Wendish Crown in Mecklenburg-Strelitz assumed Griffon Order administration in that grand duchy after 1904.)

- Knights of the Order have the right to add the nomenclature of their grade to any other titles.
- Members of the Order can be removed from its rolls for reasons of dishonorable behavior, with the final decision to be made by the grand master on the proposal of the chancellor. The name of the offender will be expunged from the roll, the insignia to be returned to the chancellor immediately.
- The insignia of the Order must be returned to the chancellor upon death or promotion to a higher grade. In the case of death, it is the duty of the recipient to have made arrangements for the return of insignia by the estate. (The 1904 agreement extending the Order to Mecklenburg-Strelitz specifically states that the rules for return of insignia upon promotion apply even if the higher grade is being awarded by a different grand master.)

The 1904 agreement between the two grand dukes provides for joint awards of the Order by both grand masters "in isolated cases", according to mutually agreed procedures already in effect for joint bestowals of the Order of the Wendish Crown. The 1904 treaty also directs the two Griffon Order chancellors to negotiate the general rules for bestowal, and mandates an exchange of lists of proposed awards "not less often than annually, at the close of the year."

- Table I. at the close of this paper indicates, in addition to the annual numbers of awards, the number of insignia returned to the Mecklenburg-Schwerin Order chancellery by year and grade, from among those awarded during the period 1884-96. Insignia from this era were being returned as late as 1941, so it is clear that the obligation to do so was not considered forfeit because of the 1918 abdications, at least by many recipients. The large majority of insignia not returned were among those awarded to foreigners, the Russians in particular.
- The Honor Cross of the Griffon Order—in the sense of a pinback "Officer's" grade ranking between the Commander and the highest grade of Knight—represents an innovation in the grade structure of German orders. A pinback Officer class was introduced into the hierarchy of the Royal Saxon Albert Order in 1890. From that time until the eve of World War I, similar grades were created for 11 existing orders and included in one new foundation.

I have titled this paper an "outline" of the Griffon Order, rather than a definitive history, because it will be readily apparent that there are many gaps in the available information on the subject, particularly the configuration of some of the more exotic insignia. Anyone having further information about these, or any other aspect of the Order, is invited to contact:

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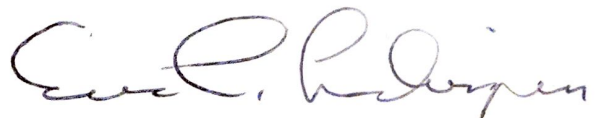


Table I. Awards of the Mecklenburg-Schwerin Griffon Order to 1896*

Year	Grand Cross	Grand Commander	Commander	Honor Cross	Knight
1884	9 (-)	3 (-)	6 (-)	3 (-)	6 (-)
1885	10 (-)	7 (-)	14 (-)	13 (-)	29 (-)
1886	8 (-)	11 (-)	15 (-)	21 (-)	26 (-)
1887	3 (1)	8 (-)	4 (1)	10 (1)	16 (-)
1888	14 (-)	6 (-)	10 (-)	17 (1)	37 (-)
1889	10 (1)	10 (1)	15 (-)	12 (-)	42 (-)
1890	13 (1)	8 (1)	13 (-)	17 (1)	26 (-)
1891	4 (2)	2 (-)	10 (2)	18 (1)	25 (1)
1892	15 (1)	12 (2)	13 (2)	23 (2)	21 (-)
1893	7 (-)	6 (-)	14 (-)	25 (-)	24 (2)
1894	27 (1)	20 (2)	21 (2)	36 (3)	56 (3)
1895	13 (2)	12 (1)	26 (6)	43 (5)	31 (5)
1896**	3 (4)	7 (4)	5 (3)	8 (4)	5 (1)
Total Awards	<u>136</u>	<u>112</u>	<u>166</u>	<u>246</u>	<u>344</u>
1897	(2)	(4)	(3)	(1)	(6)
1898	(2)	(6)	(4)	(5)	(1)
1899	(2)	(6)	(-)	(4)	(4)
1900	(2)	(4)	(3)	(1)	(1)
1901	(1)	(3)	(6)	(8)	(5)
1902	(4)	(4)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1903	(2)	(1)	(4)	(6)	(7)
1904	(2)	(2)	(4)	(11)	(2)
1905	(7)	(4)	(9)	(11)	(10)
1906	(4)	(2)	(3)	(3)	(6)
1907	(1)	(3)	(3)	(1)	(1)
1908	(5)	(1)	(1)	(6)	(6)
1909	(5)	(4)	(3)	(6)	(3)
1910	(1)	(-)	(2)	(3)	(-)
1911	(1)	(1)	(3)	(9)	(1)
1912	(2)	(3)	(1)	(6)	(4)
1913	(3)	(-)	(3)	(6)	(6)
1914	(2)	(1)	(2)	(4)	(1)
1915	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(4)
1916	(-)	(-)	(1)	(3)	(4)
1917	(-)	(-)	(2)	(3)	(1)
1918	(-)	(-)	(2)	(1)	(-)
1919	(-)	(-)	(1)	(-)	(-)
1920	(-)	(-)	(-)	(1)	(-)
1921	(-)	(-)	(-)	(1)	(-)
1922	(-)	(-)	(-)	(1)	(-)
1923	(2)	(-)	(1)	(-)	(-)
1924	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
1925	(-)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(2)
1926	(1)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(1)
1927	(-)	(1)	(-)	(2)	(-)
1928	(-)	(-)	(1)	(-)	(-)
1929	(1)	(-)	(-)	(1)	(-)
1930	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)

(continue)

Year	Grand Cross	Grand Commander	Commander	Honor Cross	Knight
1931	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(1)
1932	(-)	(-)	(1)	(-)	(1)
1933	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
1934	(-)	(1)	(-)	(-)	(-)
1935	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
1936	(1)	(1)	(-)	(-)	(1)
1937	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(1)
1938	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
1939	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
1940	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
1941	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(1)
No Date +	(-)	(2)	(1)	(3)	(-)
Total Returned	(67)	(67)	(86)	(132)	(99)
Percentage Returned	49.3	59.8	51.8	53.7	28.8

* = Figures in parentheses indicate the number of insignia returned of those awarded, 1884-96, whether by reason of death or promotion in the Order

** = Through 24 June

+ = Date of return not given in roll

Source: Mecklenburg Landeshauparchiv, Schwerin, Staatsarchiv, DDR:
 "Ordensmatrikel des Grossherzoglich Greifen-Ordens", pp. 1-167

Table II. Awards of the Griffon Order by Nationality of Recipients, 1884-96

Nationality	Grand Cross		Grand Commander		Commander		Honor Cross		Knight		Totals	
		(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)
German	82	60.3	65	58.0	109	65.7	197	80.1	180	52.3	633	63.0
Russian	27	19.9	26	23.2	29	17.5	31	12.6	110	32.0	223	22.2
(As % of Foreign Awards)	50.0		55.3		50.9		63.3		67.1		60.1	
French	3		2		2		4		33		44	
Italian	7		3		6		2		5		23	
Turkish	3		1		7		—		3		14	
Austro-Hungarian	2		2		4		3		2		13	
Swedish	1		3		3		4		2		13	
Japanese	5		2		3		—		1		11	
Danish	2		4		2		1		—		9	
Greek	—		3		—		1		1		5	
Dutch	1		—		—		2		1		4	
Monagasque	—		—		—		1		3		4	
Belgian	—		—		1		—		1		2	
Portuguese	2		—		—		—		—		2	
Spanish	1		—		—		—		1		2	
Norwegian	—		—		—		—		1		1	
Swiss	—		1		—		—		—		1	
(All foreign)	54	39.7	47	42.0	57	34.3	49	19.9	164	47.7	371	37.0
Totals	136		112		116		246		344		1004	