

Rosettes



A rosette is a small, circular device that is typically presented with a medal. The rosettes are either worn on the medal to denote a higher rank, or for situations where wearing the medal is deemed inappropriate, such as on a suit.

Historians say that the rosette award ribbon dates back as far as the 8th or 9th century. Unlike the rosettes we know today, designed to resemble a rose, the first millennium rosettes are said to have been created to symbolize the moon and planets.

In 1802, Napoleon Bonaparte instituted the use of rosette award ribbons as a part of the Legion of Honor award. These early rosettes, much larger than the rosettes we see today, were attached to the ribbon that displayed the Legion medal and presented to deserving individuals in recognition of outstanding military or civic service.

Rosettes are also sometimes called bowknots, due to their shape. Moreover, a large rosette is sometimes pinned onto the ribbon which suspends a medal, typically the Officer (and sometimes Grand Officer)'s badge of certain orders of chivalry.

Some small lapel rosettes are worn in the same manner as other lapel pins. For instance, knights and dames of the Order of the British Empire now wear a lapel rosette bearing the order's cross in the center, whereas previously this was a purely metallic lapel pin. While a metal lapel pin mounted on a silk rosette is considered a decoration of distinction, this is not always true of a metal emblem lacking the ribbon backing.



Several of the top decorations of France, including the Légion d'honneur and the Ordre national du Mérite, are presented with a rosette along with the medal. The Legion of Honor authorized a rosette for those who are the rank of officer or above. If the grade is higher, the rosette is adorned with gold and/or silver bars (or "half-knots") which are placed beside each side of the rosette. The same manner is accorded to the Order of National Merit. In occasions when ribbon bars are worn alone, the above-mentioned half-knots and/or

rosettes are pinned onto the ribbon bars as appropriate to denote the wearer's grade.

In the United Kingdom, small silver rosettes can be added to the ribbons that are worn in place of medals. Usually these indicate multiple award bars, the number of times a decoration for merit or distinguished service has been awarded. (Exceptions are the George Cross and Victoria Cross, where the ribbons are issued only with miniatures of the medals attached.) Holders of the 1914 Star, the 1939-45 Star, the Atlantic Star, the Pacific Star, the Burma Star, the South Atlantic Medal (awarded for service in the Falklands War), the Gulf War Medal 1991 and the Sierra Leone medal could also receive these rosettes if they met certain criteria for combat service.



In the United States, the Medal of Honor is issued with a 1/2 inch light blue rosette with white stars, authorized for civilian wear as a lapel button.^[1] Previously, the Purple Heart was also presented with a purple and white rosette, but now has been replaced by a metallic lapel pin. The lapel pin is

designed to be a smaller version of the rectangular service ribbon, also for use on civilian wear. Most American military medals have the ribbon bar design scaled down to the size of a lapel pin.