We are probably most familiar with the cross in its simplest form: the Latin Cross. However, the cross symbol has many formats appearing in heraldry, freemasonry, and religion. Each format is interpreted many ways, and each change in format has multiple names and is interpreted to represent multiple ideas. This article will not explore those representations, as they could consume a large volume.

The cross was originally associated with executioners. When Emperor Constantine abolished execution by crucifixion in the 4th Century, the cross transitioned into a symbol of the Christian religion. Cross symbols were used during the crusades and have played a major role in heraldry.

When an image of Christ (corpus) is shown nailed to a cross, it is called a crucifix.

CROSSES ARE GROUPED INTO FOUR MAIN GROUPS: CRUX IMMISSA, CRUX COMMISSA, CRUX DECUSATA AND CRUX SIMPELS.

The Crux Simplex, being a simple upright post, does not have the transverse beam found on other forms. The ancient Greek word for stake is stauros (n) and stauroo (v). This simple post was common for crucifixions until the Phoenicians added a cross beam to make a crux immissa.

The crux simplex evolved from a tree - infelix lignum or arbor infelix - dedicated to the gods of the nether world, a non-fructifying tree, unproductive, valueless, and therefore considered suitable for crucifying criminals. A common crucifixion method was to bind the condemned person's wrists to a beam (patibulum) and then attach that beam to a tree or stipe, thereby forming a cross (crux composita or crux acuta).

The Crux Commissa is a 'T' shaped cross; commissa meaning 'joined' or 'attached'. The more widely known names are the Tau Cross (St. Anthony's Cross) and the Forked Cross (Y-shaped Cross).

The Crux Decussata comes from decus, Latin for 'distinction', 'honour', 'glory' and 'grace'. The Roman numeral X is ten (decem). The Chinese and Japanese character for ten also happens to be a cross.

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**CRUX COMMISSA EXAMPLES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Tau Cross" /></td>
<td>Tooled leather.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Ankh Cross" /></td>
<td>Cork, Pyrography. Left: Pewter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Fourche Cross" /></td>
<td>Black Glass with gold luster. White Metal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TAU CROSS**

**OLD TESTAMENT CROSS**

**ANTICIPATORY CROSS**

**ADVENT CROSS**

**COMMISSA CROSS**

**COMMISSSEE CROSS**

**ST. ANTHONY’S CROSS**

**ANKH CROSS**

**ANSATA CROSS**

**EGYPTIAN CROSS**

_A looped Tau Cross and the Egyptian hieroglyph meaning ‘life.’_

**Y-SHAPED CROSS**

**YPSILON CROSS**

**ANILLEE CROSS**

**MOLINE, MILLRIND, or MILLRINE CROSS**

**PALL CROSS**

**FOURCHE CROSS**

**FURCA CROSS**

**ANKH CROSS**

**Above: Cork. Pyrography. Left: Pewter**

**Y-SHAPED CROSSES.**

_Inlaid pearl and abalone. Black Glass set in metal. Vegetable ivory whistle_

**EASTERN ORTHODOX CROSS**

**RUSSIAN CROSS**

**UKRAINE CROSS**

**SLAVIC CROSS**

**SLAVONIC CROSS**

**BYZANTINE CROSS**

**PAPAL CROSS**

**POPE’S CROSS**

**MARONITE’S CROSS**

**SALEM CROSS (Freemasonry)**

**EARLY PAPAL CROSS**

**CATACOMB CROSS**

**CROSS OF LORRAINE**

**LORRAINE CROSS**

**DE GAULLE CROSS**

**GAULLIST CROSS**

—characterized by two horizontal beams of equal length, equally spaced from the top and bottom.

**BUDDED CROSS**

**APOSTLES CROSS**

**DISCIPLES CROSS**

**TREFLEE CROSS**

**TREFOIL CROSS**

**BONTONEE CROSS**

**BOTTONY CROSS**

**CATHEDRAL CROSS**

**THREE-DIMENSIONAL CROSS**

**ST. NICHOLAS CROSS**

**ST. OLGA’S CROSS**

This is an Eastern Orthodox Cross superimposed on a Budded Cross.

**FLEUR-DE-LIS CROSS**

_lily petal adornment at the arm-ends_

**GLORY CROSS**

**NATAL CROSS**

**NATIVITY CROSS**

**BETHLEHEM STAR CROSS**

**RAYED CROSS**

—a Nowy Cross
The Crux Immissa has a horizontal beam inserted at right-angles to the upright post. Immissa means 'inserted.' Another name for this cross is Crux Capitata, which means 'with a head.'

There are two variations of the dimensions for a cross—sublimes and humilis:

- **Crux Sublimis** - tall cross, where the victim was high off the ground. This would be used for people who had commanded a high rank in society (the Latin Cross, etc.)
- **Crux Humilis** - a low cross, where the victim's feet were close to the ground—the height and width are equal. To suit the shape and size of shields, heraldic crosses are often shown where the height and width are equal. (Most crosses appearing on buttons fall into this category.)

**Lorraine Crosses.**
- White Glass with black paint.
- White Glass with gold luster.
- Black Glass.

**Pomme Cross.**
- Glass, mirror back.

**Portate Cross with a Crown.**
- Fabric with blued steel beads and yellow metal. Studio by Tom Horne.

**Calvary Cross.**
- Purple dye on Ivory.
- Part of a Motiwala set.

**Latin Cross.**
- Ceramic set in metal.

**Patrician Crosses.** (Both are also “Budded” Crosses).
- Top is gilt brass. Bottom is Enamel on Brass.

A Chrismon is a Christian symbol that represents aspects of the person, life or ministry of Jesus Christ. Most of the crosses in this article are Chrismons.

**Crosses in Heraldry.**

Because every minute aspect of the cross is symbolic, and crosses are used extensively in heraldry, we shall follow this article with a second article focused on the “Cross in Heraldry” and introduce the terminology for the various cross attributes and representations.

**Bibliography.**

http://www.seiyaku.com. I am sincerely indebted to the generosity of Paul Harding who shared extensive information from this website.

http://www.wikipedia.com


8-POINT ST. JOHN, MALTESE, PATTEE, REGENERATION, FISHTAIL, CAMPAIGN, FORMY, OR IRON CROSS. Clockwise from above: Two variations of pierced Bethlehem Pearl. White Metal.

4 Rubber buttons.
Zia pottery sew-through.
Bakelite imitation tortoise shell. Black Glass.

CRESCENT CROSS. Silver and turquoise OME.

BOTTONY CROSS. Smokey Pearl. White metal and colored paste OME.

BROKEN CROSS
NERONIC CROSS
NERO’S CROSS

CELTIC CROSS
GAELIC CROSS
HIGH CROSS
SCOTTISH CROSS
IRISH CROSS
WELSH CROSS

ANGLICAN CROSS
EPISCOPAL CROSS
ST. JOHN’S CROSS
HALO CROSS
SUN CROSS

INDENTED CROSS
DENCHEE CROSS (sawtooth edge)

LAMBEAU CROSS mounted on a bar of three ragged pendants

CALVARY CROSS
CALVAIRE CROSS
CRUCIFIXION CROSS
HOLY CROSS
STEPPE CROSS
ALTAR CROSS
PERONNEE CROSS
DEGRADED CROSS

INVECTED CROSS
PATERNOSE CROSS
PATERNASTER CROSS
ROSARY CROSS

CROSS WITH A CROWN OF THORNS

ENGRAILED CROSS
ENGRESLEE CROSS
INDENTED CROSS —dimpled with

FLEURIE or FLORY CROSS
FLORETTY CROSS
FLEURETTE CROSS
FLEURONNY CROSS (liliform ends)

ST. JAMES CROSS
WARRIOR’S CROSS
a Fleurie Cross with the lower part pointed (fitched)
ST. CLEMENT’S CROSS
ANCHOR CROSS
MARINER’S CROSS
SAILOR’S CROSS

many other forms exist

ALL-SEEING EYE CROSS
PROVIDENCE CROSS
EYE OF PROVIDENCE CROSS

POPE’S CROSS
BENT CROSS
BENDY CROSS
ST. NINO’S CROSS
GRAPEVINE CROSS

MIDSOMMARSTANG CROS

SOLDIER’S CROSS
FALLEN SOLDIER’S CROSS
BATTLEFIELD CROSS
BATTLE CROSS

CARAVACA CROSS
A Patriarchal Cross with Christ flanked by two angels. Unique in that the arms are nailed to

SAINT’S CROSS
INHABITED CROSS
any cross that includes pictures or sculpture of other persons alone or with

HAND-HELD CROSS
any cross with a handle attached

PROCESSIONAL CROSS
THOR’S CROSS
HAMMER CROSS
WOLF’S CROSS
VIKING CROSS

TRIUMPHANT CROSS
GLOBIUS CRUCIGER
TRIUMPHANT & ORB CROSS

ROPE CROSS
CRODEE CROSS

SHEPHERD’S CROSS

ALPHA & OMEGA CROSS
BEGINNING & END CROSS

RHO CROSS

CHI RHO CROSS variations

CROSS
CROSSEET
— fitted

TEUTONIC CROSS
POTENT CROSS
— made of 4 Tau Crosses

ST. CHAD’S CROSS
— combining Potent and Quadrant Crosses
NOWY CROSS

ST. JULIAN’S CROSS
MISSIONARY’S CROSS
— a Cross Crosslet at 45 degrees

CROSS CROSSELT
— made from four Latin Crosses at right angles

ST. JOHN’S CROSS
TEMPLAR CROSS
PATTEE CROSS

ST. JOHN’S CROSS (shaped)
ST. LAZARUS CROSS
FISHTAIL CROSS

BAPTISMAL CROSS
— a Greek Cross on

CROSS CROSSLET

MILLER CROSS
MILLRINE CROSS
MILLRND CROSS

CRENEL CROSS
EMBATTLED CROSS

4 Tau & 4 Greek Crosses
JERUSALEM CROSS
NEW JERUSALEM CROSS
CRUSADER’S CROSS
CANTONEE CROSS
CROSS POTENT

QUADRAT CROSS
NOWY CROSS
— The projection in the middle is called a “nowy”

GREEK CROSS
PLAIN CROSS
ST. GEORGE’S CROSS
KING ST. GEORGE’S CROSS
ALISEE or ALESEE CROSS
HUMETTY CROSS
FUSILS CROSS
FUSILEE CROSS
LOSANGEE CROSS
LOZENGEY CROSS

PATONEE CROSS
(floriated points)

CONSECRATION CROSS
ROUNDED CROSS

THOR’S CROSS
ST. CUTHBERT’S CROSS

HUMETTY CROSS
HUMETTEE CROSS
COUPED CROSS
ALISEE or ALAISEE CROSS

STRAW CROSS
ST. BRIGHID’S CROSS

SUN CROSS
SOLAR CROSS
PAGAN CROSS
WHEEL CROSS
ODIN’S CROSS
WODEN’S CROSS

TOULOUSE CROSS
CATHAR CROSS
ENTRAILED CROSS
OCCITAN CROSS
HUGUENOT CROSS
LANGUEDOC CROSS
— this is a Voided Cross

BEZANT CROSS
POMMEE CROSS
any cross whose arms end in circles

MASCLE CROSS
MASCLEE CROSS
MASCLY CROSS
— a voided cross

AVELLANE CROSS
CERCELEE CROSS
RECERCELEE CROSS
SARCELLY CROSS

CELTIC CROSS
(variation)

SNOWFLAKE CROSS

BASQUE CROSS
LAUBURU CROSS

CANTERBURY CROSS
BECKET’S CROSS

PERONNEE CROSS
DEGRADED CROSS
GRADED CROSS

TRIPARTED CROSS
INTERLACED CROSS

ST. HANS CROSS
BOWEN CROSS
SHIELDKNOT

CAROLINGIAN CROSS
KNOTTED CROSS
CELTIC TWIRLS CROSS

SWASTIKA CROSS (top)
SUVAUSTIKA CROSS (bottom)
GAMMA CROSS
FYLLOT CROSS
TETRASKELION CROSS
SPINNING CROSS
ROTATING CROSS
BENT CROSS

BARBEE CROSS
CROSS STAR
ARROW CROSS
ST. SEBASTIAN’S CROSS
CROIX TOURENEE
CROIX CRAMONNEE
— anserated crosses

PHOES ZOE CROSSES
phi, omega, sigma
(phos: meaning light)
and zeta, omega and eta
(zoe: meaning life)

BENEDICT CROSS

CONQUEROR’S CROSS

COPTIC CROSS
ETHIOPIAN CROSS
LALIBELA CROSS
AXUM CROSS
GONDAR CROSS

VOIDED CROSS
FIMBRIATED CROSS
BORDERED CROSS
CLECHEE CROSS
PIERCED CROSS
WHITE CROSS (white center, instead of the empty center of the Voided Cross)

DEATH CROSS
BLACK PLAGUE CROSS
RED CROSS

THUNDER CROSS

SULFUR CROSS
CROSS OF SATAN

MARIAN CROSS
— emphasizing devotion to Mary

GRAIL CROSS
not an actual cross, popular after shown in “Indiana Jones” movies

PATTONCE CROSS
— any form of cross with expanded ends

BRANCHY CROSS
BRANCHEE CROSS

CAMARGUE CROSS
composed of an anchor, cross & heart

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ATLANTIS CROSS

IMINSUL ASATRU CROSS
Three versions of the COPTIC CROSS. At right is the Coptic Ankh.
Rayed Cross. Yellow Metal

Carolingian Cross. Black Glass with gold luster.

Calvary Cross. Pierced Bethlehem Pearl.


Cantonee. Brass.

Carved Wood.

Carved Bethlehem Pearl.

Jerusalem Crosses.

Cable Cross. Rubber.


Consecration or Rounded Cross. Carved pearl sew-through with cut steel stars O.M.E.


Crosslette. Painted Wood with pearl O.M.E.

Flery Cross. Pewter.

2 central crosses and 4 Enhendee Crosses (in the blue). Enamel.

Rounded or Consecration Cross. Black Glass.
ANCHOR, SAILOR, MARINER, or ST. CLEMENT CROSS.

(F) Bethlehem pearl.
(R): Bakelite with brass and glass OME. Mechanical.

SAINT'S OR INHABITED CROSS. Jasperware.

BOTTONY: Precision inlay Glass set in a brass cup.

BOTTONY. Black Glass with gold lucter.

FLEURIE CROSS. Brass.

(SCREEN CROSS. Pastes suspended above a brass cup.

ETOILE CROSS. Brass. Cut Steel OME.

GREEK CROSS. Ceramic

PATONCE CROSS. White glass with black glass precision inlay.

CROSS. Enamel. Cut Steels.

SUN CROSS. Celluloid.

SUN CROSS. Fabric in brass.

GREEK CROSS. Black Glass.

CROSS. Engraved Brass. Cut Steel border. Scalloped edge.

PATONCE CROSS. White glass with black glass precision inlay.

FLEURRIE CROSS. Pearl. Brass escutcheon.

FLEURRIE AND FRETTEE CROSSES on one button. Steel cup.

PASSION, NAIL, CARPENTER'S, POINTED, AIGUISE, URDEE, OR SUFFERING. Mothwala Inlay.
In the following list, crosses that have been confirmed on buttons are highlighted. If you have buttons with any of the other types, please send a scan to the Editor (cjoy@gci.net) and we will update this listing.