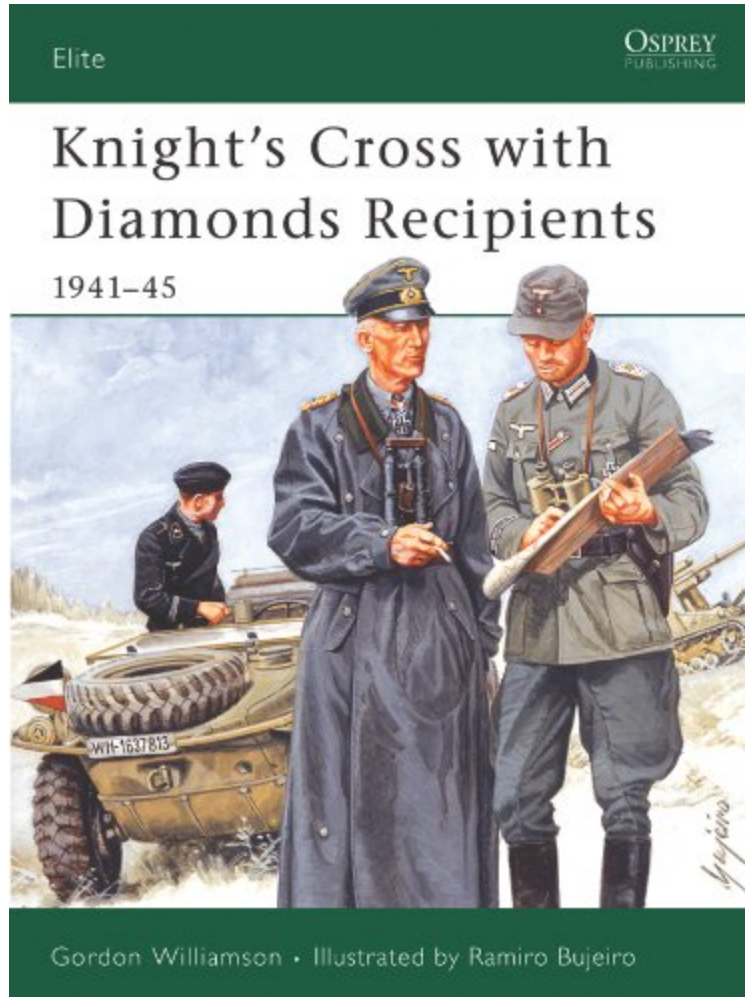


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Knight's Cross with Diamonds Recipients: 1941–45 (Elite)

Gordon Williamson

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Gordon Williamson : Knight's Cross with Diamonds Recipients: 1941–45 (Elite) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Knight's Cross with Diamonds Recipients: 1941–45 (Elite):

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. A short but excellent sourceBy DimitriosIf you want a quick reference to every single Diamonds winner of the Wehrmacht, this is the finest book you can get. With the exception of just a few mistakes (like that of the 28 total awards, when they were clearly 27), the short biographies of the holders of this prestigious award are excellent and very comprehensive. Mr Williamson has a nice writing style as was evident in his older books "Aces of the Reich" and "Infantry Aces of the Reich" and the book can be read in a single day. There are also photographs (sometimes more than one) of every person discussed. A very nice addition to the WW II literature.8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Overview of the Award and Its RecipientsBy Mr. TruthtellerOf the estimated 13-15 million men who served in the German Armed Forces in World War II only 27 were

awarded the Knight's Cross with Diamonds, formally known as the Knight's Cross with Oak-leaves, Swords, and Diamonds. (Some accounts refer to 28 winners of this award but that is due to mistakenly counting one recipient, renowned fighter pilot Hans Ulrich Rudel, twice because he was awarded not only the Knight's Cross with Diamonds but also the Knight's Cross with Diamonds in Gold, a separate award specifically limited to be given only 12 times. Rudel became the only recipient of the Knight's Cross with Diamonds in Gold.) In order for a person to receive the Knight's Cross with Diamonds, he had to first receive the the Iron Cross, Second Class; the Iron Cross, First, Class; the Knight's Cross to the Iron Cross; the Knight's Cross with Oak-leaves; and finally the Knight's Cross with Oak-leaves and Swords, of which there were only 160 recipients. (The German Cross in Gold, although its requirements were similar, was not officially part of this hierarchy of awards. The German Cross in Gold was given for acts of individual valor or leadership that surpassed the Iron Cross, First Class, but were not quite sufficient to qualify for the Knight's Cross.) In this respect the Knight's Cross with Diamonds was not awarded so much for a single act or action of extreme bravery (like the U.S. Medal of Honor) or successful leadership in battle but was more often the result of a series of acts, although occasionally one act could qualify a person for receiving more than one of the lower grades simultaneously, with each level requiring a higher standard of accomplishment. Gordon Williamson's book on the winners of the Knight's Cross with Diamonds does an outstanding job in providing an overview of each of the winners of this award. Each recipient is given his own 1-3 page biography, including the events or actions that led to being awarded each level of the Knight's Cross, culminating in the Knight's Cross with Diamonds. Each entry is thorough, objective, and well-written. At least one picture is provided of each recipient, sometimes even three or four, to put a face to the story. Outstanding full-page color illustrations are also provided for seven of the recipients. Given the page limitations set by the publisher, the book has few faults. One is that the color pictures of the award itself are not that clear and do not show how dazzling these awards really were. (The awards were in platinum and over 50 diamonds were set into the oak-leave cluster and on the handles and hilt of the swords. As this was too gaudy to wear in the field, after the first few presentations winners were also given a copy of the award in silver, with fake diamonds, for everyday wear. At the same time the actual award was slightly increased in size, and brilliance.) Altogether the book is an excellent introduction to the award and each of its winners.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

Answer to a WWII Trivia Question By John M. Workman
Der Ritterkreuz des Eisernen Kreuzes mit Eichenlaub, Schwertern, und Brillanten. The Knights Cross to the Iron Cross with Oakleaves, Swords, and Diamonds. How many men received this award? An inevitable question when WWII history buffs get together. The answer is 27. Legendary Stuka pilot Hans Ulrich Rudel was awarded both the Diamonds and a unique Diamonds with Golden Oakleaves. This nifty Osprey Series book profiles each of the awardees with interesting, well-written biographical information, BW photos, and unique albeit somewhat cartoonish color artwork. What makes this little compendium such a fascinating read is that some of the men who received this decoration are obscure even among WWII history enthusiasts. Strachwitz, Hube, Ramcke, Brandi, Schorner, Tolsdorf, Mauss, and von Saucken are not well known compared to such legends as Hartmann, Galland, Rommel, and von Manteuffel. Another plus, given the proliferation of fake Knights Cross awards the authors provide a detailed description with photos of the real deal. If you are a WWII history devotee this book will not disappoint.

On 28 September 1941, Hitler instituted a new, supreme class of the Knight's Cross decoration for gallantry and leadership: the Oak-Leaves with Swords and Diamonds. This award would be presented to only 28 soldiers, sailors and airmen, out of the approximately 15 million who served in the German armed forces. This title describes and illustrates all 28 of those men from fighter aces and U-boat commanders, to the youngest generals in the Wehrmacht, and field marshals in command of army groups – and including one officer for whom Hitler had to invent a literally unique award that set him apart even among the 'Diamond-bearers'.

From the Publisher
An unrivalled illustrated reference source on fighting men and commanders, past and present. Each volume is packed with full colour artwork, making military history uniquely accessible to enthusiasts of all ages.

About the Author
Gordon Williamson was born in 1951 and currently works for the Scottish Land Register. He spent seven years with the Military Police TA and has published a number of books and articles on the decorations of the Third Reich and their winners. He is the author of a number of World War II titles for Osprey.