

Order of St. Vladimir, Third Class, in the System of Awards of the Russian Empire in the late XIX and early XX centuries

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Abstract

The paper examines the historical role of the Order of St. Vladimir, III class, in the system of awards of the Russian Empire in the late XIX and early XX centuries. The historical documents have been analyzed; the rules for awarding and wearing the Order of St. Vladimir, III degree, at this time were systematized. The dependence of the awarding with the Order of St. Vladimir, III class, under the laws on the civil rank and title is ascertained.

Keywords: order of St. Vladimir, III class, holder of the order of St. Vladimir, the orders of the Russian Empire, the system of awards, the Russian Empire, Hereditary nobility, Active State Councilor, Colonel, Active Civil Service.

INTRODUCTION

The Order of St. Prince Vladimir, Equal-to-the-Apostles, was established by the Russian Empress Catherine II on September, 22 1782 in honor of the twentieth anniversary of her reign. The Order had four classes and was awarded gradually from the lowest fourth class to the highest first one. The motto of the Order is «Benefit, Honor and Glory» [1].

The cross of the Order of St. Vladimir, III class, is golden, red enameled on both sides, with black enameled and golden borders, and the monogram of St. Vladimir under the Grand-Ducal Crown in the center of the cross obverse. There is the inscription «September, 22 1782» on the reverse. The distance between the opposite arms of the cross without an eye is 45 mm approximately. The Cross was worn on a neck moiré three-stripe ribbon, about 44 mm wide, red with black edges. If the Order

was awarded for services in battle, there were the crossed swords between the arms of the cross [2, 3, 4].

Non-capitular samples of crosses of the Order of St. Vladimir, III class, occurred. They differed in size from the capitular ones. In the third quarter of the nineteenth century there were the orders with black enamel instead of red on the arms of the cross [5, 6].

In the second half of the nineteenth century some holders could have the Order of St. Vladimir, III class, with crossed swords on the upper arm of the cross. That meant that the holder was awarded with the Order of St. Vladimir, III class from 1855 to 1870 for services in peacetime, and with the Order of St. Vladimir, IV class, for services in battle (with a bow up to 1855, with swords from 1855 to 1857, or with swords and a bow after 1857) [7, 8].

In the hierarchy of orders in the system of awards of the Russian Empire the Order of St. Vladimir, III class, was higher than the Order of St. Vladimir, IV class, but it was lower than the Order of St. Stanislaus, I class. It was the highest of the minor classes for those having no stars of the order. The Military Order of St. Great Martyr George the Victorious, IV and III classes, was not included in the hierarchy, as officers and generals were awarded with it solely for battle honors.

The aim of this work is to study the historical role of the Order of St. Vladimir, III class, in the system of awards of the Russian Empire, the rules for awarding and wearing the Order in the late XIX and early XX centuries.

AWARDING WITH THE ORDER OF ST. VLADIMIR, III CLASS

All cardinal legislation changes concerning the awarding with the Order of St. Vladimir were assigned by decrees of the Russian Emperors and reflected in the Digest of Laws of the Russian Empire in different years.

The Order of St. Vladimir, III class, was awarded for deeds in the civil service and for community work [2].

Awarding with the Order of St. Vladimir of the minor classes was considered by the Order Duma with twelve senior holders of each class, under the chairmanship of the senior holder of the Order, I class. The meeting of the Order Duma took place once a year in late October in St. George Hall of the Winter Palace of His Imperial Majesty [2, 9].

The Order of St. Vladimir, III class, was awarded in two categories.

The first category comprised the persons in the Active Civil Service. They were the civilian and military ranks as well as the ranks of the nobility self-government, as the Active Civil Service. The Order could not be awarded earlier than three years after the previous one, with the exception of awarding for outstanding distinguished services when the period between the orders could be reduced.

An important prerequisite to awarding was not only the appropriate contender's class rank of Active Civil Service, but also the position he occupied at the time.

From 1892 to 1900, the Order of St. Vladimir, III class, was awarded to civilian officials holding positions not lower than VI class in the Ministries and Head Departments and being senior than State Councilor, and holding positions of V class and being senior than State Councilor in provinces and subordinate offices. In 1900, the conditions for awarding became more rigid. The order of St. Vladimir, III class, was awarded to civilian ranks, holding positions not lower than V class and being senior than the Active State Councilor [10-13].

In the late XIX - early XX century the order of St. Vladimir, III class (both with swords for military services, and without swords for services in peacetime) was awarded to military ranks senior than Colonel (VI class of the Table of Ranks) and not lower than V class [12, 14].

Omitting minor orders, the Order of St. Vladimir, III class, could be sought as an initial award by Active State Councilors and the Major-Generals, holding positions not lower than IV class [9, 14].

Province and district marshals of nobility, having served three triennial periods by the elections of the nobility (even if not in succession) and elected for the fourth, Honorary Gymnasium Trustees, Landrats and Honorary School Trustees had the right to be decorated with the Order of St. Vladimir, III class, but in case of having got the Order of St. Vladimir, IV class and St. Anne, II class.

In the hierarchy of orders, up to the Order of St. Vladimir, III class, inclusive, awarding for particular services was allowed missing one class. This rule was abrogated in 1900.

The second category consisted of the persons not in the Active Civil Service. Their awarding with the Order of St. Vladimir, III class, was possible only after having got the rest of the minor orders. It should be noted that the Order of St. Vladimir, III class, was the senior order for the persons having no civil ranks. This provision was repealed in 1900, the awarding standard being lowered up to the Order of St. Vladimir, IV class, and the order of St. Vladimir, III class, was not to be granted to the persons holding no positions in the Active Civil Service and having no civil ranks.

There was the possibility of awarding with the Order the foreigners holding no positions in the Active Civil Service, only at the Emperor's discretion. For awarding of non-Christians there were the Russian Imperial eagles on both sides of the medallion of the cross [2].

RULES FOR WEARING THE ORDER OF ST. VLADIMIR, III CLASS

The Order of St. Vladimir shall always be worn [2]. The wearing rules of the Order of St. Vladimir, III class, differed for civilian and military ranks.

On jackets and short-jackets of civilian ranks the cross of the Order of St. Vladimir, III class, was worn on the neck above the cross of the Order of St. Anne, II class, and below the crosses of the Orders of St. Stanislaus, I class, and of St. Anne, I class, that were worn with senior orders not over the shoulder but on the neck. When there were no such orders or with another way of their wearing, the cross of the Order of St. Vladimir, III class, was worn on the neck below the cross of the Order of St. Vladimir, II class. With the Order of St. Vladimir, I class, the cross of the Order, III class, was not taken off. When there was no Order of St. Vladimir of the higher class, the cross of the Order of St. Vladimir, III class, was worn on the neck on uniformed coats and frock-coats used as a travelling uniform and on frock-coats used as an everyday uniform of civilian ranks. With the orders of St. Vladimir, I or II classes, the cross of the Order, III class, was taken off and the order-star was worn on the left side of the chest, instead [15, 17].

On full-dress and service uniforms of the military ranks the cross of the Order of St. Vladimir, III class, with swords or without was worn on the neck above the cross of the Order of St. Anne, II class, with swords or without, but below the Order of Saint George, III class, and below the crosses of the Orders of St. Stanislaus, I class, with swords or without and St. Anne, I class, with swords or without on the neck, or below the cross of the Order of St. Vladimir, II class, when there were no those awards. On the frock-coats of the military ranks, the cross of the Order of St. Vladimir, III class, with swords or without was worn if there were no Orders of Saint George, III class, St. Vladimir, II or I class, with swords or without, other orders of the higher classes with swords [16, 17].

CONCLUSION

From the day of foundation, the Order of St. Vladimir was the highest honorable award. At the beginning of the XX century in the system of awards of the Russian Empire there were some significant changes: the right to get hereditary nobility by the Order of St. Vladimir, IV class, both for years of service and campaigns, and for civic and military deeds, was abolished. In this regard, the Order of St. Vladimir, III class, became the lowest order; with its awarding the holder had the right to get hereditary nobility. However, the III class of the order was available only to those who had already been a hereditary nobleman by rank. At that time the hereditary nobility was

brought by the rank of Active State Councilor (IV class of the Table of Ranks) by the Civilian Department and the Colonel (VI class of the Table of Ranks) by the Military Department. Thus, it solved a long standing problem disturbing the hereditary nobility, that was a large increase in new hereditary nobility who obtained that right by the Order of St. Vladimir, IV class, it could be given even in the low civil ranks for some years of service [12, 13, 18].

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