



## Friesen Family Crest<sup>1</sup>

The surname Friesen is a name that may have a few different sources. In some instances it is derived from the name of the region of Friesland, and would refer to someone who came from that region, Friesland is located on the coast of the North Sea, and stretches from the Netherlands in the east to Denmark in the north. In the Swabian-Swiss dialects, the word “friesen” means to “to dig ditches,” and the name may have derived from the occupation of its original bearer.

**Coat of Arms:** a silver shield displaying two red crescents. In the feudal<sup>2</sup> states of the Holy Roman Empire, that at one time encompassed most of eastern Europe, it was especially important to be able to identify enemies from allies because of the many conflicts that occurred there. A system of heraldry evolved that achieved this. It regulated what arms were borne, and allowed each of the German knights to be distinguishable from others.

**Silver Shield:** Silver, known by the French term “argent,” is one of the two metals used in heraldry<sup>3</sup>. It is usually represented on a shield by the colors gray or white. This metal represents nobility, peace and serenity. It is associated with the qualities of purity and chastity, because the metal withstands the test of fire.

**Symbolic Virtues:** It guards innocence and gives celestial happiness. It denotes virginity in maidens and chastity in widows. It also lends justice to judges and represents the virtues of humility, innocence, and happiness. Celestially, the color represents the moon.

**Precious Stone:** Pearl

**Planet:** Moon

**Obligations:** Help maidens and orphans.

**Red:** Gules, derived from an Old French word goules or gueules meaning “throats” translates into modern English as “red” and is the military color for excellence and fortitude. It is symbolic of nobility, boldness and ferocity, and can also represent fire and summer. Some ancient laws restricted its use to princes and their families. Red corresponds to the metal copper and is denoted in engravings by numerous perpendicular lines.

**Crescent:** The crescent stands for one who has been “enlightened and honored by the gracious aspect of his sovereign.”<sup>4</sup> It is also borne as a symbol of the hope of greater glory. Knights returning from crusades introduced the crescent, the badge of Islam, into the language of heraldry. The heraldic crescent has a very deep base and curving horns that quickly sharpen to points close together. Crescents also represent the moon that lights the night sky for travelers, though it does not resemble the shape of a crescent moon very closely. In English arms it was also a mark of cadency signifying the second son. The reversed crescent is a crescent with the horns turned down. The term increscent indicates a crescent with thorns facing the observer’s left, and decrescent is a crescent facing the observer’s right.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: [www.houseofnames.com/friesen-family-crest](http://www.houseofnames.com/friesen-family-crest)

<sup>2</sup> Feudalism was a set of political and military customs in medieval Europe that flourished between the ninth and fifteenth centuries, which, broadly defined, was a system for ordering society around relationships derived from the holding of land in exchange for service or labor.

<sup>3</sup> Heraldry means the system by which coats of arms and other armorial bearings are devised.

<sup>4</sup> Sovereign is defined as a supreme ruler (e.g., monarch, king, queen).