

Order of The Sword



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ORDER OF THE SWORD

This booklet contains the historical background of the "Order of the Sword," the Military Airlift Command adaptation of the ancient ceremony, procedures for nominating and selecting individuals for induction into the "Order of the Sword" and specific guidelines for the conduct of the formal induction ceremony.

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ORDER OF THE SWORD

1. HISTORY: Traditionally, the noncommissioned officer corps as we know it today was established in the early 12th century. At that time, King Gustave I of Sweden enjoined the noblemen commissioned by him to appoint officers to serve them. These people became the noncommissioned officer as we know him today. They were the accountants, builders, craftsmen, teachers, scribes and other leaders responsible for conducting the ordinary daily affairs of the kingdom. The system worked so well that it was incorporated into the Army as a way to establish and maintain a cohesive, disciplined, well trained force for protection of lives and property in the kingdom. These ancient noncommissioned officers would on occasion honor a leader and pledge their loyalty by ceremoniously presenting him a sword. The sword, a symbol of truth, justice, and power rightfully used, served as a token for all to see and know that here was a leader among leaders and man among men. This ceremony became known as "The Royal Order of the Sword." It was passed through the ages, coming to this country about the time of the Revolutionary War. It lay dormant for many years after that, with the only known instance of its use being in the 1860s when General R. E. Lee was presented a sword by his command.