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Military Swords Of Fantasy

By Doug Smith

Military swords of the modern Armed Forces symbolize power, strength, duty, and honor. There is also a historical aspect to military swords. The sword in medieval times was often the primary weapon of the soldier.

As weapon technology advanced, especially with the widespread use of gunpowder, swords became more ceremonial in nature. Today, the military sword as a weapon survives as the bayonet. Full-size military swords today are not used in combat and are symbolic instead.

Military Swords In Print

Military swords play a larger role in fantasy literature. This literature is frequently set in a medieval milieu, bringing the military sword once again into prominence as a primary weapon. These swords often have special abilities or confer special powers on their bearers. Some of these swords are special enough to have their own names.

Two of the many military swords of fantasy are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Sword Of The Rings

J.R.R. Tolkien's classic fantasy "The Lord Of The Rings" abounds with military swords. Many of these were forged with magic for use against evil foes. Sting, the short sword wielded by Bilbo and Frodo Baggins, may be the most well-known. However, the true military sword of the trilogy was born by Aragorn.

Aragorn was the heir to the thrones of both Gondor and Arnor (much of Middle Earth), yet was virtually unknown to the population. However, the story of the military sword that long ago cut the One Ring from Sauron's hand was legendary throughout Middle Earth.

The sword, named Narsil, shattered upon making that fateful cut. Aragorn inherited and carried his broken, ancestral military sword. Narsil was later reforged and renamed as Anduril during "The Lord Of

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The Rings." It is this military sword that was Aragorn's primary means of identification, and the key to his claim to the thrones of Middle Earth.

Star Swords

The original "Star Wars" by George Lucas spawned multiple movies and novels. Although the original movie appeared to be pure science fiction, it was actually a classic fairy tale set in a science fiction setting.

The fairy tale elements include a Princess (Leia), a Good Wizard (Obi-Wan Kenobi), an Evil Wizard (Darth Vader), Knights of the Realm (the Jedi), a young Squire (Luke Skywalker), and a magic sword (the lightsaber).

The lightsaber was the military sword preferred by the Jedi Knights. It differs from other military swords

because the sword had an energy blade rather than a metal one. This unique military sword could cut through almost anything. Additionally, it could be deactivated for convenience, leaving only the hilt. In the hands of a skilled master, this military sword was a fearsome weapon.

The Cutting Edge

Military swords are popular in both the real world and in the pages of fantasy. Recent Armed Forces recruiting commercials feature a soldier in dress uniform brandishing a highly polished sword. The image is extremely impressive.

Whether your interest is entertainment or historical, the website below provides more information about modern military swords.

Discover Amazing Facts About Military Swords, Coins, Rings, Medals and Other Military Collectibles at

<http://military.careerdictionary.com>

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Japanese Military Swords—Rich In Tradition And Quality Of Construction

By Mary Murtha

Ever since humans learned how to shape metal, the sword has been the weapon of choice for many warriors. It is a sturdy, durable weapon that has been a fixture in the hands of soldiers for thousands of years. Military swords have been used in combat in nearly every continent and come in a myriad of

styles.

The process of creating traditional Japanese military swords is not really a process - it is an art. These swords are made using an intricate process developed by the Chinese and improved by the Japanese. The method involves an extraordinary amount of labor, and frequently, several workers would create swords through an assembly-line like process. The sword maker must heat, fold and hammer the metal until it reaches the desired thickness.

The steel used in Japanese military swords is thought to be the best for the creation of these deadly blades. Folding and hammering the metal enabled the steel to reach its strongest and most resilient state. Air bubbles were beaten out and the composition of the steel was turned uniform, thereby eliminating points of weakness.

Japanese military swords were only allowed to have a single edge; the dull side was for support. Up until the onset of World War II, the majority of Japanese military swords were made by hand. With industrialization and a need to mass produce, swords created during WWII were done so by machine.

It is interesting to note the quality of these blades drastically decreased as the progression of the war gradually turned against Japan. High quality military swords created at the beginning of the fighting were replaced with low quality swords made with poor materials as combat came to an end. American forces in the Pacific Ocean had created a stranglehold on Japan's ability to obtain resources and the quality of these weapons reflected it.

Today, with the modern weapons available to soldiers, military swords are no longer needed for combat. However, modern armies still produce swords for many of their troops as part of tradition. There are still a handful of traditional Japanese military sword makers that work to keep the art alive.

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