

Section IV

COMMAND RETREAT

10-16. General

In the 18th century, command retreat was a daily occurrence, not to honor the flag but as a signal for units to call the roll as a final accounting before reveille the following morning.

10-17. Meaning

Command retreat is a ceremony conducted with all members of the command present. Normally, it is conducted by a battalion or larger unit.

10-18. Sequence of Events

- a. The unit is formed in line formation facing the flag (if possible). Subunits may be in mass formation.
- b. Subunits are brought to attention at the approach of the commander and his staff, or at a predesignated signal.
- c. The commander of troops forms his staff in line, takes his position two steps in front of the staff, and marches them to a position centered on and in front of the line of troops. He gives the proper commands to have himself and his staff facing the line of troops when halted.
- d. The adjutant, as soon as the staff is halted and without command, moves from his position with the staff to a position midway between the commander of troops and the line of unit commanders.
- e. The adjutant commands **REPORT**. All unit commanders salute and report in succession from right to left "*Sir _____ company all present or accounted for.*" The adjutant returns each salute.
- f. The adjutant then commands **Present, ARMS**, faces about, salutes, and reports to the commander of troops "*Sir, All present or accounted for.*"
- g. The commander of troops returns the salute and directs **POST**.
- h. The adjutant moves to his position with the staff.
- i. The commander of troops commands **Order, ARMS**.

j. The left flank member of the staff gives the commands to move the staff from behind the commander of troops to a position two steps in front of the commander of troops.

k. The commander of troops commands ***Parade*, REST**. If a band or field music is to be used, the commander comes to attention at the appointed time and commands **SOUND RETREAT**. He then returns to parade rest.

l. On the last note of "Retreat," the evening gun is fired, the commander of troops commands ***Battalion*, ATTENTION** and ***Present*, ARMS**. He then executes about face and commands himself and his staff to ***Present*, ARMS**. The commander's salute is the signal for the band to begin playing "To the Color" or the National Anthem as the flag is lowered.

m. After the last note of music, the commander of troops commands himself and his staff to ***Order*, ARMS**, faces about, commands ***Order*, ARMS** and directs **TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR UNITS**. The unit commanders render the hand salute. The commander of troops returns all salutes with one salute.

n. The commander of troops marches his staff away or dismisses them at this time.