

“Over the Top”



1. To the first professional U.S. Army Infantry Soldiers, the trench meant safety ... a brief respite from the horror of war.

2. Leaving the trench ... meant the opposite. Those who bravely clawed and climbed out of the illusion of security provided by the trench demonstrated character and commitment that demands respect.

3. Going “Over the Top” was an expression Soldiers used in World War I when referring to leaving their own trenches to assault the enemy.

4. Leaving the trench ... meant mustering the courage to cross the first 100 yards of “No Mans Land” ... under withering machine gun fire ... and almost certain death.

5. Leaving the trench meant you believed in yourself ... you believed you would make it.

6. More importantly, leaving the trench ... meant you believed in your teammates. When the chips were down, you would not fail your fellow Soldiers ... and they would not fail you.

7. Leaving the trench...also meant you had faith in your leaders. You believed they had the wisdom to make the call, they would lead you through the unknown obstacles ahead, and they had the experience needed to guarantee victory. They lived our motto, “Follow Me.”

8. Leaving the trench ... and the courage required to step off into the unknown ... the first 100 yards ... is something you will never forget.

9. Lastly, leaving the trench was only the beginning. The work of the Infantry was not complete until we closed with and destroyed the enemy.

10. Embarking on the “First 100 yards” takes personal courage. Completing the mission by closing with and destroying the enemy in the last 100 yards yields victory...and charts our legacy as the Infantry.

11. Life in the Infantry, the foot Soldier, is one of both hardship and pride. This journey starts with going “over the top” and the First 100 Yards.

The “FIRST 100 YARDS”

