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## First Snow in Alsace

The snow came down last night like moths  
Burned on the moon; it fell till dawn,  
Covered the town with simple cloths.

Absolute snow lies rumped on  
What shellbursts scattered and deranged,  
Entangled railings, crevassed lawn.

As if it did not know they'd changed,  
Snow smoothly clasps the roofs of homes  
Fear-gutted, trustless and estranged.

The ration stacks are milky domes;  
Across the ammunition pile  
The snow has climbed in sparkling combs.

You think: beyond the town a mile  
Or two, this snowfall fills the eyes  
Of soldiers dead a little while.

Persons and persons in disguise,  
Walking the new air white and fine,  
Trade glances quick with shared surprise.

At children's windows, heaped, benign,  
As always, winter shines the most,  
And frost makes marvelous designs.

The night guard coming from his post,  
Ten first-snows back in thought, walks slow  
And warms him with a boyish boast:

He was the first to see the snow.

—Richard Wilbur  
(used with permission by the author)



## Winter Warfare

—Edgell Rickword  
(1898–1982)

Colonel Cold strode up the Line  
(tabs of rime and spurs of ice);  
stiffened all that met his glare:  
horses, men and lice.

Visited a forward post,  
left them burning, ear to foot;  
fingers stuck to biting steel,  
toes to frozen boot.

Stalked on into No Man's Land,  
turned the wire to fleecy wool,  
iron stakes to sugar sticks  
snapping at a pull.

Those who watched with hoary eyes  
saw two figures gleaming there;  
Hauptmann Kälte, Colonel Cold,  
gaunt in the grey air.

Stiffly, tinkling spurs they moved,  
glassy-eyed, with glinting heel  
stabbing those who lingered there  
torn by screaming steel.

# The NCO Creed

No one is more professional than I.

I am a Noncommissioned Officer, a leader of soldiers. As a Noncommissioned Officer, I realize that I am a member of a time honored corps, which is known as "The Backbone of the Army".

I am proud of the Corps of Noncommissioned Officers and will at all times conduct myself so as to bring credit upon the Corps, the Military Service and my country regardless of the situation in which I find myself. I will not use my grade or position to attain pleasure, profit, or personal safety.

Competence is my watchword.

My two basic responsibilities will always be uppermost in my mind -- accomplishment of my mission and the welfare of my soldiers. I will strive to remain tactically and technically proficient. I am aware of my role as a Noncommissioned Officer. I will fulfill my responsibilities inherent in that role. All soldiers are entitled to outstanding leadership; I will provide that leadership. I know my soldiers and I will always place their needs above my own.

I will communicate consistently with my soldiers and never leave them uninformed. I will be fair and impartial when recommending both rewards and punishment.

Officers of my unit will have maximum time to accomplish their duties; they will not have to accomplish mine.

I will earn their respect and confidence as well as that of my soldiers. I will be loyal to those with whom I serve; seniors, peers, and subordinates alike.

I will exercise initiative by taking appropriate action in the absence of orders.

I will not compromise my integrity, nor my moral courage.

I will not forget, nor will I allow my comrades to forget that we are professionals, Noncommissioned Officers, leaders!



SSG Solis is an INSCOM Warrior currently assigned to HHC INSCOM as the G3 Directorate Platoon Sergeant. She also serves as an MND-B & Afghanistan Analyst on threat topics related to real world contingencies by collaborating with national and tactical-level intelligence community organizations and service elements.

This INSCOM G3 Soldier has deployed twice to Iraq and is scheduled for her third deployment to Afghanistan. She is currently pursuing a Bachelors Degree and has served as a Division Intelligence Operations NCOIC, Team Leader and Intelligence Analyst.

I am the NCO!



Army NCO | No One is More Professional than I

