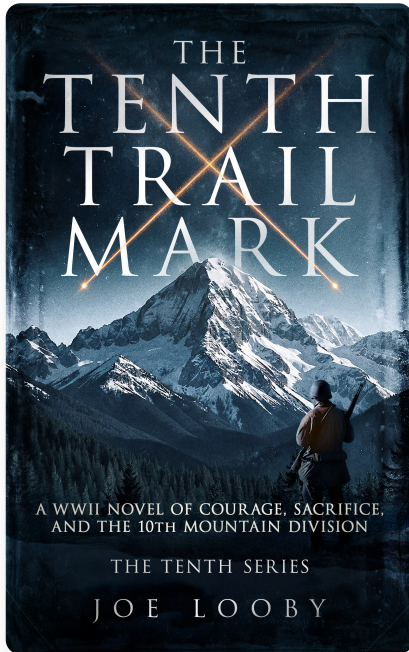


The Tenth Trail Mark

A Novel by Joe Looby

A WWII Novel of Courage, Sacrifice, and the 10th Mountain Division



Genre: Historical Fiction, War & Military, Action & Adventure

Publication: 2025

FOR FANS OF

The Nightingale, *Beneath a Scarlet Sky*, and *Band of Brothers*

THE TENTH SERIES.COM

About the Author

Joe Looby, an avid hiker, skier, and veteran, writes with inspiration from his late father, a WWII 10th Mountain Division soldier awarded the Bronze Star and Purple Heart at the Battle of Mount Belvedere in Italy. He lives near Charleston, SC, and returns often to Lake Placid, NY.

Summary

In the dead of night, Johnnie Grey leads the legendary 10th Mountain Division up an ice cliff the Germans call unconquerable. His survival instincts are his greatest weapon, but his heart belongs to Ellie, the West Virginia farm girl who gives him a silver St. Andrew's Cross: a trail mark of love meant to guide him home. Inspired by true events, *The Tenth Trail Mark* is a sweeping novel of courage, sacrifice, and a love strong enough to light even the darkest ascent.

What Reviewers Are Saying

"A sweeping historical novel... the prose balances rugged realism with lyrical detail... the ending is intense and resonant."

— Foreword Clarion Reviews

Highly Rated by Readers

"This deeply researched and beautifully written book shows how an Adirondack boy... becomes an expert and courageous mountain soldier... A must-read for historical fiction lovers."

— Elizabeth, ★★★★★ Amazon Review



From America to the Gothic Line: Training on Homestake Peak (13,209 ft)

Ordering Information

Library/Classroom Editions

Hardcover (302 pp., Case Laminate)

ISBN: 979-8-9991301-1-2 | **Retail:** \$27.99

Large Print (616 pp.)

ISBN: 979-8-9991301-0-5 | **Retail:** \$27.99

Paperback (272 pp.)

ISBN: 979-8-9991301-8-1 | **Retail:** \$19.99

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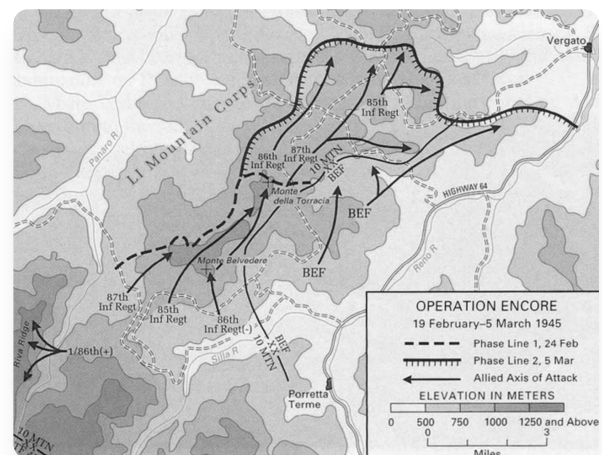
Detailed Synopsis

Johnnie Grey's story unfolds through the pivotal moments that shape his life. Growing up in Depression-era Lake Placid, his bond with the wilderness—forged under an Olympian skier and hardened by the Civilian Conservation Corps—prepares him for the rigors of mountain warfare with the legendary 10th Mountain Division. Deployed to Italy, his unit is ordered to breach the German Gothic Line, a mountain fortress that has stalled the Allied advance for months. During the climactic assault on Mount Belvedere, with his company pinned down by a devastating artillery barrage, Johnnie relies on his survival skills to devise a daring tactic that saves his men and helps turn the tide of battle. Through it all, he carries the memory of Ellie, the West Virginia farm girl who slips a silver St. Andrew's Cross around his neck—a trail mark of love meant to guide him home. More than a war story, this is an uplifting novel of innovation, resilience, and the quiet courage that endures long after the guns fall silent.

Key Selling Points

- **Critically Acclaimed:** *Foreword Clarion Reviews* hails the book as "a sweeping historical novel," praising its blend of "rugged realism with lyrical detail" and its "intense and resonant" ending.
- **A Powerful Blend of History and Heart:** Masterfully combines a meticulously researched WWII story with a powerful coming-of-age narrative and a central love story that will resonate with a broad audience.
- **Perfect for Book Clubs:** Includes a comprehensive discussion guide with themes of courage, sacrifice, and the human spirit, making it an ideal pick for reading groups.
- **Author Connection:** Joe Looby draws on a family legacy of service and a lifetime in the mountains. He is available for select talks, signings, and media appearances.
- **Historical Relevance:** Illuminates WWII's "Forgotten Front" in Italy and the pivotal battle for the Gothic Line, bringing overlooked history—and the liberation of Italy—vividly to life.

Key Historical Setting



WWII's 'Forgotten Front': The Battle for Italy's Gothic Line

For more information, visit THE TENTH SERIES.COM or contact 10thtrailmark@gmail.com.