

**Mortar:**

A very short gun for high-angle fire, generally not rifled, and thus differing from a howitzer.

**Minenwerfer or French Mortar:**

A small smooth-bore gun for throwing a large shell a very short distance, used in trench fighting.

**Outpost:**

A line of detachments placed in front of and on the flanks of a halted force, in order, (1) to prevent it being attacked before it has time to form for action; (2) to keep a constant watch upon the ground to the front.

An outpost line is generally formed of pickets, which are small bodies of troops that keep sentries posted and patrols in movement to observe the ground in front, and have other detachments known as supports and reserves in their immediate rear. (In American military writings and reports pickets are sentries, and the picket line is the sentry line.)

**Outflank:**

To get around the extremity of a line of troops so as to attack them by enfilading fire and threatening their rear.

**Picket:**

See Outposts.

**Platoon:**

One-fourth of a company of infantry or sixty men.

**Pontoon:**

A kind of large punt or flat-bottomed boat conveyed in a carriage, and used to make floating bridges.

**Parapet:**

A breastwork protecting troops.

**Park:**

In technical military language means a collection of wheeled vehicles—guns, wagons or motor cars.