

## A MAN AMONG MEN

There's a National Guard armory in Pasadena, California, named after Captain Reginald "Dusty" Desiderio, a legendary Wolfhound fighting man. His deep concern for his men and their families is related on other pages.

27 November 1950. E Company, Second Battalion hastily dug in around a snowcapped hill north of the Chongahon River in Korea. More than 30,000 North Korean troops were smashing south in a wide sweep aimed at splitting UN forces, and Desiderio's company was the linchpin of the defense.

During the night, Red artillery crashed down on the hill, followed by 5,000 screaming, bugle-blowing Chinese infantry. Wolfhound machine gun and rifle fire knocked them down in heaps, but still they came.

Scrambling from hole to hole, Desiderio exhorted the Wolfhounds to... "hold out 'til dawn and we've got it made!" Knocked down by a bullet to his shoulder, he got back on his feet, making his encouraging rounds. Two more times he was hit, once in each thigh.

Forced to crawl, he continued his gutsy tour, dragging his legs behind him. Around 0330 hours, a mortar shell exploded nearby, shredding his back with fragments.

Again a bullet found him, this time in the knee. Still he fought his way from man to man, when, just as dawn broke, a mortar shell landed, this time right on top of him. But E Company had held.

There were giants in those days -- Wolfhound giants. And make no mistake -- there are giants today, waiting for the call.

## NO GREATER LOVE...

Daring, gallantry, self-sacrifice. Empty words...until they are brought to life by such tales as that of heroic Corporal John Collier of C Company at Chindong-ni, Korea.

Twice repulsed by showers of grenades and automatic weapons fire, Collier and three Wolfhound comrades volunteered to attack a strategic ridge one more time. Grimly they advanced on the strongly held position.

Collier moved ahead, and in a wild melee with determined, ferocious enemy he destroyed a machine gun nest, killing at least four enemy soldiers. As he returned down the rocky slope to rejoin his squad, an enemy grenade landed in their midst.

Shouting a warning, he unhesitatingly threw himself on the grenade, smothering the explosion with his body.

Hold, reader. Do not turn the page. Think for a moment, place yourself in the minds of the men he saved. Can they -- or you -- forget him?

## TELL ME A STORY

Over the years, the Wolfhounds have done so much for the children of the Holy Family Home.

A beautiful home, warm and attractive clothing, nourishing food, and medicines. But more than all this, love. Love which moves a child to say "I feel so sorry for other children who have only one father. I have so many."

But in every culture, children can be terribly cruel. Japan is no exception. There was a time when other children followed these to school in the mornings, shrilling "Pom-Pom no Ko!" -- "Prostitute's child!"

No longer. For now, everyone knows that they are the foster children of the famous Wolfhound Regiment. These children visit Hawaii and return to tell of the beautiful white beaches, and palm trees and hula dancers and other wonders.

And of love...

## AGAIN AND AGAIN AND AGAIN

Before exposing one's thoughts and mind to the story of C Company's Sergeant Charles Fleek, a word of caution is advised.

Not that its veracity is in doubt, nor the details exaggerated.

Rather, it is this: the reader may actually begin to feel boredom at the recitation of yet another feat of Wolfhound heroism, a feat repeated over and over so many times by Wolfhound Warriors that to the uninitiated it seems almost routine.

Be warned. These men are truly giants in the company of giants. And although the actions of giants when taken together may seem commonplace, among us lesser souls they must be viewed as the stuff of legend, the very fabric of our nation's history.

Here once more is a Wolfhound who not only strewed the field of battle with the bodies of the enemy, but saved the lives of at least eight comrades by flinging himself on an about to explode grenade.

Because other Wolfhounds have made this great sacrifice, is the act of one more less heroic?

Pause now; ponder for a moment the true magnificence of this deed -- What greatness is embodied in this most unselfish, of all unselfish acts!

## ANGEL OF MERCY

Talk about Captain Lewis Millett to any knowledgeable Army man and you'll hear how he led a bayonet charge in Korea, celebrated as the most complete since Cold Harbor in the Civil War. But that's only part of the legendary Wolfhound's history. Before taking over as a company commander, Millett was a forward observer for the 8th Field Artillery, part of the 27th Regimental Combat team.

One day, flying over enemy territory to locate Red positions, he spotted a downed observation plane, the wounded pilot waving feebly. Ordering his own pilot to set down, Millett hoisted the wounded man into his seat.

"Take him back to the medics," he said. "I'll fight off the gooks until you get back."

Which he did.



## COLD STEEL

If it were necessary to fill a cup to create a legend, the many deeds of Captain Lewis Millett would do it brim full and then overflow.

Known as "Captain Easy" to his men, Millett was -- and is -- a true living legend. Prior to the day when he earned the Medal of Honor at Soam-ni, Korea, he constantly trained his men in the use of the bayonet.

There came a day and a time to use it.

While attacking a strongly held enemy position, the first platoon was pinned down. Millett called up the third platoon and led both units in a charge the like of which had not been seen since Cold Harbor in the Civil War.

Shouting "Kill!" in Chinese, he and his Wolfhounds smashed into the shocked enemy like a whirlwind gone mad. Wounded by grenade fragments, he continued to throw himself into the center of the resistance, driving, driving, driving with his bayonet.

Only when the last Chinese had gone to meet his maker did Lewis Millett allow the medics to begin their ministrations.

## WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

Ever pat a dog whose hair was dry and brittle from malnutrition? Squeeze a child's hand and hear her yelp because you hurt her cold sores? Wonder why little abandoned kids could smile so bravely when life held no promise of better times to come? See a child's body ravaged by rat bites?

All of these things and more were there for us to see and hear when we first saw the Holy Family Home.

You saw those things -- you felt them down to the marrow of your bones. And so you feel more than a bit guilty when people praise you for doing something about it...What else were you supposed to do?

Praise? Honor?

They belong to the Wolfhounds who never saw those conditions, yet carry on a tradition of love which causes proud children to say, "I have so many fathers."

## RESOLUTION

"The 27th Infantry is to be deeply commended...their Christian charity toward the orphanage has far surpassed denominational limitations and has developed into a Wolfhound tradition.

The Regiment is composed of men of all denominations who are recognizing works of mercy regardless of religious creed of the person involved."

- Resolution by the House of Deputies  
58th General Convention Protestant Episcopal Church



## BAD HABIT?

During the occupation of Japan following WWII, many items sold in the Post Exchange were rationed, such as soap, cigarettes, toothpaste, etc.

Normally, one bar of soap a week was enough for a man's needs, although each Wolfhound could buy two. So, at the PX there was a box bearing the sign: "Toss in the extra bar for the orphans." Each week the soap was collected along with the clothes, canned food, etc. donated by Wolfhound families, and then delivered to the Holy Family Home. On one such occasion, the sergeant delivering the precious cargo just happened to observe Sister Genevieve as she stored the soap. The closet which served as the soap repository was stacked to the ceiling! Japanese soap in those days was almost totally without lather, so Lifebuoy, and other American brands, were highly prized on the thriving black market. Which explained why the children, although not always spotlessly clean, were looking better fed each day.

And that's why, in response to the surprised sergeant's question, Sister Genevieve said, "That's not soap, sergeant. That's rice!"

## THE SOUND OF TRUMPETS...

The tales of Wolfhound heroes await only pens such as those which wrote the great Viking sagas or told the tales of the Knights of the Crusades.

Of such stuff as those warriors was Second Lieutenant Jerome Sudut of B Company, whose fantastic bravery and self sacrifice near Kumhwa, Korea, rival those of any storied hero of the past.

When his platoon's advance was halted by enemy fire from a large bunker containing several firing posts, he attacked it single-handedly. Armed with a sub-machine gun, a pistol and grenades, he charged it bravely, killing three enemy and wounding the rest. Although gravely wounded, he refused evacuation and led his platoon in still another attack -- an automatic rifleman beside him, he forged ahead into vicious streams of fire.

Next to go down was the rifleman, hit several times. Sudut seized and fired that man's weapon, killing three of the four remaining Chinese before running out of ammunition. Mortally wounded, he dispatched the last man with his trench knife.

The bards of old would have sung loud and long of this Wolfhound...

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## SILVER SCREEN

Hollywood has, so far, made three motion pictures about the Wolfhounds.

The first, and by far the most famous, was "From Here To Eternity". What lent reality to the film was that the author, James Jones, was a Wolfhound in the Second Battalion.

Next was "One Minute To Zero", starring Robert Mitchum. Although it departed from the truth, the picture highlighted an actual incident which, when it occurred, emphasized the troops' belief in the infallibility of their commander, Lt. Col. Michaelis.

"Mike", played by Mitchum, ordered the Wolfhounds to open fire on what appears to be a column of white-robed refugees approaching their position. The "refugees" whipped out automatic fire weapons and returned the fire as they fled.

Finally, there was "Three Stripes In The Sun" which fabricated a pleasant tale about the initial days of the Wolfhounds' involvement with the Holy Family Home in Osaka. Hugh O'Reilly, who was portrayed by the actor Aldo Ray, enjoyed the film because in many ways Hollywood's version of the story was new to him.

## WOLFHOUND

In the early days of the Wolfhound-Holy Family Home relationship, when the children were in truly pathetic condition, everyone pitched in.

The Regimental Surgeon, Jacob Newman, held sick call weekly. Wolfhound wives gave clothing, canned milk, things like that. Mess sergeants (in those days every company had a mess hall) and supply sergeants contributed the products of what were known as "moonlight requisitions."

Only one mess sergeant contribute nothing -- and that was because we tried to keep the project a secret from him. Mess sergeant McKitty's brother had been captured by the Japanese and was a victim of the "Bataan Death March."

He could not be expected to view what we were doing with any good will.

(I must interrupt here with the admission that the decision to prevent McKitty from finding out was mine. As was to happen all too often with other members of the Regiment, I completely underestimated this Wolfhound.)

Sergeant McKitty was furious when he discovered the deception. Not furious because of what the rest of the Wolfhounds were doing, but furious because he had not been asked to help.

Every week thereafter until the Wolfhounds embarked for Korea, a jeep trailer loaded with food left his mess hall , bound for the orphanage.

Unconfirmed rumor has it that "pot bellies" became a thing of the past in that company.

## THEY KNOW YOU

"Wolfhounds! The name to most Americans is synonymous with the famed fighting Regiment that came like a scourge of tropic lightning into the war. Back in Japan, the Wolfhounds have another significance -- the hands of the American soldier stretched out to weakness and pain. The hands they extend are human. We know the hands and the men that are fitted to them... reckless splendors of affection... gentlemen... scrappers... warriors abroad."

- Timothy J. Mulvey  
in his book, These Are Your Sons

## ALL IN THE FAMILY

Colonel Lewis Millett, the first Honorary Colonel of the Wolfhounds, is not only a legend himself, he's a descendant of a legendary family whose members have served this country for hundreds of years.

First there was Thomas Millett, who died during an engagement with Indians at Brookfield, Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1675; then John Millett who served in the Gloucester Regiment during the Revolution.

Two great-grandfathers served in the Maine Regiments in Texas and Louisiana during the Civil War and there was a great-uncle who died at Andersonville during the same conflict. His uncle Roland served in the 26th National Guard Division during World War I.

The Colonel himself served in World War II and Korea, and was involved in classified activity in Vietnam and other areas.



## MY KINDA GUY

One day recently, my wife stopped by my little office in D-Quad to drive me home. Maybe I looked tired and hot as I stepped out but a Wolfhound, I don't know his name, hurried over from A Company and thrust a cold can into my hand and said, "Hey Sergeant Major, here's your iced tea."

His action made a deep impression upon me, and I've been thinking about it every day since. We Wolfhounds are a special breed. I like to think that, a bit more than other people, we do try to draw close to our fellow man whenever we can. How else can you explain a half century of our love affair with the orphanage?

Like that Wolfhound's brotherly act with the can of tea, the orphanage project began with a simple gesture of friendship -- asking our wives and fellow soldiers to share what they had with less fortunate kids. Look what happened!

Presidents, Prime Ministers, Hollywood -- seems like everyone knows about us now. But the main thing is that hundreds of little ones will be forever grateful to the Wolfhounds.

So, what can we do about this? Forget it... or go on showing others the way....

Interesting to think about isn't it? I'm so proud to belong.

Note: When the above was being written, I didn't know the name of the man who presented me with the iced tea. Now I do: it is Sergeant John Clipp.



## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

If there is anything to the "so-called" science of numerology, try this one on for size -- the famed charge of the Light Brigade was made by the 27th Lancers of the British Army. As far as is known, they were not called "Wolfhounds."

## AWOL

Under certain circumstances, Absent Without Official Leave (AWOL) can be a serious military offense. What then, should be done with the American soldier who goes AWOL to join the Canadian Army because the US was not yet in WW II, and then goes AWOL from the Canadians to rejoin the US Army when America entered the war?

It was Lewis Millett, the famed Wolfhound who later led that historic bayonet charge in Korea...

## FLYING TANKS?

There are, no doubt, occasions when military leaders have occasion to doubt the mental stability of those serving under them. One such occasion happened at "the Bowling Alley", when Division Commander Major General Kean contacted Wolfhound Commander Lieutenant Colonel "Mike" Michaelis by field telephone.

"Hold it a moment," said Michaelis, "there's a tank passing overhead."

Stunned, General Kean was sure for a moment that the stress of combat against a foe vastly superior in numbers had finally cracked the Colonel's mind.

He was relieved a few minutes later to find that the Wolfhound Six was in a culvert beneath the road and there actually had been one of our tanks passing overhead.

## **FORGIVE ME FATHER...**

During the outbreak of the Pusan perimeter in the first year of the fighting in Korea, the Wolfhounds captured more than one thousand Communist troops in a single day. Although reluctant to do so, 27th Chaplain (Captain) Jankowski participated in this accomplishment.

It seems that fifteen North Korean communist soldiers, hiding in the underbrush alongside a road, spotted the padre's jeep approaching. The vehicle bore a white cross painted on its front bumper--and the Reds, rightly assuming that the jeep bore a man of the cloth, jumped out with their hands raised.

Father Jankowski tried to explain that the Geneva Convention forbade him to accept their surrender, but the effort was fruitless as he couldn't speak Korean and they couldn't speak English.

## **KOLCHAK**

Kolchak, the Wolfhound mascot, is named in memory and honor of Admiral Aleksandr Vassilyevich Kolchak, head of the anti-Bolshevik government in Siberia toward the end of WW I. The Wolfhounds cooperated with him in preserving order in that remote part of the world during the closing months. Because of the 27th, uncounted members of his compatriots, known as "White" Russians, were able to escape the advancing Bolshevik hordes.

## GET A WOLFHOUND!

Historically, athletics were always a part of Army life, and at Schofield Barracks prior to World War II boxing was king. Every unit in the Division had a team; rivalry was intense and often frenzied.

On Friday nights, Conroy Bowl was packed to the rafters with soldiers roaring support for their fighters. There was only one constant: Whenever a Wolfhound entered the ring, rooters from every other unit united in a shout that could be heard far beyond the confines of the Bowl: "GET A WOLFHOUND!!"

The Wolfhounds, of course, reveled in the vituperative attention. Cocky and feisty to begin with, this made them even more so. Their entire attitude was "we're good -- and we know we're good."

What made that so hard to swallow was that they were good -- and not only in boxing. Wolfhound skills and achievement in every phase of military activity established the marks at which other units took aim.

In some ways, this superiority, this confidence in their ability to outperform others, has become not only a unit, but a personal aura. It is a rare soldier who, on becoming a Wolfhound, does not assume the intangible cloak of the professional warrior and become a different, and better, man.

## AKIO AOYAMA

Akio Aoyama, as his name indicates, is Japanese. He doesn't speak English, although like many Japanese, he does understand some.

He was barely old enough to be drafted into the Japanese Army near the end of World War II, so he served briefly. When he returned to Osaka at the end of the war, he was amazed at the devastation -- the city had been an industrial center and was bombed heavily.

That was near the end of 1945.

Less than four years later, something happened that was to have a great effect on his life -- in fact, on the lives of many people.

It seems that an American Regiment, part of the Occupation Army, had begun to help the children of a nearby orphanage. The soldiers, known by the name of "Wolfhounds" had begun to provide food, clothing, medicine, money for the construction of new buildings, etc.

This state of affairs amazed Aoyama-san. It was a miracle.

These Wolfhounds were actually showing love to the children of their former enemies.

As the months and years went by, Aoyama-san watched and wondered at these things, so foreign to his culture.



As time passed, his fortunes and those of his country grew and prospered.

A day came when he began to feel that without limiting or in any way infringing on the relationship between the children and the Wolfhounds, it was time for the Japanese themselves to assume an active role. By now the President of a steel company with five plants throughout the country, Aoyama-san was well equipped to achieve this purpose. It was some time before the Wolfhounds were to become aware of his efforts -- or, in most cases, even of his existence.

His attorneys stepped in to assist in legal problems of the Home. Annual staff bonuses, a tradition in Japan, were supplemented when the Home found itself unable to fund them totally; he assumed financial support yearly for staff parties and gifts; and always the needs and joys of the children were paramount in his thinking and planning.

Eventually he began to subsidize two annual visits -- orphans to Hawaii and Wolfhound Santas to Japan. Gifts and hospitality of all kinds were showered on visiting Wolfhounds.

Despite his lavish generosity, he was always humbly respectful to the Wolfhounds, whom he regarded as men without peer.

The Wolfhounds have on several occasions honored Aoyama-san; and the Wolfhounds who know him feel honored by his presence among them.

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## BIRTHDAY FANFARE

It was to be a deadly fanfare. Artillery, tanks, and mortars of all the 8th Army units in the vicinity of the Wolfhound position joined together to plan the mightiest barrage of the Korean War...all to honor the 27th on its 50th birthday.

Since the outbreak of the conflict, the Wolfhounds had ranged far and wide, leading UN advances, covering withdrawals, earning the sobriquet "Fire Brigade" from the 8th Army Commander, General Walton Walker.

The respect of the other allied units was matched by the North Koreans, whose English propaganda radio voice was dubbed "Seoul City Sue" by the men of the 27th and who frequently promised to "destroy the 27th Division."

The big day arrived. At 12 noon sharp, the barrage, the biggest and deadliest of the war up until that time, was to slam into enemy positions.

Alerted to the coming event, combat correspondents from many American newspapers crowded around the Wolfhound CP.

Noon came and went. Silence reigned supreme. Somehow a patrol from the 35th Infantry "Cacti" Regiment had found its way into the area to be hit.

Accident -- or design?

The Wolfhounds and the Cacti have been friendly rivals for years.

## WAY TO GO

These new Wolfhounds are part of a proud unit with a great history. Their time will come to add their own lines to the Wolfhounds book of lore; just as it has for every generation. Many of those serving today were not born when Attleboro took place, but will they be true to the memory of all those Wolfhounds who came before? I know they will -- like their elder brothers, they'll "move toward the sound of the guns."

--Capt. Bob Cole, Viet Nam

## BE ALL YOU CAN BE

In war zones, just as in normal day to day existence, there's a sort of grapevine that gets the word out -- seemingly without discernible direction, it finds its way to ears attuned to receive it.

Among many others, one such bit of news resulted in a rather unorthodox method of recruitment for the 27th Infantry Regiment in Korea.

It was that the Wolfhounds were "hot".

Blazing a fiery trail in and around the peninsula, the Wolfhounds soon earned respect on both sides of the conflict.

General Walton Walker, commander of the Eighth Army, dubbed them his "Fire Brigade."

"Seoul City Sue", the communist propaganda personality, often referred to them as the "Wolfhound Division". She, or those who supplied information to her, couldn't believe a single regiment could do so much damage!

So the word got around and the Wolfhounds began to receive replacements -- men who "transferred" themselves without the formality of paperwork.

There was always room for people who wanted to fight.

Permit me a few remarks on a personal plane:

I am unashamedly proud of the Wolfhounds.  
Wolfhounds of all ranks, Wolfhounds past  
and Wolfhounds present.

It is with real gratitude that I thank Lt. Colonel  
Kenneth R. Curley, present commander of  
First Battalion, for providing the inspiration and the means  
to make this booklet and those who follow a reality.

We Wolfhounds of the past have even more for  
which to thank him. The esprit and professionalism of  
today's Wolfhound warriors are a tribute to his leadership.  
As heirs to an unparalleled tradition, they leave no doubt of  
their readiness and ability to uphold, perhaps even surpass  
it.

To return to the booklet -- I am grateful to so many  
people for their assistance and input. The dedication of  
Specialist Robert Moor was an invaluable asset, as were  
Mrs. Rose Nabarette, Sergeant Ralph Strickland, Corporal  
Mike Furutani, 1st Lt. Jeffrey Merenkov, 2nd Lt. Paul Holt  
and so many others. Their hard work made it all look  
simple.

Gratefully,  
Hugh F. O'Reilly  
Honorary Sgt. Major  
April 1996