

WOLFHOUND REFLECTIONS II

The saga of the Wolfhounds is an unending one. They have left their mark throughout the South Pacific, on the Korean Peninsula, in the jungles of Viet Nam. They were heard too in the struggles of the distant past - - mountains and villages of the Philippines and the wind-swept steppes of Siberia echoed with their fire and stored their actions in memories.

Wherever the nation's honor and interest were at stake the Wolfhounds were in the forefront.

But not for acclaim.

Theirs has always been a higher goal. The Wolfhounds are proud warriors. They calmly bear the deep-throated roar and thunderous crash of heavy artillery, the choked cough of the mortar punctuated by the crack of rifle shots. They have always moved toward the sound of the guns, always between the enemy and their country.

Over dramatic? There are no men like these! If these are your thoughts, please put these pages down. Leave us to our lives, leave us to memories and dreams that only warriors understand.





MEDAL OF HONOR

WOLFHOUND MEDALS OF HONOR

PHILIPPINE INSURRECTION

1LT Charles G. Bickman
1LT George G. Shaw

WORLD WAR II

CPT Charles W. Davis
SSG Raymond H. Cooley

KOREAN WAR

* CPL John W. Collier
* CPT Reginald B. Desiderio
CPT Lewis L. Millett
* 2LT Jerome A. Sudut
* CPL Benito Martinez

VIETNAM WAR

SGT John F. Baker, Jr.
CPT Robert F. Foley
* SGT Charles C. Fleek
* CPT Riley L. Pitts
SSG Paul R. Lambers

* POSTHUMOUS AWARD

THE MUSEUM

Through the effort and inspiration of many Wolfhounds, we will soon have a Museum or Regimental Room second to none.

Trophies, photographs, weapons, citations and other memorabilia compete with each other in friendly rivalry for space which is all too limited. A growing number of personal recollections from Wolfhound heroes such as retired Major General Guy S. Meloy of Attleboro fame (Vietnam) is available to history buffs.

Already, plans are under way to rotate exhibits. Specific items will be catalogued so that they may be easily attainable when not on display.

Lieutenant Colonels Kenneth Curley and Bernard Champoux have been responsible for inspiring and maintaining the effort to produce the museum, whose effect on the first-time visitor is certain to be impressive. An important adjunct is a sales store featuring Wolfhound wear of all kinds for men and women.

To walk into that room is to mingle with the spirits of those who have made this Regiment. Some are still with us - - and some have gone on to a higher plane.

Each in his own way left a legacy - - each of us must be dedicated to the goals that inspired them.

WOLFHOUND!

WOLFHOUND HEALERS

Let's talk about the orphanage for a few minutes - - and maybe help some of us to understand a bit more.

First of all, true orphans, children with no parents, are really rare. At the Holy Family Home, as in orphanages everywhere, somewhere in the background is one parent, often two.

Take the youngsters visiting the Wolfhounds this year (1996), Junichi and Yui. They were abandoned by their parents. Almost all of the children have suffered similarly - - sometimes the mother left, sometimes the father.

Your first impulse when you hear these things is anger - - how can people do these things? But until we know the whole story, until we know what drove these mothers and fathers, you and I have the chance to heal the wounds they left behind with love.

One thing for sure these kids need is love - - and we should thank the Man upstairs that we have the opportunity to give it.

ECHOES OF THE PAST

The expression, "history repeats itself" is known to everyone. The following excerpt from a March, 1931 letter to Wolfhound commander W.E. Hunt from retired Major General Wm. S. Graves is a case in point.

If nothing else, it should serve to stiffen the resolve of every Wolfhound to always do his duty for his country no matter what the odds:

"The duty performed by the 27th Infantry in Siberia was arduous, difficult and often very delicate, and in the words of the Chief of Staff of the Army, these duties were performed in a manner worthy of the best traditions of the Army.

"There were many interested in misrepresenting the activities of the American troops in Siberia, and so far as I am aware there was not an officer or enlisted man who was swerved from the faithful performance of his duty by these false reports."

Look familiar?

According to the Regimental History published in 1931, the Wolfhounds in 1918 covered the distance of 76 verst (50 miles) in 13 and a half hours. This was over muddy roads swampy ground--during a Siberian snow storm. In addition compliments on the spot, the Regiment received the following cable from the Chief of Staff of the Japanese Imperial Army:

To Colonel Morrow:

"The Chief of the General Staff at Tokyo congratulates on your fast and able occupation of Khabarovski."

General Nehari

FIRST BATTLE

Although only one Medal of Honor was actually awarded, four members of the Regiment were recommended for that decoration after the 27th Infantry Regiment's very first battle - - the Battle of Bayan.

The Medal was eventually awarded to First Lieutenant Charles G. Bickham, who thus became the first Medal of Honor winner in the Regiment.

Also recommended was Chaplain George D. Rice. In the words of the recommendation, he showed "absolute and fearless devotion to duty in administering to the wants of the wounded and assisting them from the firing line to the dressing station... All this under heavy fire at close range from the enemy in the fort."

Also recommended were Corporal J.M. Ward and Sergeant William Kelleher.



Credit Where Credit is Due

A few months ago, the press had a "field day" over an extreme embarrassing incident involving a trio of U.S. servicemen and an underage Okinawan girl.. There was no excuse for the actions of the of the men and they richly deserve punishment.

At the risk of being misunderstood, a Wolfhound wrote to Hawaii's former Governor George Ariyoshi, who is of Japanese descent, pointing out that this heinous crime received far attention from the press in both Japan and America than the many worthy activities by American servicemen, such as the Wolfhound Orphanage project.

Governor Ariyoshi, a tall, courtly gentleman, promptly wrote to President Clinton, expressing a similar view and recounting the Wolfhound story at length. He and the President had been governors of their respective states and were close friends.

A copy of the President's reply is on the opposite page.

This story is printed to make Wolfhounds everywhere aware that men high place also have hearts - - and are more than willing to show it.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 12, 1995

The Honorable George R. Ariyoshi
Watanabe, Ing & Kawashima
745 Fort Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear George:

Thank you for your thoughtful letter of September 27. I appreciate your suggestions regarding recent events in Okinawa and am glad to know about the Wolfhounds' involvement with the Osaka orphanage.

It's always good to have your insight, and I've taken the liberty of sharing your letter with Tony Lake.

Sincerely,

Bill

*I really appreciate
your insight -
Thanks*

IT'S OFFICIAL!

Wolfhound... many people know the name, but few know how or why it was bestowed. One story is that Major General Oi of the Imperial Japanese Army and commander of the Allied troops in Siberia said that the Regiment was as fierce and fleet in combat as the dog which was used to hunt wolves over the frozen wastes. He thought that "Wolfhounds" would be an appropriate nickname for an outstanding infantry regiment.

Another similar tale is that the Regiment was so named because it moved toward an assigned objective speedier than any other unit. Whatever the truth may be, the nickname became the official part of the Regiment's designation in 1963, when Secretary of the Army Cyrus Vance, signed orders to that effect.

As an interesting sidelight: the Regimental crest bears a wolf's head because heraldic symbolism does not include a Wolfhound.



FUSION

After the battle of Attleboro and a few days in the area of Tay Ninh, the 1st Battalion Wolfhounds found themselves digging in near an old, abandoned French fortress. Here, on the weed overgrown parapets, a Chinook helicopter delivered about two dozen, bewildered, apprehensive replacements.

Their two week indoctrination at the Division Training Center had provided enough time for magnified tales of close quarter combat. Each story-teller, of course, made his own additions to the already amplified horror stories and multiplied the numbers of killed and wounded until the wide-eyed replacements, each in his own way, began to steel themselves for whatever fate had in store for them.

Then they were greeted and briefed by the 1st Battalion Commander, Major Guy S. Meloy. He told them of the proud history of the Regiment, of its exploits in war and peace. His sincerity in welcoming them to their new family got through, for when he finished, "we're awfully happy to have you... welcome to the battalion," he was stunned by the response.

Two dozen young soldiers leaped to their feet, raised clenched fists and roared, "WOLFHOUSES!"

The magic was at work already...

SURPRISE, SURPRISE!

Describing outstanding accomplishments at the Joint Readiness Training Center to the uninitiated is akin to attempting to arouse the erotic fancy of a gecko in a hippopotamus.

But JRTC, as it is known to every American combat soldier, is the final testing ground. Do well here and you're ready to face your country's foes.

Here, through the use of lasers and other sophisticated devices, unit after unit is tested to the limit by troops whose experience at the Center has taught them every trick in the book, offensive and defensive. We've talked about that on other pages.

During the 1996 visit of the First Battalion to the Center, one such example leaps to mind.

The combat train, which provides all manner of supplies to the fighting troops, came under sudden attack and in the wink of an eye lost the Noncommissioned Officer in Charge and several other members of the unit.

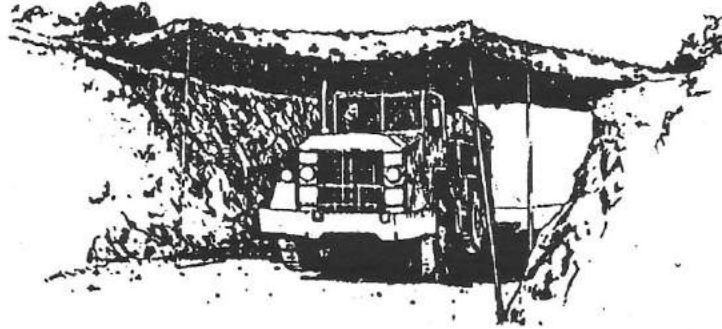
Left in charge of 26 vehicles and 65 men was Corporal Denny Phillips, 30 years old and in the Army but two years. There were ambulances, supply trucks, anti-aircraft and anti-tank vehicles to name a few.

Central points had to be selected (alternates too!) water, food and ammunition distributed ---- a thousand details were thrust upon him.

As the opposing forces spotted their location, Phillips had to react instantly, selecting locations which offered both concealment and noise discipline. He also assisted in processing replacements and arranging for wounded personnel to be airlifted for treatment.

Somehow he also found time to post perimeter guards, lead six patrols, organize a reaction force and supervise the emplacement of wire and booby traps.

Wonder what he did in his spare time?



ANOTHER KIND OF SCHOOL

In the normal course of events, the Army's enlisted men with the ambition and ability to earn commissions attend what is known as the Officers Candidate School.

But there are other ways to earn officer's bars, and in the first year of combat in Korea quite a few Wolfhounds found them. A total of 56 warriors in the 27th Infantry Regiment received combat commissions during that time. Their classrooms were the rice paddies and mountains of the Land of the Morning Calm and their instructors, a ruthless enemy.

Pause for a moment... 56 men.

Think what that says about the Wolfhounds!

When the Korean conflict finally came to the stage of peace talks between the UN and North Korea, the UN chose the Wolfhounds as the first Honor Guard at the negotiation site.

BEAU GESTE

How he got his nickname, we don't know. But "Spotlight" Simms was a team player - he never turned the light on himself - the spotlight was always shone on others.

In those days just before the Korean war, he played end on the Wolfhound football team. Running backs from the Cacti (35th) and the Deuce Four (24th) knew him well and rarely tried to come around his end. Some folks said that they went the other way because in the line next to Spotlight was tough Captain "Jake" Newman, the Regimental Surgeon - but most of us knew better.

Be that as it may, 2nd LT. Derwood Simms and his men were also a fearsome team in Korea. They proved it time and time again in the muddy rice paddies and on the rocky slopes of the "Land of the Morning Calm." They saw few calm days - - or mornings either - - in that ancient land.

Then came the last day of Spotlight's life.

Capt. Lewis Millett's "Easy" company and "Fox" company were ordered to take a ridge fronting the Wolfhound position. When Millett saw Simms (now a Captain) leading Fox company to the left of his own troops, he shouted, "Hey Spotlight! I thought you were due to go home today!"

"Yeah," retorted Simms, "but the new guy doesn't know the men - - and they don't know him. Thought I'd stick around one more day."

Fighting for that ridge was long - - and vicious. The Wolfhounds won the ridge, but Spotlight didn't come back. Most of his company did. Was he foolish? Ask the Wolfhounds...

SIBERIA

1918 - - and the 27th was in Siberia. This was to be where the regiment earned it's nickname, now part of it's official designation. The mission was to protect refugees as much as possible from the communists, who were known in those days, as Bolsheviks. Neither side totally controlled the Trans - Siberian Railway, although the 27th was able to block the lifeline from Posolskaya to Vladivostov. The Bolsheviks, under Ataman Semenoff (Ataman is a title) utilized armored trains both to attack opposing troops and to control a portion of the Railway.

DAUGHTER OF THE REGIMENT

Among the many distinguished personages who have been named Honorary Wolfhounds was child screen star Shirley Temple. The lovable youngster stood straight beside Colonel "One Punch" Harding as the Wolfhounds passed in review at a parade in the spring of 1940. She received the award with aplomb.

Small arms training for the Wolfhounds in the 1930's included firing at towed targets off the Wainae coast. The water cooled machine gun of those days had no traversing dial - - an expert gunner developed a "2 mil tap."

FROM THE WHITE HOUSE

The following congratulations for the 27th Infantry victory at the Battle of Bayan in the Philippines was received from President Theodore Roosevelt. The President was a tough combat soldier himself, having led his "Rough Riders" to victory at the Battle of San Juan Hill in Cuba during the Spanish - American war.



Theodore Roosevelt

Washington D.C., May 5, 1902
To General Chaffee,
Manila.

ACCEPT FOR THE ARMY UNDER YOUR
COMMAND AND EXPRESS TO GENERAL DAVIS
AND COLONEL BALDWIN ESPECIALLY MY
CONGRATULATIONS AND THANKS FOR THE
SPELDID COURAGE AND FIDELITY WHICH HAS
AGAIN CARRIED OUR FLAG TO VICTORY. YOUR
FELLOW COUTRYMEN AT HOME WILL EVER
REVERENCE THE MEMORY OF THE FALLEN AND
BE FAITHFUL TO THE SURVIVORS, WHO HAE
THEMSELVES BEEN FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH FOR
THEIR COUNTRY'S SAKE.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

INTO THE BREACH

Despite the fantasies of history buffs, classic military victories like Thermopylae and Cannae were never earned by swashbucklers more familiar with the bed than the battlefield.

They were won months and years before the actual conflict by commanders who worked hard and long to learn their profession, leading tough, well-trained troops. In short, professionals who excelled in their trade.

The way that knowledge is formed is demonstrated almost daily in Wolfhound training exercises today. Utilizing Oahu's rural ridges and scrub land, a recent (April, 1996) live-fire simulated combat scenario was a case in point.

This training is so vital to a light infantry unit that even the 25th Division Commanding General spent several night-time hours observing a Wolfhound company in action recently. Various other high ranking officers were also among the observers.

The Wolfhound wartime mission - - to leap into the path of enemy forces, stemming their drive until more heavily equipped units can arrive on the scene, calls for an extremely high emphasis on mobility and tactical expertise. Wolfhounds of former years would be quick to praise the readiness of their successors to accomplish that mission.

Today's Wolfhounds, ably led, physically tough and exceptionally well trained, are obviously worthy successors of their predecessors. Although certain to be outmanned, they will never be outfought.

TRIBUTE TO A FALLEN FOE

An interesting sidelight in the records of the Regiment's first battle, the Battle of Bayan on May 2, 1902, may be found in a message to the soldiers of the 27th from Brigadier General George W. Davis.

The highly unusual message said in part, "at this moment of exultation and triumph, do not forget the vanquished foe, whose persistent gallantry commanded the admiration of all who saw the magnificent defense of their stronghold."

This gallant attitude towards a defeated enemy sets a very high standard, one of which all Americans can be proud.

General Davis goes on to describe the Moros of that time as "a race of people who have been able to make such a fight and who have made this wilderness into a garden have many qualities..."

The late Riley Allen, long-time editor of the Honolulu Star Bulletin, was a Red Cross representative with the Wolfhounds in Siberia.

Colonel Frank Baldwin, who commanded the 27th Infantry Regiment in the Philippines, was one of only nineteen Americans to be awarded the Medal of Honor twice.

TAKE THE E (for enemy) TRAIN

One of the unusual features with which warriors of the 27th Infantry had to contend in Siberia was the armored train. Heavily protected by armor plate and armed with small field guns, these rolling arsenals were formidable foes.

In one battle against this almost overpowering adversary, three Wolfhounds earned the Distinguished Service Cross.

They were 2nd Lt. Paul Kendall, Sgt. Carl Robbins and Pfc. Homer Tommie.

When an armored train attacked their position, Kendall rallied his troops in a counter attack. Fighting furiously, Tommie was somehow dislodged from a precarious perch and thrown under the train's wheels losing a leg in the process. Tommie was also awarded the Medal De Guerre Avec Glaives (Bronze) for this action by French General Janin.

Robbins climbed atop the train's engine and in the face of pistol and machine gun fire hurled a grenade into the cab, rendering the engine incapable of further operation. Robbins lost his life in this gallant foray against the enemy.

This entire action was fought at night.