

WOLFHOUND REFLECTIONS III

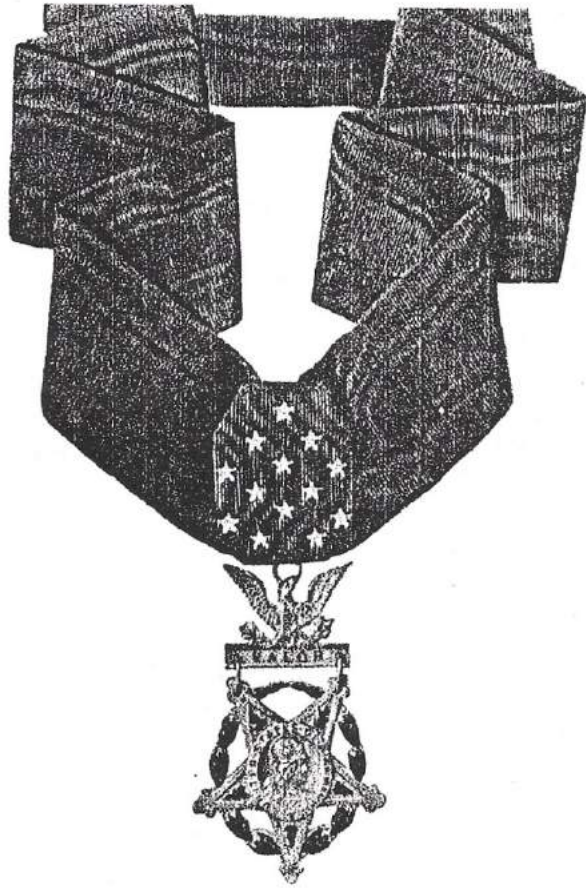
It is the nature of the Wolfhounds, if the men of a Regiment may be said to have a collective nature, to always perform in excess of requirements and expectations. This has been true for almost a century - - and given a hundred years of momentum, a change would be highly unlikely.

Equipment and weapons have improved, but then so have those possessed by those whom we may have to confront. It is arresting to note that other, non-democratic nations, have also chosen to maintain, or even increase, the numbers of their citizens under arms.

But many years ago, in a conflict almost lost in the dusty pages of history, the Wolfhounds earned another sobriquet - - "The Fire Brigade." It was a classic example of their spartan determination to always come home "carrying their shields."

A more flowery pen might decorate these pages with further proof, the results of what George Patton called "fear holding on a minute longer" - - but the Wolfhounds are happy in the knowledge that they not only can - - but WILL.

Hugh F. O'Reilly
Honorary Sergeant Major



WOLFHOUD MEDALS OF HONOR

PHILIPPINE INSURRECTION

1LT Charles G. Bickman
1 LT 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

BLACK JACK POT

Time and modern science have brought about many changes since Captain John J. Pershing led a 27th Infantry expedition against Fort Bacolod in the Phillipines in 1903. But the Moros they faced were as fierce and determined as any enemy met by the Wolfhounds since.

When the expedition stepped out it was with 600 men, 64 ponies and 100 pack mules. Two batteries accompanied them - - one of 3.6 mortars and one of mountain guns.

Their target, Fort Bacalod, was equipped with about twenty brass cannons (Moros called them lantacas). Individuals were armed with bolos and spears and a good number of Spanish Remington rifles.

Surrounding the fort was a great ditch, all of 30 feet wide and an awesome 35 feet deep. Flying from its parapets was a colorful array of battle flags.

Firing went on for a full day and night, neither side gaining much advantage. At around noon the next day Pershing ordered an assault on the fort.

First, they cut enough brush to fill the ditch at one point, and then constructed a light bamboo bridge. First Lieutenant Shaw, later to earn the Medal of Honor, led ten Wolfhounds in a charge to the ten-foot high parapet.

Clubbed rifles and bayonets swung against berserk Moros wielding their weapons until not one of the defenders was left standing.

Fort Bacolod was ours!

ANOTHER VERSION

In this campaign occurred a matter that will live forever in the history of the Regiment. The Japanese and the Twenty-sevens were pursuing the retreating Bolshevik when the Japanese, becoming exhausted, invited the Twenty Seventh to pass them and lead the pursuit. The Regiment did so and soon left the Japanese behind. It is a matter of record that one stretch of seventy-six versts (about fifty miles) was covered in thirteen and one-half hours during this advance.

Japanese General Otani sent the Regiment a letter of congratulations in which he stated his admiration of "the astonishing rapidity of the operation along the railroad and the coast of the Amur."

But the fleeing Bolsheviks paid the Regiment an even greater compliment. They called us "The Wolfhounds," a name soon taken up by all our enemies.

Excerpt of a letter to
Colonel William E. Hunt from
Colonel H. L. Laubach

It's always a good feeling when other drivers recognize the Wolfhound bumper sticker and wave. Sometimes they even shout "Wolfhounds!" We've got more friends than we realise.

CAN YOU SPARE A LITTLE?

Our financial support of the children of the Wolfhound Orphanage is not really needed any more. And to those of us who remember the old days, that's a real source of relief.

We're proud of everything we've done - - although to be honest, once you saw the condition the kids were living in you had to help them. We're prouder still of the Wolfhounds who took up the challenge without ever seeing this misery and who have kept things going for nearly half a century.

There's one thing we can't stop giving them - - love.

No matter how well things are managed, living in an institution can't be like living in your own home. The Wolfhounds have filled, are filling, that one gap in the childrens' lives. Because I know the Wolfhounds, I want to make this one personal request of you.

If you visit Japan, visit the orphanage. At Christmas time, chip in as much as you can to make their lives a little happier - - A Christmas present from you will brighten their day more than you can possibly imagine.

Can you spare a little love?

KOLCHAK I

In the "old Army", prior to WWII, three stripe Sergeants who remained in the same company for many years were not unusual. The reason for that was that unless a man was a "first three grader" (Staff Sergeant or higher) he went back to private when he transferred.

An example of this was Sergeant John Martin, a soldier in the 27th in 1902 in the Philippine Insurrection. He was still in the Regiment in Siberia where we became known as the Wolfhounds.

In 1929, when Colonel William E. Hunt obtained the first Wolfhound mascot, Sergeant Martin was the obvious choice to take care of the dog. The two became so close that when the Sergeant retired in the 1930's and moved to the Mainland, Kolchak I became despondent and refused to eat.

The mascot finally had to be shipped back to his friend, Sergeant John Martin.

NOW IN THE OLD DAYS...#1

Prior to the Korean Conflict, the Wolfhounds were stationed at Camp Sakai on the outskirts of Osaka. Just outside the post was a kind of night club called the Kolchak Cabaret. There was no formal entertainment, but a student of soldiers and their lifelong battle with bureaucracy could find much to entertain and amuse him.

Tottering about the dance floor with their G.I. partners were young Japanese girls, only weeks away from the rice paddies, painfully experiencing their first high heeled shoes. This of course, resulted in what kindness might describe as innovative dance steps.

Lining the walls were the ever-present defenders of righteousness and regulation, a few ill at ease Military Policemen. Occupation authorities condemned fraternization even in night clubs.

This meant that Private Jones could dance with Michiko-san, but once the music stopped he'd better take his hands off her. After a few bottles of Asahi beer were downed (the girls' income was determined by the number) confrontations between Wolfhounds and the upholders of the law were inevitable.

Ah, the Kolchak Cabaret!

Michiko-san's struggles with high heels were far from the only encounters with unfamiliar practices. The contents of finger bowls, lemon slices floating enticingly on the surface, sometimes disappeared in a single gulp in the hands of an unsophisticated Wolfhound.

NOW IN THE OLD DAYS...#2

The Main Post Exchange in Osaka during the Occupation of Japan was the former Sogo department store. Any thing a soldier's heart desired (almost) could be found somewhere on its six floors.

Those whose tour of duty was about to expire could buy a carton of Luckies for fifty cents (later a dollar), enough English wool for five or six dollars, add a clipping of a picture out of Esquire magazine and present the lot to a Japanese tailor.

After a few fittings, every Wolfhound who followed this procedure was fashionably attired and if the tailor did an especially good job he might receive an extra pack of cigarettes.

Up on the sixth floor was a cafeteria. Wolfhounds sometimes ordered exotic food combinations, astounding the young ladies behind the counter. One order was guaranteed to send new girls into gales of astonished laughter -- apple pie topped by cheese. No doubt they couldn't wait to get home and tell the family about those Kichigai (crazy) Americans.

NOW IN THE OLD DAYS...#3

To someone born in Hawaii, if you can't have a luau once in a while, it's the pits. And when the Wolfhounds went to Viet Nam, quite a few of them were from the Islands.

Speaking of pits, they are essential to a luau, but they're easy to dig. The problem was rocks, or the lack of them. Ti leaves were needed too.

It takes a special kind of rock in the imu, or pit. One that won't crack in the heat. And Viet Nam didn't have any - - rocks in that country shattered in the intense heat.

A retired Wolfhound back on Oahu was contacted, and it wasn't long before two big crates of imu rock and Ti leaves were ready for shipment. Unfortunately they had to go through Travis Air Force Base and then on to Nam.

When the shipment arrived at Travis, a Major who had served all his time in Europe came upon the two crates, and jumped to the conclusion that they were a poor joke concocted by a long-haired antiwar activist.

It was only through the intervention of an Air Force Corporal from Kalihi that the rocks were saved and soon on their way to Viet Nam.

General Messenger, a gourmet of the Hawaiian School, declared the results of the shipment a smashing success at the first luau.

TALE OF AN EYE

All stories don't have happy endings.

And all races cannot be painted with the same brush.

With those verities in mind...

Outside the six-storey Post Exchange in Osaka, there was always a group of kids selling trinkets of different kinds, souvenirs to tempt the steady stream of departing soldiers.

One pretty little thing, about ten, charmed a Wolfhound warrior. So often, on leaving the PX, he gave her a candy bar or other childrens' delight. Then came the Korean conflict - - he was gone for a year.

On his return, he visited the exchange. Exiting in a crowd of Khaki clad GI's, he was amazed when his little friend dashed up and threw her arms around him. An expression of love can be more rewarding than the roar of a cannon.

The only flaw in the youngsters appearance was a large cataract on her right eye, and the Wolfhound, deeply, deeply moved, decided to do something about it.

A Japanese Doctor friend agreed to do what he could and made an appointment. But the youngster did not keep it. The Doctor then appeared outside the PX one evening, sat the child on the fender of a car, and used a flashlight to examine her. Once finished, he announced that the operation would be a simple one, and made an another appointment.

She disappeared. Day after day, week after week, there was no sign of her. A friend in an investigative position eventually found her, hundreds of miles away selling souvenirs outside of an Army camp at Sendai.

With this information, came a frightening warning. "Leave her alone. She's being groomed to be a prostitute. Any attempt to rescue her will inevitably result in her death."

(Note: The reader should not try to identify soldiers in these vignettes. It would not only be irrelevant, but would interfere with the flow. They are Wolfhounds).

JUST THE FACTS, MA'AM

Very little concerning the American Siberian Expedition can be found in the average history book, which naturally pays much more attention to events at that time in Europe.

However, through the courtesy of the Wolfhound Regimental Room certain interesting facts have emerged. The Nations involved on the Allied side included, besides the U.S., Japan, China, Great Britain, Italy, France and Czechoslovakia which leads one to think that events there were earned more than passing notice at the time.

The Wolfhounds were operating in an area of extreme turmoil, at times approaching chaos. The Civil War in Russia was the cause of constant confusion, and events hastily recorded only muddled some situations further.

For example, it was recorded that on September 2, 1919, Captain Johns and Corporal Spurling of the 27th were kidnapped by Russian and Japanese troops. Were the kidnapers part of the Allied Forces? Were the Russians Bolsheviks and if so what were the Japanese doing with them?

The only additional material furnished in the available records is that the Captain was released the same day and that the Corporal was released five days later after being severely whipped.

Why?

ALIAS - - CIVILIANS

Just as they do today, Wolfhounds of fifty years ago had to learn how to cope with civilians who might fall into several categories.

The individuals wearing civilian clothes encountered during training exercises might be disguised "enemy" troops; friendly natives; spies; or just victims of the war trying to stay out of the way.

There were times then, as there probably are now, when civilian attire - - or the men who wore it - - caused serious problems.

There was the early morning at Makua when a Wolfhound platoon came upon four "civilians" armed with hunting rifles and all the gear required to qualify them as a quartet of pig hunters seeking the piece de resistance for a luau - - a pig.

All through that long, hot day, the captives pleaded, begged, reasoned, all to no avail. The Wolfhounds had been warned of trickery and were not about to listen, even if their prisoners spoke in local pidgin.

Came the end of the long, irritating day. And with it, the gathering of Wolfhound units. The only problem was that there were four extra captives - - who really were hunters.

Fortunately, they had been "captured" on property leased by the Army, and had to forget their threats to sue the Wolfhounds.

SAYONARA

Mothers with musing expressions on their faces. Oddly quiet children. Airline executives. Wolfhounds, fresh from triumphs over numerically superior forces in simulated combat, the lines of tension slowly slipping into soft smiles of paternal pride. And softly, the tones of flutes mixing Western and Oriental music played by two young children, a boy and a girl, clad in Japanese garb.

The scene: grass covered, barracks- shielded Quad D at Schofield Barracks. The occasion: a farewell picnic in honor of two children from the Holy Family Home in Osaka.

An observer need not have known the particulars of this love affair-- the kindness and compassion of the Wolfhounds was all too evident.

And the children, abandoned for some reason by their parents but secure in the knowledge that these strong, somewhat shy soldiers of another land love them unreservedly. This day is a memory, a memory etched in the minds and hearts of two little ones who know now that they are loved, unreservedly and forever.

Wolfhounds!

Mario Basiola, a Milanese opera singer and son of an opera singer, was born in Chicago when his mother accompanied her husband on tour of the US. When he reached maturity in 1956, Mario exercised his right to American citizenship by appearing before the American Consul in Milan.

He was promptly drafted into the US Army and became a drummer in the Wolfhound band.

TURNING THE TIDE

The Wolfhounds were engaged in the fighting in Korea less than three weeks when they earned a Distinguished Unit Citation, America's highest unit award. That immediately erased any doubt about their ability to fight.

The 27th Infantry - - cocky, feisty, professional; was led by a brilliant Commander, LTC "Mike" Michaelis. The combination proved to be a deadly one. Imagine if you will, a total of 3,000 casualties inflicted on the enemy in only four days - - July 23 to July 26. Launching numerous banzai charges at the Wolfhounds, the fiery North Korean divisions were met by what the citation called "countless individual, group and unit acts of extraordinary heroism."

The citation goes on to describe the destruction wreaked on the Reds and the capture of much valuable equipment. This first Distinguished Unit Citation of the war proved to be just the "shot in the arm" needed by the under-manned U.N. forces. The Wolfhounds had proved that confident professionals could be more than a match for superior numbers.

After two years service and six months in combat in Korea with the Wolfhounds, Sergeant James E. Ward was discharged from the Army - - he was only 16.

SAVED BY A WOLFHOUND

Women in the Wolfhounds?

Just about as likely as Wolfhound combat boots treading the land where Moses walked.

Both are indeed likely - and one of the lady soldiers attached to the 27th has been awarded an Army Achievement Medal for saving the life of an Egyptian civilian in the Sinai.

The Wolfhounds were in the Sinai for a six-month tour as members of a multinational peace keeping force.

Specialist Doraliz Ramirez, for six years a medic in the Army, was the soldier whose quick action made the difference between life and death for 22 year old Khalid Ahmad Nabi. Ramirez was a passenger in an ambulance flagged down by Egyptians involved in an accident and Nabi owes his life to her quick response and professional expertise.

The young Egyptian, now has no feeling from the waist down but the prognosis is complete recovery.

According to Specialist Ramirez, Nabis major concern was that he would never be able to marry.....