

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

TOP DOG

First Battalion Wolfhounds welcomed a new commander on 3 July 2002, as LTC Scott Leith took over the reins from departing LTC Billy Buckner.

Wide experience in training, military operations and planning mark LTC Leith as a CO who will bring unusual talents to the battalion. He has already become familiar to troops throughout 1/27 through frequent appearances at training sites.

The Leith family - Mrs. Lynn and sons Jake and Drew - are no strangers to the Islands. The colonel has been Chief of Plans at Fort Shafter for the past year.

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We hope it won't go to his head, but on April 28, 2002 Kolchak XII was elevated to the rank of PFC.

One year old in the preceding month, the Wolfhound Mascot spends many of his days visiting the troops.

We wish him a long and fruitful life with many a tree and lamp post at his disposal!

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Attempting to find the essence of leadership, General George S. Patton said, "I have it, but I'll be damned if I can explain it."

YOU WERE THERE

27 November, 1950. A snow capped hill north of the Chongchon river in Korea.

Some 150,000 U.N. troops are withdrawing before the massive advance of Chinese divisions which have suddenly and unexpectedly entered the conflict. The hill is vital to the success of the withdrawal - - if it is taken, thousands of the U.N. troops will be encircled.

Panting with haste, CPT Reginald Desiderio leads the 220 Wolfhounds of "Easy" Company (now Alpha 2/27) up the frozen slope before darkness sets in. Laboring mightily, they attack the hard-as-concrete soil to dig defensive positions.

Night falls. Then, in the early hours before dawn, Red artillery mercilessly pounds the hill with thousands of rounds. The barrage lifts before the sun rises and thousands - literally thousands - of screaming Chinese storm the crest.

Wolfhound machine guns pour a deadly hailstorm of fire into the attacking hordes who fall like tenpins into grotesque heaps. The ground is covered with bodies and still they come, feverishly climbing and stumbling over the corpses of their comrades.

Desiderio scrambled from foxhole to foxhole, urging his men to greater effort: "hold on until daylight," he shouts over the din. Slammed flat by a round that powers into his shoulder, he leaps to his feet again and continues his efforts. Two more hits, one in each thigh, but on he goes dragging his crippled legs behind him.

Then, just as the tip of the sun peeks over the edges of the icy ground he is hit once more, this time in the left knee. Now wounded six times, he still holds the embattled

Wolfhounds together although now only 72 of his men are still able to keep up the murderous barrage.

Shattered, exhausted, the Chinese start to withdraw, hastened in their flight by Wolfhound fire.

A final mortar round bursts over the crater which is Desiderio's command post...

Mortally wounded at last, he smiles weakly as his executive officer says softly, "it's daylight - and we're still holding on."

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Hollywood motion pictures about the Wolfhounds include: "From Here To Eternity," "The Thin Red Line," "One Minute to Zero," and "Three Stripes in the Sun."

CPL James Jones, a 2-27 Wolfhound, wrote "Eternity" and "Red Line." "Zero" starred Robert Mitchum.

The Regiment was named only in "Three Stripes," but veterans of W.W.II and the Korean War recognized several incidents in the other films, which were part of the history of the 27th.

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"Seeing what others do not see is called brilliance; knowing what others do not know is called genius."

Sun Tzu

HE WAS READY

The unit had established a night defensive position along a suspected enemy supply route when a VC battalion attacked it. The platoon leader was gravely wounded, and the squad leader took command.

Disregarding intense enemy fire, he secured the platoon radio and moved to the command post to direct the defense. When a VC bullet wrecked the radio, he sought another at a 90mm recoilless rifle position.

Everywhere at once, he employed that rifle, detonated claymores and threw hand grenades. During the five hour battle he also personally directed artillery and helicopter fire, often placing rounds as close as five meters from friendly positions.

He repeatedly exposed himself to hostile fire to redistribute ammunition and render care to seriously wounded comrades. His superb leadership, skill, and courage save the lives of other Wolfhounds and helped thwart the enemy advance.

Not the kind of guy who liked to draw attention to himself, SSG Ronald Lambers, of A Company, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroics on that day in August 1968.

Knowing that he gave his life so bravely, knowing that he was ready to meet whatever challenge fate would offer has to stir something in every thinking Wolfhound who knows his story.

IN THE SHADOWS

Myth, legend, fact and fancy - all are interwoven in the tales old soldiers tell. Where reality ends and fantasy begins lies in the mind of the audience as well as in those of the narrators.

There are some who feel that the spirits of warriors return to the scenes of their triumphs, replaying the struggles, the victories, of years gone by. And that these same heroes of the past sometimes pace once again the fields where they learned the soldier's trade.

Here in the Islands then, it is not hard to hear in the pathless shadows of the mind the swish of tall grasses on the East Range as they part for the steps of disembodied men, or the sharp click of displaced rock on the slopes of stark Pohukaloa.

Are those heroes of the past really there? Do they think of the training they received? Was it the right terrain, chosen to aid them best in developing the skills they needed to defeat the foes of their country?

There is an area, part of Makua, where the spirit of a great, great soldier keeps watchful eye as soldiers of Charlie Company, 1/27 are the first to engage in a live fire exercise in some years. He knows the value of his own training there, which led him to a heroic struggle in which he decimated scores of fanatical enemies.

Born not far away in Waianae, he is remembered now in the name that live fire area bears - Pillil'aau Complex Range.

He was Medal of Honor recipient PFC Herbert K. Pillil'aau and that field is sacred to all military men who know.

Pillil'aau wasn't a Wolfhound, but because we use that range we should know and respect his story.

COURAGE OF ANOTHER KIND

Wolfhound history often reads like the most imaginative of fictional wars. Tales told time and again of men like Robert Foley pausing only briefly to succor wounded men before resuming his assault on VC strongholds; Riley Pitts leaping up from an unexploded grenade he'd covered with his body and charging again into the face of the enemy; the many feats of Lewis Millett in W.W.II and Korea.

And more... and more... and more...

But there was another kind of bravery. A kind which doesn't get headlines real or contrived, a kind at which the Wolfhounds have also excelled.

One such incident was recalled recently by retired 1SG George Dizon, who at the time was assigned to B Company of the First Battalion.

January 1966. The battalion had arrived from Hawaii by ship, and was ordered to seize Cu Chi, a Viet Cong stronghold and power base.

Cu Chi looked peaceful enough. But beneath the weeds and underbrush was a complex maze of tunnels, concealing living quarters, medical clinics, headquarters offices, etc. And scattered throughout the area were "spider foxholes," invisible yet deadly.

If this was to be the Wolfhound base camp, first the VC had to be dug out of his hiding holes. Thus began a soul searing, nerve-wracking week and a half of crawling advance under intense enemy fire. Inch by inch, foot by foot, yard by yard. An average of a mere 75 yards a day, $\frac{3}{4}$ the length of a football field.

Alternating periods of blinding dust and weapon clogging mud, cautious glances always to the rear, where

Charlie could pop up from a spider hole any moment. Not your soul stirring, dramatic kind of thing that makes headlines.

Just a dogged, downright determination to root out the foe and take the place. Never a thought of backing off or just holding fast, each man buoyed every minute by the unrelenting, steadfast support of other Wolfhounds.

And they succeeded. They won out where others, like the Foreign Legion, had failed.

Wolfhounds.

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The very first major combat engagement of the Regiment occurred at Lake Lanao in the Philippines, early in 1902. It involved battles at several forts against savage and fearless Moros who had never been defeated by the Spanish and who cockily sent a message to the 27th: "We are prepared for war, the sooner it begins, the better." No doubt they regretted those words later.

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The 27th Infantry Regiment first landed in Hawaii on January 4, 1921. Schofield Barracks at that time became the traditional home of the Regiment, which returned there after World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and the Gulf War.

HERO NO LONGER UNSUNG

(The following are excerpts from a letter to 1/27
Commander LTC Billy Buckner from MG (Ret) Guy S.
Meloy.)

“Paul Scott was the Platoon Leader of the Medical Platoon, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry in Vietnam during my tour (July 1966 - January 1967) as the Battalion Commander. He was a remarkable leader with quick intellect, great common sense, and a strong dedication to his mission and to his men. From the Battalion Surgeon to the aidmen in the rifle companies, to the battalion staff, to individual troopers, Scott was respected and admired for not only his judgment and leadership, but also for his courage in combat.”

“At the beginning of Operation Attleboro in November 1966 I made the decision to order the entire Medical Platoon, to include the Battalion Surgeon, to accompany the Wolfhound Task Force as we deployed into the jungle to find-fix-destroy the enemy... as it developed it was one of the wisest choices I ever made.”

“...Shortly after the Battle of Attleboro began, and during an extended period when even the Medical Platoon was under direct fire and mortar attacks, Scott organized the battalion aid station, organized stretcher bearer parties who went forward time and again to retrieve wounded, and calmly and courageously coordinated the triage action of treating not only 1/27 wounded and arranging their medevac, but simultaneously handling the wounded from eight additional rifle companies from four other battalions. Due to intense enemy fire, helicopter medevac could not be initiated until several hours after the fight began, resulting in an enormous workload on the one Medical Platoon involved. In the three

days this battle lasted, the Battalion Medical Platoon treated approximately 160 wounded.”

(Note: At the time of the battle, General Meloy was a major. When the battalion commander was put out of action, Meloy took command and had control of eleven companies, some of which were encircled by the enemy. He received the Distinguished Service Cross.)

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Pits containing sharpened stakes were encountered by the Wolfhounds in Vietnam. This was not the first time - it was also a practice of the Moros in the Philippine Insurrection. It can, and will, happen again.

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AWARDING THE MEDAL OF HONOR

“Today we came here to the East Room of the White House to honor two soldiers; two soldiers who... in the same battle and at the same time... met the unsurpassing tests of their lives with acts of courage far beyond the call of duty.

Those who were there will not forget the day.

CPT Foley and SGT Baker fought in the same company. Now, together, they join the noblest company of all.”

- Excerpt of speech from President L. B. Johnson



HOW TO MAKE A GUERRILLA HAPPY

Smoking, for many people, is a pleasant experience. Drawing in a lung full and slowly exhaling it through the mouth or nose produces a sort of calm, serene satisfaction.

A soldier who smokes can go one step further. He can give someone else even more than mere satisfaction - he can fill that other person with truly exciting pleasure.

Of course that other person's pleasure can, and often will, include a subsoil habitat for our friend the soldier.

Let's start with this. A man who has spent any time at all as a guerrilla finds that certain of his senses become sharpened. It happens almost automatically - it's survival. The sense of sight, of hearing, and of smell.

When you stop to think about it, someone who smokes creates a distinct body odor. If you don't believe that, and you're a smoker, ask any non-smoker. It lasts for days.

And a guerrilla has a keen sense of smell. It's a perception which, along with the development of his other senses, has not only keep him alive - it has made him a dangerous foe.

Want to make a guerrilla happy? Smoke.

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Corporal John M. Ward exposed himself bravely to enemy fire, standing on the shoulders of LT Hugh Drum and SGT William Kelleher to fire at Moros in Fort Pandapatan during the battle of Bayan, May 2, 1902. This was the same Drum who later in his career became a general and after whom a fort in New York is named. Just another great Wolfhound...

MOUT

It has been called "the most intensive fire fight American soldiers have fought since the Vietnam War."

You don't hear too much about it these days, particularly because of the war in Afghanistan, but every infantry soldier owes it to himself to read the book written about it. The title is "Black Hawk Down."

Along with "Enemy at the Gates," this is a classic tale of urban warfare. Sited in an ancient African metropolis, it grippingly portrays the stark realism of house to house combat. The reader cannot help but be proud to be a soldier when absorbing a tale of overpowering bravery and triumphs over truly fantastic odds.

All of this happened not too long ago- October 1993. On that day less than a hundred troops lost eighteen KIA and a dozen WIA - But the enemy suffered more than 500 KIA and over 1000 WIA.

What's all this got to do with the Wolfhounds? Well, right in the middle of it all was 2/27's Executive Officer, Major Drew Meyerowich. Here's your chance to learn all about it first hand. Properly approached and sufficiently urged, he'll spell out the details.

(Sorry, the Major left us before we could print this copy. Thought you'd like to know the story anyhow.)

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"Wolfhound - the name conjures up a mystique envied by other fighting men, pride to the warriors who wear its crest, and fear to those who must oppose it."

LTC Billy Buckner
BN CDR 1/27 INF

CHOOSE THE BEST

Things aren't always what they seem - and sometimes that takes a while to sink in.

Like what happened at Panmunjom in the fifties, when the truce talks signaled a cease fire in the Korean War. There were some unhappy Wolfhounds at the time because the Commanding General of the 8th Army selected them to be the Honor Guard at the meetings.

Here they were, the most highly decorated unit of the Korean War, ordered to be watch dogs!

And then some years later what outfit was told to control the airport at Kuwait? And who was chosen by General Schwartzkopf as his security?

You guessed it. Just the best light infantry around - the Wolfhounds.

Comes September 11, 2001 and the first thing you know, who's guarding Fort Shafter, Shafter Flats, Aliamanu Military Reservation, Red Hill, and Tripler Army Medical Center?

You guessed it. And if you listened, you heard a few grumbles about the assignment. Some Wolfhounds felt they should be doing what they do best - practicing the light infantry tactics at which they excel.

As we tried to say at the beginning, things aren't always what they seem. The Wolfhounds are time and again chosen to do those jobs exactly because they are the best.

The people in charge always turn to the unit with the dedication, esprit, downright ability and desire to do the best job possible.

Remember how the hijackers slipped onto those planes?

And that's why they always turn to a Wolfhound Battalion. This time it was LTC Guthrie's 2/27 and you could bet your bottom dollar that the criticisms of airport security wouldn't happen whenever the Wolfhounds took over.

(A half humorous example - the head of security at Tripler was stopped and both he and his car were thoroughly searched. He was delighted!)

And when it came time to relieve 2/27, there was no question that their replacement would be LTC Billy Buckner's 1/27.

Wolfhounds - any job, any place, any time.

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“ We congratulate you from the depths of our hearts for the good example and impression your soldiers have made in this vicinity.”

The above is an excerpt from a letter to the Regimental Commander from the citizens of Ussuri, Siberia on September 9, 1918. It was one of several missives from various communities during that period of our history.

The reputation of the Wolfhounds in their relations with civilian populations continues to this day. Resolutions and commendations from legislative bodies in Hawaii dot the walls of the Regimental Room and those of both Battalions.

Other examples include the activities of 1/27 and 2/27 in assisting students of elementary schools on Oahu.

FIERY STEED

When you looked down upon it from the air, the series of ridges took on the appearance of a "Galloping Horse." So that's what the Wolfhounds on Guadalcanal in 1943 called it.

On the ground, it was a formidable Japanese barrier - heavily armed bunkers which had stalled our advance. The 2/27 commanding officer, determined to break the Japanese impasse, sent his executive officer, CPT Charles Davis, up to the troops with a plan.

F Company (now B Co. 2/27) was ordered to move over to the flank and attack from there as company E (now A Co. 2/27) assaulted from the front, hopefully enveloping the position. Heavy fire halted the flank attack from an enemy gun emplacement protected by several machine gun bunkers.

The next morning, six F Company volunteers again attempted an assault, losing two men in a fruitless effort.

CPT Davis then asked the other four men if they would be willing to try once more. The men - SGT Wm. P. Curran, CPL Russel A. Ward, PFC Joseph D. Stec, and PVT Oran L. Woodard, promptly volunteered.

Unknown to them, Division Commander MG Lawton Collins and Wolfhound CO Colonel McCulloch were in position to observe what followed.

Davis and the four men were only 10 yards from the emplacement when the Japanese spotted them and began throwing grenades. One came to rest only a yard from Davis and Curran, but failed to explode. Davis then tossed a grenade and his men followed suit. After throwing several more, the 25 year old CPT, firing his M-1, led another attack.

The rifle jammed, so he used his pistol and charged into the position. The rest of the battalion came over the ridge in time to see him finish off the enemy.

MG Collins stated flatly "Davis' action was the deciding factor in taking command of 'Galloping Horse.'"

CPT Davis was awarded the Medal of Honor for his bravery and some years later retired as a colonel.

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The 27th Infantry Regiment once actually served under the command of a Japanese general. This was in the wastelands of Siberia, from August 1918 to January 1920.

During that period the 27th was part of an international force which included troops from Czechoslovakia, Great Britain, France, and Japan. The overall commander was Japanese LTG S. Oi.

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PRAISE FROM THE TOP

The legacy of bravery and sacrifice that the Wolfhounds have left us is an important one and one that can never be forgotten.

General Eric K. Shinseki
Chief of Staff, U.S. Army



THE PERIPATETIC WOLFHOUND

There are times when you hesitate to tell another true-to-life tale about the man. There's a real fear that people who've never met him will believe that all of these stories are figments of someone's overactive imagination...

Think back about a few of those feats of this modern Achilles. Marooning himself in an area surrounded by enemy troops to save the life of a wounded South African Pilot; and founding the Recondo School at the 101st Airborne.

Collecting funds for the Osaka Orphanage and later in the day leading the most complete bayonet charge since Cold Harbor in the Civil War; forward observer in the artillery; air gunner in the Army Air Corps; fought in Africa, Sicily, Italy, Korea, and Vietnam. AWOL from the American Army to join the Canadians who were already at war with Germany; returning when the US got into it; earned combat promotions to Corporal, Sergeant and Second Lieutenant.

There is more, but by now you are sure to have recognized Colonel Lewis Millett.

Think you've heard it all? How about the time he offered himself, and was accepted as a hostage by enemy North Korean troops? He did this to ensure the safe return of a North Korean Battalion Commander who entered our lines to negotiate the surrender of his unit. There was no way of knowing whether all of those soon to be disarmed enemy troops agreed with the idea or not - but Millett was more than willing to accept the challenge.

We have often wondered why someone hasn't written a book or made a movie about this man. Perhaps it's because his exploits in three wars and his activities between them were so unbelievable.

CENTENNIAL

Tasked with planning and implementing a Centennial celebration, LTC Billy Buckner (1/27) handled that event with characteristic Wolfhound aplomb.

Armed with the enthusiastic assistance of LTC Chelsea Chae (2/27) he produced a four day commemorative event that will long be remembered. Scores of Wolfhounds from previous years led by Medal of Honor recipients LTG Robert Foley and Colonel Lewis Millett participated.

Carefully and neatly orchestrated events followed one upon another, each arousing lively interest without detracting from the enjoyment of those that followed.

Of particular interest were a memorial service and a symposium.

The memorial service was composed largely of moving thoughts presented by the battalion commanders, Medal of Honor recipients, and others. The reflective mien of overflow attendees was ample evidence of the awe and respect in which those who carved out Wolfhound history are held.

In a different, and perhaps more lively manner, the symposium evoked a similar response.

All in all, the celebration of the Centennial once more evoked the truism: "There is no such thing as a former Wolfhound."

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Haleiwa Beach was often the scene of live fire machine gun training prior to W.W.II. Wolfhounds fired water-cooled machine guns there at targets towed past them in the ocean. The weapons had no traversing dials and expert gunners had to develop what was known as a "two mil (millimeter) tap."