

The WOLFHOOUNDS PICK a WINNER



In a contest held in Vladivostok, Siberia, in February, 1919, to determine the best drilled and best equipped soldier among the Allied forces in that country, these men were chosen to represent their respective armies. Corporal Rust of the A. E. F. in Siberia, at the extreme left, placed first, and the other Allied soldiers in the left-to-right order shown in the picture

PICTURESQUE nicknames of outfits cropped up in all of our services during the World War, thus continuing a practice that originated during the Civil War and showed up to a lesser extent during the war with Spain. We can't compete, however, with the British, who during the past century and more have had regiments which became known as The Dirty Half Hundred, The Emperor's Chambermaids, The Holy Boys, Nobody's Own and The Tin Bellies.

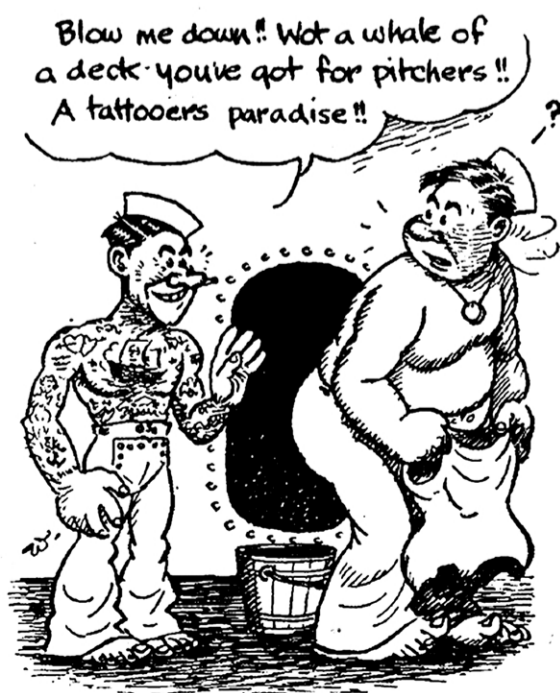
American divisions were largely known by names which reflected the section in which the division was organized or trained. Thus we had the Yankee Division (26th) of New England, the Blue Ridge (80th), the Dixie (31st), and the Middle West (89th). You remember, among other nicknames the Ivy (4th), Red Diamond (5th), Blue and Gray (29th), Old Hickory (30th), Sandstorm (34th), Rainbow (42d), Wildcat (81st), All-American (82d) and Buffalo (92d).

Even the American Expeditionary Forces in Siberia sprouted a nickname—or, rather, nicknames. That far-off group of Americans, consisting of the 27th and 31st Infantry Regiments, Ambulance Company No. 4, Field Hospital Company No. 4, a telegraph company and several supply units, became known as the "Wolfhounds" or the "Snowdogs," although the former nickname was more commonly used. If we're wrong, let some of the ex-Wolfhounds correct us.

The group pictured above includes a representative soldier from each of the Allied expeditions sent into Siberia to guard the trans-Siberian Railroad, the mines, and other property in that far-eastern section of Russia. America was represented by then-Corporal Noble H. Rust, now Sergeant Rust of the Todd County Police Department, Police Identification and Traffic section, and a member of Jeff Davis Post of the Legion, Trenton, Kentucky. The picture came from him with this story:

"The picture I am enclosing was taken by Allied staff photographers in the rear of the Japanese headquarters in Vladivostok, Siberia, during February, 1919. It shows a group of 'picked' soldiers—one from each of the Allied armies then in that theater of operations, entered by their own commanders and staff officers in a contest to determine which army had the best drilled and best equipped men in its ranks.

"Ratings were based on soldiery bearing and ability to explain, tear down and re-assemble rifle, pack and equipment in the quickest possible time. The contest was attended by the staff officers of each of the Allied forces. I was chosen to represent the American Expeditionary Forces and won first place, beating the Limey who represented England by a few seconds. The



WOLFHOUNDS



soldiers in the picture are lined up from left to right in the order in which they finished."

"**EVERYTHING** went fine in the contest," continues Rust's story, "until the turn of the Czech soldier came. He demonstrated his rifle and pack but . . . that boy was a crack corporal of grenadiers and proud of it. He jerked one of those 'potato masher' grenades off his belt and had it about half taken down when about five officers grabbed him and told him they understood hand grenades fully and to hang 'er back on his belt. He came pretty near breaking up the show.

"After the contest the soldiers were treated to a big feed and presents of smokes from their staff officers. I received an extra gift from Colonels O. P. Robinson and T. W. King, chief of staff and adjutant, respectively, of the American Headquarters Staff in Siberia.

"I had been transferred to Intelligence Headquarters from the 16th Company, Coast Artillery Corps, Regular Army, stationed at Fort Mills, Corregidor, Philippine Islands, because of my ability to speak and read German, which I had studied at Bethel College, Kentucky.

"Soon afterward, I was assigned to the Intelligence unit under Colonel D. P. Borrows, Captain Brazina and Lieutenant Kosilski which landed at Vladivostok with the 27th Infantry under general command of General Graves. There we were stationed at the palatial 'German Club' building in Svetlonskaya Street. We served as guards, interpreters, orderlies, dispatch riders and military police to the General Staff, being formed into a Headquarters Company by Lieutenant Mills.

"The boys will remember me by my nickname of 'Ding Hai.' I led a patrol of ten men from headquarters and fifteen men from Company B, Replacement Battalion, during the Kolchak and General Gaida revolts at Stancion during the month November, 1919."

The American
LEGION
 MONTHLY

OldMagazineArticles.com