APPENDIX A

Biography of Abian Wallgren

Abian A. Wallgren was born on 4 June 1892 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and passed in his hometown on 24 March 1948. He was the oldest of three children born to Abian and Hilma, both born in Sweden. His father was a tailor. A cartooning prodigy by age 16, Wallgren was creating sports cartoons for a number of newspapers in the city, and had created two running comic strips “Inbad the Sailor” and “Ruff and Ready,” and followed those up with “Sammy and Sue” and “Slobbery Slam” in 1915, which was a spin-off of a strip by Bud Counihan, who was best known for his iconic character Betty Boop.

Wallgren worked as a cartoonist for the Philadelphia Public Ledger and The Washington Post before World War I. The Marine Corps Muster Rolls, 1798–1940, said he enlisted on 25 April 1917, almost two weeks after the United States entered World War I. After joining the 5th Marines, 1st Division, in France, his talents were put to best use as a sign painter for military vehicles and facilities, and he was eventually recruited to work for Stars and Stripes as an illustrator. Wallgren had a reputation for being ill-suited to military life, especially to requirements for deadlines and punctuality, and on multiple occasions he was disciplined for drunkenness, smuggling cognac into the barracks, and arriving

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1 The content for this biography was based on multiple sources, including a 1932 issue of Leatherneck; and Caitlin McGurk, “Found in the Collection: Abian A. “Wally” Wallgren (1892–1948),” University Libraries, Ohio State University, 19 October 2012.
late or not at all for his posts. A muster roll from September 1917 summarized his conduct violations:

SD, Sign Painter. Tried by [summary courts-martial] S.C.M. 7th charged with violation of the 61st and 96th Articles of War.\(^2\) Specifications:

- AWL from 9:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on 4th; Drunk in Camp about 7:00 p.m. on 4th; Findings: Guilty.
- Sentence: To perform hard labor for one month and to forfeit two-thirds of his pay for one month. Sentence approved 8th.

Regardless of his behavioral issues, the American Expeditionary Forces venerated him for his cartooning work. His most popular military cartoon character was for the American Legion magazine, the saluting demon, a meek soldier who instinctively saluted everything he passed, human or otherwise.

In February 1918, he was transferred to Paris and drew cartoons for *Stars and Stripes* throughout the war until the final issue ran in June 1919. He was beloved among his fellow servicemembers for his satirical cartoons, even bringing him to the notice of General John J. Pershing, who credited Wallgren with lifting the spirits of doughboys across the front.

Wallgren and his wife Florence wed in 1920 and, in 1930, they lived in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania. After the war, Wallgren became a regular cartoonist for *The American Legion Weekly* (later *The American Legion Magazine*), the *National Legionnaire*, and more. He also served as commander of Thomas Roberts Reath Marine Post 186, a Philadelphia post that became inactive in 2005. In

\(^2\) ARTICLE 61. ABSENCE WITHOUT LEAVE—Any person subject to military law who fails to repair at the fixed time to the properly appointed place of duty, or goes from the same without proper leave, or absents himself from his command, guard, quarters, station, or camp without proper leave, shall be punished as a court-martial may direct. ARTICLE 96. GENERAL ARTICLE—Though not mentioned in these articles, all disorders and neglects to the prejudice of good order and military discipline, all conduct of a nature to bring discredit upon the military service, and all crimes or offenses not capital, of which persons subject to military law may be guilty, shall be taken cognizance of by a general or special or summary court-martial, according to the nature and degree of the offense, and punished at the discretion of such court.
1933, he published *The A.E.F. in Cartoons* with former editor John T. Winterich. In 1939, Wallgren created the newspaper strip “Hoosegow Herman.”

Wallgren would continue to contribute cartoons until his almost the time of his death. After a long illness, Wallgren passed away on 24 March 1948 in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania.