

The Japanese Language School Archival Project

In the Spring of 2000, the Archives continued the original efforts of Captain Roger Pineau and William Hudson, and the Archives first attempts in 1992, to gather the papers, correspondence, photographs, and records of graduates of the US Navy Japanese Language School, University of Colorado at Boulder, 1942-1946. We assemble these papers in recognition of the contributions made by JLS graduates to the War effort in the Pacific, the successful occupation of Japan, the creation of Japanese language programs across the country, and the development of cultural reconciliation programs after World War II.

CU Faculty & the JLS

One aspect of the school that I haven't seen mentioned is the role of regular University of Colorado faculty in welcoming us students to the community. Professor of English, Francis Wolle had some sort of commission from the University to be Liaison – I hope for a reduction in teaching load. He was jovially present at many of our meetings. He was particularly close to Bob and Grace Thornton, with whom Marion and I shared a house. When we jointly gave a Thanksgiving dinner for friends from the dorm, Wolle-Sensei was also an honored guest (with all of us a bit tipsy from cocktails we barely escaped dropping the turkey off the platter).

In later years, Francis Wolle married Muriel Sibell, a Professor of Art. I remember that one Saturday afternoon Miss Sibell drove Jim Satterthwaite and me into the mountains to see a "ghost" mining town that she was painting (see her *Stampede to Timberline* and other

publications). That was a generous treat, because few people used precious gas and tires for pleasure jaunts. There must have been other instances of fraternization between University faculty and the language school students, growing out of shared academic interests. Do you have papers in your Archives that cast light on that aspect of shared experience?

Robert S. Schwantes
JLS 1943

[Ed. Note: The Archives holds the papers of Robert L. Stearns, C.C. Eckhardt, Muriel S. and Francis Wolle, Joseph Cohen, and a several more wartime faculty. We also have the President's Office Papers, the Silver and Gold, and the CU Alumnus, see our website.]

**Appraisers
For Tax Purposes**

Since the Archives cannot provide assessments for tax purposes, we thought we might provide the names of two Denver appraisers who specialize in the types of collection appraisals that comprise the donated JLS collections. Mr. Bentzin specializes in reports, books, photocopied material, and technical material and Ms. Grover is one of the few who specializes in manuscript or hand written material, like letters, journals and diaries:

Mr. David Bentzin
Technical Library Appraiser
5844 S. Prescott
Littleton, CO 80120
(303) 794-8371

Grover Consulting
Margaret E. Grover, ASA
Personal Property Appraisal
Residential Contents
734 Grape Street
Denver, CO 80220
(303) 377-8429 phone
(303) 393-7757 fax

[Ed. Note: We came across these names when one of our donors sent the first appraiser to assess her collection.]

Uncommon Courage:**Patriotism & Civil Liberties**

Dear David: June 12, 2001

Thank you again for your assistance and arranging usage of Univ. Photo 5191. *Uncommon Courage: Patriotism and Civil Liberties* was completed a few days before Saturday, May 19, 2001, our first public screening here in Sacramento, California. With the help of numerous donations, we were able to present the story of patriotism and honor within the Military Intelligence Service to the American Public for the first time for free, and publicly recognize the MIS veterans on this day. Future screenings now include San Francisco, Cupertino, and Los Angeles, CA, and Washington, DC. In addition, the program was broadcast on four public television stations in the Northern California area. We are working on having it broadcast on public television nationally.

If people are interested in purchasing a copy of the video, please have them contact us at the following address:

Bridge Media, Inc.
P.O. Box 1285
Davis, CA 95617
(530) 297-0880

The price for non-institutional use is \$29.95 per video (CA Tax if CA resident), plus \$4.00 shipping and handling for first video, \$2.50 thereafter.

Sincerely,
Jolene Nakao,
Associate Producer

BOULDERITE AT SEA

"In March of '43, after a stint as an enlisted naval reservist, a friend told me that a Commander was in Seattle to interview language students for a Navy Japanese Language program. My friend urged me to go with him to the interview. Don had a year of college Japanese so I figured he had a good chance of being accepted. Since my total knowledge of Nihongo

amounted to three words, kimono, typhoon, and maru, I reckoned mine was a lost cause. I was overlooking the Navy's capacity to do the unexpected. Don was passed over and I was selected. So on 10 March I arrived in Boulder, stayed overnight at the Boulderado Hotel and in the morning marched up the hill to the school on the campus of the University of Colorado. The War was arguably the defining event of our century and for most of the Boulderites, our time at the JLS became the crucial experience of our war.

The Winter classes (I was assigned to W67 along with Boorman, Snow, Levin, et al) worked their way through five of Naganumo's tokuhans by Spring and were planning on graduation. But rumors began to fly that Captain Hindmarsh was about to pay a visit and would crack down on the beleaguered students by ratcheting up the grades required for graduation. CPT Roberts objected to Hindmarsh's plan but he lost the battle. So along with about 30 other ronin I was discharged and a civilian again – once more persona non grata with the US Navy.

With the War still on I reviewed my options and decided on the Merchant Marine. The jump from Boulder's rarified intellectual climate to the fo'c'sle of a freighter as an ordinary seaman in just two weeks was staggering. But coming from a long line of Norwegian seafarers I figured I could survive. When the War ended I re-enrolled at the University of Washington and married Marcia Beckman, a WAVE Ensign I had met in Boulder. When she was discharged from her cryptology duties in Washington, DC, we settled in Seattle and she joined a Naval Reserve drilling unit. A year or two later, her CO asked if I was interested in applying for a commission. Since I now had my

degree, I was commissioned a 1635 Lt. (j.g.).

The point of this recitation comes next. While on a 14 day annual training duty in the 13th Naval District Intelligence Office, the OIC remarked that as part of a coast wide training exercise, a large subtender was sailing down to San Francisco. A war games cruise sounded like a vacation so I accepted the invitation to make the trip. The necessary t.a.d. orders were cut and I boarded the *USS Sperry*. Barely under way, there was a knock on my door and a message

from the skipper, ordering me to stand regular bridge watches. I protested that I was only an ex-language officer who had been overcome by a superior number of Japanese dictionaries. As you will surmise, that remonstrance got me nowhere. I was offered a copy of the Watch Officer's Guide, which I swallowed whole in the next few hours. When I reported to the bridge before 1200 hours I was dismayed to discover that I was the senior officer of the watch.

Nothing I had learned from the Sensei and tokuhons in class was of any help, but the deck and lookout watches I had pulled

on destroyer training cruises as an enlisted reservist came to my rescue. I further reasoned that if the Navy wanted to risk a 30,000 ton vessel to a Lt.j.g. with rudimentary experience, that was their business. It also occurred to me that the Pacific Ocean was big enough to accommodate a few unintended zig and zags.

I wonder if any other Boulderite has conned a major vessel at sea? Or for that matter, how many personnel enjoyed three tenures on the Navy's rolls separated by uncomplimentary discharges, followed by later promotions? *Sore dake desu.*

Stuart Prestrud, USNR

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New JLS Web site:

<http://www-libraries.colorado.edu/ps/arv/col/jlsp.htm>