

The Interpreter

Archives, University of Colorado at Boulder Libraries

Number 50

★ Remember September 11, 2001 ★

August 1, 2002

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.

Marine Raiders RKO Pictures (1944) Revisited

I recall the day they filmed *Marine Raiders* at our Camp Elliott classroom in November 1944. We were told that our classroom would be taken over for a while by a film crew. Several fellows were selected to fill the benches behind the tables. Corporal Doyle Harris, the assistant to Captain Jewett in teaching conversational, or Kaiwa Japanese, impersonated a POW who was questioned by Captain Jewett, our kaiwa instructor who had lived in Japan in a silk mercantile family. "Gocho, (Corporal) as we called him, carried on the dialogue you saw in the video.

Jewett: "Do iu fu ni narimashita ka?" (How did you become a prisoner?) Gocho: Kawa wo watate horyo ni narimashita (I crossed the river and became a prisoner!)" That is the sum total of the sequence. It sounds very much more important in unfamiliar exotic Japanese I like to view the video

occasionally for old times sake. Jewett was a fine guy, really not military at all. Harris was an extroverted Pacific Marine, a cheery, blond, cigar chomping chap. "Big Medicine" to us younger types just out of boot camp: he had put in a tour of duty at Samoa where he had studied Japanese and had interrogated POWs someplace. We thought he was really salty: he had actually talked to a real Japanese enemy. We had yet to see one.

The big deal that day was when we returned after noon chow and found this black sedan still parked in front of the prefab school building. Marines were swarming all over the rear windows like wasps on a melon. I got close enough so that I could barely see the silhouetted brunette actress Ruth Hussey in the rear seat. This was "Big Stuff" to an eighteen year-old Marine. I never saw Pat O'Brien, Frank McHugh nor Robert Ryan except in the film. I was not selected as an extra to fill the classroom. Probably looked too young and innocuous, definitely not the sinister John Wayne raider type.

Oh yeah, speaking of how Japanese sounded to an unknowing Marine audience: while we were at Camp Elliott some of us were watching some war movie in the base theater. The attacking Japanese airmen in the film were taking off from their aircraft carrier. Just before the pilots boarded their planes the officer in charge gave them their parting orders in a crisp military tone; "Ame ga fureba, furanakerba kamainmasen." Those of us who knew just enough Japanese to be dangerous started to laugh out loud as the other viewing Marines looked over at us. It means: "If it rains or not, it doesn't matter." So much for film technical advisors. They knew they were safe with American audiences.

We were always careful to address every senior officer as "Sir!" In fact, I was careful with

all officers, particularly unfamiliar ones.

I will contact you later. I hope Brian Westnedge drops by.

Cal Dunbar
USMCR

Further Recollections

I wrote you some time ago about recollections of several JLS students of the Class of May 16, 1944. Another student I knew well was Ivan Morris, a class ahead of me.

Morris was a natural linguist and an excellent student, who was second high in his graduating class in early 1945. He had apparently been reared abroad, for he spoke with a definite continental accent. His chief claim to fame, however, so far as the rest of us were concerned, was that he owned a rakish limousine that had formerly been the property of Jean Harlow, the movie star.

So far as I know, Morris was the only student of my acquaintance who became a professional scholar in Japanese. He became a well-known academic at an eastern university -- Columbia, I think -- and published widely on Japanese history and affairs. (I believe that he died recently but am not certain; you should check this out with Columbia University.)

Morris Cox
JLS 1945

[Ed. Note: **Morris, Ivan**, educator, author; born London, Eng., Nov. 29, 1925; s. *Ira Victor and Edit (de Toll) M.*; BA Harvard, 1946; Ph.D., U. London, 1951; D. Lit, 1968; m. Nobuko Uenishi, Dec. 11, 1967; *With news dept., BBC, London, 1951-52; research dept., foreign office, London, 1952-1956; faculty, Columbia University, 1960-1976; prof. Japanese History, 1965-1976; Chair Dept. of East Asian Langs. & Culture, 1966-1969; author of several books on Japanese literature and culture, many are recommended classics in their fields. USNR, 1942-1945; JLS 1945. Died 7/19/76 according to Pineau Necrology.]*

Walter J. Rockler (1921-2002)

Nuremburg Prosecutor,
Activist Lawyer, Mentor

Walter J. Rockler, 81, died Friday, March 8, at his home of lung cancer. The son of Russian immigrants, the University of Chicago and Harvard Law School graduate became a lawyer because he saw it as a good way to better himself and provide for his family. Midway through law school, Mr. Rockler enlisted in the US Navy and learned Japanese so he could work in intelligence interviewing prisoners. He thought the language training would make him a good candidate to prosecute war criminals, but instead of using his Japanese language skills, the government sent him to Nuremberg. It was while in the courthouse in Germany that he met his future wife, Aino, who worked punching ration cards. They eventually settled in Chicago where Mr. Rockler worked as an attorney. Later, the couple moved to Washington, DC, where Mr. Rockler became a prominent tax lawyer.

In the 1970s, he headed a Justice Department probe of people living in the United States who were suspected of having been Nazi war criminals. He also joined the legal team representing the Willington 10 and helped to overturn their conviction.

Unafraid of taking unpopular positions, he criticized US involvement in bombing Serbian and Albanian villages during recent Balkan war. Rockler never retreated from a challenge and enjoyed a good debate. "He liked to use hyperbole to engage a discussion. He liked the engagement," said former colleague and friend, Nancy Abramowitz. Mr. Rockler also reached out to younger lawyers to teach others his craft. He always had time for people.

From Shia Kapos,
Chicago Tribune, March 13, 2002

Sensei Tribute

Though I was able to attend only the luncheon for the Navy Language School Reunion, I thoroughly enjoyed the occasion and especially appreciated the tribute to our *sensei*. I couldn't help thinking, though that we should have paid tribute, too, to Florence Walne, the Berkeley woman who was in effect our civilian boss while we were Yeomen, second class, studying *Nihongo* at the University of Colorado during World War II.

Am I wrong in thinking this was an unusual situation for those days? So far as I know, none of the men in the program objected to being bossed by a woman and lectured to periodically at school assemblies about speaking Japanese all the time, even when we were not in class.

*Paul F. Boller
JLS 1943
Texas Christian University*

[Ed..Note: There were some missed opportunities for toasts and tributes. You will be pleased to note that Ms. Walne was honored by her undergraduate college.]

Appeal For China JLOs

For JLOs who served in China after August 1945. The First and Sixth Marine Divisions moved into Northern China after WWII. Researcher would like to contact any Marine or Navy JLO who assisted in the repatriation of Japanese troops after WWII. Your experiences with the repatriation process and possible problems in executing repatriation

from the Chinese authorities is desired. Would also like to understand how records were kept of the negotiations among US, Japanese and Chinese authorities, so that I can locate them in the National Archives. Please write to:

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