

The Interpreter

Archives, University of Colorado at Boulder Libraries

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★ Remember September 11, 2001 ★

arv@colorado.edu

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Our Mission

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, letters, photographs, and records of graduates of the US Navy Japanese/Oriental Language School, University of Colorado at Boulder, 1942-1946. We assemble these papers in recognition of the contributions made by JLS/OLS instructors and graduates to the War effort in the Pacific and the Cold War, to the creation of East Asian language programs across the country, and to the development of Japanese-American cultural reconciliation programs after World War II.

Classics Professor Remembered For Love of Language

Stanley Vandersall, JLS 1944, former chairman of the classics department at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, died Saturday at age 87, closing the book on a lifetime dedicated to his love of language.

"I heard him teaching Latin in his home after he retired, and I could tell he loved the words themselves," said his daughter Diana Rippel.

Vandersall began studying Latin in high school, at the Roxbury Latin School in West Roxbury, Mass. He continued into his undergraduate studies at the College of Wooster in Wooster, Ohio, and attended graduate school at Ohio State.

His graduate studies were cut short when he enrolled in the U.S. Navy Japanese Language School. He interpreted Japanese intelligence in Hawaii and Japan from 1943-46. "As I understand it, the military looked at his record with languages and said he should learn Japanese," said

Tom Winter, associate professor of classics and religious studies at UNL.

Vandersall finished his doctorate at Ohio State after the war, and in 1948 took a position at UNL, where Winter said he was sometimes called "Commander Vandersall." Rippel said in addition to Latin and Japanese, her father spoke French, German and Greek. Valdis Leinieks, professor of classics and religious studies at UNL, said Vandersall taught nearly everything in the department during his 37 years at UNL. At one point, the department only had two professors, so Vandersall taught classics and his older colleague covered religion. "I would have trouble even deciding what his favorite subjects were," Leinieks said. "He was teaching everything all along."

John Turner, professor of classics and Cotner Professor of Religious Studies at UNL, said Vandersall was particularly fond of his first language, Latin, and was proud to have learned it at Roxbury. Leinieks said that when Vandersall was teaching, he was unlikely to let the class leave until everything had been covered to his satisfaction, often keeping classes 20 minutes late. "We referred to anyone else who would do that as pulling a Stanley Vandersall."

True to the archetypal idea of a classics professor, Vandersall rarely was without his tobacco pipe. "I think his main hobby was smoking his pipe, cleaning his pipe and knocking caked tobacco out of his pipe," Winter said. Leinieks said Vandersall also had a love of railroads. He said he would watch trains roll underneath him from the 9th Street overpass, and once rode a passenger train to eastern Canada because the line was about to be discontinued.

After receiving the College of Arts and Sciences Distinguished Teaching Award in 1984, Vandersall retired from UNL in 1985. He continued to

independently teach a class – "Latin for Retirees" – into the last years of his life. "After he retired, he had some old-timer friends and they would read Horace together," Leinieks said. "He never quit teaching."

Vandersall was preceded in death by his wife of 63 years – Florence Amy Wright – who died in February. Winter said the Vandersalls always were among the last to leave faculty gatherings, and Amy would play piano for those who stayed behind. "We figured he wouldn't leave Amy far behind," Winter said.

By Aaron Bals
Daily Nebraskan
November 11, 2004

Vertical Language: Martha Dale Moses WAVE, JLS 1944

I was born in Atlanta, Georgia, April 13, 1922, and received my BA from Agnes Scott College, Phi Beta Kappa in 1943.

Soon after graduating from college, I heard from a friend whose husband was in the language school that some women were going to be admitted. I was on the point of enrolling in the WAVES and was very excited at the possibility of studying Japanese so that I could find out how a language could be written vertically in those strange characters. It was mainly my curiosity and my love of languages that drew me to Boulder.

I arrived in Boulder at the beginning of August on rodeo weekend [*The Boulder Pow Wow was held on the fairgrounds just east of 30th & Pearl until 1973*]. I was fascinated watching my first rodeo. A few of us lived at first in a private house where our desks were painted with a blinding glossy red enamel. Then we moved to the Phi Delta Theta house with a St. Bernard named Heidi for our mascot. Our class

left Boulder on September 30, 1944.

Following our month's indoctrination I went to Washington, DC and worked in the Communications Annex. The most interesting thing I remember about that was my occasional use of a Japanese typewriter.

In Washington, I met Sid Moses, an Ohio State graduate who was working in the Pentagon. We were married in the summer of 1945. The next year we moved to Maryland and bought a piece of a neglected old apple orchard near Frederick. On it, we built a small house with our own four hands using surplus barracks for our material.

I have been primarily a homemaker, Scout leader, and community volunteer except for five years when I taught English as a second language in a Los Angeles elementary school. Then Sid retired, so I quit and we began to travel. We took our Toyota pick-up camper to Europe and camped a year. It was so much fun that we did it again a couple of years later. We are still traveling – and between trips I garden.

Most of our married life has been spent in California. We have a daughter and a son and three grandchildren.

Martha Dale Moses
WAVE, JLS 1944

WAVE 50th Reunion Entry, 1993

[Ed. Note: She is on our mailing list.]

Falk, Robert Paul 1914-1996, JLS 1944 UCLA English Professor

Robert Paul Falk, born February 28, 1914, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, passed away February 28, 1996, in Laguna Hills, California, from complications resulting from congestive heart failure. He is survived by his wife, Jane Shepard Falk; two daughters, Sara Falk Brummer and Eugenia

Falk Langford; six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

He received his B.A. degree from Williams College, and the Ph.D. degree from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. During World War II he served in the US Navy from 1943-1945 as a Japanese Language Officer in the South Pacific and attained the rank of Lieutenant, junior grade.

From 1949 until his retirement in 1974, Falk taught as a member of the English department at UCLA, and became well known as a specialist on Henry James, parody, and Colonial and nineteenth century American literature. While at UCLA he served on a number of departmental and Academic Senate committees, including University Personnel and Graduate Affairs.

Falk was the author of numerous books and articles in his field, and published in major periodicals, such as PMLA, Modern Language Notes, and Nineteenth-Century Fiction. He was an active member of professional associations, including the Modern Language Association, wherein he was a member of the Nominating Committee and chairman of the American Literature Group. As a Fulbright professor, he lectured at universities in Denmark, Poland, Germany, Italy, and Japan, where he was elected dean of the Conference on American Literature held at Kyoto University in 1966.

Florence Ridley
University of California: In
Memoriam, 1996

One soldier's defining moments

Recently I have read articles and editorials about the Battle of Okinawa in *The Japan Times* and other newspapers. I have noted how some writers tie the battle to modern-day unhappiness with the American military presence on the island or to the war in Iraq. My late father's experience might be of interest. A U.S. Marine Corps officer, he participated in the battle, serving as a Japanese-language interpreter for the U.S. forces. When I was a

little boy half a century ago, he told me how the Japanese Imperial Army troops drove civilians on Okinawa between themselves and the American guns. He told of a young woman who held scissors to her throat in terror as he approached but whom he was able to convince to surrender. He spoke of a soldier he encountered in a cave, armed with a "bomb on a stick," to whom he said, "You don't want to die . . . I don't want to die." Somehow they both emerged alive into the sunlight.

My father went on to a long career with the CIA in Asia and Europe. He lived to see -- much to his satisfaction -- the Berlin Wall fall. On his deathbed in 1995, though, he looked to Okinawa in 1945 and said the most worthwhile thing he had ever done in his life was to convince Japanese civilians and soldiers to surrender rather than kill themselves.

In a letter to my eldest son, who is half Japanese, he once wrote: "We did not hate the Japanese soldiers. They were doing their job just as we were doing ours. We respected the ordinary Japanese soldier -- and he was a very good soldier. . . . We were mad at the people who started the war and wouldn't stop it even after all chances of winning were gone."

Few things are black and white. I would like to say to those who resent the U.S. military presence on Okinawa, and to those who think badly of the U.S. military in general, to remember what one proud U.S. Marine thought was the most worthwhile accomplishment of his life.

Arlo A. Brown
Tokyo
Japan Times
Sunday, July 3, 2005
READERS IN COUNCIL

Dear Arlo:

I'm very grateful to David Hays for forwarding your letter and your Dad's letter to the Japan Times. I read the Times daily for many years in Japan. Glen Slaughter and I were the Language Officers with the 29th Marines of the 6th MarDiv through the campaign. Your Dad must have been in the 1st MarDiv, though some 2nd MarDiv units came ashore just before the end of the campaign.

I am completely in accord with him in his description of his Okinawa

experiences and his assessment of the Japanese soldier. I too spent many years in the CIA, twenty of them in Japan, Also a short stint in Vietnam and a final tour in Germany.

Semper Fi
Glenn Nelson
JLS 1944

Dear Glenn:

Thank you for the kind note. Yes, my Dad was with the 1st Marine Division. You are right about that.

Interesting about your 20 years in Japan: did you know Euan Davis [Euan G. Davis, JLS 1944, on our mailing list]? I think he was station chief in Tokyo in the mid-60s. His family was good friends of my dad's family, and they knew each other from childhood. My mom thinks Euan may have been at the naval language school as well, although not concurrent with my dad.

Euan introduced him to the agency after the war, in the late 40s, or perhaps, 47 or so. He loved it. I am not sure if Euan is still alive but my mother and siblings are in occasional touch with his children [I sent Mr. Brown the Euan Davis addresses].

My dad was stationed in Bangkok in 49-50 or so, and Hong Kong 52 to 54 or so, then Germany from 58 to 63, and then from 65 to '70 or so helped train folks at the Farm in Virginia. His last tour was Vietnam, '69 - '70, and he retired in the summer of 1970 after he got back. He died in '95, as I mentioned. He asked for USMC on his headstone before he died, though. He was always very proud of his Marine service, as is the whole family [Military service, moreover, Marine service, and especially wartime service is very often a 'defining moment'].

Semper Fi,
Arlo Brown

PS: I have been in Japan now 23 years myself, and am an aerospace businessman.

Asian Scholar Reflects On Fifty Years at Berkeley

(cont'd) With Scalapino's help, Berkeley's institute is now considered one of the nation's top-ranked programs and is one of only three federally-designated national resource centers for East Asian research.

Among Scalapino's numerous awards, including the Berkeley Medal, a Fulbright Fellowship and membership in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, is the Second Class Order of the Sacred Treasure, a medal of

recognition bestowed by the government of Japan for his efforts to promote cooperation and understanding between Japan and the U.S. He received a similar honor, the Heung-In Medal, from Korea.

Though the Kansas-born Scalapino retired from teaching in 1990, he maintains a busy schedule that includes research, writing, lectures and extensive travel to Asia. This year alone, he's traveled to that area seven times.

An event to honor Scalapino's numerous achievements, and his 80th birthday, took place Oct. 27, in San Francisco. The campus is naming a portion of its new East Asian Library and Studies Center in Scalapino's honor. The center will gather together under one roof the Institute of East Asian Studies, the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, and the East Asian Library.

D. Lyn Hunter, Public Affairs
The Berkeleyan
November 3, 1999

Recollections of a Year in the Navy Japanese Language School

(Cont'd)

AT BOULDER (June 1942 to February 1943)

My cheerful anticipation of Boulder was borne out upon arrival. It was a beautiful setting; and I was welcomed by my relatives in Denver and assured of weekends of comfort and home cooking whenever I could get away. The unmarried students were assigned to the men's dormitory on campus, which had been taken over by the Navy school. Jack Harrison and I had chosen to be roommates; we were assigned a large, bright, and wholly comfortable end room on the first floor. It was a short walk to our mess (perhaps part of the former cafeteria) and to our classrooms. There was another Navy unit on campus: a school to train radiomen. They were in uniform and under the usual discipline; we had almost no contact with them because there was no occasion to. There

seemed few others on campus – of course it was then midsummer, but I think there were not many regular students even when the Fall term began, many of the men presumably having enlisted or been drafted.

Some changes from our Berkeley routine soon developed, however. Perhaps the first was regular and required physical education workouts. Several afternoons a week after our class periods we assembled on an outdoor playing field for about an hour of calisthenics, followed by running around a track, and then whatever sport we chose to play: touch football, tennis, etc. Some grumbling, along with sore muscles, arose but we recognized the value of the exercise and in any case had no choice. I and I think most others were soon pleasantly surprised to find that our health, outlook, and appearance improved. I was especially surprised that we could exercise outdoors even when winter came; many afternoons were relatively warm, dry and with bright sunshine. In rain or snow, of course, we worked out in the gym.

My recollection is that at the outset of our dorm living, the university provided regular cleaning services, but this was soon stopped, and we were required to keep our own rooms tidy and to make our own beds, with periodic inspections by a Chief Petty Officer from the university's Naval ROTC unit. This was no great hardship, being a gentle reminder that we were after all enlisted men.

As the date of our graduation and departure into the "real" Navy world came closer, we became increasingly concerned about our lack of knowledge of how that world operated. Finally, we made our concerns known to the officer in charge of the non-classroom elements of our life, the Captain commanding the university's Naval ROTC unit. He responded by ordering us to attend a meeting with him, at which he strode in, went to the podium, read out with emphasis the Naval Articles of War, and strode out. Since this recitation detailed various dire punishments for dereliction of duty, extending to

execution, it was a sobering reminder that our privileged existence at school had definite boundaries. Unfortunately it did little to enlighten us about how to conduct ourselves in Navy protocol terms.

Of course we continued to have periodic physical examinations, being bussed in to Denver for the occasion. I could never figure out why these were so frequent. One theory was that it was to provide training for doctors entering the Navy. Another was that the Navy brass sought reassurance because many of us needed "waivers" to meet Navy physical standards for prospective officers. I, for example, required two – one because I was below the height requirements and the other because I needed to wear glasses. One of us, a strapping 6-footer, claimed that during one physical exam, he had been ordered to appear briefly before the officer in charge who had just wanted to make sure that there was at least one of us who did not need any waivers.

There were other changes especially when a new class arrived in the Fall to begin language study. Several new sensei arrived, including at least one female. I should add that there were at least two Caucasian sensei – one named McAlpin, but I can't remember the other's name – who I think had served as missionaries in Japan. One of the new nisei sensei was, as I recall, Dr. Tsutsumi (Tatsumi?), who had taught linguistics at the University of Washington. In drilling us in Japanese grammar, he strove mightily to explain the mysteries of when to use "ga" as distinct from "wa" as a nominative postposition. I don't think I was alone in never quite comprehending the rules of that game.

In late summer or early fall, Jack Harrison and I began to produce a little, 2 to 4 page mimeographed newspaper, if I can dignify it by that word, titled "Sono Hi no Uwasa" (The Day's Rumors). I think we put it out about every two weeks. This was of course an entirely in-house publication, containing all the news that was fit to print relating to our school activities. There actually wasn't very much, but

we could scrounge up items about coming events of possible interest in the Boulder community, along with usually humorous accounts of one or another aspects of the inscrutable Japanese language. Sometimes one of our number drew a cartoon; one I especially appreciated (drawn by Joe Levenson, I think) showed a girl plucking petals one by one from a daisy, while intoning "wa", "ga", "wa", "ga". We of course had obtained prior clearance for our effort, and were careful to stay away from anything even remotely touching on security concerns. I don't know whether the paper was continued after we left.

I enjoyed our months in Boulder, although I sometimes felt we were too far removed from the wartime world. The campus itself was placid and pleasant. Without a car and under the strictures of study demands coupled with the need to secure official permission to go out of town, our movements were limited. Most often, for a change of pace, we simply went to a close-by campus hangout for a hamburger, and on weekends into downtown Boulder for steaks or once in a while to a roadhouse on the outskirts of town for beer. When possible, on a Friday night I caught a bus into Denver to visit relatives who once, when I had a more extended pass, took me to Estes Park. But as the time for our graduation neared, I think we all became increasingly restive, anxious to learn what our next assignment, in the "real" Navy, would be.

Graduation day finally came. Don Keene was our valedictorian. An event I especially remember, and savor, did not occur during the ceremonies (as welcome and satisfying though they were) but earlier that morning. Jack and I had stayed abed, past the usual hour, enjoying the extra rest time, when we heard the Chief Petty Officer who was overseer of the dormitory charging down the hallway, noisily opening the door of each room to make sure all occupants were out, and then slamming each door. When he opened our door, we pretended to be asleep. We assume he then

caught sight of our new Ensign uniforms with the gold stripe very shiny that were hanging in our open closet, because we next heard him tiptoeing out and closing the door quietly. (to be cont'd)

Royal J. Wald
JLS 1943

Grilk, Anne van Patten (Mrs. Samuel P. King)

(Cont'd) Sam remained in the Navy until he got his Dear Sam letter and was retired as a Captain USNR. He was an attorney in private practice in Honolulu until 1961 when he became a state judge. In 1972 he was appointed to the U. S. District Court for the District of Hawaii and served as Chief Judge from 1974 until he took senior status in 1984. He now continues to serve as a federal judge in Hawaii and anywhere in the country where help is needed at the moment. He has sat many times in California, including in San Diego, San Francisco, Sacramento and Los Angeles, as well as in Tampa, FL, Phoenix, AZ, Las Vegas, NV. Last October he sat in New Haven, CT where we saw many of his Yale undergraduate and law school classmates.

We both love to travel and have taken three barge trips in France, one in England, and one in Ireland. In each case we have chartered the barge with friends, a great way to go. Our favorite countries are France and England. We have a favorite small hotel in Paris and a favorite flat we rent in London to offset the High Cost of Everything. The USIA sent Sam in 1984 to talk to lawyers and judges in Moscow and Leningrad. (He says this is what started Glasnost!) They also sent him to Cyprus, Belgrade, and Zagreb on the same trip. In 1985 he was sent to Beijing, Nanjing, and Guangzhou: memories, memories.

Among the male language students, we have especially kept up with Paul Kramer who lives in Washington, DC and who puts us up in his Georgetown basement at least twice a year. We also frequently see Prof. Frederick A. Olafson who has written many learned tomes on

philosophy and has just retired as a philosophy professor at the University of California at San Diego.

Anne Grilk King
WAVE JLS 1944

1993 WAVE JLS 50th Reunion Book

The American Experience in China

Now to the ever fascinating subject of "The American Experience in China", subsection 1911 to about 1939, including the 15th Infantry USA, USMC Legation Guard, and a host of other players. As the article you sent me pointed out [Edward M. Coffin, "The American 15th Infantry Regiment in China, 1912-1938: a Vignette in Social History, The Journal of Military History 58 (January 1994): 57-74.], the official U.S. Government presence represented in Peking during those years was so much more than just notable. Just a couple of the numerous events of world consequence involving the U.S. in North China are examples. Although the capital of the new (1911) Chinese Republic had been moved from Peking to Nanking, early on, the British Government refused to recognize the move and kept its diplomatic staff in Peking. That staff was a Legation with a Minister, not an Embassy with an Ambassador, signifying China's relative unimportance in the world. I believe that El Salvador then had a US Embassy, but not weak China. Officially, the U.S. and other nations followed the example of the larger and longer English presence, stayed in Peiping ("Northern Peace" the new name for Peking).

Amazingly, three U.S. officials assigned to our Peiping Legation, were prohibited by Washington from needed contact with and thorough observation of a history-making development in China detected in turn by those three - a Naval Attaché, a senior diplomat, and a Military Attaché. They were Capt Evans Carlson USMC (later idolized as organizer of Marine Raiders during WW2), John Stewart Service (later maligned by our Senate's

McCarthy

Commission), and Army Lt Col "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell (later a General heading U.S. WW2 forces in China and principal U.S. contact with Chiang Kai-shek. All three were Chinese language experts, had contacted Chairman Mao's "Long March" forces and "Communist" army in Yenan. All three believed that this movement was of major consequence to U.S. strategic interests and should be reported in detail to Washington. History proves that all were right. Seemingly urged by General and Madame Chiang, in turn, all three were removed officially from China, leading to: his resignation from the Marine Corps by Carlson; the posting of career diplomat, Service, to an Iron Curtain capital; and transfer of Stilwell to a Ft. Ord garrison command. Most Chinese history experts agree that if the independent perception of these three, that the Chinese nationalistic brand of Communism differed from the Russian brand, and that contact with and understanding of both countries be our continuous, even if troublesome policy, that U.S. history with China would be different and that the Viet Nam conflict may not have occurred. Oh well!

Dan S. Williams
JLS 1943

[Ed. Note: I had sent the article to Dan in response to his China Marines article. Since his long article elicited several responses, I thought I would include his response to the 15th Infantry article.]

Philip F. Myers JLS 1944 1915-1907

Philip F. Myers of Fort Collins died Sunday, March 5, 2007. He was born in Springfield, Mass., on Feb. 16, 1915, to Florence Walberg and Rene Myers. A member of Phi Beta Kappa, Phil graduated magna cum laude from Brown University in 1938. In 1943, he met and married Jean Wetmore. After WWII broke out he attended a 14-month intensive U.S. Navy Japanese/Oriental Language Training at the University of Colorado in Boulder. He served in the Navy

as a Naval Intelligence Officer, specialist in Japanese language translation and interpretation. At the close of the war he spent time as a language interpreter in Tokyo, Japan.

In 1947 Phil completed his M.ED at Springfield College, Springfield, Mass. He went to work at the Connecticut Junior Republic first as a social studies teacher and then as Public Relations Director. He and his wife Jean also served as cottage parents for 20 boys.

Phil joined the professional fundraising firm of Tamblin and Brown in 1957. In 1959, he became the director of development for Wittenberg University, Springfield, Ohio. He spent the rest of his career working for a number of private liberal arts colleges as development director and vice president for development. In 1983, members of the medical community approached Phil to help launch the American Federation for Aging Research Ohio Affiliate, a task he completed in 1985 when he retired.

Phil was a member of several civic organizations and civic clubs. He served as a lieutenant governor of the CT Kiwanis Club and received awards for his volunteer efforts on behalf of the Columbus, Ohio Chamber of Commerce.

Phil continued to be active in retirement and especially enjoyed helping his wife Jean when she taught line dancing at several Columbus, Ohio, senior centers. Phil and Jean moved to Fort Collins in 2003 to be near their daughter Francine and her husband Jim. He loved living at the Worthington and developed close friendships with the residents. Phil had great fun performing in the Worthington's annual variety shows and serving as "DJ Phil" for Jean's line dance class.

He is survived by Jean, his wife of 63 years; his daughter, Francine Purdom (Jim) of Fort Collins; a granddaughter, Dr. Laura Wolsko (Peter) of Broomfield; a grandson, Jim Purdom (Kelly) of Atlanta; and two great grandchildren, Mathew and Luke Wolsko. A celebration of life will be at a later date in Worthington.

Contributions may be made to Larimer County Humane Society, in care of Bohlender Funeral Chapel. Friends may send condolences to the family at www.bohlenderfuneralchapel.com.

Ms. Jean Myers
& The [Fort Collins] Coloradoan
April 1, 2007

Dear David:

I thought you would be interested in the enclosed clipping telling of Phil's death and the major events of his life. Feel free to use what you wish from the obituary when you report his death in The Interpreter.

Phil and I and a friend spent a wonderful sunny day with you when you took us to the Archives and showed us the many changes on the campus since we first arrived in 1943 for Phil's training in Japanese.

You were so very kind. We enjoyed receiving the newsletter.

Sincerely, Jean Myers

[Ed. Note: I was able to get them from the Golden Buff to CU and back on the Hop Bus, which those who toured Boulder during the 60th Reunion will recall. I enjoyed their visit, as well. Phil showed me where he used to climb out the window at night at the Men's Dorm, so he could spend time with his wife in 1943-44. The Navy had cut down on their permission for married trainees to live in town with wives. Aside from archival treasures of the JLS/OLS, I also showed them the JLS/OLS plaque in the veterans lounge in the University Memorial Center.]

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