The US Navy Japanese/Oriental Language School Archival Project

The Interpreter

Archives, University of Colorado at Boulder Libraries

Number 183 ✯**Remember September 11, 2001**✯ arv@colorado.edu May 1, 2013

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.

The Reminiscences of Donald Sigurdson Willis

[Donald S. Willis passed in 2009. This is an excerpt of a longer memoir.]

The Navy Chapter (1943-45)

Signpost at Tacloban

(Cont'd) [At Tacloban, on Leyte in October 1944] One night a typhoon struck, the next morning the beech was littered with the wreckage of small craft and the bodies of drowned sailors *[This must have been the same typhoon that scattered Halsey's fleet]*. I was expected to make my way to Dulag with some important papers, but both surface and air transportation were impossible. I made up my mind to hike the 20 miles or so, and try to work my way around the base of the cliff which stood athwart the road and which was still occupied by enemy snipers. So I picked up a carbine, started off down the dusty road. I went by a shell of a church, being used as a field hospital, and remember how Filipino guerrillas held up their fingers in the "V" for victory sign.

I saw a cloud of dust on the road in back of me just as I was approaching the trouble spot. I immediately threw myself into concealment alongside the road, and then saw that it was a convoy, consisting of a jeep and a couple of trucks carrying GIs armed with rifle-grenades. Their commanding officer invited me aboard the jeep, and we waited while the troops cleaned out the Japanese. Then I delivered to Corps HQ the documents I brought from 6th Army.

I saw our plane shoot down an enemy plane, and then get shot down by our own gunners. Once however, I saw Major Richard Bong's squadron of P-38s fly through a solid wall of flack without getting hit!

After 9 days of this running back and forth with "Messages to Garcia", I was called to intelligence duties aboard the 7th Fleet's USS *Fremont*, and interrogated one survivor each from battleships sunk during the battle of Surigao Straits (one was the *Yamashiro*, I remember), along with the Captain, Executive Officer, and Gunnery Officer from a destroyer. One of them admitted for the first time that Japan had lost the war.

The wardroom of the *Fremont* had two record sets I got acquainted with for the first time: Dvořák's Violin Concerto, and Duke Ellington's "St. Louis Toodle-oo". I played them while we were under "Red Alert" on one occasion *[not exactly General Quarters]*.

***USS* Freemont, APA 44**

At that time I noticed that I was in a continuing state of excitement, with stream-of-consciousness manic thought processes, and sleeplessness, all of which seemed to have become acute just when I came on board. At any rate, on the seventh day, I suffered a psychotic episode during which I took all my clothes off and was about to leap overboard when someone grabbed me. I slipped in and out of consciousness, and the next day (November 7) was brought aboard the hospital ship *Hope* in a stretcher. I was at the base hospital (No. 17 TRIM) in Hollandia, New Guinea until the 25th, when I was placed aboard the USS *Mizar*, for transportation back to the United States….

Donald S. Willis
JLS 1943

[Ed. Note: This is a great story! I wish I had received it for a far earlier printing. I pulled the photos from the web, in order to spruce up the tale.]

Burnt Orange JLSer

Enclosed, you will find one memoir and one biography that you might like for deposit in the Oriental Language School Archival Project. I attended the Language School from May 1943 until December 1943 as a Naval Agent. But I was let out because I was 4F in the Draft. There were six wonderful months during which I met wonderful classmates who became lifelong friends: Hammond Rolph, Frank Tucker, and Phil Burchill.

You included a UT colleague of mine, J. Harry Bennett, in *The Interpreter*. Perhaps you would like to include something about me, drawn from the enclosed *[Professor Braisted was mentioned and has letters in Issues #47, #68A*, #137 and #138.The memorial in #137 and #138 about J. Harry Bennett, taken from a UT website, was written by Professor Braisted and two other faculty.]*. I taught Far Eastern history for forty-six years at the University of Texas History Department. My chief Japanese work was the *Meiroku Zasshi*. I also have written three naval history volumes on the Navy in the Pacific and China.

William R. Braisted
JLS 5/43-
Professor of History Emeritus
University of Texas

"Graduation Day" in front of Little Theater, Boulder, 5–27-44 – identified are Phil Burchill, Hammond Rolph, and Frank Tucker, *Pineau*, 28_06_00_07, AUCBL.

[Ed. Note: As you will read in the next issue, William Braisted was a Navy Brat whose father sailed with the US Asiatic Fleet, so he was an RIC, and was a student at the Shanghai American School. I though I'd include the above shot of his three JLS/OLS friends graduating in May of 1944. We will be happy to include some of Professor Braisted's stories, starting with this one. His short memoir is included in a larger work on UT faculty entitled Burnt Orange Britannia, *from whence I drew this title.]*

Henry Warten

Henry Warten, b: April 11, 1910 in Athens, AL - enlisted in 1942 with the US Marine Corps Reserve as a Japanese Language Instructor with the rank of Staff Sergeant. Later he received a commission as a First Lieutenant

and attended the Navy School of Oriental Language.

http://www.chenowethsite.com/chenwar.htm

New Religious Movements Collection Created by
J. Stillson Judah
At the Graduate Theological Union Archives

J. Stillson Judah was born on July 7, 1911 in Leavenworth, WA. He received an A.B. in Philosophy and Oriental Studies from the University of Washington in 1934 and did his graduate work at the University of California, Berkeley in both 1940-1941 and in 1966-1969. He received his Library Certificate from the University of California in 1941. He served in Japan from 1945-46 as Japanese language interpreter for the 5th Fleet.

In 1941-1969, he served at the librarian at the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, CA. He was the editor and compiler of Index to Religious Periodical Literature from 1949-1952. Under his leadership, seven separate seminary library collections were integrated into the Graduate Theological Union Common Library. He became GTU's first librarian in 1966. He also served as Professor, History of Religions at GTU from 1969 until his retirement in 1976.

Dr. Judah received many honors for his work. He was the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1956, the Faculty Fellowship of the American Association of Theological Schools (Sealantic Fund) in 1957-1958 and received his Litt. D. Degree from Chapman College in 1956.

As an active participant in the religious freedom movement of the 1960's and 1970's he was also active in the Alliance for the Preservation of Religious Liberty serving as the Vice-Chairman for a number of years.

Dr. Judah was a pioneer in the early scholarly study of New Religious Movements in Berkeley in the 1970's, writing many articles and papers about the various groups. He published Jehovah's Witnesses and History and Philosophy of the Metaphysical Movement in 1964. In 1974, *Hare Krishna and the Counterculture* was published. Among the book chapters and articles that he wrote were several that were seminal in the field of New Religious Movements.

Dr. Judah died on October 9, 2000.

The collection pertains almost exclusively to the New Religious Movements. There is a small amount of personal material that reflects Dr. Judah's interest in tennis and ballroom dancing. The 1994 interview is contained in the personal material. This interview is Dr. Judah's life history in his own words.

Biography taken from New Religious Movements Collection Finding aid
http://www.oac.cdlib.org/data/13030/zf/kt0g5022zf/files/kt0g5022zf.pdf

[Ed Note: There are comments about Judah, OLS 1945, in issues #70, #71, $116, and #123. I placed an obituary in #71, but this treatment is far more complete. The previous obit did not include a birth or death date, among other things.]

Jerome K. Darden Jr. USMCEL

JEROME KIRBY DARDEN, JR., 84, of Groves, Texas died June 12, 2009. He was born November 2, l924 in Port Arthur, Texas to Jerome Kirby Darden and Julia Galloway Darden. He was reared in Port Arthur and graduated from Thomas Jefferson High School in l943. He served in the United States Marine Corps as a Japanese Language Interpreter during World War II and participated in the invasion of Saipan in l944. He attended the University of North Carolina, where he earned a B.S. degree in Commerce and was a member of Phi Delta Theta Fraternity. He was a Certified Public Accountant and was employed by Gulf Oil Corporation for 33 years, during which time he served in various financial positions in Port Arthur, Philadelphia, PA., Seoul, Korea, Pittsburgh, PA., and Houston, TX. He returned to Port Arthur upon retirement in 1983. He was a member of the Groves Church of Christ, the American Institute of CPAs, and the Texas Society of CPAs. Survivors include his wife of 56 years, Martha Winn Darden of Groves, TX; a son, Winn Darden and his wife, Kim of Simi Valley, CA; daughters, Julie Darden and Ginny Darden Nelson, both of Houston, TX; sisters, Joann D. Johnson of Littleton, CO and Valrie D. Bullington of Abilene, TX; and several nieces and nephews.

Houston Chronicle
6/14/2009

[Ed. Note: Another Enlisted Marine Linguist, like Irwin Slesnick and Cal Dunbar.]

Lawyer
Samuel Efron
Dies at 81
Focused on International Matters

Samuel Efron, 81, a Washington international lawyer who was of counsel to the law firm of Arent, Fox, Kintner, Plotkin & Kahn, died January 4, 1997 at Sibley Memorial Hospital after bladder surgery. He lived in Washington.

He came to Washington and began his career as a government lawyer in 1939. Before leaving the government in 1953, he had worked for the Securities and Exchange Commission, the offices of Alien Property Custodian and of Price Administration, as well as the departments of Labor and Justice. His last assignment was at Defense, where he was assistant general counsel in the Office of International Security Affairs.

In 1953, he became a founding partner in the Washington law firm of Surrey, Karasik, Gould & Efron, where he specialized in international financial matters. From 1961 until joining Arent Fox in 1968, he worked in New York, where he was executive vice president of the construction and paper pulp company of Parsons & Whittemore.

Over the years, his clients had included Finnish companies, Finland's government, its Washington embassy and Finnish ambassadors. In 1995, he was made a commander of the Knighthood of the Order of the Lion by the President of Finland. Mr. Efron, a Pennsylvania native, served with the Navy in the Pacific during World War II. He received Japanese language training at the Naval Language School in Boulder, Colo., and served for a time in postwar Japan *[JLS 1944]*.

He was a 1935 summa cum laude graduate of Lehigh University, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa, and a 1938 cum laude graduate of Harvard University Law School.

Mr. Efron had served on the board of governors of the International Club, was a trustee of Meridian House International and had served on the advisory committee of the Center for Biomedical Ethics at the University of Virginia. His other memberships included the Army & Navy, Cosmos, Harvard and Lehigh clubs in Washington.

Survivors include his wife of 55 years, Hope Newman Efron of Washington; two sons, Marc, of Chevy Chase, and Eric, of San Antonio; and twin grandsons.

The Washington Post
January 05, 1997
Metro; Pg. B08; Obituaries

Eighteen Months In the Pacific

My first assignment in Pearl Harbor was decoding Japanese messages. There were many different manual codes. The simplest, used to transmit weather reports, involved a direct substitution of kana –"ka equals su." Although it could be broken rather quickly, this code changed every 24 hours. Hence, time was of the essence. The more complex codes required creating a table: "On February 25 at 4 p.m., the following transposition is used." One had to work out the day and hour at which the code was sent, accounting for the differences between Japanese and American time zones. Document translation was a sideline, including Japanese servicemen's diaries, which gave some indication of conditions and morale at the various battle sites. Order of battle communiqués and similar items were translated in the field.

My first prisoner interrogation came after our capture of Palau. We had taken the chief of police into custody. I

was more nervous than he since I was unsure how my made-in-Colorado Japanese would work. Hence I had written out all of my questions. I was getting along until I came to the question, "Over whom did you have control – just the natives or also the Japanese troops?" The answer came back that he had control over the Siberians. I knew relatively little about Pacific geography, but I was certain that there were no Siberians on Palau. I repeated the question and got the same answer. At this point, I became firm: 'You must answer questions sensibly!'" Then the answer came slowly with the key word spelled out: "Siberians – c-i-v-i-l-a-n-s." There are Siberians everywhere!

One day in the early spring of 1945, I was summoned to naval headquarters and informed that in three to four days I would be shipping out with a consignment of troops for a destination still secret. First, I was ordered to report to a firing range for target practice. At the site, a young enlisted man handed me a revolver and told me to aim at the target that had been set up some distance away. I had never fired a gun of any type in my life, but I made a valiant effort for nearly 30 minutes. At this point, as he was helping me unload and clean the gun, my assistant said, "Sir, I would not take this gun out of the holster unless absolutely necessary." I needed no further commentary on my performance.

Shortly thereafter, I boarded a giant transport ship with hundreds of troops. After we had left the harbor, several of us junior officers were called to a meeting. There we were told that our destination was Okinawa, scheduled to be attacked by American forces. A document had been prepared on the area, and we were told to digest this thoroughly and then lecture to a group of enlisted men on what to expect. The orders were quickly carried out, with my lectures extending over five days. Subsequently, I hoped I never met any of my shipboard students again. The "document" we were given was compiled largely from much earlier accounts by missionaries and others. It was either utterly erroneous or greatly out of date.

Photo # NH 42390 USS Tennessee bombards Okinawa as troops approach the landing beaches, 1 April 1945

Our landing at Okinawa began a series of solemn and often unexpected events. When the ship arrived near Naha at dusk, a group of men were ordered into a small boat for the trip ashore. After our transfer, however, it was decided to postpone the landing until tomorrow, so we slept – or tried to sleep on the boat. It was April 4, approximately four days since the first American soldiers had stormed ashore *[see above photo, too impressive not to use]*. The next morning, we made our way to a campsite that had been designated for our small group and set up tents. Our task was to supervise and censor all Japanese communications on the island. The only problem, as we quickly discovered, was that there were no communications - at least none within our reach. The post offices and telegraph stations, along with the newspapers and other publishing outlets were all being destroyed in the course of the fighting.

Shortly, I was given a new and more daunting assignment: to search caves for documents after battle. Fortunately, I had a Japanese American Army assistant *[enlisted linguist]*. One day, on entering a cave, we encountered an Okinawan civilian, accompanied by his ten year old son. The man held a grenade in his hand. All of my Japanese left me. The only thing I could think to say in the split second available was *konichi wa* (good day). My assistant, however, became very fluent, explaining that we were not there to harm him, please set the grenade down and come out of the cave with us. Miraculously, it worked.

Japanese authorities had indoctrinated the civilian population to believe that Americans would kill them on sight; hence they should try to take some Americans with them in death. Thousands of Okinawans, so believing, holed up in caves with Japanese soldiers or accompanied them into remote areas. Many committed suicide by jumping off cliffs into the sea when the Americans approached. A series of tragedies ensued. One day, however, I witnessed a heroic act. A woman, seeing Americans approach, started running toward the open space separating American and Japanese troops. Had she reached the crest of the hill, it would have been certain death, given the firing on both sides. Fortunately for her, an American soldier, witnessing her efforts, rushed out and just before she reached the top of the hill, tackled her and brought her down. After a few days in a civilian relocation center, she had a new perspective on Americans. Others were not so fortunate.

Okinawa, 6th Division 25 G 10, photo: Walker, A Japanese civilian uses a public address system to plead w/ his countrymen, holding out in caves on Okinawa, to surrender to the marines, soldiers and civilians were in caves. ***Pineau,*** **19_03_00_5.**

Another episode is also worth recalling. Mikio Higa, later a graduate student of mine, told me of his experience. As a boy of seven, he was in Northern Okinawa with his family, seeking to avoid the war. One day, he came upon a huge black man, an American soldier. Terrified, he crouched down, but the man came up to him with a cup filled with red liquid. Mikio thought that he was being forced to drink blood, but he had no choice. It was tomato juice – a kindly gesture! To be honest, the darker side of American actions must be set forth. One of our tasks shortly after our arrival was to prepare Japanese-language leaflets urging the Japanese troops to surrender. These leaflets were being dropped over battle areas by plane. One day I came across a young American soldier who had been fighting near the caves where we had recently dropped leaflets. Eagerly, I asked him, "Did those leaflets have any effect?" His response was, "Oh yeah, a number of soldiers came out waving those leaflets. But you don't think we took them prisoner, do you?"

Fortunately, the bullets that came near me in the course of various operations missed. However, I did have a disturbing incident of another type. One day, after collecting documents in caves, a dangerous and dirty business, I told my assistant that we should stop in a safe area and go swimming to relax and clean up. The driver of our car also elected to go to the beach. It never occurred to me that he wouldn't lock the car. When we returned to the road, it was gone! We finally got back to our camp, and the commander was furious, threatening me with court-martial. (He didn't proceed because he had been making fake Japanese flags in his spare time to sell to sailors aboard transports.) However, the next day, he ordered us to search the mountains near the beach area for the car. This was a dangerous mission, but we had no choice. We didn't discover anything, and I suspected that the car had been stolen by an American

construction battalion working nearby. However, it was never found.

As the campaign began to wind down, I was assigned to be the liaison officer in Takaesu, a town north of Naha, which was packed with refugees. My office was set up in the corner of the Takaesu Elementary School. The school had no books, blackboards, or other equipment. – all had been destroyed. Hence, instruction was purely oral, and since the teachers had disappeared, we had to recruit new ones. Indeed assigning people to temporary jobs was a major task. Among the refugees was a group of prostitutes. We put them in charge of children who had lost their parents. Whether this was wise or not, I was not sure, but they performed well.

One night, someone cut all of the electric wires around the town. The culprits, we suspected, were Japanese troops in the neighboring mountains. The commanding general of the region asked me and my assistant to question the farmers in the vicinity to see if they knew anything about the matter. Our questioning produced no results – except for one. The day after an intensive round of inquiries, my assistant came to me and said, "That woman you questioned yesterday afternoon does not want to talk to you again." "Why," I responded; "I was perfectly polite." "Yes," he said, "that was the problem. You spoke in polite Japanese and that embarrassed her." Clearly, our Boulder Japanese was not all-inclusive. (We were to learn later that the wires had been cut by a farmer who twisted them together and used them to let a water bucket down into his well.)

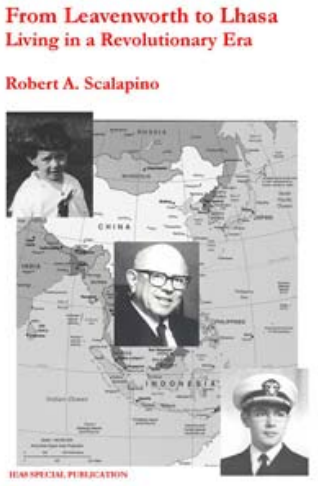
In the course of my stay in Takaesu, I organized a very small group of well-educated Okinawans – a doctor, a teacher, and a writer – for nightly meetings each week. Our little group exchanged information on the United States and Okinawa as well as on Okinawan attitudes toward Americans from the onset of the war down to the present. Those Okinawan attitudes, while predominately negative, had some positive aspects. For me the discussions provided an excellent opportunity to learn something of Okinawan thought and culture.

I'll never forget an incident involving another one of the three men. One day the writer came to me and said, "despite what you have said, Lieutenant Scalapino, I still do not understand the United States. I have three American books (all in Japanese translation), but they have not given me a clear vision of your country." "Bring the books to me," I said, "and perhaps I can clarify matters." The following day, he gave me the books: Ralph Walso Emerson's collected essays, one of Zane Grey's novels about the American West, and a thick novel set in the era of the American Civil War. No wonder my friend did not understand the United States! I tried, probably in vain, to explain the origin of these books and why they either solely or collectively explain the full nature of the United States despite providing some insights into aspects of American culture and beliefs.

Very shortly after the Okinawan campaign ended, on July 4, some of us in my unit were flown to the Philippines. Upon arrival in Manila, we were told that we would be assigned to a unit in nearby Quezon City training for the invasion of Kyushu, probably to take place in October or November. In the following weeks, I had the opportunity to view the scene in metropolitan Manila and to meet a few Filipinos, one of whom, Jose Lim, became a lifelong friend. Manila was devastated by the war, with various sectors destroyed or badly damaged. Many of the inhabitants were in dire need of shelter, food, and clothing. Yet in this region, the Americans were generally treated as liberators, and their modest efforts to provide humanitarian aid were welcomed.

Slightly over a month after having arrived in Quezon City, we heard via radio of a new bomb being used against Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Soon came the news of Japanese surrender. The succeeding evening was hazardous. Deliriously happy and occasionally intoxicated servicemen fired guns in all directions. I survived. Subsequently, I have wondered whether it was necessary to use two nuclear weapons in populous cities to induce a Japanese surrender. Later it became known that the Japanese had begun inquiries via Russia about the possibilities and terms of ending the war. They went to the wrong source: the Soviet government wanted to enter the conflict in Asia before its end to strengthen its position in that region. In any case, however, many Japanese were prepared to undergo any sacrifice rather than to be humiliated by the enemy. The final decision lay with the Emperor.

What if the nuclear strikes, or at least the second bombing, had taken place in a sparsely or unpopulated area, to demonstrate the tremendous power of such weapons, but without the massive casualties? Some would answer that given the scarce number of US Nuclear weapons at the time and the evidence of an unbending Japanese determination, an awesome demonstration was necessary. The dispute will continue indefinitely….



http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://ieas.berkeley.edu/images/publications/sp_scalapino_large.jpg

Robert A. Scalapino
JLS 1944
From
From Leavenworth to Lhasa: Living in a Revolutionary Era
Pp. 15-20

[Ed. Note: Photographs came from the web or from the Pineau Collection *and were not provided by the author.]*

Pearl Harbor Review-Linguists

(Cont'd) The Army had a smaller number of language officers, therefore a smaller pool of qualified personnel available to work on the solution and exploitation of Japanese cryptosystems from a language standpoint.

When the Signal Intelligence Service was formed in 1930, the first persons hired were required to have foreign language capability as well as skills in mathematics. Frank Rowlett had knowledge of German, Abraham Sinkov of Spanish, and Solomon Kullback of French. None of the mathematicians brought knowledge of the Japanese language into SIS.

Therefore, John Hurt was hired on May 30, 1930 as a "cryptanalyst aide," in reality, a Japanese linguist. Since he knew French as well, Hurt spent time translating classic French-language texts on cryptology for SIS use.

John Hurt had never studied Japanese formally, nor had he lived in Japan -- he had learned the language from a college roommate! Yet, he amazed those who had studied the language in-country with his detailed knowledge of it.

Hurt was the epitome of the absent-minded professor. Solomon Kullback, one of the leading cryptanalysts of the time, remembered him. "There are more stories about John Hurt than you can shake a stick at. There is no question that he had a genius or flair for languages. He was always interested in picking up new words in any language and using them. Unfortunately, sometimes he made a mistake. I think he learned two words in Russian, one which means "good-bye" and one which means "thank you," and got them confused. He met somebody who had a Russian background and they were talking, when they were supposed to leave, instead of saying "thank you," John Hurt says "good-bye." The Russian got a little indignant and went off in a huff....

"He had a theory that when you crossed the street, you just ignored traffic rules and you don't worry about cars. You stared at them, just as you would at an animal. Unfortunately, one time he was nudged, knocked down by a taxicab, and the taxicab man got out, all upset, and runs over to him and says, "Are you hurt?" John gets up and brushes himself off and says, "Yes, John B." and walked off...." (to be cont'd)

http://www.nsa.gov/about/cryptologic_heritage/center_crypt_history/pearl_harbor_review/linguist.shtml
National Security Agency
Center for Cryptologic Heritage
