

# The Interpreter

Archives, University of Colorado at Boulder Libraries

Number 61A

★ Remember September 11, 2001 ★

March 15, 2003

## 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.*

## Carl "Ferris" Miller JLS 1944 Remembered

When I was in Tokyo a few weeks ago [May 2002], a friend of mine told me of the passing of Carl Ferris Overfield Miller. Many JLS graduates will remember "Ferris" with affection and admiration. He was a brilliant linguist.

I was in Okinawa in '45 with him. He was assigned to seek out Japanese soldiers still on the island. He would enter a village in the daytime and question the residents. At night, the Japanese would return to obtain food and other support from the villagers.

One day a group of intelligence officers went to explore a five-story cave. It was agreed that we would take different paths into the cave but meet back at the entrance at 4:00 o'clock. Everyone showed up at the designated time except Ferris. We feared the worst and formed parties to search the cave thoroughly. We found Ferris on the bottom floor, with a flashlight set on his shoulder, studying a Japanese manual,

entirely oblivious of time and place.

Talking with William Sherman, former Boulderite and distinguished diplomat, I learned that Ferris was his deputy in 1949 with the ECA (Economic Construction Agency). They were charged with setting up the first standards and formuli based on US precedents for the institutions of the South Korean Government. These institutions have remained virtually the same ever since. Bill Sherman also reminded me that Ferris's given name is Carl.

In the 1960s when I was assigned to Tokyo by Merrill Lynch to open an office there, I had the occasion to visit Korea. At the time, Ferris, who had first worked with AID, was with the Bank of Korea. He had become fluent in Korean. He retired from the Bank in the early 1980s. Ferris was deeply interested in the Korean Stock Market and became an advisor and broker, working with a number of Korean financial firms, ending with Good Morning Securities. He made a small fortune, and is, perhaps, best known in Korea for the creation of an arboretum, which features not only indigenous Korean plants but foreign species, as well. He was a skilled bridge player and traveled the world with the Korean national team. He gave time and money to a number of worthwhile causes and extended personal assistance to many Koreans, including the continuing support of over 50 children.

Don Knode  
JLS 1944

*[Ed. Note: This story is regrettably late. I find the timely placement of obituaries difficult. Mainly, because I try to limit the number of obits to more than two short ones an issue. Anyone wishing to provide Ferris Miller stories will find us happy to print them up, as we are on stories about other JLS graduates. Thanks to Don Knode for this letter. Sorry this one took so long.]*

## Testimonial on USMC JLOs for Corps Birthday

Dear David:

*I received from Bill Croyle, Jr. a copy of your excellent summary of the WWII activities of the Marine graduates of the Navy Japanese/Oriental Language School. I have taken the liberty of adding a couple of names to the coverage of those who stayed in after the War.*

*Elmer and I very much appreciate your personal efforts in collecting, editing and disseminating this historical data. We all realized, at last year's Boulder Reunion, that we're not getting much younger. Thanks to your work, much of this material has been located, categorized and is being carefully stored for future study and reference. It's doubtful that we'll make another reunion, but we thoroughly enjoyed both of the Boulder Reunions!*

Harry D. Pratt  
COL USMC (Ret.) JLS 1945

*[Ed. Note: Bill Croyle, Jr. asked me to come to the November 11<sup>th</sup> USMC Birthday observance for Marine Veterans in Denver. I couldn't make it but he said he would read the remarks below that I wrote for the occasion. If any former Marine JLOs go to such observances, they are welcome to read the following statement on behalf of the Archives, University of Colorado at Boulder Libraries.]*

The Archives, University of Colorado at Boulder Libraries is conducting an archival project to preserve the legacy of the US Navy Japanese/Oriental language School: located in Tokyo from 1920 to 1940; a Marine Corps version went to Pearl Harbor until December 7, 1941; and the Navy School went to Harvard and Berkeley during 1941. Due to Japanese American relocation in 1942, the school moved to CU for the duration of WWII.

All Tokyo students were Naval Academy graduates, a number of whom were Marine officers. One Hawaii Marine

Lieutenant, Gerald Holtom, was among the recently recovered remains missing from the Makin Island Raid in 1942. In 1942, prewar JLS graduates worked in HYPO and FRUPAC, two of the radio intercept and decryption centers, the intelligence from which was so instrumental to the Midway Victory.

A considerable portion of the graduates of the 14 month Boulder program were commissioned in the USMCR sent to the Pacific Theatre of Operations, working at the Joint Intelligence Command Pacific Operating Area (JICPOA) reporting to Admiral Nimitz or the Allied Translation and Intelligence Service (ATIS) under General McArthur's command.

Together, these radio intercept, translation and interpretation centers provided the intelligence that allowed Nimitz and McArthur to hit the Japanese where they were weakest, bypassing the stronger positions. Most Marine JLOs, however, served in Marine line units in intelligence shops at the Regimental or Divisional levels. Some served with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Raider Battalion on Bougainville, others went with their units to New Guinea, Pelileu, Iwo Jima, Guam and Okinawa where they swallowed dust and mud with their own fears along with their buddies in the foxholes. We have photographs of JLOs translating Japanese documents in recently "liberated" defense works, on exposed hillsides, surrounding a cache of Japanese documents in an island rain forest, and interrogating Japanese POWs on Guam.

After the surrender, Marine JLOs participated in the capture of hundreds of thousands of bypassed Japanese troops, their interpretation vital to the negotiations. They were also crucial to the care and handling of more than a half million Japanese prisoners, many of whom were in China. During the Occupation of Japan, JLOs

participated in the Strategic Bombing Survey, along with surveys of Japanese industrial and military facilities and supplies. Some were active in the War Crimes Trials in Tokyo, Manila, and Nuremberg. Although most of the linguists in Japan were from the Army, still some USMC JLOs were involved in Occupation administration.

Following the War, some Marine JLOs stayed in the Corps as intelligence officers, like COL Harry Pratt, LTC William Croyle and MAJ Elmer Stone. Others,

Such as Mike Foley [recently passed away], John Erskine, and Paul Hauck, proud of their Marine service, went into the CIA, DIA, or the NSA and brought their expertise in Japanese with them. Former Marines, such as Halsey Wilbur and J. Owen Zurhellen, Jr., also took their Japanese language skills into diplomacy in the US Foreign Service, becoming ambassadors. Quite a few, like Edward Seidensticker, Roger Hackett and Sol Levine helped to expand the Nation's understanding of Japan by

increasing the number of Japanese and East Asian language and culture departments in colleges and universities. Still more, like Houghton Freeman, Robert Sheeks and Jack Pierce, played roles in US/Japanese reconciliation. In these ways, both Marine and former Marine JLOs made a continuing contribution to the Nation's security.

We at the Archives, University of Colorado at Boulder, wish to recognize the unique contributions, preserve

the history, and on this anniversary of the Marine Corps, praise the Marine graduates of the US Navy Japanese/Oriental Language School to their fellow Marines.

*David M. Hays*

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*2LT-CPT FA*

*1/11<sup>th</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Armored Cavalry Regt's*

*1975-1978*

*[Ed. Note: Given enough time, I could fashion one for Navy get-togethers, as well. Let me know and I will work up a similar testimonial.]*

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