

The Interpreter

Archives, University of Colorado at Boulder Libraries

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★ Remember September 11, 2001 ★

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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.

Sono Hi No Uwasa Quips

COMING EVENTS OF THE WEEK

Thurs. Sept. 3 - Pay will probably be available, and will be paid in cash by the Paymaster.

 "No, lady, I don't come from either Columbia or Harvard. I'm just naturally repulsive."

Vol 1, No 2:

Men in the courses who plan to have dental treatment had better start adjusting their budgets immediately. As Chief Gergen pointed out to two horrified students who had already incurred bills for dental work, you will have to pay for it yourself.

The Manual of the Medical Department of the United States Navy definitely states that men on detached duty (that's us) are liable to all bills incurred for dental work....

Bill Amos
JLS 1943

Douglas T. Wada CDR, USNR, Naval Intelligence, 1937-1975

The story of Douglas T. Wada is an incredible, one-of-a-kind experience of the only Nisei specifically recruited to serve in the U.S. Naval Intelligence Service, before, during, and after World War II.

Douglas Wada was born in Honolulu in 1910 and was educated in local schools including the University of Hawaii (1933-37), except four-and-a-half years of study in Kyoto, Japan. He starred on the University of Hawaii baseball team, as well as the Nippon team, in the Honolulu Japanese Senior League, where he played with Joe Takata, who later became a 100th Battalion war hero.

During his senior year at the University in 1936, Wada learned of an F.B.I. investigation on him. While enrolled in Professor Yukio Uyehara's Japanese class, he befriended a middle-aged haole in the class, who later turned out to be Lt. Cmdr. W.J. [K.D.?] Ringle, a Navy intelligence officer. Toward the end of Wada's senior year, Lt.Cmdr Ringle offered Wada a job. But Wada had no idea what the job entailed until interviewed by Capt. Kilpatrick in the District Intelligence Office, 14th Naval District, and Pearl Harbor.

With foresight, the Navy had hired Wada in anticipation of the need for a language specialist in the event of war with Japan. The Navy, looking to the future, also tutored Wada in Chinese, Korean and Russian, so that he acquired proficiency in these languages and could translate into English with the aid of a dictionary.

In the beginning, Wada was assigned to the HASP Commander Capt. Dickey, to extend the courtesy of the port when Japanese naval ships visited Honolulu. Later, on duty with U.S. Customs, Wada checked the baggage of

passengers from Japan, working with Noboru "Hunchy" Murakami, who later volunteered for MIS. During this period, Wada worked with Gero Iwai, then with Arthur Komori and Richard Sakakida, the latter two having been recruited in early 1941. All four of these pre-war intelligence pioneers basically engaged in counter-espionage work.

Prior to the outbreak of World War II, the District Intelligence Office (DIO) increased its personnel from seven to 25 officers and 30 enlisted men, and entrusted Wada with highly classified assignments such as radio and wireless intercepts. He researched Japanese books for strategic information on the history, industry and geography of Japan and also interviewed returnees from Japan to obtain topographical data.

Immediately after the Pearl Harbor attack, Wada's first important mission was to translate the navigational chart taken from the Japanese midge submarine beached at Waimanalo. Wada and Iwai also translated documents confiscated from the Japanese Consulate by Honolulu Police on the morning of the Pearl Harbor attack.

Just as Gero Iwai had experienced, Wada found himself isolated socially from the Japanese community in Hawaii. Very few knew of Wada's work and affiliation with naval intelligence. One of them was Masaji Marumoto of the first MIS volunteer group from Hawaii, who encountered Wada as a witness for the Office of Naval Intelligence in a litigation against a Japanese society that Marumoto represented. Marumoto could have revealed Wada's identity to the public but never did, and for this, Wada holds the highest esteem and respect for Marumoto.

Following Japan's surrender in August 1945, Wada received orders assigning him to the Prosecution Section, International Tribunal for the Far

East, to assist in the prosecution of Class A war criminals, including General Hideki Tojo and other high-ranking Japanese war leaders. At first Wada disliked the assignment. However, when he saw utter devastation of the cities and the suffering of the Japanese people caused by the vain decision of these leaders to prolong the struggle even when faced with certain defeat, Wada felt no compunction about prosecuting them. He also helped to organize the Interpreters Section until his departure in November 1946.

After his reassignment to the District Intelligence Office, 14th Naval District in November 1946, Wada's primary mission focused on efforts to ferret out Communists from among naval and civilian personnel within Pearl Harbor Naval Base. During this period, he wrote a report, "brief History of Communism in Hawaii," which reportedly was regarded as the Bible on the subject by other investigative agencies.

From December 1954 to July 1975, Wada was assigned to Commander, US Naval Forces, Far East. He worked on classified naval intelligence in conjunction with the intelligence sections of the Prime Minister's Office ("Sorifu"), Maritime Self-Defense Force (Japanese Navy), Maritime Security Agency (Japanese Coast Guard) and Japanese National Police. Also, functioning as the Admiral's liaison and interpreter, Wada associated with high-level Japanese government officials. Among them were Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida, for whom he acted as personal bodyguard when Yoshida passed through Hawaii enroute to San Francisco, House Speaker Naka Funada, Chief of National Police Asonuma, and Parliamentary Members Ohira, Kishi and Furuya.

Wada retired from the Navy in July 1975 with the rank of Commander, after 38 years of service. Douglas Wada's unique

stature as the first and probably the only Nisei known to be entrusted by the U.S. Navy with its most classified intelligence secrets highlights a remarkable career as a special agent and commissioned naval officer.

in MIS Personnel, WWII, Pacific Theater: Pre-Pearl Harbor to 1951
*Military Intelligence Service
Veterans of Hawaii
1993*

[Ed. Note: Allen Meyer, US Army MIS, laments that the Army MIS has no central archives as does the Navy JLS/OLS at CU.]

A Navy JICPOAn

Some of my days at JICPOA were spent at a prison camp which the Navy maintained on an overgrown breakwater that jutted out from Oahu into the Pacific Ocean. There we kept officers and nonmilitary specialists who might be useful in confirming or identifying equipment, or location of manufacture. The enlisted personnel were shipped to the States.

I was with a Marine Division assigned to Saipan and Tinian during that operation. I returned

on a Liberty ship that carried prisoners back to Oahu. During the trip I was expected to help identify the officers and specialists since they were to be kept in our camp on Oahu. The Japanese enlisted men and Koreans were sent Stateside.

Before the end of the War, I was assigned to a unit in Honolulu to write a summary of intercepted Japanese messages each week to be distributed to units of our fleet

At the end of the War, I was sent to Truk to help in translating chores involved with the

surrender of the atoll by the Japanese. Following that, I was assigned to a Marine Division at Sasebo where I was the interface with the providers of such critical services as laundry and the local beer delivery. It was fun, but by that time I had been overseas for two years. I was ready to come home and see my (one year and four-month-old) son, Mike, for the first time.

Daniel Busch
JLS 1944

[Ed. Note: This is an old letter I found going through the files. Thanks go to Dan Busch for the note.]

WAVE Letter

... We did win a medal of commendation for our work. I will say that one of my lingering memories was of reading a terse Japanese message of an explosion of a monstrous bomb on the city of Hiroshima. No one knew what it was. That bomb changed my husband's mission from the invasion of Honshu to the occupation [of Japan].

Bill and I were married in our

Naval dress uniforms in my church in Columbus, Ohio and after a brief honeymoon returned to our individual assignments –

me back to the JLS and he to Washington, DC. On his way to a new assignment in Pearl Harbor, he spent a week with me in Boulder, where we stayed at the Bolderado Hotel. Mine was the last group of WAVES in the JLS; nearly everyone else had graduated, so we went from the Phi Delt house into vacated space in the Men's Dormitory for the rest of our time there.

I will never forget Boulder and the University of Colorado, as they were then; small and friendly and beautiful. I have been unable to return, but I wouldn't have missed those 14 months, despite

the pressures of learning to write a couple of thousand kanji where the omission or misplacement of one stroke made it all wrong.

Mary Jane Carroll
JLS 1944

[Ed. Note: This is another of the letters I have uncovered in the files. I thought it was high time we heard from a WAVE. All you WAVES out there, send in stories, please. Wives too – we need stories from wives to interrupt all these masculine stories. Not that I don't appreciate the men's stories. I do. I just think that variety makes a better newsletter.]

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