

*The Interpreter*

Archives, University of Colorado at Boulder Libraries

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★ Remember September 11, 2001 ★

May 15, 2004

**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.*

**A Sensei  
(Cont'd)**

My mother (Miyuki Sakano) mentioned that she was well treated during her stay there when she taught Navy officers Japanese. She remembers eating lunch with the officers and speaking only Japanese as they were not allowed to speak English. She also remembers going off to Denver to get Japanese food on the weekends with other teachers who drove during that time. She was paid approximately \$200/month for her services with housing and lunch included. The program was to be transferred to Oklahoma and she did not wish to go there, so she returned to her husband in Salt Lake City. Times were rough then, and she had to earn income for the family.

*Mrs. Frank Giordano  
3021 Soft Horizon Way  
As Vegas, NV 89135*

[Ed. Note: We sent Mrs. Sakano and Mrs. Giordano Paul Irish's MA thesis, the newsletters, and sensei lists.]

**We Were Not  
Wanted**

It was 0200 hours [or as we liked to say when I was in, "Oh -Dark 30"] on a night in mid-August 1945 and I was fast asleep in the BOQ at Pearl Harbor when a hand shook me awake and a voice said, "Lieutenant! Get yourself to Headquarters onna double!" Hand and voice came from one of the sailors on night duty, and headquarters meant JICPOA. When I got there, I found nine other JLOs, all from our unit that interrogated POWs: there was Harry Cary, George Romani, and I forget the names of the rest. We had no idea what was up, and the officer behind the desk provided no enlightenment; all he said was, "You got orders to leave immediately, so get your gear. You go in two planes; that way, if one goes down, there'll still be some of you to carry on." To carry on what? If he knew, he wasn't talking.

Half an hour later we were at the airport. Sure enough, there were two planes on the runway with their engines turning over; we boarded and took off. A stop at Midway to refuel, then on to Guam, where we disembarked – and instead of getting any enlightenment, we get assigned quarters and are told to wait for orders. We hung around for the rest of the day; no orders. The next day we were still hanging around, glumly sitting on a terrace high over the harbor, staring at it for lack of anything better to do [Ah yes, hurry up and wait. The Army does this too]. At one point the view offers a distraction: into the harbor races a destroyer at flank speed, prow high out of the water and bow wave curling. The ship comes to an abrupt halt, lets go its anchor, the chains run out, clank, clank, clank; a second later a launch drops from the davits and heads for shore, its bow slicing through the harbor swells at high speed. Great sight. It helps no end to relieve our

boredom. Crewmen make the launch fast to the dock, an officer jumps out, and a moment later, over the loudspeaker we hear, "Lieutenants Cary, Casson, Romani - and the rest of the names – get down to the dock on the double!" We scramble to pick up our gear, get down to the dock at a run, are tumbled into the launch, and the minute we're aboard we speed toward the destroyer. Once aside, we clamber up and find places on deck to hole up, and the destroyer makes for open sea at flank speed.

Our destroyer dashed this way for a couple of hours until we came upon an extraordinary sight: an infinite collection of vessels of all sizes spread over miles of open sea and gently steaming back and forth in unison; it was the Fifth Fleet. Our destroyer races through the pack until it comes alongside a battleship which turned out to be the *Missouri*; it slows down to the *Missouri*'s pace and, as the two vessels steam along on parallel courses, a line is heaved from one ship to the other to rig a bosun's chair – an open seat that hung from a block running over the line; there were also lines from the chair to either ship, the one from the destroyer for slacking off and the one from the *Missouri* for hauling. One by one, we made the trip from destroyer to *Missouri*. It was a hair-raising experience: the ships were moving steadily, and as the chair reached the mid-point of the space between them, and the line it ran on sagged, the chair dipped, giving you the feeling that any minute you were going to land in the waters rushing along beneath. The officer on deck on the *Missouri* received us, assigned us quarters, and told us to wait for a call. The call comes: we are to report to the Captain's cabin. Minutes later we were in his cabin, stiffly at attention in front of the Great Man himself, the Captain of the *Missouri*.

"At ease," said he. We get as much at ease as we can under the circumstances, which is to say, not much. He continues – and at long last enlightenment comes: "We've had you brought aboard for a very special reason. The surrender ceremony will take place on this ship. The State Department will have its own interpreters present, the Japanese will have theirs, but the Navy wanted to be sure to have its own, too. That's why you are here." Ten pairs of eyes registered acute consternation. We were alright with the likes of "Name, rank and serial number," but handling Japanese diplomatic parlance [read – expletives deleted running through their heads!] The Captain continued, "You will report tomorrow at X hours to the officer of the deck in your whites."

At this point, consternation gave way to panic. Whites? Mine weren't even in Pearl Harbor; they were back home in New York. Someone had to tell the awful truth, and there was mute agreement that that someone was Harry Cary; he not only had the seniority of age, he had half a stripe more than the rest of us. Harry tried to resist, but there was no resisting the imploring stare of nine sets of eyes. "Er-ah," he stammers, "Sir, nobody told us to bring whites." There was a dead silence. Then the Captain spoke in a voice that practically clanged from the steel in it. He reaches for his phone and speaking to the officer of the deck orders, "You know those language officers that came aboard a little while ago? I want them off this ship immediately!"

As it happened, the *Wisconsin* was nearby, and we underwent another transfer on the bosun's chair: it was rigged from one of these behemoths to the other, and this time the ride was even more terrifying, as we swung across the yawning space between them. The commander of the *Wisconsin* had no use for us either; he got rid of us as soon as he located some supply ship

with space to put us up, which meant yet another ride on the boson's chair. And so, after having been rushed out by plane and destroyer to join the *Missouri*, we ended up on a commonplace merchant ship. We spent the next few days on it steaming back and forth, back and forth, with the rest of the fleet. We had no idea what was going to happen to us, if anything.

But something did. The armistice arrangements included a provision that, before the surrender took place, units of Marines were to land at the Japanese naval base of Yokosuka

and take it over. Someone got the inspired idea that it would help if the units had people along who spoke Japanese – and someone happily remembered that there was a batch of Japanese language officers right at hand. So we were assigned to the marine platoons and landed with them at Yokosuka days before the surrender was signed – but that's another story.

Lionel Casson  
JLS 1943

[Ed. Note: Apparently, the Captain did not think to request that his XO find some suitable LTs from whom to borrow whites for the ceremony. But

then the brass would have discovered that other fly in the ointment. Just as well the Captain showed no flexibility.

As a lieutenant in the Army I have been in similar situations, armed only with explanations that would infuriate my superiors. We called that experience, "tap-dancing." It is a familiar experience. "Tada, tada, tada...., Yada, tada, tada...., Tadadada,tada, da." I do not know what junior line officers would do with unexpected orders or questions from on high were it not for "tap-dancing". Thanks go to Mr. Casson for the great story.]

[Received sad news of the passing of Bill Carroll, Bill Sigerson, Neal Jensen and Hart Spiegel. Our sympathies go out to their kin. DMH]

## Harbaugh Addendum

You've had some correspondence with my son, Will, on the subject of my father, Ted's experiences both at the Boulder Language School and then with the Marine Corps, in the Pacific.

Two other facts of note, I think, are that when he left Okinawa, he went to Beijing, China, and assisted with the surrender and repatriation of the Japanese garrison there: all while the Chinese Communist Revolution was heating up in the countryside. As nearly as we

can figure it, he was back in the United States by Christmas of '45.

When Dad got back to civilian life, he located in Toledo, Ohio, and picked up a career with Libby Glass, at that time a division of Owens-Illinois. He served that company faithfully for over 30 years, and, for a period of 8 years, was its National Sales Manager. He and his wife, Kathleen, have 3 sons, who among them have 5 children, 2 of whom (the

daughter and son of my wife, Judy, and me) are married. The 3 sons all had the opportunity of meeting Masao Kimura and his family.

Masao, incidentally, had a very successful career as an executive with Fujitsu (Japan's IBM)...and actually wrote a book about his experiences on Okinawa. It's in my father's library.

Mr. Kimura (nee Honda) was a remarkable man. He had a charming wife, and two sons,

one of whom became a doctor; the other an engineer. Both live in the United States, I believe. I know they both got their advanced educations here.

Bryce Harbaugh  
CPT USA  
Special Forces  
1966-1969

**Donald M. Richardson**, US Army JLS offers his *Random Recollections* at \$20, write him: 273 North Drive Winchester, VA 22603

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