

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.

Ann Arbor to Boulder to Pearl Harbor

(Continued from last issue)

In July 1943, I got orders to go to Pearl Harbor. Others, including Roger went to Washington. I got to San Francisco by train with future congressman Sam Stratton who had a hotel reservation, so I bunked with him. Flew to Hawaii by China Clipper. The first night had great delays due to engine problems and a wind shift that required all runway lights to be moved by boats. Then an hour out, just as we'd gone to bed, the plane had more engine trouble, dumped most of our gas and flew back. The next night, we left again, on time and without trouble.

At Pearl, I was in JICPOA for about three months. We tried to translate diaries left by Japanese soldiers, as well as translating for POWs in the Marine brig if they needed to go to sick bay. There weren't as many POWs at that stage of the War. Bill Amos and I were interviewed by Colonel Laswell for OP-20-G, later FRUPAC, were accepted, and

after learning about the organization's function and about codes and additives, went to work either translating messages or helping senior officers in translating. For years, we couldn't tell anyone what we did, but we got a lot of satisfaction.

After the War I finished law school, went to work for a Wall Street law firm and then went to Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, first as a real estate lawyer and eventually as a vice president. I stayed in touch with the Pineaus till Roger died and still keep in touch with Bill Amos.

I got back to Boulder once in the 1970s when I was at a convention in Denver. Couldn't believe how the town had changed and couldn't find the men's dorm. I went to a restaurant in a shopping mall for lunch, and when I ordered a Manhattan was asked whether I wanted it straight up or on the rocks. The day I first arrived in Boulder, I went downtown to a restaurant and when I asked for Schlitz, Miller, or Budweiser beer, was told, "We don't carry eastern beers." I have been back to Honolulu a couple of times. Again, everything is changed. Couldn't locate the old CINCPAC or FRUPAC from the Pearl Harbor boat trip, and Seaside Bungalows, where Tom Polhemus and I had lived across from the Moana Hotel had been torn down for a new hotel.

My wife and I finally got to Japan in the 1980s. Visited Tokyo and Kyoto and saw Fujisan, but spoke or understood little Japanese. Did carry on a sort of conversation with one kind taxi driver in Kyoto. However, I enjoyed and appreciated the country and its people far more than I would have had I not had the year of Japanese in Boulder and our Issei and Nisei sensei. I was proud also that everyone in the language school at Boulder was opposed to the relocation of Japanese-Americans from the

West Coast. When we arrived in Hawaii [during the War], it was strange to see how differently the Japanese-Americans were treated from those in California. One day in 1943 in Honolulu, Grover Sims and I were driving from FRUPAC back to Waikiki when we picked up a rear admiral and his flag captain. Their Navy car had broken down. When we tried to take our usual shortcut through a restricted area along the Honolulu docks we were stopped by a Marine guard while Japanese-American dock workers walked by. We and the Admiral had to turn around and take the long way around.

Frank Roegge
JLS 1943

[Ed. Note: Boulder has changed a lot since I arrived some years after Mr. Roegge's last visit. I can hardly recognize Pearl Street or the drive down US 36. But I think they have fixed the bad bartenders and now have "Eastern beers" and know how to serve Mannhattans. We were able to show Baker Hall, the men's dorm, to those here during the reunion in 2002. Now, if Mr. Roegge visits Boulder and the University, he would get a red carpet treatment and see the plaque in the University Memorial Center veterans lounge, honoring him and his fellow graduates and instructors. At Pearl Harbor, CINCPAC has put an exhibit up in the old JICPOA Building, I think, honoring those who served in FRUPAC and JICPOA. Mr. Roegge, you and your fellow JLS/OLers are remembered.]

From the Bottom of the Barrel

A Tribute to Susumu Nakamura, Part III

I needn't have worried [about failing JLS]. When near the end of my year [I was put two months ahead because of my previous work], Mr. Nakamura came to tell me that I would be giving the Valedictory address in Japanese, which I was to compose (actually, it was permitted to ask one of the teachers to improve it) and give it from memory. I was hardly

prepared for the commotion caused by four words at the beginning of about sentence ten or so [of my speech]. I had tried a little joke about the students of Russian whose course was so much shorter and who wouldn't understand what I was saying, referring to the Japanese aphorism about people who read the Analects (*rongo*) without understanding them and then substituting the Russian language (*rogo*). This got a few polite laughs, but when I began the sentence in which I was going to evoke some pleasant memories of my year in Colorado (the kindness of the teachers, the huge Great Dane taking its ease on hot days by lying in the irrigation canals meant to water the lawns, causing floods over the sidewalks; the spectacle of a short and bespectacled language student, who will be nameless here, in his brand new Marine officer's uniform, being thrown into the pond by some British officers) as having taken place between the time when I read the first sentence in the Naganuma Readers ("This is a Book") and the last sentence in the same, I got out the words, "Kore wa hon desu," and the hall erupted into laughter and applause. This was because there was a very large new contingent of students who at last understood something of my oration.

When in 1947, after two years in Japan, I entered the University of California at Berkeley as an undergraduate student, I went to see Mr. Nakamura. He listened with the greatest interest to my description of my work in Japan, especially about my connection with the major war crimes trials where I had been Chief of the Language Branch for the Defense. Our relationship had somehow changed, and there was much less distance between us. Later, I very much enjoyed taking a course from him in advanced Japanese, and I remember very vividly a lecture which he gave in which he

pointed out the importance of the influence of Shinto on Japanese aesthetics: simplicity, frugality, directness, and economy in art, identification of man with nature, etc., many of which qualities are usually associated with Zen Buddhism but which no doubt give Japanese Zen some of its unique features. Mr. Nakamura's comments on the symbolism and meaning of the cherry blossom also I found most enlightening.

expression of gratitude and indebtedness to, and affection for, a fine teacher who has done so much to help us, his former students who have persisted in Japanese Studies, to begin to acquire the tools by which we are attempting to further our knowledge and understanding of Japan.

*Charles D. Sheldon, Ph.D.
OLS 1945
Lecturer in Japanese History
University of Cambridge*

however, that I have lost focus on just what the "collection" was. Could you print a brief description in a future issue? *[As it turned out, a very future*

It was commanded by COL Russell Phelps, USA and later by Jay Bagnall, a USNR officer. We concentrated on selective

translations of documents from the Japanese Intelligence Service on Manchuria. The Japanese Service was known as the *Namman Tetsudo Kabushiki Kai Sha No Kenkyu Jo* [Research Office of the South Manchurian Railway Company]. These translation efforts produced the earliest Postwar information on Soviet involvements in Manchuria.

*William S. Bavis
OLS, June 1946
Stillwater, Okla.**

I am delighted to have been asked to participate in this joint

**Sutiruwata, (Shizuka Mizu)
Okurahomu Shiu*

[Ed. Note: Historical collections vary in what they contain: sometimes business ledgers and financial papers; sometimes constitutions, bylaws and minutes; sometimes family correspondence and photographs; and sometimes scrapbooks and diaries. In addition, our holdings are in various states of organization and preservation: some have not received any treatment, but most have surveys, preliminary inventories or guides. The Roger Pineau Papers is a research

A Stillwater JLO in Washington, DC

With reference to your issue #69A *[Sorry about the delay]* of 15 Nov 03, you adverted to the *Pineau Collection*. I remember Roger Pineau as a stalwart in the Naval History Section of the US Navy in Washington. I must say,

collection. That is, the files within the collection were compiled by someone who was attempting to research a particular area. Hence, it contains his research on the US Navy JLS/OLS, but not his family correspondence, his research files from his work with Samuel Eliot Morison, or his professional Navy papers. It holds correspondence with, and findings on, other graduates of the US Navy Japanese/Oriental Language School. There are also Navy records, reports, photographs, and materials requested by him from other archives and research institutions. Imagine

issue.]

Unlike Leonard Rush, I chose to complete the OLS course at Stillwater, Oklahoma and graduated in June 1946. I was assigned to a Washington based organization called the Washington Document Center as a Japanese Translator. It was an inter-allied effort (British, Australian and Canadian units).

the contents: a filing cabinet – in gray half-boxes and acid-free greenish folders. That is what an archival collection looks like. Other JLS/OLS collections contain correspondence between graduates and their wives and families from postings around the country and in the Pacific. Some have letters between Boulderites during and after the War. Several collections feature photo albums, captured Japanese documents or diaries, and quite a few have memoirs.

Archivists get the pleasure of organizing and storing this material for donor families and future researchers.]