

The Interpreter

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★ Remember September 11, 2001 ★

arv@colorado.edu

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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.

To Lawrence C. Vincent & John J. Craig, 1945

Dear Sirs:

I read your "Our Japanese Ally" with a deep impression and much thankfulness. I can recollect vividly even now the gloomy, wet, stinking and fatal cave from where we were rescued, the shot in the stubborn chief officer's cave, the taste of my first hot "C" ration in the Seabees' area, and especially our first meeting at the entrance of the cave on the 27th of March in 1945.

I hope to forget the fierce, hard, and losing campaign on cursed Iwo Jima, but I will never forget your kindness to me and my respect to you, which displayed there and will continue forever.

When you were explaining to me at the mouth of our cave the present situation on Iwo Jima and good treatment awaited us at your hands, I couldn't agree to give up, because I had decided that I should commit suicide according to our old custom as we had lost the campaign. I came out merely to reconnoiter the

recent situation. But just as soon as you told me in fluent Japanese, "Humans shouldn't fight together, and we would rather build a new peaceful world. If all young men like you die like an animal in the cave, who will be able to save Japan when she will march into a new peaceful world?" I felt a new idea passed through my brain like a flash, "That's right! Who will save our fatherland to turn her rightful way for a peaceful world? Just we young men! I must not kill myself meaninglessly, and moreover I must rescue other miserable brothers in arms as many as I can."

Thus, my new life have started, which, I convince, is not a deed of a traitor, because our Emperor even took the same way with his wise determination.

I must thank you not only for this, but for that you have had true friendship, treating me not as a POW, but as one of your friends, and that you have understood me sufficiently.

I didn't know your anxiety for me which displayed when I entered the chief petty officer's cave. I was very joyful when you visited me again at the stockade on Guam without giving up remembering me.

Though, fortunately, I have met good Americans always, you are the best men I've ever met. So I will believe what you say are all true.

If all American can understand us as well as you can, Japan will be able to play her role in a stage of a peaceful world more easily and successfully. My English is not so good as you wrote, so I intend to learn it more thoroughly and study American civilization to carry it out in Japan for a peaceful world.

It is very sad for me that another farewell remains to be spoken. But I will never let you slip from my memory as rescuers of my life, as intimate friends of mine, as teachers of American civilization, and as good

cooperators to build a peaceful Japan.

*Kuwahata
Guam POW Stockade, 1945
Lawrence Vincent Collection*

The Chinese Program, Part II

The Chinese courses were very intensive, lasting 18 months. We were taught to read, write and speak Chinese, and I can still recall the grunts and groans when we were forced to listen to Chinese music during meals in the dining hall. Our instructors were native Chinese, plus an elderly American missionary who had lived in China for many years. There was, I am sure, a certain hidden tension between the Chinese and Japanese instructors, although it never surfaced, even when the students in Chinese were shown movies of Japanese war atrocities in China. Also, we became aware of the displacement of Japanese Americans from the West Coast when we took trips to Denver, where little Japanese confectionery shops had begun to open up. Sometimes, too, on bicycle jaunts from Boulder, we would come upon a prisoner of war camp, housing German or Italian POWs. Boulder was a small town then, and one could hire horses and ride up past the red rocks into the mountains. As someone from upstate New York, I was amazed at the clarity of the air and its distortion of distance. Cycling, to the uninitiated, was very deceptive, resulting in exhaustion in trying to reach a goal supposedly within an easy distance, but, in reality, much farther away. Being able to play tennis in shorts during winter, when a snow from a recent storm was still within sight was also an amusing novelty.

The most colorful members of the language school were not the Chinese or Japanese, who were rather sedate and quiet, but the more extroverted Russians, particularly when there was a

theatrical or musical performance at the university auditorium. They were often aristocratic refugees with fascinating backgrounds. I remember one woman, a bit rotund, but very beautiful, with glistening black hair and always wearing very dramatic earrings, who was a well-known Russian poetess; and there was a former ballet dancer, the younger brother of Pavlova, corpulent, nearsighted, and no longer young, but still proudly walking with the splayed gait of the professional dancer, resulting in his nickname of "the Penguin" among the irreverent college students. They were a marvelous group: completely self-absorbed and uninhibited, scanning the audience with their opera glasses during the intermission, in the European manner. (to be cont'd)

*Joseph Burgess
OLS 1946
Mandarin Chinese*

[Ed. Note: I still marvel at the clarity of the air on the Front Range, as well as the distances visible. Raised in the wooded East, I now feel claustrophobic back east, surrounded by trees.]

JICPOA Tales

The first prisoners I met were civilians, fishermen who had been taken from the ocean, I was told, but where and by what kind of naval vessel, I can't remember. This was in 1943, but before the Tarawa battle and the establishment of a POW camp on Oahu. We JICPOA lads were assigned as duty interpreters for the day and sent over to the Marine Corps "brig" inside Pearl Harbor naval base for the duty. When the four or so fishermen POWs met me, they said they were getting bored, so could I make them a *sh ji* set. Of course, I agreed and was then shown how to label the pieces and draw the game board. I went back to my barracks in Makalapa, made the pieces and board and brought them later to the "brig" where the fishermen were very happy

to get them. Eventually, they were moved to the POW camp, so I never saw them again.

I made one trip to the Oahu camp and found the Japanese and Korean POWs in separate encampments. Lights went out at 2100, as I remember, but under a Korean tent a POW who knew the Korean alphabet was teaching the letters to his fellow prisoners, in anticipation I guess, of Korea's ultimate independence.

The first military POWs I met were from Guam. I was assigned as prisoner escort officer aboard the *Ormsby* (APA-49). Sometime after the battle had begun the first POW arrived aboard an LCVP. The ship's tackle hoisted him up and put him down atop a hatch cover. Every sailor with nothing to do looked down on him, the first "Jap" they had met. I still remember my first words to him, "*Eisei no tame* (for health reasons), take off your clothes so that we can de-louse you." One can imagine how he must have felt. The Geneva Convention on POWs required that they be given some exercises, at least once a day, so we took the half dozen or so back to the ship's fantail (stern), where I encouraged dialogue between the POWs and our sailors. Later, inside the vast Eniwetok harbor, I was responsible for collecting POWs from a couple of other ships under moonlight and re-collecting them aboard a former American President's Line passenger ship. The dentist there was surprised to find so many gold teeth in the prisoners' mouths. Finally, we managed to get all POWs back to Oahu safely.

Arthur Dornheim
JLS 1943

[Ed. Note: This is the second of three stories graciously sent to us by Art Dornheim. The first was his wry account of the Und_ exercises on Folsom Field before an assembled civilian audience. Looking for photographs on the Navy Radio School, I found a photograph of those white-clad JLS students marching over onto Folsom Field for 'CU Days'. What a coincidence! One always finds what one is looking for while looking for something else.]

WAVES at the

Navy Annex, 1944-46

Quoting Glogene1@cs.com: I'm happy you liked it [the story in issue # 83]. I had fun doing it, including checking my translation with a local Japanese cultural office here in Westchester. They said it was correct, which pleased me since I haven't really used Japanese much in the 60 years. I've been in the Russian field.

The glitches you point out are supposed to be dashes. One between "Oyobu made" and "which", and the other between "LDMs" and "Large Desks, Mahogany."

For some strange reason, the computer converted the dash into that symbol.

I look forward to getting the music you mention, but what is HATO?

Thanks for recommending the Budianski book. I'll look for it. Though I've read many of the books that mention OP-20G, that one is new to me.

[I had told him I was going to get in hot water for his use of "Boulder Boys", but it might be worth it if it fired the WAVES up and caused them to write more letters, so I could take the flak.] If there were WAVES from Boulder using Japanese at the Annex, I don't remember seeing any, and I was there between July 1943 and August 1946. True, there were plenty of other WAVES, and they were very smart. One of them who worked with me in recovering a Japanese naval code was a young woman named Marguerite Anderson. (She and the other WAVES focused on the mathematical aspects of the decoding rather than the linguistic.) Maggie arrived in 1944, after having worked in Chicago on some project she would not talk about. But as we became more friendly, she confided in me one day that the work they were doing in Chicago would bring the war to an early end.

I didn't have a clue what she meant, but when I came to work on Monday August 6, 1945 as the news of Hiroshima spread throughout the world, Maggie told me that she had been working with Leo Szilard on the Manhattan Project. You'll remember that he and his

colleagues (e.g. Fermi) achieved a historic breakthrough with nuclear fission at the Alonzo Stagg Stadium in Chicago.

Gene Sosin
JLS 1943

[Dear Gene:
One of my students just posted to you the sheet music for *Hat* (the song title) of the JLS song to which you referred. It was the one written by Tatsumi, unless he wrote more than two, which is entirely possible. I think he wrote one for the WAVES as well, a hundred of whom attended JLS, 69 of whom graduated. All were sent to DC and the Navy Annex, to work at one of the translation shops.

Those WAVES may not have been focused just on math aspects. Ms. Marguerite Marie Anderson, of Omaha, Nebraska, entered JLS on 7/19/43, was graduated and commissioned in the USNR on or about September 1944. She is on our mailing list:

Ms. Marguerite LeMaitre
514 Park Avenue
Omaha, NE 68105-2735

If you can name any other WAVES, I could confirm whether or not they were "Boulder Girls." We have some others on the mailing list, you must have read the stories of WAVES Marylou Williams (née Siegfried), Marie Edwards, and others. They have told me that many were posted to positions where they had scant opportunity to use their hard-won language skills. If so, I suspect that they may have taken the injunction that their JLS/OLS training was classified and did not discuss their Boulder experience lightly. Cordially, David M. Hays, Archivist]

Hart Spiegel USMCR JLS 1943 Died March 2004

I just got the word that Hart Spiegel passed away in mid March. I knew from talking to him two years ago that he was having serious health problems, and it is sad to realize he is now gone. Hart was one of our first group of Boulder Marines to be shipped to the Pacific, and he was one of the four of us to volunteer into the 2d and 3rd Raider Battalions in time to get our initiation to mud and jungle in the Bougainville campaign. The four of us, Nabe Pierce, Bob Stillman, Hart and I, all survived Emirau, Guam and Okinawa and

actually were able to have a breakfast reunion at the '92 Boulder gathering. Now three are gone and I'm left with the last man lights-out detail. The ranks are thinning.

Hart, to me, was the archetype of the all-around American ideal male. He had extraordinarily brilliance balanced with humility and humor. He was a good athlete, a lot of fun at a party and knew all the songs. He demonstrated great courage as a Marine, and he was handsome to boot. He had a very successful career as a nationally renowned tax attorney in San Francisco where he and his wife, Genevieve raised their three children, all of whom were reported to be at his side at home when he passed away.

I know all of us who knew Hart at Boulder and in the Pacific share a great sadness in knowing that he is gone.

Glen Slaughter
JLS 1943

[Ed. Note: Mr. Spiegel was a lively correspondent with the JLS/OLS Project and we will miss him. I will try to contact the family and get an obituary to post, in time. I am sorry this note is so belated. I placed a short note last May, about recent losses.]

Rancors Aweigh

(Three junior officers sing to the tune of 'Gentlemen of Japan' from the *Mikado*)

If you want to know who we are...!
We're Lieut'ns (junior grade) USNR-
The US Navy which we serve
Had made us part of its reserve,
It is a fate we don't deserve;
We'd a-joined the Marines
If we'd had the nerve.

Miya Sama, Miya Sama
Nihongo has screwy grammar,
Honest we prefer perdition
To those lousy postpositions

If you'll kindly lend an ear...!
We'll confess why we were
Chosen to come here:

[Ed. Note: Gene Sosin has submitted the libretto of Rancors Aweigh, a skit performed 18 September 1944 at the 24 Club Banquet for JLOs in DC. We will print it in four parts. You Ivy Leaguers and your skits.]