

*The Interpreter*

Archives, University of Colorado at Boulder Libraries

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★ Remember September 11, 2001 ★

October 1, 2005

**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.*

## Reprise on "Red Flags ...", II

So you understand where I am coming from, my dad was a member of the Church of the Nazarene, an evangelical group that believed not only being "saved" but also "sanctified." While he was not too doctrinaire, he did go through the motions, though he never landed too hard on us. I mention this because they had a rather large group of missionaries in the Kansai area (10 or 12). Even though they were saved and sanctified, they had a schism, resulting in a split, thus my dad and Mom went to Tokyo. Interestingly, the Japanese converts also took sides and that schism continued until after the war. We had a Kansai group and a Kanto group. (Brotherly love.) That's how my brother and I got to Tokyo.

At that time, speaking Kansai ben in Tokyo was not that great. (Now there is no problem, for several reasons.) *Bokutachi ga ejimerareta.* It was very stressful, so Gene and I studied very hard and learned *hyojungo*

in about six months.

At that time I was very pro Japanese. I understood their fear of the West, I understood the takeover of Korea and the *Manshu jihen*. We saw the 2.26 *jiken*. That was the beginning of our enlightenment. The military was on the rise, and the populace supported them. Since most of the conscripts came from the farming class and the poor, there was a broad grass roots support, not only for the military but for the Emperor and all the myths connected with it. 1937, was the start of the *Shina jihen*. From that time on it was down hill regarding the West. Japan was getting closer to Germany, and by 1939 they were getting very tight.

In the summer of 1939 we went to Korea for a vacation. The missionaries in Korea always went to Wonsan, however, in 1938 there was a border incident with Russia, so we had to go to a beach further south on the Japan Sea. It was at that time I saw the Japanese military and civilian people show their insufferable arrogance. When I spoke to them in the Kanto ben, as a native, they abruptly changed and became civil, even polite. The Korean police also took on the air of the Japanese when it came to enforcement of their rules.

Another aside. At our summer resort we had two lakes adjacent to the ocean. We along with the other missionary kids had plenty of time, so we decided to row our two boats over to the railroad station to get the mail in our bathing suits. (It would have been delivered, but we wanted something to do.) On the way we would dive into the water and swim alongside the boats. We were having fun. The missionary boys we were with spoke very good Korean. We got along well with the older Koreans through them, and the younger ones spoke Korean and Japanese, though with an accent.

Before the train arrived, they were talking to the station

master. I didn't understand a word they said; however, the conversation was very pleasant. The train pulled in. As luck would have it, a car with three Korean policemen stopped right in front of us. It was warm so the windows were open. One policeman had three stars on his shoulder epaulets and the other two had but one. He addressed all of us in Korean, my friends faces blanched. I knew something terrible must have been said. I then said in Japanese, I don't speak Korean, would you please speak in Japanese. The three star officer was somewhat put aback, however, he soon recovered and in accented Japanese, said we cannot be at a public railroad station dressed as we were.

I then stood at attention and in a loud voice (as a Japanese high school student would have done) announced my name, where I was from in Tokyo in a very formal manner. I then said, "In Tokyo, in the Tanimachi area, during the summer heat, men walk around town in nothing more than a *fundoshi*. If that is appropriate in the great city of Tokyo, surely our garb which is much more modest should be suitable for a *chippoki na tokoro* as this village." Both police officers sitting by him burst out laughing in a loud voice. Nobody else in the train moved. The three star officer's neck swelled and his face turned beet red. I thought he was going to come out the window. The station master gave the signal for the train to leave, even though all the passengers had not boarded. When the train left, the station master said to me in acceptable Japanese, "Don't ever say anything like that again, it will get you into unbelievable trouble." It was during this time we saw hospital ships go by, carrying the injured from the *Nomonhan* incident in Manchuria and Mongol.

It was during this time, September 4, 1939, that W.W.II started. (to be cont'd)

Baldwin T Eckel  
US Army MIS

**So What ! (III)**

My preparation [for Okinawa] could last no more than that one hectic day given before my departure. Those of us flying to Okinawa were issued battle clothes, heavy boots, helmet, and a knapsack for this and that, then pricked with shots. Last, but not least, Springfield rifles with ammunition were handed out. Somehow, I found an hour or so to get over to West Loch where my younger brother, Transportation Officer at the Navy Ammunition Center, knew about weapons. He required no more than a minute or two to see that I would be dead before I could fire my Springfield. Taking that big rifle from me, which he substituted with a carbine, the much smaller and lighter piece, as well as several clips of bullets [Just a thought - I would think an M1911 45 caliber pistol would have been better, good for mobility and as inaccurate as any other weapon without proper marksmanship training. Must be my Field Artillery Lieutenant sensibilities speaking.]. Soon thereafter, it was a takeoff to Guam and then the northeasterly takeoff to Okinawa in a huge plane loaded with blood [Now there is an image].

On our approach to land, the pilot announced, "You may have noticed that we have started to circle; we will continue doing so until the Japanese cease causing trouble at the airstrip. By the way, that's the Battleship *Missouri* down there bombarding away." We could observe the recoil from each firing of the 16" guns spreading out across Pacific water. Then we landed at Kadena, the main airport at Shuri still under attack.

My first assignment during the Battle of Okinawa was to the Marines, particularly to a patrol of these men setting out to scout reports that Japanese soldiers

were slipping up to the north and escaping on fishing vessels in Nago Wan. Two members of this patrol held my close attention. The main attraction was a muscular Irishman, a burly Lieutenant with a "Mac" to his name. In every important respect, a highly seasoned veteran. Always at his heels was a sergeant: quick, boney, slight, Jewish in manner. Once in the field his rifle was at the ready every bit as Mac's .45. Seasoned killers both. How tough? Let me

All too soon Mac called me up to where he had momentarily stopped. I first thought it was only to show me the package of fruit gums that he had started to open - half-moons of red, green, orange, yellow and licorice. What followed was to be for my instruction, for knowing my place. Removing the fruit gum, Mac started to wave it over an object off to the side in the underbrush as he said, "Look here, Thornton, if you want it to taste just right, you wave it over one of these." There I saw a

putrefactive corpse of a Japanese soldier on which several birds were feeding. Almost immediately thereafter Mac blazed away at a Japanese we had stumbled upon. He emptied his .45 and then ran over to me shouting, "Hell Thornton, what are you doing with that carbine?" Grabbing my arm, wrenching at the carbine, he sent the clip spinning off into a thicket. I was learning quickly. Any Japanese fighter we happened to come face to face with was a goner, dead as a Mackerel. We were not out to take prisoners; our

purpose was to observe was to observe and listen, report back, then break up. Hardly an occasion for my *Te o agete* ["hands up"]. In leaving my tough marines, I took away little sense of accomplishment. My carbine never saw any action, either then or thereafter. My kindle came with my next assignment. (to be cont'd)

Robert D. Thornton  
JLS 1944

[Ed. Note: This is some story. It probably a good thing his carbine saw no action. I read it had no stopping power.]

### James J. Coale III Princeton, '37 OLS 1946

A man of many careers, Jim Coale died Mar. 7, 1995, at Broadmead, a retirement community in Maryland. His wife, Marietta, had died in 1974. Of a predominantly Princeton family, he left three daughters, Martha, Mary '72, and Patience, brother Ansley '39, and five grandchildren.

At Hotchkiss, Jim was on the class football team and in the choir. At Princeton, he majored say.

in English and was in the choir and glee club, was treasurer of the Presbyterian Young People's Society, and was on the wrestling squad. After graduation, he followed in his father's footsteps and got his B.D. at Union Theological Seminary in N.Y.C. and for four years served in churches in Brooklyn and Baltimore.

He entered the Navy in 1945, and after attending Russian language school and rising from seaman l/c to Lt. (j.g.), he served as a liaison in Berlin between the occupation forces of the Soviet Union and the U.S. As a civilian,

in Bonn, he was economic secretary and deputy secretary general of the Allied High Commission for Germany, in the State Dept.

In 1952, he returned to his teaching career, first with the Hampshire Country School in Rindge, N.H. In 1954, he was at Berkshire, where he taught math and chemistry and coached the wrestling team. Finally, he worked 23 years at Oldfields School in Glencoe, Md. He retired in 1987. Our condolences go to the girls and Ansley.

The Class of 1937  
Princeton Alumni Weekly

July 5, 1995

[Ed. Note: On July 28, 2004, I made contact with Russian program graduate, Vernell W. Bartlett OLS 1946. He was a classmate and fellow climber of Jim Coale's. He had been attempting to locate Mr. Coale for years. Together they had climbed around the Flatirons, Green Mountain and Bear Mountain in the foothills around Boulder. We had a long chat on the telephone, which allowed me to avoid one of those Boulder afternoon thunderstorms. By the time I left work at 5:30, the shower had passed. Anyone in contact with the Coale relatives, please pass their address to us.]