



NO MESS LINE HERE, as instructors eat out.

Presidio Pageant

The Military Intelligence Service Language School, which later was to produce some 3,700 combat language specialists during the war, began in the old Crissy airplane hangar at the Presidio.

The story of the beginning of the School, then known as the Fourth Army Intelligence School, is an interesting one. The School was not under the Army Specialized Training Program, which received appropriations from the War Department to train Army specialists in various colleges in the United States.

Plans for a school to train American soldiers the Japanese language was made by three army officers who had lived in Japan before the war. Two were West Point graduates, one of whom spent four years in Tokyo as an Assistant Military Attache.

Their proposal of an Army Japanese language school was reluctantly met by the War Department. It wasn't until November 1941 that permission was finally granted plus a skeptical sum of \$2,000.

Textbooks to study one of the worlds most difficult languages were unavailable, except for the few the officers had brought back with them from Japan, and then they had to be completely revised.



LANGUAGE TEXTBOOKS and reference material were prepared and published by Presidio instructors. Before outbreak of war, most of language-learning paraphernalia were lacking.



RECREATION WAS IMPORTANT despite war-time pace of School's curriculum. Facilities were few but personnel made good use of available equipment.

BREAKS BETWEEN CLASSES in California sun broke monotony of long hours of study. Many of this group later became nucleus of faculty at Savage and Snelling.



The original books, which contained Japanese military terms, were reproduced by mimeograph to keep within the limited budget. Later the officers combed every printing shop in San Francisco for the lowest bid just for a few dollars work.

The first class of 60 students and eight instructors got under way in one building, half for classrooms, the other half for barracks. They had no chairs to sit on, so they had to use orange crates. There were no tables so the post carpenter shop was wangled into making primitive fixtures. They had to borrow typewriters, paper and office supplies.

For the six months the School was in existence at the Presidio, they operated with few conveniences. Through personal friendship they were able to acquire a little more equipment from other officers.

But the importance of linguists in combat was fully recognized when the first group of specialists went on the field on Guadalcanal in May 1942. Field commanders began to clamor for the graduates and eventually every major unit in the Pacific had a team of language specialists.

The War Department was now convinced the Presidio School was not in vain, that it had to be enlarged. The School was then put directly under the War Department and in May 1942 moved to larger quarters at Savage, Minnesota.

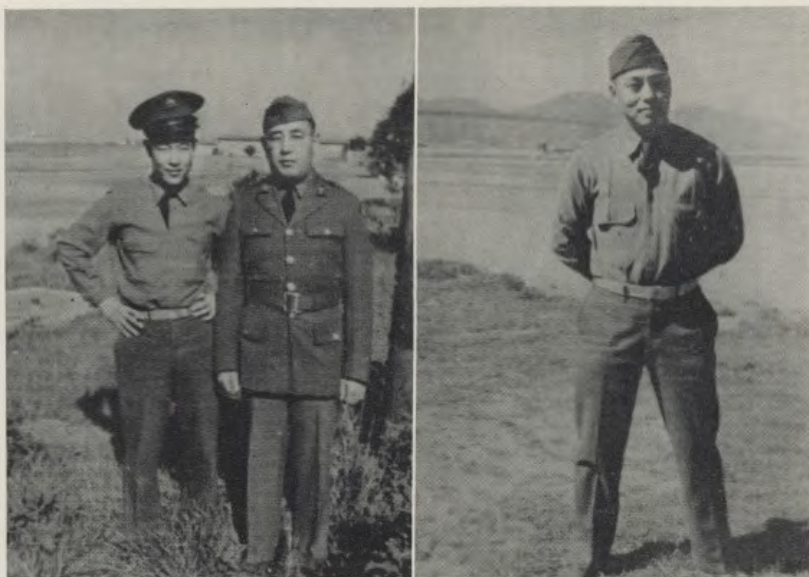


PLACES TO GO WERE FEW in town, since friends were evacuated from the Coast. YMCA was one of few meeting places.

SNAPSHOTS OF PRESIDIO personnel were few because of restriction on cameras. Roy Kawashiri, left, in dungarees and George Takeda in baseball fatigues, looked all but GIs training in secret school.



THREE OF THE FIRST Presidio class were Bill Hirashima and Dave Kato, left, and Jake Ohashi with Golden Gate backdrop.

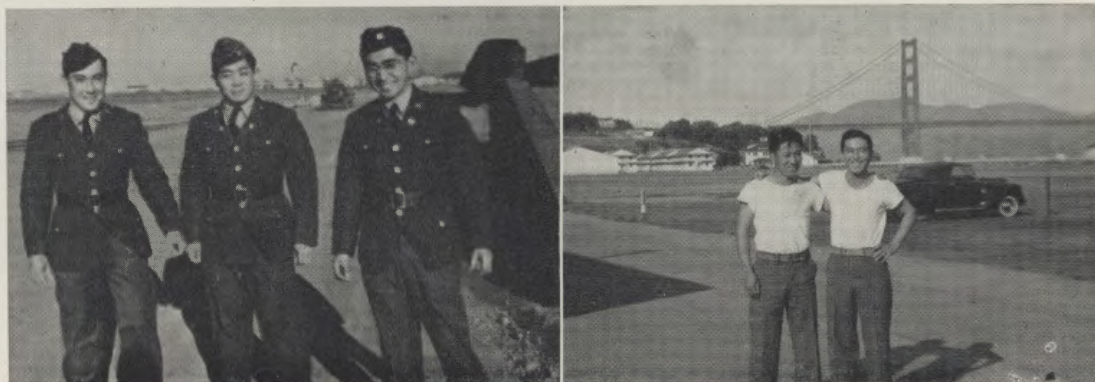


MAYEDA AND MATSUMOTO and pre-war vehicle.



PASS IN HAND but not too late,

SMILES in front of the Golden Gate.







PART THREE

Savage

- ACADEMIC AND MILITARY
- BARRACKS
- STAFF AND FACULTY
- OFFICERS OFF-GUARD
- SAVAGE SNAPSHOTS



THE CAMP

The second home of MISLS at Savage, Minnesota was the grounds and barracks formerly used by a state-maintained home for indigent old men. The war in the Pacific being too young, even the hush-hush reports on the overseas record of the MIS men had not begun to filter in. The School had yet to see itself operating at capacity. Nevertheless, Savage was the scene of a building expansion to keep up with the purposes of the School from May 1942 to August 1944.

The aerial photo is of the main camp. Flanked to the right of the wooded square are the buildings used for classrooms. Further right are the faculty offices. The cross-shaped structure facing the square is the mess hall. Buildings on the right of the wooded square are BIQ, BOQ, hospital, detachment offices. Big group of uniform barracks to left are student quarters. On the grassy plot tangent to the square are PX, administration offices. Station complement, signal office, etc., were in the buildings in the white area. The highway at the top led to Camp Seven and eventually to Shakopee to the South.

THE MI GOPHER

EMBLEM OF MISLS, THE GOPHER, is the creation of CBI veteran T/Sgt Chris Ishii while he was at Savage in 1943. Imprinted on stationery and publications, it has been given permanence in the form of a plaque. What the mule is to the Army, the lion to M-G-M, the GOPHER is to the School.

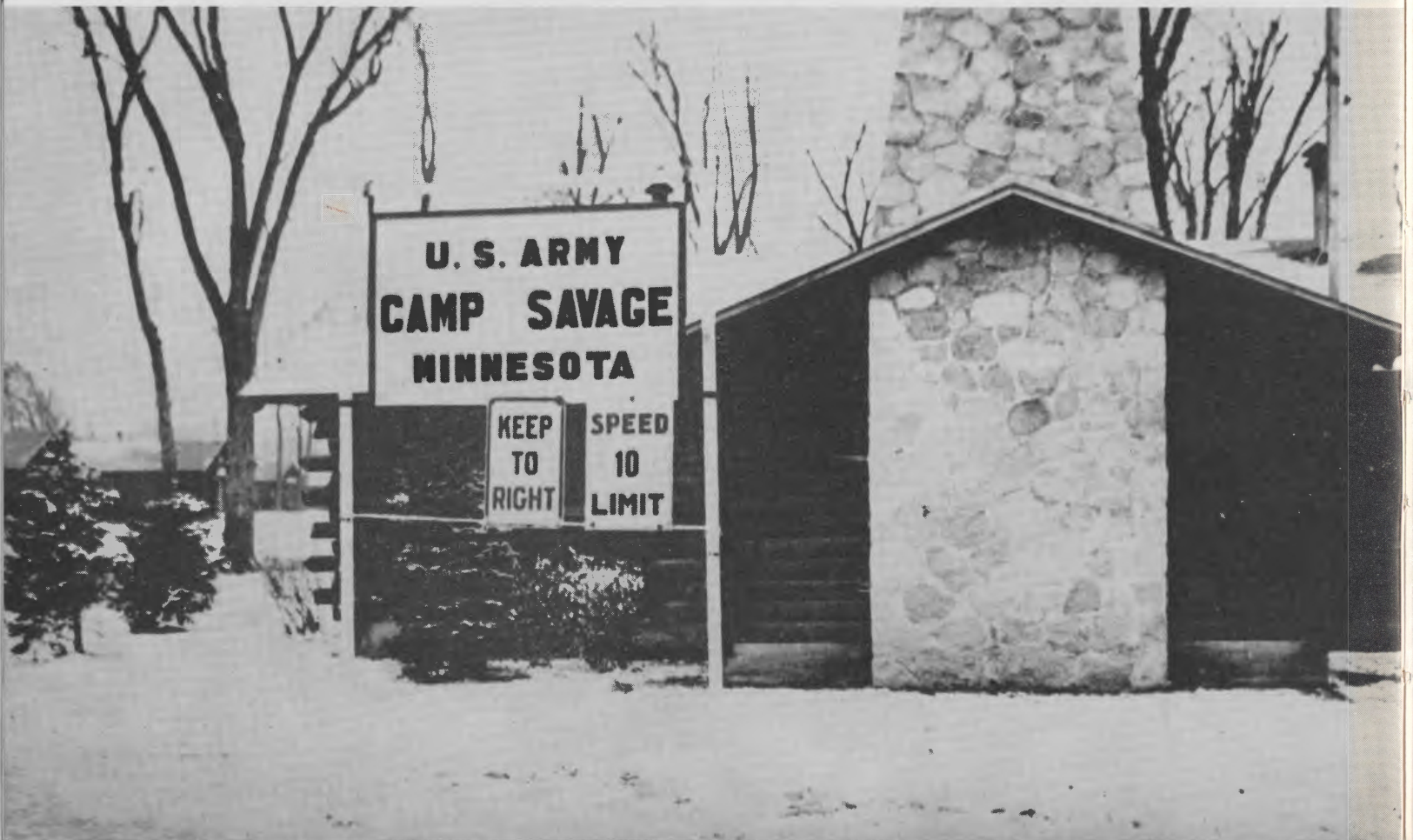


Barracks

Perpetual construction, which was characteristic of Savage, was a barometer of School growth. The handful of original buildings inherited by the School were capable of facilitating a few hundred students. Some of the classes and service units were functioning in makeshift barns. Buildings which could be used for recreational and social events were particularly missed.

It was quite apparent that the camp was not conceived with permanence in mind. The cramping exigencies which arose as more and more students entered the School were behind the continuous mushrooming of structures.

Among the buildings constructed were the theater and gymnasium, which made unnecessary the repetition of an early camp dance held in a barn after a farmer had milked his cows therein and sent them out to pasture. Despite new buildings, classrooms were always crowded, and the inability of the construction program to keep pace with the growth of the School finally forced the Command to look around for another site.



IN CAMP THREE, located southeast of main camp, students are seen passing in and out of barracks. Barracks were usually overcrowded and stuffy.



EM'S BARRACKS were located in main camp. Though less sumptuous than standard army barracks, they were more commodious than huts in Snelling "turkey farm."



CIVILIAN INSTRUCTORS, some with families, were quartered in "residence camp" (No. 7). Snow on dirt road formed mucky slush as weather warmed up.

