

CAMP ZAMA THROUGH THE YEARS....

Rikugun Shikan Gakko [1935~1945]

In 1935 land, consisting mostly of mulberry farms and forest, was selected and purchased for the future *Rikugun Shikan Gakko* – Imperial Military Academy – in Kanagawa Prefecture.



In early 1936 construction began primarily by Fujita Construction Company and mostly completed by the fall of 1937.

On September 30, 1937, the 50th class cadets moved to Zama to start their training. The billets located on the north side were used mostly by regular cadets, while those on south side accommodated regular junior class and students from foreign countries.

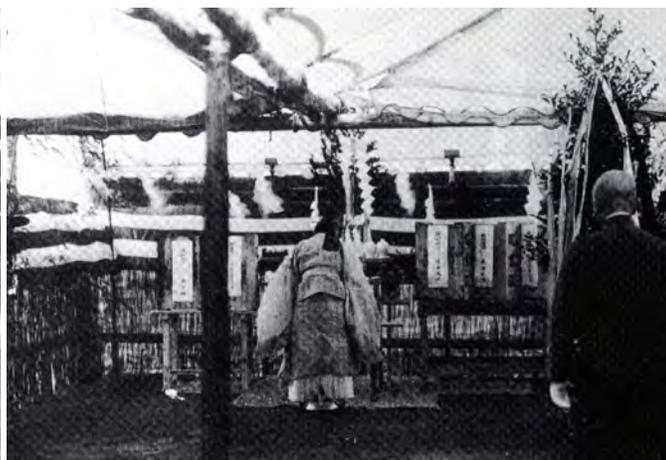
On December 20, 1937, Emperor Hirohito attended the first graduation ceremony for 426 students of the 50th class. On that day, he named the campus *Sobudai*.

With the China War theater expanding, enrollees increased each year from the 426 students in 1937 in Class 51 to 1,824 students per class by 1945. Records show that 18,476 cadets were trained at *Sobudai* and 8,956 men at the Air Academy in Toyooka, Saitama Prefecture.

In June 1945, as a precaution against intensifying Allied bombings, the entire staff and 3,000 students were sent on a long-term bivouac into the mountains of Nagano Prefecture. The *Sobudai* campus was left in care of a small unit of soldiers. On August 15, those in Nagano were informed of Japan's uncondi-



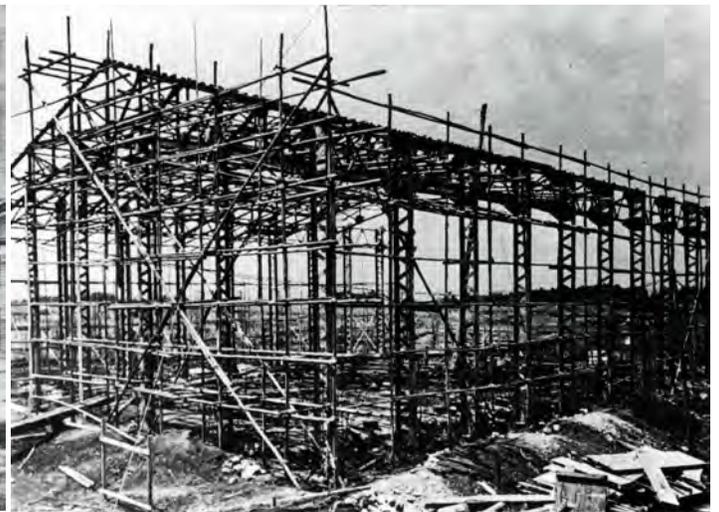
Senior Japanese Army officers and government officials watch the dedication ceremony Oct. 26, 1936, for the new military Academy.



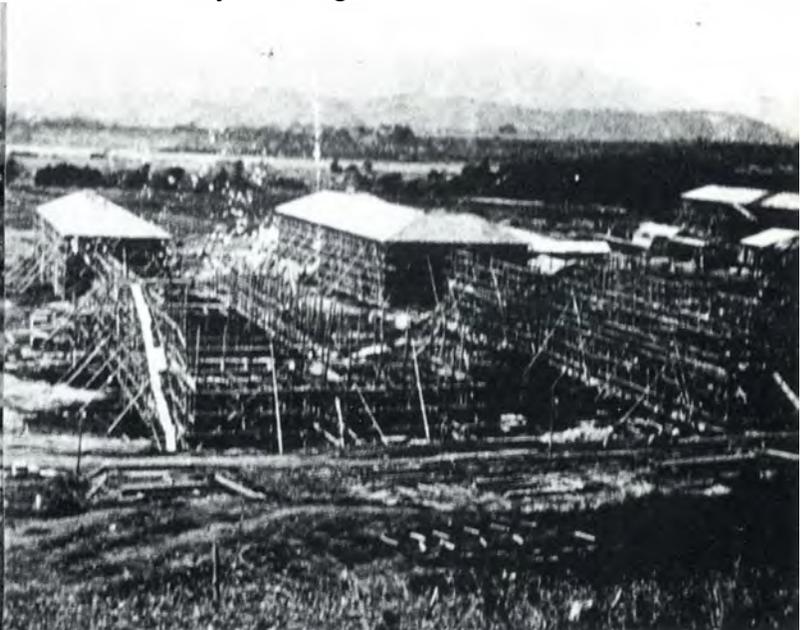
A Shinto priest performs a religious ceremony during the new Academy's dedication proceedings.



Sewer pipes waiting to be laid below ground line an area in front of some nearly completed buildings.

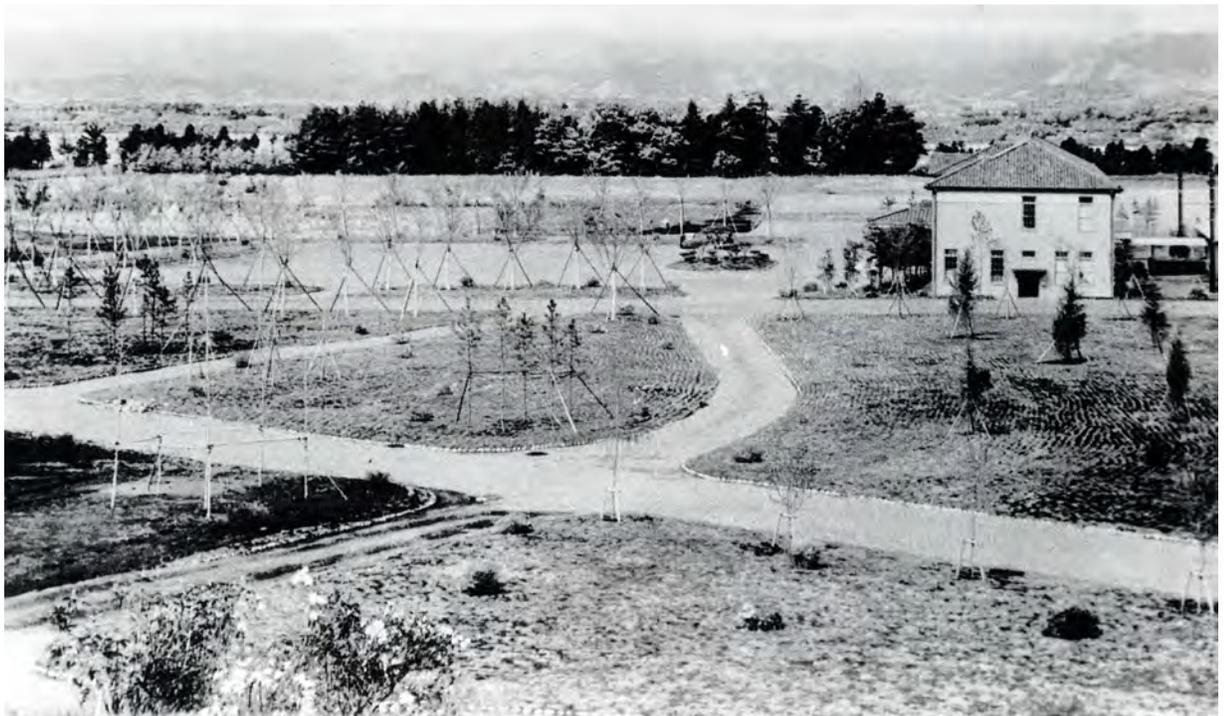


The skeletal framework goes up on one Academy building.



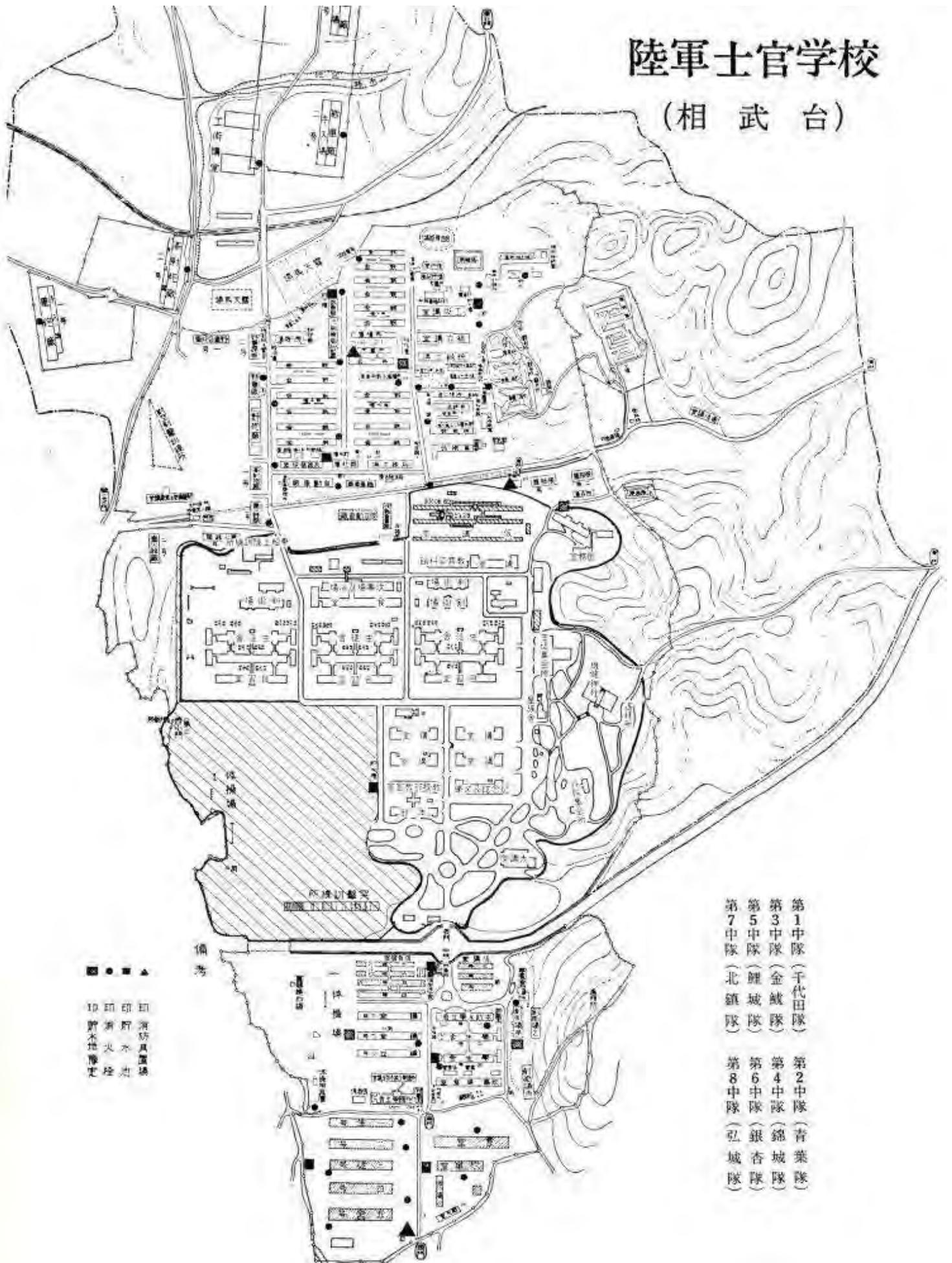
Buildings, in various stages of construction, begin to take shape opposition work site buildings.

With the Academy headquarters building already in place, newly planted trees and bushes improve the landscape where work site buildings once stood.



陸軍士官学校

(相武台)



- 第1中隊 (千代田隊)
- 第2中隊 (青葉隊)
- 第3中隊 (金鯨隊)
- 第4中隊 (錦城隊)
- 第5中隊 (鯉城隊)
- 第6中隊 (銀杏隊)
- 第7中隊 (北鎮隊)
- 第8中隊 (弘城隊)

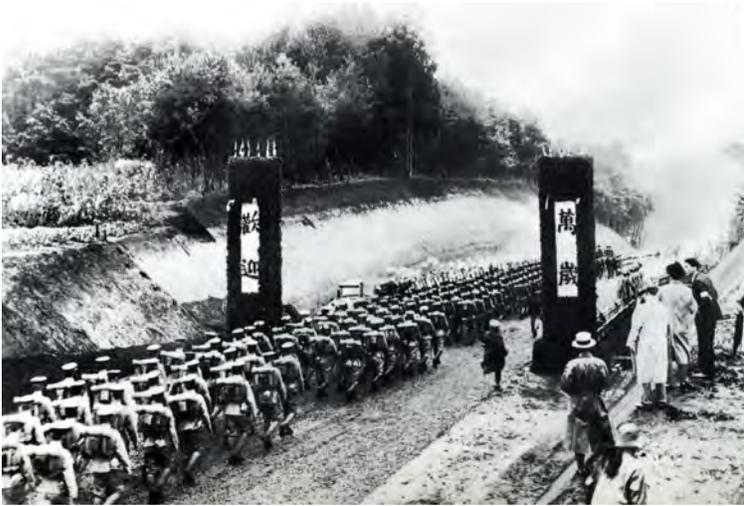
This conceptual map shows the buildings that were intended to be built for the Academy.



Workers take a break from building Gyoko-Doro (today's Highway 51) to pose for a photo.



Imperial Military Academy cadets rest on their march from Ichigaya to their new home on Sept. 30, 1937.



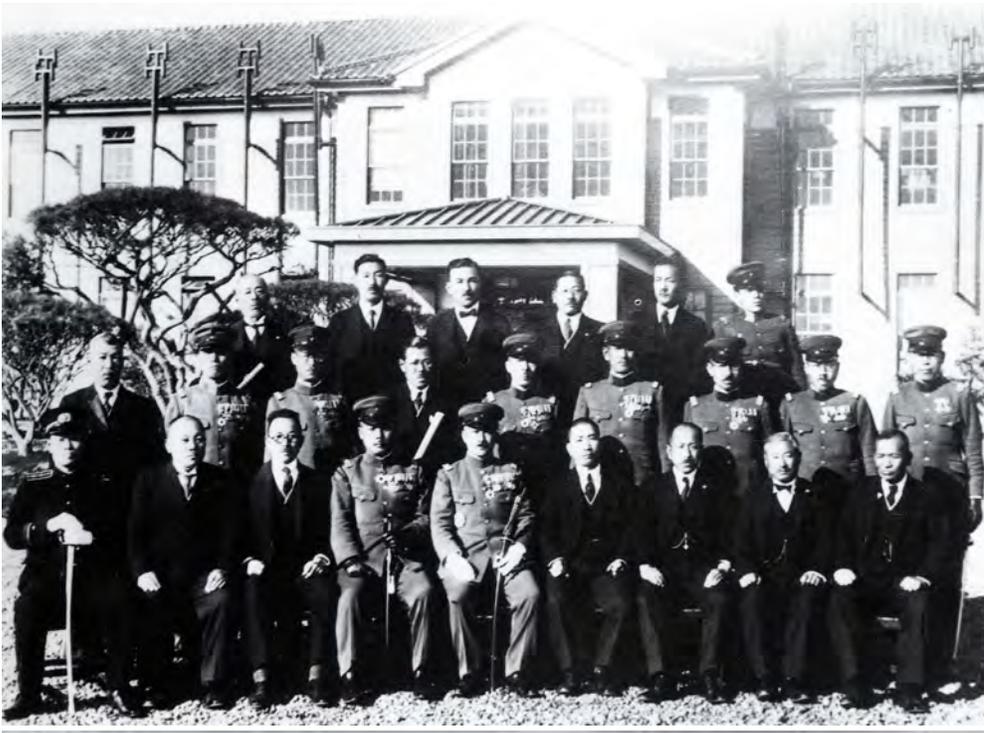
Cadets on their march from Ichigaya.



Enthusiastic and curious crowds gather as the cadets march from their old to new campus.

Cadets of Class 50 march through the front gate to the new Imperial Military Academy.





(Above left) Local officials and senior military officers at the Academy's dedication ceremony.

(Left) The Academy's front gate and headquarters building in the background.

(Above) The post at the front gate with the sign of Rikugun Shikan Gakko (Imperial Military Academy).

The headquarters for the Imperial Military Academy was one of the first buildings constructed on the new campus. It would later serve as headquarters for the U.S. Army in 1945.

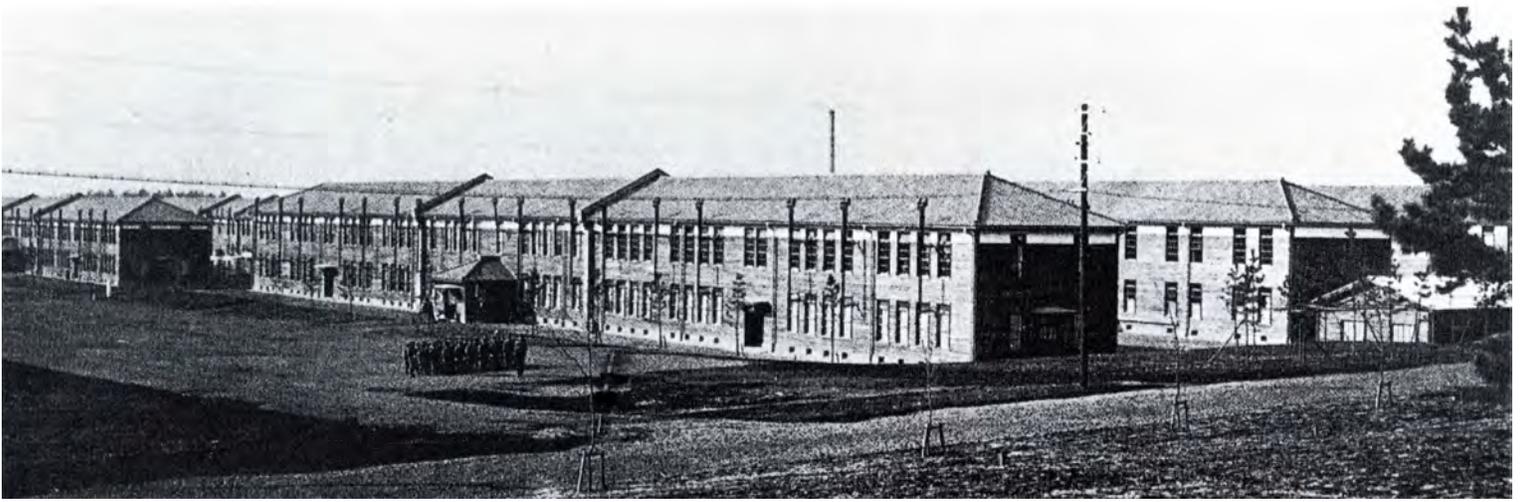




Emperor Hirohito (Japan's 124th emperor) attended all but two of the nine graduation ceremonies with the first being for Class 50 on Dec. 20, 1937, riding his white stallion Shirayuki (White Snow).



Otakebi Shrine was important to the Academy cadets. In 1945 the sacred items were removed and sent to Nagano Prefecture and the shrine was taken down. The wooden *Torii* was replaced in 1985 with a stone *Torii* by Kaikosha Association (former graduates of the Academy).



A small group of cadets practice drill in front of Academy buildings.



Cadets listen to the instructor during a lesson on building moral character to becoming an officer.



Cadet sleeping quarters.



Cadets march during a formation.



(Above) The horse stables located in what is now Dewey Park area.



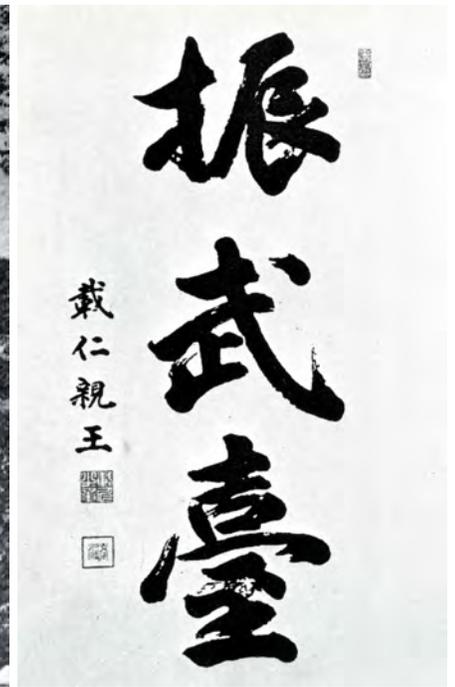
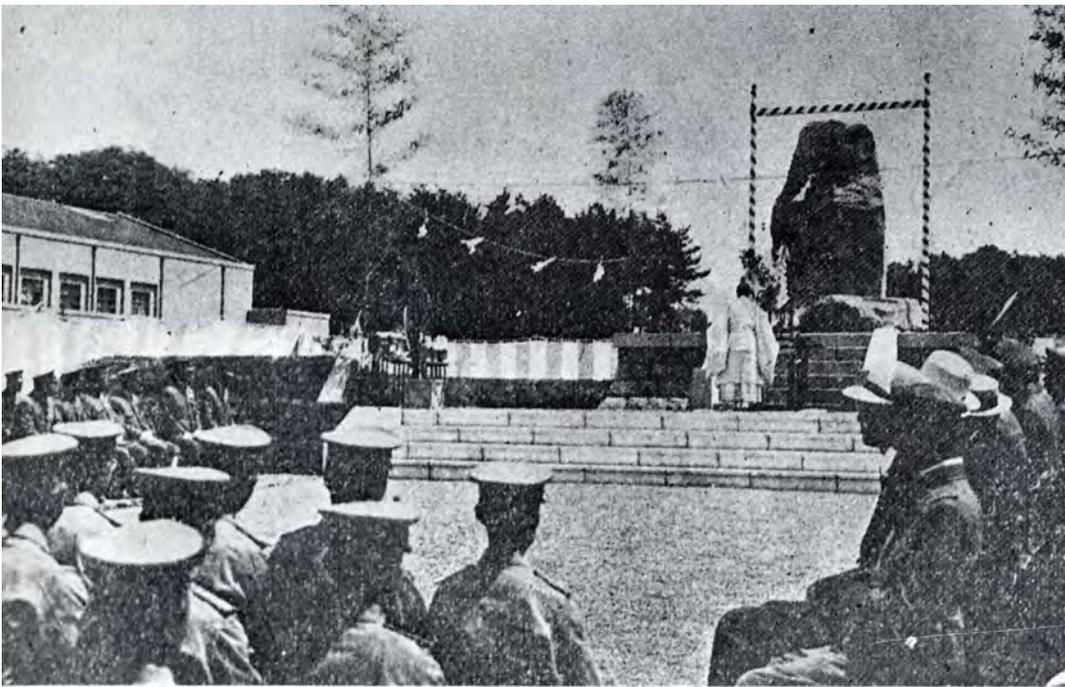
(Above right) Cadets water their horses.

(Below) Horses were an integral part of training for the officer corps.

(Below right) A cadet stands watch at night.



A classroom with instruction manuals piled high for study.



Following the graduation ceremony of the 50th class students, Emperor Hirohito told Army Minister General Gen Sugiyama to name the new campus *Subudai*—military training heights in Sagami—after the name mentioned in an epic of Crown Prince Yamato Takeru. After two years to find a suitable stone, the *Sobudai* monument was dedicated on August 20, 1940, bearing the three characters that he composed at the emperor's direction.



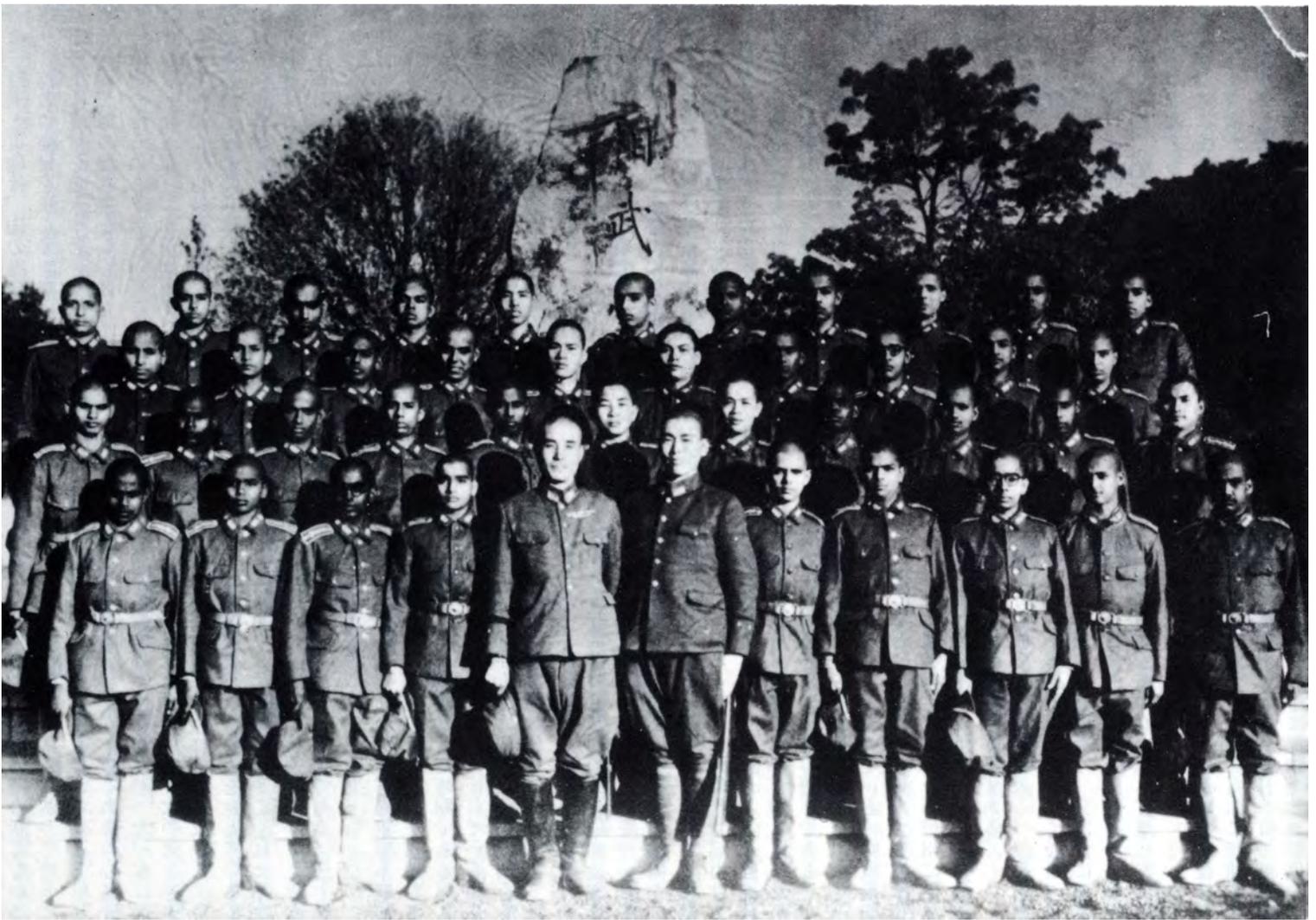
The cadet recreation and assembly building later used by the U.S. Army for a Service Club.



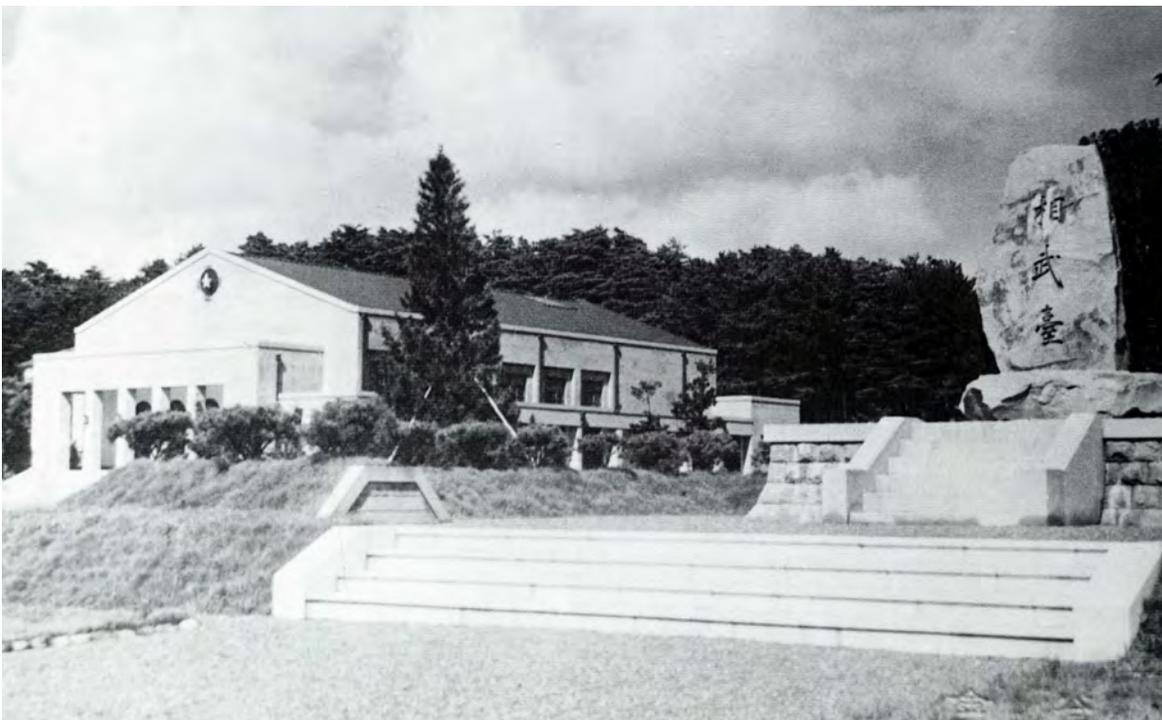
Cadets take a break and spend precious free time at the recreation building.

Graduation ceremony for Class 51 was held on Dec. 22, 1938. Graduating cadets were presented their diplomas despite a heavy rainfall that occurred that day.





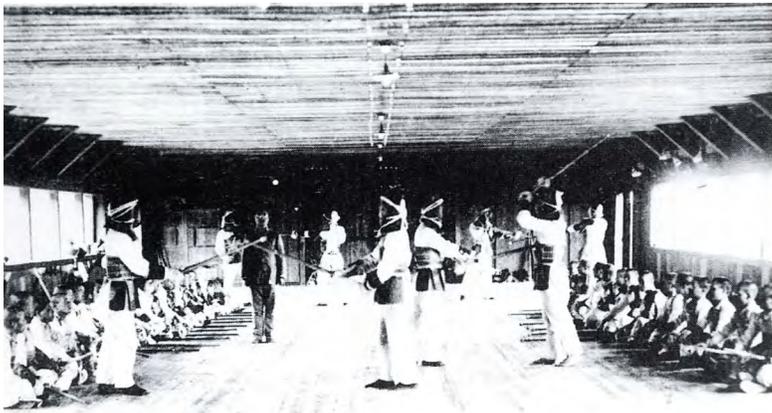
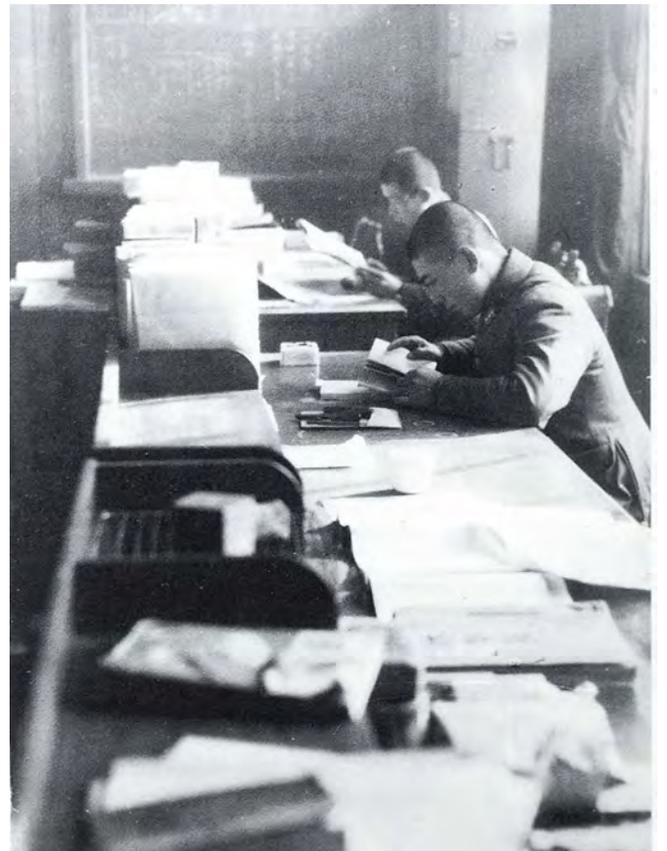
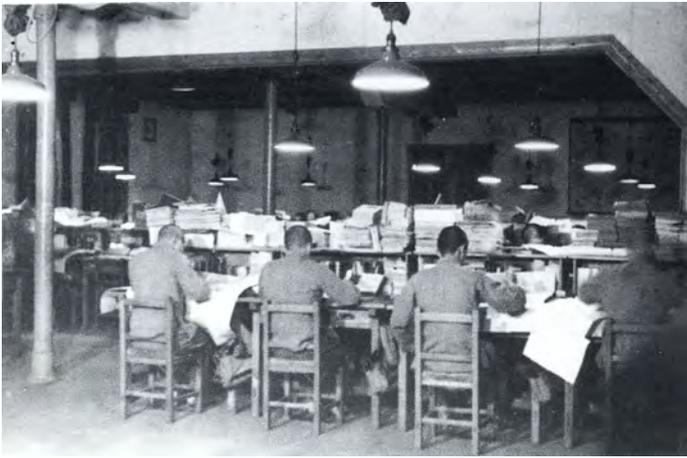
The south side of the installation accommodated regular junior class and other students including those from foreign countries. More than 600 international students from Burma, Republic of China, Korea and Manchuria received training. On notable student was Park Chung Hee who graduated third in his class in 1944 and later became president of the Republic of Korea in 1961.



Sobudai monument and the Academy auditorium.



A cadets life was one of regiment, study and building character. Shown on this page are various activities cadets went through as a daily routine from classroom work and studying to sporting activities such as kendo or horsemanship.





Mass formation of cadets and staff on the parade field.



A postcard of the auditorium. Note the two stone lions. The right one was unearthed in 2006.



While the pergola has been replaced, the wisteria growing outside the recreation center continues to grow nearly eight decades later.



Soldiers stand in formation as the end of the war draws near.



Class 59 cadets march through the front gate Oct. 14, 1944.



Three newly commissioned second lieutenants of Class 50.



During one of their rare free time trips, cadets wait for a train at Shikan Gakko-Mae train station, now Sobudai-Mae.



A cadet washes his clothes.

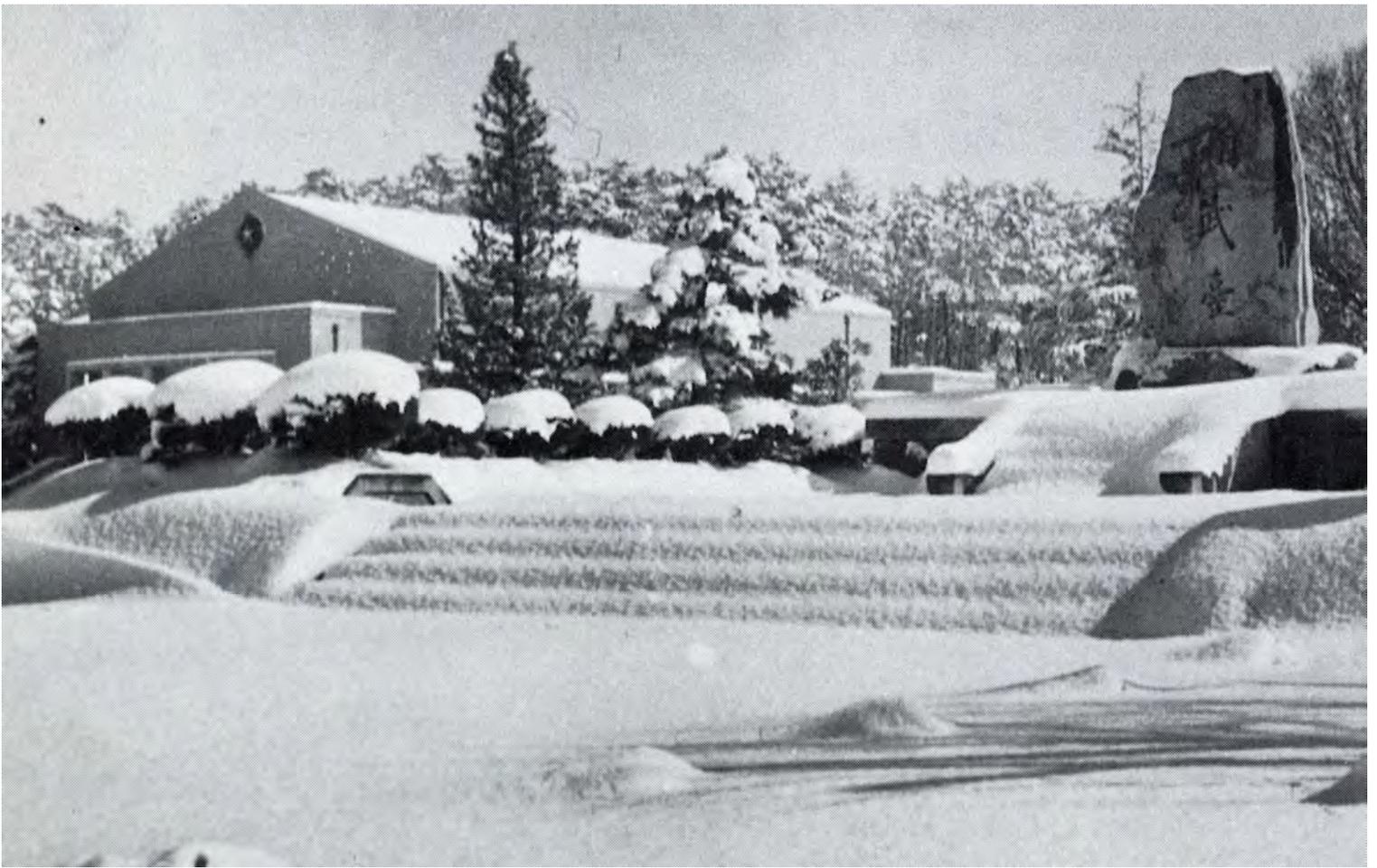


This building was for royal princes, but they preferred to stay with their fellow cadets. Inside (right) was a formal office. The building (now a museum) was moved to Camp Asaka in 1976.





An early aerial photograph of the *Sobudai* campus.



The *Sobudai* monument and adjoining Academy grounds were blanketed by a layer of snow.



A new Academy superintendent reviews troops during his assumption of command ceremony.



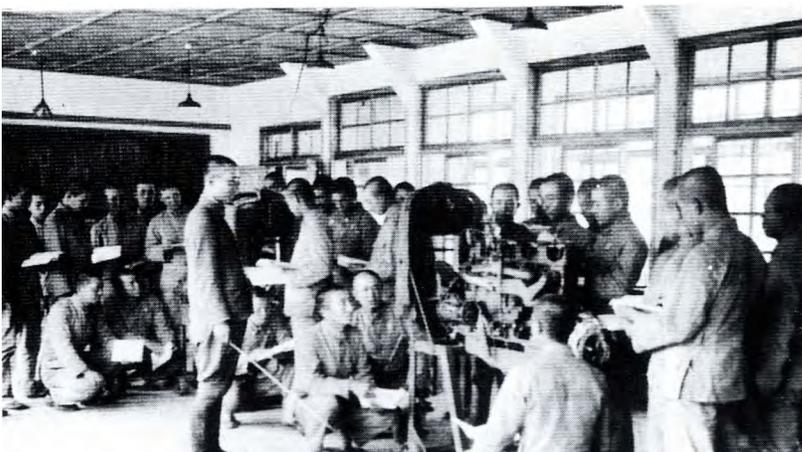
A ceremony prior to presentation of diplomas.



A ceremony honoring Emperor Hirohito is held prior to his departure after attending the first graduation ceremony on Dec. 20, 1937.



Cadets render respect to deities.



Cadets listen intently to the instruction and advice given by their revered instructors.



An Academy graduation diploma presented to Tadayuki Segawa on June 17, 1945. Class 58 was the last class to graduate before war's end.



A new swimming and training pool is dedicated in August 1941. A Shinto priest performs the ceremony with senior military officers in attendance.



Cadets take a picture by the pool. Note the shape that was used to train for boarding and disembarking ships.



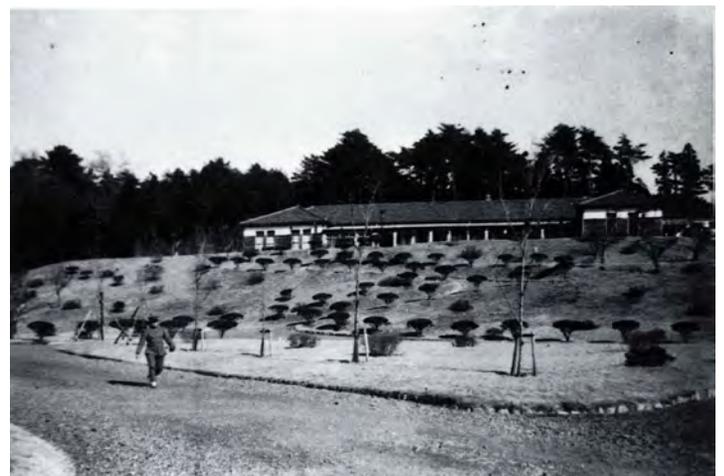
A new Academy superintendent arrives to take command in March 1945.



The tunnel with the road above to connect south and north posts.



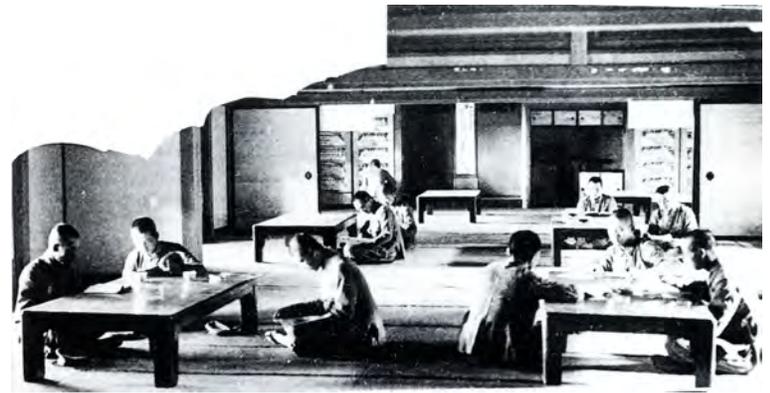
A Torii marks the entranceway to Otakebi Shrine further up the hill.



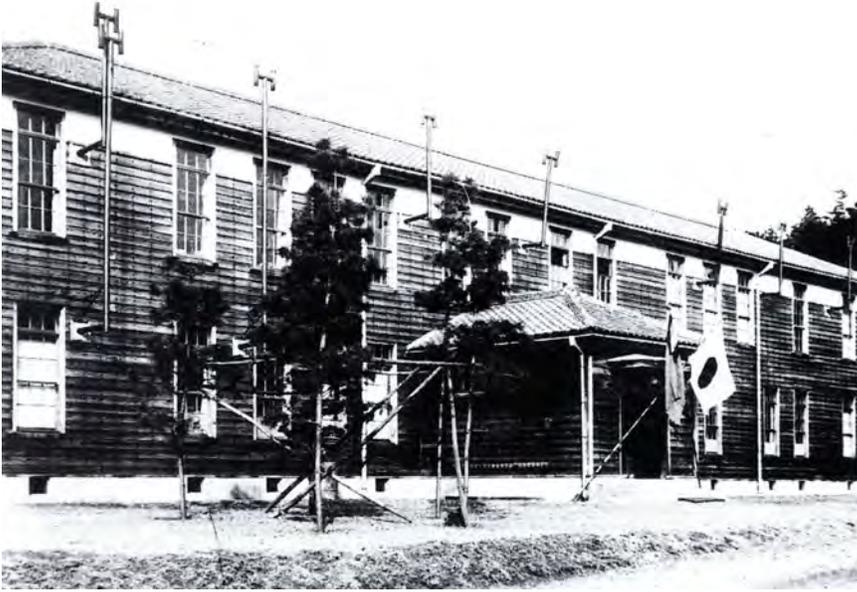
The Academy Officers' Club stood between the auditorium and Otakebi Shrine.



A postcard showing the Academy cadet barracks.



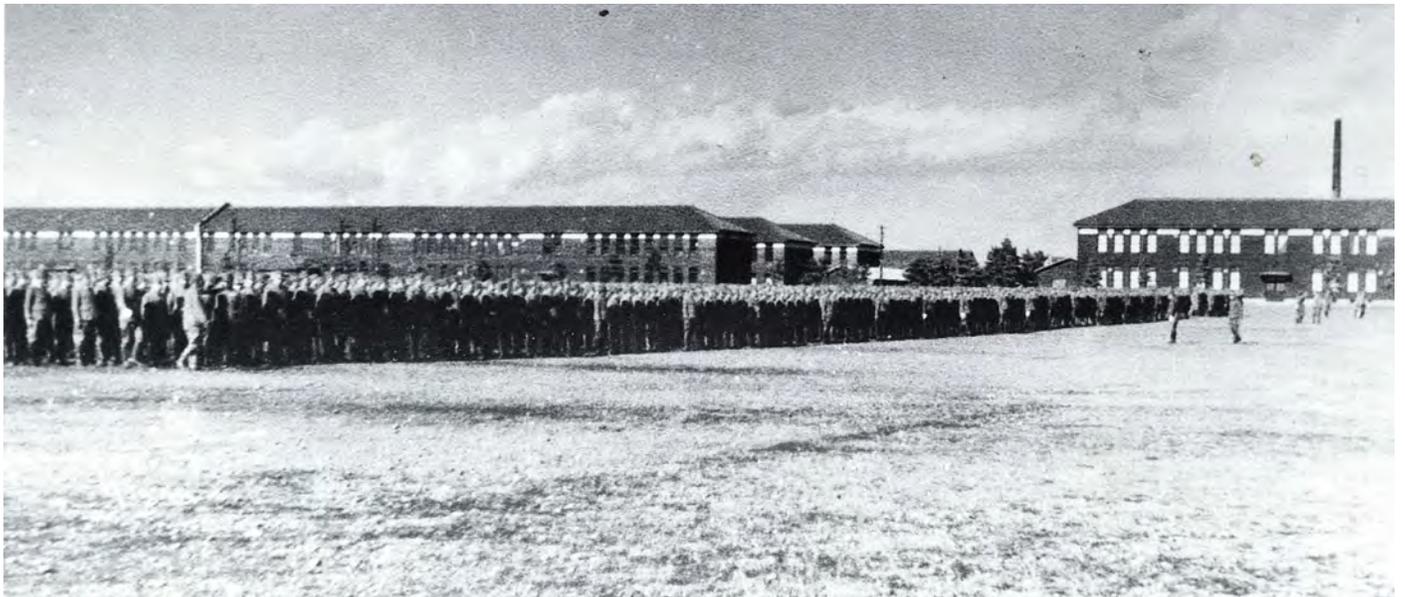
The second floor of the recreation center was used for relaxing and study by the cadets. This is one of the few remaining buildings from that era.



(Above) Classroom building for Manchurian cadets with both the Japan and Manchuria flags on display at the entrance.

(Right) Japan flags fly at the Academy front gate.

(Below) Academy cadet formation.





The members of one class unit take a group photograph before graduation.



In June 1945, as a precautionary measure against Allied bombings and possible invasion, Academy officials sent the entire staff and 3,000 students on a long-term bivouac into the mountainous regions of Nagano Prefecture. Here cadets of Class 60, 3rd Company, 4th Unit, pose for a photograph.