Messinger Pacific Theater World War II Collection

Special Collections Department

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San Luis Obispo, CA 93407-0605

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Messinger Pacific Theater World War II Collection
Date (inclusive): August-October, 1945,
Date (bulk): August-October, 1945
Collection number: MS 064
Creator: Donald J. Messinger
Extent: 1 box
Languages:
English
Repository: Special Collections, Robert E. Kennedy Library
California Polytechnic State University
San Luis Obispo, California 93407

Abstract: The Messinger Collection contains 100 black-and-white photographs that record one soldier's views of Japan in the closing days of World War II, including 14 aerial photographs of Nagasaki after the atomic bombing on August 9, 1945.

Provenance
Found in collection.

Restrictions on Access
Collection is open to qualified researchers by appointment only. For more information on access policies and to obtain a copy of the Researcher Registration form, please visit the Special Collections Access page.

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Preferred Citation
Messinger Pacific Theater World War II Collection, Special Collections, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, Calif.

Biography
Donald J. Messinger was born on February 9, 1914, and died in Rochester, New York, on June 4, 1993. Little is known about his life or his service during World War II.

Scope and Content Note
The Messinger Collection contains 100 black-and-white photographs that record one soldier's views of Japan in the closing days of World War II, including 14 aerial photographs of Nagasaki after the atomic bombing on August 9, 1945. The photographs include views of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii; the sea voyage to the Sasebo Naval Base, Japan; Japanese and American ships and aircraft; Army, Navy and Marine military personnel; images of Japanese urban and rural life in and around Sasebo following the fire-bombing; and aerial photography showing the devastation after the second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki.

The collection is arranged in original chronological order, from August through October of 1945 and uses Mr. Messinger's original captions.

Subjects
Bombing, Aerial --Japan -- Pictorial works
Nagasaki-shi (Japan) -- History -- Bombardment, 1945 -- Pictorial works
Sasebo-shi (Japan) -- History -- Bombardment, 1943 -- Pictorial works
War photography -- United States -- History -- 20th century.
World War, 1939-1945.
World War, 1939-1945 -- Archival resources
World War, 1939-1945 -- Japan
World War, 1939-1945 -- Aerial operations, American -- Pictorial works.
World War, 1939-1945 -- Japan -- Nagasaki-shi.
Messinger, Donald J. -- 1914-1993

Genre and Forms of Materials
Photographs

Related Material

Related Collections
Special Collections, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo:
Smith Family Papers on World War II, 1936-2005 (MS 65)
Manzanar Collection, 1942-1994 (MS 026)

1. Photographs 1945
Scope and Content Note
Contains one subseries: A. Photographs of Hawaii and Japan.
A. Photographs of Hawaii and Japan

Scope and Content Note
Contains black-and-white snapshots of military personnel from the Army, Navy and Marines, and the Japanese people in and around Sasebo; military transport by air, land and sea, and the devastation from firebombing and the atomic bomb at the close of World War II, arranged chronologically from August-October, 1945.

Box 1, Folder 1
Sad Sacks, the day of leaving, Hawaii
Always trucks
Convoy making up in Pearl Harbor
Plenty of room to enjoy the beautiful trip out
From the bridge to forward deck
Real comfort below-decks
Late evening, Sept. 21, 1945, Sasebo, Japan
Early morning, Sept. 22, 1945, Sasebo, Japan
The outer harbor looking east to China, Sasebo, Japan
Sasebo's inner harbor
Landing at the Seaplane Base of the great Sasebo Naval Base, Sept. 22, 1945
The first Christian service to be held in this area
This factory moved 95% underground
A great factory for making catapults
Inside said bunkhouse - former factory
Mountainside entrance to underground factory
Inside view of underground factory
Japanese working for 98th N.C.B. cutting grass
Airstrip of mowed grass at V.M.O. 5 Seaplane Base, Sasebo
Typical forward area Post Office
Some mail did come
Sweating out the trip home
Stateside hair cut???
Japanese Washrack
We stand in line to eat!!! We Stand in Line!!!
Japanese squat facing the high end
One of three Peace Planes
Charcoal burners used in lieu of gasoline
Typical farm wife with child on her back
Little Miss, with Sasebo Harbor in background
Curing rice in sunlight
Even the very old did their share
All except the middle-class city man — his wife his serf
Not so the farmer — his wife his partner
Saw a great deal of this
Typical sight of loaded women
As a rule, it's the women's place in front of the load
Taken near Haiki, 10 miles from Sasebo
Japanese police
Kids — very colorful kimonos
Notice the very large doll on the child's back
Threshing rice
Japanese bicycle-taxi near Kashima
Inside shot of middle-class home
It's quite humid in this area
View of Sonogi, Japan, with terraced rice paddies
Women carry male children until quite an advanced age
Air view of rice paddies
Very little land goes to waste in Japan
Ten million people live on the island of Kyushu alone
View of terraced fields
1. Photographs 1945

A. Photographs of Hawaii and Japan

| Box 1, Folder 11 | Air view of the Kumamoto Mountains across the Shimabara Kaiwan Bay |
| Box 1, Folder 11 | Inland waterways on air flight from Sasebo to Nagasaki |
| Box 1, Folder 11 | Rice fields, with part of Saga Mountain Range in background |
| Box 1, Folder 11 | Japanese plane factory, not far from Omuta. |
| Box 1, Folder 12 | Roadside shrine hidden in the rocks |
| Box 1, Folder 12 | Inside view of the Catholic Church, Sacred Heart, Main Street, Sasebo |
| Box 1, Folder 12 | Entrance to Shinto Shrine |
| Box 1, Folder 12 | These shrines were out of bounds to all troops |
| Box 1, Folder 12 | Entrance to a Buddhist temple |
| Box 1, Folder 13 | Country village |
| Box 1, Folder 13 | Country estate of rich farmer |
| Box 1, Folder 13 | Front view of estate |
| Box 1, Folder 13 | Better than average farm house |
| Box 1, Folder 13 | Missionary school |
| Box 1, Folder 14 | Main street of Sasa Village, approximately 20 miles north of Sasebo |
| Box 1, Folder 14 | Main street of Arita, northeast of Sasebo |
| Box 1, Folder 14 | Alleys of Sasebo |
| Box 1, Folder 14 | Three Japanese aircraft carriers |
| Box 1, Folder 14 | Middle class city house |
| Box 1, Folder 15 | Looking over the city of Omuta |
| Box 1, Folder 15 | Sasebo from the air |
| Box 1, Folder 15 | Closer view of the city showing the firebombed area |
| Box 1, Folder 15 | Military college, 5th Marine Headquarters |
| Box 1, Folder 15 | Closer view of Sasebo |
| Box 1, Folder 16 | Sasebo |
| Box 1, Folder 16 | Sasebo main street |
| Box 1, Folder 16 | Looking across town |
| Box 1, Folder 16 | His home |
| Box 1, Folder 16 | Firebombing hit in spots, leaving others untouched |
| Box 1, Folder 17 | The main theater, Sasebo, gutted |
| Box 1, Folder 17 | Sasebo Main Street |
| Box 1, Folder 17 | The main shopping area |
| Box 1, Folder 17 | The air view from Omora. This section untouched |
| Box 1, Folder 18 | Nagasaki, bomb dropped midway in the upper center, looking north Aug. 9, 1945 |
| Box 1, Folder 18 | The entire valley was a complete ruin, looking south |
| Box 1, Folder 18 | The residential area, protected from the bomb blast to the north by a range of hills |
| Box 1, Folder 18 | Large airplane factory. At the upper end of valley, or north end |
| Box 1, Folder 19 | Vertical view of a string of factories at the southern end of the Nagasaki Valley |
| Box 1, Folder 19 | Close of factories |
| Box 1, Folder 19 | Flying over the residential area |
| Box 1, Folder 19 | Former church located on the very edge of the bomb blast |
| Box 1, Folder 19 | Result of blast - southern end of valley |
| Box 1, Folder 19 | Approximately 12 miles from bomb blast, to the north, beyond the end of the valley |
| Box 1, Folder 20 | Japanese Army-Navy hospital — southern end of valley |
| Box 1, Folder 20 | Approximately eight miles to the northeast of the valley, only the blast reached here |
| Box 1, Folder 20 | A few miles further on, up the same valley |
| Box 1, Folder 20 | Church approximately seven miles down the southern end of the valley |
| Box 1, Folder 20 | The sun has set on Japan |