

Smith Family Papers on World War II

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Smith Family Papers on World War II,

Date (inclusive): 1936-2005

Date (bulk): (bulk 1942-1946)

Collection number: MS 065

Creator: Smith, Frank Herron, 1879-1965

Smith, Morris Eugene, 1912-2005

Extent: 8 boxes

Repository: Special Collections, Robert E. Kennedy Library

California Polytechnic State University

San Luis Obispo, California 93407

Abstract: Papers of two generations of the Smith family — Dr. Frank Herron Smith and his son Dr. Morris Eugene "Gene" Smith — including vintage broadsides and government reports on the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II and correspondence from the elder Smith to government officials advocating for improved treatment and safety for returning internees. Also includes Gene Smith's personal papers, yearbooks, photographs, newspaper clippings, tennis racquets and frames, and an illustrated autobiographical typescript detailing his service in the 25th Infantry Division from 1942-1946 as an Army linguist, translator, and interrogator in the Aleutians, Japan, the Philippines, and New Caledonia. Material donated by Smith family members in 1981, 1996, 2005, 2008 and 2009.

 <http://digital.lib.calpoly.edu/cdm/search/searchterm/ms%20065/>

Provenance

Donated by Gene Smith in 1981 and 1996 with an additional donation given by his heirs in 2005, 2008 and 2009, the collection is housed in and administered by Special Collections at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo.

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. Advance notice for use required.

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Preferred Citation

Smith Family Papers on World War II, Special Collections, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, Calif.

Biography

Rev. Frank Herron Smith

Dr. Frank Herron Smith was born in Illinois in 1879, son of a physician and a school teacher. By 1905, he had completed a theological course of study at Northwestern University. He soon left to begin his work abroad as a Methodist missionary, establishing churches in Japan and later Korea. By 1926, Frank Herron Smith and his family had returned to the U.S. and settled in Berkeley, California, where he served as the superintendent of the Pacific Japanese (Methodist) Mission and oversaw 22 churches in the Western U.S. After the 1942 forced internment of Japanese Americans from the West Coast, he continued ministering to his congregation by conducting church services for them in all ten of the far-flung internment camps. He was also a strong advocate for the fair treatment of the internees both while interned and once released, as well as for their businesses and real property that they had been forced to leave upon evacuation. Conversant in Japanese, Frank Herron Smith assisted the Office of War Information (OWI) in preparing scripts and making radio broadcasts to Japan during the war years. He died in Palo Alto, California, on August 6, 1965.

Morris Eugene "Gene" Smith, Ph.D.

Gene Smith was born 1912 in Nagasaki, Japan, to Methodist missionary parents, Frank Herron and Gertrude Smith. As his parents' work led them to establish churches in Korea, Smith spent most of his childhood there. The family returned to the U.S. in 1926, living in Berkeley, California. Smith attended U.C. Berkeley, earning a Bachelor's degree in History and a Master's degree in East Asian Studies. He also was a star player on the varsity tennis team, reaching the quarterfinals at Wimbledon. After the war years, Smith continued his studies, earning a doctorate in history at the University of Oregon; his thesis was the first scholarly history of the campus now known as California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. Smith enlisted in the Army in 1942. With a working knowledge of the Japanese language and his personal experience living abroad in Asia, Smith had valuable war-time skills. After a year's intensive language training at the Military Intelligence Service Language School (MISLS), he went on to serve as a Military Intelligence Officer, translating for and interrogating Japanese POWs. Discharged in 1946 with the rank of major, he received the Bronze Star and the Air Medal for his military service.

He began teaching history at Cal Poly in 1946. During his tenure at Cal Poly, he served as Social Sciences Department Head and later as founding head of the History Department. While at Cal Poly, he also coached the tennis team from 1946-1954. He retired in 1974 and died on May 8, 2005, in San Luis Obispo, California.

Sources

- "M. E. 'Gene' Smith." [obituary] San Luis Obispo Tribune 27 July 2005: B-2.
- "Morris E. Smith." U.S. World War II Army Enlistment Records, 1938-1946. Ancestry.com.
- "Professor Emeritus M. E. 'Gene' Smith Memorial July 30." Cal Poly Report. 20 July 2005: 2.
- "Retirement Reception Planned for Gene Smith." Cal Poly Report 26 Feb. 1974: 2.
- "Rites Set for Former Missionary to Japan." Los Angeles Times 14 Aug 1965: B-8.

Scope and Content Note

The Smith Family Papers on World War II contains the personal papers of Reverend Frank Herron Smith of Berkeley and the personal and wartime papers of his son Morris Eugene "Gene" Smith, of San Luis Obispo. Both father and son shared a

life-long interest in Asian culture and history, having spent several years living in Japan and Korea.

The collection is housed in eight boxes and divided into two series:

1. Frank Herron Smith Papers, 1942-1945
2. Morris Eugene Smith Papers, 1936-2005

Records relating to the elder Smith's efforts on behalf of interned Japanese-American citizens during and after World War II are found in the first series, including correspondence to government officials and broadsides ordering the evacuation and internment of Japanese-Americans from the Central Coast of California.

In the second series, the younger Smith's wartime papers include an autobiographical typescript of his career as a military interrogator, with sketches of interrogations, and photographs of Smith with other U.S. soldiers and Japanese POWs, and of commanding officers in the Philippines. Also included is a post-war study by the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission of the effects on the populations of Nagasaki and Hiroshima. Vintage newspapers from San Luis Obispo County, California, document the end of the war and post-war.

There is an additional donation of two tennis racquets and frames owned by the younger Smith, who played at Wimbledon in 1939.

The provenance, or original organization, of the papers has been preserved for the most part. However, in order to simplify access to the collection for researchers, some materials in specific formats and topics were reorganized and refoldered to more accurately reflect their contents.

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Subjects

Japanese Americans -- Evacuation and relocation, 1942-1945.

Pacific Japanese (Methodist) Mission.

Philippines -- History -- Japanese occupation, 1942-1945.

Prisoners of war

Smith, Frank Herron, 1879-1965 -- Archives

Smith, Morris Eugene, 1912-2005 -- Archives

United States. War Relocation Authority.

World War, 1939-1945.

World War, 1939-1945 -- Evacuation of civilians.

World War, 1939-1945 -- Concentration camps -- United States.

World War, 1939-1945 -- Aleutian Islands (Alaska).

World War, 1939-1945 -- Archival resources.

World War, 1939-1945 -- Japan.

World War, 1939-1945 -- Japanese Americans.

World War, 1939-1945 -- New Caledonia.

World War, 1939-1945 -- Philippines.

World War, 1939-1945 -- Prisoners and prisons.

Genre and Forms of Materials

Correspondence

Monographs/printed material/pamphlets

Yearbooks

Typescripts

Periodicals

Broadsides

Military papers

Photographs

Newspaper clippings

Newspapers

Sketches

Government reports
Tennis racquets and frames

Related Material

Materials Cataloged Separately:

Twenty-six monographs about Asian history and culture or about San Luis Obispo County history owned by the Smith family have been cataloged separately with MARC records.

Related Collections

Special Collections, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo:

Manzanar Collection, 1942-1994 (MS 062)
Messinger Pacific Theater World War II Collection, 1945 (MS 064)
University Archives, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo:
Photo Archives

1. Frank Herron Smith Papers 1942-1945

Scope and Content Note

Contains three subseries: A. Correspondence, B. World War II Publications, and C. Japanese-American Internment Broadsides.

A. Correspondence

Scope and Content Note

Contains correspondence with the FBI, President Harry Truman, and Governor Earl Warren regarding unfair post-war treatment of Japanese-Americans, arranged chronologically, 1945. 1 folder.

Box 1, Folder 1

Correspondence, Treatment of Japanese-Americans, 1945

B. World War II Publications

Scope and Content Note

Contains government documents on the internment of Japanese-Americans, a published report on the war effort, and a military yearbook, arranged chronologically, 1942-1943. 4 folders.

Box 1, Folder 2

Headquarters, Western Defense Command and Fourth Army (U.S. Army), Presidio of San Francisco, Public Proclamation No. 1, March 2, 1942

Box 1, Folder 3

Grew, Joseph C. Report from Tokyo: A Message to the American People, 1942

Box 1, Folder 4

Dept. of the Interior, War Relocation Authority. Semi-annual Report, 1943

Box 1, Folder 5

The Album, 442nd Combat Team ("Go for Broke" Team), 1943

C. Japanese-American Internment Broadsides

Scope and Content Note

Contains four vintage broadsides issued by the Western Defense Command and 4th Army (U.S. Army), at the Presidio of San Francisco giving official notice and instructions to Japanese-Americans living in specific portions of the West Coast on their forced evacuation to internment camps, arranged chronologically, 1942. 4 folders.

Box 2, Folder 1

Broadside: "Instructions to All Persons of Japanese Ancestry Living in ... the Counties of Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo, State of California," 1942

Box 2, Folder 2

Broadside: "Notice: Civilian Exclusion Order No. 13," April 23, 1942

Box 2, Folder 3

Broadside: "Instructions to All Persons of Japanese Ancestry Living in ... the City of Fresno, California," May 11, 1942

Box 2, Folder 4

Broadside: "Notice: Civilian Exclusion Order No. 102," June 30, 1942
2. Morris Eugene Smith Papers 1936-2005

Scope and Content Note

Contains five subseries: A. Personal Papers, B. Tennis Career, and C. Military Career, D. World War II Publications, E. Artifacts

A. Personal Papers

Scope and Content Note

Contains biographical sketches written about Smith, personal correspondence and photographs of Smith, arranged alphabetically by record type, 1940s-2005. 4 folders.

Box 3, Folder 1

Biographical sketches, ephemera, 1997, 2000, 2004

Box 3, Folder 2

Correspondence, Personal, 1982

Box 3, Folder 3

Correspondence, Proposed Oral History for D-Day Museum, 2004

Box 3, Folder 4

Photographs, circa 1940s

Box 3, Folder 14.1

Smith Family Diary containing Smith Family genealogy and timeline 1634-1954, and chronicle of missionary assignments and family settlements, 1954

Box 3, Folder 14.2

Studio photograph of Makoto Saito, Prime Minister of Japan, 1926

B. Tennis Career

Scope and Content Note

Contains clippings, correspondence, and photographs about Smith's early career as a tennis player, playing tennis in New Caledonia during the war, and later years as a tennis coach. Arranged alphabetically by record type, 1936-2000. 3 folders.

Box 3, Folder 5

Clippings, Professional Tennis Career, 1937, 1939, 1947, 2000

Box 3, Folder 6

Correspondence, Tennis Coach, 1952

Box 3, Folder 7

Photographs, 1936-circa 1970

Box 3, Folder 15

Scrapbook, The Wimbledon Championships 1939, featuring Eugene Smith, includes black embroidered ribbon from Normandy, 1939

C. Military Career

Scope and Content Note

Contains personal papers, military yearbooks, photographs, a photograph album, and an illustrated autobiographical typescript detailing the Army service of Gene Smith from 1942-1946. Also includes post-World War II newspaper clippings and internment camp data. Items often have notations by Smith and ephemera laid in, arranged chronologically, 1942-2005. 17 folders.

Box 3, Folder 8

Army photograph album, 1942-46

Box 3, Folder 9

Military Service Discharge Papers, Awards, 1943, 1945-47, 1962

Box 3, Folder 10

Propaganda Surrender Leaflet, circa 1943

Box 3, Folder 11

Sketches, "Interrogation by [Hank] Suzuki" and Yank magazine drawing by Rutherford, 1945

Box 3, Folder 12

Photographs of Smith with U.S. soldiers, Japanese POWs, and interrogating POWs in Luzon, Philippines, circa 1945-1946

Box 3, Folder 13

Photographs of commanding officers in Luzon, Philippines, 1945

Box 4, Folder 1

Karolevitz, Capt. Robert F. The 25th Division and World War 2, 1946

Box 4, Folder 2

Military Intelligence Service Language School Album, 1946

Box 4, Folder 3

Rutherford, William de Jarnette. 165 Days: A Story of the 25th Division on Luzon, 1945

Box 5, Folder 1

Morris Eugene Smith: Army Service, March 9, 1942-Jan 31, 1946, Typescript, early draft, folder 1 of 3, 1997

C. Military Career

Box 5, Folder 2	Morris Eugene Smith: Army Service, March 9, 1942-Jan 31, 1946, Typescript, early draft, folder 2 of 3, 1997
Box 5, Folder 3	Morris Eugene Smith: Army Service, March 9, 1942-Jan 31, 1946, Typescript, early draft, folder 3 of 3, 1997
Box 5, Folder 4	Morris Eugene Smith: Army Service, March 9, 1942-Jan 31, 1946. Typescript, successive draft, folder 1 of 3, 1997
Box 5, Folder 5	Morris Eugene Smith: Army Service, March 9, 1942-Jan 31, 1946. Typescript, successive draft, folder 2 of 3, 1997
Box 5, Folder 6	Morris Eugene Smith: Army Service, March 9, 1942-Jan 31, 1946, Typescript, successive draft, folder 3 of 3, 1997
Box 5, Folder 7	Clippings, 2001, 2005
Box 5, Folder 8	Internment Camps data, undated

D. World War II Publications

Scope and Content Note

Contains World War II era and post-war era serial, newspaper and monograph publications, arranged alphabetically by author or by publication title if no personal author. 1942-1991. 9 folders

Box 5, Folder 9	Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission, USA, and National Institute of Health, Japan. Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission. English and Japanese text, 1966-67
Box 5, Folder 10	Cole, Allan. Forty Years of Chinese Communism. Service Center for Teachers of History, Pub. No. 47, 1962
Box 5, Folder 11	Hall, John Whitney. Japanese History: New Dimensions of Approach and Understanding. Service Center for Teachers of History, Pub. No. 34, 1961
Box 5, Folder 12	Hucker, Charles. Chinese History: A Bibliographic Review, Service Center for Teachers of History, Pub. No. 15, 1958
Box 5, Folder 13	Military Intelligence Service Association of Northern California and the National Japanese American Historical Society. The Pacific War and Peace: Americans of Japanese Ancestry in Military Intelligence Service, 1991
Box 5, Folder 14	Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch. Transactions. Vol. 18, 1973
Box 6, Folder 01	San Luis Obispo Telegram Tribune
Box 6, Folder 01	September 1, 1942
Box 6, Folder 01	6 June 1944
Box 6, Folder 01	12 April 1945
Box 6, Folder 01	8 May 1945
Box 6, Folder 01	14 August 1945
Box 6, Folder 02	The Transmitter - Camp San Luis Obispo Southwestern Signal Corps Training Center
Box 6, Folder 02	1 Apr 1952
Box 6, Folder 02	The Transmitter - Camp San Luis Obispo Southwestern Signal Corps Training Center, 1 Apr 1952, 8 Apr 1952, 15 Apr 1952, 22 Apr 1952, 29 Apr 1952, 6 May 1952, 13 May 1952, 20 May 1952, 3 Jun 1952, 10 Jun 1952, 30 Oct 1953
Box 6, Folder 02	Vol. 1, No. 4, 22 Apr 1952
Box 6, Folder 02	Vol. 1, No. 5, 29 Apr 1952
Box 6, Folder 02	Vol.1, No. 6, 6 May 1952
Box 6, Folder 02	Vol. 1, No. 7, 13 May 1952
Box 6, Folder 02	Vol. 1, No.8, 20 May 1952
Box 6, Folder 02	Vol. 1, No. 10, 3 Jun 1952
Box 6, Folder 02	Vol. 1, No.11, 10 Jun 1952
Box 6, Folder 02	Vol. 2 No. 44, 30 Oct 1953
Box 6, Folder 03	The Yank, 1 June 1945

E. Artifacts

Scope and Content Note

Contains two tennis racquets with frames, owned by Gene Smith and used at Wimbledon, circa 1939. 2 boxes.

Box 7

Box 8

Two tennis racquets with one frame, circa 1939

One tennis racquet press frame with stickers of countries where Smith played tennis, circa 1939