
Guide to the Kenzo Robert Koike Papers

Finding aid prepared by Phoebe Huth, CCEPS Fellow, Fall 2014

Special Collections, Honnold/Mudd Library

800 North Dartmouth Ave

Claremont, CA, 91711

Phone: (909) 607-3977

Email: spcoll@cuc.claremont.edu

URL: <http://libraries.claremont.edu/sc/default.html>

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Kenzo Robert Koike Papers

Dates: 1921-1967 and undated

Bulk Dates: 1921-1948

Collection number: H.Mss.1048

Creator: Koike, Kenzo Robert

Extent: 2 linear feet(4 document box + 1 clamshell box)

Repository: Claremont Colleges. Library. Special Collections, Honnold/Mudd Library. Claremont, CA 91711.

Abstract: Kenzo R. Koike was a Japanese American, born in 1920 in Seattle, Washington. At the age of 12, his family moved to Los Angeles, where he attended middle school, high school, and college. In 1942, the Koike family was removed from their Los Angeles home and sent to Heart Mountain Relocation center in Wyoming. By 1943, Kenzo Koike was drafted into the United States Army, where he served as a translator in Japan from 1945 to 1946. This collection includes documents and photographs from Koike's youth in Seattle and Los Angeles, including diplomas, year books, and registration cards. It also contains military documents and photographs from Koike's time in Japan, depicting bombings after World War II, traditional Japanese dress, and Koike's relatives. In addition, a garrison hat and an aviator hat from the war are located in this collection. Postcards of barracks in Fort Sheridan and correspondence with Koike's peers in Seattle are also in this collection.

Physical location: Please consult repository.

Language of materials: Materials are primarily in English, some materials in Japanese.

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Publication Rights

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Kenzo Robert Koike Papers (H.Mss. 1048). Special Collections, Honnold/Mudd Library, Claremont University Consortium.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased, 2013.

Accruals

No additions to the collection are anticipated.

Processing Information

Processed by Phoebe Huth in 2014 in the Claremont Center for Engagement with Primary Sources (CCEPS), with assistance from Lisa Crane. In order to process this collection, photographs were taken out of their frames and placed in mylar sleeves. The frames were discarded. All loose photographs were also placed in mylar sleeves. Rolled photographs were flattened and folded correspondence was unfolded in order to preserve and store the materials. A newspaper clipping was photocopied onto acid free paper and the original disposed.

Biographical/Historical note

Kenzo Robert Koike was born in Seattle, Washington in 1920 to Japanese immigrants. At the age of 12, his family moved to Los Angeles, California, where he attended junior high school, high school, and Los Angeles City College, where he participated in many sports, including wrestling, basketball, and swimming. A year after graduating college, Koike and his family were relocated to Heart Mountain Relocation Center in Wyoming and forced into internment, where he worked for Keeshin Motor Express Co., Inc. He was then drafted by the United States Army in 1943 and eventually became a rifleman and worked for military intelligence. By the end of 1945, Koike was sent to Japan as a translator and interpreter. From the end of 1945 to the beginning of 1946, while working in Japan for the United States Army, he was able to get time off to visit relatives in Japan. Koike was able to go back to Japan in 1947 and 1948. After arriving back in the United States, Koike became a school teacher. Kenzo Koike passed away on February 2, 2010 in Granada Hills, California at the age of 89. He is survived by his wife and daughter.

Scope and Content note

This collection focuses on the early life of Kenzo Koike with the bulk of materials from 1921 to 1948. There are materials from Koike's early life in schools and military documents, which includes correspondence from Koike's elementary school peers. Most of the collection is photographs from his time in the army in Japan after World War II, including pictures of the

rubble caused by multiple bombings. These materials portray the life of a Japanese American before, during, and after World War II, including artifacts, such as hats worn during his time in the Army. Through this collection, one can see the discrimination of a Nisei Japanese American during the mid- 20th century.

Arrangement note

This collection has been arranged in the following series:

Series 1: Personal records, 1932-1967 and undated

Series 2: Photographs, 1921-1948 and undated

Subseries 2.1: Albums, 1921-1946 and undated

Subseries 2.2: Portraits, 1921-1943 and undated

Subseries 2.3: Japan, 1945-1948 and undated

Series 3: Postal materials, 1918, 1932 and undated

Series 4: Realia, undated

These materials have been arranged alphabetically by folder title within each series and subseries.

Related Material

Related materials providing information on Japanese American Internment may be found in the following collections in the Honnold/ Mudd Library Special Collections:

- H.Mss.0926, War Relocation Authority Records
- H.Mss.1047, Kruska Japanese Internment Collection
- H.Mss.1049, Yamano Japanese Internment Collection
- H.Mss.1052, Ken Tamura Papers

Indexing Terms

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

Subject Terms

Japanese Americans

Japanese Americans -- Archives

Japanese Americans -- Evacuation and relocation, 1942-1945

World War, 1939-1945--Japanese Americans

Genre and Form of Materials

Artifacts

Photograph albums

Photographs

Series 1: **Personal records, 1932-1967 and undated**

Arrangement note

Alphabetical order by folder title.

Scope and Content note

This series contains military records of Kenzo Koike, such as orders sending him to Japan as a translator. It also contains documents and commencement materials from Koike's elementary, middle, high school, and college years, such as year books and diplomas. In addition, this series has identification cards for Kenzo Koike as a Japanese American and his status as a worker during World War II.

Box 1, Folder 1

California teaching certificate, 1940 June 28-1942 March 10

Box 1, Folder 2

Henry Koike materials, 1932 January 29-1939 February 2

Box 1, Folder 3

Identification cards, 1941 June 9-1942 September 1 and undated

Note

This file contains 5 items.

Box 1, Folder 4

John H. Francis Polytechnic High School materials, 1937-1938 June 28 and undated

Box 1, Folder 5	Lafayette Junior High School materials, 1933 February-1935 21 and undated Note This file includes a photograph from 1935 of students at Lafayette Junior High School.
Box 1, Folder 6	Lafayette Junior High School yearbook, 1938 June Note Owned by Hideo Koike.
Box 1, Folder 7	Lauren Koike certificate, 1967 January 27
Box 1, Folder 8	Los Angeles City College materials, 1938 June 23-1941 January 30
Box 1, Folder 9	Military documents, 1944 June 27-1947 and undated
Box 1, Folder 10	Newspaper clipping, <i>Which was a greater menace to our country and our values?</i>
Drawer 1, Folder 1	Oversized photographs, 1941-1945 January Note This file contains 2 items: an oversized photograph of Company A, the 34th Battalion in Fort McClellan, Alabama on January, 1945 and an oversized photograph of Kenzo Koike's graduating class in 1941.
Box 1, Folder 11	Perfect attendance certificate
Box 1, Folder 12	UCLA Japanese Business Student Club stationary
	Series 2: Photographs, 1921-1948 and undated Arrangement note Alphabetical order by folder title Scope and Content note This series contains a wide variety of photographs from Kenzo Koike before, during, and after World War II. The photographs depict life for a Japanese American before the war, showing time at summer camps and his house in Seattle, Washington. Some photographs show Heart Mountain Internment Center in Wyoming and the life created during the time of Japanese American internment. In addition, many photographs demonstrate Koike's time in Japan as a member of the United States Army after World War II. Photographs depict post-bombing locations, people in traditional Japanese dress, relatives of Kenzo Koike, and everyday life in Japan after World War II.

Subseries 2.1: **Albums, 1921-1946 and undated**

Arrangement note
Alphabetical order by folder title.

Scope and Content note
This subseries contains photograph albums, which includes pictures from Kenzo Koike's early life in Seattle, Washington and Los Angeles, California, his time in a Japanese American internment camp, and his involvement in the U.S. Army in Japan after the war.

Box 2, Folder 1	Childhood and youth of Kenzo Koike, 1921 September-1941 February and undated
Box 2, Folder 2	Kenzo Koike graduation, Japanese Internment, and Japan in United States Army, 1939 February 2-1947 July and undated
Box 2, Folder 3	Kenzo Koike in Japan while in United States Army, 1945 October-1946 March and undated

Subseries 2.2: **Portraits, 1921-1943 and undated**

Arrangement note

Alphabetical order by folder title.

Scope and Content note

This subseries contains a variety of portraits, ranging from early Koike family portraits to portraits of people in traditional Japanese clothing. In addition, it also contains portraits from Kenzo Koike in the U.S. Army and small signed portraits.

Box 3, Folder 1

Koike family portraits

Box 3, Folder 2

Kenzo R. Koike military portraits

Box 3, Folder 3

Kenzo R. Koike photographs and portraits, 1921, 1941 and undated

Note

This file contains 10 photographs of Kenzo Koike at various stages in life. Included are two photographs of Kenzo as an infant in 1921 that were originally framed, Kenzo as an early teen, Kenzo on the University of California, Los Angeles campus and several portraits (including multiple copies) that were taken in 1941.

Box 3, Folder 4

Signed portraits

Note

This file contains 4 items.

Box 3, Folder 5

Unidentified portraits, 1928 February-1943 August and undated

Subseries 2.3: **Japan, 1945-1948 and undated**

Arrangement note

Alphabetical order by folder title.

Scope and Contents note

This subseries is an extensive collection of photographs and negatives from Kenzo Koike's time in Japan. Photographs range from visiting his relatives in Japan, to standing amidst rubble after bombings from World War II, to depicting everyday life in Japan during this time period. This subseries also contains photographs of Ambassador Edwin W. Pauley during his visit to Japan to negotiate reparations after the end of World War II.

Box 4, Folder 1

Asahi, Machi, Japan

Note

This file contains 1 photograph.

Box 4, Folder 2

Eileen Koike

Note

This file contains 3 photographs of Eileen Koike as an infant.

Box 4, Folder 3

Fishing

Note

This file contains 3 items. Two of the items are photographs of people fishing in Yugawara, Japan. The final item is a photograph of people digging clams near Chiba City, Japan.

Box 4, Folder 4

Identified photographs of people, Japan, 1945 December-1947 December 25 and undated

Note

This file contains 22 photographs, taken in Japan, of Kenzo Koike relatives, friends and neighbors, including Shinto musicians.

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|------------------|---|
| Box 4, Folder 5 | Kayabashi, Japan
Note
This file contains 3 items, including two photographs of people in Kayabashi, Japan, and one of a destroyed building. |
| Box 4, Folder 6 | Kenzo R. Koike photographs, 1945 December and undated
Note
This file contains 14 photographs including Kenzo Koike in his military uniform, his travels around Japan, and other unidentified people and places. |
| Box 4, Folder 7 | Komi-Suwa, Japan, 1945 November-1945 December and undated
Note
This file contains 44 photographs from 1945 of Kenzo Koike's visit to Komi-Suwi, Nogano, Japan to visit his relatives. It includes photographs of his relatives, neighbors, and the houses and landscapes in which they lived. |
| Box 4, Folder 8 | Nihonbashi Festival in Tokyo, Japan
Note
This file contains 4 items. |
| Box 4, Folder 9 | Nikko, Japan, 1945 November and undated
Note
This file contains 23 photographs from Nikko, Japan. Depicted in many of these photographs is Ambassador Edwin W. Pauley, who was appointed by President Harry S. Truman to negotiate reparations with Japan after World War II. Some of these photographs are blurry. |
| Box 4, Folder 10 | Japan, 1948 May
Note
This file contains 4 items depicting cherry blossoms, the Meiji Shrine, Chiba City fishing boats, and a small village. |
| Box 4, Folder 11 | May Day Parade on palace grounds in Tokyo, Japan, May 1
Note
This file contains 6 items. |
| Box 4, Folder 12 | Meiji Shrine, Tokyo, Japan, 1947 May and undated
Note
This file contains 5 items. |
| Box 4, Folder 13 | Military photographs, 1945 November and undated
Note
This file contains 23 items including photographs of Kenzo Koike, his friends, and others in their military uniforms during Koike's time in the United States Army. There is also a portrait of the Nisei regiment of which Koike was a part. |
| Box 4, Folder 14 | Post-war aftermath
Note
This file contains 4 items depicting the aftermath from World War II including destroyed landscapes and one photograph captioned, "10,000 Japs Killed on the 1st Island Invaded by McArthur." |

- Box 4, Folder 15 **Tokyo, Japan, 1945 November-1946 March and undated**
 Note
 This file contains 15 items depicting buildings and landscapes around Tokyo, Japan.
- Box 4, Folder 16 **Unidentified landscape photographs**
 Note
 This file contains 17 items.
- Box 4, Folder 17 **Unidentified negatives**
 Note
 This file contains 13 negatives depicting Kenzo Koike, his family and friends, various moments throughout his education, and people playing musical instruments.
- Box 4, Folder 18 **Unidentified photographs of people**
 Note
 This file contains 28 photographs of people who are unidentified. A few of the photographs are cut into shapes, like a heart.
- Box 4, Folder 19 **Yasukini Shrine**
 Note
 This file contains 7 photographs of the Yasukini Shrine in Tokyo, Japan.
- Box 4, Folder 20 **Yokohama, Japan, 1945 November**
 Note
 This file contains 4 blurry photographs depicting various landscapes.

Series 3: **Postal materials, 1918, 1932 and undated**

Arrangement note

Alphabetical order by folder title.

Scope and Content note

This series contains a few postcards from Fort Sheridan in Illinois and correspondence to Kenzo Koike in 1932 after moving from Seattle, Washington to Los Angeles.

- Box 1, Folder 13 **Card to mother, 1918 November 11**
 Note
 This card was originally framed, but the frame was discarded and the card was placed in a mylar sleeve.
- Box 1, Folder 14 **Correspondence with elementary school, 1932 June 6-1932 June 17**
Box 1, Folder 15 **Fort Sheridan postcards**
 Note
 This file contains 3 items.

Series 4: **Realia, undated**

Arrangement note

Alphabetical order by folder title.

Scope and Content note

This series contains a variety of items, including a small wooden box with Japanese characters, a stationary pad, a garrison hat, and an aviator hat from Koike's time in the United States Army.

- Box 5, Item 1 **Aviator hat**
Box 1, Folder 16 **Fort Snelling stationary book**
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Box 5, Item 2
Box 1, Folder 17

Garrison hat
Wooden box