Finding Aid for the Lincoln Kanai papers, 1938-1946, (bulk 1942-1945)

Processed by Chris Marino in the Center for Primary Research and Training (CFPRT), with assistance from Megan Hahn Fraser, August 2011; machine-readable finding aid created by Caroline Cubé.

UCLA Library Special Collections
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Descriptive Summary
Title: Lincoln Kanai papers
Date (bulk): 1938-1946, (bulk 1942-1945)
Collection number: 1637
Creator: Kanai, Lincoln.
Extent: 1 box (0.5 linear feet)
Abstract: Correspondence, primarily of Lincoln Kanai, governmental documents, pamphlets and bulletins relating to the relocation and internment of Japanese and Japanese Americans during WWII.
Language: Finding aid is written in English.
Language of the Material: Materials are in 1637.
Repository: University of California, Los Angeles. Library Special Collections.
Los Angeles, California 90095-1575
Physical location: Stored off-site at SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact UCLA Library Special Collections for paging information.

Restrictions on Access
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• Gift of Ralph Palmer Merritt, 1946.
• Gift of Bradford Smith, 1952.

Processing Note
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The materials in Collection 1637 were originally part of Collection 122, the Manzanar War Relocation Center Records (formerly known as the U.S. War Relocation Authority Archive). Collection 122 was then divided into smaller collections, one of which became Collection 131, a collection of material on Japanese American Internment. A few years later, Collection 131 was divided into three distinct collections: the Constantine Panunzio Collection of Material on Japanese American Internment (Collection 1636), the Bradford Smith Papers (Collection 1638), and this collection, the Lincoln Kanai Papers.

Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Lincoln Kanai papers (Collection 1637). UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

UCLA Catalog Record ID
UCLA Catalog Record ID: 4233237

Biography/History
Ten weeks after the United States declared war, President Roosevelt signed Executive order 9066 which gave the Secretary of War and military commanders the power to exclude any persons from designated areas, primarily along the west coast, in order to secure national defense. From December 7, 1941 until September 29, 1947 both Japanese and Japanese Americans were evacuated from the areas in which they lived and forced to relocate to designated relocation camps where they were detained. This was primarily overseen by the War Relocation Authority. Protest against Japanese and Japanese American internment, most commonly came in the form of court challenges to curfew and relocation. One of the more well known cases of protest was that of Lincoln Kanai, a U.S. citizen who failed to leave San Francisco after the order to evacuate was made mandatory for Japanese Americans or the Nisei generation.
Lincoln Kanai was born in Kauai, Hawaii in 1908. In 1930 he graduated from the University of Hawaii, where he studied science and social work. In 1937 Kanai moved to San Francisco where he became the executive secretary of the Buchanan Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), which at the time was also known as the Japanese Branch of the YMCA. After the executive order was declared, Kanai became involved in various efforts to organize assistance for Japanese and Japanese Americans during the war. He tried to find jobs for undocumented Japanese who found themselves out of work because of the war and wrote the government countless letter protesting relocation. Lincoln Kanai was especially concerned with the
relocation of Japanese American college students during the war as well as the rehabilitation of internees after they were released from relocation centers. During the war with the help of Kenneth Rexroth, American poet and essayist, Kanai also shipped educational and recreational supplies to Japanese and Japanese American internees. After the Executive Order 9066 was declared, Kanai stayed in San Francisco. Resisting relocation, Lincoln Kanai was arrested. After he was released from his arrest, he fled to Wisconsin where he filed a habeas petition to the federal district court in Wisconsin. He was later brought back to San Francisco to stand trial. He pled guilty on August 27th 1942, and was sentenced six months imprisonment. Lincoln Kanai died in February of 1982 at the age of 74.

**Scope and Content**
The collection consists primarily of Kanai's correspondence dated 1938, 1942-1943. The majority of letters written are from Kanai to the American government, however the collection also includes letters written by government officials such as Milton S. Eisenhower the director of the War Relocation Authority to Kanai, and letters written to Kanai from friends. Other correspondence within the collection includes correspondence from Japanese American internees to their former teachers and friends. This collection also includes pamphlets and bulletins issued by the War Relocation Authority, a Manzanar High School year book, as well as a bound volume of Administrative Subdivisions of Japan: with separate appendix of 47 prefectoral maps.

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

**Subjects**
- Kanai, Lincoln --Archives.
- Manzanar War Relocation Center.
- Japanese Americans --Evacuation and relocation, 1942-1945 --Archival resources.
  - Manzanar War Relocation Center Records (Collection 122). Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.
  - Constantine Panunzio Collection of Material on Japanese American Internment (Collection 1636). Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.
  - Bradford Smith Papers (Collection 1638). Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

**Box 1, Folder 1**
**Lincoln Kanai Correspondence and Governmental Documents, 1938, 1942, 1943, and undated.**

*Scope and Content Note*
Correspondence to and from Lincoln Kanai regarding Japanese and Japanese American relocation, and governmental documents released by the War Relocation Authority and the United States Senate. Organized chronologically with undated material last.

**Box 1, Folder 2**
**Letters to Mrs. L.R. Carter and Miss Paula Gillett from Japanese- American Internees at Manzanar, 1943, 1945, and undated.**

*Scope and Content Note*
Includes letters from Carter's and Gillett's former students, a year book from the Manzanar High School, and a partial roundup of news clippings and editorial comments produced by the War Relocation Authority.

**Box 1, Folder 3**
**Correspondence and documents regarding relocation centers, 1942.**

*Scope and Content Note*
Letters written by internees, and letters written by various college universities to the government protesting relocation. Also includes documents concerning the Tanforan relocation center, and college students facing relocation.
Box 1, Folder 4  Pamphlets and Bulletins relating to relocation, 1945 and undated.

Scope and Content Note
Includes pamphlets and bulletins issued by the War Relocation Authority regarding new job opportunities for families, the induction of American citizens of Japanese descent for military service, and an issued bibliography that includes materials published on the War Relocation Authority, the Japanese, and Japanese Americans in the United States, Hawaii and Canada between July 1943 and December 1944. Organized chronologically, with undated material last.

Box 1  Administrative Subdivisions of Japan: with separate appendix of 47 prefectural maps, 1946.

Scope and Content Note
A bound listing of Japanese prefectures, cities, counties, towns, and townships, giving for each the area, the population for 1940 (adjusted to 1943 boundaries), and the population for 1945, with characters, romanized names, and a code showing location on accompanying maps. All changes in civil status and names shown through November 1943. Published in 1946 by the United States, Department of State. The book was acquired by the UCLA library in 1947.