

Guide to the Smith Family Papers on World War II, 1936-2005



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Smith Family Papers on World War II, 1936-2005 (bulk 1942-1945)

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Descriptive Summary

Title:

Smith Family Papers on World War II, 1936-2005 (bulk 1942-1946)

Collection Number:

MS 65

Creators:

Smith, Frank Herron, 1879-1965
Smith, Morris Eugene, 1912-2005

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.

Extent:

8 boxes

Language:

English, Japanese

Repository:

Special Collections, Robert E. Kennedy Library
California Polytechnic State University
San Luis Obispo, California 93407

Administrative Information

Provenance:

Donated by Gene Smith in 1981 and 1996 with additional donations 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.

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:

[Identification of Item]. Smith Family Papers on World War II, Special Collections, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, Calif.

Abbreviations Used:

c.: circa

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.

Genres and Forms of Material:

Correspondence

Monographs/printed material/pamphlets

Yearbooks

Typescripts

Periodicals

Broadsides

Military papers

Photographs

Newspaper clippings

Newspapers

Sketches

Government reports

Artifacts

Related Materials

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

Biographical Notes

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 refolded to more accurately reflect their contents.

Series Description/Folder List

Series 1. Frank Herron Smith Papers, 1942-1945

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

A. Correspondence

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

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

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

Series 2. Morris Eugene Smith Papers, 1936-2005

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

A. Personal Papers

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, c. 1940s

B. Tennis Career

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-c.1970

C. Military Career

Contains personal papers, military yearbooks, photographs, photo album, and an illustrated autobiographical typescript detailing the Pacific Theater 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, c. 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, c. 1945-46

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 II, 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

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

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
1 Sept 1942
6 June 1944
12 Apr 1945
8 May 1945
14 Aug 1945

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 03

The Yank, 1 June 1945

E. Artifacts

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

Box 7

Two tennis racquets with one frame, c.1939

Box 8

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