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## Guide to the Smith Family Papers on World War II

Special Collections Department

Robert E. Kennedy Library  
1 Grand Avenue  
California Polytechnic State University  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407-0605

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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 65

**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.

### 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

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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.

#### **Restrictions on Use and Reproduction**

In order to reproduce, publish, broadcast, exhibit, and/or quote from this material, researchers must submit a written request and obtain formal permission from Special Collections, Cal Poly, as the owner of the physical collection. Researchers should also consult with an appropriate staff member regarding literary or other intellectual property rights pertaining to this collection.

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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.

#### **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

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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.

#### **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**

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**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.

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**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**

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**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**

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**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**

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**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

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**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 | <b>Biographical sketches, ephemera, 1997, 2000, 2004</b>            |
| Box 3, Folder 2 | <b>Correspondence, Personal, 1982</b>                               |
| Box 3, Folder 3 | <b>Correspondence, Proposed Oral History for D-Day Museum, 2004</b> |
| Box 3, Folder 4 | <b>Photographs, , circa 1940s</b>                                   |

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**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 | <b>Clippings, Professional Tennis Career, 1937, 1939, 1947, 2000</b> |
| Box 3, Folder 6 | <b>Correspondence, Tennis Coach, 1952</b>                            |
| Box 3, Folder 7 | <b>Photographs, 1936-circa 1970</b>                                  |

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**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  | <b>Army photograph album, 1942-46</b>  |
| Box 3, Folder 9  | <b>Military Service Discharge Papers, Awards, 1943, 1945-47, 1962</b>  |
| Box 3, Folder 10 | <b>Propaganda Surrender Leaflet, circa 1943</b>  |
| Box 3, Folder 11 | <b>Sketches, "Interrogation by [Hank] Suzuki" and Yank magazine drawing by Rutherford, 1945</b>                              |
| Box 3, Folder 12 | <b>Photographs of Smith with U.S. soldiers, Japanese POWs, and interrogating POWs in Luzon, Philippines, circa 1945-1946</b> |
| Box 3, Folder 13 | <b>Photographs of commanding officers in Luzon, Philippines, 1945</b>  |
| Box 4, Folder 1  | <b>Karolevitz, Capt. Robert F. The 25th Division and World War 2, 1946</b>   |
| Box 4, Folder 2  | <b>Military Intelligence Service Language School Album, 1946</b>   |
| Box 4, Folder 3  | <b>Rutherford, William de Jarnette. 165 Days: A Story of the 25th Division on Luzon, 1945</b>                                |
| Box 5, Folder 1  | <b>Morris Eugene Smith: Army Service, March 9, 1942-Jan 31, 1946, Typescript, early draft, folder 1 of 3, 1997</b>           |
| Box 5, Folder 2  | <b>Morris Eugene Smith: Army Service, March 9, 1942-Jan 31, 1946, Typescript, early draft, folder 2 of 3, 1997</b>           |

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2. Morris Eugene Smith Papers 1936-2005

C. Military Career

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|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| 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   |

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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   |

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E. Artifacts

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**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**