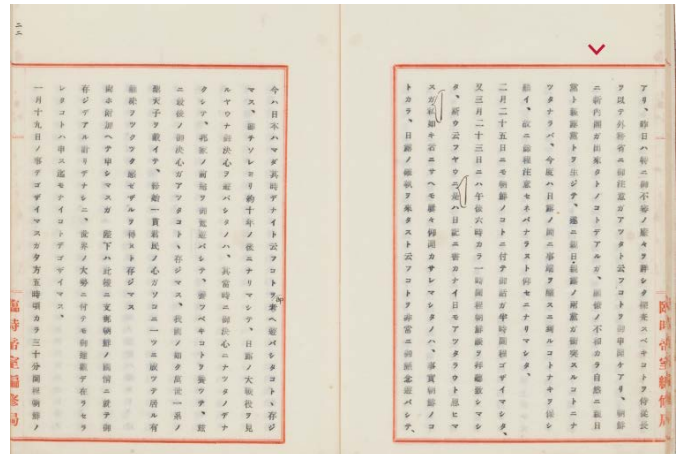


National Diet Library Newsletter

No. 242, December 2021



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Selections from NDL collections

Flowers and Birds in Turbulent Times—WATANABE Seitei's *Flowers and Birds Album*

TAKIZAWA Kazuko, Education, Culture, Science and Technology Division, Research and Legislative Reference Bureau

This article is a part of translation of the article in Japanese in [NDL Monthly Bulletin No. 717 \(January 2021\)](#).



This picture from Vol. 1 of *Seitei kacho gafu* (Seitei's flowers and birds album) features a bird perched on a branch of a cherry tree just past full bloom. This was one of Seitei's favorite themes, and he produced several similar works. Seitei loved to depict flower blossoms at the moment they were about to fall.¹

WATANABE Seitei, *Seitei kacho gafu*, OKURA Magobee, 1890–91. 3 volumes; 25 cm. NDL Call No. 3-146

WATANABE Seitei (1851–1918) was a master of *kachoga* (flower and bird paintings), who was active during the Meiji and Taisho eras. Between 1890 and 1891, he published the *Seitei kacho gafu*, a collection in three volumes of multicolor woodblock prints depicting the vibrant beauty of realistic flowers and birds.

Seitei was born near the end of the Edo period and at the age of 16 began to study with KIKUCHI Yosai², an expert in historical figure painting. At the age of 25 he was designing and sketching pottery, cloisonné, and other handicrafts for Kiritsu Kosho Gaisha, a trading company established under a national policy to promote the export of Japanese products. Not only was the Japanese government working hard to promote export industries, it also sought to catch up with Western powers and amend unequal treaties, so Japanese handicrafts were a prominent export item.³

Since handiwork featuring Japanese flowers, birds, and other motifs were popular export items, Seitei made a living as a *kachoga* painter. In fact, many famous painters who had lost the patronage of the aristocracy in wake of the Meiji Restoration managed to survive this way.

In 1878, Seitei was sent together with HAYASHI Tadamasu,⁴ an interpreter who later became a famous art dealer, to the Paris International Exposition, and stayed in Paris for roughly 2 years. As the first Japanese painter to visit Europe, he gave demonstrations of impromptu painting and how to make hanging scrolls at salons of cultured people. Edmond de Goncourt, the literary master and collector of Japanese art, and others noted that Seitei was praised for his magically fast handling of brushes and that he also presented his work to the French impressionist Edgar DEGAS.



Portrait of WATANABE Seitei, from *Kyokusui* (Meandering stream), vol.17, no. 5 (no. 182). Kyokusui-sha, 1932. NDL Call No. Z13-391.

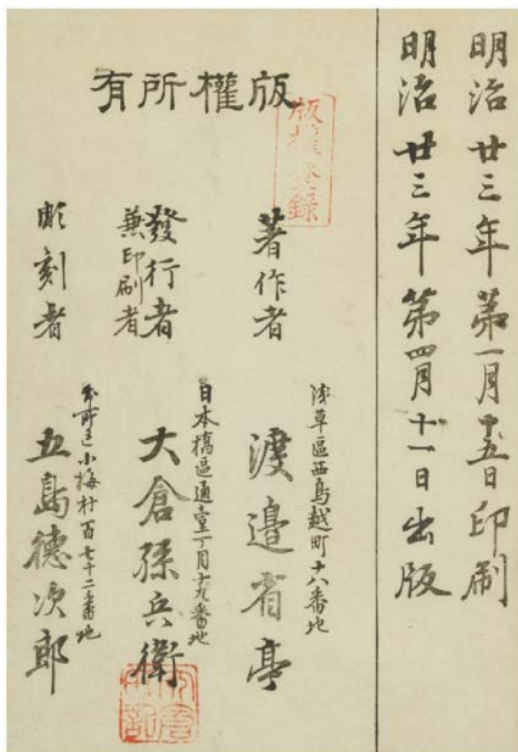


Image 3: The catalog of the publisher, Okura Shoten, introduces *Seitei kacho gafu* as "a treasure book for artisans producing lacquer, pottery, cloisonné, embroidery, or other handiwork."⁵



From Vol. 3 of *Seitei kacho gafu*. Seitei often drew flocks of pigeons, sparrows, or other commonly seen birds.

By the end of the 19th century, international expositions had become *de rigueur* as a means of promoting international trade in Europe. The Japanese government saw participation in these events as a way to tie the growing overseas demand for Japanese products with domestic production of handiwork. At the same time, national industrial exhibitions were being held in Japan, as well. Seizing on this trend, in 1877, Seitei submitted *Gunbato yokusuiban no zu* (A flock of pigeons bathing on a basin) to both Japan's First National Industrial Exhibition and the Paris International Exposition. This resulted in an opportunity to visit France, where this work was purchased by the Italian painter Giuseppe De NITTIS, who saw Seitei's demonstrations at a salon and wanted to copy the work. After coming back from Europe, Seitei continued to submit his work to exhibitions.

With Seitei's activities both in and outside of Japan gaining recognition, Okura Shoten published the first volume of *Seitei gacho kafu*. Established in 1875 by OKURA Magobee (1843–1921),⁶ Okura Shoten had become well known in 1905 for publishing NATSUME Soseki's *Wagahai wa neko de aru* (I am a cat) in book form with an illustrated cover. Okura Shoten pursued an export business to Europe, where Japonism was coming into vogue, as well as supplied handiwork design for production in Japan. And during the final two decades of the 19th century, they published numerous books on graphic design. Seitei later published *Kacho gafu*⁷ in 1903 and *Seitei kacho*⁸ in 1916 through Okura Shoten. An album of works by ukiyo-e master KATUSHIKA Hokusai was also published the same year as *Seitei kacho gafu*. (See the image below.)



From Vol. 2 of *Seitei kacho gafu. Ajisai ni cho* (Hydrangea and butterfly). Seitei stated in later life that his style was influenced by the time he spent in Europe.⁹



Hokusai kachoga den (Hokusai's flowers and birds) by KATSUSHIKA Hokusai. Published by OKURA Magobee, 1891. <https://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/851635/19> (monochrome).

Around the same time that *Seitei kacho gafu* was published, Okura also published an album of drawings by KATSUSHIKA Hokusai.

"His every motion was just like an agile magician standing in front of a small table with those magic glasses on it." (from the *Goncourt Journal*).¹⁰

Seitei's works are based on thorough sketches that were a fusion of things he had learned from classic works of Japanese art and his own ability to sketch what he saw. Though his compositions are strategically simplified, he often depicted birds in a realistic way. He also incorporated Western sensibilities into the *iki* aesthetic of Edo-period Japan, to create a witty and sophisticated style of his own, which was well received both in Japan and abroad. A major characteristic of his work was the use of only a limited number of colors. He accentuated motifs by boldly trimming unnecessary elements of background and ornamentation. The older he got, the more gorgeous his paintings became, even as he simplified the composition of the scenes.

Seitei kacho gafu contains many paintings of flowers and birds from which the beauty of Seitei's art is readily apparent. Around the same time as this book's publication, Seitei served as editor-in-chief of a new magazine about woodblock printing called *Bijutsu sekai*. (See next page.) Although finely detailed copperplate and lithographs were popular at the time, the vivid presentation of color that was possible only with multicolor woodblock printing was still used for books on painting and design.

Around the turn of the century, Seitei made a number of sketches of birds and flowers for use by the cloisonné artist NAMIKAWA Sosuke.¹¹ These *Shippo kachozu sanjū-gaku* (thirty framed cloisonné of birds and flowers) still adorn the *Kacho on ma* (bird and flower room)¹² in the main dining room of the *Geihinkan* or State Guest House, which was previously known as the Akasaka Detached Palace, where the National Diet Library was first housed and where it continued to provide library services until 1961.¹³ The sketches themselves, known as *Kachozu gacho* (Album of birds and flowers) are held by the Tokyo National Museum, which exhibits them on an irregular basis.



Bijutsu Sekai (Art world), edited by WATANABE Seitei. Vol. 1–25. Shun'yodo, 1890–1891. NDL Call No. 7-17.

An attractively designed magazine with Japanese-style binding, the cover design changed every two volumes. From left to right, the covers of Vol. 20, Vol. 8, and Vol. 1. This magazine was so popular with foreign visitors that the Imperial Hotel placed an order for every single volume.¹⁴

“He always started by drawing a beak at the middle of the canvas, after which it became a bird.” (From the *Goncourt Journal*).¹⁵



This drawing from Vol. 2 is entitled *Hyakkaku* (A Hundred cranes) and is an excellent example of the care given to drawing beaks in Seitei's works.

Given the quality of the work presented in this article, it is difficult to understand why Seitei is hardly known in present-day Japan despite this wealth of glorious artwork he left behind.

There are, however, several reasons for this. Even during Seitei's lifetime, much of his work was purchased by collectors outside of Japan.¹⁶ Add to this the fact that he took on very few pupils, and the number of later painters directly influenced by his work is not large. Also, many of his paintings were lost to fire in the aftermath of the Great Kanto Earthquake. Seitei did not agree with the results of official examinations of his work and consequently stopped submitting work to exhibitions and other public occasions. He refused to join official art organizations established by the government and kept his distance from art circles in Japan. Although the sketches on display in the Akasaka Detached Palace are an exception, during the latter half of his life he was an independent artist who only painted to fulfill commissions from individual patrons in Japan and overseas. Artists who did not regularly submit works to public exhibitions were relegated to a lower status in those days. Seitei was, however, proud of maintaining his independence from the government and continued to work steadily until he passed away at the age of 68. Accordingly, many of his works are owned by individuals.

In 2017, a retrospective exhibition of Seitei's work was held at Kashima Bijutsu, an art gallery in Tokyo,¹⁷ which prompted other events, including an exhibition of works by both Seitei and his son, Suiha, at the Saita Museum,¹⁸ the publication of a critical biography of Seitei,¹⁹ and exhibitions in Tokyo, Nagoya, and Shizuoka.²⁰ In recent years, Seitei's work has gradually become popular among lovers of *kachoga*, who may be interested in his work in book form as well.



This drawing from Vol. 2. is entitled *Gacho* (Geese) and illustrates Seitei's preference for leaving a lot of empty space in a bold, illustration-like design.

To paraphrase KABURAGI Kiyotaka's description in his book *Watanabe Seitei sensei no e*, Seitei had the good fortune to occupy a very special position in the art world of today. The fact that he spent his entire life enjoying art as if it were a pastime rather than a vocation is a befitting testimony to his place as one of art's timeless masters.²¹

(Translated by OSHIMA Kaoru)

- ¹ WATANABE Seitei and Suiha, *Kacho raisan: in praise of birds & flowers, Watanabe Seitei Suiha chichi to ko, kaiga to haiku no kyoen Saita Kinenkan kaikan 20-shunen kinen tokubetsuten Watanabe Seitei botsugo 100-nen* (In praise of birds & flowers Watanabe Seitei, father, and Watanabe Suiha, son, a joint performance of art and haiku, commemorating the 20th anniversary of the opening of the Saita Museum, a special exhibition on the 100th anniversary of the death of Watanabe Seitei). Saita Cha Bunka Shinko Zaidan Saita Kinenkan, 2018. p. 12. NDL Call No. KC16-L2936.
WATANABE Seitei (paintings), OKABE Masayuki (editor-in-chief), UEDA Sayoko et al. *Watanabe Seitei: kachoga no kokonaru kagayaki* (WATANABE Seitei, a solitary light shines on flowers and birds). Tokyo Bijutsu, 2017. p. 213. NDL Call No. KC16-L2296.
- ² KIKUCHI Yosai was a master figure painter, known for his depictions of historical figures. His background included the Kano school, the Maruyama Shijyo school, and ukiyo-e. For the first three years of Seitei's apprenticeship with Yosai, he was not allowed to paint and instead practiced calligraphy extensively to master brush technique. Yosai also ordered Seitei to memorize the patterns of kimono worn by passers-by, thereby developing his powers of observation. Yosai encouraged his students to develop original styles of their own rather than imitating the style or pattern of either he himself or other old masters.
FURUTA Asako. *Hyoden Watanabe Seitei: seiryu no kage ni* (A critique of Watanabe Seitei: In the shadow of the willow tree). Brücke, Seiunsha, 2018. pp.51-55. NDL Call No. KC229-L229.
- ³ Between 1877 and 1896, Japanese art and handicrafts were a good 10% of Japan's total exports to the rest of the world.
SATO Doshin. *Meiji kokka to kindai bijutsu: bi no seijigaku* (Meiji Japan and modern art: the politics of beauty). Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1999. pp.99-101. NDL Call No. K111-G39.
- ⁴ HAYASHI Tadamasu went to Europe in 1878 to attend the Paris International Exposition as an employee of Kiritsu Kosho Gaisha. In 1884 he opened an antique art gallery in Paris. An accomplished linguist with an excellent eye for art, he became well known as a successful art dealer not only in France but throughout Europe. From 1890 to 1901, he sold 156,487 ukiyo-e, 9,708 picture books, and 846 paintings as well as folding screens, hanging scrolls, and other objet d'art.
Hayashi Tadamasu: Japonism to bunka koryu (Hayashi Tadamasu: Japonism and cultural exchange). edited by the Hayashi Tadamasu Symposium Executive Committee, published by Brücke, distributed by Seiunsha, 2007. pp.401-402. NDL Call No. GK49-H69.
FURUTA, op. cit., p.108.
SATO, op. cit., p.81.
- ⁵ IWAKIRI Shin'ichiro. "Okura Shoten no keisei: Okura Magobee no Meiji-ki shuppan doko (Tokushu: Okura Magobee no jiseki to shiso no kenkyu)" {"The formation of Okura Booksellers: Okura Magobee's publishing business during the Meiji era" (special issue: "Research into the thoughts and deeds of Okura Magobee")}, *Okurayama Ronshu*, No. 54, March 2008. p.31. NDL Call No. Z8-579.
- ⁶ OKURA Magobee was active as an entrepreneur from the middle of the 19th century through the early 20th century. Asserting his independence from his family's business as a seller of woodprints and picture books, he started the Okura Shoten bookstore. He also established Okura Magobee Yoshi-ten, which still exists as Shinsei Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd, as well as Nihon Toki Goumei Kaisha, which is now known as Noritake Co., Ltd.
"Okura Magobee no kiseki: nishikie shuppanmoto narabi ni yushutsu tojiki meka no keieisha to shite (Tokushu: Okura Magobee no jiseki to shiso no kenkyu)" {"The miracle of Okura Magobee: From publishing nishiki-e to manufacturing porcelain for export" (special issue: "Research into the thoughts and deeds of Okura Magobee")}, written by ITANI Yoshie, published in *Okurayama Ronshu*, no. 54, 2008. pp. 51-118. NDL Call No. Z8-579.
- ⁷ <https://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/850241> (monochrome)

- ⁸ <https://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/966613> (monochrome)
- ⁹ “*Kenkyu happyo (yoyaku): Resumes kindai kachoga-shi ni okeru Watanabe Seitei no ichi, kaiga hyogen o chushin ni*” (Abstract of research paper: “Resumes” Watanabe Seitei’s place in modern painting of birds and flowers, focusing on his expressiveness) written by UEDA Sayoko, published in *Kindai Gasesu Meiji Bijutsu Gakkai-shi*, no. 27, 2018. p. 141. NDL Call No. Z11-B184.
- ¹⁰ *Gonkuru no nikki: bungaku seikatsu no shuki* (The Goncourt Journal: a record of an artistic life), Vol. 6 (1878–1884). written by Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, translated by YAMADA Jaku and SAITO Ichiro. Kadokawa Shoten, 1966. pp. 40–42. NDL Call No. 955-cG63g-O.
- ¹¹ NAMIKAWA Sosuke created cloisonné which use no outline and look like Japanese paintings. He later was named an Imperial Household Artist.
- ¹² The *Kacho no ma* is located in the main building of the Geihinkan, where it is used for official banquets and press conferences. It is open to the public. For details, visit the Geihinkan website <https://www.geihinkan.go.jp/en/akasaka/kacho_no_ma/>
- ¹³ The National Diet Library’s first facilities opened to the public in June 1948 in a temporary home at the Akasaka Detached Palace, from where the NDL continued to provide library services until 1961.
- ¹⁴ Op. cit. *Watanabe Seitei: kachoga no kokonaru kagayaki*. p.90.
- ¹⁵ Goncourt (brothers), op. cit., Vol. 6 (1878-1884).
- ¹⁶ Foreign museums such as the Freer Gallery of Art, the Metropolitan Museum, and the Boston Museum in the U.S., the National Museum in Krakow in Poland hold Seitei’s works. This gafu is also found in Western antique book market and is held by the British Museum.
See
<https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?assetId=243028001&objectId=779057&partId=1>
- ¹⁷ For this exhibition, a commemorative publication was put out as op. cit. *Watanabe Seitei: kachoga no kokonaru kagayaki*.
- ¹⁸ Exhibition catalog published as op. cit. *Kacho raisan*.
- ¹⁹ FURUTA, op. cit.
- ²⁰ The University Art Museum, Tokyo University of the Arts.
<https://www.geidai.ac.jp/museum/exhibit/2020/seitei/seitei_en.htm>; Sano Art Museum.
<<https://www.sanobi.or.jp/eng/schedule.html>>
- ²¹ *Watanabe Seitei sensei no e* (The art of Watanabe Seitei). written by KABURAGI Kiyotaka, published by *Chuo bijutsu*, 1918. p. 98. NDL Call No. YA-105

Selections from NDL collections

Materials newly available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room (12)

Modern Japanese Political Documents Division, Reader Services and Collections Department

This article is a partial translation of the article in Japanese in [NDL Monthly Bulletin No. 715 \(November 2020\)](#).

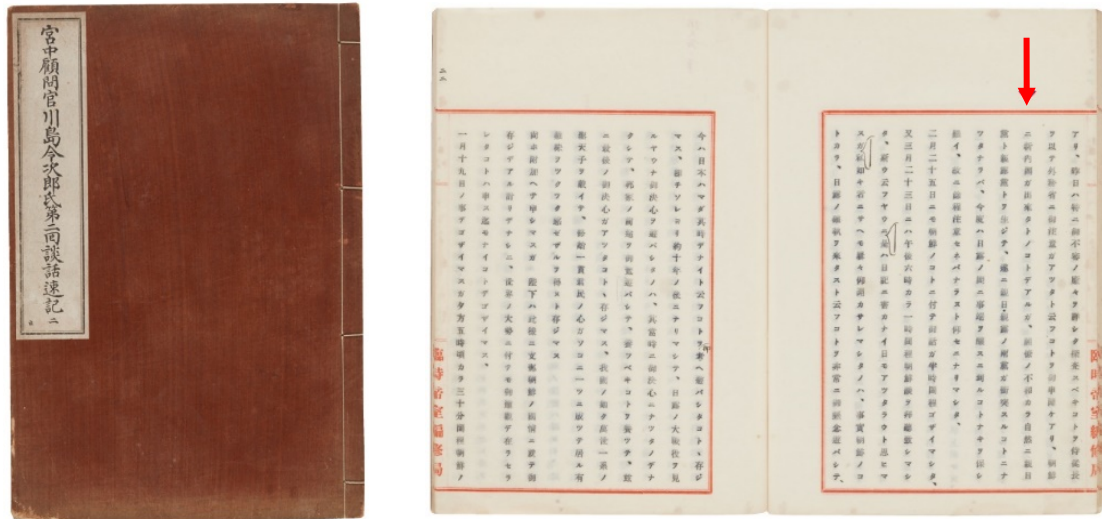


Image 1: Stenographic transcript of the second talk by Kawashima Reijiuro, councilor to the Imperial House of Japan
NDL Call No: Hashii Makoto Paper

Introduction

The National Diet Library holds approximately 420,000 personal documents (modern Japanese political history materials) comprising the personal papers of politicians, high-ranking officials, and military officers from the closing days of the Tokugawa Shogunate to the present day. This article is one of a series introducing materials that have become available in recent years at [the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room](#) in the Tokyo Main Library.

Modern Japanese political history materials consist mainly of materials collected through donations from descendants, and are opened to the public after being organized and catalogued. We hope that this article will give you a taste of the appeal of this valuable collection, which supports research and study in a variety of fields including political history.

HASHII Makoto Papers

(97 items, available since July 2020)

From the early Taisho period to the early Showa period, the Ministry of the Imperial Household established the Temporary Editing Bureau (later renamed the Temporary Imperial Editing Bureau) to edit and revise the Chronicles of Emperor Meiji. The document (Image 1) is a stenographic transcript of a talk given to the staff of the Bureau by KAWASHIMA Reijiuro, an officer of the Imperial Japanese Navy, who was serving as a councilor to the

Imperial House of Japan at the time. It was donated to the NDL as part of the former collection of Kawashima's third son, HASHII Makoto (1902-1977), a bureaucrat in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Kawashima served by the side of Emperor Meiji as an aide-de-camp to the Emperor for about two years from 1894. This period coincided with the Sino-Japanese War. Kawashima closely observed the Emperor's behavior at the Hiroshima Imperial General Headquarters and his reaction to the international situation that followed afterwards, and recalled it in this talk. On February 23, 1896, nearly a year after the end of the Sino-Japanese War, the Emperor referred to the political situation in Korea, which had contributed to the war, and expressed his concern about Japan-Russia relations, saying, "If pro-Japanese and pro-Russian parties emerged from ministerial discord and eventually clashed, it would be difficult to guarantee that Japan and Russia can avoid such a clash" (Image 1, red arrow). It was eight years later that the Russo-Japanese War broke out. After the talk, there was in-depth questioning regarding the contents of the talk, with which we can see the reality of the compilation of the Meiji Emperor's Chronicle.

The Hashii Makoto Papers also include survey materials on the supply and demand of goods after the end of the Pacific War, which were created during the period when Hashii occupied an important post in the Headquarters for Economic Stabilization.

Kawashima Reijiro (1864-1947)

Born in Ishikawa in 1864. Graduated from the Imperial Japanese Naval Academy. Served as an aide-de-camp to the Emperor of Japan before and after the Sino-Japanese War. After a stint in the U.K., he served as commander of various warships, and then as an officer of the Imperial Japanese Navy General Staff, director of the Naval War College, director of the Hydrographic Department of the Imperial Japanese Navy, and commander of the Ryojun Guard District. Lieutenant General. Died in 1947.

SUETSUGU Ichiro Papers

(1286 items, available since October 2019)

Suetsugu Ichiro was an ordinary citizen and did not appear on the political stage much. He was involved in the activities of young men's associations, which had a pre-war lineage, and in the creation of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers. Moreover, he was a distinguished person who provided logistical support for the Okinawa and Northern Territories issues as part of the brain trust of the Prime Minister by utilizing his wide range of international connections. This collection includes materials related to his activities in general, such as his notebooks and memos.

Image 2 is a note by Suetsugu Ichiro. As the sticky note at the top says "Submitted to the Prime Minister on July 17, 1994," it is assumed that Suetsugu submitted it to the then Prime Minister, HATA Tsutomu, on that day. In this text, Suetsugu appears as "S", and FUJIMORI Shoichi, Grand Stewards of the Imperial Household Agency, as "F". In 1990, after being approached by Fujimori, Suetsugu began making preparations for the Emperor's visit to Okinawa. Despite some opposition, the Emperor eventually visited in April 1993, when the National Arbor Day celebration was held in Okinawa Prefecture.

This note also contains a request for the prime minister to attend the Okinawa Memorial Service for All War Dead scheduled to be held a week later (June 23, 1994), as a prelude to Emperor's another visit to Okinawa in 1995. Due to political reasons, the Prime Minister was unable to attend the ceremony, but the Emperor visited the following year.

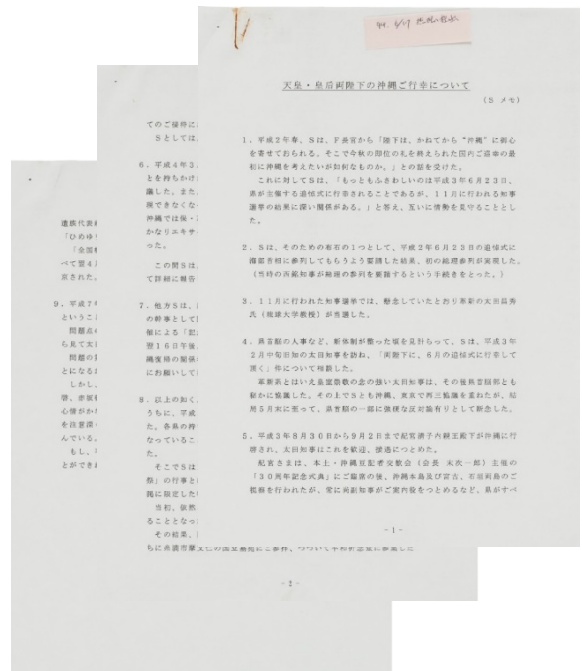


Image 2: Note by Suetsugu Ichiro regarding the visit to Okinawa by the Emperor and Empress, addressed to Prime Minister Hata Tsutomu, dated June 17, 1994
NDL Call No: Suetsugu Ichiro Papers 513

Suetsugu Ichiro (1922-2001)

Born in Saga in 1922. Youth education activist and researcher on national security issues. After graduating from the Futamata Branch of the Imperial Japanese Army Nakano School, he served in the military until the end of World War II. After the war, he was involved in the founding of Nihon Kenseikai, an organization supporting repatriates, and Shinjukai, and also had a strong influence on youth movements and youth education. In the process, he formed a friendship with politicians such as KISHI Nobusuke, NAKASONE Yasuhiro, OBUCHI Keizo, and MORI Yoshiro, and was also active in the Okinawa and Northern Territories issues. Died in 2001.

MATSUKATA Masayoshi Papers (deposited materials)

(486 items, available since February 2020)

The "MATSUKATA Masayoshi Papers" have been deposited since 1951. The collection consists of biographical materials and a large number of letters from elder statesmen, including 214 letters from KURODA Kiyotaka, 183 letters from YAMAGATA Aritomo, and 147 letters from ITO Hirobumi. Together with the 20-volume *Matsukata masayoshi kankei monjo* (Institute for Oriental Studies of Daito Bunka University, 1979-2001, NDL Call

No. DG12-26) which is a partial reprint of these materials, the collection has been widely used for research on modern history and economic history.

We have also received 486 additional items for deposit. The newly deposited materials, which have been preserved by Matsukata's descendants over the years, are a systematic collection of letters, documents related to the Imperial Family, as well as appointment letters and Kunki (decoration diplomas).

In particular, Image 3 is an imperial rescript that states Matsukata would be privileged as a Genkun (elder statesman) and is an extremely rare historical document. Also, since it was issued by Emperor Showa when he was acting as regent, it can be confirmed that he first wrote the name of Emperor Taisho and then the name of the regent next to it.

The *Matsukata haku zaisei ronsakushu* (12 volumes, traditionally bound Japanese books) shown in Image 4, was compiled by bureaucrats in January 1893 and is a manuscript of financial opinions and speeches from the beginning of the Meiji period until Matsukata's retirement as Prime Minister and Minister of Finance in 1892. The original copy was donated by the MATSUKATA family to the Library of the Ministry of Finance, but it was destroyed by fire in the Great Kanto Earthquake in 1923. According to the inscription on the box, this is a manuscript made in 1919, and was once stored in the MATSUKATA family's villa in Nasu before being deposited in the NDL.

In addition, the newly added materials include a number of chamberlain's notices indicating gifts from the imperial family, including cranes, bananas, ham, sweetfish pickled in sake lees, rabbits pickled in miso, freshwater clams, Chinese cabbage, kuwai (arrowhead), and Japanese confections. The gifts are extremely diverse.

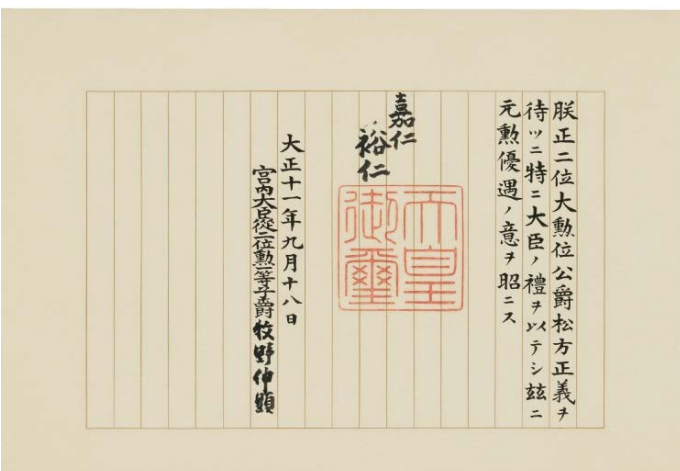


Image 3: Imperial rescript of preferential treatment for Genkun. NDL Call No. MATSUKATA Masayoshi Papers (deposited materials) 1227

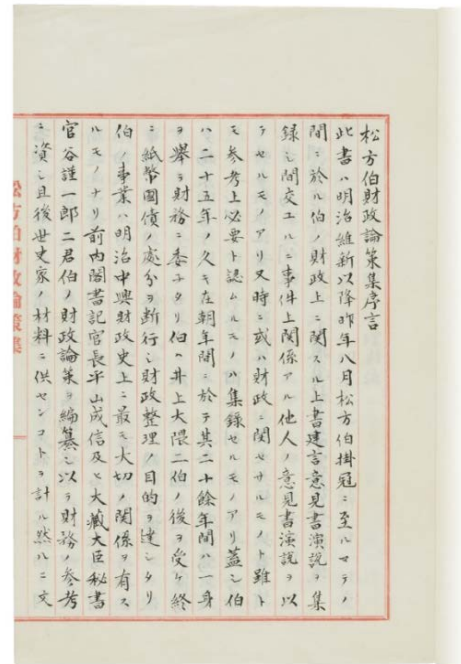


Image 4: Manuscript of financial opinions and speeches by Count Matsukata (*Matsukata haku zaisei ronsakushu*) NDL Call No. MATSUKATA Masayoshi Papers (deposited materials) 1235





Image 5: Opening the box containing Matsukata haku zaisei ronsakushu.



MATSUKATA Masayoshi (1835-1924)

Born in Kagoshima in 1835. After serving as Naimukyō

(Home Minister) and Okurakyo (Finance Minister), he became Minister of Finance in the first Ito, Kuroda, first Yamagata, second Ito, and second Yamagata cabinets from 1885 to 1898. During that period, he organized his own cabinet twice as Prime Minister, during which time he concurrently held office as Minister of Finance. Later, he successively held offices as privy councillor, member of the House of Peers, and Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, and in 1922 he was ennobled as a duke. He died in 1924.

(Translated by OGAWA Kanako and SHIMADA Hiromi)

Related articles from the NDL Newsletter:

- [Materials available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(1\)](#) (No. 200, June 2015)
- [Materials available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(2\)](#) (No. 201, August 2015)
- [Materials available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(3\)](#) (No. 202, October 2015)
- [Materials available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(4\)](#) (No. 203, December 2015)
- [Materials available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(5\)](#) (No. 220, October 2018)
- [Materials available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(6\)](#) (No. 221, December 2018)
- [Materials available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(7\)](#) (No. 225, August 2019)
- [Materials available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(8\)](#) (No. 226, October 2019)
- [Materials available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(9\)](#) (No. 233, November 2020)
- [Materials available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(10\)](#) (No. 235, January 2021)
- [Materials available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(11\)](#) (No. 241, October 2021)

Related content from the National Diet Library Website

- [Research Navi](#) : Holdings of The Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room (Japanese)

Articles by NDL staff

NDL participation in IFLA/WLIC 2021



[The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions \(IFLA\)](#) was founded in 1927 and is the world's largest organization in the field of library and information services. Currently there are more than 1,500 members from approximately 150 countries around the world.

The National Diet Library (NDL) joined the IFLA as an associate member in 1966 and became a full member in 1976. NDL employees have attended the IFLA's annual conference since 1967 to take part in sessions held by the National Libraries Section and other related sections as well as to participate in the annual meeting of the [Conference of Directors of National Libraries \(CDNL\)](#), which is usually held at the same time as the IFLA conference.

At present, six NDL employees serve on standing committees contributing to sections involved in activities such as management or information exchange. The NDL has also been designated as the IFLA Core Activity on Preservation and Conservation (IFLA/PAC) Regional Centre for Asia since 1989. In Japan, the NDL translates guidelines and reports to make the results of IFLA activities available to the public via its website and publications.

The IFLA's annual conference, the [World Library and Information Congress: IFLA General Conference and Assembly \(IFLA/WLIC\)](#) is held in a different country each year to present activity reports, network in person, and exchange views on matters of common interest. The 2020 IFLA/WLIC was canceled due to COVID-19 and the 2021 IFLA /WLIC was held as a virtual conference for the first time from August 17-19. The theme for this year was "Let's work together for the future," along with the sub-themes "Libraries Innovate," "Libraries Include," "Libraries Sustain," "Libraries Inspire," and "Libraries Enable." The General Assembly and the annual meeting of CDNL were also held online at later dates. Director General YOSHINAGA Motonobu and 36 other NDL employees participated in sessions related to their work.

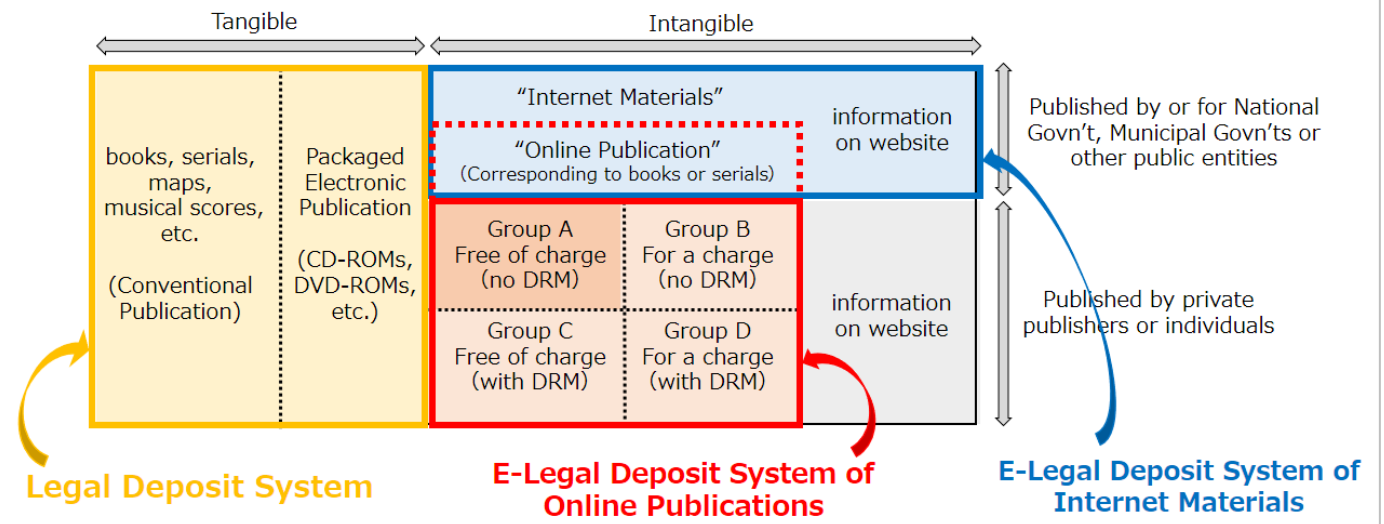
Ms. NAGANO Yuko (Assistant Director, Children's Services Division, International Library of Children's Literature) gave a presentation titled "Use of the World Through Picture Books Exhibition in Tokyo" at the Open Session of the Libraries for Children and Young Adults Section.

News from the NDL

Toward the start of the comprehensive acquisition of online publications available for a charge under the E-Legal Deposit System

Legal Deposit Section, Acquisitions Administration and Bibliographic Control Division,
Acquisitions and Bibliography Department

<Summary of the Material Collection on the basis of the National Diet Library Law>



Acquisition under the current E-Legal Deposit System

Since 2013, the National Diet Library (NDL) has been collecting digital information made available to the public by private publishers, which we considered to be equivalent to books or serials (online publications).

Digital information stored with specific codes (ISBN, ISSN, DOI) or with specific formats (EPUB, PDF, DAISY) is considered suitable for acquisition.

However, not all online publications are being acquired under the E-Legal Deposit System.

Regarding online publications that are available for a charge or protected by Digital Rights Management (DRM) deliberations by the Legal Deposit System Council (comprised of researchers, lawyers, publishers, and other experts knowledgeable about the publishing industry) on compensation for submission via the E-Legal Deposit System were inconclusive, so publishers were exempted from obligations to submit their publications in accordance with the National Diet Library Law and its subordinate regulations.

The Council's conclusion after 10 years of discussions

In March 2021, the Council reached a conclusion after 10 years of discussions and submitted its report to the Director of the NDL. The essentials are as follow.

In principle, no compensation for acquisition is required. However, non-monetary incentives, such as proof of acceptance of materials and a data backup function that provides free copies to providers of materials with the permission of rights holders, are important.

For the purpose of use and long-term preservation at the NDL, files will be collected without DRM even if they are distributed with DRM in the market.

The current system, for the exclusion from the scope of acquisition of online publications archived by repositories which have prospects for long-term preservation, will be continued.

When repositories operated by commercial organizations are considered to fall outside the scope of acquisition, they must be checked in advance from the perspective of long-term continuity, ensuring use, and preserving content, and the prevention of content dissipation and metadata linkage must be guaranteed by a memorandum of understanding.

For the complete systematic acquisition of online publications

In response to the report, the NDL is rushing to prepare for the launch of the complete systematic acquisition of online publications in January 2023.

In fiscal year 2021, the NDL will design the details of the system and adjust its operation.

In fiscal year 2022, we expect to improve the related laws and regulations and make them known to the public, including the procedures for exclusion from collection. We will provide detailed explanations to copyright holders and publishers so that the system can be started with the understanding of stakeholders.

(Translated by HIROSE junya)

News from NDL

The NDL's small digital exhibitions, Kaleidoscope of Books, are now available in English!

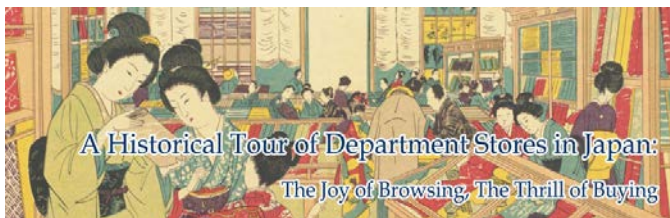
Service Planning Division, Reader Services and Collections Department



The NDL's [Kaleidoscope of Books](#) is a series of small digital exhibitions. Each features unique themes such as the early history of the Olympic Games in Japan and the strategies modern Japanese department stores used to attract customers. Through them we introduce a wide range of the library's collections including our beloved *ukiyo-e* (woodblock printings), modern fashion magazines and important historical records. Currently we provide the English version of these six exhibitions below. We sincerely hope you will enjoy them.

List of exhibitions

[A Historical Tour of Department Stores in Japan: The Joy of Browsing, The Thrill of Buying](#)



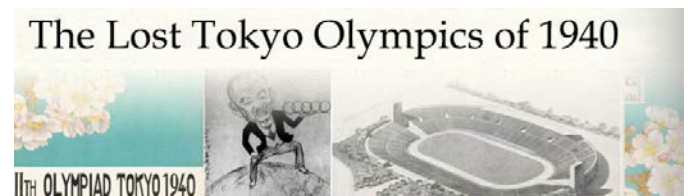
Although e-commerce is sweeping away brick-and-mortar stores in the 21st century, you may still have a special place in your heart for glamorous department stores. This exhibition invites you on a fun historical tour of department stores and tells you how these businesses flourished in Japan from the end of the Meiji era to the beginning of the Showa era.

[Expressing Romance in Words: The World of Love Letters](#)



Sending love letters to confess your love is now old-fashioned, but people in the past developed writing love letters into a sophisticated art. This exhibition takes a look at the world of love letters as seen in style guides to writing love letters, and the culture of writing love letters in the Edo period and beyond.

[The Lost Tokyo Olympics of 1940](#)



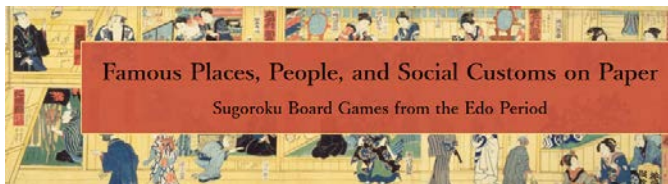
Tokyo hosted the Summer Olympics in 1964 and 2021, but not many people know another Tokyo Olympics was scheduled to happen in 1940. This exhibition discusses the history of Japan's participation in the modern Olympic Games and, of course, the fate of the Tokyo 1940 Olympics.

The Senrigan Affair and Its Time Period



Senrigan is the Japanese word for clairvoyance. In August of 1909, a woman called Mifune Chizuko claimed to have the ability to see through objects, which attracted the world's attention. This exhibition traces the course of the affair which caused a stir in Japanese society in the late Meiji period.

Famous Places, People, and Social Customs on Paper-Sugoroku Board Games from the Edo Period



Have you ever heard of *e-sugoroku*, or simply *sugoroku*? *Sugoroku* is a Japanese board game where players roll dice and compete to see who can reach the goal fastest on the board. This exhibition features Edo-period *e-sugoroku* with boards that depict famous places, people, and social customs.

Infectious Diseases in Books



Plague, cholera, malaria... The list goes on. Humanity has suffered infectious diseases throughout its history. This article will show you how Japan dealt with pandemics through materials held by the NDL.

Selected list of articles from NDL periodicals

The NDL Monthly Bulletin No. 726, October 2021/ No.727, November 2021

If you click the volume number of each issue, you can read the full-text of NDL Monthly Bulletin. The text is provided in PDF format* (in Japanese).

*To see the full-text (PDF), you will need Adobe Acrobat Reader (free download). Click [here](#) to download. ([Adobe Website](#))

No. 726, October 2021 (PDF: 5.99 MB)

- <Book of the month — from NDL collections>
Onimomotaro—Children's literature by OZAKI Koyo in his younger days
- In pursuit of foreign books (Part One)
How were foreign books collected in the Imperial Library?
- Protecting our books—Tools for preservation and restoration
(2) Applying and sticking
- Working at the NDL, Season 2 Episode 1
- <Tidbits of information on NDL>
Through PR magazines, thinking about various local communities
- <Books not commercially available>
➤ *Hikyaku don'ya shimaya saemon nikki no sekai*
- <NDL Topics>

No. 727, November 2021 (PDF: 5.30 MB)

- <Book of the month — from NDL collections>
Cooperate in this civilization project—*Kokusei chosa senden kanpo kokokushu*
- In pursuit of foreign books (Part Two)
Samurai, the Imperial Library, and Mysticism
MORI Arinori, HATAKEYAMA Yoshinari, SAMESHIMA Naonobu, and the Brotherhood of the New Life
- Working at the NDL, Season 2 Episode 2
- Books not found in the NDL
Catalogs of village libraries
- <Tidbits of information on NDL>
Record the present, pass it on to the future
- <Books not commercially available>
➤ *Hokkyokukai koro handobukku*
- <NDL Topics>