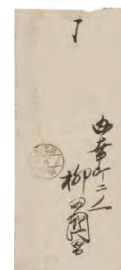
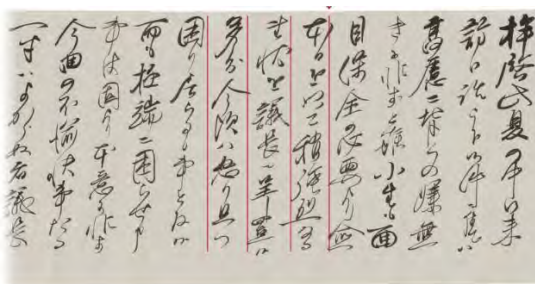
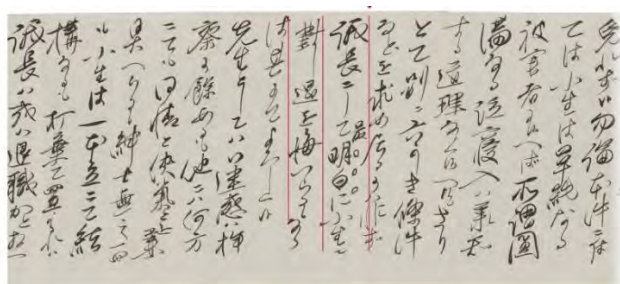
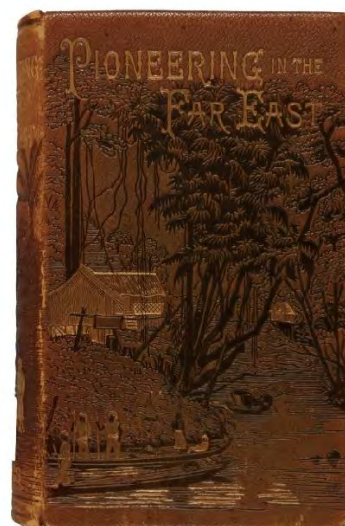
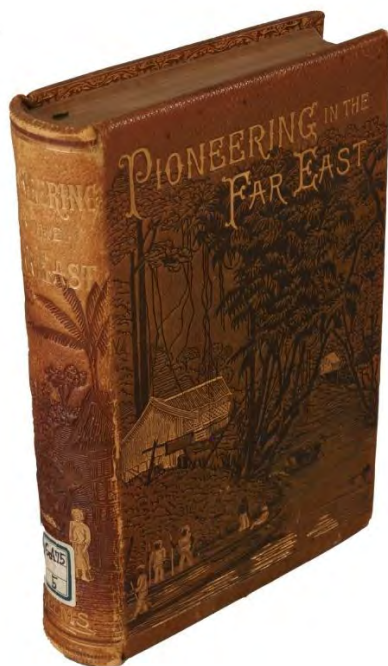


National Diet Library Newsletter

No. 264, August 2025



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Selections from NDL collections

Materials in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room: The ISHIWATA Toshikazu Papers

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. 751 (November 2023)*.

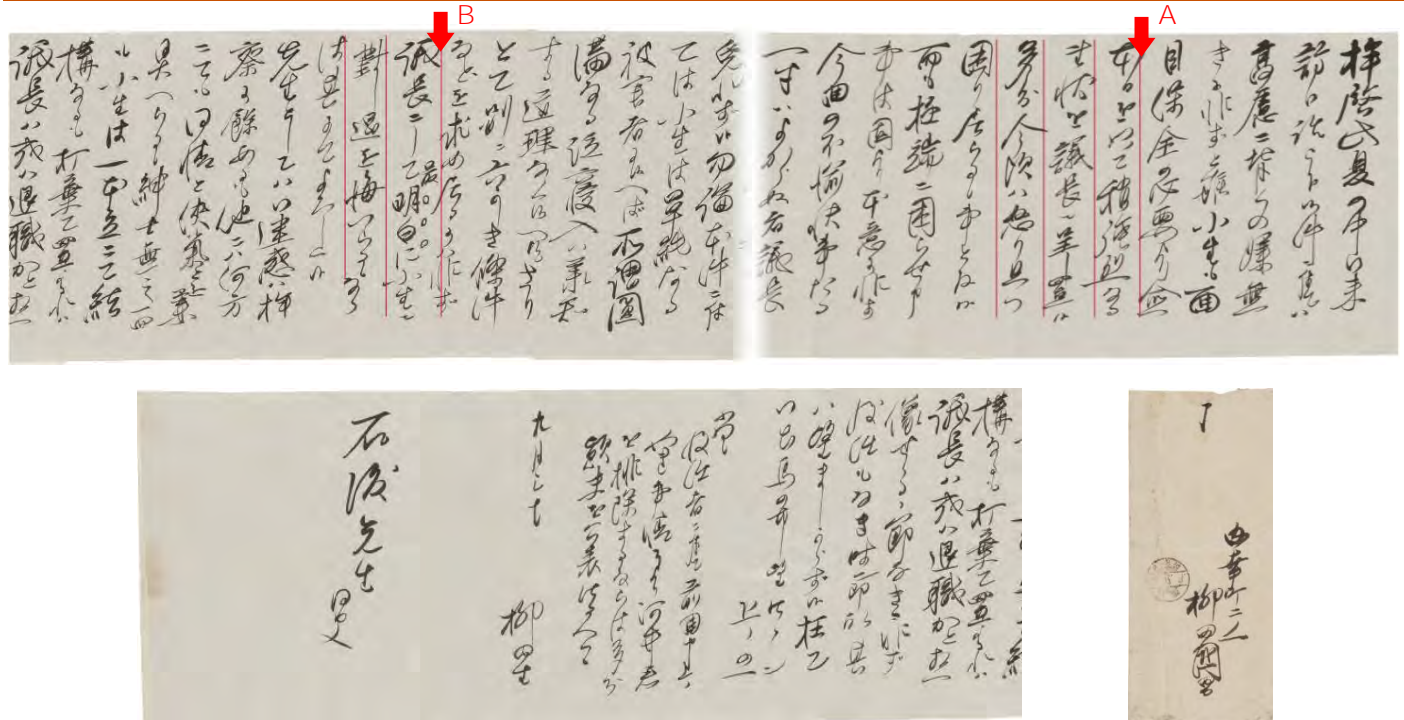


Image 1: A letter from YANAGITA Kunio to ISHIWATA Toshikazu, dated September 30, [1919].

NDL Call No. ISHIWATA Toshikazu Papers 24.

Beginning and latter part of the letter and envelope.

Introduction

The National Diet Library holds approximately 430,000 documents on modern Japanese political history, including the personal papers of politicians, high-ranking officials, and military officers. This article is one of a series introducing materials available at [the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room](#) in the Tokyo Main Library.

These materials on modern Japanese political history primarily comprise documents that were donated by the families of prominent figures and are made available to the public after they have been organized and catalogued by the NDL. We hope that this article will provide readers with a glimpse into the appeal of this invaluable collection, which supports scholarly research in political history and related fields.

The ISHIWATA Toshikazu Papers

(50 items, available since February 2023)

ISHIWATA Toshikazu was a judicial bureaucrat who rose to the rank of vice-minister in Meiji Japan. He served as chief secretary of the first SAIONJI Kinmochi Cabinet and was later a longtime member of the House of Peers. The ISHIWATA Toshikazu papers include numerous letters, many of which were from people he was acquainted with through his duties.

Image 1 is a letter to ISHIWATA from YANAGITA Kunio, a well-known folklorist, and is dated September 30, presumably in 1919. YANAGITA was originally a bureaucrat in the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce but was chief secretary in the House of Peers when he wrote this letter. At the time, the position of chief secretary was roughly equivalent to the secretary general of either House of **today's** Diet. Thus, while YANAGITA was responsible for administering the House of Peers at the direction of its Speaker, it seems that he did not have a particularly good relationship with Speaker of the House TOKUGAWA Iesato. And while a number of different explanations have been given for

the rift between them, whatever the reason, ISHIWATA was one of several people who acted as an intermediary between the two.

In this letter to ISHIWATA, YANAGITA reports that he has sent TOKUGAWA a letter: "I sent a somewhat aggressive letter to the Speaker today, and I think he is probably both angry and concerned at the moment." (A) Apparently YANAGITA was hoping that TOKUGAWA would express remorse over a previous conflict: "I would be satisfied as long as the Speaker clearly regrets his mistake against me." (B) According to an article by HARAGUCHI Daisuke entitled "The Conflict between TOKUGAWA Iesato and YANAGITA Kunio" (*Shien*, No. 153, Faculty of Humanities, Kyushu University, 2016), YANAGITA's subordinate and successor as chief secretary, KAWAI Yahachi, left a memo describing YANAGITA's letter to TOKUGAWA, which apparently criticized TOKUGAWA for plotting to ostracize YANAGITA, despite his many contributions, and for using KAWAI and other clerks to run errands for him. The aggression toward TOKUGAWA that YANAGITA expresses in his letter was a manifestation of their long-standing feud, something further corroborated in this letter to ISHIWATA. Ultimately, YANAGITA left the Secretariat of the House of Peers at the end of that year.



Image 2: ISHIWATA Toshikazu

ISHIWATA Toshikazu (1859-1937)

Born in Tokyo in 1859. During his career as a judicial bureaucrat, he held such important positions as Prosecutor of the Great Court of Cassation and Vice-Minister of Justice. Later, he served as chief secretary for the first SAIONJI Cabinet, as a member of the House of Peers, and as Privy Councilor. Doctor of law. He died in 1937.

The portrait is from *Kizokuin yoran*, revised in December 1932 (3). Kizokuin Jimukyoku. 1933.
Available via the [NDL Digital Collections](#)



Image 3: YANAGITA Kunio

YANAGITA Kunio (1875-1962)

Born in Hyogo in 1875. After joining the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce, he served as a councilor of the Cabinet Legislation Bureau and in 1914 was appointed chief secretary for the House of Peers. After retirement, he was an editorial columnist of the Tokyo Asahi Shimbun. While still in office, he pioneered the study of Japanese folklore and published *Tono Monogatari* (Story of Tono), a collection of folklore from the area surrounding the city of Tono in Iwate. He died in 1962.

The portrait is from *Teikoku kisyu ryoin shashin gacho*, Tokyo Taipusha. 1917, NDL Call No. AZ-244-M8.

(Translated by KUBO Satoshi)

Related articles from the NDL Newsletter:

- [Selections from NDL collections](#): Brief introduction to the various materials in our collections, including those in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room

Related content from the National Diet Library **Website**

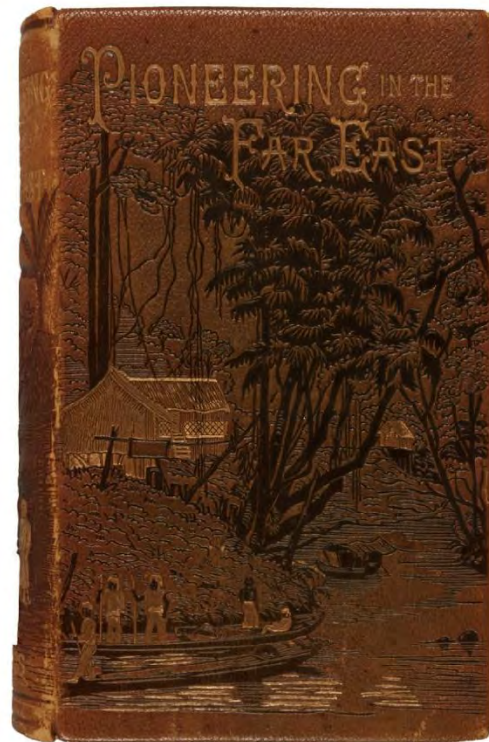
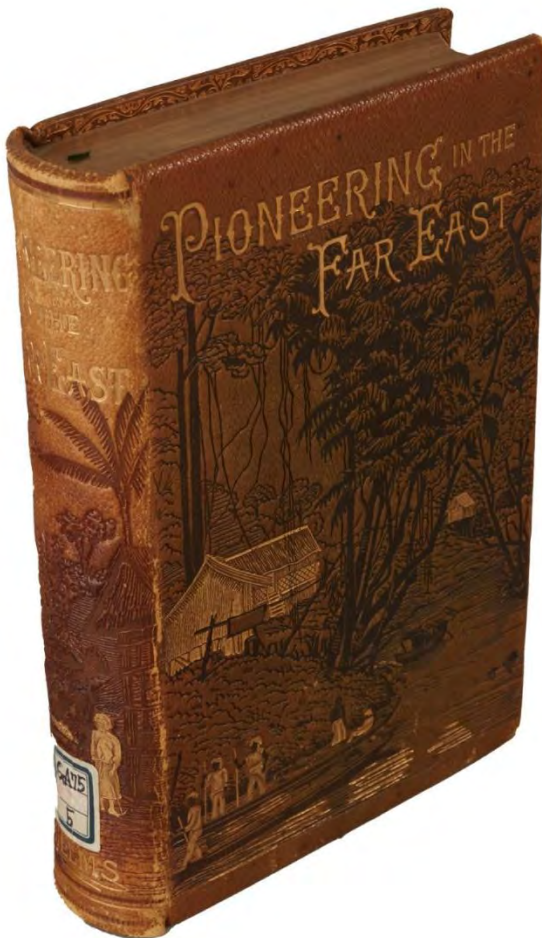
- [Research Navi](#): Summary of Modern Japanese political history materials (in Japanese)

Selections from NDL collections

A journey through time and space: *Pioneering in the Far East*

SOGI Sotaro, Social Welfare and Labor Division, Research and Legislative Reference Bureau

This article is a translation of the article in Japanese in NDL Monthly Bulletin No. 761/762 (September/October 2024).



Helms, Ludvig Verner. *Pioneering in the Far East: and journeys to California in 1849 and to the White Sea in 1878*. London: W. H. Allen. 1882. 408 pgs. 23 cm. NDL Call No. GA75-5.

These photos show the cover of the book: title engraved in gold on a thick leather cover, embossed with scenes of Southeast Asia.

New things, new events, new landscapes, and new people—there are always many encounters to be had on a journey. And travelers writing about their interesting encounters, the accompanying surprises, and their lasting memories is a tradition that is almost as old as travel itself.

Pioneering in the Far East: and journeys to California in 1849 and to the White Sea in 1878 is just such a book. Published in 1882, it tells the first half of Danish merchant Ludvig Verner Helms' (1825–1918) life story. The volume owned by the National Diet Library (NDL) is a special edition, bound in Moroccan leather and was originally a present from Helms to his daughter.

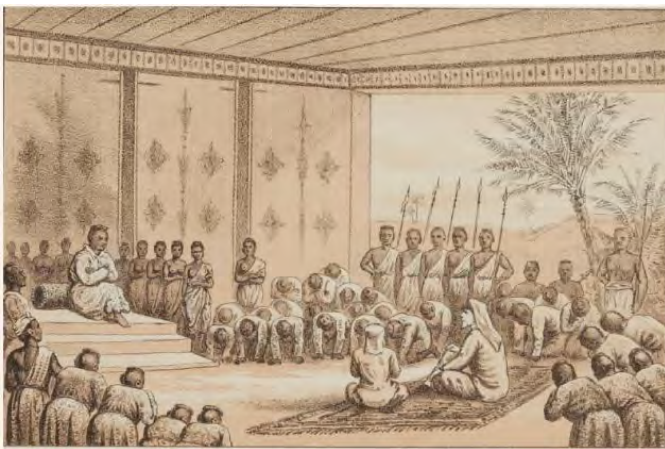
Helms traveled from Denmark to Southeast Asia in 1846 with dreams of success and spent more than 20 years trading in Bali and Borneo. He later traveled to the U.S. and the Russian White Sea coastal regions as well. This book looks back on half a lifetime of world travel and details the sights seen and the encounters experienced as well as geographical and historical references about the places he visited. In Borneo, for example, he traversed mountainous regions and dense jungles in search of minerals as well as marveled at the beauty of nature and described in detail the villages and customs of the local people. He also recalls vividly the difficulties encountered when his ship ran aground on the shores of the White Sea, where he had planned to develop a mine. His own sketches add color to the descriptions. Although

written from the perspective of a 19th-century European, **the reader can discern Helms'** high expectations for the commercial potential of his destinations and his strong interest in yet-to-be discovered natural history and culture.

By the way, on his way back to Europe from Borneo, Helms visited Japan during the early Meiji era and reported on his whole trip. Unfortunately, his illustrations of Japan were not included in this edition but let's follow in his footsteps a little and try to picture these scenes in our minds.

Illustrations from the book 1

Cambodia



Helms traveled to Cambodia in 1851 for trade and met with the king, who treated him favorably and even offered to give him an elephant.

Borneo



Local residents of Borneo.



A bungalow near a mine in Borneo. Helms also lived in one of these.

Helms' ship arrived in Nagasaki from Shanghai on June 28, 1872. He was surprised at how small Dejima was and sympathized with the Dutch who were forced to reside there. From Nagasaki, he headed to Kobe and Osaka by sea. **In Osaka, Helms wrote that he stayed at "Jote's Hotel,"** which apparently refers to the Jiyutei Hotel, one of the first Western-style hotels. At this point, Helms found Japanese things interesting but noted that the streets were narrow, the cityscape lacked dignity, and **that** "the picturesque in Japan must be sought in nature."

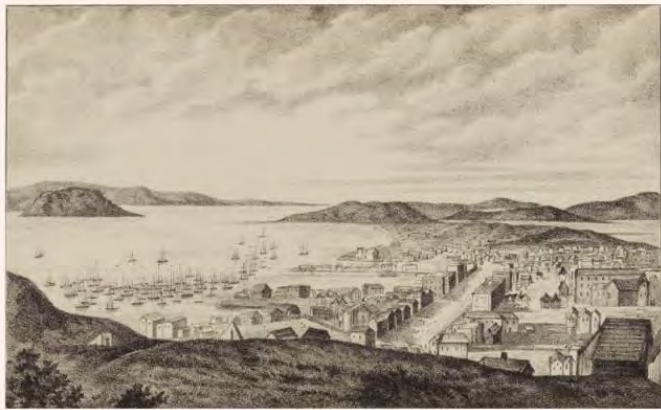
Helms was very much surprised by the bustle and beauty of Kyoto. He was particularly impressed by the grandeur of the temples and shrines, observing even the smallest detail and describing them as picturesque. As it happened, the first Kyoto Exhibition was being held at this time, and special permission had been granted, that allowed an estimated 770 ordinary foreigners to visit the city. Could it be that Helms was one of the first foreign tourists to travel to Kyoto? He visited Buddhist temples like Chion-in, Nishi Hongan-ji, and Kennin-ji, which was the venue of the Exhibition and was where he bought pottery and silk fabric. He reported trying Japanese tea as well as enjoying a performance by 200 dancing girls in Maruyama. Apparently, this refers to the Miyako Odori in Gion, which was held for the first time in conjunction with the Exhibition.

After passing through Yokohama, he arrived in Tokyo. This was not long after the Great Ginza Fire of April 1872, and **Helms noted that** "There was nothing to indicate that we had entered the largest city in the East." The fact that he was forced to change his planned lodgings hints at how extensive the damage was. Helms was able to visit Shiba, Asakusa, and Ueno. And he was amazed at how magnificent Edo Castle, Zojo-ji, and Kan'ei-ji were, while at the same time saddened to think that the days of the *samurai* who built them had passed.

Helms enjoyed his stay in Japan for a little more than a month, and his overall impression was favorable.

Illustrations from the book 2

San Francisco



This sketch of San Francisco as seen from a hilltop was made by Helms during his visit in 1850. He was astonished to find that the hill was gone and so much had changed when he visited the city again in 1872.

White Sea Coast



Copper mines in the White Sea Coast region. Helms was searching for promising mines and for development opportunities in a number of areas.



Helms' ship ran aground in rough weather while sailing along the White Sea coast.

His ship left Yokohama for San Francisco on August 8, 1872, and during this voyage he met a Chinese and seven **Japanese**. The "wonderfully well informed" **Chinese** with whom he enjoyed a cordial friendship appears to have been Yung Wing (1828–1912), the first Chinese to graduate from an American university. At the time, Yung Wing was headed to the U.S. to prepare for the arrival of a group of students from Qing China. Although Helms did not record the names of the Japanese whom he praised for their wonderful academic spirit, records of the time show that they likely were OKURA Kihachiro¹ (1837–1928), a famous businessman in Meiji-Taisyo era embarking on his first trip to the West, and HASHIMOTO Tsunatsune² (1845–1909), a doctor on his way to study in Germany who later became the first head of the Japanese Red Cross Hospital.

After writing this book, Helms settled down and was no longer a frequent traveler, but the journey of this particular copy of his book was not yet over. Having originally been given to his daughter, the book eventually passed into the hands of Helms' grandson, Verner W. Clapp (1901–1972). Clapp was an active member of the U.S. library community and served as a chief assistant librarian of the Library of Congress. He came to Japan in 1947 as a member of a library delegation invited by both Houses of the National Diet to advise on the establishment of the National Diet Library. His deep involvement in the establishment of the NDL includes recommendations on the basic design of the institution. He returned to Japan in 1968 to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the opening of the NDL and the completion of the Tokyo main library building, at which time he donated this book to the NDL. Later, together with material related to library and information science donated by his family after his death, this book now is part of the Verner W. Clapp Collection, a special collection at the NDL.

While those who have read this book know what it is to be transported to the world of Helms' 19th-century travels, the book itself sits quietly on its shelf, awaiting encounters with new readers.

*The illustrations in this book, including those not shown in this article, can be found in SHIRAHATA, Yozaburo ed. *Kaigai nihonzo shusei: Nichibunken shozo obun tosho shosai*. vol.4. Kokusai nihon bunka kenkyu senta, 2014. NDL Call No. GB63-L23 as well as in the [Overseas Images of Japan Database](#) at the [International Research Center for Japanese Studies](#).

¹ Portrait available at the online gallery [Portraits of Modern Japanese Historical Figures](#).

² Portrait available at the online gallery [Portraits of Modern Japanese Historical Figures](#) (in Japanese).

The Verner W. Clapp Collection

More information on the Verner W. Clapp Collection can be found in the following article:

[The Personal Libraries of Well-Known People \(1\) Verner W. Clapp Collection](#) (No. 236, February 2021)



Research Navi: [Verner W. Clapp Collection](#)



Portrait of Verner W. Clapp

Photo from Wikimedia Commons

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:LCmaster-mss-mff-001-001027-0001.jpg)

File: LCmaster-mss-mff-001-001027-0001.jpg

(Translated by NOZAWA Asuka)

References (in Japanese):

- OKURA, Kihachiro. *Doryoku*. Jitsugyo No Nihonsha, 1916. Available via the [NDL Digital Collections](#).
- OTSUKI, Takashi. *Kyoto hakuran kyokai shiryaku*. Kyoto Hakuran Kyokai, 1937. Available via the [NDL Digital Collections](#). (Available with Digitized Contents Transmission Service or at the NDL.)
- Kyoto Hakuran Kyokai. *Kyoto hakurankai enkakushi*. Kyoto Hakuran Kyokai, 1903. Available via the [NDL Digital Collections](#).
- TEZUKA, Akira and Kokuritsu Kyoiku Kaikan eds., *Bakumatsu meiji kaigai tokosha soran*. Kashiwa Shobo, 1992. NDL Call No. GB13-E58.
- Tokyo Keizai Daigaku Shiryō Iinkai ed., *Kohon okura kihachiro nenpu*. Tokyo Keizai Daigaku, 2012. NDL Call No. GK114-J22.
- TOMITA, Hitoshi. *Umi o koeta nihon jinmei jiten*. Nichigai Asoshietsu, 2005. NDL Call No. GB12-H42.

- Nihon Sekijujisha Byoin ed., *Hashimoto tsunatsune sensei*. Nihon Sekijujisha Byoin, 1936. Available via the [NDL Digital Collections](#). (Available with Digitized Contents Transmission Service or at the NDL.)
- MITANI, Hiroshi. "Hyakunenngo no kien." *Sanko shoshi kenkyu*, vol. 18, 1979.7. Available via the [NDL Digital Collections](#).
- MURAOKA, Minoru. *Nihon no hoteru shoshi*. Chuo Koronsha, 1981. Available via the [NDL Digital Collections](#). (Available with Digitized Contents Transmission Service or at the NDL.)
- YO, Ko. *Seigaku tozenki: Yo ko jiden*. Heibonsha, 1969. NDL Call No. GK358-1.

Articles by NDL staff

The ABCs of Long-Term Preservation of Electronic Materials (2) — Compact discs

KINOSHITA Takafumi, Research and Development for Next-Generation Systems Office, Digital Information Planning Division, Digital Information Department

This article is a translation of an article in Japanese from [NDL Monthly Bulletin No. 766 \(February 2025\)](#).



The National Diet Library (NDL) acquires not just printed matter but also electronic media, including electronic publications packaged in CDs, DVDs, or USB memory sticks, as well as digital data from the Internet with no physical media. Ensuring perpetual access to these electronic materials requires the development of suitable measures for long-term preservation that are quite distinct from those needed for printed matter.

Between 2020 and 2023, focus was placed on the migration of floppy disks (FD), which are more prone to deterioration. With the completion of FD migration, full-scale migration of compact discs began in 2023.

Following up on an earlier article on FD migration, "The ABCs of Long-Term Preservation of Electronic Information —Are those disks still readable?" ([No. 730, February 2022](#)), this article discusses measures taken for the long-term preservation of CDs and other optical discs.

The NDL's collection of CDs and other optical discs

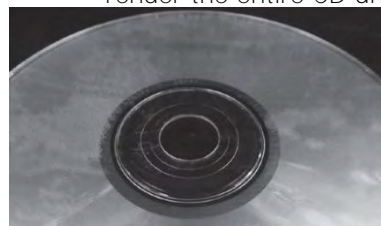
In FY 2020, the NDL surveyed the packaged electronic publications in its collection and found approximately 873,000 CDs, DVDs, Blu-ray, and other optical discs. The collection is increasing at a rate of about 39,000 items per year and includes content such as numerical data, books, statistics, audio CDs, video DVDs, applications, games, and more.



Challenges in the long-term preservation of CDs and other optical discs

Physical damage

- Even minor soiling or localized scratches can render the entire CD unreadable.



Tampering and overwriting

- Rewritable optical discs are easily tampered with or overwritten.
- Caution is needed whenever there is a risk of unintended overwriting or data deletion.

Media lifespan

- The lifespan of optical discs varies, with estimations ranging from approximately 10 years to over 100 years.
- It is suggested that recordable and rewritable optical discs deteriorate faster than read-only discs.
- It would seem safer to assume that the lifespan of optical discs is shorter than that of printed matter.

Handling of optical discs

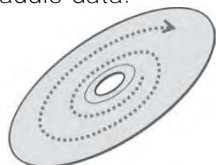
- Optical discs are still in common use, and disc drives are easy to obtain.
- A large number of operating systems, software, and devices read data from optical discs, which makes long-term accommodation of a diverse range of operating environments a necessity if the stored data is to be utilized as intended.

Characteristics and types of CDs

CDs are widely used worldwide as digital recording media. They were initially developed by Sony and Philips in the early 1980s for audio data but have been adapted for other specific uses, as well.

Characteristics

Data is recorded in a spiral from the inner to the outer edge. Nominal capacities are 650MB or 700MB for digital data, which translates to 74 minutes or 80 minutes of audio data.



Geometry

The most common geometry has a 12-cm diameter, but CD singles with an 8-cm diameter were also widely used. There are also CDs with unusual geometries, such as card-shaped CDs.



Audio CDs and data CDs

CDs were initially developed exclusively for audio data but were later used for any kind of digital data. A single CD can hold both audio and digital data.



Writable/Non-writable

Although compact discs were initially read-only (CD-ROM), later developments included discs that could be recorded but only once (recordable or CD-R) and discs that could be rewritten multiple times (rewritable or CD-RW), both of which are still widely used today.

Recordable

ReWritable

NDL measures for long-term preservation of CDs

Media conversion or migration

- The term migration refers to the transfer of digital data to safer storage media. In this case, data is extracted from optical disks and stored on other media.
- In FY 2023, approximately 15,000 CDs, mainly supplements to books published up to 2000, were migrated.
- CDs identified as rewritable are prioritized for migration.

Maintaining operating environments

- The NDL maintains PCs with Windows XP installed, which can be used for viewing CDs, although printing is not allowed.
- The NDL owns Windows XP, Windows 7, and older operating systems, which it tests to ensure operation in virtual environments.

Storage

- CDs are stored in a controlled environment at a temperature of 22°C and humidity of 55%.

Reference: Past migration efforts at the NDL

Media type	Approximate number of items (as of FY 2020)	Number of items migrated by FY 2023
Optical discs	approx. 870,000	approx. 15,000
Rewritable optical discs	1,000	394
USB memory sticks	600	547
Magneto-optical discs (MO)	36	36
MiniDiscs (MD)	1,177	144
FD	12,400	12,312

Migrating CDs at the NDL

Data CDs

Two different methods are used, as needed: files and folders are copied directly from a CD to another storage device, such as the hard disk of a PC, or a disk image file of the CD is created and stored on another storage device.

File system and root folder information
Free space
File 1
Free space
File 2
Folder 3 information
...

A disk image file is a snapshot of all the data recorded on a CD that can be stored as a single file on another device.

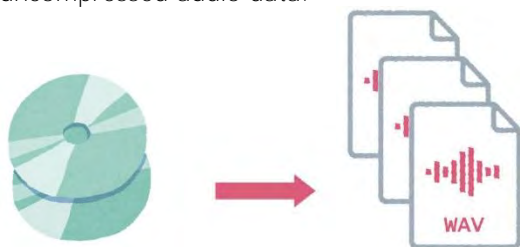
* A disk image file is a snapshot of the contents of a CD that is created by sequentially reading all digital data, including free space and management areas, and saving it as a single file. Disk image files of CDs are often called ISO files.

Storing a disk image file on a CD-R essentially recreates the original CD. In most cases, files contained in the disc image can be extracted directly from the CD.

Audio CDs

Each recorded track (equivalent to a song on a music CD) is extracted as a WAVE file with the original sound quality.

* WAVE files (often with the extension .WAV) are one of the most commonly used formats for storing uncompressed audio data.



Making migrated data accessible

As of February 2025, materials that have been migrated and have no technical issues with their use are registered in the NDL Digital Collections, primarily as part of the Packaged Electronic Publications collection, and are available for use online on the premises at the NDL.



While CDs are still commonly used as of 2025 and concerns about maintaining CD drives or other elements of their operating environment are relatively few, there are many challenges not seen with FDs, such as the vast number of CDs held by the NDL, the need for efficient migration processes, and the need to set appropriate priorities for migration. The NDL is committed to continuing its preservation efforts and technical research to ensure that **today's** culture is available to future generations, not just decades but even centuries from now.

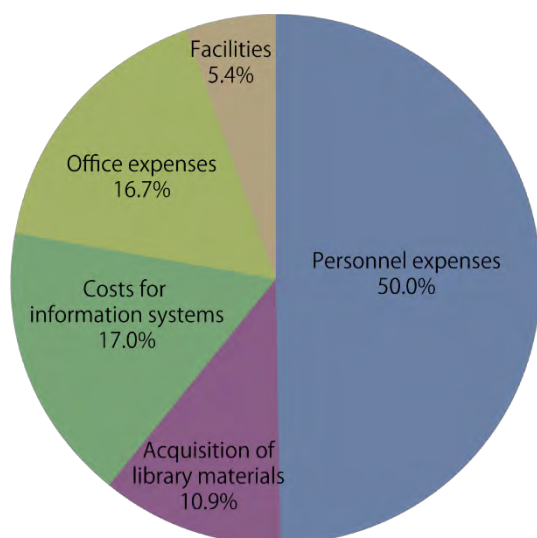
(Translated by KAWAMURA Masumi)

Budget

NDL Budget for Fiscal Year 2025

This article is a translation of the article in Japanese of the same title in NDL Monthly Bulletin No. 770 (June 2025).

The budget for FY2025 (April 2025–March 2026) was approved by the National Diet on March 31, 2025, with 20,425,700,000 yen appropriated for the National Diet Library during FY2025.



The overall composition of the expenditure budget includes:

- Personnel expenses: 50.0%
- Acquisition of library materials: 10.9%
- Costs for information systems: 17.0%
- Office expenses: 16.7%
- Facilities: 5.4%

The outline of the expenditure budget for FY2025 is as follows:

National Diet Library FY2025 Budgets (1,000 yen)

(Item) National Diet Library	19,315,137
Personnel expenses	10,214,745
Regular office expenses	188,265
Legislative research	279,183
Acquisition of library materials	2,227,498
of which was compensation for deposit of publications	347,570
Costs for information systems	3,466,055
Tokyo Main Library operation	1,746,299
International Library of Children's Literature operation	265,978
Kansai-kan operation	927,114
(Item) Expenses for facilities	1,110,563
Maintenance of the Tokyo Main Library	692,711
Maintenance of the Kansai-kan	417,852
Total	20,425,700

(Translated by KAWAMURA Masumi)

News from NDL

NDL User Satisfaction Survey of FY2025

Planning Division, Administrative Department



Since FY2003 the National Diet Library (NDL) has conducted annual user surveys in order to figure out the trends of use, user satisfaction and requests.

The NDL is now conducting a user satisfaction survey of FY2025. Your ideas and opinions are important to our library and will help us provide you with the best library services possible.

URL: <https://enquete.ndl.go.jp/245695/p/NL?lang=en>

Survey period: From May 7 to September 30, 2025

*This is an anonymous survey. It will take about 10 minutes to complete.

*Answers are processed statistically and individual answers are not linked to the respondent. Also, the data will not be used for any purpose other than this survey.

*The results of this survey will be posted on the NDL website.

For further information about NDL user surveys, please visit [the NDL website](#).

Selected list of articles from NDL periodicals

The NDL Monthly Bulletin No. 771/772, July/August 2025

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).

[No. 771/772, July/August 2025 \(PDF: 4.74 MB\)](#)

- <Book of the month - from NDL collections>
"Kaiju jikkentan" in *Otogi teburu*: In pursuit of dinosaurs
- 60th Committee on Designation of Rare Books
Materials recently designated as rare books
- Science and technology:
AEC Engineering Materials and Drawings
- The History of Expos—Digital exhibition:
Expositions where the modern technology of the times was exhibited
- <Tidbits of information on NDL>
Binding newspapers with artisanal bowknots
- <Books not commercially available>
Takehisa yumeji no bijinga to modan dezain: Utsukushi mono • kawai mono
- <NDL Topics>