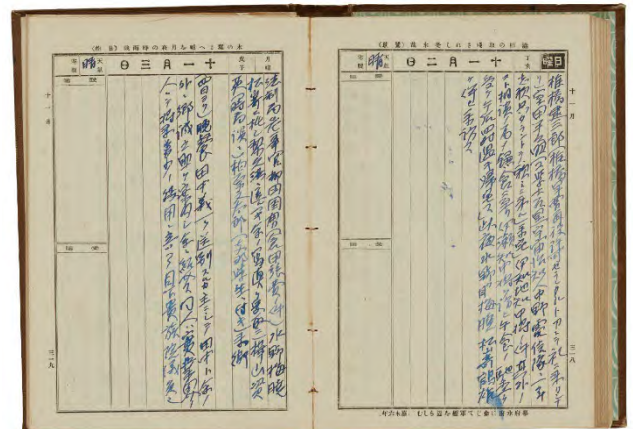


National Diet Library Newsletter

No. 258, August 2024



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Selections from NDL collections

Materials in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room: The UTSUNOMIYA Taro Papers

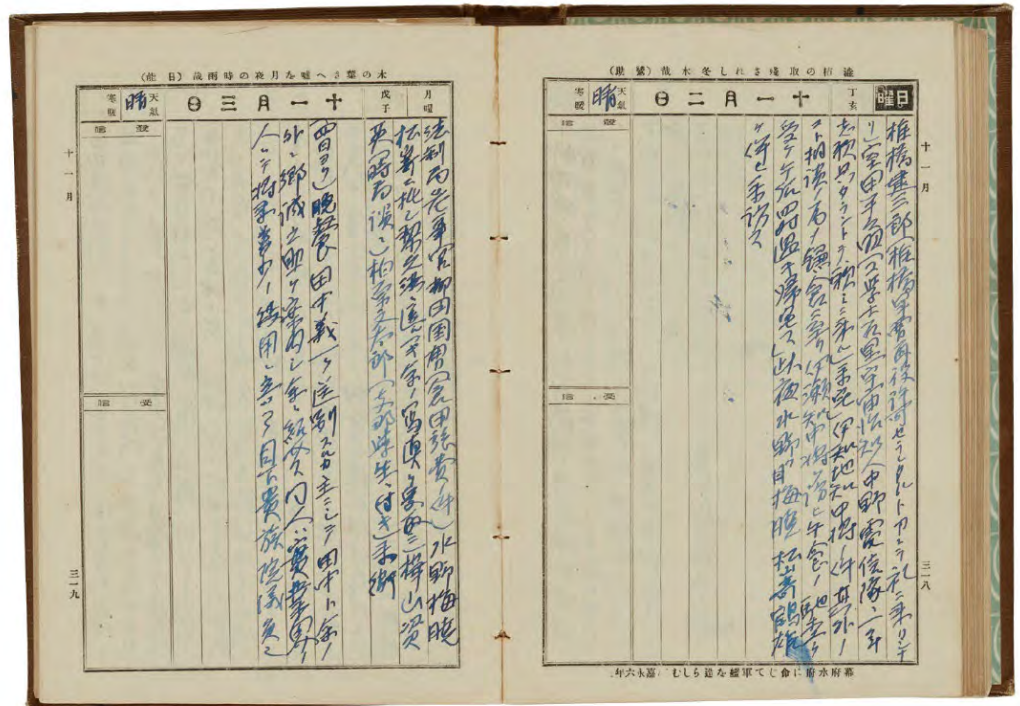
Modern Japanese Political Documents Division, Reader Services and Collections Department

This article is a partial translation of the article in Japanese in *NDL Monthly Bulletin No. 739 (November 2022)*.



(Left) Image 1: MATSUZAKI Tsuruo (1867-1949)

The portrait is from Jufukai ed. *Matsuzaki sensei kanreki shukuga kinen bunshu*. Jufukai, 1936. NDL Call No. [726-99](#).



(Right) Image 2: A diary dated November 2 and 3, 1913.
NDL Call No. UTSUNOMIYA Taro Papers, diary 8.

Introduction

The National Diet Library holds approximately 420,000 documents on modern Japanese political history, including the personal papers of politicians, high-ranking officials, and military officers, dating from the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate to the present day. 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 UTSUNOMIYA Taro Papers

(6,223 items, available since May 2022)

UTSUNOMIYA Taro originally had an interest in Asia, and served as chief of the Intelligence Bureau of the Office of Army General Staff in charge of foreign affairs and as the commander of the Imperial Japanese Army in Korea. The UTSUNOMIYA Taro Papers consist of many documents and letters related to Asia (which measure over 13 meters when arranged on the shelves).

A letter from MATSUZAKI Tsuruo (Image 1) dated December 11, 1913, is an example of the collection. MATSUZAKI studied Chinese studies in Changsha, Hunan Province from 1909 and later collected materials as an employee of the Dalian Library of the South Manchuria Railway Company (Manchurian Railway Library). In his diary from 1913, there is a related description. MIZUNO Baigyo (1877-1949), a Buddhist monk who had experience working in both Japan and China and was

acquainted with UTSUNOMIYA, suggested that MATSUZAKI consider studying in Changsha. On October 26, Mizuno informed Utsunomiya about Matsuzaki's interest in studying in China. On November 1, MIZUNO received MATSUZAKI's travel expenses. The following day, UTSUNOMIYA met with MATSUZAKI, and on November 3, UTSUNOMIYA provided MATSUZAKI, via MIZUNO, with a portrait photo to be delivered to Li Yuanhong, the Vice President of the Republic of China, with whom UTSUNOMIYA had a connection (Image 2). In his letter,

MATSUZAKI reported that he had managed to meet Li in Hankou, China, who was en route to Beijing at the invitation of Yuan Shikai, the President of the Republic of China, and also mentioned rumors about the area (Image 3).

The collection also contains postcards from MATSUZAKI (UTSUNOMIYA Taro Papers, letter 761-2 and letter 1597) and a report on Christianity in Hunan Province dated May 12, 1915 (UTSUNOMIYA Taro Papers, document 331-53).

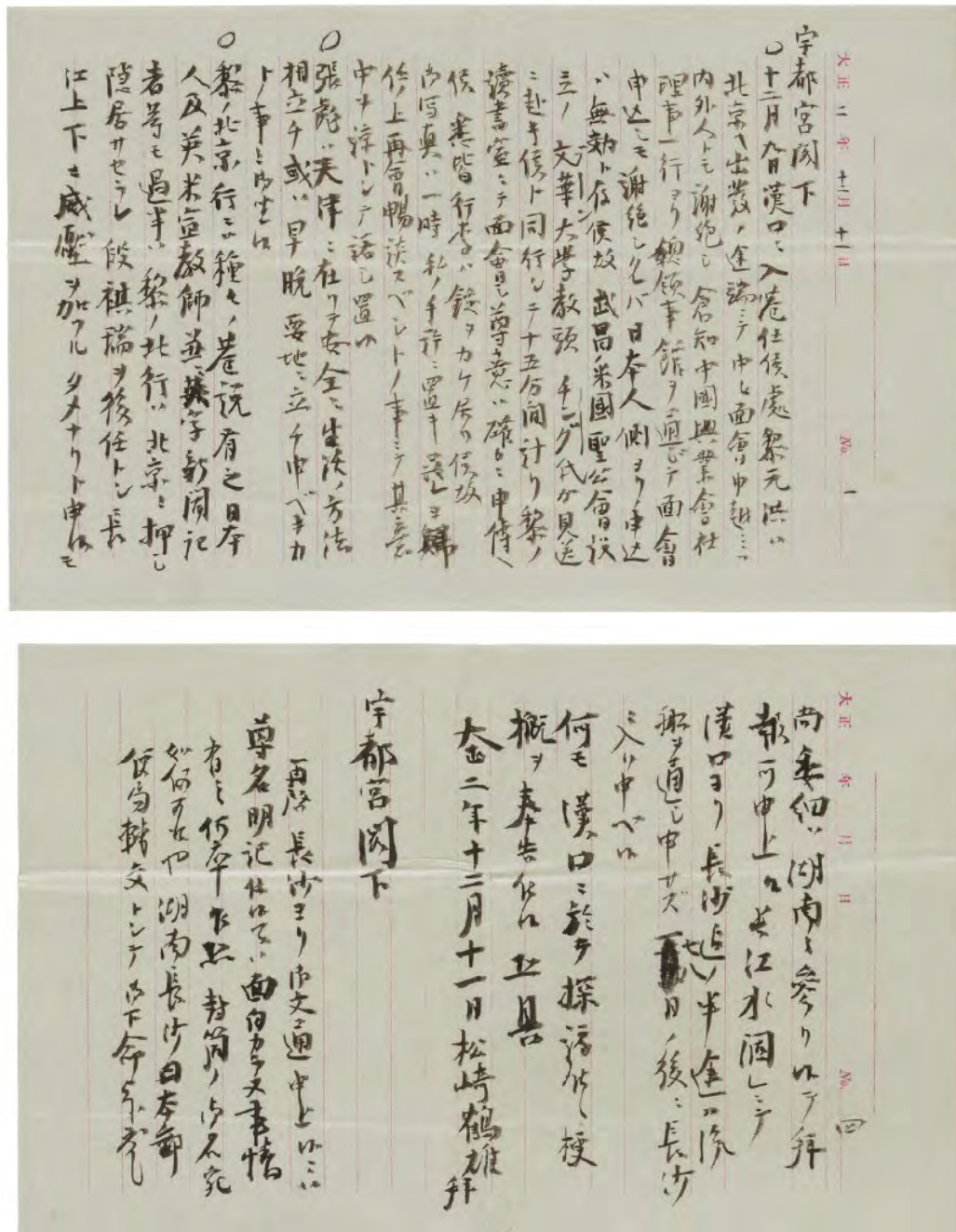


Image 3: Beginning and end of the letter from MATSUZAKI Tsuruo to UTSUNOMIYA Taro, dated December 11, 1913. NDL Call No. UTSUNOMIYA Taro Papers, letter 761-1.



UTSUNOMIYA Taro

UTSUNOMIYA Taro (1861-1922)

Born in 1861 in Saga. Military officer. He worked for the Office of Army General Staff, and during the Russo-Japanese War, he supported the Akashi operation as a military attaché to the legation in Britain. After returning to Japan, he served as chief of the Intelligence Bureau of the Office of General Staff, commander of the Fourth Division, and more, before becoming commander of the Imperial Japanese Army in Korea, an army general in 1919, and then a military councillor in 1920. Died in 1922. UTSUNOMIYA Tokuma (1906-2000), a Diet member, was his son.

The portrait is a picture from January 11, 1913. NDL Call No. UTSUNOMIYA Taro Papers 2089.

(Translated by OGAWA Kanako)

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 newly available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(7\)](#) (No. 225, August 2019)
- [Materials newly available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(8\)](#) (No. 226, October 2019)
- [Materials newly available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(9\)](#) (No. 233, November 2020)
- [Materials newly available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(10\)](#) (No. 235, January 2021)
- [Materials newly available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(11\)](#) (No. 241, October 2021)
- [Materials newly available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(12\)](#) (No. 242, December 2021)
- [Materials available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room: The YAMAGATA Aritomo Papers](#) (No. 251, June 2023)
- [Materials available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room: The MOTONO Ichiro and Seiichi Papers](#) (No. 252, August 2023)
- [Materials in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room: The UZAWA Fusaaki Papers](#) (No. 254, December 2023)
- [Materials in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room: The America-Japan Society Papers](#) (No. 255, February 2024)
- [Materials in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room: The KAWAKAMI Jotaro Papers](#) (No. 256, April 2024)
- [Materials in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room: *Shunpoko iboku* \[Scroll Book of Letters from ITO Hirobumi to MAKIMURA Masanao\]](#) (No. 257, June 2024)

Related content from the National Diet Library Website

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

Selections from NDL collections

Daitokyo shashincho: Photographs of famous places in Tokyo during the early Showa era

ITO Yusuke, Domestic Materials Division, Acquisitions and Bibliography Department

This article is a translation of the article in Japanese in *NDL Monthly Bulletin No. 745 (May 2023)*.



Daitokyo shashincho, [s.n.], [19--]. *Available in the [NDL Digital Collections](#).

This book was published in 1930, seven years after the Great Kanto Earthquake. It is a photo guidebook of famous landmarks that captures a brief glimpse of Tokyo before it underwent major changes again due to damage from the war and postwar development.

The publisher's thoughts are shown at the beginning of the description of the highlights at the end of the book. It says, "Please take a look at the new Tokyo which the people of Tokyo have built as the fruit of their tearful efforts on the scorched earth that was turned into a burnt wasteland after the earthquake."

When reading the captions of the photographs, it is interesting to learn the thoughts and feelings of the people at that time about the subjects of the

photographs.

Guidebooks have been published since the Meiji period (1868-1912) and even further back, in the Edo period (1603-1868). However, guidebooks with photographs started to be published in the mid 1890s. Many photographs are featured in the NDL's Digital exhibition "[The Meiji and Taisho Eras in Photographs](#)."

While many guides from the Meiji period include Western buildings that symbolize the modern era, such as government offices, as well as temples, shrines, and historical sites that remind us of the Edo period, this book introduces new buildings of the period, built before and after the earthquake, with photographs that symbolize Tokyo's recovery from the earthquake.



Figure 1: View of the Hibiya area from the Tokyo Municipal Auditorium. An interesting view of the former Rokumeikan building next to the former main building of the Imperial Hotel, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. Both buildings were unfortunately demolished, the Rokumeikan in 1940 and the former Imperial Hotel in 1968.

One of the most interesting photographs in this book is of the former Rokumeikan and the former main building (the Wright Building) of the Imperial Hotel side by side (Figure 1). Both are well-known architectural structures but seeing them standing side by side may be a little surprising.

The former Rokumeikan was designed by Josiah Conder and completed in 1883. At the time of this photo was taken, it was owned by the Japan Conspiration Insurance Company and was demolished in 1940.

Wright, was built in 1923 and demolished in 1968.

At the time the photo was taken, both buildings existed, and it was a great opportunity to capture the famous buildings standing side by side in one photo.



Figure 3: (Left) "Fountain Bath" located underground at Tokyo Station. (Right) A woman buys a bathing ticket from a ticket machine.



Figure 2: The former main building of the Imperial Hotel. It is now highly regarded architecturally, but the comment on this photo describes it as "strange" and "not magnificent in appearance." It seems that the understanding of architecture had not yet advanced at the time.

The former main building of the Imperial Hotel (the Wright Building, Figure 2), designed by Frank Lloyd

During long train trips on steam locomotives, passengers' bodies seemed to become soiled with soot and smoke which entered the passenger seats through the windows. The "Tokyo Station Fountain Bath" (Figure 3) may have been used to wash off such dirt from the journey. After World War II, steam locomotives were withdrawn from the main lines and the time required for train travel became shorter, and these facilities disappeared. It can be said that these facilities were unique to that era when long train trips were common.



Figure 4: Dining room in a department store. Food samples are displayed. Rice bowl dishes and Western food as well as watermelon for dessert are displayed at the top.

It was also around this time that more and more restaurants began to display product samples and prices

at the front of their stores (Figure 4). It is said that women, in particular, found it easier to eat out because they could know the prices before entering the restaurant and they could eat by sitting down on chairs without having to take off their footwear to go up to the *tatami* floor as they had previously done.

Another highlight of these materials is the changing nature of the photographs and explanations. What was new at one time may gradually become commonplace and no longer attract attention, or conversely, what was once commonplace may become a tourist attraction in later years as its reputation grows.

The guide to famous places is a collection of things that people of that time wanted to introduce, and it captures the changing times in a moment and passes it on to future generations. It might not be an exaggeration to say that it is like a device that allows us to relive the time.

There are many more photographs and comments in the book, and they can be accessed at any time through the [NDL Digital Collections](#). Visit the site if you are interested and you may be able to travel back in time.

Tokyo area in *Daitokyo shashincho*



View from Shinbashi Station towards the Ginza and Yurakucho area. Several large construction projects are underway in the Ginza area on the right. The area between the railroad tracks and Ginza is now an elevated highway and Shinkansen elevated railroad, but it offered a good view of the area when it was a canal.

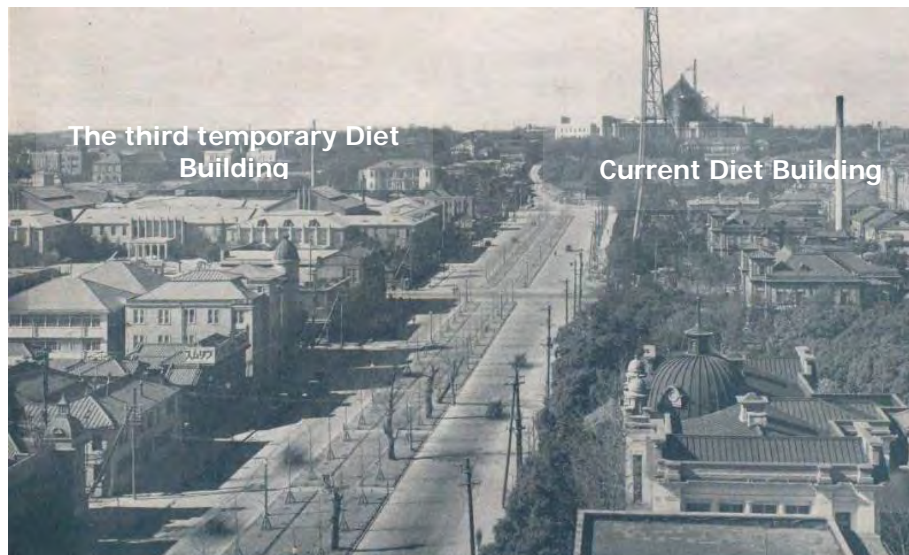


Left: Japan's first subway opened in 1927 between Asakusa and Ueno. It was extended to Manseibashi in 1930. It is amazing to see how low the ceiling was. After that, Tokyo's subway network developed greatly. However, the comment on this photograph says, "Tokyo is not expected to make much progress in the future because of its weak ground" and "as a scientific and practical toy (omitted), it is a rare existence."

Right: The Dai-ichi Sogo Building in Kyobashi, designed by TATSUNO Kingo, was completed in 1921. It survived the earthquake and war damage but was demolished in 1969.



A view of the Marunouchi area located in front of Tokyo Station. The building in the top right is the Old Marunouchi Building. There was a shuttle service from the station to Mitsukoshi and Shirokiya (department stores).



View from Kasumigaseki towards Nagatacho. The third temporary Diet Building can be seen on the left side of the road in the middle, and the new building under construction on the hill (the current National Diet Building, which was completed in 1936).



Aerial view of the Nihonbashi area. The large building at the intersection in the center of the photo is Shirokiya. The main building of the Mitsukoshi Nihonbashi Main Store can be seen across the Nihonbashi bridge.



View from Nihonbashi bridge towards the Muromachi area. The main building of the Mitsukoshi Nihonbashi Main Store (which still exists) is in the center.

(Translated by NOZAWA Asuka)

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- TAKEMURA, Masayuki, KITAHARA, Itoko (editors-in-chief), SP foramu ed. *Kanto daishinsai: 1923nen tokyo wa hisaichi datta*. 2nd ed., Tokyo Bosai Kyukyu Kyokai, 2014. NDL Call No. EG77-L863.
- MORITA, Yoshinori. "Meiji iko senzen made no tokyo annaihon no kisai joho no hensen kyu tokyo 15ku 6gun o taisho to shite." *Nihon kanko kenkyusha rengo kikanshi = The tourism studies: the journal of Japan Institute of Tourism Research*, 15(1), 2003.10. NDL Call No. Z5-B72.



Shirokiya is a major department store that has existed since the Edo period. This photograph shows the building as it was before the fire that destroyed the fourth through eighth floors in 1932. The fire was Japan's first high-rise building fire and left behind many lessons.

- OSHIMA, Kosaku. "Denshi tenjikai yoroku shashin no naka no meiji taisho kokuritsu kokkai toshokan shozo shashincho kara tokyohen=Tidbits on digital exhibition: The Meiji and Taisyo eras in photographs: from photographs in publications held by National Diet Library: Tokyo in photographs." *Sanko shoshi kenkyu* = *Reference service and bibliography*, 68, 2008.3. Available in the [NDL Digital Collections](#).

Selections from NDL collections

Visual media for a new era: The nishiki-e newspapers

SUZUKI Kanata, Business, Science and Technology Division, Reader Services and Collections Department

This article is a translation of an article in Japanese from *NDL Monthly Bulletin No. 745 (May 2023)*.



When we think of symbols of the Bunmei-kaika ("civilization and enlightenment", the Westernization of Japan in the Meiji period), things like railroads, gas lamps, cutting off topknots, and beef pot come to mind, but newspapers, which are so familiar in our modern lives, were one of the things that made people feel that a new era had arrived.

In *Kaika shindai kashu* (OOKUBO Tadayasu ed. Published in 1878), which is a collection of waka poems about the things of the new era, the following poems titled "Shimbunshi" (newspaper) are included.

Newspapers let us read various events that happened just yesterday all in one place!

けふはまたきのふにかはることくさをかきあつめてもみ
するふみ哉

Thanks to newspapers, the time has come that we can instantly hear about the good, the bad and the events that happened faraway, whatever they may be.

よしあしのなにはのこともふしのまに耳新しくきく世也
けり

These poems tell us the fresh surprise of those who came into contact with newspapers for the first time. Since it was prohibited in the Edo period to publicly report current

events in real time, newspapers were a great shock for people in the Meiji period.

However, newspapers in the early days were written for intellectuals, and they were not relevant to ordinary people. Therefore, an attempt was made to combine the fresh, real news reported by newspapers with *nishiki-e* (multicolor *ukiyo-e*), which had long been familiar to the general public and had the media characteristics of incorporating current affairs and trends. The result was nishiki-e newspapers.

The first nishiki-e newspapers were the nishiki-e edition of *Tokyo nichinichi shimbun*, published in Tokyo in August 1874. The nishiki-e edition took the form of picking an article from the past, mainly from *Tokyo nichinichi shimbun* (published in 1872), that would be of interest to the general public, depicting the scene in a large attractive picture, and rewriting the original article into an easy-to-understand, interesting text, which was then published by a publisher that had traditionally published nishiki-e. The paper was characterized by the red frame made by inexpensive, brightly colored imported dyes, and Western-style angels holding up the title (Figure 1). The popularity of these newspapers led to the publication of a series of nishiki-e newspapers, mainly in Tokyo and Osaka.



Figure 1: *Tokyo nichinichi shimbun*, No. 111 by Tentendo shujin (TAKABATAKE Ransen), illustrated by OCHIAI Yoshiiku. Gusokuya, 1874, 1 sheet. (Included in *Tokyo nichinichi shimbun*)

When a fire broke out in Numazu, *rikishi* (sumo wrestlers) who were visiting there for their show helped put out the fire. Thanks to the efforts of two *ozeki*, Sakaigawa and Omatoi, the fire did not spread to the telegraph poles, and their monstrous strength is credited with having helped the Bunmei-kaika. <https://dl.ndl.go.jp/pid/1302901>



In the case of the nishiki-e version of *Tokyo nichinichi shimbun*, the issue number is not the serial number of the nishiki-e version, but that of the *Tokyo nichinichi shimbun* from which the quotation was taken. The original issue, No. 111 of the *Tokyo nichinichi shimbun*, was published on July 27, 1872. The image of an angel holding up the title is thought to have been adopted in reference to an image depicted in a foreign publication, to evoke the new era.

It is not certain what kind of publication the angelic figures holding up the title were based on, but for example, some translations of Christian doctrine books published in the early Meiji period have decorative icons of angels and ribbons.

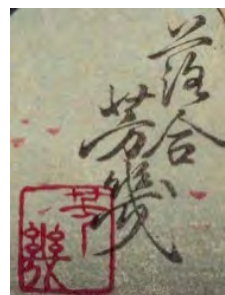


Ribbon motif, angel motif

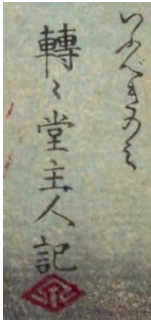
Rozariyo kiroku, translated by Juan Rueda de los Angeles, edited by Bernard Petitjean. Bernard Petitjean, 1869, 1 volume. <https://dl.ndl.go.jp/pid/2541699>



The text is plainer and more rhythmic compared to the original article from which it is taken, and many of the kanji characters are written with *furigana* (phonetic readings).



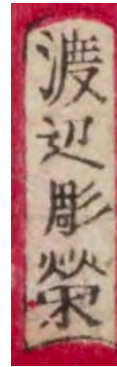
Name and seal of the painter, OCHIAI (Ikkeisai) Yoshiiku (1833-1904). Yoshiiku was a senior disciple of UTAGAWA Kuniyoshi and excelled at portraying actors (*yakusha-e*) and beautiful women (*bijin-ga*). He participated in the launch of *Tokyo nichinichi shimbun* in 1872, and later became active as a newspaper illustrator.



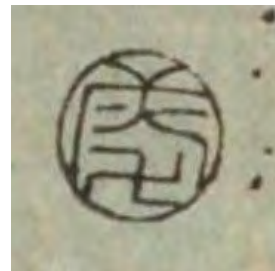
Name and signature of the author of the text, Tentendo shujin. Tentendo shujin is another name for the novelist TAKEBATAKE Ransen (1838-1885). Not only did he work as a newspaper reporter for the *Tokyo nichinichi shimbun* and other publications, but he also wrote a number of novels that gained popularity. In addition, several other reporters wrote texts for the *nishiki-e* edition of *Tokyo nichinichi shimbun* as well.



It indicates the publisher, Gusokuya. Gusokuya published *ukiyo-e* from the end of the Edo period to the end of the Meiji period.



The name of the carver, WATANABE Horiei



Aratamein which indicates that the *nishiki-e* passed the censors when it was published. From here, the date of publication of the *nishiki-e* newspapers can be determined. In this case, “戌十” (Inu 10) is written in the circle, indicating that it was issued in October 1874.

Various angel faces

If you look closely at the angels depicted in the *nishiki-e* edition of *Tokyo nichinichi shimbun*, you will see a different expression in each issue. Is it the whim of the artist?



Looks dissatisfied for some reason (No. 813)



A standard angelic face (No. 592)



Facing front and smiling (No. 322)



Many have brown hair (No. 185)



Some have black hair (No. 1)

However, as early as the latter half of 1876, the boom in *nishiki-e* newspapers began to fade away, and in their place, *ko-shimbun* (small newspapers), newspapers for the general public with illustrations and full *furigana* (phonetic readings), began to spread.

Although the *nishiki-e* newspapers were short-lived, their impressive pages are a condensed representation of the interests of the people of the city, who were bewildered by the opening of the country to the outside world.

For example, the articles rarely dealt with political or social events as one might imagine from today's newspapers. Instead, most of the articles dealt with events featuring ordinary people, such as inspiring stories, comical stories (Figure 2), or theft and murder cases

(Figure 3). The selection of these topics suggests that the readers enjoyed *nishiki-e* newspapers more as entertainment they could sympathize with rather than as a means of learning about national or social trends. Another interpretation is that the creators of *nishiki-e* newspapers intended to use the news as lessons to lead the common people into a new era with morality and rationality.



Figure 2: *Nishiki-e hyakujishi shimbun*, No. 186, illustrated by (HASEGAWA) Sadanobu (II). Hyakujisha, 1876, 1 sheet. (Included in *Nishiki-e hyakujishi shimbun*)

A man returns home late at night and is astounded to find a severed head on top of a water tank. However, what appeared to be a severed head was merely a girl from the house behind slumbering with her head hanging over the tank. The girl had come home late from a night out, and the house owner was completely asleep, so she was unable to enter the house.

<https://dl.ndl.go.jp/pid/1302219>



Figure 3: *Tokyo nishinichi shimbun*, No. 512 by Tentendo Dondon (TAKABATAKE Ransen), illustrated by Ikkeisai (OCHIAI) Yoshiiku. Gusokuya, 1874, 1 sheet. (Included in *Tokyo nishinichi shimbun*)

The daughter of a family, whose house had been broken into by thugs, was wounded while defending her old father, and the thugs, cowed by her performance, fled without taking anything. The daughter's actions became known to the public, and she was rewarded.

<https://dl.ndl.go.jp/pid/1302910>

Ko-shimbun depicted in nishiki-e



Mitate taizukushi torikeshitai, illustrated by Taiso (TSUKIOKA) Yoshitoshi. INOUE Mohee, 1878, 1 sheet. (Included in *Azuma nishiki-e*)

The woman is reading *Kanayomi*, one of the representative ko-shimbun of the early Meiji period (before its retitling, it was called *Kanayomi shimbun*). It was first published in Yokohama by KANAGAKI Robun and ran from 1875 to 1880.

<https://dl.ndl.go.jp/pid/1312878>



Yoshitoshi ryakuga kaika no daruma/Gojobashi illustrated by (TSUKIOKA) Yoshitoshi. Unknown publisher, 18--., 1 sheet. (Included in *Azuma nishiki-e*)

Master Daruma, who is said to have attained enlightenment after sitting facing a wall for nine years, is depicted lying down and reading a newspaper. *Iroha newspaper* that Master Daruma is reading was also first published in 1879 by KANAGAKI Robun, who had left *Kanayomi*, and became popular as an entertainment newspaper for the general public.

<https://dl.ndl.go.jp/pid/1312842>

In addition, focusing on the balance between the sensibilities of the new age and those of the old, progressive ideas are strongly emphasized, such as in the depictions of officers dressed in Western clothes (Figure 4) and in the strict admonitions against superstitions and popular beliefs (Figures 5 and 6). On the other hand, some of the nishiki-e newspapers also depict supposed ghosts and hauntings. For example, in an article about the spirit of a deceased birth mother appearing to care for her surviving children, the text itself says as follows:

"Since a story like this is impossible in today's age of Bunmei-kaika, this is presented as a reminder not to pass on baseless gossip."

However, the readers of this article must have been struck by the atmosphere of the ghost and her sorrowful expression, which was depicted as full of emotion. These articles tell us of the atmosphere in those days, when the spirit of the old era still remained, while welcoming the fashion of the new era.

The pages of nishiki-e newspapers, which delighted the general public for only a few years at the turning point of an era, continue to convey the feeling of that era vividly and colorfully to the present day.



Figure 4: *Yubin hochi shimbun*, No. 597 painted by Taiso (TSUKIOKA) Yoshitoshi. Kinshodo, 1875, 1 sheet. (Included in *Yubin hochi shimbun*)

Late at night, men were acting suspiciously in front of a house when an officer, who happened to be staying at the house, spotted them and took their swords away from them on the spot, insisting they come to the police station. Overwhelmed by the officer's attitude, the men were taken away, and turned out to be robbers who had committed numerous misdeeds in the past.
<https://dl.ndl.go.jp/pid/1303008>



Figure 5: *Yubin hochi shimbun*, No.466 by KISHU Gyojin, painted by Taiso (TSUKIOKA) Yoshitoshi. Unknow publisher, 1875, 1 sheet. (Included in *Shimbun furoku azuma nishiki-e*)

A calm old merchant curtly turned away a crook who came to visit him, calling himself a messenger of *tengu* (supernatural creatures). On the lap of the old man who was not deceived by superstition is a copy of *Yubin hochi shimbun* (Postal Bulletin Newspaper).

<https://dl.ndl.go.jp/pid/9369960/1/50>



Figure 6: *Kakusyu shimbun zukai no uchi: Nisshin shinjishi*, No. 37, 1875, collected by Tentendo shujin (TAKABATAKE Ransen), painted by SENSAI Eitaku. Saidaya, 1875, 1 sheet. (Included in *Shimbun furoku azuma nishiki-e*)

During a smallpox epidemic, a girl riding a rickshaw from Midorimachi in Honjo to Asakusa disappeared, leaving behind a lucky charm to ward off the plague, and a rumor began to

circulate that this girl must have been the plague goddess of smallpox. The writer bitterly denounces this as an unfounded falsehood and states that it is foolish to be swayed by superstition without understanding the benefits of the smallpox vaccine.

<https://dl.ndl.go.jp/pid/9369960/1/115>



Figure 7: *Tokyo nichinichi shimbun* No. 101 by Tentendo Dondon (TAKABATAKE Ransen), illustrated by Ikkeisai (OCHIAI) Yoshiiku. Gusokuya, 1874, 1 sheet. (Included in *Tokyo nichinichi shimbun*)

Is it because the spirits of the deceased return during the Bon Festival? It is said that the spirit of a mother who died leaving behind her two children appeared and was seen holding her children with pity, before vanishing like smoke.

<https://dl.ndl.go.jp/pid/1302900>

(Translated by MACHIDA Sumika and MANO Yukako)

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- TSUCHIYA Reiko. *Oosaka no nishikie shimbun*. Sangensha, 1995. NDL Call No. UC126-G23

Articles by NDL staff

Passing on history and will

Modern Japanese Political Documents Division, Reader Services and Collections Department

This article is a translation of the article in Japanese in NDL Monthly Bulletin No. 742 (February, 2023).

Do you have any idea which university (大学) 牛津大学 is? Don't get caught up in the kanji. This is how it is currently written in Chinese, but was also used in modern Japan.

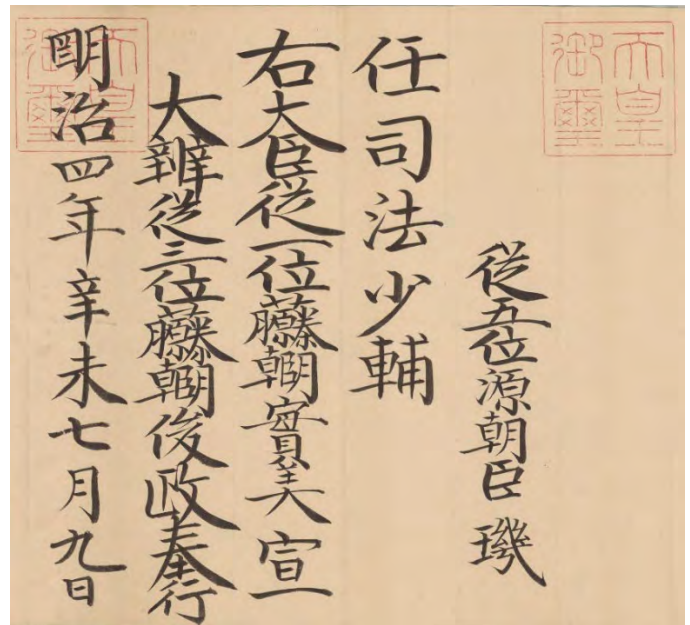
The Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room collects personal documents and other materials of modern and contemporary Japanese politicians and bureaucrats and makes them available to researchers and others after they have been organized and arranged for use. When we encounter the actual documents or check reference information to prepare a list of materials for public use, we sometimes rediscover the language used and the state of society at the time.

Let's try to answer the previous question. 牛 means ox and 津 means ford, and the answer is the University of Oxford in the U.K. We discovered this in a letter from an individual who was associated with the U.K. during the Meiji era (1868-1912) through studying abroad and other activities. It brings to mind the image of Japanese people who were attempting to modernize and internationalize.

Our work involves more than just examining old documents. Our collection consists mainly of materials donated to the National Diet Library (NDL) by individuals and organizations, which requires us to contact donors. Aside from collecting materials from publishers under the legal deposit system, donations from individuals also offer a valuable opportunity to expand our collections.

Occasionally, a descendant may contact us with the intention of donating the materials of their ancestor to the appropriate institution. Upon accepting the materials, we may inquire about the original owners and how the materials were bequeathed to them. Some donors even use important personal seals to stamp documents for the donation procedure. We believe the materials hold great significance for the donors, and we aim to fulfill their desire for widespread use.

The Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room was established in September 1949, shortly after the NDL opened. The purpose was to collect historical materials from the prewar period and prevent their loss. Although times have changed, preserving history remains relevant, even as the Heisei era (1989-2019) has now become a part of history. Our commitment extends beyond preserving the materials to also include passing on the purpose and aspirations of the Room, as it has been for generations.



An example of the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room collection:

A letter of appointment to Shiho shoyu (junior vice minister of the Ministry of Justice), NDL Call No. The SHISHIDO Tamaki Papers (2) 123.

*Available in [the NDL Digital Collections](#).

(Translated by OGAWA Kanako)

Related articles from the NDL Newsletter:

- [Materials in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room: *Shunpoko iboku* \[Scroll Book of Letters from ITO Hirobumi to MAKIMURA Masanao\]](#) (No. 257, June 2024)

Related content from the National Diet Library Website

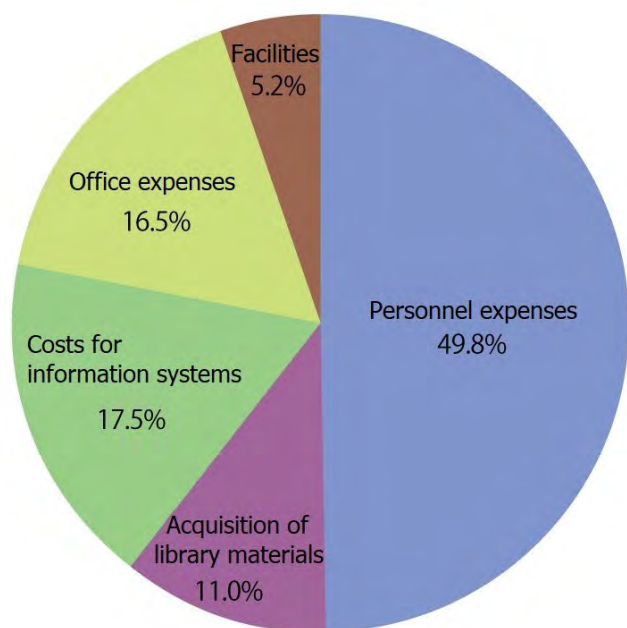
- [Research Navi](#): Summary of Modern Japanese political history materials (in Japanese)

Budget

NDL Budget for Fiscal Year 2024

This article is a translation of the article in Japanese of the same title in NDL Monthly Bulletin No. 758 (June 2024).

The budget for FY2024 (April 2024–March 2025) was approved by the National Diet on March 28, 2024, with 20,200,589,000 yen appropriated for the National Diet Library during FY2024.



The overall composition of the expenditure budget includes:

- Personnel expenses: 49.8%
- Acquisition of library materials: 11.0%
- Costs for information systems: 17.5%
- Office expenses: 16.5%
- Facilities: 5.2%

The outline of the expenditure budget for FY2024 is as follows:

National Diet Library FY2024 Budgets (1,000 yen)

(Item) National Diet Library	19,147,186
Personnel expenses	10,058,923
Regular office expenses	182,459
Legislative research	281,704
Acquisition of library materials	2,222,433
of which was compensation for deposit of publications	347,570
Costs for information systems	3,542,579
Tokyo Main Library operation	1,671,206
International Library of Children's Literature operation	262,967
Kansai-kan operation	924,915
(Item) Expenses for facilities	1,053,403
Maintenance of the Tokyo Main Library	947,259
Maintenance of the Kansai-kan	106,144
Total	20,200,589

(Translated by KUBO Satoshi)

News from NDL

NDL User Satisfaction Survey of FY2024

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 FY2024. 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/488724/p/NL?lang=en>

Survey period: From June 3 to October 31, 2024

*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. 759/760, July/August 2024

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. 759/760, July/August 2024 \(PDF: 8.84 MB\)](#)

- <Book of the month — from NDL collections>
Tracing history in a book from Nanki Bunko: *The Enoch Pratt Free Library of Baltimore City*
- 59th Committee on Designation of Rare Books
Materials recently designated as rare books
- Travel writing on world libraries
National Library of Wales and Hay Festival Hay-on-Wye
- Digital exhibition "Exploring Japanese Landmarks in Nishiki-e and Photographs"
- <Tidbits of information on NDL>
Fun for Children
- <Books not commercially available>
Tonosama no 1nen: Moriokahan nenchu gyoji o himotoku
- <NDL Topics>