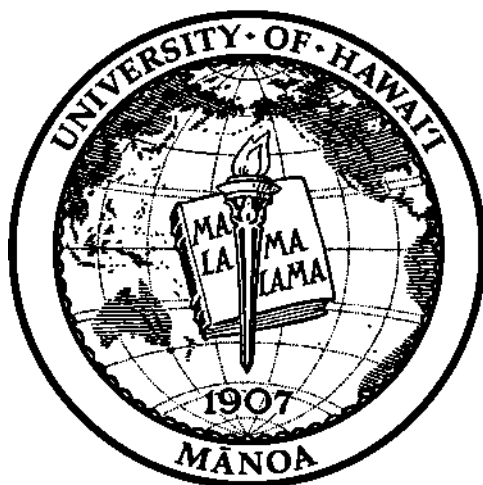


UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MĀNOA

Bishop M. Tottori Papers

Finding Aid



AJA 005

Archives & Manuscripts Department
University of Hawaii at Manoa Library

August 2006

Table of Contents

Introductory Information	1
Administrative Information	2
Biographical Sketch	3
Scope & Content Note	5
Series Descriptions	6
Inventory	8

Introductory Information

Collection Name: Bishop M. Tottori Papers

Collection Number: AJA 005

Dates: 1943-1975, 2004-2007

Size of Collection: 2.0 linear feet

Creator of Papers: Bishop M. Tottori
Sadako Tottori Kaneko (editor)
Reverend Kawanishi (translator)

Abstract:

Bishop Mitsumyo Tottori was born on May 6, 1898, on the island of Shikoku, Japan. At the age of 11 he received his *tokudō* (desire to enter priesthood). In 1914, Tottori completed his final ordination ceremony. Tottori graduated from the Shingon Shū Kyoto University in 1924. He was recommended to undergo study at Koyasan for missionary work. After, he was assigned to assist at the Hawaii Shingon Shū Betsuin in Honolulu, Hawaii. In June of 1927 he was reassigned to the Komyōji Temple in Wailuku, Maui, where he met and married Aiko Fujitani of Lahina, Maui. At the onset of World War II, agents extensively interrogated Reverend Tottori, however he was allowed to stay in the Islands due to articles he had written. At the end of World War II, Reverend Tottori was appointed sixth bishop of the Hawaii Shingon Shū Betsuin. In 1947, Tottori was appointed the Director of Missionary Work in Hawaii. In October 1961, he was conferred the title of *Dentō Dai Ajari*. In 1973, Tottori received the *Mikkyo Kyokasho* in recognition for his dedication to missionary work. Bishop Tottori died on January 6, 1976, at the age of 77 after a brief illness.

The Bishop M. Tottori Papers have been organized into two series, Translations and Notebooks, each arranged chronologically. The series “Translations” contains two binders of materials created by Sadako Tottori Kaneko (Bishop Tottori’s daughter) with the assistance of her family. The first binder, “Bishop M. Tottori, AJA, 1943-1958,” contains prefatory materials to the collection generated by Kaneko following Tottori’s death. The second binder, “Bishop M. Tottori, WWII Hawaii Nisei Casualties, 1943-1949,” is composed of the translations done by Reverend Kawanishi of Liliha Shingonji Mission. The series “Notebooks” contains original notebooks created by Bishop Tottori and written in Kanji created out of Tottori’s commitment to the safety of Hawaiian Nisei soldiers involved in World War II as well as the Korean and Vietnam conflicts.

Administrative Information

- Repository Information:** Archives & Manuscripts Department
University of Hawaii at Manoa Library
2550 McCarthy Mall
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822
Phone: (808) 956-6047
Fax: (808) 956-5968
Email: archives@hawaii.edu
URL: <http://libweb.hawaii.edu/libdept/archives/>
- Processing Archivist:** Megan Radomski
- Completion Date:** August 2006
- Restrictions:** None
- Provenance:** Materials donated by Sadeko Tottori Kaneko in 2005 (Accession AJA 2005:026)
- Preferred Citation:** [Identification of item], Bishop M. Tottori Papers, Archives & Manuscripts Department, University of Hawaii at Manoa Library.
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Biographical Sketch

Bishop Mitsumyo Tottori was born Motosuke Tottori on May 6, 1898, on the island of Shikoku, Japan. He was the sixth of seven children born to Shoji and Nami Tottori. At the age of 11 he received his *tokudō* (desire to entire priesthood) and his *kaimei* (priest name), Mitsumyo. At 15 he received his *dochō* (certificate) signifying his commitment to become a Shingon priest.

On Feb. 2, 1914, Tottori completed his final ordination ceremony (*Denpo Kanjo*), entitling him to communicate the doctrines of Shingon Buddhism. Tottori enrolled in the Shingon Shū Kyoto University. He graduated on March 12, 1924. Due to his excellent academic record there, he was recommended to undergo study at Koyasan for missionary work. After completing his training at Koyasan, Tottori was sent to Korea for a brief period. However, he was ultimately assigned to assist in Hawaii.

On Dec. 20, 1925, Tottori arrived in Hawaii. He was assigned to assist Bishop Kō-ō Kameyama at the Hawaii Shingon Shū Betsuin (head temple) in Honolulu. In June 1927 he was reassigned to the Komyōji Temple in Wailuku, Maui. There he met and married Aiko Fujitani of Lahina, Maui. After spending nine years in Wailuku, the Tottori family moved to Japan so that the now Reverend Tottori could serve at the Hōrakuji Temple. But on Feb. 3, 1940, Tottori returned to Hawaii to serve at Shingon Shū Koshōji Temple in Haleiwa.

At the onset of World War II, agents of both the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the local military extensively interrogated Reverend Mitsumyo Tottori. While all other Japanese Buddhist ministers were interned, the Tottori family was allowed to stay on Oahu due to articles Tottori had written prior to the bombing of Pearl Harbor, which encouraged Nisei to remain loyal to the United States. Tottori was not permitted to hold group services during the war, but he conducted private memorial services throughout Oahu, which spurned requests by Japanese Americans for Tottori to pray for their family members away at war.

Reverend Tottori kept notebooks during the war in which he transcribed the names of all the soldiers whose families requested his prayers. In addition, he also made *tōba* (religious memorial tablets) for the Hawaii Nisei who died during the war. He prayed for them in his personal prayers and at *o-bon* and *o-higan* services. A total of 420 *tōba* were created. Today they remain enshrined on the main altar of the Liliha Shingonji Mission. Tottori kept similar notebooks during the Korean Conflict (“Prayer Book of Names”). He recorded the names of all the Hawaii Nisei who served, continuing to update it until 1958.

At the end of World War II, Reverend Tottori was appointed the sixth bishop of the Hawaii Shingon Shū Betsuin in Honolulu. In 1947, Tottori was appointed the Director of Missionary Work in Hawaii. On Jan. 21, 1958, Bishop Tottori attained the rank of *Dai Sōjo* (Archbishop). That same year, he retired to Daigo Bun Kyo In Temple, which he renamed Liliha Shingon Mission (now Liliha Shingonji Mission). During this time, Tottori attended night school to study English and took citizenship classes at McKinley High School. On Jan. 8, 1959, Bishop Tottori became an American citizen.

In October 1961, Bishop Tottori was invited to participate in the *Gaku Shū Dai Kanjo* Ceremony to receive the highest rank and recognition for scholarly achievement. He was conferred the title of *Dentō Dai Ajari* (Abbot). During the Centennial Celebration of Japanese Immigration to Hawaii in 1968, Tottori was presented with the 6th Order of Merit with the Order of the Sacred Treasure by the Japanese government for his contributions to the United States. In 1973, the All Japan Buddhist Headquarters awarded Bishop Tottori the *Mikkyo Kyokasho* (Shingon Buddhism Missionary Award) in recognition for his dedication to missionary work.

Throughout his life Tottori pursued interests in calligraphy and poetry writing. He was a member of the Honolulu Poetry Club. His pen name was Nichigu Dōnin (“House of the Sun” or “Haleakala”).

Bishop Tottori died on Jan. 6, 1976, at the age of 77 after a brief illness. Hundreds whose lives Tottori had touched with his dedication to the Hawaiian Buddhist community attended the ceremony.

Adapted from: “Bishop M. Tottori, Hawaii AJA, 1943-1958,” Bishop M. Tottori Papers, Archives & Manuscripts Department, University of Hawaii at Manoa Library.

Scope & Content Note

The Bishop M. Tottori Papers have been organized into two series: Translations and Notebooks.

The series “Translations” contains two binders of materials created by Sadako Tottori Kaneko (Bishop Tottori’s daughter) with the assistance of her family. The first binder, “Bishop M. Tottori, AJA, 1943-1958,” contains prefatory materials to the collection generated by Kaneko following Tottori’s death. The second binder, “Bishop M. Tottori, WWII Hawaii Nisei Casualties, 1943-1949,” is composed of the translations done by Reverend Kawanishi with images of the corresponding pages in Tottori’s original notebook (“WWII Nisei Casualties I-III”).

The series “Notebooks” contains original notebooks created by Bishop Tottori and written in Kanji created out of Tottori’s commitment to the Hawaiian Nisei soldiers involved in World War II as well as the Korean and Vietnam Conflicts. The notebooks primarily contain the names of Hawaii Nisei soldiers who were killed during the three conflicts as well as the names of the Hawaiian Nisei soldiers whose loved ones requested Tottori to pray for their safety. All notebooks with the exception of “WWII Nisei Casualties I-III” have not been translated. Materials are arranged chronologically.

Series Descriptions

Series 1: Notebooks

Dates:	ca. 1943-1975
Size of Series:	1.0 linear foot
Physical Format:	Hand-made rice paper notebooks
Arrangement:	Chronological

Description of Contents:

Series of notebooks in Kanji primarily created out of Bishop Tottori's commitment to the Hawaiian Nisei soldiers involved in World War II as well as the Korean and Vietnam conflicts.

World War II Notebooks: Contains translated and untranslated works. "WWII Nisei Casualties I-III" contains the names of Hawaii Nisei casualties during World War II from the first casualty (Sergeant Shigeo Takata, of Waialua, Oahu) to the end of the war. Reverend Kawanishi has translated this volume. The translation is contained in "Bishop Tottori, Hawaii Nisei Casualties, 1943-1949." "Kinen Mei Bo, Prayer Book of Names" is a brocade covered book that contains the names of the Hawaiian Nisei soldiers whose loved ones requested Tottori to pray for their safety. This work has not been translated.

Korean Conflict Notebooks: Includes "Korean Conflict Nisei Casualties, 1950, IV" and "Korean Conflict Draftees and Enlisted Men." No translations are provided

Vietnam Notebooks: Contains "AJAs Stationed Around the World," which includes the names of Hawaii Nisei that served in the Vietnam War. No translations are provided

Miscellaneous Notebooks: Consists of "Buddhist Sutras," an accordion-fold prayer book of Buddhist scriptures that Tottori used during funerals. No translations are provided

Series 2: Translations

Dates: 2004-2007

Size of Series: 1.0 linear foot

Physical Format: Papers

Arrangement: Chronological

Description of Contents:

This series contains two binders of materials created by Sadako Tottori Kaneko (Bishop Tottori's daughter) with the assistance of her family.

The first binder, "Bishop M. Tottori, AJA, 1943-1958," contains prefatory materials to the collection generated by Kaneko following Tottori's death. It also includes "Platform for the Hungry Ghost and Bishop Mitsumyo Tottori" written by Reverend Jitsunin Kawanishi, which inspired the project. The bulk of the binder consists of photographs of selections from Tottori's original notebooks that are found in Series 2: Notebooks. Images of other dedications Tottori made to Hawaii Nisei soldiers that are not included in this collection, such as *tōba* (religious memorial tablets), are represented in this binder.

The second binder, "Bishop M. Tottori, WWII Hawaii Nisei Casualties, 1943-1949," is composed of the translations done by Reverend Kawanishi with images of the corresponding pages in Tottori's original notebook ("WWII Nisei Casualties I-III"). The entries begin with the first Hawaii Nisei casualty of the war (Sergeant Shigeo Takata) and continue through the war's end. Each entry usually contains the name, date of death, and the hometown of each soldier, but sometimes also includes family names, rank, place of death, and age. An index of soldiers by last name as well as hometown is provided.