

Box 1:7

Ikeda, Kando and Ikeda, Tsukiko Nagura Biographies in English undated

2002/353

PAPA
Kando Ikeda

Ikeda Sennosuke born January 24, 1875 in Takada City, Niigata Prefecture, Japan.

Became monk at age 19 (1894) at Senkyoji Temple, town of Yasuzuka, Niigata Prefecture. Changed name to Ikeda Kando. Seikyoji (over 250 years old) still stands unchanged, including room where Papa ate, slept, worked and studied for many years. Monk training severe.

Graduated from Agriculture College, Imperial University (Teikoku Daigaku). Received student scholarship from Higashi Honganji (largest temple in Kyoto) to go to the United States. Senkyoji Temple is part of Higashi Honganji. Many years later when Mr. Otani, head of Higashi Honganji, came to the U.S., Papa acted as his guide.

Don't know exact year Papa arrived in U.S. but copies of letters he wrote give some information about his activities:

1906: Requested books for Sunday Club Papa established for "opening library, holding moral meetings, teaching English and three Rs to young Japanese all around here."

1908: Offer to buy land for clearing and production. Offer of hired labor for clipping goats.

Contract agreement between W.J. Sales and K. Ikeda re clearing land, clipping goats' hair, mending fences, cutting wood.

Subscriptions to agricultural magazines. Requests for informational material on chickens, Angora goats, squabs, turkeys; on "effects of cold and warm localities in production of milk and butter"; on raising Holsteins, Jerseys, Guernseys.

In application to be agent/labor contractor and to buy land, listed following qualifications:

Graduate of Agricultural College, Imperial University, Japan

Courses at U.C. Berkeley Agricultural College

Did contract work on 2000 acres of sugar beet

Raised 100 acres of tomatoes

Raised 100 acres of peas and cucumbers

Rented 800 acres of brush wood land for raising Angora goats and turkeys; for making charcoal

"Have many intelligent and industrial business partners so can get many Japanese workers"

1909: Applied for job as interpreter for company going to Japan. Listed experience: worked for Masuda Company, managed Japanese store in Hayward, was President and interpreter for Japanese Society.

Louis P. Jones
President

1909: Applied for job as Japanese salesman in general
(Cont.) merchandising store.

Requested permission to translate parts of "California Vegetables" by Prof. E.J. Wickson for own book "Guide Book for Japanese Farmers in California". **

In 1911 Papa married Nagura Tsukiko. Three daughters: Mieko Mary, Noriko, Kazuko.

The same year, 1911, papa began newspaper career. Published a daily, Kokumin Shimbun, with Soejima Hachiro; discontinued in 1912. In 1913 started and sold a weekly, Hokushin, again with Soejima Hachiro. Later the same year Papa began publishing own weekly, the Hokubei Hyoron. Published off and on, not continuously, as records show other activities:

1919: Requested books from Lincoln Jefferson University on Philosophy, Education, Psychology, Comparative Religion, Social Ethics, et al (15 books total) for correspondence courses. Studies resulted in thesis which earned Papa a B.S. degree. Later obtained Ph.D.

1920s: Published treatise "No Soul Exists After Death" in Japanese and English.

** Published picture book: photographs of public buildings and agricultural industry in California, with commentaries in Japanese. Used as text in schools in Japan.

Business ventures: produced Japanese sweet rice in steam room built in basement; made miso.

Print shop (job printing)

Sometime after Mama died (1934) Papa went to Japan with some of Mama's ashes for burial in her family cemetery. Went to Japan again as representative of City of Oakland for observance of 2600th anniversary of founding of Japan.

Resumed publishing Hokubei Hyoron in 1930s until World War II when interned as enemy alien. Internment Record:

12/8/41 Ft. Missoula, MT
4/13/42- 5/29/42 Fort Sill, OK
5/30/42- 6/05/43 Camp Livingston, LA
6/07/43- 1/27/44 Santa Fe, NM
1/27/44 Paroled to 117 S. First West
Salt Lake City, UT

In 1945 () Mary left Topaz to join Papa in Salt Lake City. Later both went to New York where Kazu had relocated.

February 1946 Papa finally returned to old home in Oakland to /with Nori, Trav and later Travis and Michael.

Worked for Nichibei getting subs, ads; as East Bay reporter.

Wrote 3-volume book on Japan-U.S. relations and other matters: published and sold Volumes I and II, died before Volume III could be published. Old friend, Mr. Amemiya, finished and distributed Volume III after Papa's death.

On July 15, 1951 Papa organized public music concert in observance of 17th anniversary of Mama's death. (Copy of program attached.)

Died 9 days later on July 24, 1951 of a heart attack while asleep.

MAMA

Tsukiko Nagura Ikeda

Nagura Tsukiko born December 18, 1874 in Hatogaya City, Saitama Prefecture, Japan. First girl child of Nagura Tatsugoro and wife Kiyo. Older brother Jinzo, two younger brothers Shichiro and Naokichi, younger sister Ryu. Mama's ancestors were doctors to the Imperial court for three generations.

Name at birth was Nagura Tsugi. Shortly after arrival in U.S.A. Mama vowed she would one day return to Japan. One evening, gazing at the moon, thought longingly of Hatogaya and changed name to Tsukiko (Moon Child).

Year of Mama's birth, 1874, Japanese school system established. Mama began education at Jizo-in Temple (Used as a school), then attended Sakura Jyo Jiku in Tokyo: studied English language, Japanese and Chinese literature.

Mama married young; first husband died early. Felt stifled living in country town, dreamed of going abroad. German customer of Nagura family business (wholesaler of rice and exporter of plants) agreed to accompany Mama to U.S. Her goal: California, where younger brother Naokichi (Waseda University graduate) had successful merchandise store in Sacramento. Mama's bold decision to travel (unheard of for Japanese woman at that time) surprised everyone in hometown Hatogaya. All townspeople, including the Mayor gave her big send-off with their blessings.

In 1906, age 31, Mama embarked from Yokohama with mixed feelings--joyful anticipation and sorrow at leaving family and friends. Travelled 300 days, touching Shanghai, Hongkong, Singapore, Ceylon, Aden/Red Sea, Suez Canal, Egypt, Mediterranean Sea, Italy (Naples), Bay of Biscay, France (Le Havre), three months in Germany (Hamburg, Berlin); on to U.S.A.--New York, Washington, D.C., town in Ohio, Chicago. Sometime in 1906 finally reached destination -- Oakland, California. Tearful, happy reunion at train station with brother Naokichi (Nao-chan).

After a short rest, visited Los Angeles and other cities. Finally entered white family's home for "learning process"... "to learn the ways of American family life".

In 1911 Mama "unexpectedly came across an ideal person" and married Ikeda Kando. Three daughters: Mary Mieko born 1912, Noriko born 1915, Kazuko born 1918. Devoted life to three daughters, wanting all three to go to college. To fulfill this aim spent last years as a domestic worker to supplement family income.

Following her belief that everyone had obligation to serve society Mama was active member of Oakland Buddhist Women's Association (President for a time), and participated in community events. Mama also wrote articles and poetry for the Hokubei Hyoron, newspaper published by Papa.

In 1912 Mama began writing book about her travels and impressions of American people, customs. Book entitled "Rakuyo Kogan" -- first book written by Japanese woman residing in the U.S.A. Published in Japan sometime after 1920, distributed by Hinomoto Book Company, San Francisco. Advanced in her ideas (especially for Japanese woman) Mama expressed support for women's suffrage and for women's liberation (within limits). Final chapter unveils her vision of World Peace through actions by women world-wide. Exhorts her "sisters" in Japan to lead the movement.

Did not realize long-held dream of returning to Japan. Died on July 18, 1934 at age 59.

Mama's brother Naokichi, other family members and friends buried some of her ashes in Bodaiji (Nagura family gravesite) in Jizo-in Temple. (Remainder of ashes in urn at Oakland Buddhist Church.)

Grief-stricken brother wrote verse inscribed in back of gravestone:

Under the rainy sky of tsuyu*
the nightingale sings
as if recalling America
from Hatogaya

*tsuyu is rainy season (June/July) in Japan

Above brief biography of Mama based on edited excerpts from (1) article in May 27, 1970 issue of Hatogaya Shimpo (newspaper in Mama's home-town) and (2) article about Mama in Hatogaya commemorative booklet. (Photocopies of articles attached.) Some notes and quotations are from Mama's book.

N.B. The Ikeda sisters express deep gratitude to Mr. Eikichi Tagawa for his many hours of work in translating articles into English and his many hours of travel to dig up facts about our parents' early life. We also thank him for the photographs and videos of our Nagura and Ikeda relatives in Japan.