Overview of the Collection

Creator  
Evanson, Ella C

Title  
Ella Evanson Scrapbooks

Dates  
1941-1974 (inclusive)  
1941 1974  
1941-1942 (bulk)  
1941 1942

Quantity  
.21 cubic feet (1 box)  
(Accession No. 2402-001)

Summary  
Teacher, George Washington junior high school, Seattle, during the evacuation of Japanese Americans from the West Coast during WW II.

Repository  
University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections  
Special Collections  
University of Washington Libraries  
Box 352900  
Seattle, WA  
98195-2900  
Telephone: 206-543-1929  
Fax: 206-543-1931  
speccoll@uw.edu

Access Restrictions  
Open to all users.

Languages  
English

Sponsor  
Funding for encoding this finding aid was partially provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Biographical Note

Ella Evanson, the daughter of Norwegian immigrants, began her teaching career in her native North Dakota before moving to Washington State. She taught at several schools in Washington before finally settling at George Washington School (a junior high school in Seattle’s Central District). She taught seventh and eighth grade there from 1928 until her retirement in 1956.

In 1942 George Washington School was considered unique in the Seattle School District. Principal Arthur G. Sears emphasized democratic ideals and stressed tolerance and respect for differences among the approximately one thousand 7th- and 8th-grade students at his school. The students formed a racially diverse group, many of them Japanese American. Also present in this racial mix were students of Chinese-American, Jewish, African-American, and Caucasian families.

On the Monday following the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Principal Sears called an assembly. The essays written by the students later that day make it clear that he spoke about tolerance, remaining friendly toward those who are different, and what it means to be an American citizen.

Executive Order 9066, signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 19, 1942, was the instrument that allowed military commanders to designate areas “from which any or all persons may
be excluded." All persons of Japanese ancestry were forced to move from the West Coast to camps in the interior of the country that were euphemistically called internment camps. Before the evacuation in April, 1942, Ella Evanson asked her pupils to write about their feelings. She preserved these papers over the years, believing they had historic value. The papers in this collection reflect the thoughts of her students during WW II, especially in the aftermath of the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the subsequent order to evacuate Japanese Americans.

After her retirement, Ella Evanson travelled widely, once taking a freighter trip across the Pacific. She died in January, 1986, at the age of eighty-eight.

Content Description

Most of the items in this collection were saved in scrapbooks assembled by Ella Evanson. They include: essays written in class after a school assembly held the day after the bombing of Pearl Harbor; essays written by Caucasian children about the evacuation of some of their classmates to Camp Harmony and later Minidoka; an autograph book with photographs of the 37 Japanese-American children at the school, along with their goodbye messages to Miss Evanson; and letters from students written from the camps. Also included are six stories by Evanson based on the everyday lives of her students from different cultures, and correspondence and clippings from the 1970s describing the value of the materials to future historians.

Use of the Collection

Restrictions on Use

Literary rights (copyright) belonging to both Ella Evanson and her students, the authors of this material, are retained by them and their heirs.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Acquired from Ella Evanson, 1975.

Processing Note


During processing, Evanson’s original scrapbooks were unbound, and the different sections foldered individually and reboxed. Evanson’s original order and section titles were retained.

Bibliography

Detailed Description of the Collection

General Correspondence, 1974
Box-folder1/1

Contents List, n.d.
Box-folder1/2

Photographs

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| Box/Folder   |                                  |         |
| 1/3          | Ella Evanson                     | 1942    |
| 1/3          | Mayeku Kubota, a Pupil           | 1942    |

Autograph Book, Mar.19-Apr. 24, 1942
Box-folder1/4

Incoming Letters from Japanese-American Children after Evacuation[view], Feb. 24-Mar. 27, 1942
Box-folder1/5

Writings

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| Box/Folder   |                                                                             |         |
| 1/6          | Essays by Japanese-American Children on School's Pearl Harbor Day Assembly[view] | 1941    |
| 1/7          | Essays by Caucasian Pupils on School's Pearl Harbor Day Assembly[view]        | 1941    |
## Container(s)

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<tr>
<td>1/10</td>
<td>Essays by Tooru Hideshima</td>
<td>1942</td>
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<td>1/11</td>
<td>Writings by Ella Evanson</td>
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## Clippings

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## Names and Subjects

**Subject Terms:**
- Japanese Americans--Education--Washington (State)--Seattle
- Japanese Americans--Evacuation and relocation, 1942-1945
- Japanese students--Civil rights--Washington (State)--Seattle
- Junior high school teachers--Washington (State)--Seattle--Archives
- Students and war--Washington (State)--Seattle
- World War, 1939-1945--Japanese Americans--Education (Primary)--Washington (State)--Seattle
- World War, 1939-1945--Washington (State)--Seattle

**Personal Names:**
- Evanson, Ella C.--Archives

**Form or Genre Terms:**
- Scrapbooks

2004 (Last modified: 4/13/2018)

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Ella Evanson Scrapbooks, 1941-1974
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