

IN SEARCH OF YOUR *KOSEKI* FOR DENSHO'S FINDING YOUR NIKKEI ROOTS SERIES

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO GET MY *KOSEKI*?

1. First, look at your family papers at home. Your Issei ancestor likely brought his/her *koseki* during immigration; check to see if it can be located among your family papers.

2. Create a pedigree packet proving your lineage to someone named on the *koseki*. Usually this would be your Issei ancestor. Some Nisei are also listed on the *koseki*, especially if they were born before 1927. Your packet should include a photo ID with your address, such as a driver's license, and copies of documents naming the next generations (such as your birth certificate naming your parents, your parents' birth or death certificates naming their parents).

3. Identify your name in *kanji*, if possible.

4. Identify the family address (*honseki*) in Japan. This is the registered domicile, not necessarily where the family actually lived. Clues for finding the address are usually found on immigration records, old passports, passport applications, and sometimes personal documents at home.

5. Identify the correct municipal office that corresponds to the ancestral village. Usually this can be done through Wikipedia or the publication, *Zenkoku Shichōsan Yoran*, which describes merged cities and their corresponding municipal offices.

6. Most municipal offices have forms online for family registers. Try using Google Translate to understand the basic components of the document, including the cost.

7. Write a letter to the municipal office explaining what you need. It is ideal if you can get someone to write this in Japanese.

8. You can complete this process by mail, in person, or by proxy. If you go in person, try to bring a Japanese-speaking associate. If you don't know anyone, try setting up an appointment through Goodwill Guides (link on next page) or hire a genealogist.



Courtesy of the Yasui Family Collection, Densho
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Compiled by Linda Harms Okazaki. All URLs valid as of 30 July 2020.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Consulate General of Japan, in Honolulu, Search Your Japanese Roots (Resident Registration)
https://www.honolulu.us.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_ja/findingroots.html

Diplomatic Record Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
5-3,1-chome, Azabudai, Minato-ku Tokyo, Japan 106-0041
Telephone: 81-3-3585-4511
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/about/hq/record/index.html>

Family History Center, Salt Lake City, UT (*koseki* retrieval and translation; free)
<https://www.familysearch.org/help/>

Family History Center in Tokyo (not just for Tokyo)
5-10-30 Minami Azabu Minato-ku Tokyo 106 JAPAN
Phone: 011 (81) 3-3440-2764
Email: JapaneseSupport@familysearch.org

FamilySearch, Beginning Japanese Research
https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Beginning_Japanese_Research

Goodwill Guides (volunteer organization)
<http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/arrange/travel/guide/guideservice.html>

Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii (*koseki* retrieval and translation; \$)
Tokioka Heritage Resource Center
2425 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96826
Tel: 808-945-7533, ext.42
<http://www.jcch.com/tokioka-heritage-resource-center> (Genealogical Research Assistance)

Jisho, English/Japanese online dictionary
<http://jisho.org/>

Marty Wolf, instructor offering classes on *koseki* retrieval
Email: Marty_wolf@stanfordalumni.org

Compiled by Linda Harms Okazaki. All URLs valid as of 22 July 2020.