

The Lives of Kumaji Kimura and Motoichiro Ohgimi from Japan,
Hope College's first international graduates

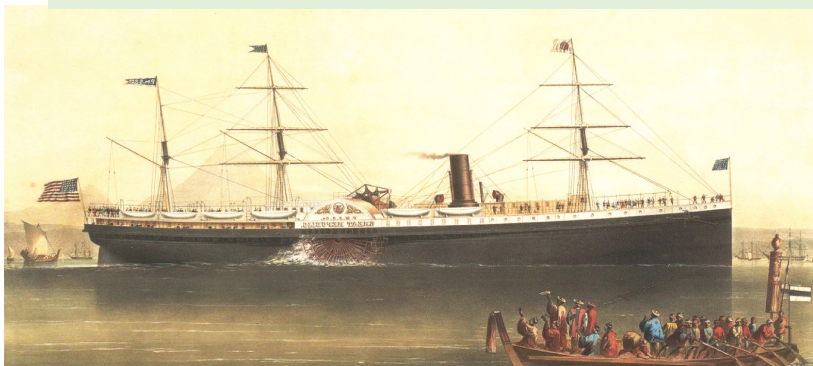


(Compiled and presented by Douglas Braat for the
Japanese Legacy Celebration, April 27, 2024)

(from 1930 Milestone)

Early Lives until voyage to the US

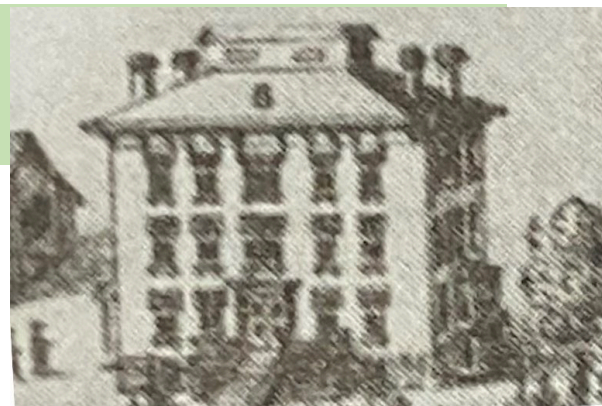
	Kimura	Ohgimi
Born	<u>March 3, 1845</u> , in Kyoto, surname Sakurai.	<u>February 21, 1845</u> , in Edo (Tokyo),
Background	Confucian family loyal to Tokugawa Shōgun.	Surname Marumo; loyal to the Shōgun.
1852	Age 7, moved to grandfather in Edo, dies 1853.	ca 1862 Studied at Yushima Confucian school.
1854	Adopted by Confucian scholar Kimura Hazan. [Surnames before given names, Japanese practice.]	
	Kimura & Ohgimi may have first met at the Yushima school. K. Hazan an instructor there.	
1863-68	Fought in battles against imperial forces, Fought in the Boshin War under Katsu Kaishu.	
1865	Married (Taguchi) Tōko	1869 Age 24, adopted by Ohgimi family as heir,
1868	Son, Yukichi, is born.	became engaged with daughter aged 8.
	Katsu Kaishu negotiated surrender of Edo to imperial forces, but battles continued.	
	Family moves to Shizuoka, still not safe.	Also moves to Shizuoka after the war.
1869-70	Kimura & Ohgimi possibly met again at Shizuoka Gakumonsho school, studying English, etc. Toyama Masakazu with overseas experience was English instructor there for a short time. Katsu Kaishu had also moved to Shizuoka then. Kaishu recommended K&O go to the US and arranged for some financing. Toyama had connection at US consulate, got passage docs for K&O to the US under false names.	
1871 Jan.	Toyama was sent with Mori Arinori, 1st ambassador, on same boat to the US. ~ Kimura & Ohgimi went to the US without a clear plan. ~	



Great Republic, 1866 Steamship, that brought Kimura & Ohgimi to the US.
(Image: Public Domain, Wikipedia)

Kimura & Ohgimi's departure from Japan and first weeks in the US

<u>Lunar Date</u>	<u>Solar Date</u>	<u>Details</u>
1870-12-3	1871-1-23	Left Yokohama aboard the <i>Great Republic</i> for SF.
1870-12-27	1871-2-16	Arrived in San Francisco.
1871-1-1	1871-2-19	Left SF by train for New York.
1871-1-8	1871-2-26	Arrived in New York.
1871-1-22	1871-3-12	Met Philip Phelps Jr, Hope's first president.
1871-1-24	1871-3-14	Went with Phelps to Albany.
1871-1-27	1871-3-17	Continued on their own to Holland.
1871-1-30	1871-3-20	Arrived in Holland, given residence at Van Vleck.



(Detail from campus map of 1860-70s, "Hope College at 150", p198)

Lunar dates: Given in Kimura's diary and letters to his wife Tōko at this time.

Solar dates: Used in the US and elsewhere.

Japan officially adopted the solar calendar in 1873.

Departure & arrival dates of the *Great Republic* accord with the solar dates above.

Time in Holland & New Brunswick, and return to Japan

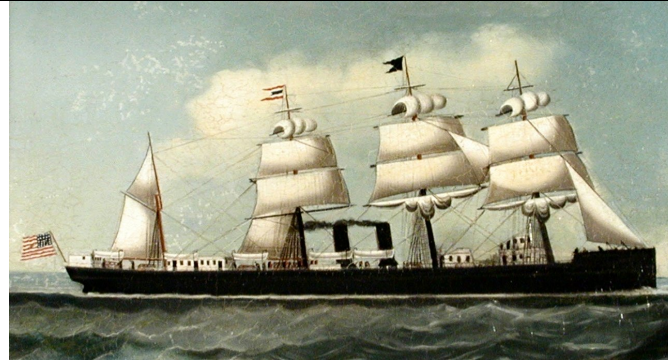
Kimura

Ohgimi

1871-73	Shared room 19 in Van Vleck* for first two years, possibly longer.		
1871 Oct 9	Great Fire of Holland, Hope's campus (and Van Vleck) mostly spared.		
1871 Nov.	Started studies at Hope's Preparatory Department in the "D" class.		
1872 June 1	Baptized at Hope Church by Rev. Abel Stewart. Ryōzō Tsugawa also.		
1875 June	Graduated from the Preparatory Department.		
1875-76	Lived in Japanese Hall with 2 other Japanese.		Remained in Van Vleck, room 8.
1878-79	Lived in Van Vleck, room 7.		Lived in Van Vleck, room 3.
1879 June 25	Graduated from Hope College.		
1879-82	Attended New Brunswick Theological Seminary in NJ, graduated in May 1882.		
1880-82	Commuter to medical school in NY, scholarship.		
1882 June 4	Ordained in New Brunswick.	'82 Sept.	Ordained in Albany.
1882 Spring	Applied to return as missionaries but classified as "Native Ordained Ministers".		
1882 July 14-21	In Holland on way back to Japan.		
1882 July	A.M. (Master of Arts) degrees conferred by Hope College.		
1882 Aug 20	Arr Yokohama on <i>City of Peking</i> .	'82 Nov 11	Arr Yokohama on <i>City of Peking</i> .

* Referred to as "University Hall" or "College Building" until 1883 when renamed Van Vleck Hall.

City of Peking, 1874 Steamship
(Smithsonian Postal Museum)

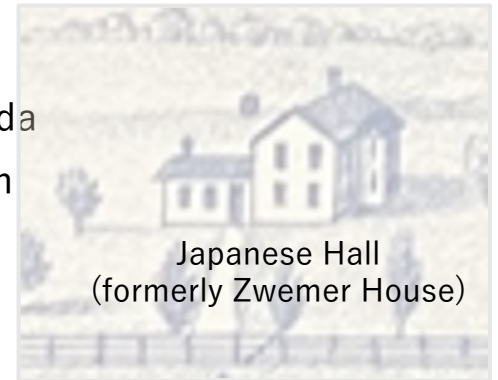


Reflections on life at Hope

Kimura

"[At Hope] Kimura unexpectedly met a Japanese, Ryōzō Tsugawa, a subject of the Chōshū domain that had been rising up against the Tokugawa Shōgunate (Bakufu) for whom Kimura [and Ohgimi] had been fighting as loyal samurai. Kimura and Ohgimi thus could not feel kindly toward Tsugawa at first. Tsugawa was in need of financial aid at the time. Because Kimura was a Japanese, he felt he should have greater reason for being sympathetic toward Tsugawa than the Americans and gave 100 dollars, a fourth of all he had. Kimura could not be indifferent to the true life directed by the Bible: 'Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you' [Matt. 5:44]." (adapted from Eiichi Kudo, "Meiji-ki no Kirisuto-kyō", 1979, pp99–100).

In 1875-76 (at least), Kimura lived in Japanese Hall with Tametsune Matsuda and Boonzo Hashimoto who were both from Satsuma, a domain aligned with Chōshū against the Tokugawa Shōgunate during the Boshin War.



Japanese Hall
(formerly Zwemer House)

Ohgimi

"My sole object of going to America was to study something that would give me distinction and honor in my future career. This worldly ambition made me decidedly disinclined towards religion, but since I came to Holland, I was struck with the happy state of the Christian homes - something I had never found in Japan. At last I came to the conclusion that Christianity was what made them so different from others. I began to study the Bible more earnestly." (from a letter to Frances Otte Phelps, *Anchor*, May 1908)

First Years back in Japan

Kimura

1883 Pastor of Shitaya Church, Tokyo.

1883 May 8-12

Participated in the 3rd National General Assembly of Christians.

Ohgimi

1883 Pastor of Kojimachi Church, Tokyo.

Ohgimi: 3rd row, 1st on left.

Kimura: 2nd row, 3rd from right.



Tōko, 1886



Connecting with Christians from around Japan

(Wikipedia, etc.)

1883 July 1st mission activities in Komoro area.

1883 Oct 4 Named head of northern mission of UCCJ.

1884 Jan. ~ Involved in Japanese translation of the Old Testament, completed in 1887.

1885 (cl. 1909) Est. Meiji Girls' School with Tōko.

1884 Marries. Instructor at Tokyo Union Seminary.

1886 Tōko dies of cholera, Iwamoto takes over.

1886 Involved with est. of Meiji Gakuin, instructor.

1888 Paster Daimachi Church, baptizes Tōson.
Named principal of Shoei Girls' School.

1887 Reads Bible at Meiji Gakuin's 1st graduation.

1891 Mission activites in Shinshū incl. Komoro.

1890 Sep 12 Holds Hope College reunion in Tokyo with Kimura, Tsugawa, and Matsuda. [unconf'd]

1892 Moves to Komoro.

1890 Oct. Decides to move to Nagasaki.



Standing, l. to r.: T. Matsuda, '83; Nanomiya. Seated, l. to r.: R. Tsugawa; K. Kimura, '79; M. Ohgimi, '79.

language. These students lived in the Zwemer House, which became known as Japanese Hall; and according to an old engraving, the southwest corner of the campus was called the Japanese Grove. In September 1896, some of these students living in Japan held a memorial service honoring President Phelps.

Gathered for a memorial service in 1896 honoring President Philip Phelps Jr.

Kimura seated at center, Ohgimi at right.

Tsugawa (Prep Dept '74) at left; Matsuda '83 standing center; Nanomiya, brother of Tsugawa, who was with Tsugawa in Holland a short time.

Photo of Phelps in frame on the table.

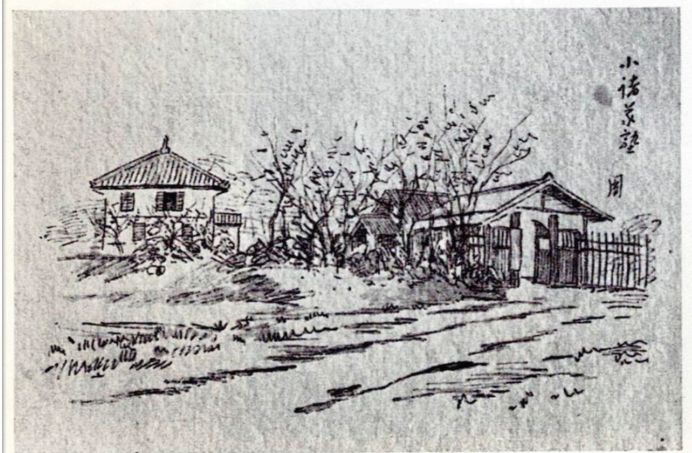
(Phelps died on Sept. 4, 1896.)

(from "A Century of Hope", Wynand Wichers, 1968, p105)

Later Years

Kimura

1893 Dec. Establishes Komoro Gijuku.



卒業生の一人小山周次画伯による小諸義塾のスケッチ

1896 New building constructed.
Marries (Tōgi) Takako aged 25,
(graduate of Ferris Women's C.)

1896 Sept Kimura & Ohgimi attend memorial service for Philip Phelps Jr. in Tokyo.

1899 Shimazaki Tōson joins KG faculty.

1901 Building for girls' education opens.

1903 KG celebrates 10th anniversary.

1904 Russo-Japanese War. Effect on Komoro Gijuku not clear.

1905 Girls' school closes; Tōson resigns.

1906 Komoro Gijuku closes after 13 yrs.

1907 Teaches at Ferris for 1 year.

Ohgimi

1890 Oct. 3rd principal of Steele Academy, Nagasaki.



1891 Sept. Renamed Tōzan Gakuin.

1895-96 Involved with mission activities in Taiwan.

1896 July Resigns from Tōzan, returns to Tokyo.

1897 May Head of Seminary of Nagoya Eiwa School
taking over from Uchimura Kanzō.

From 1897 Involved with Methodist mission activities.

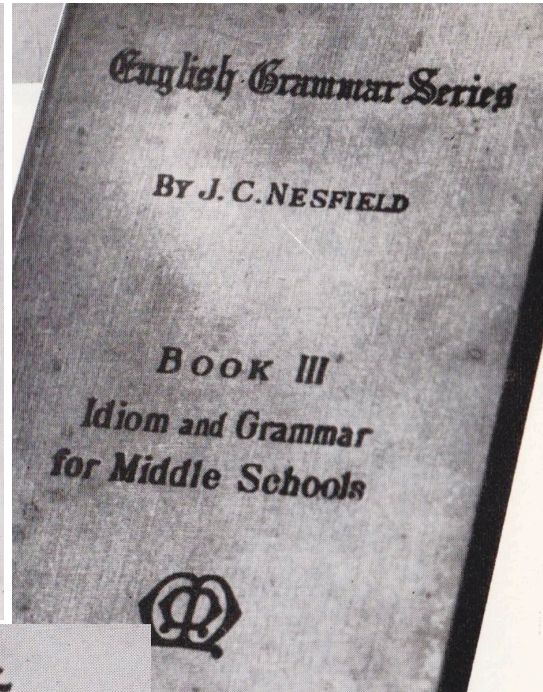
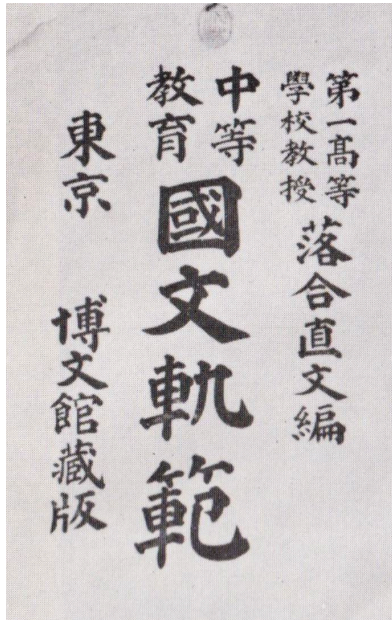
1901 Seminary in Nagoya closes. Moves to Tokyo.

1906 Pastor Asakusa Church, Education for blind.

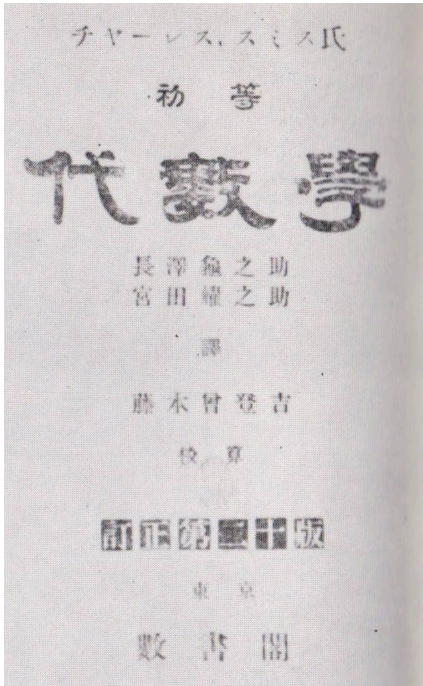
1908 Oct. At Hope, looks for funds for school for blind.

Textbooks used at Komoro Gijuku

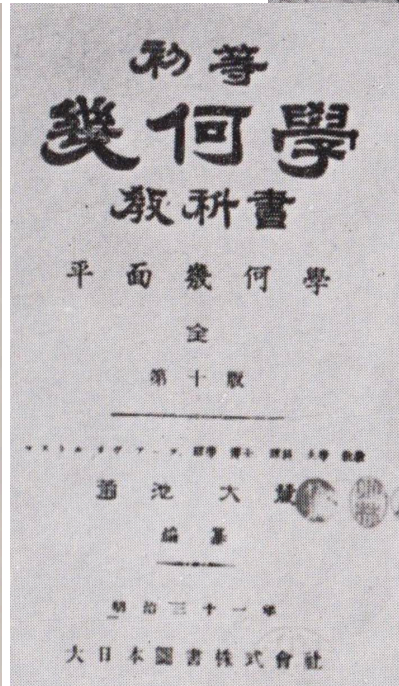
English grammar and Japanese literature texts used by Tōson Shimazaki.



“Self Help” by Samuel Smiles, translated by Masanao Nakamura, a former teacher of Kimura. Used by Kimura.



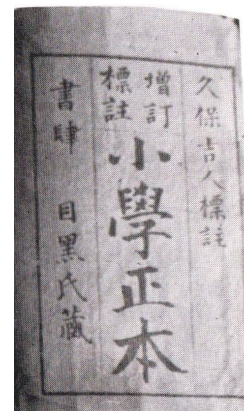
(L) “Elementary Algebra” by Charles Smith (translated).



(R) “Elementary Geometry” (plane) by Dairoku Kikuchi.

Ethics for Elementary students →

(from “Shiritsu Komoro Gijuku Bokkaku-shi”, Isamu Hayashi, 1966.)



Kimura's final years

Kimura		Ohgimi	
1909-14	Mission activities in Nagano.	From 1912	Starts to study Greek in earnest.
1915	Returns to Komoro.	1917 Dec 24	Kimura with O for Christmas at facility for blind.
1916	Reunion of girls' school graduates.	1921	Resigns Methodist ch, focuses on NT Greek.
1917	Moves to Shirogane, pastor Ushigome Ch.	1922 July & Aug.	Visits Kimura twice in Komoro, goes to hot spring.
1923 Sept 1	Great Kanto Earthquake. Kimura in Komoro, unaffected; Ohgimi possibly there too.		
1926 Sept.	Becomes final trip to Komoro.	1923-27	Stays in touch with Kimura in various ways.
1927 Feb 28	Passes away at home, days before age 82.	1927	Working on NT Greek dictionary, life's work.
1927 Mar 5	Funeral at Ushigome Ch, burial at Yanaka.	Ohgimi delivers Benediction at Kimura's funeral.	



[Notes about the above: Shirogane is the part of Tokyo where Meiji Gakuin is located. Ushigome is between Shirogane and Yanaka.]

Overall view
(Komoro Gijuku Society)

Grave of Tōko Kimura (left side) and Kumaji Kimura at Yanaka Cemetery, Tokyo (Oct. 2022)

Grave of son, Yukichi (1868-1899), at the left of his parents' grave (Oct. 2022)

Ohgimi's Final Years after Kimura's death

- 1927-40 Devoted to New Testament Greek studies.
- 1932 Publishes Japanese translation of "Grammar of New Testament Greek".
- 1940 Completes NT Greek-Japanese dictionary, published by Kyōbunkan.
- 1941 Dec 27 Passes away age 96, 8 weeks before 97 and 3 weeks after Pearl Harbor.
Survived by sons Hisashi and Yosoe, and daughter Yukari.
(Yosoe, a diplomat of Japan in Spain, was Kaoru's father. His mother Mabel née Jones was Irish.)
- 1948 Dec. "Before his death the Rev. Mr. Ogimi was stone-deaf, half blind, but full of energy until what he considered his life-work was accomplished."
(Florence Walvoord, *Alumni Magazine*, "from Ogimi's daughter-in-law")
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Relief of Kumaji Kimura at the entrance to Kaikoen Park in Komoro with handwritten inscription by Tōson Shimazaki, a former teacher at Komoro Gijuku. Unveiled in 1936.

われらの父
木村熊二先生
と旧小諸義塾
を記念す
門弟並有志
島崎藤村出
昭和十年

“As devoted students and supporters, we commemorate our mentor Kumaji Kimura and the erstwhile Komoro Gijuku he founded.

Shimazaki Tōson,
1935”

(Komoro Gijuku Society, Feb. 28, 2023)



小諸懐古園・木村熊二記念碑除幕式
(1936年4月19日)

Bowing in honor.
At the unveiling
ceremony for the
Kumaji Kimura relief at
Kaikoen Park in Komoro,
April 19, 1936.

A Legacy of Kumaji Kimura – When two Komoro high schools are merged...

“New school to be named ‘Komoro Gijuku High’”

Out of five candidate names, 10 of 23 members of the Naming Committee voted for “Komoro Gijuku High School” compared to 5 votes each for two 2nd-place finishes. The name was passed by a majority of members in the final vote.

[An honor for Kumaji Kimura who founded Komoro Gijuku]
(Shinano Mainichi Shimbun, Feb. 25, 2023)



新校舎イメージ図 ※実際の設計とは異なります



Image of the proposed Komoro Gijuku High School

Existing Komoro Commercial HS is at right. Foreground structures will be new.
Slated to open in April 2026.

(from leaflet distributed at meeting with local residents, November 2, 2023)

A Legacy of Motoichirō Ohgimi

Motoichirō's grandson Kaoru and great-grandson Gen (Kaoru's son)



Kaoru (in orange) wrote a book about his win in the Osaka-Melbourne yacht race, 1987. Born in San Sebastian, Spain, grew up by the sea. Visited Hope in early 1990s.



Gen, percussionist and vocalist, performs with Salsa Swingoza, his band of 10+ members, at a live-house gig in Tokyo (November 2022). Son named Umi, “Sea”, is a jazz drummer.



Subtitles of Yuichi Maruyama's Interview with Gen Ogimi (1/3)

April 4, 2024, Tokyo, Japan



He's my great-grandfather.

He's my great-grandfather. I used to see his photo from time to time when I visited my grandmother Mabel's house. When I was a child I heard from my father Kaoru that my name Gen (元) was taken from the first kanji character of Motoichiro (元一郎).

I never heard much about my family history. But later when I became a musician, I met a fellow musician who was a Christian. He had heard the name Motoichiro Ohgimi at a church gathering one day and asked me if I was related to him. I replied that he was not only a relative but also my great-grandfather!

Yuichi: Does your father Kaoru have any siblings?

Gen: He has a sister, Ayame. She's my aunt and lives in San Francisco. She's 92 but still in good health.

Subtitles of Yuichi Maruyama's Interview with Gen Ogimi (2/3)



Yuichi: There's a wonderful book titled "Motoichiro Ohgimi and His Times". The preface of the book was written by your father, Kaoru. It says that while he was researching for the book, he visited Hope College, met Paul Fried, and received a lot of material.

Gen: I never heard about Hope College directly from my father. But while I was living and performing as a musician in New York City, Kaoru told me New Brunswick Theological Seminary in New Jersey had materials on Motoichiro. I drove my father for about an hour one day to the seminary to look for them.

Subtitles of Yuichi Maruyama's Interview with Gen Ogimi (3/3)

There's something I realized after a fellow musician mentioned it. I was captivated by Latin music and moved to New York. There I could interact with top local musicians, and as a result, my own band became a starting point for spreading Salsa music in Japan. I feel now, as the fellow musician suggested, there may be a similarity in the path I took with Salsa and the path Motoichiro took with Christianity.

I would love to see the actual relief once I have a chance to see it. I'm grateful to be involved in this way in the history of my great-grandfather whom I've never met, and I feel that everyone associated with Hope College has taken wonderful care of Motoichiro, for which I am truly grateful.



(from the 4-minute video shown at the Legacy event)