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Research: Wakamatsu Colony

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Wakamatsu
Colony
Centennial



1869-1969

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BERKELEY, CALIF. 94707

Gold Hill Colony: Hope and Betrayal For a 'Mayflower'

By K. W. Lee

Sacramento Union
Staff Writer



There is a lonely grave of a maiden on a meadowy hill, deep in the rolling foothills of the Sierra.

An inscription in her marble headstone reads in English and Japanese: "In Memory of Okei, died 1871, aged 19 years, a Japanese girl."

These mute objects are all that remain of a lost colony which marks the coming of the ill-fated "Mayflower" from Japan more than a century ago.

The first colony of the Yamato race perished young, as did the girl without a family name — all but forgotten by posterity.

THREE GENERATIONS later, by chance, a recollection of aging Dutch pioneer Henry Veerkamp, who knew Okei-san as a love-smitten young man, had led local historians to her grave overgrown with wild roses and to the rediscovery of the vanished settlement.

The saga of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony at Gold Hill in El Dorado County since has grown with the passage of time — like the towering keyaki tree.

A year before Okei's death, the 1870 census-taker counted 22 pioneers at the "Japanese Colony."

A century later, her own people would increase to 750,000.

Wakamatsu — the other Plymouth Rock — lives. So does the memory of Okei.

ONE HUNDRED and two years ago this week, The Sacramento Union excitedly announced the arrival of the vanguard of the original colony:

"The Japanese are among us."

Aboard sidewheeler "China" they arrived in San Francisco on May 27, 1869. They were a small band of samurai, artisans, farmers, women and children led by a German adventurer named John Henry Schnell, who was to betray them

stronghold of the shogun forces, lay in rubbles. It was in this bitter battle that a remnant of 19 brave boy warriors, facing toward Lord Matsudaira's castle in flames, committed hara-kiri.

HISTORICAL RECORDS aren't clear, but it is believed Schnell, a gun merchant and instructor in Wakamatsu persuaded the fallen tribe's chief to send an advance party to California to establish a silk and tea settlement.

The colony would serve as a sanctuary, should the lord, fearful for life and property in defeat, find it necessary to escape the vanquished land.

Upon arrival here, Schnell hinted three princes would follow him to share the colony's fortunes.

The 23-year-old soldier of fortune brought his wife, daughter of a Wakamatsu samurai. Possibly one or both of their children were born at the colony. Okei — whose family line was traced to a carpenter named Ito at Wakamatsu — came as nursemaid to the Schnell household, probably in the fall of 1870.

THE 160-ACRE settlement started out with great hope and promise — plus a flare of Schnell-inspired publicity. He spoke expansively of the eventual coming of 120 Japanese families.

At a time when Chinese immigrants were lynched for no apparent reason, the erstwhile Gold Rush country, hungry for new industry, greeted the kimono-clad Japanese with cautious welcome.

"If the introduction of new branches of culture and industry and the utilization of lands hitherto neglected as of little value are beneficial to California, we may welcome this first colony from Japan," wrote The Union's Placerville correspondent, with this apprehensive footnote:

"But in time, we suppose, the envious

tion to our stock of grains."

HE CONCLUDED, "His efforts merit encouragement and protection from the government."

During the crucial second year, a series of disasters struck. By trade a merchant, Schnell knew very little of farming, much less of local climate, terrains and soil.

The local miners turned hostile and deprived the colonists of water supply to irrigate their plants. The scorching dry spell continued. Funds dwindled rapidly. And the creditors were knocking on the door.

Schnell left for Japan with his family, with promise he would return with funds to sustain the colony. He never did.

Desperate and destitute, the remaining settlers abandoned the colony in search of food, shelter and work. Okei and samurai Matsunosuke Sakurai stayed, hoping for Schnell's return.

They found shelter and security in the family of kindly Dutch neighbor Francis Veerkamp who had acquired the foreclosed ranch. A son of his, Henry, outlived his family members and at the age of 75 disclosed the location of Okei-san's grave and the colony site.

A THIRD COLONIST, 20-year-old carpenter Kuninosuke Misumazu married an 18-year-old Negro girl from Missouri and settled in a two-room log cabin at nearby Coloma.

In the summer of 1871, Okei succumbed to a fever. She was buried on the hill she had often climbed to look homeward at sunset.

Years later, Kuni Masumizu collected money from friends and bought a marble headstone. Sakurai wrote the inscription.

It is mystery why Sakurai stayed be-

Mrs. Satsu Hironaka, 87, stands on her son's farm. She is representative of the hardy Issei who turned submarginal California land into the rich agricultural areas that feed a nation.



Staff Photo by Gary Gillis

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By riverboat they reached Sacramento, then trekked overland by wagon to Placerville, on to nearby Gold Hill, site of a gold discovery.

WITH THEM they brought 50,000 yearling mulberry trees for lucrative silk farming, tea seeds and plants for tea culture, wax trees, bamboo trees for food and craft, keyaki tree seeds, and other plant stocks.

They had fled their Alzu-Wakamatsu home, fallen in a bloody civil war between the supporters of Emperor Meiji and the defenders of the Tokugawa shogun. In the year of Dragon (1868), their feudal lord Katamori Matsudaira's outnumbered warriors were crushed by thousands of charging Meiji soldiers.

The vengeful victors burned everything in their path. Wakamatsu, last

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"But in time, we suppose, the envious and idle will raise the same complaint against them that they already have against the Chinese."

IN TIME, HIS foreboding would turn true.

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But as late as in the 1870 winter, the U.S. surveyor general who had personally inspected the ranch reported in The Union that the tea-growing project wasn't "a failure" although many tea plants had perished under prolonged drought. "I look upon these seedlings as the basis of a most important export for this state."

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It is mystery why Sakurai stayed behind. Most local historians believe the grieving samurai, to whom Okei was entrusted by her parents, couldn't return to face her family after her death.

In self-exile, Sakurai served the Veerkamp family faithfully for 30 years until his death. Kuni led a nomadic life in later years as a farmer, a cook and a fisherman and died in Colusa alone in 1915 at the age of 66.

KUNI'S OFFSPRING — all Sacramentans — are the only known descendants of the hallowed colony.

The Wakamatsu lore inevitably has yielded a maze of puzzles and speculations. At best, its historical records are scarce and sketchy. Virtually no record of the exodus from Japan exists.

To compound the myth, early Japanese works on the colony were largely a mixture of fact and fancy, thus spawning a flood of novels, songs, plays and movies.

And the man with most secrets — the shadowy John Henry Schnell — disappeared from the scene.

But a careful research of all available records indicates the integrity of the colony history appears intact.

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Or was he a gallant loyal friend of Lord Matsudaira risking everything to rescue the endangered lord and his fallen tribe?

HENRY TAKETA — a sober legal mind — believes the answer may lie somewhere in between. "Schnell's motive may have been one of self-interest, but his sincerity can't be doubted."

The German gun merchant, Taketa reasons, could have remained in Yokohama to continue his import business or could have returned to his homeland. "If you say he was an opportunist, then he was utilizing the predicament of Lord Matsudaira to promote the idea of setting up a colony in America."

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Sunday Morning, June 6, 1971 B1

Issei
Masao Itano
Pioneer



Emigrated in 1906 at 17 . . . degree in agriculture, UC-Berkeley . . . interpreter and business agent for immigrants in Sacramento . . . insurance business . . . three years in four relocation camps including one for "enemy aliens" . . . war-time worker in Chicago . . . returned home to resume insurance business . . . naturalized . . . three sons and one daughter: cancer research scientist with M.D. and Ph.D.; banker-lawyer; medical doctor; dietician.

Nisei
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Son of an Issei pioneer in Sacramento . . . Sacramento City College . . . UC Hastings College of the Law . . . second Nisei to practice law . . . a founder, Japanese American Citizens League . . . Tule Lake camp . . . helps evacuees' relocation in Cleveland . . . set up hostels for returnees and organized relocation efforts . . . two sons: a medical doctor and a college student.

Issei, Nisei, Sansei, Yonsei

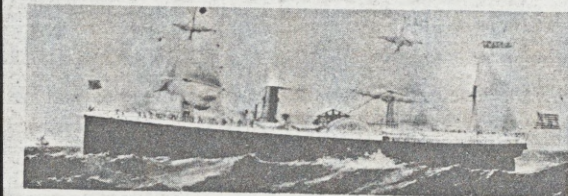
Issei, Nisei and now Sansei and even Yonsei are common enough words in the American language.

The Issei are the first generation. The Nisei are the second, the original American-born. The Sansei are the third generation and the Yonsei are the fourth.

The terms are based in the Japanese words for one, two, three and four.

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Some Kibei were at the forefront of the agitation during the evacuation years and the disturbances in the relocation centers. Most were just victims. Victims of the suspicion by the government and, in some cases, suspicion by the Nisei



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Japanese Settlements

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Years of search by the Japanese American Citizen League for authentic data had preceded the official recognition. A key evidence was the full on-site inspection report on the colony's activities by the U.S. Surveyor General carried in the pages of The Sacramento Union on Dec. 11, 1870.

A NEW RIDDLE revived the unquelled skepticism not long ago when Sacramento Union reporters working on the Wakamatsu story found an editorial in the June 17, 1869 edition of The Sacramento Union.

Unable to obtain work, it said, the party leased a farm in Alameda and hired a few white men to instruct them in learning trades.

THE ALAMEDA settlers, the report went on, were "gentlemen of refinement and influence in their own country, from which they were compelled to flee, almost destitute, because their travel in civilized countries has made them too liberal in the ideas to suit the Mikado."

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Taketa wonders wistfully that the Wakamatsu colonists might have made a fortune, had they settled in the San Joaquin Valley to grow corn, potatoes and garden vegetables.

HE REMINDS Wakamatsu must be treated as a simple episode without any illusions. "The colony simply was ahead of its time and didn't last."

The tragedy of Gold Hill, he says, wasn't Okei. "She was a simple girl who came here to do a job as nursemaid. When Schnell left, she was entrusted in the hands of the Veerkamps who loved her as if one of their own."

The real tragedy, he says, was the one which befell the other colonists who had nobody to turn for help and vanished into nowhere.

Yet, come spring, the lone keyaki tree upon the hill unveils their undying dream in its shy blossoms.

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Masao Itano
Pioneer

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The terms are based in the Japanese words for one, two three and four.

There is another group. They are the Kibei. Loosely translated, kibi means "return to America."

It was a fairly common family practice before the war for one son to be sent to Japan for his education. This practice was found among other immigrant groups but more common with those from Japan.

The Kibei usually went to Japan before they were 10 years old, and usually returned to the United States after finishing high school.

As a group, they were a prime target for the spy-scare panic that swept California, Oregon and Washington at the outbreak of the war.

Forced onto the wrong side of a language barrier, they were not quick to mix with other Nisei.

The practice of sending children to the old country has

practically disappeared from the American scene. The Kibei, most of them now in their 40s and 50s, are a vanishing group.

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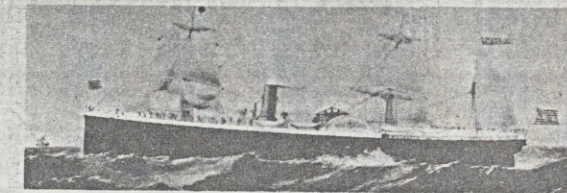
But there is no recorded case of aiding the enemy. None in the history of the American Issei, Nisei, Sansei or Kibei.

There is one outstanding recorded case involving a Kibei. He was Pfc. Sadao S. Munemori, killed in action near Sereveza, Italy, on April 5, 1945.

Munemori was a sergeant in the intelligence unit at Camp Savage, Minn. He volunteered for a reduction in rank to join a combat unit and was assigned to the 100th Battalion, 42nd Regimental Combat Team.

" . . . By his swift, supremely heroic actions, Private Munemori saved two of his men at the cost of his own life and did much to clear the path for his company's victorious advance."

The words are from a citation. The citation accompanied a Congressional Medal of Honor.



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A NEW RIDDLE revived the unquelled skepticism not long ago when Sacramento Union reporters working on the Wakamatsu story found an editorial in the June 17, 1869 edition of The San Francisco Chronicle.

In a veiled slap at an earlier Union report of the arrival of an advance Japanese contingent, The Chronicle admonished: "It is a mistake to suppose the colony recently introduced by Mr. Schnell is the first of these people settled among us."

"Upward of a year ago," the paper contended, "Mr. Van Reed, father of the United States Consul at Jedo (Edo?), an old resident of this city, brought a party of them to the Labor Exchange to obtain employment."

Unable to obtain work, it said, the party leased a farm in Alameda and hired a few white men to instruct them in learning trades.

THE ALAMEDA settlers, the report went on, were "gentlemen of refinement and influence in their own country, from which they were compelled to flee, almost destitute, because their travel in civilized countries has made them too liberal in the ideas to suit the Mikado."

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A search for any contemporary evidence has yielded none but tantalizing hearsay. For years, Yasuo Abiko, English editor the Nichibei in San Francisco, has been looking out for any authentic clues to the Alameda colony. So far, he has found none.

Abiko remains intrigued: "In the absence of historical corroboration, it is still quite possible such a thing could have happened."

Few can, indeed, dismiss the Alameda mystery as a byproduct of journalistic rivalry.

Time may tell.

EXILE OF A RACE, Fisher, Anne R. Seattle, Wash.: F. and T. Publishers, 1970. A highly critical but factual account of the forced evacuation of Japanese Americans and alien Japanese from the

authors comment: "as a departure from American principles (the evacuation) will stand as an aberration and a warning."

JAPANESE IN THE UNITED STATES, Ichihashi,

University Press, 1946. A personal narrative and picture book, written by a Nisei who was on an art fellowship at the University of California, Berkeley, when World War II broke out. The black-and-white drawings and brief

as a chronicle of a young Nisei intellectual's search for identity in America and Japan. It is a story of youth disenchantment with the American dream.

—George Kagiwada

What Sacramento Is Reading

By MRS. LANN JURGENS
Sacramento City-County Library

Librarians across the country will testify to the popularity of cookbooks in public libraries—all kinds of cookbooks. Sacramento is no exception. There are approximately 1,300 different titles of cookbooks in the Sacramento City-County Library system. This does not include the multiple copies of each title.

Different seasons of the year contribute to the use of special cookbooks — i.e. books on outdoor barbecuing are taken out in the summer, cookie and pastry cookbooks are more popular in December. But nothing seems to halt the circulation of cookbooks giving recipes from foreign countries.

The reference librarians from the Main Library, Martin Luther King branch and Carmichael branch gave virtually the same reports — cookbooks on foreign dishes head the list in popularity. A new Time-Life Book series called "Foods of the World" has been widely circulated in Sacramento. In each book in this series, a different country is represented by the famous chefs of that country and they describe their recipes in detail.

Two or three books are purchased every month with dieters in mind. "The Better Homes and Garden Calorie Counter's Cook Book" in a good sample. This week the book order was rather interesting in that it included 21 copies of a new recipe book entitled "Homemade Candy." The same order also included 20 copies of Clara Beth Bond's standard book for dieters entitled "The Low Fat Low Cholesterol Diet." If the candy book circulates as much as the diet book, the battle will be lost.

Best Sellers This Week

FICTION

The Passions of the Mind — Stone

DINSMORE BOOK STORES

OPEN SUNDAY

Two Locations to Serve You

IN SACRAMENTO 11 AM-5 PM
THE CROSSROADS
5770 Freeport
422-3260

IN DAVIS — 10 AM-7 PM
UNIVERSITY MALL SHOPPING CENTER
825 Russell Blvd. — 758-1700

QB VII — Uris

The New Centurions — Warmbaugh
The Underground Man — MacDonald
The Bell Jar — Plath

NON-FICTION

The Sensuous Man — "M"
Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee — Brown
The Greening of America — Reich
Stilwell and the American Experience in China, 1911-45 — Tuchman
The Female Eunuch — Greer

What Became of the Pioneer's Children?

In the year of madness — 1942 — she was on the way to America's concentration camp, as were 110,000 other Japanese residents on the West Coast, mostly citizens by birth.

But she was an exceptional "enemy alien." She was also a Negro.

Because her Japanese grandfather was the wrong type of ancestor, she and her two children were herded out of their Sacramento home, destined for one of the 10 hastily built relocation camps.

SOMETHING happened on her way to the camp. Her interrogators at the Roseville assembly center were uneasy about sending a black woman to a Japanese enclave behind the barbed wire. After a consultation, they let her go home.

Three decades later, Mrs. Juanita Masumizu Wong, 62, of 6329 Fruitridge Road, could chuckle at her own not-so-funny predicament:

"I cussed all the way to Roseville — I wasn't the lady."

She remembers the one-sided confrontation. "I put up a stiff argument. I was downright mad. I told them, 'If I had told you I was part Japanese before this war, you wouldn't have believed me, black as I am."

"I said all I knew was my grandfather was Japanese and my father was half-Japanese. I said I saw no reason for them to tear up my roots and send me to any kind of camp."

IRONICALLY, neither she nor her relocation officers were aware that she was one of the few known descendants of the first colony of Japanese pioneers in this country.

Her unique wartime "Japanese experience" came to light — quite by accident — during a recent search for new historical facts surrounding the short-lived Wakamatsu colony at Gold Hill (located outside of Placerville).

History reveals her grandfather, Kuninosuke Masumizu, came to America as a young carpenter with a party of refugees to start a tea and silk colony in 1869.

Shortly after his arrival at Gold Hill, Kuni, as he was called, married a Negro girl from Missouri, probably the first interracial marriage by a Japanese on this continent.

WITHIN TWO years, the colony of about 22 Japanese settlers succumbed to harsh elements of nature and circumstances. All but Kuni, a girl named Okei and samurai Matsunosuke Sakurai vanished.

Kuni's marriage to Carrie Wilson, daughter of a Blackfoot Indian woman and her freed slave husband, produced nine children. All but three — Grant, Harry and Clara — died in infancy, and the lines of Harry and Clara survive.

Harry left only one daughter, Juanita, but Clara's marriage to the son of a Welsh-German brewer named Elebeck and a mixed Indian-Negro woman, produced George, Harry, Helen, and Geraldine. All except Harry now live in Sacramento's Oak Park.

Today, these five Negroes and their offspring constitute the only known descendants of the historic Wakamatsu colony.

INTERVIEWS with Juanita Wong and George Elebeck, 67, of 4307 36th St., oldest of the living Kuni grandchildren, also brought out these curious episodes:

— Kuni's wife, Carrie, in her late 90s was summoned by the FBI in March, 1942, to determine her citizenship status because of her marriage to an "enemy alien" who had been dead for 27 years.

— Kuni's son and Juanita's father, Harry David Masumizu (his name was Africanized to spell Massmedsu), long known as "Jap Harry" in Japan Alley, had undergone "the severest questioning," as Juanita recalls, by FBI agents for possible ties with Japanese organizations.

"The first time was shortly after the war started," Mrs. Wong said. "The officers picked up my grandmother and my father from their home here and my children from school."

"TWO MEN came to my home and took me to the upstairs in the old post office. When I got there, my grandmother, my father and my children with big eyes were all there."

"My grandmother was pretty much shook up. We were released. They told us to notify them when we left town."

However humble his role, Kuni's place in the history of Japanese Americans looms

They include Japanese Americans who have noticed that in spite of a high level of educational attainment, they make considerably less money than Anglo Americans.

They include people who see that our aged as well as our youth have health, psychological and other problems which are not being attended to by appropriate agencies.

They include a growing number of Japanese parents who see the racial stereotypes depicted on TV cartoons

ly committed cultural genocide to show we were good Americans.

One Nisei father related to me with some concern that his son had asked him, "Aren't you embarrassed to eat with chopsticks in front of your Caucasian friends?"

I think the father was gratified that his son was Americanized to a point where he felt no hesitation in raising such a question, but I am sure he was not happy with the question itself.

Mrs. Juanita Wong, of Sacramento, granddaughter of Japanese pioneer Kuninosuke Masumizu, proudly admires a photo of her father, Harry Masumizu. She is one of the few known descendants of the first Japanese colony in this country.



large because he has left behind the only living legacy.

Although they knew of his race, his grandchildren had never realized his historical significance. In 1969, by accident, they learned of their grandfather's place when they saw his picture — the only known picture of any of the Wakamatsu colonists — in The Sacramento Union. His photograph was published as part of the Wakamatsu centennial observance by the sponsoring Japanese American Citizens League.

FROM RECOLLECTIONS of his grandchildren George Elebeck and Juanita Wong, Kuni must have eked out a marginal living as a lone Japanese with a black wife and three growing children in a hostile white world. Japanese immigrants were yet to arrive in numbers three decades later. He was an outsider who came to a wrong place at a wrong time.

Mrs. Wong feelingly recalls her grandmother telling her of hardships in the days of a two-room log cabin upon a hill within a stone's throw of Marshall's gold discovery site.

Kuni and Carrie produced nine offspring, Mrs. Wong says, but only three of them lived. "My grandmother worked in the garden but when the time of delivery came she went inside and gave birth to two of her own children — there was no doctor, no midwife."

MRS. WONG, married to a retired Chinese Negro, continued, "She said when her first baby was born a young girl came out of the hills and gave her a piece of cloth as a present for the child." Presumably, Kuni's wife was speaking of Okei — the 17-year-old nursemaid to the master of the colony — who

died of a fever at 19. More than a decade later, it is said, Kuni collected money from the former colonists in the area, went to San Francisco and returned with a marble headstone for her grave.

His grandchildren remember him as an even-tempered man who knew no anger — and a loner who worked as a miner, cook, barber, fisherman and farmer. His fatal weakness: gambling. "He was a gambler. And my grandmother didn't like it," says Mrs. Wong.

George Elebeck said his grandmother told him Kuni used to mine at Coloma. He said he has a map which shows a deep vein of pure gold. Kuni, Elebeck said, later blew up the mine in anger because laws prohibited Orientals from owning mines. The Kuni family, however, eventually left Coloma and lost the property.

GEORGE ELEBECK too remembers: "He was quite a fisherman. I used to go to the river to fish with him. My grandmother told me he ran the first fish market in Sacramento."

Mrs. Wong said Kuni visited with her several times. "Then he dropped out of sight, and we never heard from him."

Kuni, the nomadic outsider, apparently drifted on to Colusa where Japanese oldtimers remember him as a lonely old man who fished in the river and sold his catch to eke out a meager living."

He died there in 1915, alone. His grave remained unmarked until 1926 when his countrymen who knew him collected money to erect a simple tombstone with an inscription which read:

"In memory (sic) of Kuni Masumizu, died Sept. 13, 1915, aged 66 years."

— W. Lee

Contra

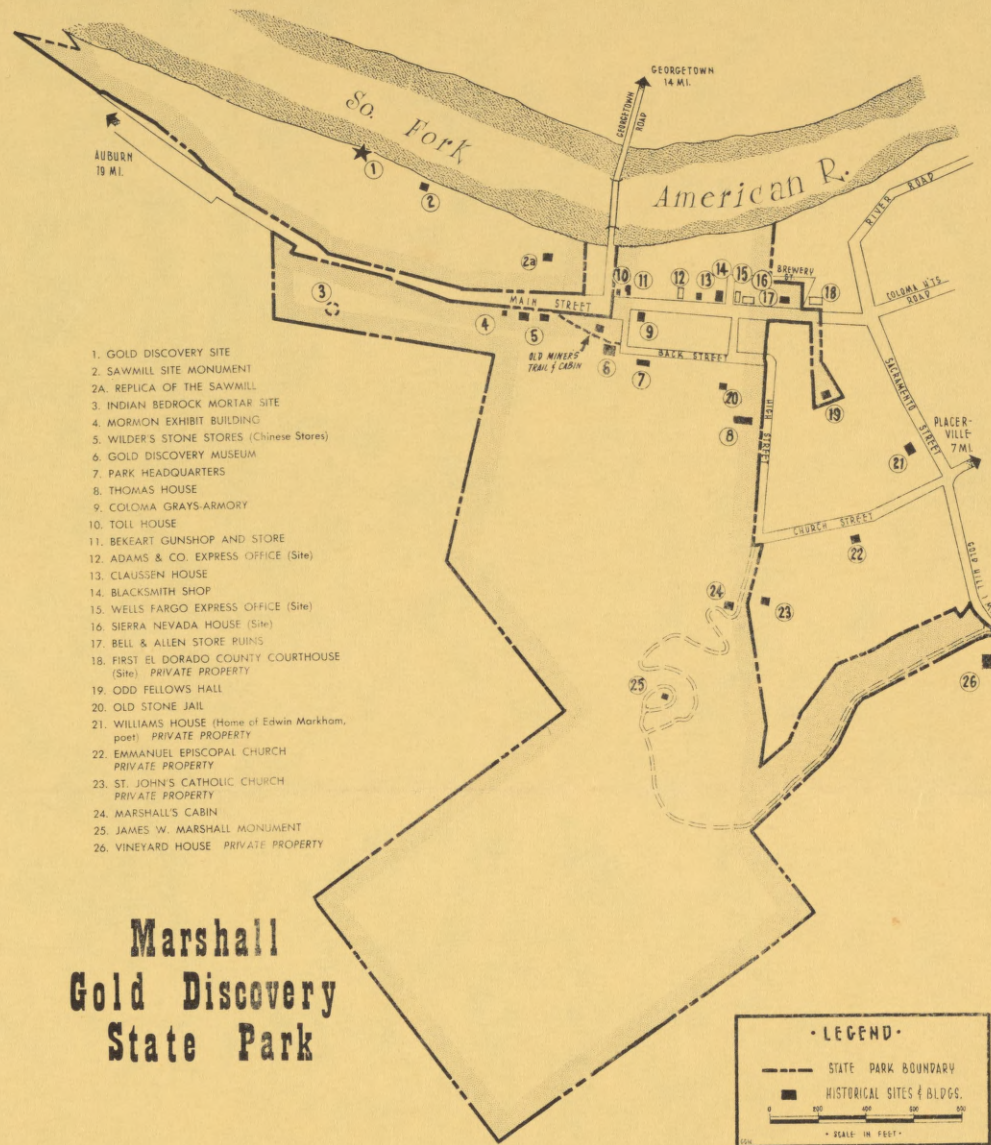
By Keith Power

At this time of year the hills of eastern Contra Costa county are as smooth and tawny as the flanks of sleeping lions.

But south of Pittsburg, where coal miners dug a century ago and left behind slag heaps in the valley bottoms, the rolling brown grass is relieved by a sudden spill of green.

There, in remarkable profusion, crimson manzanita and the plump - coned Coulter pine combine with oaks and a swath of California buckeye with their leaves stripped and branches silvery in the sun.

And it is there on publicly-owned land that a Utah engineer, assisted by a law firm, intended for the wide West, intends to begin mining operations in a few years.



PICNICKING WITH HISTORY

HISTORIC MARSHALL GOLD DISCOVERY STATE PARK, BESIDES ITS LESSON IN HISTORY, ALSO OFFERS CHOICE PICNIC SPOTS. THERE ARE 93 TABLES, SOME NEAR THE RIVER. THERE IS A SMALL CHARGE FOR PICNICKING AND FOR ENTRANCE TO THE MUSEUM. HIKING AND FISHING ARE OTHER ATTRACTIONS.

COLOMA IS EAST AND A BIT NORTH OF SACRAMENTO ON STATE HIGHWAY 49, WHICH CONNECTS WITH U. S. 80 AT AUBURN AND US 50 AT PLACERVILLE. COLOMA, WITH AN ALTITUDE OF 750 FEET, CAN BE VERY WARM IN THE SUMMER AND FALL AND COLD IN WINTER.



MARSHALL GOLD DISCOVERY STATE HISTORIC PARK

Coloma, California

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

"BOYS, I BELIEVE I HAVE FOUND A GOLD MINE!"

COLOMA HAS ANOTHER SAWMILL.

LIKE THAT FIRST ONE, IT IS ON THE BANK OF THE RIPPLING SOUTH FORK OF CALIFORNIA'S AMERICAN RIVER.

THE NEW MILL IS POWERED ELECTRICALLY. THE OLD ONE DREW ON WATER TO MAKE IT GO.

THE ORIGINAL MILL CUT BOARDS OF PINE FOR SUTTER'S FORT, DOWNSTREAM IN NEW HELVETIA, THE LITTLE COMMUNITY THAT WAS FOUNDED BY CAPTAIN JOHN AUGUSTUS SUTTER, A SWISS ADVENTURER. THIS IS THE PLACE THAT WAS TO BECOME SACRAMENTO AND EVENTUALLY THE CAPITAL OF ALL CALIFORNIA.

THE NEW MILL IS A FULL-SIZED, WORKING REPLICA BUILT OF RUSTIC LUMBER, SOME OF IT HAND-ADZED AND PUT TOGETHER WITH OAK PINS. IT WAS CONSTRUCTED BY COLOMA CITIZENS AND THEIR NEIGHBORS, WHO WERE GIVEN HELP BY THE STATE. THE EL DORADO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY LED THE WAY.

IT WAS AT THE OLD MILL AT 7:30 THE MORNING OF JANUARY 24, 1848 THAT 38-YEAR-OLD JAMES WILSON MARSHALL PICKED SOME BRIGHT OBJECTS FROM THE TAILRACE OF SUTTER'S MILL AND SHOUTED: "BOYS, I BELIEVE I HAVE FOUND A GOLD MINE!"

IT WASN'T LONG UNTIL THAT SHOUT WAS BEING ANSWERED FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD BY PEOPLE ATTRACTED BY GOLD AND ADVENTURE IN CALIFORNIA. WITHIN A YEAR THERE WERE 80,000 MORE CITIZENS. AND PEOPLE KEPT COMING. WHEN COLOMA'S NEW SAWMILL WAS DEDICATED ON JANUARY 21, 1968 TO MARK THE 120TH ANNIVERSARY OF MARSHALL'S DISCOVERY, THE STATE HAD A POPULATION OF 19,500,000. GOLD, HELPED BY SUNSHINE, HAD PAID OFF.

THE FIRST SAWMILL AT COLOMA WAS BUILT BECAUSE CAPTAIN SUTTER NEEDED LUMBER. HE ASKED MARSHALL TO BUILD AND OPERATE THE MILL IN THE LITTLE VALLEY CALLED CULLUMA BY THE INDIANS WHO LIVED THERE. MARSHALL WENT TO COLOMA IN SEPTEMBER 1847 AND HE AND PETER WIMMER BEGAN CONSTRUCTION, AIDED BY MEMBERS OF THE DEFUNCT MORMON BATTALION.

THEY BEGAN DEEPENING AND WIDENING AN OLD RIVER CHANNEL IN THE GRAVEL FOR THE TAILRACE SO WATER WOULD FLOW THROUGH BETTER. AFTER A TIME, BECAUSE THE TAILRACE WASN'T DEEP ENOUGH, THE CHANNEL WAS BLOCKED DURING THE DAY TO MAKE IT EASIER TO DIG. EACH NIGHT THE WATER WAS LET IN TO WASH AWAY THE LOOSE DIRT AND GRAVEL.

IT WAS ON ONE OF THE MORNING INSPECTIONS THAT MARSHALL SAW SOMETHING GLISTENING ON BEDROCK. HE WASN'T SURE OF HIS FIND SO HE POUNDED THE STUFF WITH A ROCK. IT WAS MALLEABLE, LIKE GOLD. HE FOUND MORE FLAKES IN THE WATER, PUT THEM IN HIS HAT AND HURRIED TO WHERE OTHERS WERE WORKING. THEY SHARED HIS EXCITEMENT AND WERE CERTAIN ENOUGH OF WHAT THEY HAD TO GO BACK TO THE

RACE AND HUNT FOR MORE. MARSHALL THEN TOOK THE GOLD TO SUTTER'S FORT, 58 MILES SOUTHEAST, WHERE THE AMERICAN RIVER JOINS THE SACRAMENTO.

CAPTAIN SUTTER AND MARSHALL DECIDED THEY HAD REAL GOLD BUT DECIDED TO KEEP THE FIND A SECRET. THEY WANTED TO FINISH THE SAWMILL BEFORE WORD GOT OUT BUT THE STORY WAS TOO GOOD TO KEEP. AT SUTTER'S FORT, TEAMSTER JACOB WITTMER PAID FOR BRANDY WITH COLOMA GOLD. CAPTAIN SUTTER WROTE OF IT TO GENERAL M. G. VALLEJO AT SONOMA.

THE STOREKEEPER WROTE TO HIS SAN FRANCISCO EMPLOYER, SAM BRANNAN, AND HE PRINTED THE FIRST PUBLIC ACCOUNT OF THE FIND IN HIS NEWSPAPER, THE CALIFORNIAN. THAT WAS ON MARCH 15, 1849, AND THE RUSH GATHERED MOMENTUM.

COLOMA BEGAN TO BOOM. OTHER DISCOVERIES WERE MADE NEARBY AND THE TOWN BECAME THE "QUEEN OF THE MINES."

IN THE LATE 1850'S, HOWEVER, COLOMA'S PLACER MINES WERE PRETTY MUCH EXHAUSTED. THEY GAVE WAY TO HOMES AND GARDENS. PLANTINGS MADE BY MARSHALL, HIMSELF, CAN STILL BE FOUND ON THE HILLSIDE NEAR THE WOODEN CABIN HE BUILT. IT STILL STANDS ON THE NARROW ROAD OPPOSITE ST. JOHN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH. RUINS OF EARLY DAY STONE BUILDINGS STAND ALONG OTHER STREETS. SOME ARE WITHOUT ROOFS AND THE WOODEN FLOORS HAVE LONG AGO ROTTED AWAY AND DISAPPEARED--EVEN AS DID THE SAWMILL, WHICH FELL INTO DISUSE BEFORE PARTS OF IT WERE CARRIED OFF.

ABOUT 70 PERCENT OF THE TOWN IS INCLUDED IN MARSHALL GOLD DISCOVERY STATE HISTORIC PARK. EACH YEAR THE CITIZENS OF COLOMA CELEBRATE DISCOVERY DAY ON THE WEEKEND NEAREST TO THE JANUARY 24 ANNIVERSARY. BUT ALL THE YEAR AROUND, VISITORS GO TO COLOMA, WHICH NOW HAS A POPULATION OF ABOUT 175, TO SEE WHERE THE FIRST MAJOR GOLD DISCOVERY WAS MADE IN CALIFORNIA. SOME OF THEM STILL LOOK FOR THE GOLD AS THEY BEHOLD THE GIANT STONE MARKER ON THE ORIGINAL MILL SITE ON THE EDGE OF THE RIVER. THE MARKER WAS CONSTRUCTED BY THE SOCIETY OF CALIFORNIA PIONEERS.

MOST VISITORS STOP BY THE HISTORIC MUSEUM, OPENED IN 1961, WHERE THERE IS A PICTORIAL EXHIBIT OF THE GOLD DISCOVERY. THERE ARE ALSO MAPS AND RELICS OF THOSE DAYS. ONE OF THE MOST PRIZED IS A PIECE OF TIMBER FROM THE FIRST MILL. SEVERAL TIMBERS WERE UNEARTHED IN 1914 BY PHILIP C. BEKEART, SON OF A COLOMA PIONEER. OTHER TIMBERS WERE DUG UP BY THE STATE IN 1947.

OTHER CHAPTERS OF THE CALIFORNIA GOLD STORY ARE TOLD ELSEWHERE IN THE STATE. AT COLUMBIA STATE HISTORIC PARK AN ENTIRE TOWN HAS BEEN PRESERVED AND RECONSTRUCTED. AT BODIE STATE HISTORIC PARK A GHOST TOWN HAS BEEN PRESERVED BY ITS DEAD MINES. AND AT PLACERITA CANYON STATE PARK IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY CAN BE SEEN THE SITE WHERE THE VERY FIRST GOLD WAS DISCOVERED IN CALIFORNIA. THAT WAS IN 1842--BUT SOMEHOW THE FEVER DIDN'T SPREAD UNTIL THE COLOMA STRIKE SIX YEARS LATER.

JAMES W. MARSHALL
1810-1885

INCREDIBLY, THE MAN WHO DISCOVERED THE GOLD THAT SET OFF THE RUSH OF THE FORTY-NINERS DIED IN POVERTY. AFTER HIS FIND, JAMES W. MARSHALL WAS HOUNDED BY PEOPLE WHO THOUGHT HE HAD HIDDEN GOLD AWAY OR KNEW OF RICH CLAIMS. MARSHALL MADE HIS LIVING AS HE COULD--BLACKSMITHING, CARPENTERING, AND BY A NOT-VERY-SUCCESSFUL LECTURE TOUR. THE STATE PAID HIM \$9,600 AS A PENSION BUT HE LOST MOST OF IT IN MINING GAMBLES. HE DIED AUGUST 10, 1885 A FEW MILES FROM COLOMA, WHICH HE HAD PUT ON THE MAP FOR ALL TIME.

MARSHALL, WHO WAS BORN IN NEW JERSEY, STARTED WEST WHEN HE WAS 21 AND TRIED LIFE IN INDIANA, ILLINOIS, KANSAS, AND OREGON BEFORE HE CAME TO CALIFORNIA IN 1845.

HE IS ENTOMBED UNDER A HILLSIDE MONUMENT OVERLOOKING THE GOLD DISCOVERY SITE. HIS STATUE IS ATOP ITS MARBLE SHAFT. IN MINER'S GARB HE POINTS FOR ALWAYS TO THE SPOT WHERE HE AND CALIFORNIA STRUCK IT RICH.

THE FIRST PIECE OF GOLD HE FOUND, ABOUT HALF THE SIZE OF A DIME, IS IN WASHINGTON, D. C. AT THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE. A REPLICA, PRESSED FROM AMERICAN RIVER GOLD, IS DISPLAYED AT COLOMA.



FROM THE SAME SPOT—Mrs. Fern Sayre of Sacramento, who has done extensive research of the Wakamatsu Colony and the Okei saga, pays her respects at the gravesite of the first Japanese woman to be

buried in California—atop Gold Hill. It is said Okei often climbed this hill to watch the setting sun and gaze in the direction of her homeland. The mountains in the background are due west from the hill.

'Mayflower of the Pacific'

BY HENRY TAKETA
Sacramento

The date of May 27, 1869, is most significant in the history of Japanese immigration to the United States and in their notable contribution to the agricultural industry in California especially.

The Japanese pioneers have left their handprints in the teeming valleys throughout the length and breadth of California and other parts of the western United States. With patience and industry, they cleared, leveled and irrigated the land and brought crops to bear in soil which had previously remained idle or had been put to limited use for pasturage and grazing.

It was on this May 27, 1869, that a small group of proud and determined Japanese arrived at the Port of San Francisco aboard the sidewheeler, S. S. China, owned by the Pacific Mail Steamship Co.

The part of Japan they left behind was Aizu Wakamatsu, located in the northwest section of what is now Fukushima Prefecture, and those early pioneers were to become known as the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony of Gold Hill.

As War Refugees

Civil war in Japan between the supporters of the Tokugawa Shogunate and the followers of Emperor Meiji who favored centralized imperial power had a direct bearing upon the coming of this pioneer party.

Katamori Matsudaira, last of the feudal lords of Aizu Wakamatsu, and a number of other ruling clans sided with Tokugawa and had suffered a crushing defeat.

Chaos reigned for a time

its scenic and topographical similarity to their Japanese homeland or because many early settlers there were from Holland or Germany as was Schnell.

Much of the group was made of farmers and those in the trades, but several were samurai followers of Lord Matsudaira.

Four women, including nursemaid Okei Ito of the Schnell family, were with the pioneer party.

The settlers, arriving in San Francisco, proceeded to Sacramento by riverboat and wagon-trained to Placerville and Gold Hill, where Schnell had arranged to purchase 600 acres for the farm colony. With them came 50,000 three-year-old mulberry trees for silk farming, large quantity of bamboo roots for food and craft industry, tea seeds, wax tree stocks, grape seedlings and other varieties of plants and seeds of their native land.

Lack of Water

Immediately upon their arrival, the settlers built their homes and planted their crops on land purchased from Charles M. Graner. For a while it appeared that they would be rewarded for their determination and many sacrifices.

However, combination of dry climate of the area, scarcity of irrigation water, lack of funds and failure of financial assistance as promised from Japan doomed the pioneer project in less than two years.

With the end in sight, Schnell left the colony with his Japanese wife and two young daughters with assurances to the colonists that he would return with needed money, but he failed to do this and thus abandoned his Japanese followers to their own fate in a strange and often hostile land.

As dictated by necessity and self-preservation, the

settlers sold most of their valuables and belongings to ward off hunger while patiently waiting for their leader who never returned. Ultimately, each was compelled to go his own way.

Only Two Remain

Some were able to return to Japan and others moved elsewhere where employment was more promising.

From every indication, only Matsunosuke Sakurai, a samurai, and Okei, the nursemaid, remained behind at Gold Hill where they were befriended and employed by the early pioneer family of Francis Veerkamp. His descendants are to be found in the Gold Hill-Coloma area where they are engaged in farming and business.

Okei is said to have died of fever at the age of 19 in the spring of 1871 and was buried at the knoll which she frequently climbed to watch the setting sun and gaze in the direction of her homeland. Her headstone reads both in Japanese and in English, "In Memory of Okei, died 1871, aged 19 years. (A Japanese Girl)."

Matsunosuke Sakurai faithfully served the Veerkamp family until his death on Feb. 25, 1891, and he now lies at rest in the Vineyard Cemetery at Coloma, the historical site of Marshall's gold discovery and a few miles from Gold Hill.

Work Carried On

Although the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony was shortlived and suffered its tragic ending, it signaled the coming of Japanese pioneers to America and the beginning of their notable contribution to the agricultural industry of California.

Many descendants are carrying on the work of their pioneer forebearers with the same devotion, determination and skill, which helped to make California the most productive farm-

ing state in the United States and the greatest agricultural region in the world.

People from many communities of California and the western states, and even as far away as Japan, have made pilgrimage to Gold Hill to pay homage and to meditate at Okei's grave in its humble surroundings.

On top of a hill overlooking the city of Aizu Wakamatsu, a beautiful memorial with identical grave-stone was erected and dedicated to the memory of the young Japanese girl, Okei, in 1958. This site is sentimentally called "Gold Hill".

Okei has become a legend and folklore in Japan. Her story of youth, pride, hardships, loneliness and heart-breaks was made into a Japanese movie with the title of "Flower of the Storm" and also into a popular song called "Okei's Lullaby".

Rediscovery of Site

This brief history of the organized settlers from Japan and of their tea and silk farm colony at Gold Hill was made possible only through painstaking and time-consuming research undertaken by Mrs. Fern R. Sayre and Soichi Nakatani of Sacramento.

The very existence of this colony became lost with its tragic ending and was not rediscovered until after World War I.

Unquieted rumors persisted that a young Japanese girl, who died in the Gold Rush period, was buried at Gold Hill.

Finally a search was undertaken by several Sacramentans, and through coincidence, the first person to be interviewed was the 82-year-old Henry Veerkamp, son of the settlers who befriended the young Japanese girl and who was one year older than Okei.

In recalling the past, Henry Veerkamp spoke of the

hardship suffered by the Japanese settlers and the sad and lonely life of "Okei-san" who was very beautiful in her kimono. He pointed out the location of the colony and guided the searchers to Okei's gravesite. Thus the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony was rediscovered.

Site Registry Sought

A local committee consisting of Mrs. Sayre, Mr. Nakatani, George Oki and this writer are in the process of formulating plans to register the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony as a historical site with the Division of Beaches and Parks of the State of California.

Project to beautify and perpetuate the Okei gravesite as a tribute to the people of this farm colony and to all other Japanese pioneers is under serious study.

Centennial commemoration issue will be sought of the U. S. Post Office Department in 1969, the 100th year of the coming of the Wakamatsu pioneers to Gold Hill.

Along the same line of thought, the theme of the first and only tea and silk farm is being given highest consideration for Coloma's 1969 annual celebration.

In each of these undertakings, participation and assistance is being sought from the neighboring chapters of the Japanese American Citizens League and its Northern California - Western Nevada District Council, local Japanese American organizations, citizens and historical societies of Coloma and El Dorado County, and others who are interested in paying honor and tribute to these "Mayflower" pioneers of the Pacific who sailed the ocean eastward to reach the western shores of the United States and to all others who were to follow in their footsteps.

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Chaos reigned for a time in Japan and there was genuine fear for life and property among the losers.

Eduard Schnell, a trader of Dutch or German descent and a confidant of the Lord of Aizu Wakamatsu for a number of years, sold arms to the clan and had chosen a daughter of a samurai as his wife. Either at the suggestion of Herr Schnell or to prepare for a possible sanctuary if it became necessary to flee the homeland, Lord Matsudaira made plans for the first organized emigration to the United States and brought into existence the ill-fated and short-lived Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony of Gold Hill.

Vanguard of 40

Between 35 and 40 persons under leadership of Schnell constituted the vanguard of what was to have been the first of several contingents.

Gold Hill of El Dorado County may have been selected for this colony for

were samurai followers of Lord Matsudaira.

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Soichi Nakatani (standing) and Mrs. Fern Sayre, both of Sacramento, study material from the City of Aizu-Wakamatsu.



English side of the headstone reads "In memory of Okei, died 1871, aged 19 years, a Japanese Girl."

4 Scions of State's Pioneer Japanese

By Almena Lomax

Four Sacramento Negroes and their offspring have been found to be the only known descendants in Northern California, perhaps in the country, of the first Japanese settlers in America.

George and Harry Elebeck, Mrs. Geraldine McWilliams and Mrs. Helen Starnes, all of the Oak Park section of Sacramento, are the grandchildren of Kuninuke Masumizu who came to this country in 1889 at the age of 20 as one of 30 members at the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony.

The colony had been recruited in Japan by Edward Schnell, a Swiss trader, to grow tea and mulberry trees for silk production on 160 acres purchased by Schnell in the Gold Rush country of El Dorado County.

The colonizers found the dry, mountainous climate against them. The tea plants and mulberry trees they had brought from Japan failed and the colony disbanded. Some members returned to Japan. Some moved to other parts of the state and country. Masumizu chose to stay, and at some unknown time, he married the daughter of a Blackfoot Indian woman and a freedman. They had three children, Harry, Grant and Clara.

Harry had one daughter who is now dead. Grant had none.

Mixed Blood

Clara continued the mixed-blood strain in the family by marrying the son of a Welsh-German brewer and a woman of Choctaw Indian blood. It is their four children who survive.

Now 66, the age at which his Japanese grandfather died, George Elebeck, 4307 26th st., Sacramento, remembers that his grandfather owned Sacramento's first fish market and that he served as interpreter in Sacramento courtrooms for the Japanese who came later.

Masumizu, on his own, with no older generation to guide him, became proficient not only in English, but in Spanish. Elebeck, who was 11 when his grandfather died in 1915, says he looked more Spanish than Japanese, "unless you looked at him close, or talked to him."

Masumizu, or Kuni, as he



DESCENDANTS OF PIONEER JAPANESE-CALIFORNIAN
Mrs. Helen Starnes (grandchild), Mrs. Clara Heady (great-grandniece) and George Elebeck (grandson)

—AP Photo

came to be known, outlived both his wife and the two other members of the colony who remained in the area.

Although he was a carpenter in Japan, Kuni turned to farming, fishing and working a gold mine in Colusa. He later blew up the mine in anger because of the laws prohibiting Orientals from owning mining rights.

His grandson, George, recalls his grandmother telling him the mine had a deep vein of gold, and he is considering legal action to regain control, not only of it, but of the remainder of his grandfather's property in Colusa County.

Masumizu is buried in the Colusa cemetery. His grave is considered something of a shrine by history-minded members of the Japanese-American Citizens League.

Through their efforts, the state recently placed a plaque at the original colony's school, Gold Hill, in El Dorado County, marking it as a state historical site.

Although aware of their

grandfather's racial identity, none of the Elebeck family knew of his historical significance until his photograph was published in a Sacramento daily during the JACL's Wakamatsu Centennial observance last year.

At first the Elebecks thought the picture was their late uncle Harry, who had closely resembled his father. Then they matched it with family keepsakes and found that it was their grandfather.

Each had a picture of the small, dandyish-looking man who did look more Spanish than Oriental, except for his eyes.

The family regards itself as "mixed," or Negro, taking the race of the mother.

Through the adopted daughter of Harry Masumizu, Mrs. Juanita Wong, who is married to a Chinese, the racial mixture has been carried even further. Her young sons regard themselves in the day's idiom as black.

Although the Wakamatsu Centennial Committee and Sacramento historian, Mrs.

Fern Sayre, continued to search for other descendants of the first Japanese settlers, none was turned up. When the Centennial banquet was held, the paradox was of a Negro family on hand representing the Oriental pioneers.

Masumizu's marriage to the Negro-Indian woman, Carrie, began a tradition of inter-mingling between Negroes and Japanese which has been closer for Negro relations than with any other of America's minorities except the Indian, with whom the

Negro often intermarried during slavery and until the turn of the century.

Masumizu's granddaughter, Mrs. McWilliams, thinks this is because "the Japanese aren't as prejudiced as other races."

She regards the Chinese as "very close, a one-race people." Her brother, George, also believes that the Japanese have never been as prejudiced against Negroes as other groups.

However, Akiji Yoshimura of Colusa, a member of the Wakamatsu Centennial Committee, thinks American Japanese democracy originated in necessity.

Second Wave

After the Wakamatsu colonizing group, no more Japanese came until just before the turn of the century. Yoshimura's grandfather, father and stepmother were in that group. They went first to Hawaii, then moved to California.

The Japanese encountered great anti-Oriental feeling and, few in number, they turned to another discriminated-against minority, the Negro.

Traditionally, up and down the Pacific Coast, they have lived in or on the edge of the Negro community, done business in it, and even joined Negroes in such civil rights actions as the suits to outlaw restrictive covenants in housing. Negroes could always stay in Japanese hotels and eat in Japanese cafes when otherwise barred.

However, intermarriages such as that of Kuni and Carrie Masumizu were infrequent, for, as Yoshimura acknowledges, "the Japanese pride themselves on the purity of their race, or they did until now — now, everything is mixed."

AUCTIONS

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THE

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Please return to →

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Berkeley, Calif. 94707





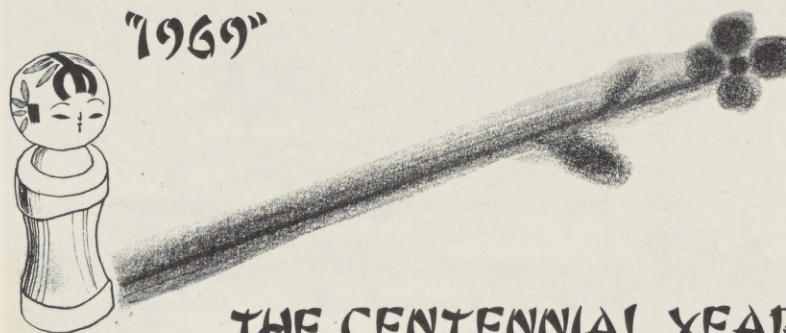
"Many of our leaders are young; our spirit is young." Dennis Warren, a University of the Pacific Junior who is the Student Chairman of Let Us Vote, is pictured here with Eddie Le Baron, Mrs. Elizabeth Koontz, President of the National Association of Education, and television personality Joey Bishop.

Alexander the Great once had a right hand man named Antipiter. On one of his great expeditions, he succeeded in surrounding a Grecian city. Antipiter sent a messenger to talk to the city fathers, and he said, "Before we talk over terms; send us twenty hostages." The messenger returned with this reply, "We will send you twenty of our men, but not one of our youth." I have an idea that deep down in the hearts of Californians is a regard for our youth no less than was held by those Grecian people for theirs. In education, too, it is a matter both of rolling up our sleeves and using our imaginations to work out this great problem of our commonwealth.

It seems to me that California can face up to its problems. Many of our leaders are young; our spirit is young. The dead hand of the past does not weigh heavily upon us. Our innovations cause the whole world to sit up and take notice. I believe we can measure up. I have faith in the fact that we *are* going to measure up. And I have faith that the same spirit which was manifest in California a hundred years ago will come forth to lead us ahead in the spirit of the covered wagon, rather than the spirit of the bandwagon.

From: **California in 1975**, a speech delivered by Dr. Robert E. Burns, President of the College of the Pacific for the Commonwealth Club of California in San Francisco, September 3, 1954.

EDITOR MARTHA SEFFER O'BRYON
 GUEST CONSULTANT — JAPANESE SECTION YUSUKE KAWARABAYASHI
 ORIGINAL DRAWINGS TOSHIAKI KATOH
 PHOTOS from the collection of HENRY TAKETA



THE CENTENNIAL YEAR

By HENRY TAKETA

*Refrain of rock-a-bye, heard in far away land,
 Okei, just seventeen, why did she cry?
 As she quietly sang the Lullaby
 Of her native land, why did she cry?
 Refrain of rock-a-bye, distant clouds swept by,
 In the lonely sunset, her heart searched afar,
 Only in her dreams could she return home,
 Toward her beloved Aizu, she watched the stars.
 The song of rock-a-bye, she sang as she cried,
 Gentle Okei, longing and waiting in vain,
 As winter fled and spring had arrived,
 For glad tidings from home, which never came.*

(Interpretation of Okei's Lullaby)

For persons of Japanese ancestry, the year of 1969, will bear special significance in that it has all the birthright of a centennial year for those Japanese immigrants of long ago who chose to leave behind their island homes and seek their fortune, gainful employment and a new life in the United States. They had the making of hardy pioneers, which in fact they were. With pride, hope, industry and patience, they not only survived but successfully overcame the many natural obstacles and man's prejudices of their time and made possible a better world of today for themselves, their children and children's children. Many have since gone their parting ways and, for those still among us, most are in their twilight years. In our sober moments, we give thanks for all that they have done and pray for their deserving reward.



Castle, Aizu Wakamatsu, Japan

If 1969, is to be a true and meaningful centennial for our Issei generation, the pages in the book of time must be turned back a full century. Search and research undertaken must prove without a shadow of any doubt the timely arrival in 1869 of the Japanese people, not by accident or misfortune as would be the case of a shipwrecked sailor or fisherman or on temporary leave from Japan by a student, traveler or trader, but for permanent settlement somewhere in the United States. Over the past forty years, bits of evidence had been gathered and, as pieces from here and there and out of the past were put together, they gradually brought to light the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony of Gold Hill, El Dorado County, California, and its people of a hundred years ago.

This episode of early California is little known because the Colony was ill-fated and short-lived. At best, the records are fragmentary and meager, but everything about the Colony and the colonists miraculously fell into its proper place. Through persistence and industry on the part of a few researchers¹, the story of the coming of the Wakamatsu colonists; their arrival at Gold Hill in June, 1869, and venture into farming; the abandonment of the farm colony and the exodus of its people; Okei and her grave, Matsunosuke Sakurai, and other people and events of the time can now be unfolded and told with exactitude as it happened.

Hereafter, new discoveries will serve to refine what is already known and not to establish the very existence of the Wakamatsu Colony and its people.

On December 9, 1966, an application was submitted by the writer in behalf of several sponsors² to have the "Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony of Gold Hill" recognized as an episode of historical significance by the Historical Landmark Advisory Committee of the Division of Beaches and Parks. The application was unanimously approved at the conclusion of the hearing on December 16, 1966, with the understanding that the plaque and monument dedication be deferred until sometime in 1969, "the 100th anniversary of the Colony's founding." At this point the biographical portion of the application may adequately serve to bring to the readers the story of the Wakamatsu Colony, its people and their brief but memorable existence:

WAKAMATSU TEA AND SILK FARM COLONY OF GOLD HILL

"The most notable contribution of the pioneer immigrants from Japan to the economy and industry of the State of California and the United States has been in the field of agriculture. With utmost patience, preserverance and industry, they cleaned, leveled and irrigated land and brought crops to bear in soil which had previously remained idle or had been put to limited use for pasturage and grazing.

"Japanese immigration of any consequence to the United States was in the late 1890s and early 1900s, and their influence upon California's farming industry was in direct ratio to the number of new arrivals. However, it is most significant that its humble beginning was with the coming of a small but proud and determined group from Aizu Wakamatsu in Japan to Gold Hill, El Dorado County, on or about June 8, 1869, to establish a farm settlement, although this venture lasted less than two years and ended in tragedy.

"Aizu Wakamatsu, led by its last feudal lord, Katamori Matsudaira, and a number of other ruling clans had the misfortune of supporting Tokugawa Shogunate in its conflict against the followers of Emperor Meiji who favored centralized imperial power and had suffered a crushing defeat. Chaos reigned for a time in Japan, and there was genuine fear for life and property among the losers. Either at the suggestion of Eduard Schnell, a trader of Dutch or German descent and a long-time confidant of the lord of the Aizu Wakamatsu, or to prepare for a possible sanctuary or refuge if it became necessary to flee the homeland, Lord Matsudaira made plans for the first organized emigration to the United States and brought into existence the ill-fated and short-lived Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony of Gold Hill.

"Between nine to ten persons under the leadership of Eduard (John Henry) Schnell constituted the first vanguard of several groups of contingents. Sixteen more were soon to follow, and others (including Okei, nursemaid to



Graner House which was the headquarters of the Schnell Family, Gold Hill, El Dorado County

the Schnell household, Matsu and Kuni) were to arrive at the Colony later. Gold Hill of El Dorado County may have been selected for this colonization for its scenic and topographical similarity to their Japanese homeland or because many early settlers were from Holland or Germany as was Schnell. Many of the colonists were farmers and those in the trades, but several were samurai followers of Lord Matsudaira. Six Japanese women, including Mrs. Schnell, and four young children were with the pioneer colony. Two of the children were the daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Schnell, and the remaining two were daughters of Japanese families. The original party arrived at San Francisco aboard the sidewheeler, "China", of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company on May 27, 1869, proceeded to Sacramento by riverboat, and thence wagoned to Placerville and Gold Hill where Eduard Schnell had arranged to purchase 160 acres for the farm colony. With them came 50,000 three-year old mulberry trees for silk farming, a large quantity of bamboo roots for food and craft industry, tea seeds, wax tree stocks, grape seedlings and other varieties of plants and seeds of their native land. Also, sizeable shipments of cuttings and plants were to be received at Gold Hill after initial preparations had been completed. However restrictive or limited, the Japanese people were now traveling between California and their homeland of Japan in the interest of their agricultural undertaking at Gold Hill, El Dorado County.

"Immediately upon their arrival, the settlers set out to build their homes and clear and plant their crops on the land purchased from Charles M. Graner, and for over a year it appeared that they would be rewarded for their determination and many sacrifices. However, combination of dry climate of the area, scarcity of irrigation water, lack of funds and failure of financial assistance to come from Japan as promised doomed the pioneer project in less than two years. Beset with money problems and other problems, Eduard Schnell left the colony with his Japanese wife and two minor daughters with assurance to the colonists that he would return with much needed funds, but he failed to do this and thus abandoned his Japanese followers to their own fate in a strange and often hostile land.

"As dictated by necessity and self-preservation, the settlers sold most of their valuables and belongings to ward off hunger while patiently waiting for their leader who never returned, and ultimately each was compelled to go his own way. Some were able to return to Japan and others moved elsewhere where employment was more promising. From every indication, only Matsunosuke Sakurai, a samurai, and Okei Ito, nursemaid to the Schnell household, remained behind at Gold Hill where they were befriended and employed by the early pioneer family of Francis Veerkamp. His descendants are to be found in the Gold Hill-Coloma area where they are engaged in farming and business. Okei is said to have died of fever at the age of 19 in the spring of 1871, and was buried at the knoll of a hill which she frequently climbed to watch the setting sun and gaze in the direction of her homeland. Her headstone reads both in English and Japanese, "In Memory of Okei, died 1871, Aged 19 years, a Japanese Girl." Matsunosuke Sakurai faithfully served the Veerkamp family until his death on February 25, 1901, and he now lies at rest in the Vineyard Cemetery at Coloma, the historical site of Marshall's gold discovery and a few miles from Gold Hill.

"With its tragic ending, the colony soon passed into oblivion, and its very existence was lost and forgotten until after World War I. Unquieted rumor persisted that a Japanese girl, who died in the gold-rush period, was buried at Gold Hill near Coloma. A search was undertaken by several Sacramentans, and the first person they interviewed was the 75 year old Henry Veerkamp, son of the pioneer settlers who befriended and gave shelter and employment to Okei Ito and Matsunosuke Sakurai, the last of the colonists to remain at Gold Hill. He was a year older than the Japanese girl he knew as "Okei San" and, in vividly recalling the past, he told the story of the tea and silk farm, its Japanese pioneers and their hopes, industry, disappointments, suffering, hardships and ultimate abandonment of the colony. He pointed out the site of the settlement and the location of Okei's grave, and thus the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony was rediscovered."

Understandably, 1969 will be a climactic year for those who had indulged in time-consuming and painstaking research on the Wakamatsu Colony and for others who have come to love this phase of California's early history. For them it has been one of constant vigil to keep the delicate story of the first immigrant group



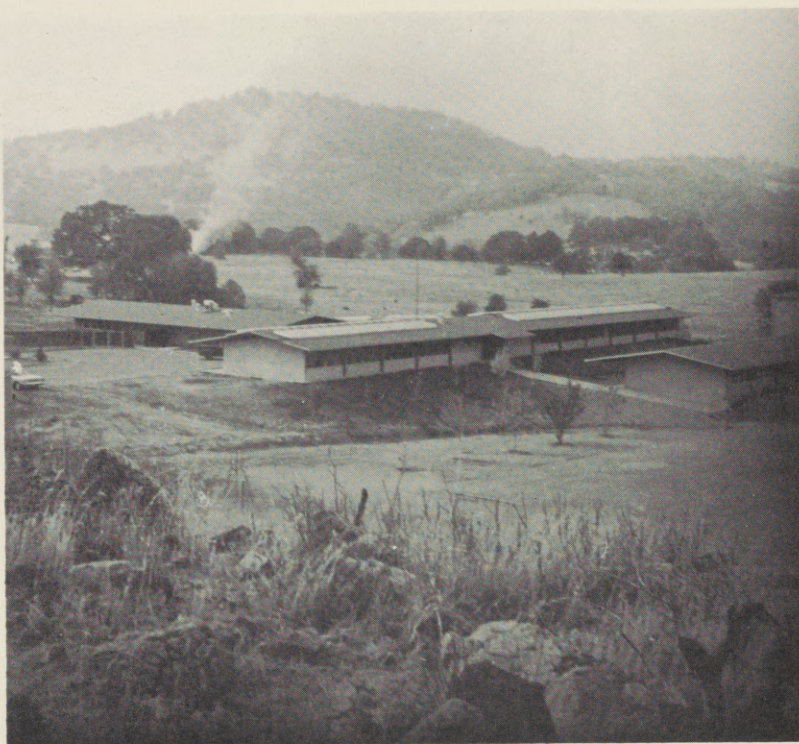
Keyaki Tree. Only known thing to have survived the abandonment of the Colony. The tree is next to the Graner House.



View of the Okei's Graveside from Gold Trail Union Grammar school, Coloma, California

from Japan of a century ago from again fading away and passing into oblivion. Over the years, not all words were kind or complimentary on the subject of this writing, and it was looked upon as "much ado about nothing." In recent times and noticeably within the last several months, more persons concerned with or interested in the heritage of the Japanese people of America have come to the realization that with the dawn of 1969 will come the Centennial Year not only for the early pioneers of the ill-fated Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony of Gold Hill, El Dorado County, but for all Japanese who chose to make some place in America their home. The last paragraph of the Historical Landmark application sincerely expressed the minds and hearts of its sponsors and may imbue the readers with the same sense of spiritual tribute for the people of Wakamatsu Colony and their dramatic but short-lived venture and others who took leave of Japan a few years later and made possible, through hope, pride, patience and industry, our world of today:

"Although the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony was short-lived and suffered its tragic ending, it signaled the coming of Japanese pioneers to America and the beginning of their notable contribution of the agricultural industry of California. During the past three-quarters of the century, they have left their marks in the teeming valleys throughout the length and breadth of this great State. Many descendants are carrying on the work of their pioneer forebears with the same devotion, determination and skill which helped to make California the most productive farming state in the United States and the greatest agricultural region in the world. Thus, it is befitting that the land which was once the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony be historically recognized as the site of (a) the only silk and tea farm in this State and (b) the first venture into agriculture by Japanese immigrants in the United States and (c) where the important participation of the pioneers from Japan to California's agriculture had its beginning."



The Gold Trails Union Grammar school, viewed from Okei's grave, will be the site of the dedication of the Historical Landmark Plaque in June of 1969.

Two major events are now being scheduled and planned for 1969 on the theme of the "Centennial Year." There undoubtedly will be announcement of others. Coloma-Lotus Boosters Club sponsors of the annual Gold Discovery Celebration at Coloma Gold Discovery State Park, El Dorado County, has dedicated the 1969 celebration in tribute to the Wakamatsu Colonists of Gold Hill and in honor of all Japanese people of America on the occasion of their one-hundredth anniversary. Coinciding as closely as possible to the day John Marshall discovered gold at Sutter's sawmill, 1969 celebration will take place on Saturday and Sunday, January 25 and 26, with emphasis on the latter. Five Japanese American communities, represented by Stockton, Marysville, Placer County, Florin and Sacramento JACL Chapters, will marshal their talents and resources to

bring a bit of history of the Japanese people of America, their culture and other subjects of interest. The story of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony and the hopes and tribulations of its people, girl "Okei" and her lonely grave at Gold Hill, other immigrants from Japan to follow, contribution of the Japanese people to California's agriculture and general growth, the other matters representative of the life of the Japanese people will be told by means of displays and exhibits. Other active participations will be bonsai and flower arrangement demonstration and displays, doll displays and accompanying lecture, kendo and judo exhibitions, Japanese cookery, pamphlets on Japanese culture and values, music and dancing.

The deferred dedication of the Historical Landmark Plaque in recognition of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony of Gold Hill as an important episode in California's early history will take place on a day yet to be announced in June 1969. Other complementary activities and events are being discussed and planned, and Northern California-Western Nevada District Council will oversee the programing and financing in behalf of all sponsors. Gold Trails Grammar School, which is part of what was once the Wakamatsu Colony Farm, has been tentatively approved and selected for the placement of the Historical Monument. Dedication will have civic and religious overtone and may be followed by appropriate social and festival program and activities.

People of Japan, and in particular the City of Aizu Wakamatsu, have long revered the legendary story of the Japanese pioneers of a century ago to Gold Hill, El Dorado County, and are said to be moving ahead with plans to commemorate 1969 as the Centennial Year in honor of the Japanese people of America. A memorial was dedicated in 1957 to the girl "Okei" and others of her Wakamatsu Colony at a site known as "Gold Hill" located on a plateau of the mountain overlooking the City of Aizu Wakamatsu. The monument is a replica of Okei's gravestone at Gold Hill, El Dorado County.

Aizu Wakamatsu is the home of "Byakkotai," the legendary boy warriors of the civil war which spawned the Wakamatsu Colony of Gold Hill, and the girl "Okei" now has been given an immortal place in the hearts of its people. Almost total destruction was inflicted upon the community in the civil war, and, therefore, no source material remained to enable its historians to tell the story



English inscription of Okei's gravestone placed at Okei's grave by Matsuaosuke Sakurai about 10 years later. Fence has been there from the time of its rediscovery in 1924 or 1925.



Replica of Okei's gravestone at Gold Hill of Aizu Wakamatsu, Japan. Dedicated in 1960.



白虎隊自刃の図

この絵は、白虎隊士の武士道の精華を讃え、古代ローマの石柱を海路はるばる送ってくれたローマ市民への答礼として贈呈したものです。

Aizu Wakamatsu is the home of "Byakkotai," the legendary boy warriors of the civil war which spawned the Wakamatsu Colony of Gold Hill, and the girl "Okei" now has been given an immortal place in the hearts of its people.

about the Wakamatsu Colony at a place called Gold Hill in distant America. The history of their own people who ventured forth in 1869 has now been enriched by such records, documents, reprints and other pertinent matters recently contributed by local researchers. History belongs to everyone. Our historians were pleased to share their knowledge with the community of Aizu Wakamatsu.

The history of the Japanese people of America has had its beginning, however humble and of short duration, with the arrival of the Wakamatsu Colonists at Gold Hill in June, 1869. Our heritage goes back to these early pioneers and others who were soon to follow and give so much of themselves to their adopted country. Wise and timely advice has been given by persons in positions of knowledge and authority to the effect that 1969 is about to present a "golden" opportunity of a lifetime, and only fools would permit the year to slip by without doing something both meaningful and deserving. They warn that the next centennial year is a full century away. With a little reminder and ado, every one with a feeling for those people of early California could give remembrance or observance, each in his or her own way, during the same June weekend to be assigned for the Historical Landmark Plaque Dedication at Gold Hill, El Dorado County, California. Thus, by so doing, we shall spiritually help to make the year of 1969 a simple but a memorable Centennial Year in honor of the pioneers of America from Japan of the past one hundred years.

- 1 Bunjiro Takeda, former Sacramentan
Tsuyoshi (Ki) Kimura, author of "Meiji Reconstruction", Tokyo
Soichi Nakatani, Sacramento
Sajima Furukawa, Aizu Wakamatsu
Fern R. Sayre, Sacramento
Henry Taketa, Sacramento
- 2 Coloma-Lotus Boosters Club
El Dorado County Orical Society
John B. Hassler, Coloma
Japanese American Citizens League
Northern California and Western Nevada District
Japanese American Citizens League chapter of Florin, Marysville, Placer
County, Sacramento and Stockton
Soichi Nakatani, Sacramento
George Oki, Sacramento
Fern R. Sayre, Sacramento
Muneichi Yamasaki, Auburn
Henry Taketa, Sacramento

Page No. 1

SCHEDULE 1. - Inhabitants in Wakamatsu Township in the County of El Dorado, State of California, enumerated by me on the 1st day of July, 1870.

Post Office: Wakamatsu

No.	Name	Age	Sex	Profession, Occupation, or Trade	Place of Birth	Place of Birth, stating State or Territory of the United States, or Country, if of Foreign Birth	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic	Whether married	Whether single	Whether widowed	Whether divorced
1	Ueda, John	42	M	Miner	San Francisco	California					
2	Ueda, David	41	M	"	San Francisco	California					
3	Ueda, John	40	M	"	San Francisco	California					
4	Ueda, John	39	M	"	San Francisco	California					
5	Ueda, John	38	M	"	San Francisco	California					
6	Ueda, John	37	M	"	San Francisco	California					
7	Ueda, John	36	M	"	San Francisco	California					
8	Ueda, John	35	M	"	San Francisco	California					
9	Ueda, John	34	M	"	San Francisco	California					
10	Ueda, John	33	M	"	San Francisco	California					
11	Ueda, John	32	M	"	San Francisco	California					
12	Ueda, John	31	M	"	San Francisco	California					
13	Ueda, John	30	M	"	San Francisco	California					
14	Ueda, John	29	M	"	San Francisco	California					
15	Ueda, John	28	M	"	San Francisco	California					
16	Ueda, John	27	M	"	San Francisco	California					
17	Ueda, John	26	M	"	San Francisco	California					
18	Ueda, John	25	M	"	San Francisco	California					
19	Ueda, John	24	M	"	San Francisco	California					
20	Ueda, John	23	M	"	San Francisco	California					
21	Ueda, John	22	M	"	San Francisco	California					
22	Ueda, John	21	M	"	San Francisco	California					
23	Ueda, John	20	M	"	San Francisco	California					
24	Ueda, John	19	M	"	San Francisco	California					
25	Ueda, John	18	M	"	San Francisco	California					
26	Ueda, John	17	M	"	San Francisco	California					
27	Ueda, John	16	M	"	San Francisco	California					
28	Ueda, John	15	M	"	San Francisco	California					
29	Ueda, John	14	M	"	San Francisco	California					
30	Ueda, John	13	M	"	San Francisco	California					
31	Ueda, John	12	M	"	San Francisco	California					
32	Ueda, John	11	M	"	San Francisco	California					
33	Ueda, John	10	M	"	San Francisco	California					
34	Ueda, John	9	M	"	San Francisco	California					
35	Ueda, John	8	M	"	San Francisco	California					
36	Ueda, John	7	M	"	San Francisco	California					
37	Ueda, John	6	M	"	San Francisco	California					
38	Ueda, John	5	M	"	San Francisco	California					
39	Ueda, John	4	M	"	San Francisco	California					
40	Ueda, John	3	M	"	San Francisco	California					
41	Ueda, John	2	M	"	San Francisco	California					
42	Ueda, John	1	M	"	San Francisco	California					
43	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
44	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
45	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
46	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
47	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
48	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
49	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
50	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
51	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
52	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
53	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
54	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
55	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
56	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
57	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
58	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
59	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
60	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
61	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
62	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
63	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
64	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
65	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
66	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
67	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
68	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
69	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
70	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
71	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
72	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
73	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
74	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
75	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
76	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
77	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
78	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
79	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
80	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
81	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
82	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
83	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
84	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
85	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
86	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
87	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
88	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
89	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
90	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
91	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
92	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
93	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
94	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
95	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
96	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
97	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
98	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
99	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					
100	Ueda, John	0	M	"	San Francisco	California					

Sum of all names 14. Sum of all males 14. Sum of all females 0. Sum of all children 0. Sum of all deaf and dumb 0. Sum of all blind 0. Sum of all insane 0. Sum of all idiots 0. Sum of all married 0. Sum of all single 0. Sum of all widowed 0. Sum of all divorced 0.

PEOPLE OF THE WAKAMATSU COLONY

The writer is now privileged to present to the readers personal statistics of the twenty-six persons who composed the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony of Gold Hill as of June 1, 1870. The 1870 Census was discovered in September of this year and with it their names, family status and other data. The report classifies the grouping as "Japanese Colony" and notes that Mr. Schnell provided the details. The names of Okei, Matsunosuke Sakurai and Kun-

Page No. 9

SCHEDULE 1. - Inhabitants in Calaveras Township in the County of El Dorado of California, enumerated by me on the 2 day of July, 1870.

Post Office: Gold Springs Frank A. Smith Ass't Marshal.

Name		Age		Sex		Color		Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each person, male or female		Place of Birth		Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic		Whether married	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
113	Nagason	31	M	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
114	Amason	30	M	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
115	Amason	28	M	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
116	Amason	26	M	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
117	Amason	24	M	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
118	Amason	22	M	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
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inosuke Masumizu, the three persons already known to the researchers, do not appear on the census roll and, in the light of events which took place subsequently, the only conclusion to be drawn is that they arrived shortly after the census month of June 1870. It is also interesting to note that the census reveals the birth of Frances and Mary, infant daughters of Mr. Schnell and his Japanese wife, as having taken place in California. American birth of Frances appears to be somewhat questionable but that of

the Wakamatsu Colony of Gold Hill, El Dorado County, had twenty-two Japanese, including Mrs. Schnell. The Federal Census total reported the entry of eight Japanese females in 1869 and the presence of the same number in 1870 in the United States, and our record now reveals that the colony also had eight females, of whom six were housewives and two were minor children of the colonists. Additionally, newspaper articles of the period would give indication that the colonists were traveling, however, infrequently, between Gold Hill and Japan in the interest of their tea and silk farm.

Mary, who was born in April 1870, is beyond any doubt. Could they be our first born?

Federal 1870 Census Total of the Japanese people of the United States as compiled by JACL Issei Story shows that there were fifty-five Japanese people in the United States (excluding Hawaii and Alaska), and of this number, thirty-three were in the State of California and twenty-two in El Dorado County. Recent discovery corresponds to the Federal reports in that as of June 1870. ✓



Henry Taketa and his wife, Sally, planning the celebration in Coloma, California.

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

Although the Wakamatsu Colony and its colonists were the principals in this episode of California's Early West, others were to have vital roles as their neighbors, friends and benefactors and in conserving and perpetuating their history over the last one hundred years. Without these people, the story of the early Japanese settlers could have become forgotten as being just another of many events or incidents of very little significance. However, because the connecting links were provided by them, we are now able to tell the story of the Wakamatsu colonists as to how it happened and when it happened.

Mr. and Mrs. Francis Veerkamp, neighbors to the colony, befriended and gave employment to Okei and Matsu, the only two who stayed behind at Gold Hill after its abandonment, and provided for the burial of the young Japanese girl on a knoll of a hill which was a part of the colony farm. Matsu continued to reside with the pioneer Veerkamps and their descendants until his death in 1901, and the latter arranged his final resting place at Coloma's Vineyard Cemetery. It is said that Mr. and Mrs. Veerkamp had given permission for the burial of an infant child of a Japanese couple, who were returning to Japan, next to Okei. It fell upon Henry Veerkamp, the eldest son, to reveal and tell the story of the colony, its people and the Japanese girl he remembered as "Okei-San" after a lapse of more than fifty years.

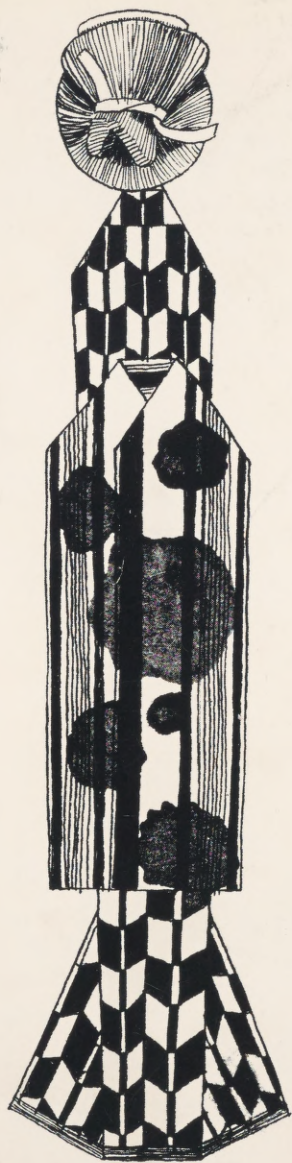
With its rediscovery, Okei's grave has become a spiritual memorial to the early pioneers from Japan with their hopes, determination, industry, patience, suffering and frequent tragedies. For more than forty years, first with Henry Veerkamp and more recently with Malcolm L. Veerkamp, uncounted thousands of Japanese people from near and far places have been privileged to make pilgrimage to Okei's grave. Other Veerkamp descendants have shown utmost understanding of the impact which the episode of the Wakamatsu Colony has had on the Japanese people here and abroad. In their own quiet and dignified ways, the Veerkamps of the past were, and those of the present are also, a part of the people and events which have given to us the story of the Japanese pioneers of early California.

As the year of 1969 approaches and with it the Centennial Year for the Japanese people of America, I dedicate my brief article in recognition of the latent but kindly participation by the pioneer Veerkamps and many of their descendants in the history of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony of Gold Hill of a century ago and the courtesies of many years which they have extended to the Japanese people for visitation and pilgrimage to Okei's grave.

Henry Taketa

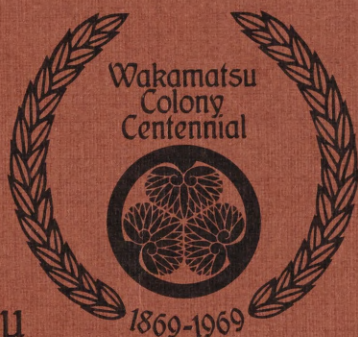


In 1930, Dr. Ki Kimura came from Japan and talked to Mr. Henry Veerkamp at his ranch at Gold Hill, California. Mr. Veerkamp was then 82 years old. He told Dr. Kimura that "Okei-San was a nice girl and when she wore her Japanese kimono she was really beautiful." This photo, taken of Mr. Veerkamp about this time, is part of the Okei collection of Mr. Henry Taketa.

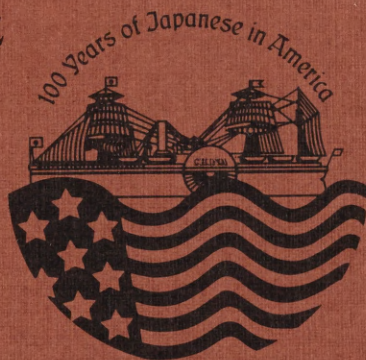


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WAKAMATSU
COLONY
CENTENNIAL



To all our Pioneer Issei...

Dear Friends :

1969 is the Centennial Year of the arrival of the first organized group of immigrants from Japan to the United States. The story of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony to Gold Hill in El Dorado County, California, is an essential part of that history, for it *was* this first group.

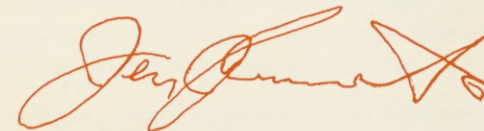
The legend of the Japanese maiden, Okei-san, who lies buried within view of the site where the Wakamatsu Colony Monument will stand, adds a nostalgic and reverent touch to this century old episode.

Appropriately, the State of California has established this site as a historical landmark, and Governor Ronald Reagan has issued a Proclamation in recognition of California being the destination of this first group of people from Japan.

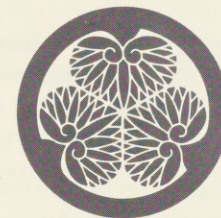
In keeping with the Resolution adopted at our 20th Biennial National Convention this past year designating 1969 as the Centennial of Japanese Immigration to the United States, the Japanese American Citizens League is proud to play a role in this observance. We are gratified that this celebration takes place in a period of unparalleled good-will between the United States and Japan, and pray that it will remain ever so.

We salute the pioneer immigrants of the Wakamatsu Colony in this first official event of this Centennial year. Similar observances will take place in many other communities throughout this land where immigrants from Japan and their offspring have made significant contributions to American life.

Sincerely yours,



Jerry J. Enomoto
National President
Japanese American Citizens League



1869-1969

Wakamatsu Colony Centennial

On December 16, 1966, the State of California, through its Historical Landmarks Advisory Committee in the Division of Beaches and Parks, recognized the "Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony" as an episode of historical significance. The Landmark Registration of the Colony site was approved with dedication of the plaque and monument deferred until the centennial year of 1969.

In 1968, the Japanese American Citizens League at its 20th Biennial National Convention in San Jose adopted a resolution designating 1969 as the "Centennial Year of Immigration by the Japanese to America."

More recently, the California State Legislature and Governor Ronald Reagan, by resolution and proclamation, have officially recognized and approved the Japanese Immigration Centennial Observance.

INTRODUCTION —

For this 100th anniversary of the first concerted migration from Japan to North America, a uniquely appropriate symbol demands our attention, a figure cloaked in just enough mystery that she can represent all who came after her.

Her name was Okei and she stepped so briefly onto the pages of history we can only guess at many of the things which touched her. But she was mortal and caught in the mesh of great events, so we can say some things of Okei with assurance.

Her name was given as Okei Ito, but *Ito*, a common designation for the family seamstress, smacks of clerical necessity. Without a patronym, she would be one of the commoners, very likely in view of her position. She was nursemaid to the Samurai daughter who was the wife of Dutch fortune hunter John Henry Schnell, assisting with the care of the couple's two daughters and other family chores.

Schnell had been a long-time confidant and adviser to the Lord Katamori Matsudaira of Aizu Wakamatsu in Iwashiro Kuni (modern Fukushima Ken). This thread of connection precipitated Okei from obscurity into her moment on the stage.

It began, as many great events did, with the screams of warriors and castles burning in the night. Lord Matsudaira supported the Tokugawa Shogunate in the civil war started by followers of the Emperor Meiji. The Emperor, consolidating his autocratic powers, triumphed.

In feudal Japan, Lord Matsudaira and his high-born supporters had few choices. Two were obvious: fall upon their swords in the honorable death of *seppuku* . . . or flee. It is not surprising that the new world beckoned many of the vanquished.

Schnell, sent off to make plans for the first organized emigration of Japanese to the United States, went to California. There

were no more than ten in his party, mostly farmers and tradesmen, but with a few Samurai. Sixteen more followed, including Okei. They brought 300,000 three-year-old mulberry trees for silk farming, tea plants and seeds, large quantities of bamboo roots for food and craft industry, wax tree stocks, grape cuttings . . .

Among the seeds which came with Okei's party were those of the *keaki* (*Zelkova serrata*) which still grow in the Gold Hill country at Coloma.

Okei died in the new land — possibly of malaria contracted during her party's passage through the Sacramento delta, possibly of a broken heart . . . perhaps of both. She was young when tragedy struck, only 19. This places her birth in 1852, just two years before Perry's *black ships* forced the opening of Japanese ports. Her days went from the Year of the Rat to the Year of the Goat (1871).

Okei is buried in the hills near Coloma. She was not the first Japanese to come to the American continent, but she was the first immigrant of the Wakamatsu venture to give her life to the new land.

You can understand then, why the story of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony is told through the eyes of her spirit — in imagination partly, that's true, but with care for historical records and with sympathetic understanding of what that upheaval must have meant in the life of a young Japanese girl.

A harsh foreign tongue
Spoke her death — still, *keaki*
Blooms at Okei's grave.

Wakamatsu



Wakamatsu

1869 1969

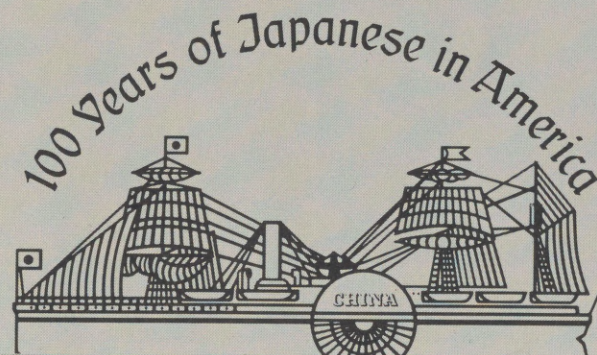
This is how we came to America, three parties of us fleeing the war which spread chaos through Dai Nippon in the Year of the Dragon (1868).

Those of us who came in the third party brought the seeds of *keaki*. The wood of this tall tree which the western world calls Zelkova was esteemed by our carpenters, although some said it made poor planks, warping and cracking. Perhaps it was because *keaki* was not one of the *goboku* which we were forbidden to cut in our homeland; thus, our people were familiar with it. There was the fact, as well, that the *keaki's* shy blossoms, barely visible among the leaves, carried the symbol of what our lives had become.

It was the hope of those who planned our exodus to transplant a bit of our homeland into this strange new world. None of us felt we could ever return to the places of our birth.

Those were evil times. Unrest gripped our native land. It had been only several years since the American black ships had returned to force their commercial treaty upon the Shogun.

The treaty, so it was said, was signed on a warship of the foreigners in Edo Bay. Many saw this as reason to overthrow the Lords of Edo who had ruled us since 1600, by western counting. A strong force banded around Emperor Meiji



to restore the autocracy

In Aizu Wakamatsu, our Daimyo, the Lord Katamori Matsudaira, supported the Tokugawa against the followers of Meiji.

One day, a great force of Meiji warriors stormed around Lake Inawashiro and overwhelmed Tsurugajo Castle. They burned everything—the shops of the *sakaya*, the *fudeya* and *sumiya*, the *nunoya*, the *chashitsu*...they burned the boats of the cormorant fishermen, the poorest huts and the fine houses of the *hatamoto*, and even the castle of our Lord Matsudaira.

All was a great blaze of tall flames and smoke which blew toward the west full of brightness like the moon on a cloudy night. Our whole valley became a giant *kamado* with ashes dancing on the air like flakes of our lost *gohei*. Not one stone was left upon another, not one roofbeam remained in our town.

Some of our Samuri made a stand about ten *cho* (1200 yards) from the eastern gate of Aizu and permitted others to escape into the hills where many of us had fled earlier.

In that one day then, we of Aizu Wakamatsu became pariahs in our homeland.

Some said this was the Fates retaliating for the Battle of Sekigahara in which Tokugawa Ieyasu seized power. Whatever it was, this battle and the others like it marked the end of that period lasting almost four hundred years in which our island kingdom had maintained its isolation from the rest of the civilized world. Our island sanctuary had been breached. We were to emerge from the time of handcraft and agriculture into the era of industrial revolution and world commerce.

For those of us who were refugees from Aizu, though, none of these facts were apparent. We were lost in the wave which swept everything before it... 'like the fisherman at Ise whose boat has gone adrift.'

That night after the battle, many pitiful cooking fires joined the flickering watchfires in the mountains. Rumors sped among us. It was said our Daimyo had died in his castle, whether in battle or in honorable *seppuku* no one could say. Others maintained that he had been wounded and was in hiding.

Those in the household of Schnell san wept bitterly. There was a story among us that Lord Matsudaira had dreamed of a cuckoo crying in the night — a certain death omen. And some said this fate had fallen upon us because we had not expelled the barbarians. Black looks were cast at Schnell san. But *he* had been prepared for this moment.

Some days before the battle, a messenger had brought a note in a split pine bough (thus it was from the Lord Matsudaira). It was on gray *kanyagami* (official paper) and folded formally — so we knew it was important. My mistress ordered us that day to begin packing. The way we packed was significant. It was the packing of *naibun*, for those who flee in darkness.

There were many tearful decisions — whether to take the lacquer *karabitsu*, how many robes for the children, how to



pack the scroll from the *tokonoma*, which outer garments would be best against the cold of the mountains...

We fled eastward then, across the mountains, past crude farm huts with mud and wattle fences. We hid by day among the friendly poor, sleeping often on mats over the earth floor. We traveled by night in rough *ajiroguruma* with sides of woven reeds.

All this time, terrified, I did as I was commanded. I had never been farther from Aizu than the hill temples. I was not yet eighteen years old and I believed every terrible story the frightened whispered to the frightened. If we stayed too long in the high places, it was said, we would suffer *mononoke*, possession by unfriendly spirits. Some said *Oyamatsumi*, the god of the mountains, had turned his face away from us, that we went against his direction and would be attacked by the horrible winged *tengu* which inhabited these regions.

There were many *sakudoka*, frightened mischief makers who spread such stories. I may have been guilty myself of some of this. Finally, in my terror, I retreated into my own thoughts — walking, riding, working. There were more things to do than there are weeds in a garden.

One day, we reached a place where the sea was visible. I did not know the place, of course, but it was said that this was Niigata in Echigo where Lord Matsudaira had relatives and friends. For a time, we remained in the hills above the sea looking down on the port. I thought it a strange port for there was no harbor, only an open roadstead broken by a river.

Here, Schnell san housed us in a great helmet-roofed farm building which belonged to friends. And here, he informed us that he was splitting the party which now numbered some twenty-six, counting the two children we had brought

and the six women.

The morning of departure came. Taking his wife and the children, Schnell san left, accompanied by some farmers and carpenters, and a *Samurai* friend. The others of us were to follow later. Our route was to be the same as that of the first party — down the river in small boats and out to a black ship which would stop in the roadstead.

How I hated to be left behind. I should live only with my fears, I thought, with no one to care for, nothing to do.

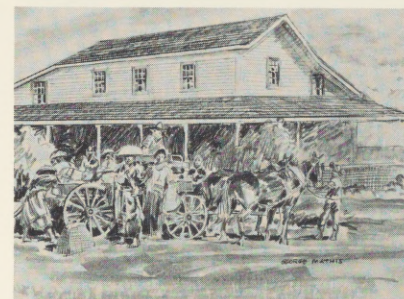
As I wept, my mistress gave me a poem —
*'Noisy insect singing in the grass,
What sorrow makes you cry out so
When I bear mine in silence?'*

It was an old poem and I knew that it chided me because she had lost more than I. Most of her *Samurai* family was dead, their fine homes burned. The survivors, like ourselves, were hunted through the land. But one of her lady friends gave me another old poem to answer with and I sent it the day we parted —

*'Do you know how slow the dawn can be
When you wait alone?'*

I do not like to recall our days of waiting or the days, later, on the ship. The stomach sickness overtook me as it did many of my *doshu*. It felt strange to commit myself to one of these *smoking teapots* which had caused so many sleepless nights in my homeland. I feared the ship, yet I was hopeful. I feared the new land ahead, yet I dreamed if it.

For a long time after the gleaming hills of my homeland had vanished into the mists of the horizon, I imagined I still could see them. It was like visions of the Isle of Mimiraku where the dead are to be seen in the distance, but vanish



if you approach too near.

The day came, finally, when we entered a narrow passage from the sea. Some said this passage was the *Kimmon Kaikyo*, but I saw no gate and it did not look golden — only waving with yellow grass on the hills.

The first group of our migration had crossed the sea on a big side-wheeler, the "China" of the Pacific Mail Lines. This, I learned later. They had arrived on the 27th day of the Fifth Month in 1869. From San Francisco, they went by riverboat to Sacramento, thence by wagon to Placerville and Gold Hill.

How strange the names sounded. How difficult for us to pronounce.

We, arriving shortly after the first group, followed the same course. As we went up the river, I thought how familiar the reed-lined watercourse would appear if it only had fishtraps and cormorant fishermen. There were fishermen in small boats, but they used long poles which waved in the air like pothooks.

At Gold Hill, Schnell san had arranged to purchase 160 acres (about 640 *tan*). The land was to be bought from a Charles M. Graner. We thought the region looked much like our homeland. It had green trees in the hills and it was often cold at night. And, too, there were many families in the vicinity who came from the homeland of Schnell san.

Immediately upon our arrival, we set out to clear the land and plant our crops. Some times, the natives of the region were to be seen. They appeared poorer even than we. Often, the neighboring landowners came to look at us as we labored. They were booted men, women in long garments with parasols. Many of the men were bearded and looked like giants to us. The truth is, they frightened us. We did not know what

strange powers they possessed. Their tongue was harsh to our ears. Yet — many of these people, we learned, could be kind. It was just the strangeness of everything.

For more than a year we worked and it appeared we would be rewarded for our sacrifices. But a combination of many things defeated us — the dry climate, scarcity of irrigation water, the lack of money, the failure of promised funds to arrive from our homeland.

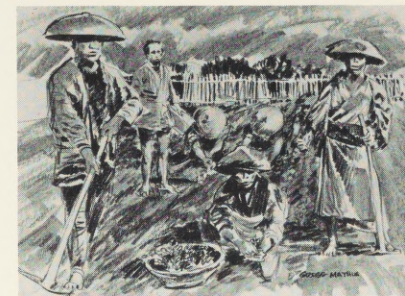
One day, Schnell san left us, taking his wife and daughters. He assured us he would return with the money we needed so desperately, but he failed and did not return.

We were abandoned in a strange and often hostile land. In that nearby collection of wretched and untidy buildings which our neighbors called a town, it was said they thought us Chinese and they had been known to kill Chinese for no apparent reason.

Winter came and we thought we had been lost in the abode of Isonokami who thrives on rain. There was snow and cold. We sold most of our belongings to buy food while awaiting Schnell san's return.

When it became apparent that he would not return, our people began to drift away. The carpenters were the first to go. They were used to wandering the countryside in search of work. Finally, only the *Samurai*, Matsunoke Sakurai, and I, the lowly nursemaid remained. But I was ill, having contracted the wasting fever in this place.

On those days when I felt strong enough, I climbed to a nearby hill and looked across the land toward the west from whence I had come. Homesickness was a pain in my chest... never again to see my friends and the familiar mountains.



This place was the abode of the dead, I thought. Matsu tried to rally me. "Spring renews everything," he said. "Wait for the spring."

In this time, we both were befriended and employed by the family of Francis Veerkamp, countrymen of Schnell san and pioneers in the land here.

When I grew certain that I would die here, I asked only that they bury me on the hill where I had gazed toward my homeland.

The fever was very bad then. At times, I imagined that all these things had never happened, that I was back in my familiar bed at Aizu. I could hear the children scampering about on a frosty morning, blessing themselves against the cold.

I thought I heard the sunset bells and the choruses of small bells from the hill temples, the chanting of sutras.

Once, Matsu told me I would be like Takenouchi and live 350 years, but it was not to be in the way he said, for this was truly *Shide no Yama* for me.

In the spring, in the Fourth Month, they carried my body to the hill where I had requested. Over the grave, they placed a headstone inscribed in both English and Japanese: "In memory of Okei, died 1871, aged 19 years, a Japanese girl."

Nearby, the *keaki* continued to grow.

EPILOGUE

These things are known —

Matsunosuke Sakurai faithfully served the Veerkamp family until his death on February 23, 1901. He now lies at rest in Vineyard Cemetery at Coloma, the historical site of John Marshal's first gold discovery and a few miles from Gold Hill.

Descendants of Francis Veerkamp still live in the area, engaged in farming and business.

For many years, the tragic fate of the Wakamatsu Colony drifted into oblivion, its very existence lost and forgotten until after World War I. Rumors persisted, though, that a Japanese girl who died in the Gold Rush period was buried at Gold Hill.

Several Sacramento residents took up the search.

Perhaps they were guided by the spirit of Okei. The first person they interviewed was Henry Veerkamp, then 75, son of the pioneers who had befriended Okei and Sakurai.

Veerkamp was a year older than the Japanese girl he had known as "Okei San." Vividly recalling the past, he retold the story of the Wakamatsu Colony. He pointed out the site of the settlement and the location of Okei's grave.

The 1870 Census gives names, family status and other data on the Wakamatsu Colonists, information supplied by Schnell, according to the census taker's marginal notes. The group is identified as "Japanese Colony," but the names of Okei, Sakurai and Kuninosuke Masumizu, three already known to researchers, do not appear on the census rolls. A possible conclusion is that they did not arrive until after the census month, June 1870.

It is interesting to note that the census records the births of



the two infant daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Schnell as having taken place in California. It could be explained by the Japanese custom of dating birth from conception. As of the census taking, Frances Schnell is recorded as age 2, her sister, Mary, as age 2 months (April birth). Either or both of the Schnell children could be recognized as first born of Japanese ancestry in America. The colony *had* been in existence for one full year at the time of the census.

A Swiss "wine-maker," And Dielbol, is listed as one of the colonists. His presence may account for the importation of grape cuttings from Japan.

One of the colonists is recorded by his family name.

"Nishijawa" (Sampei) appears immediately after the Schnell family on the rolls. His surname, his youth (18 years) and listing ahead of the other colony males may indicate high caste status, perhaps a princely family. It was not until a few years later that commoners were required to adopt patronyms for the purpose of family registry in Japan.

The 1870 Federal Census total of Japanese people in the United States, and records compiled by the Japanese American Research Project sponsored by the Japanese American Citizens League and the University of California at Los Angeles show 55 Japanese then in the U.S. (excluding Hawaii and Alaska). Of that number, 33 were in California, 22 in El Dorado County. This is checked by research showing as of June 1870, the Wakamatsu Colony of Gold Hill had 22 Japanese, including Mrs. Schnell.

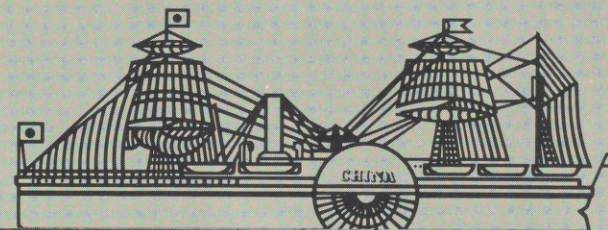
Newspaper accounts of the period suggest the colonists were traveling, however, infrequently between Gold Hill and Japan.

Because of this, there may have been other colonists whose home was Gold Hill on June 1, 1870.





100 Years of Japanese in America



THE ISSEI STORY

Had she lived, growing old like the Japanese Methuselah, Takenouchi, gentle Okei would be 117 years only today. In a way, though, she *is* deathless, always 19, yet destined for far greater age than Takenouchi's fabled 350 years.

Hasn't her spirit watched over the Issei and all their descendants? Doesn't it continue to watch?

Listen to the voice of the *obasan*, the old grandmother, and you will hear Okei saying: "I care that our children are *dai ichi ban*. I care that we produce *Erai Hito* (Great Men)."

Are the descendants of the Issei not like the iris of the ancient poem —

*'It began its life in a swamp, unobserved —
But see how it has put forth its roots!'*

If you listen carefully, you may also hear many other things in the words of Okei, for she truly watches...

We came to America for many reasons: because life had become intolerable where we were, because there would be no life at all unless we fled... because something beautiful beckoned in the new land...

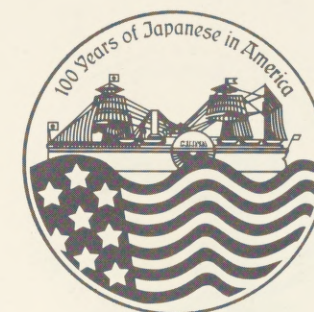
Freedom.



For whatever reason, we came. From our tragic few of 1869, we grew to 3,000 in 1880, then jumped to 27,000 in the next twenty years. By 1910, we were 127,000.

We saw a place for ourselves and filled it. We fanned out

across the coastal and mountain states because there was backbreaking work to be done and others shunned it. We had skills and we entered many jobs — in the fish canneries and lumber industry of the Pacific Northwest, in the citrus groves of the Southwest, in the fertile Sacramento Valley farmlands, and in the railroads, the mines and waterways of the Rockies.



Everywhere we went, we watched and learned. We saw that we could prosper. From our meager rewards, we bought land we knew was valuable. Others called this land "submarginal," but we had farming skills which this new land had not yet seen.

Other Americans awoke one day to see that these "submarginal" lands, these rocky hillsides and sandy wastelands, these swamps and "alder bottoms," had been transformed somehow into flourishing farms.

What do the economists and historians say?

"Much of the vast wealth and variety of the agricultural economy of the West can be traced directly to the industry and imagination of the Issei. By 1918, California's agricultural income was estimated at \$523 million, of which \$63 million (more than one-tenth) was produced by the Japanese. In some garden crops, 80-90 percent of the State's entire output was raised and marketed by the Japanese."

Will you forgive a small bit of laughter from Okei? How often the dry-boned statistic misses the mark! These were not statistics, these were people, individuals. These were not Japanese; these were Americans, and for the same reason that I am American: because I gave my flesh and my blood to the land.

Meet Okei, the American.

It was not done without emotions, without labor, without people. Their lives were shortened by inches — “Inochi ga chijimaru.” But they *were* human and they had names.

HARRY YOEMON MINAMI — He popularized salad vegetables on the American menu by large scale production for low price carload shipments throughout the country.

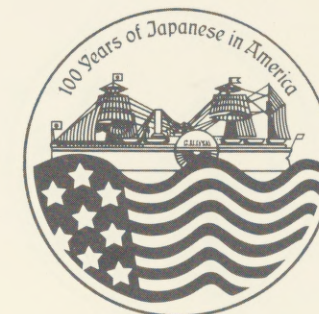
KINJI USHIJIMA (GEORGE SHIMA) — He taught his fellow Americans how to reclaim low islands from river channels, and he made a \$15 million fortune doing it . . . in potatoes!

HACHIRO ONUKI — He was rechristened Hutchlon Ohnick by an Irish miner friend, and he started the tiny Phoenix Illuminating Gas and Electric Co. in 1886. It became the giant Central Arizona Light and Power Co.

MASAHARU KONDO — He fathered the Southern California fishing industry.

GEORGE YANAGIMOGHI — He pioneered the Pacific Northwest oyster growing industry.

So da!



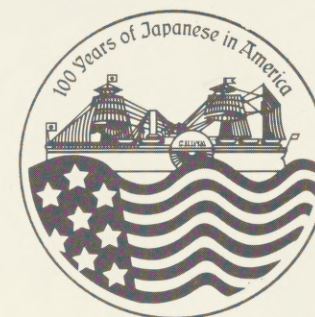
People who lived real lives and had individual names and dignity did these things. They took land often suitable “only for hay and jackrabbits” and they made it blossom. They developed the intensive row crop farming on the Pacific Coast, pioneered rice growing in California and Texas, and they did many more things.

In the same times and same places, there were many more who could say with feeling: “*Haraga tatsu* (deep anger) was my daily companion as I labored endlessly to earn a few coins.”

Like the Chinese before us, we Issei were easy to single out as objects of ridicule and scorn. Appearance and language set us apart. It was supreme irony. The very pioneer virtues of industry and thrift so much admired in others became symbols of hatred and fear.

“Yellow peril!” they cried.

Read the headlines in the San Francisco Chronicle’s hate campaign of 1905: “The Japanese Invasion” . . . “Japanese, a Menace to American Women” . . . “Brown Men an Evil in the



Public Schools" . . . "Crime and Poverty Go Hand in Hand With Asiatic Labor."

In the wake of such campaigns, hundreds of anti-Japanese laws were adopted by the states which once had welcomed us. Our lives became circumscribed, thwarted.

Where was the freedom which had beckoned?

It was still there, glimmering through the legal/social barriers like the *unuhana* which welcomes the springtime. From within our ethnic ghetto, barred from many jobs for which we were educated and superbly fitted, we could still see *outside* the thing which had brought us to this land.

"Yoshi," we said. "All right." We had a heritage of determination, of faith and patience.

By the late 1930s, Nisei voices grew louder, more eloquent.

My heart cried out in these times, for I could see dark clouds on the horizon: *Senso* . . . War. We had felt its lash in Aizu. We

had seen the homes of the lowly and the mighty burning in the night. We had heard the lament before:

"Among the proud and the commoner alike are those who have known better days."

My heart was as unsettled as the bobs of the fishermen at Ise, but no one could hear my voice as it cried from the lonely grave in the hills.

Sunday, December 7, 1941.

We recall that date in a way other Americans cannot. It was the beginning of a nightmare. They called it public hysteria, vigilantism, "the blackest chapter in the history of American democracy." It was a bloodless pogrom but there were acts of brutality, of hostile violence.

What are these words, these labels, in the face of the reality? Racism, political opportunism, greed — all operated behind the mask of "military necessity." There was no *due process of law*, no charges filed, no hearings held.





On March 2, 1942, the madness reached its climax in a Presidential Executive Order. By that order, some 120,000 of our people, two-thirds of them American by birth, were herded out of the coastal states and into ten concentration camps.

The evacuation was completed in 137 days with a terrifying affront to human values and democratic ideals. Businesses were closed, farms abandoned, homes boarded up, furnishings sold for pennies on the dollar.

What a bitter experience this loss of freedom was in the *Land of the Free*. Repudiated by our government, knowing that

a basic American principle was being violated, we were imprisoned for having "the wrong ancestors."

And not a single act of disloyalty was reported against us by responsible authorities, then or later.

Our concentration camps were hastily converted from fairgrounds, racetracks, parks, pavilions. We found ourselves behind barbed wire fences guarded by sentries in watchtowers complete with mounted machineguns and searchlights in the name of "military necessity." The average time we had been permitted to uproot our lives — 15 days.



Well...we hadn't even had that much time at Aizu, but the "military necessity" had been a bit more obvious.

The Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco estimated our loss at \$400 million. With what system of values do you measure the loss for our Issei and their Nisei children? How can you put a sum of money as balance against the work of a lifetime obliterated by a single stroke of the Presidential pen?

The average age of the Nisei when this blow fell was 19. Is that not a significant age? Do you not recall the headstone in both Japanese and English at Gold Hill?

"In memory of Okei, died 1871, aged 19 years..."

Of course, you have seen other headstones since then with the age no greater. I was merely the first.

Something profound had happened to us in this new land, though. Our dream refused to die.

*'Left all untended,
Still it flourished — this
Flower we planted.'*



Individually and together through the Japanese American Citizens League, the Niseis demanded the right to exercise their duties and obligations as Americans.

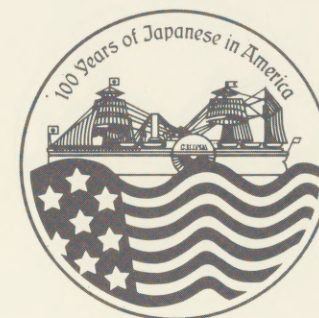
This is how histories are written, you see :

On February 1, 1943, the U.S. Army formed the 442nd Regimental Combat Team composed of volunteers from Hawaii and the continental United States, most of the latter coming from the concentration camps.

Their motto : "Go For Broke."

Behind that motto, the 442nd became the most decorated unit of its size and length of service in American military history. The 442nd was to be merged later with that other band of heroes whose ancestors came from Japan, the 100th Infantry Battalion. The 100th, organized in Hawaii, trained on the mainland, was committed to action at Salerno, Volturno, Cassino, Anzio Beachhead, the Rapido River, the breakthrough to Rome...

How small that battle on the slopes above Lake Inawashiro grows by comparison !



What length of time did it take before the European-American became simply American ? What price did he pay ? Do the survivors of the 100th and the 442nd know ?

Are there others who can answer these questions ?

The War Department recruited volunteers from the concentration camps to serve in Military Intelligence. Although few knew it, Nisei linguists had been engaged in this highly sensitive work long before *Senso* dispatched his lightning bolts in World War II.

More than 6,000 Nisei served in virtual anonymity in the Pacific War against the land of their ancestors. A select few were engaged in intelligence work in the Philippines, later escaped to Bataan and Corregidor and finally were ordered to Australia by General MacArthur. Others were assigned to the Pacific Islands and Alaska, were loaned to our allies and attached to the Joint Intelligence Center at Hawaii. They served from New Delhi to China and saw battle with Merrill's Marauders.

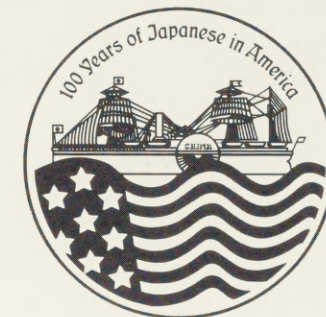
Much of this was doubly dangerous front line duty where a Nisei linguist faced the guns of his American comrades who, seeing an oriental face, might shoot without warning. A classic

and tragic example of this involved Sgt. Frank Hachiya, mortally wounded by invading American troops at Leyte as he attempted to return to his own lines with valuable information about enemy defenses. He accomplished his mission as he was dying. Sgt. Hachiya posthumously received the Distinguished Service Cross. Ironically, this happened as his name was being stricken from the honor roll in his Oregon hometown because he was of Japanese ancestry.

Of such heroism is the Nisei legend woven. These are landmarks of the transformation from Japanese-American to simply American. There are other landmarks, as well —

Manjiro Nakahama, a castaway in 1841, was rescued by a whaler and taken to Boston, Mass. He became the first Japanese to learn English. Hizoko Hamada recorded his name as Joseph Heco when he became the first naturalized Issei on June 30, 1858. (This door to citizenship was closed later, not being restored until the 1952 Act which restored naturalization privileges to immigrants from Japan.) There are the Nisei casualties of World War II — 9,468 (600 killed in action). And do not forget Okei.

Landmarks of the transformation.



What lies ahead?

JACL, again as in wartime, is providing direction, but now it has an even more mature and experienced leadership, confident in its right and motivated by a deep sense of obligation to those who gave their lives to prove that "Americanism is a matter of mind and heart, not race or ancestry."

The Nisei made an American dream come true for their aging parents, and secured for themselves and their children the right to walk in peace and dignity among their fellow Americans, a remarkable record of achievement which grew out of a people subjected to extreme hostility and a constant atmosphere of discrimination.

Perhaps we are all like the few who braved defeat at Gold Hill — farmers all. And what we nurture is the seed of eventual justice for every human.

"History shows us how much we owe to the past sacrifices of others. It kindles within us a quiet pride in the accomplishments of our forebears, and makes us determined to put the future in debt to us."



General Joseph (Vinegar Joe) Stilwell pins the Distinguished Service Cross on Miss Mary Masuda whose brother, Kazuo, was killed at Cassino.



Mrs. Nawa Munemori, mother of the first Nisei Congressional Medal of Honor winner, pays tribute to the 7 Japanese who died when the Maine was sunk in April 1898.



To research and preserve the life and times of the Issei and the Nisei, the Japanese American Citizens League initiated in 1960 the "Issei Story Project" by providing initial funds of \$100,000 for what was later to become the JACL-UCLA Japanese American Research Project. This significant undertaking has subsequently received substantial financial support from the Carnegie Foundation and National Institute of Mental Health.

Coincidentally scheduled for publication by William Morrow and Company, Inc., in early November, 1969, is "Nisei, The Quiet Americans, The Story of a People." The author is William Hosokawa, associate editor of The Denver Post. This monumental effort by a distinguished Japanese American journalist traces the Issei-Nisei experience from its roots in feudal Japan to the 100th Anniversary of Japanese immigration to the United States.



Executive Department
State of California

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS In May, 1869, the first Japanese in California arrived in San Francisco aboard the sidewheeler "China" and proceeded to Sacramento by riverboat, thence to Placerville by wagon and on to Gold Hill, El Dorado County, a few miles from the site of Coloma, where gold was discovered in 1848; and

WHEREAS These early Japanese pioneers set up a colony to grow silk and tea as the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm, which through a series of tragedies, lasted less than two years; and

WHEREAS On December 16, 1966, California's Historical Landmarks Advisory Committee, Division of Beaches and Parks, did recognize the Watamatsu Tea and Silk Farm colony of Gold Hill as an episode of historical significance in the history of early California, and will dedicate the historical landmark plaque at the site of the farm colony on June 7, 1969; and

WHEREAS The Coloma Gold Discovery Day on January 26, 1969, celebrated the arrival of these first Japanese pioneers by focusing on Japanese arts and crafts; and

WHEREAS May, 1969 is the centennial of the first arrival of Japanese in California; and

WHEREAS With patience, perseverance and industry, the Japanese have contributed much to California, particularly in agriculture, for the past decades since their arrival in the Golden State, adding to our heritage and history

NOW THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, GOVERNOR OF CALIFORNIA, do hereby proclaim the year 1969 as JAPANESE CENTENNIAL YEAR, urging all Californians to study the contributions of the Japanese to our California way of life.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed here this 3rd day of February, One Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty Nine.

Ronald Reagan
Governor

George J. Brown
Secretary of State

John L. ...
Deputy Secretary of State



PRINTED IN CALIFORNIA OFFICE OF STATE PRINTING

Assembly, California Legislature, 1969 Regular Session

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

Relative to commemorating the centennial of Japanese immigration to the United States

By Honorable Eugene A. Chappie of the Sixth Assembly District
(Coauthored by Senator Stephen J. Treale of the Third Senatorial District)

WHEREAS, The first group of Japanese immigrants arrived from Aizu Wakamatsu, Japan, aboard the sidewheeler *China* of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company and entered the United States on May 27, 1869, at San Francisco; and

WHEREAS, This valiant and brave band of colonists proceeded to Sacramento by riverboat, traveled overland by wagon to Placerville and Gold Hill, and established the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony of Gold Hill by clearing the land, building their homes, and cultivating plants and seeds, including 50,000 three-year-old mulberry trees for silk farming, which they had brought with them from their native land; and

WHEREAS, Although this pioneer project was doomed in less than two years by a combination of dry climate and a scarcity of irrigation water, it nevertheless heralded a period during which the Japanese people immigrated to California to participate in the beginnings of the Golden State's agricultural industry; and

WHEREAS, On December 16, 1966, the Historical Landmarks Advisory Committee of the Division of Beaches and Parks unanimously approved the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony of Gold Hill as a historical landmark and stated that "Although the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony was short-lived and suffered its tragic ending, it signaled the coming of Japanese pioneers to America and the beginning of their notable contribution to the agricultural industry of California. During the past three-quarters of the century, they have left their marks in the teeming valleys throughout the length and breadth of this great State. Many descendants are carrying on the work of their pioneer forebears with the same devotion, determination and skill which helped to make California the most productive farming state in the United States and the greatest agricultural region in the world..."; and

WHEREAS, Marking the first centennial of Japanese immigration to America, the year 1969 bears witness to a century in which Japanese-Americans have made immense contributions to the culture and heritage of their adopted land and have overcome times of trial by perseverance and boundless faith in the United States, which faith is best personified by the Japanese-American Creed, which states:

"I am proud that I am an American citizen of Japanese ancestry, for my very background makes me appreciate more fully the wonderful advantages of this nation. I believe in her institutions, ideals, and traditions; I glory in her heritage; I boast of her history; I trust in her future. She has granted me liberties and opportunities such as no individual enjoys in the world today. She has given me an education befitting kings. She has entrusted me with the responsibilities of the franchise. She has permitted me to build a home, to earn a livelihood, to worship, think, speak, and act as I please—as a free man equal to every other man.

"Although some individuals may discriminate against me, I shall never become bitter or lose faith, for I know that such persons are not representative of the majority of the American people. True, I shall do all in my power to discourage such practices, but I shall do it in the American way: above-board, in the open, through courts of law, by education, by proving myself to be worthy of equal treatment and consideration. I am firm in my belief that American sportsmanship and attitude of fair play will judge citizenship and patriotism on the basis of action and achievement, and not on the basis of physical characteristics.

"Because I believe in America, and I trust she believes in me, and because I have received innumerable benefits from her, I pledge myself to do honor to her at all times and in all places; to support her constitution; to obey her laws; to respect her flag; to defend her against all enemies, foreign or domestic; to actively assume my duties and obligations as a citizen, cheerfully and without any reservations whatsoever, in the hope that I may become a better American in a greater America"; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Members of the Legislature join in commemorating the centennial celebration of Japanese immigration to the United States and express the deep appreciation of all the citizens of California for the immense and invaluable contributions made by Japanese-Americans to the rich cultural heritage of this state and of America; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit a suitable prepared copy of this resolution to the Japanese-American Citizens League.

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 10, adopted in Assembly January 20, 1969.

SIGNED:

Bob Monagan
BOB MONAGAN
Speaker of the Assembly

ATTEST:

James D. Driscoll
JAMES D. DRISCOLL
Chief Clerk of the Assembly

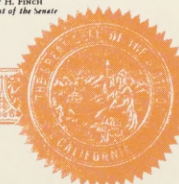
Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 10, adopted in Senate January 21, 1969.

SIGNED:

Robert H. Finch
ROBERT H. FINCH
President of the Senate

ATTEST:

C. D. Alexander
C. D. ALEXANDER
Secretary of the Senate





百年祭

"1969, THE CENTENNIAL YEAR"

INTRODUCTION: The sponsors of the Gold Discovery Day Celebration have traditionally selected an annual theme in honor of different people, event and thing of historical significance in California's early west. The 1969 celebration is dedicated to the Japanese pioneers of America on the occasion of their centennial year and in recognition of their contribution to the agricultural industry and general growth of this State. It would take many volumes to adequately write the history of our Japanese people, but these few pages would suffice to tell our readers the story of its beginning a hundred years ago.

"WAKAMATSU TEA AND SILK FARM COLONY OF GOLD HILL"

The most notable contribution of the pioneer immigrants from Japan to the economy and industry of the State of California and the United States has been in the field of agriculture. With utmost patience, perserverance and industry, they cleared, leveled and irrigated land, and brought crops to bear in soil which had previously remained idle or had been put to limited use for pasturage and grazing.

Japanese immigration of any consequence to the United States was in the late 1890's and early 1900's, and their influence upon California's farming industry was in direct ratio to the number of new arrivals. However, it is most significant that its humble beginning was with the coming of a small but proud and determined group from Aizu Wakamatsu in Japan to Gold Hill, El Dorado County, on or about June 8, 1869, to establish a farm settlement, although this venture lasted less than two years and ended in tragedy.

Aizu Wakamatsu, led by its last feudal lord, Katamori Matsu-daira, and a number of other ruling clans had the misfortune of supporting Tokugawa Shogunate in its conflict against the followers of Emperor Meiji who favored centralized imperial power and had suffered a crushing defeat. Chaos reigned for a time in Japan, and there was genuine fear for life and property among the losers. Either at the suggestion of Eduard Schnell, a trader of Dutch or German descent and a long-time confidant of the lord of the Aizu

Wakamatsu, or to prepare for a possible sanctuary or refuge if it became necessary to flee the homeland, Lord Matsudaira made plans for the first organized emigration to the United States and brought into existence the ill-fated and short-lived Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm colony of Gold Hill.

Between nine to ten persons under the leadership of Eduard (John Henry) Schnell constituted the first vanguard of several groups or contingents. Sixteen more were soon to follow, and others (including Okei, nursemaid to the Schnell household, Matsu and Kuni) were to arrive at the colony later. Gold Hill of El Dorado County may have been selected for this colonization for its scenic and topographical similarity to their Japanese homeland or because many early settlers were from Holland or Germany as was Schnell. Much of the colony was made up of farmers and those in the trades, but several were samurai followers of Lord Matsudaira. Six Japanese women, including Mrs. Schnell, and four young children were with the pioneer colony. Two of the children were the daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Schnell, and the remaining two were daughters of Japanese families. The original party arrived at San Francisco aboard the side-wheeler "China" of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company on May 27, 1869, proceeded to Sacramento by river-boat, and thence wagoned to Placerville and Gold Hill where Eduard Schnell had arranged to purchase 160 acres for the farm colony. With them came 50,000 three-year old mulberry trees for silk farming, large quantities of bamboo roots for food and craft industry, tea seeds, wax tree stocks, grape seedlings and other varieties of plants and seeds of their native land. Also, sizeable shipments of cuttings and plants were to be received at Gold Hill after initial preparations had been completed. However restricted or limited, the Japanese people were now traveling between California and their homeland of Japan in the interest of their agricultural undertaking at Gold Hill, El Dorado County.

Immediately upon their arrival, the settlers set out to build their homes and clear and plant their crops on the land purchased from Charles M. Graner, and for over a year it appeared that they would be rewarded for their determination and many sacrifices. However, the combination of the dry climate of the area, scarcity of irrigation water, lack of funds, and failure of financial assistance to come from Japan as promised doomed the pioneer project in less than two years. Beset with money and other problems, Eduard Schnell left the colony with his Japanese wife and two minor daughters with assurance to the colonists that he would return with much needed funds, but he failed to do this and thus abandoned his Japanese followers to their own fate in a strange and often hostile land.

As dictated by necessity and self-preservation, the settlers sold most of their valuables and belongings to ward off hunger while patiently waiting for their leader who never returned, and ultimately each was compelled to go his own way. Some were able to return to Japan and others moved elsewhere where employment was more promising. From every indication, only Matsunosuke Sakurai, a samurai, and Okei Ito, nursemaid to the Schnell household, remained behind at Gold Hill where they were befriended and employed by the early pioneer family of Francis Veerkamp. His descendants are to be found in the Gold Hill-Coloma area where they are engaged in farming and business. Okei is said to have died of fever at the age of 19 in the spring of 1871 and was buried at the knoll of a hill which she frequently climbed to watch the setting sun and gaze in the direction of her homeland. Her headstone reads both in English and Japanese, "In Memory of Okei, died 1871, Age 19 years, a Japanese Girl." Matsunosuke Sakurai faithfully served the Veerkamp family until his death on February 25, 1901, and he now lies at rest in the Vineyard Cemetery at Coloma, the historical site of Marshall's gold discovery a few miles from Gold Hill.

With its tragic ending, the colony soon passed into oblivion, and its very existence was lost and forgotten until after World War I. Unquieted rumor persisted that a Japanese girl, who died in the gold-rush period, was buried at Gold Hill near Coloma. A search was undertaken by several Sacramentans, and the first person they interviewed was the 75-year old Henry Veerkamp, son of the pioneer settlers who befriended and gave shelter and employment to Okei Ito and Matsunosuke Sakurai, the last of the colonists to remain at Gold Hill. He was a year older than the Japanese girl he knew as "Okei San" and, in vividly recalling the past, he told the story of the tea and silk farm, its Japanese pioneers and their hopes, industry, disappointments, suffering, hardships and ultimate abandonment of the colony. He pointed out the site of the settlement and the location of Okei's grave, and thus the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony was rediscovered.

JAPANESE FLORAL ART

The art of arranging flowers began with the introduction of Buddhism in the Sixth Century. In offering flowers to Buddha, the Japanese endeavored to arrange them as artistically as possible. From this custom developed an artistic type of flower arrangement in the Heian Period (794-1185) which was called Rikka.



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The Rikka saw its perfection in the Muromachi Period (1378-1573), and the style was known as "Tatebana" which meant standing up.

The Japanese, perhaps for 1,000 years or more, decorated their dwellings with flowers in receptacles in random, upright position.

About 500 years ago, the originator of the Ikenobo School, Ikenobo Jukei of Kyoto, started a new concept of a central branch called "Shin" and supported it with "soe", "soeuke", "Nagashi" and others. The basic rule of arrangement commonly known as "Ten-chi-jin" (heaven-earth-man) was followed. The first book on flower art was published in 1470.

"Shoka" was perfected about 250 years ago. It introduced the employment of three "Yakueda" or principal branches of "Shin", "Soe" and "Tai". The "Shoka" is a simplified variation of the "Rikka". It accentuates freer lines and therefore demanded greater creativity on the part of the composer.

The modern "Shoka Sanshuike" style made its debut several years ago as a modern version of the "Shoka".

"Shoka" for some 300 years has been using one or two kinds of materials only. "San shuike", as the name implies, calls for the employment of three different kinds of materials.

With the Meiji Restoration some 100 years ago, Japan was swept by surging waves of European culture. The influence was so great that even the Japanese mode of living seemed to be Europeanized. The changing living pattern in turn affected the time-honored Ikebana. The "Rikka" and "Shoka" seemed to be out of harmony with the new Europeanized surroundings. This situation prompted the debut of "Moribana" basket and "Nageire" (throw-in) styles, both categorized as "Gendaibana".

"Nageire" style is simple to manage in that it features oriental mood and simplicity.

"Moribana" (fill a basket) was long familiar to the followers of flower arrangement everywhere but "Ikenobo" elevated it from a mere hobby to the status of the art and culture of today.

BONSAI (Miniature Trees) (Bon-sigh)

"Bonsai" literally means miniature scene composed of one or more plants, earth and sky. In a sense it is a product of the love of the Japanese people for nature and natural surroundings and their fascination for things which are minute in size. If one can succeed in harmonizing the two with focus on a dwarfed plant or tree, the result is a bonsai.



The culture of bonsai has been practiced and enjoyed by the Japanese people for perhaps a thousand years. The growing conditions and choice of plants and shrubs are more ideal in Japan than perhaps any other place in the world. Therefore, it is difficult to duplicate in America the qualities of dwarfed plants which decorate the homes and gardens of Japan. It would be unfair to commence comparing a prized Japanese bonsai with one of our own creation. Let it be accepted that Japanese bonsai is one thing and the American product is another. Each provides the creator and owner the same pleasure and satisfaction.

Because bonsai plants are not cultivated extensively in America and national forests are closed to random foraging for plants and shrubs, a beginner must first overcome his major obstacle in locating raw materials with which to produce his bonsai. We generally look to the following sources: (1) seeds, (2) cutting, (3) grafting, (4) layering, (5) dividing, and (6), if fortunate, from natural surroundings, and the place to "rummage" is one nursery to the next. With persistence one usually succeeds in locating plants which do have the potentials for the making of good bonsai. A discard pile often offers greater choice in both age and shape of plants. Also, there is no rule against purchasing bonsai created by others.

Bonsai should be studied as one would any other cultural endeavor. Much can be learned by visiting local nurseries with ready-made bonsai on display and observing the creations of others. In time, one will acquire a skill of his own, a bit of imagination, and the much needed confidence. Read faithfully on the subject and,

if available, join a local Bonsai Club. Most of the club meetings provide demonstrations which start with a nursery can and end with a finished bonsai.

In practicing the art of selecting plants, soil preparation, fertilization, watering, pruning, shaping, wiring, repotting, and other particular maintenance requirements, consultation with those already familiar with bonsai culture would be most helpful and purposeful. Bear in mind that we are dealing with living things, and the one mistake we may make may be our first and last mistake. By observation, patience, and proper application, we shall have in our bonsai a lifetime of enjoyment and personal satisfaction.

DOLLS (NINGYO)

At first dolls were not toys in Japan. It has been only a little over two hundred years since Japanese children have had their first dolls to play with.



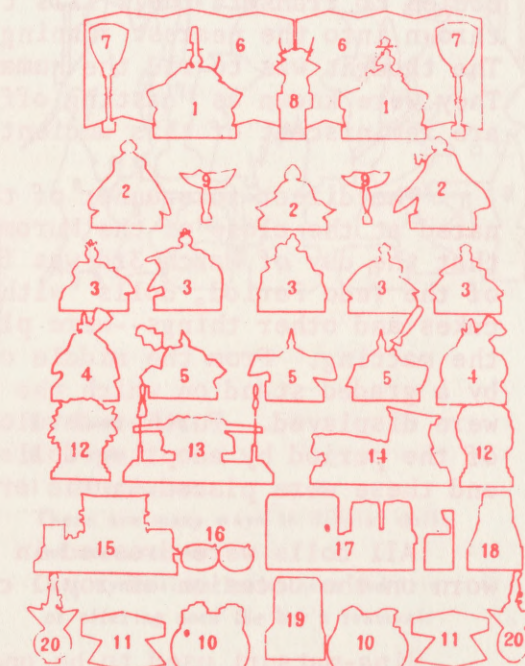
The early dolls were symbols of deities or human beings. "Ningyo", the Japanese term for dolls, means the image of a person. Originally, ningyo was a charm to protect one from sickness, disaster or evil spirits. This thought still remains although of lesser importance. In rural districts, at doorways and entrances to villages, crude dolls made of twisted straw are often to be seen. They are supposed to safeguard the people from illness and disaster or to protect the crops from insects. The huge dolls seen on floats at shrine festivals of today are reminiscent of the ancient dolls.

With the progress of time, such dolls were made better and more artistically and they gradually developed into objects of ornament or decoration. Yet they were still not things to be played with.

The real development of Japanese dolls was not seen until about the middle of the 17th century. In the first part of the Tokugawa Period not only the technique of doll making advanced rapidly but dolls were made as playthings to be enjoyed by the children and grownups.

Dolls have long played an intimate part in the daily life of the Japanese people and perhaps more so than in any other place in the world. Focus is placed on dolls in many Japanese festivals, legends, plays, folklore, stories of heroes and heroines, deities, and almost everything imaginable. In a sense, Japanese people and their dolls are inseparable.

GIRLS' FESTIVAL



- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Prince & princess | 8 High vases & stand | 15 Toilet set |
| 2 Court ladies | 9 Cake stands | 16 Braziers |
| 3 Musicians | 10 Dinner sets | 17 Set of chest of drawers |
| 4 State ministers | 11 Rice pudding stands | 18 Mirror stand & needle box |
| 5 Court attendants | 12 Orange & cherry trees | 19 Picnic box |
| 6 Screens | 13 Palanquin | 20 Sweet wine bottles |
| 7 Lanterns | 14 Court cart | |

Although the festivals for both girls and boys are not legal festivals now they are still held yearly throughout Japan. The former is held on the 3rd day of March and the latter on the 5th day of May; and, for about one week or more before the festival days, various kinds of dolls are displayed in every home. The observance custom at the girls' festival began long ago and there are many opinions as to the true origin. The immediate reason lies in its connection with the court. It is the Emperor's palace in miniature.

According to the zodiacal calendar, the third day of the third month was "the day of the snake", and the purification ceremony connected with that day was also practiced in Japan. Offerings were dedicated to the gods to cleanse the people from impurities and to rid themselves of evil influences. The priests used to visit homes on that day, read prayers, and perform rites of exorcism.

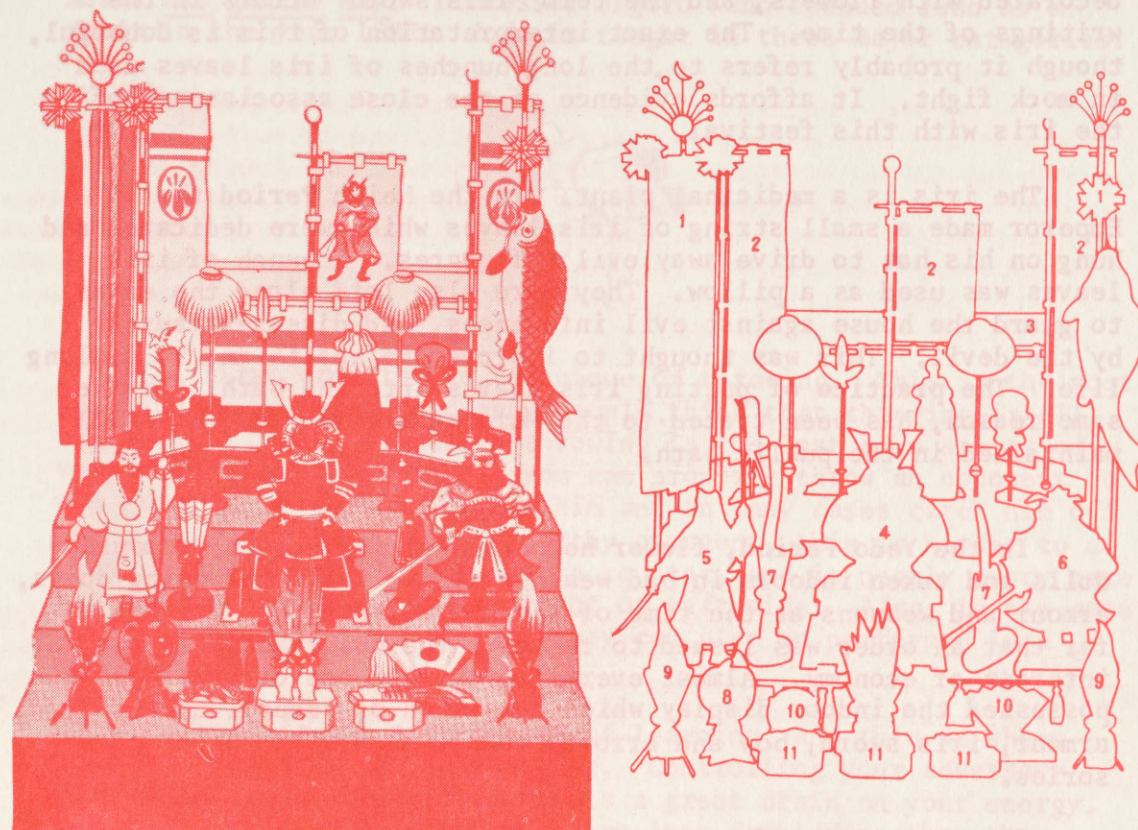
From this it is but a step to using dolls as "scapegoats", which meant "human figure" or hitogata. Those who prayed for divine grace used to breathe upon the dolls and rub them against their own bodies to transmit their ills to the dolls. Those dolls were then thrown into the nearest running water and borne away by the stream. The thought was to rid the human bodies of sickness and disease. They were known as "casting off dolls". The simpler paper dolls are reminiscent of this ancient custom.

The direct forerunner of the present girls' festival was originated at the close of the Muromachi Period, and it is generally held that the day of March 3rd was fixed at about 1685. At the beginning of the Edo Period, dolls with small tables with offerings--rice cakes and other things--were placed in rows on a carpet spread on the matting. From the middle of this Period the carpet was replaced by a graded stand on which the dolls and additional accessories were displayed. Further developments appeared in the later part of the period by adopting dolls representing people of the high court and these were placed in the order of their importance or standing.

All dolls were dressed in ceremonial court robes as are still worn on the occasion of royal ceremony.

Hina-matsuri used to be one of the very few occasions when little girls had their own parties. It was customary for them to invite their small friends to these parties at which they partook of the sweets and food offered to the dolls. Many families still treasure their family hina-matsuri dolls and doll furniture which have been preserved for generations. Brides sometimes take their own dolls to their new homes.

BOYS' FESTIVAL (TANGO-NO-SEKKU)



- 1 Carp & banner set
- 2 Banner rack
- 3 Screen
- 4 Armour
- 5 Jinmu-tenno
- 6 Shoki
- 7 Sword & bow set
- 8 Drum

- 9 Camp fires
- 10 Drum
- 11 Offering set

There are many ways to display dolls and accessories.

Carp symbolizes healthiness and iris of offering does the boy's festival.

It is almost impossible to explain the origin of the boys' festival in a few lines, because there are so many opinions as to its true origin. In the Heian Period, the iris was dedicated to the Emperor on the third day of the fifth month. On the fourth day, customary decorations were erected and on the fifth day the Emperor visited the Hall of Martial Arts, at that time within the confines of the palace. There he watched the warriors show their skill in archery and sword play.

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The present festival may be traced to the Kamakura Period when the various customs fostering the martial spirit were known to have been in vogue. The "paper helmet" was exhibited, the top being decorated with flowers, and the term "iris sword" occurs in the writings of the time. The exact interpretation of this is doubtful, though it probably refers to the long bunches of iris leaves used in mock fight. It affords evidence of the close associations of the iris with this festival.

The iris is a medicinal plant. In the Heian Period the Emperor made a small string of iris leaves which were dedicated and hung on his hat to drive away evil influences. A bunch of iris leaves was used as a pillow. They were also laid along the eaves to guard the house against evil influences, and diseases caused by the devil. This was thought to improve the health and to prolong life. The practice of putting iris leaves into the bath, for the same reason, has been traced to the Muromachi Period and is still maintained in the public bath.

In the Yedo Period, flower helmets were replaced by armoured dolls and taken indoors in bad weather. This vogue for using dolls, armour and weapons at the time of the May festival was carried so far that an order was issued to restrict the observances in the interest of economy. Almost every family with one or more boys possessed the indoor display which consisted of several dolls, armour, iris sword, bow and arrows, carp, banners and other accessories.

The outstanding feature of the festival today is the carp streamer, koi-nobori. Huge paper or cloth carps are displayed atop tall poles. The carp symbolizes its superiority for courage and power over others of its species.

The koi-nobori or carp streamer came into use for the first time in the Anyei Era (1772-1780), as the people found that the indoor display of paper dolls and such was not sufficient to glorify the festival.

In many districts of the country, kite flying was made a part of the Tango festival. Huge kites sometimes as big as 30x50 feet were used. The boys enjoyed kite-fighting by letting their kite or kite line entangle with the kite of their opponent.

JUDO

The word Judo, literally translated from Japanese to English, means the gentle way. Professor Jigoro Kano founded Judo as a sport in the year 1882. Judo is taught in three major categories.



The first area is the technique of throwing. This is the most spectacular to watch, and many people think that throwing is all there is to Judo. Actually, throwing is the last of a series of very important acts. Before you can properly throw an opponent to the ground, you must unbalance him and in many cases catch him off his guard. In the case of a worthy opponent, this is harder to do than it sounds. Each throw has a counter, and in nearly every case a throw can be done from the right or left side. Also, in the case of forward and reverse throws, they can also be performed in a modified way.

Mat work is the second area of learning, and this is where hard work replaces the spectacular. Controlling your adversary on the mat for a full 30 seconds is a great drain on your energy. With mat work choking techniques are less forbidding than they sound. For the Judoist practicing Judo (13 years of age and up), he must learn to choke and also learn to keep from being choked. For the timid at heart, please note that there has been no death or serious injury from choking at Judo.

In the third area, as the practicing Judoist becomes more proficient, he will learn joint lock techniques, which can be used only in practice until the Judoist earns the right to wear his black belt. Only the Black Belt holders may use joint locks in contest.

The physical aspects of Judo are quite interesting, but one must take a closer look at the principles and the spirit behind Judo. It soon becomes clear that, while Judo is a type of physical education, it is also a way of life. Sincere Judoists will give of themselves wholly and completely to the ideals as well as the physical art of Judo.

Personalized lessons are learned at Judo. Politeness, respect for your elders, sportsmanship, cooperation, social ability, leadership and restraint are to name a few. Character building and spirit of competition are the prime objectives of Judo today.

Judo is not new in the United States. It started at the turn of the century and was strongly supported by President Theodore Roosevelt. In the 20-some years since the end of World War II, Judo has spread to almost every country and is no longer the exclusive sport of Japan. There are 20 Yudanshakai (Judo Associations) in the United States Judo Federation. The active registered members in 1968 exceeded 25,000. In Northern California alone there are 44 registered and active clubs, and generally they are opened to the public for trial or permanent membership.

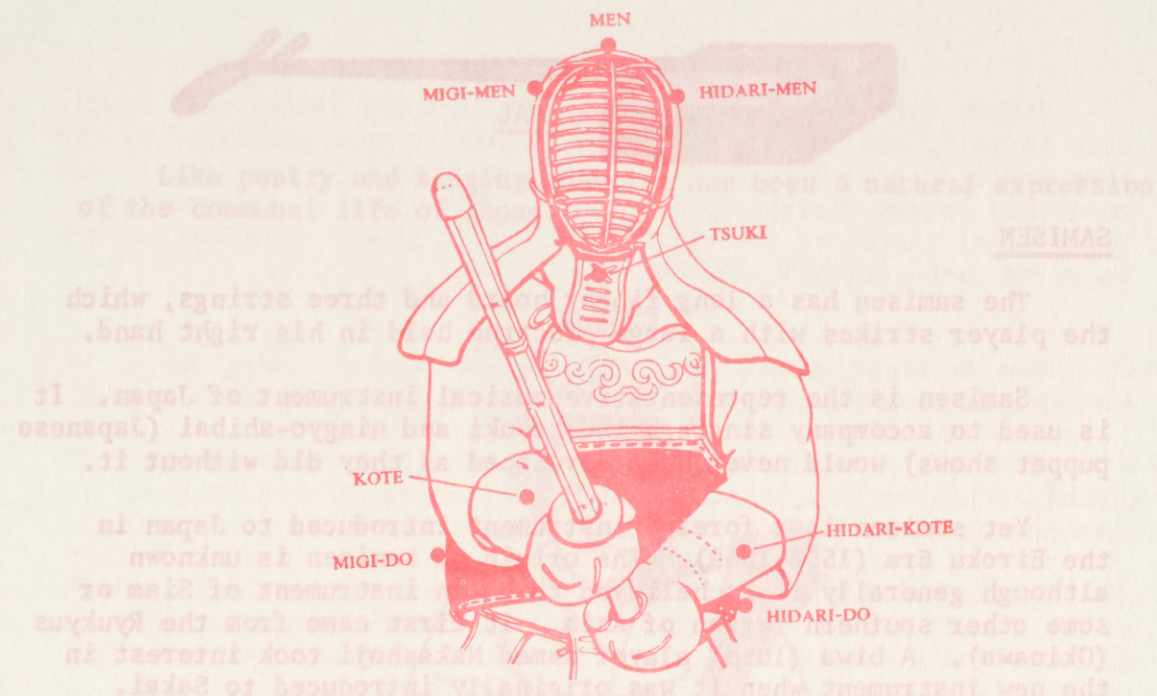
The 86-year development of Judo as a sport has been very gratifying to the men who have nurtured it along its way. In 1964 it was placed in the Olympics as a courtesy to the nation hosting the Olympics, but now (in 1972) it will be in the Olympics as a regular event.

May we summarize Judo in this manner: It is a training of the mind and body to work together to obtain the MAXIMUM EFFECT WITH THE MINIMUM OF EFFORT. Remember, too, that Judo is practiced by men, women, and children to develop physical strength, mental alertness, and good moral character.

KENDO

The origin of Kendo (Japanese fencing) goes back nearly 1500 years. It was developed by the samurai or warrior class to improve their combat skill with the sword, which was the most used of weapons in battle until recent times. By its own evolution and timely refinement, Kendo has undergone many changes. The learning of combat skill became secondary to the code of ethics to be rigidly observed by the Kendo followers. Valor, honesty, integrity, patience, discipline and good character formed the essential basis for its spiritual teaching. In Japan today, Kendo is a part of the curriculum of secondary schools and universities. It is one means by which the students are exposed to the heritage of the Japanese people and the virtues and good traits of the samurai of the past are passed on to the people of today.

Kendo, as now practiced, is primarily a sport which utilizes swords made of split bamboo (shinai). The participants wear headmasks and have well-padded neck, shoulders, and arms, and wear body pads or plates. Heavy gloves protect the hands and forearms. With



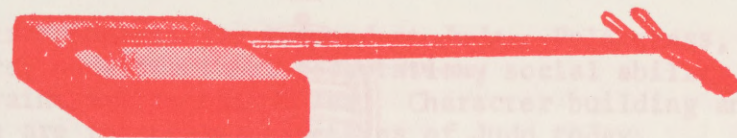
these safeguards, the banging of the swords accompanied by shouts are more frightening to the spectators than to the contestants themselves. Points are scored by striking different parts of the opponent's body or head. Also, the manner, posture and grace of executing each stroke contributes toward scoring points. Throughout the contest, codes of conduct must be rigidly adhered to by each combatant.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS: KOTO, SAMISEN, SHAKUHACHI



KOTO

The "koto", "samisen", and "shakuhachi" are called the trio of instruments in the Japanese orchestra. The "koto" is a kind of harp or lyre with 13 strings, about 6 feet in length, laid on the floor when played.



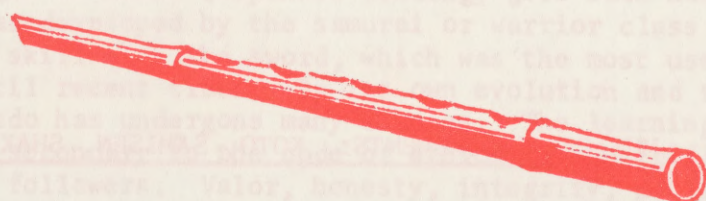
SAMISEN

The samisen has a long finger board and three strings, which the player strikes with a large plectrum held in his right hand.

Samisen is the representative musical instrument of Japan. It is used to accompany singing, and kabuki and ningyo-shibai (Japanese puppet shows) would never have developed as they did without it.

Yet samisen is a foreign instrument introduced to Japan in the Eiroku Era (1558-1569). The origin of samisen is unknown although generally it is believed to be an instrument of Siam or some other southern region of Asia. It first came from the Ryukyus (Okinawa). A biwa (lute) player named Nakashoji took interest in the new instrument when it was originally introduced to Sakai. Thereafter, it became a very popular instrument called samisen (three-stringed).

Samisen is made in three different styles called futo (thick), naka (medium) and hoso (narrow), classified by the thickness of the stem over which the three strings are strung. The heavier stem gives a deeper tone than the lighter one.



SHAKUHACHI

The shakuhachi is a sort of flute made of a hollow bamboo stem of about 1 foot 8 inches in length with five finger holes.

JAPANESE DANCING

Like poetry and singing, dancing has been a natural expression of the communal life of Japan.



In the course of history, some dances have been protected and refined to the point of being elevated to classical art. Such is the contribution of Japan to the world's treasury of dancing. The Japanese dance originated in "Kabuki".

Before the advent of "Kabuki", the Japanese dances were mostly used in religious rites where dance and music were performed by the same individuals. With the appearance of "Kabuki", the dancers and musicians became distinctly separated. The "joruri" accompanists (musicians) expressed the meaning of the songs and thus the dancers acquired rich pantomimic elements.

What is known as the "furi" (postures for expressing deep emotions) became a very important technique in the Japanese dance.

Since the Japanese dance was based on the two dimensional principle bequeathed from the ancient classical "Noh" plays, it does not have the vertical jumping movement.

Early in the Edo Period, the well-to-do regarded dancing as one of the important cultural accomplishments for their daughters. Renowned families (Iemoto) of various dancing schools perpetuated prestige and power over the Japanese dancing world.

Traditional local dances include those originating from dances performed in the cities of the Nara and others, as well as those developed from the intermingling of primitive folk ceremonies and religious rites. Producers of "creative dances" endeavored to find the original forms of the dance in these traditional local dances.

During the Taisho Era (1912-1925) Japanese dancing embraced a fresh dynamic vitality and has enjoyed some creative changes that heralded a new dance movement in Japan. However, undisturbed by the rise and progress of the new Japanese dance, the tradition of the classical Japanese dance has been preserved with renewed appraisal of its high aesthetic value.

GOLD DISCOVERY CELEBRATION PROGRAM

January 25 and 26, 1969

The Gold Discovery Celebration is held every year on the weekend closest to January 24, the day James Wilson Marshall picked up the first flake of gold in the tail race of Sutter's Mill in Coloma. This year's theme is "Early Japanese of California", and is dedicated in honor of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony which was founded at Gold Hill, El Dorado County, in June, 1869. This is the Centennial Year for the people of the Wakamatsu Colony and others who were to follow to settle in the United States. Celebration buttons on sale in the museum and other stations--50¢.

Saturday, January 25

- 10:00 a.m. Museum opens with Japanese exhibits telling the story of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony (founded June 1869) and other subjects of general interest.
- 1:00 p.m. Parade down main street of the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus. James W. Marshall chapter host. Refreshments at the Grange Hall.
- 2:00 Sutter Mill demonstration
- 3:00 "Hold up and robbery" of Wells Fargo strong box containing a rare Japanese jeweled dagger. In front of museum. Sutter Mill demonstration.
- 8:00 Old Time Miners' dance in the Grange Hall. Costumes optional. Sponsored by the Gold Trail Grange.

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Sunday, January 26

PART I. GENERAL ACTIVITIES

- 10:00 a.m. Museum opens. Japanese exhibits telling the story of Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony of Gold Hill and displays on flower arrangement, dolls, bonsai plants and other subjects of general interest.
- 11:30 Miners' poker game with dance hall girls. Main parking lot.
- 12:00 noon Old time fiddling by Sacramento Fiddlers. Coloma Park. Capture of robber and trial. Main parking lot.
- 1:00 p.m. Parade begins. Theme: "Early Japanese of California". End of trial and hanging of robbers. Main parking lot.
- 2:00 Sutter Mill demonstration
- 2:30 Old time fiddling. Park parade awards at Sutter Mill. Rock and roll band. Parking lot.
- 3:00 Sutter Mill demonstration. Band concert - park.
- 3:30 Whiskereno judging. Sutter Mill.
- 4:30 Sutter Mill demonstration
- 6:30 Melodrama and Olio by Hangtown Theater Guild. "Ulysses Goes West", directed by Russ Howard. Community Hall.

PART II. SPECIAL JAPANESE ACTIVITIES

- Repeat Performances at: 11:00, 12:00, 2:00 and 3:00
- Museum: Flower arrangements followed by story of the dolls.
- Reviewing Stand: Judo and Kendo demonstrations
- Community Hall: Dancing and music
- Museum Patio: Bonsai displays and demonstration

PART III. FOOD CONCESSIONS - ALL DAY

Hot lunch served by Gold Trail Grange. Grange Hall.
Japanese Chicken Teriyaki booth. Behind reviewing stand.

APPRECIATION

There is no charge for activities and events. Your support by purchasing a 50¢ Celebration button at the Museum and other stations is most appreciated.

* * * * *

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Program pamphlet covers courtesy of Sumitomo Bank,
Japan Air Lines and Bank of Tokyo.

Coloma-Lotus Boosters Club,
Celebration Sponsor

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Covers Courtesy of:

The Sumitomo Bank of California

The Bank of Tokyo of California

Japan Air Lines

Wine jar, *Lei*, with ox-heads, T'ao-t'ieh and spiral ornament.

Height 45.4cm.: Yin Dynasty

Though the lid is missing, this jar has a feature common to many ancient Chinese wine jars having handles, each of which has a ring, at its shoulder on both sides and also being ornamented with an ox-head shape handle on one side near the bottom. This jar is surprisingly well shaped and the ornamental design is delicately cast. Its lustre is also attractive. It is noteworthy that the skillfulness of casting in the Yin Dynasty is shown on this jar. (from Sumitomo Collection, Japan.)



THE SUMITOMO BANK
OF CALIFORNIA

The Japanese "Mayflower"

By Kimura Ki

If one talks of the "Japanese Mayflower", it is very unlikely that one will be under-
stood. The facts of which I have written here were, in fact, long lost in oblivion. It happened in
May 1869, nine years after the exchange of documents ratifying the new U.S. - Japanese Treaty of
Amity and Commerce, an exchange which took place between President Buchanan and the strange, top-k
knotted kimonoed Japanese delegation in Washington on May 24, 1860, just one hundred years ago from
now. The Pacific clipper "China" sailed into San Francisco harbor bearing a party of between thi
thirty and forty Jpanese; they had all come from a place called Aizu, in the northwest of what is no
now Fukushima Pref. and are generally known as the "Aizu settlers."

They settled at a spot in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada in California, and they gav
their home the name "Wakamatz Colony." Wakamatsu is the name of the capital of the Aizu district,
and the site of the castle of the feudal lord of the day. It was this name that the American news
papers of the day used in reporting the activities of the newly-arrived Japanese.

The English have always attached a great historical importance to the first fruits of c
colo- nization. The first English child born in America, a girl, died at the tender age of one ye
but her name, Virginia, is perpetuated forever in the name of the state. In the case of the
"Wakamatz Colony" set up by the Aizu settlers, however, the first Nisei baby to be born was des
tined for complete oblivion.

The colony did contain in its midst, however, a 17-year-old girl called Okei. She died
at the age of 19, after only two years in America, yet it was her gravestone that, through a for
tuitous chain of circumstances, served to bring to light once more not only her own sad history
but the achievements of the whole group of settlers to which she belonged.

AIZU IN DEFEAT

It was Matsudaira Katamori, the last feudal lord of Aizu, who was responsible for sendi
the settlers. His son was at one time Ambassador to the U.S., and his daughter is the present
Prin cess Chichibu. At the time of the Meiji Restoration, it was Matsudaira who was appointed to h
Read the alliance.

The Imperial forces, flushed with victory, laid siege to Wakamatsu Castle. The Aizu dis
trict had long been renowned for the valor of its samurai, and the castle put up a stout fight agai
gaunt the powerful enemy. The young boys even organized a unit called the "White Tiger Unit" (By
13yakko tai), determined if necessary to lay down their lives for what they believed was the good of
the country, and when the castle was finally burnt down all of them---from 14 to 16 years of age---
com- mitted harakiri. The girls, too, organized a unit known as "Nayotake." One of them who survi
vied later became the wife of Niijima Jo, the celebrated educationalist in Japan.

After its defeat, Aizu sank into the depth of poverty. The lord's advisors at the time
incl- uded a German called Eduard Schnell who had come to Japan to sell arms. He won the special c
Conti- dence of the Lord of Aizu. Was given a mansion, even chose samurai daughter for wife.

Schnell had a suggestion to make. A gold rush, he informed the Lord of Aizu, was on the
California, and adventurers from all over the world were making their way there. Why should not
Aizu send a party itself? The gold, of course, might all have been found already, and too much co
could not be hoped for in this direction. Even so, land could be bought for farming.

The Lord of the Aizu Clan accepted this suggestion, and set about carrying it into effe

AMERICAN NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS

The exact number of immigrants in the party is not known; some put it as low as 17, but
it seems likely there were at least 35 or 36. The leader was Schnell, and a small number of samu
rai were included, but the majority were farmers, carpenters and the like.

The prty also included women---Schell's wife and Okei, her companion. Accounts in Ameri
can newspapers suggest that there were two other women, but there is nothig to confirm this.

Okei at that time was a girl of only 17, or, by Western reckoning, 15 years and a few m
months. What, one must wonder, could have driven such a young girl to take part in such a risky under
taking. It happened that just then Schnell's wife was looking for a nurse to look after the two small
child- dren she was taking with her, and that Okei volunteered for the job of her own accord. How mu
much credence can be placed in this story is not certain, but it is probably somewhere near the tr

Events after their arrival in California can be known with something approaching certai
truth since occasional mention of their activities can be found by thumbing through the old newspap
of ninety years ago preserved in the California State Library.

The Alta Daily News, published in San Francisco, carried the following article in the mo
prominent position on its front page on May 17, 1869:

↑
Check Alta Daily News SF
5/17/1869
↑ 27

ARRIVAL OF JAPANESE IMMIGRANTS

Three Japanese Families---Thirty More Coming Soon---Probability that the Defeated Prince Will Follow---Japan no Home for Them Since the Civil War.

A Prussian gentleman, Herr Schnell by name, who for ten years lived in the northern part of Japan, has landed in San Francisco with three Japanese families. These three families form the advance guard of a group of forty families now on its way to this port. Eighty more families are to follow, making a total of 120 families and four hundred persons coming to California to establish a permanent colony here.

As a result of the defeat of the Aizu Clan, he was compelled to find some peaceful occupation elsewhere. It is apparently no mere rumor that three princes are to follow him here to share their fate with him. Herr Schnell has 120 followers, who look up to him as a father. His chief task for the moment, he declares, is to help them and to train them to comply with American laws and customs.

These Japanese, far from being serfs, are free people. Should the prince of Aizu come, many more immigrants and their families are due to follow. All of them are perfect gentlemen, brought up in respectable families and highly educated, and there is no doubt but that they will accept and conform to the laws and customs of this country.

The completion of the transcontinental railway around that time had thrown large numbers of Chinese laborers out of work, who were now seeking any job they could get, at very low wages. There had been considerable feeling in favor of expelling the Chinese, and this had resulted in the so-called "Pigtail Ordinance." Knowing this, Schnell was afraid that the two races, superficially resembling each other, might be confused, and adroitly took steps to stress their great difference.

REMINISCENCES OF AN OCTOGENARIAN

The narrative from now on is based on a synthesis of numerous newspaper reports, plus the results of personal investigations made by the present writer. The party settled down in a mountain village called Colema in El Dorado County.

The Alta Daily News of June 16 of the same year carries a report that Schnell had established a Japanese colony to be called the "Town of Wakamatz," while the Sacramento Union of Sept. 3, 1870 says:

Schnell, of the Japanese colony in El Dorado County, makes a fine display of Japanese and Chinese plants, grown near Gold Hill, El Dorado County, from imported shrubs and seeds. Amongst his articles are observed some fine healthy tea plants, grown from the seeds, which were planted on the 14th of March last. These plants are about four inches high and are vigorous and healthy. The same exhibitor exhibits a specimen of goma, or oil plant, together with a quantity of the seeds and a sample of the oil. He also exhibits samples of rice plants and a specimen of the Japanese paper tree.

At first, thus, the prospects for this pioneering project seemed rosy. Even so, it ended in failure. One reason was that plants from rainy Japan would not grow in dry California. Even more serious was the failure of Schnell's funds. Faced with mounting debts, he finally abandoned the party and fled back to Japan.

The Japanese left behind did not have the fare home. And they went back after having come all the way to America, just because work did not go well. Each went his own way, thus in search of some way of earning a living. Two of them alone---Sakurai Matsunosuke and the girl Okei---were retained at the home of Veer Camp, the overseer of the land.

In 1930, I met an old man called Henry of the Veer Camp family who had known Okei personally. Hale and hearty despite his eighty-two years, he would still go out into the fields to work. "Okei-san was a nice girl," he told me, "and when she wore Japanese kimono she was really beautiful. She could not speak English very much, but was bright, and soon learnt needlework and cooking from my mother, who was very fond of her." He shed tears of emotion as he spoke of her. He had been one year older than Okei.

About six months after she was taken into the Camp family, Okei died of some feverish illness.

The Japanese party included a ^{man} called Masumizu Kuninosuke, a clever man who at first went gold-seeking and digging and found nuggets worth 3000 dollars. Since women were scarce in California, most of the party did not marry, but Masumizu got married and had a baby. This child was the first Nisei. He lived with his mother in Sacramento after she became a widow, working as a barber, and may be alive and well to this day. over

The Japanese party included a man called Masumizu Kuninosuke, a clever man who at one time went gold-seeking and digging and found nuggets worth \$3000. Since women were scarce in Calif, and most of the party did not marry, but Masumizu got married and had a baby. This child was the first Nisei. He lived with his mother in Sacto after she became a widow, working as a barber, and may be alive and well to this day.

Okei was delighted at the news of the baby's arrival in the Japanese community, particularly since they lived in an area, near the original California gold-mining belt, where killings were a more frequent occurrence than births. Knitting a jacket for the new baby she took it one day across the hills to Sacramento where the Matsuzumi lived. On her return, she complained of feeling unwell and took to her bed. A high fever developed, and soon, without a word of regret or of longing for her far-off home, she passed away.

Fifteen years later, in 1886, a marble tablet was erected to Okei's memory at the suggestion of Sakurai Matsunosuke. He collected money for the purpose from those other members of the original party whom he could trace, and wrote the inscription for the marble in Japanese calligraphy. The front was written in Japanese, while on the back was the inscription in English: IN MEMORY OF OKEI? DIED 1871, AGED 19 YEARS (A Japanese girl).

This was the last action of the Japanese immigrants in concert, however, and after this not only Okei but the Wakamatz Colony itself sank into complete oblivion.

One reason, of course, was the death of members of the party, but another was that the Japanese farmers left the area and went to farms in other districts in search of work.

OKEI RESURRECTED

After the First World War, however, large numbers of Japanese farmers poured into the Coloma area. They discovered, in the bush on the top of a hill, a marble gravestone buried in the grass and engraved with the name of a Japanese woman. Round about it, red wild roses were growing in profusion. People said, however, that the grave with red roses was that of a prostitute, and they accepted the story. At the beginning of the Showa Period, a photo of the grave was sent to the Japanese Foreign Office, and at the time when we first saw it the same story was believed among officials there too.

However, a newspaperman called Takeda Setsujo had his doubts about the story. Perhaps the fact that he came from the same prefecture as Okei---Fukushima---had some bearing on the matter.

He went to a house standing near the bush to ask if anything was known of the grave. By a strange coincidence, it was the home of the Veer Camp family, and old Henry told him the sad story of the Japanese settlers and the unhappy, ill-fated life of Okei.

In the same house were preserved a number of relics of the party, among them the banner presented to it by the Lord of Aizu (half of it consists of the Rising Sun, half of the hollyhock crest of the Matsudaira family); a dagger decorated with gold from the same source; and a loose outer kimono of a richness found only in the dress of noble ladies. And the fact that the stories of the Wakamatsu Colony were not a wild fiction was borne out by the accounts scattered through American newspapers of the time.

While I was investigating the subject on the spot, I was visited by a reporter from an American newspaper, and as a result there appeared in the Fresno Bee and other Hearst newspapers a long, half-page article about "the first Japanese girl who came to States, in the vain hope of producing silk," accompanied by a photograph of the grave. On my return to Japan, I visited Aizu again in search of further material, but everybody who knew anything in Aizu was already dead except for the old mother of the city mayor.

On the basis of my finds, I wrote a novel about Okei, Okei of El Dorado, which was made into a movie soon after, entitled Flower in the Storm and starring Yamada Isuzu. However, with the advent of World War II shortly after, such stories of friendship with the U.S. became taboo in Japan. In America, apparently, the situation was somewhat different, for I heard, when I went there for the San Francisco Conference, that the story of Okei had been broadcast on the radio there during the war at least four times.

After the war, a campaign started in Aizu, Okei's original home, to have a tablet in her memory erected there also. A site was chosen at the upper terminal of the cable car on Seaburiyama, at the famed beauty-spot and spa of Higashiyama, and renamed Gold Hill after the site in America. A photograph of Okei's gravestone was obtained from America and a similar one, in marble, was erected in the autumn of 1958.

In August last year, a play on the theme of Okei was put on at the Kabuki-za in Tokyo. Entitled Gold Hill, the story of the play was written by myself and the dialogue by Iwaya Shin'ichi.

Before World War II, U.S. immigration laws were very severe toward Japanese, and it was almost impossible for a Japanese girl to go to America. Naturally, thus, the young Japanese men who went to the U.S. in the past found it difficult to secure wives. All the more reason, then, why they should find an object of interest and boundless affection in this story of Okei -- Okei, who was one of their forerunners, who maintained herself spotless throughout all, and whose spirit was finally laid to rest on American soil. It was in a frame of mind akin to that of the medieval monk in Europe worshiping the Virgin Mary that they would go to pay their respects at her grave. For them, she had become a type of eternal female.

Shirwa 1 = 1926



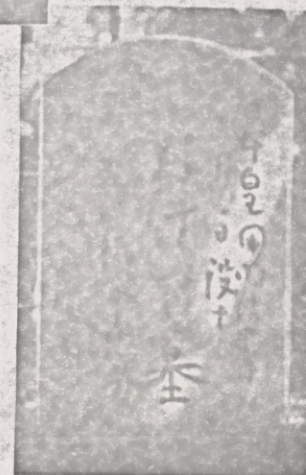
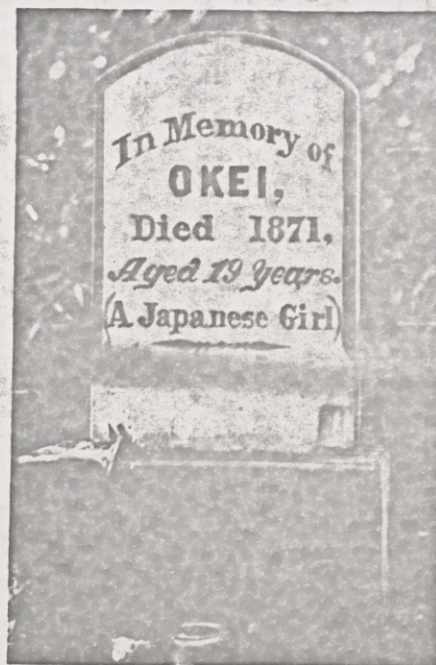
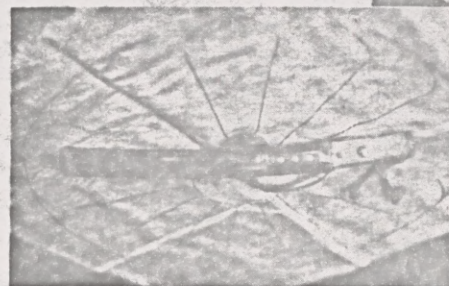
写真説明

In Memory of
OKEI,
Died 1871,
Aged 19 years.
(A Japanese Girl)

同じく紋等の遺
した女持の短刀
と伏帛。共に現
在フェル・カム
プ家に蔵す。



日本移民
一行の遺
した旗の
紋章のあ
る旗。



本作のヒロイン、おけい
の墓。表面には日本語を
刻し、裏面は英文である。
北米カリフォルニア・エ
ル・ドラド郡黄金丘の樹
林の中にあり。

Daily Alta Calif

mostly re
dear silk cultivation
favorable at 1st. Then
disappointed. you say

Daily Alta California, San Francisco

Sacramento Daily Union - May 28, 1869 - P3-C-4.
From San Francisco Alta - May 27th. ✓

SF. Thursday May 27, 1869 - Vol XXI, # 7008
" ARRIVAL OF THE JAPANESE IMMIGRANTS " Front Page, Col. 2

Herr Schnell, a Prussian gentlemen for 10 years past resident in northern principalities of Japan, has arrived with 3 - Japanese Families. These families are the precursors of 40 Japanese families now on the way for our port, and of a further accession of 80 families making in all 120 families, or say 400 persons are coming here for permanent settlement.

They are mostly silk cultivators and manufacturers; some are tea culturists, they bring with them 50,000 tree's of the Morus Alba, 3 years old. This is the most tender leaf of all the mulberries, and makes the best silk in the country. They bring a great number of bamboo plants of the large variety, useful for a thousand purposes, they are 12 ft. high. Also, 500 Vegetable Wax tree's 4 ft. high and 3 yrs. old - they bring also 6,000,000 of tea nuts, the seed of the tea plant is a small nut.

Herr Schnell was interpreting Secretary to the Prussian Legation and latterly Minister of Finance to the Northern Principalities at War with the Mikado. He is complete master of the Japanese language and was attached to Prince Idsu, (Aizu) under whom he held an important command. The defeat of the North has obliged him to seek elsewhere for peace and occupation. It is not improbable the 3 Princes will follow him and share his fortunes.

Herr Schnell possessed 120 retainers and their families, they look to him for means of living and guidance in a way to conform to the law and usage of our country. They are serfs, but free. and he charges himself with their care support

✓ If the Princes come they may bring many more industrial families, they are highly educated and polished gentlemen, with families brought up in the highest refinement. They fully comprehend our laws and usages and will conform to them.

✓ It should be understood that the Japanese conduct themselves with dignity; but they are prompt to repel insult and imposition, they cannot safely be treated as Chinamen often are. They come with their families; they bring skill and industry to develop our resources. Herr Schnell means to buy Government Land not in the valleys, which are unsuited; but in the cheaper hill or mountain lands. These gravelly loams are best adapted to the healthiest growth of silk; and especially is it an Axiom; not
→ " Hills for the fine teas, dales for the coarse."

Schnell knew that we were over stocked with common mulberry tree's in the nursery, with very few set out for permanent planation; so he has brought his own tree's, he does not intend to feed worms till his tree's now 3 yrs. old have another full years growth. The Japanese do not esteem eggs or cocoon's scarce rooted in the nursery.

fed all our
in cutting scarce
rooted in the nursery.

3 ft. is the standard height of plantation mulberries in Japan, they never bear the stem, but the branches are allowed to grow clear to the ground, thus giving the bark protection from sun-scald.

Their mode of feeding is to cut off the entire branch, instead of plucking the leaves and thus the worm has always a cleanly feeding place. We are doing the same and we give it approval.

Herr Schnell would reel our California Cocoon's this year if he could find them of merchantable quality. But such as they are at Neuman's Exhibition would not answer at all. They are fit only for shoddy.

Mountain Democrat. Oct 30, ^{N (1869 #)}~~(1870)~~
p. 3, c. 2.

4 Placerville, Oct. 28, 1869

Arrival of Japanese: The Japanese Colony at Gold Hill in this County, has been enlarged the present week by a fresh arrival of sixteen immigrants.

We have been informed that the prospects of the colony are quite flattering & the greatest confidence is entertained by the J. that their industrial experiments will prove a success."

- ✓ 1. Sacramento Union - June 8, 1869 - P3-C3.
From Placerville, June 7.

Schnell and Bennetts, agents and managers for the Japanese Families, now enroute for this state, have purchased the ranch of Charles Graner, near Gold Hill in this County, paying \$5,000 therefore. They express themselves highly pleased with the location for all the purposes contemplated for silk and tea culture.

They design increasing their area at least 2,000 acres. The nature of the ground in that locality will allow giving them nearly or quite a connected plantation of that dimension.

-
2. Sacramento Daily Union - Mon. Sept 18. 1869-PP-C4
From Placerville 9/16

In a former letter I spoke of the Japanese Colony which located at Gold Hill several months ago, and gave items as I received them, in part from Schnell, the agent, but more generally from those who from their business relations with the Colony, I thought I could rely upon what they said.

Circumstances have of late shown that my informants were deceived or if not, they deceived others. There are but 8 Japanese - 4 males and the same number of females and it is not known that any more are on the way here. The 140 reported at the time of arrival of those here, soon to arrive never embarked from their native country. From what I can learn it looks as if the thing would be a "fizzle" yet in all hope their efforts will be crowned with success. Of the several million tea seeds brought and planted by the Colony less than 130 plants have been produced and they are in a puny condition; besides only (2) of the fine mulberry tree's of the several hundred brought are alive, not having been able to stand the heat and dry summer.

The President of the State Agricultural Society must have been deceived also: or he would not have incorporated the following into his address delivered at the Pavilion on the 7th. inst.:

Experiments in Tea culture now being made in ElDorado County, by a large company of Japanese, who have migrated to our State for that purpose within the last year, are giving evidence of success beyond all expectations. The plants, set out under most disadvantageous circumstances late in the season, are growing much better than in Japan, and the question of the successful production of Tea in all our foothills is fully settled already - The only question remaining to be decided being the quality of the tea produced, and the experiment so far gives good indication of a favorable answer to this question.

mt. Democrat
10/30/1869
more
16 immigrants

only 2 out of
57,000 by
Sept?

Included?

3. Sacramento Daily Union - Wed. Feb. 9, 1870 P3-C1

FOR THE JAPANESE COLONY

There arrived yesterday morning from San Francisco and were forwarded to Placerville, to be sent to the Japanese Colony's settlement near that place about 60 boxes, containing tea plants, 18 packages fruit tree's most of which were brought out from Japan by the last steamer. The more advanced of the tea plants were growing in diminutive hot houses.

sent for
more
plants
in Feb 70

4. Sacramento Daily Union - Wed. March 2, 1870 P-2-C-3

THE JAPANESE COLONY

The Japanese Colony in Eldorado under Herr Schnell is progressing - Schnell has just received in excellent condition and is having them set out as fast as possible, 140,000 of the tea plants. He expects to have at least 5 chests of tea on exhibition at the next State Fair, Of this years growth from the set out last year.

more tea
plants
3/70

The picking of the tea is done during the month of June, therefore the plant requires but little irrigation.

5. Sacramento Daily Union - Tuesday April 5, 1870 - P2-C1

TEA CULTURE AT HOME

We have already one tea plantation in this state - that near Gold Hill, Eldorado County, where some Japanese have planted about 50 acres. The question whether the business will pay or not is important, since the tea consumption of the U. S. aggregates about 40,000,000 lbs. per year, at an average cost of 34¢ per lb. The total cost of this tea is about 13,600,000 which we have to pay to China and Japan. In favor of the business we have first - the duty of 20¢ per lb. second - the cost of shipment across the pacific and third - that salt water carriage for a long time depreciates the quality of tea. The cost of average tea at HongKong or Yokohoma is about 12½¢ per lb. Cost of shipment and Insurance and exchange 2¢ more - Total cost including duty at 34½¢ of this we have 22½¢ as the premium offered tea growers in California. This ought to make the business pay if we can induce experienced growers to come over here from China and Japan and give it a fair trial.

6. Sacramento Daily Union - June 11, 1870 - P5-C2.

JAPANESE PLANTATION

Herr Schnell, prop. of the Japanese plantation in Eldorado County paid a visit to the city yesterday and brought with him a small sample of tea grown and cured on the plantation within the past week. It was of a dark green color such as the natural leaf would attain on being dried. It was pronounced by all who tasted it to be of a quality equal to the average imported Japanese tea.

7. Sacramento Daily Union - Thurs. Sept. 1, 1870 -P3-C1.

JAPANESE CONTRIBUTION

S.F.
Fair
9/70

Herr Schnell of the Japanese Plantation near Placerville passed through the city yesterday accompanied by 2 of his Japanese co-workers enroute for the San Francisco Fair with articles to be exhibited at the Horticultural Fair now in progress. These articles consisted of tea plants 2 years of age and other 1 year old seedlings; also, which the Japanese make their celebrated strong paper and of a plant from seed of which a fine salad oil is obtained. Schnell had with him a small bottle of olive oil which he had pressed from 4 lbs. of seed. It was of good appearance and flavor. He obtained a valuable fund of information with regards to the culture of silk in our climate.

8. San Francisco Call - Sept. 4, 1870 Sunday P2C1

STATE Fair

Class Five-Misc:

Exhibition of Mountain Rive, Ava Plant, Paper Plant, Tea Plant and Oil Tree: J. H. Schnell of Eldorado County. Diploma \$5.00

? what kind

SILK CULTURE IN ELDORADO COUNTY

Besides the immigration of Japanese in this county with a view to silk culture, the Democrat thus refers to the efforts of one Reiber in the same business; it remarks:

To Louis Reiber, a German residing 6 miles east of this city, belongs the credit of having first introduced the cultivation of silk into this county. More than a year ago Reiber took the initiatory steps by taking from the San Jose Nursery and planting upon his ranch a number of mulberry tree's. The soil and climate was found to be well adapted to their growth, which induced him to invest in the business and give it a fair trial. He has a fine ranch upon which can be produced anything that is grown in this climate. He owns the water rights with which to irrigate, which he brings in ditches and pipes a distance of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles at considerable expense, having had to use about 2 tons of lead pipe. He has now between 3,000 and 4,000 fine tree's of the various kinds used feeding the worms - such as the *Morus Multicaulis*, *Morus Morett* and *Morus alba*. All are which doing well. He has also put out 6,000 cuttings which have sprouted and doing finely. His worms are now feeding of which he has 2 kinds. With their distinctive titles we are not acquainted, but numerically speaking their name is "legion" Reiber has associated with him in business, Louis Hess, a German and late resident of France, who is well versed in the silk business.

SF Call - 1870 - note of Kern Schmeckel's J. colony
displaying - J. plants - fine healthy sea plant
planted in 3/14/70. Plants about 4" high +
vigorous - healthy. also no. of rice plants +
specimen of J. Pepper tree.
Shown at SF Horticultural Fair

1ST JAPANESE IN U.S. LEFT BLACK KIN

BY STANLEY O. WILLIFORD
Times Staff Writer

The only known descendants of the original colony of Japanese to come to America in 1869 are black.

This came as a surprise to many Japanese last year when they celebrated the centennial of their existence in this country. It came as a surprise to the black families, also.

An ensuing search of historical records show that not long after Kuninosuke Masumizu arrived at Gold Hill in El Dorado County as a member of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony, he married the daughter of a Blackfoot Indian woman and her Freedman (freed slave) husband.

A 20-year-old carpenter, he had come with either the first or second contingent of colonists seeking to escape the battles between the feudal lords and the emperor in Japan.

His marriage produced three children — two sons, Grant and Harry, and a daughter Clara. He died in 1915 at the age of 66. Today only the lines of Clara and Harry survive. Harry had one daughter who wed a Chinese named Wong.

Clara, however, married the son of a Welsh-German brewer named Elebeck and a woman with Choctaw and Negro blood. They had four children — George, Harry, Helen and Geraldine — all of whom are alive.

Black Descendants Represent Colony

When a Japanese-American Citizen League banquet was held at Sacramento's El Dorado Hotel, it was the black descendants of "Kuni" (as he was known) who represented that pioneer colony.

According to Akiji Yoshimura, one of the Wakamatsu Centennial Committee members and longtime historian of the colony, the relatives of Kuni were found quite by accident.

"The picture of Kuni (the only known picture of any of the colonists) was published in the Sacramento Union. We were publishing it to call attention to the centennial. Apparently one of his grandchildren happened to notice it and recalled it was his grandfather," said Yoshimura.

In fact, when Mrs. Geraldine McWilliams (Kuni's granddaughter) saw the photo she thought it was her deceased Uncle Grant Masumizu, Kuni's son. She was born shortly before her grandfather's death and had no clear idea of what he looked like.

To make matters more difficult, the name Masumizu was spelled quite differently. The family had Africanized the spelling to "Massmedzu."

But the caption revealed enough to make her know the picture was of someone in her family and she sent her daughter, Mrs. Clara



DESCENDANTS—Helen Starnes, left, and George Elebeck Jr. discuss article on the Wakamatsu settlement. In center is niece, Mrs. Clara Heady. Mrs. Starnes and Elebeck are sister and brother and are grandchildren of Kuninosuke Masumizu, pioneer Japanese settler.

Times photo



Kuninosuke Masumizu

L. Heady, to find out how the paper got it.

Soon afterward, Henry Taketa, a Sacramento attorney and member of the centennial committee, got in touch with George Elebeck Jr., Mrs. McWilliams' brother.

Taketa told the history of the Wakamatsu Colony to Elebeck and requested that he and the family come to the banquet.

Elebeck, 66, is the oldest of Kuni's grandchildren and the one who remembers him best.

He says his grandfather was a fisherman, a farmer and a quiet, reflective man who made a good living for his family.

Elebeck, who, like his two sisters, lives in Sacramento's Oakpark section, said his grandfather often acted as interpreter in the Sacramento courtrooms and "was the first to own a fishmarket in the city."

According to Mrs. Fern Sayre, Sacramento historian and originator of much of the research on the Wakamatsu Colony, Kuni "was a very brilliant man and very well thought of. He spoke Spanish, English and Japanese."

Historian Yoshimura, who lives in Colusa where Kuni is buried, recalls:

"When my mother arrived Kuni was still living. During that time, Kuni served as interpreter for the Japanese. My mother said Kuni had taken her to the doctor and served as interpreter. I'm sure he did this for a lot of people."

The Masumizu descendants, who look and have always considered themselves Negro, say they have no identification with the Japanese community.

Elebeck, who knows a number of Japanese in the area from his school days, says he has more contact than anyone, but he indicated that this was casual. Still he is honored that his grandfather established the only known

Please Turn to Back Page, Col. 1

JAPANESE PIONEER LEFT BLACK KIN

Continued from First Page
link with the Wakamatsu Colony.

"You couldn't very well tell my grandfather was Japanese until you looked close at him or talked to him. He looked more like an Indian," Elebeck said.

Elebeck also remembers some of the hard times the Japanese had later, although he denies his grandfather ever suffered any discrimination.

Elebeck believes that he personally and the Negro generally have always received fair treatment from the Japanese.

"Japanese have never been prejudiced against Negroes in California that I know of," he said.

Some historians of the American Japanese believe Kuni simply fished the Sacramento River to make a living, was not particularly close to his countrymen and, except for his efforts as interpreter, might not have had contact at all.

Taketa speculated that Kuni might have been out of touch with other Japanese because he had preceded them by so many years.

Japanese immigration

was not heavy until near the turn of the century. By that time Kuni was more than 50 years old with a black wife and three grown children.

But little is really known about Kuni.

It is believed that he came to America with a contingent from the besieged Aizu Wakamatsu community in Japan to build a refuge in the new land.

Led by a Dutch or German trader named Eduard Schnell, the first group arrived in the port of San Francisco on the ship "China" on May 27, 1869.

Schnell then arranged the purchase of 160 acres near Gold Hill in El Dorado County where the colony intended to grow tea and mulberry trees for silk.

But the new colony soon failed and its 30 or so members left, either to return to Japan or to find new homes throughout the country.

With the dissolution of the colony, three members were known to have remained in the area—a 17-year-old girl named Okei, a samurai warrior named

Sakurai Matsunosuke and Kuni.

Kuni outlived them both. However, Okei, who died at 19, became a legend which came to symbolize the short existence of the colony in the new land.

Kuni, until recently, had been nearly forgotten.

Carrie, Kuni's wife, made even less of an impact on history. One of the few historical accounts of her comes from a book written by German historian, Dr. Kurt Meissner.

"Kuni's Negro wife only knew to explain that when her first child was born, a young girl came out from the hills and gave the baby a piece of clothing as a present.

"This girl must have been Okei-san who wanted to make a present for her traveling companion and old friend Kuni. According to Japanese custom a congratulation gift is given to the first born. Not much later Okei-san died."

To everyone in the community, Elebeck said, his grandmother was known as Aunt Carrie, a woman who visited anyone's sick child and had a habit of

smoking a corn cob pipe.

"Carrie, who was 6 feet tall, towered over her husband, Kuni, who was 8 inches shorter, and outlived him by more than 27 years," Elebeck said.

According to Elebeck, who says he is about to start legal action to regain his grandparent's lost property in Colusa, he has possession of a map which Carrie told him marked a vein of gold.

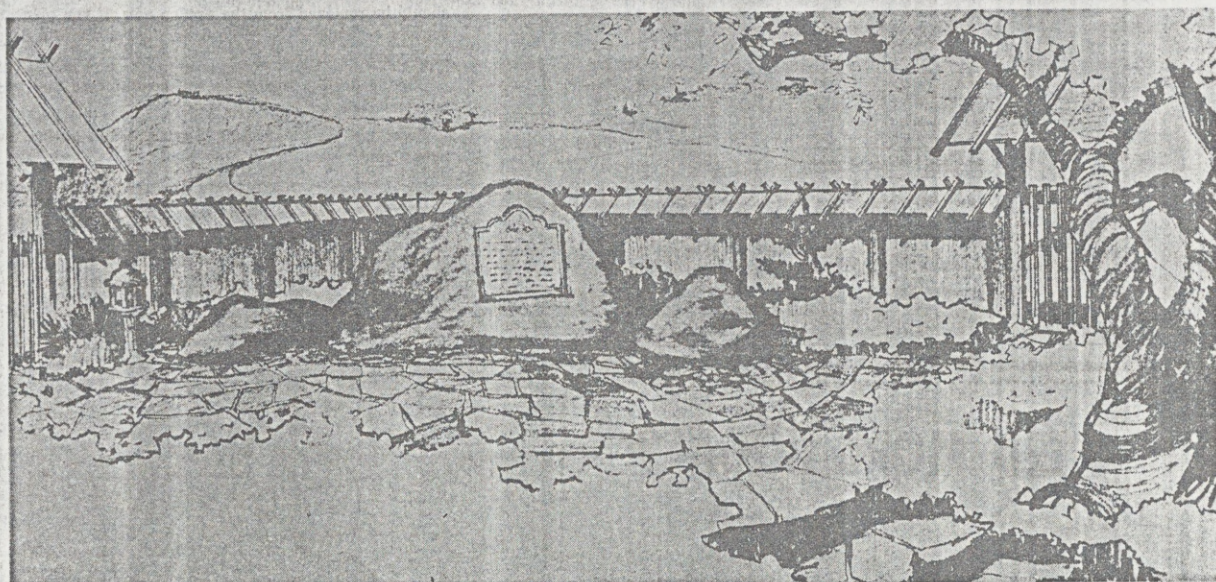
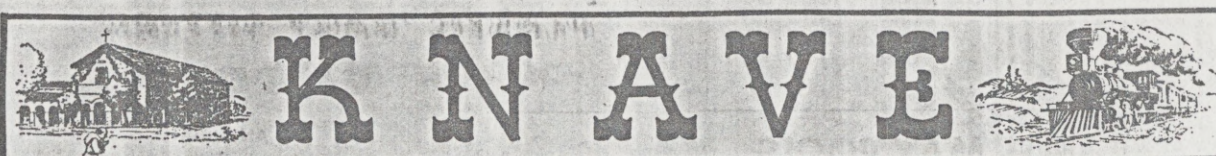
Kuni, he said, because of laws prohibiting Orientals from having mining rights, finally blew up the mine.

However, the family moved and eventually lost control of the property, he said.

The Masumizu blood, of course, also flows through Elebeck's two sons and the children of his two sisters and brother.

And Harry Masumizu, Elebeck's uncle, has a daughter Juanita Wong, who has two sons.

But the youth, for the most part, know nothing of their great grandfather or his culture. And though their blood is a composite of many ethnic groups, their involvement is almost totally black.



Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Monument was dedicated yesterday at Gold Hill in El Dorado County by Japanese American Citizens League

Japanese Bowed Here With Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony

FIRST immigrant group from Japan to the United States arrived in California 100 years ago last month, more than 20 years after the discovery of gold at Coloma and at a time when all San Francisco was still talking about the Golden Spike event over in Utah that signified the completion of the eastbound Central Pacific Railroad and the westbound Union Pacific into a great transcontinental rail line linking our nation's east and west coasts.

The group arrived in San Francisco from Aizu Wakamatsu, Japan, aboard the sidewheeler *China* of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company on May 27, 1869. Within a period of a little more than a week the little band of 26 Japanese immigrants were settled at El Dorado County's Gold Hill where they energetically established the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Company almost at the outskirts of Coloma. The date of the colony's founding has been set as June 7, 1869 — just 100 years ago yesterday.

To commemorate the historic event Mrs. Ronald Reagan, wife of the California governor, yesterday joined hands with Mrs. Seichi Shima, wife of the Japanese Consul General headquartered in San Francisco, and together they unveiled a monumental plaque marking the Centennial of the Wakamatsu colony. It was a gala occasion for the Japanese American Citizens League, El Dorado County, and the little communities of Gold Hill and Coloma. Governor Reagan was on hand to give greetings.

The dry climate of 1869, insufficient water for irrigation, and lack of funds promised them, doomed the Wakamatsu colony to failure in less than two years. After holding out as long as they could by selling their belongings, they scattered elsewhere. Only Matsunosuke Sakurai and Okei Ito remained and were befriended by the Francis Veerkamp family.

THIS VALIANT band of colonists proceeded to Sacramento by riverboat, traveled overland by wagon to Placerville and Gold Hill, and established the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony of Gold Hill by clearing the land, building their homes and cultivating plants and seed including 50,000 three-year-old mulberry trees for silk farms — trees brought with them from their native land.

Congressman Harold T. Johnson who represents 19 California counties including El Dorado, recently addressed the House of Representatives in Washington commending the Japanese American Citizens League for its Centennial celebration of the Wakamatsu colony.

"Although the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm was short-lived and suffered its tragic ending, it signaled the coming of Japanese pioneers to America and the beginning of their notable contribution to the agricultural industry of California," the Congressman stated.

"During the past three-quarters of the century they have left their marks in the teeming valleys throughout the length and breadth of this great State. Many descend-

dants are carrying on the work of their pioneer forebears with the same devotion, determination and skill which helped to make California the most productive farming State in the United States and the greatest agricultural region in the world.

"It is now befitting that the land which was once the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk colony be historically recognized as the site of (1) the only silk and tea farm in this State and (2) the first venture into agriculture by Japanese immigrants in the United States, and (3) where the important participation of the pioneers from Japan to California's agriculture had its beginning."

Last night a Centennial commemorative banquet was held in Sacramento where guests heard William Hosokawa, associate editor of the *Denver Post*, tell of the Japanese-American's boundless faith in the United States. The speaker is the author of a book due off the press early this winter entitled "Nisei: The Quiet Americans," a story of the Japanese in the United States during the past 100 years.

HENRY Taketa, Sacramento attorney and native Californian, detailed the Wakamatsu story in the winter issue of *The Pacific Historian*, and it is Taketa's report that Congressman Johnson used in the Congressional Record.

"The most notable contribution of the pioneer immigrants from Japan to the economy and industry of

California and the United States," wrote Taketa, "has been in the field of agriculture. With utmost patience, perseverance and industry they cleaned, leveled and irrigated land and brought crops to bear in soil which had previously remained idle or had been put to limited use for pasture and grazing."

"Japanese immigration of any consequence to the United States was in the late 1890s and early 1900s, and their influence upon California's farming industry was in direct ratio to the number of new arrivals. However, it is most significant that its humble beginning was the coming of a small but proud and determined group from Aizu Wakamatsu in Japan to Gold Hill in El Dorado County on or about June 8, 1869, to establish a farm settlement, although this venture lasted less than two years and ended in tragedy."

"Aizu Wakamatsu, led by its last feudal lord, Katamori Matsudaira and a number of other ruling clans had the misfortune of supporting Tokugawa Shogunate in its conflict against the Emperor Meiji who favored centralized imperial power and had suffered a crushing defeat. Chaos reigned for a time in Japan, and there was genuine fear for life and property among the losers."

"Either at the suggestion of Edward Schnell, a trader of Dutch or German descent and a long-time confidant of the lord of the Aizu Wakamatsu, or (maybe) to prepare for a possible refuge if it became

Continued on Page 24

The Knave

Continued from Page 21

necessary to flee the homeland, Lord Matsudaira made plans for the first organized emigration to the United States and brought into existence the ill-fated and short-lived Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony of Gold Hill."

BETWEEN six to 10 persons under the leadership of Eduard (John Henry) Schnell constituted the vanguard of several groups or contingents (including Okei, nursemaid and Kuni) were to arrive at the Colony later," according to the Take-ta story.

"Gold Hill of El Dorado County may have been selected for this colonization for its scenic and topographical similarity to their Japanese homeland, or because many early settlers (there) were from Holland or Germany as was Schnell

... "Six Japanese women, including Mrs. Schnell and four young children, were with the pioneer colony. Two of the children were the daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Schnell and the remaining two were daughters of Japanese families.

"The original party arrived at San Francisco... (then) proceeded to Sacramento by riverboat, and thence wagoned to Placerville and Gold Hill where Eduard Schnell had arranged to purchase 160 acres for the farm colony. With them came 50,000 three-year-old mulberry trees for silk farming, a large quantity of bamboo roots for food and craft industry, tea seeds, wax tree stocks, grape seedlings and other varieties of plants and seeds of their native land. Also, sizable shipments of cuttings and plants were to be received at Gold Hill after initial preparations had been completed...

"Immediately upon their arrival the settlers set out to build their



George Mathis, well-known California artist, sketched pioneer Japanese planting Mulberry trees, 1870

homes and clear and plant their crops on the land purchased from Charles M. Graner, and for more than a year it appeared that they would be rewarded for their determination and many sacrifices.

"However, a combination of dry climate of the area, scarcity of irrigation water, lack of funds and failure of financial assistance to come from Japan as promised, doomed the pioneer project in less than two years.

"Beset with money problems... Eduard Schnell left the colony with his Japanese wife and two minor daughters with assurance to the colonists that he would return with much needed funds. But he failed to do this, and thus abandoned his Japanese followers to their own fate in a strange and often hostile land."

NCESSITY prompted the Japanese settlers to sell most of their valuables and belongings to ward off hunger while patiently waiting for their leader who never returned.

"Ultimately each was compelled to go his own way. Some returned to Japan, and others moved elsewhere where employment was more promising. From every indication, only Matsunosuke Sakurai, a samurai, and Okei Ito, nursemaid to the Schnell household, remained at Gold Hill where they were befriended and employed by the pioneer family of Francis Veerkamp, descendants of whom are still found in the Gold Hill-Coloma area engaged in farming and business.

"Okei is said to have died of fe-

ver at the age of 19 in the spring of 1871 and was buried at the knoll of a hill which she frequently climbed to watch the setting sun and gaze in the direction of her homeland. Her headstone reads in both English and Japanese, 'In Memory of Okei, died 1871, Age 19 years, a Japanese Girl.'

"Matsunosuke Sakurai faithfully served the Veerkamp family until his death on Feb. 25, 1901, and he now lies at rest in the Vineyard Cemetery at Coloma, the historical site of Marshall's gold discovery, but a few miles from Gold Hill.

"With its tragic ending, the colony soon passed into oblivion, and its very existence was lost and forgotten until after World War I..."

THE KNAVE

A Pilgrimage to Gold Hill

Sansei Group Determined to Find Identity With the Past

On Sunday, June 20, Kimochi, Inc., of San Francisco will sponsor a pilgrimage to the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony of Gold Hill. Japanese Americans from San Francisco will join persons from San Jose, San Mateo, Palo Alto, the East Bay, and Sacramento to journey to the site of the first Japanese settlement in America.

The schedule for the excursion will be: 8:30 a.m., leave San Francisco; 10:30 a.m., arrive at Sacramento Buddhist Church; 11:30 a.m., arrive at Gold Hill; 12:30 p.m., Star Museum in Coloma; 1:00 p.m., picnic lunch; 2:30 p.m., leave Coloma; 3:30 p.m., return to Sacramento; 6:00 p.m., return to San Francisco.

Persons desiring further information on the Wakamatsu excursion should contact June Ikemoto at 564-0859.

By JANET HEDANI

Until recently, Asians have been told, have been taught, and have read that the Asian people have been insignificant in American history (i.e. our history in America has been left out of history books, our contributions to America ignored). In other words, America has chosen to ignore our history. But we have a heritage of determination, of faith and patience that was and still is of great importance in the formation of America.

One of the most notable contributions of Asian people in America was that of the pioneer immigrants from Japan to the economy and industry of California and the United States in the field of agriculture. These people cleared, leveled and irrigated land, and brought crops to bear in soil which had previously been labeled "submarginal," idle land, land used for pasture and grazing.

Japanese immigration to the United States swelled from the late 1880's when the Japanese were officially allowed to do so by the Emperor. However, the first Japanese colony here in America was started in 1869 by a small but proud and determined group from Aizu Wakamatsu.

This first attempt at Japanese immigration to America was the result of internal conditions in Japan and of the attraction of the American dream of immediate economic success. In Aizu Wakamatsu in 1868 the Lord Katamori Matsudaira supported the Tokugawa Shogunate in its conflict against the followers of Emperor Meiji who favored centralized imperial power. He suffered a crushing defeat. Chaos reigned for a time in Japan, the losers fearing for life and property.

During this time, Lord Matsudaira made plans for the first organized emigration to the United States. This was probably at the suggestion of Edward (John Henry) Schnell, a trader of Dutch or German descent who made his fortune in gun dealing with feudal lords in Japan and a longtime confidant of the Lord of the Aizu Wakamatsu. Perhaps the reason for the plans was to prepare for a possible sanctuary or refuge if it became necessary to flee the homeland. Thus the ill-fated and short-lived Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony of Gold Hill came into existence.

About nine or ten persons under the leadership of Schnell were the first to arrive. Others (including Okel, nursemaid to the Schnell household) were to come to the colony later. Gold Hill of El Dorado County may have been selected for this colonization for its scenic and topographical similarity to their Japanese homeland or because many early settlers in the area were from Holland or Germany as was Schnell.

Much of the colony was made up of farmers and those

The original party arrived at San Francisco on May 27, 1869. From San Francisco, they went by riverboat to Sacramento, then by wagon to Placerville and Gold Hill. There, Schnell had arranged to purchase 160 acres from a Charles M. Graner under an eight-year contract. With them came 50,000 three-year old mulberry trees for silk farming, large quantities of bamboo roots for food and craft industry, tea seeds, wax tree stocks, grape seedlings and other varieties of plants and seeds of their native land. Sizeable shipments of cuttings and plants were to be received at Gold Hill after initial preparations had been completed, but newspaper accounts of the period suggest that travelers were infrequent between Gold Hill and Japan.

Immediately upon their arrival, the settlers set out to build their homes and clear and plant their crops on the land. For over a year it appeared that they would be rewarded for their determination and sacrifices. However, a combination of the dry climate of the area, scarcity of irrigation water, lack of funds, and failure of financial assistance to come from Japan as promised doomed the pioneer project in less than two years.

Beset with money and other problems Schnell left the colony with his wife and two daughters with assurance to the colonists that he would return with the

TURN TO PAGE 2

Protection Racket Rampant in S.F. Chinatown, Bared

A "protection" racket has been thriving on the streets of San Francisco's Chinatown. Many of the community's merchants are being asked by young Chinese gang members to pay for protection — or else.

In an article written by Robert Patterson of the San Francisco Examiner, he notes certain instances of merchants who availed themselves of the "protection" and those that did not:

— A gasoline station has paid \$25 a week and its hoses have not been cut unlike those of other gasoline dealers who did not pay for the "service."

— The Great Eastern Cafe at 649 Jackson St. did not feel that it needed protection. "But now," writes Patterson, "it is a little darker in the Great Eastern because there is concrete where there was once glass." The plate glass windows of the cafe were broken a short time ago.

— One of the major movie houses in Chinatown is paying \$200 a month to prevent its seats from being slashed.

— Bars along Grant Ave. pay between \$24 and \$50 a month to prevent disorders from occurring on their premises.

Noting the similarity of the protection racket to that which flourished in Chicago during the Prohibition era, Patterson described most of the Chinatown merchants as being "very much afraid."

Members of the police department have been holding conferences with Chinatown leaders to solve the problem, and Police Chief Alfred Nelder told Patterson that the police would work hard to eliminate the racket. "We have a monopoly on the protection business in San Francisco," Nelder assured.

Cheryl Finishes College Studies To Be a Teacher

Cheryl Yoshimura, who recently resigned as columnist for Hokubei Mainichi, was graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, with a degree in English. Cheryl, in her column "Sansei Speaks," wrote articles covering a wide range of subjects in fields of religion, government, politics, travel, civic matters, as well as student unrest. Much of her writings were characteristic of the folksy, fire-side chats.



CHERYL

On Sunday, June 13, 1971, Cheryl, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Nobu Yoshimura of San Francisco, was honored by her parents and her grandfather, Mr. Ikeda, at their home in the Sunset District. Guests included Mr. and Mrs. Paul Ohtaki, Mr. and Mrs. John Yamauchi, Mr. and Mrs. Elji Sakai, Mr. and Mrs. John Shimizu, John Sakai, Cheryl Cook, Mary Ikeda, Tom Kobayashi, Karen Cook, and Susie Takamoto.

Well-wishers showered Cheryl with gifts and then feasted on such delicacies as pickled egg plant, shirazi, kammoboko, lemon fried chicken, miyoshi shrimp salad, lime jello with walnuts, swedish meat balls, tofu, barbecued pork, tossed sajad, chirashi, and kimpera.

Cheryl, following a trip back East with her mother, to visit her brother who is now undergoing Navy boot camp training in Rhode Island, plans to enter the teaching profession in the fall.

Matsunaga Bill Moves Ahead In Congress Action

WASHINGTON (UPI) — A bill outlawing domestic concentration camps was sent to the House floor Wednesday but opponents tacked on a separate measure that would allow citizens to be locked up if Congress declares an insurrection exists.

In a procedural skirmish that brought claims of victory from both sides, the House

pared to Hold

tributions of Asian people in America was that of the pioneer immigrants from Japan to the economy and industry of California and the United States in the field of agriculture. These people cleared, leveled and irrigated land, and brought crops to bear in soil which had previously been labeled "submarginal," idle land, land used for pasturage and grazing.

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Gold Hill

CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

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As dictated by necessity and self-preservation, the settlers sold most of their valuables and belongings to ward off hunger while patiently waiting for their leader who never returned. Ultimately each was compelled to go his own way. Some were able to return to Japan and others moved elsewhere where employment was more promising.

It seems that only Matsunosuke Sakurai, a samurai, and Okei Ito, nursemaid to the Schnell household, remained behind at Gold Hill where they were befriended and employed by the family of Francis Veerkamp.

In the spring of 1871 Okei died of fever at the age of 19. She was buried at the knoll of a hill which she frequently climbed to watch the setting sun and gaze in the direction of her homeland. Her headstone reads both in English and Japanese. "In Memory of Okei, Died 1871, Age 19 Years, a Japanese Girl."

Matsunosuke Sakurai faithfully served the Veerkamp family until his death in 1901, and he now lies at rest in the Vineyard Cemetery at Coloma.

With its tragic ending, the colony soon passed into oblivion. Its very existence was lost and forgotten until after World War I. Still, a rumor persisted that a Japanese girl, who died in the gold rush period, was buried at Gold Hill near Coloma. A search was undertaken by several Sacramentoans.

The first person they interviewed was Henry Veerkamp, 75 years old. His parents had given shelter and employment to Okei and Sakurai. He was a year older than the Japanese girl he knew as "Okei-san." He recalled the story of the tea and silk farm, its Japanese pioneers and their hopes, industry, disappointments, sufferings, hardships and ultimate abandonment of the colony. He pointed out the site of the settlement and the location of Okei's grave, and thus the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony was rediscovered.

On June 7, 1969, California's Historical Landmark Advisory Committee recognized the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony of Gold Hill as an episode of significance in the history of early California and declared the site a historical landmark.

We cannot let the Wakamatsu colony pass again into oblivion. Let us find out more about our own history by talking with our people. Let us join the pilgrimage to this important landmark in our heritage.

Ralph Nishimi
Cops Sacramento
Sumitomo Golfing

SACRAMENTO — Firing an even par over the Hoffman Park course, Ralph Nishimi took top honors in the annual Sumitomo Banks Invitational Tourney held last Saturday. Frank Yamada claimed the low net trophy by posting a score of 83-20-63 in the link contest participating in by 108 golfers from all over the Valley.

Following the tournament a "Cook Out" was held at the Sacramento Horsemen's Association clubhouse with Kiyoshi Mizuno as head chef. Bob Fukushima acted as master of ceremonies and the newly appointed manager of the local bank, Kelch Minami, presented the prizes.

Other winners in the tournament were:

1st Flight — Yoshio Hirai, 79-11-68; Eugene Geraty, 77-7-70; Akio Iwanaga, 76-5-71; Gil Martinez, 77-6-71; and Richard Masuda, 80-9-71.

2nd Flight — Paul Shimazu, 80-14-66; Jim Johnson, 83-17-66; Ritz Nayrow, 84-16-68; Ron Hitomi, 88-19-69; and Elji Hironaka, 88-18-70.

3rd Flight — Denrei Matsumoto, 88-22-66; Lincoln Fujii, 85-28-66; Ted Tanaka, 94-27-67; Dennis Hashikuni, 95-28-67; and Rye Kelkoan, 100-30-70.

GARDEN CITY GOLFERS
TO INVADE SACTO MONDAY

Approximately 50 Garden City Golfers are scheduled to invade Sacramento for their annual home and home match play this coming Sunday with the Sacramento Nisei at the Dry Creek Golf course near here.

Following the tournament, a "Cook Out" will be hosted by the losing club.

Black Students

CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

"Some of them spoke English to me, and finally, I was invited inside her tea shop by a lady nearby. It was a very warm thing, and I had lots of experiences like that — outside Tokyo."

The fundamental reasons for Japanese color consciousness were explored by both students in papers they did for classes here. Bradley is a psychology major and Miss Green is studying social science.

"I found a deep inferiority complex toward whites," said Bradley, "and an apparent need to feel superior to someone else. I had read this applied to Koreans, and though I don't know any, I know now how they feel. Oddly enough, we knew a black guy who had a Japanese girlfriend. She sympathized very much with his problems, but was very prejudiced against Koreans, and she stood

Japanese "Song Bird"
In Berkeley Tonight

BERKELEY — Nazomi Arima, who is known as the "Japanese Song Bird," will perform under the sponsorship of the Alpha Auxiliary of Family Service, 7:30 p.m. Friday, June 18, at the Berkeley City Club, 2315 Durant Ave.

A lyric soprano, Miss Arima was a movie starlet in Japan. She gave up her stage and film career in order to come to the U.S. to continue her voice studies. She will sing melodies from the East and West, and her program will include selections on the koto.

Two intermissions are scheduled during the three-part program. During the first intermission Joni and Dana Hiramoto of El Cerrito will perform four Japanese classical dances. The girls are studying under Madame Michiya Hanayagi.

Keglers Report

SF Lincoln Trio

Teams	W	L
Lincoln Bowl	24	4
Toda Travel	18	10
Galaxy Specialty	17	11
Sumitomo Bank	15	13
Hayakawa's Salon	14	14
Bank of Tokyo	13	15
Kamazen	13	15
Toraya Restaurant	12	16
Ken Morino Co.	11	17
Hokamp Bakery	11	17
Art's Mens Shop	10	18
Roma Trophy	10	18

Team High Series and Game ... Galaxy Specialty 2323 — 652

Indiv. High Series and Games

MEN — Terry Filkins GS 822-237-229-204; Bill Baoini LB 812-210-207-210; Hiro Sentachi BT 801-234-231; Kayo Hayakawa GS 795-202-224; Hank Shimada LB 788-243; Dan Raye HS 781-210-212; Terry Sentachi K 781-200-214; Fred Nakamura AMS 776-224; Lee January HS 755-203-200; Joe Sordini TTB 748-213; Frank Olim AMS 733-202; Kei Shibata TTB 728; Sachl Takenaka KMC 718-231; Yutaka Handa SB 709; Archie Hirashima TR 705; Giichi Sakurai HS 700; Art Murakami TR 200.

WOMEN — Jen Hayakawa HS 752-190-192-215; Mamie Suyeyasu TR 710-199-189; Betty Ozaki GS 706-224; Kim Furuya K 200-226; Norma Sugiyama HB 205-192; Babe Sentachi LB 198.

Sac'to 2 Plus 1

SACRAMENTO — It was position night on June 2 for the 2 Plus 1 Nisei Mixed league, but none of the top six teams was able to improve its position with most of the bowlers finding difficulty with the lane conditions. Lowly Libra came out of its hole to strangle Gemini 4 to 0 to surprise everyone.

Scorpio also landed an upset

Skier Igaya Is
One of 16 Named
To Hall of Fame

DETROIT — Reider Anderson of Norway and Chiharu (Chick) Igaya of Japan were among six persons named last week to the National Ski Hall of Fame by the United States Ski Association.

The latest additions brings to 123 the number of competitors, officials, promoters and pioneers of skiing in the Hall of Fame, located at Ishpeming, Mich.

Also named to the Hall by the USSA at its annual convention here were Joseph (Jumping Joe) Perrault of Ishpeming; Warren Chivers of Saxton Rivers, Vt.; Sally Neidinger Hudson of Olympic Valley, Calif.; and the late Nels Nelson of Revelstoke, British Columbia.

San Mateo Mixed

Standings (June 15)

Teams	W	L
HELEN-J	12	6
BJ'S	12	6
CHALLENGERS	11 1/2	6 1/2
IRENES	11	7
HONEY-BEES	11	7
GOOD GUYS	10	8
SCOTTYS	9	9
MAR-J	8	10
FAR OUT	7	11
YO-YO	7	11
CAROL-MAR	6 1/2	11 1/2
CAPT. JACK	3	15

Team High Series and Game

Scottys — 758; BJ's — 2116

Indiv. High Series and Games

Jon Tamaki HJ 200-587; Joe Sasaki Sc 202-585; Kunio Kajisa HB 213-583; Mel Mark BJ 207-212-560; Jack Young 212; Hank Yuen CM 220; Bo Nakagawa MJ 210; Dave Fong Yo 206; George Ojima Sc 203.

WOMEN — Betty Mark BJ 199-521; Mary Fong Yo 199-520; Elaine Kodakari HB 177-515; Gayle Yoshimoto CJ 184-509; Helen Gee HJ 185-504; Jackie Pang HJ 191.

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The Sacramento Union
Sunday
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June 6, 1971 25¢

16 Pages
OF
Color Comics





Staff Photo by Gary Gillis

Air Show Tragedy

Page 3

Pass Catcher Wins

Good Morning!

Worth repeating

The sublimest song to be heard on earth is the lisping of the human soul on the lips of children.

—Victor Hugo

Increasing winds

Continued fair and warm but slightly cooler with increasing southerly winds. High today 87, low tonight 54. High Saturday 88, low 53. Bay Area: Mild and

Joanne Takeuchi of Sacramento offers flowers and a Buddhist prayer at grave of Okei who died 100 years ago this summer at Gold Hill's Wakamatsu colony. Numerous stories and pictures in today's Sacramento Union are dedicated to settlers from Japan who have become our friends and neighbors. Similar in-depth coverage of other Sacramento ethnic groups will appear in the future.



Other stories on Japanese Americans today throughout Section B and on Page D1.



*"One fallen flower
returning to the
branch? . . . oh no!
A white butterfly."*

Okei Ito

Lives on in History

By JEANNE VAP
Sacramento Union
Staff Writer

Homesick for her native Japan, Okei Ito died of a fever in 1871. If it weren't for Mrs. Ed Sayre Jr., the 19-year-old nursemaid might be forgotten on Gold Hill — where she is buried. Instead, Okei lives on in movie, song and story.

Fern Sayre has many hobbies. She collects Indian artifacts, grows bonsais and feeds about 100 birds a day. But most important of all is her historical research. It has her reading newspapers which date back to 1849.

The shipping records printed in these old papers are especially fascinating. In a way, they prompted Mrs. Sayre's interest in the history of early California minorities — long before ethnic studies were the rage. "The papers listed Caucasian arrivals by name, while

they merely stated 'a group of Chinese or Japanese.'"

"I was up to Gold Hill one day and Al Veerkamp, great-grandson to the early pioneer, suggested, 'why don't you do a story about the little Japanese girl on the hill?'"

Mrs. Sayre had all but forgotten the story of Okei — but it touched her romantic sensibilities, as well as her curiosity. When the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk colony disbanded, Okei stayed on in Gold Hill as a nursemaid for the Veerkamp family. She was buried at 19 on the hill she had climbed to gaze westward toward Japan.

As a young girl in Placerville in the early '20s, Mrs. Sayre had seen the grave and heard the story. Henry Veerkamp, who had been a year older than Okei, was alive at the time. "Unfortunately, the most important thing to me then was the Saturday night dance in Shingle Springs, Rescue or Coloma," explained Mrs.

Sayre. So in 1958, she began searching for answers to the questions she neglected to ask as a child.

Other Sacramentans, like Henry Takeda and Soshi Nagatani, knew the story. Mrs. Sayre wanted to document it.

Her search began in the California Room of the State Library. She found the first "clue" in the May 27, 1869, Sacramento Union and Sacramento Bee — which described the arrival of the German John Henry Schnell with a group of Japanese.

Mrs. Sayre contacted the Japanese Consulate in San Francisco and later wrote to the library in Wakamatsu, Japan. She learned of a book written in the '30s, entitled "The Flowers of the Storm" by Dr. Ki Kimura which described the Wakamatsu colony's flight from Japan. "From the book, an opera, movie, kabuki and

Please Turn to Page D 2

tlett, who runs a workshop in Family Living and Human Sexuality at the University of Miami in Florida.

Dr. Bartlett, mother of two, grandmother of three and a wife for 39 years, also is head of the National Screening Committee for the All-American Family Search, now in progress.

"PARENTS MAY have differing points of view about discipline and child-raising techniques," Dr. Bartlett said. "But they should agree to present a united front — and on the whole act as a unit.

—Children are allowed to have a say in some decisions, if not all. This gives them a sense of participating in family affairs and gets them over the feeling of being on the outside, looking in all the time.

—Affection abounds. The children then feel secure, loved, and wanted. When they see Mom and Dad getting along they are made to feel even more secure. When Mom and Dad quarrel, don't speak to each other, it shakes the children to the

joys and the sorrows, the ups and the downs, in your family figure out to an "all in together" philosophy or approach.

—Family enjoys doing some things together. Togetherness to a suffocating degree can kill all the joy, of course. You are not expected always to ride bikes together, or fly kites together. But you can find some things the family does together besides eating three meals a day and watching television. Games, picnics, museum visits. Make time to do things together.

'The Girl on the Hill' Tells Tale of Gold Days

Continued from Page D1

song had been written — they knew that Okei had died — but were not sure of what happened to the Wakamatsu colony in America."

"WHEN I GAVE my research to the Sierra-El Dorado County Historical Society, I thought that was the end of it. Little did I know that my research would become an international situation and the most interesting adventure of my life."

In 1966, (the year the application for a plaque and monument at the site of Okei's grave was accepted,) came an invitation from the mayor of Wakamatsu. Mrs. Sayre and her husband made the trip to Japan in 1968.

They took along California Almonds, Black Label Scotch, books on the California Gold Rush, the Seal of the State of California — and copies of Mrs. Sayre's research. And they returned with congratulatory scrolls from the mayor and other Wakamatsu dignitaries, a glass enclosed figure of Okei-san, the nursemaid, and many fond memories.

"We were treated like movie stars," recalled Mrs. Sayre who appeared on Japanese TV, radio and newspaper. The honored guest and only female at

a Chamber of Commerce dinner for 60 men, Mrs. Sayre also burned incense at the monument to Okei-san in Wakamatsu. "Wakamatsu was practically the picture of Placerville," she reported.

THE TRIP was a high point in her "career" as a historical researcher which began 25 years ago, "when my brother, who was with the National Guard, gave me some old letters to read, written to Governor John Bigler about Joaquin Murietta." Next, she read first person accounts of the Mendocino Indian Wars, "which read just like a movie script."

"I always wanted to be a detective," admitted the wife of the county auditor, "maybe that's why I enjoy historical research."

Mrs. Sayre has never "locked away" her research in a glass case, like a kimonoed doll. "It's fun to share." A TV network recently "borrowed" her research on the Chinese in California to prepare a documentary on the subject.

There is also an historical novel, "The Loves of Okei," printed in Switzerland, based on Mrs. Sayre's work. "I get 25 per cent of the royalties," she

explained, "which means I have netted \$128.47 and \$33.47 to date."

A LICENSED accountant, Mrs. Sayre is aware that the "return" does not begin to equal her investment in time and energy. "For a while, I was going to San Francisco three and four times a week to do research in the California Historical Society Library." (Mrs. Sayre often makes the trip with Helen Holdredge, Sacramento historical novelist.)

Although many of her articles have been published in UOP's Pacific Historian, Mrs. Sayre insists, "I'm not a writer. I'm a researcher."

"Yes, you might say I've lost my baby." Minority studies are the "in" thing today, and everyone is getting into the act. "I'm getting nothing but phone calls asking for my research."

Happy that this long-neglected segment of California's past is finally getting the attention it deserves, Mrs. Sayre disagrees with those who would use ethnic studies to "divide." "Our country is supposed to be a melting pot. We should be proud of being Americans — and yet retain our cultural heritage."

Looking

Steven loves to pl brothers — and the dog is a Gern too big for a 2-ye ly watches him fr has no medical pr a very special fai cially mixed, pa black. Anyone in Steven, or a child the Sacramento C tion Division, 454-

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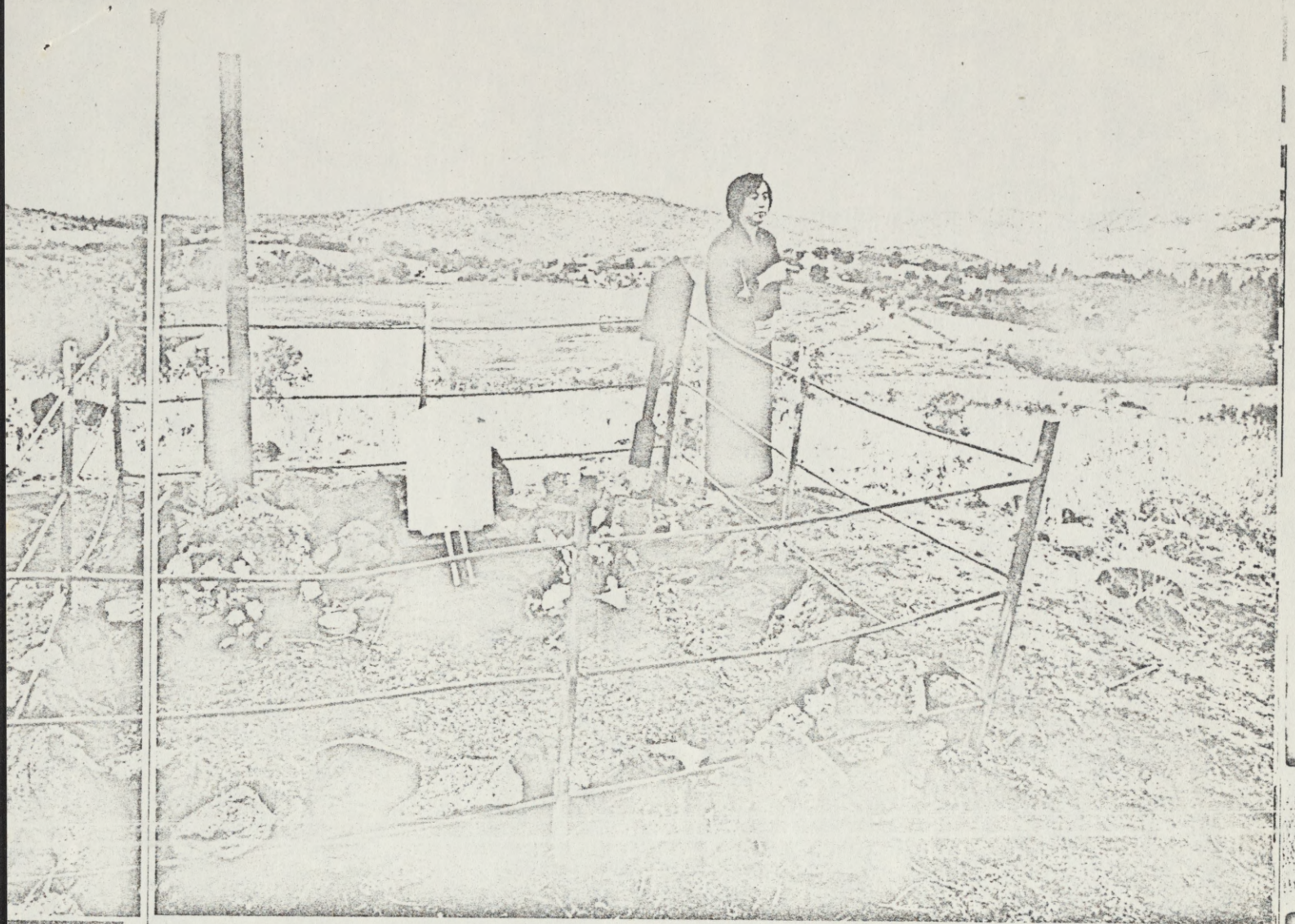
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Oct. 27, 1972

ゴールド・ヒル
黄金の丘における墓をたずねて
早乙女 貢氏のカリフォルニア取材旅行

新連載小説「おけい」の取材のため、筆者早乙女貢氏はアメリカ西海岸へ飛んだ。歴史小説界で最も多忙といわれるだけあって、一週間のかけ足旅行だったが、黄金の丘（ゴールド・ヒル）にある「おけい」の墓をまのあたりにみて、構想はおおいにふくらんだという。（オーバンの消防署前で）撮影・永井 涼一





おけいの墓が、カリフォルニア州エルドラド郡コロマ村のゴールド・ヒルで発見されたのは一九一六年のことである。和歌山出身の中条某が農園で働いているうちに幼児を亡くした。当時のことで日本人の墓地などない。近所に住むピアカンブ夫人が、私の土地に日本の娘の墓がある、その隣へ埋葬したらよい、とすすめてくれたのだ。

中条は喜んで好意を受けた。中条の友人である国司為太郎は墓参りをするうちに、おけいの墓に興味を持ち、それを竹田文治郎に話した。竹田（山形県出身）は雪城という雅号を持つ日米新聞サクラメント支局長であった。

雪城はその年、おけいの墓に詣でたが、ピアカンブの家を訪れて、おけいとは一つ違いのヘンリー老人に会ったのは翌年二度目の墓詣でときであった。

この事実を、私はサクラメント在住の中谷十一氏（北米毎日通信員）に聞いた。従来、竹田雪城が発見者とされていたので意外であった。サンフランシスコ日米時事新聞取締役池添一馬氏や、北米毎日新聞社長清水巖氏に会って中谷氏を紹介された。

八十四歳になる中谷氏やヘンリー武田氏や、佐藤信吾氏など関心を持つ多くの在留邦人の熱意がカリフォルニア史実語問委員会を動かし、若松コロニーの茶と絹農園は歴史的事件として登録されている。

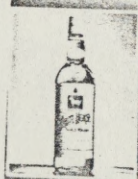
北米新聞の竹田雪城の記事に次いで河村幽川が昭和四年に文藝春秋に発表したが、さらに木村毅氏が熱心に調査され幾多の隠れた事実を発見された。現地のＦ・セイヤー夫人や山形の高嶋米吉氏など、おけいと若松コロニーの調査に尽力している人が多い。

私は会津藩士の後裔として、維新史の探究に三十余年を費やしているが、おけいには早くから関心を持っていた。

数年前、会津若松高瀬喜左衛門市長と歓談の際、図書館長の竹田正夫氏が大量の資料を提供してくれた。その中に前記語問委員長リチャード・Ｆ・マッカーシーの懇意によるヘンリー武田氏からの一八六九年サンフランシスコ・ブリティッシュ紙その他の膨大な資料が含まれていた。おそらく、私は本誌連載中、何度かゴールド・ヒルを訪れることになるだろう。

早乙女 貢

眠らざる スコッチ 〈ホワイトホース〉



日本総代理
JARDINES

東京 丸の内 有楽町線 有楽町駅 丸の内口 丸の内ビルディング 丸の内ビルディング 丸の内ビルディング

「おけい」の墓はシエラネバ
ダ山脈を見はるかす丘の上
に、ひっそりと立っていた。

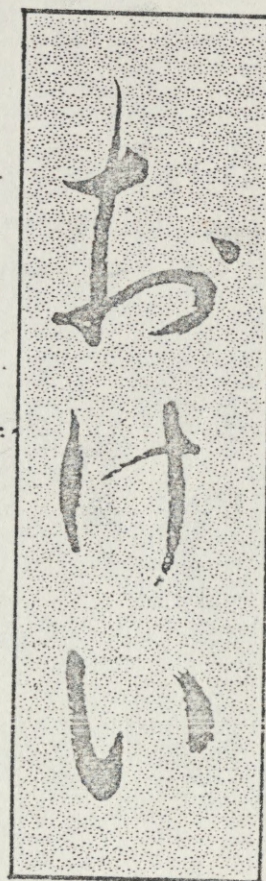
「おけい」の墓には、死んだ年だ
けで、月日はしるされていない。



早乙女氏は旅行中のほとんどを和
服姿で通した。(オーバンで)



新連載小説



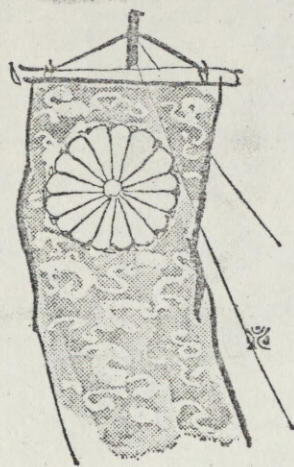
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早乙女貢
（題字も）

第一章

雪

転



二

どんと後で賑わう会津若松の城下に走りこんできた江戸からの使者は、不吉な死の風を運んできたのである。おけいたち町の者には、よく理解の出来ないことだったが、殿様が京都に御役で行ってから数年になる。その御役が、大公儀の役職としても非常に重く、責任のある仕事だということは、藩士たちの言葉の端々でおぼろげにわかっていった。京都守護職といい、天子のいる京都の

治安を守る役目という。黒船騒ぎ以来、世の中がなんとなくざわついていて、この奥州岩代にくにも潮騒は聞えてはいたが、やはり何といても山に囲まれた盆地だけに、情報は遅く、現実感はいなかった。

藩主松平肥後守備が、江戸を出発したのは文久二年の雪の降りだした師走のはじめだったが、入京以来、すでに五年間、一度もお国入りしていない。それだけでも、京の騒ぎが大変なことは想像がつく。京詰め藩士たちは何人かずつ交番で帰国しているが、殿様は帰るひまがないのだ。西国の過激な浪人を取締る際に負傷して帰国する者もいた。また、骨董に入って戻って来る者も少なくなかった。黒船以来の開国と攘夷の騒ぎは、結局、西国の雄藩が、結託して大公儀を転覆するという陰謀にはかならなかったのである。

大政奉還が行われたのは、去年の十月で、そのことも、へ將軍さまが詳識なされた。

というくらいにしか、理解されない。

これまでも將軍が老衰のために、終戦することはあったが、すぐに、次の將軍が立ち、世襲のように、お世

嗣か、御三家御三卿から選ばれた新將軍が次代を継いでいる。ところが、今度の場合は、継がないのだという。將軍という職が絶えることになったのだという。

三百年近くにわたった大公儀の複雑な機構は、町人の窺い知るところではなかったし、將軍職の権限なども知らない。ただ、世の中の仕組みが、そういうふうになっている。その將軍職を辞し、政權を天朝に還したという事実が、世の中がどう変わるようになるか、その不安だけだった。

前号まで

正月の十五日、会津の城下は白一色の世界だった。この日を会津では、女の年取りという。男が大晦日に年をとりをし、女は正月に年をとりをする。梅屋の娘のおけいも数えで十六になる。そろそろ嫁入りの義が持上がったことも不思議ではない。だが、どうもかといえは晩婚のおけいは、弟妹と頼みではかりいて、そんなことはあまり考えたくない。女の年取りは、女子供に楽しい行事が多い。おけいは友達のお力に誘われて、町はずれの河原に左義長焼を見に出かけた。門松や松飾りが威勢よく飾る。その時、町名主たちが血相を変えて騒ぎつけてきて叫んだ。「参上です。ねえ、京で戦が始ってなし、それが、大負けじゃ」と。

敵密には二百六十四年になるという、世の中の仕組み

残らず殺戮され、町は焼尽くされたし、ある城下では



仕事だということは、藩士たちの言葉の端々でおぼろげにわかっていった。京都守護職といい、天子のいる京都の

これまでも將軍が老衰のために、辞職することはあったが、すぐに、次の將軍が立ち、世襲のように、お世

たちが血相を変えて騒ぎ立てて叫んだ。「騒ぎ立ててはねえ。京で騒ぎが始ってなし、それが大負けじゃ」と

厳密には三百六十四年になるという、世の中の仕組みが変わることは、政治に関りのない者にも、不安で恐ろしいことだった。ところによっては、無類な者が横行し、農民一揆を惹き起して、陣屋が焼かれたり、町家が襲撃されたりしているという。ある町では若者男女一人

残らず殺戮され、町は焼尽くされたし、ある城下では質屋と酒屋と米屋が狙われ、家族が道路へ引きずり出されて、丸裸にされ、鉄や鎌で滅多斬りにされたという。そんな話は、たいてい飛脚や商用で越後に行ったり宇都宮から戻ったりした人々の口から伝えられた。

「恐かなえ、うちは桶屋でなし、よかつたげんじよも」
「おけいがそう言つて首を絞めると、小千谷縮みの包みを背負つた太刀屋の多吉は、鉄めるようにおけいの胸や腰を見て、
「可愛い女なら、桶屋も米屋もないでなし。おけい坊なら、おらでも抱きつきたくなくなるでなし、顔見するため寄り道して来たんだがら」
「嫌んだ」

おけいはつんとして横をむいた。
「汝や何を吐く、打撃つけるぞ、と父が半分本気で怒鳴らなければ、多吉は上り樫からのこのこ上つてきたかもしれない。」

お伊勢さまのお蔭参りや打撃しの騒ぎも、遠いくにの出来事として、この盆地では聞けた。静かな会津盆地の雪は、汚れを知らず美しく夕日に映えていた。

少女の気分が脱けきらないおけいには、大人たちほど、時勢の変化を深刻に考えられなかった。大人たちが、目を追つて不安の色を濃くしてくるのが、ふしぎなほどだった。

(將軍さまがいなくなって、天子さまに代るといっても、あたしたちの暮らしが、どう変るといふのかしら)

もともと、江戸も將軍も、この盆地から見れば遠い存在だった。二十万石の会津家のもとで生活がたつてい城下町の者には、それが徳川幕府があつて、その支配下にあるという意識も少ない。大名の政治は、それだけの独立性を持つてゐる。祖父も祖母も、その親や兄弟も、この地で生れ、この地で死んでゐる。代々そうやって暮らしてきたのである。この生活のリズムが、急に他動的に変えられると聞かされても、びんと来ない。

だが、この会津の殿様は、並の大名ではない。幕府の家門としての伝統がある。藩祖を二代將軍秀忠の子保科正之に仰ぎ、十八松平の二であり譜代というにとどまら

ない。御三家御三卿に次ぐ家柄だった。藩学もすべて、保科正之の家訓を基としていて、徳川家を支える藩屏たる立場を自認している。京都守護職を命じられたとき、何度も固辞したのだが、他に適任がないからと老中方に懇願されては、藩祖の遺訓があり、御親藩として容保は断ることが出来なかったのだ。

そういう立場では、徳川幕府が倒れたら、共倒れになる恐れは充分あった。家中の重苦しい不安の色は、藩士の誰もが、それを自覚していたからである。

日が経つにつれて、京の敗戦の詳細がわかって来た。急使は毎日のように来た。江戸にも、連日、報告が入ったのである。

いわゆる鳥羽伏見の戦いである。その戦さは大政奉還以来、天皇側近を固めた薩摩、長州、土佐を主体とする反幕の軍中で徳川一門を弾圧しようとしたことにある。むろん、会津容保の京都守護職も許めさせられ、かれらは前鋒軍として大坂城に在った。たまたま、江戸では、薩摩屋敷に無頼者を集め強盗団を組織して、放火掠奪殺害を行なって人心を恐怖に陥しこんでいた。内部混乱を狙ったことだ。市中取締庄内藩士らがこの兇賊の巢に大砲をぶち込んで掃討した。

翌日はこの報告に接すると、

「薩人の奸謀、君側を蔽う、奮って上洛して薩賊を掃蕩するべし」

として、京に向って進撃せしめたのだ。

君命を尊しとする家訓は容保以下、この命令に従わせている。この戦さでもっとも善戦し、もっとも死傷者を出したのは、会津兵と、容保の実弟の桑名侯の兵である。はつきりした数字は出ていないが、討死は百三十名にも及ぶという。負傷者の数は五百人の上を回っている

という話だった。

京詰めのかんき兵は千名内外だったから、この戦傷者の数は如何に会津が全面に立って活躍したかを物語っている。

主力であるはずの徳川家臣たちは、撤兵方や砲兵隊、歩兵隊に、新選組や見廻組を含めても討死九十人たらずというから、一万三千余の大軍から見れば、微々たるものであることがわかる。桑名、大垣、浜田の諸藩はいずれも十人内外の討死しかない。会津ほど誠忠の士が少なく、敗走が早かったからだ。

「まことに戦さなら、負けはせざつたげんじよも」
般況をつぶさに伝えるために、江戸に着くとすぐに帰国を命じられた野田という若者は片眼帯も痛々しい顔を、時々紅潮させて、人々の問いに答えた。

「他の隊の士氣がまるつきりだから、孤軍奮闘しても所詮、棄城せざるを得ない。それでもわれらが奮闘すれば、士氣を振起せると思うたげんじよも、敵は……」
野田緒之進は、そこで息を吞んだ。

「危なくなると、錦旗を掲出して来たから」

「きんきとは何だべし」

「錦の御旗でなし、天朝の旗でなし、汝ら錦旗に刃向いよつたら賊軍になるは……薩賊どもは、そう我々を攻めて来たがならはれ、もう何はとも支えようが失くなつたなし……」

錦旗。

人々の目に、そのまだ見知らぬ旗が、いろいろな形で、重くのしかかっていた。十六兩の御紋を赤地に金箔で印したり縫いとりしてあるという。それが天子より薩賊に授けられたとあれば、これに刃向うことは、こちらが賊になるということであった。

錦旗を掲出されなければ、千騎が一騎になるまでも戦って、会津武士の本領を發揮して死ねた、という感

慨が、野田緒之進にも、国元の武士たちにもひとしく胸に浮んだことである。

他の藩ならいざ知らず、会津容保の勤皇の心は、他の誰にも負けないものであった。孝明天皇が、朕は誰よりも、肥後(守)を頼みとするぞ、と仰せられて御親政を度々寄せられている。絶対的信賴の上に立って、公武合体の新体制を進めようとする矢先に、露じられた。岩倉具視による海軍説が信憑性を持つのは、そのためである。朝議は一変し、固執な公武合体の中途政治の道は閉ざされたのだ。

だが天皇への畏敬の念は、代替りとなつても変わらな。いわゆる勤皇の志士と称して天下を舞った連中は、明治天皇を利用しただけで、△玉がどげんした△とか△近ごろの玉は△などと蔑すみ称したが、恭敬な会津藩主は、錦旗に敵対するのは恐れ多しとして、矛を揃めたのだ。薩摩側では、してやったり、と北斐笑みだである。東北人の朴訥で、篤実な心を遊用したのである。

「これから、どうなるのだべなこれ」

城下は不安に包まれた。鳥羽伏見で敗戦したということは、同地戦争に敗退したというにとどまらない。

「薩摩が攻めてくるだべし」

「錦旗が来たらどうすべな、薩摩人は野蠻だから、女も子供も打殺されるでなし」

「なんだってま、戦さは負けだら、お終いだべし。勝つしかねえだべ」

城下の道真屋では、刀や槍が売れて、在庫が底をついたという話もひろがった。そういう噂は、さらに人々に欠乏感を抱かせるのだ。武士の家だつたら、どんなに少なくても、刀が七本や八本はある。槍も薙刀もある。が、町家には武器になるものは、庖丁や七首ぐらゐの

も及ぶという。負傷者の数は五百人の上を廻っている。

も戦って、会津武士の本領を発揮して死ねた、という感

なくとも、刀が七本や八本はある。槍も薙刀もある。が、町家には武器になるものは、鷹や七首くらの

ものだった。道中差が転がっていても、町人の道中差はいわば大除けで、手入れも怠っているから、赤錆が出て

いる。研ぎに出さなければいけないし、家族の数だけでも、刀を揃えなければならなかった。

町人だから、いざとなれば、逃げだしても恥にならないのだが、代々御恩になっていることを思うと、同じ城下の者としての情宜

が、そう急に掌を覆えすことが出来るだろうかという点にあった。武士も町人も農民も、同じ盆地の中で、一家族のように心を通わして代々暮してきたのである。武士たちと町人の間に階級の差はあっても、同胞としての感情の交流がある。なんらかのかたちで、みんな関わりを持っていた。

「おけい、うちには道中差が一本きりだから、買うて来ねば、しようがねえがらし」

父が漸くそう言いだしたときは、もう、刀屋の見世先には、売物ではない、研ぎの注文品が山のように積まれてからだった。職人気

質の父は、目先が利かない。真鍮棒に熊が出るに聞い、いざ出かけるのは冬眠に入ったころだ。そんな父のうといところも、おけいは嫌いではなかったが、こうなると、世間に遅れてしまつて、我が家だけが、薩摩武士に殺戮されるような恐怖を感じてくる。

おけいは、二、三軒まわつてみたが、どこの刀店も売切れていて、主人や研師は刀とは縁のなさそうなおけいを憐れむように見た。娘っこどもは櫓城にでも隠れるがよかんべえ、愚図々々したら、はで半侍に股ひき裂かれるでよ、芋を突つままれるでなし、などと言ったりした。

父は、売切れていたと聞くと、にしろにも短刀の一本ずつでも持たせてやりていが、そうもできねえがら、切出しの小刀で我慢すつかな、と苦笑した。戦さになったら、みんなを連れて松枝峠へ帰るが一番でなッし、と、母は横をむいたまま言った。正面きつて反対すれば、むきになって我を通すことを知っているからだ。父は黙った。が、暫くしてから、山さ行きてえが、そうもできねえがら、と、首をふりふり自分に言い聞かせるように呟やいた。

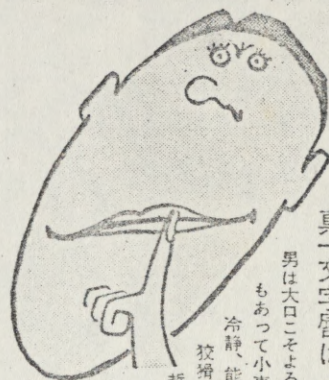
(あたしは、刀よりも、薙刀がいい)

おけいは、薙刀を習ったこともないくせにそんなことを思った。お屋敷の女性たちが薙刀を庭でふりまわしているのを見たことがある。髪を止め止めの鉢巻をし、袴がけで、袴を穿き、白い二ノ腕をむき出しにして、颯爽と薙刀をあやつる姿は、凛々しくて、美しくて、うっとり見惚れていたものだ。道場の窓からのぞいたこともある。

尚武の気風が横溢した藩だから、おけいも、無理に頼めば、教えて貰えないこともなかったが、そんなことは町の娘に用がないと叱られて、断念しなければならなかった。こんな事態になるのなら、薙刀の一手二手教えて



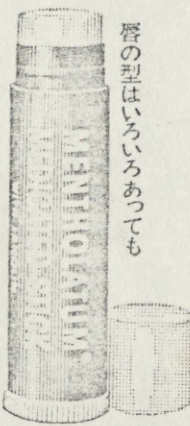
唇による 性格判断2



真一文字唇は、学問好きの哲学型

男は大口こそよろしけれ……。男らしく、生活力逞しく、度胸もあって小事にこだわらない。ひきしまった唇は、冷静、能弁、能率的な才人多く、但し悪用すれば狡猾なり……。悪用とまではゆかなくとも、哲学型が遂にその真一文字の唇を開いて、愛を囁くとなると大変やさしいムードを出したり、甘い言葉で相手の感情を揺さぶるなんて苦手中の苦手です。なんとか彼女を説得しようとするほどに口の中から唇までからからに乾きがち……。
※池田書店「はり／＼人間学」(池田重雄著)参照

唇の型はいろいろあっても



唇の荒れ・乾き・ひび割れに

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貰っていたのはよかったが、それも思うだけで、ほんとは薙刀を使うような性質ではない。見るのは嬉しいが、自分でするには、やはりむいていないのだと近ごろでは悟っていた。

満で十五という年齢が、女らしさを無意識のうちにとめていたのかもしれない。そう思えば、薙刀に憧れたのは、乳房がふくらまない前だった。銭湯にゆくと羞ずかしいほど、ちかごろ乳房が目立ってきている。

羞ずかしいといえ、おけいは醜態なのだろうか、下腹部の鬚りに気がついたのは、去年の暮れだった。洗っても落ちない汚れに気がつくと、春の萌草のよろに、黒ずんだものが、そこを蔽っていて、おけいは羽目板にへばりついたまま、真顔になったものだ。

城下の風呂は混浴だった。江戸では、混浴は禁止されていたという話も聞いていたが、ずっとそうやって別に事件も起らなかったせいか、城下ではそれが許されていた。武士たちも入りに来た。むろん、武家の娘たちも入る。その点でも、会津城下では、武家と町人の差別がなかった。武家屋敷には、風呂場のあるところがほとんど

どだったが、お長屋住いの軽輩や独身者や大身でも風呂などは好きなときに入るので、気軽に銭湯に行く。おけいは、材木町の家に隔てくるまでもその火照りが冷めなかったのを覚えていた。

「なんだ、半日も長湯してのぼせたみてえだぞ」

弟がからかった。すぐ下の弟だはまだ生えていないので、あんなふうなんだろう、と思った。一緒にゆかないでよかった、もう弟や妹たちと金輪際一緒にゆくまいと思つた。小さな妹などは、隙子を破ったり髪を引つ張ったりするのが好きだから、大事なところを引つ張られたら、赤恥をかいてしまう。しかし、その決心も、やはり長女である以上、押通すわけにはゆかず、弟妹を風呂屋に連れてゆくの役目になっていた。恥をかかないために、おけいは、裸になるときびしい顔をすることにしている。手拭で上手に隠すことをおぼえた。

あの柿を拾ってくれた侍が突然、桐屋を訪れたのは、三日目のことだった。おけいは、その姿を半丁も先に見

つけている。表の雪を踏み固めているときだった。おけいはあわてて家に駆けこんだ。薬書を脱いで、上へあがると、櫛を探した。手鏡を探した。こんなときに限って、目につかないものだ。おけいがやっと探しあてたとき、武士は快活な声をひびかせて、入ってきた。

「約束の日だげんじよも、櫛は出来ているか」

おけいに逢いに来たのではなかった。急に肩の力が抜けるような気がした。はっとすると同時に、何か淋しさも胸を没している。

へえ、それが五つだけで、あとの一つは明日になりそう、と父が恐縮すると、それ以上、告めだてはせず、すぐ届けてくれ、と言った。おけいの方を見たようであったが、あのとこの娘とは気がつかなかったのだから、忙しそうに、出ていった。

「その対馬館に届けるがら、おけいも手伝ってくれ」

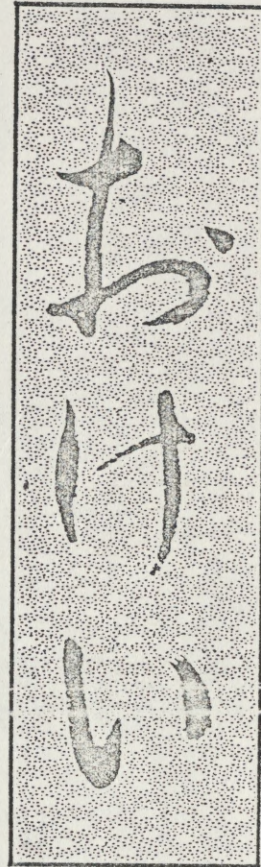
父にいわれて、うん、とおけいは飛立つように応えている。

(つづく)

Nov. 3, 1972

週刊朝日 46

新連載小説



(2)

早乙女貢 (さおとめ みつぐ) (題字も)

三井永一・画 (みつ い えい いち)

第一章 雪

転



その知らせが齎^{もたら}されたとき、おけいは家にいなかった。粉雪の中を柿の籠を抱えて歩いてた。白一色の雪の中で、熟れ柿のいろが目ざめるばかりに明るかったのを覚えていた。

侍たちは、雪を蹴散らして走ってきた。お城の北と西の大手の道は、必ず毎朝雪が掻かれ、踏み固められているが、霰^{あられ}々として降りやまない雪があとからあとからと

積って今朝から五寸も嵩^{かさ}高くなっていた。おけいは博労町の親類の家からの帰りだった。

甲賀町通りをお城に向って歩いていると、背後から騎馬が競い合うように走ってきたのである。

馬の吐く息が白く、蹄の蹴上げる雪が飛散して、凄まじい。馬上の侍たちは陣笠で合羽を着ていた。合羽の裾がはねあがって、なびいていたことくらいしか見ていない。

「危ない、踏ん殺されるでなし」

誰かが叫ぶのが聞え、おけいは、あわてて堀ぎわへよけた。そこは北大手の本一ノ丁へ出る角で、家老屋敷の長い堀がつづいてた。

騎馬は三頭。はげしい勢いで角を曲った。雪煙が濛々^{ももも}とあがった。雪の塊が飛んできたので、おけいは思わず、身を竦めたが、その拍子に、籠が手から放れ、柿をぶち撒けてしまったのだ。

転がりはしなかったが、二十あまりあったのが、すばすばと雪の中に埋まった。

「――まあ、きれい」

おけいは、拾いかけた手を止めた。

白い雪の中に点々と半ば埋もれた柿の鮮やかな色が、美しかった。馬に蹴られそうになったことも忘れてしまっている。

この地方でよくとれる、身知らず柿^{みしらず}だった。枝もたわなに生る。はじめて見た旅人などは、その壮観さに驚くのだが、あまりの豊富さに、幹も折れるのではないかと思われるほどだった。渋柿だから、樽柿にする。身知らずという俗称も、身のほど知らずに沢山生る、という意味と、あまり美味なので食べすぎるといふ意味がある。おけいの家にはこの柿の樹がない。マユダマ閉子を持っていった代りに、伯母がくれたのだった。

「何をばやばやしている。遅鈍^{おそだま}でなし、氷柿^{こりかき}になつてしまつてはないか」

通りかかった若い武士が、拾ってくれようとした。

「いいんです、きれいだから」

「おかしい娘だな、さ、籠を」

武士は手早く、柿を拾って籠に入れた。丁度、食べてるの熟れ方なのだ。雪で冷やしすぎては凍えて食べられなくなる。おけいも、あわてて拾いはじめた。

若い武士は山岡頭巾をかぶっていた。言葉は荒いが、



宗

若い武士は山岡頭巾をかぶっていた。言葉は荒いが、頭巾の中の涼しい眼が笑っていた。

武士は立上があると、大手の方を眺めやった。

「甚く飛ばしていたが、……」

気になったように、城の方へ歩きだしている。

「あの……」

おけいは、言いかけて、声をのんだ。名前を知りたかったが、聞けるものではなかった。そうでなくても、若い男と女の立話は、きびしく批判される城下なのである。その上、身分差があった。いくら軽輩でも、両刀差した武士と、町人の娘では、対等に口がきけない。雪の日で、人目が少ないからよかったようなものの、普通なら、柿を拾ってやることも憚られる規律だった。おけいは満で十五になる。数えで十六歳。どちらかというと小柄なほうだから、少女に見えたのかもしれない。

村木町の家に帰ると、この寒いのに片肌脱ぎになって、父の万造が鮑を動かしていた。桶屋では年期的に入った腕だったから仕事が多い。根が真面目すぎる男で、人が善くおだてに乗り易い。酒は強い方だが、度を過すと酒風の気味になる。

「父つアま、もう仕事？ 今日十五日じゃないの、休みだというのに」

「うん、休みだと断ったんだが、なんでかんでもやってくれという注文だから。ま、突っぱねたいが、それも出来ねえがら」

「ほんじゃって、なにも、今日は、女の年取りなのに」

「そうだったなし、ま、やりかけて、やめることも出来ねえがら」

そんな万造に、母のおきくはやれやれと諦めきった顔をむけて、父つアまは男だから、と、微笑した。女の正月に関係ないらしい、というのだ。ほだけんじよも、せつ

かくおけいが貰うて来たんだから、身知らずでも食べてくれなはんしょ、と優しく奨められて、漸く飽を離した。女の正月とも、女の年取りともいう。なぜ正月の十四日がそうなのか。男衆が大晦日に年とりをして、女は半月遅れて年をとる。いつからそんな風になったのかとおけいは、母にきつて訊ねたことがあったが、昔からの習わしでなし、と笑ってとりあわなかった。

マユダマ団子を沢山こしらえて、若木や水木に通して、神棚に飾りつける。マユダマ団子は米を粉にした粉で作るが、松枝鮫で生れた母は、粟か蕎麦で作ったという。松枝鮫には水田がなかったのである。もともと農家の豊年祈願から出たものであるが、町人たちの間にも年中行事として行われてきているのだった。

正月三ヶ日より、この十四、五日の方が、会津の女子供には忙しく楽しい。関東でどんど焼という祭の神やあの男鹿のなまはげに似た、かせどり、や・なりきぜめ、や、槌ん棒曳きなど、太騒ぎするのだ。

おけいは身知らず柿を食べながら、あの若い武士のことを話したくて、うずうずしていた。涼しい眼もと、頭巾のかげの横顔の凛々しさが網膜に灼きついている。何と言ったらいいだろう。

（若いお侍さんが親切にしてくれたの）

羞ずかしい。思っただけで、おけいは黙くなった。

「姉ちゃん、身知らず酔っぱらったみていだが」

二つ違いの弟が見咎めた。

「榎火のせいだなし」

「ほんじゃって、どんだん賑くなるでなし」

「頼い子、嘸らんと、お食べ」

「んじゃけじよ、やっぱり、怪しいでなし」
あの場面を見られたのではないかと思つた。かつと頬が燃えるようだった。おけいは柿を放して、頬を圧えた。あわてて、こすつた。こすると、赤みはますます増すのだ。

すのだ。

弟は、そんな姉を大きな眼で見つめている。長男のせいか、ときどき、兄貴のような口を利くことがある。町者の子でも硬骨の武辺ぶりを尊ぶ会津藩の気風が、責任感を養うのかもしれない。が、こんな際にそういう目で見られるのは、たまらない。

「なによ、こまちゃくれが、生意氣なこと嘸らんと、槌ん棒曳きに行かんしょ」
おけいは睨めた。

母のおきくも、巫山戯つて居らんと早よう行つて早よう帰んなはえ、と追ひだした。行べい行べいと、弟はその下の弟と妹を連れて出ていった。鑢打ちの木槌や竹箆に鑢縄を三筋つけて、雪道を曳いて歩き、槌ん棒のお通りじゃ、長虫来んな、もぐらもち起すな、と叫びながら街を廻る。これを、家々から、団子の茹で汁をかけた、檜の皮を打ちつけたりするのだ。そのあとで、団子や餅や柿をくれるのである。

母は、幼な見たちが居なくなると、ほつとしたように、あらためてお茶を入れて、おけいを見た。二人きりになると、おきくは妹を見るような眼をすることがある。嫁に来たのも早かつたし、まだ若いから、どうかすると、年のひらいた姉妹に見られることもあった。

「去年は父つゝまが厄落したつたげんじよも、今年は、私の番だてねえ、明日っから新しい火吹き竹を買つてこんと」
と笑つた。

もう仕事をはじめていた万造は、そうだったな、と思ひだして、榎を捨ててくるのも難しがつたぜ、と桶から頬をあげた。三人は笑いくずれた。男の厄落しは四十二歳。男は榎を捨てるが、女は遡う。使ひこんだ火吹き竹を家から外へ投げ捨てるのが風習だった。女が家事を捨てるといふのではなく、二つの区切りということだろう。

おきくが、そんな話をしはじめたのは、ただ今夜が厄落しの日だというだけの理由ではなかった。

「お前も数えて十六になるべ、私がこへ来たのも同じ歳だべし、翌年、お前が生れで……」

そう言いながら、凝つと見る眼が、おけいには眩しくなった。母が何と言いたいのかわかつてきたからだ。

女の十五歳といえは、そんな話が持上がるのも不思議ではない。もう友達で嫁に行ったのが何人もいる。おけいは、どちらかといえは隆熱の方だし、弟妹と毎日きやあきやあ騒いでいて、あまり考えたことがなかった。

年ごろだから、男のことを思うことはあるが、いずれ、そのときがくるだろうし、どうせ女は誰かのところに行くのだからと漠然と思つていただけだった。豊かな暮しではないにせよ、父が働いてくれる以上、飢饉のときでも、食べるには事欠かなかった。上を見りや限りがね、下を見りや限りがね、と父はよく言つたが、ほんとうにそうだと思つてゐる。身分にふさわしい暮しをしてさえいれば、それで人生はいいのだと、おけいは疑うことがなかった。

そのおけいの胸に、あの若い武士が強い印象を残したのである。それは、まだ恋というかたちにはなっていない。が、これまで、一度も、こういう気持を抱いたことはなかったのだ。何か、漠としてはいたが、予感めいたものがある。

「——おけい」

と、あらたまつて、母は言った。

「博労町で、何か聞かんかったなッし」

「なんにも」

「おはんちゃ病氣でなし、それでま、すっかり気が弱くなつてゐるからなし、それでなし……」

おきくは言い難そうだった。おけいは、そんな母の思いやりが、気の毒になつてきた。あたしの縁談でなッ



いやりが、気の毒になってきた。あたしの縁談でなッ

し、と口火を切ってやりたかったが、そう言ってしまうと、もうその縁談に深入りしそうで、まだ、そんな気にはなれない。心の支度もできていなかった。どんな相手か知らないが、あたしを貰いたいというのはどんな男かしら、とわくわくしながらも、その名前を聞いてしまっただけにはいけないような気がした。名前を聞くとは責任が生じるように思うのも、おけいの優しさのせいだろう。

(どうしよう……)

おけいは、あわてて仕事場をふりかえった。

「父アアま、正月から仕事をしているのは、家だけだべ、明日からしなほうか、きまりがよくて」

「こいつ、生意気なことを言うでなし、火薬場で、なんでもかんで、玉薬の桶が要るそうだがらし、おくにの御用だべし」

「んだべなアし」

と、母が応えた。

おけいはまた困った。話の継穂がない。すぐ裏の住吉河原に火薬製造所が出来たので桶の注文が増えて、父は忙しくなっていたのだ。オランダ桶と言って、大きな丸い樽を作らされて、徹夜で苦心していたものだ。古い火薬樽のタガをはずし、ばらばらにして寸法をとったり丸みをだす鉋を鍛冶屋に注文したりしていた。その工夫の腕を買われたのだろう。時勢のあわたしきは、城下の桶屋にも及んできている。

おけいが救かったのは、母がまたさっきの話を蒸し返そうとしたとき、友だちが訪ねてきたことだった。

「おけいちゃん、寒の神に行かんしょ」

近所の大工の娘のお力だった。おけいはほっとして、あっ、お力ちゃん、直に行くがら、と飛立つように腰をあげた。

雪は殆どやんでいた。子供たちが雪を転がして雪達磨

ヘスパーカッヅで

気軽に乾杯しましょう

グラスに入った白雪です。

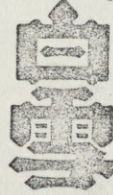
そのまゝ飲めます。さわやかな旨口の酔い

仲間がいれば、すぐに楽しいパーティの始まりです。



180ml詰
110円

清酒



シラユキ

山はふた海は一

小西酒造株式会社

を作ったり、槌んを曳いて、騒いでいたり、夕暮れの会津城下には、愉しいささめきが横溢していた。その騒ぎも、しかし、屋敷町の方は、妙に重苦しい部分があつて、下町の浮わつたものと、そぐわない感じだった。

かせどりと寒の神が、多く町人農民の風習だからというのではない。山国の盆地で他国からの旅人がめつたにない城下だけに、この会津では、土農工商の融和が無理なく行われ、身分階級の差を日常に意識することが少なかった。

祭といえば、侍も町人も一体になる感じだった。槌ん棒曳きやかせどりなど、武士の子も、町人の子も一緒になつて走りまわる。その感情の交流が、会津城下を一つの色合いで染めあげていたのである。しつとりと落着きのある城下町の雰囲気は、そういうところからきていた。

「お力ちゃんが来ながつたら、妙なことになるところでなッし」

おけいはメ飾りや神札の古いのをまとめていた束を持って、お力と急ぎながら、ああ救かつた、と大きな息をした。吐く息が白く宵闇の中に見えた。

「なんだ、人さらいから逃げたしたよな塩梅でなッし」

「ほほほ、人さらいみだいなもんだがらし」

「あ、わがつた。嫁とりだべ、どこ？ どこに嫁ぐの」

「いや！ 嫁かない、どこにも」

おけいは顔をふつて馳け出した。町はずれの天照寺の裏の河原でいつも左義長焼が行われるのだ。火明りに本堂の大屋根と鐘樓の影が浮きあがり、もうもうと煙が空を蔽っていた。

薪が積まれた上に、門松や人形やメ飾りが乗せられ、威勢よく燃えあがっている。結豆のつとや炭俵を投げる者もあつた。子供たちが次々と持つてくるメ飾りが投げられて、下に落ちないうちに火を移して燃えあがり、御幣などが火勢にあふられて、炎を舞いあがらせるのが、壮観だった。

どの顔も火を映して真赤になり、子供たちは走りまわったり、雪の上で組打ちしたりしていた。この火が燃すものがなくなつてだんだん奥になると、お飾り餅を焼いたり、芋を焼いて食べるのだ。

ぼろぼろと音を立てて燃え尽きている最中に、町名主や肝煎たちが血相変えて駆け寄ってくるのが見えた。

「こりゃア、お止めじゃ、お止めじゃ、寒の神はこれ限りじゃ、火を消すべし、早よう雪をかけねば」

「にしら、雪をかけねばだべ、お達しだべなほれ」

突然のことだ。みんな果然となった。

「お名主さん、どうなんだほれ、はで、火薬場は遠くて、風向きも危くねいだべ、何も、火を……」

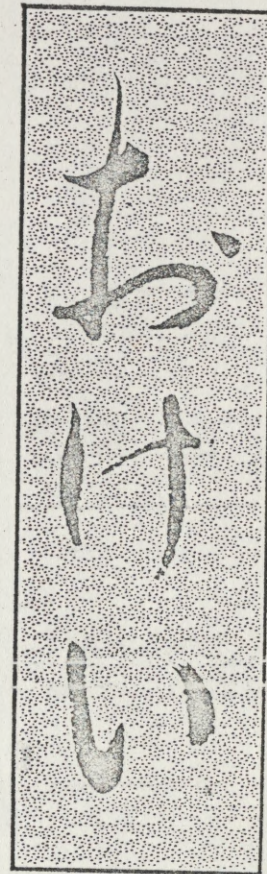
「いいから、雪をかけねか。祭どころではねえんだがら。大事が起つただぞ、京でお殿さまが大変なことになつたなし、戦さがはじまつてなし、それが、大敗けじやと」

京で戦さが——それだけでも、城下の人々を緊張させるものだったが、その戦さで大敗したというのだ。おけいは、狂つたように馬を走らせてきた三人の武士を思いだした。あの騎馬が、江戸からの使者だつたのか。

敗け戦さ、ということが、自分たちにどういふ結果を齎らすことか、おけいの小さな胸には、すぐにわかりようはなかった。が、この暗い空のように、不安が重くひるがってきて、おけいは、しつかりとお力の腕を掴んでいた。

(つづく)

新連載小説



(1)

さ おとめ みつぐ
早乙女 貢
(題字も)

序章 コロマの道

みつ い えい いち
三井永一・画



カリフォルニア州では百日に一日しか雨が降らないという。その雨が叩きつけてきたとき、私は車の中で、うとうととしていた。

まだ夜の色が残ったフリーウエーである。単調な禿山と散在する牧場の間を八〇号線が走っていた。さすがに夜の州道は車が少なく、時速百二十キロで何時間も走っていると、車はまるで軌道の上を運ばれているような安

定感があった。二十五ドルの保証金で借りたビントは快調にインディアン・サマーの夜を飛んだ。

二年前にこちらにきてはじめて免許証をとったというN青年は、煙草をとり出すときや、地図を見ると、ハンドルから両手を離した。左右に広大な禿山の起伏がつづくフリーウエーは、そのまま、二、三百メートルもインチの狂いもなく、車を走らせる。リミットが七十マイルから七十五マイルという速さでこの広さの大陸では当然のことになる。

「百年前は、ここはどんな道だったろう、ごろた石の細い、馬車が一台通れるくらいの道だったろうな」

サンフランシスコを出て間もなく、落陽に照らされた禿山を眺めたとき、私は、旧満州の山々を思いだしたものだ。

満州の山々は文字通り禿山が多かったが、このアメリカ西部の山のそれは、同じ緑せた褐色でも近よってみると意外に草が生えている。牧草になるのか、十インチばかりの草が生えているのかが、これが山肌と同じ色合いなので、少し離れると禿山にしか見えない。

「秋だから」と、私は言った。「少し早いようだけど、

もう末枯れはじめているのか」

N青年は笑って、私も最初そう思ったんですが、いつもあんな風なんですよ、と言った。

どう見ても枯れ草だった。春も緑にならない草。水の豊かなわが国では考えられない乾いた風景だった。この乾きは、緑の豊かな国土を持つ私たちに一種の失望とともに原始の荒々しい感情で揺さぶるすにはない。サンフランシスコの百五十万坪に及ぶ鬱蒼たる森林公園が、草一本ない砂漠に他処から持ってきて植林した成果であると聞かされても、信じ難かったのと表裏をなしていた。部分的には熱帯のジャングルを思わせる、その緑と、豊かな日陰をつくるために、スプリングクラーが絶え間なく動き、一日の水の消費量三百万ガロンという贅沢でしかし効果的な方法によって、死んだ土地を甦えらせていたのである。(――百年前までは、しかし、考えられないことだった……)

私は、窓外に流れる禿山を見ながら、思った。

フリーウエーは、この山の腹を無惨に断ち、盆地を貫き、密を削って、東へ延びていた。

このころ道のころ、幌馬車がかたごとと、夜を日につ

いで走ったことであろう。西部の荒僻地帯に慣れた人々には、さして苦にならなかったことも、異国の、豊かな四季にめぐまれて育った者の目には、どれほど絶望的な、殺伐さに映じたことであろう。

黄塵と熱病と、インディアンや無頼漢の襲撃と、

ことであつたと、西部開拓史は伝えている。一八四八年サクラメント近郊コロマで金塊や砂金が発見されてからゴールド・ラッシュとなり、東から北から南から、黄金亡者たちが集ってきた。やがて金鉱は開かれ、

を残すにはない。サンフランシスコからコロマへの道、川路と陸路で開拓され、サクラメントの町が過熱状態のときには一年の間に七千人から八千人が移住した。



いて走ったことであろう。西部の荒蕪地帯に慣れた人々には、さして苦にならなかったことも、異国の、豊かな四季にめぐまれて育った者の目には、どれほど絶望的な、殺伐さに映じたことであろう。

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「秋だから」と、私は言った。「少し早いようだけど、

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を残すにはいない。サンフランシスコからコロマへの道、川路と陸路で開拓され、サクラメントの町が過激状態のときには一年の間に七百人から五万人にまでふくれ上がったといわれる。

サクラメント市は州都になっているが整然として冷たいくらしいの官庁都市で、私たちが入ったときは五時を僅かに過ぎたくらいなのに、商店はほとんどが店を閉ざして、硬い表情だつた。かつて荒くれた酔いどれたちが、酒瓶と拳銃をふりまわしていたおもかげを伝えるものは、市の北郊にあるオールドタウンくらいのものでした。歴史的遺跡として補修工事が進んでいたが、われわれの機念にある西部劇調の街よりは新しいようであつた。

コロマへの道は、サンフランシスコからなら、必ずサクラメントを経由する。陸路は前記の八〇号線だが、川をゆくなら大盆地に切りこんだグリーズリー湾からサクラメント川を遡り、支流のアメリカン川に軸をむけることになる。

ミシシッピの外輪船は著名だが、あれと同じようなものであつたらう。アメリカン川は二十数マイルでフォルサム湖に辿りつく。

この湖を縦断すれば、また川を遡って、コロマ村へゆきつくことになるのだが、百年前には、その船便はなかったのかもしれない。

記録は、サクラメントまでを示しているにとどまる。かなりの急流であるし、兩岸の樹木が蔽いかぶさって、舟の航行を阻んだのかもしれない。

話が飛んだが、私がコロマへの道を通ってゆく途中で、そのことに気がついたのは八〇号線とはオーバンで別れてからである。オーバンは百年前に立てられた火の見櫓をそのまま残している古い静かな街で、四九号線との分岐点だつた。アメリカのように歴史の浅い国では、百年前のおもかげでも史跡として貴重になる。ヨーロッパや

東洋の歴史の深さ厚さが、アメリカには口惜しいのである。史跡保存には、かなりの熱意を凝やしている様子だが、このあたり一帯で見受けられた。ヨーロッパのような石積み建築が少ないから、コロマ村では、牢屋までが大変な史跡になっていた。中世のような六方塔のまゝで荷造りのような様まであった。

二

このオーバンの街も御多分に洩れず金鉱熱の恩恵を蒙ったところだが、四通八達の手配だけに当初は馬車の中継地が、宿場街として発展していったものであろう。五叉路になった街の中心部に近く急な坂に階段式につながつた店構えが、そのまま残っている。一階の露合や、太い柱の狭い入口や、インディアンの前立のような看板の模様に、西部特有の表情がある。銀行がある。一八八七年と書き置かれた銅板看板がはつきりと見える。私は、以前、山陽線の尾道駅の手前で、汽車が何故か十分ほど停車したとき目の下に土蔵造りの備前銀行というのを見たことを懐かしく思いだした。あれは二十年前のことだから、いまはどうなっているか知らない。むろん、このオーバンでも銀行の建物だけでは洗濯屋になっていた。南へ坂を登って暫くゆくと、新しい街がある。歴史的な街のたゞすまいを残すため、中心部をすらしであるのだ。そこを通りすぎるとたちまち山の中に入る。深い谷底と、亭々たる針葉樹の高峰が連なっており、表情は一変する。下界から一度に高野山の上へ連れて来られたような急激な変化であった。

ここはすでにエル・ドラドである。シエラネバダ山脈に踏込んでいたのだ。このカリフォルニアとネバダの境界をなして南北に走る山脈の雄大さは、はじめての旅人には、前途に不安を抱かせたに違いない。四九号線

は一車線であるが、一般舗装道路で、山の間を白く蛇行して走っている。その行先を見定めるには深い森林が遮っている。その変わりようが極端なせいであらうか、何やら深い山中に迷い込む感じは拭えない。

もしも落魄の人々が、この道を辿ったとすると、馬車の漸く通れる道はあっても行先に見果して何があるか、人家があるとは信じられない恐怖におののいたことであらう。日本の山と違って、余裕を持った心には絶景と見えても初めての異郷の不安は倍加されたに違いない。この山中で、再びカリフォルニアの雨に見舞われた。

九月十月がインディアン・サマーと呼ばれる最も暑い季節だけに、雨は猛烈であった。八〇号線ではとうとうとしていたので、降りだしを知らなかったが、曇った空の向うに、天の灰色がそのまま滲みまわって森林に蔽われた山々を包みこみ、その奇麗なまでの空漠のひろがりや、やがて車に襲いかかってくると思えた。激しい雨脚が樹々を叩き、ハイウエーを叩いて、しぶきをねあげて迫ってくるさまは異常なまでに恐怖的であった。南から北への雨雲の進行に向って、ピントをふつ飛ばして行つたことで、あたかも、怒濤の中に突込むような結果になったようである。

車の鼻にしぶきが上がり、フロントガラスに百千の雨が叩きつけてきた。ガラスが割れるかと思われるばかりの豪雨だった。ワイパーが忙しく動きだしても間に合わない。片側は千仞の谷である。さすがに速度を強めねばならなかった。屋根を叩く雨は、いまにも突破して頭上に沛然と降りかかるかと思われ、フロントガラスがいまにも飛散してガラスの破片と雨が顔に突刺さってくるような恐れすらあった。この豪雨は、その襲来が突然であったようにまた、突然、ぱたりと止んだ。前方の空に美しい青空がのぞき、雨は未練気もなく、立去っていた。この間がどれくらいつづいたろうか。あまりにも、その

退き際のあざやかなゆえに、狐につままれたような感じだった。振りかえると、オーバンの空は、暗灰色に蔽われて悪夢ではないことを証明していた。

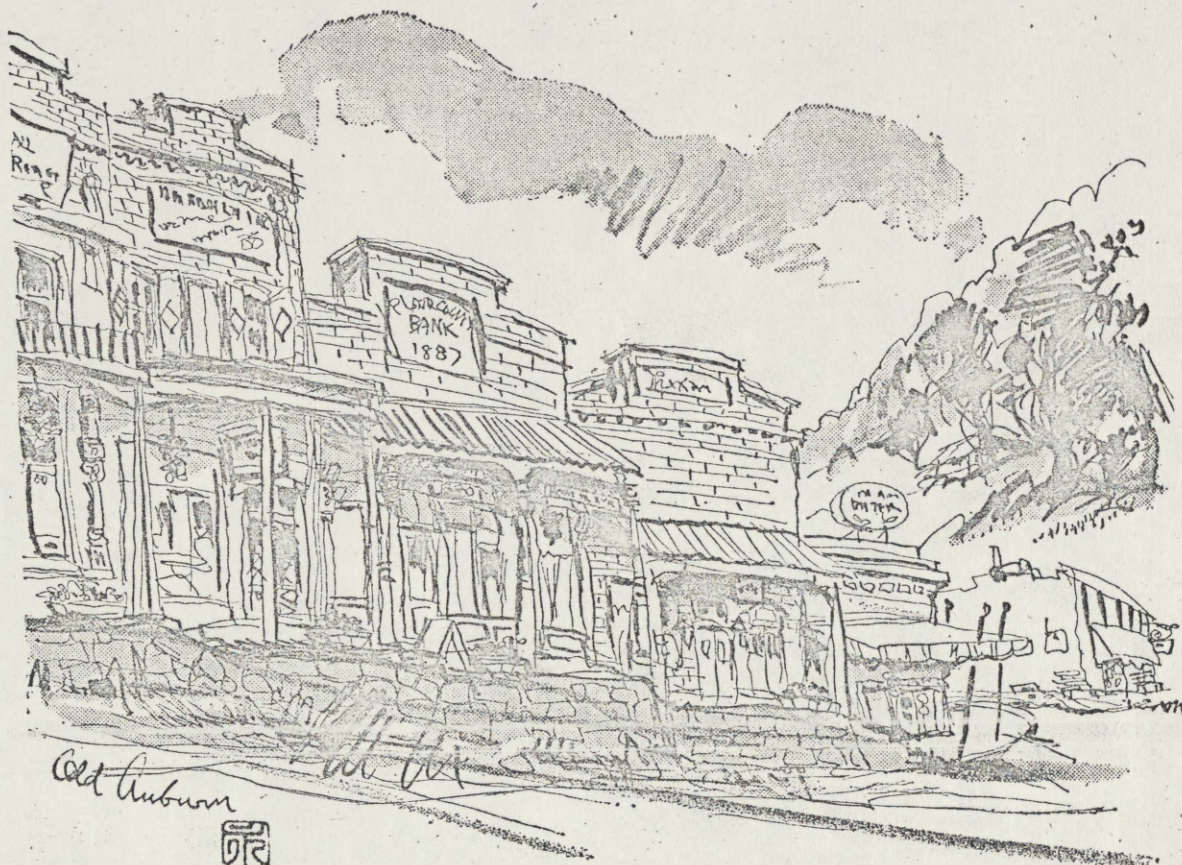
もうこのあたりは標高はかなりあるはずであった。豪雨の痕跡はしかし、たちまちのうちに拭かれたように消えてゆく。樹々の滴が陽光にきらめき、道はいつの間にか山中から平原に出ていた。そう錯覚させるほど、あたりの起伏は低くゆるやかになっていて、放牧の馬や牛が見えた。高原なのだ。およそ七マイルほどでクールに出る。左へ折れると三八九号線で、グリーンウッドを通って、百万ドルの金を掘出したブラック・オーク山跡の跡がある。

このあたりからは、遺跡といえはほとんど、金鉱と関連したものばかりである。間もなく右手に、豪奢であったらうベイリー・マンションが朽ちかけたまま（軒には野生の葡萄の蔓が延びて、小さな実を沢山つけていた）傲然とハイウエーを見おろして、最盛時の大地主の貴族と威容を示していたのもそれなら、金鉱発見者の栄誉を銅像に残すマッシュアルが金を発見した箇所を指さしているのも、すべてが、ゴールド・ラッシュへの懐古につながる。しかし、私が、わさわざ、このコロマの道を通つたのは黄金亡者を哀むためでも、一粒の砂金でも拾おうというさもしい魂胆ではない。薄幸の青春を異郷で淋しく閉じた一人の日本の少女の軌跡を追つてのことであった。

三

彼女が、このコロマへの道を通つたころはすでに、黄金の狂気が去つたあとであった。

前述の一八四八年は、わが国の嘉永元年でフランス二月革命の年にあたる。黄金熱のピークは十年間にすぎない。死の街や、魔境の地図を調べても、たいてい



が、五〇年代で、せいぜい六〇年代の末まで。狂気の二十年——二十年目がわが国の明治元年。日本列島を吹き荒れた動皇攘夷の風と、黄金の光に魅せられたアメリカの狂気と、びったり一致する偶然の符合は何を意味するのだろうか。十九世紀後半の、近代への夜明け前の、陣痛の苦しみを表徴するのであろうか。

彼女がサンフランシスコに上陸したのは明治二年の春である。金銀熱は冷め、サクラメントも急激な膨張を羞じるように、人口が激減していたときであった。サンフランシスコのオッキンデンタル・ホテルの古い宿帳に、はつきりと彼女の名前が記されていた。当時の人々は、この日本の娘に異様な関心を抱いたに違いない。コロマ村に入った私は、アンティックの店で彼女のことを聞いた。そこはアメリカン川の南の支流に近く、ふと、この川を遡ってきたのではあるまいかと考えたのである。

「私は彼女を直接に知らないが……」

と、度の強い眼鏡をかけた老婦人は太い指をあげて言った。

「少し手前にパイロット・ヒルというところがある。あの道を西へゆけば、フォルサムへ出るよ。サクラメントからくるには、あの道が一番近いのさ」

オーバンを経由した四九号線はコロマから四マイルほどで五〇号線にぶつかる。そこがブラサビルである。八〇号線と大差ない距離でサクラメントに至るからこの三角点を結ぶ中を通るフォルサムからパイロット・ヒルへの道が、現在から見れば裏街道でも、当時はメーンになっていたのかもしれない。

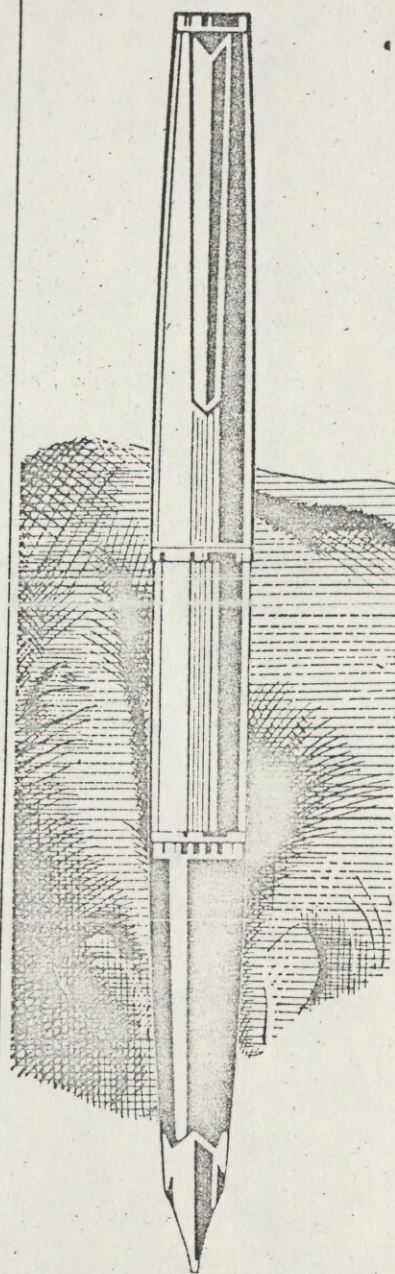
「わざわざ東京から来たのか、彼女も喜ぶだろうよ。でも、ピアカンプの婆さんには逢わない方がいい、すつかり人が違ってしまったからね。この戦争で……」

度の強い眼鏡が私の年輪を探るように見ながら、気の毒そうに、息子を太平洋戦争で亡くしてからね、日本人嫌いになっているから、とつけ加えた。

ピアカンプ家というのは、かつてコロマ村の大半を占めていたオランダ・ランチの管財人で、いまは大農場主になっている一族のことであった。私はここで木製のインディアン・コインを買って、車をいったんフォルサムへと向けた。

フォルサムの存在は、現代では合衆国刑務所とダムによって僅かに知られている。ひとたびフォルサムまで走

伝統の技術が生んだ 21世紀の ステータス・シンボル



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らせてから、また逆に通った。この道を辿りながら、彼女たちは行先に光明を見たのだろうか。深い樹立と、時折り左手に散見する溪流と。この溪流には、まず、さけ、なますが釣れるという。河原におりと、日の加減で、ときどき、キラキラと光るものがある。砂金だった。ただ採算がとれないだけで、まだこの川底には、マーシャルの指先に応えるものがある。彼女たちは、カパー・ワゴンでことごと未知の道を辿り、あるいは、なますを釣ってみたかもしれない。口に合わせぬ異郷の食事に飢えていた胃を、新鮮ななますやさけで満たしたかもしれない。

その夜、シエラネバダ・ハウス三世という古めかしいホテルに泊ったが、曉方、また雨が降った。これは小雨であった。

やはり高原の冷気と四辺の風物は、山中湖畔にでもいるような錯覚を起させた。小雨の中に、濃い真白な霧のかたまりが、雲のようにひくひくと動いて、山の中腹を隠して流れていた。そこから、ゴールド・ヒルまでは近い。いや、ここはもうゴールド・ヒルだという。昔のワ

イン・テストイングの看板をかけた家などがある。

小さな郵便局や前述の牢獄などのあるコロマ村を突抜けて、プラサビルへの近道になる暗い細道を登るとすぐに左手に小学校が見えてきた。ピアカンプの農場はその先だった。放牧の牛がのんびりと草を食んでいた。郵便受にピアカンプの名を見つけたければ行過ぎていたろう。百年前の回廊のある二階建の農屋と巨大な樺が見えた。この樺は日本から持ってきて植えたものなのだ。扉が歪んで農場の魔窟のようであったが、すぐ前に車庫があつて、若い男がトラックスを出そうとしているところだった。歪んだ名札を私が直していると、犬が飛んで来、若者がおりてきた。

若者に見えたが、二十歳、六で、子供があるという。

フィリップという名だった。兄弟の真中で妹が一人ある。そんな話をした。

「その日本人女性なら、既に聞いている」

フィリップは言った。

「可哀想なことをした。ヘンリーが愛していたようだけ」

ヘンリーというのは、曾祖父の弟になる男で、ために

一生を独身で送ったということだった。小雨の中を私たちはひきかえし小学校の裏手の丘へのぼった。見晴しのいい丘の上に一本のオーク樹がある。そのほかは岩頭が露出しただけの荒涼たる眺めである。この広い丘全部が墓場のような気がした。丘上から眺めると、はるかに北西のかたには、アメリカン川の谷を越してシエラネバダの山脈が雄大な空を劃ってゆるやかな稜線を見せて横たわり、雲かと見またがう濃い霧が山麓から湧いては流れ、山腹を這っていた。

丘の上に、その墓はあつた。墓碑面は真東をむいている。大理石の墓はいま作ったもののように白い。

In Memory of OKEL……裏面には、奇妙な日本字が彫ってあつた。

日本皇國 明治四年……月と日が彫ってあるが、数字はない。欠けたのではない。はじめから彫られてなかったのである。中央に大きく、おけいの墓と読めた。

(つづく)

し、長期
力をして
書や専用
が必要
を始める
抱えてい
鉄」を産
ねばな
具楽部

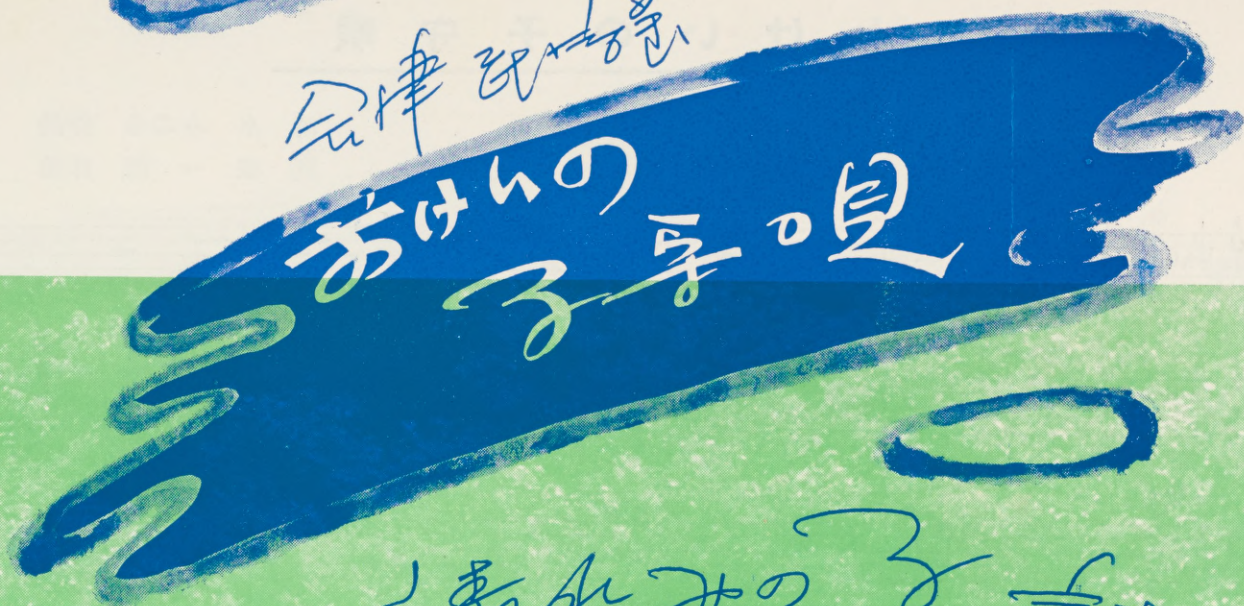
力。

yu.

oo

会津民謡

おけいの
子守唄



o

おれみの子
ねー ちや ちや
おれ



黄金立
こかねがおか
GOLD HILL

おけいの子守唄

清水みのる 作詩

利根一郎 作曲

ゆっくり



mf



ね ん ね ん ー お こ ー ろ り い こ く の お か で



お け ー い じゅう し ー ー ー ち あ ー ー な ぜ な い た

おーくに なまりのヨ こもりうた こもりうた

うたいながらも サー、 ー なぜないた なぜないた

ねんねん、おころり 異国の丘で
 おけい、十七 あゝ なぜ泣いた
 ○ お国なまりのヨ 子守唄
 唄いながらもサ なぜ泣いた

ねんねん、おころり 浮雲、追つて
 おけい、しよんぼり あゝ どこ見てた
 ○ 夢でなければヨ 帰れない
 恋し会津のサ 空見てた

ねんねん、おころり 唄つて泣いて
 おけい、いとしや あゝ 何待つた
 ○ 春が来たのにヨ まだ来ない
 故郷のたよりをサ たゞ待つた

唄の解説

会津若松市文化財調査委員長 古川 佐寿馬

1887年(明治20年)頃からは北米カルフォルニア州にも日本からの移住者が入りこんできて、日本の田舎の開拓地にもよくある掘立小屋がこゝにも見うけられ始めた。ことにアメリカ人の眼にとまつたのは幼児のおしめが乾してある風景である。

ある移住農民が愛児を亡くして郷里に遺骨をおくことも叶わぬので、せめて故郷日本のみえる所にでもと丘を登つてあれこれと墓所を探していたら、ゴールド・ヒル(黄金の丘)の最も眺めのよい所、西に沈む太陽に向つて小さな美しい大理石の一基の墓をみつけた。不思議なことに裏に「おけい之の墓」と日本語で書いてあり、明治四年没す、享年19才とあり、表に英字で日本娘とも書いてある。懐しのあまりその近くを愛児の墓所と定めそのことを日本人に話したら大変な噂になった。それはわれわれよりズツと早くしかも明治の始めにこゝに移住してきた日本人——しかも娘がいたという——それが殉教者に会ったような気持ちでそれが彼らの励ましとなり更に尊敬とかわった。そして誰いうとなく自然にこゝにお詣りする人がふえた。

このおけいさんこそ会津生れの可憐な娘で芋茎新田(いもがらしんでん)のおきくの長女でした。母と共に野菜作りに精だしていた氣立ての優しい色白の娘だった。

母が毎朝新鮮な野菜を売りあるいているうちにおきくの家からあまり遠くない絵高町の異人館の奥さん(会津藩士の娘)とついじっ懇になり乞われるまゝにおけいさんを侍女兼子守にと邸にあげた。

この異人館の主人は藩主容保公の信任あつく身はドイツ人でありながら、士分にとりあげられ藩の砲術指南となり名も平松武兵衛と藩公から賜わつた程の人物だった。会津戦争に敗れて四民は苦しみことにサムライは罪にとわれ更に四散して身のおき所もなかった。

その時、このドイツ人エドワード・シユネール(平松武兵衛)は世界の状況にも精しくもともと横浜で武器の輸入商であつたところから、このあわれなサムライと百姓をつれてアメリカの新天地に若松町を造ろうと藩公に進言した。殿の許しをえて明治2年5月に40人(この一行におけいさんも加わつた)を先駆者とし横浜か

らチャイナ号でアメリカのカルフォルニア州にわたり、こゝで農業を始めた。製茶・養蚕などを計画し諸準備をしてわたつたのだが氣候風土があまり会津とちがついて成功が覚束なくなりシユネールはおけいさんを隣家の地主ヴィアカンプ家にあづけて資金の工面に日本に帰つた。

しかし、シユネールはついに母国ドイツまで行つて資金をえようとしたが思いにまかせず再び渡米できなかつた。一方とり残された娘おけいさんはヴィアカンプ夫人にわが子のように可愛がられて料理やお裁縫を教えられ器量でもの覚えがよく優しい娘と大変なほめられものだった。だが、月日がたつにつれ日本がこいしくなり、ことに夕方になると「故郷恋しき母恋しきに堪えきれず、ゴールド・ヒルの頂上の丘から西の方日本を——会津を——夕陽の山の端に沈むのを背のびしながら眺めて泣いていた。せめて月一回の便船で故郷の母からの音信をと祈っていたが、これも空しかつた。ねむられぬ深夜に風に乗つて狼の遠吠などが聞こえてくるなどとは幼いときの母の唄つてくれた子守唄を憶いだしてはしとどに枕をぬらし

た。とうとう身心ともに疲れ果てている時、熱病にかゝりうわ言に母にきかされた会津なまりの子守唄を低く吟みながら異国での短い花の一生の終りをつげた。丁度19才でアメリカに行つて二年目で白い卵の花の咲く盛り頃であつた。ヴィアカンプ夫人は篤い看護の甲斐もなく逝つたおけいさんを憐んで、よく夕陽の沈む時浮雲を染める赤い空をあかず眺めていたその丘の頂に葬つた。

それから十年程すぎて一行の松之助たちが漸く毎日の胡口をしのぐようになり、可憐なおけいさんの墓をと小さいけれど彼女の純真な心になぞらい、真白い大理石の墓を西の方会津に向けて建てた。

1957年(昭和32年)約90年たつてあこがれの故郷会津の背炙山にアメリカからおけいさんの霊石を迎えて墓碑が建てられた。夢にまでみた生れ故郷に帰つてどれ程か喜んでいるであろう。又1960年の日米修好百年祭には日本移民のNo.1最初の女性移民として米国でも讃えられ慰霊祭があげられ、在米日系人を始め米人からも尊敬されていつも墓には献花のたえ間がない。