NPS Form 10-900
(Oct.1990)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

397

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 941 Cold Springs Road ☐ not for publication N/A

city or town Gold Hill ☒ vicinity

state California code CA county El Dorado code 017 zip code 95633

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☒ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title — Date: 28 APR 2009

California Office of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official — Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action

- ☐ entered in the National Register
  - ☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register
  - ☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
- ☐ removed from the National Register
- ☐ other (explain): _____

Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony
Name of Property

El Dorado County, CA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- [x] private
- [ ] public-local
- [ ] public-State
- [ ] public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- [ ] building(s)
- [ ] district
- [x] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	7	buildings
1		sites
		structures
		objects
3	7	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic
Agriculture: silk and tea farm

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture: pastureland

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

No style – farmhouse vernacular

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Rhyolite (local igneous rock)
roof Wood/metal
walls Wood
other

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony
Name of Property

El Dorado County, CA
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☐ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ B removed from its original location.

☐ C a birthplace or a grave.

☐ D a cemetery.

☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ F a commemorative property.

☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)
Japanese Ethnic Heritage
Exploration/Settlement
Agriculture

Period of Significance
1869-1871

Significant Dates

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
Japanese

Architect/Builder
N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):
- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data
- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☒ Other State agency, Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☒ Other

Name of repository:
American River Conservancy, Coloma

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 54.3 acres

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	—			3	—		
2	—			4	—		

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rebecca Allen, Ph.D., and Kimberly Wooten

organization Past Forward, Inc. date 15 March 2009

street & number PO Box 969 telephone 530-333-4547

city or town Garden Valley state CA zip code 95633

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner
(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Helen L. Veerkamp Revocable Trust, % Gary Veerkamp, Trustee

street & number 8691 Gunner Way telephone 916-965-8780

city or town Fair Oaks state CA zip code 95628

Narrative Description

The site of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm is an intact rural landscape, located in Gold Hill, approximately 2 miles south of the town of Coloma, where gold was discovered in California. Although near the gold fields, local farms dominated the Gold Hill area. In 1869, on behalf of Matsudaira Katamori (a *daimyo* of the Tokugawa family), agent John Henry Schnell purchased land and buildings from Charles Graner to establish the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony. Japanese colonists planted and maintained mulberry trees and silkworm cocoons for silk farming, as well as tea plants and seeds. Dominant features of the landscape that convey the history of the short-lived colony are a residence, barn, associated vegetation, small pond, and expansive agricultural fields.

The residence was built by the original owner (Graner) and may date as early as 1856; physical evidence found in the basement suggests that Graner expanded the building to its current configuration during his tenure. The house is a simple two-story rectangular (58 ft. north-south by 48 ft. east-west) gable-roof farmhouse with a wrap around porch and a lean-to addition on the north side. There is a full basement, where the dressed stone foundation construction can be seen. The house is wood-framed; full dimension lumber and square nails are evident. The 10 ft. wide covered porch dominates the south, west, and north elevations. The main entrance is on the west elevation: the downstairs has a center door with a set of two windows flanking the entrance; three evenly spaced windows dominate the top floor. There is a 1950s era extended-gable rear addition placed on the east side; original exterior building elements are visible on the interior. Overall, the exterior of the building maintains excellent historical integrity. The bottom interior of the house has been modified, although many original elements remain; the interior of the second floor is divided into several small sleeping rooms, and appears to retain much of its historical integrity.

The barn is north of the main house; it measures 68 ½ ft. north-south by 65 ½ ft. east-west. It is roughly square building with a multi-pitched gable roof of corrugated iron over wood shingles. The wood-framed structure is covered with V-rustic siding, and is of post construction on a rock foundation. The floor is of tongue and groove construction. Full dimension lumber was used in its construction, and many main structural elements show mortise and tenon cutouts; square cut nails are also evident. The building has been remodeled on the exterior and interior; original lumber was used but evidence of wire nails suggests a later structural strengthening and remodeling for use as a dairy barn.

Other vegetative and physical evidence of the Wakamatsu Colony can still be seen in the local landscape. A large *keaki* (Zelcova) tree is next to the house and was planted by the Japanese colonists. The colonists also planted mulberries on the property to the east of the house and barn. The original mulberries have long since died, but approximately 10-12 volunteers remain,

suggesting where the colonists conducted their sericulture experiments. During their first year on the property, Wakamatsu colonists excavated and filled a small pond for fish culture. The approximately ¼ acre pond is found east of barn; its size varies according to the rainfall. Agricultural lands surround the main house and barn, and extend to the west and east of the main cluster of structures. According to the contemporary newspaper accounts and an 1871 General Land Office Map, Schnell and the Wakamatsu colonists planted these fields with tea plants and a vineyard; while these specific plants are no longer grown, the property has remained as agricultural fields since that time. Comparison of the modern landscape with an 1883 lithograph shows that the physical appearance of the house, as well as the barn, and surrounding agricultural fields has remained remarkably intact.

In 1873, Francis Veerkamp purchased the Wakamatsu Colony lands. His descendants have owned the property since that time, maintained agricultural use of the property. Additional non-contributing buildings represent the tenure of the Veerkamp family. A small wood-framed rectangular (24 ft. x 12.5 ft.) tractor barn is between the primary residence and barn; based on its full dimension lumber, and possible correlation with the 1883 lithograph, it dates to the late 19th century. During the early 20th century use of the farm as a dairy, a long rectangular (68 ft. x 18 ft.) dairy barn and wood-framed residence (49.5 ft. x 24.5 ft.) were built behind (east) of the primary barn. A circa 1930s-1940s rectangular (18 ft. x 24.5 ft.) wood-framed garage was built just northeast of the main residence. Another 1950s residence (24 ft. x 28 ft.) was built east of the main residence, behind a small hill and not in the viewshed of the historic structures. Two additional non-contributing outbuildings are directly across Cold Springs Road from the primary residence. One is small wood-framed rectangular shed (18 ft. x 16 ft.) that may have materials from the early 20th century, but has been reconstructed. The second is a post-1940s rectangular (40 ft. x 60 ft.) shed.

Despite these later additions, the core of the Wakamatsu Colony lands retains integrity of their rural setting. The barn and house are adjacent to Cold Springs Road, the central road running through the town of Gold Hill. As during the tenure of the colony, expansive agricultural fields and rolling hills surround the buildings on all sides, including the lands west of the road. In addition, the vegetation and small pond convey the setting when the colonists occupied the land.

Statement of Significance

The Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony site is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A at a national level of significance in the areas of ethnic heritage, agriculture, and early settlement. It is one of the oldest properties in North America associated with Japanese permanent settlement in the United States. Members of the colony occupied the site from 1869-1871. The site has a residence and barn associated with the Wakamatsu settlers, mulberry trees (for sericulture) planted by the colonists, and associated agricultural fields and pond. The agricultural setting, including surrounding farmlands, has remarkable integrity, maintaining its rural setting. Overall, the site represents the vanguard of Japanese American contributions to the culture of the United States.

The Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony contributes significantly to the broader patterns of the nation's history under the themes of Ethnic Heritage and Exploration/Settlement as the site of the first permanent settlement of Japanese immigrants in the continental United States. The Wakamatsu colonists occupied the site from the summer of 1869 to the spring of 1871, and were a critical portent of the Japanese immigration to come in the last decades of the 19th century. Of the 55 people of Japanese heritage documented by a United States census in 1870, 22 were settled at the Wakamatsu Colony in Gold Hill. The added uniqueness of the some of the Wakamatsu colonists, members of the Japanese samurai (military) class, adds another level of importance to the ethnic heritage of the site. Mary Schnell, the daughter of Jou and John Henry Schnell, was two months old at the time of the census, and the first child of a Japanese immigrant born in the U.S. During the dedication of the California Historical Landmark plaque, the year 1969 was designated as the centennial of the Japanese immigration to the United States.

The contributions of the colony to California's agricultural industry are tied culturally to their Japanese heritage and include a focus on sericulture and tea, Japan's two most important export industries at the time the colony was established. While some prior experimentation with tea and silk farming had been attempted (by non-Japanese) in California, these efforts met with little success. Under the theme of Agriculture, the contributions of the Colony to the agriculture industry are recognized; they mark the beginning of Japanese influence on the agricultural economy of California and the United States. The Japanese colonists, like the later Japanese immigrants of the 1880s and 1890s, made significant contributions to the agricultural development and crop specialization, particularly in the western United States. For nearly a century and a half, the integrity of the rural agricultural setting of the Colony has been maintained, including the residence occupied by colonists and the native trees that they planted.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. (cont'd)

CRAWFORD, John Jones, was a well educated mining and metallurgical engineer working successfully in the field of hydrology, business and politics. He is noted for having created the Park Canal & Mining Company and serving as its general manager from 1875 to 1916, for creating the Crawford Gold Mining Company, and for serving as California's State Mineralogist. This popular general manager and water salesman, was the instigator of mining, irrigation, and electrical projects from 1877 until his death in 1914. He made profitable those ditches still bearing his name, four owners and seventy five years later. He was a caring husband, father, and an active community servant whose descendants hold him in high regard as do those who know of his work, his accomplishments, his interest in promoting the economy and developing the Diamond Ridge mines, ranches, and towns of the west slope of El Dorado County. He was a man concerned for the welfare of the environment and for the rivers of California. Memories of Crawford are respected to this day by those who continue to benefit from the ditch system which bears his name, and by the El Dorado Irrigation District employees who maintain those ditches and recognize their continuing importance.

CRAWFORD, John Jones (Who's Who In America 1906-07: 404; and Who Was Who In American History-Science and Technology 1976: 134; and Crawford Biographical Card n.d.: n.p.), mining and metallurgical engineer, was born in Newcastle, Pa. 2-12-1846 to J. M. and Elizabeth J. Crawford. During his late teens, he served with the Union Army in the War Between the States; yet, despite that interruption, he graduated from the Polytechnic College of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia by 1867 when he was 21 years old. Then, this energetic student traveled to Europe where he attended the Royal School of Mines at Freiburg, Saxony, when he visited all of the important mines on the European continent and the mines of England, Cornwall, and Wales. He graduated in June, 1870.

Returning to the United States from Germany in 1870 , during the Franco-Prussian War, he landed in California and traveled to White Pine County, Nevada, where he became superintendent of the Great Basin Mining Company in 1871 at the age of 25 years. This position lead him to become the superintendent of the Ingot

(continued)

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. (cont'd)

Mining Company, Elko County, Nevada, where he erected the large reduction works during 1872-1873. In 1873, he returned to California, then went east where he was employed in the development of lead and zinc mines in western Missouri. In 1875, he spent several months in the gold fields of North Carolina "experting" mines for capitalists of New York.

By 1875, Crawford's family and other investors of Philadelphia purchased the Eureka Ditch and the Dry Gulch Hydraulic Mine in El Dorado County, California, naming their acquisition Park Canal and Mining Company (Sioli 1883: 104-106). Crawford left his employment in North Carolina, returning to California to accept the position of general manager of the newly formed company, and took up residence in the Cay family house in Pleasant Valley.

Crawford established the offices of the Park Canal and Mining Company in Dry Gulch and in Diamond Springs; and then, together with Pleasant Valley's ditch engineer, E. V. Davenport, work was commenced renovating and enlarging the old ditches and extending new ditches higher into the mountains eastward, bringing more water to his Dry Gulch Hydraulic Mine, to his Tennessee Mine, and to customers as far westward as the American Reservoir (today's Bass Lake near El Dorado Hills).

It was Crawford who first envisioned major storage facilities for water where Lake Jenkinson lies behind today's Sly Park Dam.

In Soquel, Santa Cruz County, California, on 9-30-1880, John Jones Crawford married Miss Frances Morey, sister of Henry S. Morey, operator of Placerville's flour mill, machine shop, and foundry.

Influential in community, county and state politics, Crawford was also a Drillmaster for the Knights of Pythias in 1882; he encouraged horticulture on Diamond Ridge, 1883; he was Aide-de-Camp for Placerville's Grand Army of the Republic, Post 108; he was Marshal of Placerville's 4th of July celebration, 1887; he released 40,000 salmon trout into the ditches and streams in the Diamond Ridge area during 1887; and he was a Mystic Shriner in the Golden Gate Commandery of the Knights Templar at the time of his death in 1914. He was also involved in California's anti-Chinese movement in the 1880s, believing that jobs in California should be reserved exclusively for U.S. citizens.

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640 *tan* is equivalent to about 160 acres. Alternatively, Schnell may have embellished. Schnell's report to the newspaper about the size and equipment at the Colony was expansive: he claimed a "large orchard, thousands of bearing vines, grain fields, a good brick [sic] house well furnished, a barn, well-appointed wine house, implements of husbandry, horses, wagons, cows, pigs, fowls, and good and abundant water" (Starns 1993:90). It is difficult to tell how much Schnell was hoping for and what he understood from Graner, as he had yet seen the property. Schnell's purchase certainly included a house, barn, and fields.

In any case, once at the Colony site, the colonists quickly went to work, establishing their farm, planting mulberry trees, oil plants, and constructing a pond for breeding fish. Schnell successfully displayed silk cocoons at the 1869 California State Agricultural Fair in Sacramento. In March 1870, a California newspaper noted that the colonists had received and planted more than 140,000 tea plants. The tea plants were likely planted in the flat fields west of the main residence and barn.

During the fall of 1869, and summer of 1870, at least 26 more Japanese colonists came to join the Wakamatsu Farm. Some of the colonists were farmers, some skilled workers such as a carpenter, and some were of the lower samurai class. According to the 1870 U.S. census, there were 55 Japanese in the United States. Of these, 22 were colonists at Wakamatsu: 14 men, 6 women, and 2 children. The two children were Schnell's daughters, one born in Japan, and one at the Wakamatsu site. Van Sant (2000:125) estimates that the number of Japanese colonists at Wakamatsu was more likely 35, by far the largest grouping of Japanese settlers in the United States at that time.

At the 1870 Horticultural Fair in San Francisco, Schnell and two colonists displayed tea plants and silkworms. The colonists also planted grapevines and the 1870 census lists Fred Dielbol, a Swiss winemaker, present at the Colony. The 1871 General Land Office map makes note of "Schnell's Vineyard." The local newspaper, the *Mountain Democrat*, praised the industriousness of the Japanese colonists (Starns 1993:93; Van Sant 2000:126-127).

The Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm was destined to be short-lived. Many factors contributed to the Colony's collapse: temporary drought, competition for water with local miners who "jumped claim," poor management skills, and the withdrawal of financial support from Matsudaira. Surprisingly, the new Mejii government pardoned Matsudaira; he chose to become a Shinto priest and remain in Japan. A short but ill-timed drought caused the tea plants to wither and die. To make matters worse, a few local miners diverted water from a stream on the property. Documents at the Recorder's Office show that Schnell was in legal trouble regarding the land ownership by the end of December, 1870. In June 1871, Schnell left California, along with his wife Jou, and their two daughters. Although he promised to return, he did not, effectively abandoning the other Japanese colonists. According to Sioli (1883:112), whose source was likely Francis Veerkamp, Schnell was killed after he returned to Japan.

The fate of only three of the colonists is specifically known. Matsunosuke Sakurai, likely a former samurai, worked for the Veerkamp family who had purchased the Wakamatsu lands in 1873. According to Veerkamp family oral tradition, he was a "wonderful gardener" and friend of the family (Yohalem 1977:220). Matsunosuke lived in Gold Hill until his death in 1901. Okei, a young nursemaid for the Schells, also stayed with the Veerkamp family. She died at age 19 in 1871, and is buried on Veerkamp property, nearby (but outside of) the Wakamatsu property. Her gravesite is still maintained by members of the local Japanese American community, and a replica of her gravesite has been created in Aizu Wakamatsu, Japan. Masumizu Kuninosuke, a young carpenter, moved to nearby Coloma and became a farmer and miner. He married Carrie Wilson, a woman of African and American Indian descent, in 1877. He and his family eventually moved to Sacramento. Masumizu Kuninosuke died in 1915, at the age of 66. His descendants remain in the area and were interrogated by the FBI in the 1940s (during World War II) to determine if they should be classified as "enemy aliens" (they were not). As for the others, some traveled to, and stayed in, San Francisco. Only a few possibly returned to Japan; records are scarce because they would have been considered enemies of the Mejii government (Van Sant 2000:128-129).

Although it was short-lived (1869-1871), the Colony affected U.S. agricultural traditions. The colonists themselves were the vanguard of Japanese *Issei* (first-generation Japanese immigrants) into the United States. Large numbers of Japanese began to arrive on U.S. mainland in the 1880s. The Mejii restoration had brought an end to Civil War, but it also began a period of rapid modernization, due to contact with the Western world. The resulting social upheaval caused many to look for new places to settle and continue their traditional agricultural practices. Many of the *Issei* adopted the agricultural colony model as a mechanism for maintaining their cultural connections. By 1900, there were more than 24,000 Japanese living in the continental United States (Daniels 1988:115). Most lived in the western states, and their affect on local agriculture was profound (Daniels 1988:143); in California, for example more than 10% of all California farm products were produced by Japanese Americans (Van Sant 2000:129). As Daniels (in Van Sant 2000:x) notes, the story of the earljest Japanese immigrants highlights the facets of multiculturalism in the United States. The National Park Service commissioned *Five Views, An Ethnic Site Survey for California*, intended to celebrate and highlight the country's ethnic diversity; the story of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm is featured in the section on Japanese American heritage.

In 1924, a resurgence of interest in the Wakamatsu story began. Late attorney and Sacramento Japanese American community leader Henry Taketa interviewed Henry Veerkamp, who was one year older than Okei, and 75 at the time of the interview (Taguma 2007). Local Japanese Americans started to tend Okei's gravesite, and the story of the Wakamatsu Colony re-emerged. In 1969, then governor Ronald Reagan proclaimed the Wakamatsu Colony site to be a California Historical Landmark No. 815. The Japanese American Citizens League and the Japanese Consul General Shima Seiichi supported the proclamation. Matsudaira Ichiro, the grandson of the colonist's *daimyo* financier, also attended the ceremony. The Japanese

American community designated 1969 as the Japanese American centennial. In 1986, Yoshiki Inomata, the Mayor of Aiza Wakamatsu, Japan wrote a letter of thanks to Malcolm Veekamp, praising the family for their care of the gravesite. In 2001, the Veerkamp family donated an original Wakamatsu banner with the Colony's lotus blossom crest, and a ceremonial dagger (possibly a short samurai sword) that may have belonged to Jou Schnell to the nearby Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park. In 2007, a Veerkamp descendant found photographs of the colonists in an envelope; the photographs were taken at an historically known photography studio in Placerville, California.

When Francis and Louisa Veerkamp purchased the Wakamatsu Colony lands in 1873, they blended local and national history. The Veerkamps had settled in Gold Hill in 1852, and purchased land adjacent to the Colony and in nearby communities to settle their six sons. The Veerkamp family maintained the rural agricultural nature of the property, preserving the heritage and landscape of the Wakamatsu Colony. Through many complicated land transactions, the Wakamatsu lands have passed to several Veerkamp sons and daughters of subsequent generations. The Helen L. Veerkamp Revocable Trust (Gary Veerkamp, Trustee) currently holds approximately 127 acres of the original approximate 180 acres of the Wakamatsu Colony lands; they also hold much adjoining acreage. The 54.3 acres included in this nomination constitute the heart of the Colony, centered on the main structures, mulberry plantings, pond, vineyard, and surrounding flat agricultural lands to convey the rural setting of the Colony farmlands. The association of the Wakamatsu Colony with the remaining acreage (outside of the nominated 54.3 acres) is not as immediately apparent, although archaeological survey and investigation may enhance the association. The remaining acreage has retained its agricultural setting, but is comprised of more rolling hills that are less likely to have been farmed by the Wakamatsu colonists, and has been further influenced by cattle grazing and the early 20th century construction of a small 6-acre lake.

The American River Conservancy currently leases portions of the land from the Helen Veerkamp Trust. The Conservancy's intention is to preserve the site, rehabilitate the structures, and to identify appropriate governmental partners to develop an historical park celebrating the heritage of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm. *Nichi Bei Times*, Northern California's oldest Japanese American newspaper, has recently published an article supporting these efforts (Taguma 2007). The National Japanese American Historical Society, the Japanese American Citizens League (Florin, Placer, Sacramento and National Chapters), Congresswoman Doris Matsui, Assemblyman Alan Nakanishi, El Dorado County Supervisor Ron Briggs, the El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce, and many others public figures and private citizens also support this preservation effort.

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Willson, James E.
2009 Letter to Rebecca Allen, 13 March 2009. Licensed land surveyor, Carlton Engineering.

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Geographical Data

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	10	683660	4293200
2	10	684500	4293020
3	10	684500	4292840
4	10	683880	4292740
5	10	683620	4292820
6	10	683600	4292980

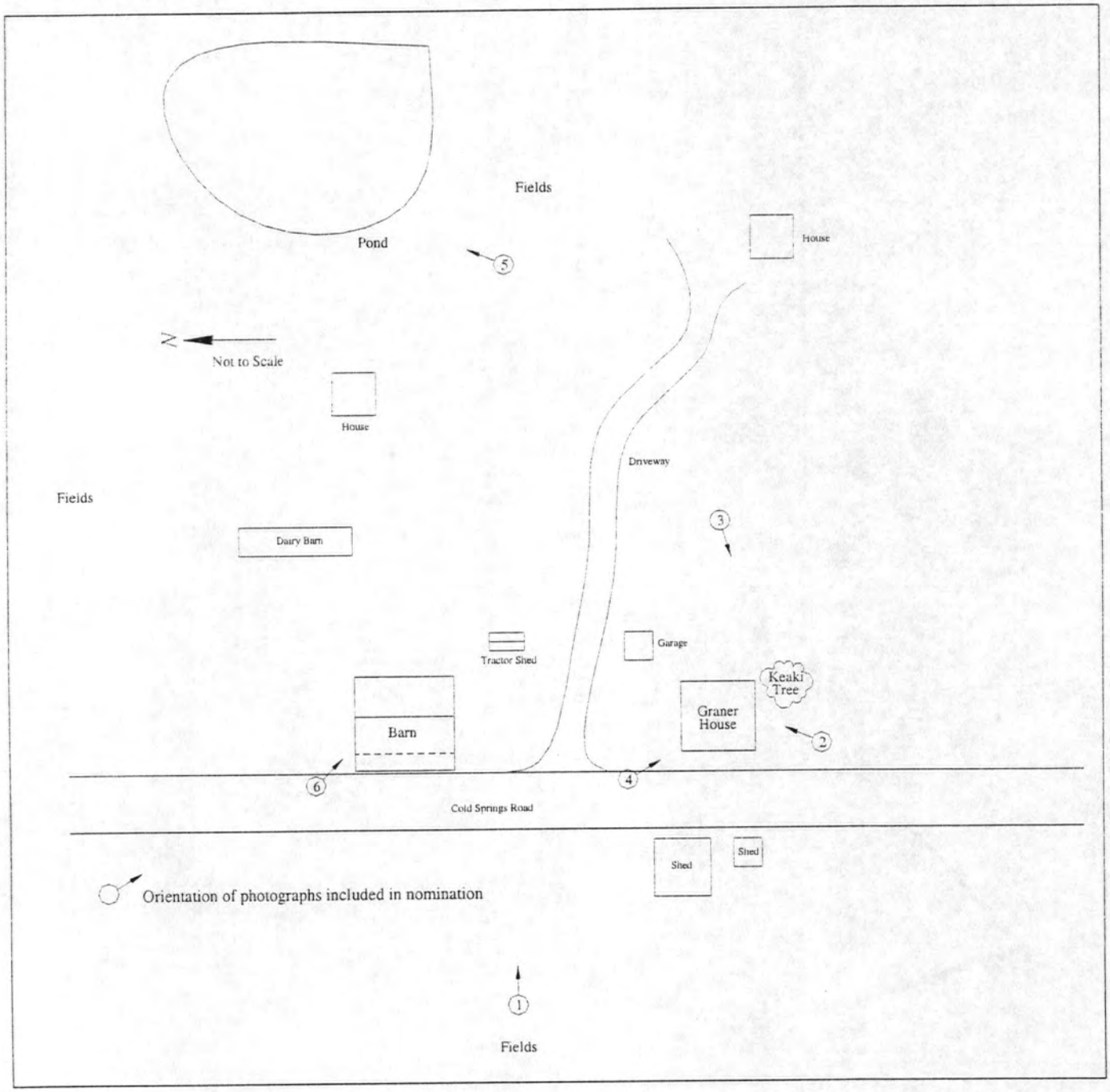
Verbal Boundary Description

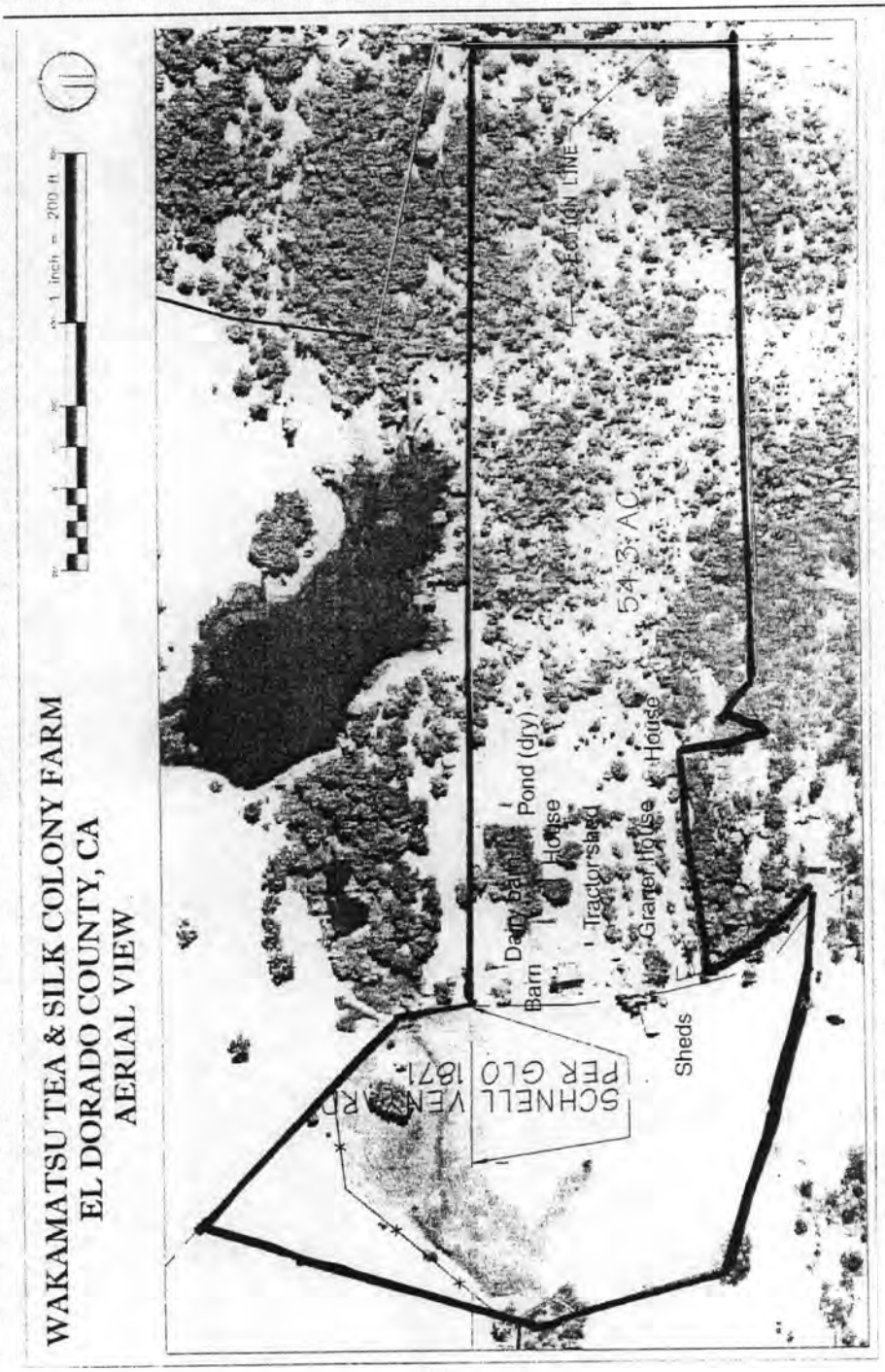
The property is an irregular shape, located in Township 11 North, Range 10 East of El Dorado County, California, north of the main intersection in Gold Hill, and two miles south of the town of Coloma. Most of the land is in the N 1/3 of the NE 1/4 of Section 32, with smaller portions jutting eastwards into the NE 1/4 of the NW 1/4 of Section 32, and northwards into the SE 1/4 of the SW 1/4 of Section 29 and the SE 1/4 of the SE 1/4 of Section 29.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes 54.3 acres of the approximate 180 acres that comprised the original purchase of lands for the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm. The nominated acreage maintains sufficient physical integrity and integrity of rural setting to convey the history of the Wakamatsu Colony. Included in this acreage is the heart of the Wakamatsu Colony lands, including a residence, barn, associated vegetation (including a *keaki* and mulberry trees), pond, and surrounding flat agricultural fields.

Photograph Key




WAKAMATSU TEA & SILK COLONY FARM
EL DORADO COUNTY, CA
AERIAL VIEW
1 inch = 200 ft.
SECTION LINE
54.3 AC
Pond (dry)
House
Tractor shed
Granary
House
Dairy barn
Barn
Sheds
SCHNELL VENDARD
PER GLO 1871

Wakamatsu colonists. Circa 1870-1871. Photographer, George H. Gilbert, Placerville, California. (Courtesy American River Conservancy)

Wakamatsu colonists. Circa 1870-1871. Photographer, George H. Gilbert, Placerville, California. (Courtesy American River Conservancy)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: CALIFORNIA, El Dorado

DATE RECEIVED: 5/01/09 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/20/09
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/04/09 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/14/09
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 09000397

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL:	N	DATA PROBLEM:	N	LANDSCAPE:	N	LESS THAN 50 YEARS:	N
OTHER:	N	PDIL:	N	PERIOD:	N	PROGRAM UNAPPROVED:	N
REQUEST:	Y	SAMPLE:	N	SLR DRAFT:	Y	NATIONAL:	Y

COMMENT WAIVER: N

___ACCEPT ___RETURN ___REJECT _____DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RETURN

SEE ATTACHED COMMENTS

RECOM./CRITERIA Return

REVIEWER Paul R. Lusignan DISCIPLINE Historian

TELEPHONE _____ DATE 6/12/09

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments (Y)/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

WAKAMATSU TEA AND SILK COLONY FARM
El Dorado County, CA

National Register of Historic Places - Return Comments:

The current nomination is being returned for technical and substantive revisions.

Classification
The property is perhaps better classified as a *district* since it contains fairly large acreage and a diverse number of physical resources.

The number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register should read: *0.*

Functions
The Historic Functions should include: Agriculture/agricultural outbuilding (barn), Agriculture/agricultural field (landscape features); and Domestic/multiple dwelling. Certain of the categories may depend on a better discussion of the exact functions of the extant resources. Was the house used as a bunkhouse facility to accommodate all of the settlers, or was it restricted to use by certain individuals (Schnell?) as a single family home? Was the barn a storage facility, processing site, or animal facility? The current narrative provides limited documentation of the actual use and operation of the colony complex buildings.

Description
The nomination repeatedly refers to the entire nominated property as an "intact rural landscape," yet there appears to be many factors arguing against such consideration, not the least of which is the inclusion of significant non-historic agricultural resources (7 noncontributing buildings), the loss of historic agricultural crops and evidence of historic farming activity, the apparent loss of historic buildings (where did the 35 colonists live on the site during the historic period?) and the condition of the few extant buildings attributed to the Colony's settlement at this site.

House. What is the "evidence" suggesting that the original owner of the property (Graner) may have expanded the building? More importantly, the nomination asserts that the house maintains "excellent historical integrity." What evidence, if any, is there regarding the condition and form of the property during the time period of the Wakamatsu Colony use? What particular architectural features of this building are consistent with other similar vernacular forms from this (or the earlier Graner) period? To the naked eye (from the photographs provided), the current house appears to be substantially altered, including enclosure and reconfiguration of the surrounding porch, re-cladding of the porch and main elevations using wood shingles, new fenestration, and the rather substantial rear (eastside) addition. The nomination should not overstate the condition and integrity of the extant resources if the physical evidence is not there. On the other hand, if clear evidence of historic features and construction forms are intact they should be clearly noted.

Is there any information from oral or written records regarding the condition or character of the property from the time of the Wakamatsu Colony? How was it established that this building in its current condition reflects the time period of Colony use and not later agricultural periods, during which we know substantial changes were made to the farm property? Various modern-day accounts of the Colony's history present sketches and recent photographs of the building, but clear historic evidence of the original form is sketchy.

Barn. The barn suffers from some of the same issues as the house, in that the description provided in the nomination offers little information regarding the original condition and use of the building and what physical changes have occurred over time. What forms or features of the current building accurately convey the historic resource directly associated with the Wakamatsu Colony? A dairy barn will ordinarily have very distinct functional elements from other types of agricultural buildings. What is the date of the barn? What is the evidence used to attribute this building to the Colony? Do we have any idea of the use of the facility during the Colony period? Are there portions of the barn that conform to historic period construction forms and not potentially later forms?

Given the desire for national level significance and the obvious changes to the site over many years, it is important to provide as much supporting documentation as might be available rather than relying on conjectural opinion or oral tradition about the extent of historic resources at the site.

Agricultural site. What evidence is there that the extant landscape features date to the historic period? Is there any record of how the site was actually used and laid out by the Colony? For instance how do we know that the colonists planted mulberries to the east of the house and barn? Do we have any sense about traditional planting systems or field organization by Japanese sericulturalists? Do the 10-12 volunteers that remain reflect actual planting patterns, later sericulture development by later settlers, or simply wild regrowth? As a contributing feature of the property it would be useful to understand what these actual elements represent.

The substantial redevelopment of the property by subsequent farmers and ranchers cannot simply be overlooked as it relates to the ability of the extant landscape to convey an accurate sense of time and place in association with the Colony. Once again the selection of a national level of significance would seem to call for a very strong integrity argument. In particular, presentation of the basis for the opinion that the site represents an intact rural landscape would seem to dictate some evidence of the historic Japanese settlement era plan and layout of the property. Just the fact that the property continues to be open land is not necessarily the same as retaining important physical characteristics directly from the historic period. (Any additional information regarding the historic extent of the orchard/vineyard areas, how many additional buildings were built, if any, whether the land cleared and fenced, whether specific field patterns were developed consistent with sericulture activities and how might they differ from later dairy usage of the land would be useful in documenting the physical landscape.) Has any archeological work been done at the site to support the physical condition?

Concern remains about the evidence being used to support the contention that the extant features in fact reflect the historic complex and patterns of development directly associated with the Wakamatsu Colony. (The 1883 lithograph cited as evidence of physical integrity [7.2] reflects a time period over 10 years after the end of the Wakamatsu venture and may or may not represent a continuation of agricultural patterns or a wholly different operation.)

Significance

The box for *Cultural Affiliation* should be left blank except for nominations under Criterion D.

Agricultural Context. The Area of Significance for Agriculture is not sufficiently justified at this time to merit consideration at the national level of significance. While the Colony may have had as its intent the establishment of a productive agricultural operation, nothing in the current documentation provides evidence that they were successful in their efforts, or that those efforts had any type of significant influence on local, regional, or national agricultural development. In order to establish and justify agricultural significance at the national level there needs to be clear evidence that the property played some form of significant role in the larger context of farming in the historic period, or specifically the establishment and development of sericulture (silk) and tea as an important pursuit. There is no denying the significant role of California in the historic patterns of American agricultural development during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but the current documentation fails to show any direct link between the 1869—1871 efforts of the Wakamatsu Colony and these later important efforts. In fact most evidence would support the fact that the Wakamatsu Colony was a little remembered effort, largely forgotten by the time of the more substantial emigration of agricultural laborers to the West Coast and elsewhere during the 1880s and later. Was the Colony actually seen as establishing the feasibility of sericulture in America, or was its failure detrimental to such efforts? Was it even known outside the small number of families directly involved in the effort? What evidence, if any, is there to support the significance of the Wakamatsu Colony to the later, broader efforts at establishing agricultural colonies or independent farming operations in the United States? Merely showing that this may have been the first (largely unsuccessful) attempt at agriculture by a rather unique group is not the same as justifying a nationally significant place within the history of American agriculture. Documenting a historic function is not necessarily the same as documenting historic significance.

Ethnic Heritage/Exploration Settlement. Similar to the discussion of Agricultural significance, the current nomination does not provide a strong case for the importance of the 1869—1871 Wakamatsu Colony to the broad national patterns of Japanese ethnic immigration to this country. The short duration of the active Colony, its apparent failure, the unique make-up of the colonists (middle class rather than laborers, outsiders rather than mainstream culture) all call into question the Colony's true role in instigating, promoting, or modeling important patterns of significant late-nineteenth and early twentieth century Japanese immigration. How exactly were the Colonists "a *critical portent* of the Japanese immigration to come in the last decades of the 19th century?" [8.1] Justification for national significance would seem to require a direct correlation between the activity at a site and the broader patterns of the larger historic context.

Statements to the effect that "professional historians of Japan and America have paid scant

attention to the Wakamatsu Colony,"[1] "...meaningful immigration (of Japanese) began only in the 1880s,"[2], and "For many years, the tragic fate of the Wakamatsu Colony drifted into oblivion, its very existence lost and forgotten until after World War I," [3] appear to point to the relative lack of a direct correlation between the Colony and later patterns of historic settlement. Scholars cite various reasons for the patterns of later Japanese settlement, including economic advantages in the U. S. compared to Japan's prevailing wages, the positive imagery of the United States as portrayed in the Japanese press, and personal connections, but none appear to link back to the Wakamatsu Colony. In fact, some researchers point to the pivotal importation of Japanese laborers to Hawaii in 1869 as a far more important and precedent setting event to historic Japanese migration and agricultural development.[4]

This should not be construed as an opinion that the Wakamatsu Colony site is not eligible for listing in the National Register, perhaps even at the national level. The nomination and supporting documentation, however, need to refrain from reaching too far afield in trying to establish the historic importance of the Colony. Making broad statements as to the influence or importance of the site to the patterns of later settlement without direct evidence weakens the case rather than providing a clear depiction of what the site was and still does represent--"the adventurous spirit of the *Issei* generation...to risk all in a new and unknown land to seek their dreams...dreams of riches, dreams of a new place, dreams of starting anew.... represents the dreams that many others who followed later brought with them.[5]" The story of the Wakamatsu Colony may bring with it a clearer understanding of what the *Issei* went through at a certain point in time, unlike any other later site of that or later periods. At its core, the Wakamatsu Colony site may simply represent one unique step along a long, disconnected journey of ethnic immigration and settlement. The revised nomination may want to discuss this "journey" as the historic context, highlighting what may be comparable "steps" or "snapshots in time" along the way.

The nomination also needs to clearly differentiate between historic period context and current day perspectives. References to "Japanese Mayflower" and "Japanese Jamestown" may represent the newfound appreciation of this site, but may have limited value in terms of establishing historic period associations and connections. For unlike these Anglo-American sites little supporting evidence is provided as to the long-term historic impact of the Wakamatsu Colony.

Geographical Data

The Verbal Boundary Description needs to directly reference the enclosed, scaled map, if the map in fact represents the proposed boundary. The use of current land ownership as a justification for the boundary selected is rather tenuous. While the exclusion of areas where significant land redevelopment have created modern intrusions (reservoir/pond) is appropriate,

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1 http://www.directcon.net/pharmer/research/JohnVanSant/pages/VanSant_01.html, 1992

2 Daniels, Roger, Asian America, *Chinese and Japanese in the United States since 1850*, U of Wash Press, 1988

3 http://www.directcon.net/pharmer/Wakamatsu/Wakamatsu.html,

4 Daniels, ibid.

5 Kenji G. Taguma, *Nichi Bei Times*, May 2, 2007.

such a methodology brings into question the inclusion of areas reflecting simply open space with no evidence of historic period activity or development.

Inclusion of the open lands surrounding the core farmstead without a clear understanding of the actual historic land use patterns from the Wakamatsu Colony period is problematic. A stronger discussion of our understanding of the historic period patterns and how the current landscape conveys those elements would serve to strengthen the boundary justification. Inclusion of open space alone without relevancy to historic resources calls into question the appropriateness of such extended boundaries. With such an extended area, the nomination also includes a host of later non-contributing buildings, which greatly detract from the historic integrity of the site. Inclusion of such resources would seem to call for a much stronger statement of justification or a more restrictive boundary. The ability of the nominated site to convey an accurate sense of historic time and place needs to be justified based on more than just inclusion of the open setting.

Has any archeological study of the site been completed that might provide additional support for extended boundaries? Even if the nomination does not seek eligibility under Criterion D, the existence of known remains might supplement our understanding of the historic site.

Photographic Documentation
The electronic images provided with the digital prints do not meet National Register standards. (The images provided are only 72 dpi).

If you have questions regarding these comments, please contact me directly at the number or e-mail listed below.

Paul R. Lusignan, Historian
(for) Keeper of the National Register
(202) 354-2229
Paul_lusignan@nps.gov

S:\nr\lusi\slrtemp\wakamatsu.rtn

NPS Form 10-900
(Oct.1990)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

09000397

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 941 Cold Springs Road ☐ not for publication N/A

city or town Gold Hill ☒ vicinity

state California code CA county El Dorado code 017 zip code 95633

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☒ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Stephen D. Mikesell SHPO 8/26/09
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

California Office of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

☑ entered in the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

10/9/2009

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
- ☐ public-local
- ☐ public-State
- ☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
- ☒ district
- ☐ site
- ☐ structure
- ☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	7	buildings
1		sites
		structures
		objects
3	7	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture/agricultural outbuilding (barn)
Agriculture/agricultural field (landscape features)
Domestic/multiple dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture: pastureland

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

No style – farmhouse vernacular

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Rhyolite (local igneous rock)
roof Wood/metal
walls Wood
other

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Narrative Description

The Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm is one of the oldest properties in North America associated with Japanese permanent settlement in the United States. Members of the colony occupied the site from 1869-1871. The site has a residence and barn associated with the Wakamatsu settlers, volunteers from mulberry trees (for sericulture) planted by the colonists, a *keaki* tree, and associated agricultural fields and pond. The area of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm has retained much of its rural agricultural landscape setting. The Wakamatsu property is in Gold Hill, California, approximately two miles south of the town of Coloma, where gold was discovered. Although near the gold fields, historically and during the present day, local farms dominate the Gold Hill area.

In 1869, on behalf of Matsudaira Katamori (a *daimyo* of the Tokugawa family from the Aizu Wakamatsu province of Japan), agent John Henry Schnell purchased land and buildings from Charles Graner to establish the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony. Schnell described the farm to a local newspaper shortly after his arrival. He stated that he had purchased land, "a large orchard, thousands of bearing vines, grain fields, a good brick [sic] house well furnished, a barn, well-appointed wine house, implements of husbandry, horses, wagons, cows, pigs, fowl, and good and abundant water (Starns 1993:90). Japanese colonists (including men, women, and children) came with the Schnells. There is no extant documentation to confirm the exact appearance of the house and property during the Wakamatsu tenure, although Schnell indicates that the property was well established. The 1870 census (further described below) noted the Schnell family group living in a dwelling, along with a Swiss winemaker and a Japanese laborer. Five other dwellings and family groups were also noted. Documentary evidence does not suggest where these latter dwellings were located. It is likely that they may have been temporary structures; the 1880 census notes only one dwelling on the property.

Charles Graner originally purchased the land in 1856; and may have built the main house at that time. Physical evidence (comparison of foundation thickness) found in the basement suggests that Graner expanded the building to its current configuration during his tenure. Graner owned much property in the area, and donated two acres to the south to the local school district. According to the oral tradition of the Veerkamp family that later owned the property, Graner was a man of means, and built the house in its current configuration (minus later additions described below). One of the earliest maps of the area, a Surveyor General's Map of 1868, shows the "C Graner" house and an adjacent schoolhouse. An area noted "Vine" is west across Cold Springs Road of the Graner house. According to the 1872 Surveyor General's Office Map (area surveyed in 1869-1871), this same area west of the house is labeled "Schnell's vineyard."

The main house is a simple two-story rectangular (58 ft. north-south by 48 ft. east-west) gable-roof farmhouse with a wrap around porch and a lean-to addition on the north side. There is a full basement, where the dressed stone foundation construction can be seen. The house is wood-framed; full dimension lumber and square nails are evident. The 10 ft. wide covered porch dominates the south, west, and north elevations. The main entrance is on the west elevation: the downstairs has a center door with a set of two windows flanking the entrance; three evenly spaced windows dominate the top floor. The two story rectangular shape, sloping gable roof, and wrap around porch of the house are indicative of the common vernacular architectural style of the area. As an example, a contemporary farmhouse in the neighboring community of Garden Valley, built by one of the Veerkamp sons in 1870 at 6170 Veerkamp Way, shows similar architectural features, primarily the two story structure, with a sloping gable roof and extended covered porch area (El Dorado County Property Records).

There is a 1950s era extended-gable rear addition placed on the east side; original exterior building elements are visible on the interior. Overall, the exterior appearance of the building maintains historical integrity. The bottom interior of the house has been modified, although many original elements remain; the interior of the second floor is divided into several small sleeping rooms, and appears to retain much of its historic materials.

Schnell also noted that his purchase included a barn. The existing barn is north of the main house; it measures 68 ½ ft. north-south by 65 ½ ft. east-west. It is roughly square building with a multi-pitched gable roof of corrugated iron over wood shingles. The wood-framed structure is covered with V-rustic siding, and is of post construction on a rock foundation. The floor is of tongue and groove construction. Full dimension lumber was used in its construction, and many main structural elements show mortise and tenon cutouts; square cut nails are also evident. The building has been remodeled on the exterior and interior; original lumber was used but evidence of wire nails suggests a later structural strengthening and remodeling for use as a dairy barn. There is no extant documentation to suggest that the barn used the Wakamatsu occupation was in this exact location, although Veerkamp oral tradition suggests that it was. Indications of early construction methods (mortise and tenon, square nails) seem to confirm this. The barn retains integrity of some materials, although the exact interior and exterior configuration have been compromised.

Soon after their arrival, members of the Wakamatsu colony planted and maintained mulberry trees and silkworm cocoons for silk farming, as well as tea plants and seeds. Given the topography (a slight rise and pond to the east of the house), the tea plants noted in contemporary newspaper accounts may also have been planted in the expansive flat fields west of the house, near the area noted as the vineyard. Veerkamp oral tradition also supports this. Other landscape features that remain and convey the history of the short-lived colony are associated vegetation, a small pond, and agricultural fields. A large *keaki* (Zelcova) tree is next to the house and according to the Veerkamp family was planted by the Japanese colonists; the

tree's size supports this conjecture. The colonists also planted mulberries on the property. The original mulberries have long since died, but several volunteers remain that suggest that the colonists conducted their sericulture experiments in the area east of the house and barn. During their first year on the property, Wakamatsu colonists excavated and filled a pond for fish culture (Starns 1993:90). The approximately ¼ acre pond is found east of barn; its size varies according to the rainfall.

In 1873, Francis Veerkamp purchased the Wakamatsu Colony lands, after the colonists' venture failed. His descendants have owned the property since that time, and maintained agricultural use of the property. Comparison of the modern landscape with an 1883 lithograph shows that the physical appearance of the house, as well as placement of the barn and surrounding agricultural fields has remained much the same. The Veerkamps were dairy farmers and used the land primarily for grazing cattle. Additional non-contributing buildings represent the tenure of the Veerkamp family. A small wood-framed rectangular (24 ft. x 12.5 ft.) tractor barn is between the primary residence and barn; based on its full dimension lumber, and possible correlation with the 1883 lithograph, it dates to the late 19th century. During the early 20th century, a long rectangular (68 ft. x 18 ft.) dairy barn and wood-framed residence (49.5 ft. x 24.5 ft.) were built behind (east) of the primary barn. A circa 1930s-1940s rectangular (18 ft. x 24.5 ft.) wood-framed garage was built just northeast of the main residence. Another 1950s residence (24 ft. x 28 ft.) was built east of the main residence, behind a small hill and not in the viewshed of the historic structures. Two additional non-contributing outbuildings are directly across Cold Springs Road from the primary residence. One is small wood-framed rectangular shed (18 ft. x 16 ft.) that may have materials from the early 20th century, but has been reconstructed. The second is a post-1940s rectangular (40 ft. x 60 ft.) shed.

Despite these later structural additions, this portion of the Wakamatsu Colony lands retains much of their integrity of rural setting. The barn and house are adjacent to Cold Springs Road (the central road running through the town of Gold Hill), and visually dominate the existing landscape. As during the tenure of the colony, and as depicted on the 1868 and 1872 Surveyor General's Office maps, agricultural fields and rolling hills surround the buildings on all sides, including the lands west of the road. In addition, the ornamental vegetation, agricultural fields to the west of the house, and small pond and volunteer mulberry trees to the east of the house help to convey the setting when the colonists occupied the land.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)
Exploration/Settlement
Japanese Ethnic Heritage

Period of Significance
1869-1871

Significant Dates

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder
N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):
- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data
- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☒ Other State agency, Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☒ Other

Name of repository:
American River Conservancy, Coloma

Statement of Significance

The Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm site is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A at a national level of significance in the areas of exploration and early settlement. During the dedication of the California Historical Landmark plaque in 1969, the Japanese American Citizens League and the California state government designated that year as the centennial of Japanese settlement in the continental United States.

Van Sant (2000:118) summarizes the importance of the Wakamatsu Colony:

> First, they established the largest Japanese enclave in the United States before the beginning of systematic Japanese immigration in the mid-1880s. Second, they were the first group of Japanese intending to permanently settle in the country. Finally, although they did not directly influence the process of emigration from Japan, they were the vanguard of Issei (first-generation Japanese immigrants) to the United States.

Of the 55 people of Japanese heritage documented by the United States census in 1870, 22 were settled at the Wakamatsu Colony in Gold Hill. The Wakamatsu colonists were from varying backgrounds; Jou was reported to be of the Japanese samurai (military) class, as well as laborers and carpenters. Mary Schnell, the daughter of Jou and John Henry Schnell, was two months old at the time of the census, and the first child of a Japanese immigrant born in the U.S. At least one of the colonists moved to the nearby town of Coloma, and left documented descendants behind.

The Wakamatsu colonists were the harbinger of later *Issei* migration to the mainland United States, and "signaled the coming of other Issei pioneers to California [and elsewhere] who would endure and persevere in the decades to come" (Maeda 2007). The Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm is an important symbol of the beginning of the story of Japanese immigration to the United States, and a symbol of Japanese American contributions to agricultural and cultural traditions.

Historical Context

To understand the significance of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony, it is important to highlight the context of Japanese society that the immigrants were fleeing. Beginning in the early 17th century, Tokugawa shogunates emphasized cultural isolation and prohibited Japanese citizens from traveling abroad. This isolationist doctrine remained in place until Commodore William Perry, acting for United States, forced open several Japanese ports to U.S. trade in 1853-1854.

In the 1860s, the cultural isolation was faltering. Matsudaira Katmori (1835-1893) was distantly related to the Tokugawa family and was a *daimyo* (local lord) of the Aizu Wakamatsu province. Matsudaira disagreed with the Tokugawa policy of isolation, and instead chose to walk a line between "Eastern ethics, Western science." John Henry Schnell and his brother were arms dealers in Japan, and also dabbled in merchandizing other Japanese goods. Matsudaira was one of the Schnell's best customers, and the brothers trained Matsudaira's samurais in the use of firearms. Matsudaira's relationship with Schnell was close enough that he gave him an honorary Japanese name that included two of same *kanji* characters as were in Matsudaira's name. Schnell married a Japanese samurai class woman (Van Sant 2001:123), further strengthening his ties to Japanese society.

Strife between the Tokugawa faction and those who propped up the Emperor for their own benefit resulted in civil war, ultimately leading to the Mejii Restoration, as well as Matsudaira's surrender in 1868 (Van Sant 2000:119-123). Matsudaira was condemned for execution. After Matsudaira surrendered, the Schnell brothers were in jeopardy.

John Henry Schnell, his Japanese wife Jou, and six other Japanese colonists left Japan on May 1, 1869 and arrived in San Francisco on May 20 (Van Sant 2000:124, information from Pacific Mail Steamship Archives and *San Francisco Chronicle* 21 May1869). Schnell intended to purchase lands on behalf of Matsudaira, who thought he may need a place of exile. Schnell was to establish an agricultural colony that would grow tea and mulberry trees, and cultivate silk worms. Schnell chose California as their destination as the state (beginning in 1866) offered government financing to entice farmers to speculate with sericulture (Starns 1993:86). Parasitic epidemics had destroyed much of the lucrative European sericulture, and many areas were trying to take advantage of this lucrative export trade. Japanese immigrants were a relative rarity in the United States, and the 1869 arrival of the colonists received the attention of several California newspapers, including the *San Francisco Bulletin, Alta Daily News*, *Alta California*, and *Sacramento Union* (Van Sant 2000:124).

Prior to the arrival of Schnell's group, there were only a handful of Japanese who came to the continental United States (the history of Japanese influence on Hawaii is complex, and not considered here, as Hawaii did not formally become part of the U.S. until 1959). Van Sant (2000) suggests that the first two Japanese arrivals were castaway sailors, who arrived in the 1840s, and eventually returned to Japan. In 1860, the Japanese Tokugawa shogunate established an embassy in the United States, and staffed it with 77 members; their stay in the U.S. was temporary. In 1864, a young Japanese man stowed away on a merchant ship, eventually making his way to Massachusetts. There, he became a student and converted to Christianity, returning to Japan as an influential missionary in 1874. A few overseas students (*ryūgakusei)* attended colleges in the west, including two who attended Rutgers University in 1866. More came later to study at Rutgers; with the exception of five students who died, all returned to Japan. In 1867, six young Japanese samurai men joined the utopian community in upstate New York, known as the Brotherhood of New Life. They had met the charismatic leader of the commune two years

earlier, while in England to study Western science and technology. When civil war erupted in Japan, the six returned to Japan, accompanied by several other Japanese who had also come to the commune. Other than these few stories, specific knowledge about the presence of Japanese in the United States prior to 1869 is limited, in part because U.S. census records did not record the Japanese at the embassy, nor did they count temporary visitors, including merchants and other officials.

The Wakamatsu colonists were different from previous Japanese visitors to the continental United States because they intended to permanently settle in California, in contrast to Japanese students, merchants, and diplomats. The colonists arrived with plants, and the Schnell family group (and later more family groups according to the 1870 census). It was the rarity of this group of Japanese immigrants that caught the attention of the San Francisco *Alta Daily News*, which noted that the colonists brought means for their agricultural productivity with them, including "50,000 three-year old kuwa [mulberry] trees" used for sericulture, and that six million tea seeds would soon be sent to them (Van Sant 2000:124). The newspaper praised the Japanese work ethic, as well as Jou Schnell's beauty and grace. This was an attitude in contrast to the more prevalent discrimination towards Chinese miners, perhaps because the Wakamatsu colonists cultivated Japanese plants, so that the threat of direct economic competition was generally not perceived.

To establish the Wakamatsu Colony, John Henry Schnell purchased two parcels of land in the town of Gold Hill from Charles Graner on 18 June 1869. He also purchased a third-interest in a nearby quarry, south of the town of Gold Hill. The history of these lands is complicated, as not all land transactions were recorded at the El Dorado County Recorder's Office. Graner had purchased 160 acres of land from Samuel and Mary Hill in 1856; the Hills had preempted and filed a claim for the land, in anticipation of patenting the land at a later date. Graner already settled an odd-shaped smaller piece of land adjoining the southern border of the Hill property. Although his legal preemption is not on file at the Recorder's Office, Graner claimed the land, and constructed a house and barn on the smaller piece of land. The Graners sold two acres of this property to the local district in 1868, creating an irregular southern boundary. To further complicate interpretation of land ownership, property boundaries somewhat shifted to the south and west in 1871, when the Government Land Office officially surveyed the land. Through study of neighboring claims, physical survey (Willson 2009), and some approximation, it can be closely estimated that the size of the two parcels of land that Schnell purchased was around 180 acres. Because of the complexity of land transactions, there is confusion in the published literature over the size of the original property. Starns (1993:89-90) lists the acreage as 160, but she noted that Schnell reported to the newspaper that he had more than 600 acres under cultivation. Van Sant (2000:125) lists the acreage as 640 acres. It is possible that Schnell's report may have been misconstrued, as the Japanese measurement of 640 *tan* is equivalent to about 160 acres.

As noted above, Schnell's purchase included a house, barn, and fields. Documentary information on the Wakamatsu colonists is sparse. There is no written evidence about where the

colonists lived. As noted above, the 1870 census noted that Schnell, wife, children, a Swiss winemaker, and one Japanese man lived in a single dwelling; Veerkamp oral tradition also suggests that Schnell and his family lived in the Graner house. It is unknown where the remainder of the colonists lived. Archaeological investigation has not yet occurred on the site (it is currently privately owned); such investigation would likely provide further evidence and clarification of land use and occupation.

Once at the Colony site, the colonists quickly went to work, establishing their farm, planting mulberry trees, tea plants, and constructing a pond for breeding fish. Schnell successfully displayed silk cocoons, tea, and oil plants at the 1869 California State Agricultural Fair in Sacramento. June and October 1869 editions of the local newspaper, the *Mountain Democrat*, praised the industriousness of the Japanese colonists (Van Sant 2000:126-127). In March 1870, a California newspaper noted that the colonists had received and planted more than 140,000 tea plants. The tea plants were likely planted in the flat fields west of the main residence and barn. At the 1870 Horticultural Fair in San Francisco, Schnell and two colonists displayed tea plants and silkworms (Van Santa 2000:126, quoting from an 16 June 1870 article in the *San Francisco Call*).

During the fall of 1869, and summer of 1870, more Japanese colonists came to join the Wakamatsu Colony. According to the 1870 U.S. census, there were 55 Japanese in the United States. Of these, 22 were colonists at Wakamatsu. The July 1870 census lists the following: Dwelling 115, Family 100, John H. Schnell, farmer, Jou Schnell, keeps house, Frances Schnell, 2-yr old daughter, and Mary Schnell, 2 mo. old daughter, Family 101, Fred Dielbal, Winemaker, Nisijawa Taro, Japanese laborer; Dwelling 116, Family 102 Kinjdlego, carpenter, Mrs. Kinjdelyro, keeps house, Daidijro, carpenter, Mrs. Kaidjiro, keeps house, Dajidjiro Takidado, 2-yr old daughter; Dwelling 117, Family 103, Tomodjaro, Sinsia, Mrs. Sinsia, Sindyro, Mrs. Sindyro, all farm laborers; Dwelling 118, Family 104, Tanejero, Kintaro, Juntaro, all farm laborers; Dwelling 119, Family 105, Tilyjero, Uozezoro, Uozeroro Amarisa (female), Uezezoro child, age 7, Mazemuzu (probably Masumizu), all farm laborers; Dwelling 120, Family 106, Abmesabra, Pakeyce, farm laborers. The census taker noted "Names reported as given to me by Schnell." The census lists both Schnell daughters as "White," and states that they were both born in California; given Frances Schnell stated age at 2 years old, this is not possible. While there appears to be some identifiable family groups (husband, wife, child), the exact relationship of some of the residents was likely conjecture. Van Sant (2000:125) estimates that the largest number of Japanese colonists at Wakamatsu was probably around 35, by far the largest grouping of Japanese settlers in the United States at that time.

The Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm was destined to be short-lived. Many factors contributed to the Colony's collapse: temporary drought, competition for water, poor management skills, and the withdrawal of financial support from Matsudaira. A short but ill-timed drought caused the tea plants to wither and die. To make matters worse, a few local miners "jumped claim," and diverted water from a stream on the property (Starns 1993:93; Van San

2000:127). Documents at the Recorder's Office show that Schnell was in legal and financial trouble regarding the land ownership by the end of December 1870. Surprisingly, the new Mejii government pardoned Matsudaira; he chose to become a Shinto priest and remain in Japan, cutting off Schnell's main source of funding. In June 1871, Schnell left California, along with his wife Jou, and their two daughters. Although he promised to return, he did not, effectively abandoning the other Japanese colonists. According to Sioli (1883:112), whose source was likely Francis Veerkamp, Schnell was killed after he returned to Japan.

The fate of only three of the colonists is specifically known. Matsunosuke Sakurai (possibly a former samurai according to Veerkamp family history) worked for the Veerkamp family who had purchased the Wakamatsu lands in 1873. According to Veerkamp family oral tradition, he was a "wonderful gardener" and friend of the family (Yohalem 1977:220). Matsunosuke lived in Gold Hill until his death in 1901. Okei, a young nursemaid for the Schells, also stayed with the Veerkamp family. She died at age 19 in 1871, and is buried on Veerkamp property, nearby (but outside of) the Wakamatsu property. Her gravesite is still maintained by members of the local Japanese American community, and a replica of her gravesite has been created in Aizu Wakamatsu, Japan. Neither Matsunosuke nor Okei were listed in the 1870 census; their arrival time at the colony is uncertain. Masumizu Kuninosuke (possibly Mazemuzu as listed in the census), a young carpenter, moved to nearby Coloma and became a farmer and miner. He married Carrie Wilson, a woman of African and American Indian descent, in 1877. He and his family eventually moved to Sacramento. Masumizu Kuninosuke died in 1915, at the age of 66. His descendants remain in the area and were interrogated by the FBI in the 1940s (during World War II) to determine if they should be classified as "enemy aliens" (they were not). As for the others, some traveled to, and stayed in, San Francisco. Only a few possibly returned to Japan; records are scarce because they would have been considered enemies of the Mejii government (Van Sant 2000:128-129).

The Mejii restoration had brought an end to Civil War in Japan, but it also began a period of rapid modernization, due to contact with the Western world. The resulting social upheaval caused many to look for new places to settle and continue their traditional agricultural practices. Although it was short-lived (1869-1871), the Colony represents the beginning of permanent *Issei* migration to the United States. As Daniels (in Van Sant 2000:x) notes, the story of the earliest Japanese immigrants highlights the facets of multiculturalism in the United States. *Five Views, An Ethnic Site Survey for California*, written by the California Office of Historic Preservation, was intended to celebrate and highlight the country's ethnic diversity; the story of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm is featured in the section on Japanese American heritage.

Political struggle between the United States and Japan, and more overt racism towards Japanese delayed the arrival of more immigrants (Van Sant 2000: 133). After relations had improved, and the Japanese economy worsened, larger numbers of Japanese began to arrive on U.S. mainland in the 1880s. Many of the later *Issei* adopted the agricultural colony model similar to the Wakamatsu colonists as a mechanism for maintaining their cultural connections

(Van Sant 2000:130). By 1900, there were more than 24,000 Japanese living in the continental United States (Daniels 1988:115). Most lived in the western states, and their effect on local agriculture was profound (Daniels 1988:143). In California, for example more than 10% of all California farm products were produced by Japanese Americans (Van Sant 2000:129).

In the early 1920s, the Japanese American community began a resurgence of interest in the Wakamatsu story. Late attorney and Sacramento community leader Henry Taketa interviewed Henry Veerkamp, who was one year older than Okei, and 75 at the time of the interview (Taguma 2007). Local Japanese Americans started to tend Okei's gravesite in 1924, and emphasized the story of the Wakamatsu Colony as the beginnings of Japanese immigration to the continental United States.

In 1969, then governor Ronald Reagan proclaimed the Wakamatsu Colony site to be California Historical Landmark No. 815. The Japanese American Citizens League and the Japanese Consul General Shima Seiichi supported the proclamation. Matsudaira Ichiro, the grandson of the colonist's *daimyo* financier, also attended the ceremony. The Japanese American community designated 1969 as the Japanese American centennial. In 1986, Yoshiki Inomata, the Mayor of Aiza Wakamatsu, Japan wrote a letter of thanks to Malcolm Veekamp, praising the family for their care of the gravesite. In 2001, the Veerkamp family donated an original Wakamatsu banner with the Colony's lotus blossom crest, and a ceremonial dagger (possibly a short samurai sword) that may have belonged to Jou Schnell to the nearby Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park. In 2007, a Veerkamp descendant found photographs of the colonists in an envelope; the photographs were taken at an historically known photography studio in Placerville, California.

When Francis and Louisa Veerkamp purchased the Wakamatsu Colony lands in 1873, they blended local and national history. The Veerkamps had settled in Gold Hill in 1852, and purchased land adjacent to the Colony and in nearby communities to settle their six sons. The Veerkamp family maintained the rural agricultural nature of the property, preserving the heritage and landscape of the Wakamatsu Colony. Through many complicated land transactions, the Wakamatsu lands have passed to several Veerkamp sons and daughters of subsequent generations.

The 54.3 acres included in this nomination constitute the heart of the Colony, centered on the main structures, mulberry plantings, pond, vineyard, and surrounding flat agricultural lands to the west of the residence that convey the rural setting of the Colony farmlands. The association of the Wakamatsu Colony with the remaining acreage (outside of the nominated 54.3 acres) is not as immediately apparent, although archaeological survey and investigation may enhance the association. The remaining acreage has retained its agricultural setting, but is comprised of more rolling hills that are less likely to have been farmed by the Wakamatsu colonists, and has been further influenced by cattle grazing and the early 20th century construction of a small six-acre lake.

The American River Conservancy currently leases portions of the land from the Helen Veerkamp Trust. The Conservancy's intention is to preserve the site, rehabilitate the structures, and to identify appropriate governmental partners to develop an historical park celebrating the heritage of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm. *Nichi Bei Times*, Northern California's oldest Japanese American newspaper, has recently published an article supporting these efforts (Taguma 2007). The Consul General of Japan, the Governor of Fukishima Prefecture, the Mayor of Wakamatsu in Japan, Senator Barbara Boxer, Congresswoman Doris Matsui, the National Japanese American Historical Society, Japanese American Citizens League (Florin, Placer, Sacramento and National Chapters), Assemblyman Alan Nakanishi, El Dorado County Supervisor Ron Briggs, the El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce, the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors, and many others public figures and private citizens also support this preservation effort.

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 54.3 acres

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	—			3	—		
2	—			4	—		

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rebecca Allen, Ph.D. and Kimberly Wooten

organization Past Forward, Inc. date 11 August 2009

street & number PO Box 969 telephone 530-333-4547

city or town Garden Valley state CA zip code 95633

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Helen L. Veerkamp Revocable Trust, % Gary Veerkamp, Trustee

street & number 8691 Gunner Way telephone 916-965-8780

city or town Fair Oaks state CA zip code 95628

Geographical Data

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	10	683660	4293200
2	10	684500	4293020
3	10	684500	4292840
4	10	683880	4292740
5	10	683620	4292820
6	10	683600	4292980

Verbal Boundary Description

The property is an irregular shape, located in Township 11 North, Range 10 East of El Dorado County, California, north of the main intersection in Gold Hill, and two miles south of the town of Coloma. Most of the land is in the N 1/3 of the NE 1/4 of Section 32, with smaller portions jutting eastwards into the NE 1/4 of the NW 1/4 of Section 32, and northwards into the SE 1/4 of the SW 1/4 of Section 29 and the SE 1/4 of the SE 1/4 of Section 29. (Sketch map on page 13 shows these boundaries).

Boundary Justification

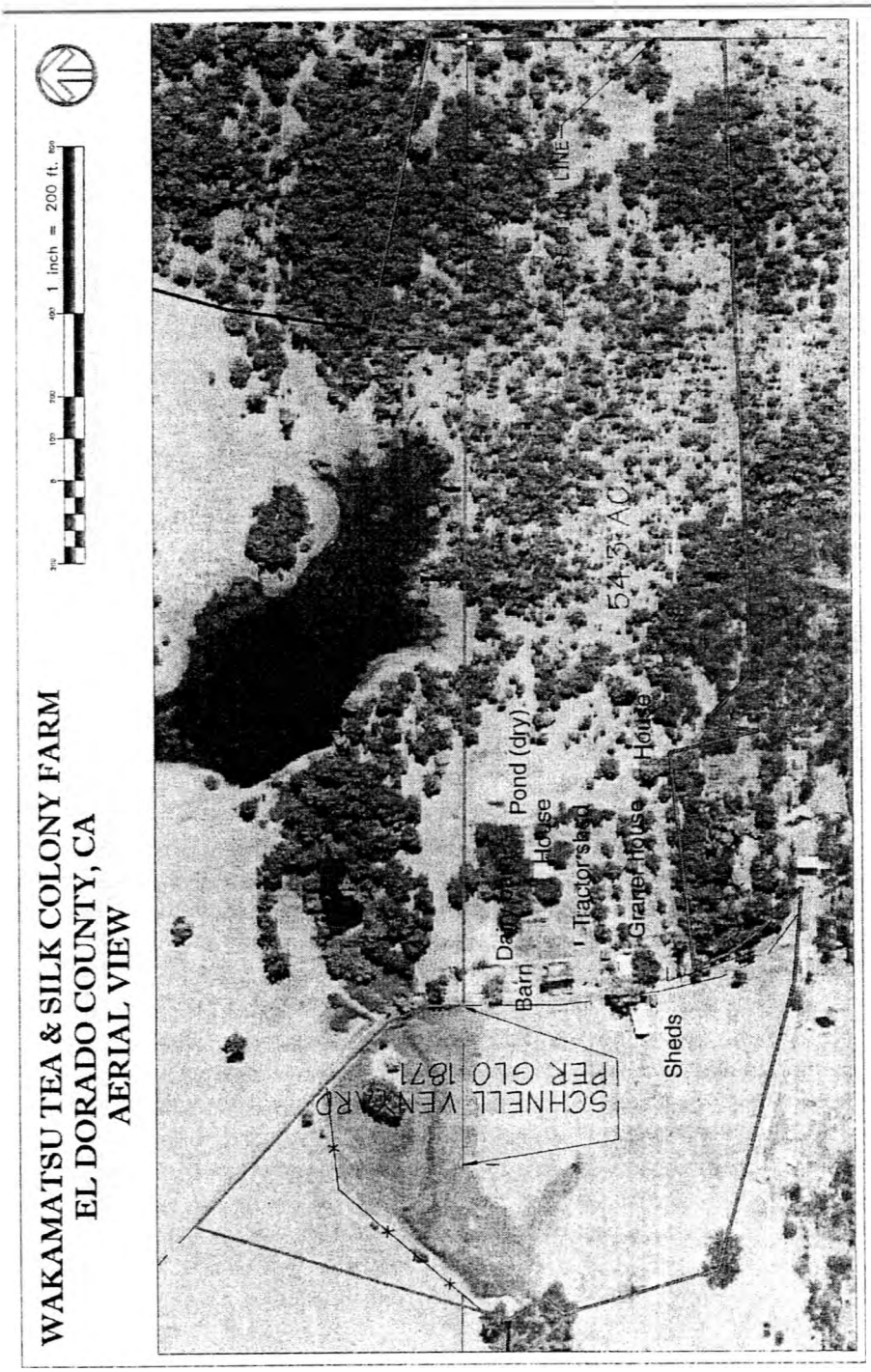
The nominated property includes 54.3 acres of the approximate 180 acres that comprised the original purchase of lands for the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm. The nominated acreage maintains sufficient integrity of rural setting to convey the history of the Wakamatsu Colony. Included in this acreage is the heart of the Wakamatsu Colony lands, including a residence, barn, associated vegetation (including a *keaki* and volunteer mulberry trees), pond, and flat agricultural fields to the west that are documented to be the site of the vineyard and possibly the tea plantings. The eastern, southern, and western boundaries extend to the original property lines. The northern boundary is cropped from the original property holdings as later land use (including construction of a six-acre reservoir) has altered the landscape. Specific historic use of these lands north of the proposed boundary associated with the Wakamatsu colony is unknown at this time.

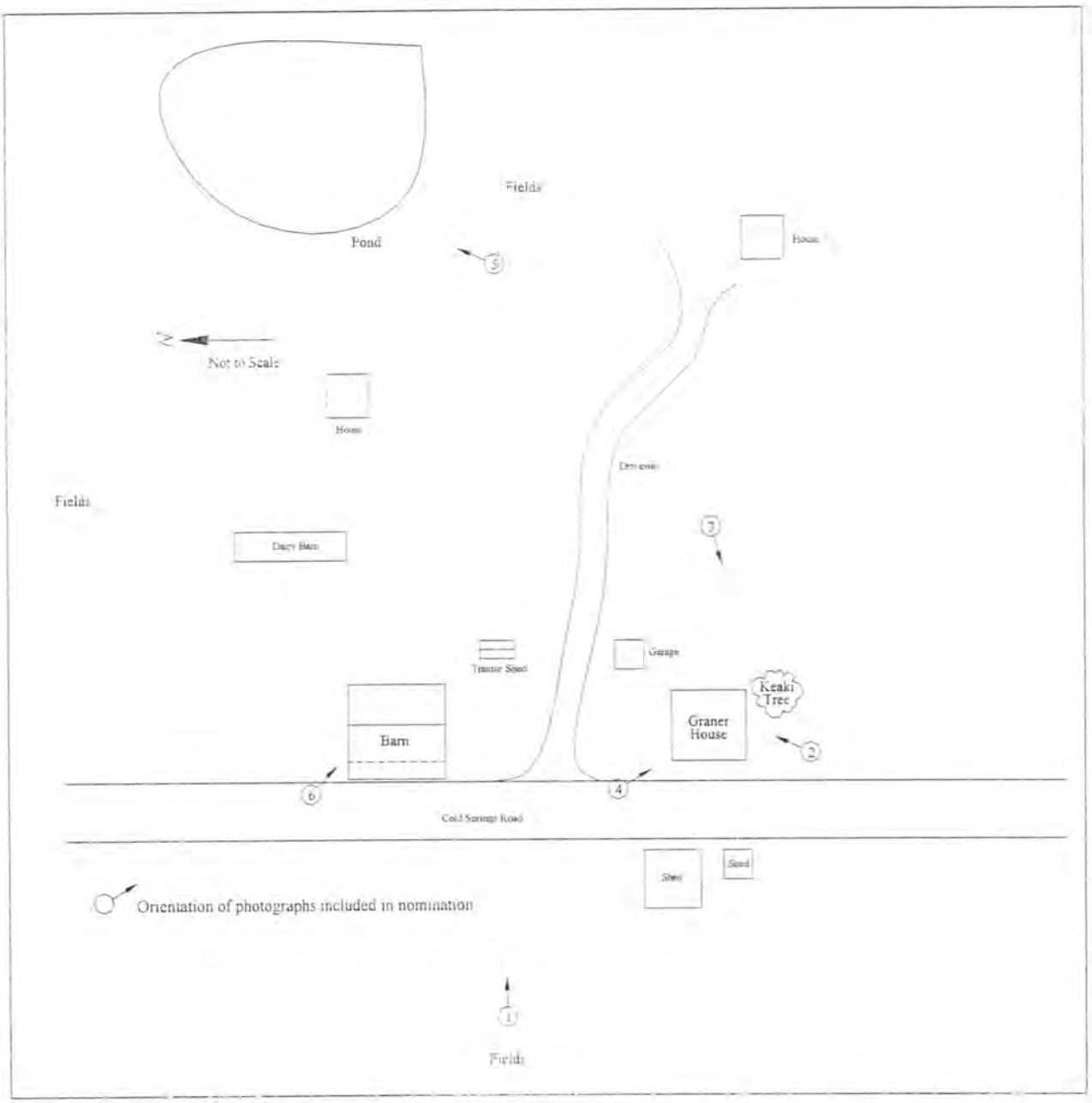
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

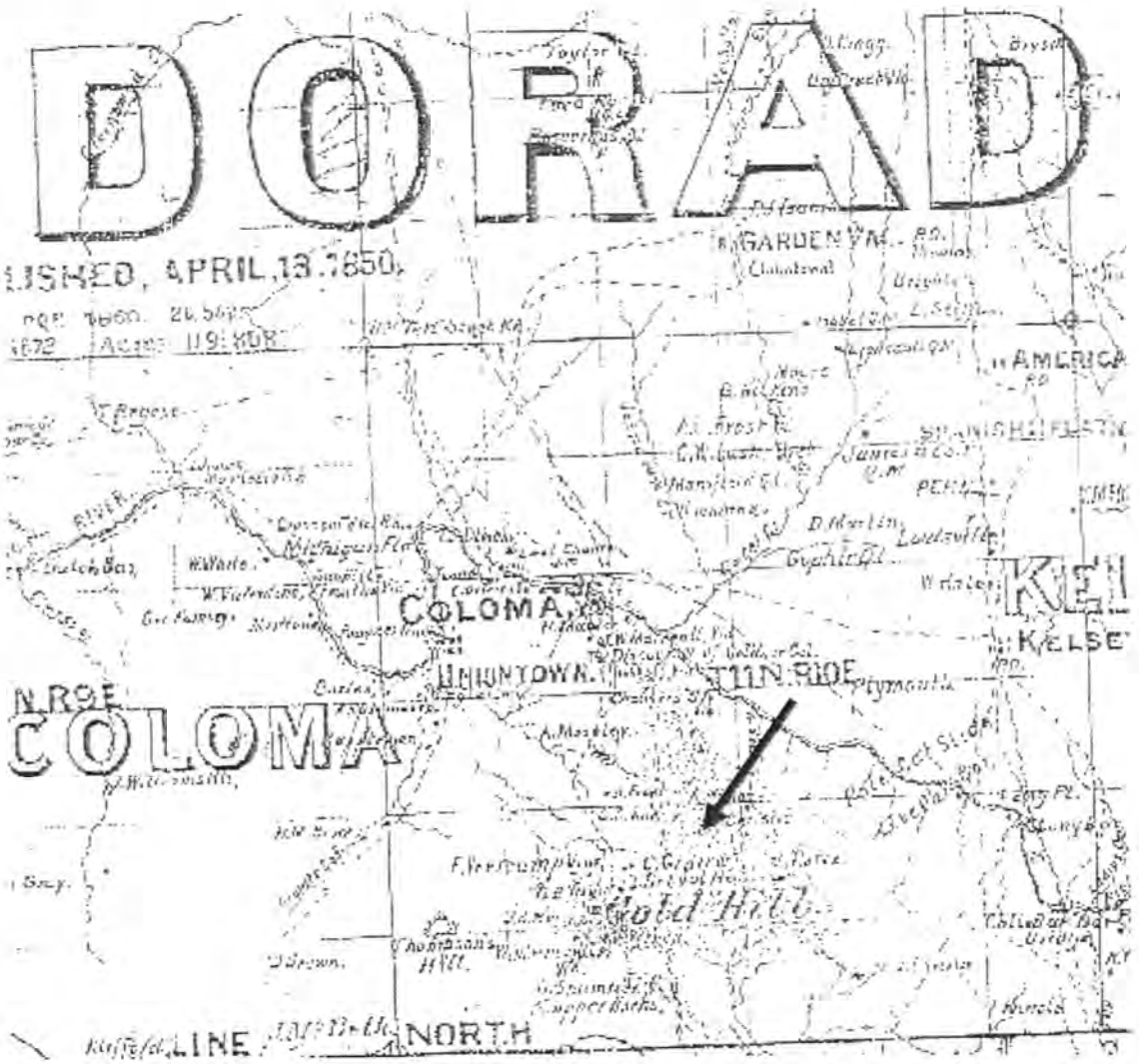
Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm
El Dorado County, CA

Section number Sketch Map Page 14

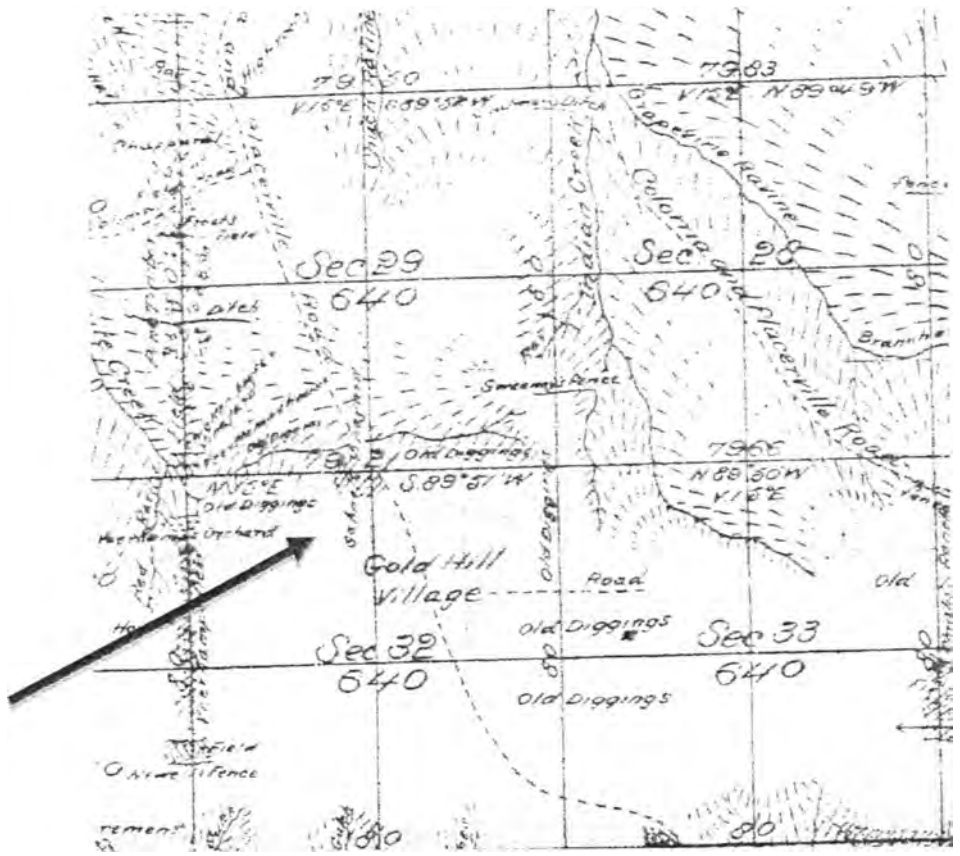



Fields
Pond
5
House
Not to Scale
House
Driveway
Fields
3
Dairy Barn
Tractor Shed
Garage
Keaki Tree
Graner House
Barn
2
6
4
Cold Springs Road
Shed
Shed
Orientation of photographs included in nomination
1
Fields

Portion of 1868 Map of El Dorado County, U.S. Public Surveys, J.H. Wildes, Principal Draughtsman, U.S. Surveyor General Office, San Francisco, August 17, 1868. "C. Graner" house highlighted with arrow.



Portion of 1872 Map of Township No. 11 North, Range No. 10 East of Mount Diablo. U.S. Surveyor General Office, San Francisco. Lands surveyed 1869-1871, approved July 10, 1872. "Schnell's Vineyard" highlighted with arrow (vineyard located also noted on Sketch map above).



Wakamatsu colonists. Circa 1870-1871. Photographer, George H. Gilbert, Placerville, California. (Courtesy American River Conservancy)

Wakamatsu colonists. Circa 1870-1871. Photographer, George H. Gilbert, Placerville, California (Courtesy American River Conservancy)

NPS Form 10-900a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section _____ Page ___

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 09000397 **Date Listed: 10/9/2009**

Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm **El Dorado** **CA**
Property Name **County** **State**

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

_____ 10/9/09
Signature of the Keeper **Date of Action**

==========

Amended Items in Nomination:

Significance:

The appropriate level of significance is: *state*.

The current nomination does not provide a strong case for the importance of the 1869—1871 Wakamatsu Colony to the broad national patterns of Japanese ethnic immigration to this country. The short duration of the active Colony, its apparent failure, and the unique make-up of the colonists (middle class rather than laborers, outside rather than mainstream Japanese culture) call into question the Colony's true role in instigating, promoting, or modeling important patterns of significant late-nineteenth and early twentieth century Japanese immigration. How exactly were the Colonists "a critical portent of the Japanese immigration to come in the last decades of the 19th century?" [8.1] Justification for national significance would seem to require a direct correlation between the activity at a site and the broader patterns of the larger historic context.

Statements to the effect that "professional historians of Japan and America have paid scant attention to the Wakamatsu Colony," "...meaningful immigration (of Japanese) began only in the 1880s," , and "For many years, the tragic fate of the Wakamatsu Colony drifted into oblivion, its very existence lost and forgotten until after World War I," appear to point to the relative lack of a direct correlation between the Colony and later patterns of historic settlement. Scholars cite various reasons for the patterns of later Japanese settlement, including economic advantages in the U. S. compared to Japan's prevailing wages, the positive imagery of the United States as portrayed in the Japanese press, and personal connections, but none appear to link back to the Wakamatsu Colony. In fact, some researchers point to the pivotal importation of Japanese laborers to Hawaii in 1869 as a far more important and precedent setting event to historic Japanese migration and agricultural development.

This should not be construed as an opinion that the Wakamatsu Colony site is not eligible for listing in the National Register, perhaps even at the national level. Making broad statements as to the influence or importance of the site to the patterns of later settlement without direct evidence weakens the case rather than providing a clear depiction of what the site was and still does represent--"the adventurous spirit of the Issei generation…to risk all in a new and unknown land to seek their dreams…dreams of riches, dreams of a new place, dreams of starting anew…. represents the dreams that many others who followed later brought with them. " The story of the Wakamatsu Colony may bring with it a clearer understanding of what the Issei went through at a certain point in time, unlike any other later site of that or later periods. At its core, the Wakamatsu Colony site may simply represent one unique step along a long, disconnected journey of ethnic immigration and settlement. A revised nomination may want to discuss this "journey" as the historic context, highlighting what may be comparable "steps" or "snapshots in time" along the way.

The nomination also needs to clearly differentiate between historic period context and current day perspectives. References to "Japanese Mayflower" and "Japanese Jamestown" may represent the newfound appreciation of this site, but may have limited value in terms of establishing historic period associations and connections. Unlike these Anglo-American sites little supporting evidence is provided as to the long-term historic impact of the Wakamatsu Colony.

Likewise, while the Colony may have had as its intent the establishment of a productive agricultural operation, nothing in the current documentation provides evidence that they were successful in their efforts, or that those efforts had any type of significant influence on local, regional, or national agricultural development. In order to establish and justify significance at the national level there needs to be clear evidence that the property played some form of significant role in the larger context in the historic period, or specifically the establishment and development of sericulture (silk) and tea as an important pursuit. There is no denying the significant role of California in the historic patterns of American agricultural development during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but the current documentation fails to show any direct link between the 1869—1871 efforts of the Wakamatsu Colony and these later important efforts. In fact most evidence would support the fact that the Wakamatsu Colony was a little remembered effort, largely forgotten by the time of the more substantial emigration of agricultural laborers to the West Coast and elsewhere during the 1880s and later. Was the Colony actually seen as establishing the feasibility of sericulture in America, or was its failure detrimental to such efforts? Was it even known outside the small number of families directly involved in the effort? What evidence, if any, is there to support the significance of the Wakamatsu Colony to the later, broader efforts at establishing agricultural colonies or independent farming operations in the United States? Merely showing that this may have been the first (largely unsuccessful) attempt at agriculture by a rather unique group is not the same as justifying a nationally significant place within the history of American agriculture.

These clarifications were confirmed with the CA SHPO office.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

NPS Form 10-900a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section _____ Page ___

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 09000397 **Date Listed: 10/9/2009**

Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm **El Dorado** **CA**
Property Name **County** **State**

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

_____ 3/26/2010
Signature of the Keeper **Date of Action**

==========

Amended Items in Nomination:

Significance:

Level of Significance: national

At the time of original listing the National Register voiced concerns regarding the nomination's justification for a national level of significance. Given the short duration of the active Colony (1869—1871), its apparent failure, and the unique make-up of the colonists (middle class rather than laborers, outside the mainstream of Japanese culture and later immigration patterns) the Colony's true role in instigating, promoting, or modeling important patterns of significant late-nineteenth and early twentieth century Japanese immigration was called into question.

Subsequent to the 2009 listing, supporters of the Colony nomination identified additional documentation, which directly pointed to the important role of the Colony venture in Japanese social and cultural history, particularly in how the agricultural experiment was viewed by Japanese citizens back in their homeland. The National Park Service now believes that a case for national level significance has been made for the property and that ***national*** significance is the appropriate level of significance for the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm.

From a national perspective the story of the Wakamatsu Colony provides an insightful glimpse into--"*the*

adventurous spirit of the Issei[1] *generation…to risk all in a new and unknown land to seek their dreams…dreams of riches, dreams of a new place, dreams of starting anew…. represents the dreams that many others who followed later brought with them*[2]*. "* Studying the Wakamatsu Colony as a unique snapshot of early Japanese immigration can bring with it a clearer understanding of what the *Issei* went through at a certain point in time, unlike the conditions or situations faced at any other site of that or later periods. At its core, the Wakamatsu Colony site represents one unique step along a long, sometimes disconnected journey of ethnic immigration and settlement in the United States. Not all points along that journey may represent great successes, but each in its own way significantly contributes to the compilation of a fuller story.

In the arc of Japanese ethnic history in this country, the Wakamatsu effort holds a unique place. Recognized by many scholars as one of the first, if not the first, attempt at a permanent Japanese settlement, the Wakamatsu Colony has become an important part of any broad study of Japanese immigrant history. While most studies to date find little supporting evidence as to the *direct* long-term historic impact of the Wakamatsu Colony on local, regional, or national agricultural development or immigration, the events associated with the Colony venture nevertheless can be, and were, seen as the first tentative steps in a historic, multi-part journey.

Whereas much of the evidence appears to support the fact that the Wakamatsu Colony was a little remembered effort after its failure, largely forgotten by the time of the more substantial emigration of agricultural laborers to the West Coast and elsewhere during the 1880s and later, newly identified research reveals that may not necessarily be true for the Colony's role in Japan itself. Recently uncovered evidence points to the significant use of the Colony story during the early twentieth century as part of Japan's nationalist ideology, where the 1869 efforts are pointed to as visible support for Japan's continued aggressive colonization efforts. Where the dismantling of the colony farm may have relegated the Wakamatsu project to a footnote in American agricultural history, evidence shows that the story continued to have significant relevancy in Japan and in America's Japanese immigrant community. The Wakamatsu immigrant saga, maintained and perhaps embellished over the years, supported ideas of Japan's longstanding role in American history, buttressed expansionist views, and provided iconic figures symbolizing the virtues of Japanese culture and ideology. The character of Okie, a female member of the Wakamatsu Colony and purportedly the first Japanese citizen/immigrant to die in this country, was particularly popularized in literature, movies and socials writing of the period. The long-standing value and appeal of the Wakamatsu story, both in Japan and in the minds of later Japanese immigrants points to its sustained importance to broader Japanese ethnic and social history and the process of identity formation and history making[3]

These clarifications were confirmed with the CA SHPO office.

DISTRIBUTION:
National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

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[1] *Issei*, term used in countries in North America, South America and Australia to specify the Japanese people first to immigrate. Their children born in the new country are referred to as Nisei (second generation), and their grandchildren are Sansei (third generation).

[2] Kenji G. *Taguma, Nichi Bei* Times, May 2, 2007.

[3] see, *"Pioneers of Overseas Japanese Development": Japanese American History and the Making of Expansionist Orthodoxy in Imperial Japan*, Eiichiro Azuma, **Journal of Asian Studies**, Vol. 67, No. 4, November 2008.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY NAME: Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: CALIFORNIA, El Dorado

DATE RECEIVED: 8/28/09 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 10/11/09
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 09000397

DETAILED EVALUATION:

___ACCEPT ___RETURN ___REJECT _____DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

The Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm is significant at the national level under National Register Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Asian (Japanese) and Exploration Settlement. The establishment of the small agricultural colony in California's gold country in 1869 marked what is largely considered the first permanent effort by Japanese immigrants to establish an economic and social foothold in the United States. Contemporaneous migrations by individual Japanese citizens occurred sporadically, but the Wakamatsu Colony was clearly the first documented attempt at permanent settlement and integration into the American economy. Ultimately a failed financial venture, the colony nonetheless represented an important milestone in what would become a rich history of 19th and 20th century Japanese immigration and social development.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept Criterion A

REVIEWER Paul R. Lusignan DISCIPLINE Historian

TELEPHONE _____ DATE 10/9/09

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR (Y)/N

Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm
Gold Hill (vicinity), El Dorado County
Staff Evaluation

The site of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm is an intact rural historic landscape located near Gold Hill, approximately 2 miles south of the town of Coloma, where gold was discovered in California. The nominated property encompasses 54.3 acres. Contributing resources include a residence and barn associated with the Wakamatsu settlers, and landscape elements including mulberry trees (for sericulture) planted by the colonists, and associated agricultural fields and pond. The barn and house are adjacent to Cold Springs Road, the central road running through the town of Gold Hill. Expansive agricultural fields and rolling hills surround the buildings on all sides, including the lands west of the road. The nominated acreage maintains sufficient physical integrity and integrity of rural setting to convey the history of the Wakamatsu Colony.

The Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm site is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A at a national level of significance in the areas of ethnic heritage, agriculture, and early settlement. In 1869, on behalf of Matsudaira Katamori (a *daimyo* of the Tokugawa family), agent John Henry Schnell purchased land and buildings from Charles Graner to establish the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony. Japanese colonists planted and maintained mulberry trees and silkworm cocoons for silk farming, as well as tea plants and seeds. It is one of the oldest properties in North America associated with Japanese permanent settlement in the United States. The Wakamatsu colonists occupied the site from the summer of 1869 to the spring of 1871, and were a critical portent of the Japanese immigration to come in the last decades of the 19th century. Of the 55 people of Japanese heritage documented by a United States census in 1870, 22 were settled at the Wakamatsu Colony in Gold Hill. Mary Schnell, the daughter of Jou and John Henry Schnell, was two months old at the time of the census, and the first child of a Japanese immigrant born in the U.S. In the area of Agriculture, the contributions of the colony mark the beginning of Japanese influence on the agricultural economy of California and the United States, particularly in the area of crop specialization. The contributions of the colony to California's agricultural industry are tied culturally to their Japanese heritage and include a focus on sericulture and tea, Japan's two most important export industries during the period of significance.

Rebecca Allen, Past Forward, Inc. prepared the nomination for the American River Conservancy. The property owner, the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors, the Japanese American Citizens League, and the National Japanese American Historical Society among others support the nomination. Staff visited the site on January 22, 2009.

Staff recommends the State Historical Resources Commission determine that the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm meets National Register Criterion A at the national level of significance and recommend the State Historic Preservation Officer approve the nomination for forwarding to the National Park Service for listing in the National Register.

Cynthia Toffelmier
Historian II
March 17, 2009

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
REPRESENTED BY THE
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

COLOMA QUADRANGLE
CALIFORNIA—EL DORADO CO.
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
SW/4 GEORGETOWN 15' QUADRANGLE

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS, and USC&GS

Topography from aerial photographs by multiplex methods
Aerial photographs taken 1946. Field check 1949

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on California coordinate system, zone 2

Dashed land lines indicate approximate location

1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 10, shown in blue
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 14 meters north and 90 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks

UTM GRID AND 1973 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map

20% TOTAL RECOVERED FIBER

SCALE 1:24 000

CONTOUR INTERVAL 40 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Secondary highway, all weather, hard surface
Light-duty road, all weather, improved surface
Unimproved road, fair or dry weather
State Route

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

Revisions shown in purple compiled by the Geological Survey from aerial photographs taken 1973. This information not field checked

COLOMA, CALIF.
SW/4 GEORGETOWN 15' QUADRANGLE
N3845—W12052.5/7.5

1949
PHOTOREVISED 1973
DMA 1861 IV SW—SERIES V895

INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA—1983

ISSN 0-607-08566-5

County of El Dorado

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

RUSTY DUPRAY.....DISTRICT I
HELEN K. BAUMANN.....DISTRICT II
JAMES R. SWEENEY.....DISTRICT III
RON BRIGGS.....DISTRICT IV
NORMA SANTIAGO.....DISTRICT V

CINDY KECK.....CLERK OF THE BOARD

330 FAIR LANE PLACERVILLE, CA 95667
TELEPHONE (530 621-5390
FAX NO. (530) 622-3645

February 26, 2007

Diane Matsuda
Executive Director
California Cultural and Historical Endowment
900 N Street #300
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Ms. Matsuda,

This week, the American River Conservancy (the "Conservancy") will submit a grant application to the California Cultural and Historical Endowment (the "Endowment") for funding to acquire 303 acres of ranch land owned by the Veerkamp family in western El Dorado County (about 40 miles due east of the State Capital).

The Conservancy has initiated an extensive capital campaign to raise the matching funds required by the Endowment. Through this capital campaign the Conservancy expects to raise the balance of necessary funding to complete the acquisition of these ranch lands as well as support the restoration of historic buildings and design and build an interpretive facility for the historic Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony established in 1869.

The Wakamatsu Colony is the first and most important Japanese pioneer site in California and North America. The Japanese colonists introduced traditional Japanese agriculture to El Dorado County and California. The Wakamatsu colonists participated in the San Francisco Horticultural Fair in 1870 and won an award for its silk production. The original farmhouse, barn and a grave site and headstone for a young Japanese girl (Okei Ito), and a state historical land mark plaque dedicated by Governor Reagan in 1969 are the only historical artifacts of the Wakamatsu Colony.

It is the vision of the Conservancy, the Veerkamp family, the Japanese-American Community and State Parks to resurrect a living-history, interpretive State Park facility recreating the Wakamatsu Colony at the peak of its existence. In addition, the project as outlined by a Grant Deed of Conservation Easement will provide for over 200 acres of wildlife habitat, the restoration of the Wakamatsu – Veerkamp homestead, a historic barn and dairy. The Conservation Easement also allows for the development of a new dairy and creamery with irrigated pasturelands on 60 acres that will continue the historic and productive use of these ranch lands.

As County Supervisor for District IV, the boundaries of which contain the Veerkamp Ranch and Wakamatsu site, I want to express my full support to the vision for the protection, restoration and interpretation of the Wakamatsu and Veerkamp family history of this site. It is our expectation that this facility will become a part of the County's farm trail program which highlights the broad range of agricultural production in El Dorado County.

Lastly, the Conservancy has an 18-year history of completing over 50 conservation projects in El Dorado County. The Conservancy provides education, conservation and stewardship programs to protect and conserve fisheries and wildlife habitat, scenic vistas, cultural heritage and recreational lands throughout El Dorado County. I know this agency has the experience and project completion skills necessary to meet all project and Endowment requirements.

Thank you for your review of this letter and your support of this very exciting El Dorado County project.

Sincerely,

Ron Briggs

Ron Briggs
Supervisor
El Dorado County, District IV

tlg/rvb

DORIS O. MATSUI
5TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA
COMMITTEE ON RULES
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–0505

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
222 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515–0505
(202) 225–7163

DISTRICT OFFICE:
ROBERT T. MATSUI FEDERAL COURTHOUSE
ROOM 12600
501 I STREET
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814
(916) 498–5600

www.house.gov/matsui

March 28, 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

RE: Support for Wakamatsu Colony preservation

I am pleased to offer my support to the American River Conservancy and the Sacramento, Placer and Florin Chapters of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) and their campaign to raise $4.6 million to preserve the site of the Wakamatsu Colony.

The Sacramento, Placer and Florin chapters of the JACL and the American River Conservancy have formed a partnership entitled the "Gold Hill – Wakamatsu Project" that seeks to acquire the historic 300 acre Veerkamp property at Gold Hill, a rural ranch in El Dorado County. The Gold Hill – Wakamatsu Project would establish a new state historical park on this site in commemoration of the first Japanese settlement in North America.

The Wakamatsu colony was founded in 1869 when a group of Japanese settlers arrived in California to establish a silk farming community. The colonists brought many items from Japan, including mulberry trees, silkworm cocoons, tea plants and a large banner bearing the crest of the Aizu Wakamatsu tribe. The colony struggled for a number of years due to lack of funds and an insufficient water supply; ultimately, the Japanese settlers had to abandon the settlement. However, many original artifacts from this settlement remain preserved by the California State Parks system. The original farmhouse, a gravestone of a young Japanese girl, and a state historical landmark serve as visual reminders of the site's legacy.

The Veerkamp family of Placerville, who has owned the land surrounding the Wakamatsu colony since the 19th century, is now interested in selling the ranch to the American River Conservancy (Conservancy), which regrettably does not yet have sufficient funds to purchase the property. Should the Conservancy fail to purchase the property, it is likely the land would be sold for commercial development. This is why the procurement of funds is so vital to the Gold Hill –Wakamatsu Project.

To many Japanese Americans, the Wakamatsu Colony is as symbolic as Plymouth Rock was for the first American colonists. Indeed, many Japanese tourists have visited the "Historical Landmark" placard. The Gold Hill –Wakamatsu Collaborative now has an historic opportunity to acquire this land and preserve the legacy of these early Japanese Americans. Moreover, the establishment of a state historical park would prevent development on the site and ensure that the natural habitat is preserved for future generations of visitors.

I have great confidence in the Gold Hill – Wakamatsu Project, and I am pleased to support their fundraising efforts. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my Sacramento office at (916) 498-5600.

Sincerely,

Doris O. Matsui

DORIS O. MATSUI
Member of Congress

DOM:sb

Still Finding Gold In El Dorado County

April 9, 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

RE: Support for Gold Hill Ranch - Wakamatsu Colony Site Acquisition

On March 21, 2007 Alan Ehrgott, Executive Director of the American River Conservancy provided the Board of Directors of the El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce with a presentation on the purchase of the historic 300 acre Veerkamp property at Gold Hill, a rural ranch in El Dorado County. As presented by Mr. Ehrgott, the Gold Hill-Wakamatsu Project would acquire this ranch from a willing seller, the Veerkamp family at a purchase price equal to the appraised, fair market value and establish a new state historical park on this site in commemoration of the first Japanese settlement in North America.

The Gold Hill Wakamatsu Project would feature a management plan that would protect: 208 acres as wildlife habitat and open space with hiking trails and picnic areas; 60 acres of grazing and pastureland; a 10 acre site protecting the historic Charles Graner House (circa 1852), original barn and family dairy; and lastly a 25 acres site for the recreation of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony established in July, 1869 as a living history, interpretive facility that features the introduction of silkworm farming, paper making, tea, rice and bamboo crops and processing. It is proposed that this site also become integrated into El Dorado County's Farm Trails Program.

Following the review and discussion of this proposal, the Board of Directors of the El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce unanimously agreed to support in concept the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Project as a unique opportunity to acquire this historic site, establish a state historical park and preserve the sites natural habitat and cultural resources for future generations of visitors to El Dorado County.

Should there be any questions regarding the support of the El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce, please do not hesitate to contact my office at (530) 621-5885

Sincerely,

Laurel Brent-Bumb

Laurel Brent-Bumb
Chief Executive Officer

EL DORADO COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
542 Main Street, Placerville, California 95667
(530) 621-5885 (800) 457-6279 Fax (530) 642-1624

PEOPLE TO PEOPLE
International

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER
Founder

Peace through Understanding

April 11, 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of People to People International, it is my pleasure to extend my support of the El Dorado County Chapter's efforts to preserve the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony. Chapter President, Myrna Hanses, has shared the history of this important international and historical landmark with me and I fully agree that such an important portion of California history should be cherished and restored to its full glory.

The tale of a small group of Japanese immigrants who traveled to California and the Veerkamp family who befriended them is a wonderful example of People to People International in action. When my grandfather founded People to People, he said, "I have long believed, as have many before me, that peaceful relations between nations requires understanding and mutual respect between individuals." What better example of this than people from such diverse backgrounds working together through the shared bond of agriculture? The historical value of their partnership is immeasurable and is certainly a testament to the regional connection between the people of California and Japan.

I am proud to offer my support of the El Dorado County Chapter's efforts and urge you to support the American River Conservancy as they work to preserve the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony.

Warm regards,

Mary Jean Eisenhower
President/Chief Executive Officer

MJE/tsw

WORLD HEADQUARTERS
501 East Armour Boulevard Kansas City, Missouri 64109-2200 USA 816.531.4701 *phone* 816.561.7502 *fax* E-mail: ptpi@ptpi.org Web site: www.ptpi.org

UAB SCHOOL OF SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Department of History

8 May 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

After Aizu domain in northern Japan was defeated supporting the Tokugawa shogun's government against the anti-shogun forces of Satsuma and Choshu domains wanting to establish a new imperial government, approximately 30 Japanese from Aizu traveled to Coloma, California, in 1869 to establish a tea and silk farm. Most of these Japanese colonists were samurai class, and can be considered as agricultural colonists and political refugees because they opposed those who became leaders in the new Meiji imperial government of Japan. Led by John Henry Schnell (sometimes confused with his brother, Edward Schnell), a German mechant and advisor to Aizu lord Katamori Matsudaira, the "Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm" in Coloma prospered at first, but collapsed by 1871 due to the lack of an adequate water supply and other problems. Three of the Japanese colonists are known to have remained in California for the rest of their lives, one of whom is buried on the Veerkamp property of the original colony site. Others may have gone to the burgeoning city of San Francisco, and a few might have made their way back to Japan by way of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company ships between California, Japan, and China.

Despite their failure to establish a successful agricultural colony, these vanguard Japanese immigrants suggest the significant contribution Japanese farmers would soon make to the economy of California. For example, by 1918, over 10 percent of all farm products in California were produced by Japanese immigrant farmers. Moreover, some of these later immigrant farmers adopted the agricultural colony as an institution for developing the Japanese American frontier. The Wakamatsu colonists were also the vanguard of Japanese political refugees in the United States. Beginning in the late 1870s, Japanese political activists fled to the United States from the increasingly conservative and nationalist government dominated by officials from Satsuma and Choshu, many of whom were the same samurai who defeated Katamori Matsudaira and Aizu in 1868. As agricultural colonists and as political refugees, the Japanese of the Wakamatsu Colony in Gold Hill, Coloma, were the vanguard of thousands and thousands of Japanese immigrants in the United States.

Although I grew up in Placerville, California, and spent a great deal of time as a boy in Coloma hiking around Gold Rush era historical sites and swimming in the American River, I first became interested in the Wakamatsu Colony story when I lived in Osaka, Japan, from 1985-91. I visited Aizu-Wakamatsu twice during those years and was helped in my understanding of the Japan side of the Wakamatsu Colony story by the late Mr. Masao Takeda, former Chief Librarian of Aizu-Wakamatsu Public Library. Later, I was helped by the late Mr. Henry Taketa (no relation) of Sacramento for the American side of the Wakamatsu Colony story. When I returned to the United States to study for a doctorate degree at the University of Oregon (PhD., 1996), I decided to focus on Japanese history, particularly the history of Japan's relations with the United States. Using books and documents from both Japan and the United States, the story

The University of Alabama at Birmingham
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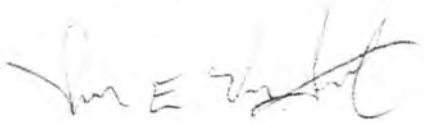
UAB SCHOOL OF SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Department of History

of the Wakamatsu Colony became a major chapter in my dissertation and first book, Pacific Pioneers: Japanese Journeys to America and Hawaii, 1850-80 (University of Illinois Press, 2000). Two of my academic conference paper presentations have specifically been on the Wakamatsu Colony (Asian Studies on the Pacific Coast Conference, Monterey, CA, 1993; American Historical Association Conference, Chicago, 2000), while several other conference papers have dealt with other aspects of 19th century Japan-US history. While studying about the Wakamatsu Colony, I discovered there were--and are-- plenty of people in northern California and in northern Japan interested in this formative episode of Japan-US relations. For example, during a break from my year-long Fulbright teaching and research duties in Osaka in 2005, I was able to join the People To People group from El Dorado County who happened to be visiting Aizu-Wakamatsu at the same time.

The story of the Wakamatsu Colony is a historically significant episode during the frontier era of the relationship between Japan and the United States, and is of significant interest to people in California and Japan. As someone who has a strong professional and personal interest in the Wakamatsu Colony in Coloma, California, I am very glad to learn of the purchase agreement between the American River Conservancy and the Veerkamp family for the purpose of restoring the original site of the Japanese colonists who journeyed to northern California in 1869.

Sincerely,



Dr. John E. Van Sant
Associate Professor
Department of History
University of Alabama-Birmingham

The University of Alabama at Birmingham
401 Ullman Building • 1212 University Boulevard
Birmingham, Alabama 35294-3350 • (205) 934-5634 • FAX (205) 975-8360

NJAHS

National Japanese American Historical Society

1684 Post Street
San Francisco, CA 94115-3604
PHONE (415) 921-5007
FAX (415) 921-5087
EMAIL njahs@njahs.org
WEB www.njahs.org

May 16, 2007

Fred Kochi &
Alan Ehrgott
American River Conservancy
P.O. Box 562
Coloma CA 95613

Dear Fred & Alan Ehrgott,

RE: Support for Wakamatsu Colony preservation

On behalf of the National Japanese American Historical Society, Inc., I am pleased to offer our support and endorsement to the American River Conservancy and the Sacramento, Placer and Florin Chapters of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), and their campaign to raise $4.6 million to preserve the site of the Wakamatsu Colony.

The "Gold Hill-Wakamatsu Project" (The Sacramento, Placer and Florin chapters of the JACL, and the American River Conservancy) have formed a partnership seeks to acquire the historic 300 acre Veerkamp property at Gold Hill, a rural ranch in El Dorado County. The Gold Hill-Wakamatsu Project established a new state historical park on this site in commemoration of the first Japanese settlement in North America.

It is historically significant that the Wakamatsu colony was founded in 1869 when a group of Japanese settlers arrived in California and established the first silk farming community. The colonists brought many items from Japan, including mulberry trees, silkwood cocoons, tea plants and a large banner bearing the crest of the Aizu Wakamatsu tribe. The colony struggled for a number of years due to lack of funds and an insufficient water supply; ultimately, the Japanese settlers had to abandon the settlement. However, many original artifacts from this settlement remain preserved by the California State Parks system. The original farmhouse, a gravestone of a young Japanese gift, and a state historical landmark serve as visual reminders of the site's legacy.

We understand that the Veerkamp family of Placerville owned the land surrounding the Wakamatsu colony since the 19th century and is now interested in selling the ranch to the American River Conservancy (Conservancy), which regrettably does not yet have sufficient funds to purchase the property. Should the Conservancy fail to purchase the property, it is likely the land would be sold for commercial development. This is why the procurement of funds is so vital to the Gold Hill-Wakamatsu Project.

It is our belief that acquire that this historic site be acquired and restored as the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony is vital to an understanding the history of this state and to our nation. To many Japanese Americans, the Wakamatsu Colony is as symbolic as Plymouth Rock was for the first American colonists. Indeed, many Japanese tourists have visited the "Historical Landmark" placard. The Gold Hill-Wakamatsu Collaborative now has an historic opportunity to make this reality.

Sincerely,

Rosalyn Tonai
Executive Director, NJAHS

Gold Trail Union School District

May 22, 2007

District Office
1575 Old Ranch Road
Placerville, CA 95667
1.530.626.3194
Fax 1.530.626.3199

Joe Murchison
Superintendent

Board of Trustees
President
Matt Turner
Clerk
Gary Ritz
Jill Engelmann
Lauren Keith
Scott Matyac

Joe Murchison
Superintendent/Principal
Sutter's Mill School (K-3)
4801 Luneman Road
Placerville, CA 95667
1.530.626.2591
Fax 1.530.626.2593

Stephany Rewick
Principal
Gold Trail School (4-8)
889 Cold Springs Road
Placerville, CA 95667
1.530.626.2595
Fax 1.530.626.3289

An Equal Opportunity Employer

To Whom It May Concern:

The Board of Trustees for the Gold Trail School Union School District and I would like to formally declare our support for the campaign to raise $4.5 million to acquire the 300 acre Veerkamp property in the Gold Hill area. This acquisition facilitated by the American River Conservancy would preserve and allow public access to a significant historical site.

The Okei grave and the site of the Wakamatsu Silk and Tea Plantation are both located on the Veerkamp property. The importance of these sites to the Japanese people and Japanese-Americans is beyond measure. In addition, this historical piece of property is an important part of our local history, and the history of California.

The opportunity to buy a piece of land with such a rich and colorful past is rare. The property is beautiful with rolling hills, mature oak trees, granite outcroppings and several ponds. There is no doubt in my mind that if the American River Nature Conservancy is unable to raise the money the property will be lost to the public and sold for a housing project.

Our middle school campus, Gold Trail, sits in the middle of the Veerkamp property. The campus is also the location of a State Monument, dedicated by Governor Reagan in 1969, commemorating the Wakamatsu Plantation.

The Gold Trail District is committed to supporting the American River Conservancy in its effort to preserve the history of the Veerkamp land.

Sincerely,

Joe Murchison
Superintendent

CONSULATE GENERAL OF JAPAN
50 FREMONT STREET, 23RD FLOOR
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94105

TELEPHONE: (415) 777-3533
FAX: (415) 974-3660

August 9, 2007

The Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor of the State of California
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

I would like to bring to your attention a project of international and historical significance to California. The Wakamatsu Colony located in Gold Hill in El Dorado County is the site of the first Japanese settlement in North America in 1869. One of the pioneers, Okei, was the first female Japanese immigrant to the United States. Her grave and the site of the colony currently stand on a private property.

The American River Conservancy is now working with the Japanese American community to acquire the original site of the colony and donate it to the California State Park System. The Consulate General of Japan encourages this project and would appreciate any support that you could give to this historic project. For your reference, I enclose letters from Yuhei Sato, the Governor of Fukushima, and Ichiro Kanke, the Mayor of Wakamatsu. It is their sincere wish to see the colony and Okei's grave commemorated as a public park.

I hope you will give this project your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

Makoto Yamanaka
Consul General of Japan

cc: Alan Ehrgott, Executive Director, the American River Conservancy
Co-chair, Gold Hill – Wakamatsu Project
Fred Kochi, Board, National Japanese American Historical Society
Co-chair, Gold Hill – Wakamatsu Project

STATE OF CALIFORNIA – THE RESOURCES AGENCY ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, *Governor*

OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
P.O. BOX 942896
SACRAMENTO, CA 94296-0001
(916) 653-6624 Fax: (916) 653-9824
calshpo@ohp.parks.ca.gov
www.ohp.parks.ca.gov

June 13, 2008

Mr. Alan Ehrgott, Executive Director
American River Conservancy
348 Highway 49
P.O. Box 562
Coloma, CA 95613

Dear Mr. Ehrgott:

Thank you for your letter of May 27, 2008, regarding the Wakamatsu property in Gold Hill, and your request that I certify the National Register eligibility of this property.

I can state enthusiastically that the Gold Hill property can and should be listed in the National Register of Historic Places at the national level of significance. This is almost certainly the oldest property in North American to be associated with Japanese immigration. It is also probably the only North American property to be linked directly to the emigration of samurai following the Meiji Restoration. The place is the more remarkable for the existence of an 1860s home, actually occupied by the Wakamatsu settlers, mulberry trees planted by the silk farmers, and the grave stone of Okei Ito, almost certainly the oldest Japanese immigrant grave in the United States.

The State of California has recognized the statewide significance of this site since a California landmark plaque was dedicated there by Governor Ronald Reagan in 1969. With the passage of time, we can conclude that the property is in fact of national significance, recognizing its incalculable value in commemorating the long and important contributions of Japanese American to the culture of the United States.

While I am happy to attest to the National Register eligibility of this property, this letter cannot substitute for an actual listing. The property can and should be listed in the National register of Historic Places, and my staff will be ready to help you or others accomplish that important designation.

Sincerely,

Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
State Historic Preservation Officer

JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE
Masao Satow Building • 1765 Sutter Street • San Francisco, CA 94115
Phone: (415) 921-5225 • Facsimile: (415) 931-4671 • Email: JACL@jacl.org

September 18, 2008

Senator Barbara Boxer
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-0505

Dear Senator Boxer,

The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) supports the Gold Hill Ranch Wakamatsu Colony Acquisition Project. This property is significant to the history of Japanese Americans because the Gold Hill Ranch property is the oldest cultural site in North America associated with Japanese immigration. It is also the only North American property linked directly to the emigration of Samurai from Japan following the Meiji Restoration.

The Gold Hill property is even more remarkable for the existence of an 1860's home actually occupied by the Wakamatsu settlers, the existence of living mulberry trees on the property, planted by the Wakamatsu silk farmers and the grave site and grave stone of Okei Ito, almost certainly the oldest Japanese immigrant grave in the United States make this site valuable to the history of the Japanese in America. To preserve the memory of this pioneering site and restore the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony will enhance the understanding of the rich and diverse history of this state and our nation.

Time is of the essence, and appropriate funding must be procured by May 2009, or the property may be lost to development. The JACL appreciates your effort and enthusiasm to assist with this project.

Best regards,

Larry Oda
National President

VICE CHAIR:
LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

COMMITTEES:
APPROPRIATIONS
HEALTH

Assembly
California Legislature

ALAN NAKANISHI
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, TENTH DISTRICT

STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 942849
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0010
(916) 319-2010
FAX (916) 319-2110

DISTRICT OFFICE
218 WEST PINE STREET
LODI, CA 95240
(209) 333-5330
FAX (209) 333-5333

September 23, 2008

Alan Ehrgott
Executive Director
American River Conservancy
P.O. Box 562 348 Highway 49
Coloma, CA 95613

RE: The Gold Hill Ranch Wakamatsu Colony Acquisition Project.

Dear Mr. Alan Ehrgott:

As a State Legislator representing portions of El Dorado County, it is with great pleasure that I express my strong support for the Gold Hill Ranch Wakamatsu Colony Acquisition Project. The major impetus for it is the history attached. It is the oldest known cultural site in North America associated with Japanese immigration, which was the result of political upheaval. It represents what one Japanese author called the Japanese Mayflower. In 1869 more than 20 colonist from Aizu-Wakamatsu, Japan, came to Gold Hill and established the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony. Their "Mayflower" was a side wheeler called "China," owned by the Pacific Mail Steamship Company.

The property includes; a home from the 1860's actually occupied by the Wakamatsu settlers, the existence of living mulberry tress planted by the Wakamatsu silk farmers and the grave of Okei Ito, thought by many to almost certainly be the oldest Japanese immigrant grave in the United States. In 1969 Governor Reagan commemorated the site with a plaque in recognition of the incalculable value of the contributions made by Japanese Americans to the culture of the United States.

I appreciate your effort and enthusiasm to assist with this project.

Sincerely,

Assemblyman Alan Nakanishi
Tenth District

cc: Senator Barbara Boxer, United States Senate
William Haigh, Field Manager, Bureau of Land Management
Jim Branham, Executive Officer, Sierra Nevada Conservancy

COUNTY OF EL DORADO

330 Fair Lane
Placerville, CA 95667
(530) 621-5390
(530) 622-3645 Fax

SUZANNE ALLEN DE SANCHEZ
Clerk of the Board

March 11, 2009

MAR 1 2 2009

California State Parks
Office of Historic Preservation
Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
State Historic Preservation Officer
P.O. Box 94286
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

Dear Mr. Donaldson:

On March 10, 2009, the County of El Dorado Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to authorize the Chairman to sign a letter of support for the Nomination of Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony to the National Register of Historic Places (National Register).

Located in the Gold Hill area of El Dorado County, just a couple of miles from Coloma, where gold was discovered by John Marshall in 1849, this first Japanese agricultural settlement by the pioneer immigrants in June of 1869, is probably one of "California's Best Kept Secrets."

Today, El Dorado County is a main destination point for visitors seeking fresh farm products, wine, Christmas trees, as well as historic and recreational facilities. Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony marked the beginning of Japanese influence on the agricultural economy of California and as such, the Board of Supervisors feels the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony qualifies for the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) to be placed on the federal government's list of historic buildings and other cultural resources worthy of preservation.

The County of El Dorado Board of Supervisors would like to thank you for your consideration of our request for this nomination.

Sincerely,

Ron V. Briggs, Chairman
Board of Supervisors
El Dorado County

The Helen L. Veerkamp Revocable Trust March 18, 2009

MAR 1 9 2009

California State Parks
Attn: Office of Historic Preservation
Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
State Historic Preservation Officer
P.O. Box 94296
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

Dear Sir

Thank you for providing us notification of the State Historical Resources Commission's (SHRC) meeting scheduled for April 16th. We understand at that meeting that the SHRC will consider and take action on the nomination of the Wakamatsu Tea & Silk Farm Colony for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register).

SHRC's action on this nomination is of considerable interest to the Helen L. Veerkamp Revocable Trust (Trust). The Trust's primary asset, the Gold Hill Ranch, has been in our family for many years. This ranch includes within its approximately 272 acres most of the property originally acquired by John Henry Schnell in 1869 for Colony settlement.

In whole or in part, five generations of Veerkamps worked and obtained sustenance from this land. The dual histories of the property, with respect to both the Wakamatsu colony and the Veerkamps, are strongly intertwined. These complimentary histories along with our length of ownership result in strong family ties to the property. We have an interest in maintaining and preserving both the property's agricultural and historical heritage.

To that end, the Trust has been working with the American River Conservancy (ARC) for two years in an effort to have the property acquired by ARC. As noted previously, such an acquisition has as its goal the preservation of not only the property's Japanese history, but also its agricultural heritage. Because of the current economic climate, it is unclear whether ARC will be able acquire the entire acreage, or will ultimately be limited to the acquisition of some smaller portion.

The Trust views placement of the property identified in the nomination package as entirely consistent with and supportive of our goal for property preservation. The Trust enthusiastically supports National Registration, and hopes that your Commission will act on this nomination in a positive manner.

If at all possible, I will attend your meeting in Palm Springs on April 16th, and will attempt to answer any questions you may have on this matter.

Thank you for your consideration of this application – I look forward to seeing you on the 16th.

Very truly yours

Gary R. Veerkamp

Gary R. Veerkamp
Trustee – Helen L. Veerkamp Revocable Trust

Cc: Evelyn Veerkamp
Phillip Veerkamp
Alan Ehrgott
David Zelinski

Toffelmier, Cynthia

From: Gene Itogawa [gitogawa@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2009 8:34 AM
To: Mikesell, Steve; Donaldson, Milford; jcorreia@parks.ca.gov; Toffelmier, Cynthia
Subject: SHRCommission letter on Wakamatsu

Steve, this is a copy of the letter on the Wakamatsu nomination. A signed hard copy will be mailed to the office today. Gene

April 12, 2009

Julianne Polanco
Chairperson
State Historical Resources Commission
PO Box 942896
Sacramento CA 94296-0001

Dear Chairperson Polanco:

The Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony Foundation, a non-profit organization in consort with the American River Conservancy, was established to assist in the acquisition and preservation of the historic Wakamatsu Colony site in El Dorado County, CA. The State of California recognized the historical significance of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony as California Historical Landmark No. 815 in 1969 in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the colony.

Historically, Japan had been an isolated island nation under the domain of the Tokugawa Shogunate for almost 300 years. The Tokugawa's reign of domination ended with the accession of Emperor Meiji and the beginning of the Meiji Restoration in 1868. Civil strife and regional conflicts contributed to the collapse of the leadership of the Aizu Wakamatsu clan. The first group of political refugees from Wakamatsu arrived in San Francisco in May 1869. The colonists travelled by boat to Sacramento and then by wagon to Gold Hill in El Dorado County. The Wakamatsu Colony lasted only two years but its significance is not measured in time. Contrary to preceding endeavors by individual Japanese sojourners of shipwreck sailors, students, and diplomats, the Wakamatsu Colony represents the first attempt by a large group of Japanese to establish a permanent settlement in mainland America. The national level of significance of the Wakamatsu Colony is represented by the contributions of agricultural products introduced by the first Japanese pioneer settlers whose influence on agricultural development and legacy of Japanese heritage in America contributed to the broad

patterns of the nation's history under ethnic diversity and exploration/settlement.

The Foundation and Conservancy both endorse the inclusion of the Wakamatsu Colony in the National Register of Historic Places at the national level of significance.

Sincerely,

Eugene Itogawa
Vice Chair
Gold Hill Wakamatsu Foundation

cc: Wayne Donaldson, SHPO
Stephen Mikesell, Deputy SHPO
Jay Correia, Supervisor
Cynthia Toffelmier, Historian II.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA - THE RESOURCES AGENCY
Arnold Schwarzenegger, *Governor*

OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
P.O. BOX 942896
SACRAMENTO, CA 94296-0001
(916) 653-6624 Fax: (916) 653-9824
calshpo@ohp.parks.ca.gov

August 26, 2009

Ms. Jan Matthews, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service 2280
1201 I (Eye) Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

Subject: **Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm**
Gold Hill (vicinity), El Dorado County, California
National Register of Historic Places

Dear Ms. Matthews:

Enclosed please find the **Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm** nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. This property is located near Gold Hill, El Dorado County, California. On April 16, 2009 the State Historical Resources Commission unanimously found the property eligible for the National Register under Criterion A at the national level of significance. The nomination was originally submitted April 28, 2009 for consideration and subsequently returned for technical and substantive revisions. The enclosed revised nomination addresses the comments.

If you have any questions regarding this nomination, please contact Cynthia Toffelmier of my staff at 916-653-5789.

Sincerely,

Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosures

"Alan Ehrgott"
<ehrgott@arconservancy.org
>
01/08/2010 05:27 PM

To <paul_lusignan@nps.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject FW: Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony Site

Dear Mr. Lusignan,

As I understand it, the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony site is currently listed as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the *state* level of significance. I also understand that you are considering eligibility at the *national* level of significance. May I respectfully suggest the review of a few resources and references, attached and provided below that support the *national* level of significance.

Attached, is an article published in the New York Times on June 5, 1869 entitled *"JAPANESE IMMIGRANTS, Arrival of Three Families in San Francisco, Several More Expected ."* The obvious question here
is, why would the New York Times be interested in the arrival of three Japanese families in San Francisco? I believe there are several answers. 1) They were the first and had not been seen before. Japanese were not allowed to leave Japan legally until 1884 when an agreement was signed between their government and Hawaiian sugar plantations (The History of Japanese Immigration—Brown Quarterly—v.3, no. 4 – Spring, 2000). 2) Secondly the size and nature of their investment: *"They are mostly silk cultivators and manufacturers; some are tea cultivists. They bring with them 50,000 trees of Morus alba, three years old . This is the most tender leaf of all the mulberries and it makes the best silk in that country. They bring a great number of bamboo plants of the large variety, useful for a thousand purposes. They are twelve feet high. Also, 500 vegetable wax trees, four feet high and three years old. They bring also 6,000,000 of tea nuts ".* 3) The educational and cultural status of these Japanese immigrants, *"They are not serfs, but free. . . 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" .*

These three Japanese families became the first Japanese colonists to settle in the United States, the first of approximately 30 Wakamatsu Colonists to settle at Gold Hill. According to this New York Times article, they settled in hills immediately south of Coloma because *"These gravelly loams are best adapted to the healthiest growth of silk worms and the finer qualities of silk; and especially is it an axiom, "Hills for the fine teas, dales for the coarse ".*

The Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony is recognized by many Japanese publications as the **first Japanese Colony in the United States**. The Nichi Bei Times reports, *"For Japanese Americans, this is our Jamestown ."* (WHERE IT ALL BEGAN: Preserving the First Settlement of Japanese in America; by Kenji G. Taguma, Nichi Bei Times, April 27, 2007). Within its Japanese Immigration to the U.S.A. Chronology, the Fukushima Ken Jinkai of Southern California report, *"The history of the Japanese immigrants in America started from Fukushima. When the fall of Aizu Castle during the Boshin War turned the warriors and merchants there adrift, Henry Schnell Matsudaira naturalized into*

Japanese founded an immigrants' group to America which consisted of almost 30 people in order to find their new life there. One of them was "Okei", a daughter of a shrine carpenter. She was only 17 years old then. [Okei died in 1871 at the age of 19 and is buried on the Gold Hill Wakamatsu site. She is believed to be the first Japanese to die on American soil.] They purchased a land of 500 acres in Coloma, Northern California naming it Wakamatsu Colony and began developing the land for farming. They brought tea trees, mulberry trees, keyaki (zelkova) trees and various kinds of other young plants as well as silkworms with them. However, because of insufficient water supply, they failed in their farming project and were scattered" (Fukushima Ken Jinkai of Southern California, 100th Anniversary Publication, Japanese Immigration to the U.S.A. Chronology).

What I find particularly interesting from this Fukushima Ken Jinkai publication is the documentation of other Japanese immigrants that arrived towards the end of the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony occupation (1871) and immediately thereafter from the Wakamatsu area (Fukushima Prefecture) that had very significant impacts to America and to Japanese-American relations. We believe that the Wakamatsu colonists were not only the vanguard of Japanese immigration but because of the positive media coverage they received encouraged the immigration of academics and other industry leaders that benefited the United States and led to greater levels of understanding and cooperation between the United States and Japan. A partial list of these immigrants from Wakamatsu, Japan and the surrounding area are outlined below.

In 1871, during the occupation of the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony, a young woman by the name of Naoye Yamakawa, the daughter of the Chief Retainer of the Lord to Aizu Wakamatsu Castle came to New York and studied for 12 years. She returned to Japan and became a social star of the Rokumeikan and made significant contributions to the introduction of Western culture to Japan. She later married a General of the Army, Iwao Ohyama and devoted herself to social services and was decorated with the Fourth Order of the Precious Crown. Miss Yamakawa's brother, Kenjiro Yamakawa fought as a member of the famous teenage-Samurai legion, the Byakkotai Troop during the Boshin Battle in defense of the Imperial Siege of Wakamatsu Castle in 1868. He was 15 years old at the time. He was dispatched by the Japanese government in 1871 to study physics at Yale University. He later served as University President of Imperial Tokyo University and Imperial Kyoto University.

Another Japanese man from Fukushima prefecture, Kanichi Asagawa became the first Japanese university professor in America. He attended Yale University in 1895 at the age of 22. He studied history at Yale University, achieved a permanent professor post at Yale and taught there for 35 years. He died in Vermont in 1948. Another man, Hideyo Noguchi, who became a "medical saint" throughout Japan, immigrated from the Aizu Wakamatsu area to the United States as a medical researcher in 1900. His critical research on yellow fever at Pennsylvania University, the Carnegie Institute and the Rockefeller Medical Institute produced over 204 published treatises over his lifetime. He himself became infected with yellow fever, which caused his death in Africa at the young age of 52.

Another agriculturalist, from Fukushima Prefecture was Keisaburo Koda who settled in the Fresno area of California in 1907 and became the first to successfully grow a premier type of Japanese rice here in the United States. This rice was successfully developed and marketed as "Rice King" and became the standard for California's substantial rice industry.

There are certainly a number of "firsts" associated with the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony. It is the first settlement of Japanese in the United States. It is the first and only

Colony in the United States established by Samurai. The Wakamatsu colonists included the first multi-racial Nisei (second generation) born on the American continent – Mary, the daughter of Jo and Henry Schnell Matsuidaira. It included Okei Ito, the first Issei (first generation) person to die in America. It also included the first Japanese to marry an African American woman when Kuninosuke Masumizu wed Carrie Wilson. The Wakamatsu colony was also the first to demonstrate the successful cultivation of Japanese plants in America.

Lastly, the Wakamatsu colonists experienced success in the United States. Editors from the *Placerville Mountain Democrat* inspected the Wakamatsu colony at Gold Hill and pronounced the tea plants in "vigorous health". The mulberry trees were "perfectly healthy in appearance," while oil plants had "found their element in both soil and climate". Silkworms raised at the colony were "much larger and brighter in color than the ordinary silkworm," the editors exclaimed. One year after their arrival, Schnell and two unnamed Japanese colonists put on "a fine display of Japanese plants, grown from imported shrubs and seeds" at the Horticultural Fair in San Francisco. Hearing of the initial success of the colony, Eugene Van Reed sent an agricultural expert from Yokohama to determine which plants could be sent from Japan to California for profit (See Pacific Pioneers, Japanese Journeys to American and Hawaii, 1850-1880, John E. Van Sant, page 126). Clearly, California newspaper accounts of the Wakamatsu Colony viewed the colonists as an asset. We believe the positive media coverage the Wakamatsu colonists received of their success in introducing Japanese plants in America and the positive industry employed by the Wakamatsu colonists, created the setting, impetus and social comfort by which additional Japanese could emmigrate from Japan and Hawaii.

Consequently between 1870 and 1890 the number of Japanese residing in the United States jumped from 55 to 2,038. By 1918, over 10% of all farm products grown in California, were produced by Japanese immigrant farmers (California State Board of Control, California and the Oriental, 52, 243. See also Iwata, "Japanese Immigrants.").

I am hopeful you will consider this information in your deliberation over the Wakamatsu Colony site's eligibility for the National Register at a *national* level of significance. There is absolutely no opposition to this project. I also believe a national level of significance is necessary for our successful protection of this important historical site. Please let me know if you have any questions regarding the information I have provided. Thank you very much for your time and careful deliberation.

Sincerely,

Alan Ehrgott
Executive Director
American River Conservancy
Office: (530) 295-2190
Email: ehrgott@arconservancy.org

January 15, 2010

Ms. Carol D. Shull
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
and Chief of the National Historic Landmarks Survey
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Carol,

We cherish the unique history of the State of California and its place as the Pacific gateway for generations of immigrants seeking a fresh start in the United States of America. As you likely know, our coastal shores welcomed many from political unrest and civil strife throughout Asia including the very first Japanese settlers from Wakamatsu, Japan in 1869. The remarkable sacrifices endured by this first colony as they fled civil war in Japan must not be forgotten. And the cultural enrichment and lasting imprimatur that they left on the State of California and our nation of immigrants must be a story that carries on for future generations.

For these reasons, we ask respectfully that you consider adding the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony site to the National Register of Historic Places with a national level of significance. The Gold Hill-Wakamatsu Preservation Act of 2009 was introduced by Senator Barbara Boxer in the Senate and Congressman Tom McClintock in the House to confer national attention upon this site, continuing nearly fifty years of historical commemoration beginning in 1969 when Governor Ronald Reagan declared this to be a state historical site.

We believe the contributions of this colony lasted well past its two-year life near Coloma, California. In fact, many documented sources note that the chronology of Japanese immigration to the U.S. began with the successful migration and assimilation of these first Wakamatsu colonists. Their success in the fields of education and agriculture impelled waves of Japanese immigrants in the late 19th and early 20thCentury. And the new agricultural products they brought such as mulberry trees for silk farming, bamboo roots, tea seeds, grape seedlings and short-grain rice spawned California's eventual preeminence as a diverse, agricultural and economic leader.

In closing, we appreciate your consideration of our views and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Joan Barsotti
2239 Hidden Valley Lane
Camino, CA 95709-9722

Japanese American Citizens League

Masao Satow Building • 1765 Sutter Street • San Francisco, CA 94115
Phone: (415) 921-5225 • Facsimile: (415) 931-4671 • Email: JACL@jacl.org

January 15, 2010

Ms. Carol D. Shull
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
and Chief of the National Historic Landmarks Survey
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Ms. Shull,

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In closing, we appreciate your consideration of our views and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Larry Oda
National President

PEOPLE TO · PEOPLE INTERNATIONAL

EL DORADO COUNTY CHAPTER

January 16, 2010

Ms. Carol D. Shull
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
and Chief of the National Historic Landmarks Survey
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Ms. Shull,

For over two years, we have engaged in an effort to raise enough funds to purchase, restore and develop a one-of-a-kind parcel of land here in El Dorado County, California. It is the site chosen by a small group of Japanese to begin a new, safe, simple and productive life in the new world in 1869. They had escaped a civil war in Aizu-Wakamatsu, and brought a variety of seeds and plants with them to begin anew. They also brought their dreams of success, their friendliness, courtesy, and determination to persevere against all odds, to establish an agricultural colony.

We have received several grants and a considerable number of donations from individuals in California and Japan, who all support our goal. They too recognize that this opportunity to save the Gold Hill-Wakamatsu Colony site, is similar to rescuing an endangered plant or animal. It will be just a memory of a few people, and a rumor to many, if we are not successful.

Because additional funding is needed and some grants are contingent upon the property being designated as a having *national* importance and significance, we respectfully ask that you consider our request for this elevated designation.

We appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Myrna Hanses

Myrna Hanses, President
El Dorado County California,
Chapter of People to People International

Kevin Mains, President
People to People International, New Mexico Chapter
3900 Juan Tabo NE, Suite 16
ABQ, NM 87111
(505) 217-3538
(505) 298-3939 fax

18 January 2010

Ms. Carol D. Shull
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
and Chief of the National Historic Landmarks Survey
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Ms. Shull,

We in New Mexico join with our friends in California and deeply value the unique history of the State of California and its place as the Pacific gateway for generations of immigrants seeking a fresh start in the United States of America. Just as New Mexico has played such a significant role in America's immigration history, so to California represents an invaluable role in bringing to our shores incalculable wealth through the flow of pacific immigrants that arrived in such places as the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony who were fleeing from political unrest and civil strife throughout Japan in 1869. The remarkable sacrifices endured by this first colony as they fled civil war in Japan must not be forgotten. And the cultural enrichment and lasting imprimatur that they left on the State of California and our nation of immigrants must be a story that carries on for future generations.

For these reasons, we ask respectfully that you consider adding the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony site to the National Register of Historic Places with a national level of significance. The Gold Hill-Wakamatsu Preservation Act of 2009 was introduced by Senator Barbara Boxer in the Senate and Congressman Tom McClintock in the House to confer national attention upon this site, continuing nearly fifty years of historical commemoration beginning in 1969 when Governor Ronald Reagan declared this to be a state historical site.

We believe the contributions of this colony lasted well past its two-year life near Coloma, California. In fact, many documented sources note that the chronology of Japanese immigration to the U.S. began with the successful migration and assimilation of these first Wakamatsu colonists. Their success in the fields of education and agriculture impelled waves of Japanese immigrants in the late 19th and early 20thCentury. And the new agricultural products they brought such as mulberry trees for silk farming, bamboo roots, tea seeds, grape seedlings and short-grain rice spawned California's eventual preeminence as a diverse, agricultural and economic leader.

In closing, we appreciate your consideration of our views and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,
Kevin Mains

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 19, 2010

Ms. Carol D. Shull
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
and Chief of the National Historic Landmarks Survey
National Park Service
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Ms. Shull:

We cherish the unique history of the State of California and its role as the Pacific gateway for generations of immigrants seeking a fresh start in the United States of America. Our shores have welcomed many people escaping from political unrest and civil strife throughout Asia, including the very first Japanese settlers in North America, who came to Gold Hill, California from Wakamatsu, Japan in 1869. The remarkable history of these first colonists, and their lasting impact on the State of California and our nation of immigrants, is a story that must carry on for future generations.

For these reasons, we introduced the Gold Hill-Wakamatsu Preservation Act of 2009 to confer national attention upon this site, continuing forty years of historical commemoration beginning in 1969 when Governor Ronald Reagan declared this to be a state historical site. The National Park Service has also recognized the historical significance of the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony site by listing it on the National Register of Historic Places. We understand that the level of significance is still being determined, and respectfully urge you to list this site at the national level, rather than state or local level, fully commemorating the importance of the Wakamatsu Colony.

We believe the contributions of this colony lasted well past its two-year life near Coloma, California. In fact, many documented sources note that the chronology of Japanese immigration to the United States began with the successful migration and assimilation of these first Wakamatsu colonists. Their initial success in the fields of education and agriculture established California as the gateway for waves of Japanese immigrants entering our nation in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. And the new agricultural products they introduced, such as mulberry trees for silk farming, bamboo roots, tea seeds, grape seedlings, and short-grain rice, contributed to California's eventual preeminence as an agricultural and economic leader.

We appreciate the National Park Service's recognition of the Gold-Hill Wakamatsu Colony site and your consideration of our views on its level of significance.

Sincerely,

Barbara Boxer
United States Senator

Tom McClintock
Member of Congress

PEOPLE TO PEOPLE
International

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER
Founder

Peace through Understanding

January 20, 2010

Ms. Carol D. Shull
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
And Chief of the National Historic Landmarks Survey
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Ms. Shull:

I am writing to lend my voice to the many who ask for your consideration in adding the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony site to the National Register of Historic Places with a national level of significance.

Senator Barbara Boxer and Congressman Tom McClintock introduced the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Preservation Act of 2009 to confer national attention upon the site. This continues nearly fifty years of historical commemoration, as Governor Ronald Reagan declared it a state historical site in 1969.

As the President/CEO of an international organization, which at its core celebrates diverse cultures, I believe it is essential to retain the historical significance of this site. California enjoys a rich history of welcoming countless immigrants in search of a better life in the United States of America. It is difficult to imagine the sacrifices endured by the first Japanese settlers from Wakamatsu, Japan in 1869. It is heartbreaking to imagine their struggles, and their subsequent contributions to our society, could be forgotten.

This site has enjoyed a State significance level since 1969. I join those dedicated individuals who believe it is time for a National level of significance. Thank you for your sincere consideration.

Best regards,

Mary Jean Eisenhower

Mary Jean Eisenhower
President/Chief Executive Officer

MJE/css

WORLD HEADQUARTERS
911 Main Street, Suite 2110 Kansas City, Missouri 64105 USA 816.531.4701 *phone* 816.561.7502 *fax* E-mail: ptpi@ptpi.org Web site: www.ptpi.org

JAPANESE AMERICAN
JACL CITIZENS LEAGUE
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA - WESTERN NEVADA - PACIFIC REGIONAL OFFICE
1765 Sutter Street, San Francisco, CA 94115 •

January 20, 2010

Ms. Carol D. Shull
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
and Chief of the National Historic Landmarks Survey
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Ms. Shull:

The Northern California-Western Nevada-Pacific (NCWNP) District of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), cherishes the unique history of the State of California and its place as the Pacific gateway for generations of immigrants seeking a fresh start in the United States of America. Our coastal shores welcomed many from political unrest and civil strife throughout Asia, including the very first Japanese settlers from Wakamatsu, Japan in 1869. The remarkable sacrifices endured by this first colony as they fled civil war in Japan must not be forgotten. And the cultural enrichment and lasting imprimatur that they left on the State of California and our nation of immigrants must be a story that carries on for future generations.

For these reasons, we respectfully ask that you consider adding the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony site to the National Register of Historic Places with a national level of significance. The Gold Hill-Wakamatsu Preservation Act of 2009 was introduced by Senator Barbara Boxer in the Senate and Congressman Tom McClintock in the House to confer national attention upon this site, continuing nearly fifty years of historical commemoration beginning in 1969 when Governor Ronald Reagan declared this to be a state historical site.

We believe the contributions of this colony lasted well past its two-year life span near Coloma, California. In fact, many documented sources note that the chronology of Japanese immigration to the U.S. began with the successful migration and assimilation of these first Wakamatsu colonists. Their success in the fields of education and agriculture impelled waves of Japanese immigrants in the late 19th and early 20thCentury. And the new agricultural products they brought such as mulberry trees for silk farming, bamboo roots, tea seeds, grape seedlings and short-grain rice spawned California's eventual preeminence as a diverse, agricultural and economic leader.

The JACL is the oldest and largest organization in the country focusing on civil rights, education and cultural preservation of the Japanese and Asian American community. The JACL NCWNP District is the largest district in the JACL, with 33 chapters and 5,000 members. Preserving our cultural and historical heritage is part of our core mission as an organization. We ask for your kind consideration of our request to preserve this site, which we view as the birthplace of our history in America.

Sincerely,

Patty Wada

Patty Wada
Regional Director
JACL NCWNP District

AMERICAN RIVER CONSERVANCY
CONSERVATION • EDUCATION • STEWARDSHIP

Mr. Paul Lusignan
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye St. NW (2280)
Washington, DC 20005

January 20, 2010

Re: Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony

Dear Mr. Lusignan:

I have enclosed a copy of an academic paper from The Journal of Asian Studies published by Cambridge University Press (Vol. 67, No. 4 published November, 2008). This 39 page, highly-referenced treatise is the most complete characterization I have seen of the impact the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony and one of its colonists, Okei Ito had on Japanese American history, Japanese immigration to the United States, and the "expansionist orthodoxy in Imperial Japan".

After reading this paper, I cannot see how anyone could have any doubt as to the influence the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony had on Japanese immigration to the United States and the national impact it had on our country as a whole. The Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony site is the oldest property in North America to be associated with Japanese immigration. The Wakamatsu Colony is the first Japanese agricultural colony in the United States. It is also the only property linked to the emigration of samurai following the Meiji Restoration. In addition, the Wakamatsu Colony site is the birthplace of the first Japanese American (1869) and contains the grave site of the first Japanese immigrant (Okei Ito) to die on American soil (1871).

I would also ask that you consider our state of urgency. We have a very short window of time to complete the fundraising to acquire this parcel. The owners have received an approval from El Dorado County to subdivide the property. We believe we need a level of "national significance" to complete our fundraising efforts and purchase this property before the owners complete the subdivision and irreversible development of the property.

On behalf of the Japanese-American community, People-to-People International and the many hundreds of people who have supported this acquisition with financial donations, please review the enclosed academic paper. We believe it provides you with more than sufficient evidence and cause to approve the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony nomination to the National Register at a level of "national significance".

Thank you very much for your review of this enclosed study.

Alan Ehrgott

Alan Ehrgott
Executive Director
American River Conservancy

cc: Paul Loether, Carol Shull

348 HIGHWAY 49 • P.O. BOX 562 • COLOMA, CA 95613
PH. (530) 621-1224 • FAX (530) 621-4818 • www.arconservancy.org

AMERICAN RIVER CONSERVANCY
CONSERVATION • EDUCATION • STEWARDSHIP

Mr. Paul Lusignan
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye St. NW (2280)
Washington, DC 20005

January 20, 2010

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Alan Ehrgott
Executive Director
American River Conservancy

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AMERICAN RIVER CONSERVANCY
CONSERVATION • EDUCATION • STEWARDSHIP

Mr. Paul Lusignan
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye St. NW (2280)
Washington, DC 20005

January 20, 2010

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Thank you very much for your review of this enclosed study.

Alan Ehrgott
Executive Director
American River Conservancy

cc: Paul Loether, Carol Shull

348 HIGHWAY 49 • P.O. BOX 562 • COLOMA, CA 95613
PH. (530) 621-1224 • FAX (530) 621-4818 • www.arconservancy.org

January 23, 2010

Ms. Carol D. Shull
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
and Chief of the National Historic Landmarks Survey
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Carol,

We cherish the unique history of the State of California and its place as the Pacific gateway for generations of immigrants seeking a fresh start in the United States of America. As you likely know, our coastal shores welcomed many from political unrest and civil strife throughout Asia including the very first Japanese settlers from Wakamatsu, Japan in 1869. The remarkable sacrifices endured by this first colony as they fled civil war in Japan must not be forgotten. And the cultural enrichment and lasting imprimatur that they left on the State of California and our nation of immigrants must be a story that carries on for future generations.

For these reasons, we ask respectfully that you consider adding the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony site to the National Register of Historic Places with a national level of significance. The Gold Hill-Wakamatsu Preservation Act of 2009 was introduced by Senator Barbara Boxer in the Senate and Congressman Tom McClintock in the House to confer national attention upon this site, continuing nearly fifty years of historical commemoration beginning in 1969 when Governor Ronald Reagan declared this to be a state historical site.

We believe the contributions of this colony lasted well past its two-year life near Coloma, California. In fact, many documented sources note that the chronology of Japanese immigration to the U.S. began with the successful migration and assimilation of these first Wakamatsu colonists. Their success in the fields of education and agriculture impelled waves of Japanese immigrants in the late 19th and early 20thCentury. And the new agricultural products they brought such as mulberry trees for silk farming, bamboo roots, tea seeds, grape seedlings and short-grain rice spawned California's eventual preeminence as a diverse, agricultural and economic leader.

In closing, we appreciate your consideration of our views and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Steve Togami
President, New Mexico chapter of JACL (Japanese American Citizens League)

SAN FRANCISCO JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE
PO BOX 22425, San Francisco, California 94122 PHONE 415. 273.1015

January 25, 2010

Ms. Carol D. Shull
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1849 'C' Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240-0001

Dear Ms. Shull

The San Francisco Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League supports the effort to add the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony site to the National Register of Historic Places with a national level of significance. The Gold Hill-Wakamatsu Preservation Act of 2009 was introduced by Senator Barbara Boxer in the Senate and Congressman Tom McClintock in the House to confer national attention upon this site.

As a nation of immigrants, adding the Wakamatsu Colony to the Register of Historical Places as one of the first major Japanese agricultural endeavors in the United States, it would demonstrate the significance of one of the many Asian immigrant groups that came to this country seeking a better life like all others who immigrated to the United States. Such a designation would also bring more attention to the Asian American experience in the United States, particularly in California.

It is our belief that when we learn about our neighbors, their history, and their struggles, we will find we have more in common with one another rather than differences.

Sincerely,

Hiroshi Shimizu
President

cc: Alan Ehrgott, ARC

January 25, 2010

Ms. Carol D. Shull
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
and Chief of the National Historic Landmarks Survey
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Ms. Shull,

We cherish the unique history of the State of California and its place as the Pacific gateway for generations of immigrants seeking a fresh start in the United States of America. As you likely know, our coastal shores welcomed many from political unrest and civil strife throughout Asia including the very first Japanese settlers from Wakamatsu, Japan in 1869. The remarkable sacrifices endured by this first colony as they fled civil war in Japan must not be forgotten. And the cultural enrichment and lasting imprimatur that they left on the State of California and our nation of immigrants must be a story that carries on for future generations.

For these reasons, we ask respectfully that you consider adding the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony site to the National Register of Historic Places with a national level of significance. The Gold Hill-Wakamatsu Preservation Act of 2009 was introduced by Senator Barbara Boxer in the Senate and Congressman Tom McClintock in the House to confer national attention upon this site, continuing nearly fifty years of historical commemoration beginning in 1969 when Governor Ronald Reagan declared this to be a state historical site.

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In closing, we appreciate your consideration of our views and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Gordon Yoshikawa

Gordon Yoshikawa
Cincinnati chapter, Japanese American Citizens League

bridging generations

Japanese American Citizens League
Silicon Valley Chapter

January 27, 2010

Mrs. Carol Shull
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places and
Chief of the National Historic Landmarks Survey
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mrs. Shull,

We, the undersigned, on behalf of the members of the Silicon Valley Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League, ask for your consideration in the matter of adding the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony site to the National Register of Historic Places with a national level of significance.

One of the missions of the National JACL, as well as of our chapter, is to maintain, and to educate our communities about, the history of Japanese Americans in the U.S.A. The settlers of the Gold Hill Wakamatsu colony contributed an important chapter to this history. In addition to the success of the colony in the area of silk production, the settlers also introduced other agricultural products which contributed to California's rise as a diverse agricultural and economic leader.

We ask for your support of the Gold Hill-Wakamatsu Preservation Act of 2009, introduced by Senator Barbara Boxer in the Senate and by Congressman Thomas McClintock in the House.

Sincerely,

Silicon Valley Chapter, JACL

Gail Sueki, President
Mark Kobayashi, Vice President
Patricia Nakashima, Secretary
Jeff Yoshioka, Treasurer

Cc: Patty Wada, JACL Regional Director, Northern California-Western Nevada-Pacific District

841 Blossom Hill Road, Suite 212, San Jose, CA 95123 • (408) 363-3671 • siliconvalleyjacl.dnsalias.net

Carol Shull/WASO/NPS
02/03/2010 11:24 AM

To Cicely Muldoon/OAKLAND/NPS@NPS, Jon Jarvis/WASO/NPS@NPS
cc Paul Loether/WASO/NPS@NPS, Paul Lusignan/WASO/NPS@NPS, Maureen Foster/WASO/NPS@NPS
bcc
Subject Gold Hill Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm may come up at Japanese American Citizens League Reception.

Dear Jon and Cicely,

We saw that you both will be attending the Japanese American Citizens League Reception this evening. The National Register recently listed in the National Register the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm, Gold Hill, El Dorado County, California. The State recommended that it be listed at the national level of significance. The National Register staff did not think that the nomination justified listing at the national level on the basis of the original nomination. The National Register has received a number of letters from interested citizens, some politicians, and the Japanese American Citizens League urging that the nomination be listed at the national level of significance. Since the property was listed, we have received additional documentation and are reviewing the listing again in regard to what level of significance can be justified. If you get questions at the reception , please let people know that the National Register staff is reviewing the level significance in the light of the new documentation.

I will be out of the office until about 1:00. Please let Paul Loether know if you need any more information.

Warm regards,

Carol

Carol D. Shull
Interim Keeper of the National Register
of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street NW (2280)
Washington, DC 20005
202-354-2234
FAX: 202-371-1616

February 12, 2010

Ms. Carol D. Shull
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
and Chief of the National Historic Landmarks Survey
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Carol,

We cherish the unique history of the State of California and its place as the Pacific gateway for generations of immigrants seeking a fresh start in the United States of America. As you likely know, our coastal shores welcomed many from political unrest and civil strife throughout Asia including the very first Japanese settlers from Wakamatsu, Japan in 1869. The remarkable sacrifices endured by this first colony as they fled civil war in Japan must not be forgotten. And the cultural enrichment and lasting imprimatur that they left on the State of California and our nation of immigrants must be a story that carries on for future generations.

For these reasons, we ask respectfully that you consider adding the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony site to the National Register of Historic Places with a national level of significance. The Gold Hill-Wakamatsu Preservation Act of 2009 was introduced by Senator Barbara Boxer in the Senate and Congressman Tom McClintock in the House to confer national attention upon this site, continuing nearly fifty years of historical commemoration beginning in 1969 when Governor Ronald Reagan declared this to be a state historical site.

We believe the contributions of this colony lasted well past its two-year life near Coloma, California. In fact, many documented sources note that the chronology of Japanese immigration to the U.S. began with the successful migration and assimilation of these first Wakamatsu colonists. Their success in the fields of education and agriculture impelled waves of Japanese immigrants in the late 19th and early 20thCentury. And the new agricultural products they brought such as mulberry trees for silk farming, bamboo roots, tea seeds, grape seedlings and short-grain rice spawned California's eventual preeminence as a diverse, agricultural and economic leader.

In closing, we appreciate your consideration of our views and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Allan Hida
3939 Walnut AV #334
Carmichael, CA 95608-2199

California

PEOPLE to PEOPLE
International

Delaware Chapter of People To People International

P.O. Box 25064
Wilmington, DE 19899
2008 – 2009

February 18, 2010

Ms. Carol D. Shull
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
and Chief of the National Historic Landmarks Survey
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Re: Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony

Dear Ms Shull,

Our Delaware Chapter of People to People International recognizes understanding between people of different cultures and backgrounds as a big factor in world peace, as set forth by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, the founder of PTPI.

It is this context that we ask respectfully that you consider adding the Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony site to the National Register of Historic Places with a national level of significance. The Gold Hill-Wakamatsu Preservation Act of 2009 was introduced by Senator Barbara Boxer in the Senate and Congressman Tom McClintock in the House to confer national attention upon this site, continuing nearly fifty years of historical commemoration beginning in 1969 when Governor Ronald Reagan declared this to be a state historical site.

We believe that understanding, appreciating and preserving the past will lead to a more harmonious future on both local and global levels. Elevation of the Wakamatsu Site to National Registration is in keeping with these ideas.

In closing, we appreciate your consideration of our views and we look forward to your response.

Very truly yours,

Edward L. Tucker
Chapter President

Japanese American Citizens League – San Jose Chapter

565 North Fifth Street
San Jose, California 95112
(408) 295-1250
www.sanjosejacl.org

March 10, 2010

Ms. Carol D. Shull
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
and Chief of the National Historic Landmarks Survey
National Park Service
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240
Re: Gold Hill - Wakamatsu Colony National Recognition

Dear Ms. Schull:

Senator Boxer and Congressman McClintock have ably described the importance of recognizing the Gold Hill – Wakamatsu Colony at an upgraded level of historic significance meriting National stature. The San Jose JACL supports this action and as part of the Nation's oldest and largest Asian American Civil and Human Rights organization, we also ask you for your support.

As a former Historic Preservation Officer for the City of San Jose, California and as the current President of the San Jose JACL which owns and preserves the first Japanese Hospital building constructed in San Jose 100-years ago in 1910, I fully appreciate the importance of the following National Historical Preservation Act excerpt:

"The historical and cultural foundations of the Nation should be preserved as a living part of our community life and development in order to give a sense of orientation to the American people."

To the American people, the term "Gold Hill" and Japanese Americans should become synonymous with "Plymouth Rock" and the Pilgrims. Your support will help establish this sense of orientation for present and future generations of Americans. Please help us to preserve the Japanese American culture in our great Nation.

Sincerely,

Leon Kimura

P.S.- Historically speaking, the San Jose Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League began in 1923 as the American Loyalty League, six years before the JACL was formed in 1929. Prominent Chapter members include Congressman Michael Honda and former Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta (who grew up next door to the hospital building and his wooden desk is still in his old insurance office inside the building!).

Rebecca Allen
<rebecca@pastforwardinc.com>
03/23/2010 01:10 PM

To <Paul_Iusignan@nps.gov>
cc Alan Ehrgott <ehrgott@arconservancy.org>, <mwdonaldson@parks.ca.gov>
bcc
Subject Additional thoughts on Wakamatsu Colony national signficiance

History: This message has been replied to.

Paul --

I'm following on the Wakamatsu colony national significance, and have some additional thoughts to offer.

In our last conversation, you stated your concern that this short-lived colony had no long term impact on Japanese American culture. You noted the gap in immigration from the end of the colony in 1871 until the 1880s when more Japanese arrived. I stressed that the revised nomination viewed this site as the first stepping stone in Japanese American settlements. In my continued discussion with the Japanese American community, and review of volumes that discuss this history, the cultural importance of this site — the sense of importance in terms of the Japanese American place of beginning, and what that represents to the community — becomes more and more clear. Every encyclopedia entry I've seen (online and in book form) that addresses the Japanese in the United States discusses this first colony. The majority of Japanese American histories also note Wakamatsu as the first colony – it's the first important link in this history. There was a slow trickle of Japanese into the U.S., but the story is complicated by Japanese emigration to Hawaii, which not part of the U.S. until much later, and Mejii government policies that discouraged (and at times outlawed) emigration. I'm also really struck by the first California newspaper accounts of the Wakamatsu Colony — they viewed the colonists as an asset, in direct contrast to the prevailing views of Chinese laborers in the 19th century. In the wake of the Chinese Exclusion Act, Japanese immigrants were specifically invited into the U.S. to fill the labor gap. Until the Japanese farmers arrived in greater numbers and were viewed as an economic threat, they were generally viewed as the more favorable of immigrants. Newspaper reports of the Wakamatsu colonists set the tone of the "acceptable" nature of the Japanese that prevailed until the turn of the 20th century, and then the events leading up to and during WWII. In this instance, the story of Japanese migration to the U.S., the west was at the forefront of the national scene. Immigration into the U.S. for the most part meant immigration to California and other western states. Research into this early story of Japanese immigration prior to 1880 is a relatively new area of study, as evidenced by the volume by John Van Sant, published in 2001, which was very well received. Additional studies are still underway, and are needed to further highlight the importance of Wakamatsu. This should not detract from your decision.

Since our conversation, I've also found evidence that Japanese newspapers continued to tout California as a favorable place to emigrate although Wakamatsu colony did not last long. Toyotomi Morimoto (1997:18, *Japanese Americans and Cultural Continuity: Maintaining Language and Heritage)* noted: "After the Meiji Restoration in 1868, young people were encouraged by their predecessors to open new worlds for themselves by coming to the United States. In particular, Fukuzawa Yukichi was influential in inspiring youths through his newspaper *Jiji Shimpo* and several other publications." I have no doubt that investigation into archives in Japan will show more evidence of the importance of the idea of

California (and thus the U.S.) to Japanese emigrants. Certainly the story of the 19-year-old Okei and her early death have done so, as evidenced by the replica gravesite erected in Wakamatsu, Japan, and the letter from the Wakamatsu mayor to the Veerkamp family, thanking them for their upkeep and preservation of the site. Again, this does not detract from the importance of the Wakamatsu Colony site, but adds to its potential for national significance.

It also strikes me as a matter of balance in representation of Japanese American contributions to U.S. culture and history. I've briefly looked at properties currently listed on the National Register representing Japanese history. The majority of these are WWII internment camps, such as Manzanar near Independence, California. There are a few temples, the Angel Island Detention Center for those being deported, and a few town sites that housed both Japanese and Chinese, but only one example of an agricultural site that I could see. All of these were 20th century sites. One of the unique qualities of the Wakamatsu Colony is that it was so early. While the colony ultimately failed, it was an important stepping stone, and a harbinger of immigration to come. It is also an opportunity to tell the public of the positive side of Japanese immigration, and the importance of their later contributions to agriculture. The Japanese American community clearly recognizes Wakamatsu as their place of beginning in the United States. The National Register needs to do so as well.

Thank you for time, and please let me know if I can provide you with any additional information --

Rebecca

****

Dr. Rebecca Allen
Past Forward, Inc.
PO Box 969
Garden Valley, CA 95633
530-333-4547
www.pastforwardinc.com

****

JAPANESE IMMIGRANTS.

Arrival of Three Families in San Francisco—Several More Expected.

From the San Francisco Alta California, May 27.

Herr SCHNELL, a Prussian gentleman, for ten years past resident in the Northern Principalities of Japan, has arrived in San Francisco with three Japanese families. These families are the precursors of forty Japanese families now on the way for our port, and of a further accession of eighty families, making in all one hundred and twenty families, or say, four hundred persons are coming here for permanent settlement. They are mostly silk cultivators and manufacturers; some are tea culturists. They bring with them 50,000 trees of the *Morus alba*, three years old. This is the most tender leaf of all the mulberries, and it makes the best silk in that country. They bring a great number of bamboo plants of the large variety, useful for a thousand purposes. They are twelve feet high. Also, 500 vegetable wax trees, four feet high and three years 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, 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 that three 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 he charges himself with their care, support and guidance in a way to conform to the law and usages of our country. They are not serfs, but free. 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 silkworms and the finer qualities of silk; and especially is it an axiom, "Hills for the fine teas, dales for the coarse." He knew that we were overstocked with common mulberry trees in nursery, with very few set out for permanent plantation, so he has brought his own trees. He does not intend to feed worms till his trees, now three years old, have another full year's growth. The Japanese do not esteem either eggs or cocoons fed, like ours, on cuttings scarce rooted in the nursery. Three feet is the standard height of plantation mulberries in Japan. They never bare 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 Californian cocoons this year if he could find them of merchantable quality. But such as are at NEUMANN'S exhibition would not answer at all. They are fit only for shoddy.

The New York Times
Published: June 5, 1869

JAPANESE IMMIGRANTS.

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THE JOURNAL OF ASIAN STUDIES

VOLUME 67

NUMBER 4

NOVEMBER 2008

PUBLISHED FOR
THE ASSOCIATION FOR
ASIAN STUDIES, INC.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

The Journal of Asian Studies Vol. 67, No. 4 (November) 2008: 1187–1226.
© 2008 The Association Asian Studies, Inc. doi:10.1017/S0021911808001757

"Pioneers of Overseas Japanese Development": Japanese American History and the Making of Expansionist Orthodoxy in Imperial Japan

EIICHIRO AZUMA

Focusing on intersections of Asian area studies and U.S. ethnic studies, this article probes overlapping but hitherto neglected trajectories of Japanese colonialism and transpacific migrant experience and of modern Japanese history and Japanese American history. Constructed during the 1930s, expansionist orthodoxy of imperial Japan justified and idealized the agricultural colonization of Manchuria on the basis of historical precedence found in a contrived chronicle of Japanese "overseas development" in the American frontier. This study documents how Japanese intelligentsia, popular culture, and the state concertedly co-opted U.S. Japanese immigrant history in service of the policies of imperial expansion and national mobilization in Asia before the Pacific War. While involving conflicting agendas and interests between the colonial metropolis in imperial Japan and the expatriate society in the American West, the example of transnational history making elucidates borderless dimensions of prewar Japanese colonialism, which influenced, and was concurrently influenced by, the presence and practices of Japanese emigrants across the Pacific.

RECENT SCHOLARSHIP ON THE Japanese empire has unveiled totalizing aspects of imperial colonialism that not only called into service the nation's human and economic resources but also involved the production of knowledge and culture suitable for the goal of national expansion. As Stefan Tanaka (1993, 68–104) traces, through academic studies of "eastern history" (*toyō-shi*) in tandem with the Orientalization of the Asian continent (*shina*), Chinese history and culture were redefined as an inferior other to be conquered or overcome. The mass culture of imperial Japan, including films, magazines, and even stage revues, meanwhile helped consolidate "a doctrine of assimilation (*dōka;* lit., 'same-ization'), or Japanization (*Nipponka*)," thereby cultivating popular enthusiasm for a mission "to civilize…the peoples of Asia" (Robertson 1998, 89–138, esp. 91–92). In this context, the construction of a historical metanarrative for the expansive nation also formed a significant aspect of Japan's empire building. Expansionist orthodoxy, as it took shape during the mid-1930s, traced the origins of modern Japan's "overseas development" (*kaigai hatten*) to labor migrations to Hawaii and Guam in 1868, and to the establishment of the so-called

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Wakamatsu tea and silk colony in rural California the following year. Whereas the 1868 endeavors were altogether characterized as a disastrous failure due to the virtual peonage of "ignorant" workers by unscrupulous white merchants, the agricultural colonization of the American frontier was celebrated as a project that "almost offered an example of ideal colonization"—in the words of a foremost expansionist historian of early Showa Japan—and hence an appropriate starting point of modern-day imperial colonialism, which was purportedly in full bloom in Manchuria when the master narrative was crafted (Iriye [1936] 1942, 1:9–29).

The maiden Okei, a seventeen-year-old member of the 1869 California expedition from Aizu Wakamatsu, Fukushima Prefecture, figured particularly large in the teleological story of Japan's imperial beginning abroad. The young woman was said to have joined the group as a nanny for the children of its leader, but she quickly became something of a "heroine" who dwarfed other early emigrants in importance to imperial Japan. Okei's rise in a domestic expansionist narrative provides a glimpse into a fundamentally transnational process of prewar knowledge production and history making that brought together the Japanese expatriate community in the United States and the home empire in Japan. During the 1930s, the two sides inadvertently collaborated in the remembering of Okei and similar figures, as well as the forgetting of others, in history. In California, for example, when the members of the Japanese American Citizens League honored the tribulations and triumphs of their parents' generation at its 1934 convention, the American-born Japanese leaders singled out "Miss Okei" as "an inspiration that has guided others [Japanese immigrants] to pioneer along the same lines" in the western frontier (*Shin Sekai*, September 12, 1934). Almost concurrently in Tokyo, using similar language, a popular writer glamorized the young emigrant woman for having purportedly spearheaded the "cultural" and "expansionistic" developments of Meiji Japan in the New World (Kimura 1935). As a trailblazer in the formation of two communities—ethnic and national—Okei emerged at the crossroads of their respective histories, rendering Japanese American history into imperial Japan's orthodoxy of "overseas development" during the era of aggressive colonial expansion in Manchuria and into other parts of Asia.

The duality of Okei's identities elucidates not only the fluid positionality of Japanese emigrants between the two national spaces but also the contested relationship between the histories of the Japanese in America and their compatriots in imperial Japan. The contemporaneous development of Okei legends on both sides of the Pacific during the 1930s represented only one of the many instances in which the overseas ethnic community and the domestic national community became entangled in their respective quests for racial survival in white America and for imperial expansion in Japanese Asia. For the residents in the United States (Issei) and their American-born children (Nisei), the

narrative of the young woman pioneer played a significant role in the construction of a group history and its collective identity, through which they attempted to consolidate their resources for ethnic empowerment in a racist society that discriminated against these "Orientals." On the other hand, for the Japanese state and public of the militarist era, Okei provided a romanticized symbol of the nation's colonial genesis and destiny that amplified the usefulness of the Japanese migrant experience in America to its nascent expansionist metanarrative and official policy of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. By placing the circulation of historical discourses and representations in a transnational context, this study proposes a new way to understand the complexities of prewar Japanese colonialism, which often confounded emigration with colonial expansion in the building of a "total empire."

In American academia, emigration traditionally falls into the domain of Japanese American studies, and colonial expansion constitutes a central research agenda for modern Japan specialists. Despite the numerous intersections, historians of modern Japan and Japanese America seldom acknowledged the pertinence of these intersections until the last decade. The most important reason for this disciplinary and epistemological compartmentalization is the artificial insulation between U.S. ethnic studies and Asian area studies—one that mirrors contemporary politics within American scholarly discourse more than actual historical circumstances. Nonetheless, though the two fields have generally operated in accordance with separate problematics, their recent trajectories demonstrate a noteworthy contrast. Whereas ethnic studies scholars, especially historians, have tended to remain more cautious about, if not oblivious to, the overlapping research agendas of the two fields, a number of scholars in area studies have risen to the challenge of crossing disciplinary boundaries to produce solid monographs of a transnational and interdisciplinary nature.[1]

Indeed, the divorce of Japanese American history from modern Japanese history was initiated by, and has been sustained chiefly through the efforts of, Asian Americanists, who since the late 1960s have demanded the incorporation of their racial history in hitherto Eurocentric narratives of U.S. national formation and the immigrant saga.[2] In line with the liberal agenda of antiracism and

[1]Noteworthy works have come out, especially in Chinese and Chinese American studies, that look at global Chinese migrations as a diaspora. See the works by Adam McKeown (1999, 2001) and Madeline Y. Hsu (2000). With similar perspectives, some anthropologists of Japan, such as Joshua Hotaka Roth (2002) and Takeyuki Tsuda (2003), have examined the recent migration of Japanese Latin Americans to their ancestral land and probed the fluidity of their ethnonational identities. Historical analyses of North American Nikkei, however, still remain almost exclusively within the confines of domestic race relations and the domain of U.S. or Canadian ethnic studies.

[2]In thinking about the intersections of the two fields, Shirley Hune (2001, 235) discusses "the global and national dimension as the center of Asian American Studies," calling for a "both and also" approach rather than a prevailing "either-or binary reasoning." However, she cautions about important political and theoretical factors that still rationalize the preservation of the line

inclusion, their basic goal was to stretch the bounds of a racially circumscribed national experience *within* the U.S. history field, but not beyond it. While participating in domestic racial politics, Asian Americanists have also challenged the prevailing Orientalism that earmarks their long-standing discursive exclusion from U.S. domestic life, a theoretical approach that has concurrently reinforced their insistence on their distinct identity from Asian foreigners across the Pacific, as well as from Asia itself.[3] Common interpretive modes in studies of Japanese American internment have further shored up such a mononational frame of thought, keeping scholarly inquiries from aspects of the ethnic experience that might contradict a narrowly legalistic concern and domestic(ated) research agenda, that is, the violation of the Nisei's citizenship rights by the U.S. government, and their undivided loyalty despite such egregious acts of official betrayal (Azuma 2005b).

The recent popularity of diasporic perspectives has not translated into substantive research on transnational dimensions of Japanese American history, either. Revolving chiefly around theoretical questions, or at best, specific cases of South Asian diaspora or transpacific Chinese migration, existing academic discussions of Asian diaspora rarely include an analysis of Japanese American experiences, and not in the least of crossroads between colonialism and migration. And beneath these tendencies to nationalize the ethnic Japanese history lies the general neglect of vernacular immigrant sources, which, if examined, would show numerous instances of transnational ties and negotiations between the Japanese in America and their home empire, including the exchange of expansionistic ideas and symbols, such as Okei (Azuma 2005a). Combined with the political priorities embedded in ethnic studies, this methodological problem has contributed to a slanted orientation of Japanese American studies—one that defines Japanese Americans' history almost exclusively as a U.S. national experience.

Although our historical understanding still tends to be structured according to a rigidly nationalized system of knowledge and a spatially organized way of learning, many scholars of modern Japan—and Asian studies in general—have made notable strides beyond such confines. Traditional focuses on major state institutions, well-known national figures, and hegemonic state ideologies have

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between ethnic and area studies, for the latter—being older, larger, and more established—can easily compromise, if not completely dominate, the former. Any global analysis of a diasporic population, Hune further contends, still needs to be "grounded where people are" (2001, 235), that is, a national and local context where different dynamics of social relations prevail. In this sense, informed border crossings are recommended instead of simply leveling and combining the fields. On another interesting discussion of disciplinary divisions between Asian American studies and Asian studies, see Sucheta Mazumdar (1991).

[3]Perhaps this attitude explains a tendency among many Asian Americanists to keep even transnational or diasporic studies in the hemispheric context of the Americas only (see Anderson and Lee 2005; Hirabayashi, Kikumura-Yano, and Hirabayashi 2002).

given way to broader themes of society and culture, as well as more nuanced treatments of ordinary women and men, who often posed alternative visions to the bounded meanings of state and nation. Understandably, most specialists rest their eyes on the discursive spaces and social practices that evolved within the physical boundaries of the Japanese state or the formal territories of the empire, but transnational studies of Japanese imperialism or even studies of "borderless colonialism" have also emerged in recent years. While Mariko Asano Tamanoi's edited volume (2005) brings Chinese, Manchu, Korean, and Polish views and experiences into the complex histories of Manchuria, Louise Young sheds light on "a long-standing association of emigration with Japanese expansion" (1998a, 311) to various parts of the world, which culminated in the erection of Japan's total empire in northern China. Prasenjit Duara (2003, 179–208) delineates the broader regional context in which a "frontier" was formed in a contested borderland of Manchuria in the interwar era. Not only Japanese intellectuals and colonialists but also Chinese nationalists have taken part in this transborder endeavor, producing varied representations and visions of a national collectivity and sovereign control in accordance with their respective efforts of state building there.

Shifting attention from the Asian continent to the Pacific as a site of similar entanglements and contestations, John J. Stephan (1984, 1997) has examined the precarious relations between Japanese in Hawaii and in their homeland empire, as well as the involvement of some Nisei in Japan's war planning. Takashi Fujitani (2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2006) has authored pathbreaking essays on other aspects of historical convergence between ethnic and national histories, and his forthcoming book will probe the similarities of white American racism and imperial Japanese racism during the Pacific War, especially relative to the use of assimilated Nisei and colonized Koreans as conscripted soldiers in the respective empires.

As exemplified by these developments, Japanese area studies is better prepared to bridge the disciplinary and epistemological divides between Asia and America, which have obfuscated the overlapping trajectories of Japan's colonial expansion and the transpacific migrant experience in particular, and of Japanese history and Issei history in general. While avoiding flattening critical differences between the lives of a racial minority in white America and the colonial master in imperial Japan, this essay first unveils intersections between emigration and colonialism in the modern Japanese experience, and briefly explains the construction of an expansionistic racial history among the Issei after the era of anti-Japanese exclusion in the United States. The bulk of the essay discusses how imperial expansionism manipulated the story of Okei and the Japanese migrant struggle on the American frontier, absorbed the Issei's historical constructions into an official domestic narrative, and finally enshrined all American residents in imperial Japan's pantheon of national heroes on the eve of the Pacific War.

Intersections of Emigration and Colonialism

The root of this conflation of the trajectories of prewar Japanese America and imperial Japan lay first and foremost in the muddling of emigration (*imin*) and colonialism (*shokumin*) in a public "discourse on overseas development" (*kaigai hattenron*). Popularized after the late 1880s, the idea of overseas development was predicated on the supposition that ordinary people would take the lead in Japan's external expansion through emigration. A prevailing interest in maritime trade, the Malthusian urge to disperse the "surplus" rural population, and the general mimicking of Western imperialist practices in Meiji Japan were woven into *kaigai hattenron*, but at its core, the discourse entailed nationalistic populism that attempted to involve the hitherto forsaken masses in the crucial national project of empire building (Duus 1995, 295–301; Peattie 1988, 1–33; Young 1998a, 310–17).[4]

Using the idea of Japan as an "expansive nation" (*bōchō minzoku*), ideologues of overseas development envisioned the mobilization of imperial subjects through a common expansionist past and future. Lamenting that they had suppressed the calling of their "expansive blood" under the seclusion policy of the Tokugawa regime, these ideologues typically dwelled on a scheme of dialectical racial struggle, in which the conflicts between the "Aryan race" and the "Mongolian race" had determined the course of world history in the entire span of human history. In the language of social Darwinism, some early expansionists compared the ongoing conquest of the uncivilized by the West to the Mongol domination of Eurasia during the thirteenth century, predicting that the coming era would see another rise of the Mongolian race in the world under Japanese initiative. While advocating popular emigration for overseas colonization in the neighboring regions, this line of thought also formed a powerful support for the 1894 war against China, as Japan, the awakened "leader of the Asiatic," was destined to set a new tone for world history by overcoming the remnants of the old, represented by the Chinese (Genkakusei 1896; Nagasawa 1894, 11–16, 38–39).[5]

[4] Louise Young (1998a, 311) is one of the few scholars who has explicitly commented on "a long-standing association of emigration with Japanese expansion." She traces the origin of this connection to the 1870s, when the central government began an effort to "colonize" the northern island of Hokkaido with displaced ex-samurai and farmers, who built agricultural settlements while pushing indigenous Ainu people out of their settlements. Furthermore, Young astutely shows how this emigration movement "expanded its purview to target the European settlement societies of the Americas and the Pacific" (Young 1998a, 312).

[5] In the late nineteenth century, many writers affiliated with the Seikyōsha, such as Nagasawa, made comparable arguments in the society's organs—*Nihonjin* and *Ajiya*. The organ of the Colonization Society, *Shokumin Kyōkai hōkoku*, was also a rich repository of early expansionist ideas. Later in November 1910, the popular magazine *Taiyō* (vol. 16, no. 15) issued a special volume on "the expansion of the Japanese nation," in which well-known statesmen, bureaucrats, and intellectuals discussed in the same breath the accomplishments and promises of overseas development in Asia, the Americas, and the Pacific. Tsurumi Yūsuke (1935) reveals how the idea remained integral to Japanese imperialism of the 1930s.

Hence, from the outset, the politics of emigration-led colonialism was deeply intertwined with the formal military ventures of Japanese imperialism.

Consisting of young intellectuals, a political society called the Seikyōsha played a key role in advancing emigration-led colonialism at its formative stage between 1888 and 1894. After the sweeping Westernization of the previous decade, the 1880s ushered in nativist backlashes, giving birth to a number of so-called Japanist groups. In the middle of these political shifts, a fierce debate over diplomacy broke out, inducing the nationalists to launch an attack on the conciliatory attitude of the central government toward the West. Originally imposed on Japan during the Tokugawa regime, the unequal treaties, which the Meiji government subsequently inherited, accorded extraterritoriality to foreign residents and placed Japanese tariffs under international control. Until 1911, the revision of these treaties remained a top priority for Japanese diplomacy. In 1886, Tokyo first entered into negotiations with the West for the abolition of extraterritoriality with a proposal that Japan accept a mixed court including foreign judges for criminal trials of Europeans and Americans. Once news of this compromise leaked out to the public, the government found itself in a storm of criticism. Among the most vocal critics were members of the Seikyōsha, who went on to form a fluid group of bellicose "hard-liners" (*taigaikō*) in alliance with other antigovernment proponents and anti-West chauvinists (Nakasone 1993, 101–45; Pyle 1969, 99–117; Satō 1998, 11–38).

The hard-liners had a different answer to the problem of unequal treaties. Instead of conciliation, they asserted, Japan must expand externally by acquiring formal and informal territories, so that the West would take the nation seriously as a legitimate player in international power politics. For the first time, these nationalists presented a vision of "overseas development" as an alternative course for diplomacy and national empowerment. Instead of simply creating the infrastructure of imperial rule within Japan proper, they argued that the country should embark on a project of real empire building through mass emigration, international trade, and, if necessary, proactive military deployment. Because the emigration of rural people to Hawaii and the American West had just begun in the mid-1880s, nationalists willingly mistook the popular practice of temporary work abroad (*dekasegi*) for the first instance of Japanese colonialist expansion in the modern era. Founded by the hard-liners in 1893, the Colonization Society (*Shokumin kyōkai*) reified such conceptual confusions because its members equated state-supported colonialist ventures in Asia and the Pacific with mass labor migration to the Americas (*Shokumin Kyōkai hōkoku* 1893, 102–18). While calling for an imperialist war, such pundits expressed a desire to see more and more subjects of their "expansive nation" migrating abroad for the "conquest of frontiers" and the building of "new Japans" beyond Japanese shores (Azuma 2000, 39–40).

Depending on the directions and methods, there were three types of early expansionist schemes, which conflated, rather than distinguished, the concepts

of *imin* and *shokumin*. The first—that is, continental expansionism—mirrored a mounting interest in Korea and Manchuria as a theater of Japanese economic and military activities. In light of the Russian threat, security concerns had smoldered among leading circles of Japan since Saigō Takamori's 1873 plan to invade Korea, but advocates of continental expansion became a formidable political force only in the context of deteriorating relations with China and Russia between 1890 and 1904. Core members of the Seikyōsha were instrumental in organizing the Oriental Society (*Tōhō kyōkai*) in 1891, which provided an important forum for the discussion of Japan's colonial destinies in northeastern Asia on the eve of the first Sino-Japanese War. Second, advocates of southward expansion combined a romantic notion of adventure with a naked imperialistic urge to expand into the southwestern Pacific (Nan'yō) for trade and settlement. A harbinger of Japanese naval operations during the First World War, this current of thought tended to look to Micronesia and its vicinity as a chief destination for entrepreneurs and labor emigrants (Nakasone 1993, 207–11; Peattie 1988, 1–30; Pyle 1969, 156–60).

Meanwhile, supporters of a transpacific movement envisaged what historian Akira Iriye calls "peaceful expansionism" through the transplantation of ordinary Japanese to the Western Hemisphere. Without resorting to military force, they theorized, the superior qualities of the expansive nation would allow Japanese emigrants to compete successfully with other races in economic endeavors, especially agriculture, on the frontiers of the New World. With the largest Japanese population abroad, albeit mostly of a working-class background, on par with Korea and Manchuria, North America and Hawaii (and later Brazil) were seen as preferable sites for overseas Japanese expansion by the turn of the twentieth century, insofar as they served Japan's interests as overseas "centers of economic and social activities closely linked to the mother country" (Iriye 1971, 131). Blurring demarcations between labor migration and colonization therefore induced many Japanese to gloss over crucial differences between the lives of colonizers under the protection of Japan's military might and those of indigent migrants in another sovereign country through the encompassing language of "overseas development."

Educated Japanese—both domestic and abroad—consequently had the tendency to view all foreign settlements of their countrymen and women as aspects of national expansion. Japanese emigrant leaders in the United States were no exception, and they, too, were strongly influenced by transpacific expansionism (Azuma 2000, 40–47). Dissociating themselves from the rest of the population who came as temporary *dekasegi* workers, many Issei intellectuals and elite businessmen identified themselves as colonial settlers, and strove to present their experiences of "triumphs and tribulations" in the American context according to the doctrine of peaceful expansionism. However, not until the 1930s did they finally have an organized historical discourse that fused their American experiences into a synthesized record of overseas national development, for neither Japanese America nor imperial Japan was compelled to produce a systematic narrative before that decade.

Issei History Making

Expansionist history making was a reciprocal process, and dramatic (or traumatic) changes in Japanese immigrant society in the United States helped spur that process first among the leading Issei. In the early 1920s, when discriminatory American laws took their agricultural and immigration rights away on the basis of their status as "aliens ineligible to citizenship," Japanese immigrants were collectively faced with a prodigious crisis that appeared to threaten the survival of their economy and community. Institutionalized American racism against the Issei generation, many felt, expedited the coming of a second-generation era, wherein the Nisei's "superior" racial traits, coupled with their birthright of U.S. citizenship, would soon enable them to defeat white racism and further enlarge America's "new Japan." In this context, some immigrant intellectuals took on a teleological project of summing up the passing first-generation era for future resurrection, chronicling their records of collective struggle and racial persecution as a contrived story of overseas Japanese development—the nation's progress on American soil that was temporarily arrested by white racism. Significantly, in that narrative, Issei writers not only juxtaposed their trajectory with the disparate footsteps of other Japanese emigrants and colonialists elsewhere, but also they asserted their doubly pioneering roles in the expansion of Japan's national influence in the United States, as well as in an American epic of frontier conquest (Azuma 2003, 1401–13).

Incorporating elements of Japan's peaceful expansionism and the U.S. frontier discourse, Japanese immigrant history was thus fundamentally transnational, directed to the audiences of both countries. Avoiding choosing one over the other, Issei writers attempted to carve out a legitimate place in the histories of their native and adopted countries, and the emergent narrative of progress usually combined two-pronged arguments, which may well have appeared contradictory to the nationalized eyes of each domestic public. On the one hand, a typical example read,

> We have been here for some 60 years. Ever since the beginning of modern Japan, no other group of Japanese spent as long as 60 years in a foreign land. We are indeed the first ones. Our history is not quite the same as our homeland's, but it is still part of it. Our history constitutes the first page of the history of Japanese expansion. (*Rafu Shimpō*, October 16, 1935)

On the other,

> We, the Japanese in America, all crossed the Pacific [and] entered the half-untouched wilderness of North America with such heroic determination. Unfamiliar with the language and customs, we still managed to build today's foundations with many tears and much sweat.... We all

> have done our best for our own lives and this society (the United States) .... No one can deny that we have performed distinguished service for the advancement of North America (Nakagawa 1932, 2).

Predicated upon the theme of double national contributions, the history of the Issei "pioneers" unfolded with an emphasis on their remarkable ascent in American agriculture and their fight against Western racism, using terms similar to Japan's contestation with the Euro-American powers in international politics. Immigrant intellectuals adopted this rhetorical strategy to argue for socioeconomic parity with white Americans and cultural compatibilities between the two races *because of* their recent exclusion. Thus, in order for the Japanese in America to (re)elevate their status in American society, a redefinition of racial meaning was necessary, and their homeland offered perfect material support for it. In seeking acceptance into white America on an equal basis, Issei writers deliberately likened their preexclusion achievements as American frontiersmen to the current rise of the Japanese empire as a world power. Not only had the Issei tamed much of the forsaken western land, the immigrant historians reasoned, they had "always kept their farms green and supplied produce of higher quality" owing to their "superiority in [farming] skills" and outstanding racial fortes—the ones that also made it possible for Japan to compete so effectively with the West (Zaibei Nihonjinkai 1940, 157). Such historical inventions were also predicated on the view that their community was a partner with Japan in a struggle against white racism, local and global, and this contention was canonized in *Zaibei Nihonjinshi* (History of the Japanese in America), namely, that the Issei had preceded all other groups of Japanese, including those in the homeland, in confronting the challenges posed by Anglo-Saxons (Azuma 2003, 1412–13; Zaibei Nihonjinkai 1940, 1–4).

Integral to these formulations was the simplification of the Japanese immigrant identity, whereby the contrasting images of settler-colonizers and *dekasegi* migrant laborers were reconciled in favor of the former. The majority of the Japanese in America initially had come to work on Hawaiian sugar plantations and western farmlands between 1885 and 1924, whereas smaller numbers of educated individuals and student immigrants had indeed arrived in search of a "new Japan" on American soil. That the numerical minority could dominate the process of identity formation in particular, and of history making in general, had to do with the access they enjoyed to community leadership, financial resources, and the ethnic print media. With the backing of propertied farming and business classes, Issei writers projected an undifferentiated image of nationalist colonists upon their group identity. While these self-proclaimed immigrant "frontiersmen" demanded inclusion into America through calculated historical constructions that countered the exclusionist accusation that they were an unassimilable laboring horde, the writers and their supporters also hoped to attire themselves in more honorable clothing with the goal of debunking the

prevalent Japanese stereotype that American residents were an "abandoned people" (*kimin*), that is, a "worthless" lot of "uncultured" *dekasegi* field hands (Azuma 2003, 1408–09, 1412–17).

Compiled in 1940 by a committee of immigrant writers and community leaders in San Francisco, *Zaibei Nihonjinshi* characterized the Issei as "imperial subjects... with the determination to enrich the country and strengthen the military." Indignant with Russia and other European powers for their domineering attitudes that had led to the Triple Intervention following the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95, this canonical Issei history argued that thousands of "young Japanese [had] pushed their way to the gold-filled United States, where they could tap into the wealth of no parallel in the world" for the benefit of the resource-deprived homeland (Zaibei Nihonjinkai 1940, 77). According to the immigrant orthodoxy, then, no *dekasegi* laborers had come to the United States. The Japanese in America were all patriotic trailblazers in pursuit not of trivial personal gains but of national interests, and "only with such a sense of mission could we build today's Japanese community and attained the present level of development" (Zaibei Nihonjinkai 1940, 77). This invented identity of Issei settler-colonialists proved to serve a pivotal agenda for imperial Japan during the 1930s, as it inflated the value of permanent colonial settlement over a more common historical practice of temporary work abroad. Brushing aside earlier connotations of shiftlessness and selfishness, immigrant history redefined the word *imin* to bring it in line with the notion of *takushi*, or colonial fighter—the official designation Tokyo gave to agricultural emigrants to Manchuria in that decade.[6]

Buoyed by the discourse on overseas development, history making allowed Japanese residents in the United States to claim legitimacy in terms of Japan's imperialistic imagination, even though their purpose was to win respect from their homeland, not necessarily to collaborate in state-sponsored expansionist aggression in Asia. Because peaceful expansionism had permeated both Japanese America and imperial Japan, the particular historical visions Issei writers presented did not ring hollow in the ears of the Japanese public. Not until the mid-1930s, however, did Japan proactively seek to co-opt Issei experiences and confer on the emigrants a recognizable place in the annals of national expansion. Prior to this time, Japan had no consistent position on overseas development, and as noted earlier, various factions of elites had advanced quite different types of expansionism. Yet the military seizure of Manchuria in 1931 prompted Tokyo to consolidate its resources to develop the so-called Mongol-Manchurian lifeline

[6]At the Imperial Diet, the colonial minister stated that his office had employed the term *takushi* because Japanese settler-colonialists in Manchuria should not be confused with earlier *imin*—*dekasegi* labor emigrants—to the Americas. He noted the difficulty the government had faced in recruiting new emigrants to Manchuria, for many people refused to join the ranks of low-class *dekasegi* laborers. The Colonial Ministry also had to respond to repeated requests from the residents in Manchuria, who disliked being called *imin* (see Teikoku Gikai 1939, 338–39).

for the Japanese empire. Adopted in 1936, the twenty-year plan to send one million Japanese households (five million people) to the region marked the first systematic involvement by the state in emigration and colonization (Young 1998a, 307). With Manchurian development a national policy of the highest importance, the prior experiences of Japanese abroad suddenly became a matter of concern for officials and opinion makers in Japan. In order to convince the conservative agricultural population to give up the comfort of their native villages for new opportunities on the Manchurian frontier, imperial Japan needed a synthesis of national emigration history that would demonstrate that building a new Japan was not only a historical mandate for the nation but also as honorable an act for an imperial subject as dying for the emperor in war. It was in this context that Issei history finally attracted close attention from Japanese intellectuals and the print media.

Orthodoxy Making in Imperial Japan

In his *Hōjin Kaigai Hattenshi* (History of Overseas Japanese Development, originally published in 1936), Iriye Toraji first systematically appropriated the Issei's transnational narrative for the goal of imperial expansion by purging a key theme of the American pioneer story. A Foreign Ministry employee, Iriye was an ardent advocate of peaceful expansionism, having hoped to compile a comprehensive record of Japanese emigration and overseas colonization since the Meiji Restoration. Drawing on diplomatic papers, emigration company documents, and a wide range of secondary sources, his 1,100-page volume presented the subject as a serious academic study. While it might have turned away the ordinary reading public, Iriye's scholastic narrative had a tremendous impact on the shaping of historical knowledge of emigration in Japan. Reprinted in 1938 and again in 1942, the book became canonized as an official publication of the Society for the Study of the Emigration Problem, an affiliate to the Foreign Ministry, which looked to "disseminate information on the conditions of overseas Japanese development" in conjunction with the official Manchurian enterprise (IMK 1938, 1–2). As such, Iriye's *History* not only set the manner in which the historical epic of national expansion was subsequently interpreted and narrated, but also it defined the meaning of the Issei past for an educated audience of the empire.

Divided into two parts, the volume grouped divergent flows of emigration into a single trajectory of overseas Japanese development; it detailed the varied but unified experiences of residents in Hawaii, the United States, Micronesia and other Pacific islands, Southeast Asia, Mexico, Canada, Peru, Australia, the Philippines, Brazil, and Manchuria in chronological order between 1868 and 1936. Iriye explained how Japan had reached the point at which the Japanese government, after many years of neglect and failure, had finally come to

its senses to embrace Manchurian colonization as a national project. Filled with stories of "tribulation," including the Issei's struggles in the United States, Iriye's narrative suggested by contrast a better future for emigrants to Manchuria in the post-1936 era. His optimism, accentuated by gloomy anecdotes of the past, hinged on one crucial difference between the trailblazers of overseas development and the current "colonial fighters." Unlike the Issei, the residents in Manchuria could expect full support from Japan's Colonial Ministry and live comfortably under the protection of its mighty imperial forces. Learning from their mistakes, Iriye surmised, the Japanese of the 1930s were fully cognizant of their expansionist heritage, as well as their colonial destiny, which now looked brighter than ever (Iriye 1942).

Overall, Iriye faithfully adopted key aspects of the Issei's historical constructions, that is, their purported patriotism and status as pioneers of modern Japanese expansionism. Nevertheless, the position that the Japanese in America held in his book was very specific: victims of Anglo-Saxon racism and an inept government at home. Fifteen of its fifty-five chapters detailed the doings of Japanese residents in Hawaii and the continental United States, and their fight against white oppression was a particular focus of the volume, which suggested to readers that the lives of Japanese in America revolved mostly around interracial struggle (Iriye 1942, 1:75–82, 304–17, 450–57, 496–511; 2:162–78, 257–74, 313–32, 512–16, 522). Combined with similar stories of racial injustice and exclusionary politics in Australia and Canada, Iriye expressly elucidated the heroism of the emigrants, who stood up single-handedly to Anglo-Saxon racism despite no support from the homeland. While reiterating the Issei's arguments in most parts, the author also inserted a new interpretation that American racism derived from whites' "fear of Japanese superiority." By resorting to discriminatory legislation, Iriye wrote, white Americans ironically "have confessed their defeat" as a race. Although the Issei's development in America fell victim to institutionalized practices of exclusion, they still proved themselves to be "victors of racial competition, because, after all, white Americans could not compete with them fair and square" (Iriye 1942, 2:326–27).

The moral of Issei history—as rendered by Iriye—was clear. Now, with the awakening of the home government and the full support of imperial armed forces, emigrant-colonizers bound for Manchuria would be able to exploit their racial superiority to the fullest. Iriye saw in the Issei's past a historical crystal ball that revealed Japan's bright colonial future. But at the same time, the incorporation of the Japanese in America into the chronicle of national expansion relegated them to a ruptured past, against which the redeemed present was appreciated as something qualitatively different. Indeed, this is why Iriye's metanarrative concluded the discussion of the Issei's experience with the subhead "Gravestone of the Victors"—as if they had altogether disappeared from history by the mid-1920s after the unfortunate conclusion of interracial struggle (Iriye 1942, 2:326–27). In the end, the record of the Japanese in America

rhetorically justified why Tokyo must proactively intervene and take the lead in the project of overseas development, while concomitantly underscoring the immutability of Japanese superiority that the passage of time or difference in historical circumstances could not efface. This pattern of incorporation characterized the Issei's standing in other expansionist narratives that came out in imperial Japan in the ensuing years (Kikuchi 1940; Makishima 1937; Shibata 1941).

Okei: At the Crossroads of Agricultural Emigration and Manchurian Colonization

In tandem with Iriye's orthodoxy making, Okei was put on a historical pedestal during the mid-1930s. Just as Issei history became significant as a monument to illuminate the triumph of Japanese blood in the interracial struggle, her legend lived on as a threshold of national expansion through a modest tombstone in a desolate field in Gold Hill, California. A seventeen-year-old nanny, Okei was among a small group of Japanese emigrants, led by a German merchant named John Henry Schnell, who crossed the Pacific in 1869 to grow tea and silkworms in a "new Japan" on the American frontier. This endeavor nevertheless failed within a year due to financial problems, which led to a quick dispersal of its members. While the Schnells and some emigrants returned to Japan, others stayed near the remnants of the California colony. Okei lived with a sympathetic white family, but she fatally contracted malaria and died at the age of nineteen. A few decades later, another colony member built a modest grave in her memory. No Issei cared for it until the end of the 1920s, when her tombstone became suddenly memorialized in the Japanese immigrant community (Kawamura 1930, 11–20, 161–82; Zaibei Nihonjinkai 1940, 19–29).

No sooner had Issei ethnic history laid claim to Okei as its starting point than did their native land declare its proprietary rights to the female legend. The synchronous process of history making exemplified how the ethnic and national histories informed each other. In the United States, immigrant writers used Okei to transcend the recorded presence of Japanese prostitutes that they saw as a dishonorable past. By defining her as "the first Issei woman" who purportedly died a virgin, the immigrant master narrative did not connect Okei with the "women of disgraceful profession" who had congregated at Chinatowns, mining towns, and railroad construction sites in the American West during the 1880s and the 1890s. Instead, Okei—pure and dedicated—was rendered the authentic precursor of contemporary Issei women, many of whom came as "picture brides" to build immigrant households in California's new Japan between 1908 and 1920 (Azuma 2003, 1418). This cleansing of historical female identity went hand in hand with the invention of Issei patriotism, which obfuscated the migratory labor heritage of most Japanese immigrant men. Combined, Issei history

making discursively transformed the Japanese in America into worthy members of the expansive nation of Japan, as well as moral American frontiersmen and women.

Whereas Japanese in America authenticated their dual national heritage through the deification of Okei, imperial Japanese found her story desirable for different reasons. Since the 1920s, bits and pieces of her story had been introduced to Japan, but it was the novelist and literary scholar Kimura Takeshi who played a central role in hijacking the Okei legend and putting it to use on behalf of the program of Japanese colonial expansionism. In January 1932, the writer first published a report of his visit to Gold Hill in a popular Tokyo magazine. While interviewing area residents about the female pioneer, Kimura was said to have stated that "the bravery of the beautiful Japanese Girl, Okei, first woman of her race to venture to California in 1870 [*sic*]" inspired him so much that he was determined to seek more information on her for a new book project (Kimura 1932, 33; *Sacramento Bee* 1931). Three years later, the author published a novel, in which Okei was metamorphosed into a "forerunner" not simply of Japanese emigration to the United States but of "Japanese imperialism" (Kimura 1935, 1).

Entitled *Meiji Kensetsu* (Building Meiji [Japan]), the 1935 publication offered a mixture of historical fabrication and ideological indoctrination under the façade of romance and adventure. Set in Tokyo, Aizu, and Yokohama during the civil war of 1868–69, the story revolved around three protagonists: Fukuzawa Yukichi, Shijimi Heikurō, and Okei. In the first scene, Fukuzawa, Japan's foremost Westernizer, appeared as the founder of Keiō academy, where he was educating future leaders of Meiji Japan, including Shijimi, a fictive figure. While Fukuzawa epitomized the symbol of Japan's shift from feudalism to modernity, his nineteen-year-old disciple was depicted as a genius in English studies and a devoted nationalist—a quintessential leader of the first generation of modern Japan. In May 1868, the imperial forces clashed with pro-Tokugawa fighters inside Tokyo, which resulted in a significant victory for the new government. In the midst of warfare and turmoil, Fukuzawa continued to teach a normal course, admonishing his agitated students to concentrate on "learning for a new Japan" (Kimura 1935, 72). Yet Shijimi sneaked out to volunteer for the imperial forces because he believed destroying Tokugawa feudalism was necessary in order to "unify the nation as one" and "build a new Japan based on it" (Kimura 1935, 61–62).

The second scene moved to Aizu, where the imperial forces had their final confrontation with the retreating feudal factions in the summer of 1868. Shijimi was injured in this battle, but a local merchant took him in, leaving him in the care of a maid named Okei. Temporarily blinded by shell fragments, Shijimi was not able to see Okei, though he developed strong affections for her. Okei turned out to be an assassin from the pro-Tokugawa Aizu domain, but she, too, yielded to her feelings toward the young enemy

(Kimura 1935, 158). Their romance was nonetheless short-lived, for Okei disappeared when Shijimi had his eyesight restored. After unsuccessfully searching for Okei in the town of Aizu Wakamatsu, Shijimi found himself in the port of Yokohama, where the dejected man subsequently eked out a living as a translator for foreign merchants. One evening, Shijimi saved a young woman from local gangsters; this woman was a live-in nanny at the Schnells. At first, Shijimi could not recognize her, but he soon realized it was Okei when he was invited to visit the Schnell residence. The young woman confided to him that she was about to leave for California with the other emigrants. On the following day, despite their wishes to stay together, the two reluctantly parted: Okei to America, and Shimeji to Tokyo. While Okei tragically died a few years later across the Pacific, Shijimi resumed his studies and in 1873 devoted himself to organizing the Meirokusha, Japan's first society of Westernized scholars, including Fukuzawa, which disseminated Enlightenment ideas in the nascent modern nation-state. As the editor of *Meiroku Zasshi*, the society's organ, Shijimi spearheaded the creation of a forum for free and civilized public discussions—an institution that had not existed in the feudal era. The novel concluded with Fukuzawa commenting that whereas the sword that Shijimi carried into the Aizu battle had left no mark on history, his pen was affecting the world more greatly than was the Meiji government (Kimura 1935, 346–47).

Key ideological messages, as far as "imperialism" was concerned, can be found in a conversation between Shijimi and Okei in Yokohama. First, Kimura tacitly affirmed Japan's current policy in Manchuria through the words of the female Japanese trailblazer in America. In the novel, Shijimi marveled when Okei told him that she was on her way to the United States to "establish a Japanese village" on its frontier. "This young woman is heading for America!" he muttered, for "even I, a student of western studies, have never dared to think of such a thing" (Kimura 1935, 213). He, however, cautioned Okei about the seemingly unrealistic nature of her undertaking, pointing out that no remnants of Japanese settlements were now detectable in Southeast Asia, where many emigrants were said to have moved before the seclusion policy of the Tokugawa regime. Okei's reply flabbergasted Shijimi: "That's because our ancestors did not take hoes with them." Some, according to her, "took swords and conquered foreign places," and others "took abacuses in pursuit of profits only" (Kimura 1935, 220–23). Okei continued,

> No way could they sink roots by such means. With hoes, they should have cultivated the land, developed rice fields, and grown vegetables—in other words—they should have engaged in agriculture. Then, I think the Japanese villages in Southeast Asia could have remained prosperous even today.... And farming takes more than male labor. Perhaps, warfare and commerce would only need men, but farming requires women to raise families. A Japanese settlement would thrive only if men farm

> to sink roots in the land and women produce descendants for them. (Kimura 1935, 223–24)

In light of Japan's Manchurian policy that was under way at the time Kimura authored this treatise, Okei's idea of family-based agricultural colonization was full of ramifications. From the example of Okei, readers were led to believe that the expansion of modern Japan had since the very beginning taken the current form sanctioned by the militarist government. Fukuzawa's dismissal of the "sword" as an agent of change also bears a close parallel to Okei's preferences for a "hoe" over a sword as a means for overseas development. Through this agrarianist focus, Kimura's narrative implicitly likened peaceful expansionism in America, exemplified by the first Wakamatsu colony, to the state-sponsored colonialist enterprise in Manchuria of the 1930s. The theme of the Issei's agricultural success, which occupied a central place in their ethnic history, corroborated neatly with this process, shaping and reinforcing a popular belief in the inseparable ties between land and race, between farming and national expansion.[7] Previously, as historian Louis Young argues, "almost no one considered Japanese agricultural migration an indispensable pillar of empire" (1998a, 310).[8] Yet the appropriation and distortion of the Japanese immigrant legend enabled Kimura and other ideologues to invent an agrarian tradition in Japanese imperialism and to assert the authenticity of the family farm settlement over other ways of colonization on the grounds of the Issei experience in America.

By linking the American agricultural development of yesteryear to the Manchurian colonial enterprise of today, Okei's inclination toward domesticity played an especially important role. Before Tokyo adopted the 1936 guidelines for Manchurian colonization, Japan mainly shipped men of reserve military status as armed emigrant-settlers due to the general disorder of newly occupied territories. Still, in order to encourage family-based colonization, government and military authorities tackled the question of coupling these men with so-called continental brides (*tairiku no hanayome*). After the departure of the first thirty such women for Manchuria in 1934, a steady stream of emigrant wives ensued to "raise families" and "produce descendants" in Japanese agricultural settlements there. Imperial colonialism of the 1930s valorized the role of women precisely for the reasons Kimura outlined in terms of Okei's gendered utterances. In tandem with his novel, indeed, various outlets of the mass media—news reports,

[7] According to many Issei who visited Japan in the 1930s, people tended to assume that they were connected to agriculture simply because they lived in America. One immigrant writer who was interviewed by a Tokyo newspaper noted his embarrassment when he subsequently found that it identified him as an "agricultural tycoon" from California. Though he protested the error, the newspaperman told him that no one would read the article unless it was about a successful Issei farmer. That stereotype was most likely a by-product of the Issei's own history making (see Yusa 1940, 522).

[8] On the agricultural aspect of Manchurian colonization and the ideologizing of its importance, see also Sandra Wilson (1995) and Young (1998b).

fictions, movies, and popular songs—glorified "continental brides" in a similar manner during the latter half of the decade (Aiba et al. 1996; Jin'no 1992). Together, they shaped a public opinion that normalized female emigration despite the contrary historical realities of masculinized working-class Japanese diasporas in the past.

While effacing the gender bias in emigration history, *Building Meiji* underscored the patriotic nature of Okei's emigration-led colonization, and hence of all Issei trailblazers and Manchurian emigrants as her followers. In the novel, Kimura emphasized Shijimi's dedication to Meiji Japan time and time again, and the young nationalist's approval of Okei testified to how much her dream of building a new Japan in America was to be revered as an act of patriotism as well. And that neither protagonist attempted to abort the colonialist endeavor for their romantic interests and personal happiness made clear what should be a priority to citizen-subjects of the expanding empire.[9] Along the same line, the title of the novel inflated the meanings of emigration to America in the past and of that to Manchuria in the present. Whereas Shijimi helped to establish the modern press and a space for public discourse in the new civil society of Meiji, Okei laid the foundation for overseas Japanese development. They were both "builders" of modern Japan, but in the context of ongoing Manchurian colonization, Okei's deed was more relevant—and hence more important—to the contemporary agenda of the empire than Shijimi's contribution to the early stage of domestic modernization.

These messages underwent another ideological transformation with the production of a popular movie based on Kimura's novel in July 1940. A major presentation of the Tōhō Cinema featuring top celebrities of the time, *The Flower in the Storm* (*Arashi ni saku hana*) made notable changes to the identities of Okei and Shijimi. In the film, the former was of a prominent Aizu agriculturalist-samurai family, not of more humble origin, as commonly assumed. In the place of her aging father and soldier brother, Okei guided agitated peasant-servants for the defense of her family farms—and agriculture that she called "the foundation of nation"—from the devastation of the war. After her family members were killed and her servants dispersed, Okei and Shijimi encountered one another and parted in the same way that Kimura's novel described, but one notable difference in the film was that the dejected man subsequently participated in a gang of smugglers in Yokohama. Instead of a mere nanny, the movie made Okei a central figure in the Wakamatsu colony expedition, who was instrumental in reassembling her former servants and steering those hesitant peasant-emigrants toward the cause of overseas agricultural colonization. Right before her departure for America, Okei and Shijimi met again, and the former

[9]The movie advertisements (*Shūkan Asahi*, June 30, 1940, 26; *Kinema Junpō*, June 21, 1940, July 1, 1940) emphasized the fateful struggle of their "love" and "ideals" in this "elegy that unfolded behind the opening of Meiji Japan."

persuaded the latter out of the criminal organization, urging him to "dedicate [himself] to the country." As Okei and her fellow agricultural colonizers sailed off at the crack of dawn in search of a new Japan across the Pacific, so Shijimi embarked on a new life as a determined nationalist for modern Japan, a country that had just awakened to the limitless possibilities of progress and expansion. Amid images of beaming morning light and overflowing hopes, the film ended with no suggestion of Okei's early death or of her colony's swift demise. Rather, only a bright future appeared to await both protagonists, whose lives appeared to be—albeit "separated tragically by fate"—still connected by and entangled in a larger destiny of the expansive nation.

Considering that most ordinary Japanese were unfamiliar with Issei history other than having a vague notion of their agricultural successes, the 1940 film resulted in more profound inventions than simple manipulations of the characters. First, *The Flower in the Storm* dehistoricized the experience of the Japanese in America by melting it right into the ongoing enterprise of Manchurian colonization. Although they both defined Okei as the origin of Japanese America, neither Iriye's academic narrative nor Kimura's fictive account denied a temporal distance between the Wakamatsu colonization and the mainstay of Japanese experience in the United States, because readers would know that Okei had died and her colony had gone under decades before the emigration of the current Issei residents. The film did away with that distance by not showing the aftermath of Okei's departure. Without the insertion of her death and her colony's failure, the film immortalized Okei and the Wakamatsu colony, and through the absence of vital historical information it hinted at a direct causal linkage between her and Japanese development in the United States and other new Japans, including "Manchukuo." In *The Flower in the Storm*, the past was not simply a historical crystal ball for a different present; in it, what was unfolding in Manchuria directly mirrored what had happened in America.

Similarly, the film's representations of Okei flattened the class diversity of overseas Japanese in service of the state's colonialist project. Between Japan's colonial territories and foreign emigrant settlements, the populations actually ranged widely from family farmers to itinerant field hands, from affluent traders to indentured prostitutes, and from colonial masters to racial minorities. Eliding these distinctions between the settler-colonizer and the labor-migrant, *The Flower in the Storm* purged heterodox historical facts and presences in conformity with the essentialized imagery of overseas residents. Consequently, Japanese agriculturalists on the American frontier, whom Okei epitomized in the film, resembled colonial fighters and continental brides on Japan's Manchurian lifeline. The nationwide showing of the Okei film therefore marked an important moment, in which significant aspects of Issei history making overlapped orthodox renditions of national expansion, approved under a policy of state thought control. Although *The Flower in the Storm* did not offer as systematic a narrative as Iriye's academic history did, Okei's dramatized story probably did more

to organize popular knowledge around her dual identity as the thresholds of Japanese America and of Manchurian colonization—knowledge that helped the masses to grasp the current imperative of Japanese imperialism relative to the Issei past, and vice versa.[10]

1940 Tokyo Conference of Overseas Japanese

In the history of Japanese imperial expansion, 1940 was a crucial year in another way. Extolling the exploits of all Issei, as Okei in the film, the 1940 Tokyo Conference of Overseas Japanese (*Kaigai Dōhō Tokyo Taikai*) was a total ideological project that fused Iriye's scholarly construction and Kimura's popular inculcation into an unprecedented national pageantry. Jointly sponsored by the Japanese Ministries of Foreign and Colonial Affairs, this conference placed the subject of overseas development at the center of a historic yearlong commemoration that celebrated the nation's beginning in 640 BCE and the 2,600th anniversary of the mythical first emperor Jinmu's accession to the throne.[11] Preceding the grand finale that featured Emperor Hirohito, the Conference of Overseas Japanese took place between November 4 and November 8, and attempted to assemble all segments of Japanese society—elites and commoners, domestic and overseas—in the glamorization of Japan's expansionist past, present, and future.

Apparently inspired by Hitler's rallying of worldwide *Volksdeutschen*, the Japanese government rested the basis of this national mobilization on the ties of blood among overseas ethnic comrades (*kaigai dōhō*) that cut across differences in class, gender, ideological, geographic, and even citizenship backgrounds.[12] Earlier that year, the Konoe Fumimaro administration had

[10]Insofar as Kimura's fiction, and the motion picture based on it, targeted a popular audience who would not read Iriye's academic history, the co-optation of Okei in those media had particular influence over the consciousness of the masses. The novel came out of Kaizōsha, one of the major publishing houses in prewar Japan, as a part of the "Restoration Epic Novel Series." Because Okei's story was juxtaposed with eleven well-known sagas of the Meiji Restoration in the series, Kimura's presentation of Okei would likely have looked factual. Indeed, the fifty-five-page appendix in *Constructing Meiji* contained clippings of historical newspaper articles and a report of the author's visit to the remains of the Wakamatsu Colony in 1931, which enhanced that impression. The film version furthered this confusion of fact and fiction with even more fabrications, ones that were no longer recognizable as such.

[11]The Japanese government spent five years on the preparation of this yearlong commemoration. There were many national, prefectural, and municipal gatherings and celebrations, as well as exhibitions, book projects, and sports events, including an "East Asian athletic games." The 1940 Olympics and an international exposition were also scheduled to take place in Tokyo in conjunction with the celebration, although the war in Europe resulted in their cancellations. For details of the 2,600th anniversary events, see Naikaku Jōhōbu (1942).

[12]Since the mid-1930s, Nazi Germany had been active in mobilizing *Auslandsdeutschen* according to Hitler's ideology of pan-Germanism. In addition to the Deutsches Ausland-Institut and other similar entities that had existed since before the Third Reich, Hitler set up the Auslands

announced a set of guidelines to consolidate resources—human and material—for ongoing war efforts in China. The core doctrine of this totalitarian reform was predicated on *hakkō ichiu* (unifying every corner of the world under one roof), Jimmu's purported motto in founding the nation, which now connoted the creation of a supraregional "New Order" in Asia and the Pacific under Japanese leadership. This agenda became the ideological underpinning of imperial colonialism of the early 1940s, which found Iriye Toraji's synthesis, and the Issei's past in particular, useful in building a larger empire based on a network of overseas settlements. The Tokyo conference was therefore an official attempt to enlist the history of emigration, as well as emigrants themselves, in service of Japanese imperialism. An internal government document, which detailed the unpublicized but central goals of the 1940 event, prioritized "uniting and solidifying the bonds between the homeland and the organizations of overseas Japanese" for the general purposes of *hakkō ichiu* ("Jōshinsho" 1940, 498–500, esp. 499).[13] The mass rally resulted in the formation of the Central

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Organization and the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle (VoMi) to control the affairs of Germandom abroad. American intelligence "believed" that Nazi Germany's programs had offered Tokyo a model when it embarked on the policy of national mobilization under the banner of *hakkō ichiu*. In September 1940, Heinrich Stahmer, Hitler's emissary to Japan on a mission to finalize negotiations for the Axis military alliance, purportedly "suggested to the Japanese Government the establishment of [an] overseas Japanese central society" (Tillman 1940, 4) in conjunction with the November conference. Although no collaborating evidence is yet located in the Japanese archives, it is feasible that Stahmer actually convinced Foreign Minister Matsuoka, a former Issei, of the usefulness of "overseas ethnic comrades" to the cause of national mobilization, as the German diplomat had been previously involved heavily in the operation of the VoMi, a wing of the SS. Later, just as Germany had promoted the resettlement of American *Volksdeutschen* in occupied Poland under the auspices of the Kameradschaft USA, Japan contemplated the "relocation" of overseas Japanese to newly occupied territories (see Hayashi 2004, 122–23; Smith 1965, 2–25, 117–51; Tillman 1940, 4).

[13]Initially, there was not an orchestrated effort on the part of the Japanese government to absorb overseas residents into the new political structure of the empire. In February 1940, the Overseas Japanese Newspapers Association, which included former emigrant journalists and newspapermen connected to Japanese settlements abroad, initiated a project to assemble emigrants in Tokyo for a rally. While the organization enlisted support from social and political leaders for the plan by March, the Colonial and Foreign ministries separately began to plan a meeting of leading overseas residents, because the officials felt it worthwhile to "exchange viewpoints and have the emigrant leaders understand the [new] reality of the homeland" (Arita 1940). As the foreign minister noted in an internal memo, their conference was to be completely different from the one planned by the newspapermen, since the ministry only intended to invite a total of twenty-seven representatives from the Americas and Nan'yō. In short, the initial official plan was to hold a discussion session of selected elite from outside Asia with no element of pageantry. Meanwhile, in late April, Konoe Fumimaro agreed to served as the head of the special committee organized by the newspapermen, who adopted his doctrine of *hakkō ichiu* as the basic guideline for their rally. As Konoe captured political power in the next few months, government officials decided to merge their planned meeting into the other, making it a national event of unprecedented scale and a project of expansionist orthodoxy making (on this development, see Arita 1940; Naikaku Jōhōbu 1942, 1:202).

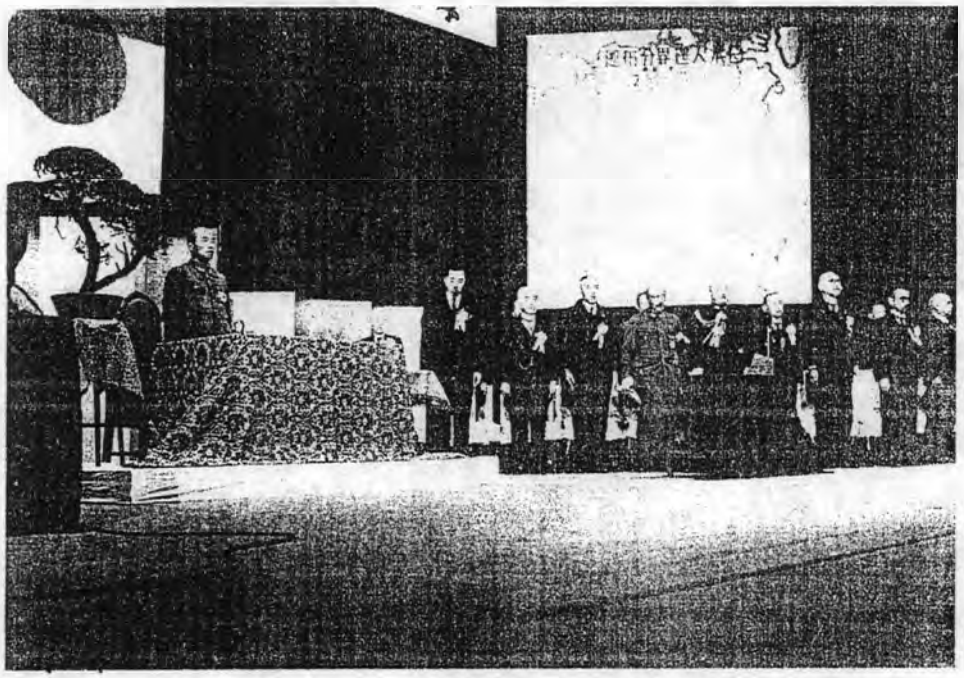


Figure 1. Opening ceremony of the Conference of Overseas Japanese, November 1940. With Prince Higashikuni (behind the center podium) as the official convener, this conference featured virtually all top government officials of the time in honor of overseas ethnic comrades—emigrants and colonialists alike. On the stage, Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro stands closest to Higashikuni; Army Minister General Tōjō Hideki and Foreign Minister Matsuoka Yōsuke in the fourth and the eighth, respectively. From the author's personal collection.

consciousness. Full of suggestive visual representations, the first day of the conference was most significant in its ideological effects. On November 4, a grand celebration march kicked off the five-day program. Accompanied by musical bands and thousands of domestic participants, overseas invitees paraded through central Tokyo between Hibiya Park and the Imperial Palace. Following the Rising Sun flag came the first overseas residents, two elderly Issei from northern California (see figure 3). Conference officials picked them to head the procession because their frail but dignified bodies symbolized the official starting point of Japan's seventy years of external growth that was still progressing under the banner of *hakkō ichiu*. The parade was a concrete expression of that history, which united the disparate paths of emigration and colonization into a monolithic, unilinear trajectory. After the two Issei came the entire Hawaiian delegation, then the continental United States, the Canadians, the Nan'yō, the Latin Americans, and finally the delegates from China and Manchukuo—the order clearly marking the undifferentiated chronology of Japanese emigration history (see figure 4). The end of the parade consisted of some 3,000 domestic high school and college students, who aspired to join the ranks of their overseas

Figure 2. Opening ceremony of the Conference of Overseas Japanese, November 1940. Representatives of the imperial household (center), the government (right side), and overseas settlements (left side) hurrah in union for the past and future success of national expansion. The giant maps show the distribution of Japanese residents in various areas of the empire's "overseas development," including the United States. From the author's personal collection.

compatriots as colonial fighters and continental brides (KDC 1941, 2–3). After the procession reached the Imperial Palace, a metaphor of their return from faraway lands to the heart and soul of the "expansive nation," one of the elder Issei led three cheers of hurrah for the emperor (*Miyako*, November 5, 1940; *Tokyo Nichi Nichi*, November 5, 1940; *Yomiuri*, November 5, 1940). The participants' "enthusiastic banzai" was then met with the prime minister's affirmation of the consolidated expansionist pasts and present. "Your presence here," remarked Konoe, "is a reminder of the history of Japanese colonization [abroad], the opening pages of which have been written in your blood and that of your forerunners" (*Trans-Pacific*, November 7, 1940).

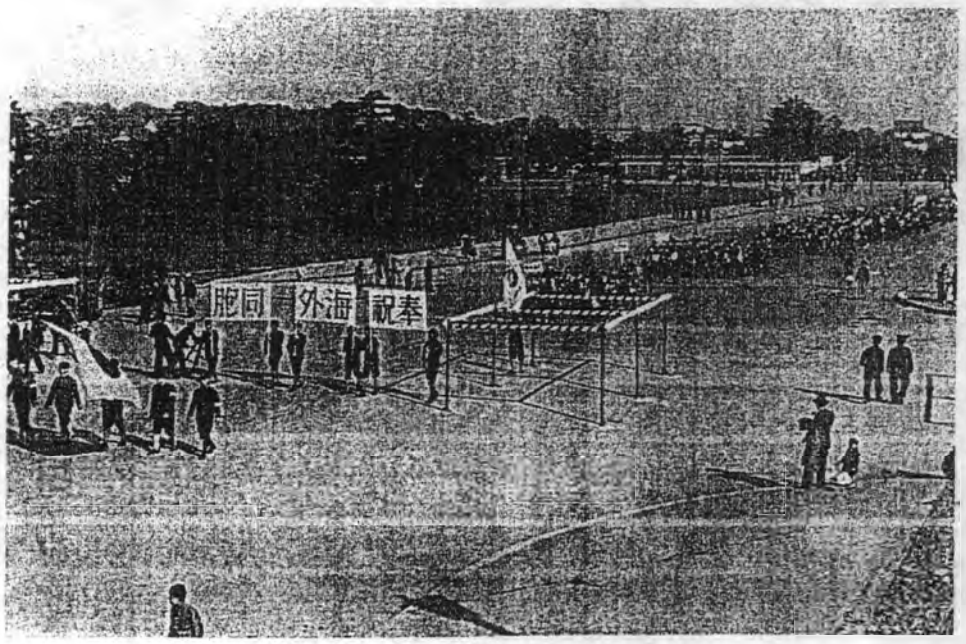
Demonstrating the history that Iriye had crafted in words with actual agents of overseas development, the 1940 commemoration formed a "mnemonic site," which engaged, and enmeshed, both its participants and observers in the emerging state orthodoxy. As historian Takashi Fujitani explains, a mnemonic site refers to "non-verbal official signs and the dominant meanings, customs, and practices associated with them" (1996, 11) that unfold in national ceremonies and rituals. In order for Iriye's expansionist narrative to acquire public consent

五米在）者限年最外在と（歳四八）翁助之坂本塚者長年最の中者加参む道を頭先の進行大
翁郎太岡南の（年六十

Figure 3. The forefront of the grand celebration march and emigration history, 1940. Tsukamoto Matsunosuke, the "oldest" surviving emigrant (eighty four years old) leads the procession, followed by Minami Kunitarō, the emigrant who spent the longest time overseas (fifty-six years in the United States). Both are from northern California. Source: Kaigai Dōhō Chūōkai (1941).

and to turn into a national common sense, such a site was indispensable. Choreographed by the state, the personified representations of the expansionist past and present communicated to the Japanese of every class and every age these official messages: that emigration and colonization were identical and indivisible, and that the Japanese in America were the pantheon of great exemplars—the "fighters of the nation's all-out struggle" for imperial expansion, as General Tōjō noted (KDC 1941, 6).

The Japanese government placed Issei participants at the helm to consolidate these orthodox meanings. At the opening ceremony, an immigrant newspaper publisher from San Francisco responded to the dignitaries' speeches on behalf of those from abroad. He pledged that each and every one of them would begin anew, taking to heart the glory of being an imperial subject, and "advance with the spirit of *hakkō ichiu* in a respective frontline of overseas Japanese development." The closing ceremony on November 8 reinforced the notions of their unequivocal patriotism and their relevancy to the empire. For this event, conference officials brought the two North American pioneers to the center stage again, uniting them with Japan's foremost nationalist-expansionist, Tōyama Mitsuru, who had led the ultra-right Kokuryūkai (Black Dragon/Amur River Society) movement since the turn of the twentieth century. The revered



む進に前城宮進行大祝奉の胞同外海

Figure 4. Procession of overseas residents in front of the Imperial Palace. Source: Kaigai Dōhō Chūōkai (1941).

national hero voluntarily approached the two Issei to shake their hands, an action that moved the audience of nearly 2,000 to a standing ovation. This emotional show was followed by another oath of commitment to the national cause, where a female representative from Hawaii repeated the Issei newspaperman's earlier comments (KDC 1941, 23–26; *Kashū Mainichi*, November 8, 1940; *Nichibei*, November 9, 1940; *Shin Sekai*, November 9, 1940).

In terms of their ideological effects, the second and fourth days were equally significant, albeit by the manner of historicizing rather than dehistoricizing. By adopting Iriye's narrative scheme, the conference established a nuanced gradation of the meaning that each regional group held in view of Japan's present policy mandate. At the discussion sessions on November 5 and 7, officials steered the Issei toward "talking specifically about the several decades of their tribulations," the aftermaths of racial exclusion, and the resultant challenges they faced in the United States. The authorities dissuaded the American participants from taking up current affairs in Asia as subjects of deliberation at their group session; instead, Foreign Ministry officials simply briefed the Issei on "Japan's recent conditions and international politics" (ZHD, October 23, 1940). This focus on a localized past revealed a stark contrast to what transpired in the Nan'yō and East Asian sessions. There, the discussions revolved around future courses of their respective "developments," because both contingents resided on the new frontiers upon which the fate and progress of the Japanese

empire depended. While the Nan'yō group exchanged thoughts and opinions that "might serve as a compass for Japan's policy of southward expansion," the delegates from Manchuria confidently declared "the centrality in the coming era of their status among overseas compatriots" (KDC 1941, 17–18; Takumushō and Gaimushō 1940, 36–37).

At the evening public lecture on November 5, this temporally organized order of priorities was still manifest. Unlike others, Issei speakers dwelled on highlights of their yesteryear. For example, American intelligence reported that a farmer from San Diego described the Japanese in America as "the winners of the [racial] struggle" who had

> pioneered...for the past seventy years withstanding racial discrimination and economic pressure with perseverance and...founded unshakable foundation of what it is today.... Thus the fact that our great Japanese race achieved great over-sea expansion could be attributed to the gift of the men of our race at the first line of development and due to our pioneers' great efforts. But it is also due to the spirit of the universal brotherhood[,] which is, I firmly believe, the foundation of our national glory at the same time, that is, the outward manifestation of great hope and ideal of our first Emperor, Jimmu. I...as one working in foreign soil, realize what new east Asiatic sphere means to us. (Gilliam 1942, 6–7)

As Tokyo officials envisioned, the Issei's anecdotes were meant to serve as a source of inspiration for the expansive nation; yet the unambiguous reminder was also that the Japanese in America were not in the position to actively partake in the current phase of empire building in East Asia.

Fundamentally, the 1940 conference entailed a project of what Michel Foucault describes as "total history," which drew "all [past] phenomena around a single center," mainly that of the Manchurian colonization enterprise. With the help of the state's ideological apparatuses, this total history not only disavowed discontinuities and ruptures among Japanese experiences abroad but also denied the audience disparate interpretations of overseas "development." The principles of continuity and unity shaped the grammar of popular historical consciousness relative to the question of national expansion, which subsequently determined the possibilities of knowing for a domestic public (Foucault 1972, 9–10; 1980, 168). The manner and circumstances in which Issei participants performed their parts deterred contemporary observers from appreciating their real standing as a persecuted minority in white America. And perhaps, more critically, the pageant made it impossible for the Japanese public to delve into the Issei's reasons for history making, as they looked perfectly congruent in their beliefs with those of Japanese officials, who simple-mindedly glorified "the superior quality of the Japanese as a race" without regard to their social standing in the

United States, as well as the real meaning of their development there (*Trans-Pacific*, November 7, 1940).[14]

For the most part, many Japanese in America were willing accomplices, taking sincere jubilance in the formal acknowledgment of their historical role and the homeland's acceptance of U.S. residents as its worthy members. As auspicious as it was, however, that official recognition accounted for only a partial fulfillment of the Issei's goal. Having lived in the interstices of both countries, they wished to reconcile their in-betweenness by claiming an integral place in each nation and history, simultaneously. Thus, while vouching for their Japanese patriotism, Issei writers and leaders always stressed how much they had contributed to American society in what historian Gary Gerstle calls "the political language of Americanism" (2002, 8–13). And in order to convince white America to admit them as equals despite their Oriental ancestry, Issei opted to emphasize their outstanding racial character through the example of imperial Japan's rise as a world power. This politics of dualism, which set apart Issei from their compatriots at home, turned out to be no match for a totalizing imperial nationalism and its insistence on a monolithic Japanese identity. The compromised designation of the Issei as "soldiers of *hakkō ichiu*" at the expense of their other, American identity revealed the fundamental vulnerability of their diasporic imagination to the nationalist binarism that disallowed cosmopolitan ambiguities and ambivalence. But it was also true that without such eclectic emigrant transnationalism, Japan would have found it much harder to co-opt the experience of American residents, and all the convenient ideas it offered.

Indeed, the Japanese press made certain that the dedication of overseas patriots was transparent, undiluted, and most importantly, singular. Newspapers throughout the nation meticulously reproduced the doings of rapturous Issei and other participants at the conference, embellishing the reports with tales of their struggles and other historical facts appropriate solely for the agendas of imperial Japan. Their stories were accompanied by exaggerated headlines such as "Overflowing Patriotism!" and "The Spirit of National Foundation Kept Alive in a Distant Foreign Land" (*Hōchi*, November 5, 1940; *Tokyo Nichi Nichi*, November 5, 1940). Other, more theatrical expressions included "The Spectacular Procession of Overseas Compatriots with Tears in Their Eyes," or "Watering Eyes under the [Rising Sun] Flag" (*Yomiuri*, November 5, 1940; *Miyako*, November 5, 1940). Tokyoites who witnessed the parade, according to the press, held the marchers in high esteem (see figure 5). Along both sides of the route were layers of

[14]This is not to say that common people suddenly forgot what were now deemed heterodox ideas about overseas Japanese, especially those in America. Anti-*imin* biases remained quite strong, where Issei were despised categorically as low class *dekasegi* workers. Still, orthodoxy appeared to have taken root in Japanese society in 1940, if only temporarily, because many Issei participants fondly recalled a dramatic shift in Japanese attitude from derision to respect after the conference (see *Shin Sekai*, December 7–8, 1940; *Nichibei*, December 15, 1940; *Kaigai no Nippon*, February 1941, 29.

す表を窓数に者加参でし立起に前省務拓は相拓田秋時のこ・過通を前省務拓は並行祝奉
（相拓田秋（高段一央中）

Figure 5. American Issei marching in the midst of a cheering crowd. Standing at the solute before the banner is Colonial Minister Akita Kiyoshi. Source: Kaigai Dōhō Chūōkai (1941).

cheering crowds, and "from the windows of buildings young office women cried out, waving their hands and handkerchiefs," as if to send off loyal soldiers bound for the war front (KDC 1941, 3). As a reporter of the *Tokyo Nichi-Nichi Shinbum* (November 5, 1940) noted, the two Issei elders at the head of the procession made a particularly strong impression (see figure 3):

> Among the proud participants...are Mr. Tsukamoto [Matsunosuke of San Francisco] who is as thin as a heron and Mr. Minami [Kunitarō of Oakland] who barely walks forward one step a time with the help of an assistant. Wearing morning coats, both men slowly proceed in tears, perhaps recalling the tribulations that they have withstood for half a century [in America] and rejoicing at the honor of taking part in this national celebration. This sight cannot but touch our hearts deeply.

Aided by powerful graphic imagery to "touch [their] hearts," hegemonic renditions of expansionist history encroached on the minds of the Japanese masses, helping to homogenize their way of seeing their overseas compatriots, especially the Issei pioneers from America. As effective as it might have been, however, Tokyo officials knew well that the 1940 conference alone would not suffice to make the people suddenly enthusiastic about a policy of mass

emigration to Manchuria, the ultimate purpose of the event. Whereas the spectacular pageantry moved, exhilarated, and engulfed the audience in a flood of emotion, other means of ideological mobilization took a subdued approach that was repetitive and reinforcing. In the beginning of 1940 and during the conference, the Japanese government generated additional mnemonic sites that packaged Issei history more comprehensively in national history—projects aided by other unofficial endeavors, including the showing of *The Flower in the Storm*.

Organized by the Cabinet Information Bureau, a grandiose exhibition named "Our New Frontiers" was held in January 1940, when the 2,600th anniversary celebration commenced. Although it offered a relatively minor place for the Japanese in America, this exhibition contextualized the Issei record within Japan's history of 2,600 years, thereby making it neatly dovetail with major historical episodes and legendary figures of overseas development through the entire span of the nation's existence. Some of the topical features that purportedly mirrored the Issei experience were the so-called advance of the Yamato state into Korea (200–600 CE), the penetration of Japanese commerce into Southeast Asia (1400–1600), and various displays of Japan's modern colonization endeavors. Utilizing photos, documents, dioramas, and mannequins of emigrants and colonialists, the exhibition attracted over one million visitors, including Prince Chichibu, Hirohito's younger brother (Isetan 1940; Naikaku Jōhōbu 1942, 11:429–59; NMK 1940).

At the conclusion of the 2,600th year festivities, a second exhibition showcased emergent expansionist orthodoxy in tandem with the overseas Japanese conference. At a Nihonbashi department store, the "Grand Exhibition of Overseas Japanese Development" presented "the microcosm of our modern-day national expansion" in order to "cherish the memory of the pioneers with a view to promoting further overseas development" (KDC 1941, 54). Sent directly from abroad, the displayed artifacts consisted of local agricultural specialties; large panorama photos of Japanese farms, businesses, and community activities; materials related to regional pioneers; and published histories. Just as in the grand celebration march, the exhibition placed a particular focus on the achievements of the Japanese in America (see figure 6). At the entrance, for example, one hundred boxes of Sunkist brand products from Issei farm organizations in Los Angeles were laid out to form "an impressive mountain of fragrant oranges and lemons that make the visitors' mouths water" (KDC 1940; 1941, 54–71; Naikaku Jōhōbu 1942, 12:204, 211) (see figure 7). A large farm tractor with a life-size mannequin of an Issei agriculturalist sat in the hallway to the North American section, which arrested visitor attention with the central theme on a large sign board: "It was the Japanese who have built the foundation of development and prosperity on the [U.S.] Pacific Coast!" (KDC 1940) (see figure 8). While singing the praise of colonial success and racial superiority through a variety of artifacts, the exhibition also highlighted the undiluted

Figure 6. Exhibit of Issei achievements in agriculture. This exhibit juxtaposes an untamed American frontier of the pre-Japanese immigrant era with photographic images of prosperous Issei agriculture, including large-scale rice farming that the Japanese had purportedly introduced into California. Source: Kaigai Dōhō Chūōkai (1941).

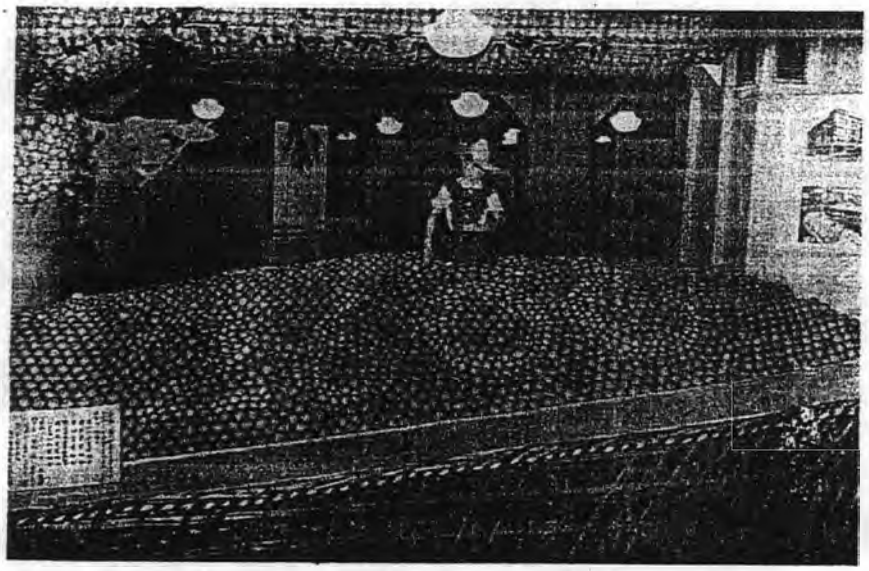


Figure 7. "A Mountain of Sunkist Oranges and Lemons." The description reads, "Donated by Japanese agricultural associations in America, the savory aroma of abundant Sunkist oranges and lemons makes the visitors' mouths water. After the exhibition the fruits are presented to wounded and sick soldiers." Source: Kaigai Dōhō Chūōkai (1941).

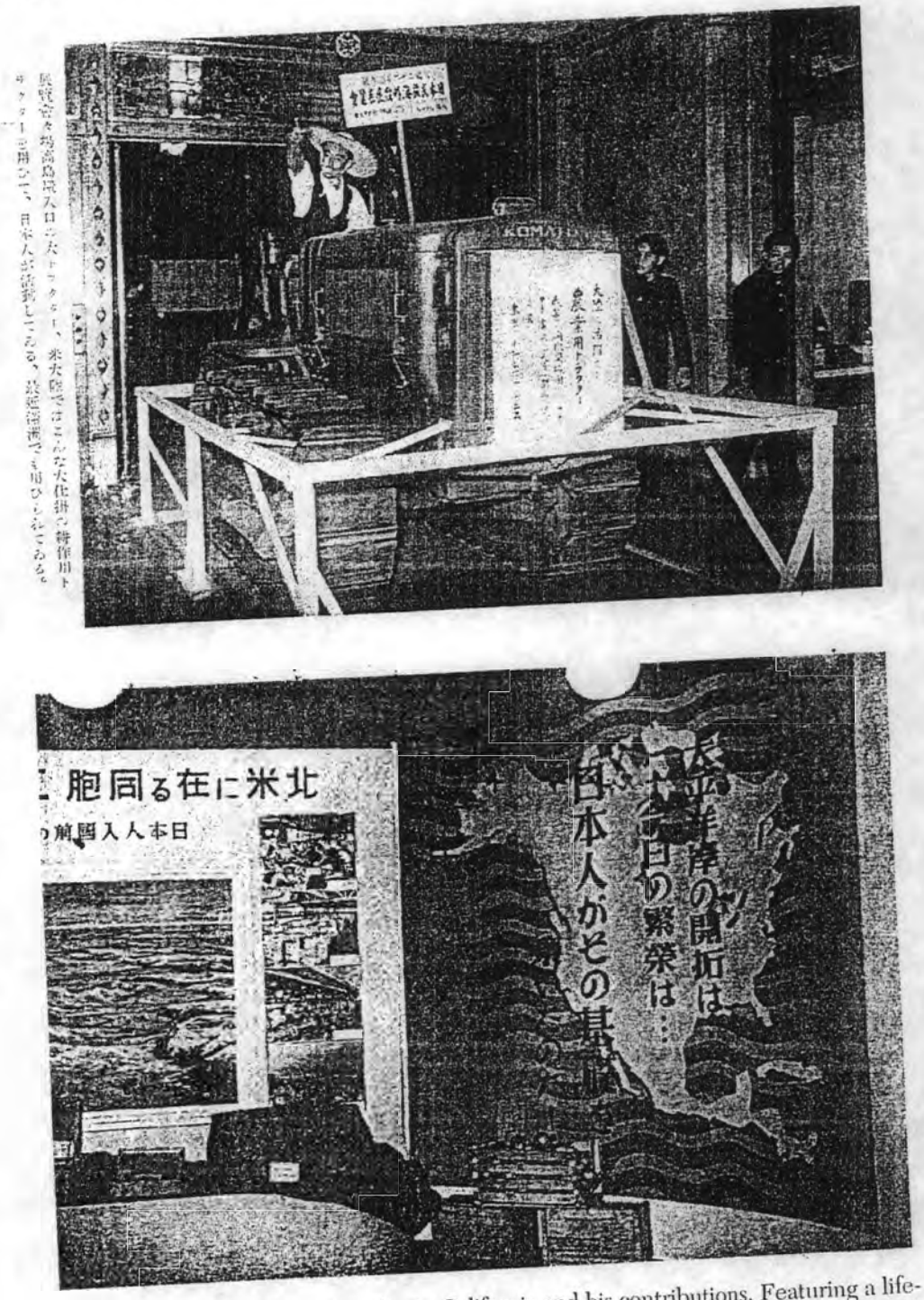


Figure 8. Japanese agriculturalist in California and his contributions. Featuring a life-size mannequin of an Issei man on a farm tractor, this display illuminates an "advanced" and "modern" characteristic of Japanese farming in California, a model for agricultural emigrants to Manchuria. A wall display in the back has an image of North America with the bold-letter inscription quoted in the main text. Source: Kaigai Dōhō Chūōkai (1941).

patriotism of overseas Japanese through a display of thousands of their *imon bukuro*, or care packages for imperial soldiers (see figure 9). These symbols were conspicuously placed at the main show windows along a trolley route and throughout the exhibit halls inside the department store (KDC 1941, 54–59, 74–76). More than 690,000 people visited this mnemonic site during the first two weeks of November 1940.

Other means of the total ideological project included the fixing of the meanings engendered by the state-sponsored pageantry and exhibitions. In an effort to elevate the social status of emigrants and promote the popular appreciation of emigrating in line with emergent orthodoxy, the government decorated 628 overseas residents, including 91 leading Japanese from North America, with a commemorative sake cup and a letter of commendation signed by the foreign minister. On November 10, the climax of the yearlong national commemoration, five leading Issei men were conferred the Sixth Order of the Sacred Treasure and the Medal of Honor with Green Ribbon, as were five other emigrants from elsewhere. Just like distinguished scholars, meritorious statesmen, devoted bureaucrats, and self-sacrificing military men, the Issei gained officially sanctioned "distinction," as Pierre Bourdieu (1993,

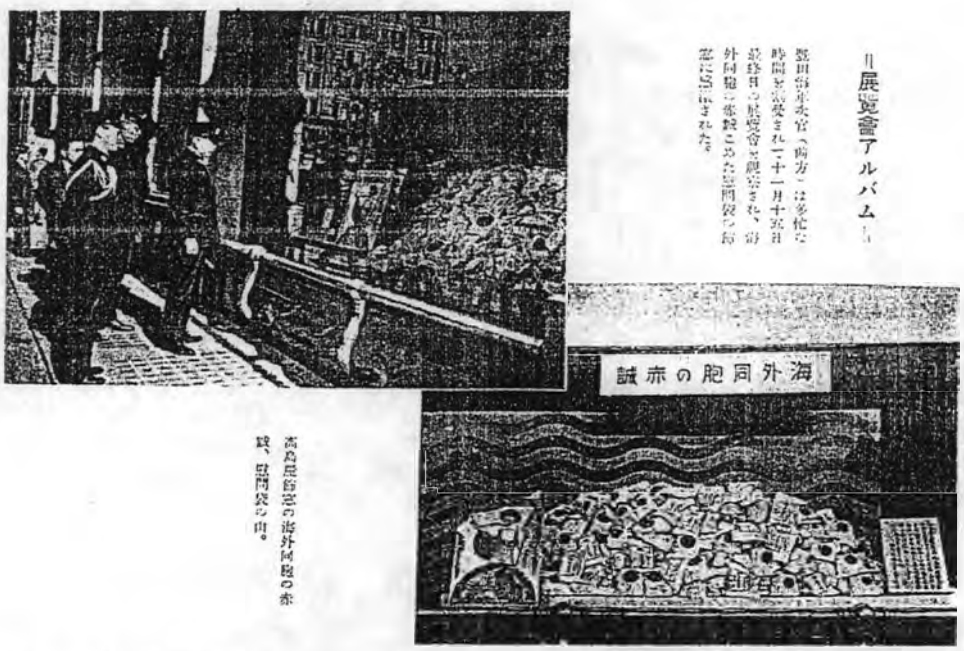


Figure 9. Exhibit of overseas Japanese patriotism: *Imon Bukuro*. These care packages, meant for Japanese solders on the Chinese war front, are displayed as an emblem of overseas Japanese patriotism and a symbol of their indivisible ties to the homeland. The vice minister of the navy, as the description notes, "paid a visit to the exhibition despite his busy schedule on its last day, thoroughly moved by the sincere patriotism of overseas residents." Source: Kaigai Dōhō Chūōkai (1941).

61–67) puts it, to enter into the ranks of national heroes (*Tokyo Nichi Nichi*, November 11, 1940; *Shin Aichi*, November 11, 1940; *Rafu Shimpō*, November 12, 1940; *Nichibei*, November 12, 15, 1940). Yet what the Japanese in America did not realize at this juncture was the price of that recognition, and of their pivotal place in imperialist orthodoxy that the recognition betokened in the distrusting eyes of American authorities. Indeed, after Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, they were to pay that price with confinement in U.S. internment camps as "dangerous enemy aliens."

With a focus on borderless dimensions of Japanese colonialism, this essay was an attempt to write an international history overarching the hitherto compartmentalized historiographies of modern Japan and Japanese America. While being mindful of the political need to defend the distinctiveness of the Japanese American experience from the national history of Japan, the author looked to elucidate their intersections with an eye toward understanding a convoluted process of expansionist orthodoxy formation. Because a rigid dichotomy between ethnic studies and area studies has created many blind spots in our nationalized knowledge, this study demonstrated how a transnational approach could throw light on some of those spots. The more complicated our historical understanding is, the better it reflects the complexities of human experiences that refuse to be contained within a single national history. Crisscrossing the established disciplinary boundaries between Japanese history and Japanese American history is one way of achieving this, and the example of reciprocal history making in the two national spaces offers a good case study.

Three sets of hegemonic discourse partook in the formulation of Japanese expansionist orthodoxy before the Pacific War. In the aftermath of institutionalized racial exclusion, Japanese residents in the United States marshaled ideas selectively from Japan's peaceful expansionism and the American popular discourse of frontier conquest to compile their records of racial development. Interpreting the collective ethnic past in terms of the dominant national ideologies, Issei writers chronicled a trajectory of the binational pioneers in the context of their general quest for recognition as worthy citizen-subjects of both countries. Yet by divorcing the story of immigrant tribulations and triumphs from its constitutive context of American race relations, Japanese intelligentsia, popular culture, and the state concertedly co-opted Issei history in service of the new policies of agricultural colonization in Manchuria and national mobilization after the mid-1930s. The dualistic Issei pioneer thesis simply gave way to a contrived statist discourse on Japanese supremacy, when imperial Japan was about to engage the Anglo-American powers in its all-out race war.

Orthodoxy making entailed the synchronous process of dehistoricizing and historicizing to illuminate key ideological messages. For example, in the film on Okei, the quintessential female Issei pioneer was characterized

simultaneously as the genesis of previous Japanese emigration to the United States and as the epitome of ongoing Manchurian colonization, and at the loci of her timeless dual identities laid Okei's agrarian belief and her unflinching commitment to overseas development. Furthermore, the skewed representations of the pioneer woman served to obfuscate labor dimensions of transpacific emigration at the expense of settler-colonialism à la the state-sponsored Manchurian project of the 1930s. Not only did the resultant narrative muddle the popular understanding of *imin* and *shokumin*, but also it unified diverse—and conflicting—paths of modern Japanese migration into a homogeneous, unilinear progression, upon which intellectuals and the state subsequently constructed a systematic, teleological metanarrative. Here, Japanese immigrant experience as a past looked no different from Japanese colonialism of the 1930s. In other moments of dialectic ideologizing, however, the Issei were simply relegated to the position of the ruptured past to elucidate the current political priority of imperial Japan, that is, national and racial development in northeast Asia, not in the Americas.

Prewar history making had important ramifications for the wartime histories of imperial Japan and Japanese America. The official U.S. rationale for the Issei's incarceration stemmed partially from their fashioning of a dualistic history, which inadvertently benefited Japan's political agendas in Asia. Tragically, just as Japanese officials unhesitantly nationalized the Issei's past without homage to their American identity, so the American authorities failed to look beyond the simplified notion of the resident Japanese as pro-Axis spies and enemy collaborators. When many Issei began to notice the vulnerability of their binational history in the face of clashing state nationalisms in the early months of 1941, it was already too late. The U.S. military and law enforcement agencies were busy translating their published chronicles and jubilant pronouncements at the 1940 Tokyo conference as incriminating evidence of their potential treachery, and as Federal Bureau of Investigation files reveal, major Issei authors and conference participants were blacklisted as the most imminent security risks (Azuma 2003, 1424–25). On Pearl Harbor Day, they were the first to be arrested for indefinite detention.

Meanwhile, for the duration of the war, imperial Japan refused to cut Issei history adrift from the established orthodoxy that was predicated on it. The warring state continued to find the pioneers of overseas development useful for the construction of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. The theme of racial struggle particularly compounded an official interest in Japanese emigrant experience in America during the Pacific War. The mass incarceration was a welcome development to the Japanese authorities, for the racial martyrdom of the Issei (and Nisei) offered additional propaganda material with regard to Anglo-American racism, against which the empire was purportedly fighting. The rhetoric of a race war needed symbolic victims, who were concomitantly superior to their white tormentors, as Tokyo's scheme of history had it that

Japan was destined to win the struggle in the end.[15] The political utility of Japanese residents in the United States remained intact so long as they played the role of patriotic pioneers wronged by white racism.

After 1945, however, the defeat of the Japanese empire quickly buried into oblivion the theory of overseas development and the Issei's pivotal place in expansionist national history that the theory had carved out. As a postwar narrative of their Nisei children as loyal Americans developed in popular and academic discourses of both countries, Japanese emigrants became simply Japanese "Americans," a group of people whom few historians of modern Japan have considered thematically relevant until recently. Symbolically, too, Okei has since become the sole property of Japanese American history, for her grave now stands designated as part of an official California state historic landmark—one that commemorates the beginning of an immigrant success story, or what Nisei leaders proudly call an "American saga" (Van Sant 2000, 129).[16] While rescuing Okei and the Issei from the shackles of such discrete national histories, this study has examined a transnational aspect of Japanese imperialism, which overflowed the formal boundaries of the empire itself.

Acknowledgments

A portion of this study was presented at a Center for Japanese Studies colloquium at the University of Michigan, and the author is grateful to the audience for their valuable feedback. Earlier versions of this article also benefited greatly from useful comments by Frederick Dickinson, Takashi Fujitani, Fred Notehelfer, and John J. Stephan. Emily Anderson provided invaluable editorial support, and so did Deborah Ring, copyeditor at the *Journal of Asian Studies*. Last but not the least, with their perceptive comments and helpful criticisms, *JAS* editors and anonymous readers enabled the author to clarify and sharpen his arguments. All translations—and any errors in them—are mine unless otherwise noted.

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[15]English broadcasts of Radio Tokyo, for example, characterized a "concentration camp for Japanese residents" as a culmination of racist "persecution and humiliation" in the United States. Issei returnees and repatriates from America were recruited as propagandists to give firsthand accounts of the tyranny of white "devils and beasts" before a homeland public and to the world at large (see Foreign Office 1942, 1:215, 213–17; Aoki 1944; Nakazawa 1943; Ebina 1943; Kawamura 1943; Gaimusho Jōhōkyoku 1942, 4:77–81, 108–13).

[16]While most postwar Japanese obliterated Okei from their memory, the city of Aizu Wakamastu reclaimed its native daughter by erecting a replica of her California tombstone in 1957. Yet, hailed as an inspiration for the people of Aizu, Okei was no longer a symbol of "Japanese imperialism," as Kimura had put in 1935. Whereas her American identity continued to be denied as before, she was now simply a "local" hero, not someone tied to a hegemonic national(ist) narrative.

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A Project of the California Cultural and Historical Endowment

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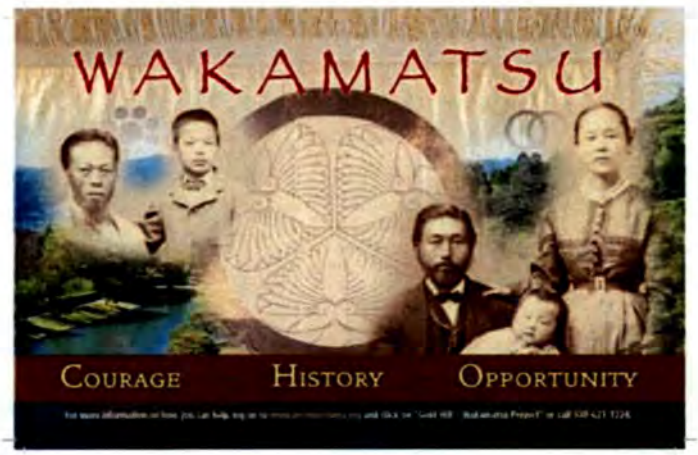
Project Name: Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony Stabilization

Project Summary: Stabilization of the structures on the site of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm colony.



Project Lead: American River Conservancy

Project Contact: Alan Ehrgott
ehrgott@arconservancy.org

Grant Amount: $483,750

Grant Type: Project

Project Address: 941 Cold Springs Road
Placerville, CA 95667

Project Web Address:
http://www.arconservancy.org

Project County: El Dorado

Previous Project | Next Project

Office of Historic Preservation
CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

WAKAMATSU TEA AND SILK FARM COLONY
Historical Landmark

Description:
The agricultural settlement of pioneer Japanese immigrants who arrived at Gold Hill on June 8, 1869-the only tea and silk farm established in California-had a promising outlook but failed tragically in less than two years. This was the initial Japanese-influenced agricultural attempt in California.

Registration Date:
12/19/1966

Location:
City: Gold Hill
County: El Dorado

Directions:
Gold Trails Elementary School, 889 Cold Springs Rd, Gold Hill

Images:

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Title:
Dedication of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony historical landmark plaque.

Creator:
Unknown.

Subject:
Dedication services -- California -- El Dorado County [lcsh]
Gold Hill (El Dorado County, Calif.) [lcna]
Historical markers -- California -- Gold Hill (El Dorado County) [lcna]
Japanese Americans -- California [lcsh]
Reagan, Ronald [lcna]
Chappie, Eugene [aacr2]
Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm [aacr2];

Publisher:
California State University, Sacramento. Library. Dept. of Special Collections and University Archives.

Date:
1969-06-07.

Type:
Photographic print.

Format:
10 x 8 in.
Source type: Photographic print.
Source characteristics: b&w
Source dimensions: 10 x 8 in.
Area scanned: 10.03 x 8.10 in.
Scanning hardware: Epson Expression 1600
Scanning software: Photoshop 6.0
Compression: None
Scanning resolution: 600 dpi
Color space: Grayscale
Color bit: 8 Bit
Image size: 6018 x 4860 pixels
Image file size: 28568 kb.
Image format: Tiff

Identifier:
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ark:/13030/kt3r29q0z8
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Language:
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Imagery Date: 2005
10 S 683970.00 m E 4293091.87 m N elev 1594 ft
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Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California

History

A History of Japanese Americans in California: IMMIGRATION

One of the first groups of settlers that came from Japan to the United States, the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony under the leadership of John Schnell, arrived at Cold Hill, El Dorado County, in June 1869. Additional colonists arrived in the fall of 1869. These first immigrants brought mulberry trees, silk cocoons, tea plants, bamboo roots, and other agricultural products. The U.S. Census of 1870 showed 55 Japanese in the United States; 33 were in California, with 22 living at Gold Hill. Within a few years of the colony's founding, the colonists had dispersed, their agricultural venture a failure.

Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony, El Dorado County

The 1880 Census showed 86 Japanese in California, with a total of 148 in the United States. Possibly these were students, or Japanese who had illegally left their country, since Japanese laborers were not allowed to leave their country until after 1884 when an agreement was signed between the Japanese government and Hawaiian sugar plantations to allow labor immigration. From Hawaii, many Japanese continued on to the United States mainland. In 1890, 2,038 Japanese resided in the United States; of this number, 1,114 lived in California.

Laborers for the Hawaiian sugar plantations were carefully chosen. In 1868, a group of Japanese picked off the streets of Yokohama and shipped to Hawaii had proved to be unsatisfactory. Thereafter, a systematic method of recruiting workers from specific regions in Japan was established. Natives from Hiroshima, Kumamoto, Yamaguchi, and Fukushima were sought for their supposed expertise in agriculture, for their hard work, and for their willingness to travel. Immigrants to California from these prefectures constituted the largest numbers of Japanese in the state.

Except for a temporary suspension of immigration to Hawaii in 1900, the flow of immigration from Japan remained relatively unaffected until 1907-08, when agitation from white supremacist organizations, labor unions, and politicians resulted in the "Gentlemen's Agreement," curtailing further immigration of laborers from Japan. A provision in the Gentlemen's Agreement, however, permitted wives and children of laborers, as well as laborers who had already been in the United States, to continue to enter the country. Until that time, Japanese immigrants had been primarily male. The 1900 Census indicates that only 410 of 24,326 Japanese were female. From 1908 to 1924, Japanese women continued to immigrate to the United States, some as "picture brides."

Japanese Picture Brides at Angel Island, Marin County [circa 1919]

In Japan, arranged marriages were the rule. Go-betweens arranged marriages between compatible males and females, based on careful matching of socio-economic status, personality, and family background. With the advent of photography, an exchange of photographs became a first step in this long process. Entering the bride's name in the groom's family registry legally constituted marriage. Those Japanese males who could afford the cost of traveling to Japan returned there to be married. Others resorted to long-distance, arranged marriages. The same procedure that would have occurred if the groom were in Japan was adhered to, and the bride would immigrate to the United States as the wife of a laborer. Not all issei were married in this manner, but many were. For wives who entered after 1910, the first glimpse of the United States was the Detention Barracks at Angel Island in San Francisco Bay. New immigrants were processed there, and given medical exams. As a result, this was the place where most "picture brides" saw their new husbands for the first time.

Those hoping to rid California of its Japanese population thought the

Gentlemen's Agreement would end Japanese immigration. Instead, the Japanese population of California increased, both through new immigration and through childbirth. Anti-Japanese groups, citing the entry of "picture brides," complained that the Gentlemen's Agreement was being violated. A movement to totally exclude Japanese immigrants eventually succeeded with the Immigration Act of 1924. That legislation completely curtailed immigration from Japan until 1952 when an allotment of 100 im migrants per year was designated. A few refugees entered the country during the mid-1950s, as did Japanese wives of United States servicemen.

The pattern of immigration has left its mark on Japanese communities to this day. While immigrants before 1924 were uniformly young, the delay in immigration of women resulted in many marriages in which the husband was considerably older than the wife. Immigration of women between 1908 and 1924 also meant that the majority of children (nisei) were born within a period of 20 years, 1910-1930. Researchers during World War II noted that rather than a normal curve, the Japanese population in the United States was bi-modal — an age group for the original immigrants and another for their children. This has influenced the ways in which Japanese communities have been organized, e.g., the need every 25 years or so to have facilities and organizations oriented to children, with long periods of time when such facilities were not needed. Consequently, large numbers of nisei would enter the job market at the same time, and they would have children at about the same time. The immigration pattern is also reflected today among issei who are still living. The vast majority are women. Eighty-five percent of the clientele of Kimochi-Kai and other Japanese senior citizen organizations in California's major cities are women.

NEXT> Settlement

History | Links to the Past | National Park Service | Search | Contact

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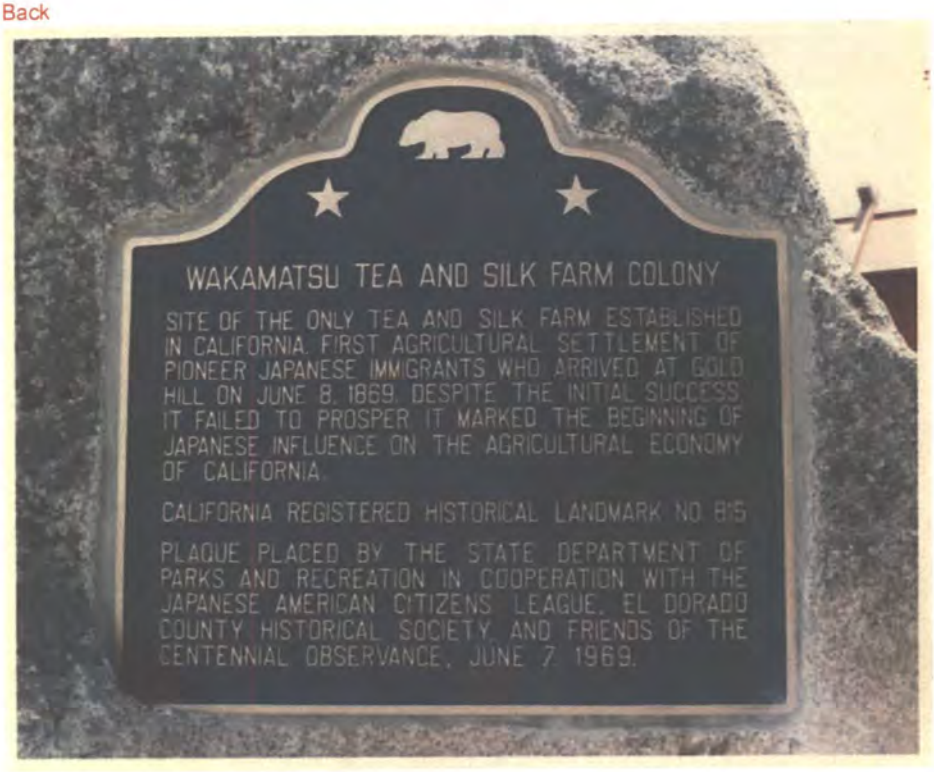
the
bottom seven photograghs is the identity and location of the photographer, "George H. Gilbert, corner of Plaza and Main Sts, Placerville, Cal." They were handed down from my Great Uncle, Joseph William Egbert Veerkamp, to his wife, Mary, to their son, Don Veerkamp, to his wife Dorothy Veerkamp, to my 1st Cousin, Martha Veerkamp De Haas who lent them to me for one day to scan and publish. The hand writing on the envelope containing the pictures is Dorothy Veerkamp's. (bottom of page)

Alan Ehrgott of the American River Conservancy has confirmed by his own research that Mr. Gilbert was doing business in Placerville during the time of the Colonist's presence.

PICTURES ARE LINKED TO LARGER SCANS

Back



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Title:
Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony historical landmark plaque.
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Wakamatsu Project

The California Rice Commission is a proud supporter of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Project.

Driven from Japan as a result of the civil wars of the mid 1800's, a small group of Japanese colonists left Aizu Wakamatsu on an epic journey.

It started with a voyage across the Pacific on a Chinese schooner to San Francisco, continued by steam ship to Sacramento and concluded by wagon to the Motherlode.

Chasing the dream

They arrived in Gold Hill in 1869, just a mile above the historic mill where John Marshall discovered the precious metal just over twenty years earlier. They came with mulberry trees, silk worms, tea, rice and all of the tools necessary to start a new agricultural colony.

They comprised the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony, the first Japanese to colonize North America.

Initial success gave way to disappointment, as struggles for California's other great resource - water – left the colony with out irrigation for their crops. Their crops withered and died and the land the colony had purchased was sold but they held fast to their dream.

Okei's story

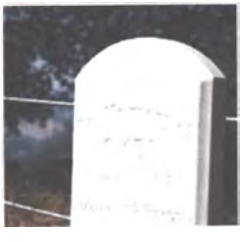
Some of the initial colonists scattered, but several stayed in the area to work on neighboring farms and businesses. Nineteen-year-old Okei Ito stayed in Gold Hill as a nanny for the Veerkamp family, the new owners of the colony site and an adjoining ranch.

The story is told that she would walk to the top of the hill and look toward her native Japan as the evening sun dipped in the West, homesick and lonely in a foreign land.

Tragedy struck not long after and she died of fever. Resting beneath a marble headstone on that same hill, she became the first Japanese citizen to be buried in U.S. soil.

Preservation efforts

A broad group of Japanese American citizens, The American River Conservancy and the California rice industry are working diligently to save this cultural and historic site-which has been called the Japanese Jamestown. Efforts are focused on purchasing the ranch that encompassed the Wakamatsu Colony site. Okei's



"Hidden History on a Gold Country Ranch"

History books are filled with epic journeys and dreams fulfilled. For the members of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony, their unheralded quest to find a better life in California's Gold Country carried no such storybook ending ...

grave and the original farmhouse used by the colonists stand to this day.

You can help preserve this important, unheralded part of California's history. Your contributions will help the effort to acquire the ranch and build an interpretive center, showing future generations the crops and products the colonists dreamed of producing and sharing their courage and determination to make it in a new land.

The California Rice Commission is a proud supporter of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Project.

To date, project supporters have raised $2 million toward the purchase of this historic site, restoration of the farmhouse and development of an interpretive center that will show what the colonists hoped to achieve. You can learn more about the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony online at www.arconservancy.org and click on the Gold Hill Wakamatsu page. Donations can be made at the Web site.

ARTI FACT

Place of Refuge

"IN MEMORY OF OKEI, DIED IN 1871, AGED 18, A JAPANESE GIRL." That is the inscription on the headstone, and exactly a century later this local woman came to pay her respects, photographed by a reporter with the *Sacramento Union*. Okei, said to be the first Japanese person to die on American soil, lived and worked at the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm, established by her countrymen in 1869. Although it lasted only two years, it was one of the oldest Japanese settlements in the United States, recently memorialized in the National Register of Historic Places. **THEY CAME TO SAN FRANCISCO IN THE SPRING OF 1869,** via paddle-wheel steamer, fleeing civil war. They carried mulberry trees for silk production, tea plants, bamboo, and other plant stock. They were brought over by John Henry Schnell, a German soldier-of-fortune who developed a loyalty to an embattled feudal lord, Matsudaira Katamori. The colony was a refuge should Katamori and his followers need to flee. **THE 100-ACRE SETTLEMENT DID WELL AT FIRST,** tended by 22 families who grew tea, silk, and rice and also operated a fishery. It was 40 miles west of Sacramento, in gold-mining country, and the farm was seen as a welcome addition to the local economy, the first to introduce Japanese horticulture to California. At the 1869 state agricultural fair, the growers exhibited silkworm cocoons and tea and oil plants. **IN 1871, A DROUGHT HIT THE COLONY HARD.** Schnell, while outwardly confident in the experiment, knew little about farming or the local climate. As prospects dwindled, he left for Japan to bring help but never returned. The colonists dispersed and the settlement collapsed. **OVER THE YEARS, THE FARM HAS TAKEN ON** the quality of myth, inspiring books, songs, and film, even though little is known about the people who lived there. The American River Conservancy and the Japanese American Citizens League launched a successful campaign to buy the site, whose significance has been compared with that of Jamestown and Plymouth. Aside from the grave of Okei, it includes a farmhouse and barn situated in rolling countryside with streams and wetlands.