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**The Near North and the Far North:
The Nikkei Community in North Queensland, 1885-1946**

Thesis Submitted by

Tianna Killoran B.Ed – B.A (Hons)

James Cook University

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Abstract

During the mid-1880s, following the Meiji Restoration, large numbers of Japanese people began to emigrate throughout the Asia-Pacific region. Both Japanese men and women migrated to places such as Hawai'i, the United States, Brazil, Canada, and Australia in search of economic opportunities. In Australia, especially the northern regions, there were significant groups of Japanese migrants who worked in primary industries and joined the multicultural communities that existed in this northern half of the continent. The existing historiography identifies these migrants as sugar cane labourers or pearl shell workers, or, in the case of women, sex workers. This thesis revises this broad narrative of Japanese migration and finds that, particularly in north Queensland, the history of Nikkei is much more nuanced, colourful, and complex.

With Australia's Federation in 1901 and the subsequent passing of the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*, Australian authorities sought to 'shut out' Asian migrants. The newly federated nation grappled with anxieties about its geographical proximity to Asia while its cultural affiliation remained with Britain. These immigration laws were not entirely successful, however, and many Japanese migrants continued to reside in north Queensland and within the 'great white walls' of Australia. Under the White Australia policy, Japanese migrants continued to work, develop businesses, have families, and form vibrant and interconnected Japanese communities.

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, concerns of local Japanese migrants were often matters with national and international consequence. Indeed, the Japanese consulate in Townsville and the Japanese Association's chapters throughout north Queensland built a strong foundation for conducting Australia-Japan diplomacy and influencing geopolitical relationships.

Using a diverse range of digital tools and archival records, this thesis assembles the history of Nikkei people, families, and their communities, and investigates the roles and relationships of Japanese people within north Queensland between 1885 and 1946. By reading formal government records, newspaper archives, and family history sources 'against the grain', this thesis finds that the links forged between Japanese migrants and the wider north Queensland community were integral to developing the Australia-Japan relationship. Consequently, north Queensland rose to geopolitical and diplomatic significance on the global stage. Around the turn of the twentieth century, Nikkei in north Queensland were a significant group which influenced the social, commercial, cultural, and diplomatic life of north Queensland. After the outbreak of the Pacific War and the subsequent deportation of most Nikkei people from Australia in 1946, this community was fundamentally changed and Australia's historical memory of this community was shattered.

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Abbreviations

ADB	<i>Australian Dictionary of Biography</i>
AWU	Australian Workers' Union
QBDM	Queensland Births, Deaths and Marriages registry
BC	<i>Brisbane Courier</i>
CEDT	Certificate Exempting from Dictation Test
CIB	Commonwealth Investigation Branch
CIS	Commonwealth Investigation Service
CM	<i>Courier Mail</i>
CP	<i>Cairns Post</i>
CSR	Colonial Sugar Refining Company
DM	<i>Daily Mercury</i> (Mackay)
DT	<i>Daily Telegraph</i> (Sydney)
ET	<i>Evening Telegraph</i> (Charters Towers)
JRA	<i>Johnstone River Advocate and Innisfail News</i>
MP	<i>Morning Post</i> (Cairns)
NAA	National Archives of Australia
NH	<i>Northern Herald</i> (Cairns)
NLA	National Library of Australia
NQR	<i>North Queensland Register</i>
NM	<i>Northern Miner</i> (Charters Towers)
NYK	Nippon Yusen Kaisha
POW	Prisoner of War
QSA	Queensland State Archives
RC	Royal Commission

SLQ	State Library of Queensland
SMH	<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i>
TDB	<i>Townsville Daily Bulletin</i>
US	United States
WWF	Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia

Images

Image 1. John Nakashiba and his adopted son Peter Nakashiba in Darwin, 1937.

Image 2. Advertisement for the Nakashiba Bros store in Cairns, 1915.

Image 3. Wahichi Nakashiba, whom Bunsuke and John Nakashiba were accused of harbouring in 1921.

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Image 19. Members of the Yamashita family, with Haruyoshi Yamashita likely the man in centre, on their way to their home on Thursday Island in 1947.

Tables

Table 1. Dictation Test Pass and Fail Rates, 1902-1909.

Table 2. Number of Local Aliens Interned in Australia as of 31 March 1944.

Glossary

Alien	Any person who was born outside the British Empire or its colonies.
Ambassador	Regarded as a higher class of diplomatic representative shared among ‘first class’ nations, an ambassador was a diplomatic representative of one nation often stationed within another nation.
British subject	Any person born within the British Empire, including its colonies.
Consulate	The official residence and office of a consul or consul general.
Consul	A diplomatic representative of one nation, often regarded as a lower class of representative than an ambassador.
Consul-general	An official head of a consulate and is the highest ranking among the consuls at a particular location.
Embassy	The office, function, or role of an ambassador. This can sometimes include the official residence and office of an ambassador.
Internee	A person who is imprisoned or confined, without trial, for political or military reasons often during wartime. An internee is distinct as a civilian during wartime, compared to a prisoner of war.
<i>Issei</i>	A term referring to first-generation Japanese people who migrated to a country outside Japan.
<i>Japonisme</i>	The incorporation of Western perceptions of Japanese art and design styles into Western aesthetics.
<i>Karayuki-san</i>	A term that roughly translates as ‘going to China’, referring to the way women were trafficked from Japan to China and eventually throughout the Asia-Pacific region during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
Legation	A body of diplomatic envoys, or a diplomatic envoy and their staff, on a diplomatic mission to another country.
<i>Nan’yō</i>	A Japanese term referring to the ‘south seas’, often used as a shorthand for Japanese imperial ambitions to their south.

Naturalisation	The process whereby a person renounces all former allegiances to another nation and attains, in principle, the same obligations and rights of a natural-born subject.
<i>Nikkei</i>	A term referring to Japanese migrants and their descendants living outside Japan. This is a broader term that is often preferred to terms such as Japanese-Australian.
<i>Nisei</i>	A term referring to the second generation of ethnically Japanese people born in the new country to one, or two, Japanese-born immigrants. In other words, the children of <i>issei</i> .
Prisoner of War	A person who is a uniformed, badged, or identified member of the military who has been captured, or has surrendered, as an opponent during a war. A prisoner of war is distinct as a combatant, whereas an internee is a civilian.
<i>Sakoku</i>	Japan's period of isolationist foreign policy under the Tokugawa Shogunate in the period from approximately 1633 to 1853.
<i>Sansei</i>	A term referring the children of children born to ethnic Japanese people in a new country of residence. In other words, the third generation or the children of <i>nisei</i> .
<i>Zaibatsu</i>	A Japanese term, translated in English as “financial clique”, this term refers to large business conglomerates that existed in Japan from the Meiji period until the end of the Second World War.

Notes

Australian archival records relating to Japanese migrants often have discrepancies and variations in spelling and naming conventions, including the anglicisation of Japanese names in official records. When speaking about women, these discrepancies are further complicated where women's marital status changed or they used aliases. To minimise further confusion, this thesis refers to Japanese migrants by the most common spelling of their known given name followed by their family name, where relevant. This standardisation is a deliberate choice to retain clarity and consistency when referring to individuals in an Australian context, but notes that the Japanese convention is to place the family name before the given name.

Introduction

Following a string of petty thefts and drunk and disorderly charges throughout the late 1880s, Tamiji Nakagawa — or Tommy Japan, as he was more commonly known — found his luck finally turning around.¹ When a horse named Carbine crossed the finish line first in the 1890 Melbourne Cup, Tommy and ten other Japanese residents of Thursday Island suddenly became a combined £22,500 richer in the Tattersall's sweepstakes.

While many of the other men in Tommy's syndicate used their winnings to pay their respects — donating to local causes and such — and subsequently packed up and returned to Japan, Tommy made only a brief trip to his hometown before returning to Thursday Island. He opened a billiard saloon and a store selling tobacco and liquor and became somewhat of a character around town. For the next few decades, local publications wrote about him as a caricature, noted as the “best known personality of TI” who would “clatter about in his wooden clogs.”² Tommy Japan became an overnight icon of Thursday Island and his win developed into an imagined mythology of the success of Japanese migrants in the pearl shelling industry that took hold in both Australia and Japan. Tommy's name became a byword for the Japanese men who were perceived as fatalistic divers in the Torres Strait:

During the last five years 101 divers have lost their lives through diving at Thursday Island — one of them an Englishman. Tommy Japan remarks, philosophically: “Plenty more Japanese,” and buckles on the gear.³

While the men who shared in Tommy's syndicate returned to Japan with great wealth, it was fabled that “hard on the heels” of these fortunate winners came many thousands of Japanese

¹ “Northern District Court,” *Northern Miner* (Charters Towers) (hereafter *NM*), 25 July 1882, 2;

“Saturday's Police Courts,” *Evening News* (Sydney), 1 October 1888, 3; D. C. S. Sissons, ‘Australian-Japanese Relations: The First Phase 1859-1891’, in *Bridging Australia and Japan: The Writings of David Sissons, Historian and Political Scientist*, ed. Keiko Tamura and Arthur Stockwin, vol. 1 (Canberra, Australia: ANU Press, 2016), 52–54.

² “Tommy Japan: How Nipponese Came to TI,” *Pacific Islands Monthly*, 17 April 1943, 35; “Legal Notices,” *Telegraph* (Sydney), 28 November 1903, 7; “The Rise and Decline of the Thursday Island Press,” *Pacific Islands Monthly*, 1 December 1973, 47-9.

³ “During the Last Five Years,” *Bulletin*, 13 August 1898, 11.

people to Thursday Island, hoping to find similar fortunes as pearl divers.⁴ So great was the success of Tommy Japan and his fellow winners that a Japanese writer, Watanabe, reported that the men could afford to fill their baths with saké rather than water. Watanabe narrated the migration of people from Japan to Australia, describing how, “crying out ‘Me, too’, one after another they would mortgage their houses and their fields and embark. At Shionomisaki, for example, almost the whole village went en masse.”⁵ Year on year from 1890, the number of Japanese migrants arriving to Australia increased and, by 1894, Australian newspapers sounded the alarm, exclaiming “Japanese Influx, Thursday Island” and “Japanese at Thursday Island, a Threatened Invasion.”⁶ The narrative of Tommy Japan became entrenched even among Australian public figures, with Australia’s Director of Military Intelligence, Edmund Piesse, recounting in 1919 that “the good fortune of a part of Japanese pearlery living at Thursday Island, who drew the winning horse in a large sweepstake on the Melbourne Cup, attracted attention in Japan, and Japanese began to come in larger numbers” — but Piesse’s claim was swiftly rebuked by Japanese diplomats.⁷ For decades still, Australian publications recounted Tommy Japan’s story with increasingly sensational language.⁸

The fantastical tale of a Japanese man who found his fortune on Thursday Island and instigated an influx of Japanese men to northern Australia encapsulates much of the storytelling about Japanese migration to Australia. Indeed, this narrative exemplifies how Japanese migrants have been alienated from the central narrative of Australia’s history. Tamiji Nakagawa’s story represents a pairing of the complementary views Australians held of Japan between 1885 and 1946: an Orientalised conception of Japan as a charming nation on the one hand, and fears that this ‘Other’ presence would arrive to Australian shores to claim resources and land of the

⁴ “Tommy Japan: How Nipponese Came to ‘TI,’” *Pacific Islands Monthly*, 17 April 1943, 35.

⁵ Watanabe as translated by and cited in David C. S. Sissons, “The Japanese in the Australian Pearling Industry,” *Queensland Heritage* 3, no. 10 (1979): 14–15.

⁶ “Japanese Influx, Thursday Island,” *Telegraph*, 5 September 1894, 2; “Japanese at Thursday Island, a Threatened Invasion,” *Brisbane Courier* (hereafter *BC*), 5 May 1894, 3; Regina Ganter, *The Pearl-Shellers of Torres Strait: Resource Use, Development and Decline 1860s-1960s* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1994), 106.

⁷ Hanihara and Piesse, File 1, Series 5: Japan, 1918-1923, Box 3, Papers of E.L. Piesse, MS882, NLA (hereafter Piesse Papers).

⁸ See, for example “Under the Whip,” *Bulletin*, 12 April 1939, 32; “Tommy Japan: How Nipponese Came to ‘TI,’” *Pacific Islands Monthly*, 17 April 1943, 35

‘unpeopled’ and ‘unguarded’ north.⁹ The practical reality of Australia’s relationship with Japan, informed by the migrants who came to north Queensland in the period between 1880 and 1946, however, is a little more nuanced, a lot less fantastical, and often much more consequential.

Historical Background to Japanese Migration

While we know little about Tommy Japan and why he came to northern Australia during the early 1880s, he was just one person in a large movement of Japanese people who began to leave Japan after it ‘opened up’ in 1868. That year marked the beginning of the Meiji Restoration, which saw the end of Japan’s reclusive and isolationist period. The Meiji Restoration sought to modernise and industrialise Japan, but, with much of this activity focused on the cities, it came at the expense of those people living in rural agricultural areas. Even before the Meiji Restoration, many of these rural areas which Japanese migrants left were already facing difficulties with crop yields — often mountainous and rocky, the soil did not support agriculture well— along with increasing taxation and civil unrest. The Shimabara Rebellion of 1637-1638 was one of the largest civil conflicts in Japan during the Edo period (1603-1867) that saw the death of thousands and, for those who survived, religious persecution and ongoing oppression. Following the rebellion, the Tokugawa government sought to repopulate the region to increase its productivity, forcibly relocating thousands of people to the Shimabara Peninsula — this strategy did not work, and the region fell into further poverty. Over two hundred years later, the region continued to struggle and these problems were only exacerbated by the Meiji Restoration, particularly as tax reforms contributed to growing inequality among farmers.¹⁰ It therefore became a common, even encouraged practice to send family members abroad after 1868; in the best cases, these family members sent back money to assist the household, and in the worst cases, it meant there was one less mouth to feed.

⁹ Alison Broinowski, *The Yellow Lady: Australian Impressions of Asia* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1992), 5; Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men’s Countries and the Question of Racial Equality* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing, 2008); David Walker, *Anxious Nation: Australia and the Rise of Asia, 1850-1939*, 2nd ed. (Perth: UWA Publishing, 2012), 229; Russell McGregor, *Environment, Race, and Nationhood in Australia: Revisiting the Empty North* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 9–11.

¹⁰ Ann Waswo, ‘The Transformation of Rural Society, 1900–1950’, in *The Cambridge History of Japan: Volume 6: The Twentieth Century*, ed. Peter Duus, vol. 6, The Cambridge History of Japan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 543, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CHOL9780521223577.012>.

These people left Japan in search of economic opportunities throughout the Pacific. Many of the Japanese women who departed Japan were from the western-most points in Japan, including the Amakusa Islands in Kumamoto Prefecture, and the Shimabara Peninsula in Nagasaki Prefecture, while most Japanese men were departees from the Ehime and Wakayama Prefectures.¹¹ In the following decades, the Japanese government sought to manage these systems of migration, with labour agents and shipping companies later becoming involved. Australia was just one destination for the people who left Japan in search of opportunities and among the options, it was not a major one. Australia as a destination has been broadly overlooked in scholarship on Japanese emigration throughout the Pacific during the nineteenth century.¹² In this historiography, north Queensland figured as only a small footnote to the wave of migration out of Japan. This thesis contends, however, that despite becoming home to a relatively small number of Japanese migrants, north Queensland nonetheless played a significant role in the development of Australian-Japanese relations and both nations' place in global politics.

Histories of Japanese migrants in Australia have often been framed by Australia's troubled and complex relationship with Japan and Asia at large. Marred by periods of war, fears of a 'yellow tide', and fears of espionage, Australia's perceptions of Japan have long reflected its own anxieties as the nation periodically rediscovered its Asian geography.¹³ As a result of this anxiety, Australian histories have typically Orientalised and othered Asian migrants rather than acknowledge the connections and relationships they formed within Australia's shores. In many ways, Australia's and Japan's places on the world stage during the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century ran in parallel.¹⁴ At each turn of Australia's development of nationhood,

¹¹ Sachiko Sone, 'The Karayuki-San of Asia, 1868-1938: The Role of Prostitutes Overseas in Japanese Economic and Social Development' (PhD Thesis, Murdoch University, 1990), 13; Regina Ganter, 'The Wakayama Triangle: Japanese Heritage of North Australia', *Journal of Australian Studies* 23, no. 61 (1999): 55, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14443059909387474>.

¹² Often Australia is briefly mentioned among a list of countries that Japanese people migrated to and is discussed in the context of Australia's harsh exclusion of Asian migration. See, for example, Sidney Xu Lu, *The Making of Japanese Settler Colonialism: Malthusianism and Trans-Pacific Migration, 1868–1961* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108687584>. This work on Japanese settler colonialism throughout the Pacific, for example, makes few mentions of Australia.

¹³ Walker, *Anxious Nation*, 1.

¹⁴ Alison Broinowski, 'About Face: Asian Representations of Australia' (PhD Thesis, Canberra, Australian National University, 2001), 99.

Japan played an important role: Australian immigration policy and its subsequent amendments were influenced by Japanese diplomacy; during the First World War (hereafter WWI), Japanese naval vessels escorted Australian troop ships to battles that were seen as marking Australia's maturation as a nation; in the aftermath of the war, Japan's demands for racial equality and territory antagonised and shifted Australia's international relations; and, during the Second World War (hereafter WWII), Australia's fears of an 'Asian invasion' seemed to have materialised with Japanese troops on Australia's 'doorstep'.

Historiography of a Troubled Relationship

Histories of Australia-Japan relations during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century characterise Australia as a nascent nation troubled by its cultural, geographical, and economic relations with Asia. For Australians, Japan was sometimes distinguished from these general views of Asia. When Japan does come to the fore, Australians' historical uneasiness manifests itself in historiography that emphasises war between the two nations rather than periods of peaceful cooperation.¹⁵ David Walker's foundational text *Anxious Nation* explains and recognises the binary within histories of Asian-Australian relations and argues that Australia's British culture has historically caused tension with its Asian geography. Walker argues that whilst "destructive Asia, figured as an irresistible human tide, was a prominent motif in our culture from the late nineteenth century, there was an uneasy awareness of Asia's power to beguile and charm the West into a state of false security."¹⁶ Another key work on Australian perceptions of its Asian

¹⁵ See, for example, N. K. Meaney, *The Search for Security in the Pacific, 1901-14* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1976); N. K. Meaney, *Fears & Phobias: E.L. Piessie and the Problem of Japan, 1909-39* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 1996); Neville Meaney, *Towards a New Vision: Australia and Japan Through 100 Years* (Sydney: Kangaroo Press, 1999); Yuriko Nagata, *Unwanted Aliens: Japanese Internment in Australia* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1996); Pam Oliver, 'Interpreting "Japanese Activities" in Australia, 1888-1945', *Journal of the Australian War Memorial*, 2002; Pam Oliver, *Allies, Enemies and Trading Partners: Records on Australia and the Japanese* (Canberra: National Archives of Australia, 2004); Pam Oliver, *Raids on Australia: 1942 and Japan's Plans for Australia* (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2010); Robin Gerster, *Travels in Atomic Sunshine: Australia and the Occupation of Japan* (Melbourne: Scribe Publications, 2008). Even where some of these histories do not specifically focus on war, the topic under consideration is confined and framed by these periods of war.

¹⁶ Walker, *Anxious Nation*, 229.

neighbours, *The Yellow Lady* by Alison Broinowski, extends Walker's argument about tensions within Australia's views of Japan. Broinowski argues that Australians' particular view of Asia — as either threatening or exotic — was shaped by a sense of national identity and an ongoing debate about whether geography or (British) history would be Australia's defining factor.¹⁷ These conflicting themes have been picked up by other historians who have skilfully teased apart Australia's tendency to both fear and exoticise Japan.¹⁸ Indeed, these two elements often co-existed as a reflection of Australia's own identity as an anxious nation.

In the context of late nineteenth-century imagery of the “enchanted Island”, Walker demonstrates that the perceived fanciful, ritualised, and Orientalised nature of Japan was held in stark contrast with the densely populated China that was envisioned as an unstoppable torrent rushing towards unpopulated Australia. He explains that whilst “China seemed a pent up dam of uncontrolled human energy, Japan appeared a more courtly and ritualised society, a nation more like Britain with its rich history, manicured landscapes and carefully maintained architecture of social controls.”¹⁹ While some historians have articulated how the Japanese nation has been historically lumped together with Asia generally, other historians detail Australia's more nuanced recognition of Japanese people as refined, artistic, and polite, much akin to a ‘Britain in Asia’.²⁰ Broinowski's *The Yellow Lady*, for example, provides analysis of how Britons, and Australians like them, understood Japan's community-conscious and artistic society as analogous to an Oriental Britain. The emergence of *Japonisme*, a European art style, was one product of this admiration for Japanese refinement.²¹ Walker agrees that Britain and Australia had growing taste for Japanese art and fashion, where romantic ideals of an exotic and fanciful culture led to a notion of Japan as a sensual and artistic place of the East.²² Furthering Japan's so-called British-like qualities was the perception of Japanese politeness and refinement. As Walker contends, these perceived

¹⁷ Broinowski, *The Yellow Lady*, 5.

¹⁸ David Walker, ‘Rising Suns’, in *Australia's Asia: From Yellow Peril to Asian Century*, ed. David Walker and Agnieszka Sobocinska (Perth, Western Australia: UWA Publishing, 2012), 73–96; Melissa Miles and Robin Gerster, *Pacific Exposures* (ANU Press, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.22459/PE.2018>.

¹⁹ Walker, *Anxious Nation*, 3. See also, Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003), 50.

²⁰ On the former point, see, for example, Meaney, *Towards a New Vision*, 18; Erika Lee, ‘The “Yellow Peril” and Asian Exclusion in the Americas’, *Pacific Historical Review* 76, no. 4 (2007): 550, <https://doi.org/10.1525/phr.2007.76.4.537>; McGregor, *Environment, Race, and Nationhood*, 9.

²¹ Broinowski, *The Yellow Lady*, 16.

²² Walker, *Anxious Nation*, 59.

qualities were seen to align Japan with the values of the West, particularly in Britain.²³ Certainly, late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century Australian newspapers made a point of Japanese decorum, with returned visitors to Japan highlighting how “the Japanese are the most polite in the world,” and in the same breath emphasising that “the greatest friend of Japan is Great Britain.”²⁴

As a growing naval and global power, the Japanese naval squadron’s many visits to Australia between 1878 and 1917 became a touchstone in Australia-Japan relations.²⁵ These visits have been presented as a source of intrigue, enthusiasm, and celebration. Sachiko Noguchi and Alan Davidson argue that the Japanese naval squadron’s 1881 visit to Melbourne had a cordial reception with social events, and facilitated close friendships amongst Japanese visitors and Australian locals that continued long past the squadron’s departure.²⁶ In particular, they draw attention to a story of Japanese navy men trying to learn the waltz during their visit, and how “with a little trepidation” the women slightly raised their long skirts and the midshipmen went down on their knees to watch their partners’ feet.²⁷ Although a seemingly light-hearted story about Japanese and Australian interactions in the early twentieth century, Noguchi and Davidson use this example to explore the cordial and friendly relationships that developed, despite the potential fear and menace that a Japanese naval visit could have otherwise aroused. Diane Menghetti’s *Sound of Our Summer Seas* documents a similar attitude to the Japanese naval squadron’s visit to Townsville, telling a charming story about students from Central State School singing the Japanese anthem to the squadron at Queen’s Gardens.²⁸ Similarly genial scenes are described by other historians, such as Dorothy Gibson-Wilde and Pam Oliver, and document Australia’s friendly view of the Japanese navy in these earlier years.²⁹

²³ Walker, 66.

²⁴ “Japan and Future,” *BC*, 22 November 1928, 15.

²⁵ So far as can be established, the squadron visited Australia in 1878, 1881, 1902, 1903, 1906, 1907, 1910, 1911, and 1917.

²⁶ Sachiko Noguchi and Alan Davidson, ‘Melbourne Friends of the Mikado’s Navy’, in *Relationships: Japan and Australia, 1870s to 1950s*, ed. Paul Jones and Vera Mackie (Melbourne: The University of Melbourne, 2001), 15; Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 111.

²⁷ Noguchi and Davidson, ‘Melbourne Friends’, 35.

²⁸ Diane Menghetti, *Sound of Our Summer Seas* (Sydney: Macmillan Art, 2004), 22.

²⁹ See, for example Dorothy M. Gibson-Wilde, ‘The Japanese Consulate at Townsville in the 1890s’, *Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland* 16, no. 1 (1996): 27; Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 111.

Historians Walker, Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, and David Sissons make it clear that, alongside other ‘white men’s countries’, Australia was anxious to retain geopolitical power within the West. These historians closely examine Australia’s fear that “a time will come” where an imperial Japan and an ascendant Asia will overcome Australia’s power.³⁰ Australia’s fears heavily influenced their foreign and immigration policies, as well as their defence strategies. These included amendments to the *Immigration Restriction Act* in 1904, the introduction of compulsory military service along with the building of the Royal Australian Navy in 1911, and the establishment of the Pacific Branch Bureau — a fledgling form of the Australian foreign office — that operated between 1921 and 1923.³¹ As Oliver and Henry P. Frei agree, however, Japan was always much more important to Australia than Australia was to Japan.³² Frei’s *Japan’s Southward Advance* provides a detailed investigation into the rational merit of Australia’s suspicion of Japanese expansion, or *nan’yō*, and concludes that Japan had no specific designs on Australia before 1942. It was only in 1942, in the course of WWII, that some Japanese Navy General Staff briefly considered an invasion of Australia to deprive United States’ (US) forces of a military base; this plan was quickly abandoned. Outside of this, Frei argues that Japan had no specific designs on Australia. Frei looks to a much longer history, prior to Japan’s 250 years of seclusion, to identify Japanese imperial ambitions during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a re-emergence of Japanese influence within the Western Pacific. As part of this, Australia figured far beyond the periphery of *nan’yō* and yet, as Frei astutely points out, Australian strategists, writers, and media were haunted for more than half a century by visions of a Japanese invasion.³³ Indeed, Frei narrowly considers territorial expansion and overlooks geopolitical power, but his argument subverts historians’ framing of the Australia-Japan relationship around themes of war and invasion. While these fears were all too real for some Australians, they had little basis in Japan’s plans for Australia.

³⁰ D. C. S. Sissons, *The Immigration Question in Australian Diplomatic Relations with Japan 1875-1919*, Accessed from <https://nla.gov.au/nla.cat-vn767615> (Brisbane, 1971); Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*; Walker, *Anxious Nation*.

³¹ Henry P. Frei, *Japan’s Southward Advance and Australia: From the Sixteenth Century to World War II* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1991), 2; Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 250–51..

³² Pam Oliver, *Empty North: The Japanese Presence and Australian Reactions 1860s to 1942* (Darwin: Charles Darwin University Press, 2006), 6; Frei, *Japan’s Southward Advance*, 3.

³³ Frei, *Japan’s Southward Advance*, 218–19.

Australian Anxieties

The key to understanding the Australia-Japan relationship lies in looking inwards at the development of Australia's view of itself and, importantly, its anxieties. Australia's fears about Asia, and more specifically Japan, are closely tied to its self-styling as a 'white men's country', with Lake and Reynolds providing a global context to Australia's perspective. They argue in *Drawing the Global Colour Line* that such 'self-styling' meant Australians defined themselves by their culture and history, rather than their geography, but that the latter was a driving force in the development of Australian immigration policy. Australia's national identity of 'whiteness' functioned to Other Japan and its nationals within Australia. These histories that examine Australian fears of Asia as the Other are significant in positioning Australia's national identity but risk stereotyping the place of Asian — or Japanese, in this case — migrants and their place in Australia. Importantly, this leaves space to more closely examine the nuanced experiences of Nikkei within Australia's history.

Literature that focuses on Japan as a perceived threat to Australia during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries reveals layers of fear and anxiety that typified Australia's view of a menacing Japan. *Drawing the Global Colour Line* identifies that Australia primarily feared growing Japanese imperialism and the threat it posed to 'white men's countries' and their 'global dominance'. Charles Pearson's *National Life and Character* is widely cited — in key works such as *Anxious Nation*, *Empty North*, and *Drawing the Global Colour Line* — as a text that shaped Australian views of rivalry between East and West. Lake and Reynolds describe how Pearson's perspective as an anxious colonial shaped Australians' realisation of their position as a Western nation situated in an Asian neighbourhood. In response to this realisation, Australians developed a defensively white nationalism that manifested in the White Australia ideology, which was legislatively enshrined in the *Immigration Restriction Act* immediately after Federation in 1901.³⁴ Oliver adds that Pearson's *National Life and Character* was widely accepted and used in immigration policy debates leading up to this Act.³⁵ Walker agrees with this in *Anxious Nation*, stating that "[i]t is doubtful that any book with an Australian inspiration has ever had a greater impact among intellectuals in Britain or the United States than Pearson's."³⁶ Lake and Reynolds add that Pearson shaped the discursive and psychic frameworks of shifting global dynamics,

³⁴ Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, 77–78.

³⁵ Oliver, *Empty North*, 274.

³⁶ Walker, *Anxious Nation*, 2.

constructing the notion of an approaching battle between East and West.³⁷

Historians generally identify the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* as a means by which Australia cemented its white nationalism and identity. Lake and Reynolds contextualise Australia's development of immigration policies and demonstrate that the White Australia policy was about maintaining an intrinsic whiteness of Australian nationhood.³⁸ It would be logical to assume that the White Australia policy would also extend to an exclusion of coloured labourers, such as Japanese labour immigrants, in north Australian industries. However, the pearl shelling industry and its almost total reliance on coloured labour was effectively exempt from the policy. On the surface, the ideals of the White Australia policy were in conflict with the migration exemptions granted to workers in the pearl shelling industry. Historians, however, continue to disagree whether the pearl shelling workers' exemptions upheld or detracted from White Australia's ideals. In 1955 for example, J.P.S. Bach argued that the Australian government viewed the presence of an Asiatic community of northern Australia with great distaste, and as such, this immigration exemption discredited the entire objective of the White Australia policy.³⁹ Lorraine Philipps, on the other hand, was critical during the 1980s of these explanations and contests that Bach's arguments are poorly substantiated. She counters that the exemption was fully in accord with the White Australia policy's objectives and was given on the basis of an acceptance that white labour could never exist in the industry. In Philipps' view, the exemption was utilised to cement the power of white employers.⁴⁰ Regina Ganter's considered take on the situation, however, recognises the economic and diplomatic challenges faced by the government if they were to block non-European people from the pearl shelling industry. In fact, the industry in far northern Australia was frequently beyond the purview of authorities and, importantly, Australia had no jurisdiction in the waters beyond the three-mile limit where most of the luggers operated.⁴¹ It would seem that Australia's exemption for this industry sought to overlook white Australian ideals when it served other commercial or economic values.

³⁷ Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, 92–93.

³⁸ Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*.

³⁹ J. P. S. Bach, *The Pearling Industry of Australia: An Account of Its Social and Economic Development* (Sydney: Department of Commerce and Agriculture, 1955), 127.

⁴⁰ Lorraine Philipps, 'Plenty More Little Brown Man! Pearlshelling and White Australia in Queensland 1901-18', in *Essays in The Political Economy of Australian Capitalism*, ed. E. L. Wheelwright and Ken Buckley, vol. Four (Sydney: Australia & New Zealand Book Co, 1980), 59.

⁴¹ Ganter, *The Pearl-Shellers of Torres Strait*, 115–16.

Importantly, proponents of a White Australia sought to reduce the supposedly immoral influence of Japanese migrants on the untamed north. Colonial and Commonwealth legislators sought to counteract the perceived immoral influence of Asian migrants on Indigenous people in Australia with the introduction of the *Aboriginals Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act 1897* (QLD). As Ganter argues, this Act was a major expression of anti-Asian sentiment.⁴² As an extension of these fears, Australian authorities spent decades attempting to control Japanese pearl shellers who sailed Australia's northern coasts and had access to remote regions where Aboriginal people lived beyond the so-called protective reach of Europeans. Unwelcome 'incursions' of Japanese fishermen in northern Australia became entangled with perceptions of their immoral influence on Aboriginal people. As Oliver has noted, this fraught situation continued for decades into the twentieth century. During the late 1930s, Australian vessels such as the *Larrakia* and *Rooganah* were sent to patrol Australian waters to "check the evil" of Japanese pearl shellers who were accused of activities ranging from espionage to relationships with Aboriginal women.⁴³ During the first three decades of the twentieth century, fears of invasion had underscored wide-ranging reports of Japanese activities in northern Australia's waters.⁴⁴ Walker's argument that tropical heat, such as in these northern waters, was perceived to promote undisciplined sexuality shows the connections between perceptions of Asian immorality and their so-called threat to the untamed north and its "supposedly stagnant, morally undeveloped tropical races."⁴⁵ These overwrought ideas about immoral Japanese men and women, as Ganter argues, drove fears and suspicions of the multicultural and 'complicated' north that disrupted the central premise of Australian national history.⁴⁶ Failed attempts such as the *Larrakia* patrols in 1937 only heightened fears of White Australia's inability to 'protect' northern Australia. The "laughable anti-climax" of the *Larrakia*'s efforts were described in newspapers in 1937, narrating how "the *Larrakia* is being towed into Darwin by another lugger, while the 'captured' [Japanese] lugger is following meekly behind."⁴⁷

⁴² Regina Ganter, 'Living Immoral Lives: Coloured Women and the Paternalistic State', *Hecate* 24, no. 1 (1998): 1.

⁴³ Oliver, *Empty North*, 54–55, 86.

⁴⁴ Oliver, 125.

⁴⁵ Walker, *Anxious Nation*, 143–44.

⁴⁶ Regina Ganter, 'Coloured People: A Challenge to Racial Stereotypes', in *Navigating Boundaries: The Asian Diaspora in Torres Strait*, ed. Anna Shnukal, Guy Malcolm Ramsay, and Yuriko Nagata (Canberra: Pandanus Books, 2004), 219–21.

⁴⁷ "Larrakia being Towed into Darwin," *Advertiser* (Adelaide), 14 June 1937, 19.

The Empty and Piebald North

This thesis focuses on the north Queensland region and recognises the unique community, environment, and economy of north Queensland compared to other regions of northern Australia such as Broome or Darwin. Whilst Lyndon Megarrity has commented on the reluctance of historians to pursue studies of the vast super-region of northern Australia across Queensland-Northern Territory-Western Australia, it is evident there are advantages in closer research of specific regions of the north.⁴⁸ Julia Martínez argues that there was not a singular, but a ‘plural Australia’, highlighting the need for close consideration of the distinct economic and social conditions within different parts of northern Australia.⁴⁹ Keiko Ono and John P. Lea also tease out the differences between Thursday Island and Broome. Whilst other historians — such as Oliver in *Empty North*⁵⁰ — tend to view the two locations as dissimilar only in their administrating governments and perceived wealth of the pearl beds, Ono and Lea demonstrate how the environments of each location shaped the socio-cultural structures and conditions for the success of the pearl shelling industry.⁵¹ It is interesting to note John Bailey’s description that “Broome was like an island, hemmed in by desert and sea.”⁵² Thursday Island and the rest of the north Queensland region must not be treated the same as the pearl shelling regions elsewhere in northern Australia. Environmental conditions shape the social and cultural structures of the community, in both physical and non-physical ways, to create spaces that are unique to that area.

Northern Australia is commonly imagined as a place different to the rest of Australia; it is a place beyond the normality of mainstream Australia. For example, Matthew Richards’ PhD thesis *Race Around Cairns* examines imaginings of the Cairns region, amongst other places in northern Australia, characterising it as a tropical paradise. He argues that, “[t]he fantasy of Cairns

⁴⁸ Lyndon Megarrity, *Northern Dreams: The Politics of Northern Development in Australia* (North Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing Pty. Ltd, 2018), 6.

⁴⁹ Julia Martínez, ‘Plural Australia: Aboriginal and Asian Labour in Tropical White Australia, Darwin, 1911-1940’ (PhD Thesis, University of Wollongong, 2000), 2.

⁵⁰ Oliver, *Empty North*.

⁵¹ Keiko Ono and John P. Lea, ‘Japanese Vision and Northern Australia: The Early Role of Japanese Settlers on Thursday Island’, *Australian Planner* 37, no. 2 (2000): 95, <https://doi.org/10.1080/07293682.2000.9657883>.

⁵² John Bailey, *The White Divers of Broome: The True Story of a Fatal Experiment* (Sydney: Pan Macmillan Australia, 2001), 166.

as paradise annexes tropical authenticity from indigenous Aboriginal and Pacific Islander cultures to conceptually install white people as authentic north Queensland natives.”⁵³ Russell McGregor mostly agrees, adding that northern Australia was “commonly imagined as both forbidding and exotic, a part of the national territory that failed to conform to national conceptions of normalcy.”⁵⁴ Locating the links between the territory and the imaginary provide an insight into the perceptions of northern Australia as a place beyond the reaches of mainstream Australia’s control and therefore a fluid and uncontrollable tropical space that collided Australia’s Asian geography with its fears of a ‘yellow tide’.

North Queensland frequently featured in Australia’s anxieties about Asia, perceived as part of the ‘empty north’ but also vulnerable as the ‘open door’ of the northern coast. McGregor’s *Environment, Race and Nationhood in Australia* provides a useful basis for a discussion of controversies surrounding the emptiness of northern Australia and the fears it entailed. Although focusing more on the Northern Territory, McGregor contends that the trope of the Empty North was hyperbole charged with anxieties that drew attention to the demographic deficiencies of the region.⁵⁵ He argues that a key anxiety surrounding the Empty North was that Asia could threaten, and was already threatening, a region that was large, unpeopled, and unguarded.⁵⁶ Oliver’s work *Empty North* builds upon this trope, arguing that fears of “hordes in the north” were reflective of an “Orientalist racist perspective.”⁵⁷ *The Immigration Question in Australian Diplomatic Relations with Japan* by Sissons refers to a Japanese overseer at Macknade Mill, near Ingham, who reportedly made the statement that the fifty Japanese labourers who worked at the plantation would be “the seed from which in after years the immigration to this country of tens of millions of their fellows would spring.”⁵⁸ Although Sissons plays down the significance of this statement, explaining that it was unlikely to have been part of a wider policy of Japanese expansion, Sissons’ inclusion of the statement suggests recognition of an invasion theme within Australia’s fears of Japan. North Queensland then, as the focus of this thesis, provides a socially, culturally, and environmentally focused lens under which Australia’s relationships with Japan —

⁵³ Matthew Richards, ‘Race Around Cairns: Representations, Perceptions and Realities of Race in the Trinity Bay District 1876-1908’ (PhD Thesis, Townsville, James Cook University, 2010), 21.

⁵⁴ Russell McGregor, ‘Excursions Through Emptiness: Interwar Travel Writing on Northern Australia’, *Journal of Australian Studies* 41, no. 4 (2017): 421, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14443058.2017.1380684>.

⁵⁵ McGregor, *Environment, Race, and Nationhood*, vii.

⁵⁶ McGregor, 1.

⁵⁷ Oliver, *Empty North*, 4–5.

⁵⁸ Sissons, *Immigration Question*, 24.

and its migrants — can be examined.

Overview of Thesis Chapters

This thesis focuses on the history of the Nikkei community in north Queensland between 1885 and 1946. In part, the terms ‘Japanese migrant’ and Nikkei are used interchangeably as it refers to the experiences of Japanese people, and their descendants, who reside permanently outside of Japan. Nikkei is a term referring to the Japanese diaspora as it exists around the world, including *issei* (first-generation), *nisei* (second generation), and so on. While the term is a broad and flexible one, Nikkei is used throughout this thesis as a recognition of the unique experience of Japanese people and communities whose identities are distinct from those who still reside in Japan.

Chapter One provides context to the White Australia policy in the period between 1885 and 1946 as it applied to Japanese migrants. Academic histories have dealt with the White Australia policy in great detail, although most accounts contain a dearth of material analysing how this applied to Japanese migrants. Many of the most detailed works, such as Myra Willard’s 1923 history, A.C. Palfreeman’s (1967) and A.T. Yarwood’s and M.J. Knowling’s (1964 and 1982), deal with the specific administrative and legislative manoeuvres of the *Restriction Act* but tend to view Australia’s legislation in isolation from global contexts.⁵⁹ Reflecting the eras in which they were written, Willard’s history firmly justified the implementation of immigration restriction, while Yarwood’s and Knowling’s histories provided a moderate critique of the policies as they were being dismantled during the 1960s. As such, these histories of the White Australia policy that stretch across the policy’s long life throughout the twentieth century have become foundational, albeit criticised works, on this topic.⁶⁰ More recent histories have examined Australia’s racial attitudes towards non-white immigration and how this was enshrined in law, relating Australia’s racial views to other ‘white men’s countries.’ Lake and Reynold’s *Drawing the Global Colour Line* and Jeremy C. Martens’ *Empire and Asian Migration*, for example, emphasise Australia’s unoriginal approach to limiting undesirable immigrants among the

⁵⁹ Myra Willard, *History of the White Australia Policy to 1920* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1923); A. C. Palfreeman, *The Administration of the White Australia Policy* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1967); A. T. Yarwood, *Asian Migration to Australia: The Background to Exclusion, 1896-1923* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1964); A. T. Yarwood, *Race Relations in Australia: A History* (Sydney: Methuen Australia, 1982).

⁶⁰ Anna Clark, *Making Australian History* (Sydney: Vintage Books Australia, 2022).

Commonwealth nations.⁶¹ Peter Prince's PhD thesis, *Aliens in Their Own Land*, and David Dutton's *One of Us?* are among the few contemporary historical works that have returned to the close analysis of immigration restriction legislation. Prince's analysis of the subjective application of legislation is fundamental to understanding how Australia reconciled immigration restriction with exemptions for Japanese migrants.⁶²

Histories dealing with Japanese migrants in Australia, however, have frequently commented on aspects of Australia's immigration restriction as it related to the development of Australian-Japanese relations. Sissons and Frei deal broadly with Australia's relationship with Japan, arguing that immigration policy was often a source of tension between the two nations.⁶³ Against this backdrop, Oliver has investigated Japanese merchants and pearl shell divers in Australia and briefly commented on the exemptions available to Japanese migrants. Oliver points out that there were three main ways for Japanese migrants to enter and remain in Australia prior to 1941 — an indenture contract, becoming a merchant, or gaining domicile status⁶⁴ — but that the reality was much less tidy.⁶⁵ Broadly then, the particular mechanisms by which Japanese migrants were able to enter and remain in Australia — both before and after Federation — have remained generally unexamined, particularly where they were shaped by the specific conditions of northern Australia.

This second chapter examines attempts by the colony of Queensland's and the Commonwealth of Australia to restrict 'undesirable' — non-European — immigration and the troubles this posed for Australia's diplomatic relationships, particularly with Britain and Japan. It finds that Queensland, and especially federated Australia, had to carefully moderate and revise its immigration policies to find common ground among competing demands for racial exclusion,

⁶¹ Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*; Jeremy C. Martens, *Empire and Asian Migration: Sovereignty, Immigration Restriction and Protest in the British Settler Colonies, 1888-1907* (Perth: UWA Publishing, 2018).

⁶² Peter Herman Prince, 'Aliens in Their Own Land. "Alien" and the Rule of Law in Colonial and Post-Federation Australia' (PhD Thesis, Australian National University, 2015); David Dutton, *One of Us? A Century of Australian Citizenship* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2002).

⁶³ D. C. S. Sissons, 'Immigration in Australian-Japanese Relations, 1871-1971', in *Bridging Australia and Japan: The Writings of David Sissons, Historian and Political Scientist*, ed. Keiko Tamura and Arthur Stockwin, vol. 1 (Canberra: ANU Press, 2016), 209–29; Frei, *Japan's Southward Advance*.

⁶⁴ J. P. S. Bach, 'The Pearlshelling Industry and the "White Australia" Policy', *Historical Studies: Australia and New Zealand* 10, no. 38 (1962): 203–13, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10314616208595223>.

⁶⁵ Oliver, *Empty North*, 31.

deference to British needs, and the potential for Japan's dangerous indignation. As a result, Japanese migrants were able to arrive in, depart from, and reside in Queensland through a series of exemptions that were continually negotiated through local, regional, and national diplomatic channels. Central to this diplomacy in north Queensland were the Japanese consulate in Townsville and the local representatives of Japanese migrants. Nevertheless, the administrative mechanisms and terminology of the *Restriction Act* — particularly the dictation test and racial definitions of 'alien' — were applied to other acts, regulations, and policies to restrict Japanese migrants' access to parts of north Queensland life.

Chapter Two develops the theme of Japanese diplomacy and investigates how diplomatic representation occurred at multiple levels of the community, from local representative groups all the way up to consuls and the Japanese government. Typically, historians have taken a birds-eye view of the diplomatic relationship between Japan and Australia, characterising it generally as tense and anxious, occasionally wavering in the direction of either friendliness or aggression. These Australian-Japanese relations have frequently been considered with regard to federal concerns surrounding immigration, security, and defence, and occasionally, commercial trading.⁶⁶ This chapter, however, concerns itself with the more local and regional theatres in which these diplomatic issues played out and considers the roles of representatives at various levels. Tomoko Horikawa, for example, argues that Australia made minor concessions to Japanese migrants coming to Australia, due in part to Japan's growing international status, but also because of the sustained diplomatic pressure that Britain placed on Australia.⁶⁷ Horikawa's work emphasises the Japanese consul's role in negotiating key concessions for Japanese migrants in Australia, particularly as they related to people in Queensland, developing regional nuance to Australia's federal concerns. Gibson-Wilde adds further detail to the history of Japanese diplomacy in Australia, examining the Japanese consulate in Townsville and its influence in north Queensland, Australia, and Japan.⁶⁸ Evidently, coastal centres such as Townsville, Cairns, and Thursday Island

⁶⁶ See, for example Meaney, *Search for Security*; Meaney, *Fears and Phobias*; Frei, *Japan's Southward Advance*; Sissons, *Immigration Question*; Sissons, 'First Phase'; Yuichi Murakami, 'Australia's Immigration Legislation, 1893-1901', in *Relationships: Japan and Australia, 1870s to 1950s*, ed. Paul Jones and Vera Mackie (Melbourne: The University of Melbourne, 2001), 45–70; Neville Bennett, 'White Discrimination Against Japan: Britain, the Dominions and the United States, 1908-1928', *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies* 3, no. 2 (2001): 91–105.

⁶⁷ Tomoko Horikawa, 'Australia's Minor Concessions to Japanese Citizens under the White Australia Policy', *New Voices in Japanese Studies* 12 (2020): 2, <https://doi.org/10.21159/nvjs.12.01>.

⁶⁸ Gibson-Wilde, 'The Japanese Consulate at Townsville'.

acted as important sites of connection and negotiation for Australian and Japanese interests. This chapter argues that the systems of cooperation and representation that developed among Japanese migrant groups in north Queensland enabled strong diplomatic representation on behalf of these migrants. The Japanese consulates, particularly the one in Townsville, were key to representing and elevating local and regional concerns to a national and international stage. Importantly, the Japanese consulate in Townsville and the Japanese Association throughout north Queensland acted as a connection between international politics and local diplomacy.⁶⁹

Chapter Three argues that Japanese labourers, supported by government, commercial enterprises, and diplomatic representation, were able to establish strong cooperatives among themselves. The members for these cooperative organisations, typically the Japanese Association, included labourers, prominent businessmen, laundry workers, and farmers all the way up to diplomatic representatives and even the Japanese consuls. This chapter shines new light on the activities of Japanese pearl shell and sugar cane labourers, adding to previous histories that have detailed divers' daring exploits — risking their lives for a chance at great riches — and their mastery of pearl shell diving within the industry in northern Australia. These exoticised tales were typical of older histories of Japanese divers, although more recent works have also discussed the stronghold of Japanese migrants as pearl shell divers and alleged owners of luggers within the industry.⁷⁰ Some of these works undertake a detailed discussion of the political and economic factors informing Japanese migrants' stronghold in the pearl shelling industry in northern Australia, indicating the compounding factors of concessions to Japanese migrants and their business activities.⁷¹ More recent works by historians including Ganter and Oliver have developed a nuanced view of Japanese workers' involvement in the pearl shelling industry, and other historians have acknowledged the more diverse contributions present within this industry

⁶⁹ Frei, *Japan's Southward Advance*; Melanie Bassett, 'Port Towns and Diplomacy: Japanese Naval Visits to Britain and Australia in the Early Twentieth Century', *International Journal of Maritime History* 32, no. 1 (2020): 45–60, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0843871420903160>. Bassett has looked at the relevance of these port towns and cities, where they served as a threshold between politics of the maritime world and the urban space. I would qualify, however, that these port towns similarly operate as a threshold between international diplomacy and local diplomacy.

⁷⁰ Sissons, 'The Japanese in the Australian Pearling Industry'; Philipps, 'Plenty More Little Brown Man'; Mary Albertus Bain, *Full Fathom Five* (Perth: Artlook Books, 1982); Bailey, *White Divers*.

⁷¹ Bach, *Pearling Industry*; John Bach, 'The Political Economy of Pearlshelling', *The Economic History Review* 14, no. 1 (1961): 105–14, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2591357>; Bach, 'Pearlshelling Industry and White Australia Policy'.

across northern Australia.⁷² Missing from these histories, however, is the recognition of Japanese migrants' agency and organisation as labourers in these industries. This chapter argues that, building upon the diplomatic representation discussed in Chapter Two, Japanese workers were able to build capacity and capital that propelled their upward mobility in north Queensland industries.

Histories that identify Japanese people in the sugar cane industry have often identified these men were labourers and employees, overlooking the success of some men as farmers and cane growers in the region. While the presence of Japanese workers has certainly been recognised, both in histories of north Queensland and in histories of Japanese migrants in Australia, there has been little elucidation of their significance or contributions.⁷³ Peter Griggs' research, however, argues that 'alien agriculturalists' — Japanese migrants among them — played a significant role in the development of the sugar cane industry, often cultivating poorer land and contributing significant quantities of cane in the industry's worst years. Griggs' work is one of the few histories that considers what Japanese workers may have done after becoming 'time-expired'.⁷⁴ Yoichi Yano's detailed analysis of Japanese labour migration to Australia during the 1890s similarly highlights the significance of Japanese labour organisation, which goes some ways to explaining the upward mobility of sugar cane workers described by Griggs.⁷⁵ As Martínez briefly argues, Japanese workers' willingness to strike and their union activities have been recognised by historians such as Ganter — who more generally indicates the social organisation among Japanese workers — but does not consider the implications of these activities in terms of

⁷² Ganter, *The Pearl-Shellers of Torres Strait*; Oliver, *Empty North*; Julia Martínez and Adrian Vickers, *The Pearl Frontier: Indonesian Labor and Indigenous Encounters in Australia's Northern Trading Network* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2015).

⁷³ G. C. Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away: A History of North Queensland to 1920* (Brisbane: Jacaranda Press, 1963), 243; Bianka Hedwig Vidonja Balanzategui, *The Herbert River Story* (Ingham, Queensland: Hinchinbrook Shire Council, 2011), 118–32; Menghetti, *Summer Seas*; John Armstrong, 'Aspects of Japanese Immigration to Queensland Before 1900', *Queensland Heritage* 2, no. 9 (1973): 3–9; Meaney, *Towards a New Vision*, 48–50.

⁷⁴ Peter Griggs, 'Alien Agriculturalists: Non-European Small Farmers in the Australian Sugar Industry, 1880–1920', in *White and Deadly: Sugar and Colonialism*, ed. Pal Ahluwalia, Bill Ashcroft, and Roger Knight (New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1999), 135–55.

⁷⁵ Yoichi Yano, 'Japanese Labour Immigration to Australia During the 1890s' (Honours Thesis, Sydney, University of New South Wales, 1985).

industrial action and potential unionisation.⁷⁶ This chapter argues that Japanese labourers' cooperation and industrial action in both the sugar cane and pearl shelling industries were fundamental to their securing of improved wages and working conditions. A number of Japanese migrants were able to gain upward mobility and move from indentured and contracted labour to free labourers and even employers. While there was a degree of mobility and flexibility for these 'time-expired' men, often moving between different industries throughout the years, this meant that some Japanese men became sugar cane farmers, pearl shell boat owners, and business owners.

Looking beyond the story of Japanese men who came to Australia as indentured labourers, Chapter Four focuses on Japanese women's roles and contributions in north Queensland. General histories of Japanese migration have dismissed Japanese women as being few in number and mostly engaged in sex work, implying they are therefore of little significance in Australia's history.⁷⁷ Most historians who have researched the lives of Japanese women in Australia have closely investigated the experiences of those women who were allegedly trafficked from Japan or other parts of Asia and the Pacific. Bill Mihalopoulos and James Warren, for example, have taken a considered approach to these women's roles within this broad migration network and attempted to bring detail and nuance to their experiences as sex workers.⁷⁸ In the Australian context, some historians, principally Sissons and Su-Jane Hunt, have investigated

⁷⁶ Martínez, 'Plural Australia'; Ganter, *The Pearl-Shellers of Torres Strait*.

⁷⁷ See, for example Armstrong, 'Aspects of Japanese Immigration', 5; Shuji Kyuhara, 'Remains of Japanese Settlers on the Torres Strait Islands', trans. Yoshihiko Yabuuchi (Japan, 1977), 15–16, State Library of Queensland; Bain, *Full Fatbom Five*, 91–92; Meaney, *Towards a New Vision*, 55; Menghetti, *Summer Seas*, 9–10; Oliver, *Empty North*; John Lamb, *Silent Pearls: Old Japanese Graves in Darwin and the History of Pearlshelling* (Canberra: Bytes 'n Colours, 2015). In this thesis, the terms sex work and sex worker are used in favour of other terms such as prostitution, prostitutes, or similar, except where directly quoting from other sources..

⁷⁸ Bill Mihalopoulos, *Sex in Japan's Globalization, 1870–1930: Prostitutes, Emigration and Nation-Building* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2011); Bill Mihalopoulos, 'Ousting the "Prostitute": Retelling the Story of the Karayuki-San', *Postcolonial Studies* 4, no. 2 (2001): 169–87, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13688790120077506>; Bill Mihalopoulos, 'The Making of Prostitutes in Japan: The Karayuki-San', *Social Justice* 21, no. 2 (56) (1994): 161–84; James Warren, *Pirates, Prostitutes and Pullers: Explorations in the Ethno- and Social History of Southeast Asia* (Perth: UWA Press, 2008); James Francis Warren, *Ab Ku and Karayuki-San: Prostitution in Singapore, 1870-1940* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Sone, 'Karayuki-San of Asia'.

those Japanese women's lives in detail, arguing that although many of these women lived tragic and violent lives in Australia, they attempted to make the best of their circumstances, much like other sex workers in Queensland around the turn of the twentieth century.⁷⁹ Certainly, Japanese women in north Queensland were not all trafficked or smuggled into the country, nor were they all sex workers. This chapter builds upon existing research — not only these women's working lives, but also their families and community involvement — and develops a more nuanced and complex picture of Japanese women in north Queensland over the course of their lives.

More recently, Ganter has attempted to problematise the assertion that all Japanese women were sex workers, while Noreen Jones and Yuriko Nagata have argued for closer accounts of the multifaceted nature of these women's lives.⁸⁰ Jones' and Nagata's research, coupled with the archival mosaic methods described by historian Warren, provide a way forward in overcoming the self-fulfilling prophecy of the *karayuki-san* narrative.⁸¹ The Japanese term *karayuki-san* roughly translates as 'going to China', referring to the way women were trafficked from Japan to China and eventually throughout the Asia-Pacific region during the nineteenth century. Applying the term *karayuki-san* to all Japanese women who migrated throughout the Asia-Pacific, including Australia, has reinforced their story as impoverished, trafficked sex workers and, as Mihalopoulos argues, has blinded historians to the multifaceted lives of Japanese women who migrated throughout this region.⁸² While some of the Japanese women living in north Queensland were sometimes involved in sex work — of those who were, there are more complex dimensions to their personal and working lives — this is just one part of their story.

⁷⁹ David Sissons, 'Karayuki-San: The Japanese Prostitutes in Australia, 1887–1916 (I & II)', in *Bridging Australia and Japan: The Writings of David Sissons, Historian and Political Scientist*, ed. Keiko Tamura and Arthur Stockwin, vol. 1 (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 2016), 171–207; Su-Jane Hunt, *Spinifex and Hessian: Women's Lives in North-Western Australia, 1860-1900* (Perth: University of WA Press, 1986); Raymond Evans, "'Soiled Doves': Prostitution in Colonial Queensland', in *So Much Hard Work: Women And Prostitution In Australian History*, ed. Kay Daniels (Sydney: Fontana Books, 1984), 127–61; Raelene Frances, *Selling Sex: A Hidden History of Prostitution* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2007).

⁸⁰ Ganter, 'Living Immoral Lives'; Ganter, 'Wakayama Triangle'; Noreen Jones, *Number 2 Home: A Story of Japanese Pioneers in Australia* (Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 2002); Yuriko Nagata, 'The Japanese in Torres Strait', in *Navigating Boundaries: The Asian Diaspora in Torres Strait*, ed. Anna Shnukal, Guy Malcolm Ramsay, and Yuriko Nagata (Canberra: Pandanus Books, 2004), 139–59.

⁸¹ Jones, *Number 2 Home*; Nagata, 'Japanese in Torres Strait'; Warren, *Pirates, Prostitutes and Pullers*, 227.

⁸² Mihalopoulos, *Sex in Japan's Globalization*, 12.

Through individual biographies, we can see the complexities of these women's experiences whether they were unmarried, married, widowed, had children, ran businesses, or undertook various types of work. In tracing individual Japanese women's lives, this chapter draws on these existing histories to add complexity and detail to this history of Japanese migration and argues that these women contributed significantly to the social and commercial life of north Queensland.

Chapter Five explores the rise of Japanese migrants who became small business owners and independent merchants in north Queensland. W. Richard Purcell and Oliver are two historians who have paid attention to Japanese commercial and trading activities within Australia during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, although both emphasise the larger *zaibatsu* conglomerates and trading companies that operated out of Australia's southern ports.⁸³ Purcell traces the development of the "small but substantial complex of Japanese trading companies in Australia" that began in 1882, but experienced a massive rise in commercial activities during the interwar period.⁸⁴ Oliver builds upon Purcell's work, incorporating the personal, political, and social dimensions of these large companies into the relationships formed with the wider Australian community.⁸⁵ Both Purcell and Oliver agree that these large trading companies were responsible for approximately eighty-nine percent of the import trade and ninety-five percent of the export trade between Australia and Japan.⁸⁶ Purcell and Oliver's analyses leave room for the much smaller Japanese businesses that sold imported Japanese goods, particularly those outside of the southern quarter of Australia's continent, and much remains to be said in this area. The existence of these smaller Japanese businesses, which

⁸³ W. Richard Purcell, 'The Nature and Extent of Japanese Commercial and Economic Interests in Australia 1932-41' (PhD Thesis, Sydney, University of New South Wales, 1980); W. R. Purcell, 'The Development of Japan's Trading Company Network in Australia 1890-1941', *Australian Economic History Review* 21, no. 2 (1981): 114-32; Oliver, 'Interpreting "Japanese Activities"'; Pam Oliver, 'Japanese Relationships in White Australia: The Sydney Experience to 1941', *History Australia* 4, no. 1 (2007); Oliver, *Raids on Australia*.

⁸⁴ Purcell, 'Japan's Trading Company Network', 114, 119-21.

⁸⁵ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*.

⁸⁶ Purcell, 'Japan's Trading Company Network', 119.

typically traded in Japanese wares and textiles, are briefly acknowledged in histories of Japanese migrants in Australia but hitherto have not been explored in detail.⁸⁷

This chapter argues that in north Queensland, there were a number of small business operators who formed a smaller network of independent merchants who were peripheral to the *zaibatsu*. Many of these small operators arrived in north Queensland as labourers and later took up ownership and management of businesses. As was the case for other small migrant businesses throughout north Queensland, commercial encounters between Japanese businesses and the wider community provide visible examples of interracial exchanges that frequently took place in regional and rural areas of northern Australia.⁸⁸ Evidently, the large Japanese commercial trading companies are significant, but this chapter expounds upon a greater variety of Japanese small businesses and investigates Japanese business activities and networks far into northern Australia to provide insights into their connections with these northern communities. This chapter also identifies other types of small business, including laundries, market gardens, and boarding houses, which provided essential services to the wider community and were a source of independence and mobility for Japanese migrants.

Building upon the roles and contributions of Japanese workers, women, and business owners in north Queensland, Chapter Six explores how Nikkei people of different milieu were valued participants in their wider community and in north Queensland life. These types of connections have been examined by historians, but often from an anthropological or racial standpoint. For example, in 1972 Gaynor Evans wrote an Honours thesis that attempted to reconcile historical and anthropological methods, arguing that Thursday Island was a plural

⁸⁷ Bach, *Pearling Industry*, 17; Clive Moore, 'A Precious Few: Melanesian and Asian Women in Northern Australia', in *Gender Relations in Australia: Domination and Negotiation*, ed. Kay Saunders and Raymond Evans (Sydney: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1992), 78; Meaney, *Towards a New Vision*, 53; Philip Hayward and Junko Konishi, 'Mokuyo-to No Ongaku: Music and the Japanese Community in the Torres Strait (1890-1941)', *Perfect Beat* 5, no. 3 (2001): 48; Yuriko Nagata, "'Certain Types of Aliens': The Japanese in Australia", in *Relationships: Japan and Australia, 1870s to 1950s*, ed. Paul Jones and Vera Mackie (Melbourne: The University of Melbourne, 2001), 223; Jones, *Number 2 Home*; Menghetti, *Summer Seas*, 28–29; Yuriko Nagata and Jun Nagatomo, *Japanese Queenslanders: A History* (Brisbane: Bookpal, 2007), 12.

⁸⁸ Sophie Loy-Wilson, 'Rural Geographies and Chinese Empires: Chinese Shopkeepers and Shop-Life in Australia', *Australian Historical Studies* 45, no. 3 (2 September 2014): 407–24; Ian Simpson, "'Decent Fellows, Making an Honest Living': Indian Hawkers in White Australia', *History Australia* 13, no. 3 (2016): 321–34.

society. Evans' thesis paid attention to the presence of migrant groups, including a substantial Japanese population, that was seemingly at odds with the rest of Queensland's population much further south.⁸⁹ Reynolds agrees that Thursday Island was a "multi-racial Gibraltar", but challenges Evans' view of the rest of Queensland. Reynolds expands Evans' work to argue that the "multi-racial society in the tropical north" stood at odds to the southern, settled, and overwhelmingly white Australia.⁹⁰ This rosy view of a cosmopolitan and cooperative north has been tempered by historians such as McGregor and Martínez, with McGregor arguing that inter-racial harmony was more fragile than Reynolds suggests, but that mutual dependence and cooperation was a pragmatic concern for these communities.⁹¹ Martínez furthers this analysis by arguing other northern towns, like Darwin, had a similar multiculturalism as Thursday Island, where Japanese migrants were often treated with respect. However, this experience varied for individuals and certainly there were still strict 'colour lines' drawn with rigid severity between cultural and racial groups.⁹² Expanding on these histories, and the perspective that Japanese migrants were 'visible participants' in different sections of north Queensland communities, this chapter seeks to contribute a broader understanding of these connections and intersections.⁹³

This chapter argues that there were many different connections and relationships formed between Nikkei peoples and the wider north Queensland community. These connections were varied and complex, depending on the social standing or associations of people — depending on whether they were labourers, divers, business people, or diplomats, for example — and could be widely described as friendly, charitable, tense, celebratory, violent, competitive, or fraught. Indeed, many Japanese residents in north Queensland were visible participants in their wider community, sharing in celebrations and commemorations that were significant to Australia and Japan. These 'rickety relations' were constantly shifting and experiences varied for individuals and even Japanese groups, such as labourers or laundrymen, depending on the circumstances.

⁸⁹ Gaynor Evans, 'Thursday Island 1878-1914: A Plural Society' (Honours Thesis, Brisbane, University of Queensland, 1972), 2–3.

⁹⁰ Henry Reynolds, *North of Capricorn: The Untold Story of Australia's North* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2003), vii.

⁹¹ Russell McGregor, 'Drawing the Local Colour Line: White Australia and the Tropical North', *The Journal of Pacific History* 47, no. 3 (2012): 331–32.

⁹² Martínez, 'Plural Australia', 8, 327–28.

⁹³ Tianna Killoran, 'Visible Participation: Japanese Migrants in North Queensland, 1880–1941', *History Australia* 18, no. 3 (2021): 508–25.

But for the most part, Japanese people in north Queensland benefitted from their place in the upper tier of the racial hierarchy of non-European peoples, with white Australians often tolerating them above other Asian, Pacific, and Indigenous peoples.⁹⁴ As Chapter Six describes, there were a number of different ways that Japanese groups connected on friendly and social terms with different sections of the wider north Queensland community, often dependent on these different circumstances. Some of these relationships were through families, with children creating further connections throughout the community through attending school and school events, church services, and other social occasions.

In 1941 many of these connections and relationships were broken. Chapter Seven investigates the treatment of Japanese migrants in the lead up to the Pacific War and the subsequent internment of Japanese civilians in 1941. It finds that Japanese migrants — many of whom, by this time, had been living in Australia for the past three or four decades — were treated with suspicion, their activities and movements monitored by local police and government authorities. After Australia declared war with Japan, police came to arrest Japanese migrants who were now classified as enemy aliens, along with a broad group of people the government classified as having ‘Japanese loyalties’. This group included the children of Japanese migrants, regardless of where they were born, women married to Japanese nationals, and also anyone who generally associated with people of Japanese ancestry. Nagata is the only researcher who has devoted significant attention to this internment of Japanese people in Australia, although Japanese internment has been noted in other histories focusing on WWII civilian internment.⁹⁵ In this field, however, there has been an emergence in recent decades of internment memoirs and historical fiction that seek to shine light on these experiences.⁹⁶ Nonetheless, this chapter

⁹⁴ McGregor, ‘Drawing the Local Colour Line’, 332.

⁹⁵ Yuriko Nagata, ‘Japanese Internment in Australia During World War II’ (PhD Thesis, University of Adelaide, 1993); Nagata, *Unwanted Aliens*; Yuriko Nagata, ‘Japanese-Australians in the Post-War Thursday Island Community’, *Queensland Review* 6, no. 2 (1999): 15; Yuriko Nagata, ‘Naive Patriotism: The Internment of Moshi Inagaki in Australia During the Second World War’, in *Under Suspicion: Citizenship and Internment in Australia During the Second World War*, ed. Joan Beaumont, Ilma Martinuzzi O’Brien, and Mathew Trinca (Canberra: National Museum of Australia Press, 2008), 112–24; Yuriko Nagata, ‘Japanese Internment in Australia During WWII’, in *Japanese American Memorial Pilgrimages*, 2020, <https://vimeo.com/438777811>.

⁹⁶ See, for example, Mary Nakashiba, *Beyond Borders: A Memoir* (Brisbane: Bookpal, 2010); Cory Taylor, *My Beautiful Enemy* (Melbourne: Text Publishing Company, 2013); Christine Piper, *After Darkness* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2014); Christine Piper, ‘After Darkness: Japanese Civilian Internment in Australia

seeks to deepen the understanding of this era of internment and its impacts on the Nikkei community within the north Queensland context. The experiences of those Japanese migrants who were interned during WWII are an occasionally acknowledged, but broadly disregarded, aspect of Australia's history. Much greater attention has been given to the internment experiences of Italian, German, and other European nationalities.⁹⁷

As this chapter argues, the previous years of legal loopholes, rickety relationships, and diplomatic status of Japanese migrants in Australia soured when the Pacific War began, and deteriorated thereafter. While Japanese migrants were not citizens or subjects in any legal sense, they were generally regarded as 'good citizens' by their wider community; but after the Pacific War began, Japanese migrants were racially Othered within Australia and authorities became suspicious of their loyalties. As a result, all Japanese migrants were interned.⁹⁸ The legally tenuous

During World War II' (Doctor of Creative Arts, Sydney, University of Technology Sydney, 2014). In North America, there are many more memoirs and fiction works, most notably, Joy Kogawa, *Obasan* (Toronto: Lester and Orpen Dennys, 1981); David Guterson, *Snow Falling on Cedars* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1995).

⁹⁷ See, for example, Noel W. Lamidey, *Aliens Control in Australia, 1939-46* (Sydney: printed by the author, 1974); Kay Saunders and Helen Taylor, 'The Enemy Within? The Process of Internment of Enemy Aliens in Queensland 1939-45', *The Australian Journal of Politics and History* 34, no. 1 (1988): 16-27; Margaret Bevege, *Behind Barbed Wire: Internment in Australia During World War II* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1993); Kay Saunders, "'Inspired by Patriotic Hysteria?'" Internment Policy Towards Enemy Aliens in Australia During the Second World War', in *Minorities in Wartime: National and Racial Groupings in Europe, North America and Australia During the Two World Wars*, ed. Panikos Panayi (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 1993), 287-315; Kay Saunders, *War on the Homefront: State Intervention in Queensland, 1938-1948* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1993); Kay Saunders and Roger Daniels, eds., *Alien Justice: Wartime Internment in Australia and North America* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 2000); Kay Saunders, "'The Stranger in Our Gates": Internment Policies in the United Kingdom and Australia During the Two World Wars, 1914-39', *Immigrants & Minorities* 22, no. 1 (2003): 22-43; J. Peter Weiss, *It Wasn't Really Necessary: Internment in Australia with Emphasis on the Second World War* (Adelaide: printed by the author, 2003); Klaus Neumann, *In the Interest of National Security: Civilian Internment in Australia During World War II* (Canberra: National Archives of Australia, 2006).

⁹⁸ Pam Oliver, 'Citizens Without Certificates or Enemy Aliens? Japanese Residents Before 1947', in *Under Suspicion: Citizenship and Internment in Australia During the Second World War*, ed. Joan Beaumont, Ilma Martinuzzi O'Brien, and Mathew Trinca (Canberra: National Museum of Australia Press, 2008), 125-41.

status of the Nikkei community — even those who had been born or married in Australia — was strategically dismantled and regulations were used to treat Japanese migrants as suspect and to intern them en masse. This internment, remarkable for its scope, saw a fracturing of both the Nikkei community and its ties to north Queensland; this group of people including Japanese migrants, their children, and partners were wrenched away from north Queensland life. Chapter Seven is a closing chapter on this era of the Nikkei community in north Queensland, and in the period after 1946 a variety of different connections developed between Australia and Japan. The visible and engaged Japanese community that existed in north Queensland prior to 1946 was destroyed, and its history largely forgotten.

Research Methods and Contemporary Sources

This thesis utilises a rich body of archival material relating to Japanese migrants, held in both physical and digitised repositories throughout Australia. Accessing archives in a variety of formats has enabled my research to engage with both the depth and breadth of archival material relating to Japanese migration in north Queensland. Combining close readings of sources, and analysis using digital tools, I have drawn upon combinations of these archival documents and records to assemble the histories of individuals, groups and communities of Japanese people as they lived, worked, and participated in north Queensland life. Through these assemblages, we can trace the experiences of people — not just the mythologised accounts of individuals like Tommy Japan, but the real stories, too — and their role in regional, national, and international politics.

Japanese migrants — along with many other non-European migrants — were documented and surveilled closely within White Australia. These processes of control have created a detailed record of individuals' lives. These government records are held primarily in the National Archives of Australia (NAA) — in the Brisbane, Canberra, and Melbourne reading rooms — and have captured details about Japanese migrants' entry, departure, movements, and changes in profession and living situations over time. Oliver's detailed research guide, *Allies, Enemies and Trading Partners: Records on Australia and the Japanese*, has been especially useful in navigating these government records about Japanese migrants.⁹⁹ These records include 'Certificates Exempting from the Dictation Test' (CEDTs) that were used to permit the re-entry of Japanese migrants to Australia, as well as 'Alien Registration Certificates' — required to

⁹⁹ Oliver, *Allies, Enemies and Trading Partners*.

surveil all aliens during WWI — and pre-WWII surveillance reports and internment dossiers. These records are complemented by similar archives held at the Queensland State Archives (QSA) in Brisbane, including ‘Certificates Exempting from the Sugar Cultivation Act 1913’, which contain detailed forms and applications about Japanese migrants who attempted to obtain exemptions to work in the sugar cane industry under these regulations. Additionally, government correspondence and memorandums held in both the NAA and QSA detail discussions and negotiations around key legislation and policy that related to Japanese migrants in north Queensland. These reports, commissions, and legislation provide overviews of the general policies and laws surrounding the arrival of Japanese migrants and the administration of their entry to Australia and activities whilst here. Put together, these records have been used to trace Japanese migrants as they lived, worked, and moved throughout north Queensland between 1880 and 1946.

The National Library of Australia’s (NLA) digitised collections of newspapers and magazines have provided access to other rich primary sources. These newspaper records include articles, advertisements and notices which develop greater detail and nuance about Japanese migrants’ life events and activities. Many of these records document business advertisements and changes, events in peoples’ lives, and add local perspectives to events of national and international significance. Genealogical records and methods of tracing family histories have been invaluable for this thesis. The Queensland Births, Deaths and Marriages records (QBDM), which I have collated with newspaper notices of family events and baptism records, have provided a means of making the connections among Japanese migrants and their families in north Queensland become clearer.

These digitised archives present historians like myself — living “a thousand miles” or more away from the nearest physical government archive¹⁰⁰ — with new opportunities for conducting research, but also with an almost overwhelming mountain of sources. Fortunately, many of these archives are keyword searchable and, despite other historians’ lamenting that digitised archives direct linear — and therefore limited — and specific research, the digital

¹⁰⁰ The first academic history of north Queensland, written by Geoffrey Bolton in in 1963 used its title to highlight the remoteness of north Queensland from southeast Queensland. Other government archives, such as those in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne are even further away. See, Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away*.

archive enables new and creative forms of serendipitous discovery.¹⁰¹ In particular, these digital records enable many women's lives to be traced. Without the accessibility and searchability of these records, these women's stories would have been lost in the depths of the archive. I argue that these new opportunities are also available when researching individual Japanese migrants. Aided by Tim Sherratt's digital tools in the 'GLAM Workbench', research conducted as part of this thesis has been able to identify, harvest, track, and extract large quantities of archival data about Japanese migrants from digitised archives.¹⁰² The serendipitous nature of the digital archive has made it more possible to piece together women's histories, as well.¹⁰³ There is also a rich photographic record of Japanese migrants in north Queensland that is contained across many of these archives, both physical and digital. Unexpected glimpses of Japanese people can be caught in newspaper pages, CEDTs, and general photographs of north Queensland streets and towns. Such photographs have been included throughout this thesis to give a face to a name and add flesh and blood to the stories of individuals who, in many cases, have been forgotten since their forced departure from Australia in 1946.

In considering the significant number of sources written about Japanese migrants in English, it is a limitation of this thesis that Japanese-language sources — including primary and secondary sources — have not been consulted. This is a result of my own limitations — given that I solely speak English — and the limited resources, including access to translation services, within a PhD research project. While there remains an ongoing divide between English and Japanese histories, it would be an important consideration for future projects to incorporate further Japanese sources. In the absence of these sources and the perspectives that they provide, there are still a significant number of primary and secondary sources relating to this topic in English, both in print and digital formats.

In a few instances, I discuss findings that seemingly challenge or contradict previous historians' work. These differences in findings are generally because of two primary factors. The first is that different archival records have been analysed and have yielded different results. For example, in Chapter Five, I identify a range of smaller and independent Japanese businesses that

¹⁰¹ Catherine Bishop, 'The Serendipity of Connectivity: Piecing Together Women's Lives in the Digital Archive', *Women's History Review* 26, no. 5 (3 September 2017): 767.

¹⁰² See, for example, Tim Sherratt, "GLAM Workbench," <https://glam-workbench.net/>; Tim Sherratt, 'More Than Newspapers', *History Australia* 18, no. 4 (2 October 2021): 837–40.

¹⁰³ Bishop, 'The Serendipity of Connectivity', 767–68.

differ vastly from Oliver's and Purcell's research.¹⁰⁴ While these historians analysed enemy property records from WWII, which contained focused dossiers on the large commercial Japanese companies in Australia at this time, my research utilises individuals' internment records and newspaper advertisements to identify smaller businesses. The analysis of these archives yields a more nuanced and regional view of Japanese businesses as they operated throughout north Queensland, thereby extending and developing Oliver's and Purcell's research. Secondly, my research has the advantage of time and technology that earlier historians did not have access to. For example, Sissons' research was detailed, insightful, and significant, but was limited by the inaccessibility of government records that had not reached their open access period. I have conducted research more than three decades after Sissons and therefore have the immense privilege of access to records that Sissons did not have. My research is indebted to the foundational, detailed, careful, and important work of these historians who have come before me.

This thesis contributes to a broader understanding of Australia's relationship with Japan and the role that Japanese migrants in north Queensland played on this stage of geopolitical events and diplomacy. Through a nuanced and careful examination of the roles, relationships, and connections forged by Japanese migrants at the local and regional levels of north Queensland, new ways of understanding these connections emerge. In particular, diplomacy at multiple levels was an important part of these relationships, and the connections that Japanese migrants formed within north Queensland communities were a key influence in these processes. Japanese migrants contributed to the economic and social life of the region, establishing friendships, organisations, and businesses. While other north Queensland community members similarly contended with ideas of a White Australia amongst the multicultural north, and relations among people of different races and cultures remained fraught, many grew familiar and friendly with Japanese migrants who lived and worked in north Queensland between 1880 and 1946.

¹⁰⁴ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*; Purcell, 'Japan's Trading Company Network'.

Chapter One: Deconstructing the Great White Walls of Australia



Image 1. *Top left*, John Nakashiba and his adopted son Peter Nakashiba in Darwin, 1937. (Image courtesy of 74, M119, NAA.)

Image 2. *Top right*, Advertisement for the Nakashiba Bros. store in Cairns, 1915. (Image courtesy of “Nakashiba Bros,” *Northern Herald* (Cairns) (hereafter *NH*), 3 December 1915, 31.)

Image 3. *Bottom left*, Wahichi Nakashiba, whom Bunsuke and John Nakashiba were accused of harbouring in 1921. (Image courtesy of B. Nakashiba Exemption Certificate, 1921/24449, A1, NAA.)

Six years after the passing of the infamous *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*, Japanese migrant John Iwamatsu Nakashiba applied for his brother, Bunsuke Nakashiba, to come to Australia.

According to his papers, John was a local storekeeper in Cairns — of excellent character, by all accounts — and he wished for his younger brother to attend an Australian school and technical

college.¹ John had first arrived in Australia in 1890 and worked his way from domestic servant to general merchant, importer, and eventually even shareholder in a local sugar cane farm with other Japanese migrants. No doubt he hoped his brother would find similar success in Australia. John's application was successful, and in 1907, Bunsuke was approved for entry into the country under the allowances made for students (as well as tourists and merchants) who held a Japanese passport. Bunsuke was permitted to remain in the country for twelve months, with provisions that he could apply for extensions up to a period of three years. After his three years were up in 1910, Bunsuke departed for Japan.²

In 1912, John again approached customs authorities on his brother's behalf. This time, John claimed that he wished to do business in Japan for three years and wanted Bunsuke to take care of the Cairns store in his absence. Aware of Bunsuke's previous residence in Australia and with excellent character references again in hand, authorities approved the application and John's brother arrived in Cairns that same year. John's travel plans fell apart, however, and Bunsuke was forced to swiftly return to Japan in 1913.³

Aided by his Japanese passport, which enabled automatic entry for one year, Bunsuke once again travelled to Cairns in 1915. According to customs reports of the following year, Bunsuke had been in his brother's employ as a storeman and his twelve-months entry had recently expired. Local solicitors and the Consul-General of Japan provided legal support for Bunsuke's renewal of exemption from the dictation test.⁴ After this point, rolling extensions were granted to Bunsuke over the next six years. He also demonstrated his business acumen, and Bunsuke was credited with the growing success of the Nakashiba Bros. store that amply supplied "a want in a community which is patronised by so many tourists during the winter season" and was boasted as "the largest Japanese emporium in the north."⁵

In 1921, however, new difficulties arose. The Consul-General of Japan applied on

¹ Letter from Atlee Hunt, Secretary for External Affairs, to Collector of Customs, Brisbane, 2 January 1907, B. Nakashiba Ex. Cert. Exemption Certificate, 1921/24449, A1, NAA (hereafter B. Nakashiba Exemption).

² Memorandum, Department of External Affairs, 21 October 1908, B. Nakashiba Exemption.

³ Memorandum, Department of External Affairs, 21 August 1912 & Memorandum, Department of External Affairs, 16 May 1913, B. Nakashiba Exemption.

⁴ Letter from Atlee Hunt to Collector of Customs, Brisbane, 18 February 1916, B. Nakashiba Exemption.

⁵ Letter from Fred C. Hodel to The Minister for External Affairs, 11 January 1921, B. Nakashiba Exemption; "Nakashiba Bros," *Cairns Post* (hereafter *CP*), 16 October 1913, 8.

Bunsuke's behalf for his wife to enter the Commonwealth. After more than a decade of ongoing approval to reside in north Queensland, the Nakashibas, and the consul-general probably assumed that application for Bunsuke's wife was little more than a formality. But much to their surprise, customs responded with a swift refusal of the application *and* the claim that Bunsuke had been harbouring a prohibited immigrant. The allegations were that Bunsuke's brother-in-law, Wahichi Nakashiba, was a prohibited immigrant and that, after a customs officer had asked Bunsuke about a man by the name of Chuzo (a nickname that Wahichi reportedly went by), Bunsuke had claimed he did not know the person. John Iwamatsu Nakashiba also became embroiled in the affair; he was allegedly taking care of Wahichi's passport and had produced a copy which customs claimed had been "tampered with."⁶

The result of this ordeal was that Bunsuke's wife was refused entry and Bunsuke was ordered to depart the country within three months. John was not penalised in any overt way though he, too, came under general suspicion. Reports claimed the 'Cow Station' — a large lease of land around the northern beaches of Cairns with Earl Hill at its centre — which John was part-owner of was, in fact, a site for illegal Japanese landings and even subterfuge. Waves of arguments and rebuttals ensued between authorities, local community members, the Nakashibas, and their representatives. The consul-general for Japan suggested that customs officials were making Bunsuke the "victim of misrepresentation," while a petition of over thirty Cairns merchants defended Bunsuke, and Fred C. Hodel asserted that if Bunsuke was to be deported for harbouring a prohibited immigrant, then so too should the wealthy British merchants of Thursday Island who were guilty of the same charges. Unimpressed with the assertion that they were guilty of impropriety, customs authorities hardened their position. It was decided. Bunsuke departed Australia in 1921 for the Aru Islands, and by all accounts did not return.⁷

The Nakashiba affair took place all within the 'great white walls' of Australia and demonstrated that the *Restriction Act* could be applied flexibly, with outcomes ranging from lenient to severe, depending on individuals' circumstances. The three Nakashibas — John, Bunsuke and Wahichi — with their consistent entry, re-entry, and long-term residence in

⁶ Letter from Atlee Hunt to Acting Collector of Customs, 21 January 1921, B. Nakashiba Exemption.

⁷ Copy of "Japanese: Concern in the North," *Daily Mail* (Brisbane), 11 February 1921, Letter from Acting Consul-General, Japan to Secretary, Home and Territories Department, 29 January 1921, Petition to Minister for External Affairs, 28 January 1921, Letter from Fred C. Hodel to The Minister for External Affairs, 11 January 1921, Minute Paper, Alleged Improper Use of Japanese Idents at Thursday Island, 6 May 1921, Telegram, 24 August 1921, B. Nakashiba Exemption.

Australia serve as a clear example of the legislative limits and loopholes that existed under the complex web of the White Australia policy. Entangled within this legislation were various other state and federal laws that were designed to assert control over the entry and participation of non-European migrants. Japanese migrants living in north Queensland both before and after the passing of the *Restriction Act* were varyingly favoured and disadvantaged by the conditions of the White Australia policy. This chapter outlines how Japanese migrants like the Nakashibas were able to migrate to and reside in north Queensland, while still at times facing significant barriers to their full participation in aspects of north Queensland life.

In the half-century prior to the passing of the *Restriction Act*, ‘white men’s nations’ sought to establish frameworks of immigration restriction. Most Australian colonies had attempted to restrict the entry and participation of non-European migrants, but this typically focused restriction on either Chinese people or ‘Asian’ people generally.⁸ Queensland, along with colonies stretching into northern Australia, struggled to reconcile the ideological belief in a White Australia — requiring the exclusion of people judged racially inferior, or non-white — with the need for the perceived abilities of ‘coloured labour’ to support tropical agriculture and pearl shelling in northern Australia. The solution, as McGregor has argued, was that a “local colour line” was figuratively drawn at the Tropic of Capricorn, uneasily sealing off the ideals of an all-white south from the realities of a multiracial northern Australia.⁹ For Japanese migrants, they were able to leave and enter the Queensland colony as they pleased between 1868 and 1893. From the mid-1890s, however, the growing Japanese migrant population became a source of unease, with fears of their economic success in northern Australia and Japan’s growing military ambitions abroad.¹⁰

Building Barriers to Non-European Immigration

The *Restriction Act* was the linchpin for the newly federated nation and its vision for a White Australia. In the decades following its enactment, the White Australia policy — as it became

⁸ Willard, *History of White Australia Policy*, 17.

⁹ McGregor, ‘Drawing the Local Colour Line’.

¹⁰ Bach, *Pearling Industry*, 79; Sissons, ‘Immigration in Australian-Japanese Relations’, 197. Bach asserts that up until 1893 migration restriction applied exclusively in all colonies to Chinese migrants, while Japanese migrants experienced almost no restriction. After Japan’s victory against China in 1895, this military achievement began to demonstrate how far Japan’s military modernisation had gone since the beginning of the Meiji period.

known — was held up as a means of constructing an ideal Australian society. In the minds of the men who imagined and wrote this legislation, they would uphold Australia as the most successful nation of all, untroubled by the perceived racial problems of the US or Britain. Sir Henry Parkes described White Australia as “a policy of the first magnitude to cement society together by the same principles of faith and jurisprudence, the same influence of language and religion, and the same national habits of life.”¹¹ The *Restriction Act* cemented this commitment by enforcing a systematic restriction of undesirable immigrants — specifically *coloured* immigrants — from entering Australia. Australia was not alone in its restriction of Asian or Japanese migration, however. It was among many other ‘self-styled’ white men’s countries, principally Canada, New Zealand, and the US, where divisions between class and geography came together to form deep-seated views of Asian migrants as fundamentally Other. In Australia, anti-Chinese sentiment had been growing since the 1850s gold rushes and led to sweeping anti-Asian immigration policies; Japanese migrants became a casualty of the restrictions, with this large and diverse group categorised as Asian and similarly Other within an imagined White Australia.¹² What federated Australia struggled to account for in its vision, however, was the substantial population of non-white migrants who were already living in northern Australia prior to 1901.

Upon Federation in 1901, the Australian Government inherited Queensland’s delicate balance of immigration restriction and reliance on non-European indentured labour. With the nation placed firmly on one side of the global colour line, northern Australia remained a domestic complexity and highlighted the challenges of drawing a “local colour line.” Northern Australia had long been regarded as empty and underdeveloped, and without non-white immigrants it was feared the development of the region would be stifled, jeopardising Australia’s economic prospects, calling into question the legitimacy of territorial claims, and even leaving the nation open to foreign incursions.¹³ In north Queensland’s case, there were great concerns about undesirable peoples making inroads within the sugar cane and pearl shelling industries that almost exclusively relied on non-European labour. Queensland’s prior arrangements with Japan as part of the 1894 *Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation* seemed a useful avenue for federated Australia to enable a continuing stream of workers judged capable of dealing with tropical conditions. This agreement, signed by Japan and Britain — and offered to Britain’s

¹¹ Parkes as cited in Willard, *History of White Australia Policy*, 190.

¹² Patrick Haid, ‘Reformulating Citizenship: The Nikkei in Canada and Australia’ (PhD Thesis, University of New South Wales, 2011), 43.

¹³ McGregor, ‘Drawing the Local Colour Line’, 329.

colonies, including Queensland — had ended British extraterritoriality in Japan, overturned the first of Japan's 'unequal treaties', and negotiated some small concessions to Japanese migrants within signatory British colonies.¹⁴ All in all, the 1894 agreement had signalled a closer relationship between the British Empire and Japan, including shared commercial privileges and a recognition of Japan as a growing global power.¹⁵ As such, Queensland's decision to enter into this treaty came with some expectations to allow Japanese migration. Negotiations before the treaty came into effect, however, resulted in a mutual agreement to 'reasonably' limit Japanese migration to Queensland. Australia's inheritance and continuation of the treaty after 1901 served to smooth tensions: Britain had been placated in its opposition to open discrimination against any nation; Japan did not feel directly excluded by Australian legislation; and Japan had been maintained as a potentially friendly ally, rather than a feared naval power.

The strategy inherent within the *Restriction Act* from 1901 was therefore to limit the entry of undesirable non-white migrants to the greatest extent diplomatically possible, and when non-white migrants could not be excluded, limit their participation in Australian society. As Prince argues, the legislation worked to exclude not just aliens — people born outside of the British dominions — but also people who had British subject status that were considered undesirable in White Australia.¹⁶ To achieve this end, the *Restriction Act* sat at the centre of a complex web of state and territory legislation that enabled different methods of exclusion — both physically from Australia, but also from rights to work or participate in Australian life — that could carefully and ambiguously sidestep diplomatically or economically damaging situations.¹⁷ The inbuilt complexity of immigration exclusion is neatly summarised by Prince, as follows:

¹⁴ The *Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation* was signed in 1894 and came into force in 1899. The unequal treaties that were ended included the British 1858 *Treaty of Edo* that granted foreigners in Japan the privilege to be tried in their consular courts rather than under Japanese law. Furthermore, commercial privileges were provided to British merchants under the *Treaty of Edo*. This treaty, along with others signed between Japan and other nations, were considered humiliating and 'unequal' by Japan, hence 'unequal treaties.'

¹⁵ I H Nish, 'Japan Reverses the Unequal Treaties: The Anglo-Japanese Commercial Treaty of 1894', *Journal of Oriental Studies* 8, no. 2 (1975): 137–45. Nish argues that the *Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation* was not a sign of friendship between the two nations, but signalled Britain's willingness to do justice to treaty revision in Japan and recognise it as among the 'civilised nations.'

¹⁶ Prince, 'Aliens in Their Own Land', 163–64. In essence, anyone who was not visibly white or European.

¹⁷ Sissons, 'Immigration in Australian-Japanese Relations', 200.

[N]otwithstanding the tight legal barriers against non-white immigration put in place by federal legislation, hundreds of pieces of domestic law were also introduced by the Commonwealth and the States to prevent the small number of non-Europeans officially recorded as remaining in Australia from participating in key aspects of national life ... of some 217 acts, regulations and ordinances introduced across the country between 1901 and 1939 restricting the participation of ‘aliens’, non-Europeans and indigenous people in the Australian community, the vast majority (173) were enacted at State or Territory level. When added to laws enacted before federation by the States (as British colonies), the first as early as 1828, there were at least 300 formal legal barriers to full membership of the community at various times in Australia before World War Two.¹⁸

The complexity and flexibility of non-European exclusion in post-Federation Australia was furthered by its ambiguous language. As Martens has argued, the most debated item of the *Restriction Act* was whether it should make an explicit statement about the types of undesirable migrants covered by the Act. While hardline White Australia advocates, including Federal Labor leader Chris Watson and Labor MP Billy Hughes, sought to name and exclude specific nationalities of undesirable migrants, the Liberal Protectionist Party was more calculated in their approach. Prime Minister Edmund Barton, a member of the latter party, for example, was better informed; the British Colonial Office had advised they were unlikely to approve any legislation that damaged Britain’s international relations.¹⁹ Across the turn of the twentieth century, Britain had been strengthening its relationship with Japan and was considerate of Japan’s attention to national prestige. Naming a specific nation as a source of undesirable immigrants, particularly Japan, was considered unwise and untenable by the British government. As a result, Edmund Barton was among those who were successful in their push for legislating ambiguous language that sought to restrict the entry of any “prohibited immigrant.” This definition described a prohibited immigrant as *any* person who failed the dictation test. Using this method, Australia could restrict the immigration of non-European peoples without appearing to directly discriminate against any particular nation. The term “prohibited immigrant” and eventually “alien” came to be used (and misused) as a legally ambiguous term to exclude any non-white peoples, especially in north Queensland.²⁰

¹⁸ Prince, ‘Aliens in Their Own Land’, 161, 168.

¹⁹ Martens, *Empire and Asian Migration*, 137.

²⁰ Prince, ‘Aliens in Their Own Land’, 3.

The key mechanism of the White Australia policy was therefore the dictation test, as this provided the absolute bar to admission. The test was used not only to enforce the *Restriction Act*, but also other legislation, such as the *Lands Act 1910* (QLD) and the *Sugar Cultivation Act 1913* (QLD).²¹ The test of fifty words dictated to an incoming migrant at the port of disembarkation was a blunt but effective instrument to control — rather than exclude entirely — the entry of Asian migrants. The Australian dictation test was modelled on the Natal Test, which was a method of immigration control employed in southern Africa. In practice, the Natal Test had sought to limit unwanted Indian migrants, but on its face was proposed as a barrier to “impecunious and ignorant immigrants” who “were liable to become a charge upon the Colony” or were perhaps being induced to emigrate without sufficient knowledge.²² At face value, the test was simple: write out fifty dictated words in any prescribed language. Borrowing from the principles of the Natal Test, the dictation test had been adopted by the NSW colonial government as part of the *Coloured Races Restriction and Regulation Act 1896* before its adoption under the *Restriction Act* in 1901.²³ Importantly, the test was not applied to every person who arrived. This inherent flexibility of the test was wielded both against, and in favour of, Japanese migrants depending on the political and diplomatic circumstances. The dictation test was therefore a deceptive device both in its design and application.

Under Section 3(a) of the *Restriction Act*, entry to Australia was prohibited for any person who failed to write out a dictated passage of fifty words. While the test could technically be given to any person arriving in Australia, it was typically only given to select individuals. Additional instructions beyond the prescribed legislation were sent out to customs officers via a series of circulars, urging them to exercise “tact and judgement” in their application of the test to incoming passengers. More explicit instructions were saved for in-person visits by the Customs Department.²⁴ Yarwood argues that while the exact instructions provided to customs officers who conducted these tests remain unclear, early drafts of circulars show the following passages marked for removal (and presumably were delivered to officers in person):

²¹ Prince, 219–20. These were obviously not required at the port of entry but used in the context of these industries. Prince also points out that much of this legislation either required ‘aliens’ or even all ‘persons’ to have first passed the test to undertake certain activities.

²² Joseph Chamberlain, as cited in Martens, *Empire and Asian Migration*, 99.

²³ Martens, 99.

²⁴ Yarwood, *Asian Migration to Australia*, 45–46.

All aboriginal inhabitants of Africa, Asia and Polynesia should be subjected to the test unless otherwise exempted ... The English language will be the one that will be most generally adopted for the purpose of the test, but if, in the opinion of the officer, the immigrant is likely to pass a test in that language and at the same time would, for reasons which the officer would be prepared to state, be an undesirable immigrant, it may be better to adopt a passage from some other language.²⁵

The possibility that the dictation test could be delivered to any incoming passenger, in principle, provided a façade of fair and equitable treatment. Nonetheless, the Japanese government and its representatives offered their criticism of the dictation test and its discrimination against Japanese nationals. Despite this criticism, Edmund Barton maintained — both for Japan’s sake and Britain’s interests — that “there is no discrimination against Japanese subjects that I know of in any Australian legislation.”²⁶ The façade, at least diplomatically, was maintained.

For Australia, the dictation test was not initially effective in limiting the arrival of undesirable migrants. Yarwood explains that the early dictation test passages were fairly easy and roughly equivalent to the first-year dictation test at a high school level. Further, they did not require perfect responses.²⁷ After a few years, however, the dictation test proved its effectiveness in excluding sufficient numbers of undesirable migrants (see Table 1). While the test remained the same, the test’s effectiveness in the years after 1902 did not rest in potential migrants actually failing the test, but in its deterrent value. That few individuals were failing the test was not problematic, because fewer individuals were arriving in Australia (see Table 1). Not only were arriving migrants unenthusiastic at the possibility of being turned away, but many were denied passage by shipping companies who were concerned they might have to carry the costs of onward travel for those refused entry. The dictation test therefore proved to be an effective mechanism for exclusion by subterfuge, as customs authorities reflected in 1929: “The test when applied is used as an absolute bar to admission; but, as a matter of fact, occasion does not arise for the test to be applied to any great extent, as shipping companies refrain from bringing

²⁵ Yarwood, 46.

²⁶ Letter from Japanese Consul Eitaki to Edmund Barton, 21 March 1902, Correspondence with H. Eitaki; Acting Consul General for Japan, 1901/203/1, A8, NAA (hereafter H. Eitaki Correspondence).

²⁷ Yarwood, *Asian Migration to Australia*, 48.

coloured passengers to Australia unless they have authority to land.”²⁸ The dictation test was maintained as an effective method of deterring, rather than thoroughly excluding, undesirable migrants from Australia for many decades.

Table 1.
DICTATION TEST PASS AND FAIL RATES, 1902-1909

	1902	1903	1904	1905	1907	1908	1909
Number failed	618	126	115	104	61	107	107
Number passed	33	13	1	3	0	1	1

SOURCE — A. T. Yarwood, *Asian Migration to Australia: The Background to Exclusion, 1896-1923* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1964), 49.

Customs officers retained almost total discretion in the application of the dictation test, ensuring a flexibility to effectively manage Japanese migration. Nevertheless, customs officers’ discretionary, and even clumsy, administering of the dictation test often made it possible for ‘prohibited immigrants’ to legally opposed their exclusion from Australia. In circumstances where these individuals had sufficient funds and were knowledgeable enough to legally oppose their exclusion from Australia, customs officers often found themselves at a disadvantage.²⁹ Fortunately for the Australian government, there were few cases where these decisions were contested.³⁰ Administrators and parliamentary draftsmen were well aware of these shortcomings in the application of the dictation test but aimed for a broad system of managing and creating a ‘hostile environment’ for — rather than entirely excluding — Asian migration to Queensland and Australia.³¹ As was particularly the case for Japanese migrants, controlled migration rather

²⁸ Commonwealth Year Book of 1929, as cited in Barry York, *Admitted 1901-1946: Immigrants and Others Allowed into Australia Between 1901 and 1946*, Studies in Australian Ethnic History, No. 2 (Canberra: ANU Press, 1993), 4.

²⁹ Yarwood, *Asian Migration to Australia*, 47. Yarwood outlines some cases where people opposed their exclusion on the basis of the dictation test from Australia. In these instances, their case was often successful because customs officers had not applied, nor could they prove they had applied, the dictation test in the correct way or at the correct time.

³⁰ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 92; Mr. and Mrs. Shigematsu, 1909-10, 1910/5151, A1, NAA (hereafter Mr & Mrs Shigematsu).

³¹ Yarwood, *Asian Migration to Australia*, 67.

than outright exclusion became the general status quo under which Japanese nationals could still migrate to Australia.

Restricting Naturalisation and Civic Participation

Where total exclusion could not be achieved, particularly in the case of Japanese migrants, authorities instead focused on creating hostile conditions for Japanese and other non-European migrants. Particular aspects of Australian life were made virtually inaccessible to Japanese migrants and there were a number of hurdles to long-term residence.³² Given the gender imbalance of migrants, who were predominantly male, denying residence to their families and wives was one of the earliest tools used to discourage unwanted migrants from remaining in Australia for any extended period of time. As Yarwood describes, “it was anticipated that denied the comforts of family life, discriminated against in respect of naturalisation, franchise and pension rights, they [Asian migrants] would be impelled to shake off the dust as they left these ungrateful shores.”³³ These various “disabilities” of aliens within the Commonwealth were a point of focus for authorities, with the Prime Minister’s Department even compiling a detailed list of these limitations upon aliens in all states and territories during the 1920s.³⁴ Within this legislation, a creative and ambiguous vocabulary was used to describe those migrants from whom certain rights were excluded to create a façade of fair treatment. This diverse and ambiguous vocabulary included, “Asiatic and African aliens”, “persons of any Asiatic race”, “Aboriginal natives of Australia, Asia, Africa or the Islands of the Pacific”, “Chinese or people of other

³² Prince, ‘Aliens in Their Own Land’, 276–79; Sissons, ‘Immigration in Australian-Japanese Relations’, 200.

³³ Yarwood, *Asian Migration to Australia*, 79. This reliance on marriage as a pre-requisite for the entry of Japanese families, however, seems to have overlooked a Japanese law confirmed by the Consul-General for Japan in 1928 that “does not make the presence of both parties necessary for the valid establishment of the union, the only necessary condition being to register the marriage at the office of the proper authorities.” This clarified that a Japanese man while in Australia might marry a woman still in Japan, only requiring that the marriage be registered at the local authorities. See, for example, Letter from I.M. Tokugawa, Consul-General for Japan to F.J. Quinlan, Assistant Secretary, Home and Territories Department, 18 May 1928, Japanese Marriage Law, 1928/5508, A1, NAA (hereafter Japanese Marriage Law).

³⁴ Report on the Disabilities of Aliens and Coloured Persons Within the Commonwealth and its Territories, 1922, File 1, Series 1: General Correspondence, 1918-1925, Box 1, Piesse Papers (hereafter Report on the Disabilities of Aliens).

Asiatic race”, and “persons other than those of European descent.” In Queensland, to avoid a rejection of legislation by imperial authorities, there was deliberate use of the word “alien” on its own without explicit reference to people of another race, but nevertheless with a clear intention to exclude non-Europeans, especially those of Chinese background.³⁵

From 1867, naturalisation was made virtually inaccessible to all aliens living in Queensland. Denied naturalisation, many Japanese migrants were unable to enjoy particular rights and freedoms that were reserved for naturalised subjects. Under the *Aliens Act 1867* (QLD), the requirements to become naturalised were described as such:

Asiatic and African aliens to be married and have resided three years in colony. No Asiatic or African alien shall be entitled to be naturalized as a British subject unless such alien shall be married and shall have resided in the colony for a period of three years: Provided also that the wife of the said alien shall at the time of his being so naturalised reside within the colony.³⁶

This clause excluded any unmarried individuals from becoming naturalised. Where a Japanese man was married, there were further requirements that he, along with his spouse, had resided in the colony for at least three years. Even then, sole discretion lay with the Minister.³⁷ It is unsurprising, then, that Bunsuke’s repeated return to Australia was stopped when he asked for his wife to also obtain entry. Nearly all Japanese migrants who arrived were single men who often returned to Japan at periodic intervals between contracts, thereby reducing their continual residence in Queensland. These individuals were referred to as sojourners. Given the particular circumstances of Japanese migrants, the 1867 *Aliens Act* created a near impenetrable barrier to naturalisation but did not explicitly outlaw it. This was by design; the Act advanced the goals of a White Australia without causing conflict with Britain’s international interests. By denying the entry of wives and by closely documenting the movements of people arriving and departing from Australia between contracts, naturalisation became near impossible. This barrier to naturalisation then also became a barrier to many other activities in Queensland that were reserved only for British subjects or naturalised individuals. Voting and owning property, for example, was

³⁵ Prince, ‘Aliens in Their Own Land’, 168.

³⁶ *Aliens Act 1867* (QLD). S. 5.

³⁷ Yarwood, *Asian Migration to Australia*, 68.

available only to naturalised aliens and British subjects.³⁸ So, while the claim that the arrival of Japanese migrants in the pre-Federation era in Queensland was almost entirely unrestricted, their participation in all aspects of Queensland life were often severely limited and were designed to create conditions whereby remaining in Queensland for any extended period of time would be extremely undesirable.

If an alien were somehow able to navigate the obstacles to naturalisation, the rights reserved to a British subject would still be inaccessible to them as a naturalised alien. While technically naturalisation was supposed to involve the renunciation of all former allegiances and the attainment of the same obligations and rights of a natural-born subject, non-European migrants were unable to move beyond the status of an alien, whether naturalised or not.³⁹ Dutton identifies under Section 11 of the *Nationality Act 1920* (Cth) that the Commonwealth and States reserved the power to restrict certain “rights, powers and privileges” of naturalised British subjects.⁴⁰ Prince agrees, arguing that earlier laws such as the *Naturalization Act 1903* (Cth) restricted aliens on a technicality:

[A]lthough the *Naturalization Act 1903* purported to confer equal rights on all people (including non-Europeans) who became subjects through the process of naturalisation, the ability of non-European residents to move beyond the legal status of ‘alien’ through naturalisation was prevented under section 5 which prohibited ‘aboriginal natives of Asia, Africa, or the Islands of the Pacific, excepting New Zealand’ from becoming subjects.”⁴¹

These laws that barred aliens, defined in the racial sense, from accessing the rights of natural-born subjects were codified within the tangled web of White Australia policy. This intricate balance often meant that individuals who were legally natural-born British subjects, for example the Australian-born children of Japanese migrants, were still subjected to discriminatory laws designed for aliens. The extreme extent of this can be seen where Australian-born people of Japanese descent were surveilled and classified as aliens in the lead up to, and during, WWII. In

³⁸ Charles Archibald Price, *The Great White Walls Are Built: Restrictive Immigration to North America and Australasia, 1836-1888* (ANU Press, 1974), 92. *Aliens Bill 1861* had already established that ownership of property was a right reserved only to British subjects.

³⁹ Dutton, *One of Us?*, 13; Prince, ‘Aliens in Their Own Land’, 146.

⁴⁰ Dutton, *One of Us?*, 12; Ilma Martinuzzi O’Brien, ‘Citizenship, Rights and Emergency Powers in Second World War Australia’, *Australian Journal of Politics & History* 53, no. 2 (2007): 208; Prince, ‘Aliens in Their Own Land’, 165.

⁴¹ Prince, ‘Aliens in Their Own Land’, 164–65.

some cases, these Australian-born individuals were required to apply for naturalisation.⁴² Evidently then, naturalisation was virtually inaccessible to Japanese migrants, but even for the few fortunate individuals who overcame impossible barriers or *nisei* born in Australia, naturalisation meant very little within the landscape of White Australia.

Even those Japanese migrants who were granted naturalisation were typically denied the right to vote under the *Franchise Act 1902* (Cth). This law stated that “no aboriginal native of Australia, Asia, Africa or the islands of the Pacific (except New Zealand)” was entitled to be an elector unless such a person already had the right to vote under State law.⁴³ In one case, Jiro Muramatsu, a Japanese migrant who arrived in Australia in 1893 and was naturalised in Victoria in 1899, lodged an appeal to the High Court of Australia to be able to vote in federal elections. Jiro argued to the High Court that since he had been previously registered on the West Australian electoral roll, being a naturalised British subject, he had the right to vote and register for Commonwealth elections. Justice J. Higgins, however, ruled against Jiro on the basis of the exclusion of any “aboriginal native of Australia, Asia, Africa, or the Islands of the Pacific” from voting. Jiro asserted that the Ainu, with whom he did not identify, were the original inhabitants of Japan and he did not fit this definition. The Justice, however, referred to the definition of “aboriginal people” as being any people who dwelled in a country prior to the arrival of Europeans and so, regardless of the history of Japan, the European perspective deemed Jiro as an “aboriginal native of ... Asia.”⁴⁴ Jiro’s dismissal from the right to vote in Australia as a naturalised person is indicative of the hostile conditions created for Asian migrants, including migrants from Japan. Even where people of relative wealth, affluence, education, and legal power were able to challenge these limits to their civic participation, the legal complexities of White Australia often proved an insurmountable challenge.

⁴² Prince, 163–67. Prince argues that despite the specific legal definition of ‘alien’ as a non-British subject within Australia, this term was more often used in the racial sense within political and legal contexts.

⁴³ Prince, 166; Report on the Disabilities of Aliens. Under the *Local Authorities Act 1902* (QLD) and the Commonwealth *Franchise Act 1902*, Section 3, they were also unable to become a member of the Senate or House of representatives in federal Parliament or to become a member of (or vote in) a local election.

⁴⁴ Extract from Commonwealth Law Reports 1923, Judgements of Justice J. Higgins, Jiro Muramats – A Native of Japan, Disqualification under Section 39(S), Appeal before High Court of Australia, E1945/1 PART 1 Attachment, A406, NAA; Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 92.

The ownership, or even leasing, of land was another barrier that limited not only residence but many kinds of commercial activities in Queensland. The *Lands Act 1910* (QLD) prohibited aliens from owning or leasing land, including sub-letting in Queensland, unless they had first passed a dictation test in any language that the Secretary for Agriculture might specify. The Act also allowed that, even if an alien were to acquire a selection of land, their title and interest in the land would be forfeited if they did not become naturalised within five years.⁴⁵ These restrictions somewhat eased under the *Leases to Aliens Restriction Act 1912* (QLD), preventing any alien leasing a parcel of land greater than five acres without first passing a dictation test. Despite this slight liberalisation of the law, owning land or farming was still difficult.⁴⁶ Prince convincingly argues that visual appearance and skin colour was used instead of the law's definitions to determine who would be prohibited as aliens from owning or leasing land; government officials felt no hesitation in discarding or ignoring the law for the purpose of racial exclusion.⁴⁷

Similar laws barred migrants from receiving the pension, acquiring liquor licenses, or even participating in mail carriage services.⁴⁸ This racial discrimination was an ongoing source of grievance and tension in Australia-Japan relations, but was rarely sufficient grounds for British intervention. Even legislation that did not necessarily strictly affect Japanese migrants, but was clearly discriminatory — such as the *Postal and Telegraphic Bill 1901* (Cth), which barred Japanese migrants from an industry in which few, perhaps none, worked — was a source of offence.⁴⁹ The Japanese government had threatened that, “if they [the Immigration and Postal Bills] become law [this passing of law] will compel Japan Mail Steamship Company to discontinuance of service and generally will greatly affect growth of commerce between Japan and Australia.”⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Prince, ‘Aliens in Their Own Land’, 218. *Land Act 1910*, 1 Geo V, No 15, in Queensland Historical Acts, http://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/qld/hist_act/lao19101gyn15157/, Section 59 (b) and 62 and 94 (a)

⁴⁶ Prince, 219–20.

⁴⁷ Prince, 226.

⁴⁸ See, for example Report on the Disabilities of Aliens; Queensland legislation affecting Japanese and other Asiatics, 1911/20007, A1, NAA. In both sources the Japanese Consul protested against Queensland's Liquor Bill in 1911.

⁴⁹ Protest by Japanese Consul on white labour clause of Postal and Telegraphic Bill, 1901/101/8, A8, NAA (hereafter Protest on Postal Bill).

⁵⁰ Telegram from F.S. Campbell, Private Secretary, London, to Government Offices, Melbourne, 18 October 1901, H. Eitaki Correspondence.

While the dynamics of the Australia-Britain-Japan relationship often motivated Australian concessions, as will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Two, these smaller concerns rarely elicited any British interventions on behalf of Japan. Various barriers existed to aspects of life that might be conducive to permanent settlement, but many migrants, nonetheless, remained living in Australia for many decades.

Japanese Pearl Shell and Sugar Labourers

The dependence of the pearl shelling industry — and to a lesser, but not insignificant extent, the sugar industry — on Japanese labour left the post-Federation Australian government in a precarious position. Despite various attempts to control and limit the participation of Japanese workers in the pearl shelling industry, they “came to enjoy the unique privilege of becoming Australia’s sole exception to the policy of excluding indentured coloured labour.”⁵¹ Historians have disagreed about whether this special exemption challenged or affirmed the ideals of White Australia. Bach argues that Australia “laid itself open to charges of insincerity when it allowed aliens to enter the country as workers, but refused them the right to share in the material rewards of their labours,” while Philipps affirms that protecting white labourers from dangerous work was a commitment to White Australia ideals.⁵² Nonetheless, the decision to exempt pearl shell workers from the *Restriction Act* ultimately kept the commercial interests of the industry within Australia’s control and waters.⁵³ The exemption also facilitated the controlled and continual arrival of Japanese migrants to work and live within north Queensland.

Prior to Federation, the Queensland government had limited success in managing the arrival of Japanese workers to the far northern pearl shelling industry. As the numbers of Japanese migrants in the industry grew in the period between 1889 and 1892, European master pearlers feared that Japanese migrants would cooperate to buy, lease, or hire luggers and possibly cut them out of the industry entirely. These master pearlers complained that Japanese-owned

⁵¹ Philipps, ‘Plenty More Little Brown Man’, 58. Under 4(j) of the *Restriction Act* the pearl shelling industry was exempt from the main provisions of the dictation test.

⁵² Bach, *Pearling Industry*, 272; Philipps, ‘Plenty More Little Brown Man’, 59.

⁵³ Bach, ‘Pearlshelling Industry and White Australia Policy’, 20. The pearl shellers threatened to shift to nearby Dutch-controlled islands and work outside Australian waters if their right to employ Japanese workers was limited. Australia was left with the decision to either exclude Japanese migrants and thereby forfeit any profit from the pearl shelling industry or attempt to retain the industry under its regulation by allowing entry to a controlled number of Japanese migrants.

boats were using unfair methods to drive the “white pioneers” out of the industry and were depleting the pearl beds.⁵⁴ It was at this time that a permit system was introduced under the *Pearl-shell and Bêche-de-Mer Fishery Acts 1881*, modelled on legislation from Western Australia, where a permit was required to own or lease a lugger. Permits were, as a matter of policy, denied to all Asian migrants. European master pearlers continued to perceive a Japanese monopoly of pearl shell diving, complaining that Japanese were “evading the spirit of the legislation.” In 1894, the apparent influx of Japanese migrants and their stronghold within the industry caused growing alarm. At the time, approximately 1000 Japanese men were engaged in the industry in the Torres Strait — forming the largest non-European racial group within the pearl shelling industry and twice the number of European residents on the Island — with twenty-two Japanese-owned and forty-six Japanese-leased luggers operating out of a total of 231 licensed boats in the industry.⁵⁵ Indeed, there were also a number of people of many nationalities and ethnicities working within the industry. Often men from the Malay Peninsula and the Philippines were dress divers, while many Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people were swimming divers.⁵⁶ Broadly in the Torres Strait pearl shelling industry, there were migrant workers from many parts of Asia.⁵⁷ An amendment in March 1898 to the *Pearl-shell and Bêche-de-Mer Fishery Act 1881* (QLD) (hereafter *Pearl-shell Act*), however, further restricted aliens from renting boats or being issued boat licenses to reduce their influence within the industry. While this legislative manoeuvre appeared to indiscriminately apply to all aliens, the primary effects were on the Japanese workers of the Torres Strait.

Further policy changes in 1898 required Japanese workers coming to the pearl shelling industry to first obtain special approval to enter Queensland.⁵⁸ The Japanese consul pursued the issue of entry into Queensland with authorities. A terse letter sent by the Japanese consul in November 1899 concedes that mutual agreements had been reached to limit Japanese migration

⁵⁴ Bach, *Pearling Industry*; Bach, ‘Pearlshelling Industry and White Australia Policy’, 207; Sissons, *Immigration Question*, 24–25.

⁵⁵ Ganter, *The Pearl-Shellers of Torres Strait*, 105–6.

⁵⁶ Dress divers refers to divers who used a diving suit, while swimming divers refers to those who did not use a diving suit.

⁵⁷ See, for example, Bach, *Pearling Industry*, 279–89; Steve Mullins, ‘Company Boats, Sailing Dinghies and Passenger Fish: Fathoming Torres Strait Islander Participation in the Maritime Economy’, *Labour History*, no. 103 (2012): 39–58.

⁵⁸ Ganter, *The Pearl-Shellers of Torres Strait*, 106–7; Sissons, ‘The Japanese in the Australian Pearling Industry’, 16.

to Queensland under the *Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation* but stated that the consul could not fathom why all Japanese applications to enter Queensland were being rejected. Consul Iijima politely asserted his exasperation, claiming “the suitability of Japanese labourers to these employments is abundantly proved by the satisfaction expressed by employers, and the desire to procure them.” In negotiating the number of Japanese migrants allowed entry, Consul Iijima remarked: “I am unable to learn on what basis this proportion is arrived at or how the limit or maximum becomes known and I will be thankful if you will be good enough to enlighten me on these points.”⁵⁹ Queensland eventually relented and agreed to accept migrants up to the total of 3247, which was the total Japanese population in 1898.⁶⁰

These negotiations between Queensland and Japan set the tone for the fickle and contrarian relationship between these two governments in the coming decades. With the economic benefits of Japanese trade and labour, particularly in the pearl shelling and sugar cane industries, Queensland sought to balance these benefits against its racial ideals.⁶¹ The opportunity had arrived in 1894, when Britain offered each of the Australian colonies the choice to enter into the *Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation*. But it would be another two years before the treaty was considered. The 1896 Conference of Premiers in Sydney, then, was dominated by two separate but interrelated discussions. The premiers firstly considered whether the Australian colonies should seek to extend migration restriction to all Asian migrants; and secondly whether they should sign the *Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation*, which would create favourable trading conditions with Japan but would also require a freedom of Japanese migration to Australia.⁶² On the second point, all premiers unanimously agreed to reject the treaty, which provided a clear answer on the former point of discussion. Behind the scenes, however,

⁵⁹ Letter from K. Iijima, Japanese Consulate, Townsville to Chief Secretary, Queensland, 6 November 1899, Correspondence re Japanese Immigration into Queensland including returns of Japanese arrivals and departures, Item 861852, SRS 5384, QSA (hereafter Japanese Immigration and Returns).

⁶⁰ Sissons, ‘The Japanese in the Australian Pearl Industry’, 16. This was a ceiling number and numbers entering could not exceed those who had departed. There was also a limit of twenty-five Japanese migrants arriving per ship. Furthermore, requests made by white master pearlers were the only applications typically approved.

⁶¹ Armstrong, ‘Aspects of Japanese Immigration’, 7.

⁶² Sissons, ‘First Phase’, 85–86. Sissons notes that increasing numbers of contract labourers each year since 1892 had caused concern. In 1894, Britain had signed the *Anglo-Japanese Agreement of Commerce and Navigation* in a bid to secure their alliance with Japan and its growing industrial and naval power. All Australian colonies were given the option to also sign the treaty.

Queensland had already entered into negotiations with Japan, tersely discussing the possibility of Queensland limiting Japanese migration. These conversations behind closed doors remained secret until 1899, however, with some historians suggesting that a simple miscommunication — involving missed letters — leading up to the 1896 conference had influenced Queensland's original vote to reject the treaty.⁶³ Nevertheless, by 1897 Queensland had agreed to enter into the treaty with Japan on the proviso a more stringent restriction of Japanese migrants would be enforced.⁶⁴

In a habit that continued after Federation, Queensland followed its signing of the treaty with a series of separate legislative amendments that would limit the participation of Japanese migrants in Queensland life, particularly in the pearl shelling industry. The introduction of the *Pearl, Oyster and Marine Products Regulations Supplementary Bill* in December 1898 meant that no alien could acquire a license to own or lease a pearl shell lugger. With the treaty still in place, this counter-legislation denied the principles and spirit of the treaty. Outrage over this 1898 bill led to a reaction from the Japanese Association on Thursday Island. This group of workers petitioned against the bill, citing that it was specifically injurious to Japanese workers:

It is really evident that the object of this Law is to drive Japanese entirely away from the Pearl Fishing Industry ... Therefore Japanese alone are injured by the law ... The action of Queensland in disregarding the most favoured nation clause of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty which is in operation and to which it has itself acceded and not allowing Japanese to be naturalised is illegal and in violation of the Treaty.⁶⁵

Queensland, however, did not relent. Aside from a shift in 1905 to restrict Japanese arrivals in the pearl shelling industry to replace only numbers of departing workers, the following decades of tussle over Japanese involvement in the pearl shelling industry attempted to reduce their perceived grasp on the industry. Queensland remained the battlefield for controlling Japanese workers arriving to work in the pearl shelling industry and, despite Royal Commissions in 1908 and 1913, Japanese migrants continued to benefit from the *Restriction Act* exemption for the industry for entry into Australia. Both the 1908 and the 1913 Royal Commissions — although the latter's report and recommendations were not released until 1916 — sought to investigate the

⁶³ Sissons, *Immigration Question*, 28.

⁶⁴ Japan agreed to this requirement as they were already uninclined to encourage the migration of Japanese nationals and so agreed to this condition.

⁶⁵ Translation of Memorandum of the Association of Japanese in Australia, 8 August 1899, Japanese Immigration and Returns.

depletion of pearl shell beds in the Torres Strait, how to discourage aliens working within the industry, and importantly, how white workers might be encouraged to take up pearl shelling. While both Royal Commissions recommended various regulatory changes, it had little effect on the presence of Japanese workers within the industry.⁶⁶

While no other industry experienced the same total exemption from the *Restriction Act* as the pearl shelling industry, other agricultural industries in north Queensland received some beneficial exemptions that also enabled Japanese migrants to live and work in the region. Japanese migrants who had been contracted to work in the sugar industry prior to Federation were able to remain in the region even after 1901, with many of them going on to become farmers and business owners.⁶⁷ The *Sugar Cultivation Regulations* of 1913, however, prohibited “any person who has not first obtained...a certificate of having passed the dictation test in any language directed by the Secretary for Agriculture” from cultivating or being employed in, or in connection with, the cultivation or manufacture of sugar cane.⁶⁸ Under the regulations, however, it was possible for Japanese migrants to gain exemption through either “long residence within Queensland or the Commonwealth,” or “any other circumstances satisfactory to the Secretary for Agriculture.”⁶⁹ A report compiled in 1922 suggested that a total of 1570 aliens had been granted an exemption, 357 of these being Japanese migrants.⁷⁰ Japanese migrants were still subject to the wide array of White Australia exclusion, but often found ways to navigate this tangled web.

⁶⁶ J. Mackay, H.A.C. Douglas, G.H. Bennett, *Report Together with the Minutes of Proceedings, Minutes of Evidence Taken before the Commission and Appendices of the Royal Commission Appointed to Inquire into the Working of the Pearl-Shell and Beche-De-Mer Industries* (hereafter cited as 1908 RC), (Brisbane: Government Printer, 1908); F.W. Bamford, W.J. McWilliams, W. Maloney, H. Gregory, W. Maloney, *Royal Commission on the Pearl-Shelling Industry, Together with Minutes of Evidence, Appendixes, and Indices* (hereafter cited as 1913 RC), (Victoria: Government Printer, 1913).

⁶⁷ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 32. For more, see Chapter Three and Chapter Five.

⁶⁸ Prince, ‘Aliens in Their Own Land’, 228–31. Interestingly, this legislation was only given royal assent when it was confirmed that the dictation test would not be used to exclude Italians or other Europeans which was provided under section 3 of the legislation.

⁶⁹ Copy of Queensland Government Gazette, 16 October 1913, p. 990, Queensland Sugar Cultivation Act 1913. Discrimination Against Japanese, 1920/5592, A1, NAA.

⁷⁰ Circular outlining nationalities of aliens engaged and employed in the cultivation of sugar in Queensland, SRS6041/1/161, QSA. Japanese migrants were the third largest racial group to receive exemptions, with 518 Chinese migrants and 466 Polynesians also receiving exemptions.

Finding a Way Around

In 1904, the Japanese Government's persistent diplomacy and pressure saw a Passport Agreement reached with Australia.⁷¹ Historian Neville Meaney has referred to this as a "Gentleman's Agreement,"⁷² indicating this was an informal agreement, as had been the case in the US. The Japanese Passport agreement was formalised between Australia and Japan under Section four of the *Restriction Act*.⁷³ On 10 August 1904, the Minister for External Affairs informed the Japanese consul-general that any bona fide Japanese merchants, students, or tourists who desired to visit Australia would be admitted to the Commonwealth provided they possessed a passport issued by the Japanese Government. This passport provided an exemption from the dictation test and was limited to a period of twelve months. Nearly all requests for extension, much as had been the case for John and Bunsuke Nakashiba, were granted. Japan was the first Asian country to make this style of agreement with Australia under the *Restriction Act* but was later followed by agreements with China and India. Even in later decades where multiple passport exemptions existed, Japan accounted for the largest group of passport exemptions, with 138 people granted entry with passports in 1920 alone (See Appendix 1).⁷⁴

The Japanese Passport system, unlike the *Restriction Act*, was used as a method to control rather than exclude Japanese migrants. While there was some degree of imprecision and ambiguity in the system of issuing passports and the terms of agreement between Japan and Australia, it was a generally effective process that had created the desired effect of controlling

⁷¹ Martens, *Empire and Asian Migration*, 143; Oliver, 'Interpreting "Japanese Activities"', 36. For further discussion of Australia-Japan diplomacy, see Chapter Two.

⁷² Meaney, *Search for Security*, 130.

⁷³ Under Section 4 prescribed in No. 17 of 1905, an Act to amend the *Immigration Restriction Act*, 1901 it was stated that, "If the Minister notifies by notice in the Gazette that an arrangement has been made with the Government of any country regulating the admission to the Commonwealth of the subjects or citizens of that country, the subjects or citizens of that country shall not, while the notice continues to have effect, be required to pass the dictation test."

⁷⁴ Pacific Branch, Prime Minister's Department, Report on Immigration Restriction the Passport Arrangements with Japan, China, India and Other Countries, 882/2/67, File 1, Series 2: Immigration and White Australia, 1915-1925, Piesse Papers. These individuals were not granted a CEDT (Form 21), but the presentation of their passport at the port of arrival was used to exempt them from the dictation test and thereby allow their landing in Australia.

Japanese migration. Sissons suggests there may have been issues with the system of Japanese-provided passports, where provincial authorities in Japan that issued passports might not have properly heeded government instructions.⁷⁵ This may have been the case for Mitsu Shigematsu and her husband, who were granted Japanese passports for “commercial purposes” in 1909 but were found to be working at a Japanese laundry in Atherton; this gaffe was only settled after the Japanese government’s swift apology, a drawn out court case, and the couple’s subsequent deportation.⁷⁶

Aside from a Japanese passport, a Certificate of Exemption from the Dictation Test (CEDT) was the primary mechanism to, as the name suggests, gain exemption from the dictation test to aliens wishing to enter Australia. A CEDT ensured that any alien who was naturalised or domiciled in Australia — any individual with a continuous residence longer than three years — would be able to leave the country and return without being required to take the dictation test. These certificates were another mechanism for strictly controlling entry of aliens into Australia under the *Restriction Act*, but the CEDTs’ existence, and the extensive archival records their administration generated, demonstrate the significant pre-existing population of aliens resident in Australia prior to 1901. Yarwood describes how CEDTs were eventually used as proof of domicile, given that Form 21 was initially named a Certificate of Domicile, before its later renaming as a Certificate of Exemption sometime around 1904.⁷⁷

While the application of the *Restriction Act* was often inconsistent, given the requirement for many British subjects to also apply for CEDTs, Yarwood documents the shift from a limited granting of CEDTs in 1901 through to the more generous supply of certificates by March 1903. From this date, “it became the general rule for applications to be approved so long as evidence of good character and of five years’ residence could be produced.”⁷⁸ Any person, including Japanese migrants, who could prove residence in Australia since 1898 or earlier was therefore eligible for a CEDT if they so wished. CEDTs generally only granted a window of three years within which individuals could return to Australia, but Japanese migrants frequently had the diplomatic backing for continual extensions.⁷⁹ This was often the case for children of Japanese

⁷⁵ Sissons, ‘Immigration in Australian-Japanese Relations’, 194–95.

⁷⁶ Letter from Atlee Hunt, Secretary of Department of External Affairs to Edward Foxall, Secretary to Japanese Consulate-General, 10 May 1909, Mr & Mrs Shigematsu.

⁷⁷ Yarwood, *Asian Migration to Australia*, 67.

⁷⁸ Yarwood, 69–70.

⁷⁹ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 64.

migrants sent to Japan for education, as well as merchants such as Hosaki Araki.⁸⁰ Interestingly, Sophie Loy-Wilson shows that Chinese migrant storekeepers would often sponsor new staff for exemption to enter Australia, and would often use the prestige of their companies to request exemption visas for staff in smaller stores in towns like Innisfail and Townsville.⁸¹ Importantly, these practices show the significance of relationships and representation to navigate the administrative barriers to migration. While there is no clear indication of this practice among Japanese storekeepers, certainly there were some similarities as most extensions were granted with the support of the Japanese consul. Evidently, these CEDT's indicate a consistent flow of Japanese migrants both in and out of Australia, including new and returning individuals, for many decades even after the passing of the *Restriction Act*.

Conclusions

The White Australia policy and its encompassing legislation — particularly the *Restriction Act* — formed part of an elaborate system of immigration control in Queensland. This legislation, which began developing in the nineteenth century in Queensland with many processes and elements adapted by the federated government in 1901, was a system of exclusion and control that was inherently flexible and discretionary. As a result of this policy, many Japanese migrants were limited in their entry into and participation in Australian life. Japanese migrants, however, also benefitted from the many exemptions built within the *Restriction Act*, whether as contract labourers in the pearl shelling and sugar cane industries, under the Japanese Passport Agreement, or in recognition of their domicile in Australia. Life in Australia, however, was designed to be hostile and difficult for Japanese, and other immigrants considered ‘undesirable’. Nonetheless, many individuals, as this thesis will illustrate, were able to build substantial lives, communities, connections, families, and businesses within north Queensland.

The effect of this complex web of legislation and exemptions was that many Japanese migrants were able to enter, leave, return to, and remain in Australia for many decades between

⁸⁰ Tsuriyi Shiosaki, CEDT (hereafter CEDT), 30 July 1914, 158/26, J2483, NAA; Hosaku Araki, CEDT, 13 September 1916, 219/91, J2483, NAA. Tsuriyi's CEDT was extended on three separate occasions, each for a period of three years “by endorsement.” Hosaku was granted an extension of three years.

⁸¹ Loy-Wilson, ‘Rural Geographies and Chinese Empires’, 418. Please note that in 1910, the town of Geraldton in far north Queensland was renamed Innisfail. For clarity and consistency, this town will be referred to as Innisfail.

1880 and 1941. It was a minority of Japanese labourers — in both the pearl shelling and sugar cane industries — who considered themselves only transient workers. As a result of remaining in one location for an extended period of time, Japanese migrants developed deeper connections with north Queensland. These connections, whether developed intentionally or not, gave these individuals more reason to reside in Australia for longer periods of time and aided their ability to remain in Australia. As seen in Japanese migrants' diplomacy, and later their fervent employment, businesses, families, and community involvement, the White Australia policy could only go so far in restricting and controlling the lives of Nikkei in north Queensland

Chapter Two: Local Diplomacy and National Negotiation in the Australia-Japan Relationship

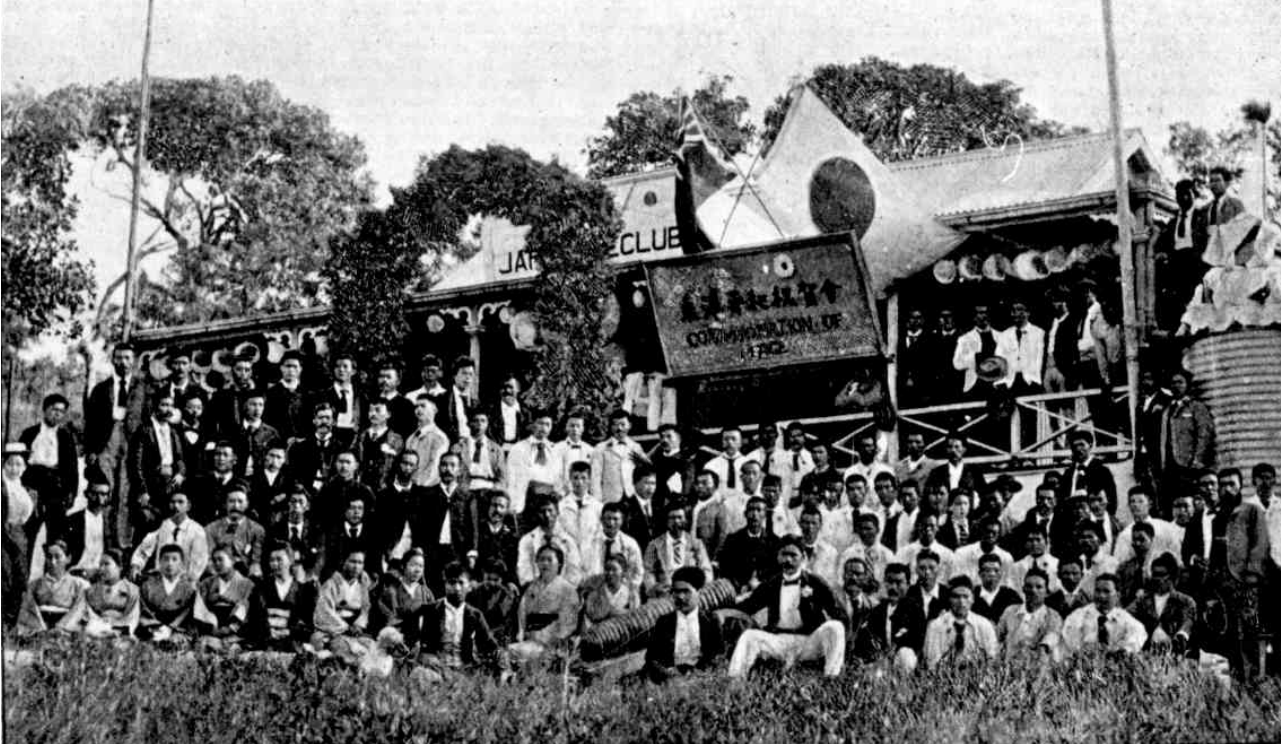


Image 4. A group photo of people outside the Japanese Association on Thursday Island, 1895. Clearly visible are Japanese flags above the entryway. (Image courtesy of Trove, NLA: “The Commemoration of Peace,” *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 13 July 1895, 33.)

On a Friday afternoon in February 1904, a middle-aged Japanese man boarded a local train at Ripple Creek near Ingham that was headed for nearby Lucinda. He had finished up his work as an inspector — responsible for supervising and ensuring the working conditions of Japanese sugar cane workers in the area — and as an officer of the Japanese Imperial Army, was on his way to assist in Japan’s ongoing war efforts against Russia.¹ As the man made his way towards

¹ Letter from Herbert Bowden, Bowden Brothers & Co., Ltd, to John Douglas, Government Resident, Thursday Island, 13 April 1899, Correspondence re. Japanese immigration into Queensland, Item 861850, SRS 5384, QSA. Bowden’s letter provides a clear explanation of the role of Japanese Inspectors. Appointed by the emigration companies, the inspector’s duty was “to see that the men

the front of the train to sit among other ‘ordinary passengers’, he was accosted by one of the train guards and ordered to move to one of the back compartments of the train. The section he was intending to sit in was reserved for passengers typically of British or European heritage, while all other non-European people were required to remain together in the less desirable carriages at the back of the train. Embarrassed and insulted, the Japanese officer acquiesced, but fumed silently at the indignity.

After disembarking, word quickly spread of his ill treatment. Mr. R. G. Johnson, the acting chairman of the Hinchinbrook Shire Council, likely sensed an impending furore and wired the Japanese officer the following day, extending his sincere apologies for the tramway official’s actions. By then, the news had already reached Japanese Consul Tayui in Townsville, who expressed his extreme displeasure at the mistreatment of a Japanese national. He demanded reassurance that there would be no repeat of this occurrence. At the time of this incident, Japan’s status as a rising global and military power was only being cemented by its performance in the war with Russia. Japan’s victory against the Russian state was yet to come, but politicians and diplomats of these years already understood the importance of maintaining Japan as a friend rather than a potentially dangerous foe. Eager to smooth over the diplomatic drama, local newspapers reported on the incident, describing it as a “misunderstanding of a regrettable nature”. The concerns surrounding this incident carried over a number of months, with the Hinchinbrook Shire Council offering further apologies, the Premier of Queensland addressing the Japanese consul’s concerns, and even the Commonwealth Government acknowledging this had been an “insult to an officer of a friendly power.”²

The attentiveness at all levels of government to a local incident that occurred in north Queensland is indicative of the diplomatic power held by the Japanese community and its consular representatives throughout the region. The continuous presence of Japanese migrants in north Queensland was both a cause, and a consequence of, ongoing and direct diplomatic relations through the Japanese consulate and the various authorities in Australia. While the arrival of Japanese migrants in the mid-1880s led to the Japanese government’s interest in the region and the development of diplomatic relations, it was not until 1894 that they were formalised through the *Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation*. This treaty further

faithfully carry out their contracts and that employer fulfills his obligations ... [he] has to settle all disputes, and report same to the proper authorities in Japan.”

² “Local and General,” *Evening Telegraph* (Charters Towers) (hereafter *ET*), 4 March 1904, 2; Vidonja Balanzategui, *Herbert River Story*, 122.

cemented relations between Japan and Australia. This chapter examines the role of the Japanese consuls and emphasises the importance of their diplomatic approaches to matters that most affected relations in north Queensland.

The numerous exemptions and concessions granted to Japanese migrants, as discussed in the previous chapter, characterise the more formal treatment of Japanese migrants by state and federal governments. In this chapter, a new layer of localised persistence and strength of Japanese diplomacy is added to the discussion, revealing further depth to these negotiations and relationships. While Australia's perception of Japan as a 'friendly power' was an important factor in the granting of these concessions, the persistence and strength of Japanese diplomacy in this area also played a significant role. Japanese diplomacy operated at several levels in Australian society during this period, making use of both Australia's relationships with other nations, and dealing closely with domestic affairs in Australia. The most significant development in these diplomatic relations between Australia and Japan was the establishment of the Japanese consulate in Townsville — the first official Japanese consulate in Australia staffed by Japanese diplomats — which demonstrated Japan's active interest in advocating directly for itself and for its nationals living throughout the country, particularly those residing in north Queensland.

A Japanese Consulate in Townsville

Establishing a Japanese consulate on Australian soil was a significant move for any Asian nation to make with regards to the British Empire. Townsville at this time was considered, at least by British standards, a nascent colonial settlement in northern Australia. The earlier appointment of Australian Alexander Marks in 1879 as an Honorary Consul for Japan was similarly significant, the establishment of this office marked only the fourth Japanese consulate in the British Empire after Hong Kong in 1873, London in 1876, and Singapore in 1879.³ In fact, the first permanent embassy to the US was posted in San Francisco in 1870, while Japan's first permanent Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary was appointed in Marseille, France in 1872. Alexander Marks' role as a Japanese consul in Australia was therefore a recognition of the

³ Shōzō Kadota, 'The Japanese Embassy in London and Its Buildings', in *Japanese Envoys in Britain, 1862-1964*, ed. Ian Nish (Brill, 2007), 1–7; David Sissons, 'The Lady Rowena and the Eamont: The 19th Century', in *Bridging Australia and Japan: The Writings of David Sissons, Historian and Political Scientist*, ed. Keiko Tamura and Arthur Stockwin, vol. 1 (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 2016), 93.

important diplomatic and commercial relationship between Australia and Japan.⁴ The appointment of the first Japanese career consul, Nakagawa Tsunejiro, in Townsville in 1896, signalled Japanese interests in the northern regions of Australia and the significance of diplomatic representation. Evidently, local north Queensland matters were of international consequence in the view of the Japanese government.

While many of Japan's diplomatic relationships after the end of the *sakoku* period were formed under the Tokugawa Shogunate, the Meiji government sought to formalise these relationships and establish permanent consulates and embassies throughout North America and Europe. An embassy — or envoy — from Japan had first gone to the US in 1860, then to Europe in 1862, and was later followed by the 1871-1873 Iwakura Mission to both continents.⁵ Japan's participation in world fairs throughout the late nineteenth century, particularly the 1873 Vienna Exposition and the 1878 Paris Exposition, also brought a taste for Japanese fine and decorative arts to a fever pitch throughout Europe. The French term *Japonisme* was developed in 1872 to describe the incorporation of so-called Japanese art aesthetics with western styles and became popular among European elites and artists. In following decades, *Japonisme* porcelains and specialty items became increasingly accessible to people of many classes and locales throughout the world, including north Queensland.⁶ In the following decades, the Japanese government sought to establish consulates throughout the west. The appointment of an honorary consul for Japan — usually a member of the host country — followed by a Japanese career consul was a pattern that was seen throughout North America and Europe. In San Francisco in the US, for example, a national from the host country was appointed as the first honorary consul of Japan in 1870, followed by the first Japanese career consul in 1874.⁷ In Honolulu in Hawai'i, an honorary consul was first established in 1875 in a similar fashion, seven

⁴ Oliver, *Raid on Australia*, 33.

⁵ Arjan Van Der Werf, 'Deliberate Non-Communication: The Influence of the Religious Issues on the Diplomatic Talks During the Visit of the Iwakura Delegation to Belgium', in *Turning Points in Japanese History*, ed. Bert Edstrom (United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis Group, 2002), 57–59.

⁶ For further discussion of the popularity of these items in north Queensland, see Chapter Five. See also, Broinowski, *The Yellow Lady*, 16–17; Ayako Ono, *Japonisme in Britain: Whistler, Menpes, Henry, Hornel and Nineteenth-Century Japan* (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2003), 6–14; Kimi Coaldrake, 'Fine Arts Versus Decorative Arts: The Categorization of Japanese Arts at the International Expositions in Vienna (1873), Paris (1878) and Chicago (1893)', *Japan Forum* 25, no. 2 (2013): 174–90.

⁷ "The History of the Consulate General of Japan in SF," Consulate-General of Japan in San Francisco, https://www.sf.us.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/e_m01_06.html.

years after the arrival of the first Japanese settlers, and a Japanese career consul-general was appointed in 1885.⁸ In Canada, however, the first Japanese government mission established was the Japanese consulate in Vancouver in 1889, with Consul Fukashi Sugimura appointed from Japan.⁹ In the years before embassies became the favoured form of diplomatic mission, states would typically respond with the same level of diplomatic representative that had been received.¹⁰ Given Japan's perceived subordinate position throughout the West, it logically followed that smaller legations in the form of consuls or foreign ministers were appointed. These Japanese consulates established throughout the Americas, Europe, and Australia were early forays into the theatre of modern Western diplomacy. During this time, Japan was seen to be entering on the world stage, at least as far as the West was concerned. In December 1905, however, following Japan's victory over Russia and the strengthening of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, the first Japanese legation was upgraded to an embassy in the United Kingdom. The appointment of the Japanese embassy in London was accompanied by the elevation of the British consulate to embassy status in Tokyo that same year. Other nations, including the US in 1906, quickly followed suit. This elevation of Japan's status signalled the nation's emergence as a world power that was, as far as any nation had ever been, equal to other nations.

The Japanese consulate established in Townsville therefore represented a small diplomatic mission in the northern region of Australia but was nonetheless a significant marker of north Queensland's strategic and diplomatic importance. There was no such equivalent for

⁸ "About Us", Consulate General of Japan in Honolulu, https://www.honolulu.us.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/ryoujikan_history_en.html. The appointment of the Japanese Honorary Consul and Consul-General in Hawai'i was to the Kingdom of Hawai'i under the leadership of King David Kalākaua, prior to the overthrow of the Hawai'ian monarchy 1893.

⁹ "History of BC-Japan Relations," Consulate-General of Japan in Vancouver, https://www.vancouver.ca.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/history1_en.html

¹⁰ *The Popular Encyclopedia; or Conversations Lexicon*, 3rd ed., s.v. "Ministers, Foreign.," *Historical Dictionary of U.S. Diplomacy from the Revolution to Secession*, comp. Debra J. Allen (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2012), s.v. "Diplomatic Rank." During the nineteenth century, with the exception of the US and their complicated relationship with monarchies, only "first class" nations or those with "royal honours" would both send and receive ambassadors. As Allen's work explains, "the English, French, Spanish, Russian, Austrian governments send ambassadors to each other; the Prussian government does not send ministers of this rank." There was an unevenness in the European diplomatic ranking systems, but it was generally accepted diplomatic protocol that a receiving state would not dispatch a representative with a higher rank than it had received.

any other Asian nation in Australia at the time, and certainly not in north Queensland.¹¹ As Oliver argued, “where Japan established consular services and in what order reflects the areas that Japan considered the most important.”¹² As the first honorary Japanese consul, Alexander Marks promoted Japan and Australia’s shared interest in developing productive and friendly business relations with Australian merchants.¹³ Marks certainly advocated on behalf of Japanese nationals himself, but the appointment of career consul Tsunejiro Nakagawa signalled an unmistakable commitment to Japan’s economic and labour interests in the north. The Townsville consulate was broadly responsible for advocating for Japanese interests in Australia. Its proximity to the majority of Japanese contract labourers in north Queensland meant that it dealt closely with labour concerns. The numerous consuls who took up the Townsville appointment would frequently tour the north Queensland region to visit Japanese workers and inspect their working and living conditions.¹⁴ The Japanese consuls were prudent and persistent in their letters and telegrams to the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Customs Office, and to the Prime Minister’s Department itself in bringing to attention matters that concerned Japanese people living in Australia. North Queensland was clearly a significant Australian region from Japan’s viewpoint, and in 1900, the Japanese consul suggested that another consulate or sub-consulate should be established on Thursday Island.¹⁵ The Thursday Island consulate never eventuated, but it is unclear whether this is because it failed to gain approval from the Japanese Government or from the Queensland government.¹⁶

The Townsville Japanese consulate was situated in a central and physically commanding position, with the building’s history supporting its importance as a place of diplomatic and

¹¹ Norman S. Pixley, ‘Consuls in Queensland: Part 1: The Colony’, *Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland* 9, no. 5 (1974); Norman S. Pixley, ‘Consuls in Queensland: Part 2: 1901-1950’, *Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland* 9, no. 6 (1975).

¹² Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 45.

¹³ Meaney, *Towards a New Vision*, 56.

¹⁴ ‘Early Japanese Visitors to Queensland’ Presentation by Julie Ireland, 19 October 1996, Paul Tonnoir Personal Collection (hereafter Early Japanese Visitors).

¹⁵ Letter from Japanese Consul, Townsville to the Prime Minister, Queensland, 12 June 1900, Admission of Japanese into Queensland, Ordered by the Legislative Assembly, A.5—1899, Paul Tonnoir Personal Collection (hereafter Admission of Japanese).

¹⁶ In his letter, the Japanese Consul states that this proposal still needed approval from the Japanese Parliament. Furthermore, it is unlikely the Queensland government would have granted diplomatic power to any Asian nation that far from the reaches of the seat of government in Brisbane.

political substance. The building, which was a dual residence and office for the Japanese representatives, was named *Kardinia*. It seems that this name, or *kardiniyoo* in Wadawurrung language translated to ‘morning sun’ or ‘sunrise’ and had already been given to the house.¹⁷ It was an auspicious name that seemed to acknowledge the Japanese symbol of the rising sun and its recent adoption in Meiji period flag designs. Indeed, the rising sun became the symbol of Japanese imperial ambitions.¹⁸ *Kardinia* is located at the top of Stanton Hill, just off the iconic Castle Hill in Townsville and overlooks the sea out to Magnetic Island. It has been described as a:

[L]arge and elaborately decorated town villa and, most importantly, occupied a commanding situation looking down over Townsville. On its front lawn was a tall flagpole; from its eminence the Japanese flag flew well above the British flags on the poles below in the town. It gave the appearance, in fact, that the Japanese flag flew over Townsville.¹⁹

Photographs of the house at the turn of the twentieth century make visible the tall white and crimson Japanese flag on a pole outside *Kardinia*, which combined with its location on a hill overlooking Townsville and the coastline, asserted an air of authority.²⁰ Before it was acquired by the Japanese government, the house had been owned by John Graham McDonald, a former police magistrate and pastoralist who had at times been in partnership with Robert Towns — Townsville’s namesake — and Sir John Robertson.²¹ Gibson-Wilde argues that the Japanese

¹⁷ Eccles, Corrina. “Kardinia Park Chronicles – Welcome to Djilang,”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sx7B_rS7AA; “History,” Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, <https://www.wadawurrung.org.au/history>; “Northern Social Gossip,” *Queenslander*, 18 April 1896, 726.

¹⁸ Often referred to as the “land of the rising sun,” the sun has held symbolic meaning in Japan since at least the Asuka period (538-710 CE). In 1870 the Japanese national flag was adopted, which has a crimson red circle in the centre and symbolises a sun disc. From 1870 to 1945, the rising sun flag that features a red disc surrounded by sixteen rays emanating from the disc, was adopted as the war flag of the Imperial Japanese Army. From 1889 to 1945, a similar flag design with the red disc offset to the left, was used as the naval ensign of the Imperial Japanese Navy. During WWII, the rising sun became a symbol of Japanese imperialism and aggression across East and Southeast Asia.

¹⁹ Gibson-Wilde, ‘The Japanese Consulate at Townsville’, 28.

²⁰ Photograph outside *Kardinia* ca 1902, Paul Tonnoir Personal Collection.

²¹ “Kardinia,” Queensland Heritage Register, Queensland Government, <https://apps.des.qld.gov.au/heritage-register/detail/?id=600938>.

Consul Tsunejiro Nakagawa took great care when selecting the location of the consulate, suggesting the Japanese population in north Queensland would not be looked down upon and were perhaps even superior to others.²² It seems more likely that local memories and attitudes towards *Kardinia* and its history have been imbued with these qualities after the fact, but certainly they are fitting. From their location in Townsville, the Japanese consuls were readily involved in local matters that concerned Japanese migrants. As a strategic location in north Queensland, the consulate in Townsville had placed itself in a town with a well-connected port and direct steamer routes travelling both north and south. The Japanese consul in Townsville could travel north to the sugar cane farms of the northern mainland, the busy pearl shelling centres of Thursday Island and Darwin, or south to the commercial and political centres of Sydney and Melbourne and be home within a month.²³

Following on from the establishment of the Japanese consulate in Townsville in 1896, there was a consulate established in Sydney in 1897 and another in Melbourne a few years later.²⁴ Before 1901, these three consulates held approximately equal power and represented the breadth of Japanese interests in Australia. After 1901, however, the Sydney consulate was upgraded to consulate-general and the Townsville consulate was closed in 1908. Since Federation, both Australian and Japanese representatives had shared the opinion that the Japanese consulate should be shifted south. Edmund Barton had stated that there should be one central Japanese consulate, rather than three separate offices in Townsville, Sydney, and Melbourne. Consul Tayui was of a similar opinion, requesting the consulate be moved to Brisbane upon seeing the growing importance of trade and commerce within that region.²⁵ The significance of the Japanese consulate in Townsville has been generally overlooked in Australian and north

²² Gibson-Wilde, 'The Japanese Consulate at Townsville', 28.

²³ Early Japanese Visitors; "Nippon Yusen Kaisha (Japan Mail Steamship Co.)," *Japan Times*, 4 January 1901, 8. This advertisement shows the Australian line of the *Nippon Yusen Kaisha* had two vessels travelling monthly to Melbourne via Moji, Nagasaki, Hongkong, Manila, Thursday Island, Townsville, Brisbane, and Sydney.

²⁴ It is unclear whether there were three separate consuls, with one consul posted at each consulate during this period. From all accounts, it appears that until 1898 there was only the consul at Townsville and the other consulates in Sydney and Melbourne were perhaps staffed by secretaries and other Japanese officials. After 1908, when all consular activities were shifted to Sydney, the role of the consul was upgraded to the single role of Consul-General.

²⁵ Minute for His Excellency the Governor-General from Edmund Barton, Prime Minister, 3 July 1901, 1901/19/1, A8, NAA; Early Japanese Visitors.

Queensland history but it is highly regarded in Japanese diplomatic history.²⁶ For example, the Townsville consulate is explicitly recognised as the first Japanese diplomatic mission in Australia by the consulate general of Japan in Sydney and has been frequently upheld by Japan as an important place in the history of Australian-Japanese relations.²⁷ From these geographic and strategic centres, the Japanese consuls in Australia were positioned to have a persistent and direct influence on trade, migration, and policy as it related to Japan and its citizens in Australia.

The Australia-Japan-Britain Diplomatic Triangle

Despite Australia's attempts at asserting its own sovereignty and voice in international relations, its close ties to Britain meant the latter's sphere of influence often took greater priority over Australian needs. This complex relationship has long been documented by historians with Australia often striking a balance between submission to British political and diplomatic interests, while simultaneously asserting its own needs within the imperial framework. Importantly, however, attention also needs to be paid to other nations, such as Japan, whose awareness and manipulation of this dynamic was often strategically employed.

Indeed, Britain exerted effort to maintain friendly relations with Japan during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Following on from the 1854 *Anglo-Japanese Friendship Treaty*, the 1894 *Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation* solidified the commercial and political ties between the two nations.²⁸ At this time, Britain found its global pre-eminence as a

²⁶ "Kardinia," Queensland Heritage Register, Queensland Government, <https://apps.des.qld.gov.au/heritage-register/detail/?id=600938>.

²⁷ "Mission & History of the Consulate-General of Japan, Sydney," Consulate-General of Japan in Sydney, https://www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/about_history.html; "Ambassador's Official Visits to Queensland," Embassy of Japan in Australia, https://www.au.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/bilateral_official_visits_qld_en.html. Ambassador Kusaka paid an official visit to Queensland from 6 to 9 August 2016. One of his visits included the Japanese Consulate in Townsville, as well as other locations on Thursday Island in recognition of the deep cultural and economic ties shared by Queensland and Japan. The current owners of the house, Paul and June Tonnoir, have received numerous visits from Japanese diplomats and have been invited to Japan in honour of *Kardinia's* historical significance in Australian-Japanese relations.

²⁸ The Anglo-Japanese Alliance was subsequently signed in 1902, which further cemented these relations. Compared to predecessor agreements focused on trade and migration, this allied Japan and Britain against Russia's threat to both nations.

naval power was being challenged by other nations. These circumstances meant there were benefits to allying itself with Japan as it quickly industrialised and militarised because it was growing as a power throughout the Pacific. Japan's interest lay in its perception of itself as an outsider to the natural and traditional alliance among many of the Western nations, most of them former — or soon to be former — British colonies. The treaty offered Japan not only commercial and 'right to reside' privileges, but symbolically elevated the nation as a peer of one of the 'great nations'. Britain honoured this treaty for at least the next few decades, including by exerting influence on its settler colonies. Australia's colonies were offered the choice to sign the 1894 treaty, but aside from Queensland, all of them recoiled in disdain at the thought of granting such rights to an Asian nation. The signing of the *Anglo-Japanese Alliance* in 1902 was also imposed upon Australia. As Melissa Miles has argued, the newly federated Australia felt they were "an invisible onlooker to and consumer of the alliance forged by the 'big boys' on the other side of the world." Australia's inferior position within the 1902 *Anglo-Japanese Alliance*, as Miles contends, was a continuing source of frustration.²⁹ Britain's disappointment at Australia's unwillingness to enter into such treaties and to grant concessions to Japanese nationals placed Australia in an awkward position within this diplomatic triangle. Japanese diplomats, however, were wily in their use of these situations and often negotiated concessions for Japanese migrants in Australia by leveraging the Australia-Britain relationship.

After Queensland's signing of the 1894 treaty, Japanese diplomats proved willing to draw Britain into disagreements between the two entities. Queensland became unhappy with the numbers of Japanese people migrating to the colony, with public pressure to reduce their entry and even deport some Japanese workers residing in north Queensland.³⁰ In 1899, after attempts by the Queensland government to ban Japanese migrants from engaging in the pearl shelling industry, and to block them from naturalisation, letters of protest penned by the Japanese Association on Thursday Island were distributed to the Japanese Prime Minister Yamagata as well as the Minister for Foreign Affairs via the Japanese consulate in Townsville. In 1899, accompanied by an explanatory memorandum, copies of these letters later reached the desk of British Prime Minister Lord Robert Gascoyne-Cecil via Ernest Satow, the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Japan.³¹ The letters protested:

²⁹ Melissa Miles, "'The Child of the World's Old Age': Australian Perceptions of Japan-as-Child", *Journal of Australian Studies* 41, no. 3 (2017): 325.

³⁰ Bach, *Pearling Industry*, 127; "Japanese Labour," *Queenslander*, 3 September 1898, 475.

³¹ Letter from Ernest Satow to the Marquess of Salisbury, K.G., 12 September 1899, Japanese

[T]he action of Queensland in disregarding the most favoured nation clause of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty which is in operation and to which it has itself acceded and not allowing Japanese to be naturalised is illegal and in violation of the Treaty. Queensland has no right at all to refuse to allow Japanese to be naturalised, after allowing naturalisation to Germans, French, Americans, Australians, and the subjects or citizens of other Treaty Powers who emigrate thither ... it is really evident that the object of this Law is to drive Japanese entirely away from the Pearl Fishing Industry.³²

Following Queensland's passing of further amendments to the *Pearl-shell and Bêche-de-Mer Fishery Act* in 1898, along with other Acts, the Japanese government felt its citizens were being discriminated against and targeted by the Queensland government. While these amendments did not directly name Japanese migrants, they forbade new migrants — who were statistically likely to be Japanese people — from participating in the pearl shell and bêche-de-mer industries. In a memorandum penned by Baron Hayashi in 1900, he drew attention both to the cordial relations between Australia and Japan, as well as the spirit of the treaty between Japan and Britain to which Queensland was a signatory. This treaty, he asserted, “maintains the principle of equality of treatment ... and distinctly rejects all stipulations that savour of discrimination.” Hayashi claimed that he hoped the same sense of justice and fairness would guide Queensland's dealings with Japanese subjects.³³ On this matter, Queensland acquiesced to Japan's request to maintain a ceiling number at which Japanese migrants might participate in these fisheries.³⁴ Nevertheless, Japanese migration to north Queensland remained a thorny issue for years to come.

By 1901, with proposals to introduce the *Restriction Act*, tensions once again flared and Japanese diplomats proved themselves willing to manoeuvre Britain's influence over Australian affairs. Prior to the passing of the *Restriction Act* in December 1901, Consul Eitaki sent warnings on this proposed legislation in May of that year. Eitaki boded that, “the friendship that exists between the Empires of Great Britain and Japan leads me to suppose that your Government would not willingly take steps calculated to wound the feelings of the people whom it is my

Immigration and Returns.

³² Memorial of the Association of Japanese in Australia, 8 August 1899, Japanese Immigration and Returns.

³³ Enclosure No. 31, Letter from Baron Hayashi to the Chief Secretary of Queensland, 30 July 1900, Admission of Japanese.

³⁴ Letter from James R. Dickson, Chief Secretary to His Imperial Japanese Majesty's Consul, Townsville, 3 October 1900, Admission of Japanese.

privilege to represent.”³⁵ When the consul received an unsatisfying response, further letters were sent from the Japanese consul in Britain to the Colonial Secretary relaying Japan’s extreme opposition to restrictive immigration legislation in Australia. This correspondence was sent with the full knowledge that any pressure Britain placed on Australia would far outweigh any influence that Japan could directly exert. Martens argues this was an effective diplomatic strategy and that, “in spite of Australian assertions to the contrary, the British government retained ultimate sovereign authority over Australia’s immigration policies, and that it was willing to resist Australian pressure for restrictive laws when these threatened its imperial interests.”³⁶ British public servants distantly steered the development of Australian legislation; Joseph Chamberlain and the Colonial Office sent stern warnings to Australian politicians that they would not assent to any legislation that jeopardised Britain’s imperial and international interests. More specifically, Chamberlain advised Edmund Barton that Australia should not enact any explicitly anti-Asian migration laws.³⁷ As a result of this pressure, the *Restriction Act* was strategically designed to use vague language. While the Act enabled the exclusion of any migrant of Asian origin, it did not explicitly discriminate against specific nations, thereby avoiding offence. The *Restriction Act* was also accompanied by a specious dictation test and the Act’s vague allusions to keep individuals out of the Commonwealth who may burden the state with their ‘ignorance’.

There were further skirmishes over the next few decades when Japanese diplomats would use Britain’s influence to gain concessions from Australia. For example, in 1902, upon hearing that the *Commonwealth Franchise Bill* proposed to disenfranchise Japanese migrants, Consul-General Eitaki asserted:

It is difficult to understand why, under the existing circumstances of the alliance between Great Britain and Japan, and the friendly feeling subsisting between Australia and Japan — which I do not think you would willingly do anything to disturb — it should be thought advisable to pass an Act couched in terms which cannot help being regarded by the Japanese as offensive in the extreme.³⁸

As Britain’s willingness to infringe Australian sovereignty lessened in the following years,

³⁵ Letter from Consul of Japan, Eitaki to Prime Minister Edmund Barton, 13 May 1901, H. Eitaki Correspondence.

³⁶ Martens, *Empire and Asian Migration*, 110.

³⁷ Martens, 135.

³⁸ Japanese Consul-General protesting against disfranchisement of Japanese, 12 April 1902, 1902/370/1, A8, NAA.

however, the Japanese government and its representatives found new and different ways to assert their interests within Australia.

Negotiating Local Concerns with National Significance

The location of the Japanese consulate in the north enabled swift attention to local and national concerns, especially as they related to Japanese migrants in the north. Of particular concern was the management of Japanese migrant arrivals and it was generally agreed between Australia and Japan that the Japanese government and its representatives were responsible for regulating the flow of migrants to Australia. Prior to the *Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation*, the migration of Japanese peoples to Australia was regulated by the 1886 edict in Japan that all citizens had to apply for passports before departing the country.³⁹ Between 1886 and 1904, the Queensland-Japanese Agreement built upon the passport system and placed additional limits on the numbers of those who could arrive. After 1904, the Japanese Passport Agreement meant that any student, tourist, or merchant was able to reside in Australia for twelve months, with the possibility of further extensions to their stay. Throughout all of these iterations, however, there was a sentiment of mistrust from the Australian public of the Japanese government's diligence in this process.⁴⁰ This tension was obvious in the actions of the newly appointed Japanese Consul Tsunejiro Nakagawa. Within a week of his arrival in Townsville, he moved to assuage any ill feelings about Japanese migration to Queensland. In a March 1896 interview with the press, Consul Nakagawa asserted his nation's perspective on migration:

[H]e said his Government did not encourage emigration unless under contracts. The regulations, which were of a stringent nature, also provided that in case of individual emigrants they must have passports, and two guarantors to undertake to pay their passage back to Japan in the event of their own inability to do so. Mr Nakagawa also said that he thought it strange under these strict conditions that an anti-Japanese feeling should exist in Australia. The Japanese Government would be unwise to sacrifice the goodwill of a friendly nation by simply sending a few thousand emigrants to Queensland. If the planters, for instance, required Japanese labor, an agreement would have to be made and sanctioned by the Japanese Government, and there was no fear that individual

³⁹ John Lamb, *Okinawans Reaching Australia* (Perth: Hesperian Press, 2019), 7; Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 34.

⁴⁰ See, for example "Japanese in the Pearlshell Industry," *BC*, 22 October 1897, 7.

laborers would come from Japan to Queensland.⁴¹

But concerns were not lessened, with Consul Nakagawa and his successors quickly becoming the point of contact for passport and entry disputes. For example, a miscommunication was quickly smoothed after fifty contract labourers departed Japan in late 1901 and were due to arrive after the passing of the *Restriction Act*. In essence, the labourers would have been unable to land in Australia. A brief exchange of letters between the Japanese consul, Robert Philp, who had contracted the labourers, and the Chief Secretary's Office in 1902, however, was able to quickly resolve the matter.⁴² In September 1904, the Australian government decided that any bona fide Japanese merchants, tourists, or student travellers be permitted to freely enter and pass through Australia providing their passports were examined at the first port of call. If they wished to remain in the Commonwealth for longer than twelve months, Japanese citizens were able to apply for a certificate of exemption to extend this stay.⁴³ The problem with the passport system, however, was that it relied on mutual understanding between Queensland and Japan. The Japanese government was fundamentally responsible for the issuing of passports to Japanese contract workers, but in practice this task was passed on to regulating and recruiting agents who could best handle the issuing of passports.⁴⁴ Any discrepancies or mismanagement in the issuing of passports, however, still fell to the Japanese consuls to manage. Nevertheless, ongoing disagreements and miscommunications about the entry of Japanese migrants led to a quota system in Queensland. The Japanese consul was involved in negotiations, with Queensland and Japan resolving to enact a strict ceiling cap of 3247 Japanese migrants.⁴⁵

The strict migration conditions that Consul Nakagawa had promised went both ways. Often, the Japanese consuls were persistent and persuasive negotiators, even aggressive, as John

⁴¹ "A Japanese Consul," *Daily Northern Argus* (Rockhampton), 12 March 1896, 3.

⁴² Letter from Robert Philp to Chief Secretary's Office, 25 January 1902, Correspondence re. Japanese Immigration into Queensland including indenture of Japanese labourers, Item 861854, SRS 5384, QSA. This involved the permitted landing of fifty contract labourers on Japanese passports in late 1901, who had already left Japan before the formal passing of the *Restriction Act* and had been under the impression they would be allowed to land. This was technically true, but due to the circumstances an allowance was made.

⁴³ "Japanese Tourists and Merchants Admitted on Passports. Letter from the Prime Minister," *SMH*, 26 September 1904, 6.

⁴⁴ Ganter, 'Wakayama Triangle', 57.

⁴⁵ Menghetti, *Summer Seas*, 21.

Armstrong argues, in their support for Japanese nationals' welfare in Australia.⁴⁶ Not only would the Japanese representatives support applications for passport extensions, but they would also sternly intervene in instances where applications were rejected. Just as the consuls had staunchly defended Bunsuke Nakashiba's case, they also determinedly supported Daisaburo Ishikura's application to extend his stay in Australia after it was rejected by authorities. Daisaburo was a relative of Yesaburo Tashima, the proprietor of Tashima's silk store on Flinders Street in Townsville.⁴⁷ He had first come to Townsville in 1906 as a student to learn English with a local teacher and study business under the supervision of Yesaburo. Extensions of Daisaburo's stay had continued year after year until, it seems, authorities felt he had stayed too long, and offered a final three months for Daisaburo to finish up his affairs in Australia. After representation from the consuls, however, a further twelve-month extension was secured. Daisaburo departed in 1909 but was again able to reside in Australia from 1911 to 1915 with the support of the Japanese consul.⁴⁸ So persistent were the consuls in obtaining extensions for Japanese migrants, it eventually became accepted practice that the consul would simply provide a list of individuals for whom extensions were required — they were all but automatically granted — and even temporary visits were assured success if supported by the Japanese consul.⁴⁹

On the ground, the consuls often dealt with the day-to-day concerns of Japanese migrants. The strategic proximity of each consulate to groups of Japanese migrants enabled the consuls to deftly navigate matters of local significance in the scope of national concerns. As part of these local matters, the concerns of labourers and contract labour migrants were often well-represented and heard by the Japanese consuls. It was a habit of the Japanese consuls, upon their appointment and regularly thereafter, to tour the districts where many Japanese migrants resided and worked. For example, Consul Iijima Kametaro, upon his appointment in October 1899 immediately took up a twenty-day tour of the north Queensland sugar districts. He made detailed reports on the conditions and concerns of Japanese migrants living in each of these areas.⁵⁰ This included Japanese workers who felt they had been unfairly dismissed, such as one man who was dismissed from his cleaning work at the Mount Morgan Post Office. Addressing a handwritten

⁴⁶ Armstrong, 'Aspects of Japanese Immigration', 8.

⁴⁷ See Chapter Five for further discussion of Tashima & Co.'s Silk Store in Townsville.

⁴⁸ Department of External Affairs, Memorandum 11/2836 & Memorandum 14/20170, 6 February 1915, E. Tashima Japanese Passport, 1923/24399, A1, NAA.

⁴⁹ Yarwood, *Asian Migration to Australia*, 81; Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 79.

⁵⁰ Menghetti, *Summer Seas*, 18.

letter directly to Prime Minister Edmund Barton, Consul Eitaki expressed concern at the suggestion that “the man was discharged on account of his color” and asked “upon what ground the Japanese in question was discharged, and, if on the ground of color, under what Act or Regulation.”⁵¹ According to Menghetti, the original appointment of the official Japanese consul in Australia, to Townsville, was to specifically protect Japanese workers in north Queensland.⁵² This meant that the consuls often scrutinised the conditions of labour contracts and the work to be undertaken. The consulate was responsible for navigating the concerns and needs of Japanese migrants in Australia, but its proximity to the majority of Japanese contract labourers meant that it also dealt closely with labour disputes. Earlier representatives, including Mr K.I. Watanabe, arrived in north Queensland in 1893 as an unofficial envoy of the Japanese government. After spending some time in North America “inquiring into the social and industrial condition of Asiatic races there,” he now intended to do the same in Australia. He spent around two months visiting north Queensland, finding that the state was not a “land of promise” and that, in particular, the sugar labourers were locked into underpaid contracts with hard conditions for three years. They “would have to make the best of it,” he summarised.⁵³

The Japanese consuls were also interested in any legislation that might concern Japanese migrants. While sometimes local Nikkei would alert the consuls to issues, the diplomats would also pay close attention to proposed bills or bureaucratic processes that might affect Japanese migrants. The criticisms were forthcoming. Consul Tayui, in 1902, for example, noted the convoluted and protracted process of obtaining a Certificate of Domicile that would provide Japanese migrants with readmission to Australia. The process was, as Tayui put it, “trifling” and “not fair.”⁵⁴ The Japanese consuls in Australia were diligent to all matters that concerned Japanese migrants, whether small or large. As Yarwood argues, “the diplomatic prestige and armed might of the Japanese government ensured an attentive hearing for consular representations.”⁵⁵ The consuls made regular and persistent representations to both the Queensland governments and local councils and authorities. For example, the consul protested

⁵¹ Letter from Eitaki to Prime Minister Edmund Barton, 20 September 1901, Request for Information by Consul for Japan re Dismissal of a Japanese Worker, 1901/262/1, A8, NAA.

⁵² Menghetti, *Summer Seas*, 15–16.

⁵³ “Another Unofficial Envoy from Japan,” *Queensland Times, Ipswich Herald and General Advertiser*, 7 December 1893, 7.

⁵⁴ Letter from R. Tayui to the Collector of Customs, Brisbane, 15 April 1902, Enquiry by H Eitaki Acting Consul General for Japan re Certificate of Domicile, 1902/116/265, A8, NAA.

⁵⁵ Yarwood, *Asian Migration to Australia*, 82.

on the issue of the *Liquor Act Amendment Act* (QLD) in 1923, under which Asian migrants would be prohibited from engaging in employment related to the sale of alcohol. This issue was brought to the attention of the Japanese consul after numerous appeals from Japanese residents' Associations in Queensland.⁵⁶ The consuls protested on this issue, well aware that in north Queensland a number of Japanese migrants working in pubs and hotels would be negatively impacted by this legislation. Similarly, there were concerns regarding a white labour clause inserted into the *Postal and Telegraphic Bill in 1901*.⁵⁷ The Japanese consuls' understanding of the minutiae of Australia's bureaucratic processes, along with their physical proximity to local communities, meant they were often able to lend effective diplomatic support to Japanese migrants' concerns in north Queensland.

Private Diplomacy

Private diplomacy, or the use of personal and friendly relationships to facilitate diplomacy, was a key ingredient of Japanese negotiations and relations with Australia. The Japanese government and its consuls were strategic in fostering friendly relationships and exercising existing connections through Australian officials. Persistent in their advocacy for Japanese interests in Australia, Japanese representatives were also endlessly friendly and used social occasions to facilitate good feelings between Australia and Japan. Japanese consuls were well aware, as Oliver has argued, "that the practice of unofficial correspondence since 1901 was the most effective way in which to resolve difficult cases."⁵⁸ This private diplomacy operated at all levels of Australian-Japanese relations, ranging from social and informal through to official governmental relationships beginning from the earliest years of the Japanese consuls to Australia and through to WWII.

Japanese diplomacy was often successful enough that at times Japan's interests would be promoted by Australian government officials. Indeed, these interests were facilitated by existing personal and friendly relationships. For example, when it came to negotiations of the entry of Japanese merchants to the Commonwealth in around 1904, Edward Foxall, English Secretary to the Japanese Consul-General in Sydney, sought friendly advantage through his connections to

⁵⁶ Copy of Telegram Received by Prime Minister Stanley Bruce from the Japanese Consul, 4 August 1923, File 2, Series 5: Japan, 1918-1923, Piesse Papers.

⁵⁷ Protest on Postal Bill.

⁵⁸ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 87.

Atlee Hunt, Head of the Department of External Affairs. While Atlee Hunt held an important role in negotiating Australia's policy and administration of migration, Foxall was an Australian-educated official backed by the Free Traders with strong views opposing the White Australia policy. Foxall's strategic appointment as Secretary to the Japanese Consul-General was useful to both Australian and Japanese representatives. In a series of letters exchanged between Hunt and Foxall in 1908, addressing each other as "My dear Atlee" and "My dear Ted", they discuss the admission of Japanese wives to Australia and the nuances of defining merchants under the Japanese Passport Agreement. Hunt and Foxall's friendship often smoothed out brief political understandings both efficiently and diplomatically. Letters exchanged in 1905, for example, demonstrate a difference of opinion between Japan and Australia regarding the definition of merchants under the Japanese Passport Agreement. Foxall explained to Hunt that the Japanese government considered anyone employed in the conduct of mercantile affairs, including retailers and clerks, to fit Australia's definition of bona fide merchants. Australia's understanding, as Hunt explained, had been that the class of merchants would include only those involved in wholesale establishment.⁵⁹ Through a frank discussion, the two were able to openly exchange their views. Foxall admitted that "the total number of Japanese who have availed themselves of the privilege offered is small enough to remove all misgivings as to too great an influx." The overall conclusion saw Australia agreeing to Japan's definition upon the assurance that migration would still be limited.⁶⁰

This ability to negotiate typically fraught and contentious topics — as they related to making concessions for Asian migrants under the *Restriction Act* — created a smoother channel for diplomacy compared to formal government negotiations. The two men corresponded candidly in these private communications, a substantial tonal difference compared to their more formal letters. The correspondence contains recognition of the friendly relations, with Foxall noting "how much he [the Japanese Consul-General] appreciates the kind and friendly spirit which has pervaded all your official relations with him" and "the cordial relations which have always subsisted between your Department and this Consulate-General."⁶¹ No doubt, these

⁵⁹ Letter from Edward Foxall to Atlee Hunt, 4 February 1910, Item 1315, Papers of Atlee Hunt.

⁶⁰ Japanese Merchants, Assistants, Wives and Students on passports General Policy File, 1937/1511, A1, NAA.

⁶¹ Private letter from Edward Foxall to Atlee Hunt, 22 April 1910, Item 1317, Series 26, Papers of Atlee Hunt, MS52, NLA (hereafter Papers of Atlee Hunt); Letter from Mr. Saito to Atlee Hunt, 2 August 1912, Item 1325, Papers of Atlee Hunt.

private communications were a friendly, albeit strategic, method of diplomacy for many decades in the Australian-Japanese relationship, which continued on both sides.⁶²

From the time the first Japanese consul was appointed in Townsville, they became a part of the local social scene. After his arrival in March 1896, the first Japanese consul, Tsunejiro Nakagawa, was invited to a luncheon at the Queen's Hotel on account of Lord Lamington's visit, alongside other esteemed guests.⁶³ By June, Tsunejiro had visited the southern colonies and left a positive impression:

The Consul for Japan is a model of courtesy, as indeed are all the better classes of his nation, a young man apparently, intellectual, speaking excellent English and possessing a fund of information respecting this country, which shows the deep study he has made of our people and our institutions and our prejudices.⁶⁴

Tsunejiro also agreed to an interview with the *Daily Telegraph*, taking the time to eloquently convey Japan's interest in developing productive trade with Australia and allay fears of 'overwhelming numbers' of Japanese migrants who might arrive.⁶⁵ The Japanese consul quickly became a recognised figure among regional and national matters, whether diplomatic or social.

Importantly, the Japanese consuls also hosted regular social events and soirees of diplomatic importance that would cultivate friendly relations and opportunities for culture sharing. Each year, *Kardinia* would host a special event for the Japanese Emperor's Birthday — with over sixty guests who were prominent residents of Townsville invited — demonstrating a respect for Japanese celebrations and traditions at the local level. The spacious multiple verandahs of *Kardinia*, as well as the dining room and sitting room were used to entertain guests and displayed "the many objects of special interest found in a Japanese home."⁶⁶ Further dinners and 'smoke concerts' highlight Consul Kametaro Iijima's popularity, and Townsville residents seem to have regarded him with fondness. Consul Iijima and his wife had a particular charm for

⁶² D. C. S. Sissons, 'Private Diplomacy in the 1936 Trade Dispute with Japan', in *Bridging Australia and Japan: The Writings of David Sissons, Historian and Political Scientist*, ed. Keiko Tamura and Arthur Stockwin, vol. 1 (Canberra: ANU Press, 2016), 247–66.

⁶³ "Lord Lamington's Visit at Townsville," *NM*, 2 April 1896, 2.

⁶⁴ "The Japanese Consul," *BC*, 13 June 1896, 5.

⁶⁵ "Our Trade Relations with Japan," *Daily Telegraph* (Sydney) (hereafter *DT*), 14 June 1897, 5.

⁶⁶ "Townsville Social Items," *North Queensland Register* (hereafter *NQR*), 13 November 1899, 50;

"Townsville Social," *NQR*, 4 November 1901, 7; "Invitations Issued," *NQR*, 31 October 1904, 35.

diplomacy, hosting private dinners that brought together not only local authorities such as the Mayor, Sub-Collector of Customs and the Chairman of the Harbor Board, but also visiting captains of Japanese cruisers and ships.⁶⁷ Kametaro was also sure to meet with Japanese representatives around north Queensland, including the Japanese Club on Thursday Island, along with Government Resident John Douglas.⁶⁸ Each of the consuls seemed to be well regarded, deftly handling a range of local concerns whether celebratory or tragic.⁶⁹ On his departure following the abolishment of the Townsville consulate in 1908, Consul Goro Narita was honoured with a dinner by the American Consular Agent and the Vice-Consul for Denmark, with the Mayor, local Justice, Police Magistrate, and other officials.⁷⁰

Japanese diplomacy in north Queensland also extended to official events that elicited friendship and excitement on a public scale. The Japanese Naval Squadron's multiple visits to Australia between 1878 and 1935 maintained both formal relations, while also developing positive and friendly feelings among members of the two nations.⁷¹ These visits, as Oliver argues, could often be used as a barometer of Australian-Japanese relations.⁷² While earlier visits in the nineteenth century were warmly received, there was an escalated excitement at the squadron's Australian return after the turn of the twentieth century. In Sydney, tens of thousands of people were reported to have lined the streets to greet the ship. *New Idea* magazine devoted a multi-page spread in 1903 to the event, documenting multiple perspectives and cheerful pictures of Australians on the Japanese naval ship. Sydney residents excitedly documented their time aboard the flagship *Hashidate*, memorialising everything from the terrier dog named Onslow, to the "big gun" on the ship, and demonstrations of swordsmanship.⁷³ Images in local newspapers depict

⁶⁷ "Townsville Social Items," *NQR*, 23 April 1900, 50.

⁶⁸ "Smoke Ho," *Worker*, 11 November 1899, 6.

⁶⁹ "News in Brief," *Bundaberg Mail and Burnett Advertiser*, 15 September 1908, 3. It was reported that Consul Narita paid all expenses for the burial of a (white) woman who was murdered by a Japanese migrant in Townsville.

⁷⁰ "Personal," *DT*, 9 October 1908, 8.

⁷¹ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 111–14; Menghetti, *Summer Seas*, 26; Noguchi and Davidson, 'Melbourne Friends', 15. So far as can be established, the Japanese Naval Squadron visited Australia in 1878, 1881, 1902, 1903, 1906, 1907, 1910, 1911, and 1917.

⁷² Noguchi and Davidson, 'Melbourne Friends', 15; Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 112.

⁷³ "Our Japanese Visitors," *New Idea*, 6 June 1903, pp. 899-903, State Library of Queensland.

the visit of the training squadron in 1903 as an elaborate and excited affair.⁷⁴ But towns in northern Australia were also among the naval squadron's stops. Heading north from Sydney, the ships skipped Brisbane and headed straight on to Townsville and Thursday Island, much to Brisbane "society leaders'" displeasure.⁷⁵

Following a small gaffe in salutations, there were slightly smaller, but no less excited, events in honour of the squadron in Townsville and Charters Towers.⁷⁶ At each event, the importance of the alliance between Britain and Japan in keeping world peace was affirmed, with Australia's role recognised. The Rear Admiral and his officers were given tours of Townsville landmarks and were hosted at a special reception at the Botanical Gardens in 1906, while the visiting squadron reciprocated by inviting 150 Townsville and Charters Towers residents as special guests on board the ship.⁷⁷ A Townsville correspondent reported that "[t]he warship was beautifully decorated, the deck being got up in representation of a garden, with delicately constructed paper trees and flowers, and with national flags and streamers fluttering from the rigging. A program of games, juggling feats, music, and other amusements made up an extremely enjoyable afternoon."⁷⁸ Aspects of the visit of the Squadron in Townsville demonstrate a reciprocation of positive contributions and interactions; while the Naval Squadron made their

⁷⁴ "The Japanese Squadron in Sydney," *Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser*, 17 June 1903, 1489-1491.

⁷⁵ "The Japanese Training Squadron," *Queensland Figaro*, 7 May 1903, 18; "Society Column," *Telegraph*, 27 June 1903, 4. The social column noted that, "Brisbane society leaders are openly expressing their regrets that thus far this city has had but few of the great social events of the year ... Townsville people had the Japanese naval squadron all to themselves. The Japanese ships passed Moreton Bay, and not even a glimpse of their glories did they afford Brisbane."

⁷⁶ "Japs at Townsville," *Australian Star* (Sydney), 23 June 1903, 7; "Visit of the Japanese," *ET*, 24 June 1903, 2; "Japanese Squadron at Townsville," *Queenslander*, 4 July 1903, 4. When the Japanese squadron arrived in Townsville, they fired a salute of twenty-one guns but received no response, so did not immediately land. According to the officer in charge in Townsville, they were unable to return the salute without permission of the Australian Federal Minister. By the next day, however, permission was obtained and thus the salute was returned and the Japanese naval squadron landed in Townsville.

⁷⁷ Menghetti, *Summer Seas*, 26; Trisha Fielding, "Locals Sang Japanese Anthem in Native Tongue," *Townsville Bulletin*, 16 January 2016, 17 (hereafter *Locals Sang Japanese*). At the invitation of the Mayor, Rear Admiral Kimamura and his officers were given a tour of the Town Hall on Flinders Street, the Theatre Royal, and the Central Hotel.

⁷⁸ *Locals Sang Japanese*.

own donations to local cyclone relief funds and the Central State School in Townsville, the squadron had special dinners hosted for them and students from the Central State School memorised and sang the entire Japanese national anthem in Japanese.⁷⁹ The formal celebrations when the squadron arrived on Thursday Island were a little more subdued, but again marked a momentous occasion for local residents and Japanese migrants. In 1903 it was reported there was no public reception for the squadron, but the Japanese Association had arranged entertainment of a “liberal scale.”⁸⁰ In the following years, these events involved formal visits of local government officials to the ships, a guard of honour, and further celebrations at the Japanese Club House.⁸¹ By 1917, as relations became somewhat more frosty, the visiting squadron instead were entertained by a private dinner at the Queen’s Hotel.

The Role of the Local Japanese Association

In addition to the Japanese consulate in Townsville between 1896 and 1908, the various Japanese Association chapters located throughout north Queensland were also critical in handling local and national diplomacy.⁸² The Japanese Association, with chapters established in most north Queensland towns — including Thursday Island, Cairns, Innisfail, Ingham, Townsville, Ayr and the Burdekin, and Mackay — was a significant intermediary that bridged local interests and concerns with the diplomatic and political interests of the Japanese consulate.⁸³ As Ganter has argued, the social and community organisation among Japanese migrants, including the Japanese Association, was their most effective method of exerting influence on politics, working conditions, and foreign policy.⁸⁴ The Association held an important function among local Nikkei

⁷⁹ Locals Sang Japanese; Menghetti, *Summer Seas*, 22.

⁸⁰ “The Japanese Squadron,” *BC*, 3 July 1903, 2.

⁸¹ “The Japanese Squadron,” *SMH*, 21 April 1906, 13; “Japanese Club,” *Truth*, 19 May 1907, 11.

⁸² The Japanese Association was also occasionally named the Japanese Club, the Japanese Society or the Japanese Brethren Society. Regardless of name, the organisation and its chapters each performed approximately the same function in their communities and so will be referred to as the Japanese Association for clarity and consistency.

⁸³ Review of Japanese Population and Activities, Queensland (Report), 20 February 1939, Japanese Activities in Queensland, A367, C68645, NAA (hereafter Japanese Activities in Queensland.) This report provides a detailed list of the different chapters, including the names of representatives in each location.

⁸⁴ Ganter, *The Pearl-Shellfish of Torres Strait*, 109.

communities, supporting social events, advocating on political issues, facilitating workers' industrial action and organisation, and smoothing the relationship between local Japanese peoples and the wider community through outreach and fundraising. Documents seized from the Thursday Island Japanese Association in 1941 show the organisation had a clear statement of its purposes:

[T]o unify general Japanese affairs by means of unanimous action by Japanese residents ... the object of the Society is to keep the dignity of Japanese nationals by internally rectifying any evil practices among themselves, to cultivate the mutual friendship amongst our compatriots by externally removing any hindrances, and also to promote our morality of benevolence and mutual help in sickness and difficulties so as to enhance the prestige of the Japanese Empire.⁸⁵

The Japanese Association throughout north Queensland looked both inwards and outwards through the Nikkei communities and elevated local Japanese voices to be heard at state, national, and even international levels.

The first Japanese Association in north Queensland was formed not as a social club but to advocate for the rights of Japanese workers.⁸⁶ The earliest mention is of a Japanese Mutual Benefit Society in 1891, which by 1894 had 350 members, most of them pearl shell workers. At the time Torajiro Satō, a local merchant, was elected President and the club aimed to generate funds for community activities, provide assistance to the needy, and ensure that “the members become law-abiding, respectful to their superiors (the Europeans) and to live in peace and amity among themselves.”⁸⁷ Loyal to its members' interests, the Association's primary business was advocating on behalf of local workers.⁸⁸ The Japanese Association chapters also operated elsewhere in Australia and took on significant roles in their communities. In Broome, the Association involved itself in drawing up agreements between Japanese workers and the pearl shelling fleets, as well as dealing with any work disputes that arose. The general agreement was

⁸⁵ Letter from the Japanese Society, Thursday Island, to the Japanese Consulate-General, Sydney, 2 December 1941, EPJ1609, A1379, NAA.

⁸⁶ The effects and outcomes of Japanese workers' industrial action and organisation are discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.

⁸⁷ “Country Mail: Northern districts,” *BC*, 10 January 1891, 6; “Country Mails,” *BC*, 10 July 1894, 2. Note that Torajiro's family name has been variously spelt as Satow, Sato, or Satō. For brevity, Satō is used for brevity, except in instances where it is a direct quote or reference to text within a paragraph.

⁸⁸ Bach, *Pearling Industry*, 158; Menghetti, *Summer Seas*, 27.

that workers engaged in the pearling industry would pay fees as a levy for the maintenance of the Association.⁸⁹ During 1894, when Japanese workers on Thursday Island were facing rising unemployment, the Association there held meetings and conducted negotiation on members' behalf. A representative from the Club contacted sugar planters around Cairns and Mackay and other businesses in Townsville to facilitate the employment of Japanese labourers. The Association also contacted the 'Foreign Department' in Japan, requesting that no further passports be granted to Japanese men wishing to come to Queensland.⁹⁰

While it is clear the Japanese Association wielded significant influence, it did not always represent a coherent viewpoint among Japanese migrants. With increasing unemployment of Japanese workers in the pearl shelling industry between 1894 and 1899, a division grew between those workers who wished to discourage further Japanese migration — to protect the interests of current Japanese residents — and those who felt the Queensland government was unfairly restricting Japanese migration. At the same time as Torajiro Satō, President of the Japanese Association, sailed to Japan to advocate for further Japanese migration, other members of the Japanese Association passed a resolution that was forwarded on to the Minister President and Minister for Foreign Affairs. These workers felt that, owing to an excessive number of Japanese workers in the pearl shelling industry, the migration of additional Japanese workers would induce even more restrictive legislation. They wished to preserve the working conditions of only the current pearl shell labourers. The Association's resolution documented Queensland's attempts to ban Japanese people from participating in fishing and boat ownership in the Torres Strait. The Association demanded that the minister enter into negotiations to relieve this restriction, stating "it is really evident that the object of this Law is to drive Japanese entirely away from the Pearl Fishing Industry."⁹¹

Among the wider Nikkei community, the Japanese Association was persistent in its advocacy, making representations on immigration and other issues well into the 1920s and 30s.

⁸⁹ Letter from the Collector of Customs, W.A. to the Senior Inspector, 5 May 1942, Series 24: Japanese in Australia — Internees, Papers of D.C.S. Sissons, MS3092, NLA (hereafter Sissons Papers).

⁹⁰ "Unemployed Japanese," *Western Champion and General Advertiser for the Central-Western Districts* (Barcaldine), 13 March 1894, 6; "Japanese Labour," *Telegraph*, 2 April 1894, 4.

⁹¹ Memorial of the Association of Japanese in Australia, 8 August 1899, Japanese Immigration and Returns; "Japanese Grievances," *BC*, 26 July 1899, 5. This perceived discrimination was a recurring issue, with a similar situation earlier in 1895. See, for example "Threatened Influx of Japanese," *Morning Bulletin* (Rockhampton), 30 August 1895, 6.

The Association and its representatives saw it as their duty to assure the wellbeing and status of Japanese people within their communities. Association representatives, for example, would frequently write into local newspapers in response to community issues. Often their concern was the fair treatment of Japanese migrants in Queensland, usually in relation to the *Restriction Act*. Secretary of the Japanese Club in 1921, T. Inouye wrote letters to the editors of the *Cairns Post* and the *Northern Herald* protesting the inferiority with which Japanese migrants are treated.⁹² He did not mince his words:

I for one, imbued with the white teaching, ventured to unwelcoming Australia 25 years ago ... It will not be long before it is considered a virtue to exterminate colour out of existence by the constitutional law of an ideal white or at least to make a mere tool of their welfare. Because our skin is yellow, our heart is black, and the Asiatic heathen a deadly economic enemy. Does the average fair-minded Australian know that, when the sugar industry was so young, with a scarcity of labor, they brought out cheap contract labor from Japan 30 years ago to do the hard work—for whose advantage I dare not argue—in a forlorn hope of a free hand when their time expired as it was promised, but promised only! ... If only 400 or 500 much-questioned Japs, scattered along the productive North of Queensland, can lower the white living, it is due to its own fragile foundation

When I recollect the war that was fought with beautiful ideas, it should have widened the channel of fundamental social blessings ... Yet while the bloody war was raging, we were such a good nation that we saw plenty of fluttering flags of ours flying, and the noble Australians went over thousands of miles protected by their patriotism ... The solution is not far to seek when they over-use the State's right, and put all the possible obstruction to strangle the civil rights were are entitled to.⁹³

The following year, another representative attempted to defend the position of Japanese people in the sugar industry. The author protested against unfair treatment of “members of our race who are, or have been, residents in this country for that long period of time” and asking “for fair and reasonable treatment to those of us who are resident here.”⁹⁴ In 1930, Tokitaro Iwanaga also corresponded as Secretary of the Japanese Association in Cairns with the *Cairns Post* editor.

⁹² “Correspondence,” *CP*, 1 June 1921, 3; “Correspondence,” *NH*, 8 June 1921, 32.

⁹³ ‘Correspondence’, *CP*, 1 June 1921, 3.

⁹⁴ “Japanese in the Sugar industry,” *BC*, 13 May 1922, 9.

Tokitaro called out the absurdity of the situation wherein a Japanese migrant was deported from Australia after failing to pass a dictation test in Greek.⁹⁵ Association members also remained in contact with the Japanese consul about perceived discrimination, including the aforementioned *Liquor Act Amendment Act* of 1923.⁹⁶

More than simply writing letters, however, there were tangible supports in place for Japanese community members. This includes interpreting, support for administrative and legal matters, and even banking.⁹⁷ With early iterations of the Association operating as a mutual benefit society, donations to the Association for the benefit of the community was an accepted, if not expected, course of action. As we know, Tommy Japan and his fellow syndicate members all made donations to the Japanese Mutual Benefit Society not long after their Tattersall win.⁹⁸ These large donations, along with the contributions of a portion of people's wages funded the Japanese Association building and its services. The Association's 'club house' as it was often termed, was not only a place for meeting and socialising, but also housed services for other community members including assistance with literacy and letter writing, sending money to Japan, forming labour contracts, delivering mail, and interpreting.⁹⁹ Association members would often provide interpreting services for other Japanese people in the region. Mitsu Terasita, for example, was the Secretary of the Japanese Association on Thursday Island in 1902 and would often act as a local interpreter for police and customs.¹⁰⁰ In 1930, Momu Mitakara's application for a CEDT was managed by her agent Hidewo Oki, a local store manager and likely the Japanese Association Secretary.¹⁰¹ These and other services were made available to Japanese migrants living in more isolated areas of north Queensland, with efforts expended to keep

⁹⁵ "Correspondence Deportation Law," *CP*, 28 May 1930, 4.

⁹⁶ Telegram from the Japanese Consul to Prime Minister Stanley Bruce, 4 August 1923, Item 191, Series 5: Japan, 1918-1923, Piessie Papers.

⁹⁷ There are multiple references to Japanese community representatives providing banking and financial services. See, for example Oliver, 'Citizens Without Certificates', 132; Particulars of Annie Margaret Iwanaga, Secret Report, 16 December 1941, Annie Margaret Iwanaga – Objection against internment, 255/741/416, MP508/1, NAA (here after Anne Iwanaga Objections).

⁹⁸ "Country Mails. Northern Districts," *BC*, 10 January 1910, 6.

⁹⁹ Early Japanese Visitors.

¹⁰⁰ Nobu Ide Statement, 6 September 1910, Prosecution of Japanese Girls at Thursday Island, 1910/5858, A1, NAA.

¹⁰¹ Memorandum from the Sub-Collector Townsville to the Collector of Customs at Brisbane, 9 May 1930, Momu Mitakara, 456/1930, J2773, NAA.

individuals well-informed and connected with other Nikkei. As a report in 1939 described, “Japanese [in Queensland] are widely distributed and so have an efficient system of communications so that someone out at Hughenden could be well-posted on national issues.”¹⁰² Other reports indicate that a Japanese man living in Malanda, for example, remained in postal contact with the Japanese Association in Cairns.¹⁰³ The Japanese Association was a crucial link in the relationships and connections developed between individual Japanese migrants in Australia, their governmental representatives, and the larger geopolitical significance of their activities in Australia.

Conclusions

The strong diplomatic representation of Japanese migrants in north Queensland was a result of the significant and engaged Japanese population within the region. Local community groups and systems of social organisation, informally and through the Japanese Association, were responsible for the representation and advocacy of Nikkei community concerns for many decades, from the 1890s and through to 1941. The Japanese Association and its many chapters throughout north Queensland had members who were well-versed and well-connected with the Nikkei community as well as government and diplomatic representatives. Their core responsibilities were to manage and negotiate Japanese migrants’ interests as they were relevant to the community, whether this meant assisting with work contracts, speaking publicly on immigration challenges, or petitioning for legislative changes.

The Japanese consulate, when it was in Townsville between 1896 and 1908, remained in communications with the Japanese Association, as well as government officials among local, state, and federal circles. For the time that the Japanese consulate existed in Townsville, both *Kardinia* and its diplomatic occupants commanded an influential position in the social, commercial, political, and cultural life of the north Queensland region. The Japanese consuls and their staff in Townsville, as well as in Sydney and Melbourne, developed friendly relationships with public servants and politicians. Of course, these Japanese diplomats also made strategic use

¹⁰² Review of Japanese Population and Activities, Queensland (Report), 20 February 1939, Japanese Activities in Queensland.

¹⁰³ List of Alien Details in Queensland, 1941, Q30582 PART 2, BP242/1, NAA (hereafter List of Alien Details Part 2) refers to a man in Malanda who remained in contact with the Japanese Association via their P.O. Box 138.

of Japan's relationship with Britain to place pressure on the Australian government when it was required. The wily use of these connections often smoothed the way for diplomatic troubles that arose and cleared the path for negotiations of fraught situations relating to Japanese immigration, working conditions, and restrictive legislation. It is in these tensions and negotiations that the broader international context becomes visible, with Japanese diplomats negotiating local concerns that held greater geopolitical significance not only in Australia and Japan, but across the Pacific.

While the Japanese consulate's move to the southern corner of Australia in 1908 marked a similarly southern shift in Japanese diplomats' priorities, the advocacy and negotiation on behalf of Japanese nationals continued for many decades. In fact, Frei argues that in this period the Japanese government began to see an increasing value in Japanese migrants who developed new connections and opportunities outside Japan. Already a pervasive influence during the life of the Townsville Japanese consulate, the Japanese Association's persistent advocacy and organisation remained a foundation of Japanese diplomacy in north Queensland until the beginning of the Pacific War. Local diplomatic concerns, such as the 1904 situation with the Japanese officer on the train or appeals against the deportation of Japanese migrants, were not simply local concerns; instead, these tensions became matters of international significance and at times, were a major part of international politics.

Chapter Three: Japanese Contract Labourers



Image 5. A parade of Japanese pearl shell workers marching to the Torres Strait Pearlers' Association Office on Thursday Island in 1923. (Image courtesy of No. 66147, SLQ).

In 1923, around four hundred Japanese pearl shell workers — divers, tenders, crewmen, and cooks alike — dressed in their best white shirts and formal pants and marched in the sweltering Thursday Island humidity towards the Pearlers' Association Office. The men were orderly, but angry. They wanted a higher rate of pay per ton of pearl shell they gathered from the seabeds throughout the Torres Strait and they were unwilling to work or spend their money in town until their demands were met.¹ The men were on strike and, with the pearl shelling and *bêche-de-mer* industries at a virtual standstill without Japanese labourers, Thursday Island's small economy and community was paralysed. Newspapers reported that tensions rose to a fever pitch after Japanese protesters reached the house of J.L. Adams, the chairman of the Torres Straits Pearlers' Association, and allegedly shook his house where it stood. Outnumbered, police helplessly watched, aware that a sufficient force of constables to allay potential violence would take more

¹ "Japs at Thursday Island," *DT*, 17 February 1923, 8.

than a month to recruit and transport to the island. With the *HMAS Geranium* recalled from its training exercise in Darwin to make a show of force, Australian military leaders advised this situation must be carefully managed lest it quickly become an “international incident.” Within a few weeks, the Sub-Collector of Customs came to an agreement with representatives of the Japanese Association, negotiating to *temporarily* meet all their demands.² This was neither the first nor the last time that Japanese workers would take industrial action to secure increased wages, improved working conditions, or less-restrictive immigration policies.

The circumstances of the 1923 Japanese workers’ strike on Thursday Island were described as “delicate from an international point of view” for the Australian government.³ While such statements were tinged with journalistic dramatisation and racist diatribe about the growing power of Japan and other Asian nations in Australia’s geographical proximity, this conflict between Japanese pearl shellers and white Australian authorities was more than just a localised wage dispute. Arriving from different regions throughout Japan since the late 1880s, Japanese workers were contracted to pearl shelling and sugar cane industries throughout north Queensland, where their collective power established them as a significant force. For many years, these workers in the pearl shelling and sugar cane industries — and likely in other industries where Japanese worked, albeit in fewer numbers — leveraged their position and productive capacity to secure better working conditions for themselves. For some, such industrial action laid the foundations for decades living in north Queensland and even enabled the kind of financial security and upward mobility that led to the ownership of pearl shelling boats, sugar cane farms, and businesses.

Labour Contracts and Conditions

Japanese men who arrived in north Queensland during the last two decades of the nineteenth century were typically contracted for periods of three to four years in either the pearl shelling or sugar cane industries. These roles included both skilled and unskilled labour, although Japanese migrants were often pearl shell divers or mill workers respectively. Japanese contract labourers were regarded as a valuable albeit expensive labour source, with support from Honorary Consul for Japan Alexander Marks in 1892 indicating they were a “superior class of labour” who were

² “Japs Rule Thursday Island,” *DT*, 20 March 1923, 5; Dispute between Pearlers and Japanese Indents at Thursday Island re Wages, 1924/4618, A1, NAA.

³ “Japs Rule Thursday Island,” *DT*, 20 March 1923, 5.

“capable people in the field and workshop, as well as in the higher lines of intellectual activity.” The benefits that derived from employing Japanese workers in the sugar plantations of Hawai‘i were used as an argument for securing these workers for Australia’s tropical north.⁴ Many of the Japanese migrant workers who came to north Queensland were from rural and low-income villages in Yamaguchi, Wakayama and Hiroshima in Japan. They formed part of a larger movement of Japanese migrants out of Japan throughout the Pacific from the 1880s, with migrants arriving at sugar plantations in Hawai‘i, Brazil, Peru, San Francisco, and regions of Canada primarily seeking economic opportunities.⁵ Australia was a peripheral destination in this migration pattern, receiving between 10,000 and 15,000 Japanese migrants, while more than 122,000 had migrated to Brazil and 117,000 to the US by 1941.⁶

In the early years of contract labour migration, the Japanese government feared mistreatment of Japanese workers and oversaw careful negotiations of contracts. The first groups of workers were those whose indenture was independently arranged by businessmen in Australia, such as Captain A. Miller who contracted a group of thirty-seven Japanese people to work on Thursday Island in 1882. Sissons argues that Miller’s contract — which took six months to negotiate — signalled a turning point in the Japanese government’s willingness to allow its nationals to go abroad; previously, it refused to approve any contract labourers in any country after groups of Japanese workers were stranded in Hawai‘i, Guam, and California in 1868. Despite Miller’s success in 1882, by 1886 the view of the Japanese Foreign Ministry had shifted dramatically and work on Thursday Island was judged to be too hazardous for Japanese citizens to undertake. The Ministry ordered the workers — around 200 men by that time — to return home. By 1890, however, Japanese pearl shell workers appeared to be experiencing economic success, and Japanese villages began to make their own arrangements for advancing money for the passage of local young men to Thursday Island.⁷ Many of these men who arrived on Thursday Island during the 1890s arrived without contracts in hand. As the number of workers steadily increased over the next few years, unemployment grew and many had to find work on the mainland or return home. In 1894, emigration companies began to oversee the recruitment and passage of these workers, a system that was bolstered by the advent of the new Nippon

⁴ “Labour from Japan,” *BC*, 12 April 1892, 7.

⁵ Nagata, ‘Japanese Internment in Australia’, 14–15.

⁶ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 29–30.

⁷ Sissons, ‘The Japanese in the Australian Pearling Industry’, 10–13.

Yusen Kaisha (NYK), or Japan Mail Steamship Company, shipping line to Australia in 1891.⁸ For the next decade, numbers of contract labourers arriving in north Queensland from Japan would steadily increase.

The Japanese government held similar concerns about the potential mistreatment of Japanese contract workers in the sugar cane industry. While newspaper records indicate that large groups of Japanese migrants arrived in north Queensland as early as October 1885, perhaps through private negotiations, Menghetti suggests that the first Japanese government approved agreements occurred in 1892. These later agreements were facilitated by the Yoshisa Emigration Company for the Herbert River sugar growers.⁹ This 1885 date coincides with the Queensland Liberal government's announcement it would ban the recruitment of Melanesian labourers after 1890; sugar plantations and companies may have sought an alternative source of labour almost immediately following this announcement. Negotiations between the Japanese government and sugar companies were arduous and ongoing, as they had been in the pearl shelling industry. They were not always successful, with Mourilyan Sugar Co.'s attempts to contract workers falling apart in 1888. Regardless, it seems that only small groups of Japanese workers began to arrive in north Queensland during the late 1880s and 1890s and their arrival went by with minor controversy and consternation as the 1890s progressed.¹⁰ By 1902, larger companies — including Union Bank of Australia (Mourilyan Plantation), Australian Estates Mortgage Co. Ltd. (Kalamia and Seaforth plantations), Wood Bros & Boyd (Ripple Creek), Drysdale Bros (Pioneer Mill in Mackay), and Colonial Sugar Refining Company (CSR) (New Farm) — were financing and applying for the entry of groups of twenty-five to fifty Japanese labourers for periods of three years and six months. Pearl shelling companies were doing much the same.¹¹

Following the government negotiation of Japanese labourer contracts, moderation of this system was deferred in part to emigration and steamship companies, namely the Yoshisa

⁸ “Nippon Yusen Kaisha,” *SMH*, 2 January 1891, 4; “Japan and Townsville,” *Australian Star*, 5 February 1891, 6.

⁹ “Brevities,” *Evening News*, 26 October 1885, 5; Menghetti, *Summer Seas*, 14.

¹⁰ See, for example “Japanese for Sugar Plantations,” *DT*, 28 November 1889, 5; “Queensland Parliament,” *Australian Star*, 29 June 1893, 4; “Topics of the Week,” *Australasian* (Melbourne), 31 July 1897, 33.

¹¹ Japanese Immigration Applicants for the Introduction of Japanese into Queensland, 1902/51/7, A8, NAA; Peter Griggs, *Global Industry, Local Innovation: The History of Cane Sugar Production in Australia, 1820-1995* (New York: Peter Lang, 2011), 90.

Emigration Co. and the NYK in Australia.¹² With regards to Hawai'i, Alan Takeo Moriyama argues that after 1894 private emigration companies became largely responsible for a complex system of contract labour migration with the key actors in this process being the Japanese Government, Prefectural and local authorities, emigration agents, and the migrants themselves.¹³ Within this system, labour recruiters in Japanese villages would arrange for passports, contracts, and passage for Japanese labourers. Recruiters' responsibilities, however, did not end once a labourer had departed Japan. These individuals would also act as agents, communicating with the men's families about their welfare and arranging remittances of the men's wages to their families.¹⁴ Ganter argues that men would often sign two contracts concerning their working conditions, including food, work hours, payments, and holidays. The first contract was signed in Japan and the second once a worker arrived at their destination; "[s]uch contracts were meant to safeguard the recruits from exploitation, but they were a mere formality, and the workers themselves accepted that the company was not bound by them. When they arrived at Thursday Island, the workers signed a different contract with the employer."¹⁵ Contract migration of Japanese labourers was thus reliant on both the organised systems in Japan as well as the networks of workers within north Queensland.

Within the Japanese community in north Queensland there were groups comprised of workers from different industries. Among these groups, there were often strong systems of social organisation and support in place. In the pearl shelling industry, for example, workers would spend many months out at sea together, establishing relationships and hierarchies critical to the functioning of the boat. As a result, workers would become a close-knit group. While out at sea, Japanese divers were — in practice — in charge of the lugger and its operation. The tender was generally drawn from the same ethnic group as the diver and acted as the diver's second in command. Because remuneration depended on the amount of shell that could be gathered by the diver, all of the work on the lugger was done in cooperation to promote the diver's success.¹⁶ On shore, there were also close and hierarchical relationships, but with paternal — or *oyakata* — roles fulfilled by key community leaders. Torajiro Satō and later Haruyoshi

¹² Sissons, *Immigration Question*, 23.

¹³ Alan Takeo Moriyama, *Imingaisha: Japanese Emigration Companies and Hawaii, 1894-1908* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985), 42–73.

¹⁴ Moriyama, 59–60.

¹⁵ Ganter, *The Pearl-Shellers of Torres Strait*, 108.

¹⁶ Ganter, 117.

Yamashita, both local businessowners, were two such community representatives who took on these roles. These men would make sure that the workers had money put aside — often referred to as ‘doing their banking’ — and ensured they were well behaved in town and dressed appropriately.¹⁷

Intelligence reports from the late 1930s indicate that Japanese workers maintained communication networks with representatives posted throughout north Queensland.¹⁸ Their representative was often a businessman or a respected community leader. This representative could speak and write English and was responsible for tasks such as assisting with government forms and applications, providing interpreting services, and circulating community information. These positions had existed since the earliest days of Japanese sugar cane labourers in the region, with these workers’ contracts even stipulating that a Japanese overseer had to accompany each group of men.¹⁹ These overseers, like the man who was forced to the back of the train to Lucinda in 1904, would have acted in a representative capacity and were usually authority figures.²⁰ Sukezayemon Mitakara and Tokuda (Harry) Suzuki, for example, were among these overseers who came with the earlier groups of Japanese sugar cane labourers to north Queensland. Well-paid and well-respected, both men went on to become sugar farmers who employed Japanese and non-Japanese workers.²¹ Evidently Japanese contract workers in the sugar cane and pearl shelling industries had both formal and informal networks and community obligations that organised their working lives. These Japanese labourers looked out for other Nikkei and had clear roles and responsibilities within mutually supportive networks and, upon this foundation, they were able to advocate and further their rights within Australia.

Workers’ Cooperation and Representation

Japanese labourers were often able to work cooperatively for mutual benefit, with their strong systems of social organisation enabling them to agitate for improved wages and working conditions. Broadly, it is worth drawing attention to Japanese workers’ collective industrial action

¹⁷ Ganter, 119–20.

¹⁸ Review of Japanese Population and Activities, Queensland (Report), 20 February 1939, Japanese Activities in Queensland.

¹⁹ Menghetti, *Summer Seas*, 14.

²⁰ For a summary of this incident, see the introduction to Chapter Two.

²¹ Sissons, *Immigration Question*, 24.

in north Queensland and the significance of these actions in the accumulation of rights, power, and capital for Japanese migrants. While much of this action was supported by diplomacy — as discussed in Chapter Two — there was also an important role played by Japanese workers and their Association. Although Japanese workers may not have been members of formally registered unions, the Japanese Association nonetheless facilitated industrial action and organisation, particularly for those in the pearl shelling and sugar cane industries.

Japanese workers in north Queensland would sometimes take strike action, march, and otherwise act cooperatively to support wage and working condition negotiations. This collective organisation of workers was most evident in the pearl shelling and the sugar cane industries, but likely existed in other industries where they worked. Japanese workers' organisation has been touched upon by other historians, but as Martínez argues, attention has rarely been paid to the significance of informal Japanese union activities.²² Menghetti and Armstrong, for example, refer to Japanese migrants striking at Victoria Mill when hot water was not available at bath time, and in Goondi to win above-agreement wages, but provide little comment on the implications or outcomes of these strikes.²³ Ganter argues that Japanese pearl shellers' 'collective organisation' was a driver of their activities in northern Australia. These activities, she suggests, enabled chains of workers' migration, established business opportunities, and increased their economic competition with white master pearlers. Noting only a few strikes during the 1920s, Ganter argues that more 'militant industrial action' was uncommon, with workers typically respecting the process of annual wage negotiations and head divers' decisions.²⁴ It seems, however, that workers' strikes may have been more common than Ganter indicates and that governmental records downplayed these activities. Local and state authorities would be unwilling to acknowledge Japanese industrial action out of concern that that it would give credence to fears of the 'yellow peril' and inflame groups such as the Australian Workers' Union (AWU) or Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia (WWF).

In the pearl shelling industry in the Torres Strait, Japanese workers generally went on strike every few years. The earliest indication of organised collective action among Japanese migrants was in 1895 when a report in the *Queenslander* described, in simple terms, a meeting of Japanese pearl shell workers. The article describes a large group of Japanese workers

²² Martínez, 'Plural Australia', 224.

²³ Menghetti, *Summer Seas*, 14; Armstrong, 'Aspects of Japanese Immigration', 4. Unfortunately, neither Menghetti nor Armstrong provide references for these claims.

²⁴ Ganter, *The Pearl-Shellers of Torres Strait*, 104, 120–21.

congregating at the Jetty Boarding House on Thursday Island for a ‘general improvement’ meeting, and notes that following some light entertainment, the workers discussed current affairs ranging from the international—for example, the outcome of the Sino-Japanese War—through to the local, including the current state of the pearl shelling industry and its implications for the divers’ incomes and potential profits.²⁵ This meeting occurred during the peak of the pearl shelling industry — when the industry experienced the highest numbers of workers and thus shell raised, and shell prices were at an all-time-high — and may have been the group’s earliest foray into labour organisation. From this account, the meeting was a structured rather than informal affair, although it perhaps occurred prior to the permanent location of a Japanese Club House on the island. Nevertheless, newspapers reported the same year that the Japanese Association had “some strong labor union instincts in them.”²⁶ In the following years, Japanese industrial action seemed to continue, or at least the threat of it loomed large. Historian Yano reports that Japanese pearl shell workers protested against Burns, Philp & Co.’s firing of a Japanese worker in 1895 for ‘stealing’ a pearl; all workers left the pearl shell beds and returned to Thursday Island in protest.²⁷ In the following year, workers went on strike again seeking the layoff of an Australian overseer and an increase in their wages. Workers reportedly went on strike for three months, but this may have been a vast exaggeration as no Australian newspaper reports referring to these strikes can be located, and surely such a significant disruption to the industry would not have gone unnoticed.²⁸ Still, the threat of Japanese pearl shell workers going on strike remained all too real.²⁹ In 1901, a Japanese crew threatened to strike — an action which would probably have led to strikes by other crews — if a certain captain was not removed. Attempts were made to replace the crew, but to no avail, and the captain was fired.³⁰ In 1904 and 1905, authorities began to up the ante and Japanese workers were sentenced to terms of

²⁵ “Social Gossip,” *Queenslander*, 13 July 1895, 54.

²⁶ “The Japanese North,” *Daily Northern Argus*, 30 August 1895, 2.

²⁷ Yano, ‘Japanese Labour Immigration’, 94–95. Yano references research by Japanese historian Taira Ogawa in *Arafura Kai No Shinju (Pearls of the Arafura Sea)* which is not available in English. Burns, Philp & Co., were a major trading and importing company in north Queensland that was formed in 1883, with interests in pearl shelling and sugar cane farming. For a comprehensive history of one of the co-founders of Burns, Philp & Co., Robert Philp, see, Lyndon Megarrity, *Robert Philp and the Politics of Development* (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2022).

²⁸ Yano, ‘Japanese Labour Immigration’, 95.

²⁹ ‘Japanese dominance,’ *Telegraph*, 28 January 1898, 4.

³⁰ “Northern Black-labor Papers,” *Bulletin*, 16 November 1901, 31.

imprisonment after going on strike, perhaps for desertion, public nuisance, or violence.³¹ This response, however, made little difference, with workers continuing to meet, strike, make demands, and seek representation.³²

Over the next two decades, Japanese workers took what seemed to be even more radical action to ensure their wages and working conditions. It is unclear whether this escalation is best explained against the backdrop of international war tensions or growing discontent among workers.³³ The pearl shellers again went on strike in January 1908 — this time the *bêche-de-mer* fishermen also stopped work — over rates of pay. After this, they appear not to have gone on strike again until 1919. The *Cairns Post* indicated that in 1919 “trouble has arisen” among the crews and tenders who were seen to “imitate white comrades” by requesting higher wages, with the boats continuing to sit idle. As part of the action, “the men are holding meetings at the Japanese Club House daily, and appearances indicate they intend to hold out for some time.”³⁴ As the journalist was aware, and as pearl masters on the island also would have been, there were few threats the authorities could make to Japanese workers; while many were indentured and could be deported, the success of the industry relied on their labour and a mass deportation would leave behind a shell of an industry. Three successive commissions and inquiries were not able to make any significant changes to the supposed monopoly of Japanese divers within the pearl shelling industry, including boat ownership. Some changes were implemented, including a permit system, requirements for diver registration, and ratios on the ethnicity of crew members; but each change simply brought new innovations and adaptations in the way Japanese workers operated the boats.³⁵ Throughout these years, Japanese workers maintained a commitment to collective action and representation as effective methods for achieving change. Anxieties about Japanese pearl shell workers seemed to reach fever pitch in 1923, with newspapers around

³¹ “Yesterday’s Messages: Japanese on Strike,” *Warwick Examiner and Times*, 17 December 1904, 2; “Japanese Strike,” *Morning Post (Cairns)* (hereafter *MP*), 17 December 1904, 3; “Trouble at Thursday Island,” *Darling Downs Gazette*, 28 March 1905, 3.

³² “Thursday Island,” *Gympie Times and Mary River Mining Gazette*, 28 March 1905, 2.

³³ For a discussion of these international tensions, see the end of this section.

³⁴ “Japanese Pearl-ers on Strike,” *Clarence and Richmond Examiner*, 21 January 1908, 5; “Japanese Pearl-ers,” *CP*, 4 August 1919, 5.

³⁵ J. Hamilton, A. Dawson, W.H.B. O’Connell, J. Hoolan, W. Smyth, Report Together with Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings, of the Commission Appointed to Inquire into the General Working of the Laws Regulation the Pearl-Shell and Beche-de-mer Industries, (Brisbane: Government Printer, 1897); 1908 RC; 1913 RC.

Australia commenting that Japanese workers on Thursday Island “ruled and ran the place.” This was a continuation of disputes over rates of pay for divers and payment for shell. The dissatisfaction in 1923, following on from earlier years, focussed on the complaint that the payment made for shell was not sufficient to cover all the pearl divers’ expenses. During the strike, it was reported that “all Japanese are sitting tight, and exercising a rigid boycott. They are spending no money, and are prepared, evidently, if the dispute cannot be settled, to be returned to Japan.”³⁶ The withdrawal of Japanese workers’ labour in 1923 brought Thursday Island to its knees and forced the Sub-Collector of customs to meet all their demands.

Industrial action was also taken by Japanese labourers in the sugar cane industry to secure increased wages, although it occurred on a much smaller scale. The *Worker*, a typically anti-Japanese and pro-white industrial action publication, often reported on Japanese strikes from a hostile perspective. These strikes were more commonly described as the Japanese workers “giving trouble,” and generally went unreported in other news publications. In 1900, the newspaper reported that “The Empire is in Danger” after about 140 Japanese workers went on strike at the Mossman Central Mill after there was a truck accident, while in 1904 Japanese workers were described as “giving considerable trouble lately” following the organised strike at Kalamia plantation. In each case, the *Worker* framed the events as cowardly Japanese workers overcome by the heroics of white authorities.³⁷ Certainly there are many other reported instances of Japanese sugar workers going on strike, most within the period between 1895 and 1910, when there were greater numbers of Japanese sugar cane workers. Whether airing concerns about rations, wages, or other terms of their contracts, Japanese workers would withhold their labour and engage the support of Japanese representatives, including the ‘chief inspector for Japanese’ N. Kobayashi and the Japanese consul.³⁸ In 1896, Kobayashi was sent to assist strikers at Pioneer Estate but they had reportedly resumed work before his arrival.³⁹ Drawing on concerns in the pearl shelling industry, one 1923 *Daily Telegraph* article briefly outlined the history of Japanese workers striking, recalling back to 1916 when workers brought about ‘changes’ to the permit

³⁶ “Japs at Thursday Island,” *DT*, 17 February 1923, 8; Dispute between Pearlery and Japanese Indents at Thursday Island re Wages, 1924/4618, A1, NAA.

³⁷ “The Empire is in Danger,” *Worker*, 7 April 1900, 16; “A Conspiracy of Colour,” *Worker*, 17 December 1904, 10.

³⁸ Menghetti, *Summer Seas*, 14; Yano, ‘Japanese Labour Immigration’, 81; “Japs Rule Thursday Island,” *DT*, 20 March 1923, 5.

³⁹ “Local and General News,” *NQR*, 9 December 1896, 36.

system in the sugar cane industry, followed by other disturbances in 1920 and 1923. In particular, the author was concerned that “they have become a majority in a weakly isolated Australian community [and] have grown to be the true makers of the law.”⁴⁰

There are some indications that broader international affairs also influenced the actions of workers in Australia. Bach links the striking of pearl shell workers in 1919 with Japan’s disappointment at the outcomes of the Paris Peace Conference. At that conference, key Japanese proposals on the racial equality clause were rejected, with Australia’s Prime Minister Billy Hughes expressing particularly vehement opposition. In Bach’s view, this tension between the Australian and Japanese governments filtered down to tensions between Japanese and Australian community members in north Queensland, with the affront to Japanese people’s national prestige influencing concerns about labour conditions, their right to fly the Japanese flag on pearl shelling and *bêche-de-mer* boats, as well as the general arrangements of authority on board the boats.⁴¹ While there is little evidence in support of Bach’s argument, there certainly were continuing protests and ‘labour troubles’ among Japanese workers throughout north Queensland after WWI, even where Japanese migrant numbers were beginning to decline.

Increasing Japanese Ownership in the Pearl Shelling Industry

In the pearl shelling industry, workers cooperated within a strict hierarchical structure. A pearl shell diver was at the top of a pearl shell lugger’s hierarchy, undertaking the most dangerous but important job. The diver had to descend to the ocean floor, collect pearl shells, and then spend hours ‘staging’ their return to the surface to avoid decompression sickness, or ‘the bends’. Before becoming a diver on a lugger, however, a crew member had to first work as a ‘try diver’ — listed as a lugger attendant on most records⁴² — and learn both the systems of diving and the techniques of spotting and gathering shell. While training divers was described as a straightforward process, developing skill in spotting shell took more time. One veteran diver of the Torres Strait explained the process to the 1908 Royal Commission:

Q2982 - How long does it take to make a man a diver?

⁴⁰ “Japs Rule Thursday Island,” *DT*, 20 March 1923, 5.

⁴¹ Bach, *Pearling Industry*, 158.

⁴² Lamb, *Okinawans Reaching Australia*, 22.

It depends upon his eyesight. A man can do that actual diving in time; but to take up the shell you must teach him. He must understand the bottom. It takes about six months before a man becomes anything like good at picking up shell.⁴³

After a time, a ‘try diver’ might ascend the hierarchy and gain promotion to a full diver. Those who gained thorough knowledge and experience of the reefs and waters around the Torres Strait Islands, the Great Barrier Reef, and the Coral Sea were advantaged over others who did not. Other members of the crew, worked to support the diver. Lines of authority ran through the structure of the boats and flowed onto shore relationships, where Japanese migrants would accumulate knowledge and connections for their own benefit and to share with others.

Furthermore, the pearl shelling industry’s payment system was devised to incentivise divers to maximise profits rather than to simply work for a wage. In the late 1890s Japanese divers began to be paid on ‘lay’ rather than in wages, presumably to encourage them to maximise their catch and therefore the profits for owners. This payment system also helped to minimise loss to owners in a poor season. As a result of this payment system, a diver exercised considerable independence. He was in charge of the boat’s operation while out at sea and was able to pick his own crew, who he then presented to the boat owner to arrange the formalities of employment. A diver would earn anything from £70 to £85 per ton of shell raised.⁴⁴ It was generally considered a good arrangement by white master pearlers, but caused frustration among these owners when they felt that Japanese divers were earning well above average across a season.⁴⁵ This arrangement was developed by the European owners of pearl shelling boats seeking to ensure their own profits, but had unintended consequences. It led to a growth in the authority of Japanese divers and crews in boats and allowed the divers to maximise their profits and take advantage of the occasional pearl find. These profits also meant Japanese workers were able to invest further in the industry and become boat owners in all but name. While Japanese ownership of boats was not technically legal, it was part of a widespread practice referred to as ‘dummying’.

Dummying was not the only money-making activity surreptitiously undertaken by Japanese migrants. Pearls, although considered an unreliable resource — “there are certain places

⁴³ 1908 RC, 94. For a description of the purposes of both the 1908 and 1913 Royal Commissions, see Chapter One s.v. ‘Japanese Pearl Shell and Sugar Labourers’.

⁴⁴ 1908 RC, 34-5.

⁴⁵ 1908 RC, 34, 37. Statements from the RC describe divers making £150 in a single season (approximately three months) and sometimes up to £200-300 in a single year.

in the Torres Strait where you will get pearls, and there are other places where you might get 1,000 shells and not find one pearl,” explained one diver — caused much tension between divers and master pearlers. In the 1890s it was expected that any pearls found were the property of the boat owner, who often went to some trouble to ensure this easily concealed gem was not ‘disappeared’ on the boat. Increased competition after 1897 led to the development of private agreements that allowed divers to retain profits on pearls, as one boat owner described to the 1908 Royal Commission:

From 1899 onward “private agreements” prevailed supreme, varying much in character, but undoubtedly abusing the meaning and spirit of the new regulations. Competition between owners for good divers became very keen. The stations who looked after their own boats and collected their own pearls had to increase the rates of lay on shell and increase their cash advances to a fabulous amount in order to retain their divers from the overtures of other owners tempting their divers with ownership of the catch of pearls, and being their own masters afloat, etc. A firm carrying out the regulations could not exist against this competition.⁴⁶

There were some attempts to prosecute those who ‘stole’ pearls, but it was difficult for a boat owner to prove theft, let alone find hidden pearls.⁴⁷ Sometimes searching for pearls could lead boat owners to wish they had never bothered in the first place. In 1937 one hapless boat owner found two pearls hidden in a crevice in the wall of a boat’s cabin, and “as the pearler gazed at his find, which he held in his finger tips, a box on which he was standing broke, and the sudden jolt caused him to drop the pearls, which fell into the crevice, rolled for yards along a plank to a hole in the side and disappeared into the sea.”⁴⁸ By 1908, it was generally accepted that Japanese divers would keep any pearls they found, which could be sold for anywhere from £100 up to £600 or even £800, depending on the agent who bought it.⁴⁹ Although a rare and unreliable

⁴⁶ 1908 RC, 168.

⁴⁷ “Owners’ Heavy Losses,” *Courier Mail* (Brisbane) (hereafter *CM*), 8 February 1937, 12; “Telegrams,” *Telegraph*, 6 May 1904, 2; “The Romance of Pearl Shelling,” *Queenslander*, 21 November 1903, 29. Mr. F. J. Beor, a solicitor on Thursday Island, described a recent case where a Japanese diver was charged with three years’ imprisonment for stealing a pearl valued at £320, while another case was dropped.

⁴⁸ “Owners’ Heavy Losses,” *CM*, 8 February 1937, 12.

⁴⁹ Once Japanese divers’ retention of pearls became an accepted practice, the buying and selling of pearls became difficult to regulate. The 1913 RC sought to regulate the agents who bought and sold these

commodity, a Japanese diver's finding of a pearl and the choices he made with the resulting money could change the trajectory of his pearl shelling career on Thursday Island.

Japanese workers had other tactics to ensure their own profits. Witness statements in both the 1908 and 1913 Royal Commissions contained multiple accusations of the transferring of shell between luggers in order to sell it at the best possible price.⁵⁰ Boats operating from a shore station would collect £80 per ton — but would also have to cover wages and expenses — compared to boats operating from floating stations that earned approximately £25 per ton, but without the expense of wages or provisions. Floating station boats also had the advantage of being able to replenish provisions, carry out repairs, or even access medical care without the hassle of returning to shore. These boats, then, could maximise their profits by transferring their catch — if it was convenient and possible to do so — to the higher-paying shore boats.⁵¹ As William Madison Hayne described in 1908, “if a schooner diver had a bad catch, and there was a Thursday Island [shore] boat about, he could pass some of his catch over to the shore boat, and get £70 a ton for it from the shore boat diver, who would then sell the shell to his employer, both divers making a profit out of the transaction.”⁵² Unless pearl shell workers were caught in the act, the transfer of catch was difficult to prove but is demonstrative of the collaborative efforts of Japanese workers. Most tactics were targeted at maximising the profit of Japanese divers, but sometimes activities might be more sinister; Thomas Champernoune May, an accountant and auctioneer on Thursday Island, claimed to have intimate knowledge of what happened at sea. He suggested to the 1913 Royal Commission that, “Japanese divers, in order to get rid of the [non-Japanese] swimming divers, threw out fat and grease to attract sharks.” This

pearls, with it being alleged that “less reputable” pearl dealers would travel north to Thursday Island for a few weeks at a time and spirit away these pearls.

⁵⁰ 1908 RC, 103.

⁵¹ Shore stations involved housing men, supplies, and produces on protected anchorages. The luggers would go out to sea for a few weeks at a time and return to the shore station when needed. The floating station was a later innovation that involved a larger vessel, such as a schooner, serving as a ‘mother ship’ for fleets of pearling luggers. This floating station enabled the boats to remain at sea for months at a time. Indeed, floating stations remained a controversial method of operation for pearl shellers. James Clark, who led and initiated the Clark Combination, honed the effectiveness of floating station innovations. For a detailed explanation of these systems, and the role of the Clark Combination in pearl shelling innovation, see Stephen Mullins, *Octopus Crowd: Maritime History and the Business of Australian Pearling in Its Schooner Age* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2019), 8–9.

⁵² 1908 RC, 120.

tactic was allegedly used to get rid of swimming divers, who were divers that remained in shallower waters to collect pearl shell. Swimming divers, however, were unlikely to be much of a threat to Japanese divers, but there were certainly other mentions of Japanese boats throwing dirt or other trash into the ocean to muddy the waters to clear out any other people nearby.⁵³

With the incentives, the means, and the ability to cooperate to maximise their profits, many Japanese divers were able to buy their way into the management and ownership of pearl shelling luggers around Thursday Island. By 1894, it was estimated that Japanese migrants managed more than seventy boats and effectively owned at least thirty-eight of these.⁵⁴ Under the recommendations of the 1897 Royal Commission, however, pearl shelling boats could no longer be owned by or registered to ‘aliens’, including Japanese migrants. Dummying, or falsifying ownership, hence became a widespread practice. Open discussion of dummying among various men in the Torres Strait pearl shelling industry makes it clear this was a well-understood practice that was virtually untraceable. To obscure registration and evade local investigation, a boat that was built in Cairns, for example, might be registered in Townsville — by a Japanese diver with the assistance of a local representative — and then sailed to Thursday Island. Or for those that were built on Thursday Island, title remained in the name of a European person.⁵⁵ As more and more Japanese divers improved their financial situation — often with pearls, whether legitimately or otherwise — their windfalls provided an impetus to become more independent. William John Graham, a licensed victualler on Thursday Island who was probably privy to the ramblings and gusto of local workers while they were drinking, provided an account of dummying to the Royal Commission in 1913:

To begin with, a diver probably finds a good pearl, and, being a capable man, he feels inclined to launch out for himself. He tells the man for whom he has been working what he thinks of doing and that man regarding him perhaps as his best diver does not like to part with him. What happens? A Japanese boat-builder has perhaps a boat on the stocks - the Japanese generally build boats during slack time, getting their timber on credit and the diver comes along and offers to put down £150. The Japanese says ‘I have already put £120 into this boat and it will cost a good deal more to finish it.’ The diver, not having any more than £150 to pay by way of a deposit, probably sees his former

⁵³ 1913 RC, 63.

⁵⁴ Yano, ‘Japanese Labour Immigration’, 93.

⁵⁵ 1908 RC, 120.

employer, who not wanting to lose a good man offers to find another £150, provided that the boat stands in his name. In all probability he will get her eventually, and the diver will help him to clear it. Ultimately, when the diver wants to go home, his former employer is sure to get the boat altogether. The first inkling I got of the procedure was in connexion with a boat to which reference is made in the report of the Mackay Commission. There was a boat on the market, and she was going a-begging for want of a dummy owner. I, among others, was approached by a Japanese to act as a dummy owner, and when I asked ‘what is it worth?’ he replied, ‘it will be worth as much to you as for any one else, namely, £50 per year and 5 per cent of the gross catch.’ That was to be my reward for registering the boat in my name; but I should also have to put down £150 to get her off the stocks. I did not accept the offer.⁵⁶

Similar scenarios were also described by John Bleakley, Clerk to the Chief Protector of Aborigines, and Ernest Julian Hennessey, a Commission Agent, among others.⁵⁷ Dummying was a mutually beneficial system for Japanese crew members, divers, and European pearl shellers; while divers and crew could maximise their earnings, European business men could increase their wealth by investing in pearl shelling and experienced divers.⁵⁸ Burns, Philp & Co. seemed to have also taken part in the practice, with accusations that the company had acquired boats with shady purchase histories and had a number of men ‘on their books’ who owned luggers. Although he could not be considered unbiased about the issue of Japanese ownership in the industry, John Renfrew Craig, Secretary to the Australian Fisheries Association and Cairns wharf labourer explained to the 1913 Royal Commission:

In Thursday Island, and, indeed, in other ports, there are men who have not £20, and never had that amount of money—men who are not in a position to buy one of these boats—but who appear as owners. We have men of straw who seem to own large boats—men in the employ of large firms who are mere clerks in offices and big stores.⁵⁹

Assuming a number of Japanese divers had ownership of pearl shelling boats in all but name, this gave them not only the monetary means, but also the freedom, to carry out fishing and pearl

⁵⁶ 1913 RC, 103.

⁵⁷ 1908 RC, 35.

⁵⁸ The retention of skilled divers became a concern for many pearl shellers, often resorting to increasingly competitive contract conditions to retain experienced divers.

⁵⁹ 1913 RC, 4.

shelling on their own terms. Many Japanese boats switched to bêche-de-mer fishing where it was necessary or convenient and to further maximise profits.⁶⁰

Japanese boat builders were the foundations of increasing Japanese ownership within the Torres Strait pearl shelling industry. After the turn of the twentieth century, nearly all boats were built by Japanese workers. Often, they would have boat sheds and workshops sitting on the shoreline where they also owned the boat slips. Leading up to and during the first two decades of the twentieth century, these boats were either sold to companies such as the Clark Combination or Burns, Philp & Co., or were ‘sold’ to other small European pearl shellers to preserve a façade of legality, while Japanese workers were able to earn a more substantial profit on the pearl shell its crew collected.⁶¹ In 1898, multiple reports from white pearl shellers emerged that Japanese workers were heavily invested in boat building businesses on Thursday Island and were responsible for building pearl shell luggers, construction sails, and even making repairs. It is difficult to know exactly which Japanese workers were involved in boat building, but it is likely to have been anywhere between forty and seventy men — including labourers, carpenters and owners — during the period between 1880 and 1941.⁶² Tsugitaro Furuta was one of these boat builders. He owned a boat slip and employed other Japanese men in his boat building enterprise.⁶³ Tsugitaro built many Thursday Island vessels in the period between 1899 and 1930, including the *Mina* (later called *Tribal Warrior*), which he built for George Smith in 1899, the *Mercia* (later called *Penguin*), that was built for Hodel’s Ltd, and the *Floria*.⁶⁴ Aside from being an

⁶⁰ 1908 RC, 126-7.

⁶¹ Mullins, *Octopus Crowd*, 156–57.

⁶² “The Pearling Industry,” *Advertiser*, 24 April 1902, 5. There were forty Japanese boatbuilders and forty Japanese storekeepers according to the 1898 claims of Mr R. Cohen, the secretary of the Australian Waterside Workers Union on Thursday Island.

⁶³ Boat slips and boat building businesses on Thursday Island were referred to interchangeably. This is likely because the boat building sheds were co-located on the beach front with the boat slips. See, for example Boat slips at Thursday Island, ca. 1928 [photograph], No. 4179680, Album of Views of the Torres Strait Islands, Charles Maurice Yonge Collection, NLA.

⁶⁴ “Tribal Warrior,” Australian National Maritime Museum, <https://arhv.sea.museum/en/objects/details/165123/tribal-warrior?sessionid=6E1B613CC10FEF7E59779D61E2101C65>; “Penguin,” Queensland Maritime Museum, <https://maritimemuseum.com.au/learn/collections/vessels/penguin>; “Japanese Construction,” Cairns Maritime Museum, <https://www.cairnsmaritimemuseum.org.au/?p=72>; “A

accomplished boat builder, Furuta was married to Kameno Furuta and the couple appeared to have run a boarding house on the island.⁶⁵ ‘Turuta’s’ business on Thursday Island in 1908 paid workers about £5-8 per month with the board and lodging included. The house was likely nearby or attached to the boat slip, and Image 12 (see page 166) shows two men and a child standing outside Furuta’s house. The boarding house was a large two-storey Queenslander surrounded by frangipani trees and palms sitting on a sandy shoreline.⁶⁶

Tsugitaro was not the only Japanese boat builder who contributed to increasing Japanese ownership of luggers in the pearl shelling industry in the Torres Strait. Shotaro Tachibana was also a Japanese boatbuilder and is credited with building at least fourteen boats on Thursday Island between 1904 and 1938. Shotaro must have made substantial profits from his work as he did not hesitate to pay a £100 fine in 1912 in lieu of facing jail time. Statements from Thursday Island pearlers — S.S. Newman, representatives of Burns, Philp & Co., and E.J. Hennessey — in 1912 attest to Shotaro’s ongoing work with them over more than a decade. Shotaro would build boats for these pearlers, but also deliver boats and even travel to carry out repairs throughout the Torres Strait and Dutch East Indies.⁶⁷ Shotaro Tachibana’s business dealings, along with Tsugitaro Furuta’s, indicate they were businessmen who took an active role in their business dealings. In all likelihood, they employed and coordinated with many other Japanese boat builders on Thursday Island.

In fact, many Japanese boatbuilders probably worked together as partners within a company or in cooperatives. *Pugh’s Almanac*, an annual commercial guide to Queensland businesses, for example, made references to the Japanese Boatbuilding Co. on Thursday Island in both 1896 and 1897. In following years, these companies may have gone unrecorded as the

Few Facts About the Floria,” Cairns Maritime Museum,

<https://www.cairnsmaritimemuseum.org.au/?p=82>.

⁶⁵ Furuta’s boarding house is likely the building that is in the background of Image 12 (page 166).

⁶⁶ 1908 RC, 160; “Thursday Island Boatbuilders,” *Pugh’s for 1920*, 397; CEDT, Tsugitaro Furuta, 3 May 1911, 65/98, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Mrs Kameno Furuta, 65/99, 3 May 1911, J2483, NAA.

⁶⁷ CEDT, Shotaro Tachibana, 28 September 1914, 159/82, J2483, NAA; “Immigration Restriction,” *BC*, 20 December 1912, 7. Among Shotaro’s CEDT documentation, customs authorities openly acknowledged that Shotaro would routinely travel to the Aroe Islands (Dutch East Indies) to deliver boats or carry out repairs. Interestingly, there did not seem to be any requirement for, nor any record of Shotaro’s CEDTs for each of these trips, even though he was departing and entering Australia.

almanac listed few non-European businesses among its pages.⁶⁸ The exact nature of how these boatbuilding companies operated is not clear, but there were many that had interests in multiple areas of the pearl shelling industry. Drawing from the Japanese-language source *Wakayama Ken Imin Shi*, Yano's translation identifies four Japanese shipbuilders on Thursday Island in 1897, among many other men who had interests in multiple businesses. The name 'Futura' is listed among these boatbuilders — most likely the aforementioned Tsugitaro Furuta — as well as 'E. Tachibana' — likely Shotaro Tachibana — who both had interests in boat building and pearl shelling, among other businesses. Yano lists another name, 'Koshiwogi', who had business interests in ship building, pearl shelling, operating a grocery shop, and interpreting services.⁶⁹ Certainly, if the Japanese Boatbuilding Co. was a cooperative, this might have provided both security and support for the multiple business interests of Japanese migrants. There are elusive mentions of other Japanese boatbuilders throughout north Queensland, hinting at a larger network of Japanese carpenters and boatbuilders. For example, a man named Imoto offered his services in Mackay in 1910, advertising, "Japanese Boat Builder, builds dingies and boats. Samples on view Victoria Hotel. Inspection invited. Only staying in Mackay limited period."⁷⁰ This limited evidence of Japanese boatbuilders provides a useful starting point for reconsidering contributions of these, and perhaps other migrant groups, to the maritime history of north Queensland.

Importantly, many of these boat builders and owners assisted local Japanese workers. The social organisation and cooperation among Japanese pearl shell workers would have extended to the off-season, where Japanese boat builders provided work to divers and crew while they were on shore. This system of seasonal employment perhaps played a role in the dummied of pearl shell luggers, where Japanese and divers and crew would assist in a boat's construction during the lay season to offset or minimise labour costs. As a result, Japanese divers and/or boat builders would be able to offer the boat at a lower upfront cost to European 'owners' through whom the boat would be dummied. Four successive Royal Commissions failed to make significant changes in legislation to discourage or decrease Japanese boat building. Only in 1930 was legislation passed that restricted the work of Japanese on boat slips and limited Japanese migrants to either working on luggers or returning to Japan. The legislative reforms were hailed as a success, but by this time, most of the Japanese workers were only a few "old

⁶⁸ "Boatbuilders," *Pugh's Almanac 1897*, 153B; "Boatbuilders," *Pugh's Almanac 1897*, 220A.

⁶⁹ Yano, 'Japanese Labour Immigration', 98.

⁷⁰ "Imoto," *Daily Mercury* (Mackay) (hereafter *DM*), 29 December 1910, 1.

hands” who were “free men” that worked on the boat slips.⁷¹ Nevertheless, the legislative changes during the 1930s marked the end of an era in Japanese participation in the pearl shelling industry in the Torres Strait.

From Contracted Labour to Independent Farmers

By the turn of the century, ‘upward mobility’, as Yano terms it, was also a possibility for Japanese workers in the sugar cane industry. Yano focuses on those Japanese labourers who were well-suited to the mechanical work at mills and who were placed in charge of some centrifugal operations, overseeing European workers, or becoming engineer’s assistants.⁷² For them, Yano argues, upward mobility into independent farming marked a successful trajectory in their line of work. This upward mobility was not limited to Japanese mill workers, however, as other Japanese sugar cane labourers were able to achieve similar success.

Some Japanese sugar labourers who became time-expired — meaning their labour contracts of approximately three to four years had expired and they were free to pursue their own interests or return to Japan — remained in Australia and undertook other work in the sugar cane industry or in nearby areas. They worked as cooks, laundrymen, or general labourers. A small group, however, became sugar cane planters in their own right. This mobility from labourers to independent farmers was achieved by approximately twenty-six Japanese migrants in the period between 1880 and 1941. Members of other groups of non-European migrants, such as Pacific Islanders and Chinese, experienced this same mobility during this period.⁷³ Although the presence of Japanese labourers on sugar cane farms and in sugar cane mills has been recognised by historians, Japanese sugar cane farmers remain underacknowledged. Griggs argues that with the encouragement of planters such as CSR, John Robb & Co., and Drysdale Bros & Co., some employees became tenant farmers, which led to a diversification in the ethnicity among small cane farmers. In particular, a variety of nationalities were involved as sugar cane farmers throughout north Queensland, with Griggs identifying a dozen Japanese cane growers in the Proserpine and Mackay districts alone. Griggs’ 1999 analysis of exemptions under the *Sugar Cultivation Act 1913* (QLD) indicates there were approximately seventeen Japanese farmers in

⁷¹ “Pearl Trade,” *Northern Standard* (Darwin), 12 December 1930, 3.

⁷² Yano, ‘Japanese Labour Immigration’, 114–15.

⁷³ There is limited research on this topic. For example, see, Griggs, ‘Alien Agriculturalists’.

Queensland between 1880 and 1913. Further investigation of these records, however, has found approximately twenty-six Japanese sugar cane farmers, as described in Appendix 2.⁷⁴

Japanese sugar cane farmers made up only about seven and a half percent of all sugar cane labourers and mill workers who were granted exemptions under the *Sugar Cultivation Act* of 1913.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, the significance of Japanese farmers is not adequately represented by the total number of farmers or the amount of sugar they produced. As Griggs argues, many of the early non-European migrant agriculturalists, including Japanese farmers, were responsible for improving tracts of land that European farmers had found too difficult to cultivate. Moreover, Japanese farmers were often among the first few in a sugar district and they ensured steady supplies of sugar cane to mills before other farmers were established or when they experienced ‘down’ times.⁷⁶ Despite the barrage of discriminatory measures against them, Japanese farmers were fairly successful and managed to cultivate tracts of land that were considered poor and unviable. In nearly all cases, these farmers were men who had completed indentured contracts and amassed the money to lease a farm, usually sometime in the first decade after 1901, later employing other workers and often continuing to farm for many decades.

Of the twenty-six Japanese sugar cane farmers who can be identified as living in north Queensland between 1900 and 1941, approximately twenty-three were first contracted as sugar cane farm labourers or mill workers. After completing their contracts, they sought out opportunities as cane growers. Griggs argues that there were increasing restrictions on alien farmers during the 1900s and 1910s but, provided Japanese migrants could gain exemptions to farm under the *Sugar Cultivation Act 1913* (QLD), some mills were willing to work with them. Granted, Japanese farmers experienced discrimination from some mills who refused to accept their sugar cane, but where necessary, Japanese farmers probably used intermediary agents in the

⁷⁴ Griggs, 141.

⁷⁵ There were 345 exemptions granted to Japanese men throughout the batch files of Applications for Certificate of Exemption and Certificate of Exemption under the Sugar Cultivation Act, 1913. Agriculture and Stock Department Correspondence Files, SRS 6041, QSA. There are perhaps more Japanese farmers than are noted in Appendix 2, as Griggs has identified farmers in other locations. For example, Griggs identifies ten Japanese farmers in Proserpine and zero in Cairns. My own research in Appendix 2, however, finds only three Japanese farmers in Proserpine and another three in Cairns.

⁷⁶ Griggs, ‘Alien Agriculturalists’, 154–55.

same way Chinese farmers navigated similar discrimination.⁷⁷ Before 1941, there were about ten Japanese sugar cane farmers in the Mackay region, which stretched from The Leap in the north, down through Farleigh and the Palms, and as far west as Homebush. Griggs has argued European farmers in this region were very willing to lease land to Melanesian farmers, and probably other non-European farmers, as they found them to be very desirable tenants in the early 1900s.⁷⁸

Yokito Endo, for example, was a farmer at Homebush who was one of the most successful cane growers in this region, and perhaps in north Queensland. At the time of his internment in 1941, Yokito held approximately 278 acres of sugar cane farmland that the government then sold for £25,504 in 1953.⁷⁹ Considered to be an extremely wealthy canegrower, reports furnished by the Controller of Enemy Property in 1946 indicated that Yokito's land produced over 2000 tons of cane per annum and he additionally held shares in A.C.F. Shirley Fertilizer in Brisbane. Yokito had been farming since at least 1927 when he placed the winning bid on the property being auctioned by the local Racecourse Co-operative Sugar Association Ltd. At the time, however, aliens such as Yokito were unable to own land, and the Co-operative agreed to place their Cane Inspector Mr. Axam as the Trustee. Axam had no dealings in the management of the property until Yokito was interned in 1941.⁸⁰ It is unclear how Yokito managed to place the winning bid on such a large tract of farmland. The years between 1904, when Yokito became time-expired, and 1927, must have provided him with sufficient finances to purchase the property outright.

Jack Takagaki was another similarly successful sugar cane farmer in the Mackay region who owned a slightly more modest 120-acre sugar cane farm in Homebush. Jack had first arrived in Australia in 1902 on a contract working as a sugar labourer — different accounts indicate he was either a stable hand or a mill worker — and he spent the subsequent time-expired years as a cane cutter. In 1909 Jack obtained a lease on a few acres at the Palms Estate in Mackay, slowly

⁷⁷ Griggs, 144; Armstrong, 'Aspects of Japanese Immigration', 3–5.

⁷⁸ Griggs, 'Alien Agriculturalists', 139.

⁷⁹ Department of the Treasury, Minute Paper, C. L. Hewitt, Controller of Enemy Property, 22 February 1956, Yokito Endo and Trustee S.J. Axam, EPJ1604 PART 1, A1379, NAA (hereafter Yokito Endo and Trustee).

⁸⁰ Memorandum by Norman Bennett, Manager of Racecourse Co-operative Sugar Association Ltd., 11 April 1947, Yokito Endo, EPJ1604 PART 2, A1379, NAA; National Insurance Commission Report, 15 April 1947, Yokito Endo and Trustee.

paying it at a rate of one shilling per year and remained farming there for the next twenty years. No doubt, there were additional fees to be paid on the cane he farmed. By 1929, Jack was married with children and had the funds to purchase a 120-acre property also in Homebush. While it is unclear how he was able to bypass similarly restrictive laws against aliens — he was not naturalised — perhaps he also used a trustee arrangement.⁸¹

Yokito Endo and Jack Takagaki were exceptional in the size of their farms and purchase of land, but they were not the only Japanese cane growers in north Queensland to have found success as independent farmers. Many others around the Mackay region moved from sugar cane labouring to farming after the completion of their contracts, in the first decade after Federation. As seen in Appendix 2., a noteworthy proportion of these individuals continued farming well into the 1920s and 1930s. Further north in the Herbert River region, there were three Japanese farmers around the Seymour River, who may have managed to lease farms just before the turn of the century. The Ingham region received some of the earliest Japanese labourers and therefore was the first to have ‘time-expired labourers’. Sukezayemon Mitakara reported that he began farming sugar for Macknade Mill around 1897, followed soon after by Yosuke Masumoto in 1899.⁸² Kensaku Mori, another sugar cane farmer, worked first for twelve years as an employee and then began leasing at Ripple Creek around 1910.⁸³ By 1927, Sukezayemon’s farm was around forty-three acres and was held in both his and his Australian-born daughter’s name.⁸⁴ The size of the others’ farms remain unclear, but in some cases they were evidently large enough to require the employment of additional labourers. Sukezayemon employed both Italian and Japanese

⁸¹ Interview with Jack Takagaki, 21 November 1997, Series 1, Sweet Talking Oral histories 1997-1998, Australian Sugar Industry Museum, State Library of Queensland (hereafter Jack Takagaki Oral History); Prisoner of War/Internee, Jack Takagaki, QJ16176, MP1103/2, NAA.

⁸² Sukezayemon Mitakara, File 244E, AGS/N355, SRS 6041, QSA; “The Bemerside Tragedy,” *Townsville Daily Bulletin* (hereafter *TDB*), 7 April 1927, 7; QSA: SRS6041, AGS/N355, 256E, Yosuke Masumoto; “Sugarcane Planters Cultivating Four Acres and Upwards.”

⁸³ Kensaku Mori, File 202E, AGS/N355, SRS 6041, QSA; CEDT, Kensaku Mori, 27 February 1917, 277/65, J2483, NAA; “Sugarcane Planters Cultivating Four Acres and Upwards,” *Pugh’s (Queensland) Official Almanac and Directory, 1917*, 1263.

⁸⁴ Contract of Sale, 12 January 1927 and Contract of Sale, 12 January 1927, Miyoko Mitakara, EPJ803, A1379, NAA.

labourers, while Yosuke employed his brother Toshitaro Masumoto and probably other workers on his farm.⁸⁵

For some of these farmers, growing sugar cane was just one in a series of occupations. This diversification, and associated changes in occupation over time, provides the clearest explanation of why some farmers, like Yokito Endo, had such large and productive farms, while other Japanese farmers subsisted on much smaller and temporary cane farms. In fact, it is likely many Japanese sugar cane farmers were various combinations of farmer, market gardener, boatbuilder, or even storekeeper at various times in their careers. Seitoro Ishimoto was one of these small farmers. He supplied cane to the Mossman Mill in the 1900s using land sub-let from leased Crown land along the banks of the Mossman River. As Griggs argues, farmers like Seitoro Ishimoto were often essential to the productivity of the sugar cane industry, particularly in struggling years, where they made use of otherwise ‘unusable’ land for growing sugar cane. But it is unlikely Seitoro Ishimoto supported himself through cane farming alone. Seitoro’s internment records describe his occupation as both gardener and fisherman, with his possessions including a two-roomed cottage, three acres of farmland growing bananas and vegetables, and various gardening, fishing, motor mechanic, and carpenter’s tools.⁸⁶ Seitoro additionally had interests in building and repairing fishing boats.⁸⁷ Comparably, Goto Aijiro spent his fifty years in Australia travelling around north Queensland after completing his initial contract, likely thereafter doing the odd labouring job or small-scale market gardening. After 1937, however, Goto took up sugar cane farming in Edmonton, south of Cairns.⁸⁸ Similarly for Harry Kamada, cane farming was just one job in a series of others; he was first a cane labourer in Mackay, later a cane farmer in

⁸⁵ QSA: SRS6041, AGS/N355, 256E, Yosuke Masumoto; “Sugarcane Planters Cultivating Four Acres and Upwards,” *Pugh’s (Queensland) Official Almanac and Directory, 1917*, 1262; CEDT, Yosuke Masumoto, 14 December 1917, 237/96, J2483, NAA; Contract of Sale, 12 January 1927 and Contract of Sale, 12 January 1927, Miyoko Mitakara, EPJ803, A1379, NAA.

⁸⁶ Prisoner of War/Internee, Seitoro Ishimoto, MP1103/2, QJ16040, NAA.

⁸⁷ “The New Invincible,” *SMH*, 22 September 1928, 1; “Notice of Bailiff’s Sale,” *CP*, 15 August 1927, 2. S. Ishimoto of Cairns is listed as a recent buyer of the latest types of Invincible Marine Engines, priced from £150-380, while Ishimoto’s boat shed in Mossman is the location of the sale of the boat ‘Shadow’ by Ernest Shang and James Douglas Shang.

⁸⁸ Goto Aijiro Alien Registration Certificate No 73 Issued 30 October 1916 at Ingham, JAPANESE GOTO A, BP4/3, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Goto Angiro, QJ16016, MP1103/2, NAA.

Proserpine, and after 1929 a laundryman in Julia Creek.⁸⁹ Although an original contribution to the field of research, Appendix 2 provides only an indication of Japanese sugar cane farmers between 1890 and 1946; there are likely to have been many others who took up sugar cane farming for brief or intermittent periods of time but were otherwise classified generally with other fruit and vegetable farmers or even as market gardeners.

In contrast to small, independent Japanese farmers, some other men saw sugar cane farming as an investment opportunity. A number of Japanese storekeepers and merchants around Cairns leased or had part ownership in plots of sugar cane farms. John Iwamatsu Nakashiba — of Nakashiba Bros — and Asajiro Nishioka were partners in the ownership of around forty-five acres of sugar cane farm in Gordonvale. It is unclear how personally involved John was with the farm, as he was also a prominent (and occasionally successful) businessman in Cairns, Thursday Island, and Darwin.⁹⁰ John was a storekeeper and commission agent, often providing supplies for Japanese pearl shelling boats, with some rumours that he was also involved in running brothels and assisting with dummyming in the pearl shelling industry. Interestingly, Asajiro seems to have continued farming for most of his time in Australia, while it seems that John farmed perhaps only for the duration of their seven-year lease (between 1908 and 1915). For John, cane farming was a business opportunity that was perhaps not as profitable as he had hoped, as he declared bankruptcy and left for Darwin in the 1930s. For Asajiro, however, the farm remained a consistent source of income. As more boats in the pearl shelling industry came to be owned (or at least controlled by) Japanese migrants, Japanese storekeepers like John would have also invested in Japanese pearl shelling boats. As with the sugar cane farming, they were not directly involved in either industry, but remained investors who seemed to profit handsomely. John, for example, acted as an agent to Japanese boat builders and then also coordinated with Japanese divers to supply rations of rice, tinned meats, sugar, and flour.⁹¹ Japanese farmers, and even boat owners, were therefore a mixed bunch of independent men and investors with diverse portfolios.

⁸⁹ No.1142 Harry Kamada, Return of Proserpine, Chief Secretary's Department, General Correspondence – Coloured Labour and Asiatic Aliens, 16 July 1913-31 July 1913, Item 862496, SRS 5402, QSA; Harry Kamada, File 2113E, AGS/N356, SRS 6041, QSA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Ichizo Kamada, QJ16051, MP1103/2, NAA.

⁹⁰ Oliver, 'Citizens Without Certificates', 133; Prisoner of War/Internee, John Iwamatsu Nakashiba, DJ18113, MP1103/2, NAA.

⁹¹ 1908 RC, 88, 104.

Another such storekeeper and sugar cane farmer was K. Ishikawa of K. Ishikawa & Co., in Cairns. While there are numerous advertisements for his store on Sachs Street in Cairns, he often publicly commented on the treatment of Japanese people in the sugar cane industry and was reportedly a farmer himself. In 1921 Ishikawa sent a letter of protest to the editors of local newspapers in response to news of an AWU conference motion to bar Japanese people from sugar mills and from leasing farms. Ishikawa argued that the number of Japanese migrants in the sugar industry were few and of those, most had been in the industry for many decades. This was the official opinion of the Japanese consul at the time, as well, and claims of declining numbers were more or less accurate.⁹² Still incensed in 1922, Ishikawa argued that “[a]s for myself, I have put into a farm the savings of a life time. I have done my best, with the help of my countrymen, to assist the sugar industry all I can.”⁹³ While it is unclear how long Ishikawa himself was involved in sugar cane farming, it was likely only one part of his overall business, although he did spend at least some time managing the farm himself, as Yorokuro Hayami was brought from Japan to manage his store in Cairns while he tended to the farm.⁹⁴

Conclusions

As one of the earliest groups of Japanese migrants to arrive in north Queensland, Japanese indentured labourers paved the way for improved working conditions and rates of pay, systems of mutual cooperation, and increased the financial position of the Nikkei community. Pearl shell workers who arrived in the Torres Strait during the mid-1880s received support from the local Japanese Association and the Japanese consulate in the enforcement of their contracts. This was possible because of the strong systems of cooperation and organisation among Japanese pearl shell workers that facilitated industrial action. Compared to other migrant labourers in this industry, Japanese workers were well-represented and the conditions of their contracts carefully regulated. Cooperation among and representation of Japanese pearl shell workers was the foundation of growing Japanese influence in the north Queensland region.

⁹² “Ishikawa,” *CP*, 9 August 1922, 1; Letter from Japanese Consulate General to Secretary, Home and Territories Department, 1 July 1919, Question re Employment of Japanese in Sugar Cane Industry, 1919/13433, A1, NAA.

⁹³ “Correspondence,” *CP*, 21 January 1921, 2; “Japanese in the Sugar Industry,” *BC*, 13 May 1922, 9.

⁹⁴ Memorandum Home and Territories Department, No. 20/21213, 2 December 1921, Y. Hayami Japanese on Passport, 1926/4456, A1, NAA.

Upon these cooperative foundations, existing and newly arrived Japanese workers benefitted from employment stability, increased income, and representation. As a result, many found financial success and independence in the north Queensland region. In the pearl shelling industry where Japanese workers, and particularly divers, came to form the majority, they exercised influence over the industry's resources and conditions. In the sugar cane industry, time-expired workers found more mobility and flexibility in their work, many of them choosing to remain in Australia for years to come and transition into other industries. Within these systems, however, Japanese workers found power in their ability to strike, organise, and withhold labour when conditions or circumstances were not up to expectations. Although authorities were generally unwilling to refer to the disputes of Japanese workers as taking industrial action, it is evident that organisation of labour and mutual cooperation underpinned the approaches of Japanese workers in the sugar cane and pearl shelling industries. When rates of pay became a concern, accommodation provisions were not met, or rations were insufficient, Japanese workers would again and again meet, negotiate, march, and strike their way to force concessions from employers. These activities were strongest in the pearl shelling industry, where Japanese workers were numerous and Japanese divers a critical factor in the success of the industry and Thursday Island's economy, but these activities were also used by groups of sugar cane workers throughout north Queensland.

This solidification and entrenchment of Japanese workers' collective power in defending pay and conditions was a steppingstone for financial success and even independence for some Japanese migrants. These gains are most evident in the pearl shelling industry, where not only were divers in charge of pearl shelling luggers' operation at sea, but through methods of 'dummying' and partnerships with boatbuilders and local storekeepers, some were able to own pearl shelling luggers themselves. Boat ownership among Japanese divers bypassed the power and control of European master pearlshellers. Operating boats was essentially a small business in all but name, with some even able to shift between pearl shelling and collecting *bêche-de-mer* as the seasons and economics demanded. Similarly in the sugar cane industry, a small handful of Japanese workers were able to lease and eventually even own sugar cane farms. Some farmers would occasionally partake in fruit and vegetable market gardening as the need arose. Spread throughout north Queensland, these Japanese farmers employed other workers — sometimes even European workers — and sold to mills directly, or perhaps through dummying when needed. Many of these men continued farming for decades and became a strong part of the industry's success and longevity. It is this spirit of upward mobility that realised success for many

Japanese workers who had arrived from the poorer farming regions of Japan in search of economic opportunities.

Chapter Four: Threads of Connection and Japanese Women



Image 6. *Left*, Shigi Furukawa's passport photo in 1935. In this photograph she is around fifty-eight years old. (Image courtesy of Shigeri Furuchi Japanese passport, FURUCHI S, BP313/1, NAA.)

Image 7. *Right*, Studio portrait of an unnamed Japanese woman wearing a kimono in Mareeba, far north Queensland. Photographed by Harriet Pettifore Brims, date unknown. (Image courtesy of Series 1: Glass plate negatives, 31054 Harriet Brims collection, SLQ.)

When she lived in Australia, Shigi Furukawa was a wife (multiple times), a widow, a sly grog seller, and a laundry proprietress. Arriving in Australia in 1898 under the name Shigi Furuchi from Awaji Province, Hyōgo Prefecture in Japan, she spent twenty years living on Thursday Island. Nonetheless, the nature of her work and means to make a living when she first arrived remain entirely unknown.¹ In 1908, Shigi married a well-dressed and mustachioed man named

¹ Prisoner of War/Internee, Shigi Fulukawa, QJF16014, MP1103/2, NAA (hereafter Shigi Fulukawa Internment Record).

Jutaro Ogawa. Only a year later, though, her husband mysteriously departed for Japan and never returned.² Shigi may have attempted to follow Jutaro to Japan, with records showing she applied for a Certificate of Exemption from the Dictation Test two weeks after Jutaro had left, but she never boarded a ship to leave Australia.³ In all likelihood, Shigi never saw her first husband again.

In 1918, Shigi moved to Mackay where she reportedly owned her own home — a marked difference to Thursday Island, where she had rented properties from various landlords — and on Christmas Day of 1922, she was caught selling ‘sly grog’ by the local police.⁴ A policeman had been keeping watch on Shigi’s house for a few nights and that Christmas morning he arranged for an agent to approach her. The agent purchased a bottle each of horehound beer and Resch’s lager from Shigi. Although Shigi vehemently denied any such illegal activity when police confronted her, she was brought before court a few days later and opted to pay a fine of £50 in lieu of three months jail.⁵ Shigi married again in 1926 to Mitsugoro Furukawa, a local sugar cane labourer turned laundry proprietor, and together, it seems, they ran the Fuji Laundry on Wood Street in Mackay.⁶ Over the next decade and a half, however, Mitsugoro’s health began to decline and he passed away in August 1941. It can only be assumed that during these years, Shigi took on extra responsibilities running the laundry business. She was interned as an enemy alien in December 1941.⁷

The task of tracing the story of Shigi’s life in Australia across her changing names, residences, and professions highlights some of the many complexities involved when researching Japanese women’s lives. She becomes most visible in the historical record when she interacts with authorities managing her status as an alien in White Australia, and when her activities fell on

² Marriage Registration of Shige Furuchi and Jutaro Ogawa, 17 August 1908, 1908/C/2285, Queensland Births, Deaths and Marriages (hereafter QBDM); CEDT, Jutaro Ogawa, 1 April 1908, 1908/164, J3136, NAA.

³ CEDT Unclaimed and Cancelled, Mrs Shigi Ogawa, 14 April 1909, 17/66, J2483, NAA..

⁴ Shigi Fulukawa Internment Record; “Summons Court,” *DM*, 29 December 1922, 2.

⁵ “Summons Court,” *DM*, 29 December 1922, 2; “Sly Grog Selling,” *BC*, 30 December 1922, 5.

⁶ Marriage Registration of Shige Furuchi and Mitsugoro Fulukawa, 8 September 1926, 1926/C/2413, QBDM; Certificate 2043E for Mitsugoro Furukawa, Item 2574813, AGS/N356, SRS 6041, QSA; “Removal Notice,” *DM*, 17 December 1926, 10. Mitsugoro often went by ‘C. Fulukawa’ in advertisements, presumably under an anglicised version of his name.

⁷ Death Registration of Mitsugoro Fulukawa, 7 August 1941, 1941/C/3263, QBDM.

the wrong side of the law. From this limited view, it seems that Shigi at least lived a somewhat comfortable and peaceful life in Australia before her internment. Unlike the many sordid stories of Japanese women who were trafficked to Australia to work in the sex industry, there is no evidence to suggest Shigi was ever involved in sex work. Other archival records, however, show there is much else to say about Shigi's life in north Queensland. While the story of Shigi's life is built primarily from fractious interactions with authorities, her story, like those of the many other Japanese women who lived in north Queensland, is much more complex and nuanced than the existing histories of Japanese migrants in Australia might suggest. Indeed, there are gaps and ambiguities in the history of Japanese women, but this chapter broadens the scope of understanding the diversity of these women's experiences and contributions to north Queensland life.

Troubling the History of the *Karayuki-san*

Japanese women who were trafficked from Japan throughout Asia and the Pacific, often referred to as *karayuki-san*, have been represented in histories as impoverished and destitute women who were unwittingly sold into the sex trade.⁸ Having arrived on some remote shore of northern Australia, such women were supposedly single and therefore immoral, and were forced to live a life of crime and debauchery. This narrative, however, has become an overly generalised and even exaggerated historical narrative about Japanese women who migrated to Australia.⁹ Between 1910 and 1935, historian Sachiko Sone has estimated anywhere from a few thousand up to nearly twenty thousand Japanese women were living and working internationally as sex workers.¹⁰ Within Australia, there were estimated to be around two hundred Japanese women who were sex workers between 1890 and 1905.¹¹ The 1911 census indicated there were a total of 242 female Japanese persons in Queensland, although this includes approximately seventy-two

⁸ These women were colloquially labelled as *karayuki-san* in Japan, which roughly translates as 'going to China.' This phrase refers to the way women were trafficked from Japan to China and eventually throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

⁹ See, for example Bain, *Full Fathom Five*; Armstrong, 'Aspects of Japanese Immigration'; Meaney, *Towards a New Vision*; Menghetti, *Summer Seas*. These histories take a stereotypical view of Japanese women who migrated to Australia, either describing these women only as sex workers or giving them the briefest of mentions (often only as sex workers, as well).

¹⁰ Sone, 'Karayuki-San of Asia', 55.

¹¹ Sone, 106–7.

who were children, likely born in Australia.¹² These numbers are wildly inconsistent and, along with other evidence, the archival basis of this narrative in Australia is questionable in its blanket application to all Japanese women.

Very little is known about the background of those *karayuki-san* who came to Australia to work in the sex industry. Acknowledging the limited nature of his sources, Sissons has indicated that most of these women, like the male Japanese labourers, came from the poorer farming regions of Kumamoto and Nagasaki. While many of these women were illiterate, the Japanese men who migrated had similar literacy rates.¹³ These Japanese women and men were part of a larger movement of the ‘rural poor’ moving out of Japan during the Meiji Restoration. Beyond this, historians have been unable to adduce many other details about the backgrounds of Japanese women before they came to Australia, often drawing broad generalisations based on limited and unreliable evidence to suggest an historical narrative of crime, poverty, and debauchery.¹⁴ Indeed, some historians in Japan have sought to understand more about this history of Japanese women, particularly from the 1970s following the release of Tomoko Yamazaki’s fraught, but ground breaking, *Sandakan Brothel No 8*.¹⁵ Other historians have also sought to understand the experiences of Japanese sex workers and their role within the Meiji period.¹⁶ As Oliver suggests, however, we still know very little about these women within the

¹² Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Data Archive, Len Smith, Tim Rowse, and Stuart Hungerford, “Historical and colonial census data archive (HCCDA),” ADA Dataverse, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.26193/MP6WRS>.

¹³ Sissons, ‘Karayuki-San’, 188.

¹⁴ See, for example, Bain, *Full Fathom Five*, 91; Jones, *Number 2 Home*, 167; Frances, *Selling Sex*, 47.

¹⁵ Yamazaki Tomoko, *Sandakan Brothel No. 8: An Episode in the History of Lower-Class Japanese Women*, trans. Karen Colligan-Taylor (New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1999). Yamazaki’s research methods to gather oral histories and testimonies from former *karayuki-san* and their families are problematic. Most notably, Yamazaki deceived Osaki, the former *karayuki-san* she lived with for many weeks to conduct her research. Yamazaki described Osaki as “certainly the poorest of which I had ever seen or heard”, but still deceived Osaki so that she would provide food and accommodation. Yamazaki withheld her identity and purposes so that Osaki would share more information and also stole documents and photographs from families of former *karayuki-san*. For further criticisms, see, Warren, *Ab Ku and Karayuki-San*, 8; Mihalopoulos, *Sex in Japan’s Globalization*, 47.

¹⁶ See, for example, Ann Marie L. Davis, *Imagining Prostitution in Modern Japan, 1850–1913* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019); Mihalopoulos, ‘The Making of Prostitutes in Japan’; Mihalopoulos, ‘Ousting the “Prostitute”’; Mihalopoulos, *Sex in Japan’s Globalization*; Amy Stanley, ‘Enlightenment

context of Australian history and there is a need for a re-examination of the narratives that have so far been constructed.¹⁷ Importantly, this does not mean that Japanese women were never victims of sex trafficking or exploitation, or actively engaged in sex work. This chapter does not deny these realities, but it does suggest that this narrative has flattened historical understanding about the diverse experiences of those Japanese women who migrated from Japan to Australia. Regardless of whether Japanese women were sex workers or not, archival records reveal the rich tapestry of Japanese women's lives in north Queensland.

Previous historians have relied on limited, typically judicial, sources to understand these women's experiences in Australia. At the heart of this limited evidence is the oft-cited statement of W.E. Parry Okeden, the Queensland Commissioner of Police. Okeden reported on the number and distribution of Japanese women in colony, stating that there were 116 Japanese women in Queensland in 1897 and — with the exception of the consul's wife — all of them “gain their living by prostitution.” This was not only a wild generalisation, but its statistical basis has been thoroughly refuted by historian Ganter.¹⁸ Nevertheless, the Commissioner's statement remains widely cited.¹⁹ The Commissioner's faulty statement is indicative of a wider use of legal and police records when speaking about these Japanese women, which directs histories towards an overemphasis of criminality and violence in Japanese women's lives. As is often the case with histories of sex work, historians can only access a narrow and limited view of these women's past when the primary sources, generally legal records, are preoccupied with the legal implications of their work.²⁰ Most archival sources regarding Japanese women are therefore focused on crime

Geisha: The Sex Trade, Education, and Feminine Ideals in Early Meiji Japan', *Journal of Asian Studies* 72, no. 3 (2013): 539–62; Amy Stanley, *Selling Women: Prostitution, Markets, and the Household in Early Modern Japan* (Berkeley, US: University of California Press, 2012); Warren, *Ab Ku and Karayuki-San*; Warren, *Pirates, Prostitutes and Pullers*.

¹⁷ Oliver, *Empty North*, vi.

¹⁸ Letter from Commissioner of Police to Under Secretary Home Department, 14 September 1897, Item 861851, SRS 5384, QSA; Ganter, 'Wakayama Triangle', 57.

¹⁹ See, for example Armstrong, 'Aspects of Japanese Immigration', 5; Sissons, 'Karayuki-San', 175; Nagata and Nagatomo, *Japanese Queenslanders*, 10–11.

²⁰ Judith Allen, 'The Making of a Prostitute Proletariat in Early Twentieth Century New South Wales', in *So Much Hard Work: Women and Prostitution in Australian History*, ed. Kay Daniels (Sydney: Fontana Books, 1984), 198.

ranging from theft and robbery, through to rape, suicide, murder, and other violence.²¹ A few Japanese women are visible only in the historical record through their connections to violent and tragic events. Shina Nakagawa, for example, the widowed partner of Tattersall winner Tommy Japan, is almost exclusively known in connection with her violent murder by Japanese diver Yosuke in 1895.²² Most other Japanese women mentioned by name in histories of Japanese migration in Australia — ‘Karayuki-San: The Japanese Prostitutes in Australia, 1887-1916’ and *Spinifex and Hessian*, for example — are also connected to such sensationalised and violent stories. These include the police inquiry into the suicide of Aramaki Kumi in Wyndham in 1889, and a Japanese man’s brutal attack on a woman named ‘Masano’ after she tried to leave her house.²³ As Raelene Frances aptly describes historical research about sex workers: “Historians find out most about sex workers when they come into contact with the law, either as accused or victim.”²⁴ In this way, police records mediate the archival link between historians and those women who were sex workers.²⁵ In order to escape this limited view of Japanese women, often obfuscated by moral assessments to determine their source of work, historians must therefore attempt to look beyond legal records and reconsider whether other sources can reveal further details about their lives.

Another issue with historians’ use of these limited legal sources is that police often used Japanese women’s marital status as a measure of their ‘respectability.’ Unmarried women were generally judged to be sex workers, while married women were considered ‘respectable.’ Contained in the same document as the Police Commissioner W.E. Parry Okeden’s 1897 estimate of Japanese women in north Queensland, is a statement from the Sub-Collector of Customs in Townsville. He claimed, “police inform me that four of the women are prostitutes, the other three live with their husbands here.”²⁶ Not only does this statement contradict the

²¹ Sissons, ‘Karayuki-San’. Sissons makes use of other archives such as census and newspaper records, although these are used to support, rather than interrogate, the police records.

²² Fugita Tatsu & Shina Nakagawa & Toosuke Yosuke, Item 2733181, Series 36, Inquests, QSA.

²³ Sissons, ‘Karayuki-San’, 179; Hunt, *Spinifex and Hessian*, 134–35. The woman named ‘Masano’ is definitely not the same person as Masano Oki who is mentioned later in this chapter.

²⁴ Frances, *Selling Sex*, 46.

²⁵ Kay Daniels, ‘Introduction’, in *So Much Hard Work: Women and Prostitution in Australian History*, ed. Kay Daniels (Sydney: Fontana Books, 1984), 5.

²⁶ Letter from Collector of Customs to Under Secretary, Treasury, 27 August 1897, Item 861851, SRS 5384, QSA. An additional note at the bottom of the letter relates further details of the telegram received from the Sub-Collector in Townsville.

commissioner's 1897 numerical estimate, but it shows that information gathered by police is laden with the conflation of women's marital status, 'respectability', and work.

Comments on the estimated numbers of Japanese women in each category — their marital status, perceived respectability, and their location — are echoed by historian Sissons, who, although careful and critical in his research, believed it was unlikely many Japanese women were "respectable." Sissons concluded that Thursday Island, owing to its relatively large Japanese population, was the only place where more "respectable services" could feasibly be sustained by Japanese women. He doubted "whether there would have been the same degree of 'respectability' among the Japanese elsewhere in Queensland."²⁷ Sissons' use of police records that were preoccupied with respectability in turn replicates authorities' arbitrary judgements of sex workers and loses sight of Japanese women's broader circumstances and experiences in north Queensland. This does not mean that many of these Japanese women were *not* sex workers, but police records' correlation between respectability, marital status, and sex work calls the broad reliability of these statistical returns into question. Statements from individuals such as John Douglas, who in 1902 was the Government Resident on Thursday Island — "[a]mong the Asiatic contingent resident on Thursday Island there are forty-three Japanese women, of whom a few are respectable married women; the rest we may classify as not very respectable"²⁸ — uses the same coded language to imply that all unmarried Japanese women were sex workers. Douglas' words illustrate social attitudes that saw a porous line between women's morality and sex work and that effectively painted all unmarried Japanese women as sex workers. It is important to acknowledge that marital status was not a reliable indicator of whether a Japanese woman was a sex worker. Not all unmarried women were necessarily sex workers, and marriage did not necessarily preclude women from sex work. None of this is to suggest that these women were not sex workers, but there is insufficient evidence to indicate that all single Japanese women were sex workers. Put plainly, historians can place little reliance on the judgements of police and government authorities when it comes to understanding the history of Japanese women in north Queensland.

If we can then acknowledge that the blanket narrative that all Japanese women in north Queensland were sex workers is frayed, there is much opportunity to say something different

²⁷ Sissons, 'Karayuki-San', 174–75. Sissons does not explain what he means by "respectable services" or "respectable women," but we can assume he was probably referring to married women who were not sex workers and whatever services they might provide.

²⁸ John Douglas, *Asia and Australia* (Brisbane: 1902), 51.

about these women's histories. We can consider a wider variety of circumstances — although trafficking certainly occurred — that brought Japanese women to north Queensland and their choices within this process of migration and settlement. Indeed, we can thread additional detail into the lives of women who were involved in the sex industry in Australia by reading 'against the grain' of the existing historical record. Furthermore, the subjectivity of legal and police records can be supplemented by a greater diversity of archival sources. Finally, if we abandon the simplistic historical narrative that all single women were sex workers, the marital status of Japanese women can be reconsidered in terms of their relationships with other individuals — whether formally or informally — and the roles they undertook in the region. Broadly speaking, if we consider the lives of Japanese women outside of sex work and look beyond police records, a much richer and more nuanced narrative of these women's lives in north Queensland emerges. Of course, women could engage in sex work alongside other types of work and importantly, sex work did not necessarily remove all other working opportunities from Japanese women's lives.

A Methodological Patchwork

Writing about migrant women, particularly those framed as sex workers, relies on fragments of an archive that exists as the "collective response of those who supervise, monitor and police them."²⁹ If we cast aside the assumption that the lives of all Japanese women in north Queensland were defined by sex work, there is a vast array of records that assist in telling a different history of Japanese women in Australia. Facilitated by increasingly digitised archival records and their accompanying digital research tools, it is fortunately now much easier to navigate a wider variety of historical records to find out about Japanese women in north Queensland.³⁰

In researching the lives of Japanese women in north Queensland, it is essential to assemble a 'patchwork' of records to build a picture of their lives. This assemblage of sources is necessary as Japanese women (and men) who arrived in northern Australia were likely to have been working class, spoken English as a second language (if at all), and often had limited literacy in both Japanese and English. Consequently, these individuals were unlikely to have created their

²⁹ Mihalopoulos, *Sex in Japan's Globalization*, 8.

³⁰ Oliver, *Allies, Enemies and Trading Partners*. Importantly, there are more archival sources available today because the open access period has been reached. Oliver's work provides a detailed guide to NAA records relating to Japanese migrants in Australia that have been recently opened.

own written records in any language. Historians researching Japanese women who were sex workers in South East Asia have been able to use an array of newspaper records, business records, family history records, and government records to create a mosaic-like picture that collectively captures the many histories of Japanese women.³¹ This method develops, from the bottom-up, the small day-to-day lives of individual women built into a collective biographical presentation of their motives, pressures, values, and feelings. As Warren describes, “this technique compels the social historian to pay close attention to the disparate experience, values and motives of a small group of individual women in diverse contexts and sequences of action, and to subsequently piece together and analyse in a convincing manner the pattern and meaning in their lives for the majority of women.”³² Weaving together individual histories can create a larger tapestry of their collective, but varied, experience in north Queensland. These methods have been similarly employed by Australian historians researching other migrant women who may have left behind scant sources. Although focusing on Chinese women, Kate Bagnall employs a similarly patchwork approach but refers to her method as writing global microhistories, where individuals’ experiences are considered as flows within the larger currents of global history.³³ Within these histories, judicial records still have their place, but need to be used in concert with other records to say something different about migrant women and their lives.³⁴

These women’s circumstances and lives in north Queensland, however, cannot be disconnected from the broader patterns of Japanese migration and diaspora, nor can individual biographies provide a clear picture of their circumstances. Collating and developing histories of Japanese women in north Queensland therefore involves microhistories, or biographical approaches, anchored in the process of global history. These historical methods, whether referred to as ‘patchworks’, ‘mosaics’, or ‘global microhistories’, populate these women’s stories with individual realities that are most often a discussion of “ordinary people engaged in their own stories of survival, tragedy, or victory” within the currents of global history, and vice versa.³⁵

³¹ Warren, *Pirates, Prostitutes and Pullers*, 25. Warren refers to a ‘mosaic-like’ approach, but for the purposes of sustaining the analogy, a patchwork method is used synonymously.

³² Warren, 227.

³³ Kate Bagnall, ‘Chinese Women in Colonial New South Wales: From Absence to Presence’, *Australian Journal of Biography and History* 3, no. 3 (2020): 3–20.

³⁴ See, for example Julia Martínez, ‘Chinese Women in Prostitution in the Courts of 1880s Darwin’, *Northern Territory Historical Studies*, no. 30 (n.d.): 28–42.

³⁵ Heather Streets-Salter as cited in Bagnall, ‘Chinese Women in Colonial NSW’, 5.

Within these microhistories is the use of family history records to trace women's and family stories from the starting point of Japanese women living in north Queensland. Often this involves beginning with formal government records, usually held in the NAA, such as CEDTs, Alien Registration Forms, or internment records that document Japanese women at a particular point in time in north Queensland.³⁶ There are various Japanese women documented in these government records, and while spelling of names might vary, it is usually straightforward to correlate these sources and develop a basic timeline and profile of some women's lives. Often the details gleaned from government records can be used to investigate other archival sources, including state government records, typically those relating to businesses, labour contracts, police and judicial records, newspaper records (including notices and advertisements), and birth, death, and marriage records. All of these archival sources are consolidated to develop a history of individual Japanese women in north Queensland, filling in both the inner details and the contours of their lives. The outline of known Japanese women's lives in north Queensland are compiled in Appendix 3. Overall, patchwork connects multiple records that document women's histories to develop a more detailed and reliable picture of their lives and extend previous histories of Japanese women in the region.³⁷

Marriage is Complicated

Authorities often focused on Japanese women's marital status as a measure of respectability and morality. Although it is a fraught exercise to navigate perceptions of these women's relationships and marital statuses, it is worth discussing the connections that Japanese women developed in north Queensland. Many of these women were labelled as 'single', in the unmarried sense, but this is a relative term. Single could simply have referred to a woman who was not formally attached to a man through marriage, but, as in the case of Shigi Furukawa described at the beginning of this chapter, there are complexities when attempting to define when a woman may have been single, married, widowed, or any combination of these. Thus, consideration must also be given to those circumstances where women may have formed attachments of various types —

³⁶ Many of these records are held within the following NAA series: J2483 and J3136 contain CEDTs from 1903 to 1956; BP4/3 contains alien registration forms and notices of change of abode between 1916 and 1920 under the War Precautions (Alien Registration) Regulations of 1916; MP1103/2 contains internment records from 1941, with records of Japanese women interned in Queensland under the control number beginning with QJF.

³⁷ See, for example, Appendix 3.

formal, informal, legal, or otherwise — over the many years they lived in Australia. Certainly, Japanese women had a variety of different relationships within Australia.

Out of a survey of eighty-one identified Japanese women who lived in north Queensland between 1885 and 1946, as documented in Appendix 3, more than two-thirds appeared to participate in the institution of marriage during this time. Some of these women, like Otoku Shigemoto, Shizuye Mitsui and Sui Yoshida were married in Australia, nearly all of them to Japanese men.³⁸ Many others, however, were referred to in documentation as ‘Mrs’ and, although they may have simply lied in these documents, the tendency to treat Japanese women as single by default makes this unlikely. Indeed, it is unclear whether these women were married, or whether they were single women pretending to be married women.³⁹ It is a misconception that a majority of Japanese women were single in the simplest sense of the word. Looking more closely at Japanese women and the nuances of relationships they had with other individuals in north Queensland highlights more possibilities for investigating the roles and connections they developed within the region.

It is often difficult to identify when and where many women were married, as some were married in Japan, either before they arrived in Australia or during a short trip, while others were legally married in Australia. These varied circumstances can make it difficult to identify all married women, especially women who may have travelled separately to their husbands and therefore been classified as single. Some Japanese women, such as Momu Mitakara and Hana Masumoto were likely married to each of their husbands in Japan, prior to their arrival in Australia. In Momu’s case, her husband arrived in north Queensland in 1893 and she soon followed in 1896, both of them living for the entirety of their time in Queensland on a small farm in Bemerside near Ingham.⁴⁰ Hana Masumoto lived in the same sugar-growing region of Ingham with her husband but there is no record of their marriage. Evidently the couple had a

³⁸ Marriage Registration of Rikichi Shigemoto and Otoku Ohira, 5 February 1909, 1909/C/2539, QBDM; Marriage Registration of Masataro Nakane and Shizuye Mitsui, 12 February 1909, 1909/C/2541, QBDM; Marriage Registration of Sui Yamano and Tsunesaburo Nakanishi, 4 December 1907, 1909/C/2541, QBDM.

³⁹ See, for example CEDT, Mrs Hiro Turusato, 29 August 1935, 520/95, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Mrs Kamenon Furuta, 3 May 1911, 65/99, J2483, NAA.

⁴⁰ Birth Registration of Miyoko Mitakara, 24 November 1903, 1903/C/1444, QBDM; Momu Mitakara Alien Registration Certificate, JAPANESE MITAKARA M, BP4/3, NAA; Sukezayemon Mitakara Alien Registration Certificate, JAPANESE MITAKARA S, BP4/3, NAA.

daughter — Shizuyo Masumoto — together, and the family's connections can be linked through correlated application and departure dates in their CEDTs.⁴¹ Emerging from these couples' stories is the suggestion that some husbands would travel ahead to Australia and establish 'roots'. That pattern seems to have lasted into the twentieth century. While it was easier for Japanese women to migrate to Australia prior to 1901 due to the passing of the *Restriction Act*, as discussed in Chapter One, some women married Australian-born men who had Japanese heritage. Chiyo Oki was among these, marrying Australian-born Hidewo Oki while he was in Japan. After a few years, Chiyo was able to gain entry and came to live with Hidewo in Townsville in 1931.⁴²

Some other women were married multiple times, although it is not always clear why. Shigi Furukawa, for example, who was described at the beginning of this chapter, was married first in 1908 and then again in 1926.⁴³ It is uncertain, however, whether she was a widow from her first marriage or if her husband had simply departed for Japan and never returned. Similarly, Shizuna Endo married a number of times during her life and demonstrated a similar financial independence to Shigi, who often spent the years 'between' her marriages as a mobile and independent woman able to support herself. Like other Japanese women before her, Shizuna arrived as a single woman and although marriage may have been a practical method of support, she spent significant periods of time as a single woman. Of course, Shizuna may have had other reasons that remain unclear. She was thrice married in Australia, first to Buichi Honda in 1903, then to Sataro Idemoto in 1909. While it is unclear what happened to Shizuna's first husband, her second husband died the year after they were married. Shizuna did not remarry again until 1937 when she was wed to Yokito Endo.⁴⁴ The time between Shizuna's marriages demonstrates

⁴¹ CEDT, Hana Masumoto, 14 December 1917, 237/94, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Yosuke Masumoto, 14 December 1917, 237/96, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Shizuyo Masumoto, 14 December 1917, 237/95, J2483, NAA.

⁴² Chiyo Oki, Application for Leave to Submit Objections Against Detention Order, OKI/C, MP529/8, NAA; Transcript of Evidence of Objection by H Oki, TRIBUNAL 4/151, MP529/3, NAA (hereafter Hidewo Oki Objections).

⁴³ Marriage Registration of Shige Furuchi and Jutarō Ogawa, 17 August 1908, 1908/C/2285, QBDM; Marriage Registration of Shige Furuchi and Mitsugoro Fulukawa, 8 September 1926, 1926/C/2413, QBDM.

⁴⁴ Marriage Registration of Shijinu Honda to Buichi Honda, 26 September 1903, 1903/C/307, QBDM; Marriage Registration of Shizuno Honda to Sataro Idemoto, 5 February 1909, 1909/C/2540, QBDM; Death Registration of Sataro Idemoto, 11 February 1910, 1910/C/3186, QBDM; Marriage Registration of Shizuno Honda to Yokito Endo, 9 February 1937, 1937/C/619, QBDM.

the complexity and ambiguity when attempting to describe Japanese women as single, married, or even widowed.

Other Japanese women became widows while they were in Australia and, for some, this substantially changed their life circumstances. After her husband was murdered in 1895, it seems likely that Kimu Fujita and her young child departed Thursday Island and left behind the trauma and financial insecurity of running a boarding house as a young widow and single mother.⁴⁵ Momu Mitakara similarly departed Australia only a few years after her husband's passing in 1927.⁴⁶ The Mitakara family's sugar cane farm in Bemerside near Ingham appears to have continued operating — presumably through Momu's employment of additional workers — but by 1930 Momu and her daughter Miyoko departed for Japan and did not return.⁴⁷ Other women, like Kuma Oki, sought out new opportunities in business after a husband's passing. Kuma Oki (formerly Sameshima) married Torakichi Oki in 1907, but it was not until 1924 that she moved — as a widowed woman — to Innisfail by her own means. There she established a small café and sold hot meals to locals for the next sixteen years.⁴⁸ Others, like Shina Nakagawa and Sao Tanaka, remained in Australia after they became widows, although it is unclear whether they inherited their husbands' businesses or continued with other means of work to financially support themselves. Before her husband's death, Sao had one child and reportedly did 'home duties' while her husband ran a store but was able to continue supporting herself after she became a widow. Shina Nakagawa also had no children and continued to support herself even after her husband, the infamous Tommy Japan (Tamiiji Nakagawa) reportedly died while visiting Japan.⁴⁹

Evidently, some women have been mistakenly described as single during the internment

⁴⁵ Tatsu, Nakagawa, and Yosuke Inquest.

⁴⁶ Death Registration of Sukezayemon Mitakara, 10 February 1927, 1927/C/263, QBDM.

⁴⁷ Passport, Momu Mitakara, 456/1930, J2773, NAA.

⁴⁸ Marriage Registration of Torakichi Oki and Kuma Sameshima, 25 February 1906, 1906/C/2281, QBDM; Mrs Kuma Oki, Application for Leave to Submit Objections Against Detention Order, OKI/K, MP529/8, NAA.

⁴⁹ Sissons, 'The Japanese in the Australian Pearling Industry', 13–14; Tatsu, Nakagawa, and Yosuke Inquest; CEDT, Sawo (or Sao) Tanaka, 4 October 1917, 233/55, J2483, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Sao Tanaka, QJF16236, MP1103/2, NAA. It is unclear how Sao was able to support herself as a single widowed mother, but she did not appear to remarry and there is no evidence the store was closed or remained open.

era, even though they were actually widows or separated from their partners. Nagata discusses five single women interned on Thursday Island — Tomi Hamasaki, Nobu Ide, Chie Yukawa, Yone Nagata, and Masu Kusano — who were allegedly former *karayuki-san*.⁵⁰ Among these women, however, ‘single’ does not appear to be a neat or simple description of their marital status. Tomi Hamasaki, for example, was listed in internment records as a married woman.⁵¹ Nobu Ide was similarly a married, perhaps widowed, woman who was married in either (or both) 1913 and 1923.⁵² Chie Yukawa appeared to be a ‘single’ woman and was described as such in internment documents.⁵³ This was also the case for Yone Nagata, but multiple CEDT’s refer to her as ‘Mrs Yone Nagata’, an honorific that was unlikely to be applied nonchalantly to a Japanese woman travelling alone.⁵⁴ Finally, Masu Kusano was described in internment records as a single woman, but had actually married Jirokichi Okamoto, a laundryman, sometime during the 1910s. Kusano was probably Masu’s unmarried name, as she used the name Masu Okamoto throughout the 1910s and early 1920s, but reverted to Masu Kusano sometime during the late 1920s.⁵⁵ It is unclear whether she was a widow, or wanted to be considered single or unmarried, but regardless Masu’s marital status, along with many other Japanese women, evades simple categorisation.

Certainly, there were seemingly unmarried or so-called single Japanese women who lived

⁵⁰ Nagata, ‘Japanese in Torres Strait’, 147, 159.

⁵¹ Tomu Hamasaki [internment], C70550, A367, NAA.

⁵² Nagata, ‘Japanese in Torres Strait’, 146; Sissons, ‘Karayuki-San’, 194; Kyuhara, ‘Remains of Japanese Settlers’, 16; Marriage Registration of Nobu Ide and Otomotsu Tanaka, 17 February 1913, 1913/C/3101, QBDM. Sissons claims that Nobu was unmarried, while Kyuhara argues that Nobu was married in 1923. Marriages of this 1923 record cannot be located, but QBDM records Nobu’s marriage to Otomatsu Tanaka in 1913.

⁵³ Prisoner of War/Internee, Chie Yukawa, QJF16237, MP1103/2, NAA.

⁵⁴ CEDT, Yone Nagata, 9 February 1912, 91/81, J2483, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Yone Nagata, QJF16235, MP1103/2, NAA.

⁵⁵ CEDT, Masu Kusano, 5 February 1912, 91/76, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Jirokichi Okamoto, 5 February 1912, 91/75, J2483, NAA; Certificate of Exemption, Jirokichi Okamoto, 25 January 1914, Item 2674890, AGS/N356, SRS 6041, QSA; CEDT, Mrs Masu Okamoto, 20 March 1917, 231/9, J2483, NAA; Japanese Alien Registration Certificate No 211 issued 19 October 1916, Mrs Masu Okamoto, JAPANESE OKAMOTO M, BP4/3, NAA; CEDT, Jirokichi Okamoto, 16 February 1922, 335/033, J2483, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Masu Kusano, QJF16234, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Masu Kusano, QJF16234, MP1103/2, NAA.

in north Queensland. They are, however, more difficult to track through the historical record. In contrast to Catherine Bishop's suggestion that European married and widowed women's identities are often obscured in the historical record by their husbands, the opposite appears to be true of Japanese women.⁵⁶ Out of the eighty-one surveyed Japanese women who lived in north Queensland (see Appendix 3), only approximately one-third of these women were either single or cannot be identified as ever having been married. Quite possibly, however, this number may be higher. For many of these women, there are only fleeting indications of their presence in Australia, typically as they entered or departed the country. Little is known, for example, about Yukeye Yamamura and Youe Yamada, although a small amount of information can be extracted from the single CEDTs that have been located. These documents indicate that both women were resident for a period of time in Australia, but it is possible little else may ever be learned about their lives in north Queensland. Yukeye Yamamura's CEDT was issued to her in June 1915 and states that she departed for Japan in July 1915 and returned to Thursday Island some four months later. CEDTs were only issued to individuals who could prove a long-term residence in Australia — typically three years or more — and so we can deduce that Yukeye had probably lived in Australia since at least 1912. She also returned to Australia in 1915 and in the absence of other CEDTs, death or marriage certificates, we can also deduce she continued living in Australia after 1915. Outside of this CEDT, it is unclear whether Yukeye was married, widowed, or unmarried.⁵⁷ This is similarly the case for Youe Yamada, where we can only identify that she may have lived in Australia for a few years before and after 1911, but beyond this CEDT, we have no other details about her life.⁵⁸ This scarce level of detail is often the case for many Japanese women who lived in north Queensland after 1885.

Caring for Families

Home and family life is another important element to understand Japanese women's experiences and relationships in north Queensland. For at least a quarter of the women who migrated to

⁵⁶ Catherine Bishop, 'On Their Own in a "Man's World": Widows in Business in Colonial Australia and New Zealand', in *Female Entrepreneurs in the Long Nineteenth Century: A Global Perspective*, ed. Jennifer Aston and Catherine Bishop, Palgrave Studies in Economic History (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020), 177. Bishop's description is still applicable in her own research, but this exception suggests that researching migrant women can present different archival challenges.

⁵⁷ CEDT, Yukeye Yamamura, 1 June 1915, 183/12, J2483, NAA.

⁵⁸ CEDT, Youe Yamada, 8 March 1911, 65/22, J2483, NAA.

Australia, motherhood and raising a family, either with or without a partner, formed a significant portion of their experience. The circumstances of these women varied, with some remaining childless, while others had children with one partner or different partners over time. These children could have been raised by single Japanese mothers or within a larger family or community network. Although it is not possible to provide an exhaustive discussion of the Japanese women who had children in Australia, it is worth noting the implications of these small families and their networks.

While most Japanese women had only one or two children in this period, Hide Shiosaki was one woman who had a large family with her husband while living in Australia. She arrived on Thursday Island in June 1898 at the age of eighteen.⁵⁹ She married another Japanese migrant, Tsurumatsu Shiosaki, who was a well-known boatbuilder.⁶⁰ Together Hide and Tsurumatsu had five children, sending each child to Japan to be educated when they were a few years old. Most of Hide and Tsurumatsu's children eventually returned as adults to Thursday Island.⁶¹ Ino Kasahara was another woman who had five children with Yakichi Kasahara, who was presumably her husband, although no records of their marriage exist in Australia. Similarly, it seems that each of the children were sent to Japan after a few years.⁶² Other women, like Masano

⁵⁹ Mrs Hide Shiosah, Japanese Alien Registration Certificate No 36 Issued 10 November 1916, JAPANESE SHIOSAH H, BP4/3, NAA.

⁶⁰ Hide had her first child with Tsurumatsu in 1906, although after this date she is referred to as Hide Okano (Mrs Shiosaki). See, for example Birth Registration of Sute Shiosaki, 27 August 1906, 1906/C/10163, QBDM; CEDT, Hide Okano (Mrs Shiosaki) and child Kantaro, 4 March 1909, 16/95, J2483, NAA (hereafter CEDT, Hide and Kantaro, 1909).

⁶¹ CEDT, Hide and Kantaro, 1909; CEDT, Hide Shiosaki, 20 July 1914, 158/24, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Tsuruyi Shiosaki, 20 July 1914, 158/26, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Toshio Shiosaki, 20 July 1914, 158/25, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Iwao Shiosaki, 18 February 1915, 175/44, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Tsurumatsu Shiosaki, 8 December 1914, 170/55, J2483, NAA.

⁶² CEDT, Ino Kasahara and female child, 1 March 1907, 1907/98, J3136, NAA; CEDT, Ino Kasahara, 20 September 1915, 185/44, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Yaye Kasahara, 20 September 1915, 185/45, J2483, NAA; Birth Registration of Kichi or Tsuyoshi Kasahara, 10 August 1897, 1897/C/1695, QBDM; Birth Registration of Shigeno Kasahara, 20 June 1899, 1899/C/1798, QBDM; Birth Registration of Aochi Kasahara, 13 March 1903, 1903/C/6433, QBDM; Birth Registration of Haruko Kasahara, 13 March 1903, 1903/C/6433, QBDM; Birth Registration of Kimiye Kasahara, 15 May 1906, 1906/C/10148, QBDM; Birth Registration of Yayeno Kasahara, 15 August 1909, 1909/C/10000, QBDM. It is unclear why there are two birth registrations under 1903/C/6433, but it is possible that

Oki, were responsible for raising their children alone. Whether she was separated or Masano's husband, Asasuke, travelled for work, it appears that Masano and Asasuke often lived separately.⁶³ Only one of Masano's children went to Japan — departing at age three and returning at sixteen — while the other three appeared to continue living on Thursday Island.⁶⁴ This pattern of sending children to Japan, often with them returning as adults, demonstrates the ties that Japanese migrants maintained with their families and communities in Japan, while still continuing their lives in Australia.

Among these smaller and larger families was the development of family networks of Japanese migrants, with multiple generations of Nikkei — *issei*, *nisei*, *sansei*, and so forth — living in Australia. Hide Shiosaki's eldest daughter, Tei, married community leader and local storekeeper Haruyoshi Yamashita, who was twenty years her senior. Together they had nine children, and after WWII, all continued living on Thursday Island.⁶⁵ This was much the same for Kuma Oki's family and children. She had three children while living on Thursday Island. The birth of Kuma's first child, Hidewo, perhaps influenced her marriage to Torakichi Oki, as he was born only two months after their marriage. It is unlikely that Kuma's second child, Hachiro, ever gained recognition as Australian-born as she gave birth "at sea" while on her way to Japan in 1906. Kuma's third child, Mary Oki Samejima, was likely born on Thursday Island in 1913 but Torakichi Oki is not listed as the father (despite Mary taking the Oki name).⁶⁶ Kuma's eldest son, Hidewo, remained in Japan from 1907 to 1924, returning to north Queensland when he was eighteen years old. Hidewo brought his wife Chiyoe from Japan to north Queensland in 1931, and they initially lived in Townsville. After the birth of their first child, the couple joined Kuma

either the certificate was filed twice or Ino gave birth to twins, although there are no death certificates for either child.

⁶³ See, for example CEDT, Asasuki Oki, 24 August 1915, 184/65, J2483, NAA; Alien Registration Certificate No 64, Mars Masano Oki, 18 October 1916, JAPANESE OKI M, BP4/3, NAA; CEDT, Arasuki Oki, 1 March 1935, 519/97, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Masano Kimura (Oki), 20 March 1936, 535/44, J2483, NAA.

⁶⁴ Birth Registration of Hideko Oki, 12 September 1915, 1915/C/12782, QBDM; NAA: J2483, 266/91, CEDT, Hideko Oki, 24 April 1919, 266/91, J2483, NAA.

⁶⁵ Nagata, 'Post-War Thursday Island', 34–35.

⁶⁶ Marriage Registration of Kuma Sameshima and Torakichi Oki, 24 February 1906, 1906/C/2281, QBDM; Birth Registration of Hidewo Oki, 16 April 1906, 1906/C/10135, QBDM; Birth Registration of Mary Oki Samejima, 29 January 1913, 1913/C/12396, QBDM; Mrs Kuma Oki, Application for Leave to Submit Objections Against Detention Order, OKI/K, MP529/8, NAA.

in Innisfail in 1933 and operated a number of businesses while raising their family.⁶⁷ Together Hidewo and Chiyoe had eight children and were well-connected within the Innisfail community. Even after their release from internment, the Oki family went to live in Babinda just south of Cairns for a number of years.⁶⁸

While some other Japanese women may not have had biological children, adoption and blended families were also common. The interesting case of Anne Iwanaga — an Australian-born child of Chinese migrants who was adopted by Otsume and Tokitaro Iwanaga — shows that, unsurprisingly, families came in many configurations. The couple raised Anne as their own and she allegedly did not know she was adopted until internment forced Anne's father to reveal she did not have Japanese ancestry in the hope that she would not be interned.⁶⁹ Other families had different arrangements. Shizuna Endo, who was married a number of times, had multiple step-children through her late husband Yokito Endo and was evidently a continuing presence in their lives.⁷⁰ Shigi Furukawa was another woman who, while she had no biological children of her own, was closely connected to her second husband's family and children. Shigi evidently took charge of all family affairs, with family members' documents in her possession at the time of internment.⁷¹

⁶⁷ Chiyoe Oki Objections; Hidewo Oki and wife and family - Detention Orders, 255/742/520, MP508/1, NAA (hereafter Oki Family Detention Orders); Prisoner of War/Internee, Chiyee Oki, QJF16136, MP1103/2, NAA; "Child Electrocuted. Innisfail Tragedy," *CP*, 24 May 1939, 8; "Oki Silk Store," *Johnstone River Advocate and Innisfail News* (hereafter *JRA*), 13 May 1938, 2. Joan's birth records cannot be located, but it is probably that Joan was born sometime during 1933 and the Oki family moved to Innisfail that same year.

⁶⁸ Japanese Releases – [Oki 4 pages], Q24014, BP242/1, NAA (hereafter Oki Releases); "Child Electrocuted. Innisfail Tragedy," *CP*, 24 May 1939, 8.

⁶⁹ National Security (General) Regulations – Report, 18 June 1942, Anne Iwanaga Objections. Anne is variously referred to as Anne or Annie Iwanaga, sometimes also including her middle name Margaret. For consistency and brevity, she is hereafter referred to as Anne Iwanaga except where it is directly quoted or is the name of an archival record.

⁷⁰ Application For Leave to Submit Objections Against Detention Order, Shizuna Endo, ENDO/S, MP529/8, NAA.

⁷¹ List of Personal Property, Shigi Furukawa, 9 December 1941, Inspector of Police, Mackay, Item 319769, Police Correspondence re. Alien Registration, SRS 16865, QSA; "Thanks," *DM*, 2 September 1936, 6.

Other women had extended family throughout north Queensland who likely migrated to Australia around the same time as them.⁷² For example, Sashi Mori and Oko Shiraki were recorded as sisters in internment records. Sashi and her husband Kinsuku appeared to be living with Oko and her husband Tamiji in the latter's laundry in Cairns. With each of them having been involved in laundry work in the past, they perhaps formed a small family cooperative that ran the business and provided support to each other.⁷³ Otomo Hamasaki was also the niece of Tame Nishi, who was five years her elder. Both originally from Nagasaki, the women had lived on Thursday Island in earlier years, arriving at similar times — Tame in 1898 and Otomo in 1899 — with the two probably providing support and guidance to each other.⁷⁴ Given the concentrated immigration of women from villages in Nagasaki, Wakayama, and Kumamoto, there were likely to have been many other familial connections among Japanese migrants throughout north Queensland. At the very least, there may have been known connections among women that were established both before and after they came to north Queensland.

Entangled Home, Work, and Business Life

North Queensland residents, including the Nikkei community, were unhappy about the presence of Japanese sex workers and often took their concerns and complaints to authorities. As early as 1891, Japanese community members sent a petition to John Douglas, the Government Resident on Thursday Island, complaining about the keeping of a brothel by “Okeyo” at the back of Sasaki's Laundry. Thursday Island, they claimed, was fast becoming “notorious” for women of “ill repute.”⁷⁵ No doubt, Nikkei concerns about Japanese sex workers transgressed their own moral codes and ran parallel to their aversion to increasing Japanese migration to north Queensland; they seemed to believe that if the resident Japanese community was kept small and well-behaved, then it would bring them more acceptance and respect within the region.

⁷² Frances, *Selling Sex*, 52. Frances also makes brief reference to this chain migration within her history of sex work in Australia.

⁷³ Mrs Sashi Mori, Application for Leave to Submit Objections Against Detention Order, MORI/S, MP529/8, NAA (hereafter Sashi Mori Objection); Mrs Oko Shiraki, Application for Leave to Submit Objections Against Detention Order, SHIRAKI O, MP529/8, NAA (hereafter Oko Shiraki Objection).

⁷⁴ Tomu Hamasaki [internment], C70550, A367, NAA; Tame Nishi, Application for Leave to Submit Objections Against Detention Order, NISHI/T, MP529/8, NAA.

⁷⁵ Letter to the Hon. John Douglas, Government Resident, Thursday Island, 23 October 1891, Item 847411, SRS 5253, QSA.

Nevertheless, by 1893 there were multiple newspaper reports documenting the supposedly growing presence of Japanese women of ‘ill-fame’ in Charters Towers, Cairns, and Thursday Island.⁷⁶ Indeed, concerns about Japanese women readily developed among some sections of the community. In 1903, Charters Towers’ newspapers reported on the Japanese women who lived in Gard’s Lane, describing the street with a tone of exoticism and intrigue.⁷⁷ The Women’s Franchise League made investigations — involving a Mrs Katting disguising herself as a man to speak to some of the Japanese women — into Gard’s Lane in Charters Towers in 1903, where the women of the League expressed shock and dismay at the Japanese women’s work but exclaimed that “no one would be so simple as to pretend that they did not know how prostitutes ... made their livings.”⁷⁸

Similarly in Cairns, there were petitions from 1897 and across the next decade that demanded the council remove the “Sachs Street ladies.” In early petitions, over 180 Cairns residents complained that a vast number of Japanese women had recently ‘descended upon’ the town, implying they were sex workers, and while the Mayor agreed with petitioners about the social and moral dangers of these women, he ultimately determined that it was a police rather than a council matter.⁷⁹ With little incentive to find otherwise, the police claimed their investigations saw no wrongdoing by these women nor was their alleged work illegal.⁸⁰ It seems that little was done, or perhaps the moral panic did not diminish, as further complaints appear in

⁷⁶ “Points,” *Telegraph*, 30 June 1893, 4; “Summary,” *DT*, 21 December 1893, 1.

⁷⁷ See, for example “The Gard’s Lane Evil,” *ET*, 4 May 1903, 2; “The Old Curiosity Shops,” *ET*, 8 May 1903, 2.

⁷⁸ “Seventy Women Gasp with Horror,” *Truth*, 10 May 1903, 5; “The Giddy Geisha of Gard’s Lane,” *Truth*, 24 May 1903, 2. While the *Truth*’s telling of the Franchise League’s alleged findings were more sensational, noting the gasps of horror of the women and the loud laughter of a hundred men, similar reports of the meeting were made in other newspapers. See, for example, “Gards Lane,” *NQR*, 4 May 1903, 39; “Women’s League Meeting at Charters Towers,” *Morning Bulletin*, 8 May 1903, 5.

⁷⁹ “Cairns Municipal Council, The Japanese Petition,” *MP*, 9 September 1897, 4; “Bystanders’ Notebook,” *Worker*, 7 August 1897, 5. It was reported that the Mayor all but left the petition in the wastepaper basket, and in further meetings mentioned that only sixteen of the 180 petitioners were ratepayers. The Mayor asserted that many of the petition signatories who complained of “a crying evil” in Gard’s Lane were themselves customers of these alleged Japanese brothels. It was concluded that the Japanese women were orderly and usually operated outside the main thoroughfares of town.

⁸⁰ Memoranda re. movements and doings of Japanese women, A. Sergeant Griffin to Sub. Insp. of Police, Cairns, 23 November 1897, Item 86448, SRS 14182, QSA.

1903 and petitions were again circulated again in 1907 among the Cairns Ratepayers Association, including opposition to attempts to repeal the *Contagious Diseases Act 1868* (QLD).⁸¹ There was similar outcry about the presence of Japanese sex workers in Childers, with a reported influx of Japanese women and at least nineteen women living across ten “immoral houses.”⁸² Certainly there were some Japanese women who were sex workers and who were operating throughout these northern towns, but these complaints were often the grumblings of a small but impassioned group of north Queenslanders.

Broadly, accusations against Japanese women were often based on rumours and generalisations about those who had ‘unknown’ occupations or who were allegedly responsible only for ‘domestic duties’. But this charge had little legal basis. In Queensland, a regulatory rather than criminal approach to sex work was taken, and ‘common prostitutes’ were simply required to register and present themselves for medical examination.⁸³ While some women acquiesced, it was all too easy for others to evade regulation by skipping town. Brothels, with the exception of a premises occupied by a single sex worker, were illegal but typically ‘tolerated’ and monitored by police.⁸⁴ Where police could not prove a woman was undertaking sex work, they would charge her under vagrancy laws as ‘not doing anything at present for a living’ or having ‘no visible means of support’.⁸⁵ Police applied even these laws selectively, often finding a means to charge a woman if she somehow transgressed police moral codes. In Townsville, three Japanese women were accused of “having no visible means of support,” but were discharged from court after

⁸¹ “Morning Post: From our Point of View,” *MP*, 27 February 1903, 2; “Cairns Ratepayers Association,” *MP*, 9 April 1907, 5; “Silly Sentimentalists Screech for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act,” *Truth*, 1 December 1907, 10.

⁸² “Childers,” *Bundaberg Mail and Burnett Advertiser*, 3 October 1897, 2; Correspondence re. Brothels in Childers, Item 847562, SRS 5253, QSA.

⁸³ Frances, *Selling Sex*, 158; E. Barclay, ‘Queensland’s Contagious Diseases Act, 1868 - “The Act for the Encouragement of Vice” and Some Nineteenth Century Attempts to Repeal It, Part 1’, *Queensland Heritage* 2, no. 10 (1974): 27–34; E. Barclay, ‘Queensland’s Contagious Diseases Act, 1868 - “The Act for the Encouragement of Vice” and Some Nineteenth Century Attempts to Repeal It, Part II’, *Queensland Heritage* 3, no. 1 (1974): 21–29. This practice was developed under the Queensland *Contagious Diseases Act 1868*, which could see any woman suffering a disease detained in a ‘lock’ hospital from weeks to years until she was found to be cured. This law was superseded by the Queensland *Health Act 1911*, which operated in much the same manner.

⁸⁴ Barclay, ‘QLD Contagious Diseases Act P1’, 32; Frances, *Selling Sex*, 223–25.

⁸⁵ Allen, ‘Making of Prostitute Proletariat’, 193.

promising to leave town within the week. According to the report, all of the other Japanese women in the town subsequently departed for Charters Towers, perhaps fearful of similar prosecution.⁸⁶ The 1907 investigation of the “Sachs Street Ladies” in Cairns saw the Inspector of Nuisances interviewing a number of Japanese women with most reporting they were engaged in domestic duties. The Inspector claimed that no evidence to the contrary could be found, and while it remains unclear if his assessments were accurate, community suspicions remained.⁸⁷ In these statements we begin to see an underlying presumption of sex work among women who reported they were housewives or undertook house duties as their occupation. Among the eighty-one Japanese women who are identified in Appendix 3, sixteen of them had domestic duties listed among their occupations, but another forty-nine women had no known occupation.⁸⁸ Were all of these women sex workers at one point in their lives? It is impossible to know this for certain. Regardless, there is much else to say about this diverse group of Japanese women and their work besides making assumptions about their involvement in the sex industry.

Japanese women who were substantially linked to sex work, however, were mobile and independent, taking up different types of work as their circumstances and life-course demanded. Nobu Ide’s statement to police in 1910 claimed that she had arrived in Queensland in 1897 at the age of fifteen, spending time ‘tailoring’ on Thursday Island, in Townsville, and in Geraldton (Western Australia) before later returning to the Torres Strait. At that time, she claimed “I am doing business now on my own account.”⁸⁹ Later, Nobu lived in Ayr where authorities suspected she was running a brothel that employed at least two other Japanese women.⁹⁰ By 1941, Nobu was again living on Thursday Island and, according to local memories, was a grandmotherly figure who ran a bathhouse and continued to offer domestic services such as mending and washing clothes into her old age.⁹¹ We similarly have limited details about other women such as Matsu Miyasaki — authorities plainly listed ‘prostitute’ as her occupation — and Omatsu, a brothel owner on Thursday Island, but there is evidence to suggest that they were also mobile

⁸⁶ “Townsville,” *BC*, 3 February 1899, 3.

⁸⁷ “Cairns Town Council,” *MP*, 2 May 1907, 4.

⁸⁸ This includes housewife, domestic duties, or home duties listed as their occupations.

⁸⁹ Statement of Hayashi (Diver), 7 June 1910 and statement of Nobu Ide, 6 September 1910, Prosecution of Japanese girls at Thursday Island, 1910/5858, A1, NAA.

⁹⁰ CEDT, Nobu Ide, 14 January 1920, 286/77, J2483, NAA; Sissons, ‘Karayuki-San’, 194.

⁹¹ Nagata, ‘Japanese in Torres Strait’, 146.

and independent throughout their working lives.⁹² Ben Akimoto, was accused of being a sex worker when she attempted to apply for a CEDT, but contested police and community accounts report other types of work that she may have undertaken. Regardless of whether she was at times a sex worker, Ben Akimoto was an unmarried woman who lived a self-sufficient lifestyle in Australia between 1899 and 1924. She moved around every five years or so, first living on Thursday Island and then later in Townsville and Longreach. In each town, Ben took up a different form of work, likely based on local needs and her circumstances. At different times, she was a housekeeper, a cook, and a laundress and, in Townsville, police alleged, “she was doing a little laundry work, but mostly lived on the proceeds of prostitution.” Authorities in Longreach, however, claimed they could find nothing against her character nor to suggest that she was a sex worker, and multiple community members provided character witnesses for her as a “hard working and industrious woman.”⁹³ While it is uncertain whether Ben was at times a sex worker, it is certain that she was a mobile and independent woman who moved around north Queensland, undertaking various paid roles as the need and availability arose. Undoubtedly then, some Japanese women were sex workers, but this was not necessarily always their sole profession for the entirety of their time in Australia.

Among this group of Japanese women there is evidence of some who specifically utilised their domestic skills, including as a source of income. Married women, such as Yoshino Tashima and Tsune Komatsu, worked as a dressmaker and tailoress respectively, but there are clues that other Japanese women may also have undertaken this type of work.⁹⁴ Kuma Oki, for example, had a sewing machine listed among her property when she was interned.⁹⁵ This type of labour was not the sole reserve of married Japanese women, with other women — single, unmarried, multiple times married, widowed, or otherwise — probably contracted out to complete sewing and mending tasks for Japanese laundries, or perhaps taking this work home. Some women were employed as domestic servants, such as the two women at the Swallow’s house at Hambleton

⁹² Tianna Killoran, ‘Sex, Soap and Silk: Japanese Businesswomen in North Queensland, 1887–1941’, *Lilith: A Feminist History Journal* 28 (2022): 35–54; Japanese Alien Registration Certificate No 3270 Issued 2 September 1918, Matsu Miyasaki, JAPANESE MIYASAKI MATSU, BP4/3, NAA; “Romantic tragedy,” *Telegraph*, 18 May 1894, 2.

⁹³ CEDT, Ben Akimoto, 31 August 1914, 159/19, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Ben Akimoto, 19 December 1924, 386/15, J2483, NAA.

⁹⁴ Prisoner of War/Internee, Yoshino Tajima, WJF19501, MP1103/2, NAA; Isune Komatsu, Correspondence Relating to Application for Certificate of Domicile, 6330/346/1903, BP342/1, NAA.

⁹⁵ Prisoner of War/Internee, Kuba Oki, QJF16134, MP1103/2, NAA.

Plantation (see Image 8 on page 138); these two unnamed women probably completed everything from sewing and mending to cleaning, cooking, and caring duties. As Richards has argued, Japanese women were considered “prized domestic acquisitions for the affluent.”⁹⁶ While there are many references to Japanese men and women working as domestic servants, in north Queensland most of them remain nameless.⁹⁷ Otoma Urita, a woman whom police accused of being a stowaway, was reportedly a nursemaid for another Japanese family in Charters Towers. While it is unclear whether this was a cover story for illegally or secretly entering Australia, Otoma’s previous occupations had included cooking and laundry work. Evidently, Otoma made use of her domestic skills, perhaps on an ad hoc basis, to make a living for herself.⁹⁸ This patchwork of domestic work is a clear pattern employed by some Japanese women and corroborates local memories; Nagata suggests that as they aged, former *karayuki-san* on Thursday Island took on maternal roles in the community and monetised their skills, including mending and washing clothes, cooking and baking food, and running small eateries and boarding houses.⁹⁹

There are also numerous examples of married Japanese women whose labour extended into supporting their husband’s work or operating the family business. Chiyoe Oki, Otsume Iwanaga, and Kame Tashima are perhaps the best examples of the often invisible contribution made by women to family businesses. Chiyoe Oki, for example, migrated to Australia in 1931, joining her *nisei* husband Hidewo, who managed a silk store in Townsville. In 1933 the couple moved north to Innisfail and by 1938 Hidewo had opened the Oki Silk Store and they also owned a laundry a few blocks away. Incidental remarks in the local newspaper make it clear that Hidewo conducted the silk store while Chiyoe managed the laundry.¹⁰⁰ This division of business management among couples seemed to be similar for the Iwanagas. Otsume Iwanaga’s

⁹⁶ Richards, ‘Race Around Cairns’, 79–81.

⁹⁷ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 43; Richards, ‘Race Around Cairns’, 77–79. People in Melbourne brought domestic servants from Japan as early as 1883. Richards provides a detailed description of the widely referenced photograph of the two Japanese women at Hambleton plantation (see Image 8 on page 138).

⁹⁸ Marsland & Marsland Solicitors to the Sub-Collector of Customs, re. J.C. Lewis v. Otoma, 8 February 1912, Alleged Illegal Landing of Certain Female Japanese Stowaways, 1912/12137, A1, NAA.

⁹⁹ Nagata, ‘Japanese in Torres Strait’, 146.

¹⁰⁰ Prisoner of War/Internee, Chiyee Oki, QJF16136, MP1103/2, NAA; Japanese Releases – [Oki 4 pages], Q24014, BP242/1, NAA; “Have You Heard the Good News?” *JRA*, 13 May 1938, 2; “Child Electrocuted,” *CP*, 15 March 1939, 6.

occupation was consistently described as either ‘domestic duties’ or ‘housewife’ in official records, but her domestic space was also the location of the family’s business, as was common for laundrywomen throughout the world.¹⁰¹ Over the years, as Otsume and her husband led different business endeavours — first a farm in the Atherton Tablelands in the 1910s, a silk store after 1922 and, later, a laundry in Cairns during the 1930s — Otsume undoubtedly managed the store and the home, all the while raising their adopted daughter.¹⁰² It was Otsume’s daughter who explained to authorities in 1942 that her father ‘spent most of his time at the farm and his wife [Otsume] spent most of her time at the shop’.¹⁰³ Kame Tashima in Townsville was another woman who can be seen as a businesswoman in her own right and who might be an example of the upper-class career merchants described in Chapter Five. Kame was married to Yoshimatsu Tashima, proprietor of Tashima’s Silk Store, which was one of the largest importers and retailers of Japanese goods in north Queensland.¹⁰⁴ Little is known about Kame’s life, but her role as a businesswoman in partnership with her husband was clearly recognised by others. In 1913, the Sub-Collector of Customs reported that “these two people are well known in this town [Townsville], both in business and other circles,” later reiterating that *both* Mr and Mrs Tashima were well-known businesspeople around town.¹⁰⁵ Such overt acknowledgement went counter to the ‘male breadwinner-female dependant’ rhetoric of the time, suggesting that Kame’s role in the business was substantial. There are probably many other women who contributed to their ‘husband’s’ businesses that continue to go unrecognised.

Using this information about Japanese women who managed stores and laundries

¹⁰¹ Marie Francois, “‘Se Mantiene de Lavar’: The Laundry Business in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Mexico City”, in *Female Entrepreneurs in the Long Nineteenth Century: A Global Perspective*, ed. Jennifer Aston and Catherine Bishop, Palgrave Studies in Economic History (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020), 40, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-33412-3_1.

¹⁰² Iwanaga, Etsume [Otsume], Alien Registration Certificate No 96/16, JAPANESE IWANAGA E, BP4/3, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Otsune Iwanaga, QJF16043, MP1103/2, NAA; Tokitaro Iwanaga, Alien Registration Certificate No 73/16, JAPANESE IWANAGA T, BP4/3, NAA; “Beautiful Silk Evening Dresses,” *CP*, 9 September 1922, 3.

¹⁰³ Anne Iwanaga Statutory Declaration, 19 May 1942, Anne Iwanaga Objections; Prisoner of War/Internee, Otsune Iwanaga, QJF16043, MP1103/2, NAA.

¹⁰⁴ CEDT – Kame Tashima, Yoshimatsu Tashima, Memorandum from the Sub-Collector of Customs, 25 January 1913 (hereafter CEDT Kame and Yoshimatsu), 171/1913, J2773, NAA; Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 81.

¹⁰⁵ CEDT Kame and Yoshimatsu.

alongside their husbands, similar conclusions can be drawn about other Japanese women of whom we know less. The scope of ‘domestic duties’ for Japanese women becomes blurred when the home space is blended with work spaces such as laundries, stores, boarding houses, and even sugar cane farms. Sisters Oko Shiraki and Sashi Mori, both described as undertaking domestic duties, resided together on the premises of a Cairns laundry and it is not a far stretch of the imagination to surmise that their domestic work probably included laundry work within the business.¹⁰⁶ Given that many laundry businesses often advertised mending services, these tasks were likely completed through the invisible, and perhaps unpaid, work of Japanese women.¹⁰⁷ There are also multiple examples of women who may have been involved in keeping a store in partnership with their husbands, including Uno Matsushita, Sao Tanaka and Shigeno Sakakibara. With many of these stores stocking items of a ‘feminine’ kind, the presence of a woman behind the counter to offer advice on recent stocks of crepe-de-chines, laces, and georgettes would have been a sound business decision.¹⁰⁸ Similarly, women such as Tsune Komatsu, Kimu Fujita, and Kamenno Furuta were each married to men who ran boarding houses. These home-based businesses created spaces that combined work and domestic skills, often fitting in well with women who had children and other home responsibilities.¹⁰⁹ We cannot know for certain, but probably these women had a hand in these businesses. Some other Japanese women were even business owners in their own right, including Kuma Oki, a widowed woman who ran a café in Innisfail, and Shigi Furukawa, the laundry proprietress in Mackay.¹¹⁰ Another businesswoman, Omiyo Yamashita, stated in her application for domicile in 1903 that she had been known as a storekeeper on Thursday Island for nearly two years, with her husband still living in Nagasaki

¹⁰⁶ Oko Shiraki Objection; Prisoner of War/Internee, Oko Shiraki, QJF16167, MP1103/2, NAA; Sashi Mori Objection; Prisoner of War/Internee, Sashi Mori, QJF16093, MP1103/2, NAA.

¹⁰⁷ “Laundry. H. Toyola. Japanese Laundry,” *MP*, 5 August 1897, 2; “Japanese Laundry,” *Mackay Mercury*, 28 May 1901, 4. In these advertisements for Japanese laundries, mending services are offered such as replacing buttons and repairing holes. The laundry advertisement for Mackay also offers “ladies clothing made up” and dyeing clothes.

¹⁰⁸ See, for example “New Goods Opened,” *TDB*, 19 September 1918, 7; “New Shipment,” *CP*, 17 October 1921, 5; “Beautiful Silk for Spring and Summer Wear,” *CP*, 21 October 1927, 9.

¹⁰⁹ Bishop, ‘On Their Own’, 185. In Tsune’s case, she also listed her occupation as tailoress, which would have been work that could also be completed from home.

¹¹⁰ Killoran, ‘Sex, Soap and Silk’.

during that time.¹¹¹ Evidently, work and business ownership were a part of many Japanese women's lives with businesses contexts that blurred domestic and feminine skills.

A few Japanese women were wives of sugar cane farmers and appear to have been involved in the running of the farm. In the Herbert River district, for example, Momu Mitakara lived with her husband Sukezayemon and daughter Miyoko on a small sugar cane farm that the family managed.¹¹² As was typically the case, records specify Momu's occupation as 'domestic duties' or 'housewife'.¹¹³ Both Momu and her husband migrated from Shimonoseki in Yamaguchi Prefecture, which was a relatively wealthy region of Japan. In all likelihood, the couple arrived in Australia with a long-term plan to run a farm and remain in the region.¹¹⁴ After Sukezayemon died in the floods of 1927 it is unclear how Momu was able to support herself and her young daughter, Miyoko, but they probably continued running the farm using contract labour for a few years until they decided to return to Japan to be with family in 1930.¹¹⁵ In Mackay, Shizuna Endo similarly became involved in sugar cane farming through her third husband.¹¹⁶ She had a business partnership with her husband who ran a cane farm around

¹¹¹ Application for Certificate of Domicile for Omiya Yasashita, a Storekeeper from Thursday Island, 8537/351/1903, BP342/1, NAA.

¹¹² Certificate of Exemption, Sukezayemon Mitakara, 244E, Item 2674719, AGS/N355, SRS 6041, QSA (hereafter Sukezayemon Mitakara Sugar Exemption); Sukezayemon Mitakara Alien Registration Certificate, JAPANESE MITAKARA S, BP4/3, NAA; Momu Mitakara Alien Registration Certificate, JAPANESE MITAKARA M, BP4/3, NAA.

¹¹³ See, for example Momu Mitakara Alien Registration Certificate, JAPANESE MITAKARA M, BP4/3, NAA; CEDT issued to Japanese for year ended 31/12/1930, 1931/1249, A1, NAA.

¹¹⁴ Sukezayemon Mitakara Sugar Exemption; Miyoko Mitakara, EPJ803, A1379, NAA.

¹¹⁵ Sukezayemon Mitakara Sugar Exemption; "The Bemerside Tragedy," *TDB*, 7 April 1927, 7; Miyoko Mitakara, Department of the Treasury Minute Paper 3 June 1955, EPJ803, A1379, NAA. When Sukezayemon was alive, he employed contract labourers, including Italian migrants, on their Bemerside farm. Miyoko accompanied her mother to Japan to live with family and documentation shows her also writing from Shimonoseki. Miyoko did not initially intend to stay in Japan for a long period, but her mother became ill and she became unable to return to Australia before the outbreak of war in 1941.

¹¹⁶ Application For Leave to Submit Objections Against Detention Order, Shizuna Endo, ENDO/S, MP529/8, NAA; Application for Certificate of Domicile by Idamoto Sataro, 7116/285/1903, BP342/1, NAA. While little is known about Shizuna's first husband, Buichi, her second husband was a pearl shell diver on Thursday Island. She probably moved from Thursday Island to Mackay after his death in 1910.

Homebush and it seems possible she was involved in its operation. During internment in 1941, Shizuna requested that authorities release her in time for the sugar season.¹¹⁷ This request is similar to that of Toku Shima, also the wife of a sugar cane farmer; in her application for a CEDT in 1917, Toku explained that she was only intending to travel for six months so that she could return in time for the “busy season” and assist in the management of the farm.¹¹⁸ Shizuna Endo appears to have had other responsibilities, including management of the Japanese Association in Mackay, where the seven-roomed house on Nelson Street in Mackay was under her name until it was claimed by the DFO in 1941.¹¹⁹ Maintenance and operation of the Club’s premises, including a shop front and a house, evidently fell under the simple description of “domestic duties.”¹²⁰ Whether Japanese women were employed by others, or independently engaged in the running of a business, their roles were not always clear cut for single and married women who lived in north Queensland. Japanese women’s labour — whether paid, unpaid, invisible, or considered ‘moral’ — made important contributions to the social and commercial life of north Queensland.

¹¹⁷ Transcript of Evidence of Objection by S. Endo, 13 February 1942, TRIBUNAL 4/146, MP529/3, NAA.

¹¹⁸ CEDT, Toku Shima, 6 February 1917, 227/34, J2483, NAA.

¹¹⁹ Prisoner of War/Internee, Shizuna Endo, QJF16007, MP1103/2, NAA.

¹²⁰ “Jap’s Club at Mackay is Sold,” *Evening Advocate* (Innisfail), 29 September 1953, 2.



Image 8. Two unnamed Japanese women wearing kimonos and standing in the driveway to the overseer's house at the Hambledon Sugar Plantation, Cairns, ca. 1891. (Image courtesy of Image No. 172504, APU-25 Hambledon Sugar Plantation Photograph Album, SLQ.)

Conclusions

The history of Japanese women in north Queensland is much more nuanced and varied than previously thought. The suggestion that most women were single, sex workers, and 'not respectable' is not only an oversimplification of their complex lives, but also suggests that their lived experiences in the region were inconsequential. Nevertheless, as this chapter and Appendix 3 clearly demonstrate, the marital status, working life, and family life of these women is significant, complex, and worthy of much further consideration (even beyond what this chapter can offer). By piecing together many women's individual histories, a richer and brighter patchwork of their lives is created and among even the nameless women who form part of this history, much else can be investigated and imagined about their lives and roles in north Queensland.

This chapter has extended previous historians' assessments of the history of Japanese sex workers, although it does not dismiss this aspect of the history of women in north Queensland.

Instead, fragmentary archival documents have been assembled to show the variety of women who were married, unmarried, and widowed for at least part of their lives. Broadly, 'single' as a marital status is difficult to define and many women's lives cannot neatly fit this category, nor can it indicate their alleged morality or respectability. Some understanding of Japanese women's marital status can, however, indicate the relationships and connections they formed with other members of the community.

These connections were sometimes linked to Japanese women's work, and married women often joined their husband in business, were responsible for domestic work, — in the many forms this often-invisible labour may have taken — and even commercialised their domestic skills as the need arose. If we look beyond the simplified descriptions of those women who were housewives or undertook domestic duties, there is rich diversity in the work Japanese women did undertake and the businesses they were involved in. These businesses include laundries, stores, boarding houses, and sugar cane farms. Other Japanese women were businesswomen in their own right, sometimes taking an 'as-needed' approach or perhaps establishing their own business. In the case of those women who we can safely identify as undertaking sex work, this was only one aspect of their lived experience, and many pursued independent and mobile lives for themselves. Finally, recognising the family life of Japanese women in north Queensland cements their importance in the establishment and continuation of connections between and among the Nikkei and Australian communities. Acknowledging that motherhood itself is also work, the emphasis of their built connections again brings complexity and diversity to these women's roles and experiences in the region. Indeed, each Japanese woman who lived in north Queensland had a distinctive, complex, and varied life and together they all formed crucial connections within the region's history.

Chapter Five: Japanese Businesses in North Queensland

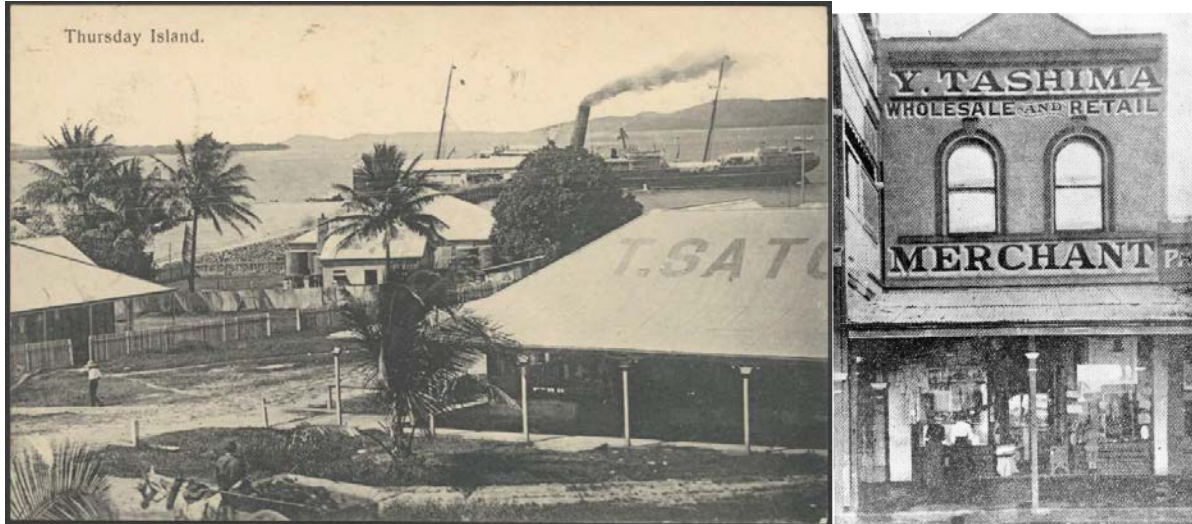


Image 9. *Left*, Thursday Island main street near the Government wharf, picturing “T. Satow’s” store in the foreground, ca. 1900. (Image courtesy of PIC/8808/1-41 LOC Album 1055, NLA.)

Image 10. *Right*, Y. Tashima Wholesale and Retail Merchant storefront located on Flinders Street East in Townsville, ca. 1913. (Image courtesy of BRN: 323850, Townsville City Libraries.)

In 1922, Seihachi Mayeshiba announced in the local newspaper that he would be closing down his successful Lake Street silk emporium and that, as of the following Monday, it would be re-opening under a new name and with a new owner.¹ Seihachi had sold his store, and presumably, all of his stock, to a young Japanese couple who had recently moved to Cairns from the Atherton Tablelands. Tokitaro and Otsume Iwanaga had been growing maize and sugar cane on the Tablelands but had probably found little success and hoped for better opportunities in Cairns.² The couple re-opened the store under the name Iwanaga & Co. and began trading within the month. They sold all manner of fabrics, clothing, toys, Japanese specialty items, and

¹ “Changing Hands,” *CP*, 17 August 1922, 4.

² Letter from J.D. Browne, IO Cairns to Australian Military Forces, Northern Command, 16 December 1941, Anne Iwanaga – Queensland Investigation Case File, Q25246, BP242/1, NAA (hereafter Anne Iwanaga Queensland Investigation).

household products to a wide variety of customers who lived in or passed through Cairns.³ As their business grew, the Iwanaga's store would have found itself trading within a small network of similar Japanese silk stores up and down the coastline.⁴

By December 1929, however, the Iwanagas were forced by circumstance to relinquish their store, which was now located in Shields Street on the corner opposite to the Crown Hotel. All of their stock was sold off in a "monster auction" throughout that month.⁵ While it is unclear what they did during the next few years — probably tending their farm at White Rock, just south of Cairns, and raising their young daughter would have kept them busy — Otsume and Tokitaro decided to brave the financial turmoil of the 1930s and open a small laundry.⁶ By 1941, Otsume and Tokitaro were in their sixties and their daughter, Anne, was a woman of twenty-three. The idea among the Iwanaga family members had been for the laundry to eventually become Anne's own small business, with Anne and Otsume spending most of their time at the laundry while Tokitaro worked the farm.⁷

During the previous decades, the Iwanagas — and especially Tokitaro — had become important community members within Cairns. Tokitaro was the Secretary of the Japanese Association chapter in Cairns, often speaking publicly on community issues or representing the local Nikkei community. Otsume was similarly involved in local fundraisers and social events within both the Japanese and broader community, often alongside her daughter.⁸ Anne also took on important responsibilities in her own right, particularly for aging members of the Japanese population. Anne would frequently do the banking and assist in the business affairs of many

³ See, for example, "T. Iwanaga, The Silk House," *CP*, 29 August 1922, 8; "Beautiful Silk Evening Dresses," *CP*, 12 September 1922, 7; "Consider the Extraordinary Gift Prices," *CP*, 30 December 1927, 7.

⁴ See, for example, "Opening up Sale at Fujiya's," *TDB*, 24 October 1922, 3; "K Sakaguchi," *CP*, 14 March 1922, 7; "Nakashiba Bros. Great Bargain Week Continues," *CP*, 27 July 1921, 8. The Nakashiba Bros had closed their store in late 1921, but some connections probably continued.

⁵ "To the Public of Cairns and Districts," *CP*, 19 May 1926, 2; "Monster Auction Sale of Japanese Silks, Fancy Goods, etc," *CP*, 7 December 1929, 2.

⁶ Report of Aliens in Cairns Region, List of Alien Details Part 2; "Railway Laundry," *CP*, 1 August 1927, 1. The Iwanaga's store was sold in 1929 but it is unclear when their laundry opened. The earliest advertisement for the Victory Star Laundry (then known as the Railway Laundry) on McLeod Street is in 1927 but the ownership is unclear. The Railway Laundry was run by the Iwanagas by 1941.

⁷ Statutory Declaration of Annie Iwanaga, 19 May 1942, Anne Iwanaga Objections.

⁸ See, for example, "Correspondence: Deportation Law," *CP*, 28 May 1930, 4; "Edmonton News," *CP*, 10 October 1936, 9; "Obituary: Mow Jue Sue," *CP*, 4 May 1939, 14.

Nikkei community members.⁹

Tokitaro Iwanaga and his wife were just one couple among the many Japanese migrants in north Queensland who remained in Australia after 1901 and became small business owners during the 1920s and 1930s. Such Japanese-owned businesses operated within an extensive network of commercial and services-oriented enterprises throughout the northern regions of Queensland, and Australia more broadly. In north Queensland, Japanese enterprise had a large customer base and offered services integral to those communities. Most businesses had remarkable longevity and, although they occasionally changed ownership — such as in the case of the sale of Mayeshiba’s store to the Iwanagas — they were usually a continuing presence in north Queensland towns for many decades. Importantly, these businesses played a crucial role in the lives of people in north Queensland, providing both essential services and items typically inaccessible to more isolated communities. Silk and specialty Japanese emporiums were the most common business among the Nikkei community, but many other Japanese migrants operated of laundries, boarding houses, and cafés.

Opportunities for Business

Like Otsume and Tokitaro Iwanaga, the Japanese migrants who sought out business opportunities in north Queensland had often come to the region through labour contracts. It is unsurprising that some turned to business; as Bach described early Japanese migrants in the pearl shelling industry, they were “industrious, efficient and thrifty ... the Japanese in the 1890s were fully established as entrepreneurs.”¹⁰ As Oliver and Nagata have noted for Japanese migrants in other parts of Australia, while some initially worked in one occupation, such as pearl shelling, they very often moved on to other work in laundries or hotels.¹¹ No doubt, the increasingly unstable pearl shell prices of the 1910s, in conjunction with more favourable Australia-Japan trade post-WWI made it an easy choice for many Japanese migrants to establish small businesses. Often this involved a move from Thursday Island onto mainland Australia, as well.¹² While some opportunities for business remained on Thursday Island, this was limited by the smaller

⁹ Letter from J.D. Browne, IO Cairns to Australian Military Forces, Northern Command, 16 December 1941, Anne Iwanaga Queensland Investigation.

¹⁰ Bach, ‘Political Economy of Pearlshelling’, 110.

¹¹ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 55; Nagata, ‘Post-War Thursday Island’, 31.

¹² Ganter, *The Pearl-Shellers of Torres Strait*, 210–12; Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 128. Oliver describes how treaties following WWI were favourable for Japanese business expansion and attracted earnest *zaiibatsu* activities to Australia into the 1920s.

population and the fluctuating state of the pearl shell industry which sustained most of the island's economy from the 1890s. As a result of improved financial standing, growing independence, and long-term residence, there was an increase in small Japanese businesses throughout north Queensland, with waves of domestic migration flowing south as pearl shell prices declined from the mid-1890s.¹³ An attitude of “work hard and get rich” underpinned the actions of Japanese migrants in north Queensland who sought financial security and independence in the form of small businesses.¹⁴

Economic opportunity was originally, and continued to be, the driving force in Japanese migration. There were similar motivations for leaving Japan, with people moving from poor rural areas to northern Australia, and business opportunity drove the internal movement of Japanese migrants from the Torres Strait Islands to the Australian mainland after WWI. As a natural progression of contract labour, Armstrong indicates that even in the earliest days of Japanese migrants working in the pearl shelling industry there was a growing appetite for independent enterprise.¹⁵ Tokitaro Iwanaga had reflected in 1941 that he had never planned on returning to Japan as “ample trade opportunities and free institution suited me best and my family.”¹⁶ The shift towards small business becomes most visible in the historical record in the 1920s and 1930s, where advertisements for Japanese stores and laundries become especially prominent. As capital accumulated among Japanese migrants, beginning with *karayuki-san* and those working in the pearl shelling industry, the wealth of the community as a whole also increased as members opened stores and laundries during this period.¹⁷ There are likely two main explanations for this intensification of Japanese businesses in the 1920s and 1930s. Firstly, by this period many long-term Japanese residents had been able to amass the capital and connections to establish businesses. Secondly, these businesses are most visible in newspaper advertisements with post-WWI editions now becoming available in digital collections. This increased digitisation of newspapers from the 1920s and 1930s may explain the greater visibility of Japanese businesses in this period, although is likely only part of the story.

¹³ Evans, ‘Plural Society’, 110.

¹⁴ Copy of Letter from T. Takahasi, Sydney to Mr & Mrs Oki, Innisfail, 10 October 1939, Intercepted by R.M. Retallack, Acting Inquiry Officer to the Inspector in Charge, CIB Brisbane, Japanese Activities in Queensland.

¹⁵ Armstrong, ‘Aspects of Japanese Immigration’, 3.

¹⁶ Letter from Tokitaro Iwanaga to Commander W. C. Scurry, 10 September 1945, Iwanaga Tokitaro and Tsune, Shiraki Kou, C67717, A367, NAA.

¹⁷ Nagata, ‘Post-War Thursday Island’, 31.

The role of business owner was one that garnered recognition and respect within both the Nikkei and north Queensland communities, particularly in small rural areas. Simpson's study of Indian hawkers in *White Australia* indicates that this generally overlooked migrant group was an important part of the bush economy and fondly regarded as "decent fellows." Similarly for Chinese migrants, as Loy-Wilson argues, individuals progressing from labourer to merchant experienced both social and economic mobility.¹⁸ Judith Brett's study of middle-class white Australia argues that particular values and activities, including business ownership, often afforded individuals a respectable place within their communities.¹⁹ In north Queensland, the same processes can be related to Nikkei business owners' interactions with the wider community. As Oliver argues, Japanese merchants were afforded respect by European community members and even experienced some form of social mobility.²⁰ While Australian legislation restricted the commercial endeavours of Asian migrants (see Chapter One), they often operated stores, laundries, boarding houses, and market gardens, although some other enterprises also existed.²¹ Importantly, this change in work was a form of social and economic mobility for Japanese migrants as well.

Where previously Japanese migrants were reliant on the conditions of their labour contracts and collective agitation to enforce their rights, individual business owners oversaw their own circumstances as far as the law would allow. Rather than living in boarding houses or within itinerant labourer camps, business ownership meant having a property of one's own to live and to work in. For most laundries or silk stores, business owners and their families, and occasionally also their employees, would live on the business property. For example, Shigi Furukawa lived on

¹⁸ Loy-Wilson, 'Rural Geographies and Chinese Empires', 412.

¹⁹ Simpson, "Decent Fellows", 328–29; Judith Brett, *Australian Liberals and the Moral Middle Class: From Alfred Deakin to John Howard* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 77. Brett describes this 'countrymindedness' where independent economic pursuits were correlated with values integral to the nation as a whole.

²⁰ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 165–66.

²¹ Janis Wilton, 'Chinese Stores in Rural Australia', in *Asian Department Stores*, ed. Kerrie L. Macpherson (London: Curzon, 1998), 94. This was not exclusive to Japanese migrants. Wilton argues it was also the case for Chinese migrants that with the White Australia policy restricting areas of employment, small business and "self-contained enterprises" became the most obvious choice for Chinese migrants in Australia and sustained further employment of other migrants in their community.

the premises of her Fuji Laundry, as did other laundry owners.²² Some of the wealthier business owners, or those with Australian-born children of a grown age, were able to own multiple properties and had the luxury of living and working at different locations. In the case of the Iwanagas, they had a small plot of land at White Rock in Cairns, while their laundry business was on McLeod Street in the main centre of Cairns.²³ Property ownership was usually made possible where one or more members of the family, often children, had been born in Australia. For those unable to own property, many could still have their long-term residence in Australia recognised in order to obtain leasehold.²⁴

Owning and operating a business was common for Japanese migrants with families, and there are many reasons why this might have been the case. It is unclear whether business ownership provided a stability of income that enabled Japanese migrants to start a family, or whether some individuals already inclined to business were also inclined to living and working as a family unit. Many single Japanese men continued to work under contracts that were renewed every three to four years, a role that often made it difficult to establish a family. Business ownership tended to indicate migrants had long-term plans to remain in Australia; not only did a physical business provide stable housing for a family to live together, but it could be passed on as generational wealth.²⁵ Nonetheless, individual migrants and families established in north Queensland were integrated into a wider Nikkei network. The kind of mutual assistance provided among migrant communities is well-documented, although for White Australia it had racial undertones of conspiracy or subterfuge.²⁶ For example, established Indian hawkers would often support newly arrived Indian migrants, including providing them with a place to stay,

²² Shigi Fulukawa Internment Record; Prisoner of War/Internee, Oko Shiraki, QJF16167, MP1103/1, NAA; ‘Japanese laundry,’ *CP*, 9 July 1935, 2. Oki and Tameji Shiraki also lived in the same location as their laundry in Cairns.

²³ Hearing of Objection to Internment, Annie Margaret Iwanaga, 21 May 1942, Anne Iwanaga Objections.

²⁴ Nearly all Japanese migrants were denied naturalisation or domicile on the basis that they were classified as ‘natives’ of Asia. For further discussion, see Chapter One s.v. ‘Restricting Naturalisation and Civic Participation.’

²⁵ Audrey Kobayashi, ‘Property and Its Transformation for Issei during the Meiji and Taisho Periods’, in *Landscapes of Injustice: A New Perspective on the Internment and Dispossession of Japanese Canadians*, ed. Jordan Stanger-Ross (Montréal, CA: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2020), 57.

²⁶ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 46.

provisions of household items, and business connections.²⁷ This practice is also seen among the Nikkei community in Australia and north Queensland. A military intelligence report from 1939 indicated that although most Japanese migrants in Queensland were widely distributed, their network was so efficient that someone even in an isolated locality such as Hughenden or Chillagoe would be kept up-to-date on national issues.²⁸ In the southern parts of Australia, local merchants were among the community representatives who would greet and support newcomers to the region. In the lead up to WWII, however, these activities and connections were considered evidence of espionage and subterfuge. This network, however, served the Japanese community in providing support and business connections throughout northern Australia and the rest of the continent.

The *Zaibatsu*

Oliver has researched the network of large Japanese business conglomerates — *zaibatsu* — that existed in Australia from the late nineteenth century through to 1941.²⁹ These *zaibatsu* operated within a large network of trade between Japan and Australia. They experienced a boom in business during the 1920s followed by a slow decline during the 1930s.³⁰ While the *zaibatsu* operated large firms in the trading centres of Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane, they also had agents operating throughout regional areas of Australia. Many of the agents Oliver identifies, however, appear to have been career merchants who originally migrated to Australia with the intention of undertaking commercial trade.³¹ Not included in Oliver's research, however, were many independent merchants operating throughout north Queensland who were previously indentured labourers or farmers. These independent merchants of the north differed significantly from the career merchants of the south; many independent merchants had arrived in Australia as workers, only later transitioning into business ownership. These independent Japanese merchants

²⁷ Simpson, "Decent Fellows", 325.

²⁸ Review of Japanese Population and Activities, Queensland (Report), 20 February 1939, Japanese Activities in Queensland.

²⁹ Oliver, "Interpreting "Japanese Activities"; Oliver, *Raids on Australia*.

³⁰ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 133–36.

³¹ Oliver, 150. I have developed the term 'career merchant' is used to describe individuals who were previously merchants in Japan and who came to Australia with the express purpose of continuing work as merchants. Independent merchants, however, are those who were previously involved in other forms of work, usually labouring, in Japan and in Australia but who later took up their own business.

in north Queensland provide a way to extend and elaborate upon current understandings of the *zaibatsu* network that Oliver discusses. Oliver recognises that in northern Australia there were multicultural communities that relied on the economic contributions of multiple racial groups and this enabled smaller Japanese businesses to flourish.³² This proliferation of independent Japanese merchants throughout northern Australia during the 1920s was linked to the rise of the *zaibatsu*. These independent merchants, however, had experiences that can be differentiated from Japanese career merchants.

Within Australia, the *zaibatsu* network dominated the import-export trade between Australia and Japan. Intelligence reports on the *zaibatsu* from 1939 indicate that there were three main Japanese business houses employing Japanese people in Brisbane. These included Kanematsu Pty Ltd, Araki & Co., and T. Kashiwagi.³³ Oliver identifies some key *zaibatsu* operating out of north Queensland during the 1920s and 1930s, while Purcell provides a more exhaustive list of the *zaibatsu* operating in Australia. These included Tashima & Co. in Townsville, which later became incorporated with Araki & Co.; the Ebisu & Co., H Yamashita, Sumioka, and Shiojima & Co. on Thursday Island; and Nakashiba Bros and Ishikawa & Co., in Cairns.³⁴ Oliver's and Purcell's identification of these Japanese businesses, however, is reliant on the use of detailed enemy property records from WWII; given the significant fluctuations in Australian-Japanese trade in the period leading up to 1941, these records represent only the businesses that were still operating in 1941 and do not include businesses that had ceased operations in earlier decades. Analysis of other records, such as Alien Registration Certificates as well as digitised newspapers, reveal other Japanese businesses that had either closed before 1941 or were too small to receive focused treatment by the Controller of Enemy Property.³⁵

Some of these *zaibatsu* operated small shops throughout north Queensland towns in addition to managing Japanese imports to Australia. Yoshimatsu Tashima and his wife Kame Tashima, for example, opened a Japanese fancy goods and curios store named Tashima & Co. in

³² Nagata, 'Naive Patriotism', 133.

³³ Review of Japanese Population and Activities, Queensland (Report), 20 February 1939, Japanese Activities in Queensland.

³⁴ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 150; Purcell, 'Japan's Trading Company Network', 120.

³⁵ By this I mean that small businesses' property and money would have been subsumed in the individuals' internment records. In the case of larger *zaibatsu*, there were internment records for individuals with separate records for the company managed by the Controller of Enemy Property.

Townsville in 1897.³⁶ This was perhaps the first Japanese emporium store in the north Queensland region. By 1905, their store was extremely profitable and their stock was worth £1303.³⁷ Townsville's Y. Tashima later entered a joint purchasing agreement through family connections with C. Tashima & Co. Ltd, Kobe to act as the sole distributor of Japanese goods in Queensland by 1924.³⁸ After this time, it is likely that nearly all goods entering Australia would have been handled through this company.

North Queensland newspaper records and WWII intelligence reports identify several smaller Japanese stores throughout the region that are additional to those businesses that Oliver has outlined (see Appendix 4). It is unlikely, however, that the small north Queensland stores were able to exist outside the *zaibatsu* network. While records of the business relationships between these smaller stores and the *zaibatsu* have not been found, it is almost certain that the smaller businesses obtained their stock through the larger firms. As Oliver explains, "although 95 per cent of Australia's Japan trade was in the hands of the *zaibatsu* companies, small operators ... made a good living in importing or indenting but were reliant on good relationships with larger firms to survive." Importantly, the *zaibatsu* and the smaller Japanese businesses relied on each other for survival, with the small businesses able to obtain their stock while large firms could develop "co-operative connections that carved out niche markets avoiding competition that would damage business."³⁹ It was a symbiotic relationship that enabled Japanese retail businesses, small and large, to extend across the Australian continent.

The *zaibatsu* were crucial to ensuring that Japanese merchants were able to conduct their business and remain in Australia. In fact, their connections to the Japanese consulate and, by extension, Australian public servants saw to it that certain regulations under the *Restriction Act* were relaxed. As Oliver has argued, the relationship between the *zaibatsu*, the Japanese consul-general, and the Australian government was extremely positive and trusting.⁴⁰ For example,

³⁶ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 81; Menghetti, *Summer Seas*, 28–29; "Fujiya's The Silk Store: 50th Anniversary Sale," *TDB*, 29 October 1930, 11. Fujiya's advertisement contradicts this information, indicating that Yamato & Co. was opened in Townsville in 1880, before ownership was transferred to Tashima in 1900 and then to Fujiya in 1910. Menghetti's research, however, indicates that Yamato & Co., and Tashima's were separate stores that both opened around 1900 before Yamato was transferred to the ownership of Tashima in 1913 and the latter took over the former's shop.

³⁷ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 81.

³⁸ Oliver, 136.

³⁹ Oliver, 135.

⁴⁰ Oliver, 149.

letters exchanged in 1920 between Edward Foxall, the English Secretary to the Japanese Consul-General in Sydney and Atlee Hunt, the Secretary to the Department of External Affairs, discuss whether it was acceptable for merchants to come to Australia to oversee the operating of their businesses. Foxall considered that “the Japanese clerks and assistants are all well-educated men, and some of them of very good family.” Foxall further argued that these Japanese businessmen were not a threat to Australian shopkeepers — as they dealt almost exclusively in Japanese wares — and therefore the Japanese passport requirements for Japanese merchants should allow these merchants continuous re-entry to Australia.⁴¹ Foxall and Hunt were in thorough agreement, and by 1931, the consul-general was simply required to provide a list to the Department of External Affairs indicating the names of merchants extending their stay in Australia and those who were leaving the country. No formal systems of requesting approval for entry were required. During the late 1920s and 1930s, therefore, the administration of the *Restriction Act* as it related to Japanese merchants was virtually in the hands of the Japanese consul-general.⁴²

While it is not possible to entirely disentangle independent merchants from the career merchants and the *zaibatsu*'s far-reaching network, there were many Japanese businesses, as outlined in Appendix 4, in north Queensland between 1890 and 1941. These enterprises were operated by independent businessmen who were seeking to improve their economic prospects and social standing, and to remain in Australia as near-permanent settlers. These important independent Japanese businesses throughout north Queensland were generally Japanese silk stores that sold a variety of Japanese goods and general household necessities, but also extended to laundry businesses.

⁴¹ Letter from Edward Foxall to Atlee Hunt, 4 February 1910, Item 1315, Papers of Atlee Hunt.

⁴² Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 149.

JAPANESE EMPORIUM

S. MAYESHIBA

Toys — Specialities for Xmas:

Celluloid, Rug and Wooden Dolls, Drums, Pop Guns, Swords, Tea Sets, and a large assortment of others

Trinket Boxes, Hair Brushes, Leather Bags, Purses; Perfumery (from 2d. to 3/6 hot.)

Photo Frames, Baskets, Cheap Tea Sets (21 pieces in set, 13/-)

Xmas Cards and Calendars also

"Nikko" Carved Chairs

S. MAYESHIBA
Importer of JAPANESE SILKS and FANCY GOODS
Lake Street, Cairns, Q.

Xmas Gifts!
The best that ever come to Cairns and we ask you to call at our shop first before purchasing elsewhere

Our Prices are very tiny

T. IWANAGA,
THE SILK HOUSE,
Lake Street — Cairns,

Will take over the business of T. Mayeshiba from Monday, August 28th, where he hopes by selling at the lowest possible prices to merit a share of the business accorded to the late firm.

New Goods are arriving every mail, including every description of Oriental lines procurable. Silk Goods of the latest variety just come to hand.

Ladies can secure the most Up-to-date Goods that it is possible to procure at prices to suit everyone.

DON'T FORGET THE NEW FIRM:
T. IWANAGA,
LAKE STREET, CAIRNS.

HAVE YOU HEARD THE GOOD NEWS?

A New Silk Store
IS OPENING IN INNISFAIL ON
Monday, May 16th

The OKI Silk Store will be located in Rankin Street, next door to Robt. Huxley and Co., a few steps from the Post Office.
Stocks include Silk Piece Goods, and Cotton Piece Goods.

IF YOU WANT BARGAINS, COME NEXT MONDAY TO THE

OKI Silk Store
Box 239 Rankin Street, Innisfail

K. SAKAGUCHI
The Noted House for Japanese Goods,
MAIN STREET, ATHERTON.
'Phone 57.

SILKS AND FANCY GOODS of every description arriving by every mail.

OUR PRICES ARE THE LOWEST ON THE TABLELANDS.

GIVE US A TRIAL.

T. SATOW,
MERCHANT AND GENERAL DEALER,
Corner of Douglas and Macleay Streets, Thursday Island.

Direct Importer from
SINGAPORE, PENANG, MALACCA,
AND THE NORTHERN COLONIES.

LARGE STOCKS ALWAYS ON HAND.
Eastern Goods a Speciality.

JUST what cane cutter and farmer want. Most durable Hand-stitched Non-slipping Japanese Shoes at moderate price at Ishikawa, Sachs Street, Cairns.

Image 11. North Queensland newspapers featured advertisements for many different Japanese merchants throughout the region. *Top left*, S. Mayeshiba's store in Cairns, 1915; *Top right*, T. Iwanaga's store in Cairns, 1922; *Bottom left*, Oki Silk Store in Innisfail, 1938; *Centre*, K. Sakaguchi's store in Atherton, 1921; *Middle right*, T. Satow's store on Thursday Island, 1898; *Bottom right*, Ishikawa's store in Cairns, 1922.

(Images courtesy of "S. Mayeshiba," *NH*, 24 Dec 1915, 24; "T. Iwanaga: The Silk House," *CP*, 6 Sep 1922, 2; "Have you Heard the Good News?," *JRA*, 13 May 1938, 2; "K. Sakaguchi," *CP*, 17 August 1921, 5; "T. Satow," *Torres Straits Pilot*, 20 October 1898, 1, Papers of Alfred C. Haddon, NLA; "Ishikawa," *CP*, 12 August 1922, 1.)

Japanese Emporiums, Silk Stores, and Shops

Australian interest in Japanese art, fashion, and items had been growing since the 1880 Melbourne International Exhibition where the Japanese section had featured prominently. From the mid-1890s, wares including Japanese tea sets and ceramics, prints, silks, and kimonos became more widely available to people living in northern Australia. The Osaka Chamber of Commerce sent a consignment of goods in 1899 to the Japanese consulate in Townsville, containing lacquerware, bead curtains, saké, toys, European umbrellas, and other similar items. This “trial sale” appeared to be a success, with reports that “owing to their cheapness, the Japanese goods were sold readily, and numerous orders are coming in ... In case of orders for any of these articles increasing, the inspection, packing, and shipment of the goods will be left in the hands of merchants themselves.”⁴³ Shifting into the hands of businesses operated by career merchants, and eventually independent merchants, north Queensland towns up and down the coast were not left without Japanese goods.

In the following decades, stores selling fabrics, clothing, and household items became a common business for Japanese migrants in north Queensland. These stores were fundamentally draper’s stores although by the end of the 1920s their product ranges had expanded and many could be described as small-scale department stores.⁴⁴ While some of the more prominent stores in north Queensland would deal directly with *zaibatsu* to obtain their stock, they would sometimes also act as agents on behalf of smaller Japanese stores. These prominent stores were often intermediaries between the *zaibatsu* and the very small Japanese shops in more remote parts of north Queensland. Regardless, all stores were likely to have received stock through a network of dominant *zaibatsu* in Australia. Most stores were operated by single Japanese businessmen, although some Japanese couples and eventually families also operated these businesses. As a result of their business, these Japanese owners and their families developed strong social connections with the upper classes of north Queensland society.⁴⁵ As Oliver argues, however, these merchant families also had to maintain relationships with other Japanese merchants and therefore lived under a two-fold class stratification, navigating both the Australian and the Nikkei community. Within the Australian community, “their position as prosperous small

⁴³ “The ‘Osaka Asahi,’ *BC*, 9 January 1899, 7.

⁴⁴ Kerrie L. Macpherson, ‘Asia’s Universal Providers’, in *Asian Department Stores*, ed. Kerrie L. Macpherson (London: Curzon, 1998), 5.

⁴⁵ These individuals were often also community representatives in some capacity, which likely went hand in hand with their role as business owners. This community involvement included roles in local chapters of the Japanese Association, local councils, and the Chamber of Commerce.

business families enabled them to enter the ‘middle class’ of Australian society where they were often well-known and respected.” This increase in social standing was cemented by the display of Australian ‘citizen’ values of the time, including advocacy within their communities and involvement in community organisations. Within the Japanese community, merchant families involved in the import-export trade, such as the Tashimas, were given higher status compared to the much smaller business owners like K. Sakaguchi and Iwanaga & Co.⁴⁶

Torajiro Satō was one of the earliest Japanese storekeepers in northern Australia.⁴⁷ Historians have previously recognised him as a career merchant who arrived during the 1880s Japanese migration period and was a prominent businessman on Thursday Island.⁴⁸ Shuji Kyuhara’s anthropological research has indicated that there were originally four Japanese stores located on the main thoroughfare of Douglas Street in Thursday Island prior to 1901. These stores were owned by migrants from Wakayama in Japan. While some of Kyuhara’s findings can be difficult to verify, as early as 1900 the *Worker* complained that “the advertising columns generally of this paper [from Port Douglas] is crowded with advertisements of Japanese boatbuilders, storekeepers and so on.”⁴⁹ Of these Japanese businessmen, Torajiro Satō was the only storekeeper and was called the “King of Thursday Island,” with the most prominent shop in the street.⁵⁰ Although it is unclear who the other prominent businessmen described by Kyuhara were, three other leading Japanese residents arrived on Thursday Island in 1882. One of them owned a billiard saloon, while the others became master pearlmen.⁵¹ Naokichi and Toki Mayeshiba were among these early business owners, first running a small store and then later

⁴⁶ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 169.

⁴⁷ D. C. S. Sissons, ‘Satō, Torajiro (1864–1928)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (hereafter *ADB*), National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/sato-torajiro-8343/text14641>. He is also occasionally referred to as Torajiro Satow.

⁴⁸ Kyuhara, ‘Remains of Japanese Settlers’, 2.

⁴⁹ “The Empire Is in Danger,” *Worker*, 7 April 1900, 16.

⁵⁰ Kyuhara, ‘Remains of Japanese Settlers’, 2; “T. Satow,” *Torres Straits Pilot*, 29 October 1898, 1; Photograph 6, Photograph 10, PIC/8808/1-41 LOC Album 1055, Thursday Island Postcard Collection, NLA.

⁵¹ Sissons, ‘First Phase’, 54; Sissons, ‘Immigration in Australian-Japanese Relations’, 204. These three men were Tanaka Yasugorō, Nakamura Kiryū, and Watanabe Toranosuke. While Tanaka was the proprietor of a billiard saloon by 1894, the other two were master pearlmen. Reportedly, Tamiji Nakagawa (Tommy Japan) was the owner of two billiard saloons and a boarding house after his famous win. It is possible that Tanaka was also one of the other winners in the syndicate.

manufacturing soy sauce, a product in demand among the working population of Thursday Island.⁵² These Japanese business owners throughout north Queensland were typically representatives for the local Japanese community, with Torajiro Satō engaging in both politics and diplomacy. In 1897, for example, he wrote a letter on behalf of the Japanese community on Thursday Island, congratulating Queen Victoria on her birthday.⁵³ Torajiro was also influential in the pearl shelling industry and made an urgent application to the Australian government in 1899 requesting fifty more Japanese labourers following the extensive loss of life during the cyclone that year.⁵⁴ Torajiro was not, however, a particularly successful businessman, closing his store and severing all ties with the pearl shelling industry in Australia after 1901.⁵⁵ There were many other business owners to fill the space he left behind.

South of Thursday Island, Oliver has indicated there were some Japanese businesses operating in northern Australia throughout the first half the twentieth century but argues that they were few in number and generally small.⁵⁶ By the 1920s, however, this was not the case. From this decade in north Queensland, there was a proliferation of highly successful, interconnected and expanding Japanese commercial businesses (see Appendix 4). A close reading of newspaper sources of that era reveals there were a number of Japanese silk stores and emporiums throughout north Queensland, usually with at least one or two stores per town. In Townsville, Yamato & Co. was one of the earliest silk stores. It opened around 1892 and operated on Flinders Street, in Townsville's primary business district. The business continued under the new management of Y. Tashima from around 1912 until it eventually became Fujiyas in 1922.⁵⁷ Toyokichi Higashi's store in Townsville, perhaps a rival to Tashima's, called attention to the quality of his wares by way of reference to Britain, claiming that, "as the Union Jack is to

⁵² Application for Certificate of Domicile for Naokichi Mayeshiba and Heisuke Moriizumi, Storekeepers of Thursday Island, 118, J3115, NAA; Certificate of Domicile for Toki, Wife of Atorekeeper Naokichi Mayeshiba from Thursday Island, 25, J3115, NAA; "Northern Supreme Court," *NM*, 7 April 1910, 7. Naokichi arrived on Thursday Island in 1892, followed by Toki in 1896. It appears they were storekeepers from the time they arrived there.

⁵³ Frei, *Japan's Southward Advance*, 81–82.

⁵⁴ Sissons, *Immigration Question*, 33.

⁵⁵ D. C. S. Sissons, 'Satō, Torajiro (1864–1928)', *ADB*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/sato-torajiro-8343/text14641>. He is also occasionally referred to as Torajiro Satow.

⁵⁶ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 82–83.

⁵⁷ "Fujiya's The Silk Store: 50th Anniversary Sale," *TDB*, 29 October 1930, 11.

all Britishers, so are my goods. Everything new. All First-class.”⁵⁸ Cairns had a similar array of Japanese silk stores, and for a period there were two Japanese silk stores that operated independently of each other. Seihachi Mayeshiba’s Emporium, mentioned in the opening passages of this chapter, was established in 1913 (perhaps even earlier) and was taken over by T. Iwanaga & Co in 1922. Under the Iwanagas’ ownership, the store operated across two different locations until it was eventually closed in 1929.⁵⁹ During the period from 1916 to 1920, Cairns also had the Nakashiba Bros store. This store was eventually closed after a series of immigration restriction difficulties that became a source of controversy in the local Cairns community.⁶⁰ John Iwamatsu Nakashiba relocated to Darwin after this time. Innisfail similarly had multiple Japanese silk stores. Hidewo Oki originally worked as manager for Fujiya’s in Townsville, later moving to Innisfail where he acted as an agent of Fujiya’s operating out of the Airdome.⁶¹ At the same time, a Japanese merchant named Kiyomatsu Sakaguchi, who had previously operated in Atherton for a number of years, moved to Innisfail and ran a small Japanese general store from approximately 1931 to 1932.⁶² Fujiya’s later had to close — likely due to the owner’s sickness — and Hidewo opened Oki’s Silk Store on Rankin Street in 1938.⁶³ There were various other Japanese stores scattered throughout north Queensland, with another in Mareeba just west of Cairns and likely other small stores in places such as Rockhampton, Mount Isa, and Chillagoe.⁶⁴

During the 1920s and early 1930s when these Japanese businesses experienced a boom in trade, there was a consistent need for their services. Often when one owner of a store wished to close down or move away, there was another person willing to step in to take over the business.

⁵⁸ “T.H. Trade Mark,” *TDB*, 10 December 1915, 6.

⁵⁹ “S. Mayeshiba,” *CP*, 21 July 1913, 2.

⁶⁰ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 142. Bunsuke was deported to Japan while his brother John opened the NAD Co., store and agency business for pearling in Darwin after 1924. For more discussion on this topic, see the introduction to Chapter One.

⁶¹ “Public Notice,” *TDB*, 3 October 1930, 2; “Power of Advocate Advertising,” *JRA*, 20 February 1931, 3.

⁶² “Fancywork Bargains,” *JRA*, 10 July 1931, 4; “Auctioneers,” *JRA*, 26 April 1932, 5; Death Registration of Kyomatsu Sakaguchi, 28 January 1933, 1933/C/1020, QBDM. Kyomatsu’s store was repossessed and auctioned off in 1932 and he passed away in January of the following year.

⁶³ “Innisfail Notes,” *TDB*, 8 August 1932, 6; “Have you Heard the Good News?,” *JRA*, 13 May 1938, 2.

⁶⁴ “Auction Sale: Insolvent Estate of Shentaro Keata,” *CP*, 7 June 1920, 1. No other information regarding this store can be found beyond this advertisement for the insolvency auction. Items advertised include the regular wares sold by Japanese stores, including men and women’s clothing, dress fabrics, crockery, and children’s toys.

Advertisements for Japanese silk stores were regularly printed in local newspapers, both in smaller publications such as the *Johnston River Advocate and Innisfail News* and in more widely circulated titles such as the *North Queensland Register*. Clever businessmen such as Seihachi Mayeshiba and Hidewo Oki would even advertise interstate; an advertisement in the *Catholic Press* from Sydney read — “Tourists to Kuranda should call at this emporium and see the fine assortment of silk fancy goods and curios”⁶⁵ — while other advertisements went as far afield as the Sydney Italian journal, *Il Giornale Italiano*.⁶⁶ These goods sold in Japanese silk stores and emporiums were both practical items and “curios” with “Oriental” novelty value. Japanese silks, for example, sold by these stores were not only fashionable and cheap but were increasingly popular in northern climates where humidity and heat meant that warmer fabrics fashionable in southern Australia were less practical. The stores also sold distinctly Japanese items to north Queensland residents, such as Japanese slippers — advertised as “quite a novelty in footwear”⁶⁷ — as well as kimonos and tea sets. In more regional areas where there were fewer retail stores, ‘authentic’ Japanese emporiums remained popular for many years during the 1920s and 1930s. The rise of the Japanese stores also matched the increase of department stores in Australia during the second decade of the twentieth century; the latter offered a wider selection of items and less interaction with sales assistants. The growth of Boland’s department store in Cairns, for example, is revered in local history, but it was the case for many years that Mayeshiba’s Silk Store in Cairns held its own in newspapers advertisements that featured prominently alongside Boland’s.⁶⁸ The Japanese stores, however, cultivated an extremely loyal customer base and ensured that patrons could obtain any item on request.⁶⁹ This attention to customer service likely found increasing popularity for the Japanese stores during the 1920s, which set them apart from the more impersonal department stores that left customers increasingly dissatisfied.⁷⁰ Most stores, however, entered a period of decline during the latter part of the 1930s as the Great Depression, trade restrictions on Japan, and competition with other department stores impacted

⁶⁵ “Japanese Emporium,” *Catholic Press*, 4 September 1919, 52.

⁶⁶ “Oki Silk Store,” *Il Giornale Italiano*, 6 December 1939, 7.

⁶⁷ “Men’s Japanese slippers,” *CP*, 25 January 1924, 3.

⁶⁸ “Bolands Centre,” Queensland Government, last modified 20 January, 2016, <https://apps.des.qld.gov.au/heritage-register/detail/?id=602536>; “S. Mayeshiba,” *CP*, 26 March 1918, 5.

⁶⁹ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 134.

⁷⁰ Sophie Loy-Wilson, ‘The Gospel of Enthusiasm: Salesmanship, Religion and Colonialism in Australian Department Stores in the 1920s and 1930s’, *Journal of Contemporary History* 51, no. 1 (2016): 100.

the profitability of the smaller Japanese stores throughout north Queensland. While this downturn in business saw some owners begin to return to Japan at this time, others simply moved laterally into a different type of business.⁷¹ The Iwanagas, for example, closed Iwanaga & Co. in 1929 and took up ownership of the Victory Star Laundry sometime during the 1930s.⁷² Fujiya's in Townsville appears to have been put out of business by a combination of competition from Kellam's department store (opened in 1930), hasty store expansion, sickness of the owners, and likely pressing effects of the Great Depression. By 1933, Fujiya's in Townsville was closed down.⁷³ By 1941, the remaining Japanese stores were those larger *zaibatsu* and the agents associated with them throughout north Queensland. Only a very few independent Japanese stores remained, continuing to weather the downturn in business without the direct protection of the *zaibatsu*.

Japanese Laundry Business

After the extensive network of Japanese stores, including larger *zaibatsu* firms, laundries were the second-most common Japanese business in north Queensland. In fact, Sissons found that "laundryman" was the second most common occupation among Japanese men listed in internment records.⁷⁴ No doubt there were Japanese women who worked in laundries as well. A

⁷¹ Letter from F.G. Galleghan, Acting Inspector, to The Director, CIB, Canberra (SECRET), 6 July 1939, Japanese Activities in Queensland.

⁷² "Auction Sale," *CP*, 13 December 1929, 2; Report of Aliens in Cairns Region, List of Alien Details Part 2; "Railway Laundry," *CP*, 1 August 1927, 1. The Iwanaga's store was sold in 1929 but it is unclear when the laundry opened. The earliest advertisement for the Victory Star Laundry (locally known as the Railway Laundry) on McLeod Street is in 1927 but the ownership is unclear. The Iwanagas ran the Railway Laundry by 1941.

⁷³ "Kellam's Come to Townsville," *TDB*, 5 March 1930, 4; "Fujiya: The New Silk Store," *JRA*, 20 February 1931, 1; "Innisfail Notes," *TDB*, 8 August 1932, 6; "Auction Sale," *TDB*, 31 December 1933, 4. Kellam's was a fast-expanding Queensland department store that opened a Townsville branch in March 1930, with Fujiya's opening a new Innisfail branch in February 1931. After closing the Innisfail store in August 1932, Fujiya's main Townsville store closed sometime in December 1933.

⁷⁴ Occupations, Internees QLD File, Series 24: Japanese in Australia — Internees, Sissons Papers. It should be noted, however, that Sissons' conclusion is based on the reported occupations of Japanese internees in 1941. Further, the list of occupations differentiates between laundrymen, numbering at seventy-eight men, while only four men were indicated as being laundry proprietors. The variation is likely a matter of reporting among different officials and the number of laundry proprietors was probably much higher.

1939 report on Japanese migrants living in Queensland gives a clear indication of the prevalence of laundry businesses among Japanese people and their wide geographical distribution:

The majority of Japanese in Queensland are engaged in laundry work and these are normally men of about 60 years of age who arrived in the Commonwealth prior to Federation and, with their families, have become well established. They represent the concentrations along the coast whilst the population inland largely consists of hotel or station cooks (frequently migratory) and a few laundry proprietors in the larger country centres like Hughenden and Cloncurry. Many of these are younger men who came to Australia by various means prior to or during the War.⁷⁵

Possibly even more widely distributed than Japanese stores, Japanese laundrymen and laundry proprietors were visible in nearly every north Queensland town. There was at least one Japanese laundry in nearly every town in north Queensland, providing services to the broader public. Some larger towns such as Cairns, Townsville, and Mackay were home to multiple Japanese laundries, and advertisements for Japanese laundries in Ayr, Babinda, Barcaldine, Bowen, Chillagoe, Innisfail, Thursday Island, and even as far west as Longreach, Charleville, Winton, and Mt Isa also regularly appeared within north Queensland newspapers.⁷⁶ The laundries provided a service to large sections of the community, not only washing clothes, but also mending and providing minor tailoring adjustments. Often local hotels, pubs, and wealthier community members would make use of the laundry businesses, with hotel patrons' laundry collected and delivered. In some cases, Japanese laundries were contracted exclusively to provide laundry services for a hotel. While there were some concerns within north Queensland communities about Japanese laundries, including the fear that these laundries were depriving white Australian women and widows of work, they otherwise appear to be well-patronised with a customer base from across the community.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Review of Japanese Population and Activities, Queensland (Report), 20 February 1939, Japanese Activities in Queensland.

⁷⁶ See, for example, "Ayr Notes," *TDB*, 9 January 1939, 3; "Lost," *CP*, 5 September 1918, 1; "Japanese Laundry," *Western Champion and General Advertiser for the Central-Western Districts*, 23 September 1916, 11; "Kiyobara: Japanese Laundry," *Bowen Independent*, 20 June 1911, 4; "Brevities," *Evening News*, 18 February 1908, 1; "Japanese Laundry," *JRA*, 31 July 1931, 8; "Small Debts Court," *Morning Bulletin*, 3 April 1903, 5; "Wanted," *Longreach Leader*, 17 August 1923, 12; "Under New Management: Mivacko's Japanese Laundry," *Charleville Times*, 4 December 1936, 6. See also, Winton and Mount Isa Districts, List of Alien Details Part 2.

⁷⁷ "Mourns from Mackay," *Truth*, 1 February 1903, 2; "In a Woman's Mind," *Worker*, 6 February 1904, 5.

In north Queensland, the Japanese laundry associations — known as *Dooshikai* — found in southern Australian centres appear to be absent. Despite this lack of formal organisation, there were still associations and systems of support among north Queensland Japanese laundry owners.⁷⁸ There were advertising wars among various regional north Queensland newspapers that demonstrate the alliances among Japanese laundries. In Mackay, for example, a series of joint advertisements appearing in the *Daily Mercury* throughout 1917 show that the Ashimura and Okuda Japanese Laundries on Victoria Street promised to match the prices of the Nasu and Asahi Japanese Laundries on Wood Street and provide a further 10% discount on any orders above ten shillings.⁷⁹ The Wood Street laundries soon launched their own series of advertisements attempting to undercut those on Victoria Street.⁸⁰ In Cairns, however, certain laundry owners were friendly rather than competitive in their business dealings with each other. The Iwanaga family, owners of the Victory Star Laundry were close family friends with Oko and Tameji Shiraki, who owned the Lake Laundry. During the 1950s, Anne Iwanaga applied for permission for her parents, along with the widowed Oko Shiraki, to be able to return to Australia.⁸¹ Anne also stayed for a time with the Tomida family in West End, Townsville who also owned a laundry. This may well have been a friendly business connection.⁸² Broadly then, Japanese owners of stores and laundries were on friendly terms around north Queensland, regardless of their various business interests.

Laundry work could also be a very mobile profession. Laundry operators were often able to move around the region, either in search of contract work or to establish new businesses. Over time, this mobility aided in the development of a small network. Heihachi Hirakawa, for example, was a laundryman with connections to multiple laundries throughout north Queensland, either working as a contractor or within his own business at different times. He was working at Tomida's Laundry in Townsville at the time of his arrest in 1941, but also had an extensive career as a laundryman throughout north Queensland. He operated in Toowoomba in 1916, was in Rockhampton in 1925, and then spent a number of years travelling and working

⁷⁸ Nagata and Nagatomo, *Japanese Queenslanders*, 13; Oliver, 'Japanese Relationships', 9.

⁷⁹ "Japanese Laundry," *DM*, 14 May 1917, 4.

⁸⁰ "Japanese Laundry Prices," *DM*, 18 December 1917, 1.

⁸¹ Letter from R.F.B. Wake to the Director of Commonwealth Investigation Service, 13 March 1947, Iwanaga Tokitaro and Tsune, Shiraki Kou, C67717, A367, NAA.

⁸² I.O. Townsville to I.S.G.S. Northern Command, 4 April 1942, 20/4/338, Anne Iwanaga Queensland Investigation.

around north Queensland.⁸³ Other police reports, such as one from the Cairns Police Division in 1931, indicated some Japanese migrants living in the area had at different times either worked for, or owned, laundry businesses. The reports describe a Japanese migrant named Shimanuta who had carried on a laundry business at Mourilyan since 1927 and had before then worked on Thursday Island in the same business. Similarly, police indicated that Japanese migrant Charley Niragama was directly employed by the Lake Eacham Hotel and worked as the hotel's laundryman.⁸⁴

It is likely that many Japanese laundry owners gained skills and knowledge first working as employees for other Japanese laundry businesses, and that these skills flowed throughout the Japanese network in north Queensland. This was the case for retail experience in Japanese silk stores, as well as laundries. Oliver argues that this mobile population of workers moved throughout north Queensland and most individuals were known to each other, learning of work opportunities through word of mouth.⁸⁵ This flow throughout the network served the community as a whole — both Japanese and non-Japanese — and served to increase the overall social and financial standing of Japanese migrants in north Queensland. This rise in the social capital of Japanese business owners is in part due to their provision of essential services to the community that would typically be more difficult to access, particularly in remote areas.⁸⁶ Where the need for the service, such as laundry work or mending, was higher, the distinctions among cultures and racial hierarchies were blurred by necessity and cooperation.

A Range of Economic Opportunities

While Japanese stores and laundries were the most common businesses among Japanese migrants, there were many other commercial opportunities. Much as the workers in the sugar

⁸³ Prisoner of War/Internee, Hiiachi Hirakawa. QJ16029, MP1103/2, NAA; “Notice,” *Darling Downs Gazette*, 26 January 1916, 1; “Japanese and Whites in Brawl,” *Evening News*, 28 December 1925, 5. Heihachi’s internment report indicates that ‘Hiiachi’ was a laundryman residing and working in Jones Street in Townsville in 1941. Tomida’s Laundry was also located on Jones Street in Townsville. The report also indicates that Heihachi spent a number of years in different locations around north Queensland.

⁸⁴ Letter from W. Gavin (Const. No. 1838) to the Inspector of Police, Cairns, 7 February 1931 and Memorandum, Department of Home Affairs, 11 March 1931, SAKAGUCHI – Deportation, 1930/10050, A1, NAA.

⁸⁵ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 58.

⁸⁶ Oliver, ‘Japanese Relationships’, 7; Loy-Wilson, ‘Rural Geographies and Chinese Empires’, 408.

cane and pearl shelling industries had sought out economic gaps and opportunities for themselves, so too did many Japanese businessmen and women residing in urban centres. Japanese-run boarding houses, for example, were a common feature of small north Queensland communities, often providing lodging to contract workers. Some of these boarding houses were owned and operated by a couple or a young family; other boarding houses were owned by multiple Japanese shareholders.⁸⁷ Holding a share in a boarding house likely entitled an individual to some combination of lodgings and meals, while also providing the necessary capital for the continuation of the business. This practice of shareholding was common among Chinese migrants, with Janis Wilton arguing that small shares were an attractive practice that allowed for flexibility in business ownership. If individuals wished to return to their home country or move elsewhere, it was fairly easy to liquidate their share of the business assets in a way that ensured the enterprise could continue to operate.⁸⁸ There is some evidence of this practice among Japanese migrants. Isao Shiraki and his father Tomejiro Shiraki, for example, each had a one-twentieth share in the Idzumo Boarding House on Thursday Island. Given that they were also employed on the pearl shelling boat *Feiton*, they likely split their residence between the lugger, from April to November, and the boarding house during lay-up season.⁸⁹ This lay-up season meant that between December and March, all pearl shelling boats and their crew were required to remain on-shore during the dangerous cyclone season. Similarly, Zentaro Shimokado and his two adult sons Zentoku and Teisun Shimokado owned shares in the Hiroshima Boarding House.⁹⁰ Naoyomu Tabata is another example of a boarding house shareholder, but he was also the boarding house caretaker and held a one-twenty-fourth share in Ugui house.⁹¹ Typically people chose boarding houses based on their home village; Ugui Boarding House and Izumo Boarding Houses, for example, were named after coastal fishing villages in the south of Wakayama. Hiroshima House on Thursday Island, however, provided lodging to men from a

⁸⁷ Lamb, *Okinawans Reaching Australia*, 16.

⁸⁸ Wilton, 'Chinese Stores in Rural Australia', 94.

⁸⁹ Prisoner of War/Internee, Isao Shiraki, QJ16407, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Tomejiro Shiraki, QJ16436, MP1103/2, NAA.

⁹⁰ Prisoner of War/Internee, Zentaro Shimokado, QJ16425, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Zentoku Shimokado, QJ16424, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Teisun Shimokado, QJ16428, MP1103/2, NAA.

⁹¹ Prisoner of War/Internee, Naoyomu Aka Naoyomon Tabata, QJ16463, MP1103/2, NAA; Internees QLD File, Series 24: Japanese in Australia — Internees, Sissons Papers.

mixture of locations.⁹² There were also boarding houses in Innisfail, Cairns, and elsewhere throughout north Queensland, providing accommodation to the many single men who were contracted to work for sugar farms, local hotels, and laundries.⁹³ References to the specific details of these boarding houses — their business name, location, or even affiliations — remain difficult to locate in archival records. Nonetheless, boarding houses remained an important business among members of the Nikkei community.

Japanese boarding houses were sometimes owned and run by married couples.⁹⁴ Although a husband and wife were generally both engaged in its operation, usually the woman's role was simply described as 'domestic duties.' Historian Clare Wright has described the ways in which hotels and pubs occupied a unique domain that blended both the public and private domains and were often an attractive vocation for women.⁹⁵ Although Wright focuses on European hotel keepers, her analysis provides context to the place of women in supplying domestic skills for public spaces. Kimu and Tatsu Fujita owned and operated a Thursday Island boarding house in 1895, before the untimely death of Tatsu that year.⁹⁶ Similarly in 1941, Isekichi Sakakibara, his wife Shigeno, and his son Hirashi, owned a twelve-room boarding house on

⁹² Oliver, *Raid on Australia*, 44; Ganter, 'Wakayama Triangle', 56; Kyuhara, 'Remains of Japanese Settlers', 3; Lamb, *Okinawans Reaching Australia*, 16; Nagata, 'Japanese in Torres Strait', 148; Nagata, 'Japanese Internment in Australia', 30; "Thursday Is. Donors to King's Memorial," *Telegraph*, 22 September 1936, 21. In 1936 on Thursday Island, there was also a Kushimoto Boarding House, while Nagata identifies a Miwasaki Boarding House and Ooshima Boarding House. Kushimoto and Miwasaki are both places in Japan, the name of Ooshima Boarding House is unknown but is probably a mistranslation referring to Hiroshima.

⁹³ "Malay V. Japanese," *NM*, 17 May 1912, 5; "Fire Inquiry," *NH*, 16 December 1912, 26; "Child Electrocuted," *CP*, 15 March 1939, 6. Although focusing on other events, each of these articles refer to the presence of Japanese boarding houses in Charters Towers, Cairns, and Innisfail respectively.

⁹⁴ The boarding house keeper was not always the same person as the owner. It can be difficult to differentiate between the two, although sharing the role between a couple often indicates some form of ownership.

⁹⁵ Clare Wright, 'Of Public Houses and Private Lives Female Hotelkeepers as Domestic Entrepreneurs', *Australian Historical Studies* 32, no. 116 (2001): 59. Wright's research, however, does not have any specific discussion of migrant women and focuses only on hotel keepers, rather than the lower class of boarding house keepers.

⁹⁶ Tatsu, Nakagawa, and Yosuke Inquest. The Fujitas also had at least one child with them at the boarding house. It is unclear what happened to Tatsu's widow, Kimu, and their child after his death.

Thursday Island.⁹⁷ Boarding houses, then, supported not only financial and living security for Japanese migrant men in north Queensland, but were also family spaces. Importantly, a boarding house offered financial freedom as business owners along with a place of residence.

Billiard saloons, tobacconists, and perhaps brothels were complementary businesses to boarding houses, often operating either within a boarding house or nearby. Tanaka Iwakichi, and Tommy Japan, for example, both ran billiard saloons on Thursday Island. Tanaka's billiard saloon offered accommodation to boarders, while Tommy's establishment on Victoria Parade claimed to sell "temperance liquors to steady the nerves," along with "cigars, cigarettes, pipes and tobacco."⁹⁸ Depending on the boarding house, brothels may have been operating from some of the rooms. In 1911, for example, there were reports of Japanese sex workers operating out of a Charters Towers boarding house.⁹⁹ Sissons has suggested that it is difficult to tell the difference between a legitimate boarding house that may have had some rooms rented out by sex workers, and a brothel that maintained the pretence of being a boarding house. It is likely that Japanese boarding houses were one of these two possibilities.¹⁰⁰ Barbara Minchinton, in particular, claims that 'boarding house keeper' was often a title synonymous with a brothel owner.¹⁰¹

Market gardens and small hold farming were another business taken up by some Japanese migrants. While historians such as Loy-Wilson have recognised the presence of Chinese market gardeners as "small businesses on the land,"¹⁰² there were also Japanese market gardeners who persisted with their enterprises well into the 1920s and 1930s. There is little available evidence about these small market gardens, although existing literature about Chinese market gardens can act as a useful starting point. Intelligence reports indicate the existence of small-scale Japanese market gardeners living along the east coast of north Queensland, with a few others further inland. These market gardeners worked around the Herbert River, Mackay, Proserpine, Gordonvale, Cloncurry, Cairns, and Yungaburra. Many of the market gardens are identifiable in intelligence reports from 1939 onwards, with the reports suggesting that most had been running

⁹⁷ Prisoner of War/Internee, Isekichi Sakakibara, QJ16574, MP1103/2, NAA.

⁹⁸ Sissons, 'First Phase', 54; "Country Mail: Northern Districts," *BC*, 10 January 1891, 6; "Tommy Japan," *Torres Straits Pilot*, 4 August 1888, 1.

⁹⁹ Sissons, 'Karayuki-San', 194.

¹⁰⁰ Sissons, 41.

¹⁰¹ Barbara Minchinton, 'Female Crews: Sex Workers in Nineteenth-Century Melbourne', *History Australia* 17, no. 2 (2020): 350. This 'middle-rung' consisted of the brothel owners and agents in each port of call.

¹⁰² Loy-Wilson, 'Rural Geographies and Chinese Empires', 412.

for a number of years and were occupied by quite elderly, single Japanese men.¹⁰³ Police reported in the Cairns District, for example, that of the few Japanese people resident at Gordonvale, most were “old market gardeners.”¹⁰⁴ Vidonja Balanzategui in *The Herbert River Story* also mentions a ‘Misha Moto’ who had a market garden on the east side of Hawkins Creek in 1924 growing vegetables and watermelons, as well as occasionally selling sweets, soft drinks, tinned foods, and tobacco.¹⁰⁵ While it is unlikely that these small market gardens offered any considerable wealth to the migrants who took up this business — particularly when compared to importing, silk stores, and perhaps even laundries — this small-scale business would have provided both social and economic independence to many single Japanese men.

Among the main businesses of stores, laundries, boarding houses and market gardens, there were other types of work and business undertaken by Japanese migrants. Tsurumatsu Shiosaki was a carpenter and boatbuilder on Thursday Island for many decades from at least 1907 to 1931, supplying luggers to pearlers working out of Thursday Island.¹⁰⁶ Some Japanese food items, such as *shooyu* (soy sauce) and miso (soy bean paste), were also made locally.¹⁰⁷ While Nagata suggests that in the 1890s there were three different soy sauce factories on Thursday Island, Haruyoshi Yamashita and Naokichi Mayeshiba are the only identifiable soy-sauce producers on Thursday Island during this period.¹⁰⁸ Among these businesses, there were also a

¹⁰³ List of Alien Details Part 2.

¹⁰⁴ Cairns District, Gordonvale Station, List of Alien Details Part 2.

¹⁰⁵ Vidonja Balanzategui, *Herbert River Story*, 149.

¹⁰⁶ A timber pearling lugger Tsurumatsu built in 1907, the *Grafton*, was actually found in Port Douglas in 2013. Tsurumatsu Shiosaki Alien Registration Certificate No 32 issued 10 November 1916 at Thursday Island, JAPANESE SHIOSAKI TSURMATSU, BP4/3, NAA; Tsurumatsu Shiosaki Alien Registration Certificate No9595 issued 3 October 1920 at Thursday Island, JAPANESE SHIOSAKI TSURMATSU, BP4/3, NAA; CEDT's Issued to Japanese for Year Ended 31/12/30, Memorandum of the ACTG Collector of Customs WA, 10 February 1931, 1931/1249, A1, NAA; Victoria Stone-Meadows, “Historic Boat the First Wreck Removed from Inlet,” *Newsport*, <https://www.newspost.com.au/2019/march/video-historic-boat-the-first-wreck-removed-from-inlet/>; “Grafton,” Australian National Maritime Museum, <https://arhv.sea.museum/en/objects/details/156956/grafton?ctx=741d9f4c-d76a-4d6b-9a9b-10957611ec80&idx=0>.

¹⁰⁷ Nagata and Nagatomo, *Japanese Queenslanders*, 5.

¹⁰⁸ Nagata, ‘Japanese in Torres Strait’, 141; Nagata, ‘Post-War Thursday Island’, 36; “Northern Supreme Court,” *NM*, 7 April 1910, 7. While Naokichi Mayeshiba was manufacturing soy sauce for a few years

number of other Japanese identified in internment records as ‘storekeepers.’¹⁰⁹ Even some evidence of a Japanese ‘nerve specialist’ and masseuse named H. Hamada who was operating in and around Townsville provides an interesting insight into the business acumen of Japanese migrants in north Queensland before WWII.¹¹⁰

Haruyoshi Yamashita serves as another example of Japanese migrants’ diverse business interests. Haruyoshi, after arriving on Thursday Island in 1898, became a respected businessman and community leader.¹¹¹ Serving as the Secretary of the Japanese Society, Haruyoshi married Tei Yamashita (formerly Tei Shiosaki), the daughter of Tsurumatsu Shiosaki, a well-known Thursday Island boat builder.¹¹² Haruyoshi was credited as keeping a local store, running a soy sauce factory, and owning multiple pearl shelling luggers. Local police described Haruyoshi’s activities in 1940 as “active in all matters of business relating to the Japanese population here [Thursday Island],” although he did not engage in pearl fishing himself. Instead, Haruyoshi took on a business management position in partnership with Tsunejiro Yamamoto, Mokuichi Masuda, and Ferner Wilfred Currington. The pearl shelling boat was formally owned by Currington — as the law required — and was operated by the former two men, who undertook small scale commercial fishing on the reef during the lay-up seasons from December to March.¹¹³ Haruyoshi probably had similar arrangements with a few other pearl shelling luggers in the Torres Strait, earning money through his investment in and management of pearl shelling boats, in addition to his other business interests.

prior to 1910, it is unclear when Haruyoshi Yamashita began manufacturing. Nagata argues that when Haruyoshi was arrested in 1941 he had been producing soy sauce for many decades.

¹⁰⁹ Internees QLD File, Series 24: Japanese in Australia — Internees, Sissons Papers. The information from Sissons’ file is a compilation of information from the NAA series MP1103/2. These sources have been cross-checked for accuracy but referenced under Sissons for simplicity of referencing.

¹¹⁰ “H. Hamada Masseur,” *Catholic Advocate*, 19 June 1930, 53; “H. Hamada Japanese Nerve Specialist,” *TDB*, 18 October 1933, 2.

¹¹¹ Prisoner of War/Internee, Haruyoshi Yamashita, QJ16215, MP1103/2, NAA.

¹¹² Prisoner of War/Internee, Tei Yamashita, QJF16216, MP1103/2, NAA. For more on Tsurumatsu Shiosaki, see, Chapter Four s.v. “Caring for Families.”

¹¹³ Letter from the Inspector of Police, Cairns to Queensland Police Commissioner, 14 December 1940, Yamashita Haruyoshi, YAMASHITA H JAPANESE, BP25/1, NAA (hereafter Yamashita Haruyoshi File).

Conclusions

Around the turn of the twentieth century and into the following few decades, Japanese migrants sought out and undertook business opportunities as a path to securing greater independence, financial security, and more permanent residence in the region. While some Japanese businesspeople in north Queensland were career merchants connected to the *zaibatsu*, as was often the case for Japanese migrants in the south, north Queensland saw an increased number of independent merchants. These men and women were among those who first came to the region under labour contracts and later conducted business. These individuals opened stores, laundries, boarding houses, soy sauce factories, and even boat building businesses. Each of these businesses provided financial independence and growth for Japanese migrants throughout the region, securing their role in providing essential services and products to a wide customer base throughout north Queensland.

In tracing the span and activity of Japanese businesses in north Queensland between 1885 and 1946, patterns emerge of a large network of business with an increasing concentration during the 1920s and 1930s, as demonstrated in Appendix 4. No doubt, broader international events, including two World Wars, the Great Depression, and trade disputes shaped the trading conditions and commercial relationships between Australia and Japan, particularly during these two decades. Japanese small businesses in north Queensland were closely networked with other Japanese and Australian businesses, connecting both south and north Australia, but also north Queensland and its residents to Asia. For individual business owners, these activities enabled growing economic independence, permanent residence, and long-standing contributions to the social and commercial life of the region. Business was more than just an economic pursuit; it was also a means through which Japanese migrants built social and cultural capital in a multi-racial north Queensland. In many cases, business was a critical factor in the upward mobility and class consciousness of Japanese migrants, elevating them as respected community members and responsible citizens.

Chapter Six: Interconnected Nikkei and North Queensland Communities

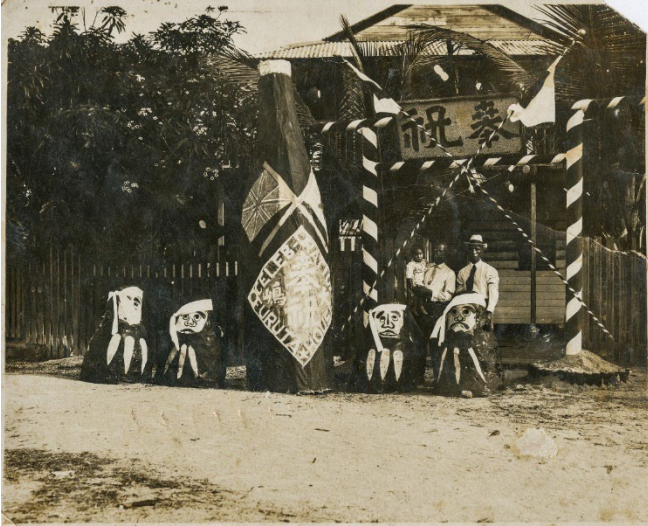


Image 12. *Left*, Two men and a child standing outside Japanese boatbuilder Tsugitaro Furuta's house with decorations and large sculpture of a bottle that reads 'Celebrate Furuta House' (undated). This was likely as part of a Japanese festival or celebration on Thursday Island. SLQ: Pat Smith Photographs, Image 30677.



Image 13. *Right*, Japanese procession in the Armistice Day Parade, Flinders Street, Townsville, 1918. Townsville City Libraries, Image BRN: 558609.

Japanese flags waving, banners proclaiming “banzai!” and a procession of Japanese people festively marching down a north Queensland street conjure an image that might have struck fear in the hearts of Australians who had endured WWII. But in the years preceding 1941, Japanese migrants’ passionate and colourful celebration of holidays — whether Japanese, Australian, British, Buddhist, Shinto, or Christian — and events of international significance were a regular, even expected, aspect of north Queensland life. On one occasion, three men could be seen standing outside the house of Japanese boatbuilder Tsugitaro Furuta’s house on Thursday Island (sometime between 1899 and 1930) proudly showing off their festive displays for what was likely a Japanese holiday such as the Japanese Emperor’s Birthday. Beside them, a three-metre oversized bottle, a saké bottle perhaps, is emblazoned with the words “Celebrate Furuta House” beneath an image of intersecting Japanese and British flags. This display was probably not an

isolated event, but rather accompanied other festivities shared by the rest of the “multi-racial Gibraltar” that was the Thursday Island community.¹

Much further south in Townsville, Japanese migrants took to the streets to join parades marking the end of WWI in 1918. Onlookers gathered to watch the “unprecedented spectacle” that ran the length of Flinders Street, seeing the returned soldiers carrying British and Australian flags passing by, followed by throngs of men and women crammed into cars and carriages, even an orchestra on the back of a truck.² As the parade proceeded, “the Japanese turned out in strong force dressed in native costumes and having on a lorry a gaily decorated model oriental house.”³ Japan had played a crucial role in aiding Australia during WWI, with the Japanese battlecruiser *Ibuki* escorting some 20,000 ANZACs across the Indian Ocean in 1914. Relations between Australia and Japan would sour following the 1919 Paris Peace Conference — driven, in part, by Prime Minister Billy Hughes’ vehement rejection of Japan’s request for a racial equality clause — but this local expression of jubilant celebration shared by Japanese migrants and the rest of the north Queensland community is symbolic of the congenial spirit developed throughout the region in the decades preceding and following 1918.

Public events and celebrations provide an insight into the ways that Japanese migrants were accepted and active members of north Queensland communities. Such festivities, however, also hint at a more complex network of relationships, interlaced with racial politics, perceptions of class and respectability, and familial bonds. While, as Oliver argues, Japanese merchants and businessmen may have experienced broad community acceptance, the experience was not the same for other classes of Japanese migrants, such as those who worked as labourers and were perhaps limited in their capacity to perform middle-class Australian values.⁴ Nikkei participated in many different milieus and circles, with varying connections and tensions among groups. Within the racial hierarchy that prevailed in north Queensland, Japanese migrants were considered to be superior among people from Asia, but nonetheless inferior to people originating from Europe.⁵ McGregor highlights the importance of racial stratification as an

¹ Reynolds, *North of Capricorn*, 85.

² “Townsville’s Fervor,” *NH*, 14 November 1918, 7.

³ “Townsville Festivities,” *NH*, 5 December 1918, 39.

⁴ Pam Oliver, ‘Who Is One of Us? (Re)Discovering the Inside-Out of Australia’s Japanese Immigrant Communities, 1901-1957’, *Japanese Studies* 22, no. 3 (2002): 287, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1037139022000036968>; Oliver, ‘Japanese Relationships’, 16.

⁵ Richards, ‘Race Around Cairns’, iv.

organising factor of northern communities, noting that the region was riven with inter-racial tensions.⁶ In fact, as Oliver argues, Japanese migrants had to navigate multiple hierarchies, both within the Nikkei community and broader north Queensland society.⁷ As Japanese society was often structured by overt hierarchical groupings of class, Nikkei in Australia were presumably skilled in negotiating these social hierarchies and perhaps even exceptional by Australian standards. At times, north Queensland residents regarded Nikkei as a homogenous grouping, but in other circumstances, class distinctions were sharply drawn between Japanese individuals. Tensions between different groups based on race, class, work roles, and even geography variously served to unite and divide diverse groups of Nikkei and the north Queensland community.

Community Celebrations and Events

Community activities, such as sports and religious events, social gatherings, and charity work were often able to unite communities and even override the segregationist push of White Australia.⁸ These events frequently brought people together for shared experiences and developed common goals and values. Indeed, Nikkei were able to form bonds with the wider north Queensland community, where, in addition to working and doing business together, public events provided opportunities for cultural exchange to improve relations and develop shared interests between people.

Nikkei participated in the social life of north Queensland towns which developed cohesion and cooperation among these two communities. Often Nikkei would present aspects of their culture and holiday celebrations to north Queensland residents and invite the community members of the region to participate and share in Japanese culture. In particular, displays of culture were more common among working class Japanese migrants who attempted to assimilate

⁶ McGregor, 'Drawing the Local Colour Line', 332.

⁷ Oliver, 'Japanese Relationships', 9. As Oliver elucidates, the Japanese community in Australia lived under a hierarchy based on their associations. Typically merchants, particularly those involved in importing, were considered the higher class. In the middle were other small business owners, such as laundry or store owners. In north Queensland, of course, labourers would have been at the bottom of this hierarchy.

⁸ Martínez, 'Plural Australia', 234.

within north Queensland communities with a display of ‘Japanese refinement’.⁹ On several occasions in Townsville Japanese migrants publicly celebrated the Japanese Emperor’s birthday with fireworks in the Queen’s Park, while the consul held private events at his residence. Evidently, links between people of the same social strata could cross racial divides. Frequently these private events were attended by esteemed local residents, such as the Townsville Mayor, the local Justice, and Mayors of surrounding towns such as Charters Towers.¹⁰ Annual celebrations of the Japanese Emperor’s Birthday were public events that occurred around north Queensland towns and were described as “a brilliant display” that were enjoyed by all community members.¹¹ While the scale of the events varied, with a large festival on Thursday Island, a dinner held at a Japanese farmer’s property in Proserpine, and the Japanese Association’s chapters in Cairns and Mackay hosting alcohol-fuelled festivities, these were regular and well-attended events throughout north Queensland.¹² Other Japanese holidays included the Bon Festival, a Buddhist festival that honours ancestors, which Japanese migrants in Broome

⁹ Martínez, 233; Hugh de Ferranti, “The Audibility of Strangers: Music and Disparate Japanese Communities in Prewar “White Australia””.

¹⁰ “Condensed Cables and General News,” *ET*, 21 October 1901, 3; “The Mikado’s Birthday,” *Gympie Times and Mary River Mining Gazette*, 5 November 1904, 3; “Mikado’s Birthday,” *Darling Downs Gazette*, 5 November 1906, 5. This celebration of the Emperor’s Birthday in both a public and private setting exemplifies the class differences among Japanese migrants, to be discussed in the next section.

¹¹ “Queensland News,” *Morning Bulletin*, 4 November 1901, 5; “The Mercury,” *Mackay Mercury*, 5 November 1904, 2.

¹² “Mikado’s Birthday,” *CP*, 4 November 1910, 4; “Local and General,” *Queenslander*, 12 November 1910, 9; “Proserpine Notes,” *Bowen Independent*, 27 November 1915, 3; “The Mikado’s Birthday,” *MP*, 9 November 1907, 4; “Japanese Celebrations,” *CP*, 1 November 1921, 4; “The Mercury,” *Mackay Mercury*, 5 November 1904, 2; “Mikado’s Birthday,” *Mackay Mercury*, 4 November 1905, 2; “The Mikado’s Birthday,” *DM*, 4 November 1907, 3; “Japanese Emperor Coronation Celebrations,” *DM*, 1 September 1917, 2; “The Mikado’s Birthday,” *DM*, 1 November 1922, 7. In Cairns and Mackay, particularly in 1907, there were a few reported instances of drunkenness that led to the breaking of property, brawls, and festival-goers falling off the wharf and into the water.

and on Thursday Island celebrated.¹³ These public events included all sections of the community, whether they were people of European or Japanese heritage, or perhaps other cultural groups.¹⁴

Japanese military victories, both during the 1895 Sino-Japanese War and the 1905 Russo-Japanese War were events celebrated in north Queensland. For example, a large celebration was held in Mossman, just north of Cairns, in 1905 following the Japanese siege of a Russian naval base in Port Arthur in Manchuria. The lively and elaborate event was documented in detail by the local newspaper:

Great was the rejoicing among the Japanese in the Mossman District when the capitulation of Port Arthur was made known by an extra issued from this office. They immediately set about raising subscriptions among themselves for the purpose of carrying out a Japanese carnival in honour of the occasion.

This eventuated in Messrs Urana and Handa's yards on Saturday last. The Australian Ensign was flown from a pole immediately above their own national colours. An evergreen triumphal arch was erected at the entrance to grounds. Across this was displayed the words 'Fall of Port Arthur, Banzai.' ingeniously worked out in Japanese hieroglyphics ... The arch was surrounded by Japanese national flags crossed diagonally. Inside the grounds there was erected an improvised temple with drink offerings temptingly displayed. ... A booth was erected in the centre of the ground, where liquid refreshments were served with gratuitous hospitality. The hogshead of beer was completely emptied as well as the whisky and brandy.

Some two hundred people assembled to witness the sports which were purely Japanese in character. Unlike European sports there was no admission to the ground nor was there any entrance fee—all was free! Over £60 were distributed in prizes...

¹³ Ferranti, 'Audibility of Strangers'; Frances, *Selling Sex*, 52; Sissons, 'The Japanese in the Australian Pearling Industry', 12; "Bonmatsuri: Broome's Feast of Lanterns," *Sydney Mail*, 9 November 1932, 4; "Feast of Lanterns," *NM*, 26 September 1933, 4. This festival was also known as the Obon Festival, *bon matsuri*, or Festival of Lanterns. According to Sissons' interview of a former diver on Thursday Island, there were similar celebrations on Thursday Island, but this cannot be substantiated by any sources. It seems likely, however, that Bon Festival would also be celebrated there.

¹⁴ See, for example, "Proserpine Notes," *Bowen Independent*, 27 November 1915, 3; "The Mercury," *Mackay Mercury*, 5 November 1904, 2.

Punctually at one o'clock two fusilades of crackers of a thousand each were fired off, and the wrestling in the ring commenced soon after ... Everything went with a vim, and at six o'clock the proceedings were terminated with singing and prayer.

Good order prevailed throughout the afternoon till just after the festival concluded, when some who had imbibed of the Japanese hospitality wanted to fight them, but one of the free drinkers got more than he bargained for.

At night fusilades of crackers (representing aerial bombs) and rockets were fired off, terminating a quaint festival.¹⁵

These festivities of a Japanese victory were celebrated with a recognition of shared Japanese, Australian, and British interests. In addition to inviting members of the public to participate, the Japanese flag adorned doorways alongside the British flags where “side by side floated the Union Jack and the flag of the land of the Rising Sun,” and in later years was “mated with the Australian flag.”¹⁶ As described in Chapter Two, Britain and Japan were cementing their military and commercial relationships, most notably through the *Anglo-Japanese Alliance* of 1902.

Often flags were part of the celebrations, as were larger than life displays (see, for example, Image 12 and 13 on page 166). Japanese residents recognised their shared interests with British Australians by supporting events important to Britain and Australia. The Japanese Association would participate in and give thanks for their inclusion in British celebrations. For example, the Thursday Island residents made public displays of congratulations to Queen Victoria. In 1937, the Innisfail Japanese Association showed their appreciation for being invited to join the festivities for the coronation of King George VI.¹⁷ A large group of Japanese migrants joined the 1915 Patriotic Day procession in Mareeba, as well as the peace procession through Flinders Street in Townsville in 1918 for Armistice Day. Japanese residents “turned out in strong

¹⁵ “Fall of Port Arthur,” *NQR*, 23 January 1905, 49. The *NQR* reprinted the article from the *Mossman Champion*.

¹⁶ “The Mikado’s Birthday,” *DM*, 4 November 1907, 3; “Japanese Celebrations,” *CP*, 1 November 1921, 4. See also, “Mikado’s Birthday,” *Mackay Mercury*, 4 November 1905, 2; “Japanese Emperor Coronation Celebrations,” *DM*, 1 September 1917, 2; “Japanese Celebrations,” *CP*, 1 November 1921, 4.

¹⁷ Frei, *Japan’s Southward Advance*, 81–82; “Celebration in the Country,” *CM*, 14 May 1937, 19; “The Coronation,” *CP*, 15 May 1937, 11.

force dressed in native costumes”, carrying Japanese flags along with banners showing the symbol of the rising sun and proclaiming ‘Banzai.’¹⁸

Other celebrations, however, were private events attended by Japanese migrants and developed cohesion and connection with the north Queensland community.¹⁹ Celebrations of birthdays, engagements, weddings, and funerals often involved both the Nikkei community and the wider community, as did social dances and debutante balls.²⁰ While some of these social events were reserved for upper-class Japanese migrants, such as merchants and businessowners and their families, wider community events included Japanese labourers and workers. The social participation of Japanese labourers was noted in formal government records, including the 1913 *Royal Commission*, observing their involvement in town life and attendance at pubs, the football, the cinema, and the shops.²¹ This involvement of Nikkei within the towns they lived in comes as little surprise, with Martínez similarly noting Japanese and others migrants’ participation in sports carnivals and community parades.²² Even within smaller sub-sections of north Queensland communities, such as sugar cane workers or pearl shelling crews, people of many ethnicities and cultural backgrounds would share in social activities. While they were looked upon poorly by authorities and some locals, Japanese gambling houses and gatherings at billiard halls were common and visited by people “of all races.”²³ The Japanese card game *oichi-kabu* was popular, as was the Chinese lottery game ‘pakapoo’ and even the occasional two-up, played by tossing coins.²⁴ Where money and alcohol were involved, the activities were not always peaceable. Sometimes there were arguments between players after they were ejected from the gambling

¹⁸ “Mareeba Notes,” *CP*, 4 September 1915, 7; “Townsville Festivities,” *CP*, 2 December 1918, 5.

¹⁹ Ferranti, ‘Audibility of Strangers’.

²⁰ See, for example, “Edmonton News,” *CP*, 10 October 1936, 9; “Obituary,” *CP*, 30 October 1919, 5; “Aquatic Ball,” *CP*, 25 July 1927, 4; “Masonic Ball. Brilliant Success. Twenty-Seven Debutantes,” *CP*, 28 May 1938, 8.

²¹ Martínez, ‘Plural Australia’, 241.

²² Martínez, 234–35.

²³ Much of the available information about these gambling houses is gathered from newspaper reports of police raids and other violent incidents at these gambling houses. See, for example, “Northern Gambling,” *Daily Standard*, 31 October 1922, 4.

²⁴ “Thursday Island Gaming Party,” *Daily Post*, 17 January 1918, 4; “Darwin Notes,” *TDB*, 15 January 1936, 12; “Chinatown Again,” *CP*, 16 January 1920, 8.

house,²⁵ or as one Cairns resident lingering in Chinatown at 1:30 in the morning complained: “I was almost knocked down by a crowd of men rushing out of a Japanese gambling den using the most filthy language over some one cheating in the game. One man had two bottles in his hand, another a lump of mangrove wood.”²⁶ Violent assaults and even murder over unpaid debts sometimes occurred, as was seemingly the case in the death of a Japanese merchant named Ida in 1918.²⁷ Broadly, however, gambling and drinking were social activities shared by labourers of many different ethnicities, including Japanese labourers, that was a generally peaceable, though sometimes illicit, pastime.

Sporting activities similarly facilitated connections between Nikkei and wider north Queensland society, whether as part of a club, or on a more casual social basis. The Japanese Association often organised events, including sport carnivals that occurred in Broome and on Thursday Island.²⁸ These events were organised around Japanese holidays and were an expected part of the festivities. A visitor to Thursday Island in 1920 described the activities on days such as the Emperor’s Birthday:

[T]he luggers all fly the Union Jack and the Rising Sun ... At the Japanese Club ... English and Japanese flags decorate the entrance, while at the flagstaff head a large red sun upon a white background flutters bravely in the south-east trades. At their sports carnivals the Japanese give fine displays of wrestling and single-stick play, the competitors, lithe and active, being singularly fit.²⁹

Wrestling and rowing were common activities, as was similarly documented for Japanese celebrations in Broome in Western Australia.³⁰ Some Nikkei were recognised for their sporting

²⁵ “Notes and news,” *Gympie Times and Mary River Mining Gazette*, 4 February 1905, 3. An Indian migrant named Robert Hassan became involved in a street fight with a group of Japanese men in Mackay after he was ejected from a Japanese gambling house.

²⁶ “Chinatown Again,” *CP*, 16 January 1920, 8.

²⁷ “Thursday Island Gaming Party,” *Daily Post* (Hobart), 17 January 1918, 4

²⁸ Photograph of Japanese Club in Broome, 1911, NLA: MS3092/23/58. In the photographs, they are playing across from the Japanese Club in Broome in 1911, with both the Japanese and British flags flying. It is not clear if this was an exclusively Japanese event, but probably the entire Broome community was involved.

²⁹ “Thursday Island,” *Argus* (Melbourne), 24 January 1920, 4.

³⁰ “Fall of Port Arthur,” *NQR*, 23 January 1905, 49; Ferranti, ‘Audibility of Strangers’; “Japanese Coronation,” *West Australian*, 27 November 1928, 16.

ability, such as Anne Iwanaga who was notable for her talents in hockey, cricket and vigoro before later becoming the captain of the Queensland women's hockey team during the 1950s.³¹ The involvement of Nikkei, including *nisei* like Anne Iwanaga, in sporting activities is demonstrative of the way that Japanese migrants and their children participated in wider community events, facilitating strong connections with other residents. Sport was more than a physical activity; it also built awareness of families within the community and forged friendships and understandings between individuals. Within north Queensland society, people from many backgrounds participated in these celebrations, events, and activities, promoting integration and cooperation among residents. Whether a formal or informal occasion, sharing in culture through different activities enabled the divisions between different cultural and racial groups in north Queensland to become flexible and adaptable depending on context, purpose, and necessity.

³¹ "Vigoro: Saturday's Fixtures," *CP*, 20 November 1936, 4; "Vigoro: Fixtures for Saturday," *CP*, 4 March 1938, 4; "Cricket: Week-end Fixtures," *CP*, 28 November 1941, 2; "Women's Hockey Proposed Revival," *CP*, 11 March 1942, 6; "Women's Fixtures," *CP*, 15 May 1936, 5; Statutory Declaration of Annie Iwanaga, 19 May 1942, Anne Iwanaga Objections. Anne was a member of many sporting teams around Cairns, including the Austral Hockey Team, North Queensland Ladies Hockey Team, Blue Jays Vigoro Team, Waratahs Vigoro Team, Colts Cricket Team, and the Rockets Hockey Team. Anne's involvement in sport including tours of Queensland, playing hockey throughout regional locations such as Gladstone, Bundaberg, Ipswich, Toowoomba, and Sydney.

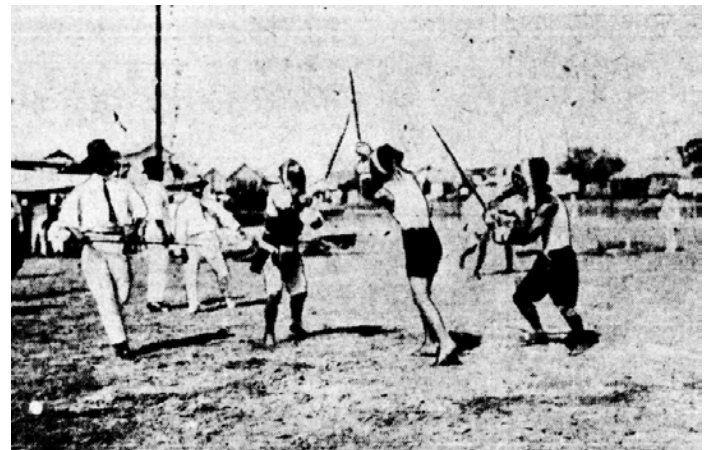


Image 14. *Top*, Sitting second from front right, Anne Iwanaga pictured with the Austral Hockey Team in Cairns, 1937. (Image courtesy of Cairns Hockey Archives.)

Image 15. *Middle*, Japanese wrestlers with a gathered crowd as part of the celebrations for the Emperor's Birthday celebrations in Broome, 1928, illustrative of the similar activities that occurred in north Queensland. (Image courtesy of "Japanese Coronation," *West Australian*, 27 November 1928, 16.)

Image 16. *Bottom*, Reportedly a 'fencing match' as part of the Emperor's Birthday celebrations in Broome, 1928, this is likely a display of *kendo*, a Japanese martial art that uses bamboo swords and protective gear. (Image courtesy of "Japanese Coronation," *West Australian*, 27 November 1928, 16.)

Civic Responsibility of Nikkei

Philanthropic and charity work formed a critical connection between Japanese residents and the wider north Queensland community. The Japanese Association's chapters were the central organisations around which this charity work occurred, often gathering funds from members for local concerns. Such charitable causes included the local ambulance or hospital, fundraising for victims and their families following the infamous Mount Mulligan mine disaster, and local children's appeals.³² Just as Chinese migrants also supported many different charitable causes as a means to celebrate their cultural identity and demonstrate support for their broader local community, Japanese migrants made similar contributions that benefitted local causes.³³ The Association and its chapters throughout north Queensland were known to advocate for local community issues, writing on matters such as the dictation test in a way that demonstrated order and respect for Australian authorities. In a letter to the editor of the *Cairns Post*, Tokitaro Iwanaga, the Secretary of the Japanese Association, expressed outrage over the provision of a Greek language test to a Japanese migrant and stated his appreciation for those who had similarly challenged the injustice of the deportation. Tokitaro was carefully diplomatic and indicated that, "my association, of course, recognises the laws of the country must be carried out, but wish to express their appreciation of the attitude taken up by Mr. Thomson."³⁴ The Japanese Association's activities and its representatives were central to Nikkei involvement with the wider community. In particular, the organisation enabled Nikkei to demonstrate qualities that were highly valued among circles of Australian society, such as emotional discipline, self-interest, and organisational skills.³⁵ The Japanese Association, then, was not only a successful avenue of

³² Vidonja Balanzategui, *Herbert River Story*, 191; "Generous Japanese Response," *CP*, 12 April 1918, 4. "Aiding Ambulance," *CP*, 21 March 1931, 7; "Mt Mulligan Disaster Administration of Relief Funds," *CP*, 15 October 1921, 5; "Ambulance Centre A Year's Work," *CP*, 2 August 1929, 16. The Mount Mulligan mine disaster occurred in September 1921 after a series of explosive charges were accidentally placed on top of a block of coal in the mine. People felt the explosions as far as thirty kilometres away. As a result of the disaster, seventy-five workers were killed and a Royal Commission into the accident was undertaken that same year.

³³ Tseen Khoo and Rodney Noonan, 'Wartime Fundraising by Chinese Australian Communities', *Australian Historical Studies* 42, no. 1 (2011): 95; Letter from the Japanese Society, Thursday Island to the Japanese Consulate-General, Sydney, 2 December 1931, Japanese Society at Thursday Island, EPJ1609, A1379, NAA.

³⁴ "Correspondence: Dictation Law," *CP*, 28 May 1930, 4.

³⁵ Brett, *Australian Liberals*, 69.

Nikkei diplomacy and representation but also for developing social trust and cohesion between Japanese residents, north Queensland society, and even internationally between Australia and Japan.

For the few individuals and businesses with the financial means, donations to charitable causes and volunteering at local events was a regular civic duty. Newspaper acknowledgements of local donors formed a regular column, with Japanese migrants' names and businesses nestled regularly among the names of other north Queensland residents. While K. Sakaguchi, a storekeeper in Atherton, donated to the Cancer Campaign Fund in 1928, others won groceries in the local Ambulance Benefit Raffle, and businesses supported causes such as the Mackay Hospital's Women's Auxiliary fund in 1940.³⁶ The visit of the Japanese Naval Training Squadron to Townsville in 1903 even included the admiral making a donation to cyclone relief funds and the Central State School.³⁷ Tommy Japan, along with his fellow winners of the Tattersall Sweep, donated a significant portion of their £22,500 to local causes on Thursday Island; Tommy alone donated more than £200 to the English Church parsonage, Quetta Memorial Church, St. Henry Asylum for Coloured Children, St. Andrew's Cottage Hospital, the Japanese Mutual Benefit Society, the Torres Strait Rifle Club, and local Bruce auction funds.³⁸ According to Sissons, Tommy Japan's donation to the Anglican Cathedral building fund exceeded that of the governor, bishop, and government resident combined.³⁹ On Thursday Island, Japanese migrants were praised for their frequent performances of wrestling, opera, and tea-making in aid of local charities.⁴⁰ Offering donations and engaging in philanthropic activities were a central part of Japanese migrants' participation in north Queensland, with many buildings and causes funded at least in part by Japanese migrants. These contributions demonstrate a community-minded

³⁶ "Atherton News: Cancer Campaign Funds," *CP*, 24 September 1928, 10; "Edmonton Notes," *NH*, 24 October 1936, 9; "Mackay Hospital Women's Auxiliary," *DM*, 30 October 1940, 4.

³⁷ Locals Sang Japanese.

³⁸ "Country Mail: Northern Districts," *BC*, 10 January 1891, 6. Bruce auctions were a type of fundraising reportedly originating in Melbourne during the 1860s. Often they involve community members donating different items that are then auctioned off to raise funds for a charitable cause. Typically the auctions were accompanied by sporting events that also raised funds. "The 'Bruce Auction'," *Argus*, 14 April 1881, 6.

³⁹ Sissons, 'First Phase', 54.

⁴⁰ Evans, 'Plural Society', 59.

attitude with a commitment to the people and places around them and, while mutually beneficial, show a commitment to the development of the region and its communities.

Of this charity work, religious activities were cornerstone of Nikkei contributions and connections to north Queensland communities. Most Japanese migrants formally identified as either Buddhist or Christian, and the latter faith frequently connected Japanese migrants' values and beliefs with those of other European residents. Speaking about Thursday Island, Reynolds argues that "religion brought people together. The Salvation Army had a 'multi-coloured cohort' much in evidence every night ... At the Anglican Parish Institute Fete in January 1903 Japanese and Cingalese Christians operated stalls."⁴¹ The Japanese Christian group was particularly active on Thursday Island where the Japanese Catechist School was established, although services in the Quetta Memorial Church were described as having a congregation including Japanese, South Sea Islander, Malay, Aboriginal, and Torres Strait Islander people. Often the local bishop would hold translated services for Japanese people on Sunday and Wednesday evenings.⁴² The Quetta Memorial Church was an Anglican church, and most Japanese migrants throughout north Queensland identified as Anglicans. Japanese migrants' association with Anglicanism is unclear, but it might be tied to early British-Japanese relations and Anglican missions to Japan from the middle of the nineteenth century. Most internment records of Japanese migrants indicated they were affiliated with the Church of England, while newspaper listings recognised Nikkei involvement in Anglican activities throughout the north.⁴³ The Iwanaga family in Cairns regularly attended Anglican Church services, and their daughter Anne was involved with the Church of England Girls' Guild.⁴⁴ Anne was well-known to the pastor at her local church who provided a character reference following her internment, describing her as "regular and devout in her churchgoing."⁴⁵ Shared Christian values, particularly Anglican values, formed a strong

⁴¹ Reynolds, *North of Capricorn*, 89.

⁴² *Carpentarian*, 1 July 1908, as cited in Evans, 'Plural Society', 96–97. On Thursday Island, the Quetta Church and these services appeared to be Catholic rather than Anglican.

⁴³ See, for example, Prisoner of War/Internee, Suyekichi Ogawa, QJ16125, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Charles Assay, QJ16005, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Otsune Iwanaga, QJF16043, MP1103/2, NAA; "Provincial Pickings," *Telegraph*, 27 June 1901, 2. While it would be too onerous to analyse the religious denominations listed on Japanese internee records it is, without question, the most common religion identified on the forms.

⁴⁴ Mrs Otsune Iwanaga, Application for Leave to Submit Objections Against Detention Order, IWANAGA/O, MP529/8, NAA.

⁴⁵ Statutory Declaration of Herbert Arthur Norton, 30 May 1942, Anne Iwanaga Objections.

foundation for the sharing of beliefs, holidays, and events between Nikkei and British people living in north Queensland. Not all Japanese migrants were Christians, although there are some clues about the Nikkei community's attitudes towards religion. The Bon Festival, for example, is a Buddhist celebration that many Japanese migrants participated in. There was also a Shinto priest named Nobukawa Maro who lived in the Herbert River Valley during the 1890s and conducted funerals for Japanese people who died in the Valley.⁴⁶ As in Japan today, many Nikkei likely practiced Buddhism and Shintoism concurrently, and perhaps also Christianity. Indeed, Christianity frequently intermingles with other faiths and likely coexisted with Japanese migrants' religious beliefs in an alternative setting. No doubt, there was a significant religious diversity among Nikkei in north Queensland.

Navigating Social Classes

Nikkei living in north Queensland came from a variety of class backgrounds and had to navigate multiple social circles and class expectations. While tolerance, and even acceptance, may have been more easily attained by upper-class career merchants and businessmen, independent merchants and lower-class labourers had to follow a more complicated path to community cooperation and acceptance. As Oliver argues, Japanese migrants in southern Australia were able to find acceptance in White Australia because they were recognised as 'good citizens' who demonstrated Australian middle-class values such as initiative, trustworthiness, hard work, and cooperation.⁴⁷ This community acceptance also occurred among diverse classes of Japanese migrants in north Queensland, but was slightly more complicated by the varied social standings of these individuals who included independent merchants that worked their way up from labouring work and individuals who remained labourers, farmers, and lower class workers. Nonetheless, Nikkei experienced class mobility throughout north Queensland depending on their circumstances and contexts. It is clear, however, that while Japanese migrants were wholly a part of north Queensland life and generally accepted by fellow north Queenslanders, Japanese merchants and businessmen often mediated these relationships.

Identifiably upper-class Japanese businessmen, merchants, and diplomats in north Queensland often socialised within similarly upper-class north Queensland circles. Indeed, these interactions are highly visible in the social pages of local newspapers. For example, the Japanese consuls often hosted dinners and formal events at *Kardinia*, the house on Victoria Street that was

⁴⁶ Vidonja Balanzategui, *Herbert River Story*, 91.

⁴⁷ Oliver, 'Who Is One of Us?', 16.

both their home and consulate. Invited guests were delighted to spend their evenings there, with the Emperor's Birthday celebrations in 1899 attended by over sixty guests, a Supreme Court Justice and Chief Inspector of Police among them, and receiving the highest praises in the local newspaper:⁴⁸

Mr. Iijima, Japanese Consul, and Mrs. Iijima gave a most enjoyable At Home at the Consulate, Stanton Hill, in honor of the Emperor's birthday, Mr. A. Forsyth presenting the guests, as they arrived, to the Consul and suite. The Consulate was prettily illuminated, and the spacious verandahs were utilised for dancing. There was some excellent music during the evening ... Refreshments were served in the dining room and also on the verandahs at intervals. Much attention was given by the guests in viewing the many objects of special interest found in a Japanese home. The Consul's private secretary, Mr. Nakayama assisted Mr and Mrs Iijima in entertaining their guests ...⁴⁹

While important north Queensland figures attended celebrations such as events for the Emperor's Birthday or the visit of the Japanese Naval Squadron, the successive consuls were also in attendance at many other north Queensland events.⁵⁰ Kametaro Iijima, consul for three years between 1899 and 1901, was particularly active in these social circles. He would travel to Charters Towers for the races and was an invited guest of the North Queensland Club in 1901. The *North Queensland Register* reported that:

[T]he popularity of Mr. Iijima, the Japanese Consul, was demonstrated on Saturday night, when some 70 members and friends assembled at the North Queensland Club to tender

⁴⁸ The Emperor's Birthday events that were hosted at the Japanese Consulate were described in extensive detail by the local newspapers, compared to some of the briefer mentions of other dinners that occurred there. It is not clear whether this was because of the spectacular nature of the event, or because of local curiosity about a Japanese festivity.

⁴⁹ "Townsville Social Items," *NQR*, 13 November 1899, 50. The two mentioned guests were Honorable Justice Charles E. Chubb and Alexander Douglas Douglas, who was promoted to Chief Inspector of Police in the Northern Division in 1898.

⁵⁰ See, for example, "Townsville Social Items," *NQR*, 23 April 1900, 50; "Social Gossip," *Queenslander*, 11 July 1903, 5; "Townsville Social," *NQR*, 4 November 1901, 7; "Townsville Social," *NQR*, 31 October 1904, 35; "Social," *ET*, 4 November 1907, 2. The 1907 event saw over 230 residents accepting the Consul's invitation to a reception at His Majesty's Theatre (School of Arts) in Townsville to celebrate Emperor's Birthday.

him a smoke concert. Dr. Humphrey (President) occupied the chair, and in a most able speech referred to the many good qualities of their guest.”⁵¹

After departing Townsville, Iijima sent back his warm regards, commenting on “their many kind friends in Townsville.”⁵² This type of friendly acceptance among north Queensland communities, however, was much more easily attained by upper-class individuals who could readily demonstrate upper- and middle-class Australian values.

Diplomats, however, were not the only Japanese people included in the goings on of upper-class north Queensland society, with merchants often accepted within similar circles. This included both career merchants and independent merchants, the latter having won respect among the community as individuals who provided local services. In Mackay, the Japanese Association in 1915 held a banquet in the local Britannia Hall to celebrate the coronation of the Japanese Emperor.⁵³ The event was hosted by Goichi Shimada, President of the Japanese Association and keeper of a local boarding house, alongside Mitsugoro Furukawa, a laundry proprietor.⁵⁴ The evening’s events, including the impassioned speeches emphasising the strength of the Allies, was covered in detail by the *Daily Mercury*. A host of prominent Mackay citizens made speeches highlighting appreciation for Japan and the greatness of Britain, including a current and former Mayor, the Manager of the Commercial Bank, and other businessmen and community representatives.⁵⁵ In his speech, Eldredge Smith plainly stated:

Japan was one of the firmest Allies Great Britain had and even at the present time Australia was indebted to her for policing the Pacific Ocean which enabled the Commonwealth to send her war vessels to Europe to take part with the navy of Great

⁵¹ “Townsville Social Items,” *NQR*, 1 July 1907, 7; “Townsville Social,” *NQR*, 28 October 1901, 46.

⁵² “Townsville Social Items,” *NQR*, 8 December 1902, 50.

⁵³ “Japanese Coronation Banquet,” *DM*, 12 November 1915, 3.

⁵⁴ This name was written as ‘Goertz’ Shimada although is almost certainly Goichi Shimada.

⁵⁵ “Japanese Coronation Banquet,” *DM*, 12 November 1915, 3. Those in attendance included: George Bergin Fay, Mayor of Mackay; Colonel William George Hodges, a former Mackay Mayor; Eldridge Smith, President of the Royal Society of St. George; H.R. Zillmann, Manager of the Commercial Bank in Mackay; J.E. Joseph, member of the Mackay Harbour Board; J.W.W. Jackson; James P. Moule, President of the Pioneer Shire Council (and soon-to-be Mackay Mayor in 1917); G. Johnson; E.J. Marryatt, businessman; Mr. Bourne.

Britain with all safety because in case of danger they had the Japanese to defend the coast.⁵⁶

While not all events were quite so emphatic about international politics, many Japanese businessmen were frequent attendees at local social events and clubs. The Townsville merchant Yoshimatsu Tashima, for example, was elected a member of the Townsville Chamber of Commerce in 1912 and he attended important Townsville events, including the send-off for the General Traffic Manager for Northern Railways in the same year.⁵⁷ Others like Mr Kiu Ishii, a Japanese manager, formerly of Asahi & Co., was noted in the newspaper's social pages during a visit to Brisbane, recognised as "well known in Townsville and Brisbane."⁵⁸

These upper-class Nikkei in north Queensland frequently provided support and representation to other, often lower-class, individuals in their community. Frequently, it was independent Japanese merchants and businessmen who used their connections and translation skills to assist others. Hidewo Oki, for example, provided assistance to Momu Mitakara in 1930 as she was attempting to gain a certificate of exemption from the dictation test before travelling to Japan. Correspondence with the Sub-Collector of Customs in Townsville in 1930 indicated that Mr. Oki was Momu's agent and offered assistance with completing applications, gathering documentation, and supporting correspondence.⁵⁹ Seihachi Mayeshiba appeared to provide similar services in Cairns, while other community members also acted as interpreters.⁶⁰ These upper-class Nikkei were intermediaries who developed systems of support and connection among the Japanese community. These individuals were not only in attendance at Japanese consulate events but were often deployed as 'respectable' community members in aid of others. Take, for example, a Police description of Hidewo Oki in 1940: "he is a married man, about 30 to 35 years of age, he always appears very respectable, as far as I have been able to ascertain I would say that he would be the most likely person at Innisfail that the Japanese consul would

⁵⁶ "Japanese Coronation Banquet," *DM*, 12 November 1915, 3.

⁵⁷ "Town and Country," *CP*, 27 February 1912, 6; "Send off to Mr. A. P. Lloyd," *TDB*, 31 October 1912, 4.

⁵⁸ "Personal," *BC*, 1 March 1906, 5.

⁵⁹ Memorandum from the Sub-Collector Townsville to the Collector of Customs at Brisbane, 9 May 1930, Momu Mitakara, 456/1930, J2773, NAA.

⁶⁰ See, for example, Nobu Ide Statement, 6 September 1910, Prosecution of Japanese Girls at Thursday Island, 1910/5858, A1, NAA.

communicate with.” Hidewo also coordinated information and communications among the Innisfail Japanese community throughout 1941.⁶¹

Strong social and civic networks existed also among the lower classes of Japanese migrants and their wider community, such as pearl shell and sugar cane workers, albeit in a different way to the upper echelons of the Nikkei. For these groups, people were clustered together based on the predominant local industry, which also acted as an organising force among the community. Many of the pearl shelling workers were located on Thursday Island, while sugar cane workers were generally centred around Innisfail, Ingham, Ayr, and Mackay. Japanese migrants made up one of the largest groups on Thursday Island and Reynolds paints a rosy picture of the Island being home to a freely-mixing multi-racial society with little discrimination and a democratic community that “made no invidious distinctions ‘even about colour.’”⁶² These relations were perhaps not always quite as idyllic as Reynolds portrays, but nevertheless, the industry remained an organising factor of Japanese connections with the rest of the Thursday Island community. Within sugar growing regions, such as around Innisfail, Ingham, and Ayr, where the Japanese migrant population was smaller, mutual community support was more critical and Japanese migrants shared more ‘equal’ connections with members of the wider community, whether comprised of other labourers, European or non-European peoples, and other residents. Japanese workers often lived and worked together and would gather in the nearby towns for social activities. Men who worked in nearby sugar mills and farms would come together in other towns to socialise; Sukezayemon Mitakara, a Japanese sugar cane farmer went with other farm workers at the nearby Seymour Hotel for drinks, while car loads of Japanese mill workers would travel from Mourilyan to Innisfail and gather in the White Horse Hotel.⁶³

In more isolated towns, distant connections were maintained through systems of representatives and communication to maintain community support. A thorough list of the Japanese Association’s organisation throughout north Queensland in 1939 indicates representatives present in nearly every north Queensland town, most of whom owned short-

⁶¹ Report by Detective Sergeant A. Hird, Criminal Investigation Branch, Innisfail, 27 May 1940, Oki Family Detention Orders.

⁶² *Sydney Evening News*, 1899, as cited in Reynolds, *North of Capricorn*, 86.

⁶³ “The Bemerside Tragedy,” *TDB*, 7 April 1927, 7; Copy of report by Det. Sgt. A. Hird. C.I.B. Innisfail 27 May 1940, Oki Family Detention Orders.

wave radio receiving sets and remained well-posted on news from Japan.⁶⁴ It was reported in Innisfail, for example, that Hidewo Oki “keeps in close touch with all Japanese living in his district and when any Japanese visit Innisfail they always call at his place of business and stay for lengthy periods.”⁶⁵ On sugar cane farms in the Mackay region, it was not uncommon for Japanese migrants to provide a place to stay for Japanese visitors and guests. A 1938 surveillance report stated that “the Japanese are very good to each other, they always have other Japs coming and staying with them.”⁶⁶ Reports from the same period indicated that although the Japanese community in north Queensland was widely distributed, they have “an efficient system of communication so that someone out at Hughenden could be well-posted on national issues.”⁶⁷

Relations, however, were not always peaceable between Nikkei and the rest of the community, and there were sometimes tensions among different groups of people. While violence was perhaps a semi-regular occurrence, these events were reported among newspapers as racial disturbances that had to be quelled by European community members. Evidence of violence and unrest among the non-European population was used to further the argument for a White Australia. In a description reminiscent of a western novel, the *Daily Guardian* illustrated Broome as an untamed town that was the scene of racial horrors. The author concluded that “it is for the white man, revolver in hand, to restore peace and order.”⁶⁸ Labelled as ‘riots’ — or even ‘racial riots’ in more sensationalist publications such as the *Smiths’s Weekly* or the *Bulletin* — these conflicts often appeared to be either workers striking or, at worst, brawls between groups based on working conditions.⁶⁹ This framing of racial violence evoked a fearful response among

⁶⁴ Review of Japanese Population and Activities, Queensland (Report), 20 February 1939, Japanese Activities in Queensland. The list of Japanese migrants’ distribution included Ayr, Babinda, Bowen, Cairns, Home Hill, Hughenden, Innisfail, Mackay, Mount Isa, Townsville, and other locations throughout South East and Western Queensland.

⁶⁵ Department of the Army, Minute Paper, 27 January 1942, Oki Family Detention Orders.

⁶⁶ Letter from A.M.B. Mills to the Prime Minister, 28 December 1938, Japanese Activities in Queensland.

⁶⁷ Review of Japanese Population and Activities, Queensland (Report), 20 February 1939, Japanese Activities in Queensland.

⁶⁸ Extract from *Daily Guardian*, 25 May 1928, Riot between Japanese and Koepangers, Broome, 11 December 1914, 1928/7748, A1, NAA.

⁶⁹ See, for example “Racial Rioting: Japs and Malays,” *CP*, 23 December 1920, 5; “Scene of Jap Riots [photograph],” *Evening News*, 12 March 1923, 10; “Characters of Thursday Island,” *Smith’s Weekly*, 27 February 1937, 26; “Serious Riot: Thursday Island Sensation,” *Australian Star*, 17 January 1901, 5; “Barr-twenty,” *Bulletin*, 29 December 1927, 18.

the European residents, with Queensland newspapers indicating as such. In 1895, one article indicated that “another disturbance took place last night between the Japanese and the South Sea Islanders, and two Japanese were badly injured.” The *Queenslander* devoted less attention to the incident, but described it as a “serious disturbance.” Despite no suggestion of danger to anyone besides those few individuals involved in the public brawl, it was reported that “owing to these frequent attempts at serious riots, several of the residents are carrying revolvers.”⁷⁰

On Thursday Island, these incidents often appeared to be peaceable, but perhaps affronting, attempts at industrial action by Japanese workers and workers from other migrant groups. In 1923, there were reportedly “serious conflicts” involving Japanese migrants that failed to describe any actual violence; Japanese pearl shell workers had gathered in a procession through the town in a bid to secure improved wages and working conditions. They had even “agreed to refrain from violence” and yet the article describes how “the situation had become so serious that the Mayor wired urgently to the State Government demanding protection and more police.”⁷¹ The industrial dispute was referred to in terms of “racial troubles.”⁷² In Broome there was violence — although it was labelled as a riot — between the Japanese and Koepang workers in 1928 because of changes in working conditions for those who worked on the pearl shelling luggers.⁷³ In subsequent reports, local police concluded that although rioting was an occasional occurrence, Broome was an otherwise peaceful and law-abiding community, where a certain level of tension among the races was actually critical to peace. The Sub-Collector of Customs noted that, “there is always a certain amount of racial feeling among coloured races working together, but the safety lies in their [sic] not being any bond of unity.”⁷⁴ Peace, then, was measured in

⁷⁰ “Thursday Island Riots,” *Telegraph*, 9 January 1895, 5; “Epitome,” *Queenslander*, 12 January 1895, 54.

⁷¹ “Japanese in the North,” *Kyogle Examiner*, 24 March 1923, 1. This scene is described in the introduction to Chapter Two. It is indicated that Japanese protesters reached the house of J.L. Adams, the chairman of the Torres Strait Pearlers’ Association and shook his house where it stood. While this could indicate physical violence, it is also possible for a small house to feel as if it were shaking with four hundred men protesting outside. Of course, this was an intimidating and out-of-control situation for Adams with a significant threat of violence.

⁷² “Racial Troubles,” *SMH*, 26 March 1923, 9.

⁷³ J. P. S. Bach, “The Pearlshelling Industry and the ‘White Australia’ Policy,” *Historical Studies: Australia and New Zealand* 10, no. 38 (1962): 211; “Racial Riot at Broome,” *West Australian*, 14 December 1914, 8.

⁷⁴ Letter from the Sub-Collector of Customs, Broome to Secretary of Home and Territories Department, Canberra, 24 August 1928, 1928/7488, A1, NAA.

terms of White Australia's control and rigid segregation of different racial groups. Framed in this way within the confines of fundamentally multicultural communities in isolated regions of northern Australia, peace was a tenuous and questionable concept.

Broadly then, the Nikkei community and the north Queensland community, composed of many different groups, operated within a spectrum of friendly, fractious, cooperative, and discriminatory relations. It can be difficult to untangle these complicated bonds between people that could be unfriendly and even violent, yet also friendly and cooperative, depending on the context. As Sophie Couchman argues, however, these behaviours need to be understood as part of a spectrum and placed in the context of other racial relations and community circumstances.⁷⁵ In north Queensland, as is often the case for many communities, it was possible for there to be simultaneous violence and cooperation. European hotels and stores, for example, would employ Japanese workers and would be customers at Japanese stores and laundries. These interactions suggest a degree of cooperation and even friendliness between European and Nikkei people, but also does not preclude discrimination or racism by other people in other contexts.⁷⁶ It was also possible for some individuals, for example, to furiously deny their connections to non-European community members. The manager of the North Queensland Brewing Co. Ltd felt compelled in 1901 to defend himself in the pages of the *Worker* and deny reports that he employed Japanese people. Offering an acerbic reply, he wrote:

I beg to ask you for a correction. Your correspondent states that the workers in the Mareeba Brewery employ a Japanese cook and the boss has a Malay cook for his family. The latter state is a complete falsehood, as I have never had any coloured labour employed either in the brewery or my private house. The men working in the brewery employ a Japanese cook in their private messroom, with which I have nothing to do.⁷⁷

Considering the layered connections within the Nikkei community, and within wider north Queensland communities — and taking into consideration the White Australia policy and the economic along with the labour conditions of the sugar cane and pearl shell industries — is fundamental to clearly understanding Japanese migrants' relationships within north Queensland communities. While these relationships were often friendly and cooperative, the way people

⁷⁵ Sophie Couchman, "Reconsidering Race": How Far Has Barry McGowan's "Refreshing Sea Breeze" Blown?, *Chinese Southern Diaspora Studies* 8 (2019): 242.

⁷⁶ For further discussion see Chapter Five.

⁷⁷ "Japs and Malays," *Worker*, 1 June 1901, 12.

related to each other was frequently shaped by economic factors or racial assumptions that became a source of tension or even violence among individuals.

Issei and Nisei Connections

Some Japanese migrants had children who were born in Australia and these second-generation Nikkei deepened ties with the broader community. Successive generations of Japanese migrants are usually referred to in terms of *issei*, the first migrant generation who were born in Japan, and *nisei*, the second generation of Japanese people born in Australia. Many *nisei* had a non-Japanese parent in Australia and this resulted in ongoing familial connections with other cultural groups in north Queensland. Furthermore, these Australian-born children gained formal access to the legal privileges afforded to British subjects and were able to — indirectly — extend the benefits of these privileges to their parents and other *issei*. The *nisei* had their own challenges living within north Queensland communities. Broadly speaking, however, children with a Japanese parent (or two Japanese parents) who were born in Australia were able to bridge Nikkei and the wider north Queensland community to establish even deeper connections within the region.

Throughout north Queensland, Nikkei families had a wide range of experiences that varied depending on intersections of race, class, gender and geography. While some Japanese couples were formally married in Australia, there were also those who had been married in Japan or elsewhere, while others were unmarried.⁷⁸ Importantly, ‘married’ could cover a wide range of legal states. Similarly, relationships crossed a variety of social and cultural barriers, and this posed challenges to the notion of a White Australia. Australian-born partners were described by authorities as coming from a variety of racial backgrounds. Although authorities would have labelled these relationships as ‘mixed marriages’, which were generally discouraged, the multi-racial character of north Queensland made it all but impossible to effectively police such unions. Nagata has documented the continuity of Japanese heritage after WWII on Thursday Island; although many families were interned because of their Japanese heritage, many families were also able to return home to the island after the war because of Torres Strait Islander family connections. Nagata has identified twelve families who returned to north Queensland in 1946

⁷⁸ For the purposes of this thesis, a family is defined as consisting of two parents with at least one child who generally live together. This is an imperfect way of defining a family but provides a starting point for exploring the matrimonial and familial relationships of Japanese migrants in north Queensland.

after their release from internment and their stories provide a window into the complex connections within north Queensland communities.⁷⁹

These families on Thursday Island, however, are only a few of the families throughout north Queensland who included both *nisei*, *issei*, and other Australian-born family members. Eliza Jane Nishi (formerly Fong), for example, was described in government records as ‘Australian-born 1/2 Chinese’, with her parents being Mary Ann McKey and Sam Fong.⁸⁰ Eliza Jane married Taroichi Nishi, a Japanese migrant from Wakayama, in 1910 and together they had two children.⁸¹ Jean Shibasaki, who reportedly had both Malay and Torres Strait Islander heritage, married Kynichi Shibasaki, a Japanese diver on Thursday Island.⁸² Other Japanese migrants married white Australian women, such as sisters Elizabeth May Yoshida and Alice Ogawa, as well as Emily Tomida in Townsville, who each married different Japanese men.⁸³ Unbeknownst to many Australian-born women who married Japanese migrants, under the *Nationality Act 1920* (Cth) women acquired their husband’s nationality when they married. This meant that many Australian-born women technically became aliens under the law, while a small number of Japanese women may have acquired British subject status through their husbands. This law was rarely applied to European or British-Australian women and was not generally an issue until WWII.⁸⁴

⁷⁹ Nagata, ‘Post-War Thursday Island’.

⁸⁰ Birth Registration of Eliza Jane Fong, 29 May 1894, 1894/C/5441, QBDM.

⁸¹ Marriage Registration of Taroichi Nishi to Eliza Jane Fong, 15 June 1910, 1910/C/1730, QBDM; Tomasu Nish - Australian born, 255/741/368, Internees QLD File, Series 24: Japanese in Australia — Internees, Sissons Papers. These racial categorisations of individuals are simplistic and limited but is a reflection of the views of authorities at the time.

⁸² Shibasaki, Jean - Queensland Investigation Case File, Q24780, BP242/1, NAA.

⁸³ Prisoner of War/Internee, Tomoichi Yoshida, QJ16527, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Suyekichi Ogawa, QJ16125, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Asa Jiro Tomida, QJ16185, MP1103/2, NAA.

⁸⁴ Although I have been unable to identify specific cases prior to WWII where this nationality became an issue, the general application of the *Immigration Restriction Act* and similar laws (see Chapter One) would suggest this law would rarely be used against white Australia women but may have been used to restrict the access of ‘alien’ women acquiring British subject rights. See, for example, Dutton, *One of Us?*, 43. Dutton argues that of the forty-five ‘Asians’ naturalised between 1904 and 1953, forty were women who were of “Asian race” and Australian birth who had lost British nationality upon marriage to an aliens.

Sometimes Japanese migrants adopted children, such as when Otsume and Tokitaro Iwanaga adopted Anne, an orphan of Chinese parents, and Seihachi Nakashiba adopted Peter Nakashiba, a child whose parents were unknown.⁸⁵ Peter struggled with authorities who questioned his identity and his parentage for many years. His adoptive father Seihachi Nakashiba claimed that Peter was the son of a Japanese migrant and an Aboriginal mother. Authorities questioned this claim, stating that the deed of adoption was invalid and the “consensus of opinion at Cairns is that the child [Peter] is an illegitimate son of pure blooded white parents, the infant having flaxen hair and blue eyes.”⁸⁶ Police later reported on Peter in 1939. They claimed:

[Peter is] alleged to be the illegitimate child of the late P.J. Doyle of Cairns and is of pure white race ... when he [Peter] was an infant he was handed to Nakashiba, then a silk merchant in Cairns, by Doyle on the understanding that when the child was 21 years of age, a large sum of money would be paid to Nakashiba and the child by Doyle. The child was brought up by Nakashiba ... P.J. Doyle died and when his will was read, there was nothing to show that he was connected with Peter Nakashiba and nothing was left in the will for either the boy or his foster father.⁸⁷

Peter lived much of his life navigating various worlds, spending time in both Australia and Japan, offering his services to Australia during WWII whilst remaining under constant suspicion.⁸⁸ Indeed, both *issei* and *nisei* faced various forms of discrimination during this period in Australia.

For those who remained in north Queensland long-term, the arrival of children and the question of their education arose. Some chose to send their children to be raised and educated in Japan, while others opted for schools in north Queensland. Among some Japanese migrants, particularly wealthy and influential families, it was common to send their children to be educated in Japan, often staying with other family members. The Oki family in Innisfail, for example, had their eldest daughter educated in Japan, just as Hidewo — himself a child born of Japanese migrants on Thursday Island — had been sent to Japan to be educated before returning when he

⁸⁵ Anne is discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven.

⁸⁶ Japanese Named Nakashiba Wishes to Take His Alleged Adopted Child to Japan, Memorandum, Attorney-General's Department, 9 May 1911, 1911/16228, A1, NAA.

⁸⁷ Letter from The Inspector of Police, Cairns Station, 17 June 1939, List of Alien Details Part 2.

⁸⁸ Peter Nakashiba, Queensland Investigation Case File, Q24264, BP242/1, NAA.

was eighteen.⁸⁹ Although born in Australia, Hidewo's education in Japan meant that on his return to Thursday Island, his proficiency in English had to be sharpened. After returning to Australia in 1924 Hidewo reportedly went to the "Christian Brothers" for three months to learn 'English conversation' and thereafter became a successful businessman around north Queensland.⁹⁰ Tomasu Nishi was another Australian-born child whose father, Taroichi Nishi, took him and his brother to Japan for schooling. As a result, their family connections were maintained despite the distance between north Queensland and Japan. Within the Nishi family, Tomasu returned to Australia in 1937, but his brother remained in Japan.⁹¹ Many of these children returned to Australia and built connections in both countries, such as Hidewo and Tomasu, while others did not. Tei Yamashita, born on Thursday Island, went to school in Japan before returning to Australia as a young adult. On the island, she took on seamstress and dressmaking work while raising her eight children. When she had her own children with *issei* Haruyoshi Yamashita, Tei made the decision to send them to attend school locally on Thursday Island. Their eldest daughter attended the state school up to seventh grade and even received a Queensland Scholarship to attend secondary school.⁹² Indeed, Nikkei families generally retained connections between Australia and Japan, and each chose their own path through the challenges that a growing family presented.

Like the Yamashitas, other Japanese families chose for their children to gain an education more locally. Often children attended schools with non-Japanese children. A report commissioned in 1925 as part of the *Royal Commission on Social and Economic Effect of Increase in Number of Aliens in North Queensland* describes 'alien' school children in Ingham: "I am advised that on the whole the alien school children are intelligent, regular in attendance, and anxious to learn. They are clean and well dressed, and mingle amicably with the Australian children."⁹³ On

⁸⁹ Copy of letter from T. Takahasi to Mr and Mrs Oki, 10 October 1939, received by Inspector in charge, CIB Brisbane, intercepted by censorship office, Japanese Activities in Queensland; Department of the Army, Minute Paper, 27 January 1942, Oki Family Detention Orders.

⁹⁰ Hidewo Oki Objections.

⁹¹ Army 255/741/368, Tomasu Nishi, Internees QLD File, Series 24: Japanese in Australia — Internees, Sissons Papers.

⁹² Transcript of Evidence of Objection by H. Yamashita, Japanese Internee, Tatura, 12 February 1942, TRIBUNAL 4/121, MP529/3, NAA.

⁹³ Copy of Royal Commission on Social and Economic Effect of Increase in Number of Aliens in North Queensland, 1925, Statement from T. A. Ferry, Commissioner, 882/2/294, File 3, Series 2: Immigration and White Australia, 1915-1925, Piesse Papers.

Thursday Island, the schools appear to have been segregated according to a racial hierarchy. Chinese and Japanese children reportedly attended the ‘white school’ on the island, while Indigenous, Malay, and Filipino children attended a non-European school.⁹⁴ Japanese migrants’ children attended various other schools around the region, including Anne Iwanaga who was enrolled in the local state primary school in Cairns, most likely the Cairns Girls’ and Infants State School, riding there on her bike each day; while Shu Nishimura and Toshio Niski, who became laundrymen in Cairns, were also educated in the Cairns region with authorities noting in 1941 their excellent English and Japanese reading, writing, and speaking skills.⁹⁵ It is not clear whether children who attended private schools, such as Miyoka Mitakara, were sent further away for schooling based on religious preferences or because of educational opportunities. Miyoka was the daughter of sugar cane farmers in Ingham but boarded at St. Patrick’s in Townsville. Miyoka became an avid painter and writer, regularly corresponding with the *Young Queenslander*. She learned typewriting and shorthand at school. These were educational opportunities that other members of her community — and perhaps even her parents — may not have been able to access.⁹⁶ Similarly, Kazuko Fukushima, the daughter of two Japanese storekeepers on Thursday Island, attended St. Anne’s School in Townsville. In Kazuko’s case, her parents identified as Buddhist while Kazuko attended the Anglican school from the age of eight. Even after her parents were interned in 1941, Kazuko was given the choice to remain at the boarding school or join her parents in internment. Having received a scholarship to continue her studies through high school, Kazuko chose to remain in Townsville and the school thereafter became Kazuko’s ‘guardian’.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ Anna Shnukal and Guy Malcolm Ramsay, ‘Tidal Flows: An Overview of Torres Strait Islander-Asian Contact’, in *Navigating Boundaries: The Asian Diaspora in Torres Strait*, ed. Anna Shnukal, Guy Malcolm Ramsay, and Yuriko Nagata (Canberra: Pandanus Books, 2004), 40; Nagata, ‘Post-War Thursday Island’, 31.

⁹⁵ Hearing of Objection to Internment by Annie Margaret Iwanaga, 21 May 1942, Anne Iwanaga Objections; Cairns Police Division Report, List of Alien Details Part 2.

⁹⁶ See, for example, ‘The Young Folk: Answers and Letters,’ *Australasian*, 12 July 1919, 48; ‘Exhibition of Work at St. Patrick’s High School,’ *TDB*, 4 December 1919, 5; ‘Townsville,’ *Catholic Press*, 29 September 1921, 37; ‘Townsville,’ *Catholic Press*, 28 December 1922, 46.

⁹⁷ This was an Anglican girl’s school before it was later joined with St. James school and became the Cathedral School of St. Anne and St. James. NLA: Sissons files, Series 24, Japanese in Australia - internees, Internment property file, Kazuko Bridges (formerly Fukushima); Transcript of Evidence of

Having children attend school in north Queensland did not necessarily exclude them from a Japanese education. A Japanese school teacher was present in Broome during the 1890s,⁹⁸ and in north Queensland a Japanese school was established at the Jubilee Hall in Townsville sometime around 1897. This school was educating both Japanese students, most likely the children of the Japanese consul and his staff, and Chinese students.⁹⁹ It is unclear whether this school is the same as, or different from, the night-school operated by Florence Buchanan on Thursday Island and in Townsville between 1893 and 1905.¹⁰⁰ Sissons' research indicates that Florence, considering herself both a missionary and teacher, was responsible for tutoring influential Japanese businessman Taira Kashiwagi in English on Thursday Island.¹⁰¹ At some point thereafter, the well-recognised 'Miss Buchanan' — along with unnamed co-workers — provided lessons to Japanese migrants: “four nights in the week they apply themselves diligently to the lessons given by Miss Buchanan ... and apparently employ a great deal of their spare time in studying the English language. At their Sunday evening school they recite in their native language the prayers, creed, and psalms of the Church of England.”¹⁰² It was reported in 1905 that Miss Buchanan closed her night-school for Japanese migrants with intentions to travel, and, in 1906, she was teaching at the Singapore Chinese Girls' School.

Conclusions

Whether they remained in Australia for a short period, or for a long time, Japanese migrants were active participants in their local communities. Nikkei people formed connections with other groups of the north Queensland community based on both proximity and class, but also developed strong systems of support within the Japanese community. These networks stretched

Objection by Mrs T Fukushima, Japanese Internee, Tatura 12 February 1942, TRIBUNAL 4/124, MP529/3, NAA.

⁹⁸ Sissons, 'Karayuki-San', 175.

⁹⁹ Synod Hall,” Queensland Heritage Register, Queensland Government, <https://apps.des.qld.gov.au/heritage-register/detail/?id=600888#>.

¹⁰⁰ Kay Saunders, 'Buchanan, Florence Griffiths (1861-1913)', *ADB*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/buchanan-florence-griffiths-5412>; “Japanese in Townsville,” *SMH*, 8 November 1905, 5.

¹⁰¹ D. C. S. Sissons, 'Kashiwagi, Taira (1868-1954)', *ADB*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/kashiwagi-taira-6895>.

¹⁰² “Provincial Pickings,” *Telegraph*, 27 June 1901, 2.

throughout north Queensland, northern Australia, and internationally to Japan. Importantly, Japanese migrants made significant contributions to the social and cultural life of north Queensland. They engaged in local and national celebrations, shared their culture and maintained common interests and values that were positioned around military and political events in Australia and abroad. Nikkei people in north Queensland were a part of the social and commercial life of towns, and also contributed to the provision of community services and resources. Those with families in Australia furthered their connections through ongoing generations of children and their activities.

Not all these relations and connections were positive, however. Racism and immigration restriction often underscored Nikkei relationships with the wider community, and tensions were frequently heightened by global politics and competing local interests. In more isolated parts of north Queensland, such as Thursday Island, tensions among groups were often interpreted through the racial lens of White Australia by European residents. Of course, there was violence and racism among these communities, often motivated by economic factors, but individuals also regularly cooperated within the community to meet common goals and interests. These connections were nevertheless complex, multi-directional, and shared across many different sub-groups of the north Queensland community.

These connections within the Japanese community and between the Japanese community and the wider north Queensland community led to respect and friendship among different groups of people. While many of the social and festive celebrations shared by all members of north Queensland society focused on events of international significance, Nikkei often went to great lengths to affirm the shared interests of Japan, Australia, and Britain. While some tensions occurred between the nations, particularly following WWI, this did not appear to affect community relationships at the local level. Australian authorities began to treat Japanese residents with suspicion from the late 1930s, however. It was during this decade that, as Japanese imperial expansion occurred throughout Asia, Australian officials became increasingly suspicious of the Nikkei living within its borders. Authorities began to undertake surveillance and compile detailed intelligence reports on Nikkei throughout Australia. The bombing of Pearl Harbour in 1941 was a culminating moment in the build-up of these tensions and suspicions, providing a spark that saw Japanese friends, neighbours, and local shop owners perceived as ‘enemy’, ‘alien’, and Other.

Chapter Seven: Civilian Japanese Internment and the Dislocation of the Nikkei Community



Image 17. Japanese internees at a train station in Renmark, South Australia, on their way from Hay Internment Camp to Loveday Internment Camp, May 1943. (Image courtesy of Image No.123033, Hedley Keith Cullen, Australian War Memorial.)

On a Monday in December 1941, police arrived at Homebush Primary School, just southwest of Mackay, to arrest twelve-year-old John Takagaki and his three younger siblings.¹ That morning, only a few kilometres up the road, the police had arrested the siblings' father, Jack Takagaki, at the family's sugar cane farm. As John recalls, it was his youngest sibling Shirley's first day of school and she was not able to get through the full day before police came to collect them.

¹ Prisoner of War/Internee, Jack Takagaki, QJ16176, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, John David Takagaki, QJ16577, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Charles Edward Takagaki, QJ16578, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Lenard Roy Takagaki, QJ16579, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Shirley May Takagaki, QJF16580, MP1103/2, NAA.

Hours earlier, on the other side of the Pacific Ocean, Japanese naval and air forces had launched an attack on the US Naval base at Pearl Harbor. Armed with folders upon folders of surveillance gathered since the 1930s, Australian military authorities had quickly enacted a policy to intern all Japanese ‘enemy aliens’ — including the Takagakis.

Sitting in the back of the police car as it travelled into town, John later observed that it was a tense ride. One policeman held a gun on the children. “It was a bit hairy,” he remembered. “Anyone would think we were about to jump out the bloody car and run away ... I thought, what’s the police got his gun out for? He’s gonna shoot dad,” John recalled.² In the local lockup, the Takagaki family — Jack and his four children John, Charles, Lenard, and Shirley — were joined by at least a dozen more members of the Nikkei community who lived around the Mackay region. The mixed group, comprising elderly people, children, women, families, sugar labourers, and business owners, were soon escorted under police guard onto trains and transported to Brisbane. They clutched the few belongings they had been able to quickly pack before they were taken into custody; these were carefully searched through and catalogued by the authorities, like all of the possessions they were forced to leave behind.

North Queensland residents would have noted with confusion the swift arrests that occurred around the region that Monday morning. There were still only whispers of war with Japan throughout north Queensland at that time. While national publications had shared news of the attack on Pearl Harbor the night before, many of the smaller local newspapers — including the *Daily Mercury* — had not yet had a chance to cover the story in any detail. That evening, in a radio broadcast across the country, Prime Minister Curtin confirmed everyone’s fears. Japan had attacked Pearl Harbor, “like an assassin in the night”, and along with other Allied nations, Australia was now at war with Japan.³ By the next morning, even the local newspapers were awash with news of the war, replete with grainy photographs of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

² Jack Takagaki Oral History. Please note that Jack Takagaki refers to the children’s father, while John Takagaki refers to the eldest son who was interviewed in the 1997 oral history. John went by the name of Jack, but in the interests of clarity and following his birth name, the eldest son will be referred to as John.

³ John Curtin – Declaration of War on Japan, 1552510, C102, NAA; “Our Defence,” *NM*, 17 December 1941, 2.

Around the country reports were being published on the arrest of Japanese people from cities and towns across Australia.⁴

In the following weeks, the Takagaki children were placed in Salvation Army homes while their father, Jack, was sent to the Hay internment camp as a “single man.”⁵ In February of the next year, however, Jack pleaded with the Aliens Appeal Tribunal to be reunited with his children. “I want to go back to my farm. I want to send my kiddies to school,” Jack implored. Seemingly unmoved by his requests, authorities nonetheless concluded that it was a shame to have the children interned, seeing as they were “very white in appearance; in fact, they could easily pass for Europeans. They speak perfect English.”⁶ The family remained in various states of unfreedom, whether in an internment camp, a southern boarding school, or elsewhere for the next few years.

In October 1946, the Takagaki family were among the fortunate few permitted to return to their homes in Australia. With even more luck, as John recalled, their home and farm were still standing, albeit neglected and dilapidated. Many more years of hardship still awaited the Takagaki family, but they persisted.⁷ In many respects, the Takagaki family were more fortunate than other Nikkei people who had been interned in Australia. Of the few others who similarly returned to their communities in Australia, most found their homes and businesses had been burned down, sold, or demolished. North Queensland residents, upon hearing news of the horrific treatment of Australian Prisoners of War (POWs) and civilian internees, saw local Japanese people as one and the same as their Pacific War enemies. For the more than ninety percent of ex-internees who were deported to Japan, they departed in what was described as a “hellship”, while their homes, bank accounts, and belongings were seized.⁸

On both sides, WWII saw the internment of thousands of civilians as ‘enemy aliens.’ European civilians abroad faced horrific conditions within internment camps at the hands of

⁴ “District Japanese Rounded Up,” *DM*, 9 December 1941, 4; “Japan Brings War to the Pacific Area,” *TDB*, 9 December 1941, 5; “Japanese Nationals,” *CP*, 9 December 1941, 4; “Federal Cabinet Adopts Special War Measures,” *DM*, 9 December 1941, 3.

⁵ Jack Takagaki Oral History.

⁶ Transcript of Evidence of Objection by J D Takagaki, 14 February 1942, TRIBUNAL 4/160, MP529/3, NAA.

⁷ Jack Takagaki Oral History.

⁸ “How the *Yoizuki* Affair Developed,” *Truth*, March 10, 1946, 24; “Little Sickness on Hellship,” *Northern Star* (Lismore), 15 March 1946, 1.

Imperial Japan.⁹ The internment of Japanese people in Australia marked a significant turning point for the Japanese diaspora. Nikkei were interned alongside other civilians and this internment had life-altering repercussions for all of those involved. In the years following the conclusion of the war, most Nikkei found themselves deported from the country they had called home for decades. For those who remained, they faced the loss of their homes, businesses, finances, and friends. This chapter explores the background to, and impact of, internment on the Japanese migrant community in north Queensland. In particular, it focuses on how this shift in attitudes towards Japanese migrants occurred in the years leading up to and during the Pacific War — with a particular disjuncture between southern and northern perspectives — and how this led to the mass internment of Nikkei within Australia. On the other side of internment, however, there are many links and connections that persisted among these communities.

Intense Suspicions

From 1919, and perhaps earlier, Australian authorities began conducting surveillance on the Nikkei community in far northern towns up to Thursday Island and throughout the waters surrounding northern Australia.¹⁰ With visible Japanese imperial and military ambitions, including the invasion of Manchuria and atrocities like the Nanjing Massacre, the Queensland government and the Queensland Police Commissioner attempted to furnish information about aliens of ‘suspected disloyalty’ residing within the state from at least the mid-1930s.¹¹ It was this

⁹ For the purposes of this thesis about the Nikkei community in north Queensland, civilian internment under the Japanese Empire during WWII is beyond the scope of this research. For histories on this topic, see, for example, Van Waterford, *Prisoners of the Japanese in World War II: Statistical History, Personal Narratives, and Memorials Concerning Pows in Camps and on Hellships, Civilian Internees, Asian Slave Laborers, and Others Captured in the Pacific Theater* (Jefferson, N.C: McFarland, 1994); Louise Young, *Japan’s Total Empire* (California: University of California Press, 1998); Christina Louise Twomey, *Australia’s Forgotten Prisoners: Civilians Interned by the Japanese in World War Two* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Bernice Archer, *The Internment of Western Civilians Under the Japanese 1941-1945: A Patchwork of Internment*, vol. 24, Routledge Studies in the Modern History of Asia (London: Taylor and Francis, 2004).

¹⁰ Letter from Inspector R.F.B. Wake to the Director of CIB, 17 October 1938, Japanese Activities in Queensland.

¹¹ Memorandum of Inspector of Police Re. Summary of Aliens, 11 July 1939, List of Alien Details Part 2. For an analysis of growing Australian fears and mistrust of Japan during the 1920s and 1930s, see, Jaroslav Valkoun, ‘Great Britain, the Dominions and Their Position on Japan in the 1920s and Early

potential for disloyalty that local police were expected to inquire into, with a state-wide investigation focused on people of German, Italian, and Japanese heritage. Reporting on the activities of Japanese migrants throughout the region, local police indicated that it was difficult to assess an ambiguous concept such as ‘loyalty’ among a large community. The police, however, compiled detailed dossiers noting the locations, occupations, and activities of most migrants living within the state. Frequently these reports contained assessments of individuals’ character, which was typically judged using their overall ‘disposition’ and family circumstances.¹² Australian military authorities noted that the character of a person was not a reflection of their loyalties.¹³ In a report dated May 1939, nearly all Japanese residents on Thursday Island were regarded to be of “good character” and “quiet disposition.” In the absence of strong evidence of any subversive activities, their race alone was enough to flag them as potentially disloyal and it was assumed they likely had strong sentimental attachments to Japan. Nobu Ide, for example, was described as having lived on Thursday Island for many decades and “is a typical Japanese and no doubt her sentiments would be with her native land Japan.”¹⁴ Nobu’s description was representative of most Japanese migrants who were surveilled and police garnered little evidence of subterfuge. These reports, however, provide insight into the underlying assumptions authorities made about Japanese migrants and how these assumptions were used to justify internment in the interest of national security. As Kay Saunders has argued, the policy to intern individuals engaged in subversive activities relied on an ill-defined and flexible definition of subterfuge activities.¹⁵ As a result, the process used to identify Nikkei for internment was a similarly subjective and racially motivated decision.

On the whole, there was little evidence of espionage among the Nikkei population in north Queensland in the years leading up to WWII. Japanese activities that were labelled as ‘suspicious’ prior to 1939 included Japanese commercial interests in mineral deposits, Japanese migrants who were surveying and photographing portions of the Queensland landscape, and

1930s’, *Prague Papers on the History of International Relations*, no. 2 (2017): 32–46.

¹² There are numerous reports compiled on this topic in Queensland alone. See, for example List of Alien Details Part 1, List of Alien Details Part 2.

¹³ Sir John Latham, Ambassador to Japan as quoted in Nagata, ‘Naive Patriotism’, 122.

¹⁴ Japanese - Thursday Island & Thursday Island General, 1939, Q30511, BP242/1, NAA. The first page of the report is slightly damaged with the report date obscured, although the NAA dates the report 29 May 1939.

¹⁵ Saunders, “‘Inspired by Patriotic Hysteria?’ Internment Policy Towards Enemy Aliens in Australia During the Second World War’, 293.

Japanese fishermen's intimate knowledge of Australia's northern coastlines.¹⁶ Interestingly, there was no evidence that Nikkei participation in celebrations of Japanese military victories in past decades — such as Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars, mentioned in Chapter Six — were ever considered by military and intelligence authorities as an indication of their loyalties. Among the readily-identified Japanese community members were individuals who were long-term and often elderly Japanese residents of north Queensland. Surveillance reports furnished little evidence of disloyalty or espionage among these people, although some of them owned radio transmitters and were in possession of Japanese-language letters and texts.¹⁷ It was believed by December 1941 that concrete evidence of organised spying was destroyed by the Japanese consulate-general — quite literally destroyed, as “smoke was observed daily coming from the consulate in Sydney in the fortnight before Pearl Harbour” — but that by this time police already had sufficient information on any individuals who were involved in organised spying.¹⁸ Nagata notes that reports of Japanese migrants owning radio transmitters and possessing political propaganda — loosely defined as any documents written in Japanese script — was used after 1941 as evidence of subversive activities such as espionage by military intelligence officers.¹⁹ Authorities noted in March 1944 that, “no evidence is offered which would label any one person an enemy agent. The report does nothing more than show a background picture of connections which could be a portion of an enemy espionage ring.”²⁰ Indeed, there was little evidence of Japanese enemy agents in Australia in the lead up to 1941 and the primary security concern was the interconnectedness of the Nikkei in Australia.

Disagreement between local and federal authorities on the security risk of north Queensland Nikkei remained a source of tension in the years leading up to 1941. In September 1939 the Commonwealth Minister for Defence distributed a memorandum on ‘Principles to be Observed with Internment’ to local police, advising them to be scrupulous in their investigations. As Saunders argues, however, the politically naïve constabulary “often lacked even a basic primary school standard education and minimal political sophistication, [and] could not discern

¹⁶ Review of Japanese Population and Activities, Queensland (Report), 20 February 1939, Japanese Activities in Queensland.

¹⁷ Ibid., Nagata, *Unwanted Aliens*, 65.

¹⁸ Oliver, ‘Interpreting “Japanese Activities”’, 40.

¹⁹ Nagata, *Unwanted Aliens*, 65.

²⁰ Counter Espionage - Enemy Channels of Communication, Compiled by ‘Mr. Murray’, 22 March 1944, Japanese Activities in Queensland. Part 1, Q30589 PART 1, BP242/1, NAA.

the political allegiances of Italians in particular.”²¹ This assessment of police insight on political nuances overlooks the local community knowledge the constabulary held. While it may have been difficult for officers to assess the shades of political affiliation among the north Queensland migrant community, police were aware of the general activities and associations of individuals. This disagreement between north Queensland police and military officials is most evident within investigation case files, where Northern Command often sought internment against the advice of police. In the case of Anne Iwanaga, for example, a Cairns Police Station senior sergeant concluded in December 1941 that there was no reason for Anne to be interned. That same month, a captain among the military authorities recommended, on the basis of the same report, that “she would definitely help the enemy in case of an invasion.” The Captain’s recommendation rested on Anne’s association with other elderly Japanese community members, whom she assisted with their banking and business affairs.²² Evidently, police and military intelligence were not on the same page when it came to their belief in the extent of Nikkei loyalties to Japan. When Hirokichi Nakamura, a Japanese migrant living in northern Sydney, was arrested, local police were under the impression that his imprisonment was a necessary but very temporary measure. Oliver explains how, “at 1:30am on 9 December, Constables Walsh and Hughes from the Northern Sydney Police Station arrived to arrest Nakamura. Constable Walsh, who had known Nakamura for twenty years, was embarrassed at the situation and apologised.” Nakamura was sure he would just need to answer questions at the police station and then return to his family. Nakamura’s family did not see him again for three years.²³

Indeed, Thursday Island police reports in 1940 noted with little concern that Haruyoshi Yamashita was in possession of a number of admiralty charts and surveys, showing all manner of approaches to northern Australia throughout the reefs. The police noted that Haruyoshi’s “sentiments are Japanese but there is no indication of any disloyalty by him towards the country in which he resides.” Following on, the report explained that some of these papers were the property of Haruyoshi’s father-in-law who was a *bêche-de-mer* fisherman in past decades, while other papers were the property of the Japanese Association to help explain the pearl shelling

²¹ Bevege, *Behind Barbed Wire*, 12–13; Saunders, “‘Inspired by Patriotic Hysteria?’ Internment Policy Towards Enemy Aliens in Australia During the Second World War’, 296–300.

²² Letter from Senior Sergeant McLennan to Inspector of Police Cairns, 9 December 1941, Anne Iwanaga Queensland Investigation; Letter from Captain J.D. Browne to Captain Northern Command, 16 December 1941, Anne Iwanaga Queensland Investigation.

²³ Oliver, *Raid on Australia*, 9–10; Nagata, ‘Naive Patriotism’, 137.

industry to Japanese tourists. The police sergeant concluded that, “this person is fit and suitable to be allowed to continue in possession of the above property.”²⁴ There had been fears for many decades — at least as early as 1908 — that Japanese migrants’ possession of maps of the reef were being used for espionage and other unnamed nefarious activities.²⁵ The reports of their possession were most definitely true, with detailed maps and charts essential for safe navigation of the Great Barrier Reef, but there was little evidence to suggest these maps were used for much else.²⁶ Even with incontrovertible evidence of Japanese possession of these maps during the 1940s, as in Haruyoshi’s case, police were still sympathetic to their uses as they related to the work of Japanese fishermen.

The movements and travel plans of Japanese migrants became of increasing concern for authorities as the late 1930s wore on. Letters exchanged between police inspectors and the Director of the Commonwealth Investigation Branch (CIB) in 1939 reveal concerns that some Japanese residents were planning their return to Japan.²⁷ Authorities considered these activities suspicious in light of escalating political tensions between Japan and Allied Nations. Altogether, however, these may have been the activities of individuals who were concerned for their own safety. A 1940 intelligence report revealed that the Japanese Society in Brisbane had advised members that:

[T]he Japanese who had not been in Australia for more than 20 years should be prepared to return to Japan at any time. The Japanese do not appear to think that the elderly Japanese who had been resident in Australia for a long period would be interned in the event of hostilities, in view of what they claimed to be the lenient treatment extended to Germans and Italians.²⁸

²⁴ Report, Thursday Island Police Station, 11 December 1940, Yamashita Haruyoshi, YAMASHITA H JAPANESE, BP25/1, NAA. For a complete list of the charts, see, Permit No 8558, 23 April 1941, op. cit.

²⁵ See, for example, “Japanese Pseudo Fishermen,” *Truth*, 3 May 1908, 7.

²⁶ For an interesting and thorough historical investigation of the way people have related to and understood the Great Barrier Reef, including the challenges it presented to navigation during the nineteenth century, see, Rohan Lloyd, *Saving the Reef: The Human Story Behind One of Australia’s Greatest Environmental Treasures* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 2022).

²⁷ Letter from F.G. Galleghan, Acting Inspector, to The Director, CIB, Canberra (SECRET), 6 July 1939, Japanese Activities in Queensland.

²⁸ Letter from R.F.B. Wake to the Director of CIB, 2 October 1940, Japanese Activities in Queensland.

As a result, most Japanese people who returned to Japan during the late 1930s were those wealthier individuals and merchants who had ongoing trade connections with Japan. Many of the Japanese residents who had lived in Australia for decades, particularly in north Queensland, remained living in the region. Australian military authorities grew increasingly suspicious of Nikkei in Australia, particularly those in Australia's northern regions.

By 1940, long-term residents throughout north Queensland were recipients of increased correspondence from Japanese representatives in the Brisbane association and the consul-general. In May that year, a report reached Innisfail police that Hidewo Oki, a local Japanese businessman, had received a letter from the Japanese consulate requesting numbers of Japanese residents and that he had subsequently held 'secret' meetings at the White Horse Hotel. Police investigations found the initial witness of these events to be unreliable, but it was concluded that Hidewo must have received confidential information from the Japanese consulate and was responsible for organising local Nikkei to discuss these matters.²⁹ Aside from extra attention to Hidewo's activities — surveillance that proved fruitless — authorities did not take any action on these concerns until internment in December 1941. As tensions between Japan and Australia increased, communications between the Japanese consulate and various representatives of the Japanese Association were brought to the attention of the Director of Military Intelligence. It was reported in August 1941 that the Japanese consul of Sydney had requested full numbers of Japanese people resident in their regions from both Brisbane and Thursday Island representatives, while a Brisbane Japanese Association leader had given out instructions that all Japanese women and children should prepare to leave Australia.³⁰ While unusual behaviour, these activities among the Nikkei in Queensland reveal a concerned community acutely aware of their precarious position in Australia should a war eventuate.

Australian military intelligence reports of Japanese activities in Australia became increasingly urgent after 1940. Secret memos from Australian intelligence authorities indicated in June 1940 that "Japan will take hostile action against the Allies within four weeks," and that "steps should be taken to complete the dossiers of all Japanese nationals with a view to their immediate internment."³¹ Evidently, this did not eventuate in the predicted timeframe.

²⁹ Report by Det. Sgt. A. Hird C.I.B. Innisfail, 27 May 1940, Oki Family Detention Orders.

³⁰ Japanese Nationals - Thursday Island, Department of the Army Minute Paper, 23 August 1941, Japanese Internment File Part 1, 65/401/135, MP729/6, NAA.

³¹ Secret Report on Japanese Activities, Major, General Staff (Intelligence), Eastern Command, 18 June 1940; Secret Memo, Japanese Activities, Director of Military Operations and Intelligence, 27 June

Furthermore, it was indicated in secret and ‘most’ secret memos that:

Due regard should be given to the fatalistic idea which permeates most Japanese as a religion of doing something for their Emperor. Therefore, Japanese nationals, even 65 to 70 and over may endeavour to engage in sabotage as a contribution [sic] to the Japanese cause.

[R]ecent information received indicates that it is probably that the Japanese will use agents of any nationality and that known instances include Chinese, Formosans, Italians, British and Americans ... The average Chinese, having no loyalty to his country, will always spy for anyone who pays him and will, when he can, serve as many masters as possible at one and the same time. The Japanese use them, but so does everyone else.³²

In light of these racial assessments of the Nikkei community (and other migrant communities within Australia), the parameters for enforcing internment were substantially broadened. As Saunders argues, Queensland’s internment policies became increasingly punitive as the war wore on.³³ In 1940, internment policy stated the intention to, in the case of war, only intern Japanese males over the age of sixteen. In following years, however, communications show a gradual expansion of provisions for elderly Japanese “due to their fanaticism”, and later women and children “until they can be safely transferred out of the country.”³⁴ Ignoring the substantial cost of mass internment, overlooking political nuance, and disregarding that internment was designed as a last resort for national security, Australian authorities determined that any person of Japanese appearance, heritage, or affiliation could be involved in espionage and were therefore subject to internment.

Internment

On 8 December, mere hours after the attack on Pearl Harbour, all individuals classed as Japanese

1940, Japanese Internment File Part 1, 65/401/135, MP729/6, NAA.

³² Secret Memo, Japanese Activities, Director of Military Operations and Intelligence, 27 June 1940 & Most Secret Memo, Japanese Activities, Director of Military Operations and Intelligence, 26 August 1940, Japanese Internment File Part 1, 65/401/135, MP729/6, NAA

³³ Saunders and Taylor, “The Enemy Within?”, 16.

³⁴ Japanese Internment File Part 1, 65/401/135, MP729/6, NAA. Beginning from June 1940, the compilation of dossiers about Japanese nationals shows the parameters of internment increase from Japanese men over the age of sixteen to any person of Japanese heritage suspected of disloyalty.

enemy aliens who were living in north Queensland (and the rest of Australia) were arrested by police. The responsibility for these arrests was divided among the CIB, Military Intelligence, and local police, with most arrests in north Queensland made by the latter due to geographical constraints. Many of the local constables expressed embarrassment in arresting individuals who were established and long-term members of the community, including many who were elderly.³⁵ Chiyo Oki, a Japanese woman living in Innisfail, who had only twelve days earlier given birth, was arrested along with her husband, their four other children, and Hidewo's elderly mother.³⁶ While there were some tense situations such as Jack Takagaki's ride in the back of a police car, other police seemed to have some empathy for Japanese residents caught up in a situation beyond their control. One man who was arrested in Mourilyan mistakenly left behind some money in his camp, and police went to some efforts to ensure it was retrieved for him.³⁷ Both police and internees were under the impression that internment was only a temporary provision and that many would soon be able to return home. Thinking this was temporary, most did not pack many possessions and internment records indicate people kept some cash on them — that was confiscated by the 'D.F.O Brisbane'³⁸ — and had at most one, or two, small suitcases containing personal belongings.³⁹ All Japanese trading houses and businesses were shut down by police, with large companies forced into administration.⁴⁰ Authorities made assurances that internees' homes, farms, stores, and other properties would be safeguarded; but these were generally empty promises and little to no action was taken to secure internees' interests.

It is important to emphasise just how swiftly and efficiently Australia's internment of Nikkei occurred in 1941, particularly when compared to the US and its territory in Hawai'i. In

³⁵ For more on police feelings about the internments, see, Nagata, *Unwanted Aliens*, 64; Nagata, 'Naive Patriotism', 137.

³⁶ Transcript of Evidence of Objection by C Oki, TRIBUNAL 4/116, MP529/3, NAA; Chiyo Oki, Application for Leave to Submit Objections Against Detention Order, OKI/C, MP529/8, NAA.

³⁷ "Excited Japanese," *CP*, 10 December 1941, 1.

³⁸ It is unclear what D.F.O. is an acronym for, possibly 'Defence Force Ombudsman' or similar.

According to the *Trading with the Enemy Act 1939* (Cth) and the *National Security (Enemy Property) Regulations 1939* (Cth), pursuant to the *National Security Act 1939* (Cth) all assets of enemy aliens were to be in the care of the Controller of Enemy Property.

³⁹ Prisoner of War/Internee, Charles Assay, QJ16005, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Shigeichi Hiramatsu, QJ16265, MP1103/2, NAA. Charles Assay, for example, had only "clothing" listed among his personal effects while Shigeichi had a single "dress watch" listed.

⁴⁰ Oliver, *Raids on Australia*, 10.

the US, it was not until 19 February 1942 that President Franklin Roosevelt issued an executive order that allowed for the exclusion of certain persons of Japanese heritage — in the interests of national security — from certain areas and for them to be forcibly moved to centres euphemistically named ‘assembly’, ‘reception’, or ‘relocation’ centres.⁴¹ Full internment of Japanese enemy aliens in the US did not occur until March 1942. In Hawai‘i, where there was a Nikkei population of approximately 157,000 people, the territory was placed under martial law between 1941 and 1944 and Japanese people had restrictions placed on their activities. On these islands, people of Japanese ancestry were investigated *after* the outbreak of war and approximately 1250 Nikkei, or around one percent of the total Nikkei population, were interned in Hawai‘i.⁴² On the other side of the Pacific in Australia, however, authorities were much more prepared for the outbreak of war. In remote northern regions such as Thursday Island, a number of military personnel had been pre-emptively stationed with supplies and materials to fence off areas on the island and minimise escapees.⁴³ Military authorities enacted a “preventative rather than punitive” policy for Japanese internment, with the general security plan to intern first and ask questions later. As Noel W. Lamidey explains in his 1974 report, “one of the duties devolving upon that office [Director General of Security] was to determine whether they [internees] should *remain* interned, having regard to fluctuating circumstances and the successful prosecution of the war.”⁴⁴ Under Regulation 20 of the *National Security (Aliens Control) Regulations 1939* (Cth), there was a provision for the internment of any *enemy alien* if it is seen by the Minister of the State for Defence to be in the interests of public safety.⁴⁵ Regulation 26 of the *National Security (General) Regulations 1939* (Cth) provided for the Minister’s discretion:

[T]he Minister may, if satisfied with respect to *any particular person*, that with a view to prevent that person acting in any manner prejudicial to the public safety or the defence

⁴¹ Brian Masaru Hayashi, *Democratizing the Enemy: The Japanese American Internment* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2010), 1.

⁴² For more on the internment of Nikkei in the US and Hawai‘i, see, Saunders and Daniels, *Alien Justice*; Dennis M. Ogawa and Evarts C. Jr. Fox, ‘Japanese Internment and Relocation: The Hawaii Experience’, in *Japanese Americans: From Relocation to Redress*, ed. Roger Daniels, Sandra C. Taylor, and Harry H.L. Kitano (Washington: University of Washington Press, 1992), 135–38.

⁴³ Bevege, *Behind Barbed Wire*, 131–32.

⁴⁴ Lamidey, *Aliens Control*, 50–51.

⁴⁵ *National Security (Aliens Control) Regulations 1939* (Cth), 8. Emphasis added. Nagata mistakenly refers to Regulation 13 of these as a ‘catch-all’ for internment, although this regulation relates only to the control of travel and movement of aliens in the Commonwealth. Nagata, *Unwanted Aliens*, 55.

of the Commonwealth it is necessary so to do, make an order ... (c) directing that he be detained in such place, and under such conditions, as the Minister from time to time determines.⁴⁶

While both sets of regulations under the *National Security Act* (Cth) were signed off on the 13 September 1939, the general regulations were designed as a catch-all that provided for the internment of nearly any individual regardless of their legal status as a British subject or otherwise. Indeed, internment regulations under the *National Security Act* were primarily designed for the internment of enemy aliens only on a precautionary and preventative basis, but the internment of the Nikkei community, however, occurred on a much greater scale.

After the arrests were made throughout north Queensland, internees were taken to their local police station where they were processed and transported to Brisbane. From Brisbane, they were further organised and sent to the relevant internment camps designed for civilian internees.⁴⁷ Even at this time, Australians became increasingly hostile; a number of the internees were reportedly hissed and booed at as they boarded the trains heading south.⁴⁸ Civilian Japanese enemy aliens were contained primarily in three different camps: Camp No. 4 at Rushworth in Victoria; Camp No. 6 near Hay in New South Wales; and Camp No. 14 at Loveday in South Australia.⁴⁹ While the camp at Rushworth held women and family groups, including boys under the age of sixteen, Hay was reserved for refugee Japanese internees transferred from the United Kingdom, while Loveday appeared to be an ‘overflow’ camp comprised mainly single Japanese men. Importantly, the Cowra internment camp — and the well-known breakout that occurred in 1944 — did not hold people who were classified as Japanese civilian internees.⁵⁰ Although a

⁴⁶ *National Security (General) Regulations 1939* (Cth), 16. Emphasis added.

⁴⁷ Australia had a number of internment camps by 1941, generally organised to detain either civilian internees or POWs. These groups were then further organised among camps by national affiliation as enemy aliens, and then by demographics such as women, children, family groups, and single men. These groupings were often imperfect, however, as in the case of single father Jack Takagaki who was placed in a camp with single men rather than in the family groups.

⁴⁸ Nagata, *Unwanted Aliens*, 65.

⁴⁹ Nagata, 125–27.

⁵⁰ The Cowra internment camp, and the subsequent breakout in August 1944, is beyond the scope of this thesis as it pertains to individuals who were classified as POWs. Indeed, the cultural memory of this incident and its coverage within Australian history, literature, and film is much more widely recalled than Japanese Australian internment. For more on this topic, see, Mat McLachlan, *The Cowra Breakout* (Sydney: Hachette Australia, 2022); Alison Starr, ‘Traces of Memory: Australian-Japanese

National Archives of Australia online explanatory document indicates that many records did not make a distinction between POWs and civilian internees, including the fact that these two groups would often live together in camps, the 42,335 records on POWs and internees held in the series MP1103/2 typically made a clear distinction.⁵¹ While all of the records were printed with ‘Report on Prisoner of War’ in the header of the form, records for internees had ‘prisoner of war’ crossed out and replaced with an ‘internee’ stamp, including an additional stamp that indicated the national affiliation of the internee.

Life within the internment camps appears to have been reasonably orderly and comfortable, but Australian authorities were keen to present this view of internment. While historian Nagata has described life in the internment camps as comfortable — in comparison to the poor treatment reported by internees in the US — this did not negate the confinement and uncertainty of internment.⁵² Fundamentally, internment constituted imprisonment without trial. Since civilian internees could not be compelled to work, unlike POWs, there were activities that many took up in the camps, including gardening and teaching classes, especially for young children. In the men’s camps, many of the Japanese internees gathered meagre resources to create artworks.⁵³ There were also festivities, with celebrations of certain turns in the war and the Japanese Emperor’s Birthday.⁵⁴ Military officers in charge of the camps were unhappy at the rate at which babies were being born; in 1941, the commandant of Tatura Camp, Major Scurry, demanded “no more babies”, but his remarks had little effect.⁵⁵ The Australian Government was

Reconciliation in a Post-War Cowra Landscape’, *Historic Environment* 28, no. 3 (2017): 74–85; Harry Gordon, *Voyage from Shame: The Cowra Breakout and Afterwards* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1994); Harry Gordon, *Die Like the Carp!: The Story of the Greatest Prison Escape Ever* (Stanmore: Cassell Australia, 1978); Kenneth Mackenzie, *Dead Men Rising* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1973).

⁵¹ “Wartime Internment Camps in Australia,” NAA, <https://www.naa.gov.au/explore-collection/immigration-and-citizenship/wartime-internment-camps-australia>; Prisoners of War Information Bureau, Dossiers Containing Reports on Internees and Prisoners of War Held in Australian Camps, MP1103/2, NAA.

⁵² Nagata, *Unwanted Aliens*, 153.

⁵³ Richard Bullen and Tets Kimura, ‘Japanese Art in Australasia During the Second World War’, *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Art* 20, no. 1 (2020): 107–24, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14434318.2020.1764232>.

⁵⁴ Internment — Camp Tatura, Prisoners of War and Internment Camps Inspection Report, 2 October 1942, 255/715/702, MP508/1, NAA.

⁵⁵ Bevege, *Behind Barbed Wire*, 134.

keen to represent the internment experience in a positive light, particularly to differentiate itself from the treatment of Australian POWs and civilians held by Japan. The only known footage of the Loveday Internment Camp is an Australian propaganda video that highlights how productive and comfortable life was for the internees.⁵⁶

Indeed, imprisonment aside, life in the Australian camps did not appear to involve any severe violence or cruelty for Japanese internees. According to recollections of *nisei* who were held in the camps, their experiences were not as negative as those of their parents. Nagata recounts oral histories from Jo Murakami and Oriol Torimaru who were interned as children and describe their time as a “new interesting communal life” and comfortable, even sometimes fun, for children.⁵⁷ Some children saw the camps as a novelty — at least for those who could remember life outside internment — but their experience varied by age. Life was particularly difficult for *nisei* who did not speak Japanese or only had one Japanese parent.⁵⁸ Joe Murakami, the child of a Japanese migrant, recalled in 1998 that “being subjected to such mental trauma in the formative years of our lives, in constant fear of being asked about our ancestry, having no other like us for mutual conservation have left us socially incapacitated and unfulfilled to this day.”⁵⁹ Individuals like Joe who were young adults at the time of internment became increasingly aware of the growing anti-Japanese sentiment within Australia. Internment also have been an uncomfortable and impactful experience for elderly and vulnerable Nikkei, with some spending their final days in internment camps or the Gladesville Mental Hospital.⁶⁰ Internment created physical and mental ill health, with Denkichi Takagaki stating his distress in being placed in a separate camp to his children in 1942, explaining that his “head got all worried.”⁶¹ It is difficult to determine the long-term effects of internment on the health of many Japanese internees, but

⁵⁶ Nagata, ‘Japanese Internment in Australia During WWII’.

⁵⁷ Nagata, ‘Naive Patriotism’, 114.

⁵⁸ Shannon Whiley, ‘The Experiences of Nikkei-Australian Soldiers During World War II’, *New Voices in Japanese Studies* 10 (2018): 1–28.

⁵⁹ Nagata, ‘Japanese Internment in Australia’, 20.

⁶⁰ Lists Giving Details of Admissions and Releases of Local Internees to Mental Institutions and of Deaths of Local Internees at Camp Hospitals and Mental Institutions, 121/12/932, B3812, NAA; Prisoners of War Information Bureau, Registers Containing ‘Service and Casualty’ Forms (Form A112) of Enemy Prisoners of War and Internees Held in Camps in Australia, MP1103/1, NAA.

⁶¹ Transcript of Evidence of Objection by J D Takagaki, 14 February 1942, TRIBUNAL 4/160, MP529/3, NAA.

the trauma of war did not end when internment did.

The internment of Nikkei within Australia stood as one of the most severe and subjective internment policies among the Allied nations during WWII. In addition to receiving internees from other Allied nations, — indeed, Australia has a long history of being used as a “distant refuse dump” for the segregation and incarceration of outsiders⁶² — Australia interned greater proportion of Nikkei than other nations with much larger populations. On the US mainland, for example, 109,650 out of 127,000 people of Japanese origin were evacuated from ‘restricted areas’ near the coast; eight-six percent of the Nikkei community were interned. In Canada, 20,881 out of 23,149 Japanese people, or a little over ninety percent, were evacuated from their homes. Notably, around 3000 of these individuals were able to relocate themselves on a self-supporting basis or to live with other relatives and friends. In Hawai’i, all 158,000 Japanese Americans remained at liberty and at work during the course of the war.⁶³ In Australia, as Table 2 illustrates, local Japanese internees were the third largest group after German and Italian internees. Among them, most Nikkei internees were from Queensland and Western Australia. Local Nikkei internees, however, made up 97.83% of the total registered Japanese aliens in Australia at the time, compared to the 31.71% of Italian and 32.04% of German internees.⁶⁴ Indeed, these numbers represent the Nikkei community in Australia as a whole, rather than simply ‘enemy aliens’ who held Japanese citizenship.

Within Australia, the term ‘Japanese internee’ was used to describe a range of people, including individuals who were born in Australia with one or two Japanese parents and women who were married to Japanese citizens. Compared to internment policy in the US, particularly in Hawai’i, Australia’s policy lacked a nuanced understanding of the Japanese community. In Hawai’i, pre-war surveillance of the 157,000 Nikkei population assembled a list of potentially dangerous individuals, with approximately 300 people identified for apprehension if hostilities between the US and the Axis powers broke out, and another 300 people who were to be closely surveilled in the event of such hostilities. The other 156,000 Nikkei in Hawai’i were still placed under restrictions and internments continued throughout the war; these authorities carefully considered Japanese peoples’ religious and cultural ties to Japan, including their profession, and

⁶² Nagata, *Unwanted Aliens*, 37.

⁶³ Nagata, ‘Japanese Internment in Australia’, 290–312.

⁶⁴ Lamidey, *Aliens Control*, 52–53. These totals for internees include individuals classed as “Australian-born” or “British-born.” Statistics regarding the total number of British subjects who were Japanese internees have not been located as authorities did not gather this data.

hearing boards met to determine the need for internment on a case-by-case basis.⁶⁵ In the continental US, a generational theory was applied to determine who should be interned. Elderly Japanese were regarded as low-risk, seeing as many had arrived in the US at a young age and had hardly spent time in Japan in decades. Children of these migrants who had been born in the US but subsequently spent ten to fifteen years being educated in Japan were seen as more likely for disaffection; it was believed many would have been susceptible to nationalistic and fanatical Japanese ideas in Japan for a number of years.⁶⁶ Broadly then, while other Allied countries took on more nuanced or case-by-case approaches to internment, Australia's en masse internment policy was a blunt instrument applied to the Nikkei community.

Table 2.

NUMBER OF LOCAL ALIENS INTERNED IN AUSTRALIA AS OF 31 MARCH 1944

Nationality	QLD	NSW	Victoria	S.A.	W.A.	Tas	Total
Germans	322	436	120	145	88	4	1115
Austrians	22	50	12	1	5	-	90
Italians	2107	806	170	170	1346	-	4727
Japanese	247	69	19	1	251	-	587
Finns	88	32	13	5	4	-	142
Romanians	2	39	1	-	-	-	42
Hungarian	3	30	-	-	-	-	33
Other	150	74	8	12	2	-	
Total	3004	1536	343	334	1696	69	6982

SOURCE — Adapted from “Commonwealth Statement of Resident Aliens Interned in Australia: Prepared 31st March, 1944” that excludes British Born and Overseas Internees. Noel W. Lamidey, *Aliens Control in Australia, 1939-46* (Sydney: printed by the author, 1974), 50.

Statistical data on internees remains difficult to verify as authorities inconsistently, sometimes even incorrectly, recorded the nationality of internees. In many cases, race was conflated with nationality and many Australian-born individuals were treated as enemy aliens. Under Australia's *Nationality Act 1920* the common law principle held that “any person born

⁶⁵ Ogawa and Fox, ‘Japanese Internment and Relocation: The Hawaii Experience’, 136–37.

⁶⁶ Bevege, *Behind Barbed Wire*, 171, 176; Hayashi, *Democratizing the Enemy*, 33–34.

within His Majesty's dominions and allegiance" was a natural-born British subject. An 'alien' was therefore any person who was not a British subject.⁶⁷ Despite this, Australian-born sisters Yoshiko Evelyn, Harumi Phyllis, and Sadaki Mary Yamashita were all identified as being of Japanese nationality despite their place of birth being listed as Thursday Island.⁶⁸ Others were identified by additional categories under nationality, such as 'Australian-born Japanese' or 'Japanese British born' still with 'enemy subject' listed under reasons for internment. These arbitrary measures of nationality are unsurprising. As Prince argues, these legal notions of 'British subject' and 'alien' were routinely ignored in favour of more general racial and cultural categories to ascribe 'otherness' to individuals in Australia.⁶⁹ May Woodhead, for example, was categorised as a Japanese internee but had her nationality listed as 'Malay' even though she was an unmarried woman born in Australia and was therefore, by definition, a British subject.⁷⁰

Australian-born women who married Japanese-born men were among those who were interned, but this was a similarly flexible category. There were approximately thirteen Australian-born women who were interned as Japanese aliens, while another eight women in similar circumstances remained free.⁷¹ Prescribed under the *Nationality Act 1920*, "the wife of a British subject shall be deemed to be a British subject, and the wife of an alien shall be deemed to be an alien."⁷² Indeed, authorities lacked nuance when attempting to apply this law as it related to internment. Technically all Australian-born women who married Japanese-born men were legally 'Japanese' in nationality — unless they had reclaimed their status as a British subject — but a few managed to escape internment on the basis of their perceived racial background.⁷³ Tei Yamashita, for example, was a *nisei* born on Thursday Island but lost her status as a British subject due to

⁶⁷ *Nationality Act 1920*, No. 48 (Cth). S. 5(1).

⁶⁸ Prisoner of War/Internee, Yoshiko Evelyn Yamashita, QJF16217, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Harumi Phyllis Yamashita, QJF16218, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Sadaki Mary Yamashita, QJF16219, MP1103/2, NAA

⁶⁹ Prince, 'Aliens in Their Own Land', 13–14.

⁷⁰ Prisoner of War/Internee, May Woodhead, QJF16285, MP1103/2, NAA.

⁷¹ Table A: List of Civilians Who Are Japanese Nationals, Japanese Internees, 11505, A373, NAA. This is only an estimated number based on statistics of internees at the end of the war; many interned people died during the war and are not included in these numbers.

⁷² *Nationality Act*, No. 62 (1936), 1.

⁷³ Nationality Act, Section 18(6); Kawata, G - Retention of British Nationality, 1941/1/2466, A659, NAA. Grace Kawata was married to Suigoro Kawata but was not interned as she applied to retain her British nationality.

her marriage to Haruyoshi Yamashita, a Japanese migrant. Tei was interned, along with her husband and Australian-born children.⁷⁴ Jean Shibasaki and Marguerite Kashiwagi were similarly born in Australia and also lost their status as British subjects after marrying Japanese-born men. Both women were also interned. Interestingly, Jean was described as having ‘Malay’ and Torres Strait Islander heritage, compared to Marguerite’s parents who were reportedly both white Australian-born British subjects. Although Marguerite was a white British subject married to a Japanese man, her husband Tairo Kashiwagi was a Japanese migrant who was a well-known silk merchant in Brisbane and President of the Japanese Association there. Authorities suspected Tairo of subversive activities – such as holding secret meetings and contact with other Japanese visitors to Australia – and this likely played a large role in Marguerite’s internment.⁷⁵

Of the Australian-born women who married Japanese men but did not face internment, this was likely due to authorities’ recognition of their status as white Australians. In particular, sisters Elizabeth May Yoshida and Alice Ogawa were married to Japanese men — and hence legally classified as aliens — but were identified as ‘white women’ and were not interned. This was also the case for Emily Tomida in Townsville.⁷⁶ Despite each of these Australian-born women sharing legal status as ‘enemy aliens’, their treatment varied on a racial basis. The Minister for the Army explained that ‘European women’ would be judged “on their merits and that internment be resorted to only where specific evidence, or reasonable grounds, exist.”⁷⁷ The

⁷⁴ Prisoner of War/Internee, Tei Yamashita, QJF16216, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Haruyoshi Yamashita, QJ16215, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Yoshiko Evelyn Yamashita, QJF16217, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Harumi Phyllis Yamashita, QJF16218, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Sadakii Mary Yamashita, QJF16219, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Ryochi George Yamashita, QJ16220, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Kingo Robert Yamashita, QJ16221, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Siro Yamashita, QJ16222, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Joe Yamashita, QJ16223, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Sigeru Yamashita, QJ16224, MP1103/2, NAA.

⁷⁵ Nagata, *Unwanted Aliens*, 89–90; “Shibasaki, Jean - Queensland Investigation Case File” (Brisbane, 1947 1940), NAA: BP242/1, Q24780; “Prisoner of War/Internee; Kashiwagi, Marguerite; Year of Birth - 1892; Nationality - Australian” (Melbourne, 1939), NAA: MP1103/2, QJF16602.

⁷⁶ Prisoner of War/Internee, Tomoichi Yoshida, QJ16527, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Suyekichi Ogawa, QJ16125, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Asa Jiro Tomida, QJ16185, MP1103/2, NAA.

⁷⁷ Chief of Staff’s Weekly Report (Secret), 13 August 1941, Japanese Internment File Part 1, 65/401/135,

practice of interning individuals regarded as visibly and racially Other remained a well-accepted practice. Overall, these complications of ‘nationality’ under the law applied to only a small handful of approximately twenty women in Queensland.⁷⁸

Objections to Internment

Where previously only individuals interned under Regulation 26 of the *National Security (General) Regulations 1939* — legislation that applied to internees who were not enemy aliens — could appeal against internment, Prime Minister John Curtin decided in November 1940 that enemy aliens were also permitted to submit their objections to internment.⁷⁹ This concession was granted before the round-up of Japanese residents and was in response to public outcry over the injustice of indiscriminate internment of Italian men.⁸⁰ While Japanese internees in principle benefitted from this amendment, few individuals saw any satisfactory outcomes to their appeals. Indeed, authorities seemed to treat Japanese internees’ objections as a procedural rather than a serious undertaking. Taking a more sympathetic view, Bevege notes that authorities did not initially intend to even hear Japanese internees’ objections, but later granted time to hearing all appeals.⁸¹ Nevertheless, the Aliens Appeal Tribunal carried an unsympathetic and unwavering attitude to the hearings. Internees’ appeals were hurried through in consecutive five or ten minute slots and husbands were usually interviewed before their wives.⁸² Often Japanese objectors expressed understanding that they were classed as enemy aliens and internment was

MP729/6, NAA.

⁷⁸ Compiled from Table A: List of Civilians Who are Japanese Nationals, Japanese Internees, 11505, A373, NAA.

⁷⁹ Bevege, *Behind Barbed Wire*, 94.

⁸⁰ Nagata, *Unwanted Aliens*, 44.

⁸¹ Bevege, *Behind Barbed Wire*, 134–35.

⁸² Transcript of Evidence of Objection by S Tonda, 13 February 1942, TRIBUNAL 4/140, MP529/3, NAA; Transcript of Evidence of Objection by Mrs T Tonda, 13 February 1942, TRIBUNAL 4/141, MP529/3, NAA; Transcript of Evidence of Objection by S Seita, 13 February 1942, TRIBUNAL 4/142, MP529/3, NAA; Transcript of Evidence of Objection by T Iwanaga, 13 February 1942, TRIBUNAL 4/143, MP529/3, NAA; Transcript of Evidence of Objection by Mrs O Iwanaga, 13 February 1942, TRIBUNAL 4/144, MP529/3, NAA. Each of these internees were brought in for their hearings at 3:00pm, 3:05pm, 3:10pm, 3:20pm, and 3:25pm consecutively on 13 February 1942 at Tatura Internment Camp.

therefore necessary.⁸³ Once a husband, with light pressure from the tribunal, was willing to withdraw his objection, his wife usually followed suit.⁸⁴ Where an internee was particularly insistent on their release, the tribunal persuaded them that internment ensured their safety and was the best available option. One Japanese laundryman from Rockhampton was adamant that he had regularly served Australian soldiers at his business, with them having no objections to him. In reply, the tribunal drew attention to the recent arrival of American servicemen who would be keen to revenge their defeats on Japanese migrants such as himself. The objector's appeal was lost on the basis that release would be dangerous for him.⁸⁵ As Nagata neatly summarises, "while the appearance of fairness was maintained [in the tribunals], the outcome was actually never in doubt."⁸⁶ Indeed, the conduct of these tribunals indicate that the internment appeals process was more procedural than it was forthright.

The number of submitted objections suggest that few Japanese internees understood that they had even signed objection documents. Rarely were they given the chance to consider, discuss, or seek advice on their objections prior to meeting with the tribunal. Peter J. Weiss notes all enemy aliens were given papers to sign objections to internment but were not obliged to submit them.⁸⁷ Despite this, many Japanese internees appeared to have unknowingly submitted objections. Shoji Fukushima and Haruyoshi Yamashita from Thursday Island, for instance, spoke little English and expressed to the tribunal that they did not understand they had signed objections against internment.⁸⁸ Many others had similar frustrations, reporting that military

⁸³ Transcript of Evidence of Objection by H Yamashita, 12 February 1942, TRIBUNAL 4/121, MP529/3, NAA. Haruyoshi stated to the tribunal that "As a Japanese national, I can offer no objection to being interned."

⁸⁴ "Transcript of Evidence of Objection by Mrs T Tonda, 13 February 1942, TRIBUNAL 4/141, MP529/3, NAA; Transcript of Evidence of Objection by Mrs O Iwanaga, 13 February 1942, TRIBUNAL 4/144, MP529/3, NAA. Both Toki Tonda and Otsume Iwanaga expressed to the tribunal that, "I would like to do just as my husband does."

⁸⁵ Bevege, *Behind Barbed Wire*, 138. Bevege reports this story from the transcript of a tribunal hearing but has withheld the person's name. Although the original primary source cannot be located, it is likely that the person referred to was Yasikichi Charles Assay from Rockhampton. Transcript of Evidence of Objection by Y Assay, TRIBUNAL 4/98, MP529/3, NAA.

⁸⁶ Nagata, 'Naive Patriotism', 123.

⁸⁷ Weiss, *It Wasn't Really Necessary*, 295.

⁸⁸ Transcript of Evidence of Objection by S Fukushima, TRIBUNAL 4/123, MP529/3, NAA; Transcript of Evidence of Objection by H Yamashita, 12 February 1942, TRIBUNAL 4/121, MP529/3, NAA.

authorities had ordered them to sign the forms and they had politely obliged. Tokitaro Iwanaga explained, “I was given a paper at Brisbane and asked to fill it in and sign it, which I did, without knowing just what it was.”⁸⁹ Chiyo Oki similarly expressed, “I did not understand the meaning of the form. There was nobody there to interpret, and I made verbal replies which were taken down. Then the Commandant came and asked us to sign.”⁹⁰ Nevertheless, the en masse signing of objection forms forced the tribunal to hear from a great number of Japanese internees and gave the tribunal the opportunity to gather intelligence about potential Japanese espionage.⁹¹

A small handful of Japanese internees were able to submit more thorough and informed objections against internment. Usually, these internees had a number of advantages: social connections to a lawyer, money to pay for legal representation, and the ability to communicate fluently in English. Even with these privileges, objectors faced an uphill battle against the burden of proof to the Aliens Appeal Tribunal. The tribunal firmly held the assumption that no person of the Japanese race could be truly loyal to Australia. These attitudes were shared among the Allies — perhaps with more discernment in Hawai‘i, the US, and Canada — with racial affiliation rather than political loyalties considered a greater factor in determining those who should be interned. Authorities stated “the Japanese race is an enemy race.”⁹² In Australia, where the tribunal felt that a Japanese invasion of Australia was an imminent threat, racial markers were similarly used to determine national loyalties. Evidence of “Japanese habits” was tantamount to disloyalty to Australia. It was expected that objectors would have to provide evidence of an Australian lifestyle, including spoken English in the home and other ‘Australian habits’ in the absence of ‘Japanese characteristics’ that included clothing, religion, food, and social connections. Proof of friendships with Australians were not sufficient, as these were imagined as a cover for espionage.⁹³ With Japanese internees regarded wholly as racially Other by the tribunal, it became nearly impossible for any visibly Japanese person to demonstrate they had an Australian outlook and were totally disconnected from their Japanese identity, regardless of any particular habits or proof of loyalties.⁹⁴ The extensive network of Japanese migrants in Australia

⁸⁹ Transcript of Evidence of Objection by T Iwanaga, 13 February 1942, TRIBUNAL 4/143, MP529/3, NAA.

⁹⁰ Transcript of Evidence of Objection by C Oki, TRIBUNAL 4/116, MP529/3, NAA.

⁹¹ Bevege, *Behind Barbed Wire*, 150; Nagata, ‘Naive Patriotism’, 122.

⁹² Hayashi, *Democratizing the Enemy*, 2–3.

⁹³ Nagata, ‘Naive Patriotism’, 138–39.

⁹⁴ Oliver, ‘Citizens Without Certificates’, 127.

at the time made it possible for the tribunal to connect nearly any individual to other Japanese internees and thus prove their disloyalty to Australia.

During the tribunals, lines of questioning were used to discern internees' disloyalty to Australia. Character, social standing and community involvement were often used as a measure of an individual's inclinations towards Australian values, but this was disregarded for Japanese internees. It was believed that it was not a question of a Japanese person's character, but where their loyalties lay and this was often assessed on racial grounds.⁹⁵ The tribunal would thoroughly interrogate loyalties by attempting to 'trip up' objectors with their own words and lead them to admit to Japanese loyalties or provide evidence of their 'Japanese outlook'. Any individual who was visibly Japanese, or affiliated with the Nikkei community, was seen by the tribunal as possessing fanatical and inscrutable characteristics that made it impossible for them to be loyal to Australian interests.⁹⁶ Maria Glaros' analysis of Anne Iwanaga's appeal identifies how testimonies were often twisted to create the impression of disloyalty. From Anne's transcripts, the line of questioning followed in a repetitive manner to create the impression of disloyalty against Australia.⁹⁷ Anne was successful in her second appeal against internment, but her experience even as an Australian-born woman who spoke fluent English and had money at her disposal reveals the appeals process as prejudiced and challenging. As Weiss argues, "the proof of innocence was on the accused, who, in the majority of cases, didn't know what he was accused of."⁹⁸ Anne's experience with the tribunal was not an isolated one. Others such as Yoshikichi (Charles) Assay were also asked repetitive and leading questions about their loyalties:

Supposing the Japanese came here; do you think they might come to Rockhampton? — I cannot tell you that. It is not my business.

Supposing they did come to Rockhampton, do not you think that you would be safer here [in internment]? — I do not think so.

⁹⁵ Nagata, 'Naive Patriotism', 122.

⁹⁶ Oliver, 'Interpreting "Japanese Activities"', 51; Nagata, *Unwanted Aliens*, 271.

⁹⁷ Maria Glaros, "'Sometimes a Little Injustice Must Be Suffered for the Public Good": How the National Security (Aliens Control) Regulations 1939 (Cth) Affected the Lives of German, Italian, Japanese and Australian Born Women Living in Australia During the Second World War' (PhD Thesis, University of Western Sydney, 2012), 243. See also, Copy of Aliens Tribunal Hearing Transcript, 29 March 1943, Anne Iwanaga Queensland Investigation.

⁹⁸ Weiss, *It Wasn't Really Necessary*, 296.

Would you like to be at Rockhampton when the Japanese Army came? — I cannot tell you anything.

... What country do you want to win this war? — I cannot tell you that; it is not my business. I do not care which wins. I am too old.⁹⁹

Indeed, the tribunal used arbitrary and punitive measures of loyalty in their “Court of Suspicions.”¹⁰⁰ Some witnesses who testified for the release of Japanese internees were brought before the tribunal and questioned as to whether they were able to tell what a certain Japanese internee was thinking. Witness statements were used to measure an internee’s “Oriental inscrutability,” whereby if a Japanese person’s thoughts were not readable by a witness then they must be a spy pretending to be a good citizen.¹⁰¹ Statements of support that advocated for internees’ release were scrutinised much more closely than anonymous sources that claimed evidence of espionage. Unrestrained by the procedures of courts of law, and with no rules for evidence, the tribunal could freely consider anonymous evidence without needing to cross-examine it.¹⁰² Even prior to 1941, Justice E.E. Cleland, Chairman of the Aliens Tribunal in South Australia, made his disdain for the tribunals process clear to the Minister for the Army in December 1940:

I understand that the onus of satisfying the Committee that any person detained is loyal lies upon the person detained and the more general and indefinite the charge against him is, the more difficult it is for him to satisfy the Committee ... The Committee has before it, the oath of the person detained subject to cross-examination and, on the other hand, the unsworn reports of one or more anonymous individuals (nearly always described as being a ‘particularly reliable agent’) and some of these reports may be possibly malicious, probably honest, and sometimes, no doubt, inspired by patriotic hysteria.¹⁰³

The routines of the Aliens Appeal Tribunal were maintained, however, and so-called “patriotic

⁹⁹ Transcript of Evidence of Objection by Y Assay, TRIBUNAL 4/98, MP529/3, NAA.

¹⁰⁰ Weiss, *It Wasn't Really Necessary*, 301.

¹⁰¹ Oliver, ‘Citizens Without Certificates’, 139. Oliver documents this measure of “Oriental inscrutability” used against Sho Takasuka by the tribunal in an attempt to prove that he was guilty of subterfuge and espionage.

¹⁰² Weiss, *It Wasn't Really Necessary*, 293.

¹⁰³ Bevege, *Behind Barbed Wire*, 40–41; Saunders, “Inspired by Patriotic Hysteria?” Internment Policy Towards Enemy Aliens in Australia During the Second World War’, 290–91.

hysteria” provided an overtone to Japanese objections to internment. Regardless of whether they admitted to loyalty to Japan or Australia, carefully resisted the tribunal’s prompts, or outright denounced their identity as a Japanese person, the tribunal maintained the individual’s internment in nearly all cases.

Prior to 1946, only a small handful of Japanese internees were successful in their objections or were able to obtain release from the camps. Typically, Japanese internees were only released under extenuating circumstances. Lamidey’s analysis of releases to 31 December 1944 show that only fifty-nine Japanese internees were released — compared to 2807 Italian and 350 German internees — and typically this was on the grounds of “humanitarianism, due to extreme infirmity of age or health.”¹⁰⁴ In other words, the person was on their deathbed. Asajiro Tomida, for example, was released early in January 1944 due to his age and ill-health.¹⁰⁵ By the end of the same month, Asajiro’s funeral notice appeared in the local newspaper.¹⁰⁶ Lamidey’s total release numbers, however, included individuals who were not born in Japan and were therefore interned under the *National Security (General) Regulations*.¹⁰⁷ Analysis of the Queensland index to Japanese internees indicates that thirty-three of these total Japanese releases were from Queensland. A great number of these releases were Australian-born women who were classified as Japanese by marriage or were Australian-born children of Japanese parents. In fact, only seven of the total releases in Queensland were Japanese-born people. Japanese releases accounted for a little over one percent of all releases, despite accounting for approximately eight percent of the total number of internees in Australia. This is compared to seventy-seven percent of released Italian internees with Italians accounting for sixty-seven percent of internees.¹⁰⁸ Among the female Japanese internees who obtained release, they had to prove not only their loyalties but also their capacity for independent living. Women and children who could prove they were able to support themselves outside internment, such as in the case of Jean Shibasaki and her children, were released.¹⁰⁹ This was similarly the case for Anima Ahmat and her child Audrey Ahmat, who were

¹⁰⁴ Lamidey, *Aliens Control*, 54. The total Italian releases includes those classified as Aliens, Non-British Subjects and Australian-born individuals. The category for Japanese releases does not specify the types of internees released, only indicating the category ‘Japanese’.

¹⁰⁵ Prisoner of War/Internee, Asa Jiro Tomida, QJ16185, MP1103/2, NAA.

¹⁰⁶ “Tomida [Funeral Notice],” *TDB*, 25 January 1944, 2.

¹⁰⁷ Lamidey, *Aliens Control*, 54.

¹⁰⁸ Investigation Branch, Queensland et al., Name Index & Registration Cards for Internees Dossiers Single Number Series, 1939, BP628/5, NAA.

¹⁰⁹ Letter from Director General of Security to Deputy Director of Security, Re. Jean Shibasaki,

interned in February of 1943 but released some two months later. Indeed, both faced challenges in obtaining release despite the flimsy basis for their internment in the first place; authorities classified both Anima and Audrey as Japanese internees who were “British born of Japanese parentage,” but Anima’s internment records indicate her nationality as ‘Malay’. Given these discrepancies, including the fact that Anima was a British subject, her internment under Regulation 26 was hardly justified.¹¹⁰ Even less sympathy was given to single Japanese fathers, such as Jack Takagaki, who pleaded for release to be with his children. He was not released until December 1946.¹¹¹ The indiscriminate treatment of Japanese internees within Australia saw a harsh and extensive imprisonment of the Nikkei, particularly those who lived in north Queensland. Whether the statistics of internment and release are carefully analysed, or the individual stories of people and authorities’ justification for their sustained internment is considered, a large proportion of the Nikkei community had their freedom taken, their homes and belongings dispossessed, and their connections to their communities smashed.

QJF.16581, 8 March 1943, Jean Shibasaki, Queensland Investigation File, Q24780, BP242/1, NAA.

¹¹⁰ Prisoner of War/Internee, Anima Ahmat, QJF16645, MP1103/2, NAA. Which of Anima’s parents were Japanese migrants is unclear. They are listed as Ahwang and Annie Savage on Anima’s internment records. The claim that Anima’s daughter, Audrey, would be of Japanese parentage is also unclear. The only existing record of Audrey Ahmat’s internment is listed in the internment records index under Investigation Branch, Queensland et al., Index Cards for Internees, BP628/5, NAA. The index indicates that both Audrey and Anima’s records correlate to Dossier 262, although this cannot be located.

¹¹¹ Prisoner of War/Internee, Jack Takagaki, QI16176, MP1103/2, NAA.



Image 18. Military police overseeing the embarkation of Formosan ex-internees onto the Japanese Destroyer *Yoizuki* at Pyrmont Bay Wharf, Sydney, ca. 1946. (Image courtesy of ID 1723619, State Library of Victoria.)

Image 19. Members of the Yamashita family, with Haruyoshi centre, as they pass through Brisbane on their way home to Thursday Island, 1947. (Image courtesy of “Japs go back to Thursday Island,” *Courier Mail*, 22 August 1947, 1.)

Dispossession and Deportation

Some historians have indicated that the Nikkei community fared relatively well during internment in Australia, but this interpretation remains contested among historians. Nagata and Bevege, for example, maintain that internees in Australia were kept reasonably comfortable and well taken care of during internment.¹¹² Weiss, however, argues that internment remained a hardship. While Italian and German families struggled with the loss of their primary wage earner — often leaving women and children to fend for themselves — entire Nikkei families were interned to avoid unnecessary hardships for Japanese women and children.¹¹³ This decision had severe consequences for the homes and businesses of Nikkei people, leaving most dispossessed of their property and belongings. With the swiftness of internments throughout December 1941 and in successive months, many Japanese internees found it difficult to make appropriate arrangements for their assets. Often, a single page form within their internment record — probably completed under similar influence as internment objection forms — was all that was available to nominate a single person who could take charge of their property. It is unlikely that nominated individuals were fully aware of their responsibilities for internees' property and even less likely that these arrangements had been made prior to internment. Few internees took the option of, or had the means to, request resources to make sure their properties were taken care of. Seemingly, there was a reliance on the simple nomination of a person's name on this form and it is unclear whether authorities took any other steps beyond filing these documents.¹¹⁴ A similar process was followed in the US and Canada, where limited time and lack of provisions for securing assets meant that most Japanese internees were forced to sell their businesses and homes at great loss.¹¹⁵ As a result of the rushed process, there were incalculable and severe repercussions for internees' homes, assets, businesses, and belongings.

In a few cases, the caretaker procedure seems to have worked for some Japanese businesses. Often this was at the cost of internees' total loss of ownership or stake in the business. Shigi Furukawa's laundry on Wood Street in Mackay, for example, was nominated as being caretaken by an Elsie Tamari within the internee property statement. It is unclear what

¹¹² Nagata, 'Naive Patriotism', 113; Bevege, *Behind Barbed Wire*, 377.

¹¹³ Weiss, *It Wasn't Really Necessary*, 143.

¹¹⁴ See, for example, the internee records in Investigation Branch, Queensland et al., Name Index & Registration Cards for Internees Dossiers Single Number Series, 1939, BP628/5, NAA.

¹¹⁵ Nagata, 'Japanese Internment in Australia', 295.

Elsie did with the business, but from 1942 the laundry was taken over by a different owner.¹¹⁶ Notices for Shigi's "well known Fuji Laundry" were placed in the local Mackay newspaper and as far as Rockhampton, indicating that the laundry was not closing down and was simply under the new management of "L. Shiba."¹¹⁷ The laundry operated for many years after 1941, but Shigi did not see any of its profits and she lost all stakes in the business when she was forcibly deported to Japan in 1946.¹¹⁸ In a more unfortunate case, Shoji Fukushima, owner of the Ebisu Laundry on Thursday Island, did not have a completed property statement in his internment records.¹¹⁹ As a result, the Ebisu Laundry was administered by the Public Trustee. During the war, the building was moved and part of it was used by the military for storage. It was later destroyed by fire.¹²⁰ Shoji's property was valued at approximately £13000 in 1956; it seems extremely unlikely that either Shoji or any of his family members had any of these assets reinstated after the war.¹²¹ Following Shoji's deportation, under Article 14 of the *Treaty of Peace with Japan* the Controller of Enemy Property seized and liquidated these assets. The funds from the liquidation, along with other Japanese internees' assets, were distributed to members of the Australian Defence Force who were Japanese POWs. Neither Shoji, nor any of his family, were ever able to claim

¹¹⁶ Internee Property Statement, Shigi Fulukawa Internment Record.

¹¹⁷ "Fuji Laundry, Wood Street," *DM*, December 11, 1941, 6. The notice assured customers that business has not been interrupted and they could expect "the same prompt and efficient service as usual"; "Fuji Laundry [General Notices]," *Morning Bulletin*, December 13, 1941, 1 also stated that "The Well Known Fuji Laundry will not close down. Under new management. — L. SHIBA." The latter of these newspapers is from Rockhampton and it appears unusual that individuals in a town over 300 kilometres away would be assured of continuing laundry services. It is possible, however, that a void of laundry services in the region was created with the internment of many Japanese laundry owners in late 1941. The subsequent increase in U.S. servicemen stationed in Rockhampton from July 1942 and the relocation of the Fuji Laundry to Rockhampton the following year supports this theory.

¹¹⁸ Prisoner of War/Internee, Shigi Fulukawa, QJF16014, MP1103/2, NAA.

¹¹⁹ Prisoner of War/Internee, Shoji Fukushima, QJ16570, MP1103/2, NAA.

¹²⁰ Letter from George Asange re. Ebisu & Co, Thursday Island, 26 August 1949, Ebisu and Company, Thursday Island - Shoji Fukushima (Internee) Repatriated (hereafter Ebisu and Company), EPJ1142, A1379, NAA.

¹²¹ Prisoner of War/Internee, Shoji Fukushima, QJ16570, MP1103/2, NAA; Letter from K. Bridges to Minister for External Affairs, 3 July 1956, Ebisu and Company. Shoji and Tomie had a daughter named Kazuko who enquired in 1956 whether she would be able to reclaim any of her parents' property or money. The response from the Controller of Enemy Property was a resounding no.

compensation for the loss of his property.¹²² Most Japanese businesses, whether or not a caretaker was appointed, were left damaged, destroyed, or neglected at the conclusion of the war.

Understanding the dispossession and property loss of Nikkei throughout the Allied nations remains an ongoing project for historians and the Nikkei community. Recent work by historians in Canada marks a new interest in attempting to uncover the depths of this dispossession and understand its consequences on the Nikkei community there.¹²³ Australian historian Sissons researched during the 1970s the outcomes of Japanese property confiscations in Australia, wrongly assuming that the *San Francisco Peace Treaty* of 1952 assured Japanese internees were able to recover at least some of their assets.¹²⁴ Sissons' unpublished research notes, however, indicate that almost all Japanese internees' property and assets seized by the Controller of Enemy Property was liquidated and sold. It was decided in 1952 that unclaimed properties and money were to be sold by the Controller of Enemy Property, such as in the case of the premises of the Japanese Club in Mackay which sold for £2500.¹²⁵ Under Article 14 of the *Treaty of Peace with Japan*, 1952, some £810,000 of Japanese assets were liquidated and distributed for the benefit of former Australian POWs and their families.¹²⁶ The sheer number of post-war claims for compensation show that while the Controller of Enemy Property may have held the property of Japanese internees during wartime, these assets were liquidated and sold thereafter. Many of the records for this process either do not exist or do not accurately value the property. Many other Japanese internees never made attempts to claim or were unaware of their ability to claim compensation.¹²⁷

¹²² Letter from C.L. Hewitt, Controller of Enemy Property, 1 August 1956, Ebisu and Company.

¹²³ See, for example Jordan Stanger-Ross et al., 'Introduction', in *Landscapes of Injustice: A New Perspective on the Internment and Dispossession of Japanese Canadians*, ed. Jordan Stanger-Ross, Rethinking Canada in the World (Montréal, CA: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2020), 3–50.

¹²⁴ Memorandum from David Sissons to Professor G. Sawyer re. the Property of Japanese Interned in Australia during WWII, 18 August 1971, Series 24: Japanese in Australia — Internees, Sissons Papers.

¹²⁵ "Japs Club Sold," *DM*, September 19, 1953, 2; Letter from L.H. Rowling, Delegate of the Controller of Enemy Property to Macrossan & Amiet, 15 October 1953, Mrs Shizuno Endo, EPJ1622, A1379, NAA.

¹²⁶ Commonwealth, *Parliamentary Debates*, Senate, 5 December 1957, 1942 (Hon. William Henry Spooner, Minister for National Development) (Austl.). There was an additional £969,000 also paid to the Commonwealth through the sale of the Burma-Siam Railway. The total £1,927,690 was distributed to just over 22,000 former POWs amounting to a payment of £86 per person.

¹²⁷ Letter from D.J. Hill, Delegate of the Controller of Enemy Property to the Chief Finance Officer,

Even individuals fortunate enough to make arrangements for the care of their property found that their possessions were destroyed or, at best, left to fall into disrepair. In the case of Floriya Torimaru, who was allowed to return to her family home in Brisbane the day after her arrest to pack some luggage, she found that most of their property had already been stolen.¹²⁸ It was similarly the case for Anne Iwanaga who found out during her internment that her family's home — along with the possessions of other Japanese internees stored there — had been burnt down. Her home insurance had lapsed during internment as the insurance company had been unable to contact her at her home address for renewal.¹²⁹ Post-war records indicate other Japanese houses and businesses were demolished or damaged by the military on Thursday Island.¹³⁰ Where buildings remained standing, many Japanese ex-internees who returned home after the war found their property neglected or damaged.¹³¹ Army headquarters were aware of these issues, noting in June 1942 that “in some instances persons have been apprehended for internment in circumstances which have resulted in stock in trade of shops, livestock, growing crops and personal property being left unattended, and presumably open to theft or misappropriation.”¹³² While it is unclear whether a state of disrepair left these properties open to damage and theft, or whether these were more sinister and targeted attacks against Japanese internees, most Japanese internees were left with little more than the clothes on their backs by

Commonwealth Sub-Treasury, 25 October 1961, Thursday Island, Japanese Firms, EPJ246, A1379, NAA; Letter from pro Chief Inspector, National Bank of Australasia to the Controller of Enemy Property, 9 March 1950, Japanese Society at Thursday Island, EPJ1609, A1379, NAA. In both cases, it was asserted that the money remained unclaimed and given that over six years had elapsed, the total was paid out to the Department of Treasury.

¹²⁸ Nagata, ‘Japanese Internment in Australia’, 114; Prisoner of War/Internee, Florimya Isabel Conchita Torimaru, QIF16593, MP1103/2, NAA.

¹²⁹ Nagata, 286; Letter from H.Q. QLD L. of C. Area to Deputy Director of Security for Queensland, 12 January 1943, Anne Iwanaga Queensland Investigation. Interestingly, the Iwanagas actually owned their property. According to Nagata’s interview with Anne, the house was in Anne’s name as law prohibited non-white residents from owning property or land.

¹³⁰ Thursday Island Claims involving Japanese Subjects, 26 August 1949, Thursday Island, Japanese Firms, EPJ246, A1379, NAA.

¹³¹ Nagata, ‘Post-War Thursday Island’, 32.

¹³² Internment Property File, Memo 65782 - Property of Internees, 23 June 1942, Series 24: Japanese in Australia — Internees, Sissons Papers. The army noted that some thefts may have been undertaken by creditors attempting to recover debts or otherwise make claims to money that may have been lost as a result of broken mining and labour agreements.

the end of the war.

On 28 November 1945, the Australian government announced its decision to release and ‘repatriate’ all Japanese civilian internees.¹³³ This policy initially applied without exception to all 3268 Japanese ex-internees, including approximately one hundred individuals who were born in Australia. It was decided later in 1945 to allow a select group of individuals — those who were Australian-born, were married to British or Australian-born spouses, or were too unwell to travel — to remain in Australia.¹³⁴ Those who wished to avoid deportation had to apply to authorities in writing. Many Nikkei were hopeful they would be able to remain in Australia. Their applications were so many that camp commandants had to resort to managing their requests by compiling forms with lists of signatures. Internees at 14C Internment Camp in Loveday, comprised of single men, communicated their wishes to return to their own homes and places of work in Australia. The men implored to authorities, explaining that “I have nobody in Japan,” “Innisfail is the only place for me to live,” and “I desire to live in Australia forever.”¹³⁵ These requests were just some of the hundreds that authorities received. In total, however, only 143 Japanese ex-internees were allowed to remain in Australia.¹³⁶ The Australian Government claimed it would not deport individuals who were too frail or infirm to travel, but photographs of the boarding of ships pictured ex-internees carried on stretchers and there are reports of elderly Nikkei dying during the voyage.¹³⁷

Japanese ex-internees to be deported were given only a few weeks warning of their departure. Feelings were mixed. A newspaper in Adelaide claimed to summarise the feelings of those at Loveday Camp: “some are plainly jubilant; others are resorting to cunning ruses to avoid joining the draft for repatriation. Still others are bewildered by the announcement of their

¹³³ Nagata, *Unwanted Aliens*, 193. Repatriation was a term used by these authorities but, as is a more accurate descriptor, deportation will hereafter be used.

¹³⁴ Nagata, ‘Japanese Internment in Australia’, 230–31. This total included Japanese internees held on behalf of other Allied nations. Approximately 958 of these ex-internees were former Australian residents or merchant seamen.

¹³⁵ Letter from Compound Leader Camp 14C, 29 January 1946, Japanese Internees, 11505, A373, NAA.

¹³⁶ Nagata, ‘Naive Patriotism’, 121.

¹³⁷ “How the *Yoizuki* Affair Developed,” *Truth*, 10 March 1946, 24 shows a woman on a stretcher being carried onto the ship; “Little Sickness on Hellship,” *Northern Star*, March 15, 1946, 1 reports that although there were no deaths on the *Yoizuki* voyage, three elderly people on *Koei Maru* voyage “died from natural causes, chiefly tuberculosis and malaria.”

comparative freedom.”¹³⁸ Nagata’s research indicated similarly mixed feelings; some internees believed Australians would be unfriendly wherever they lived, so it would be best to leave, while others were hopeful they could remain in Australia.

Indeed, many of the ex-internees would have seen crowds gathered in Melbourne — where their departing ship was waiting — with people clustered along the railway shouting and making fists at them. Ex-internees arrived at a wharf that was lined with machine guns and boarded a “shabby-looking ship.”¹³⁹ Most of the Japanese ex-internees were transported from Australia on the *Koei Maru*, described as a “pestilentially foul” ship with a “stench [that] was so great that it was apparent even against a strong wind.”¹⁴⁰ Reportedly the *Koei Maru* was not as squalid or overcrowded as the ‘hell-ship’ *Yoizuki* that transported Korean and Formosan internees and was likened to the “resurrected Black Holes of Calcutta.”¹⁴¹ While the *Yoizuki* affair caused significant public furor, there was very little drama surrounding the departure of the *Koei Maru* and the *Daikai Maru* that carried all of the deported Nikkei from Australia.¹⁴² Passengers on the *Koei Maru* reported they were “perfectly comfortable” during the voyage, including provisions of warm clothing, footwear, and sufficient food, and that they had “no complaints.”¹⁴³ Indeed, much of this propaganda was probably intended to soothe a post-War Australian public desperate to distance themselves from the horrors of war. Nagata’s later interviews with ex-

¹³⁸ “How Japanese P.O.W. View Departure,” *Advertiser*, February 13, 1946, 1.

¹³⁹ Nagata, *Unwanted Aliens*, 195–98.

¹⁴⁰ “*Yoizuki* Arrives at Rabaul; No Incidents on Trip,” *Canberra Times*, March 12, 1946, 1.

¹⁴¹ Nagata, *Unwanted Aliens*, 198–99; “Sons of Heaven Sent Home,” *Age*, 22 February 1946, 3. Nagata mistakenly confuses reports of the *Koei Maru* and the *Yoizuki*.

¹⁴² Japanese Destroyer ‘*Yoizuki*,’ PI46/11/7/1, A1067, NAA; Japanese Vessel ‘*Yoizuki*,’ 1654/5, A5954, NAA; Repatriation of Formosans on Japanese Destroyer ‘YOIZUKI,’ March 1946, 2170/1, A5954, NAA; YOIZUKI - Background and Sequence of Events, 44/431/70A, MP729/8, NAA. The conditions of the *Yoizuki* garnered substantial public attention, particularly given the emotional response of Korean and Formosan ex-internees who mistakenly believed they were being transported to Japan. This was only exacerbated by the poor conditions and overcrowding of the ship beyond capacity, along with the inclusion of some 200 women and children on the ship. There were three repatriation ships. The first was the *Koei Maru* that departed on 21 February 1946 that carried ex-POWs and ex-internees. The second was the alleged ‘hell-ship’ *Yoizuki* that transported only Korean and Formosan passengers. The final ship was the *Daikai Maru* that departed on the 2 March 1946 carrying Japanese, Korean and Formosan ex-internees.

¹⁴³ “Bundled Out of Australia,” *NM*, 15 March 1946, 4.

internees reveal a less rosy picture of these ships. On the *Koei Maru*, crew members attempted to embezzle the ship stores and withheld stored food from passengers. On the *Daikai Maru*, similar incidents escalated to passengers killing some of the crew in an attempt to improve conditions.¹⁴⁴ The Australian government's response to the conditions on the ships was relatively apathetic, asserting that Australia's responsibility for the passengers ceased the moment they boarded the ship and were handed into the responsibility of the ship's captain.¹⁴⁵ Robert Menzies, then leader of the opposition protested the over-crowded conditions imposed upon the deportees. He was met with a response from Minister for Immigration Arthur Calwell that was "one of the most vitriolic replies ever heard in parliament."¹⁴⁶ The majority of Japanese ex-internees departed from Australia on the 25 February 1946 on the *Koei Maru*.

After 1946, there were 141 Japanese ex-internees who remained in Australia. These individuals were primarily Australian-born children of Japanese migrants, spouses of Australian-born people, and a small handful of extremely elderly *issei*. The significant Japanese communities that had existed in Broome and Thursday Island prior to 1941 were drastically changed although, on Thursday Island, some former Nikkei residents were able to return to the community and their homes. Their return home, however, did not come without challenges. R.F.B. Wake, Deputy Director of CIS, was determined to challenge the return of ex-internees to their homes, asserting that, "there was no legal authority to prevent the Japanese returning to Thursday Island," but nonetheless, "every effort was being made to prevent the return of Japanese."¹⁴⁷ Other frantic telegrams advised that, "it is not repeat not desirable they return to the island," and advising Wake to "do anything reasonable to stop transit to T.I."¹⁴⁸ Many ex-internees, including the Yamashita family, were ultimately able to return to Thursday Island. Nagata argues that the most successful reintegration of Japanese ex-internees into the community occurred on Thursday

¹⁴⁴ Nagata, *Unwanted Aliens*, 200–201.

¹⁴⁵ "Plans Ready to Get Japs Away," *News*, 15 February 1946, 1.

¹⁴⁶ Bevege, *Behind Barbed Wire*, 223–24. Bevege argues that Menzies protested the deportation of Japanese ex-internees on the *Yoizuki*, although this seems improbable. More likely, Menzies opposed the abhorrent conditions onboard the ship. Bevege references this exchange as part of the "Yoiziki [sic] debate where Calwell described Menzies as 'a piece of scum'." The debate Bevege references, however, cannot be located.

¹⁴⁷ Memo of R.F.B. Wake, Deputy Director of Commonwealth Investigation Service, 11 August 1947, Haruyoshi Yamashita Queensland Investigation Case File, Q23993, BP242/1, NAA.

¹⁴⁸ Telegram, 28 August 1947, Haruyoshi Yamashita Queensland Investigation Case File, Q23993, BP242/1, NAA.

Island, with many substantive links among living residents continuing to the present day. On Thursday Island, these ex-internees maintained some of the strongest connections to the pre-war Nikkei community.¹⁴⁹ There was no home for the Yamashitas to return to on Thursday Island, with a letter in 1946 indicating that, “the premises occupied by these internees [the Yamashita family] before the War are no longer in existence (evidently having been demolished by the occupying forces) and that there is no accommodation available for them on the Island.”¹⁵⁰ The Yamashita family’s eventual return was publicly noted, with a number of photographs of the family’s arrival in Brisbane featured in newspapers around the country.¹⁵¹ The family of eleven, along with other ex-internee families, was largely accepted back into the Thursday Island community, with Evelyn Yamashita — the eldest daughter of the Yamashita family — explaining that “we were readily accepted back into the community by most people on TI, but there were a few new-chum people who had not lived on the island before the war. They didn’t like us.”¹⁵² Other ex-internees were not fortunate enough to return to their pre-war homes; these individuals had to live elsewhere in Australia and conceal their Japanese identity for fear of anti-Japanese retribution following the treatment of Japanese POWs. Bevege’s argument that “internment in Australia had come to an end and it was virtually forgotten ... the pre-war refugees and migrants who were interned, all slipped quietly into the Australian community,” conceals the reality of Nikkei experiences in a post-war Australia.¹⁵³

While it is difficult to describe the experiences of those internees who were able to remain in Australia, anti-Japanese sentiment persisted for decades. Residents in Broome protested over the return of two ex-internees to their community, while national newspapers carried stories promoting a ban on all Japanese people coming to Australia. Reports of ex-internees returning home were generally found among pages of articles about Japanese war

¹⁴⁹ Nagata, ‘Post-War Thursday Island’, 30.

¹⁵⁰ Letter from D.A. Alexander, Deputy Director of Commonwealth Investigation Service to Acting Director, Commonwealth Investigation Service, 6 December 1946, Haruyoshi Yamashita Queensland Investigation Case File, Q23993, BP242/1, NAA.

¹⁵¹ “Japs Go Back to Thursday Island,” *CM*, August 22, 1947, 1; “Jap Family Freed From Internment,” *Herald* (Melbourne), August 23, 1947, 7; “Last Internees Leave,” *DT*, August 24, 1947, 7.

¹⁵² Nagata, ‘Post-War Thursday Island’, 33–36. Other families returned to Thursday Island, including the Fujii, Mana, Nakata, Shibasaki, Tanaka, Takai, Yagura, and Yamashita families. Nagata notes that these families were better accepted on Thursday Island than in other parts of northern Australia such as Broome and Darwin, where relations were much more antagonistic.

¹⁵³ Bevege, *Behind Barbed Wire*, 224.

crimes.¹⁵⁴ Nagata shared Nikkei's recounts of stones flung at them, shots fired in their direction, and children who were beaten up at school. Many ex-internees had to frequently move around to avoid notice, while others were forced to live in tents and change their names to obscure their cultural identity.¹⁵⁵ The Oki family's experiences post-war remain unclear. The family were released to live in Babinda, but by 1972 most of the family had relocated from Cairns to the beachside suburb of Clovelly in Sydney.¹⁵⁶ The Oki family's experience, however, indicates the substantial changes in their lives during the post-war era. Remarkably, a few Nikkei were courageous and persistent in gaining re-entry to Australia during the 1950s. Tokitaro and Otsume Iwanaga, for example, returned to Australia in 1952, explaining that, "All my friends are in Australia – so I come back ... I spent more of my life here than in Japan – so I am really an Australian."¹⁵⁷ Indeed, the Nikkei community in Australia developed a complicated relationship with their identity and heritage between Australia and Japan, with many suffering discrimination for decades after 1946.

Conclusions

The decision to intern all members of the Nikkei community in 1941, whether they were enemy aliens or not, created a very difficult situation for those people of Japanese heritage living

¹⁵⁴ "Japanese at Broome," *CP*, 9 January 1947, 5; "Ban Japs," *Herald*, 25 January 1947, 8; "Jap War Criminal to Hang," *Queensland Times*, 18 December 1947, 1; "Check on Japs is Demanded by Evatt: Sees Peril," *Newcastle Sun*, 6 June 1947, 1.

¹⁵⁵ Nagata, *Unwanted Aliens*, 228–32.

¹⁵⁶ "Japanese Releases - [Oki 4 Pages]" (Brisbane, 1946), NAA: BP242/1, Q24014 Letter from E.A. Bird, Commonwealth Migration Officer to Migration Office, 3 October 1946; Death Registration of Kuma Oki, 31 August 1955, 1955/C/2955, QBDM; Death Registration of Hidewo Oki, 18 June 1972, 1972/C/2146, QBDM; 1968, Ted Yoichiro Oki, Clovelly Phillip NSW, Ancestry, Australian Electoral Rolls, 1903-1980; 1972, Ted Yoichiro Oki, Clovelly Phillip NSW, Ancestry, Australian Electoral Rolls, 1903-1980; 1968, Joan Oki, Clovelly Phillip NSW, Ancestry, Australian Electoral Rolls, 1903-1980; 1972, Chiyoe Oki, Cairns QLD, Ancestry, Australian Electoral Rolls, 1903-1980; 1972, Chiyoe Oki, Clovelly Phillip NSW, Ancestry, Australian Electoral Rolls, 1903-1980. It seems that the Oki family's move to NSW came after the death of grandmother Kuma in 1955 and Hidewo in 1972. From 1972, electoral records of the Oki family appear in Clovelly. It seems that while Ted and Joan Oki were living and working in Clovelly from at least 1968, the rest of the family — including their mother and sisters — came to live with them after 1972.

¹⁵⁷ "Japanese Migrant at 73," *Advertiser*, 18 December 1952, 1.

in Australia. These actions also irrevocably altered the Nikkei community in north Queensland. Intense fears of the invasion of Australia's north, exacerbated by decades of white Australian racial ideals, brought into question the loyalty of any Nikkei person living in Australia in 1941. With Australian intelligence authorities surveilling the Japanese community in north Queensland for years prior to 1941, military and police were ready to spring into action following the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. Decades of residence, proof of birth in Australia, reports of character, or statements of support from Australian community members did little to dissuade the Australian military or the Aliens Appeal Tribunal that Nikkei held Japanese loyalties; these authorities remained convinced that all Nikkei peoples were disloyal, unassimilable and fundamentally opposed to the Australian way of life. Japanese internment in Australia was remarkable for its scale and was an indictment of Australia's regard for due legal process. Few of the Japanese internees had the knowledge or capacity to fight internment and they remained unfree until 1946.

It is a tragedy that six decades of Nikkei participation in the north Queensland community was disrupted by en masse internment during WWII. The histories, connections, and contributions of these community members were in many ways shattered by Australia's actions during this wartime era — much the same as their homes, businesses, and belongings — but they were never completely destroyed or totally erased. Among the very few who were able to remain in Australia after internment, including the Takagaki, Oki, and Yamashita families, these people still faced recovery from traumatic internment and many years of ongoing discrimination. Some individuals managed to find their way back to Australia — such as Tokitaro and Otsume Iwanaga — and were able to return to their homes and affirm their place as Australians. Many others continued their lives in Australia, with contemporary residents of north Queensland still bearing the names, histories, and culture of their Nikkei heritage.

Conclusions

The history of Japanese migrants in north Queensland is filled with tales of triumph, tragedy, and trauma that enliven and add nuance to assessments of Australia's relationship with Japan. It is a transnational history of local connections with global implications. This thesis adds a new dimension to both Australia's relationship with Japan and the place of northern Australia in an international landscape of politics and diplomacy. With the Australia and Japan relationship marked by periods of war and substantial policy changes, a closer investigation of the history of Japanese migrants in north Queensland reveals a complex and unexpected history of strong links between regional Queensland and the wider world.

Piecing together this history of Japanese migrants out of the archival record does not come without its challenges or significant methodological considerations. The existence of Asian people within Australian history has typically been an underappreciated aspect of the nation's past and the archival record reflects this. Digitisation of archival records has facilitated the research for this thesis and its capacity to extend upon previous historians' work. More specifically, the inconsistencies in spelling for Japanese names and the extensive government documentation of aliens, undesirable migrants, and internees can often be overcome when the vast expanse of records can be managed using digital tools. This thesis builds a narrative that scales from individual life stories of Japanese migrants all the way up to the north Queensland community. To achieve this multi-layered narrative, an extensive number of records have been carefully identified, correlated and assembled. Together, these interwoven threads of records have created a detailed and complex picture of Nikkei people and their community in north Queensland between 1885 and 1946.

For many Japanese migrants, Australia presented economic opportunities, both real and imagined. As Japanese people began to arrive in Australia during the 1880s, and in the decades following, they began to face increasing barriers to their entering and residing within north Queensland. Nonetheless, Japanese migrants had many avenues through which they could enhance their rights and gain advocacy and representation. This included local community representatives and their organisations, including the Japanese Association and its many branches, and workers' organisations. Additionally, the Japanese consulate — located in Townsville from 1896 to 1908 — embodied the connection between local concerns and international relations. Issues such as a Japanese inspector being placed in the wrong train carriage and Japanese pearl shell workers striking against low wages, through the persistent

advocacy and diplomacy of the Japanese Association and the Japanese consulate, become touchstones in the Australia-Japan relationship. These key moments come to inform larger sequences of international politics, where Australia had to navigate a middle way through relationships with Britain, Japan, and indeed, the US while attempting to uphold its own ambition to be a ‘white’ nation.

The Nikkei community in north Queensland between 1880 and 1946 is significant, not because of its size but because of its role in forging links between northern Australia and Japan. Japanese workers, families, and business people created social, cultural, and economic ties throughout the north Queensland region and in doing so, placed north Queensland on an international stage. While the substantial multicultural population, and the so-called “colour line” that separated the region off from the south, has been established as a unique marker of northern Australia, this thesis sheds new light on this aspect of Australian and Japanese history. Importantly, this thesis builds upon these existing histories to develop a more complex understanding of this significant multi-racial character of north Queensland, as distinct from other parts of Australia.

Strong systems of cooperation that existed among Japanese workers from the 1890s, particularly in the pearl shelling and sugar cane industries, laid the foundation of the Nikkei community in Australia and its growing influence through the following years. These workers were among the first Japanese migrants who came to Australia and established systems of cooperation and organisation that enabled different sections of the Nikkei community to mobilise and develop opportunities for themselves and others. In real terms, this meant that many Japanese workers were able to remain in the north Queensland region for several decades — supported by the diplomatic representation of the consulate and Japanese Association — and many improved their circumstances through property ownership and business activities. The success of Japanese workers uplifted the entirety of the Japanese community in north Queensland, in both direct and indirect ways. Importantly, *nisei* and *issei* became accepted and valued members of north Queensland communities, contributing resources, charity, labour, and representation to support others’ needs. This thesis demonstrates these varying degrees of interconnected success, cooperation, and organisation among Japanese migrants and the important social, cultural, and economic connections developed with north Queensland communities, many of which persist to this day.

This cooperation and foundation of economic security flowed throughout other parts of the Nikkei community in north Queensland. This thesis further historical understanding of

Japanese workers and, by extension, the Japanese women who also migrated to north Queensland. Like the male workers who arrived in north Queensland in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, many Japanese women also migrated seeking economic opportunities. These women's activities — in the home, in paid work, in business, and in the community — became closely tied to the power and organisation of Nikkei in north Queensland. Previous histories have suggested that many Japanese women were sex workers and nearly all Japanese men were pearl shell or sugar cane labourers, but this thesis has identified a more complex and varied experience of Japanese men and women than was previously thought. Just as Japanese labourers were considered sojourners in north Queensland, previous histories have similarly regarded Japanese women as temporary migrants with few connections and little significance in the region's development. While Japanese labourers were organised and business-oriented in north Queensland, so too were Japanese women well-connected to their communities, including the businesses and organisations within them. The domestic and public life of Japanese women contributed greatly to the purposes and directions of the Nikkei community. Moreover, their roles as mothers and wives more deeply embedded Japanese migrants in the wider north Queensland community. The power and organisation of Japanese migrants, built upon negotiation of immigration restriction through local and national diplomacy made them significant members of north Queensland life and even key characters in a national and international narrative of global politics.

Growing out of the economic opportunities and independence garnered by Japanese men and women throughout north Queensland, many Japanese migrants became businessowners throughout the region. This participation in business speaks to the permanence and deep involvement of Japanese migrants within their communities. They were not sojourners nor temporary residents, but instead many had ongoing connections to the social, commercial, and cultural life of north Queensland. The level of financial and social security of Nikkei in north Queensland only increased over the decades of the twentieth century. Much of these business and commercial activities follow the patterns of Australian and international politics throughout these decades. Growth in the trade relations between Australia and Japan throughout the 1920s and 1930s was matched by growth in the number of Japanese small businesses — particularly emporiums and stores, but also laundries and farms. Such businesses began to expand and multiply their commercial enterprises, with many Nikkei taking up various combinations of business activity as the seasons, opportunities, or need arose. These businesses not only provided economic and social capital within the region but opened up north Queensland residents to a greater range of international goods and services. North Queensland's connections to Japan gave

it a cosmopolitan character around the turn of the twentieth century. Towns all along the northeast coast from Townsville to Cairns, Port Douglas, and Thursday Island had well-establishing trade routes that gave easy access and mobility to Asia for its residents.

Broadly, north Queenslanders were happy to become involved in the Japanese community and its displays of culture. This went both ways, where Japanese residents took great efforts to connect with the values and celebrations of European Australians, while also sharing their own events and celebrations. While, as this thesis shows, racial tensions and discrimination persisted, north Queensland remained a broadly multiracial and cooperative community that had varying levels of tolerance and acceptance of Japanese community members. International politics and events made their way into the social and cultural life of north Queenslanders, in part due to the influence of Japanese migrants within the region. The outcome of the Sino-Japanese War and the Russo-Japanese war were celebrated uncritically by north Queensland and Nikkei communities together, while WWI became a shared experience among the broader community. Recognition of these connections among Nikkei and the north Queensland community underlines the significance of Japanese migrants to north Queensland life and the region's importance among international discussions about the place of Japan, and even Asia, in the global political and social landscape.

This thesis, however, concludes with the surveillance and internment of the Nikkei community in north Queensland following the outbreak of the Pacific War. It documents the prelude to the internment and dispossession of the Nikkei community in Australia, with many significant repercussions in the north Queensland region. While this event disrupted and fractured the connections that had once been, it did not sever them and many of these relationships persevere. The suspicion, imprisonment and dispossession of this Nikkei community in north Queensland did, however, erase much of the cultural memory around this period of Australia's past and notions of the significance of north Queensland on the international stage. As Japanese community members who were considered friends, neighbours, employees, partners and business owners became reclassified as enemies, aliens, and spies, this aspect of north Queensland's history was forgotten. While the international community turned its focus to reconstruction in the aftermath of WWII, these families and communities carried forward the legacy and memories of the Nikkei experience in the northern reaches of Australia.

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Appendix 1.
Numbers and Reasons for Japanese Persons Admitted to Australia Without the Dictation Test, 1902-41.

Reason for persons admitted	1902	1903	1904	1905	1907	1908	1909	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918
Agreement	246															
Queensland/Japan Consular Certificates of Residence	11															
Accredited by Japanese government	21															
State Permits	7															
Section 3 (h) (possession of CEDT)	9	16	22	17	9	25	14	5	5	9	64	38	17	46	18	27
Section 3 (j) (crew of government vessel)									1							
Section 3 (l) accredited on Govt special mission)		4				1		1	4		2	11	4		4	2
Section 3 (m) (wife accompanying husband)	10	3														
Section 3 (n) (formerly domiciled person)	9	22	12	10												
Pearling	188	509	419	190	409	435	431	515	348	552	647	243	276	848	706	202
Deserters	12	2	3		6	1		3	4	1	5	3	9	14	2	7
Police proceedings		2				2										
On passports			4	34	29	29	10	16	25	37	23	28	66	93	79	125
Consul's wife			1													
Formerly domiciled					68	62	54	70	72	94	80	69	51	88	74	64
Special authority										4	1	1				2
Evaded customs officer										1						
Absconder												1				
Crews															4	
Australian birth certificate															1	2
Naturalization certificates																
Shipwrecked crew																
Consular officer																
Merchants etc.																
Total	513	558	461	251	521	555	509	610	459	698	822	394	423	1089	888	431

Reason for persons admitted	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935
Agreement																
Queensland/Japan Consular Certificates of Residence																
Accredited by Japanese government																
State Permits																
Section 3 (h) (possession of CEDT)	19	61	38	36	17	18	16	13	18	27	11	16	15	13	46	50
Section 3 (j) (crew of government vessel)																
Section 3 (l) accredited on Govt special mission)	1	1	9	2	1	1	1	8	3	9						
Section 3 (m) (wife accompanying husband)																
Section 3 (n) (formerly domiciled person)																
Pearling	327	155	85	221	68	111	171	113	198	233	116	52	162	101	110	130
Deserters	2	2	3	2	15	1			1							
Police proceedings	1	2		1				1								
On passports	87	66	82	76	88	67	84	73	69	52	76	64	123	112	115	
Consul's wife																
Formerly domiciled	83	57	63	43	33	40	46	43	42	41	22	18	24	20	24	22
Special authority	1		2	6		1	2									
Evaded customs officer																
Absconder																
Crews																
Australian birth certificate				3		1	8			3	3	3	1	3	2	
Naturalization certificates		1												1		
Shipwrecked crew												1				
Consular officer												1	5		8	2
Merchants etc.																213
Total	521	345	282	390	222	240	328	251	331	365	228	155	330	250	305	417

Reason for persons admitted	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941
Agreement						
Queensland/Japan Consular Certificates of Residence						
Accredited by Japanese government						
State Permits						
Section 3 (h) (possession of CEDT)	36	25	39	20	33	19
Section 3 (j) (crew of government vessel)						
Section 3 (l) accredited on Govt special mission)						
Section 3 (m) (wife accompanying husband)						
Section 3 (n) (formerly domiciled person)						
Pearling	228	207	99	66	45	
Deserters						
Police proceedings						
On passports						48
Consul's wife						
Formerly domiciled	10	9	19	8	7	
Special authority		1				
Evaded customs officer						
Absconder						
Crews						
Australian birth certificate	5	3	6	1	2	
Naturalization certificates						
Shipwrecked crew						
Consular officer	1	7				18
Merchants etc.	168	193	138	181	138	
Total	448	445	301	276	225	85

SOURCE — Adapted from Barry York, *Admitted 1901-1946: Immigrants and Others Allowed into Australia Between 1901 and 1946*, Studies in Australian Ethnic History, No. 2 (Canberra: ANU Press, 1993).

Appendix 2.
Japanese Sugar Cane Farmers in North Queensland, 1890-1941.

Name	Farming District	Known farming years	Known years in Australia	Farm size	Notes
Seitoro Ishimoto ¹	Mossman	1910 - 1919	1898 - 1946	3 - 6 acres	
Iheiji (Jyutaro) Mayeshiba ²	Cairns	1919	1897 - 1946	Unknown	
Shu Nishimura ³	Cairns	1928	1908 - Unknown	45 acres	
Hiroshi Nishimura ⁴	Cairns	1928	1904 - Unknown	Unknown	
Joe Nishimura ⁵	Cairns	1928	1909 - Unknown	Unknown	
John Iwamatsu Nakashiba ⁶	Cairns	1908 - 1915	1896 - 1952	45 acres	Partnership with Asajiro Nishioka
Asajiro Nishioka ⁷	Cairns	1908 - 1939	1897 - 1939	45 acres	Partnership with John Iwamatsu Nakashiba
K. Ishikawa ⁸	Cairns	1921 - 1922	1921 - 1922	Unknown	
Goto Aijiro ⁹	Edmonton	1937 - 1941	1896 - 1942	Unknown	
Kensaku Mori ¹⁰	Ingham	1909 - 1917	1897/9 - 1927	> 4 acres	
Yosuke Masumoto ¹¹	Ingham	1898 - 1917	1893 - 1918	> 4 acres	
Sukezayemon Mitakara ¹²	Ingham	1897 - 1927	1893 - 1927*	43 acres	
Senijiro Fujimura ¹³	Proserpine	1908 - 1917	1896 - 1946	> 4 acres	
Ichizo (Harry) Kamada ¹⁴	Proserpine	1913 - 1918	1898 - 1946	Unknown	
Tomoichi Yoshida ¹⁵	Proserpine	1901 - 1941	1896 - 1946	> 4 acres	
Saburo Kato ¹⁶	Mackay	1913 - 1941	1901 - 1946	5 acres	
Wekawa ¹⁷	Mackay	1913 - 1934	1902 - 1934*	> 4 acres	

Chikagasawa ¹⁸	Mackay	1904 - 1919	1890/3 - 1919	> 4 acres
Tanaka ¹⁹	Mackay	1913 - 1919	1895 - 1919	> 4 acres
Tokuda (Harry) Suzuki ²⁰	Mackay	1913 - 1941	1898 - 1946	19 acres
Turukat Komatz ²¹	Mackay	1903 - 1919	1893 - 1919	Unknown
Jack Takagaki ²²	Mackay	1908 - 1941	1902 – 1961*	120 acres
Sucsokoo ²³	Mackay	1913	1897 - 1913	Unknown
Yokito Endo ²⁴	Mackay	1927 - 1941	1901 - 1946	278 acres
Matasaku Hayashibara ²⁵	Mackay	1913 - 1946	1898 - 1946	2 acres
Chimatsu Shiraishi ²⁶	Mackay	1941	1897 - 1946	Unknown

NOTE — * indicates they died while in Australia.

Appendix 3.
Japanese Women in North Queensland from 1885

Known Name/s	DOB	Listed Birthplace	Known years in Australia	Known Residences	Marital Status	Children	Known Professions	Notes
Ben Akimoto ²⁷	1881	Yokohama, Kanagawa Prefecture	1899 - 1924	Thursday Island Townsville Longreach Brisbane	Single	-	Sex worker Laundress Cook Housekeeper	Reported she “lived on the proceeds of prostitution” in Townsville
Chie Yukawa ²⁸	1877	Nagasaki Prefecture	1898 - 1946	Thursday Island	Single	-	-	
Chiyo Oye previously Mizukawa ²⁹	1872	Saga Prefecture Or Nagasaki Prefecture	1905 - 1927	Thursday Island	Married	-	-	
Chiyo Oki ³⁰	1910	Kushimoto, Wakyama Prefecture	1931 – 1946>	Townsville Innisfail	Married	8	Laundry Silk store Housewife	Husband Hidewo Oki ran a store. Continued living in Australia after release from internment.
Fujino Mayeji ³¹	1883	Nagasaki Prefecture	1898 - 1938	Cairns Babinda Thursday Island	Married	-	Housewife	
Fukuno Tomida ³²	1881	Kumamoto Prefecture	1898 – 1927	Thursday Island	Married	-	Domestic Duties	
Hana Kondo Matsumaga ³³	1878	Nagasaki Prefecture	1907 – 1913>	Thursday Island Broome	Married	-	-	

Known Name/s	DOB	Listed Birthplace	Known years in Australia	Known Residences	Marital Status	Children	Known Professions	Notes
Hana Masumoto ³⁴	1867	Yamaguchi Prefecture	<1918	Ingham	Married	1	-	Husband was a sugar cane farmer.
Hatsu Inouye [Inone] or Maeta ³⁵	1876	Nagasaki Prefecture	<1906 – 1923>	Thursday Island	Married	-	-	
Hide Shiosaki previously Okano ³⁶	1880	Kumamoto	1898 – 1923>	Thursday Island Broome	Married	5	Domestic Duties	Husband was a boatbuilder and carpenter.
Hiro Furusato (Mashizu) ³⁷	1876	Kumamoto Prefecture	<1920 – 1935	Mackay Townsville Thursday Island	Married	-	-	
Ino Kasahara (Oyasu Tominaga) ³⁸	1874	Japan	1897 – 1917	Thursday Island	Married	5	-	
Kame Tashima ³⁹	1866	Fukuoka Prefecture	1897 - 1920	Townsville	Married	-	Storekeeping	Husband owned Y. Tashima & Co.
Kameno Furuta ⁴⁰	1866	Wakayama Prefecture	<1911 – 1918>	Thursday Island	Married	-	-	Husband Tsugitaro Furuta was a boatbuilder
Kameo Suzuki ⁴¹	1872	Nagasaki Prefecture	<1918 - 1920	Darwin Thursday Island	-	-	-	

Known Name/s	DOB	Listed Birthplace	Known years in Australia	Known Residences	Marital Status	Children	Known Professions	Notes
Kato Arita ⁴²	1879	Nagasaki Prefecture	<1909	Thursday Island	-	-	-	
Kato Kawasaki ⁴³	1876	Nagasaki Prefecture	<1911 – 1923>	Thursday Island Townsville	Married	-	-	
Kiku Nishimura previously Yamaoka [Yamasaki] ⁴⁴	1874	Wakayama	<1904 – 1924>	Thursday Island Cairns	Married	6	-	Husband was a ‘pearl fisher’ and boat owner.
Kikuno Koike ⁴⁵	1876	Wakayama Prefecture	<1912 – 1928>	Thursday Island Charter Towers	Married	-	-	
Kimu Fujita ⁴⁶	-	-	1886 - 1895	Thursday Island	Married Widowed	1	Boarding house	
Kisu Yamamoto ⁴⁷	1883	Nagasaki Prefecture	1902 - 1946	Thursday Island	Married	-	Home Duties	
Kono Shimona ⁴⁸	1877	Nagasaki Prefecture	<1906 – 1911>	Thursday Island	-	-	-	
Kuma Fukabori ⁴⁹	1882	Nagasaki Prefecture	<1911 – 1914X	Thursday Island	Married	-	-	

Known Name/s	DOB	Listed Birthplace	Known years in Australia	Known Residences	Marital Status	Children	Known Professions	Notes
Kuma Oki previously Sameshima ⁵⁰	1877	Kumamoto Prefecture	1896 – 1955X	Thursday Island Innisfail	Married Widowed	3	Housekeeper Café owner Housewife	
Mary Serguff ⁵¹	1883	Kumamoto Prefecture	<1919	Ingham	-	-	-	CEDT indicates her nationality is 'Mongol Japanese'.
Masano Oki previously Kimura ⁵²	1882	Fukuoka Prefecture	<1907 – 1937>	Thursday Island Cairns	Married	4	-	
Masaye Mie ⁵³	1880	Japan	<1912	Thursday Island	-	-	-	
Masu Okamoto (previously Kusamo) ⁵⁴	1882	Shimabara, Nagasaki	1901 - 1943	Childers Cairns Thursday Island	Married Widowed	-	Housewife Laundry	Husband owned a laundry. Husband did not return from Japan in 1922.
Matsu Miyasaki ⁵⁵	1876	Mie Prefecture/ Kumamoto Prefecture	<1917 – 1926	Thursday Island Rockhampton	-	-	Prostitute	
Mitsu Teramoto or Tashima ⁵⁶	1875	Osaka Prefecture	<1908 - 1940	Townsville Thursday Island	Married	-	-	
Miwa Tanikawa ⁵⁷	-	Japan	1916 - 1920	Ayr Thursday Island	Married	-	-	

Known Name/s	DOB	Listed Birthplace	Known years in Australia	Known Residences	Marital Status	Children	Known Professions	Notes
Momu Mitakara ⁵⁸	1863	Japan	1893 - 1930	Ingham	Married Widowed	1	Housewife Sugar Farm	
Nobu Ide ⁵⁹	1881	Nagasaki Prefecture	1897 - 1946	'Geraldton' Townsville Thursday Island Ayr	Married	-	Sex worker Brothel owner Tailoress Bath House	1910 report stating she does 'business on her own account'.
Oai Tsukimori ⁶⁰	1874	Ōita Prefecture	<1915 – 1916>	Thursday Island	Married	-	-	
Oasa Mamatsu ⁶¹	1877	Wakayama Prefecture	<1908 – 1912	Thursday Island	-	-	-	
Ohiro Minami ⁶²	1875	Japan	<1913 – 1914	Thursday Island Broome	Single	-	-	
Okito Okagi ⁶³	1876	Nagasaki Prefecture	<1911 - 1912	Thursday Island	Married	-	-	
Oko Shiraki (Kou Kido) ⁶⁴	1878	Nagasaki Prefecture	1893 - 1946	Thursday Island Cairns	Married	-	Laundry Housewife	Husband owned a laundry business. Sister was Sashi Mori.
Omatsu ⁶⁵	-	-	<1894x	Thursday Island	Unmarried	-	Brothel Owner	
Omiyo Yamashita ⁶⁶	1859	Nagasaki	1901 – 1903>	Thursday Island	Married	-	Storekeeping	Husband in Nagasaki while she was in Australia.

Known Name/s	DOB	Listed Birthplace	Known years in Australia	Known Residences	Marital Status	Children	Known Professions	Notes
Omon Mizakawa ⁶⁷	1878	Nagasaki	<1912	Thursday Island	-	-	-	
Otoku Shigemoto ⁶⁸	1877	Japan	<1909 - 1913	Thursday Island Broome	Married	-	-	
Otoma Kitano ⁶⁹	1879	Nagasaki	<1913 – 1918>	Thursday Island Cairns Townsville	Married	-	-	
Otoma Urita ⁷⁰	1884	Japan	1900 - 1912	Thursday Island Charters Towers	Married	-	Nursemaid Laundry Cooking Laundry business	Police allege her story is untrue and she was a stowaway but could not convict.
Otomo (Matsuno) Hamasaki ⁷¹	1885	Nagasaki Prefecture	1899 - 1946	Thursday Island Darwin	Married	-	Home duties Laundry	Aunt is Tame Nishi.
Otoyo Hasegawa ⁷²	1879	Nagasaki Prefecture	<1913-1917>	Thursday Island Halifax	-	-	-	
Otsume Iwanaga ⁷³	1877	Nagasaki Prefecture	1895 – 1946, 1953 – 1958x	Thursday Island Cairns Atherton Tablelands	Married	1	Store Laundry Farm Domestic Duties	Adopted daughter Deported from Australia in 1946 and returned in 1953.
Roku Shiojima ⁷⁴	1879	Nagasaki	<1912 – 1929>	Thursday Island	Married	-	-	
Roku Tanaka ⁷⁵	1878	Japan	<1907	Thursday Island	-	-	-	

Known Name/s	DOB	Listed Birthplace	Known years in Australia	Known Residences	Marital Status	Children	Known Professions	Notes
Sao (Sawo) Tanaka ⁷⁶	1878	Nagasaki	1899 – 1971x	Thursday Island	Widowed	8	Home Duties	Husband owned a store.
Sashi Mori ⁷⁷	1871	Amakusa, Kumamoto Prefecture	1886 – 1946	Thursday Island Townsville Mount Isa Ingham Cairns	Married Widowed	1	Home Duties Laundry	Husband owned a laundry. Records state 1876 arrival to Australia, but more likely 1886 (typo). Oko Shiraki was her sister.
Setsu Nishimura ⁷⁸	1876	Sanga [unknown]	<1912 - 1920	Cairns	-	-	-	
Shigeno Sakakibara ⁷⁹	1898	Wakayama	1922-1946	Thursday Island	Married	1	Storekeeping	Husband Isekichi ran the store Shiozima & Coy.
Shigi Furukuwa previously Furuchi and Ogawa ⁸⁰	1877	Hyōgo Prefecture	1898 - 1941	Thursday Island Mackay	Married (x2) Widowed	-	Laundry Proprietress	
Shina Nakagawa ⁸¹	-	-	<1885 – 1895x	Thursday Island	Married Widowed	-	Billiard Saloon Boarding House	Inherited husband's laundry businesses.
Shio Yamaguchi ⁸²	1877	Nagasaki	<1910 – 1937	Thursday Island Broome	-	-	-	

Known Name/s	DOB	Listed Birthplace	Known years in Australia	Known Residences	Marital Status	Children	Known Professions	Notes
Shizuna [Shijinu] Endo previously Idemoto, Honda, Yamanaka ⁸³	1881	Kumamoto	1898 - 1946	Thursday Island Mackay	Married	2	Sugar Farm	Husband is a farmer. Children are step-children.
Shizuye Mitsui previously Nakane ⁸⁴	1882	Yamaguchi or Wakayama	<1909 – 1914	Thursday Island	Married	1	-	
Sui Yoshida or Yamano ⁸⁵	1880	Nagasaki	<1907 – 1927x	Thursday Island Innisfail	Married Widowed	1	-	
Sumiye Shiosaki ⁸⁶	1877	Wakayama	<1915 – 1917>	Thursday Island Broome	-	-	-	
Takeno Nakamura ⁸⁷	1879	Nagasaki	<1908 – 1925>	Thursday Island	Married	-	-	
Tame Nishi previously Suzuki ⁸⁸	1880	Nagasaki	1898 - 1946	Thursday Island	Married	2	Store Domestic Duties	Husband was a 'businessman' Tomu Hamasaki is her niece.
Tamiye or Moyo Hamada (Yoshima) ⁸⁹	1874	Osaka	<1920 – 1934	Mackay Thursday Island	-	-	-	-
Toki Mayeshiba previously Shiomasu ⁹⁰	~1860	Nagasaki	1896 - 1922	Thursday Island	Married		Storekeeping	Husband owned store.

Known Name/s	DOB	Listed Birthplace	Known years in Australia	Known Residences	Marital Status	Children	Known Professions	Notes
Toku Shima ⁹¹	1875	Nagasaki	<1917	Townsville	Married		Sugar cane farm	Husband is a sugar farmer.
Tomie Fukushima ⁹²	1905	Wakayama	1924 - 1946	Thursday Island	Married	-	Domestic Duties Laundry Store	Husband owned a drapery store and Ebisu & Co. Laundry
Toyo or Tome Nakano [Ito] [Mori] previously Tanaka ⁹³	1878	Kobe, Japan	1908 – 1930>	Thursday Island	Married	-	-	
Tsune Komatsu previously Fuji ⁹⁴	1876	Okamura, Ehime Prefecture	1896 – 1910>	Thursday Island	Married	1	Tailoress Boarding House	Husband is boarding house keeper.
Tsune Yasuhara ⁹⁵	1879	Japan	<1912 – 1926>	Broome Thursday Island	-	-	-	
Tsuru Nishi ⁹⁶	1879	Wakayama	<1909	Thursday Island	-	-	-	
Tsuru Satowa ⁹⁷	1876	Nagasaki	<1914 – 1932>	Longreach Brisbane Thursday Island	-	-	-	
Uno Matsushita ⁹⁸	1885	Wakayama	1929 - 1946	Thursday Island	Married	-	Domestic Duties Store	Husband owned a store

Known Name/s	DOB	Listed Birthplace	Known years in Australia	Known Residences	Marital Status	Children	Known Professions	Notes
Waki Kawamoto ⁹⁹	1860	Nagasaki	<1907- 1916>	Thursday Island	Married	-	-	
Yaye Nishikawa ¹⁰⁰	1880	Yamaguchi or Saga Prefecture	<1911 – 1919>	Thursday Island	Married	-	-	
Yodo Nishumura ¹⁰¹	-	-	<1916	Cairns Brisbane	Married	-	-	
Yone Nagata ¹⁰²	1882	Nagasaki	1898 - 1946	Rockhampton Thursday Island	Married	-	-	
Yoshi Ida ¹⁰³	1861	Hiroshima or Ehime	<1909 – 1918>	Thursday Island	-	-	-	Husband was a merchant.
Yoshino Nishikawa ¹⁰⁴	1877	Nagasaki	<1914 – 1916	Thursday Island	-	-	-	
Yoshino Tashima ¹⁰⁵	1881	Wakayama	1901 - 1946	Thursday Island Broome	Single	-	Dressmaker	
Youe Yamada ¹⁰⁶	1884	-	<1911	Thursday Island	-	-	-	

Known Name/s	DOB	Listed Birthplace	Known years in Australia	Known Residences	Marital Status	Children	Known Professions	Notes
Yukeye Yamamura ¹⁰⁷	1879	Nagasaki	<1915	Thursday Island	-	-	-	

NOTE -- < > indicates the dates may be earlier or later than this date

X indicates a person died while in Australia

- indicates nil or unknown

[] indicates alternative spelling for names

Y. Tashima's ¹¹⁹	Townsville	1912	1922
Fujiyas ¹²⁰	Townsville	1922	1932
T. Higashi's ¹²¹	Townsville	1914	1920



Endnotes

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- ¹ Ishimoto, File 1183E, AGS/N104, SRS 6041, QSA; “Sugarcane Planters Cultivating Four Acres and Upwards,” *Pugh’s (Queensland) Official Almanac, Directory and Gazetteer for 1919*, 1298; Prisoner of War/Internee, Seitoro Ishimoto, QJ16040, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Seitoro Ishimoto, QJ16040, MP1103/1, NAA.
- ² Certificate of Having Passed the Dictation Test, Iheiji Mayeshiba, File 2197E, AGS/N97, SRS 6041, QSA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Iheiji Mayeshiba, QJ16080, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Iheiji Mayeshiba, QJ16080, MP1103/1, NAA.
- ³ Certificate of Having Passed the Dictation Test, Shu Nishimura, AGS/N97, SRS 6041, QSA; Birth Registration of Shiw Nishimura, 8 March 1908, 1908/C/1680, QBDM; Prisoner of War/Internee, Shiu Nishimura, NJ17009, MP1103/2, NAA. Shu was born in Australia but *technically* under existing legislation was classified as an ‘alien’ farmer and was required to gain permission for cane farming. Shu was also the brother of Hiroshi and Joe Nishimura.
- ⁴ Certificate of Having Passed the Dictation Test, Hiroshi Nishimura, AGS/N97, SRS 6041, QSA; Birth Registration of Hiroshi Nishimura, 18 July 1904, 1904/C/10767, QBDM; Prisoner of War/Internee, Hiroshi Nishimura, NJ17016, MP1103/2, NAA.
- ⁵ Certificate of Having Passed the Dictation Test, Joe Nishimura, AGS/N97, SRS 6041, QSA; Birth Registration of Joe Nishimura, 14 November 1909, 1909/C/2011, QBDM.
- ⁶ Certificate of Authority to Cultivate and Harvest Existing Sugar Crop, John Iwamatsu Nakashiba, AGS/N97, SRS 6041, QSA; Memorandum Department of External Affairs, 21 August 1912, B. Nakashiba Ex. Cert. Exemption Certificate, 1921/24449, A1, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, John Iwamatsu Nakashiba, DJ18113, MP1103/2, NAA; “Death,” *Northern Standard*, 6 June 1952, 2.
- ⁷ Certificate of Authority to Cultivate and Harvest Existing Sugar Crop, John Iwamatsu Nakashiba, AGS/N97, SRS 6041, QSA; Memorandum Department of External Affairs, 21 August 1912, B. Nakashiba Ex. Cert. Exemption Certificate, 1921/24449, A1, NAA; “Gordonvale Summons Court,” *CP*, 8 August 1934; Review of Japanese Population and Activities, Queensland (Report), 20 February 1939, Japanese Activities in Queensland, C68645, A367, NAA.
- ⁸ Memorandum Home and Territories Department, No. 20/21213, 2 December 1921, Y. Hayami Japanese on Passport, 1926/4456, A1, NAA.
- ⁹ Aijiro Goto Alien Registration Certificate No 73 Issued 30 October 1916 at Ingham, JAPANESE GOTO A, BP4/3, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Goto Angiro, QJ16016, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Goto Angiro, QJ16016, MP1103/1, NAA.

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- ¹⁰ Kensaku Mori, File 202E, AGS/N355, SRS 6041, QSA; CEDT, Kensaku Mori, 27 February 1917, 277/65, J2483, NAA; “Sugarcane Planters Cultivating Four Acres and Upwards,” *Pugh’s (Queensland) Official Almanac and Directory, 1917*, 1263; “Mackay Storekeepers,” *Pugh’s for 1927*, 496.
- ¹¹ QSA: SRS6041, AGS/N355, 256E, Yosuke Masumoto; “Sugarcane Planters Cultivating Four Acres and Upwards,” *Pugh’s (Queensland) Official Almanac and Directory, 1917*, 1262; CEDT, Yosuke Masumoto, 14 December 1917, 237/96, J2483, NAA.
- ¹² Sukezayemon Mitakara, File 244E, AGS/N355, SRS 6041, QSA; “The Bemerside Tragedy,” *TDB*, 7 April 1927, 7.
- ¹³ Fugimura, File 1446E, AGS/N105, SRS 6041, QSA; “Sugarcane Planters Cultivating Four Acres and Upwards,” *Pugh’s (Queensland) Official Almanac and Directory, 1917*, 1257; Prisoner of War/Internee, Sengiro Fujimura, QJ16010, MP1103/1, NAA.
- ¹⁴ Harry Kamada, File 2113E, AGS/N356, SRS 6041, QSA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Ichizo Kamada, QJ16051, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Ichizo Kamada, QJ16051, MP1103/1.
- ¹⁵ Tomoichi Yoshida, File 446E, AGS/N100, SRS 6041, QSA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Tomoichi Yoshida, QJ16527, MP1103/2, NAA; “Sugarcane Planters Cultivating Four Acres and Upwards,” *Pugh’s (Queensland) Official Almanac and Directory, 1917*, 1270; Prisoner of War/Internee, Tomoichi Yoshida, QJ16527, MP1103/1, NAA.
- ¹⁶ Kato Saburo, File 943E, AGS/N103, SRS 6041, QSA; Kato Sabura Alien Registration Certificate No 20 Issued 20 January 1917, JAPANESE KATO SABURO, BP4/3, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Kato Saburo, QJ16056, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Kato Saburo, QJ16056, MP1103/1, NAA.
- ¹⁷ Wekawa, AGS/N103, SRS 6041, QSA; “Notices,” *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 5 July 1934, 6; EKUTARO, Wekawa (Japanese), Item 446688, SRS 334/3/1499, QSA; “Sugarcane Planters Cultivating Four Acres and Upwards,” *Pugh’s (Queensland) Official Almanac and Directory, 1915*, 1261.
- ¹⁸ Chikagasawa, File 642E, AGS/N101, SRS 6041, QSA; “Sugarcane Planters Cultivating Four Acres and Upwards,” *Pugh’s (Queensland) Official Almanac, Directory and Gazetteer for 1919*, 1293.
- ¹⁹ Tanaka, File 993E, AGS/N103, SRS 6041, QSA; “Sugarcane Planters Cultivating Four Acres and Upwards,” *Pugh’s (Queensland) Official Almanac, Directory and Gazetteer for 1919*, 1307.
- ²⁰ Tokudo Suzuki, File 1020E, AGS/N103, SRS 6041, QSA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Tokuda aka Harry Suzuki, QJ16173, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Tokuda aka Harry Suzuki, QJ16173, MP1103/1, NAA.
- ²¹ Turukat Komats, File 1042E, AGS/N103, SRS 6041, QSA.

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- ²² Jack Takagaki, File 1012E, AGS/N103, QSA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Jack Takagaki, QJ16176, MP1103/2, NAA; “Jack Takagaki,” Australia Find a Grave Index, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/199407518/jack-takagaki>.
- ²³ Return of Farleigh (Mackay), No. 1696 Sucsokoo, Chief Secretary’s Department, General Correspondence – Coloured Labour and Asiatic Aliens, 16 July 1913-31 July 1913, Item 862496, SRS 5402, QSA.
- ²⁴ Yokito Endo and Trustee S.J. Axam, EPJ1604 PART 1, A1379, NAA; Yokito Endo, EPJ1604 PART 2, A1379, NAA.
- ²⁵ Matasaku Hayashibara, Internees QLD File, Series 24: Japanese in Australia — Internees, Sissons Papers; Prisoner of War/Internee, Matasaku Hayashibara, QJ16024, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Matasaku Hayashibara, QJ16024, MP1103/1, NAA; Matasaku Hayashibara, File 799E, AGS/N102, SRS 6041, QSA.
- ²⁶ Chimatsu Shiraishi, Internees QLD File, Series 24: Japanese in Australia — Internees, Sissons Papers; Prisoner of War/Internee, Chimatsu Shiraishi, QJ16165, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Chimatsu Shiraishi, QJ16165, MP1103/1, NAA.
- ²⁷ CEDT, Ben Akimoto, 31 August 1914, 159/19, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Ben Akimoto, 19 December 1924, 386/15, J2483, NAA.
- ²⁸ Prisoner of War/Internee, Chie Yukawa, QJF16237, MP1103/2, NAA.
- ²⁹ Marriage Registration of Chiyo Mizukawa and Ichimatsu Ohye, 8 March 1905, 1905/C/2173, QBDM; CEDT, Chiyo Oye, 22 January 1908, 1908/63, J3136, NAA; CEDT, Mrs Chiyo Oye, 11 July 1911, 67/9, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Chiwo Mizukawa [Chiwo Oye or Chiyo Oye], 2 December 1926, 415/94, J2483, NAA.
- ³⁰ Prisoner of War/Internee, Chiye Oki, QJF16136, MP1103/2, NAA; Japanese Releases – [Oki 4 pages], Q24014, BP242/1, NAA.
- ³¹ Fujino Mayeji Alien Registration Certificate No 70 issued 18 October 1916 at Cairns, JAPANESE MAYEJI F, BP4/3, NAA; CEDT, Fugino Mayeji, 18 June 1928, 440/46, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Mrs Fujino Mayeji, 29 June 1938, 545/8, J2483, NAA.
- ³² CEDT, Fukuno Tomeda, 9 September 1914, 159/46, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Fukuno Tomida, 24 February 1927, 429/46, J2483, NAA.
- ³³ CEDT, Hana Kondo Matsumaga, 10 July 1912, 104/37, J2483, NAA; Marriage Registration of Umekichi Matsunaga and Ohana Kondo, 15 April 1907, 1907/C/2653, QBDM.
- ³⁴ CEDT, Hana Masumoto, 14 December 1917, 237/94, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Yosuke Masumoto, 14

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- December 1917, 237/96, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Shizuye Masumoto, 14 December 1917, 237/95, J2483, NAA; Yosuke Masumoto, File 256E, AGS/N355, SRS 6041, QSA.
- ³⁵ Marriage Registration of Hatsu Mouye and Tokujiro Maeta, 31 March 1906, 1906/C/2283, QBDM; CEDT, Hatsu Maeta, 9 April 1906, 1906/49, J3136, NAA; CEDT, Hatsu Inone, 18 February 1903, 124/90, J2483, NAA; Hatsu Inouye [Japanese], 1923/1, K1145, NAA.
- ³⁶ Birth Registration of Sute Shiosaki, 27 August 1906, 1906/C/10163, QBDM; Birth Registration of Kantaro Shiosaki, 18 July 1908, 1908/C/9609, QBDM; CEDT, Hide Okano (Mrs Shiosaki) and child Kantaro, 4 March 1909, 16/95, J2483, NAA; Birth Registration of Tsurugi Shiosaki, 1 April 1911, 1911/C/10766, QBDM; Birth Registration of Toshio Shiosaki, 5 May 1913, 1913/C/12408, QBDM; Birth Registration of Iwao Shiosaki, 18 October 1914, 1914/C/10163, QBDM; Mrs Hide Shiosah, Japanese Alien Registration Certificate No 36 Issued 10 November 1916, JAPANESE SHIOSAH H, BP4/3, NAA; CEDT, Hide Shiosaki, 28 February 1923, 346/65, J2483, NAA.
- ³⁷ CEDT, Hiro Furusato, 19 November 1920, 297/078, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Mrs Hiro Turusato, 29 August 1935, 520/95, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Mrs Hiro Furusato Extension, 1 December 1938, 545/69, J2483, NAA; Hiro Furusato, Alien Registration Certificate No 13419 issued 26 November 1921, JAPANESE FURUSATO H, BP4/3, NAA.
- ³⁸ CEDT, Ino Kasahara and female child, 1 March 1907, 1907/98, J3136, NAA; CEDT, Ino Kasahara, 20 September 1915, 185/44, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Yaye Kasahara, 20 September 1915, 185/45, J2483, NAA; Birth Registration of Kichi or Tsuyoshi Kasahara, 10 August 1897, 1897/C/1695, QBDM; Birth Registration of Shigeno Kasahara, 20 June 1899, 1899/C/1798, QBDM; Birth Registration of Aochi Kasahara, 13 March 1903, 1903/C/6433, QBDM; Birth Registration of Haruko Kasahara, 13 March 1903, 1903/C/6433, QBDM; Birth Registration of Kimiye Kasahara, 15 May 1906, 1906/C/10148, QBDM; Birth Registration of Yayeno Kasahara, 15 August 1909, 1909/C/10000, QBDM. It is unclear why there are two birth registrations under 1903/C/6433, but it is possible that either the certificate was filed twice or Ino gave birth to twins, but there are no death certificates for either child.
- ³⁹ CEDT, Kame Tashima, 18 January 1913, 124/88, J2483, NAA; NAA: J2773, 171/1913, CEDT, Kame Tashima, Yoshimatsu Tashima; CEDT – Asasuke Oki, Samoa, Sebo, Clarence, Kame Tashima, 711/1920, J2773, NAA; Pam Oliver, *Raid on Australia: 1942 and Japan's Plans for Australia* (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2010), 81.
- ⁴⁰ CEDT, Mrs Kamenno Furuta, 3 May 1911, 65/99, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Kamenno Furuto, 8 March 1916, 193/29, J2483, NAA.
- ⁴¹ CEDT, Kameo Suzuki, 29 May 1918, 257/39, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Kameo Suzuki, 23 November 1920, 298/001, J2483, NAA.

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- ⁴² CEDT, Kato Arita [Areta], 19 May 1909, 18/23, J2483, NAA.
- ⁴³ CEDT, Mrs Kato Kawasaki, 10 November 1911, 77/30, J2483, NAA; Kawasaki, Kato, Alien Registration Certificate No 362 issued 25 October 1916, JAPANESE KAWASAKI KATO, BP4/3, NAA; CEDT, Kato Kawasaki, 18 August 1921, 322/016, J2483, NAA.
- ⁴⁴ Request by Yoso Nishimura to reside on Thursday Island, 1902/51/50, A8, NAA; Birth Registration of Hiroshi Nishimura, 18 July 1904, 1904/C/10767, QBDM; Birth Registration of Takeshi Nishimura, 5 May 1906, 1906/C/1515, QBDM; Birth Registration of Shiw Nishimura, 8 March 1908, 1908/C/1680, QBDM; Birth Registration of Joe Nishimura, 14 November 1909, 1909/C/2011, QBDM; Birth Registration of Tomeye Nishimura, 25 May 1911, 1911/C/1850, QBDM; Japanese Alien Registration Certificate No 61 Issued 18 October 1916, Kiku Nishimura, JAPANESE NISHIMURA KIKU, BP4/3, NAA; CEDT, Kiku Nishimura, 28 June 1924, 384/13, J2483, NAA.
- ⁴⁵ CEDT, Kickuno Koike, 9 May 1912, 93/53, J2483, NAA; CEDT list, Ah Quay and Kikuno Koike, 4/1920, J2773, NAA; CEDT, Kikuno Koike, 26 February 1920, 287/76, J2483, NAA.
- ⁴⁶ Fugita Tatsu & Shina Nakagawa & Toosuke Yosuke, Item 2733181, Series 36, Inquests, QSA.
- ⁴⁷ Prisoner of War/Internee, Kisu Yamamoto, QJF16226, MP1103/2, NAA.
- ⁴⁸ CEDT, Kono [Kone] Shimona, 20 November 1906, 1906/287, J3136, NAA; CEDT, Kono Shimona, 19 January 1911, 64/33, J2483, NAA.
- ⁴⁹ CEDT, Kuma Fukabori, 15 March 1911, 65/37, J2483, NAA; Marriage Registration of Kuma Fuckabore and Kohara Uwanosuki, 12 April 1913, 1913/C/575, QBDM; Kuma Wuanosuki, Item 665960, SRS 4190/1/128, QSA.
- ⁵⁰ Marriage Registration of Kuma Sameshima and Torakichi Oki, 24 February 1906, 1906/C/2281, QBDM; Birth Registration of Hidewo Oki, 16 April 1906, 1906/C/10135, QBDM; Birth Registration of Mary Oki Samejima, 29 January 1913, 1913/C/12396, QBDM; Mrs Kuma Oki, Application for Leave to Submit Objections Against Detention Order, OKI/K, MP529/8, NAA; Death Registration of Kuma Oki, 31 August 1955, 1955/C/2955, QBDM.
- ⁵¹ CEDT, Mary Serguff, 21 May 1919, 267/25, J2483, NAA.
- ⁵² Marriage Registration of Masano Kimura and Asaski Oki, 16 October 1907, 1907/C/2661, QBDM; CEDT, Masano Kimura [Mrs Asaki Oki], 2 November 1901, 1907/379, J3136, NAA; Alien Registration Certificate No 64, Mars Masano Oki, 18 October 1916, JAPANESE OKI M, BP4/3, NAA; Birth Registration of Shigeo Oki, 13 July 1909, 1909/C/9989, QBDM; Birth Registration of Manji Oki, 20 September 1910, 1910/C/10313, QBDM; Birth Registration of Karno Oki, 7 August 1914, 1914/C/12513, QBDM; Birth Registration of Hideko Oki, 12 September 1915, 1915/C/12782, QBDM; CEDT, Masano Kimura (Oki), 20 March 1936, 535/44, J2483, NAA.

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- ⁵³ CEDT, Masaye Mie, 20 April 1912, 93/35, J2483, NAA.
- ⁵⁴ CEDT, Masu Kusamo, 5 February 1912, 91/76, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Jirokichi Okamoto, 5 February 1912, 91/75, J2483, NAA; Certificate of Exemption, Jirokichi Okamoto, 25 January 1914, Item 2674890, AGS/N356, SRS 6041, QSA; CEDT, Mrs Masu Okamoto, 20 March 1917, 231/9, J2483, NAA; Japanese Alien Registration Certificate No 211 issued 19 October 1916, Mrs Masu Okamoto, JAPANESE OKAMOTO M, BP4/3, NAA; CEDT, Jirokichi Okamoto, 16 February 1922, 335/033, J2483, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Masu Kusano, QJF16234, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Masu Kusano, QJF16234, MP1103/2, NAA.
- ⁵⁵ CEDT, Matsu Miyasaki, 9 August 1917, 232/82, J2483, NAA; Japanese Alien Registration Certificate No 3270 Issued 2 September 1918, Matsu Miyasaki, JAPANESE MIYASAKI MATSU, BP4/3, NAA; CEDT, Matsu Miyasaki, 27 May 1926, 410/1, J2483, NAA.
- ⁵⁶ Marriage Registration of Torakichi Teramoto and Omitsu Nishino, 6 May 1908; 1908/C/2277, QBDM; CEDT, Omitsu Teramoto, 4 June 1908, 1908/223, J3136, NAA; CEDT, Mitsu Teramoto, 12 March 1925, 386/98, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Mitsu Teramoto, 21 December 1932, 514/3, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Mitsu Tashima [Teramoto], 8 May 1934, 516/30, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Mrs Mitsu Teramoto Tashima, 19 April 1940, 552/58, J2483, NAA.
- ⁵⁷ Japanese Alien Registration Certificate No 79 issued 26 October 1916, Miwa Tanikawa, JAPANESE TANIKAWA M, BP4/3, NAA; CEDT for Ah Fong, Muira Tanikawa, Otozo Tanikawa, Murasaki Fukuto, Tokuichi Futo, Tommy Loban, Macano Batcho, 2183/1918, J2773, NAA.
- ⁵⁸ Momu Mitakara Alien Registration Certificate, JAPANESE MITAKARA M, BP4/3, NAA; Momu Mitakara, 456/1930, J2773, NAA.
- ⁵⁹ Prosecution of Japanese Girls at Thursday Island, 1910/5858, A1, NAA; Marriage Registration of Nobu Ide and Otomatsu Tanaka, 17 February 1913, 1913/C/3101, QBDM; CEDT, Nobu Ide, 14 January 1920, 286/77, J2483, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Nobu Ide, QJF16233, MP1103/2, NAA.
- ⁶⁰ CEDT, Oai Tsukimori, 23 February 1915, 175/65, J2483, NAA; "Shipping: Arrivals," *NM*, 10 January 1916, 2.
- ⁶¹ CEDT, Oasa Mamatsu, 10 July 1908, 104/38, J2483, NAA.
- ⁶² CEDT, Ohiro Minami, 18 February 1913, 124/91, J2483, NAA.
- ⁶³ CEDT, Mrs Okita Okagi, 28 November 1911, 77/64, J2483, NAA.
- ⁶⁴ KIDO, Kow [formerly Oko SHIRAKI, KIDO K, BP313/1, NAA; Mrs Oko Shiraki, Application for Leave to Submit Objections Against Detention Order, SHIRAKI O, MP529/8, NAA.

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- ⁶⁵ “Romantic Tragedy,” *Telegraph*, 18 May 1894, 2; “Japanese Murderer,” *Telegraph*, 28 May 1894, 4; Death Registration of Omatsu, 6 January 1894, 1894/C/3797, QBDM.
- ⁶⁶ Application for Certificate of Domicile for Omiya Yasashita, 8537/351/1903, BP342/1, NAA.
- ⁶⁷ CEDT, Omon Mizakawa, 20 February 1912, 92/11, J2483, NAA.
- ⁶⁸ CEDT, Mrs Otoku Shigemoto, 4 March 1909, 16/96, J2483, NAA; Marriage Registration of Rikichi Shigemoto and Otoku Ohira, 5 February 1909, 1909/C/2539, QBDM.
- ⁶⁹ CEDT, Otoma Kitano, 4 March 1913, 125/27, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Toma Kitano, 7 March 1917, 227/88, J2483, NAA; Kitano, Tamo - Nationality: Japanese - Alien Registration Certificate No 14 issued 17 October 1916 at Cairns, JAPANESE KITANO TAMO, BP4/3, NAA.
- ⁷⁰ Marsland & Marsland Solicitors to the Sub-Collector of Customs, re. J.C. Lewis v. Otoma, 8 February 1912, 1912/12137, A1, NAA.
- ⁷¹ Tomu Hamasaki [internment], C70550, A367, NAA; Otomo Hamasaki Alien Registration Certificate, NT/JAPAN/HAMASAKI OTOMO, MT269/1, NAA.
- ⁷² CEDT, Otoyo Hasegawa, 4 March 1913, 125/25, J2483, NAA; Hasegawa, Toyo - Nationality: Japanese - Alien Registration Certificate No 159 issued 22 January 1917 at Halifax, JAPANESE HASEGAWA TOYO, BP4/3, NAA.
- ⁷³ Mrs Otsusne Iwanaga, Application for Leave to Submit Objections Against Detention Order, IWANAGA/O, MP529/8, NAA; Annie Margaret Iwanga – Objection against internment, 255/741/416, MP508/1, NAA; Saka Iwanaga Alien Registration, IWANAGA S JAPANESE, BP25/1, NAA.
- ⁷⁴ CEDT, Roku Shiojima, 2 January 1912, 78/64, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Masuro Shiojima, 66/85, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Roku Shiojima, 7 April 1928, 440/51, J2483, NAA.
- ⁷⁵ CEDT, Roku Tanaka, 4 December 1907, 1906/314, J3136, NAA.
- ⁷⁶ CEDT, Sawo (or Sao) Tanaka, 4 October 1917, 233/55, J2483, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Sao Tanaka, QJF16236, MP1103/2, NAA; Death Registration of Osawo Tanaka, 9 January 1971, 1971/C/3555, QBDM.
- ⁷⁷ Mrs Sashi Mori, Application for Leave to Submit Objections Against Detention Order, MORI/S, MP529/8, NAA.
- ⁷⁸ CEDT, Setsu Nishimura, 16 January 1912, 91/28, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Setsu Nishimura, 17 April 1920, 288/40, J2483, NAA.
- ⁷⁹ Prisoner of War/Internee, Shigeno Sakakibara, QJF16575, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of

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- War/Internee, Isekichi Sakakibara, QJ16574, MP1103/2, NAA.
- ⁸⁰ Application For Leave to Submit Objections Against Detention Order, Shigi Fulukawa, FULUKAWA/S, MP529/8, NAA.
- ⁸¹ Death Registration of Shine Nakagawa, 27 October 1895, 1895/C/3535, QBDM; Fugita Tatsu & Shina Nakagawa & Toosuke Yosuke, Item 2733181, Series 36, Inquests, QSA; David C. S. Sissons, 'The Japanese in the Australian Pearling Industry', *Queensland Heritage* 3, no. 10 (1979): 13–14.
- ⁸² 124/15, CEDT, Shio Yawaguchi, 24 January 1913, 124/15, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Shio Yamaguchi, 4 March 1910, 41/67, J2483, NAA; "Shipping," *Northern Standard*, 19 March 1937, 10.
- ⁸³ Marriage Registration of Shijinu Honda to Buichi Honda, 26 September 1903, 1903/C/307, QBDM; Marriage Registration of Shizuno Honda to Sataro Idemoto, 5 February 1909, 1909/C/2540, QBDM; Death Registration of Sataro Idemoto, 11 February 1910, 1910/C/3186, QBDM; Marriage Registration of Shizuno Honda to Yokito Endo, 9 February 1937, 1937/C/619, QBDM; Application For Leave to Submit Objections Against Detention Order, Shizuna Endo, ENDO/S, MP529/8, NAA.
- ⁸⁴ Birth Registration of Unnamed (F) Mitsui, 17 March 1906, 1906/C/10126, QBDM; Death Registration of Unnamed (F) Mitsui, 18 March 1906, 1906/C/3298, QBDM; CEDT, Mrs Shizuye Nakane, 26 March 1909, 17/46, J2483, NAA; Marriage Registration of Masataro Nakane and Shizuye Mitsui, 12 February 1909, 1909/C/2541, QBDM; CEDT, Shizuye Mitsui, 24 February 1913, 92/36, J2483, NAA.
- ⁸⁵ Marriage Registration of Sui Yamano and Tsunesaburo Nakanishi, 4 December 1907, 1907/C/2665, QBDM; CEDT, Sui Yamano, 22 January 1908, 1908/66, J3136, NAA; Death Registration of Ysunesaburo Nakanishi, 10 February 1910, 1910/C/3187, QBDM; CEDT, Sugi Yamono, 10 December 1917, 237/84, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Sui Yoshida or Soji Yamano, 19 September 1923, 361/48, J2483, NAA; Death Registration of Sui Yoshida, 5 February 1927, 1927/C/1016, QBDM.
- ⁸⁶ CEDT, Sumiye Shiosaki, 23 February 1915, 175/62, J2483, NAA.
- ⁸⁷ Marriage Registration of Masado Nakamura and Takeno Yoshino, 4 July 1908, 1908/C/2281, QBDM; CEDT, Mrs Takeno Nakamura, 13 August 1908, 1908/300, J3136, NAA; CEDT, Takeno Nakamura, 9 December 1921, 324/012, J2483, NAA.
- ⁸⁸ Nishi, [Mrs] Tami, Japanese Alien Registration Certificate No 54 issued 10 November 1916 at Thursday Island, JAPANESE NISHI TAMI, BP4/3, NAA; CEDT, Otami Suzuki, 15 March 1917, 227/96, J2483, NAA; Tame Nishi, Application for Leave to Submit Objections Against Detention Order, NISHI/T, MP529/8, NAA.
- ⁸⁹ CEDT, Moyo or Tamiye Hamada, 15 March 1920, 288/14, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Mayo [Tamiye]

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- Hamad [also known as Yoshima], 20 May 1933, 514/61, J2483, NAA.
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- ⁹¹ CEDT, Toku Shima, 6 February 1917, 227/34, J2483, NAA.
- ⁹² Prisoner of War/Internee, Tomie Fukushima, QJF16571, MP1103/2, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Tomie Fukushima, QJF16571, MP1103/1, NAA.
- ⁹³ Marriage Registration of Goichi Nakano and Toyo Tanaka, 25 August 1908, 1908/C/2287, QBDM; CEDT, Toyo Tanaka, wife of N Goichi, 7 January 1909, 3/94, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Goichi Nakano, 22 March 1911, 65/57, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Toyo Nakanao, 4 March 1913, 125/23, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Tome Mori or Toyo Nakano, 3 April 1924, 366/41, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Mrs Tome Nakano [Itow], 4 March 1930, 467/73, J2483, NAA.
- ⁹⁴ Marriage Registration of Fukujiro Komatsu and Tsune Fuji, 4 April 1903, 1903/C/1905, QBDM; Isune Komatsu, Correspondence Relating to Application for Certificate of Domicile, 6330/346/1903, BP342/1, NAA; CEDT, Fukujiro Komatsu, 15 June 1909, 18/60, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Tsune Komatsu, 16 June 1910, 42/74, J2483, NAA.
- ⁹⁵ Tsune Yasuyhara [Japanese], CEDT, 28 March 1912, 1912/71, K1145, NAA; NAA: MT269/1, Japanese Alien Registration Certificate, Tsune Yasuhara, NT/JAPAN/YASUHARA TSUNE, MT269/1, NAA; CEDT, Tsume Yasuhara, 16 March 1926, 408/98, J2483, NAA.
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- ⁹⁷ CEDT, Tsuru Satowa, 22 June 1914, 152/81, J2483, NAA; CEDT, Tsuru Satow, 17 August 1926, 414/12, J2483, NAA.
- ⁹⁸ Prisoner of War/Internee, Uno Matsushita, , QJF16573, MP1103/2, NAA; Application for Leave to Submit Objections Against Detention Order, Uno Matsushita, MATSUSHITA/U, MP529/8, NAA.
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- ¹⁰² CEDT, Yone Nagata, 9 February 1912, 91/81, J2483, NAA; Prisoner of War/Internee, Yone Nagata, QJF16235, MP1103/2, NAA.

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- ¹¹⁴ “Atherton Notes,” *CP*, 3 March 1931, 10; “K. Sakaguchi,” *CP*, 17 August 1921, 5.
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