

Documents Used for Historical Lectures on Hiraoka Dam

The History of Hiraoka Dam

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Chapter 1

Miscellaneous Information about the Tenryu River

1. Origins of the name “Tenryu River”

This river was once called “Abare-tenryu” meaning “Violent Tenryu” or “Raging Heavenly Dragon.”

The Downriver Area

In the *Shoku Nihongi*¹ it was referred to as the Aratama River and was said to be a sacred river where a water god performed a ritual purification. In the Heian Era, it was called the Hirose River, before becoming the Tennonaka River in the Kamakura Era. Finally, in the *Azuma Kagami*², it was recorded as the Tenryu River.

The Upriver Area

In ancient drawings, it is labeled as the Tenryu River.

The “Tenryu no watashi” Theory

A long time ago, there was a dojo³ in Tenryu District named Tenryu Temple. A nearby ferry port was subsequently called “Tenryu no watashi”, the name taken from the dojo. Thus, this theory assumes that the Tenryu River got its name from this ferry dock.

Suwa Faith and the Dragon

The Legend of Saburo Koga

The story goes that a warrior named Saburo Koga became trapped in a pit on Mount Ibuki, but he was able to escape by transforming into a serpent-like dragon and slithering his way out to Mount Asama. Afterward, he was transformed by the power of gods back into human form to become Suwa Myojin⁴. In addition to this legend, there are many other stories in the Lake Suwa vicinity that relate to serpents and dragons. In the Ina Valley, you can find around 100 serpent structures.

Suwa Faith

Suwa faith includes the worship of mountain and water spirits, one of these earthly deities being Mizuchi or Jiao. Mizuchi is a serpent god that lives in the water and appears in the ancient Chinese text *Shuyiji* (or “Tales of Strange

¹ The second of the *Six National Histories*, an historical record also known as the *Chronicle of Japan*. The *Shoku Nihongi* was completed in 797 AD and consists of 40 volumes documenting the Nara Period of Japan from 697 to 791.

² Also known as the *Mirror of the East*, an historical chronicle relating to the Kamakura Shogunate during the Kamakura Period from 1185 to 1333.

³ A hall or place for immersive learning or meditation

⁴ Suwa Myojin is a Japanese mythological god venerated at Suwa Grand Shrine in Nagano Prefecture. This god goes by many names, including Takeminakata, Minakatatomi, and Takeminakatatomi, and it is not always identified as Saburo Koga.

Matters”)⁵. In its earliest form, it was called “Ki,” before becoming “Uryu” 500 years later. After another thousand years, Mizuchi became a dragon called “Seiryu,” then 500 years later became “Kakuryu.” Finally, another thousand years later, it became “Oryu.”

Reference

“Kunitsukami” refers to the earthly deities that came into existence after the *tenson korin*⁶.

“Amatsukami” refers to the heavenly gods that fell from the heavens at the time of *tenson korin*.

2. Source of the Tenryu River

If asked to pinpoint the source of the Tenryu River, the general answer would be Lake Suwa or the floodgates of the Lake Suwa basin; however, there are 39 rivers, large and small, that flow into Lake Suwa. There are various theories that speculate that a volcano or tectonic shifts formed Lake Suwa, but it remains a mystery which of these 39 rivers was the original Tenryu River before the formation of Lake Suwa .

3. The Scale of Tenryu River

Elevation of water source	759 m	
Average water volume	135 m ³ /s	(Kashima Observation Station)
Length	213 km	
(250 km including the longest river, which flows into Lake Suwa)		
Incline	1/281 m	
Incline of Chikuma River	1/900~1000 m	

Reference

The Rhine River, which passes through Lake Thomas in the Swiss Alps:

Elevation of water source	1,602 m
Length	1,233 km
Incline	1/770 m

The Yodo River (the water source for Lake Biwa) and the Kanda River (the water source for Inokashira Pond) both have no recorded elevation for their ponds or lakes, and thus the incline cannot be measured. Also, the water sources for the other rivers are midway up very tall mountains and cannot be used as reference.

4. Tenryu River System Dam Maximum Output Electric Power Company

Main River

Okubo Dam	1,5000 kw	Tenryu River Electric Power Company
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⁵ A collection of ancient novellas and stories of strange events. There are actually two books by this title, one written by Zu Chongzhi 祖冲之 (429-500) during the **Southern Qi period** 南齊 (479-502), and one by Ren Fang 任昉 (460-508) during the **Liang period** 梁 (502-557).

⁶ The descent to Earth of the sun god Amaterasu’s grandson.

Minakata Dam	24,100 kw	Tenryu River Electric Power Company
Yasuoka Dam	52,500 kw	Yahagi Hydroelectric Power Company
(Merges with Tenryu River Electric Power Company)		
Hiraoka Dam	101,100 kw	Yahagi Hydroelectric Power Company
Sakuma Dam	382,000 kw	Electric Power Development Co.
Akiba Dam	127,100 kw	Electric Power Development Co.
Funagira Dam	32,000 kw	Electric Power Development Co.

There are 27 power plants operating only on the tributary rivers in Nagano Prefecture

Power Stations: Toyooka, Keta, Chogasawa, Ochiai, Togawa, Yonezawa, Fukuzawa, Todai, Oguro, Nakagosho, Shin-Otagiri, Ikuta, Matsukawa, Matsukawa Daisan, Matsukawa Fourth Power Station, Hirugami, Komaba, Miho, Achigawa, Yonegawa, Wago, Toyo, Wachino, Kitamatado, Iijima, Nishido, Irozawa

Chapter 5

Hiraoka Dam

Scale of the Dam

Reservoir capacity	42,425,000 m ³ (34 times the size of Tokyo Dome)
Sedimentation rate	84.8% (As of December 2003)
Effective water capacity	2,723,025 m ³ (2.2 times the size of Tokyo Dome)
Reference: Tokyo Dome Volume	1,240,000 m ³
Maximum A380 Fuel Capacity	(325 kl) out of originally 8,378 kl
Lake Suwa Reservoir Capacity	62,987,000 m ³
Area of soil decontamination within Fukushima Prefecture—	16,000,000 m ³ ~22,000,000 m ³ (About 5.9~8.1 times the effective water capacity)
Suimon	A beautiful dam with 16 gates

Events leading up to the completion of the dam

- 1939 Beginning of preliminary planning, preparation, and construction of Yahagi Hydroelectric Power Company
- 1940 With 10% completed, the project is transferred to Nippon Hassoden K.K.
- 1941 In response to the outbreak of the Great Pacific War (WWII) in 1941, Hiraoka Dam becomes vital to the nation as a means for supplying the maximum amount of electrical power to support the munitions industry (military-industrial complex).
 - First Stage – Arrival, both voluntary and by force, of Koreans
 - Second Stage – From 1942, arrival of Allied POWs
 - Third Stage – From 1944, forced relocation of Chinese
- 1944 Construction of dam comes to a pause
- 1945 Construction of dam stops
- 1949 Construction of dam resumes
 - Beginning of the mechanization of public works
- 1951 Chubu Electric Power Co. takes over construction
- 1952 Hiraoka Dam is completed

With the above-mentioned three changes of construction companies, the major halt of construction, the forced relocation and labor, and the mechanization of civil works, the eventual completion of such a massive dam was an unprecedented construction project that was riddled with complications.

Pre-war construction of the dam	Manual construction through human labor Forced labor due to the lack of manual labor Lack of materials
Post-war construction of the dam	Beginning of the mechanization of civil works This had an influence on subsequent dam construction

In order to appreciate the importance of this development, it is necessary to learn about the history of electric power demand and the power industry

1. Transition of Construction

Yahagi Hydroelectric Power Company, which merged with Tenryu River Electric Power Company, began surveying a location for a dam in August of 1939, and later that month decided on Mitsushima, before afterward changing the location to Matsuzaki. With the Electric Power Management Law in July 1940, the government launched a new initiative and created Nippon Hassoden K.K., which took over construction and all responsibilities.

2. The Pause and Resumption of Construction

May 1944	As the war intensifies, essential materials like cement in particular are in short supply, so construction pauses, and the excess supplies are diverted to the construction of airfields in Kakamigahara, where workers are frantically laboring to complete Iijima Electric Generation Plant (completed in March of 1945). All excess labor and materials are diverted in order to allot the underwater tunnel from the dam to the power plant to be an emergency backup location for NSK Ltd., but the war ends before the project is completed.
August 1945	The war ends and all construction is stopped. At that time, the project was 57% complete.
August 1949	Nippon Hassoden K.K. restarts construction
April 1951	Under orders from General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Allied Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP) ⁷ , the dissolved Nippon Hassoden K.K. is re-established as Chubu Electric Power, which takes over the electric power industry.
January 10, 1952	The project is completed, and units 1 and 2 begin operation with an output of 41,000 kw. Unit 3 is built in October of the same year, and then in 1976, Unit 4 begins operation, producing today's current output of 101,000kw.

3. Pre- and Post-war Construction Methods Public Works Contractors and the Machination of Public Works

⁷ Known in Japan as "GHQ," standing for "General Headquarters."

In June of 1940, Kumagai Gumi obtained a contract from Nippon Hassoden K.K. to begin construction of a waterway and dam at Hiraoka Electric Generation Plant. Kumagai Gumi was established as a building and contracting company on January 6, 1938. Santaro Kumagai, a native of Fukui Prefecture and the first president of the company, started out as a stonemason before creating his own business. As a subcontractor for Toshiba Co., he had a thorough knowledge of engineering technology and was able to take on large construction projects and launch his own company. He was particularly involved in the establishment of hydro-electric power stations, so much so that he became known as “Kumagai, the master of hydro-electric civil engineering.”

After the pause in construction of Hiraoka Dam from 1944 to 1949, construction resumed again with the contract from Nippon Hassoden K.K. Later on, a contract was established with Chubu Electric Power, and the project was completed in January of 1952. Prior to the war, construction was carried out through solely manual labor and required many workers; however, in order to secure rice during the period of food scarcity, a contract was established to construct irrigation canals in Oshimojo, and the workers received food as payment instead of money.

Prior to the war, there was no civil engineering machinery, so dams were dug through human manpower. Manual labor was also used to dig 17 meters through the gravel layers to the bedrock while pumping out the water, an extremely difficult task. Floods would also wipe out their progress, leaving them right back where they started. This era of recurring construction struggles is even recorded as “the introduction of difficult construction” in the Kumagai Gumi company history.

In contrast to the manual construction until that time, the construction that resumed in 1949 marked the beginning of the breakthrough in the machination of civil engineering at that time. Used equipment sold off by the American military such as bulldozers and power shovels, as well as concrete plants that could carry out semi-autonomous mixing of cement, sand, and gravel (at a ratio of 1:3:6) and crushers that greatly sped up the rate of sand and gravel collection, work that was until then done by manually, completely changed the game and became the vanguard of machination in Japanese civil engineering history. This allowed for Sakura Dam, an enormous dam and the number one annual producer of electric power output in Japan in terms of hydro-electric power even today, to be completed in just a mere three years. And thus, Hiraoka Dam marked the turning point when “Hydro-electric civil engineering master Kumagai” became better known as “Dam construction master Kumagai.”

Chapter 2

The History of the Electric Power Industry

1. Electric Power Demand

After the Meiji Restoration⁸ and beginning with the establishment of light companies, the demand for electricity increased day by day. This was due to the rapid economic development and the establishment of many munitions factories built to support the modernization of daily life and the government's policy of "enrich the country, strengthen the military."

2. The Growth of the Electric Power Business

The electric power business was born in 1882 with the establishment of Tokyo Electric Light Co. by Ichisuke Fujioka and others. A power plant was constructed in Nihonbashi⁹ in 1887, and power distribution began in a very limited area in the vicinity. In an era when power transmission technology was still raw and undeveloped, it was impossible to transmit power far from the power plant, so power plants had to be constructed near the areas they were meant to power. Due to these circumstances, various industrialists built a large number of small-scale power plants near small rivers.

Reference

By 1937, there were 470 electric utility businesses in Japan.

With the liberalization of electric power, there are now 302 "new electric power" retailers in all of Japan as of July 2014.

3. Electric Power Companies on the Tenryu Tributary Rivers in Ii District at that Time

Power Plants and Companies Constructed in Ii District up to 1926

Matsukawa Daichi Power Station	250 kw	October 1899 - 1930	Iida Electric Light Co.
Matsukawa Second Power Station	250 kw	April 1919 - 1930	Iida Electric Light Co.
Matsukawa Daisan Power Station	1000 kw	October 1924 - Still in Operation	Iida Electric Light Co.

⁸ A period of rapid industrialization in Japan that began with the restoration of imperial rule in 1868.

⁹ A neighborhood in central Tokyo.

Abukawa Power Plant	50 kw	March 1913 - 1930	Kamiina Electric Co.
Tatsuoka Power Plant	35 kw	March 1915 - April 1945	Tatsuoka Electric Utility Cooperative
Kumegawa Power Plant	35 kw	February 1922 - May 1949	Tatsuoka Electric Utility Cooperative
Komaba Power Station	35 kw	December 1914 - 1935	Komaba Electric Co.
Tateishi Power Station	35 kw	May 1922 - January 1932	Miho Hydropower
Achigawa Power Plant	810 kw	January 1923 - Still in Operation	Yahagi Hydroelectric Power Company
Ikeguchi Power Plant	50 kw	May 1920 - March 1942	Wada Electric Co.
Niino Power Plant	38 kw	June 1922 - April 1960	Asage Hydroelectric Power Company

4. The Improvement of Electric Power Transmission Technology

The Construction of High-capacity Power Stations

In addition to the improvement of electric power transmission technology making it possible to supply power to areas far away from the power station, improvements in civil engineering technology and the advent of highly efficient generators made it possible to construct large-scale power stations and dams at places like the main Tenryu River. Improvements in electric power transmission technology made construction of electric railways using electric power as a power source for the railway cars possible. This invigorated the railway industry, which demanded a high amount of electric power from the major electric power providers.

Reference

Power transmission refers to the flow of electricity from the power stations to the transformer substations, and vice versa.

Power distribution refers to the flow of electricity between the transformer substations and the households and users of that electricity.

Generators at 23,000 or 13,000 volts generate power of 500,000 or 275,000 volts → ultra-high voltage substations (154,000v) → first substation (77,000v) → second substation (33,000v) → substation for power distribution (6,600v) → pole-mounted transformer (100 or 200v) → to the consumers

Hiraoka Power Station sends 154,000 volts of electricity.

Chapter 3

The Consolidation and Reorganization of Electric Power Companies

1. Tenryu River Electric Power

In the Taisho Period¹⁰ and stretching into the early years of the Showa Period¹¹, many poorly coordinated power companies were established, resulting in multiple electric companies wiring electric cables to power the same area, which led to unnecessary competition as well as conflicts over water rights.

From around 1915 to 1920, there was a flood of applications for water rights in the main Tenryu River. After a debate in the prefecture concerning the ten eventual companies vying for rights, a policy was hammered out asserting that it was in the national interests to consolidate all of the companies together and operate jointly.

This policy was accepted, and the nine companies, with the exception of the Ministry of Railways, signed an agreement establishing the Tenryu Electric Power Co., Ltd.

Momosuke Fukuzawa, the president of the major electric company Great Consolidated Electric Power Company, Ltd (formerly Kansai Electric), was selected to be the first president.

2. Yahagi Hydroelectric Power Company

Yahagi Hydroelectric Power Company was an electric power company established in 1919 with the goal of developing on the Yahagi river system. It was grouped with the Great Consolidated Electric Power Company, Ltd, which was headed by Momosuke Fukuzawa, a businessman called the “King of Electric Power.”

As Yahagi Hydroelectric Power Company began to develop on the Achi River of the Tenryu river system, it merged with Tenryu River Electric Power Company, keeping the name Yahagi Hydroelectric Power Company and dissolving Tenryu River Electric.

Yahagi Hydroelectric Power Company took over Tenryu River Electric Power Company’s water rights, and the Sanshin Railway was opened all the way to Yasuoka. Construction of the Yasuoka Dam on the main Tenryu River commenced in 1932. (Yahagi Hydroelectric Power Company eventually owned 19 hydroelectric power stations and one thermal power plant).

¹⁰ Also known as the era of the “Taisho Democracy,” the Taisho Era lasted from 1912 to 1926 and preceded the militaristic Showa Period.

¹¹ A period of Japanese history marking the reign of Emperor Hirohito from 1926 to 1989.

Additional Information

Momosuke Fukuzawa

Momosuke Fukuzawa was a businessman and son-in-law of Satoshi Fukuzawa. He established many power stations on the Kiso and Tenryu river systems. From 1936 to 1939, he established Wachino Power Station, Toyo Power Station, and Wago Power Station, forebearers to Kansai Electric and Chubu Electric, in the downstream area of the nearby Achi River.

Momosuke Bridge is a 248m wooden suspension bridge over the Kiso River in Yomikaki that was built in order to transport supplies for the construction of Yomikaki Power Station. At the time, Momosuke Fukuzawa's request to name the bridge "Momosuke Bridge" using the kanji characters of his name was rejected, and it was named using different characters, albeit with the same pronunciation. The bridge was officially renamed using the characters of Momosuke's name as part of a reconstruction effort in 1993, a half century after his death.

Sada Yacco

Sada Yacco was Japan's most famous geisha in both name and reality, and she was favored by the likes of then-prime ministers Hirobumi Ito and Kinmochi Saionji. Her husband Otojiro Kawakami passed away in 1911, and she afterward began living with her long-time friend Momosuke Fukuzawa. She passed away in 1946 (there are episodes from her youth of interactions between her and Momosuke).

One famous Sada Yacco anecdote took place on the stage of the World Fair in Paris in 1900, where the famous French sculptor Auguste Rodin was invited to perform. He was enchanted by Sada and requested to make a sculpture of her; however, while it is unclear if Sada knew of Rodin's fame or not, she rejected his offer, stating that she was too busy.

It is said that the generous Sada Yacco played a big supportive role for Momosuke Fukuzawa in the process of developing his business.

While Momosuke Fukuzawa is considered the "King of Electric Power," Denemon Ito is considered the "King of Coal." On July 8, 1953, Byakuren Yanagiwara, a poet and former wife of Denemon Ito (personified in the fictional TV drama "Hanako and Anne") came to Tenryu Village and took a group photo with the villagers. That photo and many white lotus colored papers, hanging scrolls, and tanka strips of paper still exist in the village.

Chapter 4

Regulation of the Power Generation and Transformation Industry as Part of National Policy

1. River Regulation Plan

In 1924, the director of the Civil Engineering Research Institute of the Department of Home Affairs, Nagaho Mononobe, presented a private plan for the regulation of rivers that would mark a major turning point in future government river administration.

This plan called for the useful development of multi-purpose dams in order to comprehensively and effectively carry out river improvement (flood management) and water utilization (water works, irrigation, hydroelectric power). From an impartial standpoint, national regulation was considered the best option in order to organically implement this river development.

Also, bureaucrats had begun to think that the electric power industry could not be entrusted to the private sector, where there had been conflicts involving acquisitions of water rights and chaotic, fierce competition for market shares.

2. National Electric Power Regulation Bill

After the outbreak of the Manchurian Incident at that time, the military, and in particular a group called the “Regulation Faction,” emerged that called for prioritizing public interest over private companies’ profits, and thus the “National Electric Power Regulation Bill” was drafted.

Of all of these bills, the “Electric Power Management Bill” was especially important. Under the central clause of this bill, the Japanese state would requisition and manage all of the electric power facilities that existed in Japan. These requisitioned power facilities would be managed and operated solely by Nippon Hassoden K.K., a newly formed semi-governmental corporation.

This proposal was approved in March of 1938 alongside the “National Mobilization Law” and came into effect the following month.

3. Nippon Hassoden K.K.

Each electric power company was forced to invest in the equipment of the electric power producer and suppliers in the pretext of investing in Nippon Hassoden K.K. While Nippon Hassoden K.K. was pro forma semi-governmental, in essence it was a state-controlled company.

Just as before, the industry of power distribution to each home and business was entrusted to the private sector.

Reference

Electric Power Production and Supply (PPS) ⇒ From the power station to the substation, and from the substation to other substations

Power Distribution ⇒ From the distribution substation to the consumers

In 1937, there were many (47) electric power companies in Japan. The government tried to integrate the companies through administrative guidance, but it proved hard to eradicate the intense competition between the companies in the post-Taisho Period, and due to the complicated mess of competing interests and passions, progress was very slow.

Sensing the limitations of administrative guidance, the government decided to regulate the power distribution industry just like the electric power production and supply industry.

In August of 1941, the “Power Distribution Control Ordinance” was promulgated, and every electric power distribution company was forced to consolidate. Beginning with the big five electric power companies (The Tokyo Electric Light Company, Inc, Toho Electric Power Company, Ltd, Great Consolidated Electric Power Company, Ltd, Uji River Electric Company, Japan Electric Company), all of the electric power companies were dissolved and replaced by newly established electric distribution companies in nine nationwide blocks (Hokkaido, Tohoku, Kanto, Chubu, Hokuriku, Kinki, Chugoku, Shikoku, Kyushu).

4. Electric Power During WWII

The munitions industry demanded an enormous amount of electric power. Especially with battles like the Attack on Pearl Harbor and the Battle of Midway in 1942, emphasis was placed on aerial warfare, and a dramatic increase in the production of military aircraft was considered essential to promoting the war effort.

Production of aircraft required a large amount of electric power, and the establishment of new power facilities became an urgent issue. J-POWER (abbreviation for Nippon Hassoden K.K.) presented the “Five Year Electric Power Plan” calling for the generation of 2,770,000kw of hydro- and thermal-power between 1939 and 1943. This plan included the rapid completion of power stations, ahead-of-schedule commencement of new construction, and development of new large-scale energy facilities, to be undertaken through the inauguration of each new electric power company at the time. However, orders from the top concerning things like licensing and warning orders did not go well, and due to the lack of resources and manpower as a result of the worsening war situation,

only 440,000kw of hydro- and thermal-power were produced in five years, 15.3% of the desired total under the plan.

After that, the government introduced a series of new electric power plans, including “The 1943 Production Expansion Plan,” “The Emergency Electric Power Expansion Extraordinary Measure,” and the “Emergency Measures for Electric Energy Mobilization”; however, these plans proved unrealistic.

5. Forced Labor

J-POWER’s capacity to develop new electric power was hindered by the government’s unrealistic plans as well as the shortage of resources, which stalled the construction of new power facilities. However, it is from this government plan of throwing people at a problem in order to spur new electric power development and promote rapid construction for the purpose of fighter aircraft that Chinese, Korean, and Allied POWs were used for the construction of power stations. The construction of Tenryu Village’s Hiraoka Dam is linked to this cruel implementation of forced labor.

6. The Dissolution of Nippon Hassoden K.K.

Following the end of WWII, General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, ordered the reorganization of Nippon Hassoden K.K. into nine electric distribution companies through the “Excessive Economic Power Deconcentration Law.” However, members of the government failed to reach an agreement and the plan failed to materialize, and an irate General MacArthur issued the Potsdam Declaration breaking apart J-POWER into nine electric distribution companies and privatizing the industry. The Central Committee for the Reorganization of the Electric Energy Industry that was tasked with this job transferred electric power responsibilities to the nine newly established electric power companies (Hokkaido Electric, Tohoku Electric, Kanto Electric, Chubu Electric, Hokuriku Electric, Kansai Electric, Chugoku Electric, Shikoku Electric, Kyushu Electric).

(Afterwards, Okinawa Electric was added, bringing the current total to ten electric power companies).

7. Establishment of the Electric Power Development Company

After the nine electric power companies were established, they remained in a weak financial state for a while, and thus could not sufficiently deliver as the new electric power industry. With the aim of supporting the industry and promoting electric power development, the Electric Power Development Promotion Law was promulgated in 1952. The government funded 66.69% of the costs, while the nine electric power companies paid the rest, and the Electric Power Development Company was established. The Electric Power Development Company’s first major project was the Sakuma Dam, followed by Sakuma Power Station, which today is the largest annual producer of hydroelectric power in Japan.

In 2004, as part of efforts to rationalize and restructure special public corporations, the company was completely privatized, and the company's nickname changed from "Denpatsu" to "J-POWER."

Chapter 6

Forced Labor

1. Securing Workers

During WWII, importance was placed on securing command of the air through military aircraft, and the increased production of fighter jets was considered essential to the war effort.

The production of military aircraft required a large amount of electric energy, and thus it became an urgent matter to increase construction of new power facilities.

Civil engineering had not yet been mechanized at that time and instead relied solely on human labor. Construction progress was heavily influenced depending on whether human manpower could be secured; however, many men were sent away to fight in the war effort, and there was a shortage of workers in Japan.

2. Bringing in Chinese Laborers

In response to the urgent labor shortage, the government in December of 1942 brought over around 1,000 Chinese laborers as part of an experiment that produced positive results (this was migrant work with daily wages).

Inspired by these positive results, an organization was established to dispatch more laborers. That organization recruited more Chinese laborers and sent them to Japan after a short training session in China. Even this influx of Chinese laborers was insufficient to solve Japan's labor shortage; however, and while the organization tried hard to fulfill the urgent requests for more laborers, it could not gather enough workers, and as a result, Japan resorted to forced labor. These forced laborers were less trained and less experienced, and some were sickly and weak. Many of these laborers died on the sea voyage to Japan.

1. Number of Migrant Workers		
April-December 1943, Trial Workers	8 Groups	1,411 people
March 1944 - May 1945, Full-scale	161 Groups	38,935 people
2. By Region		
Northern China		35,778 people
Central China		2,137 people
Kwangtung Province		1,020 people
3. By Organization		
Huabei Labor and Industry Association (most workers)		34,717 people
Japan-China Labor Association (Central China)		1,455 people

North China Transport Co., Ltd.	1,061 people
Fuchang Hakou Co., Ltd. (Kwantung Province)	1,020 people
Sent by the national government	682 people

4. Method of Migration

Migrant worker applicants, activists against Japanese aggression, prisoners, members of a Chinese gang, and semi-forced laborers allocated throughout Japan through government orders to secure more workers.

Reference

May 3, 1960 34th House of Representatives
Record of the Special Committee on the US-Japan Security Treaty, etc. No. 27

Extract from a Question by Committee Member Toshio Tanaka to Minister of State Kishi

The condolences of former Lieutenant General Fujita were read at the National Memorial Ceremony for the Chinese Martyrs. Fujita was the commander of the former 59th Division. The condolences were written as follows:

“As soldiers, military police, police officers, officials, and special duty officers, our past acts of Japanese militarism in the Second Sino-Japanese War involved the forced removal of Chinese people from your homeland, as well as many other shameful acts and war crimes including detention and executions. Among us are members of the former Japanese Army 59th Division, the direct perpetrators that invaded Shandong Province and kidnapped you from your homeland and brought you to Japan like caged animals. And I, as the former Commander of the 59th Division at the end of the war, led this troop as we were driven by orders from the Japanese government as well as our own odious ambitions to carry out a large-scale human hunting operation we called “rabbit-hunting.” Most of you, under vicious threat from bayonets and subject to humiliation, were snatched from your peaceful fields, from the streets, from your homes, and were taken to Japan still crying and clinging to your homes, cut down and severed from your home like felled trees. Awaiting you in Japan were unspeakable acts of enslavement and abuses too terrible to imagine. Moreover, even as your once-healthy bodies became emaciated, you never submitted to your aggressors, even as you drew your last breaths. At last, you carried all of your grudges to this foreign land. And so your bereaved families, robbed of the heads of their households, were subject to fire, famine, and disease, left to weep in tragic conditions as their families were separated and destroyed.”

3. The Number of Foreign Laborers at Hiraoka Dam and Hiraoka Power Station

1. Chinese Laborers

It is estimated that there were 884 immigrants, but with the transfers and incorporation of laborers from Hiraoka to Numakura and Numakura back to Hiraoka, records from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs estimate a total of 1,083 Chinese immigrants.

2. Korean Laborers

*Starting with the commencement of construction of the Hiraoka Dam, a group of Korean laborers called the “Free Travel Group” worked on construction projects including the Sanshin Railway (opened in 1937) and Yasuoka Dam (completed in 1936) until 1940. There were a recorded 605 Korean migrant workers within the Iida, Tomikusa, and Wada station jurisdictions.

(Korean tenant farmers who came to Japan looking for work after their land was seized as a result of a land ownership survey in 1912 following the annexation of Korea by Japan in 1910.)

*Due to the eventual shortage of labor and wartime measures, implementation of labor went from “recruitment” in 1939 to “intermediary” in 1942, and then finally “conscription” in 1944, at which point Koreans were forcibly taken and made to work in areas like the munitions industry.

*Including the above-mentioned Free Travel Group as well as the forced laborers, there were an estimated 2,000 Korean laborers who worked on the construction of Hiraoka Dam.

*Until Chinese laborers and Allied POWs were sent to work on the dam, it was the Koreans laborers who carried out the construction of Hiraoka Dam. From the beginning of construction until the dam’s completion in 1952, Korean laborers made up the primary construction labor force at Hiraoka Dam.

*For some reason, many of the Koreans who were forcibly taken to Japan to work, of which the exact number is unknown, decided to stay in Japan after the war, joining the Korean laborers of the Free Travel Group and working in civil engineering before becoming independent and starting their own construction businesses.

3. Allied POWs

*Most of the Allied POWs sent to work at Hiraoka were American and British soldiers that were captured in the Philippines. 12,000 soldiers in the U.S. Army Forces in the Far East and 64,000 Filipino soldiers were forcibly marched 112 km from Mariveles to San Fernando in Bataan Province in what became known as the cruel Bataan Death March. Even after the march, the number of casualties continued to increase due to sickness, hunger, and the grueling conditions under the hot sun. A total of 4,250 Americans perished as a result of this march.

*On November 26, 1942, 73 Americans POWs crammed into a freight car arrived from Toyohashi Station on the Sanshin Railway. 80 British POWs then arrived over the next two to three days.

*International Committee of the Red Cross June 1943 Inspection Report
In addition to the 13 officers, 211 soldiers and 48 casualties of the Bataan Death March, 44 more soldiers perished over the winter due to ill health, malaria, skin disease, beriberi¹², hunger, diarrhea, and pneumonia due to the brutal conditions of their forced transfer by boat to Japan and Hiraoka.

August 1944 80 people transferred to Hitachi Mine
April 1945 100 people brought from Zentsuji
August 1945 93 Americans soldiers
215 British soldiers
56 Casualties

In addition to the 80 soldiers transferred to Hitachi, an estimated 440 POWs were taken to Hiraoka (the exact number is unknown).

4. Foreign Labor Breakdown

Chinese	Mainly aggregate collection and shipment, shipment (hauling?) of cement bags, kneading of concrete
POWs	Same as above
Koreans	Same as above, as well as tunnel construction (there were many laborers of the Free Travel Group that had acquired civil engineering skills and know-how through construction of the Sanshin Railway and Yasuoka Dam)
Reference	Aggregate included concrete materials, sand, and gravel Work included scooping and then sifting the stones, gravel, and sand from the rivers, then separating them into sand and gravel and discarding any stones larger than gravel. Concrete has a volume ratio of 1:3:6 (cement:sand:gravel)

Masaru Sato, the former chief analyst for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, wrote the following in his “Religious Survivalist Theory.”

North Korea’s nuclear and missile development is often reported in the newspapers, but North Korea has other world-class technology in underground

¹² A severe, chronic form of thiamine deficiency affecting the cardiovascular and nervous systems and causing extreme weight loss, weakness of the limbs, and an irregular heart beat, among many other serious symptoms.

vaults. Do you remember when images of underground vaults were revealed following Libyan leader Colonel Gaddafi's escape from Tripoli? That underground vault where he moved about via a golf cart was made by North Korea. North Korea supplies facilities such as comfortable underground living quarters and underground nuclear development sites to dictatorships including Iran, Syria, and Libya. This provides a major source of foreign currency revenue for North Korea. Today's technology, including even the most advanced spy satellites, cannot project images of anything underground.

Part V: Special Items

Meanwhile, Chinese laborers reflected back that "At the camp in Shijiazhuang, we only received one set of clothes, shoes, and futon per person. After one month, our clothes were tattered and our skin was exposed. In the winter, to withstand the cold, we wore the bags used to carry the construction materials, and we used the straw from the roadside to cover our feet. At night, we would sleep on top of each other to stay warm." (Ibid., "Questions about the War")

And then regarding food, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Report stated that an average daily intake of 4,142 calories, 11 grams of protein, and 28 grams of fat at the Hiraoka plant was sufficient. However, comments in the report estimated that there were a number of clerical errors in this calculation and that these numbers were not credible. (Hiroshi Tanaka, Tetsunari Matsuzawa "Documents on Chinese Forced Labor - Ministry of Foreign Affairs Part 5, etc." Hishioikan, 1995)

The reality is that not nearly enough food was provided. Masami Terahira states the following. "Our food was bread, which was made by mixing wheat flour with bran and a rice bran substitute at a ratio of 4:6. All we had was three pieces of bread resembling sandwich rolls and a soup that was essentially just salty water every day. This was not nearly enough to satisfy our hunger, so we often snatched vegetables from the nearby farms, and we'd often have to go apologize to the farmers afterward. The Chinese laborers also said "Our food was just three clementine-sized manju buns a day. There was no other food that came along with this." "There was some steam that came from the manju buns when they were cooked, but as this was not nearly enough water, we had to drink from the river as well. We would sneak into the nearby farms to eat the vegetables. We even ate the leaves off the trees to stave off our hunger." (Ibid., "Questions about the War")

The POW camp where Allied POWs were interned in November of 1942 was a wooden barracks built by Kumagai Gumi in a mere 20 days under orders from Lieutenant Yuo Nakajima dispatched from the Matsumoto 50th Infantry Regiment. The barracks was encompassed by a 3 meter wooden fence covered in barbed wire to prevent escape. Since the barracks were made from raw wood, the wood would warp when it dried, creating cracks through which the cold freezing air would pass through. There were guard stations at each side of the gate, and a security tower in the center with the national Hinomaru flag of Japan. Apart from the lodging houses, there was a kitchen, dining hall, storage closet, warehouse, as well as two bathrooms, a medical station, and a bath area outside.

Persevering through the cold was said to be the biggest struggle at this hurriedly-built barracks. Alfred Weinstein, an American POW and military doctor who was interned at the camp, compiled various records of the camp in his book *Barbed-Wire Surgeon*. The following is an excerpt from his book:

“To withstand the cold when we slept, we used the bags for carrying concrete to block the cold air. I’d wear as much as I could, pulling my Red Cross hat down to my ears and rolling myself into a ball on the floor. I would use pieces of paper and sawdust to cover the holes to stay warm, even doing this I was still freezing, so I would heat stones with the kitchen flames and wrap them in my blanket. I spread out straw on the floor of the medical station. To block the cold air coming in from the walls, I made a paste to stick on the wall made out of old used newspapers, grains of rice, and water. Most of the patients who made this paste chose to eat it, however, rather than paste it to the wall. (Summarized) The warmest time was our bath, once every five days. (Alfred Weinstein. M.D “Barbed-Wire Surgeon” The Macmillan Company, 1950)

Weinstein wrote the following regarding the food at the camp. “The food at Mitsushima was a nearly indigestible, rubber-like concoction of steamed wheat, rice, and various grains. Twice a week we received porridge with beans and dried fish. This was our only source of protein. When potatoes arrived, they replaced the grains. (Summary) Our vegetables for substance were daikon radishes cut into cubes and cooked with grain.

Excerpt from Documents Relating to the Forced Labor of Chinese People

Survey Report on Labor Conditions for Chinese Workers

After WWII, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) General Douglas MacArthur, who was in charge of the occupying forces in Japan at the time, seized a dossier that is now being kept in the main hall of the National Archives in Washington D.C. This dossier contains a survey, which later became a report, by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and is part of a SCAP document with the registration number RG331. It has already been reproduced in microfilm with the film number M1722, with the names as a whole on the left.

The dossier is called "Regulations on the Implementation of War Crimes Trials in Japan, Records on the Mistreatment of Chinese Workers, and the Investigation into the Circumstances Behind Major Japanese War Crimes" and consists of 17 volumes in total, but the primary part of the document relates to the forced labor of Chinese workers.

The SCAP document is supposed to be kept in the archives library in Suitland, Maryland, but for some reason the dossier is actually stored in the main building. In other words, there is a section that is treated as a military secret. A copy of that microfilm was placed in the National Diet Library of Japan and the Constitutional Archives and was made public in the summer of 1993, so it is now available for anyone to read.

Furukawa Co., Ltd. Ashio Mining Co., Ltd.

1. Regarding the high number of casualties

A survey conducted by the Japanese authorities determined that the root causes of the high number of casualties were illnesses contracted by the workers in their homeland and brought with them to Japan. However, it cannot be overlooked that Naho Ashio was known to be an area particularly strapped for supplies and money. Much less food was given here as payment than at the other factories. According to the plant, Tochigi Prefecture carried out particularly harsh treatment of the Chinese laborers (see the copy of the instructions from the prefectural authorities below), and this is considered to have played an indirect role in the high number of Chinese casualties.

[Copy]

Instructions from the prefecture to the Ashio Police Station concerning the Chinese laborers

1. The police should take the lead supervising any alerts, and at least 7 police officers must be assigned
2. The policy of supervision is meant to be intimidating
3. All fugitives must be caught and cannot be returned back to the concentration camp or put to work (the laborers are meant to think that they will be killed if they try to escape, so fugitives cannot be returned, as this will encourage others to try to escape as well). We trust the police officers, we don't trust China.
4. If any workers hear of any plots to escape, they must report this to the police immediately.
5. Make the lodging houses as wretched as possible.
6. Monthly food rations will be 36kg (Ministry of East Asia), 22 kg (Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce), 22-23 kg (Ministry of Interior), and 15-16 kg in China.
In order to degrade the quality of the food as much as possible, the food should be considered as feed for animals. Workers will be given bran, corn, and green onions, but not wheat or rice.
Food will be given in return for attendance to work. If they don't work, they will not receive food.
7. The laborers should be paid one yen per day, but they have a tendency to request five yen a day after the completion of their work term. In short, they should be paid 2,500 yen to take home after two years.
8. Restriction of Freedoms
 - a. Individual workers are not allowed to go out.
 - b. Groups may be allowed to go out a maximum of three times per month, but in principle, group requests to go out should be denied.
 - c. Censor all outgoing and incoming messages and correspondence.
 - d. All communication from China cannot be delivered by hand.
 - e. Personal visits are strictly prohibited.
 - f. Police officers must be present for all roll calls, and patrol even after the workers have gone to bed.
 - g. Comfort women do not come to this prefecture.
 - h. Under no circumstances can any workers be allowed to return home or summon other family members to Japan during their contract period.
 - i. To maintain these conditions

I know it is a matter of pride, but be careful to run everything through the chief.

j. Workers are not allowed to carry matches or cash.

Reference [7] Excerpt from page 159

Kumagai Gumi Hiraoka Plant

Construction of the power station

No. of people accepted	Foreign arrivals	397 people
	From Kumagai Numakura	686 people
	Total	1,083 people
Transferred from other plants	To Kumagai Numakura	200 people
	To Reito Nomura	97 people
	To Kumagai Kakamigahara	513 people
	To Jizai Hokkaido	3 people
Casualties		62 people
Sent back		8 people
	Total	1,083 people

Of the 23 disabled people, 19 were blind

Kumagai Kakamigahara Plant

Construction of airfield

No. of people accepted	From Kumagai Hiraoka	513 people
Casualties		23 people
Sent back		487 people
Left behind		3 people

Of the 44 disabled people, all were blind

Number of Casualties by Plant Page 443

Looking at the number of casualties at each plant, Sensen Nishina Mine had the highest mortality rate at 52%, with six other plants at 40% and seven plants at 30%. Furthermore, looking at the plants with fewer casualties, there were a total of nine plants with mortality rates under 1%, including Mansei Mining Co. which had a mortality rate of 0.3%. However, at these plants, laborers were constantly being transferred and only remaining for a short period of time, so it is logical that the mortality rate was lower here.

Plants with a High Mortality Rate	Mortality Rate	No. of laborers	No. of deaths
Sensen Nishina	52.0%	200	105
Kawaguchi Ashibetsu	45.5%	600	273
Hokutan Sorachi Teshio	45.3%	300	136

Nippon Steel Kamaishi	42.7%	288	123
Mikashima Hanaoka	42.3%	986	418
Furukawa Ashio	42.2%	257	109

The average mortality rate of all the 135 plants was 17.5%.

“The Eternal Martyrs of Japan”

The Education of Korean Children in Japan

From 1935 until around when Japan lost the war, there was a large influx of Korean laborers who worked on the pre-war construction of the Sanshin Railways and then afterwards the construction of Hiraoka Dam, and they were now living in Japan. Most of the laborers at the time of Sanshin Railways volunteered or were recruited, while most of the workers who came during the time of Hiraoka Dam construction were subject to forced labor.

Many of these Korean laborers were tenant farmers who came to Japan with their families to seek work after their land was taken and their lifestyles uprooted by the Land Ownership Survey. The children who came with them were incorporated into the local schools throughout Japan.

May 9, 1945 90 Korean elementary students (grades 1-6) listed on the school records
 Since some of these Korean students adopted Japanese names, there are definitely more Korean students than these 90

However, that is not to say that all of the Korean children could go to school. For instance, even for the students who could go to school, they had to learn the same way as the Japanese students. This was learning based on the Imperial Rescript on Education, and it was all in Japanese.

Also, considering how the Koreans were roped into work and forced to march, as well as the hardships of forced labor, many Koreans were very angry, saying things like “Why must we sacrifice our lives for this foreign country. How pointless is this?” Those that could not go to school were sad, and those that could go to school were bitter that they could not receive a proper Korean education.

These feelings and passions led to Korean national education with the establishment of the Mitsushima Korean School following the end of the war.

After the war, there were many Koreans who returned to their homeland. However, there were also many Koreans who stayed in Japan, either because they wanted to stay in Japan or because they had no means of returning to Korea.

December 1945 140 Households 537 Males 140 Females Total 677 people

August 1947

111 Males 107 Females Total 218 people

In May of 1946, the Hiraoka Branch of the League of Koreans in Japan decided to create the Mitsushima Korean School for the Koreana children in Japan.

They turned a lodging house in front of the old town hall into the new school building. There were two teachers who understood some characters, as well as 31 male students and 34 female students.

At the time the school was established, all of the students were admitted as first-graders without separating classes into different levels based on age.

Reference

From the resolution submitted by the Koreans in Shimoina to the mayor of Hiraoka Village:

Having been robbed of our former lifestyles and means of survival, and coming to Japan to work just for meager food to survive, we have no grounds to go back to Korea. Now that our never-forgotten dream of being freed is here, we have a reason to stay in Japan, as we cannot return to Korea.

Despite facing prejudice and humiliation, and in some cases suffering outright oppression, many Koreans felt they had no choice but to make the most of their lives in Japan. Key to this was education, and thus there was a strong motivation amongst the Koreans to establish their own schools. In the midst of poverty, the Korean parents established schools, while the children attended these schools with their bellies still aching with hunger. After all, if they did not do this, the parents feared that their children would grow up without any education and thus be left to suffer the same miserable experiences that they did. For Koreans hoping to teach the Korean mother tongue and Korean history to the Korean children in Japan, the establishment of the Mitsushima Korean School embodied the arduous and hard-earned fruits of their labor.

1947 Notification to the Ministry of Education - Establishment and operation of the Mitsushima Korean School is approved

1948 Unauthorized
Koreans are forced to attend elementary and middle school with the

Japanese students

October 19, 1948 School is closed
After that, Korean students attend the local public elementary and middle schools

Quote from a middle school teacher sometime around 1950-1955

“Our school is the largest in Japan, since our students are from over ten villages and towns, three prefectures, and two countries.”

A teacher that worked at the Korean middle school for eight years since the establishment of the school in 19XX stated “There were so many Korean students in Hiraoka that this might be the largest middle school in Shimoina.”

“This is probably due to the fact that the Koreans assimilated well and had friendly relations with the local people, but I am happy that the students did not face any discrimination simply because they were Korean.”

However, “These students faced many obstacles once they graduated school and tried to get a job or get married. For us teachers, this harsh reality was unforgivable and unjust. I know just how hard these students worked and suffered in order to graduate, and I can only wonder when there will be an accepting international society without discrimination and bias.”

Chapter 7

POW Camp Guards

*The POW camp was a wooden barracks built by Kumagai Gumi in a mere 20 days under orders from the Japanese army. It was built at the same site as the current Tenryu Middle School. In November of 1942, 20 troops from the Matsumoto Army unit were dispatched to work as guards for the camp.

*On July 31, 1943, some troops were sent back to their original unit to join the strengthening war effort abroad. To replace these troops, around 10 guards were hired in August. The primary duties of the camp guards were to manage and keep watch over the POWs; however, more specifically the guards were also responsible for focusing on the distribution and assignment of labor, the procurement of food, medical treatment, granting or denying special permissions (Christmas, etc.), dealing with prisoner unrest and refusals to work, as well as arranging burials for the deceased.

*Of all of these duties, the procurement of food proved the most difficult. Japan was suffering an extreme food shortage at the time, with hunger rampant due to heavy regulations and controls on food supply. On top of this, the farmland of Hiraoka had a very low self-sufficiency rate of 6%, which only exasperated the food shortage problem. Kotaro Kitazawa was the one who struggled to procure this food, working especially hard to get hold of vegetables and meat.

Kitazawa arranged contracts with a regiment of so-called government contractors in Toyohashi City and a fruit and vegetable company in Shinshiro City in neighboring Aichi Prefecture to procure onions, radishes, and burdock and ship them over via freight cars for the POWs. Some of the villagers also secretly gave the POWs miso soup and cooked soybeans, which they were grateful and happy to receive.

The dire food shortage resulted in a number of tragedies, and there were many instances of food theft followed by punishment and further restrictions, sometimes resulting in death.

*To Japanese people, burdock (called gobo in Japanese) is a highly-valued food source with much substance, but the POWs thought of burdock as “tree root”, and thus the distribution of burdock as food to the POWs was used as evidence of mistreatment in the Yokohama War Tribunals.

Furthermore, medical resources were insufficient, and when the Shioiri medics requested medicine from the headquarters, they were rebuffed and told to find supplies at the district headquarters instead. They had no choice but to request supplies like laxatives, baking powder, and ointments from the nearby town of Iida. These supplies were used for “moxibustion,” a form of therapy associated with acupuncture that involves burning the skin with leaves. While this therapy is widely accepted in Japan, to the POWs it was considered a form of torture by fire, and this was also cited in the war tribunals as a violation of the Geneva Convention.

The wife of one camp guard who was sentenced to execution at the Yokohama War Crimes Trials and unfortunately died stated that “I worked at a tobacco shop, so every once in a while my husband would bring some POWs over, and they would make gestures asking to smoke. When they did this, I gave them some cigarettes, which they tucked into their hats. They would shake my hand and say, “Thank you, ma’am.” One time my husband came over with 20 or 30 POWs, and I fed them cooked beans and sweet potatoes.

Also, since the POWs often did not have toilet paper, some villagers would wet and paste scraps of old sliding paper doors onto the rock walls along the camp passageways. POWs were grateful for this paper, which could be used as toilet paper.

The Yokohama War Crimes Trials began on December 18, 1945. The first to be tried was Tatsuo Tsuchiya (28 years old), a former civilian guard at the Mitsushima POW camp. Tsuchiya’s trial, being the first of the Yokohama Tribunals, was carried out very quickly, and he was given a life sentence on December 27, 1945.

From this trial, it is clear that Supreme Allied Commander General MacArthur was particularly concerned with the Mitsushima POW camp. Of all the camp guards who worked there at the time, six were executed (four of which were not soldiers, but employed civilian guards), four received life sentences, and one received a 25-year prison sentence.

Reference

Under General MacArthur, military tribunals for class B and C war criminals in Japan were conducted in 49 different places throughout the world.

Class A—Crimes against peace	International Military Tribunal for the Far East
Class B—Customary war crimes	Military trials under the direction of MacArthur in 49 different places throughout the world,
Class C—Crimes against humanity	resulting in over 1,000 death sentences

Tatsu Tsuchiya, the first to be tried in court, was given a life sentence. Tsuchiya was from Saku City, and in addition to farming he helped his father run his tatami mat business. He was drafted into the army in 1938 to fight in the Second Sino-Japanese War, where he sustained injuries on his left eye, right shoulder, and left hand. In September of 1942, he was discharged but later on sent to the Mitsushima POW camp as a “wounded soldier” to work as a watchman.

Another man (32 years old) from Hiraoka who was sentenced to execution previously lost his left eye and suffered multiple bullet wounds in the Second Sino-Japanese War. He was discharged from the military as a “wounded soldier,” and he returned to his hometown where he worked as a schoolteacher at Seinen School in Kamihara Village. However, in December of 1942 he was sent to the POW camp to work as a watchman. He was executed in August of 1948.

The verdict was decided using only an affidavit left behind from an American POW as evidence.

A record of Tatsuo Tsuchiya's court appearance is as follows:

"You fed them tree roots, did you not?"

"That was food called gobo."

"You tortured and abused them with fire."

"At the time, we did not have any medicine, so we used an old form of Japanese treatment that uses burns to treat pain."

The American soldier's affidavit refers to some of the defendants by their full name, but for others just by nickname. It is said that some defendants with similar nicknames were mistakenly accused and given harsh sentences.

In the midst of all this, there were also some American soldiers who had written notes praising some of the guards, and these were later used to acquit those guards of any crime. (With a foreword, Mr. Nishino deserves the true admiration and respect of all POWs. In all respects, he can be considered a true gentleman) Joint signature from some US POWs.

As for the Hiraoka man who was executed, his body was never returned to his family. All they received was his hair, nails, and a long will written for his wife. Left behind with three children, his wife faced difficult times after the war but managed to raise her children well.

A quote from the wife: "If only they hadn't built that dam here!"

At the time, work at the POW camp was considered a narrow gateway to finding a job, and the authorities thought of a job placement at the POW camp as a form of recompense for wounded veterans.

Testimony from the Family of a POW Camp Guard Sentenced to Execution

The Wife's Testimony

Around 5 pm, we boarded the train at the station in Mitsushima (Hiraoka Station) and rode along the Tokaido Line to the station in Toyohashi. From Toyohashi, the train was full with discharged soldiers, so we had to stand the entire time overnight until we arrived at Tokyo in the early morning. My husband's older brother and my father assisted us, and I remember barely making it through as I carried my youngest child and luggage, while holding my other two children's hands. My legs felt stiff as metal poles.

Since we were still early, we rode the Yamanote Line for two or three circuits, then went to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to finish the paperwork. After that, we arrived at Sugamo Station, where the holding cells were located.

I will not forget this for as long as I live. That place was a living Hell. As my soon-to-be first grader, my four-year-old daughter, my infant child and I waited outside the iron-barred fence, my husband came out in handcuffs.

At that instant, my four-year-old daughter wrapped up some of her rock candy, a truly prized possession for her at that time, into a scrap of paper and instead of eating it, she offered it to her father from behind the iron gate, saying "It's delicious. Please try it, dad."

With tears in his eyes, my husband answered "I'm full now, so I don't need it. Take it home with you and eat it later." We passed the rest of the limited visitation time just looking at each other.

When the visitation time was up, an American military officer said to my husband, "Let's go." At that instant, my oldest son jumped at the fence and began shaking it with both hands. He yelled out "Dad, don't go over there! Come with us!" As us parents started to cry, so did our children. And so there we were, all of us in the cramped visitation room, crying together. Even as I recall it now, it still gives me the chills.

"If only they hadn't built that dam here!"

The Eldest Son's Testimony

I was just about elementary school age, so of course I vaguely remember my father's face.

Even now there are nights when I can't sleep. Sometimes I recall my father's face, but unfortunately, it is always his face from that day, behind the iron gates of the cell. I want to do whatever I can to break apart those iron bars, but there is nothing I can do. I can't recall my father's face without imagining him behind those iron bars.

There is one other strange thing that I remember clearly. When the visitation time ended, and my forlorn father gave me one last look before he left out the opposite door, the iron door slammed shut with a loud thump...that sound resonated within my six-year-old head.

Even now, in the middle of the night when I close my eyes and try to recall that time, I can still hear the sound of that heavy door slamming shut. I suppose humans can remember certain sounds forever.

Chapter 8

Postwar Exchanges

Beginning in the late 1950s, Japan engaged in various friendship exchanges with China and Allied American and British soldiers. One of these British soldiers, a man named William Rose, visited Japan in 1999. Arriving at Hiraoka Station, his eyes watered as he said “I only remember the surrounding mountains.” Reflecting back 55 years later, he stood at the old site of the POW camp and exhaled, “Somewhere around here there was a cooking station.” “We used to soak the blankets in boiling water to get rid of the fleas and lice brought from the new POW arrivals.” “I made my own wooden clogs in order to stave off the winter cold.” “There were times when we were beaten for not properly doing roll call.” “I got homesick when I saw the budding flowers in spring.”

Rose added, “However, as time has passed, I have grown to forgive those that treated us POWs so terribly.” “I want to establish a bond between England and Tenryu Village,” he said, and at the welcome party with the residents of Tenryu Village, he repeatedly said that this was a “happy day,” and he left Tenryu Village as a friend of the town.

Thanks to Rose’s efforts, this became an opportunity to establish an exchange program between the U.K. and Tenryu Middle School. Now, every spring break some second-year students from Tenryu Middle School can participate in a very valuable homestay experience in the U.K., where they can practice their English conversation skills and learn first-hand about a foreign culture

This exchange program was carried out for a few years, but Rose died a few years ago, and since Tenryu Village must bear all the costs and time needed for this exchange program, the program now takes place in Guam. The fact that middle school students from this mountainous town in Japan can now participate in a village-funded international exchange trip to practice English and learn about foreign cultures is all thanks to William Rose, a former POW interned at Hiraoka.

Also, some former POWs have come to Japan to visit some of the Japanese people that treated them nicely.

As regards friendly exchanges with China, in 1993 the mayor of Tenryu Village visited Hebei Province in China, and in 1995, former forced laborers from Hebei Province visited Tenryu Village. In December of 2010, a Beijing resident (繼宗仁, English name unknown), and his grandson (韓航, English name unknown), visited Tenryu Village together. They gave a lecture at the middle school in the morning, and then in the afternoon they participated in a welcome party with the mayor of Tenryu Village and other village residents.

At the site of the former POW camp, there is now a memorial with the engraved names of 56 casualties. This memorial was donated by people involved in the construction of Hiraoka Dam as well as many other residents of the village.

Thanks to efforts by the “Memorial Construction Executive Committee,” run by leaders of the Japan-China Friendship Society, and a fundraising campaign involving many people, a memorial was constructed in front of the Hiraoka Dam administration office in 1964. Ms. Li Dequan, the Director of the Red Cross Society of China, provided the inscription for the memorial. The reverse side of the memorial wishes for everlasting peace. Every five years, the Japan-China Friendship Society carries out a memorial service with volunteers from both inside and outside the village. In the past, diplomats from the Chinese Embassy have participated in the ceremony.

Power Station Construction and the Iida Line

1. The Iida Line

1900	Toyohashi ~ Hon-Nagashino	Toyokawa Railway
1923	Hon-Nagashino ~ Mikawa-Kawai	Horaiji Railway
1927	Tatsuno ~ Tenryu-kyo	Ina Electric Railway
1932	Tenryu-kyo ~ Kadoshima	Sanshin Railway
1937	Kadoshima ~ Mikawa-Kawai	Sanshin Railway

Distance from Tatsuno to Toyohashi: 195 km

The construction of new power stations was necessary in order to expand the electric power industry, as electric power companies needed to secure consumers for electric power, and railway companies needed to secure a sufficient supply of electric power. The Sanshin Railway (the railway connecting Mikawa and Shinshu) took on the new construction of the rail line from Tenryu-kyo to Mikawa-Kawai, which was left for last. As for the funding for the Sanshin Railway, Tenryu River Electric Power Company and Toho Electric Power paid five million yen, and Toyokawa and Ina Railways paid a total of three million yen, with additional investments from Horaiji Railway, Aichi Railway, and Kune Mine. Based on these investment ratios, it is clear that the electric power companies had high expectations as to the energy demand of these railways.

The section between Tenryu-kyo and Kadoshima was ordered to begin operations ahead of schedule in order to transport necessary construction supplies for Yasuoka Dam. The transportation of supplies for the construction of Hiraoka Dam was made possible by the opening of all railway lines in 1937.

Reference

Approximate distance from Tenryu-kyo to Mikawa-Kawai on the Sanshin Railway: 70km
 This includes 171 tunnels totaling 32km
 This also includes 97 bridges totaling 4km
 The Sanshin Railway is also sometimes referred to as the Sanshin Underground Railroad

Presently, due to the replacement and alteration of some tracks for the construction of the Sakuma Dam, the number of tunnels and bridges has changed somewhat (the exact number is not confirmed)