

# The Japan-Australia Bilateral Cooperation in Archival Processing for the Wartime Seized Company Records

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## **【Abstract】**

This paper looks at the records of Australian-based Japanese companies seized by the Australian government during World War II, and are currently held by the National Archives of Australia (NAA). By tracing the collection's formation process and examining recent joint efforts between Japan and Australia to arrange and put these records to good use, it chronicles a definitive shift in the relationship of the two countries, whereby the records symbolize developing friendship. This paper addresses two key issues. It first discusses the actual process of how this collection of the wartime requisitioned documents was formed and transferred to the custody of the NAA, with reference to the political and diplomatic backgrounds as well as its current legal status. Secondly, it explains about a joint project of Japanese and Australian archivists and historians to arrange and utilize these records, an endeavor initiated in 2003 and still in progress. The outcomes of their work have already been utilized in the NAA activities. In the coming years, with the aim to foster shared memories and reconciliation between Japan and Australia, further collaboration is expected to take place over this collection for improvement in various fields including archival description and user access. In this sense, the paper illustrates an important shift whereby an archival collection born from an enemy relationship (wartime requisition) has become a symbol of friendship through the cooperative efforts of archivists and historians from the two nations. It also presents a remarkable example of how archivists from a country of the seized documents' origin could be instrumental in arranging the records held by the seizing country. Through this process, we hope to show archivists playing a vital role in reconciliation between once-rival nations—and perhaps in advancement towards world peace.

## **【Biography】**

Ms. Junko AKIYAMA's current position is Archivist at the Sapporo City Archives. She holds bachelor's and master's degrees in history from the the Ochanomizu University and finished a doctoral program in history without dissertation at Ochanomizu. She also has rich teaching experience at various institutions such as the Tokai University and the Hokusei Gakuen University. Her scholarly contributions include "Arrangement and Description of a Japanese Business Collection Held at the National Archives of Australia," *Journal of the Japan Society for Archival Science* 8 (2008): 2-20; and "The Establishment of Sapporo City Archives: Activities and Subjects in the Opening Year," *Records Management: Journal of the Records Management Society of Japan* 67 (2014): 91-103.

# The Japan-Australia Bilateral Cooperation

## in Archival Processing for the Wartime Seized Company Records

Reported by: Junko Akiyama, Hanako Wada, Daisuke Ichikawa, Hisayuki Oshima,  
Hideyoshi Yagashiro, and Masahito Ando

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with the purpose of archival processing and promotion of the use of company records

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## 1. Characteristics of the Documents of Japanese Companies' Records

### Seized During Wartime and Background of Their Establishment

### 1.1 Overview of the Records

- ▶ Held by National Archives of Australia (NAA) Sydney (as of Sept. 2016)

- ▶ Quantity : c. 800m
- ▶ TOTAL : 3,327 boxes

Series No.	Company's name	Total boxes
SP1096/1	Mitsubishi Shoji (Melb.)	97
SP1096/2	Mitsui Bussan (Melb.)	18
SP1096/3	John Mitchell	5
SP1096/4	Iida & Co.	31
SP1096/5	Mitsui Bussan (Melb.)	47
SP1098/4	Mitsui Bussan	324
SP1098/7	Araki & Co.	440
SP1098/8	Yamashita & Co.	366
SP1098/9	Okura	46
SP1098/10	Mitsubishi Shoji	112
SP1098/11	Yano & Joko	63
SP1098/12	Nosawa & Co.	18(+13)
SP1098/13	Japan Cotton Trading	170
SP1098/15	Kikugumi	8
SP1098/16	Iida & Co.	44
SP1101/1	Mitsui Bussan	475
SP1099/1-247	Yokohama Specie Bank	1050
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3,327</b>

### 1.1 Overview of the Records

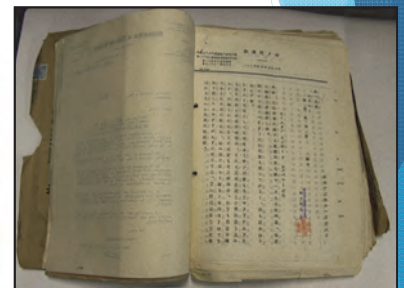
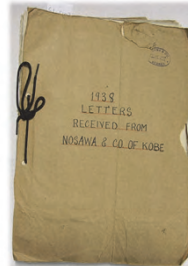
Series based on Japanese Companies

- ▶ SP1096/\* Companies in MELBOURNE
- ▶ SP1098/\* Companies in SYDNEY
- ▶ SP1101/1 Mitsui Bussan (Syd.)
- ▶ SP1099/\* Yokohama Specie Bank

Series No.	Company's name	Total boxes
SP1096/1	Mitsubishi Shoji (Melb.)	97
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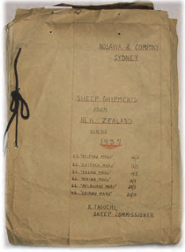
## Japanese Companies' Records

- ▶ Letters & Correspondences



### Japanese Companies' Records

#### Shipping Documents



### Japanese Companies' Records

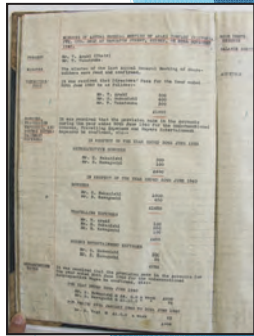
#### Ledgers & Journals

DAILY BALANCE				
Particulars		Debit	Credit	Balance
No. 1570				
MELBOURNE BRANCH				
Call	8.11	8.9	1.21	
Dr. N.S.W. Current A/c	27.76	27.76		
Y.S.B. Export A/c			26.76	
<b>Total</b>	<b>36.87</b>	<b>27.66</b>	<b>26.97</b>	<b>9.31</b>
Vouchers Attached				
Drawn				
Bank				
Other				



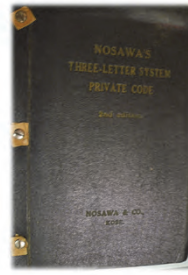
### Japanese Companies' Records

- Statements of Accounts
- Minutes books of Directors' Meetings



### Japanese Companies' Records

- Code Books
- Shipping Schedules & Tariff Lists



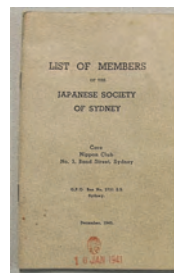
### Japanese Companies' Records

#### Textile Samples



### Japanese Companies' Records

#### Personal Documents



## 1.2 Development of Japan-Australia trades and the advance of Japanese companies to Australia

- ▶ Japan-Australia trades: Wool + Various Japanese products
  - ▶ In 1889 Kanematsu began business in Australia
    - Trading Companies opened branches : Mitsui, Mitsubishi etc.
  - ▶ During W.W.I the Trade environment improved:
    - Yokohama Specie Bank /Regular shipping line
    - Medium-to-small-sized trading companies:
      - Exporting various types of Japanese products
  - ▶ By 1930' Japan-Australia trade relations developed significantly
    - Japanese companies: Advance to major cities all over Australia

## 1.3 The Outbreak of the Second World War and the Wartime Seizure

- ▶ 1941.12 the Outbreak of the Second World War
  - ⇒ the Australian government began to seize
    - assets of the Japanese companies in Australia
      - \* the Trading with the Enemy Act (1939)
  - the Executive Agency: the Controller of Enemy Property
    - \* National Security (Enemy Property) Regulations of the National Security Act of 1939
  - ◆ The records in the office were seized as a part of the assets of Japanese companies
- ▶ 1957 the records were Transferred to NAA
  - \* Wada (2011)

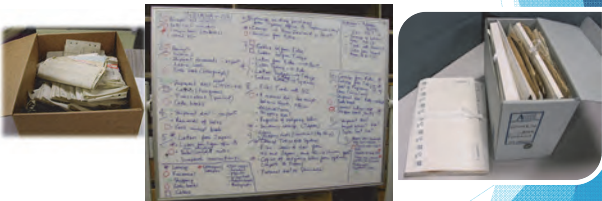
## 2. Japan-Australian Cooperative Project with the Purpose of Archival Processing and Promotion of the Use of Company Records

### 2.1 A History of the Japan-Australian Cooperative Project

- ▶ 2002 the Research on archives in Australia
  - conducted by Masahito ANDO
  - \* NAA : Introduction of the Japanese companies' records
    - Suggestion the collaborative work on archiving
- ▶ 2003 **Setting up the Japan-Australian Cooperative Project**
  - ▶ Japanese Team :
    - Dispatched a research team of archivists and historians to NAA
  - ▶ NAA : Organized a special training program on archival arrangement & description for the Project members (Canberra/Sydney)

### 2.1 A History of the Japan-Australian Cooperative Project

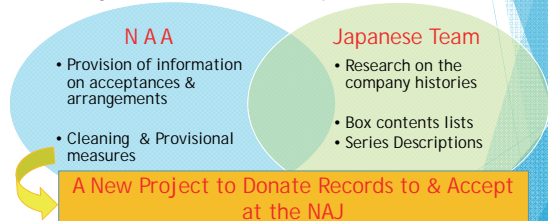
\* Arrangement & Description Exercise using Nosawa Records



- ▶ 2004-2016 the Research continued every year

### 2.1 A History of the Japan-Australian Cooperative Project

- ▶ 2004-2016 the Research continued every year
  - Sharing the information & descriptions





## 2.2 Archiving and creating descriptions by the Japanese team

### Existing Descriptions

- ▶ outline descriptions for each series
- ▶ partial description of contents \*Pam Oliver(2004)
- ▶ the Agency of these series: the Controller of Enemy Property

### ⇒Our Policies on Creating Descriptions

- ▶ Simple list of items for each box
- ▶ description of the series focused on
  - ▶ the characteristics of the document structure (the wartime seizure records)
  - ▶ the organizational history of each company
- ▶ Publishing by the NAA as guidance

## \* Sample) Box Contents List

National Archives of Australia Japanese Company Records Box Contents List (Mitsui)

Company	Series no.	Box no.	Title/Description	Date Range	Number of Items	Note	Original Creator
Mitsui	SP1098/4	258	Daily Reports	1938	23 files		
Mitsui	SP1098/4	259	1	Contract File Sydney No.30A	1939	1 vol.	Mitsubishi
Mitsui	SP1098/4	259	2	Contract File Sydney No.31	1039-1940	1 vol.	Mitsubishi
Mitsui	SP1098/4	260		Contract File	1937-1938	1 files	Mitsubishi
Mitsui	SP1098/4	261	1	[Shipping Documents]	1938-1939	19 envelops	
Mitsui	SP1098/4	261	2	[Shipping Documents]	1938	1cm	
Mitsui	SP1098/4	262		[Shipping Documents]	1937-1939	27 bundles	
Mitsui	SP1098/4	263	1	[Sales Note]	1939	1 vol.	Mitsubishi
Mitsui	SP1098/4	263	2	Shipping documents	1938	6 cm	
Mitsui	SP1098/4	264		Sales Note	1938-1940	1 file	Mitsubishi

## \* Sample) Series Description

### Miscellaneous records of Yano and Joko, pre 1941 records

Reference Code: SP1098/11

Title: Miscellaneous records of Yano and Joko, pre 1941 records

Name of Creator: Yano & Joko

#### Scope and Content Note:

Date : 1919-1941

Extent: 18.36 meters (63 boxes)

This series was created by Yano & Joko, and contains documents as follows: Shipping Documents, Contract Notes, Tax Returns, Letters, Consignment Books, and Textile Samples. \* Please note that some records of Mitsubishi & Co. Ltd. and of "Dogyo-kai" (Japanese Woolbuyers' Association, of which Yano & Joko was not a member ) are also present in this series.

#### Administrative History:

Yano & Joko was established as a general partnership company ( paid-in capital : 1 million yen) in June 1908 by Hanjiro Yano and Nobuhiro Joko. Its headquarters was located in Yamashitacho, Yokohama City. The forerunner of the company was Moringawa Gomei Kaisha (Moringawa General Partnership Company) founded by Hanjiro Yano and Kanesuke Moriyama in June 1893. ...

#### References:

Chukichi, Morita. *Kaiko 50-nen Kinen Yokohama Seiko Meiyokagami (Success and honors of Yokohama, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Yokohama port. )*. Yokohama: Yokohama Shokyo Shinpo-sha, 1910. ...

## 2.3 Achievements of the Cooperative Project

### 1) Analyzing the seizing process

- ▶ Criterion for determining the subjects of seizure :

Ratio of stock holding by Japanese

- John Mitchell : actually owned by Koto Shokai →Seizure

- Kanematsu / Ide Shoten :  
management transferred to the Australians  
→Not subject of the Seizure

\* Ichikawa (2007) / Wada (2011)

## 2.3 Achievements of the Cooperative Project

### 1) Analyzing the seizing process

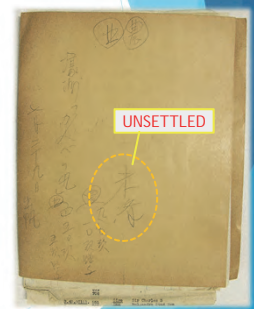
- ▶ "Mixed" records created and stored by other companies
  - ▶ "Mixed" cases confirmed (as of 2016)
  - ▶ "Swallowed" German company's records

Series No.	Company of Series	Original Creator of "Mixed" Records
SP1098/4	Mitsui Bussan	Mitsubishi Shoji
SP1098/7	Araki Company	Heinrich Lanz (H. Tronser), Mitsubishi Shoji
SP1098/8	Yamashita	Araki Co., Z. Horikoshi & Co.
SP1098/9	Okura Trading	Mitsubishi Shoji
SP1098/11	Yano & Joko	Mitsubishi Shoji ( Japanese Woolbuyers' Association )
SP1101/1	Mitsui Bussan	Yamashita, Mitsubishi Shoji, Japan Cotton Trading, Okura Trading, Iida & Co.

## 2.3 Achievements of the Cooperative Project

### 2) Characteristics analysis of the documents structure

- ▶ The unique structure due to the seizure
  - ▶ Companies' branch records
  - ▶ Records normally not stored for a long time
  - ▶ "Currently in use" documents \*Akiyama (2008)
- ▶ High value in historical analysis  
→a number of achievements published



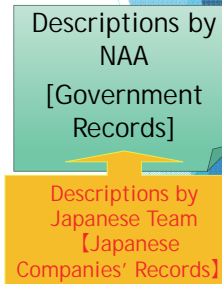
### 2.3 Achievements of the Cooperative Project

3) Maintaining box contents lists and series description

- ▶ Box contents lists: 90% completed (as of 2015)  
⇒ Complete all lists in 2016

▶ Series descriptions:  
Scheduled to complete in the coming years

- ▶ Provide to NAA & NAJ



### Conclusion

-Development of Our New Friendship-

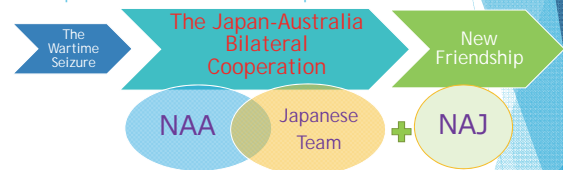
### Conclusion

-Development of Our New Friendship-

- ▶ 2015 NAA's proposal to transfer this collection to Japan
- ▶ 2016 Starting the project to donate records to & accept at the NAJ
- \* 2012 the unearthing of the Australians victim list of "Montevideo Maru"
- \* the Sharing of Wartime Records  
→ Promote understanding between the two countries

### Conclusion

-Development of Our New Friendship-



- ✓ The Reconciliation through the Records Developed by the Bilateral Cooperation
- ✓ The Friendships Further Strengthened by the Sharing of Memories

### \* References:

- ▶ Hanako, Wada. "Taiheiyō Senso no Kaisento Zaigo Nikkei Kigyō Kiroku (The Outbreak of the Pacific War and the Records of Japanese Companies in Australia)". *Rekishū Hyoron*, No. 739, November 2011
- ▶ Junko, AKIYAMA. "Arrangement and description of a Japanese business collection held at the National Archives of Australia". *Journal of the Japan Society for Archival Science*, No. 8, March 2008
- ▶ Daisuke, ICHIKAWA. "Backgrounds and Characteristics of the seized Japanese companies' records held at the National Archives of Australia". Achievements from the Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research (KAKENHI) Program "Research toward the establishment of the foundation of historical information resource systems and international archival networks", Project Number: 1522015, 2007
- ▶ Pam Oliver "ALLIES, ENEMIES AND TRADING PARTNERS -Records on Australia and Japanese-. NAA, 2004