**Land Title Searching in Steveston and Kitsilano**

Research Report

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Land Title & Government Records Cluster

Landscapes of Injustice Project

University of Victoria

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Note: This is a document for practical use in the field, prepared by field researchers. It has not been proofread or copyedited as a research output.

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Overview of Work

**Steveston: Overview of Work**

Steveston was one of the three study sites researched by the Land Title Cluster in the summer of 2017. From April to June 2017, I conducted research to identify 62 Japanese-Canadian owned properties (JCOPs) in 37 groupings for search in Steveston. I also searched 31 properties in 21 groupings starting with the first available microfilm (circa 1910s or 1920s) until the titles were converted to digital (circa 1980s), approximately 202 titles.

The search process for Steveston was more narrow than the title searching in the Vancouver-Powell Street and Maple Ridge study sites. Instead of searching all properties in a given study site, as was the approach in Powell Street and Maple Ridge, the Steveston search focused on Japanese-Canadian owned properties (JCOPs) only. To compile a list of JCOPs, I used the Mizuta maps and spreadsheets, which describes the location of Japanese Canadian residents in Steveston. Since these records did not distinguish between owners and renters/residents, I compared the list with Property Catalogues produced by the Custodian of Enemy Property Records to determine which properties were seized by the Custodian.[[1]](#footnote-1) There were a large number of Japanese Canadian owners in Steveston, and the list of properties I compiled is not a comprehensive list of all JCOP in Steveston.

There were other properties of interest in Steveston, specifically the original Steveston Buddhist Temple, that were added to the list after receiving recommendations from members of the research collective.

The Mizuta spreadsheets and Custodian records contained the full legal property descriptions, including the plan number. I used the Plan Index Cards to find titles already on microfilm. I found this was a more efficient way to find title numbers rather using the Crown Grant Books and tracing properties through the Absolute Fees Books and Indefeasible Fees Books, as was the approach for Maple Ridge. After I had title numbers, I searched the title thread backwards until the first available microfilm (circa 1910s or 1920s) and forwards until the titles were converted in the 1980s.

**List of Properties**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| JC Owner | Lot | Block | Section | Block/Range | Plan | Title of Seizure |
| Hajime Wakita and Yutaka Wakita  (first location of Steveston Buddhist Temple) | 6, 7 | 5 | 10 | B3N/R7W | 249 | 180421E |
| Yoneichi Sakai | South 1/2 of 11 and 10 | 20 | 3 | B3N/R7W | 249 | 183023E |
| Mangiro Kurahashi | North 1/2 of 11 and 12 | 20 | 3 | B3N/R7W | 249 | 187128E |
| Kashiro Akai | 1 | 27 (Parcel A) | 3 | B3N/R7W | 4760 | 176283E |
| Yasukichi Oye | 2 | 27 (Parcel A) | 3 | B3N/R7W | 4760 | 177300E |
| Kikichi Hayashi | 3 | 27 (Parcel A) | 3 | B3N/R7W | 4760 | 184470E |
| Fujitaro Fukushima | 4 | 27 (Parcel A) | 3 | B3N/R7W | 4760 | 179280E |
| Shigeru Matsunaga | 5 | 27 (Parcel A) | 3 | B3N/R7W | 4760 | 179642E |
| Shigeru Kishino | 1, 2 | 30 | 3 | B3N/R7W | 249 | 211818E |
| Kamekichi Otsu | 3, 4 | 30 | 3 | B3N/R7W | 249 | 176838E |
| Genji Otsu | 5, 6, 7 | 30 | 3 | B3N/R7W | 249 | 185386E |
| Mantaro Miyamoto | 8, 9, 10, 11 | 30 | 3 | B3N/R7W | 249 | 176834E |
| Kosaburo Ichino | North 1/2 of 6 | 2 | 10 | B3N/R7W | 249 | 181007E |
| Mitsunobu Kuba | North 1/2 of 7 | 2 | 10 | B3N/R7W | 249 | 180606E |
| Kiyoshi Imai | South 1/2 of 7 | 2 | 10 | B3N/R7W | 249 | 201834E |
| Iwa Mukai ("In Trust") | 8 | 2 | 10 | B3N/R7W | 249 | 190575E |
| Kozo Kitagawa | 9 | 2 | 10 | B3N/R7W | 249 | 181012E |
| Toku Hirose | East 1/2 of 10 | 2 | 10 | B3N/R7W | 249 | 181332E |
| Naojiro Nakatsu | West 1/2 of 10 | 2 | 10 | B3N/R7W | 249 | 181018E |
| Shizu Sogawa and Yoshikusu Sogawa | East 1/2 of 11 | 2 | 10 | B3N/R7W | 249 | 186223E |
| Masa Yamashita | West 1/2 of 11 | 2 | 10 | B3N/R7W | 249 | 181010E |

\* While not a JCOP, Lot 12 of Block 2, Section 1 is an interesting property that fell within the search parameters. It was purchased in 1939 by the Trustees of Steveston Congregation, which consisted on five Japanese-Canadian individuals. It was never seized by the Custodian, but a “Vesting Number” was written on the title, which suggests it was identified by the Custodian (the properties owned by Miles Malcolm Acheson on Salt Spring Island were also assigned a Vesting Number even though they were never seized). In 1945, the property was sold by 4 Anglo-Canadian individuals acting as Trustees for the Steveston Congregation of the United Church of Canada to Lily Shapiro, a woman who bought a number of properties from the Custodian. See titles 130474E and 187010E for these transactions.

**Extra Properties**

While the scope of research in Steveston was restricted to JCOP properties, occasionally the relevant JCOP would appear on a title alongside another property. Any properties that appeared alongside a JCOP between one transaction pre-1942 and 1974 were searched backwards or forwards, whichever was applicable, for one title or until a non-nominal consideration value was listed. This was in order to understand the value of the extra property without searching more titles than necessary.

**Database**

All Steveston data was entered in the Maple Ridge database. It was determined that for server reasons, entering the Steveston data in an existing database would be better than creating a new database. Steveston property descriptions resembled a more orderly version of Maple Ridge properties, so the Maple Ridge database was chosen over the Vancouver database.

I followed the protocols for data entry that were established in previous years and outlined in the *Land Title Cluster Handbook* (Updated September 2016) and the *Title Searcher's Report, Maple Ridge, Summer 2017* (September 30 2016).

**Location, Block and Range**

The Location field was surfaced in the database to assign properties to Steveston, and distinguish them from Maple Ridge and Salt Spring properties in the same database.

All the properties in Steveston were described as being in “Block 3 North Range 7 West.” Rather than add this to the property descriptions, the Location entry for Steveston describes all properties as part of Block 3 North Range 7 West.

Block 3 North was a broader descriptor that encompassed all properties, and properties commonly had two Blocks (eg, Lot 6, Block 5, Section 10, Block 3 North, Range 7 West, Plan 249). Rather than having two Block fields, which could quickly get confusing, the Location field was used to designate Steveston properties as being part of “Block 3 North Range 7 West.”

A “Range” field was added to the database for the Salt Spring Island properties, but not used for the Steveston properties. Since I already did most of my work in Steveston, I did not add “7W” to the Range field for the Steveston properties that I searched, and the Location field describes the properties appropriately.

**Maps and Plans**

In June 2017, the LTSA gave LoI Title Searchers access to their internal database of plans and documents, ASTRA. Using ASTRA, I collected the following plans and gave them to Nicole Yakashiro to upload to Zotero:

249

4750

4760

24331

25148

26617

27521

28935

**Kitsilano: Overview of Work**

In April 2017, I did preliminary research to prepare for title searching Kitsilano this summer. I compiled a list of 30 Japanese-Canadian owned properties (JCOPs).

I used the Vancouver Property Catalogues produced by the Custodian of Enemy Property Records to determine which properties were seized by the Custodian.[[2]](#footnote-2) Since the Property Catalogues did not distinguish Kitsilano from other areas of Vancouver, I used Google Maps to determine which civic addresses were located in Kitsilano. I also used the Ki-chi-ra-no Walking Tour map and notes from the Nikkei Museum to determine that the most concentrated area in Kitsilano was between Burrard Street and Fir Street and 4th Ave and 1st Ave. Of the 30 JCOPs I identified, 20 properties were within the Ki-chi-ra-no area and 10 properties were located within a couple blocks of this square.

After I had a list of I used the Vancouver Property Index Books to determine the plan number and some starting title numbers. From there, Mikayla took over the Kitsilano study site. She has done all the title searching and problem solving for Kitsilano.

Initial Properties in Kitsilano

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Civic Address | Lot | Block | D.L. | Plan |
| 1927 West 1st Ave | 13W1/2 | 206 | 526 | 1123 |
| 1723 West 2nd Ave | 25 | 218 | 526 | 590 |
| 1733 West 2nd Ave | 27 | 218 | 526 | 590 |
| 1737 West 2nd Ave | 28 | 218 | 526 | 590 |
| 1748 West 1st Ave | 11 | 218 | 526 | 590 |
| 1767 West 2nd Ave | 34 | 218 | 526 | 590 |
| 1782-84 West 2nd Ave | 34 | 218 | 526 | 590 |
| 1788 West 1st Ave | 3 | 218 | 526 | 590 |
| 1635 West 2nd Ave | 28 | 219 | 526 | 590 |
| 1661 West 2nd Ave | 33 | 219 | 526 | 590 |
| 1817 West 3rd Ave | 24 | 227 | 526 | 590 |
| 1726 West 2nd Ave | 15 | 228 | 526 | 590 |
| 1747 West 3rd Ave | 30 | 228 | 526 | 590 |
| 1752 West 2nd Ave | 9, 10 | 228 | 526 | 590 |
| 1618 West 2nd Ave | 17 | 229 | 526 | 590 |
| 1622 West 2nd Ave | 16 | 229 | 526 | 590 |
| 1632 West 2nd Ave | 14 | 229 | 526 | 590 |
| 1642 West 2nd Ave | 12 | 229 | 526 | 590 |
| 1646 West 2nd Ave | 11 | 229 | 526 | 590 |
| 1662 West 2nd Ave | 8 | 229 | 526 | 590 |
| 1672 West 2nd Ave | 6 | 229 | 526 | 590 |
| 1533 West 3rd Ave | 30 | 230 | 526 | 590 |
| 1907 West 4th Ave | 22 | 236 | 526 | 590 |
| 1607 West 4th Ave | 22 | 239 | 526 | 590 |
| 1618 West 3rd Ave | 17 | 239 | 526 | 590 |
| 1534 West 3rd Ave | 9, 10 | 240 | 526 | 590 |
| 2002-6 West 4th Ave | 19, 20 | 245 | 526 | 590 |
| 1952 West 4th Ave | 10 | 246 | 526 | 590 |
| 1758 West 4th Ave | 9 | 248 | 526 | 590 |
| 1778 West 4th Ave | 5 | 248 | 526 | 590 |

1. CVA AM199 Box 513 Folder 7; TFRBL Shears Box 11 File 4 Part 2. Both accessed through Zotero, April 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. CVA AM199 Box 513 Folder 7; TFRBL Sheers Box 11 File 4 Part 2. Both accessed through Zotero, April 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)