

LESSON 1 SOURCE 1.22 THE SHIMIZU AND NISHIKAZE FAMILIES

Family Names: Shimizu and Nishikaze

Family Members: Tom (Shotaro), Kimiko, Henry, Haruko, Yoshiko Shimizu; George, Komaye, Mary, Chiea, Koichi, Judy, and Harry Nishikaze

Street Address: Prince Rupert, B.C.

Occupation: Hotel and Restaurant: Dominion Hotel and Cafe

Location: Prince Rupert, British Columbia



Getting to Prince Rupert takes a long time: the northern port-city is nearly 800km north-west of Vancouver. The region has been home to the Ts'msyen people for over 5,000 years. The Ts'msyen take up seasonal residences throughout the territory, following harvest and trade cycles. The land and ocean are rich resources: the lives of the Ts'msyen are sustained by the diverse species of the area, including salmon and shellfish, along with the harvest of berries and other inland resources.

Missionaries and fur traders first visited the region in the mid-1800s. Settlers soon followed, drawn by the rich natural resources. Canneries and ports sprung up along the coastline. The city of Prince Rupert was officially created when, in 1905, the Grand Trunk Railway chose the site to be a terminus of its transcontinental railway. Prince Rupert became the business centre of British Columbia's northern coast. As architects planned the city, settlers purchased land.

Immigrants from across the world join the Ts'msyen people in the region: Japan, China, Finland, and the British Isles. The streets of Prince Rupert and nearby ports bustle with people of these different backgrounds. They work in logging and fishing industries alike, but face different challenges. British Columbia law limits the fishing permits Japanese Canadians can hold. Canadian law sends Indigenous children to residential schools. Canneries pay Chinese Canadian less than their co-workers of European heritage.

Prince Rupert serves as a commercial hub to a series of satellite towns, villages, and camps in the area. Nearby Port Essington, right on the Skeena River, is nearly two thirds Japanese Canadians. Men work in the fishing and logging industries. Women run homes and work at the canneries.

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ABOUT THE SHIMIZU AND NISHIKAZE FAMILIES

The Dominion Café and Hotel sits in the business district on 3rd Avenue, Prince Rupert. Tom Shimizu and George Nishikaze opened the business in 1915. Tom Shimizu is a sharp businessman. He runs the restaurant and hotel. George cooks. He serves British fare: roast beef, steaks, and stews. The restaurant is widely-known for its delicious food.

The Dominion Café and Hotel has two floors. The restaurant is on the first floor and the hotel's rooms are on the second. The restaurant seats a hundred customers and is open all day. Sometimes it hosts weddings and banquets.

Tom and George's wives, Kimiko Shimizu and Kamaye Nishikaze, are essential to the team. They serve in the restaurant and care for the

children. They cook for their families. George and Kameya have five children: daughter 1, daughter 2, daughter 3, Koichi (age 17), Harry (age 9). Tom and Kimiko have three: Henry (age 11), Haruko (age 9), and Yoshiko (age 3). The Nishikaze daughters help with the children. The next youngest help with small chores.

The Dominion Café's customers arrive from the logging camps and fishing villages scattered across the Northern coast. They are of different backgrounds — European, Japanese, Chinese, and First Nations — and many are far from home. It is often a comfort to visit the café and chat with Kimiko.



Right: A marriage portrait of Shotaro and Kimiko Shimizu from 1923. Courtesy of Greg Shimizu

Centre: A view of 3rd Avenue in Prince Rupert, the street where the Dominion Café was located. Prince Rupert City & Regional Archives P991-79-6478

Left: "A Good Catch of Salmon in Prince Rupert." Prince Rupert City & Regional Archives 2016-014-140b