

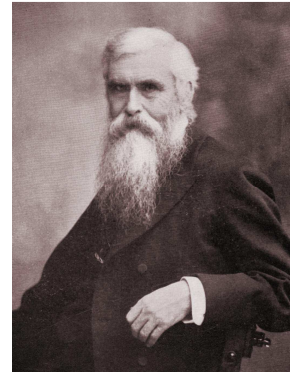
Kanaye Nagasawa – California’s King of Wine



Kanaye Nagasawa (né Isonaga Hikosuke) - February 2, 1852 – February 14, 1934
An American winemaker in California and the first former Japanese national to live permanently in the United States. A recipient of the Order of the Rising Sun and Order of the Sacred Treasure, and a disciple of Thomas Lake Harris, the self-proclaimed "Father and Pivot and Primate and King of the Brotherhood of the New Life".
Nagasawa followed Harris from New York out to Santa Rosa, California.



In 1875 the Fountaingrove Winery was founded. Harris was a self-proclaimed prophet of his new religion and saw Fountaingrove as the “Eden of the West”.



Eventually Nagasawa took over Harris' Fountaingrove estate and vineyards.

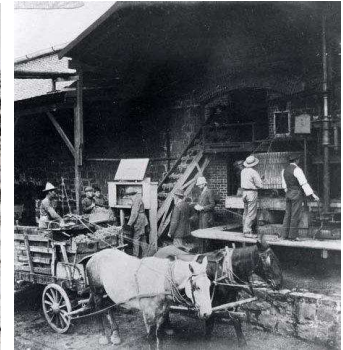
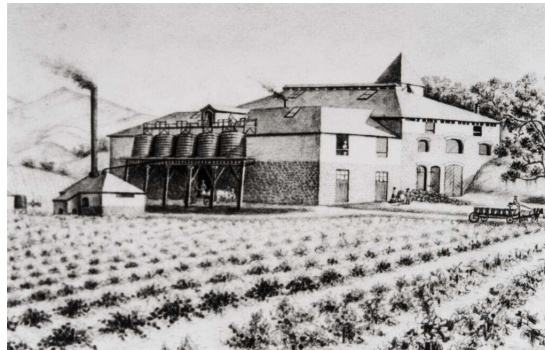
The 260 year Edo or Tokugawa Period was economically successful but also socially conservative in its rule of Japan by a Shogunate (rather than an Emperor).



1854 woodblock print only a year after Admiral Perry 'forced' the West upon Japan. In the 19th century, the imperial rule would be re-established as the Meiji Period. It is characterized by Western modernization and eventually the end of the Samurai. The Satsuma clan was initially supportive of the Meiji efforts to modernize. Nagasawa was born in Kagoshima, Japan, a member of the Satsuma clan and the son of a samurai. At age 12 or 13, he was one of 15 Satsuma students smuggled out of Japan and sent to the United Kingdom to learn Western customs, technology and systems. At this time, he was granted a new name by his lord in order to protect his family from any possible legal repercussions as most foreign travel was forbidden at the time.

Nagasawa, being too young for university, was sent to Aberdeen, Scotland, to attend school. There, he met English nobleman Laurence Oliphant, who was a disciple of Thomas Lake Harris and had been asked to find potential recruits for his New York State commune. Oliphant took Nagasawa, along with five other Satsuma students, to New York to join Harris' community there. Nagasawa studied at Cornell University for one year in 1870. While the other students who had left Japan with him returned home shortly afterwards, Nagasawa stayed with Harris and eventually followed him out to California when Harris left Brocton, New York.

Nagasawa arrived in California in 1875 at age 23. The community Harris established in Santa Rosa was named Fountaingrove, and the ranch encompassed 1,000 acres. Harris brought in winemaker Dr. John. Nagasawa became winemaker after Hyde left, and made wine for the Brotherhood of the New Life's store in New York City as well as for the British Isles. Nagasawa introduced California wines to the international world, including Europe and Japan. The wine won several medals and was widely marketed. Harris attributed the wine's success to the spiritual qualities of his religious community.





Left: 1889 painting of the Commandery (manor house) where members resided



Interior photos of the Harris House

Departures, lawsuits, scandals (real or imagined), newspaper article calling to question Harris' personal life became a part of the community. Harris would leave in 1891 claiming he had discovered the secret to the rebirth of humanity. When Harris died in 1906, Nagasawa became the leader of The Brotherhood of the New Life and lead the cult until his own death in 1934. By 1916, however, he was the only cult member still resident at Fountaingrove, and although other members visited from time to time, missionary activity had effectively ceased during the later years of Harris' life.



Fountaingrove Pond - Yeji Sasaki, Amy Ichiji, Hiro Umeda Mar, Tomaki Ichiji and Kanaye Nagasawa

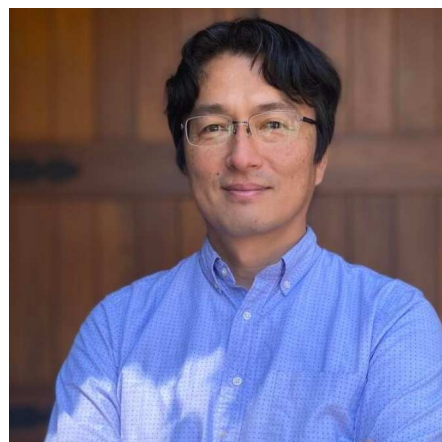
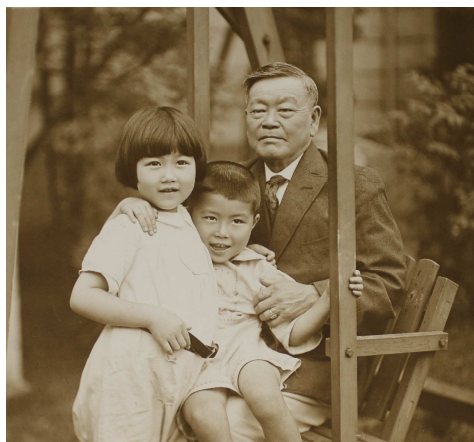
Nagasawa became the top wine producer in California. In Japan, he earned the "Wine King of California" nickname, and has been described as "the Robert Mondavi of his time". In 1915, he helped run the Japanese Exhibit at the Panama-Pacific Exhibition in San Francisco. He was often referred to as "Prince Nagasawa" or "Baron Nagasawa" because of his samurai heritage, and hosted extravagant parties at Fountaingrove throughout Prohibition, at which the wine flowed freely. He traveled with Luther Burbank instructing growers on vineyards. Thomas Edison and other famous people would come to visit at the Fountaingrove estate.



Death and legacy

In an elaborate ceremony at Fountaingrove, Nagasawa was awarded the Order of the Rising Sun at the request of Emperor Taishō. The Fountaingrove Round Barn was built while Kanaye Nagasawa ran the estate. Before the barn burned in the 2017 Tubbs Fire, it was one of very few surviving round barns in California. It was actually 16-sided.

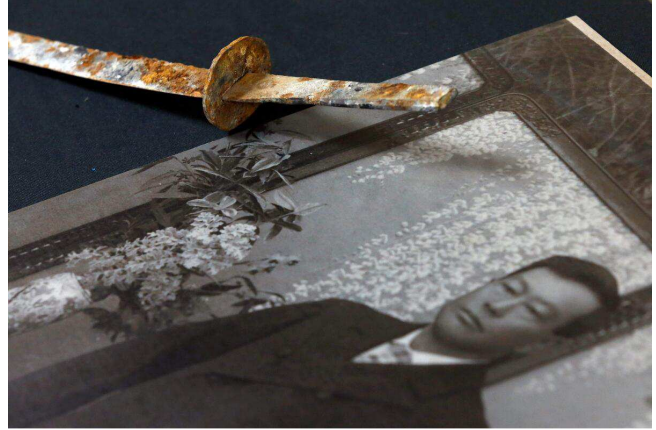
Nagasawa died in 1934, having endured growing anti-Japanese sentiment in the United States. Services were held in Santa Rosa and he was cremated in the San Francisco Bay Area.



Kanaye with Amy and Kosuke Ijichi (niece & nephew) - Eiji Akaboshi (great great grand-nephew)
He tried to pass the Fountaingrove property to his American-born grand-nephew. Due to the California Alien Land Law of 1913, the land was seized by the Santa Rosa City Council and quickly sold by an appointed-trustee for the underage nephew.

Paradise Ridge Winery

It is the Byck family that has researched and preserved this early history of California wine growing. Walter & Marijke Byck came to Sonoma County from the Netherlands. As their 'ranch' grew, they became curious as to its history...



The family continues to run this beautiful winery overlooking the Russian River Valley.