

## **Wainai Sadayuki: The Man Who Transformed Lake Towada**

### **Wainai Sadayuki and Lake Towada**

Wainai Sadayuki was born in 1858 in Kemanai, a village about 30 kilometers south of Lake Towada. In 1884, while in his mid-twenties, he started trying to introduce fish into the lake, which had no natural fish population of its own. It took him over two decades to establish a self-sustaining population. Wainai brought kokanee eggs from Hokkaido, then incubated and released the fry into Lake Towada. It was not until 1905 that the kokanee returned to the lake as adult fish to spawn. Wainai devoted the rest of his life to developing Lake Towada as a tourist destination and working to secure national park status for the area. [108]

### **The Life of Wainai Sadayuki**

Wainai Sadayuki began his career in 1874 as a substitute teacher in Kemanai. In 1881 he secured an administrative job at the Kosaka Mine, operated by the Ministry of Public Works. When he was posted to the Towada Mine, a silver mine on the banks of Lake Towada, he developed an interest in breeding fish. He began releasing different fish into the lake in 1884, starting with carp fry, and eventually quit his mine job to devote

himself full-time to fish breeding. After experimenting with cherry trout and Nikko trout, he finally found success with kokanee. In 1902 he purchased kokanee eggs from Lake Shikotsu in Hokkaido, which he incubated and released as fry the following year, and in 1905, these returned to the lake as adult fish to spawn. In recognition of his efforts, Wainai was awarded the Medal of Honor with Green Ribbon in 1907. [136]

While breeding fish, Wainai also worked to develop Lake Towada as a tourist destination, opening Kankoro, a traditional inn, in 1897, and the Wainai Towada Hotel in 1916. He was an energetic promoter, successfully persuading members of the imperial family to stay at his hotel and petitioning the Ministry of Home Affairs to award national park status to the lake and its environs. Wainai died at his home in Kemanai in 1922 at the age of 65. [77]

### **The Road to Lake Towada**

Born on February 15, 1858, Wainai Sadayuki was the eldest son in a family that had served for generations as retainers to the Sakuraba family of the Morioka domain. A studious boy, he became a substitute teacher at the local village school at age 17. He married at 21 and secured a job at the Towada Mine on the banks of the lake at age 24. [66]

**[Photos]**

Wainai Sadayuki

The site of Wainai's house in Kazuno (formerly Kemanai) today

Wainai in his substitute teacher days

Workers at the Towada Mine in 1884