

Former Ukon Warehouse

The Ukon Warehouse, built in 1894, is located at the north end of Otaru Canal. It is a large gable-roofed warehouse, typical of the Kitahama area. The Ukon family were *kitamaebune* merchant shipowners from Kono in Fukui Prefecture. The family logo, two parallel black lines resembling chopsticks, is displayed on the front of the warehouse. The logo was also used on their store fronts and staff uniforms.

The Ukon family established a base in Otaru in the 1890s, operating warehousing and fishing businesses. They were one of Japan's leading shipping agents, and also co-founded a marine insurance business.

The warehouse originally had a monitor roof, like the Hiroumi Warehouse next to it. However, in 1924, dynamite being carried to a freight train exploded at Temiya Station, damaging nearby buildings, including the Ukon warehouse. The roof was rebuilt, and the truncated shape of its roofline is a reminder of the incident.