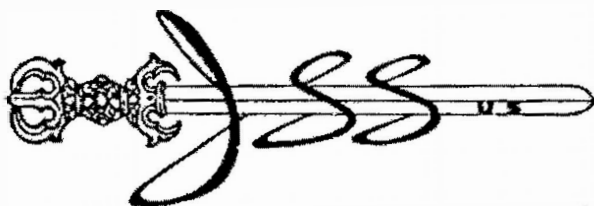


Japanese Sword Society of the United States, Inc.



NEWSLETTER

Volume 12 No. 4

JULY-AUGUST • 1980

VIDEO TAPE ON DALLAS FORGING -

The "Newsletter" has been advised that the film of Mr. Yoshihara forging a sword, showing each painstaking step from start to finish, which was taken during the Dallas event last April is now available for possible loan. Hopefully arrangements can be made to borrow this film for showing during the next several sword shows as it will certainly be of great interest to all. Further information on this film can be had by contacting Anne Luchsinger at the Channel 13/KERA station, 3000 Harry Hines Blvd., Dallas, Texas 75201. This film will be shown locally again in Dallas on September 10th at 7:30 pm.

BIRMINGHAM SWORD SHOW COMING SOON -

The summer show of the Southeast Tokenkai is upon us. Mark your calendar and plan to be there for another enjoyable "sword weekend". Advanced table reservations are encouraged, \$25 per table for the weekend. A \$10 fee will be charged non-tableholders. As in the past, the show will be held at the AIRPORT RAMADA INN, Birmingham, Alabama. This motel is at the airport and a free shuttle bus is available compliments of the Inn. For table (and room) reservations, contact: Paul Couch

August 1980						
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31						

Plan to attend! Your presence will help assure this to be another enjoyable sword show.

AFTER BIRMINGHAM -

A reminder that the Token Study Group sword show will be held October 24-26 weekend in Milwaukee. More on this next issue.

The Official Bi-Monthly Publication of the Japanese Sword Society of the U.S./Inc.
Annual Membership

NEW MEMBERS.

We are proud to announce the following new members into the Society. A very fine article in "Bushido" magazine which told of the JSS/US, plus a mention of the Society in the art publication "Arts of Asia", contributed greatly to our growing membership. Our thanks to both publications for their help.

Ned W. Walters, Richard Meyers,
Shozan Sakuma, William J. Adams,
Richard Annesser, Klaus A. Proehl,
John Prough,

* John L. Grimmitt, Dale W. McGoon,
John R. Elder, Terence N. Conway,
D. Termote,

Per Terje Norheim, Samuel M. Young,
Francis A. Frezza, Max McGrath, Craig A. Bird, Douglas A.
Johnston, Frank Haneyko, Hank McGonagle, David Searle, William W.
Wojta, Edward Gant, Charles Hyland Page, William G. Bissell,
Richard R. Conners, W. Dolphyn,

**

SUISHINSHI MASAHIDE CONTROVERSY CLARIFICATION -

The letter from Mr. Bob Benson which appeared in the last issue of the "Newsletter" questioning the authenticity of the Masahide signature used in an article in the March-April issue of the "Newsletter", brought forth the following response from Mr. Jon Bowhay author of the original Masahide article. Once again we are presented with an excellent "lesson" in the judging of swords. Mr. Bowhay points out the need to consider the "total sword" when making a judgement along with the fact that even after all the details have been studied, one must also consider possible "exceptions" to the rules. Although a somewhat embarrassing controversy, these two discussions have pointed out the importance of study when judging a sword. Mr. Bowhay's letter reads as follows:

First I would like to say that I agree with Mr. Benson that it is an excellent idea to send an authenticating source document; preferably NBTHK origami when submitting an oshigata for the "Newsletter". For that purpose I am enclosing a copy of the KOSHU TOKUBETSU KICHO TOKEN appraisal certificate of the NBTHK that was awarded to the Suishinshi Masahide blade whose oshigata appeared in the March-April "Newsletter". As you can see the issue number and owner's name appears on the certificate. This certificate is above both the Kicho Token (white paper) and Tokubetsu Kicho Token (green paper) certificates. Therefore this blade has been through two NBTHK appraisals and has been screened by a large number of top Japanese sword authorities. I hope you will print this certificate as well as the following two oshigata I have sent to help clear up any confusion. Under no circumstances would I send a questionable oshigata or an atypical example, as that would not be good study material for members.

In Japan an oshigata alone is never taken as final proof of authenticity under any circumstances. No one of any reputable standing in Japan would ever make a public statement concerning a sword without having the blade in hand and considering both the blades workmanship itself together with the nakago.

I would now like to mention some points concerning Suishinshi Masahide. I speak with a northern Tohoku accent. Unfortunately I transferred this (Shishinshi) to English without considering that most books give Tokyo pronunciations. My apologies to the readers. (The original article read "Suisenshi").

As you probably know Masahide was born in Kanen 2 and died in Bunsei 8, September 27th at the age of 76. In comparison to most swordsmiths, Masahide had many different signature styles. It is indeed rare to find a smith with such a variety of signatures. He had a huge number of students and it was common and acceptable for his students to forge a blade for him and the student might also sign the teacher's name; or Masahide may make a blade and the student sign Masahide's name for him; or Masahide would sign a student's work. We must remember that the great European artists and artisans were in the habit of doing the same thing; and is continuing today.

MASAHIDE cont'd.

For example I am enclosing two oshigata of swords that belong to Mr. Shibata of Tokyo. (Mr. Shibata is a highly respected sword appraiser in Japan who has written a great number of books on swords. In addition he is on the Juyo Token appraising board of the NBTHK.) The first oshigata is a fine blade by Naotane. (Both this blade and the next have NBTHK origami.) Many may find this a rather odd looking signature; very childish and poor in form. The signature however is considered absolutely authentic, even though on the basis of the oshigata alone the signature does look forged. The reason is that the signature was cut by Yoshitane who did most of the carvings on Naotane's blades. This is not, however, a gimei. It is considered today too, that Yosazaemon Sukesada had someone cut his name for him, a professional used for such purposes.

The next oshigata is of Minamoto Kiyomaro. If anyone should look at the oshigata alone, they would not consider it authentic. The letters are nothing like the usual Kiyomaro. They are extremely poor in form. The signature is authentic however. It is considered from the deformation of the letters that he had been drinking heavily when he signed the blade. He had a very bad drinking problem as you all know. This blade is absolutely traditional Kiyomaro style and there can be no question as to the work's authenticity with the blade in hand.

As you all know, the Japanese had a tradition of calligraphy from early times. This is still highly regarded and studied. It is still, today, practiced in school and privately on a very high level. As in the West the personality of the individual manifests itself in the subtle formation of the letters. Because Kanji is, relative to Roman letters, more complex, practice is important and people do practice hard. The thickness of the letters formed by the pressure one uses, the order of writing each line that makes up a Kanji, and the speed with which the letters are written follow an established order that must be followed.

An individual without the benefit of an upper level Japanese education cannot hope to practice these rules except on a very rudimentary level. It is impossible to learn to read and write Kanji in five or six years of even one's best efforts. Even Japanese have difficulty writing and reading freely unless they have made a special and thorough effort to do so. It takes a much greater effort to be literate in Japanese than on the same level of literacy in English. I have always had trouble with both as I have gone to both Japanese public schools and English language schools here, and I am not very literate in either language I am afraid.

We must remember that Kanji was not originally developed by or for use of the common people, but for a select few of the upper levels. It was meant to be complex and elite. It is even more so with technical terms and names used in the sword world.

MASAHIDE cont'd.

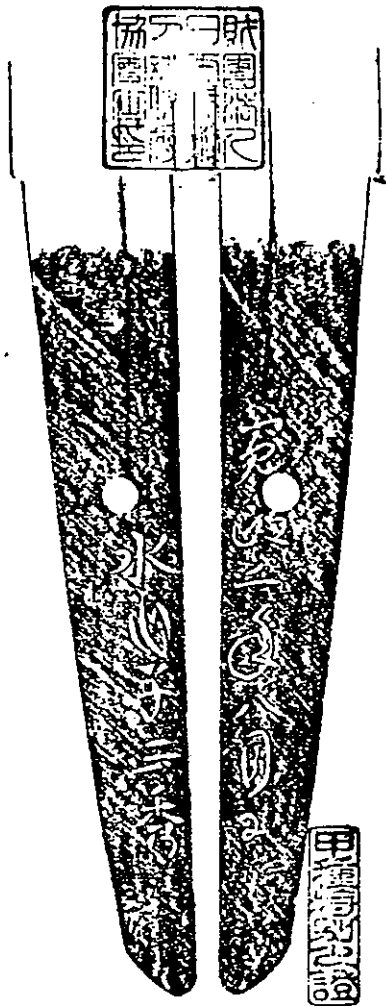
For these reasons it is rather unfair to ask the readers to "judge for themselves" as they cannot possibly do so without being absolutely fluent in Japanese reading and writing in any style. Being merely able to identify different Kanji is far from enough to judge for yourself. This is an area that will always be a problem of huge dimensions for non Japanese collectors (not that it is no problem for Japanese collectors, however).

I must add that when a public statement is made, as in the case of the Masahide oshigata it has the effect of damaging the reputation of all Foreign collectors and, in this case, of embarrassing Mr. Homma Junji and other members of the NBTHK. (Mr. Homma's name appears on the Kosshu certificate as Chairman). In Japan the actions and words of an individual are viewed as those of the entire group. This is do to many reasons. One reason is that before making a statement or taking action it is considered unprofessional not to discuss thoroughly those actions or statements with everyone involved; especially the most the most authoratative and knowledgeable people involved. So here it is taken as a matter of fact that such a discussion took place and that is how things are viewed here though the facts be different.

Perhaps what I've mentioned here is common knowledge to U.S. collectors. I do not know, but I hope it will be of some help and interest. The JSS/US is a really fine organization and I'm glad to see sword collecting on such a high level abroad. Everyone must continue to work together to compile and organize more and more research material for the club. This is most important I feel. This past Dallas cultural event was so important to study purposes. I think and hope such events will continue and grow in the U.S.

signed: Sincerely, J. Bowhay

12167



田名綱二郎殿

一 振指銘
 右は當協會
 貴重刀劍
 昭和五十二年
 八月日
 結果甲種特別
 鑑定す

認定書

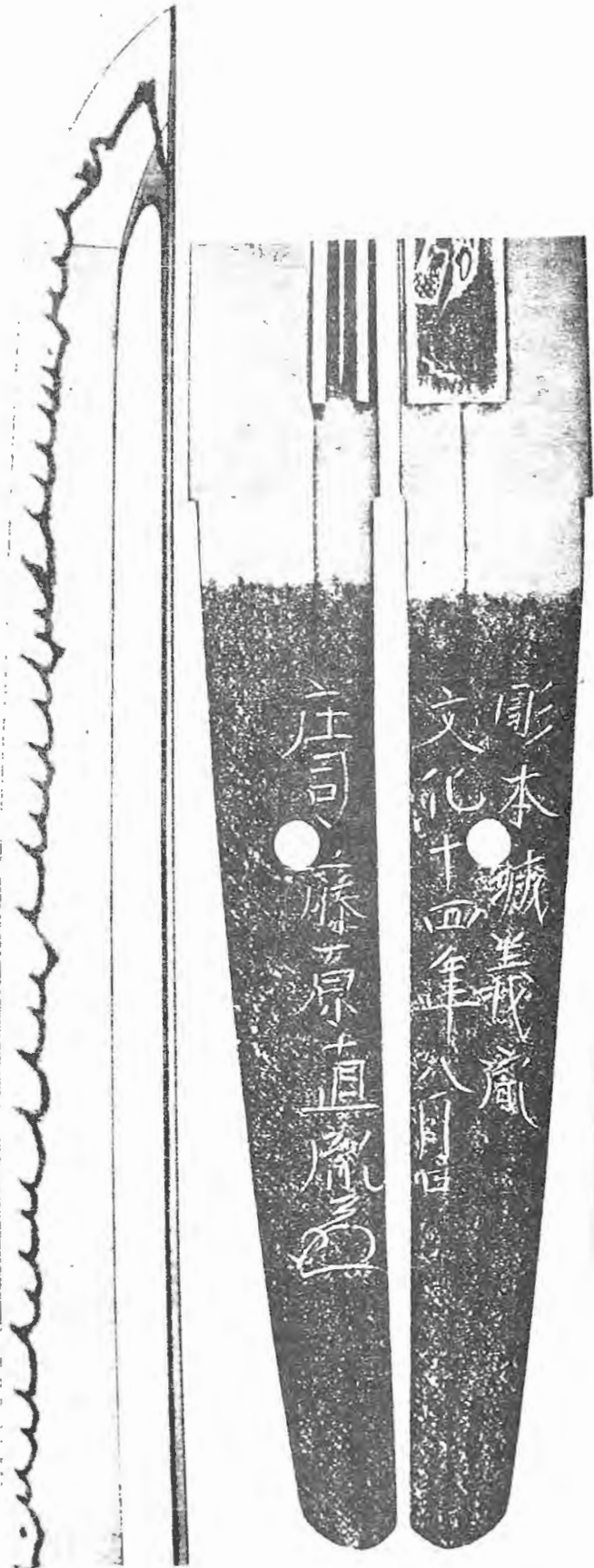
長四八四センチメートル

日本美術刀剣保存協會

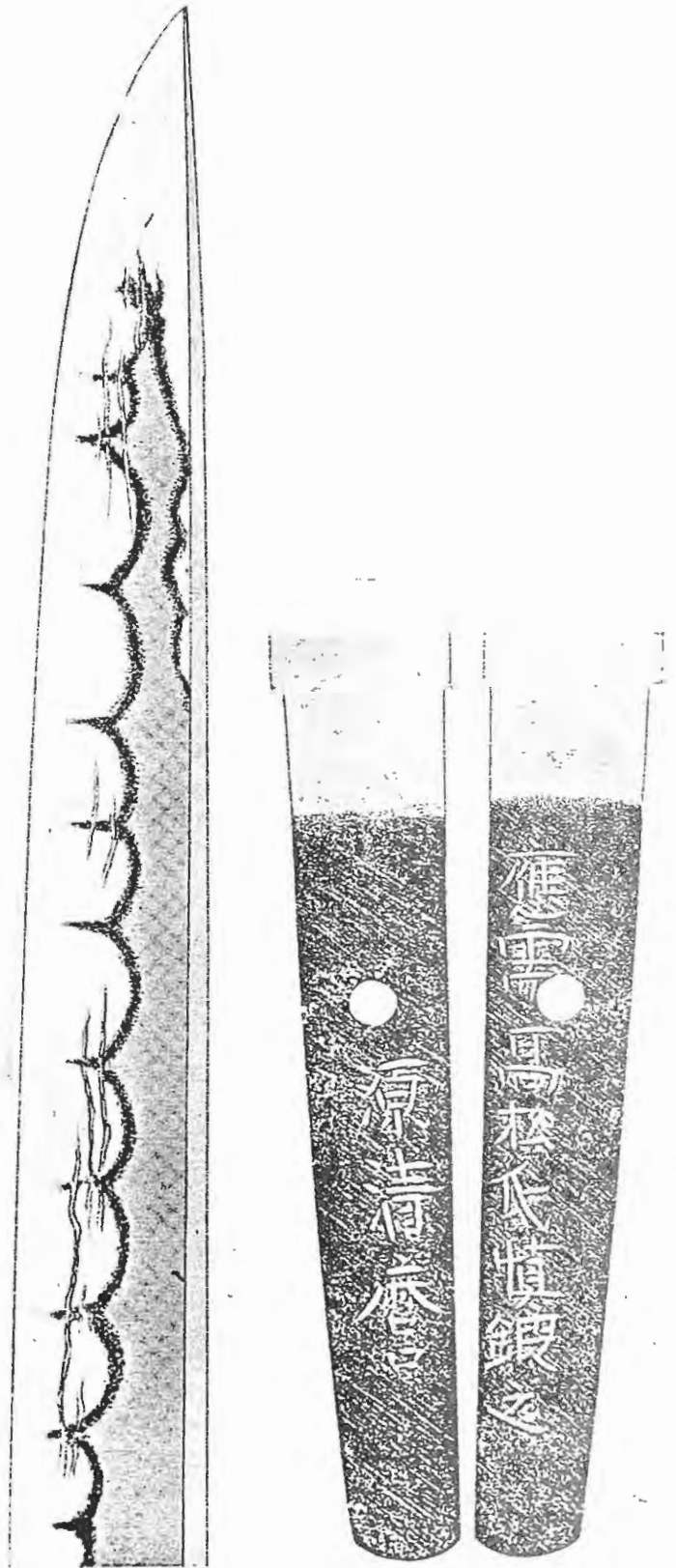
會長 本間 順



Koshu Tokubetsu Keicho origami issued by the NBTHK on the Masahide sword which was illustrated in the JSS/US "Newsletter", Vol.12 No.2.



Oshigata #1 - NAOTANE



Oshigata #2 - KIYOMARO

株式会社刀剣柴田月報 第九集第二十頁

清唐刃文は「刀剣柴田」駿河台店冥實吉也謹写

BUY-SELL-TRADE COLUMN -

This section of the "Newsletter" is offered as a free service to the membership, providing an opportunity to advertise for specific needs or offer specific items. Please keep ads short and to-the-point. No general "swords wanted" ads please. All ads should be directed to the "Newsletter" for publication.

- WANTED - Color slides of Dallas sword forging activities - especially the smiths at work. Will trade for same. Contact: Mel Oka,

- WANTED - Books on the sword; Compton, Fujishiro, others, prefer English texts. Contact:

- WANTED - Woodblock prints. Contact: Paul Couch,

- WANTED - Katana by KUNIMICHI, p.253 Fujishiro Shintohen, or Wakizashi by YASUTSUGU, p.289 Fujishiro Shinto-hen, KIJU, p.408 Fujishiro. Contact:

- FOR SALE - Katana, TAKAYUKI (ca.1558), green + papers from Dallas, 31" blade. Katana, SA, bo-hi, 30" blade. Contact: Frank "Spike" Wigelius,

- FOR SALE - Shirazaya bags available. Purple silk or Crepe-de-chine, fully lined, std. lengths for Katana, wakizashi, tanto priced at \$25, \$20 and \$15 all silk (\$5 less Crepe.) Special lengths upon request. These are hand made. Contact: Rick Mantegani

SHINTO-SHU TRANSLATION -

As was announced last issue of the "Newsletter", Steven Winkley has completed and now offers for sale a complete translation of the book on oshigata, "Shinto-shu". This is a 58 page typed 8½" x 11" copy and can be purchased either loose leaf or spiral bound. Prices are: \$17.50pp unbound, \$20pp bound. Foreign air post, add \$4 additional per copy. Steven also advised that he has some copies of the original Japanese text available at \$30pp per copy (limited supply). Contact: Steven Winkley,

Your patronage on this project will serve to encourage Steven towards future translation projects, a service we all desperately need to assist our sword studies.

EXCITING NEW PUBLICATION AVAILABLE -

Mr. Kentaro Yoshikawa's sword group, Nippon Token Hozonkai (NTH) has recently published an important book of oshigata entitled, "Yushu-tō Zuroko" which means "Catalogue of Excellent Swords". At this time I would like to review this book and at the same time encourage it's addition to one's sword library.

"Yushu-tō Zuroko" is a hard bound book (30.5 cm x 21.8 cm) which contains 150 full size oshigata showing the nakago and the kissaki portion of swords awarded "Yushu saku" rating by the NTH at their meetings since 1960. The quality of the oshigata is superb as is the reproduction and printing quality. Most of the smiths represented are of Shintō era although a number of Kotō smiths are also illustrated. Background material accompanies each oshigata providing excellent research information.

A second volume accompanies the book of oshigata (which has some English text but is primarily in Japanese). This second volume is a complete English translation of the entire book! Obviously this makes the set a most valuable and usable tool for our sword studies. The English is excellent which compliments to total excellence of this fine publication. We are to be deeply thankful to Mr. Yoshikawa and the Nippon Token Hozonkai for making this publication available to assist in the studies of non-Japanese speaking sword students.

I have worked up an index to this book listing the smiths in alphabetical order (the present index lists them by page number only). This index will be made available in the near future as soon as it can be finish-typed.

Ron Hartmann - NL Editor

* * * * *

BOOK "TANTŌ" REPUBLISHED -

The excellent book on Japanese daggers entitled "Tantō" by Mr. Suzuki has been republished after an interval of eleven years. This book was first published in 1969 and is considered an important reference work for the student and collector of tantō.

This 1980 reprint retains the 200 excellent plates of important short blades of the earlier edition. Facing each plate page of 21cm x 15cm is a page of concise Japanese text. The Japanese book I.D. serial number is 0072-07828-2223. The book has a fixed price in Japan of ¥3,000. This in my opinion represents good value for such an attractive and informative hard bound book. (The JSS/US English translation of the text will greatly enhance the value of this fine little handbook).

Ian N. Brookes
N.S.W., Australia

Editor's remark: A supply of the reprint of "Tantō" is being sought for resale through the Society.

TOKEN TAIKAI '79 NTH REPORT -

The following is a translation of a report on TTK/79, made by Mr. Yoshikawa to NTH members via their Society journal. At first this report was thought somewhat redundant, but after reading it several times it is felt that it would be very interesting to our membership in that it gives some good "Japanese impressions" of our sword world (outside of Japan). Some of these impressions are humorous, some are educational, but all point up the significance and success of TTK'79.

Our thanks to Albert Yamanaka for the translation work. Albert mentioned that this is a very loose translation, but it is done and we are able to pass it on to the membership.

RH

REPORT OF THE ALL U.S. TOKEN KAI
by Yoshikawa Koen

The convention of the U.S. Token Kai was held at the Ramada Inn close to the Chicago O'Hare Airport from the 23rd to 27th of May, 1979 for the five day period. Previously (4 years ago) we were invited to the same meet and we held the shinsa there, so it not being the first time for us, it was like returning to our 2nd home and we were not as first timers.

There were well over 400 persons in attendance who came from all states of the U.S. as well as various countries of Europe, Canada and Japan. (Over 30 members from our club made a trip to attend the meet, as well as a number of sword dealers). Therefore, rather than an "all U.S. meeting" it more or less was like an "International meeting" and we strongly felt this. Those people from all countries with different colors were there who like Japanese swords and wish to understand the sword. Although it was only for a five day period, everyone came closer to the understanding and we felt that all were of this feeling.

In the background of having this meet and it being successful, members of the Chicago Token Study Group worked very hard to bring it to a successful meeting and as an example, over a year and a half before the meeting we were asked to attend the affair and hold the shinsa. From the standpoint of a Japanese, planning so well ahead of time is unthinkable, but we also were told that from about six months before the meeting, members met each weekend to talk over the various problems to be met, and since then we received letters asking for the carrying on of the meeting once about every month or request for equipments, this and that. Also as originally planned, the project became larger than it originally had been planned and we were of the apprehension if such a large scale plan would go smoothly or not, but all having worked out quite well, we were once again amazed and doubted if any Japanese group here in Japan could have performed such a feat.

TTK'79 cont'd.

Among all the phases of the meet, the important part was the shinsa for the sword and fittings and before we left Japan, we were told that there will be about 600 swords and about 200 fittings. At the final count there were all told over 1,000 items and by this alone one can see that the meet was very successful.

The event that was most popular next to the shinsa was Ozawa Masatoshi and Goda Yasutaka, both swordsmiths and Hirado Takakazu, saya smith who gave demonstrations. Even here in Japan it is quite difficult to actually go into a workshop and see such men at work and so the people in attendance saw various phases of these things first hand and each operation was explained to the visitors in detail.

After the off time from the convention itself, movies were shown, lectures were given by the shinsa team, etc. Mr. Sasano one of the shinsa team members, gave a talk on fittings, and I myself gave a talk on the five traditions and their various routing, and in each case the interpreting was made by Mr. Yumoto of San Francisco. We saw that those in attendance understood everything as there were quite a bit of "noddings" and for this we wish to thank Mr. Yumoto for interpreting and wish to thank him for his efforts as well as others that helped.

There was a room called the "Meibutsu Room" which was in a large hall and favorite swords from private collections all over the U.S. were shown as well as fittings and armours. There were many excellent items, though we saw some contrary, and had we had time we could have cooperated in their selections in which case we felt that the Meibutsu Room would have been much better. (Editor: apparently the concern about exhibited items was due to the tsuba and kodogu from the museum collection. No attempt was possibly to verify mei and selection was on random selection alone.) As to the display of these items, many show cases were prepared and for like us peasants, we think of the expences and such as it must have been quite costly for this. We were told that everything was paid for beforehand and that after the meet, each owner took responsibility for their own items to be shipped back. There was another part of the meet which apparently goes with such a meeting, and that is the room devoted to "exchanges".

In this area, each table was sold at X dollars and those items sold or to be bought were displayed and more like a market, displayed on these table. There were over 100 tables with swords and fittings and many people seem to have attended the meet just for this. To us it seemed that the items traded in places such as this are the way the American collector trade and collect. We also saw American sword dealers too so this may be the trend of time and prices on these items seem not much different from that in Japan and in cases, there are some much higher than in Japan. The tour group from Japan were of the thought that they might make a "find" but it was not so, and they were quite amazed at the vigorous trading and ealing going on and this seems to be the going on in the Japanese sword clubs in the U.S. as the above is what went on at the meeting.

TTK'79 cont'ed.

(The next section of this article pictured four oshigata of swords which particularly impressed the team. These swords were: katana by Miyamoto Kanenore dated Ansei 5, 2.15 saku; katana by Kawachi (no) Kami Hironobu with cutting test, 2.55 shaku; katana by Yamato (no) Kami Yoshimichi, 2.45 shaku; Tachi by Shoji Yamon Naokatsu (2nd generation), dated 1865, 2.57 shaku. Two other blades are also pictured, a 1.7 shaku wakizashi by Bizen Osafune Yoshimitsu and a 2.3 shaku katana by Bizen Osafune Sukesada, but an explanation of these was missed in the translation.)

The shinsa was held from noon of the 23rd and lasted until the morning of the 27th. Our intention at the start was to go through 150 items, swords and fittings, per day the same as we do here in Tokyo and left out the thought that this was being held outside Japan. This was so decided before we left Japan with the members of the shinsa team. The format was to be a white paper form for items receiving 65 points or more and pink paper form for items rejected with the main portion of these forms to be written in both Japanese and English. If an item were judged fake, then looking at the block for fake mei an "circle" would be marked plus the information as to the items age, and other details, would be filled in. If this data did not satisfy the owner then there were others working who could be asked about this. There were hardly any questions made on the authenticities and it seems that the shinsa team had the trust of the owners. If the works were of X generation, etc., these questions were asked and to what and which group the work belonged, etc., and we were amazed at the knowledge of the owners that they knew of these facts. Shinsa for swords were by myself, and Watanabe Moritsugu as my assistant and also Yoshikawa Eiichi. For fittings Sasano did the first half and Wakayama the second half and as my assistant Hagiwara Mamoru. Omino Kiyoharu acted as lieson and all around man for the American side and in all everything went on very smoothly. The shinsa as a whole, fittings were quite good and swords not as good. There were quite a few very nice fittings and in fact there were some that even equaled Begelow and Weld collections which were collected in the early days of Meiji. As for the swords, the usages of the pink papers were seen quite a bit and hardly any that were of note. During the shinsa such a scene was seen. An American couple submitted about 10 blades and one after the other was pink. The pretty young wife commented that I liked to use pink paper a lot. I could not get what she was talking about and as I was reaching for the next pink form she had then understood all this. The interpreter had told them that if the blades had gotten through then they could hve sold at good prices at the trading room downstairs, therefore it showed us the women are strong when it comes to counting money. We then noticed that there were many couples watching the shinsa and when they heard that their swords were rejected with the pink paper, there were many dissatisfied women. We were of the understanding that western women are all very (disinterested?) but we saw that they had keen interest in their husband's interest and were very cooperative, which is not what we see here.

TTK'79 cont'd.

After we had tea at 3 PM on the 3rd day we started the shinsa again, when we heard about the big airplane accident and the air about the shinsa room suddenly became different and we could no longer continue the shinsa after that. I had the job to get as many items through as possible through shinsa and so urged those concerned to proceed. We somehow managed to continue again, however the sirens from the ambulances and patrol cars were blaring well into the night. A rather dreary day.

On the 4th day, the fittings shinsa had about finished with what had been submitted, but there were about 100 swords still to go through. This evening we had a large banquet which was held as a farewell party and all present were assembled in a large hall and many people from all over thanked us for our efforts. This was a very pleasant time for all. The shinsa was to be finished around noon of the 5th day, but it took us into the late afternoon and when we were told that we had finished the last sword, to tell the truth, all of us were dead tired. This goes the same for the local club members too and all those concerned with the shinsa. Dr. Lewert as well as Ted Wysocky, etc., told us that, "a scale of this nature was never undertaken in the U.S. before and they were glad that it all went well to the end. They were very pleased for our cooperation, and that a shinsa of this nature will probably never occur again...."....all in all everyone seemed very much satisfied with the results and we also were pleased that we had gotten such a grand cooperation.

I was somewhat disappointed that I was not able to attend to those people who went on the sword tour, due to the time taken by the shinsa as well as on the lectures. After the meeting concluded, we went on our tour to San Francisco, Los Angeles, Sacramento, New York, etc. We wish to thank all for the wonderful receptions we received in each city we visited and also wish to thank the many sword clubs as well.

* * * * *

Editor's remarks - The transcript of Mr. Yoshikawa's lecture is to be put out as another publication, along with results from shinsa, by the Token Study Group. We also have tapes of the various other lectures and hopefully these too can be transcribed eventually and presented in written form for all to benefit from. As for that task, if anyone wishes to work on this please contact this office and arrangements will be made to see this task through.

MEIBUTSU CATALOGUE SALES -

Everyone can greatly assist the sales of this catalogue if they wish. Each member received the special flyer on the catalogue awhile back. If you would in turn send this flyer to your local city library along with a brief note that they should add the publication to their inventory, it would give us a good number of sales. Other avenues of sales are being pursued but we need everyones help in selling off the bulk of our supply. Sales profits go to both the JSS/US and the TSG plus new memberships too are side benefits.

HIZEN (no) KUNI TADAYOSHI
oshigata by Jon Bowhay

SHAPE: Katana of shinogi zukure form. Length: 68.4cm or
2 shaku 2 sun 5 bu 1 rin; Sori: 5 bu.

EDGE: Hamon is sugu (straight) with some notare (undulating).
It is made up of konie deki (tempered in small nie
tradition), and the nie guchi (edge of nie line) is
extremely thick and quite brilliant. It exhibits
considerable chikei.

HADA: It is forged in ko-itame (small wood grain pattern) -
known on Hizen blades as "konuka" hada. That is a
fine itame that gives the impression of rice grains.

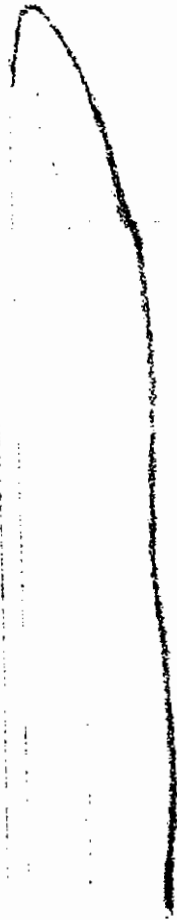
NAKAGO: Kurijiri (evenly rounded) with one mekugi-ana (peg
hole). The yasurime (file marks) are typical Hizen
style (horizontal or kiri style).

REMARKS:

This is the first Tadayoshi. This signature
is referred to as GOJI Tadayoshi as he signed with
five (go) characters. We may date the Goji works
as being around Keicho 16 (ca.1611), not much earlier
or later. The thick ko-nie guchi is a mark of Shodai
(first generation) Tadayoshi.

This blade has a fine horimono (carving) and was
done, as stated on the nakago, by Munenaga, who did
nearly if not all the original carvings on Tadayoshi's
blades.

I polished this and the blade and ha are not part-
icularly hard. The kasane is thick (thickness) and the
jigane (sword steel) is unflawed and of even consist-
ancy.



HIZEN (no) KUNI TADAYOSHI (GOJI)
Horimono by MUNENAGA 15.

SHIKKAKE SCHOOL WAKIZASHI

oshigata by Andy Quirt

FORM - Nagamaki naoshi wakizashi, o-suriage (greatly shortened), mumei (no signature remaining), length of 1 shaku 5 sun (47.6 cm).

PERIOD - Late Kamakura (early 14th century)/early Nambokucho.

REMARKS - The hamon is nie deki (tempered in nie tradition), kinsuji (lines of solid gold-like lines within hamon), sunagashi (lines of nie through hamon), nijuba (double line of yakiba), and sanjuba (triple lines of yakiba). The midare hamon (irregular tempered pattern) with areas of gonome (rounded mounded areas) and profuse masa (straight grained forging) activity makes this blade resemble ko-Uda, Norishige, and Sekishu Naotsuna.

The jigane (forging) is a mokume (burl grain) and masame (straight grain) hada. There is ji nie and chikei (nie in the surface of blade and kinsuji-like formations within grain of blade).

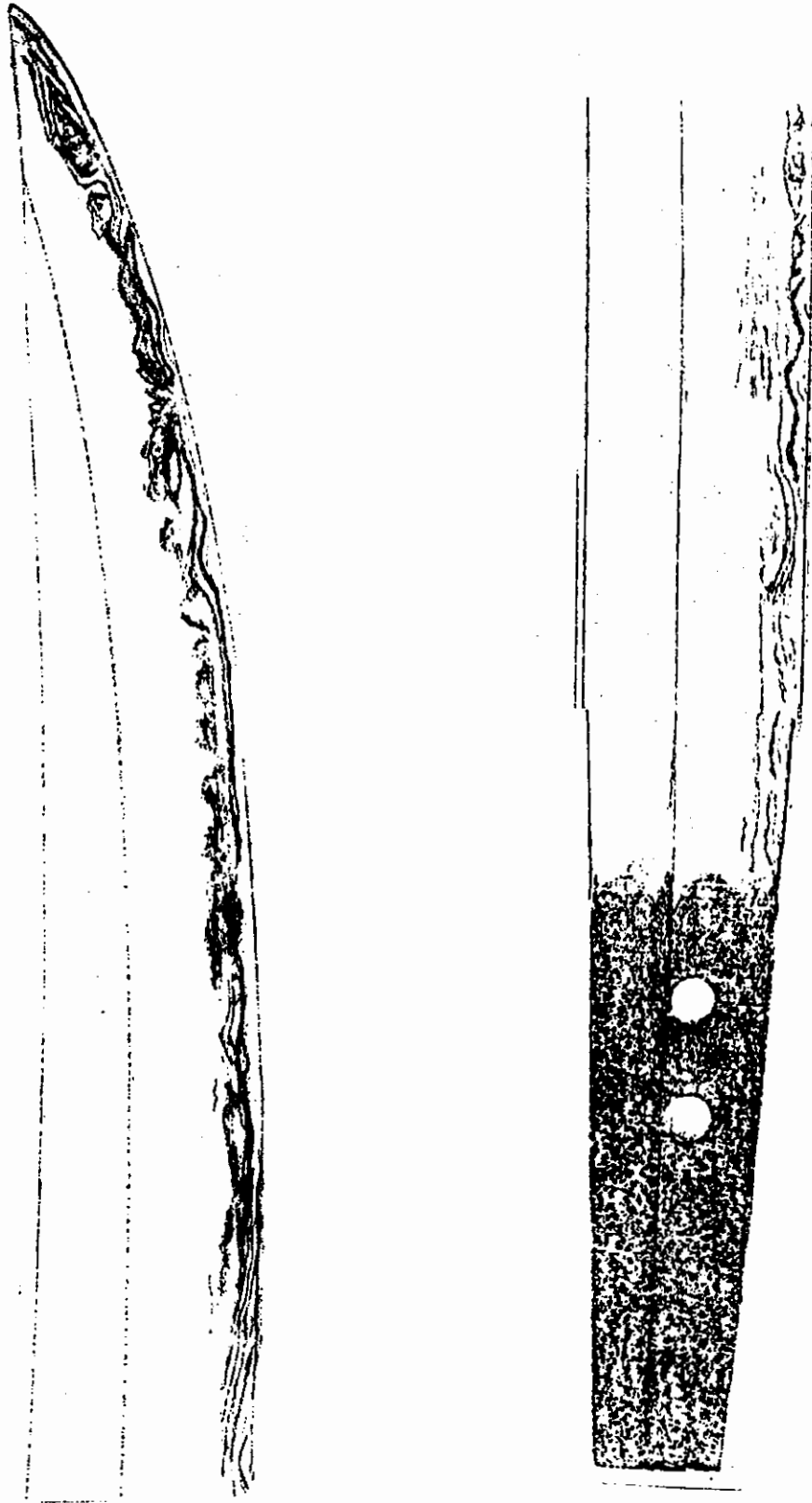
The Shikkake school was founded when Norihiro settled in the Shikkake area of Yamato province during mid-Kamakura. Norihiro's son Norinaga is generally credited with the founding of the Shikkake school.

This blade is in fresh polish and is mounted in shirazaya with a niyu (double) silver foil habaki. It has an NBTHK Tokubetsu Kicho certificate (Green paper) #368238 attributing the blade to Shikkake. Quite a bit of the skin steel has been lost by many repeated polishings.

EDITOR'S REMARKS -

Further comments are written in Albert Yamanaka's "Nihonto Newsletter", Vol.2 No.2 page 16. The very complex hamon is typified by the following description:

Width of the yakiba (edge of hamon) is narrow in nie (larger crystal formations) with the pattern (hamon) in chu suguha (medium wide straight) with hotsure (unravelings along the edge like woolen yarn), chu suguha hotsure with ko choji midare and komidare (small clove shapes, slightly irregular). Others will have uniform gonome (mounded pattern) in komidare (irregular line) with nie clustering around the nioi forming ashi (tailings), inazuma and kinsuji (gold-like lines), uchinoke (crescent moon shape formations of nie above hamon), hakikake (like sunagashi) and or nijuba. Still others will be wide yakiba in gonome made very hanayaki (gay).



Nagamaki Naoshi Wakizashi
Shikkake School, ca. early
14th century.

A RARE WAKIZASHI BY ECHIZEN MASANORI

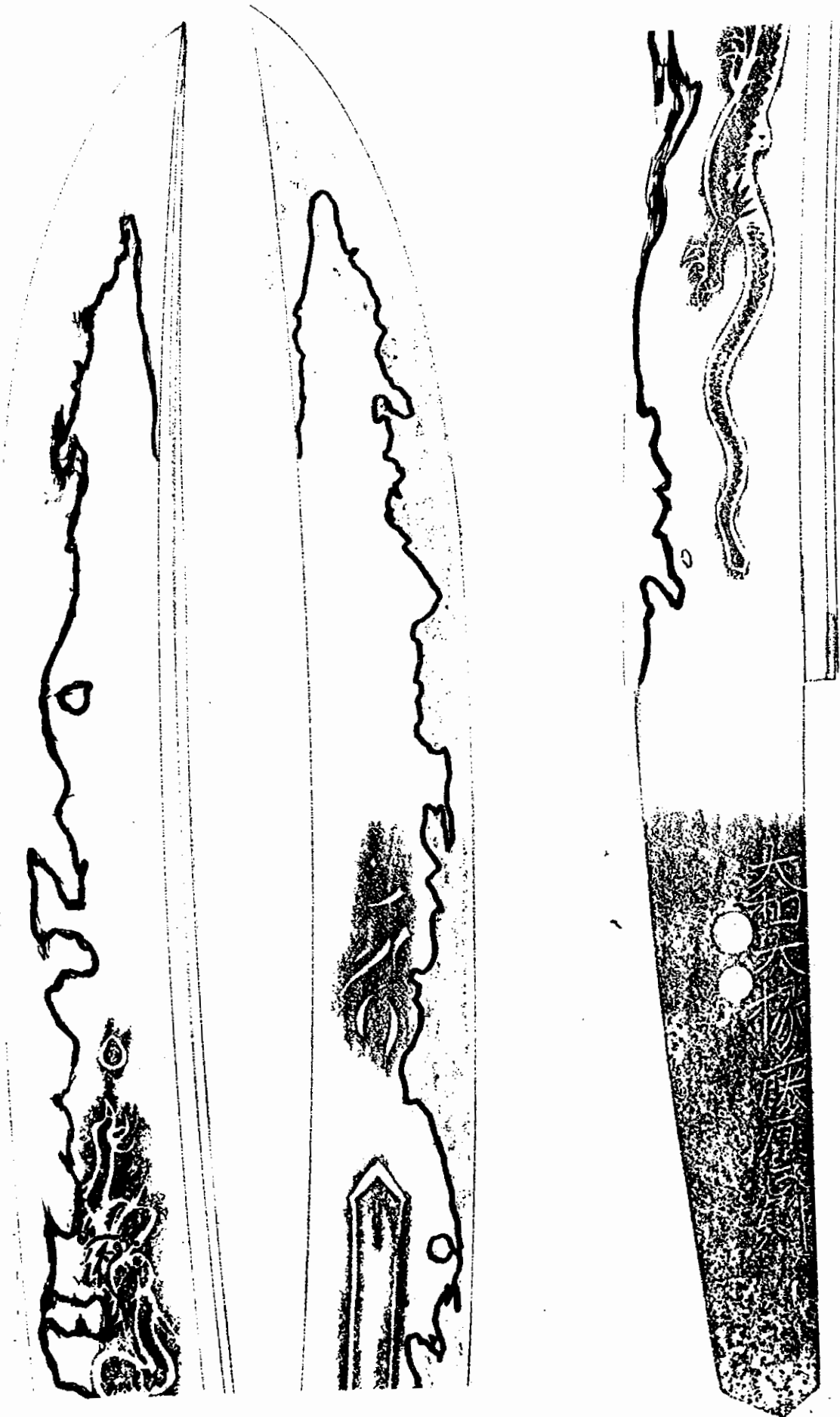
By Keith R. Evans

Although the shintō smiths produced many wakizashi, relatively few hirazukuri (made without ridgeline) blades were made. These were generally produced by such swordsmiths as Nanki Shigekuni, Kunisada, Masatoshi, Kunisuke, etc. Add to these names Yamato Daijo Masanori, a master-smith of Echizen Province, the maker of this boldly-designed hirazukuri wakizashi.

- STYLE - Wakizashi (short sword), hirazukuri (without ridgeline), mitsumune (three-sided mune or back).
- KITAE - Mixed itame, masa hada (mixed wood grained and straight grained forging), much ji-nie (nie within blade surface).
- HAMON - Gunome midare (irregular made mounded pattern) with many variations in nioi (fine, small crystals) with strings of nie (strings of larger crystals through the hamon).
- HORIMONO - Kinai bori (carving by Kinai school of carvers) of dragon with jewel and ken, with bonji.
- NAKAGO - Tip is kengo (cut sharp), file marks are slightly slanting. Two mekugi ana (holes). Signature is in eight characters: YAMATO DAIJO FUJIWARA MASANORI.
- MEASUREMENTS - Length 39.3cm
Sori 1.5cm
Width 3.3cm
Nakago length 13.0cm
Nakago sori 0.2cm

Remarks -

This wakizashi is the "sho" of a nice daisho which was split up in 1962. Now after lots of detective work and negotiations, the daisho is back together one again.



SWORD FORGING DEMONSTRATION. -

As was announced last issue, Mr. Yoshihara, master swordsmith, and his brother will be demonstrating their art at the American Blacksmiths Association conference August 21st through the 24th. The conference will be held at the Santa Cruz campus of the University of California. A special \$25 registration fee is available by contacting: ABANA/CBA Conference, c/o Mr. Michael Bondi

MRS. CADWELL DECEASED. -

It is our regret to announce the death of Mrs. Ann Duncan Cadwell, June 16th of this year. Mrs. Cadwell was the widow of the late Col. C. V. Cadwell who is remembered for his part in saving the swords of Japan from destruction after WW2. Mrs. Cadwell was a good friend of many sword people on the west coast and around the country. Her friendship will be remembered by all who knew her.

STOLEN MENUKI RECOVERED. -

The Kettering Collection of gold menuki and other kodogu, stolen last January (list published in the Vol.12 No.1 "Newsletter") has been partially recovered. Although details of this recovery have not reached the JSS/US, apparently most items were found intact with only a few items missing due to being melted down for their gold content.

SHIRASAYA MAKER'S PHONE CORRECTION. -

The "Newsletter" has been advised that the phone number listed in our latest "Supplies List" for Mike Virgadamo is incorrect.

FUJISHIRO BOOKS VIA AIR -

Several of our Australian members have asked about the additional cost of ordering the two volume set of Fujishiro via AIR MAIL delivery. A check with the Post Office shows that we can deliver this set of books via air at a total price of \$115US, to Australia. This price should be good for other foreign members alike. Please make note of this special rate in your records and specify "Air Post" if this is how you want your books delivered when ordered.

JSS/US SWORD CARE PAMPHLET COMING SOON -

A number of members have asked for instructions of the cleaning of swords, use of uchiko, oil, etc., and other sword care particulars. Because of this, a formal "sword care pamphlet" is being put together for distribution to all interested parties. The pamphlet will be brief and basic and illustrated. It's intent will be to show new collectors the basics of sword care and sword etiquette in a brief, to-the-point manner. Availability will be announced as soon as it is completed. Watch your "Newsletter" for details.

COMMENTARY -

The following has been sent to the "Newsletter" by Mr. Bill Miller, JSS/US Secretary and Director. This commentary is a follow-up to Bill's earlier article which appeared in the Vol.11 No.5 issue of the "Newsletter".

I write this as a follow-up to my last article in response to the many comments I received. It seems many are concerned about the lack of good swords to look at than the actual handling problem. Possibly I should define my impressions of sword shows.

One is that sword shows are the worst thing that has ever happened to collecting in this country. The shows have done one thing that all the dealers could not do. That is to bring a great many items together in one place for them to pick from. This gives the dealers a distinct advantage of saving time and money on their buying trips. Also, given the fact that many coming to these shows have only a limited knowledge of the items they are bringing, swords, tsuba, etc., it is not surprising that selling has become the primary objective of the sword shows.

On the other hand I myself would like to have a little more of a dual concept. That of having a chance to socialize and exchange ideas and sword information with collectors from all over this country and also trade and sell items not wanted. If we cannot do this I think these shows will eventually wither and die. This year more than any other I heard from many serious students of the sword stating that they are thinking of not attending the shows because of the hectic cut-throat attitude now prevalent. There are other groups of arms collectors, mainly antique guns, who have been able to have get togethers with emphasis on socializing and dissemination of knowledge. Considering the scholarly requirements of Nihonto as compared to other arms collecting you would think we could do something similar. But I am assuming that there are enough people interested in the serious study of swords. If a survey was taken among people involved with Nihonto, most people would be amazed as to how many there are whose thirst for knowledge of the sword is entirely directed to how much they can sell it for.

Once I told a non-collector friend about the frantic dealings that go on and he was quite amazed that we would have such a self-destructive attitude toward our hobby. If others estimates on the number of good swords going out of the country is even remotely correct, then the end is in sight for a few of us that really enjoy our strange little hobby. To put it in prospective, this was the last chance that a person of average means had of owning the Japanese Art equivalent of a Rembrandt or a Rubens.

(Signed) Bill Miller

SEVERAL ITEMS OF INTEREST -

Several books listed in the Society "Supply List" are fast becoming unavailable. As a reminder, the following books are in short supply and when gone, no more will be available.

"EARLY JAPANESE SWORD GUARDS;SUKASHI TSUBA" by Sasano. This book apparently is now out-of-print. \$15.50US/Canada, \$16.00US Others.

"MINO-TO TAIKAN" by Token Kenkyu Rengokai group. Two or three copies remain. Price: \$150.00US

"BOOK OF THE SWORD", reprint of Dallas 1972 Taikai. Only a few remain at this price. Price: \$10.00US

"TOSO SORAN" by Dr. Torigoye. Although not in short supply, still greatly overlooked by most collectors. It is a fine book, with english text, which is a great addition to any sword library if one is to even begin to understand sword fittings. Price: \$65US U.S./Canada, \$70US Others. It is available at this low price only from the JSS/US thanks to Dr. Torigoye's widow's assistance.

* * * * *

This period in collecting is presenting us with a great opportunity to subscribe to English language publications on the sword and kodogu. As a reminder, the publications of primary importance are: "Bushido" magazine, the English edition of NBTHK's "Token Bijutsu" journal, and Fujishiro's English edition of "Meito Zukan". Although requiring initial dollar outlay, all of these periodicals are worth much more than their subscription costs and are highly recommended for all of our membership. If only one sword is discovered for one's collection because of the data contained in any one of these publications, it will more than "pay" for the cost of all three of these fine subscriptions. The addresses for these journals have been printed earlier, but can be obtained any time simply by contacting your "Newsletter".

1979 BULLETIN -

The 1979 issue of our annual publication has been mailed and should be in-hand by this date, except perhaps our foreign members. Any U.S./Canadian member who has not received a copy (except very new members) should contact the NL Editor immediately. Foreign members should expect their issues no later than around the end of September.

"NEWSLETTER DEADLINE" - The next issue of the "Newsletter" will be due out sometime the first of September. Please have all material for that issue in to the Editor well ahead of that time.

Japanese Armor

Very attractive and authentically made matched copy of Momoyama, early edo period, Gasuko armor. Blue laced, black lacquered iron throughout.

- Kabuto 16 plate suji-kabuto laced in blue and white sugaki, large Brass kuwagata (horns) and paulownia mon maidate (fore-crest).
- Mempo Nara style, horse-hair mustache, laced in blue and white kabiki
- Dō Black lacquer body with large paulownia mon on the tassets laced in blue sugaki
- Sodē (shoulder guards) Black lacquer, blue sugaki laced
- Kote (sleeves) Haidate (thigh pads), Sunate (shin guards) very good quality and workmanship, backed with gold silk
- PRICE: \$1,475 (\$1,625 with bos) plus shipping

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For photographs write or call

Japanese Armor

Genuine armor complete--of parts from Momoyama through edo period

- Kabuto Momoyama period, helmet covered with boars fur (looks like head of hair). Shakuro in blue kabiki
- Dō (Yokohagi) Entire Dō covered with blue Kabiki lace (tachi Dō style) Tassetts restored and laced in blue sugaki, mid to late edo.
- Mempo Mid to late edo, lacquered iron with large fluffy mustache, laced in blue sugaki.
- Kote (sleeves) Momoyama, early edo, sleeves of many lacquered plates, fabric backing a bit tender.
- Sodē (shoulder guards) brown-black lacquer in blue sugaki
- Haidate (thigh pads) composed of heavy iron plates on restored blue backing
- Sunate (shin guards) Shino style, very good condition
- PRICE: \$2,325 (no box) plus shipping

Katsura-Kami
Also known as Kama-Yari. Short handled with small sickle shaped blade PRICE: \$160

Fire-Axe
All iron Samurai fire axe or fire hook, approximately 20", has bonji on the "belt hook" PRICE: \$115

Biyobu
Four panel Kano school sumi-e painting, mountain and fishing village scene. Very subtle. Approximately 4' x 6'. Some restoration work on two of the panels. PRICE: \$315 plus shipping

Wooden Mask
Theatrical or ceremonial use--probably Meiji period. Large face of Hanwa, green-black pigment PRICE: \$260

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For some time now I have the pleasure of being a member of the JSS/US and study eagerly the always inspiring Newsletters. In consequence my interest for especially Sword Furniture has grown - and so has my stock of books about it.

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