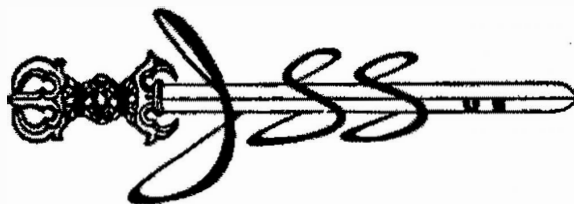


# Japanese Sword Society of the United States, Inc.



## NEWSLETTER

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Volume 12 No. 5

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER - 1980

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### MILWAUKEE SWORD SHOW COMING -

A reminder that the Token Study Group annual sword show will be held at the Red Carpet Inn located at the Airport in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The show will be held the weekend of October 24, 25 and 26. For table reservations or other show particulars contact: TOKEN STUDY GROUP c/o 1811 North 73rd St., Wauwatosa, WI 53213. A formal mailing will be sent out by the TSG very soon.

This show (usually held in Chicago) has always proved to be a grand event, well attended and full of activity. Although no special activities have been announced, an exhibit area may be set up plus the JSS/US will most likely hold some sort of membership and/or Officers meeting during the show. Plan to attend and join in the fun!

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### NEW MEMBERS -

We wish to welcome the following new members to the Society in hopes that their membership will be an active one.

Robert L. Barrowman,  
Stephen M. Kitynsky,  
John D. Ross,  
P. J. Hughes,  
D. Couchman,  
William L. Gregory,  
Gary L. Honeycutt,  
Bill Freedenberg,  
G. Newton Haleblan,  
Gary Fugate,  
Wayne Beverly,  
Donald A. Robers, Jr.,

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

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NEW MEMBERS cont'd.

Fred W. Weiss,  
Fred J. Wicks,  
Elton K. Ericson,  
Frank Wright,  
Nick Sprofera,  
Donald F. Vespa,  
Harry E. Jamison,  
ADDRESS CHANGES -

"NIHONTO TOKO JITEN, KOTO/SHINTO-HEN" TRANSLATED -

The "Newsletter" has been advised that the sword collector's "Bible", Fujishiro's two volume set of books illustrating sword signatures, is now finished being translated and is ready for printing pending resolving some legal technicalities. No other particulars are available except that it is expected to be out on the market in a few months. This has been a private venture of Mr. Dave Pepin and will certainly prove to be a great tool for all of us in our sword studies. More on this when available! The translation is into English.

NEW BOOK AVAILABLE FROM SOCIETY

Several copies of "Ōkyo and the Maruyama-Shijō School of Japanese Painting" have been purchased for resale to members. This is a museum catalogue which was produced to accompany the exhibit of these paintings which was held in St. Louis earlier this year. The catalogue is beautifully done, heavy paper cover, 199 pages w/39 pages of informative "Introduction" included. This school of artists influenced sword fitting makers in their design which makes this well illustrated catalogue of great interest to kodogu collectors.

JSS/US LIBRARY ADDITIONS -

Three new titles have been placed in the Society library and are available for loan. They are: "Ōkyo and the Maruyama-Shijō School of Japanese Painting"; "The Samurai Sword-An American Perspective" by Gary Murtha; and the english translation of "Shintō-shu" by Steven Winkley. Contact JSS/US LIBRARIAN for a loan.

JSS/US LIFE MEMBER DECEASED -

It is with deep regret that I must announce the death of Thomas B. Buttweiler who died suddenly October 5, 1980.

Tom was born in St. Cloud, Minnesota in 1934. He graduated from St. John's University with a B.A., and received his M.S. in physics from the University of North Dakota. He was employed as a physicist most of his business career.

A long time arms collector, he became interested in the Japanese sword in the mid 1950s. This interest gradually grew until he became known as one of the leading collectors and sword students of the United States. Tom has made several trips to Japan and had a primary interest in collecting and studying ko-Bizen swords and very early menuki and other such early kodogu. He authored a number of excellent research articles including, "The seeds of the Bizen Tradition", published by Token Kenkyu Kai - Dallas 1972; "The History of Pre Edo Menuki", published by Token Taikai - San Francisco 1976; "Ezo Fittings", a series recently published in "Bushido" magazine.

Tom's association with the JSS/US began years ago in the mid 1960's. An active member, he most recently served as a Director during 1978-1979. He became a "Life Member" of the Society about two years ago.

His untimely death will most certainly be felt by everyone in the sword world. Considered a "permanent fixture" at all of the sword shows across the country, it is hard to imagine his not being in attendance at future shows. As one who shared his interest in early kodogu, I personally will miss his presence and expertise in the future. The after-show hours of enjoyment spent in conversation over some friendly spirits. Seeing him show up at the show with his usual woodsey appearance, beard, hiking boots and all. All of this made up the Tom Buttweiler we all knew. Yes, he will be missed. Ironically, I talked to Tom several days past with regards to the article which he wrote for this "Newsletter". The article remains, perhaps a final word from him.

Tom Buttweiler, a loss we will all feel.

Ron Hartmann

JSS/US MEMBER DECEASED -

Our fellow-member, Alfred J. Cohn, died on 13 August 1980. He was 61 years old.

Many of us who attended sword shows, shinsa, and similar events knew Alfred well. We shall remember his cheery greeting, his characteristic lounging on his chair, his thoroughly friendly manner. He was one of those men who rarely showed anger; He was one of those valuable people who seem to find a positive side to the bleakest situation. He was a man of good counsel.

As a sword collector, Alfred Cohn is best known for his collection of beautifully mounted tantō. He had assembled a number of longer swords, yanone, and kodogu as well, always applying a connoisseur's eye for quality. He bought bad swords from time to time, as we all do, but in recent years when Alfred picked up a blade that showed little promise, by the time it came back from the polisher and shinsa, it generally had green papers. He had developed a good eye.

Alfred Cohn was a devoted citizen of Richmond, Virginia, where he lived for almost all his life. During World War II he served as a bomber pilot in the USAF. After the war he maintained his reserve status, retiring just last year as a lieutenant colonel in the USAFR. He had retired from business before that, but he continued active interests in banking and property, where his experience was highly valuable.

He is survived by his wife, Jane, who accompanied him at so many sword meetings, four devoted children, a daughter and three sons, and seven grandchildren.

This distinguished collector, a JSS/US member since 1977, leaves a permanent gap in our ranks by his death. He will be missed.

A. Z. Freeman

The above words are words of friendship and of sorrow. AZ was asked to write them because of his close relationship with Al Cohn and his family. Al was also very interested in the Society and as recent at the first part of this year, greatly assisted us in our operations. His interest was also evident during the Dallas shinsa this spring as he gave up personal time to work with the shinsa committee. Both Al and his wife Jane always provided a ready smile and nice words at the shows, adding to the enjoyment of such sword affairs. Speaking on behalf of the membership, I wish to express the Society's sorrow in losing Al Cohn.

Ron Hartmann

## MASAHIDE CONTROVERCY CONTINUES -

The controversy over the Masahide oshigata which originally appeared in the March-April "Newsletter" has brought the following letter from Bob Benson. Bob's findings are eye-opening and point out some facts-of-life in the sword world along with some other finding which have been passed on to Society Directors and Officers for appropriate action. His letter reads in part:

JSS/US members: The following are further comments on the Masahide blade and Mr. Bowhay's letter of Volume 12, Number 4 of the Society "Newsletter".

In his letter Mr. Bowhay states that the statement that I made about the Masahide being an out-and-out gimei (fake signature) has damaged the reputation of all foreign collectors. He is wrong! The fact is that the opposite is true. By having enough knowledge to challenge such gimei blades with papers we have demonstrated that we will not be duped into buying such spurious pieces. I personally made copies of the controversial Masahide oshigata and sent it to various sword collectors in Japan. Everyone said it was a phoney! They further congratulated me for bringing it to everyone's attention.

Yes, it is true that such a finding is embarrassing to Homma Sensei, but only because the NBTHK appraisers were the ones that awarded this fake Masahide Koshu papers and not because I pointed it out. The embarrassment to other NBTHK members would only come about if they were one of the judges who placed his name on the papers issued to this gimei blade. This would obviously make everyone wonder what part he played in getting the papers on the fake blade. The name on the Masahide Koshu paper is, or so it appears, to be that of a known sword dealer in Japan.

I wrote to Homma Sensei about this gimei Masahide with Koshu papers. His answer dated September 8th stated that my questions were of utmost importance and that an inquiry would be held and all of this would be carefully discussed with others at the NBTHK. He said that he will advise me of his findings.

It should further be pointed out that because of Hommas Sensei's name is printed on the Ninteisho has no bearing on the fact because all that it states is that he is the Kaicho (Chairman). He does not "pass judgement" by actually "seeing" each blade or paper but figuratively passes judgment by placing "trust" in those appraisers working for the NBTHK. It is clear that some of those appraisers had no respect for his name or trust!

The Japanese who read Mr. Bowhay's statement, "In Japan the actions and words of an individual are viewed as those of the entire group", felt that he really didn't know much about the Japanese people. They really didn't like his statement at all in that it made them look like a bunch of stereotyped decadent people not capable of thinking. In reality they have great respect for those that will step out and not be afraid to speak up as long as they can back up what they say with proof. As an

MASAHIDE cont'd.

example, a response that I received from Mr. Daisuke Saito stated that I should make all people aware that there are fake Koshu papers going around in Japan and that some gimei blades do have such papers. He further agrees that the Masahide in question is a fake.

Initially I thought that Mr. Bowhay was showing the Masahide being proud of his polishing it, but now I wonder if he even polished this blade. The paper was issued just three years ago (apparently prior to Mr. Bowhay's starting his apprenticeship) so why did it recently need to be repolished? Common sense tells us that a blade must be in good polish to be submitted for Koshu so to have it done over in such a short time just does not make sense. With the publication of the Tadayoshi blade in the July-August "Newsletter" I realized that something was not right. This Tadayoshi is a famous example used in the Nihontō Koza set, Shintō volume, page 274. In addition it went Juyo Tōken about ten years ago so why would it need to be repolished? If such a blade would somehow need repolishing, with the best polishers in the world in Tokyo it is unlikely it would be given to an apprentice. (Editor's comment: Since this area becomes a matter of ethical practices all of the particulars have been given to the Society Officers/Directors to be dealt with as they seem fit).

Further comment on the Masahide signature, a letter from Mr. Albert Yamanaka states, in part, that anyone who has been with swords long enough can see that this is not right (the signature). Even if the sword has papers what does that matter, the sword still has a bad signature. The reason that NBTHK has discontinued the Shinsa at the branches is that there was a great big shake-up at the Shinsa in Kyushu and as a result of it, they have stopped all the Shinsa at the branches. I also heard that two members of that Shinsa team quit from that! Here in Japan, at most NBTHK Shinsa, people submitting swords are almost all dealers and the only reason why they do so is that it is easier for them to sell blades with NBTHK papers. This all goes back to what I have said many years ago that people who do not know swords must go by something and the easiest is having papers. People who rely on papers are the ones who will not study.

As for the Suishinshi, it is all wrong and I doubt very much if any dealer of standing would handle that blade. It's all wrong caligraphy-wise as well as spacing, for the main things. Suishinshi was much better at caligraphy as you can see from other examples.

Yet another letter, this one from JSS/US member Yoshinobu Sugiyama (Tokyo) states in part...."You said you wrote to Homma sensei about it (this problem of false papers). I guess he already knew what was going on because two appraisers were fired by the NBTHK for that reason. Since that time Koshu and Marutoku shinsa have not been held at local branches.

Bob goes on to say that he plans on doing an article on how such a fake as the Masahide could get Ninteisho in a future issue of "Bushido" magazine.

MASAHIDE cont'd.

All of this controversy has brought a number of comments to the "Newsletter". Most members, sorry perhaps to see such matters being found to exist, on the other hand have felt that much learning has come from all of this. There are fears that bring this out can hurt the JSS/US or damage our relationship with NBTHK. Judging from comments from Dr. Homma, NBTHK Chairman, this is not a worry at all and simply shows the concern of foreign collectors as they (we) advance in our study. Further comments on this issue will be printed, particularly any formal comment from Dr. Homma which might explain these happenings.

Two of our members, Mr. Clarence Siman and Mr. Neil Keen (Neil is presently a Director), have strongly advised the "Newsletter" to adopt a new policy with regards to published oshigata. Both gentlemen feel that some sort of statement "disclaiming any responsibility as to the quality or authenticity of any items submitted for publication, unless they are accompanied by certified copies of their legitimate papers.". Although my personal feelings are that if an oshigata does not state "certification" then one must assume that the signature is open to criticism if anyone so desires (and in light of today's findings, this is so even with certification perhaps). However, some sort of disclaimer will be placed in the "Newsletter" to clarify our position. Gathering material for the Society publications is difficult at best and when material does come in, often without certification, the source of the material is considered with regards to authenticity. We will continue to print only valid information to the best of our abilities and will in no way intentionally mislead the membership.

The following letter not only deals with the Masahide signature, but goes into a straight forward discussion of how papers can be issued on a gimei blade. Perhaps somewhat redundant with Benson's letter, it has some significant things to say. The letter is from JSS/US Life Member, Mr. Tom Buttweiler. It reads:

I guess it is time that the record is set straight regarding papers and other things. The following facts have been known for a long time by old time collectors, and because it has never been published we all must bear part of the responsibility for the mess that has evolved. I refer of course to the recent Masahide controversy.

I will say it up front; the blade is a blatant fake. The fact that the blade has papers does not alter this one bit. It simply means the paper is incorrect. Yes, papers may be incorrect for a number of reasons.

1. The papers may be an honest mistake. Honest mistakes are quite rare and in the above case almost inconceivable.
2. The paper may be a forgery. Forged papers have become quite common in recent years, so much so that NBTHK has alerted collectors to look for them.
3. The paper may have been purchased. Yes, papers could be purchased and frequently were particularly at outlaying

MASAHIDE cont'd.

shinsa. (Shinsa not held at NBTHK headquarters).

4. The paper may have been a gift. Papers were sometimes given as gifts for services rendered to the shinsa team or the NBTHK. It is usually understood that these items are not to be sold but this understandably is frequently violated.

I have no idea which category applies to the Masahide paper but one certainly does.

Mr. Bowhay correctly states in his letter that "oshigata alone is never taken as final proof of authenticity". An oshigata can however be taken as final proof of fakery. The letter continues with a few tidbits about Masahide including the fact that students made and signed blades for Masahide, sometimes with his approval. This has been done throughout history but it does not make the piece a genuine Masahide. It remains a student work and no one can accurately appraise it as a Masahide. This is followed by a purported Naotane supposedly made by Yoshitane which means it is a fake. As a matter of fact the Yoshitane signature seems to me to be somewhat questionable. It is true that many kotō smiths used professionals to sign their blades because they were illiterate. Illiteracy cannot be applied to either Masahide nor Naotane who were both prolific authors.

We then come to a Kiyomaro signature which is justified by assuming Kiyomaro was drunk when he made it. This argument is usually used by a novice collector trying to justify the owning of a fake. If such an argument is to be justified we must introduce an entirely new class of signatures called "Stress Signatures". I propose that in addition to drunken signatures we have "Constipated signatures" for those smaller than normal, "Diarrhoetic signatures" for those with irregular spacing, and (with apologies to Shogun) "Constricted signatures" for those that tend to be a little shakey. These are just a few possibilities and I am sure other collectors can come up with some malady to justify whatever signature they happen to encounter.

As to the ability of foreigners to read and write Kanji; Most old time collectors can read or recognize 1,000-2,000 classic sword related Kanji. This does not make them literate in Japanese but they can get along quite nicely in the sword world. Several collectors have received certificates in brush writing and at least one has received national recognition for writing in competition in Japan! The above proficiency is not however necessary to compare a doubtful signature to one in a standard reference. If the order, direction or spacing of strokes differ from the appropriate standard then the signature is suspect. It is as simple as that. Only the ultimate buyer can be the judge and he MUST judge for himself. If he cannot do so then he must hit the books or ask for help.

MASAHIDE cont'd.

I must also say that to point out obvious shortcomings cannot be an embarrassment to Dr. Homma or any member of the NBTHK. The embarrassment will come if nothing is done to correct the faults that have been blatant for a number of years.

Old time collectors are aware that the rules of the sword world have always been Japanese rules, dominated by ethnic traditions and mores. In recent years the sword world has expanded to include a rather large international following. The NBTHK has expressed a desire to serve this international following. If the NBTHK desires to retain credibility on an international scale it must adopt an international standard or loose out to other groups that are willing to make these changes.

One final note on the Tadayoshi oshigata submitted by Mr. Bowhay (July-August "Newsletter"). The sword shown was awarded Juyo status quite a number of years ago and has appeared in several reputable references as the Standard for the five-character signature Tadayoshi. If I owned a Juyo Tadayoshi that in fact needed repolish after it had been given Juyo paper I would be very selective in acquiring the services of a polisher.

(signed) Thomas Buttweiler

What does all this mean? Buyer beware for starters. The advice too that the buyer must be able to "judge for himself" when putting out his hard earned cash is perhaps the most important rule to follow, which in turn demands conscientious sword study. Study will certainly prove a worthy effort for any collector.

To further stress the need for individual learning and for caution when buying or trading, the following letter will prove most interesting. It was recently printed in the English edition of NBTHK's "Token Bijutsu" magazine.

#### CAUTION:

Recently, a copy of a letter with a forged signature of Dr. Junji Homma was brought to our attention. The letter carrying a skillfully mimicked Dr. Homma's signature was forged to unduly authenticate and recommend swords of actually no or little significance and to deceive those who are interested in acquiring Japanese swords but yet to have sufficient knowledge and ability to judge and evaluate for themselves.

Dr. Homma has never given any comments whatsoever involving valuations of specific items. It is a rule the entire NBTHK staff abide by; that is, we are not allowed to give any comments on commercial values of Japanese swords. What we are permitted to do is only to express opinions on the signatures and the quality of the blade portion of the objects submitted for identification and authentication, for which, however, we are exempt from accepting liability.

The more interest and popularity the Japanese sword gains in the world, the greater liability it presents of arousing ill motivation among the vicious. So do bear in mind that the NBTHK never gives out official valuations on any objects related to the Japanese sword. Those who are interested in getting valuations can only do so by personally getting in touch with some reliable sword dealers.

CAUTION cont'd.

One such forged letter has been sent to the Society. Anyone who sees such a letter (which will state a dollar commercial value for the sword it represents) is welcome to send it to the Society along with the name of the person passing this fake paper. This will be filed and kept confidential until such a time that it can be turned over to proper authorities. If we all become alert to this problem it can be stamped out at least for awhile.

LETTER FROM SAN MATEO -

The following letter was received from John Yumoto with some random comments for the membership on a variety of subjects. John writes:

Almost the entire pages of one issue of the JSS/US "Newsletter" was used to find a way to get the best price from buyers for one's sword. Many suggestions were written by members. I hope by this time, everybody is happy with the suggestions and theories. I hope everyone found out how difficult it is to make maximum profits and also to try to understand beauties of Japanese swords. If you target your aim to ONE - appreciation of swords - it might be much easier. However, it is all up to you the individual.

If a blade has a beautiful signature, one might be able to price, using many market reports and trade journals as references, coming fairly close to SELLING PRICE. If one is operating a sword shop in Tokyo, mark-up has to be near 100% to allow staying in business, I think, as swords wont sell a readily as American style hamburgers.

At one sword show in the U.S., I saw one person with a collection of blades trying to sell them as a package group. The final day came and then it came close to closing time...so he then decided to sell blades individually. Everyone knew what kind of blades he had. A few BUYERS bought almost all the blades leaving just a few. A last BUYER bought one from the remainder, and showed it to me saying, "I did not know when the seller changed his mind, and individually I was interested in this one and one other." I thought the blade was an excellent one! How can other BUYERS have missed to buy that last blade? Buyers have a keen sense for price and profits, and they will survive if they can obtain many blades at nominal prices. This does not require too much knowledge. Many occassions, with out knowing, they buy one for very low price and pay then again pay fair or high prices for many. But they are getting more knowledgable. The biggest question I have is, if the blade is mumei (unsigned) and does not show details or characteristics, then what are they going to do? I know many of you will do as many BUYERS...that is buying at the cheapest price.

LETTER cont'd.

In this same "Newsletter", an oshigata of Suishinshi Masahide was shown. Later it was claimed as a "bad signature" by an individual by quoting from publications. Later, the owner showed NBTHK Koshu certificate, claiming the signature genuine. While this type of thing does go on today, many new books are coming out of Japan (to assist in sword studies). One of these books is "Suishinshi Masahide Tō Sono Ichimon", or Masahide and his school, by Dr. Kuroe Jiro. Even though it is on a rather limited area of study, it is a complete work on Masahide. Masahide's background, history, style of smithing, teacher and students (over 100 listed), evolution of signature, co-workers, names of customers, Naotane (his best student) and Naotane's decendants, Masahide's grave, his books and letters, and on and on about Masahide. There are many photos and rubbings of not only Masahide but of allied smiths.

In the book I found many styles of Masahide's signature. It is nice to know "how to tell", but also dangerous to make snap decisions with one rule. The maker of a half way well done fake signature most likely had consulted with books or genuine signatures prior to carving his fake mei.

The following are some sketches of various ways Masahide signed his "MASA" character during various stages of his life.

Tenmei 8<sup>th</sup>.

Kansei 1<sup>st</sup>.

Kansei 8<sup>th</sup>.

Kyōwa 1<sup>st</sup>.

Kansei 10<sup>th</sup>.

Kyōwa 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Kyōwa 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Another fine book is "Showa Tōken Meibutsu-cho", by the late Mr. Murakami Kosuke. A collection of over 300 photos of excellent blades, not necessary that of great blades, but blades such as Kaga Kiyomitsu, Mino Kaneyuki, Kinmichi, Minamoto Nagakuni, Shitahara Yasushige, Izumo no Kami Yoshitake, etc., all included among the famous names. The Editorial Committee includes Shibata Mitsuo, Tsujimoto Tadao, Nakahara Nobuo, Fukunaga Suiken, and Murakami Hoko. Blades shown in the book are some of approximately 1,500 very nice blades Mr. Murakami rated as "Showa Meibutsu". This and many other nice books are usually "limited editions" and by the time we find out about them they are out-of-print unfortunately.

LETTER cont'd.

Two jumbo size books on TSUDA ETCHIZEN NO KAMI SUKEHIRO recently came out about the same time. One is by Iida Kazuo and the other is by Kazuta Masaji and Moriguchi Takatsugu. Both are very good books. Another "all about a certain area" type book, by Ono Tadshi who wrote previously about smithing-"Tokohen", recently published "Kenma Chokoku-hen", to cover the area of polishing and carving on blades. This was done with cooperation of over 40 leading polishers. So many good books are out. These will keep us reading good books during long autumn evenings.

We students of the Samurai sword try to use terminologies much as we can and frequently, we often fail to use them correctly. I noticed on pages 13 and 14 of "Bushido", Vol.1 No.4, the word "OMORI" stone was used a number of times by Mr. Benson. I think it is ment to be "OMURA" stone. If I am wrong, please correct me. Also, I noticed in the JSS/US english translation of "Tantō" book - #78 KANEMITSU; the last word on Kitae should be "JIFU", not "CHIHAN", according to the explanations given on page 292, Vol.1 "NIHONTO KOZA". On #106 - NAGAYOSHI or CHOGI; in Kitae, the last word should be "JIFU" instead of "CHIKEI". Jifu and Chikei should be treated different. It is like the difference between "NIE" and "NIOI", chikei is much stronger and prominent than jifu.

Dallas origami: As of this date, I have not yet received any word about when these certificates from NBTHK on blades and fittings appraised at Dallas will arrive to me. As soon as they arrive, I will mail them out. I will also notify the JSS/US so that the members will know of their arrival. (John earlier mentioned that he suspects this arrival will be late this year at best. This delay may be due to the demands on NBTHK at this time since all shinsa business is presently being handled totally at the headquarters.)

Sword Tour: With deepest regret, I have cancelled the sixth Samurai Sword Tour of Japan - 1980, sponsored by Northern California Sword Club, Inc. The tour was scheduled to depart on October 9th, however, not enough people could go this year. I just received a letter from Mr. Kaneko Magoroku of the city of Seki, telling me that an arrangement was made to welcome us by Seki swordsmiths Association and by the Mayor's Office along with demonstrations including sword smithing, polishing, saya making, habaki making, visit to Kasuga Shrine. Also it was arranged that we view and study excellent Mino blades belonging to many private collectors of the city. It is too bad that we have to pass on this type of invitation! I am very busy with writing many letters of apology. I am getting too old to plan another tour without enough people interested, however if one does take place, it will be in the month of October again so please, if anyone is interested to go in 1981 or 1982, please let me know.

John closes by asking that anyone asking his advice via the mails please include a self-addressed stamped envelope. This greatly assists him in answering as typing is difficult for him.

### SWORD AUCTION COMING -

Christie, Manson & Woods International, Inc. will have an auction of swords and fine fittings on November 5th, 1980.

Mr. Robert E. Haynes is compiling a catalogue. Items to be offered include Kotetsu, Kiyondo, Nobukuni, Shikkake, and others along with over 240 fine tsuba and fittings. A code for the auction is "Kotetsu" auction.

### AUTHOR REQUESTS ASSISTANCE -

The "Newsletter" recently received a letter from a Mr. Richard Fuller of Bristol, England. Mr. Fuller is trying to write a well-researched book concerning the evolution of Japanese military swords from their introduction during the Meiji Restoration until 1945. This is a previously unexplored field since most reference works stop at 1868 or dismiss such swords as souvenirs or even rubbish. In Britain there is a growing interest in these items since the genuine "Samurai" civilian mounted swords are becoming prohibitively expensive, says Mr. Fuller.

Mr. Fuller asks that anyone having information on arsenals and their locations, markings, organisations and retail outlets; oshigata of Showa arsenal and gendai blades in collections; any details of unusual military styles of mountings (preferably a good clear photograph on this); photos or details on sword surrender ceremonies, presentations, sword dumps or destruction of swords by U.S. occupation forces; send what information is available to him to assist in his research.

This will no doubt prove to be a most interesting area to explore, giving the collector a side interest perhaps during his search for Tōken. Anyone able to contribute should contact him at:

### EARLE J. STONE AD BACKGROUND -

Mr. Stone contacted the "Newsletter" recently after his reading my letter which appeared in the July-August issue of "Arts of Asia" magazine. After talking to Mr. Stone I suggested that perhaps the membership be given an opportunity to buy items from his collection. He is disposing of his thirty-four year old collection primarily through his "Arts of Asia" ads and by contacting collectors. Although no give-aways are at hand, this does give us all the rare opportunity to buy direct from a collector and to purchase high quality items direct. The resulting ad which appears in this issue give the particulars on how to inquire into this. There is also the chance that Mr. Stone will attend the Token Study Group show later this month. If not "bargain basement time", at least it does present the serious collector with an opportunity.

AN OPINION ON SWORD SHOWS -

The following article was recently read to this office during a phone call and asked if it was of interest to the members. As there is some constructive thinking presented, even if somewhat redundant, it was felt that it would serve a purpose. The article goes as follows:

I attended my first gun show in 1946. In the next ten years I attended many shows in Wisconsin, Illinois, and Ohio. In 1957, with several collectors, I organized the "Great Lakes Weapons Collectors Association, Inc." and have been its first and only President. As most of you know, I have also been much involved with the "Token Study Group" from its beginning. Because of these qualifications I feel that I may speak from some experience.

In the beginning, I have seen gun shows that would favorably compare with our early sword shows, and then watched them change. I have seen others grow, wither and die; and still others wither, then grow to be to become bigger and better than ever.

With the exception of the "Great Lakes Arms Collectors Association, Inc." I have seen little or no real attempt by any Mid-west gun collectors association to put forth any kind of educational program that would compare with the efforts of any of the Japanese sword collectors groups. This is something we sword collectors can be very proud of.

Listening to remarks made about each show over the past thirty-five years, I do not believe I have heard on unanimous opinion about any given show. Some have had a good show, others have had a better show, and still others have had a bad show. The two most often heard complaints are "If it wasn't for those dealers...." and "If it wasn't for those collectors...."

To sum it all up, there are facts to be faced.

1. Neither the collector nor the dealer can rightfully blame the other. They need each other.
2. Each one of us makes or breaks his own show.
3. The complexion of each show is determined by those in attendance.
4. Those in attendance have the power and the ability to change or maintain the complexion of their show.

I hope these opinions will stimulate some thinking and action on the part of our members.

signed: Ted Wysocky

## ARTICLE CLARIFICATION -

The following letter was received from Mr. Ron Buckles in reference to an article which appeared in the May-June issue of the "Newsletter". The letter reads:

In your Dallas article you called the first time the 'hot' sword was put in the water as the tempering. Actually the entire process, especially the reheating, is the tempering. Dumping red hot metal in cool water (or oil) is called 'hardening'. This is okay for pocket knives and files but not for anything that must take stresses.

The process of reheating a piece of 'hardened' steel to a lower temperature and again cooling it is called tempering. This action allows the metal to relax and to flex without it breaking like a piece of glass. Many people at the tempering session got concerned when Yoshihara-sensei reheated the blade. It is required for a good blade!

Editor's comment: I believe this is correct with the first step being 'hardening' and the relaxing step being 'annealing' and the entire process called 'tempering'. If I recall, this was something our first Life Member, Dr. Thomas Hoopes used to correct us new collectors with. A technical point well taken.

## SOME SUGGESTIONS FROM A MEMBER -

Comments come in weekly from members as to what they would like to see in the "Newsletter" (the application for new members asks this question). Two good questions recently arrived from one of our members in Germany, Dr. Karl H. Glätzer. They are worthy of answering and perhaps the membership can assist.

1. Will the Albert Yamanaka "Nihontō" Newsletter" be reprinted and if so, will the members be advised before the book dealers buy up all the supply?

The "Nihontō Newsletter" will be reprinted (we have the required permission) but so far the people who that they would handle this project have apparently forgotten this. The NL will be done again even if it must be handled from this office but first, in order to assure good reproduction, a complete "original" copy must be borrowed. As for the supply being bought out, the membership will be given first priority for purchase as this is the intent for our being a Society. The supply will go to members first.

2. An up-to-date list of books which are a must for every collector is needed. This should include comments on content along with good and bad points, availability, price, etc.

Mr. Arnold Frenzel supplied a fine listing which he called "A Short Annotated Bibliography for Beginning Collectors of Japanese Swords". Copies are free and available by request to this office. Actually, this list could be/should be redone what with the many new books now available. Mr. Steven Winkley is expanding his booklist and does elaborate on contents but a

SUGGESTIONS cont'd.

formally "revised" bibliography is needed. Again, the membership can assist in this or perhaps Mr. Frenzel can revise his paper.

3. An informative article on sword bags is needed; material, construction, useage and the proper folding, proper knots, preferable with drawings.

A good suggestion. As tōken collectors we must learn to properly and formally handle our swords. This goes with etiquette. If anyone knowledgeable in this area cares to work up such an illustrated article, feel free. It is needed.

Along with these questions, members continue to be very interested in the booklet on "Sword Care" as mentioned in the last issue of the "Newsletter". The initial steps have been taken towards the completion of this booklet and once this issue of the "Newsletter" is mailed out, hopefully the text for this publication will be completed. It will be done without undue delay.

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" editor.

- WANTED - Blades by Yamashiro TOSHINAGA (TO-475, 6 and 7) and Mutsu TOSHINAGA (TO-478, 9 and 480). All size blades. Contact: Gary Murtha
  
- \*WANTED - A good quality Shintō katana. Contact: Bob Luchini, CA 94301. call
  
- WANTED - High quality tsuba in YOSHIRO and Kaga GOTO traditions. Also, shakudo and very early menuki. Contact: "Newsletter" editor.

\* Our advertising policy has been that we will not accept any ads which are simply "swords wanted....Highest Prices Paid....etc...." type ads. Obviously this is ment to avoid such professional ads in our publications. But, on occassion a request comes in such as Mr. Luchini who is simply looking for a fine quality sword to add to his collection. A similar ad was rejected last issue and in all fairness, it too should had been allowed. If this policy is enforced, but "bent a little to assist the average collector"....can this be accepted by the membership without this leniency being abused???? Any feelings on this?

## RANDOM THOUGHTS; DALLAS 1980 -

The "Celebration of Japanese Arts" at the University of Dallas. To the world of the Japanese sword this celebration last April was a unique event. For many of us, collectors and novices alike, the making of the sword has always been a process shrouded in mystery. The only glimmer of truth came from pictures in Japanese books, but never in detail, never the full sequence and always with anxiety toward what the caption had to say. Even to many of those who have actually visited a forge or 'Kajiba' in Japan, few have seen the entire swordmaking process from beginning to end. Now the mountain was to come to Mohammed. The following is taken from my personal month-long notes and the many questions that were asked the Japanese about what they were doing. These then are my random thoughts both then and now, months later, when I have had a chance to reflect and evaluate the experience.

As much as being on the voyages of Cook or Columbus, or with Lewis and Clark or with the soon to be famous "Pilot of the Shogun", this experience was to be history in the making. To give you an idea of it's significance, here are some of the "firsts" historically, that happened. This celebration was to be the first time a Japanese sword was to be made in the U.S. by a Japanese swordsmith, from start to finish. The first time two smiths would combine their efforts to produce a blade in the states. The first time these smiths would be working with the only American smith ever to be licensed by the Japanese Government (Keith Austin). The first time these activities would be accomplished in a dedicated Japanese smithy on U.S. soil. The first time a multitude of shirazaya would be made by one of the top makers in Japan today with the same being for habaki and other sword furniture. The first time two master polishers from divergent schools would combine their expertise for the good of the project. At one point in the project there were five polishers ranging from master to apprentice! These are only a few highlights, because almost all that was done was unique and was a first time historical sword event. Mohammed was most appreciative.

The Kajiba (smithy) was dedicated in the traditional manner. Mr. Yoshihara dressed in his traditional Hitatare, swordmakers kimono robes, entered the smithy area in a flourish of camera flashes and a murmur of expectation from all those present. Sitting in front of the anvil, Kanashiki, with the bellows and a cold firepit to his left, he began the ceremony that has rarely been seen and almost as rarely been done, the dedication of a smithy. Tradition has it that the most important element of the sword is fire. This fire will be produced by the smith from natural elements, and so it began. In almost total darkness, Yoshihara-san, assisted by his younger brother Shogi, began to hammer a flat piece of Tatara steel into a pointed rod. As the forging continued at rapid speed, with echoes of the rebounding hammer as the rod became hotter and hotter from the subsequent friction. At precisely at the right moment the rod was pressed onto a shaving of Honoki wood and an ember was born. The ember was inserted under the pine charcoal in the firepit. Then with rapid movement of the bellows plunger arm, the ember caught the charcoal ablaze and the first fire

RANDOM THOUGHTS cont'd.

was born. The scene began first as a glow and then into a bright blaze radiating the colors of Yoshihara's resplendant robes. The tradition was once again perpetuated. The new swords would be unique and would endure as do the elements which create them; fire, earth, water and air.

The Fuigo (bellows) is a box of thin wood approximately four and a half feet by three feet high and ten or so inches wide. Inside is a square plunger lined with rabbit fur which rests on a plate of glass. A lubricant similar to an uchiko is powdered on the inside surfaces to allow the piston plunger to ride more freely. The Fuigo works both on the pull and push stroke and is capable of producing enough air to make sword steel melt and run, somewhere over 2500 degrees farinheit. One can see the wood expand and contract with the force of the pistoned air. This particular piston is not resting on a piece of plate glass from the Denton, Texas glass works as it's predecessor was broken in transit from Japan.

The Kantoko or Kanashiki (anvil) is a block of hard steel two feet long and rectangular ten by four inches. It is buried on its end into the ground about two thirds of it's length. Most Kanashiki are fire hardened on the top edge, otherwise the face of the anvil has to be resurfaced periodically due to the dents from the heavier hammers. The firing of the anvil is most difficult and a very interesting process. From conversations with Keith Austin, our American smith, I learned that the anvil is put into the ground and a wall of mud created around the protruding portion. When the anvil is at the right temperature the fire is removed and the whole anvil is quenched with water, thereby hardening the top surface. The anvil weighs 100kg and becomes a real tough job to transport from one place to another.

The firepit is a firebrick lined trench about four to five feet long and about a foot wide. On the end nearest the smith the trench has a sump about a foot deep. In the bottom of the sump the bellows tube enters and due to the air flow becomes the hottest area of the pit. The newly forged blade is pushed over the sump area to control evenness of heat. Forging temperatures are around 1300°F and tempering temperature approximately 800°F. This varies from school to school.

It was quite facinating to just watch these artists at work, without reference to the why's and how's of their artistry. For example, Takayama-san, the shirazaya maker. He was able to cut out the inside of a saya with just a few long strokes of a chisel, never overlapping and following true to guide lines, the long shavings of wood falling in piles all around him. Takayama sharpened his tools every morning, and again anytime he felt they had become dull. He used a series of eight pull planes in different sizes and many different chizels varying in length, width and curvature. The bamboo he used for making mekugi were taken from special selections that had been gathered from old houses. All were over 100 years old and dark from the smoke of the hibachi.

RANDOM THOUGHTS cont'd.

Miyajima-san, the soft metal worker, worked only with files and many small hammers which varied in weight and surface configuration. He said that it took him about a day to make a gold or silver foil habaki. He would take a blank of copper and by forging it to the configuration of the blade the inside measurements would make it fit perfectly. Later, after the seam had been soldered closed, he would make a sleeve of gold or silver foil around the copper habaki. This also was a perfect fit. The leading edges of the habaki were then undercut and the gold foil pressed and burnished into the undercutting. This method is much more secure than the plain folded over method we see on old habaki. The final touch is the decoration of the foil in different patterns.

The Master Polishers, Sato and Mawatari-san were also true artists. Mr. Mawatari is a disciple of the Fujishiro school of polishing. Mr. Sato is a disciple of the Honami school of polishing. Both have had to apprentice for ten years in their trade before they could go on their own. An interesting fact that is little known is that there is some competition between different schools of artists, both in polishing and sword-making. Each school holding that their methods are the best, the most finely tuned. I was fortunate in that I was able to see these two masters at their artful best. As a knowledgeable observer of both schools of thought, it seemed to me that the end product was equally magnificent. The technique of one or the other school ultimately led to the same end, even though the methods differed. The one constant I saw in both masters was patience and discipline. Their dedication to perfection was equally evident.

The smiths, both Yoshindo Yoshihara and his brother Shogi are accomplished smiths in most of the preferred styles of swordmaking. The blades produced had utsuri and beautiful stylistic lines. Shogi cut grooves in several blades and I was fortunate to assist him in this procedure. Several yari, four kogatana and one katana were retempered. Needless to say this was also a first. An interesting note, is that a blade to be retempered must have its edge reduced. If this is not done when the blade is refired and then plunged into the water, the edge may crack. Cracking is due to the torque the blade must undergo when the hot steel is quickly quenched. One of the small kogatana produced a bend of almost twenty degrees!

The large hammers used by the sakite (hammermen) weigh 16 pounds or more. The haft or handle of the hammer is colloquially called "cow killer wood", a very strong yet flexible shaft. This wood takes twenty years to produce a trunk of 1" diameter. In viewing high speed film shown at normal speed, one can see the dynamics of the hammer shaft. The shaft bends itself into a whipping "S" shape. This subdues the shock to the sakite's hands and gives the proper bounce to ready the hammer for the next stroke. The off-center high position of the shaft related to the head of the hammer keeps the head from slanting sideways, allowing for a more flat contact of hammer to steel. The sakite usually warms up daily with a hundred or so strokes. One must hit consistently flat and in the same place every time. The smith will beat the cadence and move the steel beneath the hammer of the sakite. Sakite work is physically exhausting

RANDOM THOUGHTS cont'd.

and good sakite are highly prized. Sakite are usually apprentice smiths.

Many shirazaya we find today are becoming unglued. American collectors and others reglue these saya with "Elmer's glue" or whatever. This defeats the purpose of the shirazaya. The shiraya is originally glued with a special "rice glue". A small handfull of cooked (steamed) rice, smeared and resmeared with a little water and a spatula makes a thick "paste". Mr. Takayama told me that rice glue is used so that the two parts of the saya may easily be broken open to clean the inside of the saya or to do any adjustment work due to wear. If the parts are glued with a permanent glue, their life is limited to the next period of wear. Rice glue is simple to make, try it.

Most tools used by the smiths, polishers, and furniture people were hand made by the artist himself. Grooving tools, and chisels and planes, are made to order by the smith. Wood work for handles and blocks for planes were made by the woodman, collars or rings for tool handles made by the soft metal smith. Self sufficiency is an underlying theme.

As for the location of all this, the University of Dallas is a Catholic institution which extended it's hand, resources and facilities to help make a success of the Celebration of Japanese Arts. For over a month the University was host to the Japanese. It housed the smiths in the visiting professors suite. The community with it's resources catered special Japanese food treats, which also included Texas style Bar-b-que! The cities of Dallas and Irving conferred upon the Japanese Honorary Citizenship and also the Keys to their cities.

The local schools had trips to the University to see the blades being made and also to see the blades offered for display in the Meibutsu Room. Mr. R.B.Caldwell spent many hours and many frustrations to organize and put up the Meibutsu exhibit. Mr. Morihiro Ogawa from the NBTHK, whose expertise is well known, agonized along with Mr. Caldwell when there were some unknown delays in transit of the museum pieces.

Another exhibit which added to the total of the celebration was brought to fruition by Bruce Kirkpatrick and his wife Elsa. Japanese ceramics at their finest! Many fine examples of the various kilns of Japan were exhibited and demonstrated. A priceless collection unto itself.

Keith Austin, the American swordsmith, is very knowledgeable and one of the most interesting people I have met in the sword world. He is the product of two National Treasure teachers. He is also his worst critic, constantly striving for perfection. Keith will answer most any question you may put to him ranging from modern swords and techniques to those of the Kamakura era. He is full of the interesting anecdotes that make the Japanese sword such an interesting endeavor. For example, when he was a deshi to his first teacher his time for relaxation involved roaming through the junk yards, finding different types of iron which he could use for forging blades. By doing this he found

RANDOM THOUGHTS cont'd.

that the Eta are the scrap men of today, as they were keepers of the condemned prisoners, and leather workers of yesteryear.

In conclusion I would like to say what this celebration meant to me personally. Aside from the many complications this month presented to my schedule of work, I found this time to be the best thing that had happened to me since I found my first sword. Working with Mr. Caldwell was a pleasure, both he and Mr. Ogawa worked miracles to get everything organized. Mike Quigley's coordination of the sword show during shinsa week worked well for all those who participated. Meeting all the collectors has always been fun, yet better this time because I didn't have to travel so far. Our Dallas Kendo and Iaito club was very happy at the reception we received from those people who are students of the use of the sword as well as the pure sword students.

Most of all I felt I had made some good friends working with the Japanese. These men were teaching me in the daytime in a student-teacher relationship, and at night we were just a bunch of guys enjoying what life had to offer. When they left, my heart was sad. They had taken part of me with them, but they replaced that part with a much truer sense of what is the Japanese sword.

signed: Bill Trevino

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#### SHU-SHU, POLISHING THE SOUL -

The following is a translation of an article about Honnami Nissu, National Treasure polisher, which appeared in "Yomiuri Shibun", April 25, 1979. The article was given by Jeri Cunningham and kindly translated by Ms. Terko Masuda. The article is more a character article giving an insight into the artist. A photo contributed much to the article but this could not be reproduced. The article says:

"They often say that they are scared at my eyes when I am looking at swords. When walking on the street, I had an experience that they thought me a secret detective", said Mr. Nisshu Honnami. He is the 23rd generation master of the Honnami family who have consecutively continued since the Muromachi period as connoisseurs and polishers of Japanese swords. His work begins at 8 o'clock and ends at sunset. His whole working hours are occupied with a mental strain from the beginning to the end: "Even a moment when I have a looseness in spirit gives some influence upon a sword. I have to sork with a mental strain or concentration all the time. In order to do a good job, all I have to do is just give up a selfish desire and epicurean food, and finally keep a continued perserverance. Don't look up, but look down at your step! This is a family precept that has been succeeded from generation to generation."

SHU-SHU cont'd.

His workshop, which is located in the vicinity of the Zojo Temple in Shiba, Tokyo, is still closed to women and is surrounded with a sacred straw rope with white paper tufts. "We have to clean here without any dust. A very tiny nick like a thin line, that is called "Hike or Shike", appears on the surface of a blade if a dust particle touches the blade. The Hike deteriorates the silk-like smoothness of the blade surface."

It takes about eight days to complete one blade for polish: Seven or eight kinds of polishing stones such as Binsui of Amakusa Island and Narutaki of Kyoto are used for the whole process. "Polishing begins with Habaki-moto and gradually goes up to upper areas. The most difficult job is how to refine a good point of the blade and at the same time how to cover up a bad point of the blade. For instance, a Soshu blade and a Bizen blade are entirely different from each other, like the difference between obverse and reverse of a sheet of paper. It is an important factor for a polisher to find a specialty of each item and to make the most refined use of it. The polisher is one who remains behind the scenes, isn't he?"

Mr. Honnami is now seventy-one years old. He makes it a rule to have one cup of soup and a very simple meal for every breakfast and lunch. However, he drinks two Tokkuri-bottles of Japanese Sake every night. This is a favorite time.

The writer who heard the sound of Mr. Honnami's polishing a sword, "Shu-Shu....", feels as if Mr. Honnami is polishing the soul.

Editor's note: Mr. Honnami Nissu is fondly remembered from the 1972 Token Kenkyu Kai which he attended in Dallas those far too many years ago. His lecture on sword etiquette while in traditional costume and his warm and gentlemanly manner made this a memorable event. This came to mind while watching "Shogun" on national TV, and the late Dr. Sato's comments to Mr. Honnami saying, "you bow too much", as he was caught up in the emotional warmth of that landmark event. One can not help but wonder who will carry on these traditions in years to come.

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#### DEVELOPMENT OF THE JAPANESE SWORD -

The following article is reprinted by permission of the author, Mr. Hiromu Tanimura. The article appeared in the February, 1980 issue of "Journal of Metals". Mr. Tanimura is fondly remembered by many of us who met him during his visit, along with Mr. Kajihara, during the February sword show held in Birmingham, Alabama in 1979 (if memory serves). A grand "Old School" gentleman who made instant friends during that sword show and who surprised us with his apology for his "poor English....my German is much better!" comment, no surprise perhaps considering his years of research study in Germany years ago. Our thanks to the author, Mr. Kajihara, and "Journal of Metals".

# Development of the Japanese Sword

Hiromu Tanimura  
Kyūshū Imperial University  
Kyūshū, Japan

**A description of the metallurgical fundamentals, the forging techniques, and the ancient ironmaking and steelmaking techniques, which controlled the functional and esthetic characteristics of the Japanese sword.**

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## SUMMARY

*Both the beauty and the utility of the Japanese sword as a weapon depend on the characteristic metallic component structure of the sword blade steel. After briefly describing the characteristics of the sword blade and the history of the Japanese sword, this paper describes the forging process for making the composite structure of the sword blade steel, according to the author's experiences. Finally, ancient ironmaking and steelmaking processes are briefly explained. The author concludes that the high purity of the iron and steel obtained to the beauty and artistry of the finished sword blade.*

The practical use of the Japanese sword as a weapon is now gone, yet the Japanese people retain a great affection toward it. In theater, radio, and television, they always enjoy dramas in which Japanese swords play an active part.

Owing to the interest in antiques, the price of Japanese swords is rising sharply. Foreigners easily appreciate the beauty of the sword fittings; everyone can understand their outstanding artistic beauty. Regarding the sword blade, it is not so easy to understand the essential artistic and functional qualities. As far as appreciation of the Japanese sword is concerned, the sword blade is the most important. The Samurai regarded and loved the sword blade next to his life for both self-defense and spiritual support.

I want to explain briefly the value of the Japanese sword blade from artistic and metallurgical standpoints. In addition, I want to explain something of the ancient Japanese iron and steel smelting

processes. I believe the high quality of ancient iron and steel in Japan contributed a great deal to the perfection of the Japanese sword blade.

## Value of the Japanese Sword

Since ancient times, Samurai have valued the Japanese sword for the following reasons:

- Its utility as a weapon—sharp, light, and tough;
- As a fine art for the sword blade—for its form (Sugata), hardened zone (Yakiba), beautiful pattern on the polished surface (Hamon), and sculpture (Chōkoku);
- The sword fittings—sword guard (Tsuba), scabbard (Saya), hilt ornament (Menuki), rim part at the hilt base (Fuchi), edge part ornament of the hilt (Kashira), etc.; and
- Its spiritual function—the Samurai's badge of honor and talisman of the Samurai spirit, representing faithfulness, responsibility, and courage.

## Historical Development of the Japanese Sword

It is presumed that early Japanese swordmaking started at about 700 AD. At that time, cultures were introduced to Japan, not only from China, but also from other Asian countries via Korea. The original Japanese swordmaking techniques were founded in this time. Some historians assume that ironmaking methods were influenced from West Asian countries such as India, Persia, Turkey, etc. through the Silk Road.

During 900-1000 AD, the history of the Japanese sword was recorded more clearly because swordsmiths began inscribing their names on the tongue of the sword blade. Table I shows the eight historical development periods for the Japanese sword.

In period 1, the sword was long and curved. High-ranking warriors who battled on horseback carried their swords horizontally, hanging from their girdles. This long sword is called "Tachi."

In period 2, demand for the sword increased because of the feudal system. Emperor Goto who lived in the early 13th century was interested in swordmaking. This encouraged a number of talented swordsmiths to compete in applying their skills. The majority of swords designated as national treasures and other specially classified precious swords were produced in this period.

As a result of the Mongolian invasions the form of sword changed be-

cause of battle experiences with the Mongols.

In the end of period 3, sword blades with fancy surface patterns were produced by smith's in various districts of Japan. Some appreciators treasure these swords, which are classified as "Sōshū-den School."

During period 4, the Ruler (Shōgun) lived in Kyōto. In the middle of the 15th century his authority weakened, and as a result, internal feudal conflicts continued from this time on.

Period 5 was a time of war. Demand for swords was high, and many swords were taken to China. Sword blades made in this period were not always artistically beautiful, however, many sharp swords called "Ōwazamono" (extraordinarily sharp) were produced. Both the longer "Tachi" and shorter swords named "Katana" and "Wakizashi" were made in great numbers. The Samurai carried two swords, cutting edges down, through his girdle. At the end of this period, few powerful rulers appeared. Eventually all the feudal lords were united under one ruler; peace came to Japan, and cultural activities such as poetry, drama, and painting flourished. This Fushimi Momoyama period is called the Japanese Renaissance. Many skilled swordsmiths flourished in various districts of Japan. The development of sword fittings was especially remarkable.

In period 6, the Shōgun moved the government to Edo, present-day Tōkyo. All swords made after this time are called "new sword" (Shintō). Many excellent swords were produced in the early part of the period. After that, craftsmanship of the swordsmiths declined.

In period 7, public opinion turned against the feudal government. Many swordsmiths strived to make swords similar to the old swords (Koto); how-

ever, their skills never matched those of Koto, except for a few. Appreciators can easily discern the differences in quality.

With the start of the Meiji restoration in period 8, the feudal system was abolished and western political systems and cultures were eagerly and extensively adopted. While demand for the sword as a practical weapon was lost, appreciation of the Japanese sword as a fine art object never faded.

#### Scientific Research of the Japanese Sword

Much has been published on the history, appreciation, and evaluation of the Japanese sword; however, scientific papers are scarce.

My respected teacher, Prof. Dr.-Eng. Kuniichi Tawara of Tōkyo Imperial University has done excellent research on the science of the Japanese sword. He has made a great effort to investigate ancient Japanese ferrous metallurgy. Prof. Tawara's main researches are compiled in two books.<sup>1,2</sup>

I have been interested in this subject since about 1923 as a curiosity which later turned to scientific consideration. Mr. Kunizirō Nojima, who was an owner of the Teikoku Iron Making Co. which produces charcoal pig iron for chilled iron rolls, contributed toward my research into Japanese swordmaking. In 1936, a swordmaking laboratory was built on the campus of the Kyūshū Imperial University. Several descendants of old swordsmiths who lived near the City of Fukuoka visited our laboratory and participated in swordmaking according to their ancestors' methods. From this research, I have confirmed that the most important characteristic properties of the Japanese swords depend on the composite structure of the steel.<sup>3</sup>

#### Beauty of the Japanese Sword Blade

The beauty of the sword blade is evaluated by several factors:

- Form of the blade.

- Engravings. Various types of engraving are cut into the soft surface of the blade. Most engravings have religious significance; and names of Buddhist or Shintō gods, symbols of various Buddhist kings, etc., and sculptures of dragons, called Kurikara, were popular.

- Hamon, the most obviously beautiful part of the sword blade, means the beautiful patterns on the boundary zone of the hardened part. Yakiba means the hardened zone of the sword blade. On the surface of this boundary zone are Nie and Nioi. Ancient appreciators described Nie "as fine silver sand scattered on the surface of the blade." Nioi is a misty white pattern which appears mainly on the boundary zone of the hardened part. Nioi also appears on the unhardened surface of the blade. Ancient appreciators described Nioi as "the view of mass cherry blossoms under a weak light of morning sunrise"; sometimes they described it as a delicate and beautiful mist. Figure 1 shows the method to observe Nie and Nioi. While Nie can be seen by the naked eye, it is more easily seen with a magnifying glass. Nioi can be observed with reflected light.

After microscopic examination, Prof. Tawara confirmed that Nie and Nioi result from the same phenomena. On the boundary zone of the hardened sword blade, hard martensite and softer troostite (probably fine, unresolved pearlite) coexist. Only after special polishing can one see Nie and Nioi. Here, the coarser relief is Nie and finer one is Nioi. Sizes and forms of Nie and Nioi change in many different ways.

Table I: Historical Development of the Japanese Sword

Age of Sword	Period	Christian Era	Remark
Ko-tō (Old sword)	No. 1	700-1181	Civilian government in Nara (yamato) to Kyōto (yamashiro)
	No. 2	1182-1285	Feudal system government in Kamakura (sagami)
	No. 3	1286-1384	Sword form changed after Mongolian invasion (1262-76)
	No. 4	1385-1457	Residence of ruler (Shogun) moved to Kyōto
	No. 5	1458-1593	Age of wars, big demand for swords
Shin-tō (New sword)	No. 6	1594-1800	Residence of Shōgun moved to Yedo (now Tōkyo)
Shin-shin-tō	No. 7	1801-1866	End of feudal system in 1866
Gendai-tō	No. 8	1867-1979	From Meiji restoration, demand of practical sword is gone

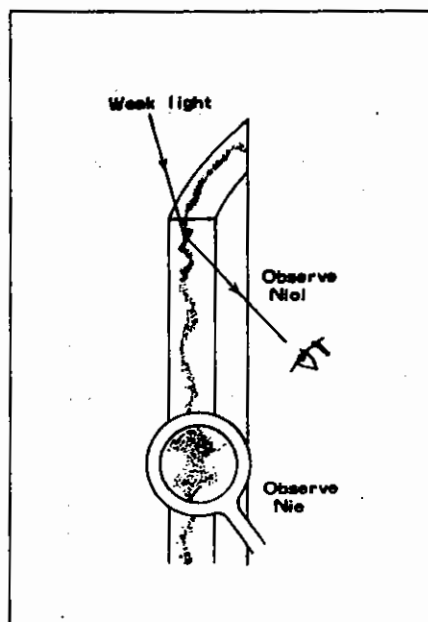


Figure 1. Hamon, the beautiful figuration observed in the boundary zone of hardening.

**Table II: Comparison of Japanese and Foreign Swords**

Japanese sword	Foreign sword
Cutting ability is most important	Lunging or striking is more important
Light and thin	Heavy and thick
Very high hardness is required at blade edge	Hardness is not required as much
Countermeasure against breakage is important	Moderately massive, less worry for breakage

Figure 2 shows one example of the microstructures of Nie and Nioi. Figure 3 shows some modified forms of Nie. When the texture of forged steel is laminated, fibrous forms of Nie appear. Their forms are flowing sand (Sunagashi), golden fiber (Kin-suzi), thunder flash (Inazuma), etc. Only talented sword polishers can show Nie and Nioi to their utmost beauty.

**Characteristics of the Japanese Sword as a Weapon**

Appreciation of the artistic beauty of the Japanese sword changed from time to time; however, serious Samurai have always appreciated the sword for its utility as a weapon, which had to be light, sharp, and tough.

Table II compares Japanese and foreign swords. To satisfy the requirements of sharpness and toughness, the Japanese sword is finished by the following techniques.

First, optimum high-carbon wrought steel is prepared by the smith for the cutting edge and the back of the blade. For the main skin of the sword, selected wrought steel must be prepared in order to provide the beautiful appearance of the sword.

Next, the cutting edge zone is strongly hardened by quenching the blade in a water bath of optimum temperature. The back zone is kept soft by slow cooling during heat treatment. This wrought steel must be prepared by the swordsmith with his best effort and skill. During the forging, iron of both high and low carbon content is intermixed to get a woven composite structure. Steel of this structure is much tougher in the hardened state than modern steel.

**Construction Weld of Hard and Soft Iron**

Figure 4 shows various methods of hammer forge welding for the sword blade. Of these methods, Makuri-Kitaë and Kofuse-Kitaë were commonly used in the Shintô time, period 6.

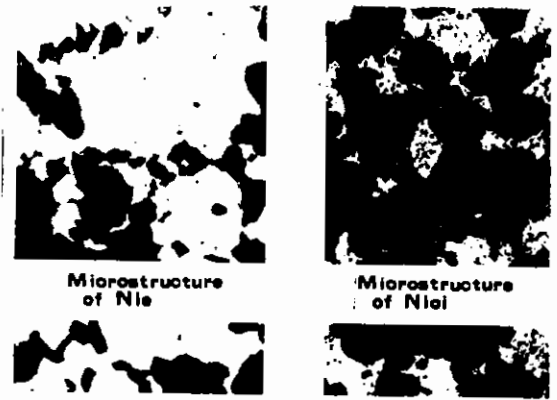
**Hardening the Sword Blade**

After the forging is completed to the desired form, the sword blade is finished to the desired dimensions by filing. On the back part of the sword blade, where soft and tough properties are required, a thick clay coating is applied. The hardened zone is coated in a special way with a very thin layer of selected clays to prevent oxidation.

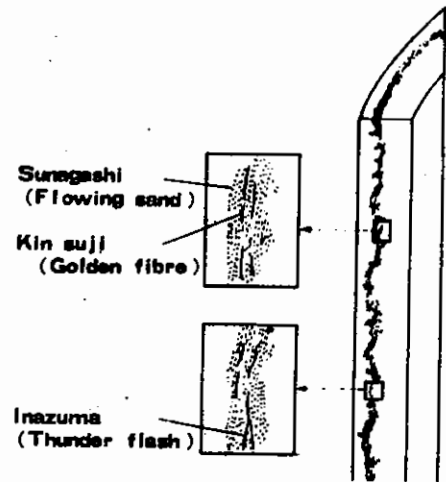
The kind of coating clays and the profile of the coating along the hardened zone are important. The beauty of Hamon is much influenced by the coating technique. The selection of the clay and the coating technique were closely guarded secrets of the craftsmen.

Before water quenching, the sword blade is heated to the optimum temperature in a narrow fire hearth. The blade must be heated uniformly along its length. In ancient times this heating technique was one of the most important and difficult steps. From the optimum heating temperature, the sword blade is water quenched horizontally with the edge down. Figure 5 shows the quench bath used in the Kyûshû University laboratory by swordsmiths. After hardening, the curvature of the blade increases because of the expansion of martensite (Figure 5).

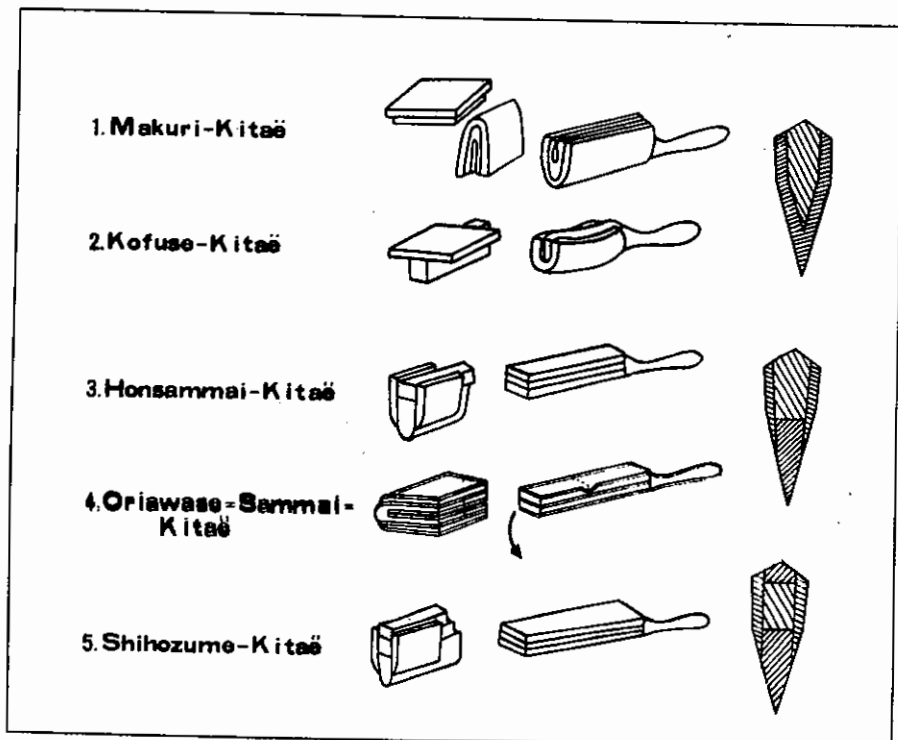
The form of the hardened zone has many variations, according to the school of swordsmiths. Temperature of quenching, the technique of clay coating prior to hardening, and the composite structure of steel all influence the form of the hardened zone. Some typical examples, Yakiba and Hamon, are shown in Figure 6.



**Figure 2. The relief on the surface after polishing comes from the difference of hardness between martensite and fine, unresolved pearlite.**



**Figure 3. Modified forms of Nie.**



**Figure 4. Various methods of hammer-forge weld construction of the sword blade.**

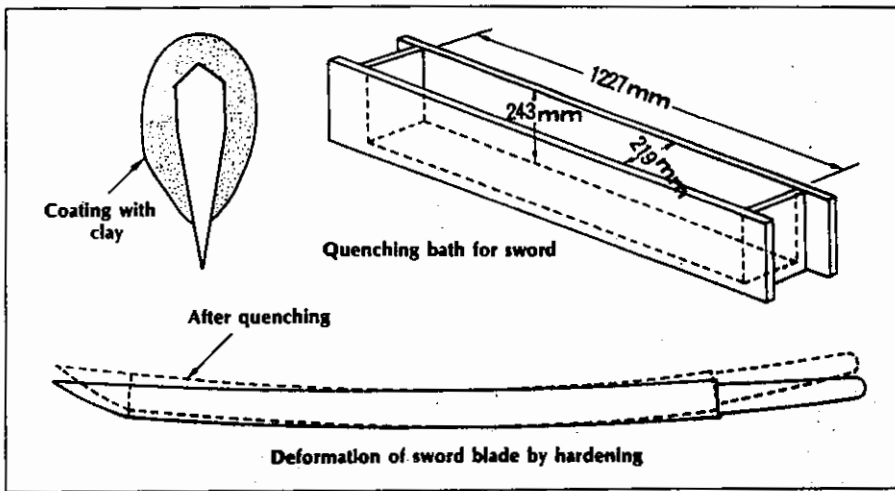


Figure 5. Hardening the sword blade.

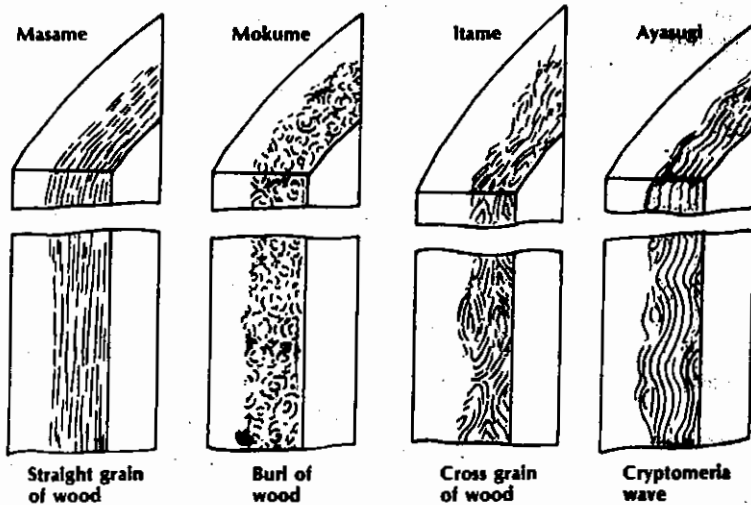


Figure 7. Several kinds of structure observed on the polished surface of the sword.

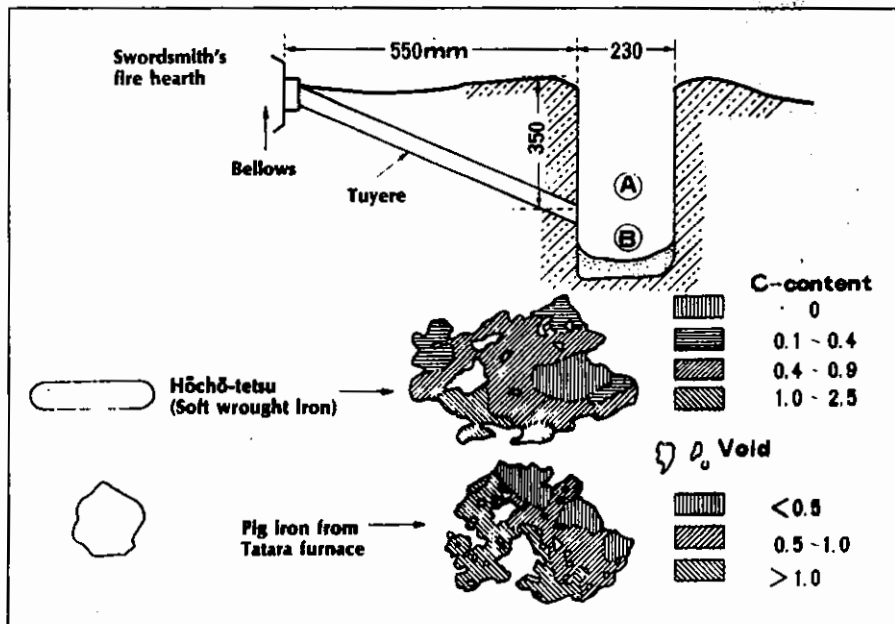


Figure 8. The Oroshi process, carburizing and decarburizing in a hearth.

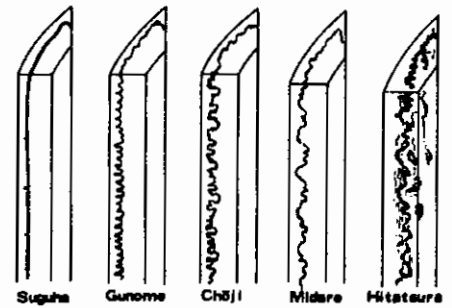


Figure 6. Typical examples of Yakiba, the various patterns of the hardened boundary.

### Research on the Composite Structure of the Japanese Sword

The study of the composite structure of steel is most important toward understanding the characteristic properties of the Japanese sword. A skilled sword polisher can produce many forms of the composite structure on the unhardened surface of the sword blade. Figure 7 shows some examples of these structures.

Between 1936 and 1938, various research projects were performed in the sword forging laboratory of Kyūshū Imperial University. During this time, about 10 swordsmiths, representing different schools, participated. While they crafted many swords, I observed the change of the composite structure of their wrought steel.

In this research, special iron and steel, made in the Tataro furnace, was used. Some examples of the chemical composition of iron and steel used for the Japanese sword are shown in Table III. Note the very low impurity levels of Si, Mn, P, and S.

### Oroshi-tetsu Method of Wrought Steel

Japanese swordsmiths prefer to use Tama hagane, the steel made in the Tataro furnace. Tama hagane is hypereutectoid steel with a carbon content of 1.2–1.7%. They also use low-carbon wrought iron, named Hochō-tetsu, for swordmaking. Hochō-tetsu is made by decarburizing pig iron from the Tataro furnace.

In our laboratory, swordsmiths first made Oroshi-tetsu. It is presumed that in ancient times, before the Tataro furnace was fully developed, swordsmiths themselves made metallic iron from iron-rich sand.

Figure 8 illustrates the Oroshi-tetsu process. In a charcoal fire-hearth, any iron ore can be carburized or decarburized. In front of the tuyere opening (B), iron is decarburized. In another part (A) of the fire hearth, the atmosphere is reducing. Here soft iron can be carburized. Swordsmiths operated the fire hearth skillfully. Lumps of iron which contain various amounts of carbon were produced as shown in Figure 8.

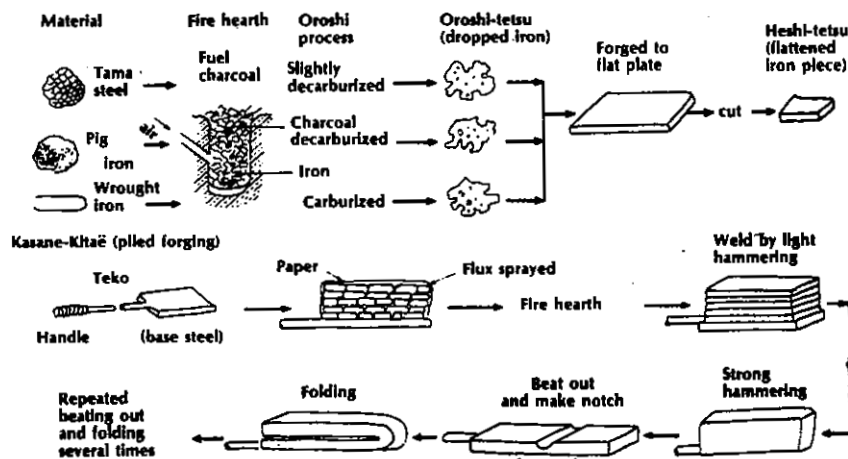


Figure 9. Forging process to make the composite structure of sword steel as practiced by swordsmiths in the Kyushu University laboratory.

Table III: Chemical Composition of Iron and Steel Used for the Japanese Sword

Kind	Composition %						Analyzed by
	C	Si	Mn	P	S	others	
Tama-hagane, steel from Tataru furnace	1.33	0.04	tr	0.014	0.006	—	Tawara
	1.77	0.017	0.09	0.016	0.003	—	Yawata steel works
	1.31	0.016	tr	0.007	0.0003	—	Tanimura
Höschō-tetsu, decarburized wrought iron	0.15	0.10	tr	0.018	0.069	Cu 0.06	Tawara
	0.12	0.05	tr	0.013	0.013	—	Tanimura
Pig iron from Tataru furnace	3.76	0.02	0	0.051	0.015	Cu 0.01	Tawara

These lumps of iron, named Orosi-tetsu, were the starting material for the composite wrought steel.

#### Forging Procedure for Composite Steels

Figure 9 illustrates how wrought steel for the sword blade was made in our laboratory. First, swordsmiths made Orosi-tetsu from Tama-steel, pig iron, or wrought iron. These various lumps of iron were flattened by hammering to a bar and piled on a spatula of the same steel as the sword. This pile was heated to a high temperature, after which the piled pieces could be welded easily by light hammering. The weldability of Japanese iron and steel is excellent because of its high purity.

With heavier hammering, the welded bar was stretched and flattened. Then, in the middle of the elongated bar a notch was cut. After folding along the notch, it was forged again. This hammering and folding process was repeated several times.

In ancient times, various forging methods were practiced. Figure 10 shows four of these methods.

Figure 11 shows a microstructure of forged steel after folding 3 times under

low magnification. Figure 12 shows the microstructure of the same steel under higher magnification. These pictures clearly show that high- and low-carbon iron coexist in the steel.

Figure 13 shows a microstructure after folding 12 times. The structure becomes finer, but it is not uniform. These experiments show that hard and soft iron coexist in the steel of the Japanese sword and that the steel is of composite structure.

As an appreciator of the Japanese sword, I have not had the heart to cut an old, precious sword. Instead, I selected two swords made in our laboratory—Wakizashi A (387 mm long) and Tanto B (250 mm long) shown in Figure 14.

After cutting, the macro- and microstructures on the section were examined, and the Micro-Vickers hardness of the quenched swords on various part of the blade was measured. In these test sword blades, soft wrought iron was not wrapped in the core.

Figure 13. Microstructure of forged steel after folding 12 times.

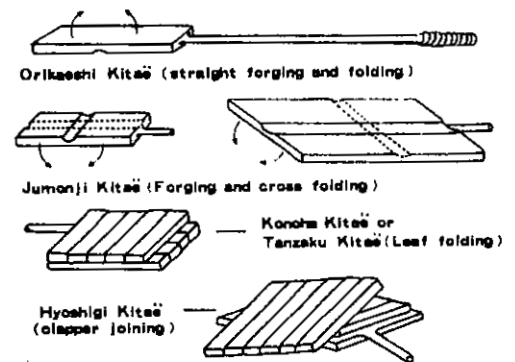


Figure 10. Various methods of forging.

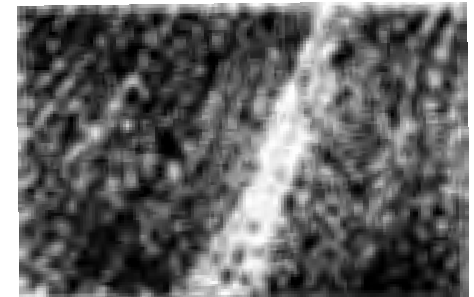
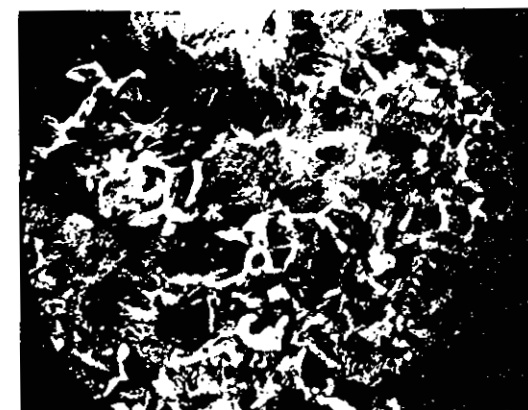


Figure 11. Macrostructure of pieces of hard and soft iron piled, welded, then folded 3 times. (Swordsmith: Nobumitsu).



Figure 12. Microstructure of forged steel after folding 3 times.



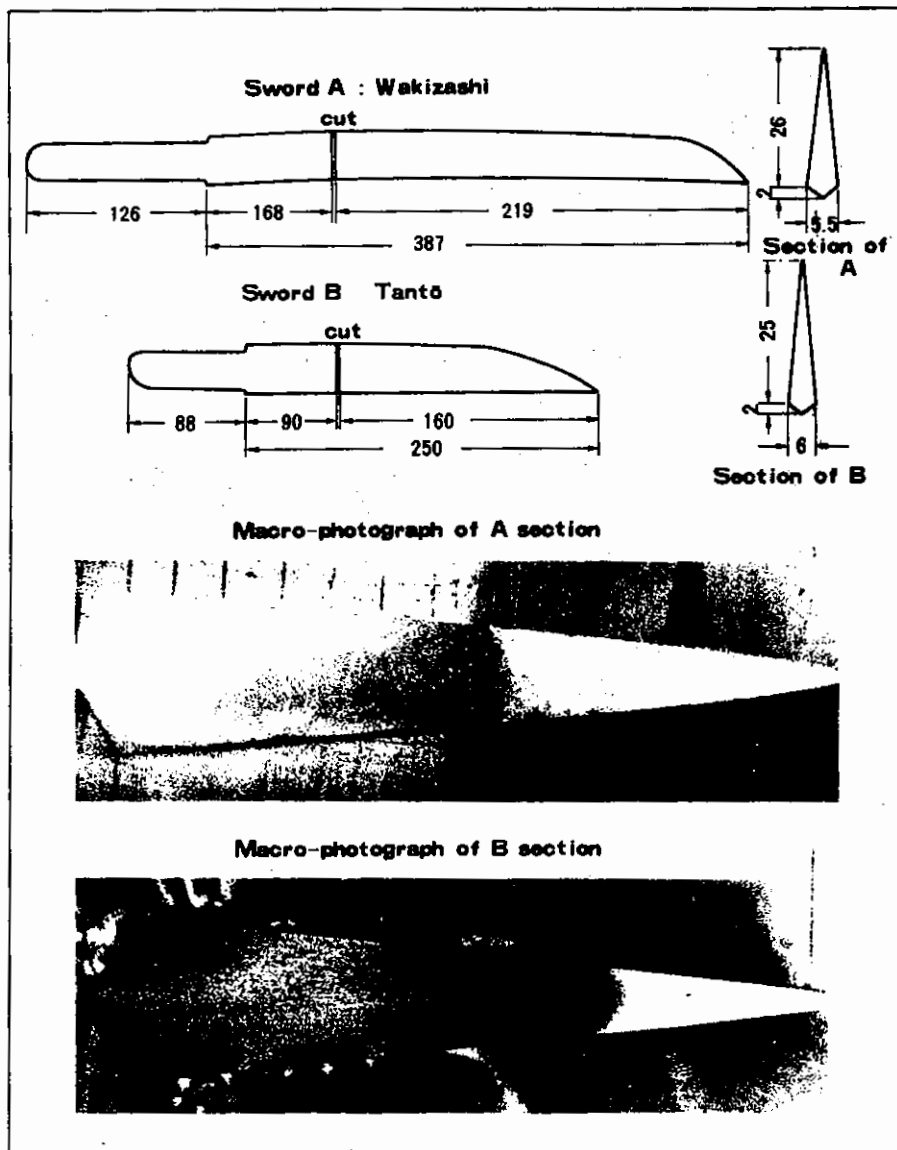


Figure 14. Swords finished in the Kyushu University Laboratory.

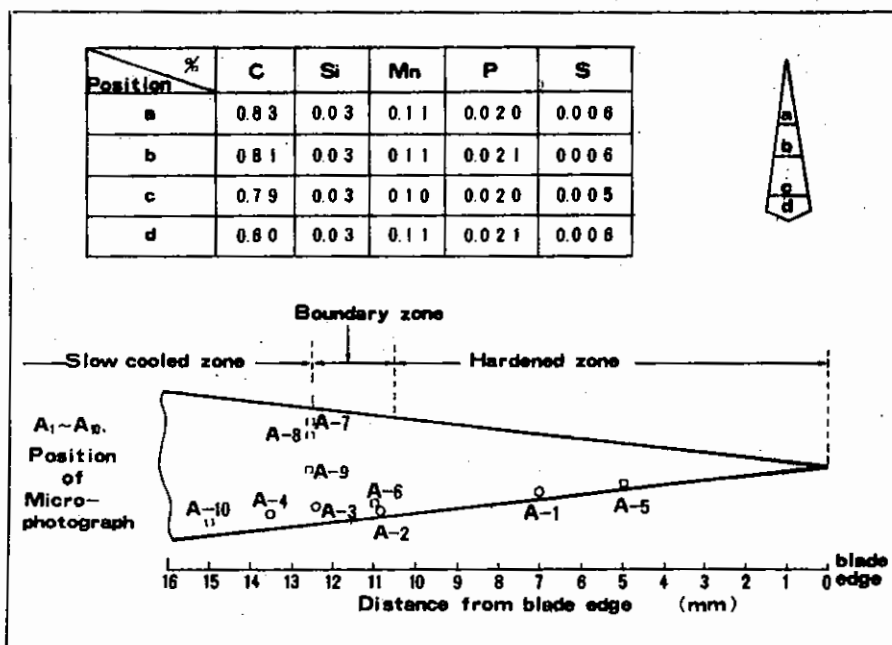


Figure 15. Chemical analysis of sword A.

Figure 15 gives a chemical analysis of sword A for parts A, B, C, and D. The average carbon content is 0.8%.

Figure 16 shows a similar plan for examining sword B which had a lower carbon content, averaging 0.47%. Figure 17 shows that the structure of sword A near the blade edge (A-5 in Figure 15) is martensitic.

Figure 18 shows the structure of sword B near the blade edge (B-1 in Figure 16). Here, small nodules of troostite (fine, unresolved pearlite) are scattered in the martensite.

Figure 19 shows the structure of sword A on the boundary zone of hardening, 1 mm from the surface (A-7 in Figure 15). This is a typical structure of Nie and Nioi.

Figure 20 shows the structure of sword A at the same distance from the blade edge as A-7 but 2 mm from the surface (A-9 in Figure 15).

Figure 21 shows the structure of sword A in an unhardened location (A-10 in Figure 15). The structure is sorbite (fine, unresolved pearlite).

Figure 22 shows the structure of sword B in the unhardened position where ferrite and pearlite coexist.

The distribution of hardness from the blade edge to the back of swords A and B was examined (Figure 23). From the back to the edge, hardness changes gradually in the slowly cooled zone. At the boundary zone of hardening, hardness changes abruptly. In the hardened zone, hardness changes in a zig-zag pattern.

In the hardened zone of sword B, troostite spots exist in the martensite matrix as shown in Figure 18. In this case the zig-zag distribution of hardness is less evident.

In the hardened zone of sword A, the structure is clearly martensite as shown in Figure 17. Yet, the hardness distribution is not uniform, possibly, because of the presence of martensites of various carbon content having different hardnesses.

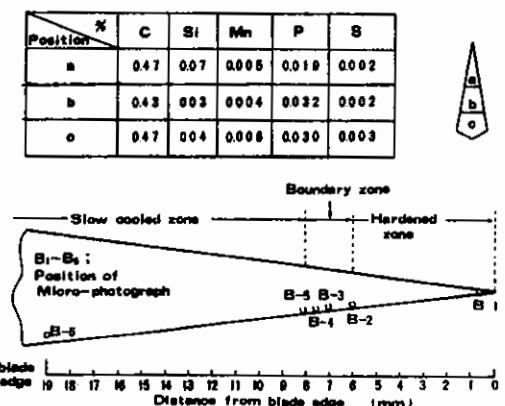
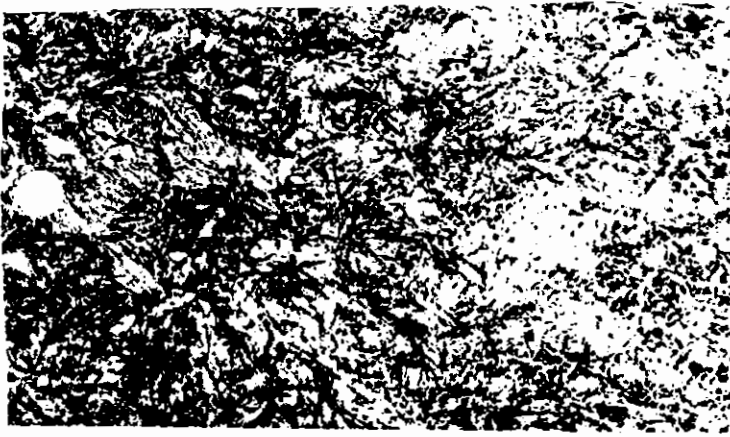
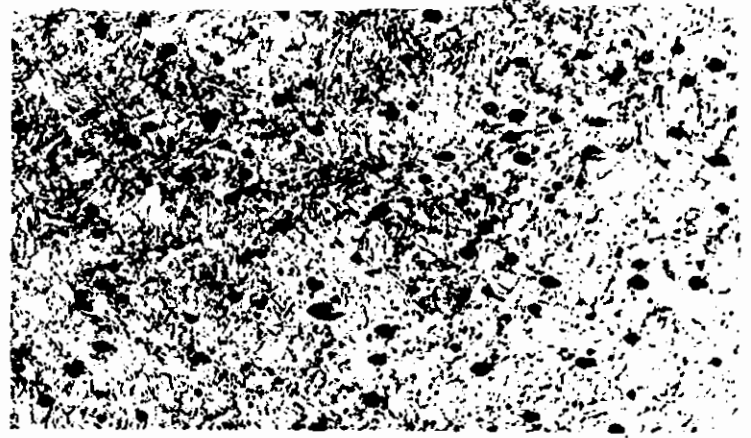


Figure 16. Chemical analysis of sword B.



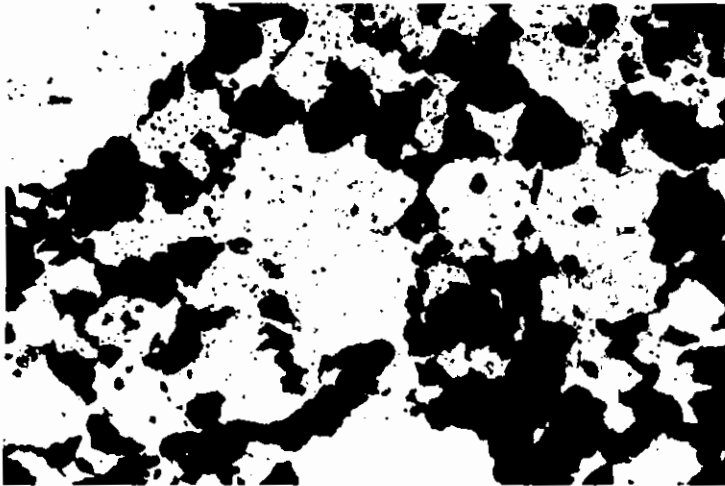
× 1000

Figure 17. Microstructure of sword A, 5 mm from blade edge, location A-5.



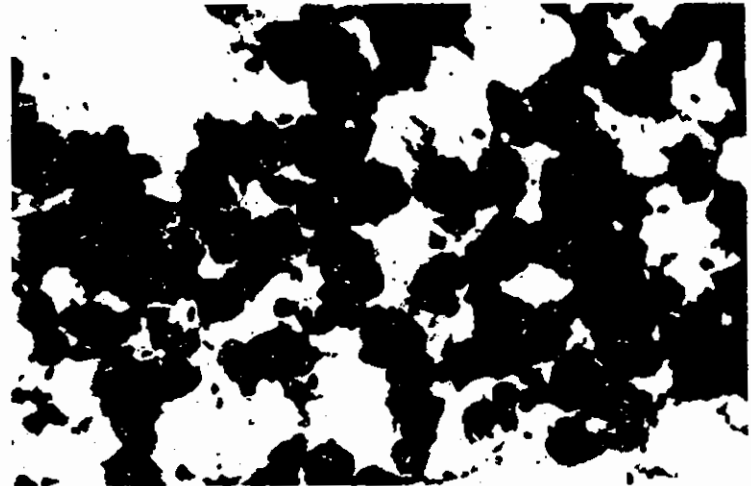
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Figure 18. Microstructure of sword B, 0.5 mm from blade edge, location B-1.



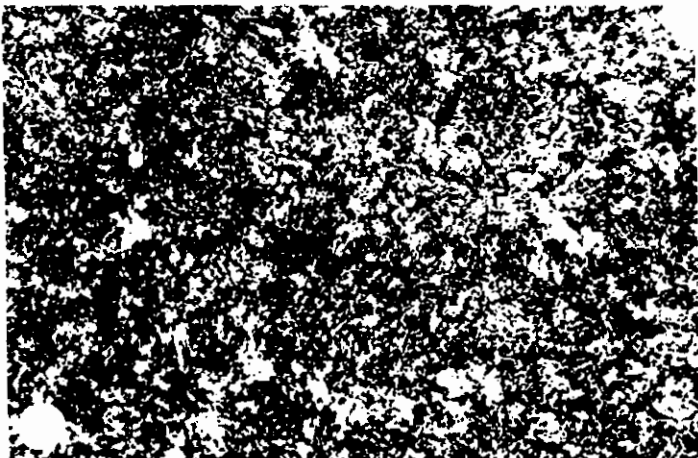
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Figure 19. Microstructure of sword A, 12 mm from blade edge, 1 mm from surface, location A-7.



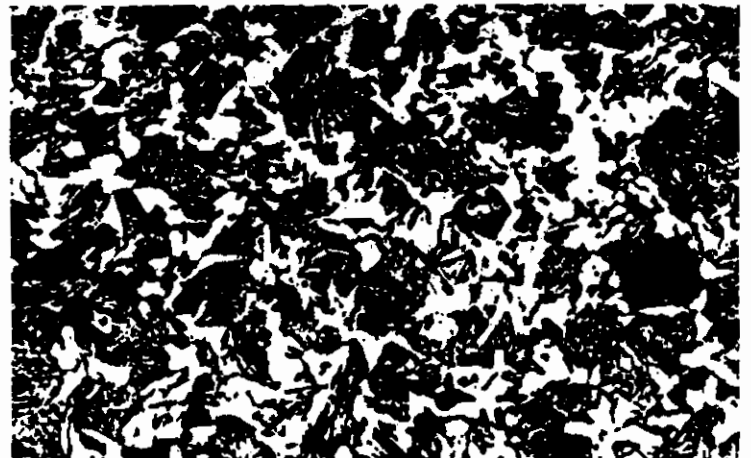
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Figure 20. Microstructure of sword A, 12 mm from blade edge, 2 mm from surface, location A-9.



× 1000

Figure 21. Microstructure of sword A, 15 mm from blade edge, location A-10.



× 1000

Figure 22. Microstructure of sword B, 19.0 mm from blade edge, location B-6.

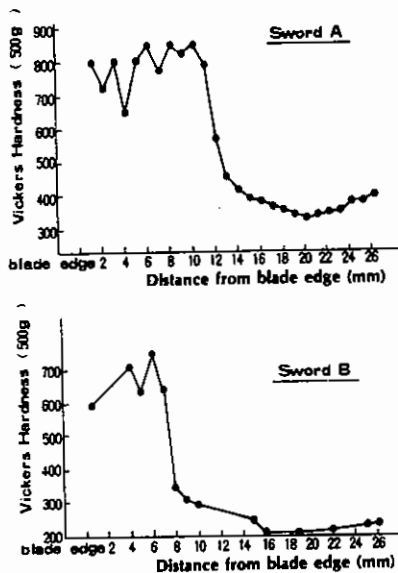


Figure 23. Hardness distribution of quenched swords.

One piece of the wrought steel was quenched in water. The structure is composed of martensite and troostite as shown in Figure 24. Note that the hardness of the martensite was different in various parts.

Figure 25a shows a schematic of the sword surface structure on the boundary zone of hardening. After polishing, hard martensite grains stand out from the softer matrix of troostite. This is the reason for the beautiful Nie and Nioi.

Figure 25b shows a schematic of the blade edge surface structure after polishing. The edge is not straight, but zig-zag like a saw. The cutting ability of the sword may be increased because of this phenomenon.

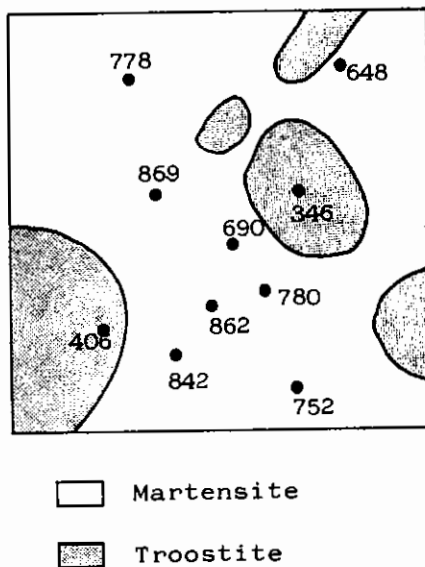


Figure 24. Vickers hardness distribution of sword steel after repeated beating, folding, and water quenching.

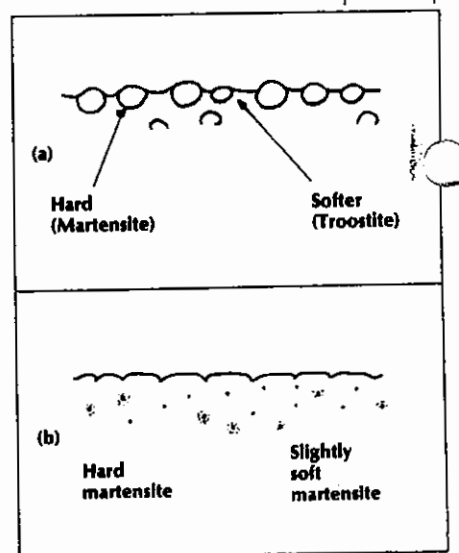


Figure 25. Schematic surface structure of the sword blade (a) on the boundary zone of hardening and (b) of the blade edge after polishing.

#### Ancient Japanese Iron and Steelmaking Process

For completion of the best Japanese swords, the good quality of the ancient Japanese iron was an important contribution. The history of Japanese iron metallurgy is vague because no literature or documentation of the ancient practices remain.

Before the introduction of European iron and steel processes in the 19th century, the so-called Tataru smelting process was the main method of iron and steelmaking in Japan.

The origin of the Tataru process is not clear. It is presumed that from primitive methods more productive Tataru process-

es were developed in about the 16th century.

Figure 26 is a rough sketch of the Tataru furnace. It is a low blast furnace (height ~ 1100 mm), with square cross section (~ 2900 x 1000 mm). From both sides, wind is blown into the furnace through a number of tuyeres. Each tuyere is made of a bamboo tube and nozzle of cast iron.

The furnace wall is thick, especially around the lower part. The inner profile of the lining is somewhat similar to that of a modern furnace as shown in Figure 30. Charging materials are charcoal and iron sand; the flux is not charged from the top.

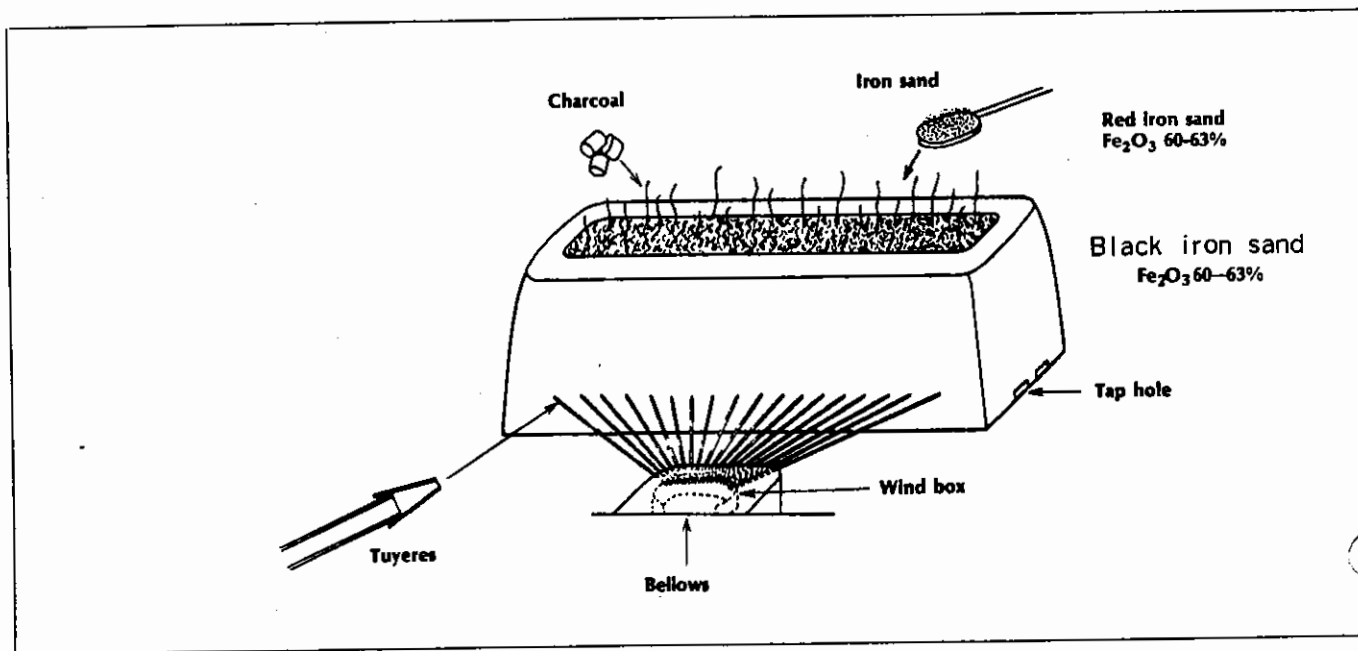


Figure 26. Schematic of the Tataru furnace.

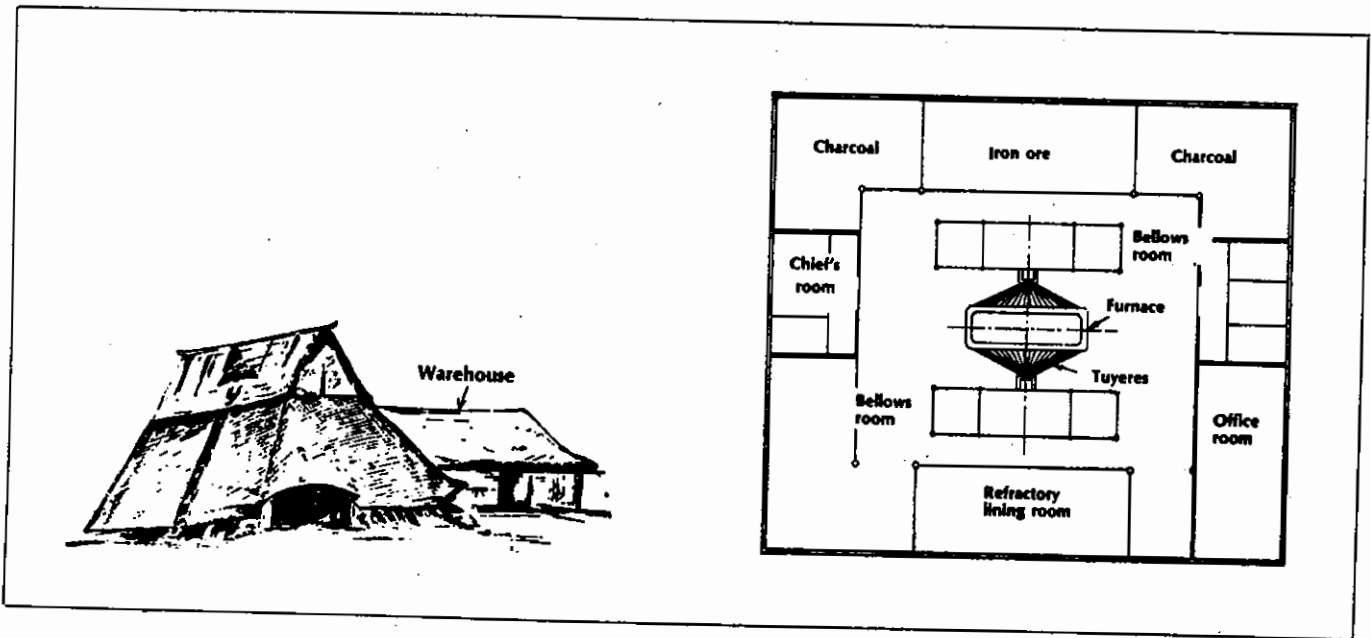


Figure 27. Schematic of the Tatara house.

Figure 28. Plan of the Tatara house.

Figure 27 shows the sketch of the Tatara house. Figure 28 shows its plan. The blast of the furnace is sent from the bellows on both sides.

Figure 29 shows a sketch of the so-called *tembin fuigo* (balance bellows), which was commonly used. This bellows is operated by human power: workers on one side step on the board while workers on the other side wait their turn, holding a rope. In order to prevent air leakage, the sliding surfaces of the bellows are covered by leather made from the Japanese racoon.

In the Tatara smelting process, various kinds of iron sand were selected by the chief furnace operator.

One kind of iron sand is reddish and is called *akome*. Another kind is black and is called *masa kogane*.

The reddish iron sand contains more ferric oxide and more impurities such as silica and titanium oxide. The black iron sand is pure magnetite, containing fewer impurities; it is particularly low in phosphorus.

The lining material of the Tatara furnace is specially selected clay. This lining can melt at the optimum low temperature, thus functioning as a flux for the smelting. After about 3 days, the lining of the furnace is completely melted away. Consumption of the lining as a function of time is shown in Figure 30.

In the first step of the smelting operation, the reddish iron sand is charged. This iron ore is reduced easily and can absorb carbon quickly. In this case pig iron is formed, collected at the bottom of the furnace, and eventually tapped out along with the molten slag.

When the furnace stabilizes at a high temperature, black iron sand is charged. This iron ore is reduced more slow-

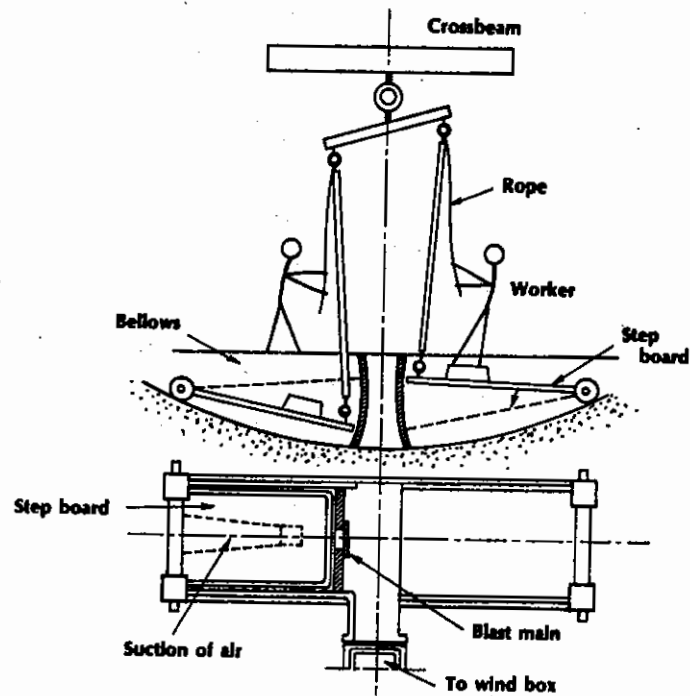


Figure 29. Sketch of the *tembin fuigo* (balance bellows).

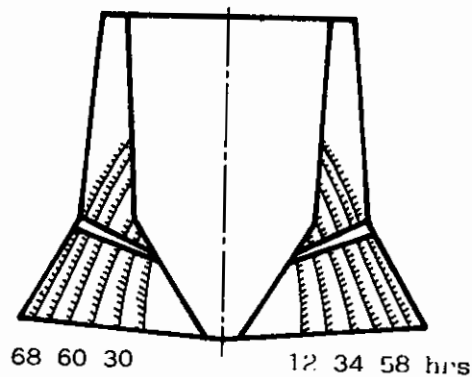
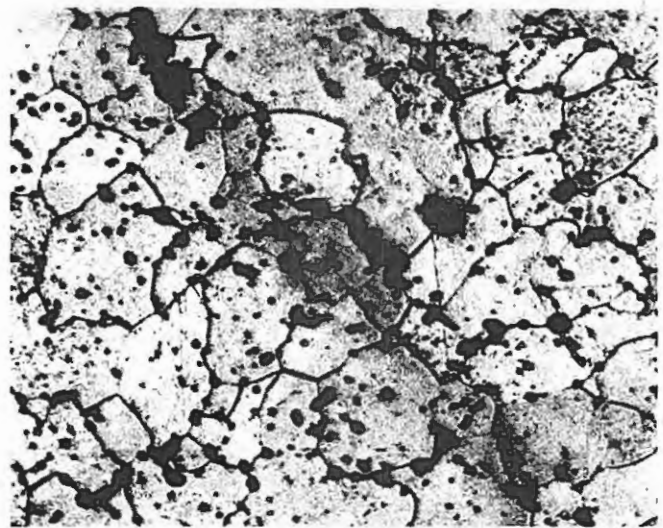


Figure 30. Schematic of the rate of Tatara furnace lining consumption.



X 125

Figure 32. Structure of Japanese wrought iron, Hocho Tetsu, for the core of the sword.



X 200

Figure 33. Cross section of industrial wrought iron.

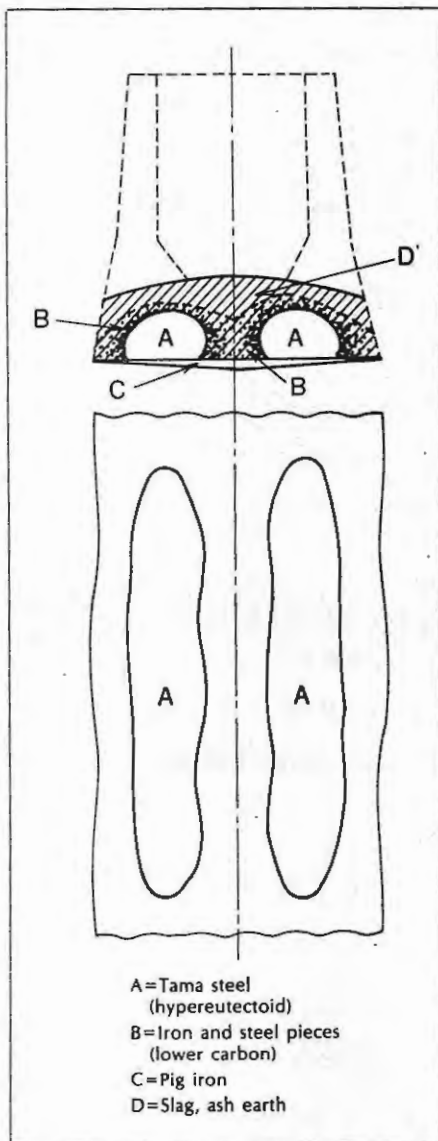
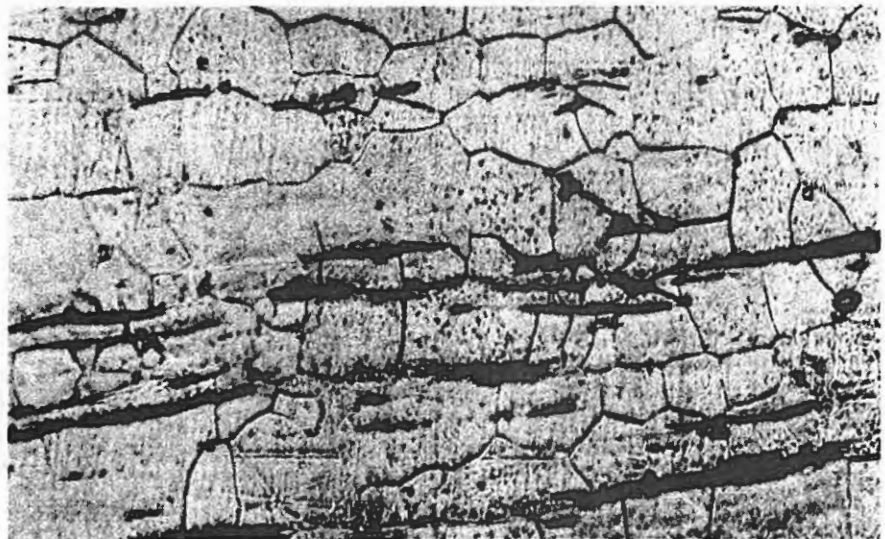


Figure 31. After 3 days, the furnace is broken and *ker*a, the lumps of iron and steel, is pulled out.



X 200

Figure 34. Longitudinal section of industrial wrought iron.

ly than the reddish iron ore. This reduced iron can absorb at most 1.2–1.6% carbon at the smelting zone, which is about 1200°C. In the smelting zone, some of the iron absorbs more carbon, becomes pig iron, and runs out, collecting at the bottom of the furnace. From the standpoint of the Fe-C phase diagram, the iron reduced from black iron sand corresponds to the solidus phase, and the iron reduced more easily corresponds to the liquidus phase. During the contact of the liquidus and solidus phases in the Tataru furnace, there is the same refining action of the solidus as in zone melting. The iron of the solidus phase accumulates at the bottom of the furnace in lumps as shown in Figure 31.

This lump of iron is called *ker*a (mother iron). The main part of this lump

is composed of very pure hypereutectoid steel called *tama-hagane*. In this steel, impurities such as P, S, and Si are very low.

In the hot forging, folding, and welding of sword steel, the iron oxide formed on the surface can react with the carbon of the steel and escapes as gas. The composite metal for the Japanese sword contains very few nonmetallic inclusions.

Figure 32 is a structure of decarburized wrought iron which was made from Tataru iron and steel.

As a comparison, the microstructure of industrial wrought iron perhaps made by the puddle process is shown in Figure 33 and Figure 34.

It can be concluded that the highly beautiful Japanese sword is fabricated from only high-purity iron and steel.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Hiromu Tanimura** graduated from Tōkyō Imperial University in 1922 and was appointed assistant professor at Kyūshū Imperial University in 1923. He received



the degree of Dr. Eng. in 1930 after completing his thesis on the "Influence of Cooling Velocity and Melting Temperature on

the Graphitization of Cast Iron." From 1931 to 1932 he studied in the Kaiser-Wilhelm Institut für Metallforschung, and in 1933 he made a study tour in the U.S. In 1934 he was appointed Chairman of Metallurgical Technology, Kyūshū Imperial University, and in 1936 he became Professor Emeritus. From 1963 to 1968 he was Executive Counselor at Yawata Iron and Steel Co., and since 1969 he has been with Toyota Motors as a counselor in the development of metallic materials for automobiles.

\* \* \* \* \*

## SOME CLOSING THOUGHTS -

Because of the amount of material included in this issue of the "Newsletter", the usual sword oshigata series has been omitted but will continue in future issues. Some "fake mei" blades will also be shown in the future, showing faults in their signing in hopes of teaching the membership more on how to examine a signature. This has been requested many times.

There has been some concern about the possible dampening of spirits, particularly among our newer members, resulting from the articles exposing fake signatures, bad origami, and unethical sword dealings. It is hoped that everyone will take these articles as lessons and actually benefit from them by acquiring a better factual understanding of the pitfalls found in the sword world (or any other area of collecting). Do not have your spirits dampened. There is so much wonderful enjoyment to be derived from understanding and studying the sword and related areas, but it does take understanding and study. It is a very demanding adventure and one must become committed to it. When spirits seem low, sit down with your favorite sword, tsuba, or other item....sit quietly and study it and accept the many moving emotions that it will give to you. Spirits will rise and you will again "feel" what it is all about. Enjoy it!

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE - The next issue of the "Newsletter" will be mailed out about the first week of December. All material intended for inclusion in that issue must be into the editor no later than the end of November.

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**By Gary D. Murtha**

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**The Samurai Sword** is printed on coated 100 lb. enamel paper (8½" x 11" page size) and hard case bound with a four-color dust jacket. (**Publication of “The Samurai Sword” is set for October 1, 1980.**) A limited edition is being printed. Orders will be filled on a first come, first served basis.

### **A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR**

In this book, all confusing details have been cast aside. However, it is comprehensive in that it will teach you how to read signatures, identify flaws, collect swords, identify the parts and names of the blade and fittings, clean and restore blades and fittings and other valuable information.

For the collector who appreciates the beauty of the sword, over 25 color plates will show the TSUBA, MENUKI, FUCHI-KASHIRA, KOZUKA and some of the most outstanding KOSHIRAE ever seen. Some of the artists are TSUNESHIGE, JINGO, UMETADA, MUNEYOSHI, MUNEYUKI, TOSHIUJI and many others with pertinent details of their schools and working period.

For the lover of blades, over 30 black and white plates will show the full length blade in all its glory, as well as closeups of all signatures. All blades are in excellent polish and authentic. Some of the makers are: MASAHIRO, TADAIRO, SUKEMITSU, KUNETERU, SADAYOSHI, TOSHINAGA and SUKESADA, just to name a few.

This book will serve as a starting point for beginners and at the same time be a valuable reference source throughout your collecting years. An absolute must for all collectors of THE SAMURAI SWORD.

**Pre-publication price of The Samurai Sword is \$15.00 plus \$1.25 per book for postage and handling. Regular book store price will be \$22.95.**

### **Order Form**

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# JAPANESE SWORDS, TSUBA

COLLECTORS AND DEALERS, HERE IS AN UNUSUAL OPPORTUNITY TO ACQUIRE SOME VERY FINE SWORDS AND TSUBA, AS WELL AS SOME FINE KAKE. MY COLLECTION IS UNPICKED, AND THE ITEMS HAVE BEEN IN MY FAMILY FOR MANY YEARS.

The sword group includes a fine TACHI by HARUKUNI, and is from the SHIMAZU family collection; an excellent wakizashi by HARIMA NO JU DIAJO FUJIWARA MASAMICHI, GOTO mounts, with kake by KORIN; a very good AKIHIRO, SOSHU, in shirasaya; a superb tanto by BISHU OSAFUNE NORIMITSU, with heavy gold and silver dragons en suite, fine horimono; a mint katana with sayagaki YAMATO NO KUNI KANENAGA, triple hi, shirasaya; a fine wakizashi by BISHU OSAFUNE SUKEMITSU, silver fittings en suite; an excellent katana, gold mei SADAMUNE in shirasaya with complete koshirai mounted; a good KO-BIZEN ICHIMONJI katana in han-dachi mounts, MUNETADA; an unusual tanto UNO-KUBI TSUKURI, KAMAKURA period, in ebi saya. All have bags.

Detailed descriptions will be furnished to inquirers.

In addition, there are about fifty good TSUBA representing many schools and artists. Ages range from 600 years old to early 19th century, and there are a number of signed pieces.

Some of the names are: TOSHIMITSU, ITO, KANEIYE, HEIAN-JO NAGAYOSHI, SUKASHI, SADANOBU, KAGA, KANSHIRO, HEIAN IYESADA, BUSHU, NAMBAN, NAOKA, KASUGA, YOSHIRO, TEMBO, TORYUSAI, GOTO, HIROYUKI (KOZUI), MICHIKADO, HIROSADA, KUNIHIRO, MASACHIKA, HAKONEBORI, SHOAMI HA, TOMOYOSHI, BRASS, MASAYOSHI, AND MANY OTHERS THAT ARE FINE EXAMPLES OF VARIOUS SCHOOLS AND ARTISTS.

Most have old brocade bags. I prefer to sell the tsuba in several lots, so the collection will maintain its integrity. The swords will be sold as a lot or separately.

There are several fine kake, including a tachi stand. The collection has been exhibited in museum shows, and to American-Japanese society organizations.

Address inquiries to:

EARLE JOSHUA STONE