Japanese Sword Society of the United States, Inc.

NEWSLETTER

Volume 14 No. 6 November-December • 1982

1983 MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE PAYABLE NOW -

A "1983 Dues Notice" form will be included along with this issue of the Newsletter if a member's dues are payable at this time. Please return form with payment.

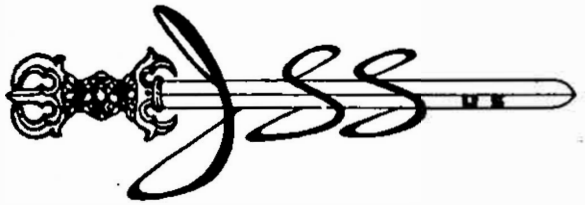
If no notice is included with this issue, this indicates that a member's dues is already paid up through 1983 and that no payment is due at this time.

Once again the society has been able to hold dues at $15 for United States and Canadian members and $20 for all other foreign members. The membership will no doubt enjoy this inflation fighting news. Perhaps in return for this effort to hold costs down members paying dues at this time could do so promptly. Such prompt payment greatly simplifies bookkeeping and all such record keeping chores. Everyone's help and consideration with this task would be greatly appreciated.

OFFICER'S MEETINGS HELD -

A good number of hours were spent in meetings by society officers during the October Chicago sword show. Although it is asking a lot of one to relinquish sword show time to sit in a hotel room and discuss non-sword business, it could be be said that the officers "met their obligation" by doing so. The future of the JSS/US was discussed at length and much constructive planning for the future was realized.

The results of these meetings will be reported to the membership by way of a special mailing sometime in the next month. When this special report arrives please give it your full attention. It will be the result of many hours of thought and preparation and likewise, it will deserve your reading and scrutiny as an informed member.



The Japanese Sword Society of the United States is registered with the State of California as a non profit organization for the appreciation and advanced study of the Japanese art sword and related fields of interest.

OFFICERS

Peter Bleed, Chairman

John Tischmann, Executive Vice Chairman

A. Z. Freeman, First Vice Chairman

Neil Keen, Second Vice Chairman

William C. Miller, Secretary

Ron Hartmann, Treasurer

DIRECTORS

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Dean Hartley,
Ron McIlquham,
David Pepper,
George Phebus,
Ted Wysocky,
Robert Coleman,
Robert Lewert,
Mel Oka,
Andrew Quirt,
Curtin Uhls,
Steven Winkley,

REWARD - $1,000 will be paid by the Society for information leading to the apprehension and conviction of anyone stealing sword or fittings from a JSS/US member, and the recovery of the lost items. Payment will be subject to Officers and Directors approval.

ADVERTISING POLICY - Paid advertisements will be accepted for publication in the Society NEWSLETTER. Ad contents must be restricted to services and items for sale. High-pressure type ads and ads not befitting the format of the NEWSLETTER will not be accep-ted. DESCRIPTIONS AND ATTRIBUTIONS OF ITEMS ADVERTISED ARE THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ADVERTISER.

ARTICLE POLICY - Articles of a research nature are of course always welcomed for publication in the Society journals. The Society will pay a $25 Honorarium to the author of original research or reporting articles when of sufficient stature. Brief articles and news items will not be awarded this Honorarium but are nevertheless solicited. CONTENTS OF PUBLISHED ARTICLES AND AUTHENTICITY OF ILLUSTRATED ITEMS IN THE SOCIETY JOURNALS AND PUBLICATIONS ARE THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE AUTHORS OF SAID ARTICLES.

CALL FOR PAPERS BY THE BULLETIN EDITOR -

I would like to appeal again to the membership to contact me about ideas or articles for the Bulletin. I would like to hear from you no matter how tentative your plans are. The idea for the Bulletin is that it should contain original material of lasting interest. It will not contain reprints or material of only passing current interest. We do not expect that every article will contain material that is fresh and new for those who can read the Japanese language literature, but our aim is to make it fresh, new and interesting for the English language audience. Two articles are now in hand, several are promised, but more are needed. Please do not hesitate to contact me about your ideas. If something isn't quite right for the Bulletin it very likely would be appropriate for the Newsletter. I am contacting some persons I know individually, but that group is necessarily small with the membership as large as it now is. I am sure many people not known to me have interesting and exciting ideas -- please let me hear from you. Publication is expected in a year.

Arnold Frenzel
Editor, Bulletin

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TO THOSE WHO ARE CONFUSED -

There continues to be a confusion as to who edits what publication for the society. To clarify:

The Newsletter - Editor: Ron Hartmann
The Bulletin - Editor: Arnold Frenzel

The Newsletter is mailed out bimonthly whereas the Bulletin is an "occassional" publication, approximately annually. All mail received as misdirected to the wrong editor does eventually reach the correct editor but also results in a delay. Perhaps this clarification will help to remedy this problem.

NEW MEMBERS

The following new members are welcomed into the organization this issue:

John Sharp,
W.A. Jones,
Cody B. Templeton,
Andrew R. Young, Jr.,

* David Cibik
Robert E. Rose,
Rick R. Sanders,
* Joe Bell
* Don W. Hill,
Frans Wigemans,
Keith R. Mueller,
Benjamin P. McKnew,
* R. Crumly, B

NEW MEMBERS cont'd.

Tom McPherson,
Douglas Trubey,
Mark Tohulka,
Brian Erickson,
Gary A. Berquist,
George Marosi,
John Mang, Jr.,
Miro C. Klement,
Stephen B. Rodgers,
David D. Shorey,
Joseph J. Juska,
Jim Kurrasch,
Anthony T.
Bernie J.
R. E. Suran,
R. I. Woodbury, 3vin Malanga, NY
Ed Pilsitz, PA
Steven G. Grice
Alan G. Fee,

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Clarence Siman and John Brzostowicz have become Life Members of the Society at this time. Both gentlemen have been JSS/US members for a good number of years.

BOSTON LIVING NATIONAL TREASURE EXHIBIT -

No formal report is available on this event in time for this Newsletter but such a report is coming. From all indications the exhibit is very well done and the demonstrations by Gassan Sadakazu and his associates were most interesting. As was announced last issue, the forging demonstrations have now ended but the exhibit will remain in Boston through January 2nd. The exhibit will then move to Chicago and, if memory serves, San Francisco. From all indications it is well worth one's time to go see it.

It was hoped that the Boston Museum of Fine Arts would had send everyone a special mailing on this event, and perhaps even schedule some sort of study activity for us, but the Newsletter received no response to this suggestion. It seems that the opportunity to greatly benefit from the visit by Gassan Sadakazu and from the event in general was there, but not utilized with the sword student in mind. Perhaps another time. Meanwhile we can look forward to a good comprehensive report of the happening.

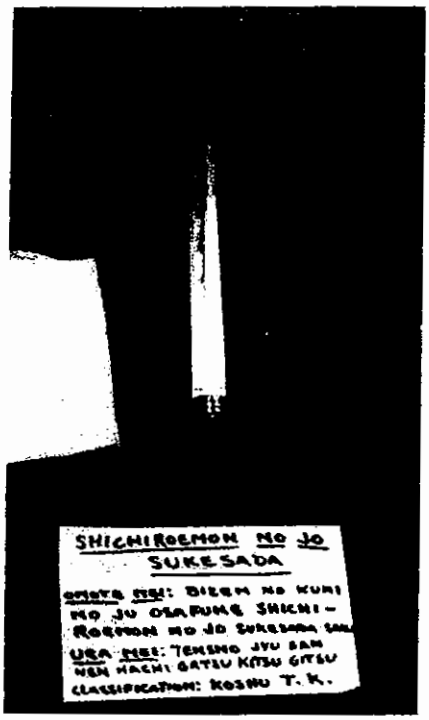
1982 Token Study Group Sword Show

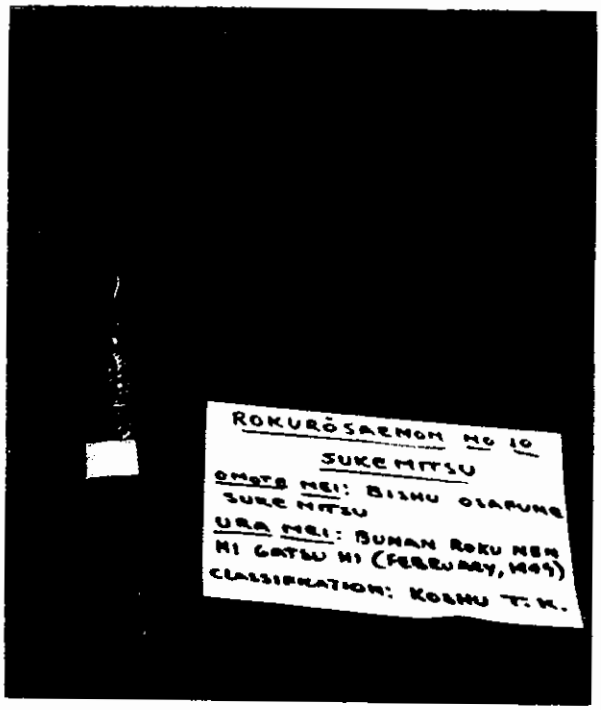
- SOME SCENES FROM THE BUY AND SELL AREA -

Tables covered with swords, kodogu, armor, matchlocks and a variety of other hardware presented the collector with ample variety of things to browse through. The usual amount of lesser items was on hand but some quality items were also to be found. It seems that quality swords are being offered for sale but prices asked are often more than the buyer wishes to pay. This reflects the somewhat depressed market of today, or so it seems. A good number of really impressive kodogu was offered at the show for what seemed to be very reasonably priced. However, as enjoyable and rewarding kodogu can be, this area of collecting seems to be overlooked for the most part.

- SOCIETY OFFICERS -

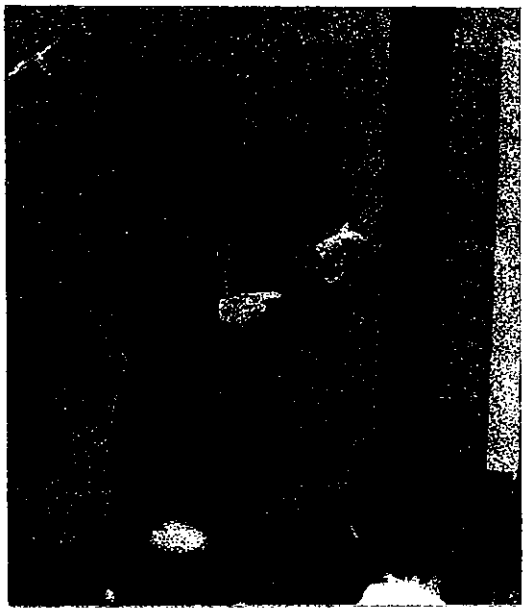
Several Officer's meeting were held during the week-end primarily for the job of revising and up-dating the organization's by-laws and Constitution. From left to right: Mel Oka, Neil Keen, Bob Lewert, Pete Bleed, Ted Wysocky, A.Z. Freeman and Andy Quirt.





SWORD EXHIBIT
SUE BIZEN

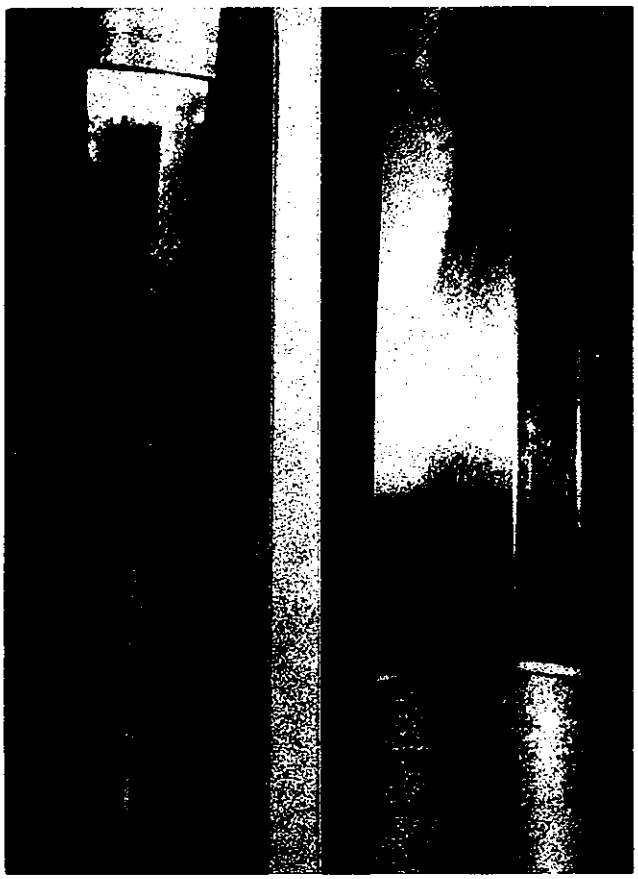
The exhibition was begun with the showing of an Oei Bizen tachi, showing the transition of style into middle and late 1500's style, ending with an example of shintō style. An excellent display of namban kodogu and Jakushi kodogu was also exhibited to round out the event.

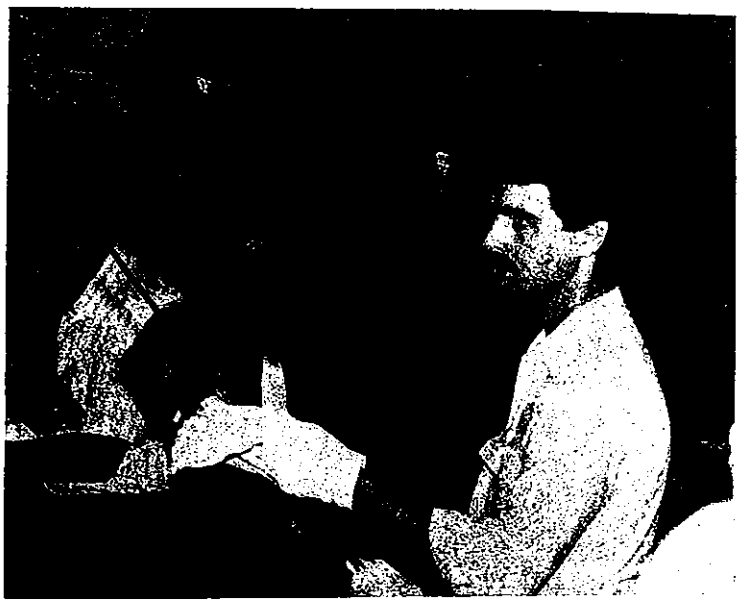


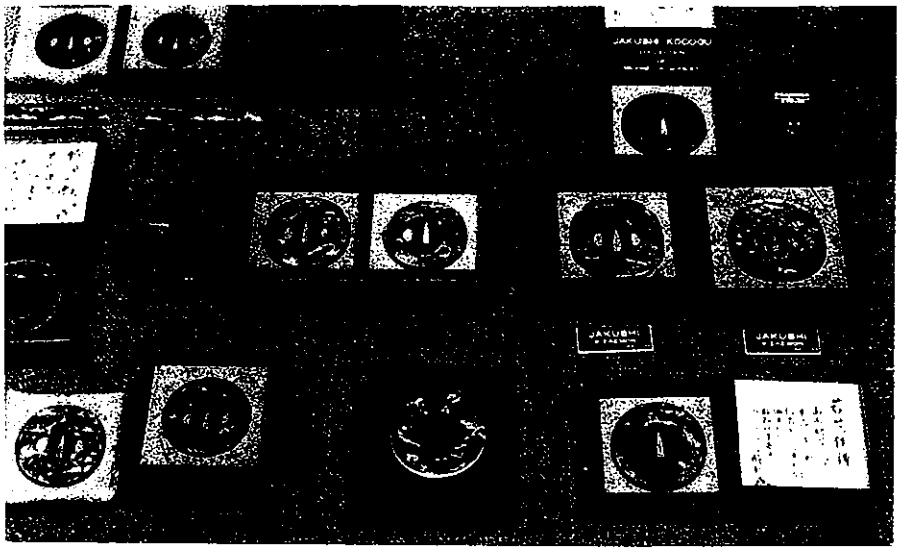
- MEIBUTSU ROOM OF SUE BIZEN -

Prior to allowing entry into the exhibit room everyone was required to attend a brief lecture on how to handle the swords on exhibit. Bob Coleman conducted the presentation in brief but thorought manner.

All of the swords on exhibit were laid out for in-hand study. White gloves were in order and volunteer overseers watched so that handling was done in proper manner.

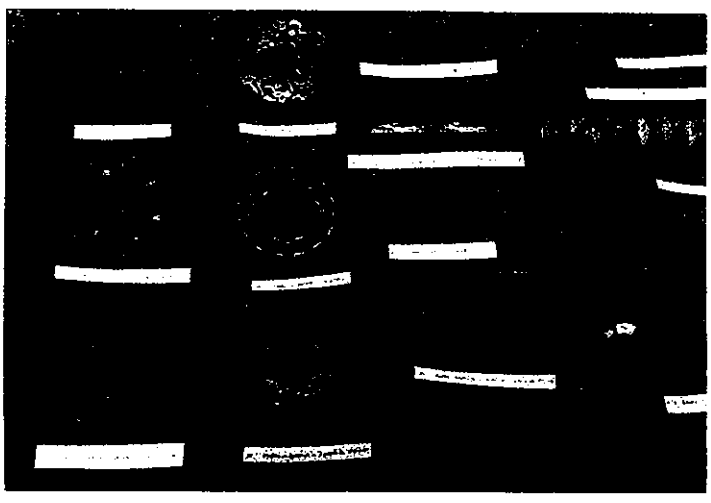






-BANQUET AND LECTURES -

Following a cocktail hour and a most enjoyable banquet, several informative lectures were presented. Mike Quigley lectured on his favorite subject, Jakushi kodogu. Charles Watrell lectured on Namban influence into Japanese art, specifically sword kodogu. Mike and Charlie presented us with an impressive display of items pertaining to their subjects of lecture.



SOUTHEAST TOKEN KAI

BIRMINGHAM SWORD SHOW

MARCH 18, 19 and 20, 1983

AIRPORT RAMADA INN

BUY-SELL ROOM ● LECTURES ● exhibit room

Sensei John Yumoto will be on hand to lecture and assist. A special display area will be set up for those wishing to bring polished, authenticated blades and fine fittings. (Reserve space prior to show please.)

This coming show is expected to be the best ever presented in Birmingham. With everyone's help through attendance and the loan of a few selected items for exhibit, it will be a good show. The display room will be open on March 19th, under security, with items being displayed as they were in Chicago last October, for in-hand study. Only items with papers are requested. If anyone wishes to display, be sure to contact Paul immediately.

Buy, sell and trade tables will be available. The cost of one table and admittance to all lectures and displays will be $50 for the weekend. Two tables will cost $85 and three tables will cost $110. Non-table holders will need to pay a $20 admissions fee.

Sensei John Yumoto will be on hand again and will be presenting lectures. He would certainly enjoy some suggestions from the membership as to what topics would be enjoyable.

Don't miss this show as it promises to be a fine weekend not only for swapping items, but for learning....and that is what we all want to do.

CONTACT: PAUL COUCH

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CORRECTION NOTED

In our last issue of the Newsletter it was announced that the Token Society of Great Britain's publication, the Programme, had a new editor. It seems that my "news" was a bit scrambled. The editor of the Programme continues to be Mr. Clive Sinclaire. Sorry about putting you out of a job Clive!

This organization did make a change in their publications recently. Rather than publishing three or four Programmes a year, they will now publish two different publications, the bi-annual Journal and two issues of the Programme to be published between the Journal issues. This change reflects their efforts to up-grade their publications and present their membership with more "learning material". The quality of their publications certainly justify membership. For information on membership, contact Mr. H. M. Hutchinson, 141 Nork Way, Banstead, Surrey, England.

● HELP NEEDED -

Recently the society was offered a large lot of the reprint, the Book of the Sword. This book of lectures on the sword was offered to the members in the last couple Newsletters. Several ads were taken out in Shotgun News, the classified newspaper of the gun collector, in hopes of selling a large number of copies fast and cheap. It was thought that the gun people, who have a slight curiosity in the sword, would jump at a good, reasonably priced book on swords. Either the ads did not get read or there simply was not much interest from that area in general....but very few copies actually sold through that newspaper. The problem is, there is a storage problem in my home with this large stock of books. You can help ease this problem by ordering a copy of this book if you do not already own one. The price is cheap, only $8.00 for members, and it will more than pay for itself many times over simply from the teaching it will give you. The new member and more novice collector would benefit most from these lectures. So please, help me out and buy a copy today. (My wife would be most relieved)

Book of the Sword - $8.00

Send orders to: JAPANESE SWORD SOCIETY/U. S. INC.
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MEMBERSHIP IN THE NIHON TOKEN HOZON KAI -

Many of our members have been asking for information about the sword society of Mr. Kentaro Yoshikawa, the Nihon Token Hozon Kai (N.T.H.K.). Mr. Yoshikawa has answered our inquiry about membership and has supplied us with the following:

Regular membership ¥8,000 annually
Special membership ¥20,000 annually
Entrance fee upon joining ¥2,000

They publish a fine journal called, Tōken to Rekishi, in Japanese but with some English added. The journal is printed on quality paper and is very well illustrated primarily with oshigata. The journal is a bi-monthly, issued every odd-month.

Membership can be sent to: Mr. Kentaro Yoshikawa

Rumor has it that Mr. Yoshikawa has published another edition of Yushu tō Zuroku (Catalogue of Excellent Swords). No details are available at the moment but any information will be passed on via the Newsletter as soon as it becomes available.

A REQUEST FOR OSHIGATA -

I am compiling an index of oshigata of known Yasukuni Shrine blades outside Japan. These blades were made by men who often adopted an infrequently used "Yasu" character such as Yasuhiro (YA-494), and who worked in the precints of the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo and by traditional methods between 1933 and 1945. I would appreciate an oshigata, using traditional Japanese oshigata paper, of both sides of the nakago, the length of the blade from point to mune-machi and the type and depth of the sori. The oshigata should extend about one inch above the machi and include the mune. I would also like to know the characteristics of the yakiba, boshi and jigane. My intention is to publish as many of these oshigata as possible and index all in a forthcoming article on the smiths of this group. Co-operating owners will be listed if they wish, otherwise the owners will be indicated as anonymous. Please indicate your preferance. Your co-operation is sincerely appreciated.

Arnold Frenzel

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AN INTERESTING ARTICLE -

Several members have given the Newsletter the article to the right. It originally appeared in the Science News, Volume 122 (September 18, 1982) and deals with the research being conducted by one of our own member, Mr. Michael Notis of Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

Many thanks to everyone who remembered us with this bit of information. Good luck to Mr. Notis in his studies.

Solar collectors and Japanese swords

An ancient Japanese surface treatment for copper-gold alloys may produce the richest black ever formed on a metal. This patina, with its high resistance to atmospheric tarnish, may be a good model for solar collector surfaces. At Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Penn., Michael Notis has combined his interest in early east Asian metalcraft with research into materials for solar energy applications. He says, "In medieval Japan the ability to color metal surfaces was in all probability better than it is in today's modern coatings industries."

Of particular interest is a 14th century method that produces a deep-blue or purple-black patina on a copper-gold alloy, called *Shakudo*, used for art objects. The treatment solution used today to create this patina consists of nearly equal portions of copper acetate and copper sulfate dissolved and heavily diluted in warm water. Notis and his colleagues have examined samples of the surface layers from ancient objects and modern specimens. They determined that the *Shakudo* patina consists of nearly pure metallic gold particles in a copper oxide (Cu_2O) matrix. The alloy itself contains from 3 to 5 percent gold by weight. "A system of gold particles distributed in a copper oxide matrix is therefore expected to meet the criteria necessary for the production of efficient solar selective-absorber coatings," says Notis.

The efficiency of a solar collector depends on its ability to absorb solar energy while minimizing infrared radiation loss. (Although a simple black-painted surface absorbs almost all incident light, it is not efficient as a solar collector because it reemits in the infrared wavelength range much of the collected solar energy.) Because no single material possesses the optimum optical properties, current commercially fabricated surfaces are complex combinations of materials. These surfacesare relatively expensive to produce. Notis says study of the microstructure of the *Shakudo* patina may "provide both fundamental insight and the development of more economical fabrication processes for selective-absorber materials." An additional bonus is the durability of *Shakudo* patinas, which have withstood centuries of use and exposure on Japanese sword hilts and other objects.

MORITOSHI SEIRYUKEN

Shinshinto Swordsmith

oshigata by Ron Hartmann

SUGATA - Katana of shinogi-zukuri form with koshizori of medium degree (16.5mm). Long and rather stout kissaki, medium narrow shinogi-ji with shinogi not raised, ihore mune set down low.

NAGASA - 71.8cm (2.37 shaku) cutting edge length. Nakago length measures 23.1cm (7.62 sun).

HAMON - Uniform gunome grouped in patterns of three and four grouped together. Pattern is medium wide with clear nioi line with crisp konie splashing into the ji of the blade. There are small spots of yō (nioi) within the hamon with nicely made ashi from the roots of the gunome. Several "jewels" of temper appear between the mounds of the pattern. The total hamon is very closely duplicated from one side of the blade to the other. The boshi is undulating midarekomi with a medium kaeri return. Some muneyaki appears in the upper portion of the blade on the ura side.

KITAE - Finely forged mokume hada throughout.

NAKAGO - Ubu (original), tapered with slight, almost no sori, low maru (rounded) mune with slanting left yasurimei. The nakago yasurimei are kiri (horizontal). The end of the nakago is cut in kata kezuri style, slightly modified from Moritoshi's normal later style.

MEI - (omote) IWAKUNI (town) YAMA FUMOTO (foot of the mountain) SEIRYUKEN (title) MORITOSHI (smith) TSUKURU KORE (pronounced kore tsukuru or "made this").

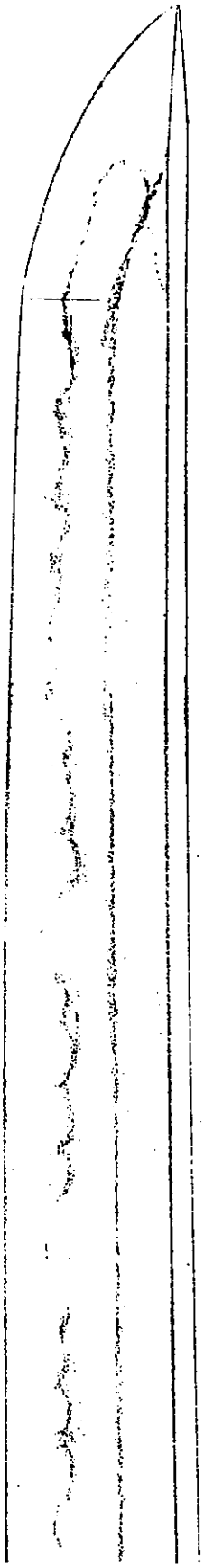
(ura) KEIO NI NEN (Keio period 2nd year - 1866)
HIYOYE TORA (zodiac year of the tiger)
HACHI GATSU HI (August, one day).

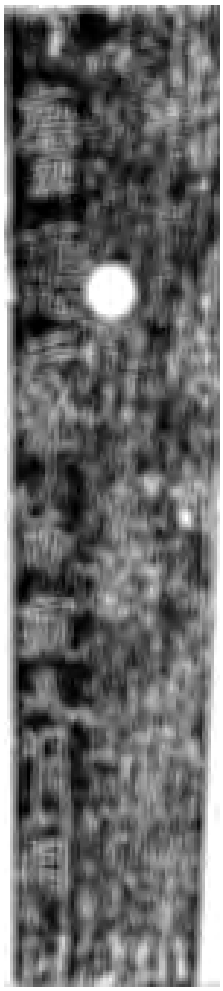
CLASSIFICATION - None (This blade has not been authenticated).

REMARKS -

Although shinshintō blades are not my most favorite period for study, this particular sword does impress me. Although not a "masterpiece" sword it is nevertheless a fine sword, well forged with a very well-proportioned masculine shape which speaks well for the eye of the smith. Moritoshi, rated only "chu saku" or "average" by Fujishiro, deserves recognition for this effort.

Shodia (first generation) Moritoshi was born Kyowa 2 (1802) and was named Iwamoto Seizaemon. The surname Iwamoto was given him in Tempo 5 (1834). He originally studied smithing under an armorsmith named Iwai Takesuke Rinto. Leaving Suwo Province, he





MORITOSHI SEIRYUKEN
Suwo Province - 1866

MORITOSHI cont'd.

traveled to Edo to study under the noted smith Chousai Tsunatoshi. Still later he went to study under Koyama Munetsugu in Kuwana of Ise Province. Moritoshi received the title "Seiryushi" and still later in life the title "Seiryuken", which is the one used on this sword. He worked finally in Iwakuni of Suwo Province and served under the Kikkawa Daimyo family of that area. He had an adopted son, Iwamoto Seiichi, who became nidai Moritoshi who worked from around the Genji era (1864). Nidai Moritoshi is known to assisted his father in forging swords late in his father's life. Shodai Moritoshi died in Keio 3 (1867) at the age of sixty-six.

Moritoshi's style differed somewhat from his first teacher Chousai Tsunatoshi in that Moritoshi worked in a more uniform gunome style. His file marks, although originally made in the slanting left fashion, went to horizontal and he did not use the full dress keisho yasurimei of Tsunatoshi. His nakago took the form of being cut off in kata kezuri fashion, more in the style of his later teacher Koyama Munetsugu. Tsunatoshi is known to be a great admirer of his student Moritoshi. Having recognized his character of being very straight-forward and consistant in his works, Tsunatoshi actually sent his son to study under Moritoshi. This is impressive since there were such great Bizen den smiths in Edo at that time such as Unjyu Korekazu.

Moritoshi used a number of sigantures such as the following ones:

Oshu Iwakuni ju Iwamoto Seizaemon Unji Moritoshi
Oshu Iwakuni ju Seiryuken Moritoshi kore tsukuru
Seiryushi Moritoshi
Oshu Iwakuni Han Seiryuken Moritoshi kore tsukuru
oite Toto Seiryushi Moritoshi
(the one on this illustrated blade)

REFERENCES -

An oshigata of a sword by Moritoshi, made on this same date, is illustrated in Nihonto Koza (revised), Vol.5, p.47.

Chousai Tsunatoshi: see Nihonto Newsletter, Vol.5, No.5, p.11.

Koyama Munetsugu: see Nihonto Newsletter, Vol.5, No.5, p.12.

Moritoshi: Nihonto Koza (revised), Vol.5, p.267; Fujishiro Nihonto Toko Jiten, Shintohen, p.464; Shinshinto Taikan (revised), p.622-624.

Many thanks to Albert Yamanaka and John Yumoto for translating and assisting in the research pertaining to this katana by Moritoshi.

THE QUESTION OF INSURANCE -

The question of insuring one's collection comes up from time to time and these questions are often directed to the Newsletter. With this in mind, a request was recently made to the Huntington T. Block Insurance Company of Washington, D.C. for some type of article pertaining to this topic. The following was sent in reply. It is a speech which was presented to the members of the American Crafts Museum, New York, New York, in October of this year. The speech was presented by Mr. Huntington T. Block, president of Huntington T. Block Insurance. Our thanks to Mr. Block for allowing us to reprint this material.

INSURING YOUR PRIVATE COLLECTION

You can insure your collectibles in a variety of ways, depending upon the size of your collection, the scope of the coverage you wish to have provided, and the amount of money you want to spend.

Your Homeowner's or Tenant's Policy provides a certain amount of insurance covering what these policies refer to as "unscheduled personal property". To an insurance underwriter that mean everything that's in your house or apartment, and the definition is broad enough to include collectibles. However, there are restrictions to the degree of coverage usually provided by these policies, and any claim you wish to make will only be insured if it results from certain named perils such as fire, lightning, windstorm, hail, explosion, riot, smoke, vandalism, theft, building collapse, and water damage resulting from an accidental discharge or overflow from a plumbing device. That leaves out insurance against breakage, mysterious disappearanced, damage caused by a pet, spilled paint or wine, to mention just a few of the perils that a collector is usually concerned about. Furthermore, coverage designed for clothing, and sofas, and television sets doesn't really lend itself to collectibles. Insurance adjusters who settle Homeowner's Policy claims tend to look for depreciation when, in fact, the kinds of objects collectors own are apt to appreciate in value. However, if your collection is still modest, and your insurance concern is limited strictly to fire and theft, you can probably get by with the coverage already provided by your existing Homeowner's or Tenant's Policy.

On the other hand, as your collection grows, it is customary to explore the coverage provided by a specific Fine Arts Policy, which can be purchased separately or as a specific endorsement to your Homeowner's or Tenant's Policy. The coverage under such a policy is a good deal broader, and usually includes "all risks of physical loss or damage" except for what is excluded. Therefore when you buy a Fine Arts Policy you look at the exclusions to learn what you are not covered for, whereas with the aforementioned Homeowner's or Tenant's Policy you refer to the list of "named perils" because that's all you are covered for. The exlusions in a Fine Arts Policy can generally be summarized as wear and tear, gradual deterioration, moths, vermin, inherent vice, and damage occurring while an object is actually being worked upon. Breakage is also excluded, but can and should be deleted for a small additional rate which is only applied to

fragile articles. When arranging a specific Fine Arts Policy, you can expect to be asked for an up-to-date appraisal or a current bill of sale for each object you wish to insure. The policy you buy will either include the appraisal list you have prepared, or will refer to the same list which will be kept "on file with the insurance company". Either way you should understand that if an object isn't on the list, it isn't insured. That means that each time you purchase a new object it should be reported to your insurer, and you usually can count on a 30 day automatic coverage for newly acquired objects in order to allow you ample time to send or call in the new information. It is very important to update your values from time to time because the insurance company is not going to pay you more than the amount set opposite each object on your appraisal list. It is interesting to note that if you compare the actual rate you pay to insure unscheduled personal property on a Homeowner's Policy with that which you pay to insure scheduled personal property on a Fine Arts Policy you usually find you are paying less for the broader coverage provided by the Fine Arts Policy. It is also important to remind collectors that what's in their houses is very often more valuable than the house itself, which makes less than desirable Homeowner's Policies with their coverage on unscheduled personal property limted to 50% of the insurance on the house.

As good collections become great collections, and values reach seven figures, still another insurance option presents itself. Insurers are now offering major collectors the opportunity to insure their objects on a blanket basis, very much same way museums insure their collections. Blanket insurance allows the collector to buy a flat amount of insurance, perhaps at a loss limit of something less than the total value of his collection, and yet be insured in full for every object in his collection up to the limit of insurance he selects. Furthermore, his claim is paid on the basis of the current market value of the object(s) as of the day of loss. This means that a collector with a $3,000,000 to $5,000,000 collection, and with object well distributed throughout his very secure and well constructed house, could make the decision that only half his collection could be destroyed in any one catastrophe, and therefore decide to buy insurance at a limit equal to half the value of his collection. Major collectors are obtaining better coverage and saving substantial insurance premiums by adopting this method of insurance.

It is valuable for a collector to know what an insurance underwriter looks for when he determines whether or not he will accept a Fine Arts Insurance Policy. He wants to know something about the house in which the collection is kept, whether it is brick or frame, how far it is from a fire hydrant, how close the nearest fire station is to the house, and whether it's a regularly manned station or a volunteer station. He'll want to know something about your loss history, and he'll be particularly interested in the kinds of locks you have on your doors and windows, and if you have electronic security for both fire and burglary, a virtual necessity once your values exceed $200,000. He'll want to know

what arrangements, if any, you make when you leave your house for a long trip. Do you engage a housesitter? Do you have live-in servants? Does someone look in periodically? He'll also want to know if you keep part of your collection in storage and, if so, something about the security at the storage facility. Some tips on safety are attached hereto.

As a private collector you may be asked to loan your objects from time to time. If that is indeed the case, it is the general rule that the borrower is expecte to insure. If a museum is doing the borrowing, it will usually provide a Loan Receipt which contains a request for the insurance value. Be certain that the figure you put in the Loan Reciept for insurance is accurate, because that is all you can expect to receive if a loss occurs.

Even the most careful collector sometimes sustains an insurance loss. It is always helpful to ask your insurance agent or company to assign an adjuster who has some knowledge of the value of collectibles. A claims adjuster who is unsophisticated in these matters will only complicate the settlement for both you and the insurance company. Remember that if an object is badly damaged, but still repairable, it may have sustained depreciation in value, and the degree of that depreciation is a legitimate part of your insurance claim. If an object is stolen, and it is an object of some quality, a photograph of the object is invaluable to law enforcement officials and to organizations like the Art Dealers Association of America who circulate descriptions and photographs of significant stolen art. Finally, when a loss occurs, do what any prudent person would in order to prevent further damage - the insurance adjuster doesn't need to see the damage exactly as it happened. He expects you to tidy up.

Some collectors forego insurance altogether, and if you have only so much to spend, it is far better to put your money into safety and security than it is to buy insurance. Insurance dollars don't replace unique objects that may be lost or damaged forever. Insurance dollars do enable you to rebuild a collection, and that can indeed be important. Furthermore, some collectors forego insurance and expect to take a tax loss if an object is damaged or stolen. They should realize that Uncle Sam will only recognize for tax purposes the original cost or the value at the time of loss, whichever is lower. That makes insurance attractive to the shrewd collector who made many of his purchases before values started to increase so rapidly. Finally, if you do have an insured loss, remember that Uncle Sam requires you to use your insurance proceeds to replace your loss with object of like kind and quality. Otherwise you have to pay capital gains.

You can see that there is a lot to be aware of even with regard to such a simple concept as insurance. However, a knowledgable agent or broker will usually give you good advice, and you can generally find one who has some knowledge of collectibles if you ask around.

Thank you.

THE GEORGE WALTER VINCENT SMITH ART MUSEUM OF SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

A report by Craig Bird

Having had the occasion to pass through Springfield, Massachusetts twice in the last month, I took the opportunity to examine the collection of orientalia at the George Walter Vincent Smith Art Museum. The collection consists of swords, armor, kodogu, koshirae, tanegashima, yari, naginata, inrō, netsuke, Imari and Satsuma ware, lacquer ware and much, much more.

It is necessary to preface this account of Nihontō related collection by quoting from the museums brochure of Japanese bronzes; "Because he (Mr. Smith) was buying Japanese art at a time when few scholarly guides were available, Smith inevitably acquired some works of lesser quality and questionable authenticity while building his impressive collection of oriental art." Where as this is immediately recognizable in such examples as the two Sanjō Munechika wakizashi, Amakuni yari and Kaneiye tsuba. The collection is all displayed in full polish, and for the most part, adequate light. The major drawback to the collection is that the entire collection has the various nakago either covered by shirazaya tsuka or by mounted tsuka and several of the attributions and labels are somewhat questionable.

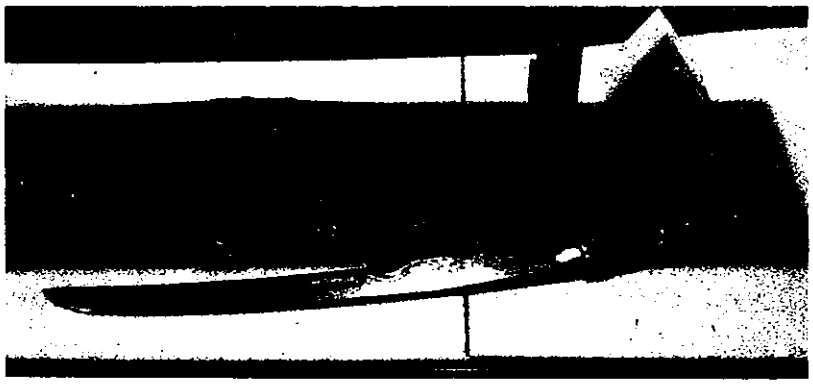
The collection of Nihontō is comprised of approximately thirty blades in shirazaya and twenty to twenty-five in full mountings. Among the blades in shirazaya were such items as a tachi attributed to Nobukuni which was in Nambōkuchō style with stylized horimono typical of that school, a Tadatsuna style katana with nice dragon horimono, a shinshintō style katana signed Kanemoto, Mino style sword in sanbon-ha attributed to Kanemoto. Next came a series of wakizashi in shirazaya; a Muramasa shinogi-zukuri wakizashi in hitatsura-ha, an unlabeled wakizashi with early Muromachi shape which appeared to be Gassan school with ayasuji-hada, a Yoshimichi wakizashi in sudare-ba, a Sukehiro, and a Sadamune wakizashi in hitatsura hamon.

The following wakizashi and tantō in hira-tsukuri; a blade (ko-wakizashi) attributed to Sanjō Munechika with gomabashi and outstanding and complex hada, a Genroku era Hiroyoshi O-wakizashi in suguha with a lengthy kanji poem horimono, an Umetada tsyle wakizashi in sugu-gunome-ha with a dragon underneath a waterfall horimono (this blade did not have a boshi), a Kanbun era Kanenori with a nice stylized floral horimono, a Getsusan (?), a Masanao attributed to Soshu-den, and a Masanori dated 1540.

By far the most impressive blade was the Gassan Sadakazu katana with longish chu-gissaki, sugu-notare-ha with ko-gunome and briliant nioi, mounted in a brownish-gold lacquered shirazaya with gold lacquer attribution to Gassan Sadakazu.

MUSEUM cont'd.

Among the mounted blades was an Edo mounted daishō with saddles wrapped around bare wood tsuka, an Edo mounted ito-maki tachi, numerous silver mounted tantō and wakizashi and a nicely mounted tanto attributed to Ujifusa with yahazu-ha in hira-zukuri.



There were several really exquisite examples among the mounted blades. The first being a daisho in mounts made to simulate bamboo stalks, another daisho was mounted in saya with large and boldly carved dragon kojiri wrapping itself around the saya with complex fuchi-kashira to match. A nice O-tantō mounted in fittings depicting Nōh masks in the form of a tengu kurikata, an oni of shakudo which served as koi-guchi and fuchi along with mask menuki. One of the nicest mounts was a black lacquered katana with all en-suite Goto style mounts which was very dignified and appealing.

MUSEUM cont'd.

Aside from Nihontō there were three nice sukashi yanoe signed Umetada Motoshige saku, with interesting horimono, a number of su-yari and magari-yari, several naginata including a nagamaki style blade with naginata ridges. Among the other polearms were sode-garami and other police weapons. There were about six tanegashima and a large wall gun, several abumi sets and saddles, a yumi and yanoe to match and an exquisite Myochin style okimono of a lobster.

The armor was as well arranged and presented as the swords, with all sides visible. There were six suits of armor ranging from late Muromachi jidai to late Edo in several styles. Also in the armor department was an early Edo somen, a yoroi kabuto from the Edo period, a nice russet iron do, an unkai (?) style kabuto hachi and other miscellaneous pieces of armor.

Included in the collection of metal work are two cases of tsuba comprised of at least 150 well preserved and displayed pieces. The tsuba are of such schools and styles as; Canton, Namban, two Hizen tsuba signed Hishu (no) ju Mitsuhiro, Kaneiye, sukashi works, tosho and katchushi tsuba, kō kinko, later kinko, Goto, Soten and many others. To finish the fittings catagory is a display of some thirty-five kodzuka, all average to above average pieces, representing a nice overall assemblage of kodzuka.

The collection at the George Walter Vincent Smith Museum represents one of average to superior quality which with the proper attitude and attention can teach both the beginner and the advanced collecter alike. The collection deserves to be visited when in the Springfield area. The address of the museum is: 222 State Street, and the hours are Wednesday through Sunday, noon to 5:00 P.M., Tuesday noon until 9:00 P.M., and the museum is closed on Mondays. The museum will provide a good insight into the possessions of the Samurai as weapons and as art.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT AUCTION HOUSES -

Auctions dealing with sword related material are very hard to conduct primarily due to a lack of expertise for cataloguing. This difficulty is reflected by the lack of such auctions except on rare occassions.

In an effort to fill this void for the collector, Bob Haynes has established Robert E. Haynes, Ltd. and Andy Quirt along with Bob Coleman have ventured into Coleman & Quirt, Ltd.,Inc. Haynes, Ltd. will deal primarily in kodogu whereas Coleman & Quirt, Ltd., Inc. will deal with swords and other related items (excluding kodogu). By specializing in their specific area of expertise these gentlemen hope to present the collector with not only fine items at auction, but with thorough and accurately described catalogues. These catalogue will continue to be useful after auction as reference works. The road to success is rough and we as collectors should assist these houses in their efforts by subscribing to their catalogues.

BUY-SELL-TRADE ITEMS -

This section of the Newsletter is offered as a FREE service to the membership, providing an opportunity to advertise for specific needs or to announce specific items available for sale or trade. Ads should be kept brief and not too elaborate. Business ads not allowed. Direct all ad copy to the Newsletter.

- WANTED - Katana signed: KANEMICHI IZUMI or TANGO. Contact: William D. Kerwin,

- WANTED - Tachi stand. Contact: Ken Barnes,

- WANTED - Tōshō and katchushi tsuba. Will trade fine sukashi, Higo, kinko, etc., tsuba for same. Send oshigata. Contact: Arnold Frenzel

- WANTED - Menuki, high quality of shakudo and rich gold, Goto design.depicting

"leaves and grain head". Must be of good, crisp color and quality. Trade quality menuki, tsuba for this pair. Also want shakudo menuki, Momoyama period menuki. Contact: Ron Hartmann,

- FOR SALE - Small collection of fine quality swords and tsuba, mostly signed shintō pieces, many with papers. Send $1.00 for complete descriptions, oshigata. An opportunity for collectors to get some good pieces! Contact: John White,

- FOR SALE - Unusual Japanese armor. Complete suit - kabiki laced tachi-do and sode - matching mons on do, haidate and tatami kabuto. Good condition. $2,100 Two hoshi-suji kabuto. Momoyama, Haruta signed pc., magnificent late Edo Myochi in Muromachi style. (price missed). One red lacquered mempo. $475. One Somen. $800. Contact: Roger Dunn,

- FOR SALE - One copy Dr. Homma's book, Masamune Toso no Ichimon (1961). Price: $400. Contact: John Mang, Jr.,

BUY-SELL-TRADE cont'd.

- FOR SALE - Katana, 29-15/16", signed: FUJI EDATARO TERUYOSHI SAKU KORE. Yoshikawa "Shusaku II (80 pts.) papers. One of the top rated swords from 1979 shinsa at Chicago. Shirazaya. Price: $5,000, will consider tsuba in trade. Copy of papers and photograph on contacting: Phillip Davis,

- FOR SALE - Mumei katana, WP Seki Kaneyoshi - $1,500; tachi Satsuma Yukiyasu - $2,800; katana, Suwo Moritoshi - $2,800; mumei katana, probably Bungo, shintō, - $750; wakizashi, Bushu ju Kanetsune, rare form, needs polish - $375. Write for oshigata/details. Will also have new list of kodogu in two weeks. Contact: Ron Hartmann,

- FOR SALE - Katana, 31.4", good polish, fist-type choji midare with activities, itame-masame, bo-hi w/soe-hi, old shirazaya, ubu, signed: SAKUSHU KATSUYAMA SHIN KINUTA NOBUSHIGE, dated Kei-o 9, 5th month. Price: $3,500. Chiisa katana, 23.8", good polish, notare w/nijuba, itame-mokume, kanbun shape, ubu, signed: YAMASHIRO DAIJO MINAMOTO KUNISHIGE, NBTHK WP (Newport Beach). $1,850.
Contact: Tim O'Neal,

- FOR SALE - NIHONTO TAIKAN, complete set of seven volumes. Extremely difficult to find, the ultimate set of reference books. Price: $4,000. Will consider half in trade goods. Contact: Charles G. Ross

- FOR SALE - Katana, 27", excellent polish, shirazaya, signed: SOSHU JU ISE DAIJO TSUNAHIRO (5th generation - Hawley #TSU-257). Contact: Alan McKelvy,

(also swords/fittings displayed, Tenshi Budokan,)

- FOR SALE - Wakizashi, 21-1/8", good polish, suguba, signed: HARIMA (no) KAMI F/W TADAKUNI, 2nd gen. $2,200; Wakizashi, 20-3/8", good polish, suguba, signed: OMI DAIJO F/W TADAHIRO, 2nd generation. $2,200; Wakizashi, 18", good polish, excellent condition and fittings, Mount Fuji hamon. Price: $2,200. Contact: Walter Krupski

- FOR SALE - Variety of swords, all periods, ito maki no tachi, complete, shinshinto 1 27½", $1,250. For complete list contact: Bill Harling,

BUY-SELL-TRADE cont'd.

- FOR SALE - Armor, two suits, full sets, SASE for photos; Bird head tachi, Tokugawa mon, excellent condition; several mempo/kabuto; Gendaitō presentation piece, (62) character mei; katana by IGA (no) KAMI F/W KINMICHI; Other miscellaneous. Contact: Ray (Ed) Hicks,

- FOR SALE - Armor, black lacquer with gold trim, good Nara mempo w/mustache, 32-plate sugi kabuto, w/mons. Very good condition, beautiful display suit. Contact: Ray Deadman,

- FOR SALE - Purple shirazaya bags, all sizes, $10/$8.50/$7; silk koshirae bags, $50/$40/$35. Contact: Frank

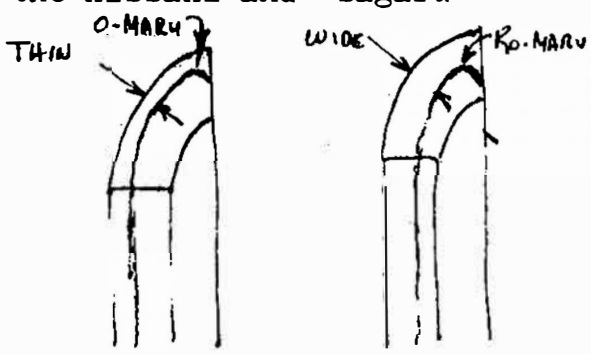
- FOR TRADE - Wakizashi, kotō, shinogi-zukuri, tachi-mei to: SANEMORI or NAOMORI, flaws, saya. If you have even a slight interest in this blade and something you would trade, then contact: S. Frankfort,

- WANTED - Kabuto, mempo, armors, books on armor, Sasama's 3-volume set on kabuto. Contact: Ed Hicks

KYO-BOSHI V/S EDO BOSHI -

The confusion resulting from the discussion of boshi made in Kyoto v/s Edo style, Newsletter Vol. 14, No.5, p.14, has been clarified by Albert Yamanaka. Albert writes:

Kyoto boshi is made high (close to tip) on kissaki and in O-maru or large rounded return, resulting in a rather thin hamon or boshi in the kissaki. The Edo style boshi is the opposite being made low (farther from the tip) on the kissaki and in ko-maru or small rounded return, resulting is a rather wide hamon or boshi in the kissaki. The illustrations show this. The terms used mean: "agai" - raised high up on the kissaki and "sagaru" - set low down on the kissaki. Actually, these terms are not commonly used, thus the confusion. With this clarification in mind, please reread the last issue article and this distinction will now become clear.



Kyo-boshi Edo boshi

RYŌKAI TACHI

OSHIGATA BY RON HARTMANN

SUGATA - Suriage tachi of shinogi-zukuri form with strong koshi-zori (2.35 cm), greatly tapering with fumbari ending with a ko-gissaki. The shinogi is slightly raised and the shinogi-ji rather narrow. The ihore mune is set down low. There is bo hi on each side of the blade which extends up past the yokote and ends in a rounded, pointed end. The bottom of the hi extends into the nakago area and ends square.

NAGASA - 72.6 cm (2.4 shaku) cutting edge length. Nakago is 21.0 cm (6.9 sun) in length.

KITAE - Mokume hada mixed with some running grain. The overall hada is very well forged and shows up bright and clear.

HAMON - The hamon is basically suguha with slight variations. There is some ko-nie along the yakiba but generally, the hamon does not show a great deal of activity and appears rather quiet in nature. The boshi is a continuation of the hamon and sweeps up in yakizume form without a kaeri or turn-back. Nioi line shows bright.

NAKAGO - The nakago has been shortened and possibly reshaped resulting in it having no sori. There is possibly some trace of a mei but if so, it is unreadable and the blade is listed as mumei.

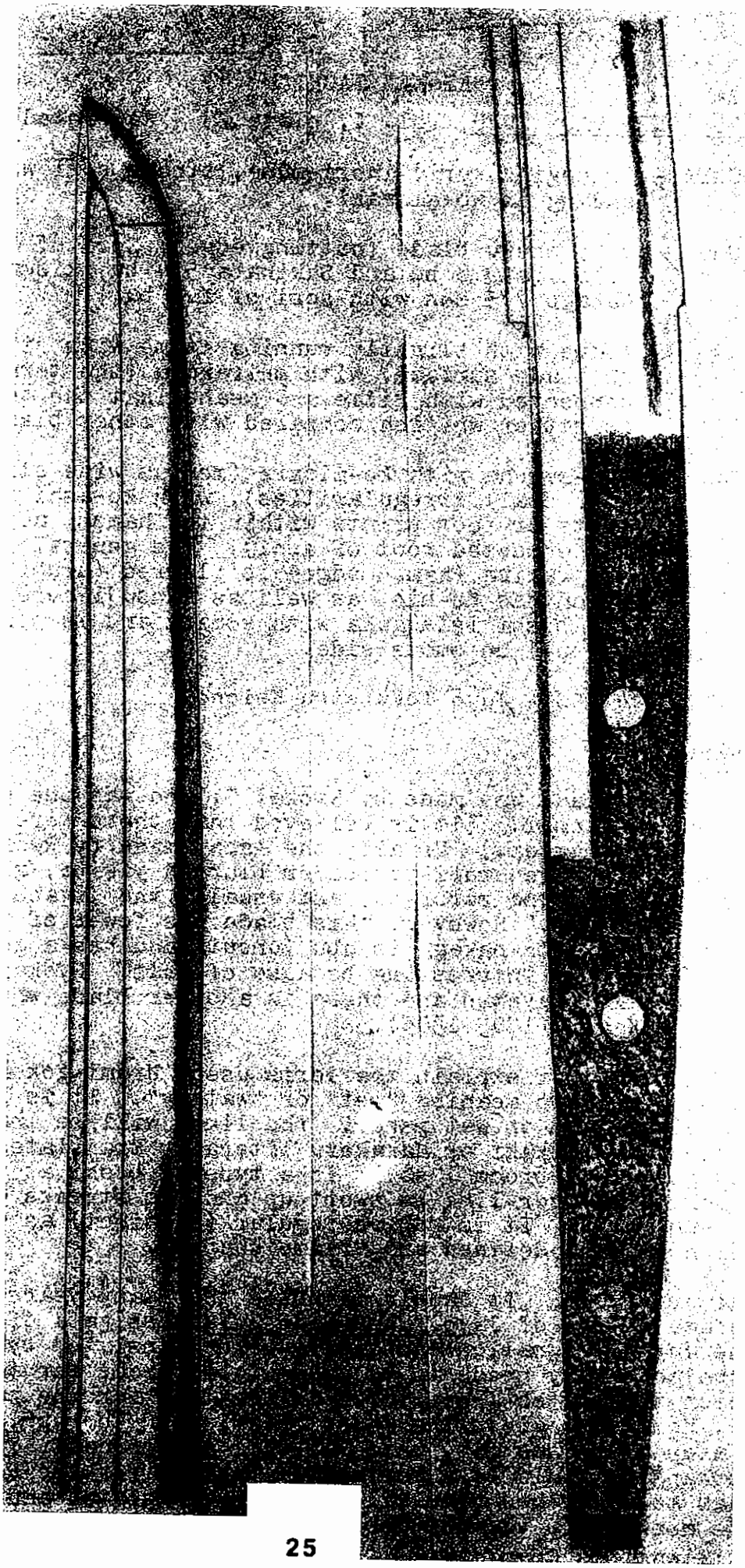
CLASSIFICATION - The blade has green papers (Tokubetsu Keicho) from N.B.T.H.K. dated Showa 53 (November). The origami simply state "Ryōkai".

REMARKS:

Ryōkai is discussed in Nihonto Newsletter, Vol. 1, No.11, page 12. The texts list Ryōkai as having been either a son or student of Rai Kunitoshi, Rai school of Yamashiro province. He worked in both Yamashiro tradition and Bizen tradition during the Einin Era (1293-1298).

This particular sword is from the Dave Pepin collection and was loaned to the Newsletter for this article. The great beauty of this tachi is its grand shape. The deep sori with fumbari and ko-gissaki will impress the holder as a sword of great form. The elegant shape certainly reflects the grandeur of the time. It is interesting that this sword's shape greatly influenced the kantei of a new-found sword, presently being polished and submitted for shinsa. This shape was copied in other times and it will be interesting to see if shinsa proves it to be another Ryōkai or something totally different.

Many thanks to Dave Pepin for his trust in loaning this beautiful tachi for oshigata and examination.



RYŌKAI TACHI
Ca. late 1200s

RYŌKAI TACHI

JŪYŌ TŌKEN NADO ZUFU, Vol. 1, plate #3 - Reprinted by permission

SUGATA - Shinogi-zukuri, ihori-mune, strong sori with fumbari ending in ko-gissaki.

NAGASA - 2.65 shaku blade (cutting edge), Sori of 1.0 sun plus, Motohaba 9.8 bu and Sakihaba 5.4 bu, kissaki 7.2 bu. Nakago 7.5 sun with sori of 1.5 bu.

KITAE - Itame with slightly running itame with ji-nie (nie grains on blade surface) with shirakeru (the term is usually connected with kitae and means that the color of the steel is rather whitish compared with other blades).

HAMON - Chu-suguha with ko-midare (medium wide straight pattern with small irregularities), with ko-ashi and yo (like spots or foot prints within the hamon, actually the disconnected root of ashi). The general impression of the yakiba (hamon edge) is blurred (urumi-gokoro). The hamon has ko-nie, as well as kinsuji here and there. The boshi is suguha with komaru and is slightly hakikaki (swept) on omote side.

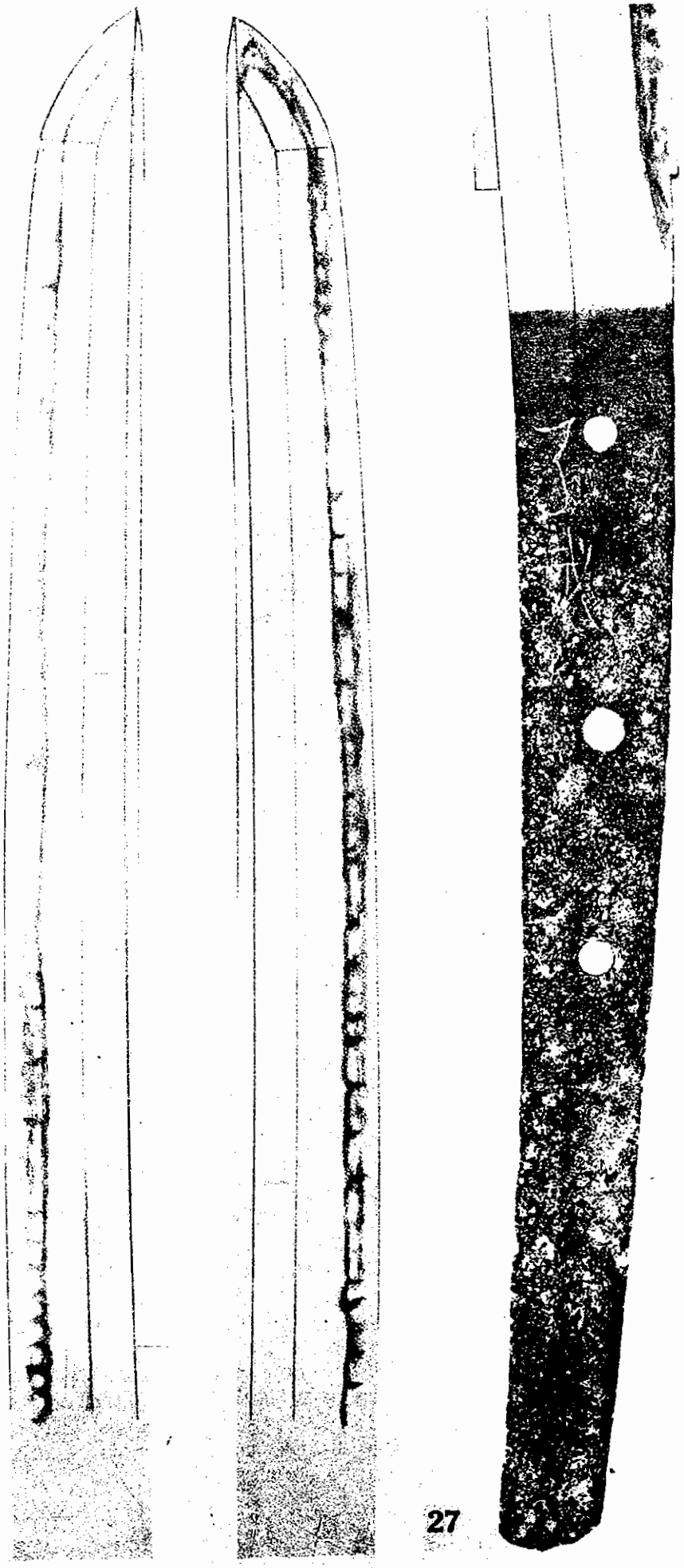
CLASSIFICATION - Jūyō Tokubetsu Keicho

REMARKS:

This blade was made by Ryōkai I, who was one of the students of Rai Kunitoshi. (It is believed that there were several Ryōkai after this master.) Usually the tachi made by Ryōkai have a tendency to have urumi-yakiba or blurred yakiba, giving the appearance of being reforged, and usually the jigane is also weak and indistinct. However, this blade has fewer of these defects. Furthermore, its nakago is ubu (uncut) and has a good signature and it is very interesting because of this. Ryōkai's common name was Kurozayemon and there is another blade which bears the date of Kagen (1303-1305).

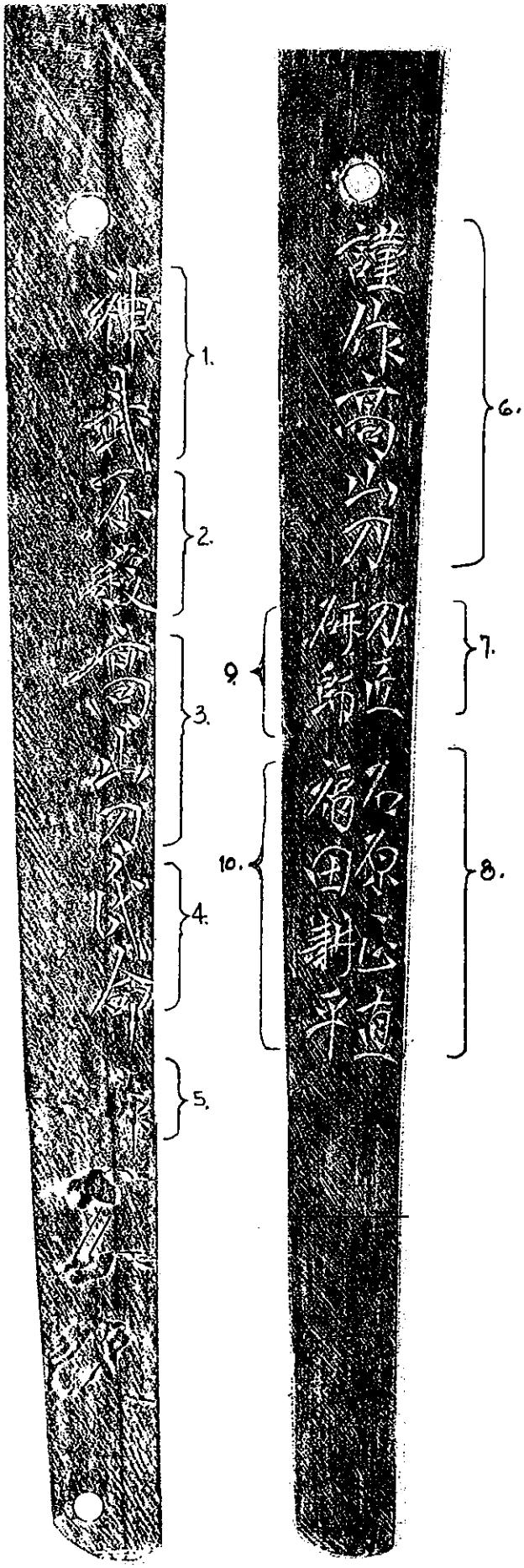
To further explain the terms used, Urumi-gokoro literally translates into meaning "wet" or "watery". It is like writing with a pen on wet paper. The lines will be indistinct and blurred. Hakikaki or Hakakeru literally translates to meaning "swept with a broom", so it is a type of boshi at the tip of which the temper-line is swept up and has streaks of ko-nie or sunagashi. It is not as regular (distinct) as the kaen, which is more defined and "flame shaped".

Editor's note: It should be noted that many years ago the first volume or two of Juyo Token Nado Zufu, oshigata of swords awarded the Juyo designation each year, were translated by John Yumoto. John certainly needs to be given full credit for this project which translates a wealth of information for the sword student. Dr. Homma has given the JSS/US permission to reprint these plates as we see fit, which is done periodically in the journal. Perhaps it would be a worthwhile venture for the Society to see that more of these annual books are translated and presented to the membership via our publications. A project of the future Publications Committee?



RYŌ
KAI (I)

amashiro
1288



During the past year or two several questions have come into the Newsletter with regards to WW2 swords manufactured in prisons. Although these swords are not "art swords" they are of interest to a number of the members simply because they are a piece of recent history. It seems that the Japanese army did make swords at prison locations and did utilize the prison labor, most likely as hammermen and other manual labor jobs. Two such swords are illustrated at the left. Albert Yamanaka translated these inscriptions as follows:

(1) - "Jimmu" refers to the very first legendary emperor of Japan.
(2) - "fusatsu" means "unable to die".
(3) - "Takayama" is a place in Hida province, near Kaga and Echizen, apparently the site of a prison. So marked swords are usually considered made by prisoners.
(4) - "Ujinobu" is the swordsmith.
(5) - "saku" is of course "made by".

(6) - "Kin saku Takayama tō", respectfully made Takayama sword.
(7) - "Tōshō" or swordsmith
(8) - "Ishihara Masanao",smith's name.
(9) - "Togishi" or polisher
(10)- "Fukuda Kohei", polisher's name.

In the latest Programme #115 of the Token Society of Great Britain, yet another "Takayama tō" is discussed. It is signed: "Takayama tō Tanrensho Oite Ujifusa kore (wo) tsukure" and further states "Yasuki Tetsu (wo) Motte kore (wo) saku". Han Bing Siong clarified the term "**Yasuki tetsu**" which refers to iron made from a district which has large deposits of this type of ore. This district is presently the location of the NBTHK Tatari Furnace Project which continues to utilize this sand iron deposit.

Just a little bit of recent history pertaining to the modern day sword. Sword #1 belongs to a St.Louis antique dealer, Mr. Gene Kelley, and sword #2 belongs to member Robert Hritz. We thank them for the oshigata used in this article.

ALBUQUERQUE SHINSA NEWS -

Mr. Ron Shibata has asked that the following information be distributed to our membership. You are urged to read it over and then respond to it by returning the questionaire which was supplied with the Newsletter Vol. 14 No. 4 (July-August 1982). If this questionaire is not available, simply write Ron Shibata and let known your plans for attending, number of items you intend to send through shinsa, etc. The success of this shinsa depends on numbers....a certain number of people must attend and a certain number of items need to be promised for shinsa.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO ☐ ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87131

DIVISION OF CONTINUING EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES ☐ TELEPHONE 505-277-2931

Dear Collector of Japanese Swords and Sword Fittings:

Although our original plans have been changed somewhat, The University of New Mexico, subject to a favorable response from collectors and students of the Japanese Sword , will host Shinsa 1983 on July 14, 15, &16, 1983 in Albuquerque. This Shinsa will be a departure from previous Shinsas in that if a blade or fitting is judged to be a forgery, an attempt will be made to establish an era and possible maker of the piece. This Shinsa should be of value to the collector and serious student of the Japanese Sword.

JUDGES

Dr. Fukunaga Suiken

Dr Fukunaga is a former Assistant Professor at Kumamoto University. He is also the Chief Resident at Johnson Air Force Base. Dr Fukunaga was the editor of Token To Rekishi the official publication of TOKEN HOZEN KAI. He is also a member of the board of Shinsa for TOKEN HOZEN KAI. Dr Fukunaga was a lecturer for the TOENSHA Sword Study Group. He has visited the United States twice as a judge for a sword shinsa.

Dr. Fukunaga has authored the following books: Zuroku Satsuma No Katana To Tsuba, Nihonto Monogatari, Hizen No Katana To Tsuba, Showa Token Meibutsu,Cho (Compiled for the late Mr. Murakami Kosuke) Nihonto No Kantei To Kenma(revised for the late Mr. Omura Kunitaro), Hyuga No Katana To Tsuba and Katana No Gimei.

Mr. Shibata Mitsuo

Mr.Shibata worked under the late Mr. Fujishiro Yoshio, the author of Fujishiro Tokojiten. After World War II, he started his own sword shop which is now believed to be the largest in Japan. He has been working as a judge for the N.B.T.H.K. for many years and has served as an official for many sword related organizations. Mr. Shibata is considered to be one of the best of judges for Japanese swords and sword fittings.

Mr. Shibata is the author of the following books:

Shumi No Nihonto	(Nihonto as Hobby)
Nihonto Nyumon	(Introduction to Nihonto)
Wakizashi No Miryoku	(The Charm of Wakizashi)
Shinshinto Nyumon	(Introduction to Shinshinto)
Kogatana Zukan	(Pictorial Book of Kogatana)
Nihonto Benran	(Handbook of Nihonto)

He has also authored a monthly publication - Rei since 1966.

Mr. John M. Yumoto

Mr. Yumoto is the author of the book Samurai Sword Handbook published in 1958 by Charles E. Tuttle Co.. He has studied swords since early childhood including hands on study of blades of the highest quality. Mr. Yumoto has studied under various sword experts and is proficient in the appraisal of blades and sword polishing work. He has also studied the basics of metal work.

Mr. Yumoto has originated many sword study groups and associations in the United States. He is an honorary member of the Japanese Sword Society of the United States, The Northern California Japanese Sword Club, and the Southeastern Japanese Sword Study Group. Mr. Yumoto is a member of various Japan based sword societies and has served as an official with some of them. He has carried out six(6) Japanese Sword Study Tours of Japan.

Mr. Yumoto, for the benefit of the American collector translated many Japanese reference books into English. Some of the titles are Juyo Token Nado Zufu Vol. I& II , Arami Meizukushi as well as a translation in progress of Kinko Meikan and Kanzan Oshigata. He is a Professor Emeritus of Japanese Language at the Army Language School in Monterey, California.

Mr Yumoto is working with The University of New Mexico in arranging and setting up Shinsa "83" and its allied lectures.

Many of you are no doubt curious about the grades of paper to be issued should Shinsa 1983 be held on July 14, 15 & 16, 1983.

The color scheme which many of us have become accustomed to (White, Green, etc.) has been dropped. The certificate will be printed on one color of paper. However, each piece will be graded according to the following categories:

Mediocre, fair, good, very good, excellent

Each certificate, regardless of final grade will carry the same price of $40.00 Pressure sensitive chart paper will be used to make oshigata of nakagos. A polaroid camera will be used to provide kodogu documentation.

For those of you who have not responded to our original inquiry, please respond immediately as the number of responses received thus far are not enough to make Shinsa "1983" a reality. A copy of our original inquiry is attached for your information.

A TOKEN OF APPRECIATION

by Steven Frankfort

Late last year I heard that there was a tantō at the British Columbia Provincial Museum (BCPM) in Victoria, B.C. Canada. After contacting Mr. Robert Paterson of the BCPM arrangements were made and the date set for me to go view this work. Travelling with Mr. Lee Fields to Victoria aboard the cruise ship, "Princess Margaurite", we arrived in Victoria about noon for the day. The ship departs around 4:00 P.M. which gave us around three hours at the BCPM. I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to Mr. Paterson and to the BCPM for allowing me to research this artifact. Thanks also to Lee Fields for assisting me with the notes.

This tantō was apparently a gift from the officers of the Imperial Japanese Navy stationed at the Kasumi-ga Ura Naval Air Training Station. The tantō was given by these men to a Mr. Cecil Meares who had been assisting them with training in advance of the British Air Mission. There is a document in the British Columbia Provincial Archives signed by the Commander of this base. The letter is signed Rear Admiral T. Tajiri as well as the other officers and states in part that out of their appreciation for his service and to commemorate his return to England they would like to present him with this token of friendship. The document is dated 17th November 1921.

The tantō is enclosed in a kiri wood box with an inscription on both the outside and the inside of the cover. The outside states, "Respectfully presented by Rear Admiral Tajiri, and the date and place." The inside inscription stating details of the blade and of the fittings. Of course, the tantō is further encased in a pretty brocade bag. Upon removing the tantō from its bag one gets the impression that there is a special feeling to it. This feeling may be attributed to both the fine koshirae and to its place as a personal gift of friendship and respect.

The following is a brief description of the blade and following that, of the koshirae.

TYPE: tantō PROVINCE: Mino/Seki

JIDAI: Shinto SUGATA: Hirazukuri with ihore mune.

LENGTH: 11½" KASANE: 3/16" SORI: 2.5mm

HAMON: Gunome/notare with some sunagashi, yo and utsuri.

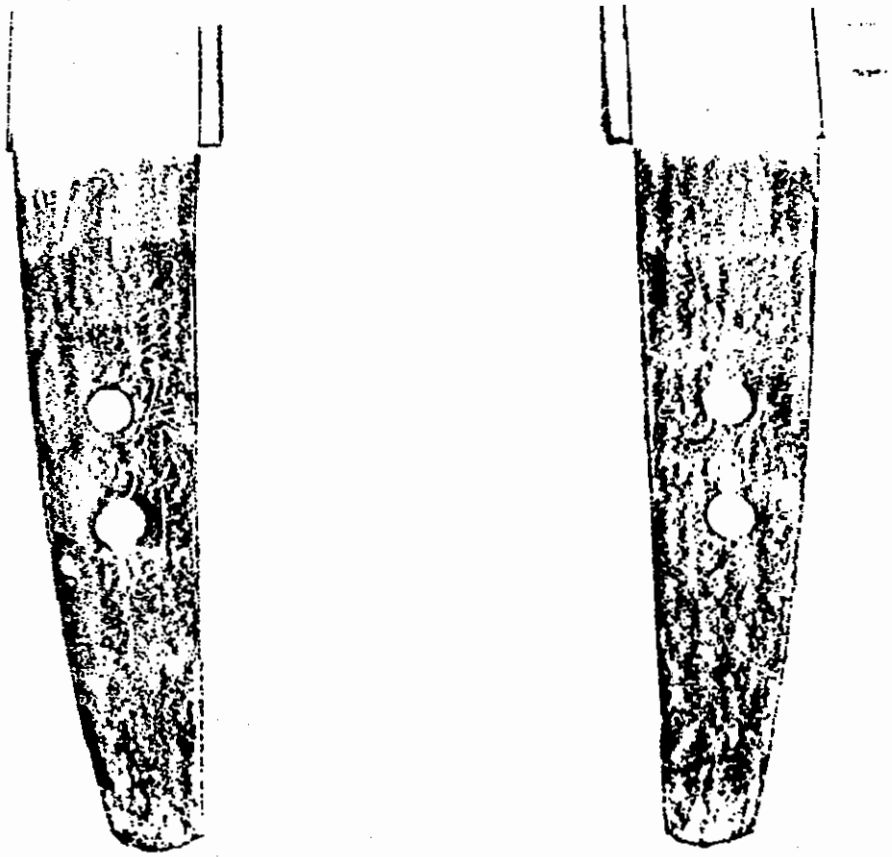
BOSHI: Tsuki-age on both sides with traces of sunagashi.

JIHADA: Tight masame with some larger itame towards the mune.

NAKAGO: Ubu, kuri-jiri, yasuri-mei are higaki, two mekugi-ana.
Omote-mei: Kaneharu saku.

APPRECIATION cont'd.

COMMENTS: This blade would seem to date from early shinto times and belong in the Mino/Seki school. The blade is very clean and in good condition. There are no major flaws and the mei is well spaced and cleanly cut.



KOSHIRAE: Tantō size tsuka with unusual black baleen tsuka-ito and medium grain same'.

MENUKI: The pair being three sea shells clustered together. A clam shell in shibuichi next to a univalve in black shakudo with gold barnacles clinging to it, and a gold oyster shell. They are secured between the ito with two braided bands of the same ito. While this seems mostly decorative it is functional and the menuki are stable. (1)

FUCHI/KASHIRA: The fuchi of dark gray shibuichi having an ishime-ji and overlaid with two fish. A carp seen from the side with gold inlaid eye and well carved details. The other fish seem ventrally in silvery shibuichi with the gills inlaid in red copper and also having well carved details. Both against gold leaves and the one carp almost three dimensional. Signed on the tenjo-gane, HITOTSUNE and SUI-RYU-EI. The kanji being bold, even and well cut.

APPRECIATION cont'd.

KASHIRA: The kashira also of dark gray shibuichi with the same ishimi-ji and overlaid with a single blowfish complete with silver puffed-out belly and tiny gold inlaid eye. The blowfish has well carved details in the same style as the fuchi and it is also resting against gold leaves.

TSUBA: The tsuba made of rogin shibuichi and of slight oblong mokko form. Well shaped with relief carved and engraved waves gently crashing against the rocks with a few gold dots of spray. The waves continuing over the mimi to meet themselves. There is only the kodzuka-ana and the seppa-dai is recessed. Signed on the face, SEKIENSHI HOGAN YASUCHIKA and on the reverse, EDO NO TOMIURA. Another interesting feature of this tsuba is on the reverse. In the lower right corner is a small gold inlaid gourd shaped cartouche with two gold inlaid kanji inside reading, SHOMYO HOGAN.(2)

KODZUKA: The jiita of shakudo with fine nanako-ji and overlaid with a small spiral univalve and sea-urchin in gold on a bed of bladder-wrack in black shakudo. In a gold frame and signed on the blade, KANETSUNE. (3) This blade bearing a slight yet visible hamon.

SAYA: The saya of beautiful ro-iro and having several shells in lacquer; a pretty gold nashiji clam shell next to a real and tiny snal shell which is covered by a clear lacquer. On the other side is a larger snail shell in gold lacquer with a gray shibuichi center and close by this a large gold nashiji oyster shell with abalone shell insert. Around this are two other small shells; one a real snail shell similar to the above and the other a fine gold nashiji scallop shell. The fittings for the saya are en suite with the tsuka and are of shibuichi and of marine life. The kuri-gata is a modelled octopus wrapping his tentacles around himself and with two large gold eyes with black centers. The octopus seems to be staring outwardly from his raised position. The purple green and white sageo pass through two gold inserts. The octopus signed in very small kanji, HITOTSUNE. The interesting and beautifully worked kojiri is of gray shibuichi and in the form of a large crayfish. His skillfully carved bent back covering the saya jiri. The legs clinging to both sides and rendered in excellent detail and having the feelers extending upwardly as tho trying to grasp some of the shells. The eyes done in a deep black shakudo.

The total affect of this koshirae is a quiet reserved elegance and is befitting of these gentlemen of the Imperial Japanese Navy to bestow on an honored and respected friend. The koshirae are brillant examples of the art of kinko and are a tribute to the men who made them. It was both a pleasure and a privilege

APPRECIATION cont'd.

to be able to work with and enjoy this tantō. It is to the museum's credit that this tantō is being properly preserved and perhaps soon to exhibit for all to enjoy.

Footnotes:

1 - See Baur, p.212, pl.xl, #D2556 for an example of this type of binding.

2 - "Shomyo Hogan", presumably an art name. Any information will be greatly appreciated.

3 - "Kanetsune", possibly a follower of Hitotsune. Any information would be helpful.

* * * *

IN CLOSING -

1982 has been a busy year and has seen the JSS/US once again grow in stature. Hopefully the Newsletter has continued to be to the liking of the membership. From your editor and all the officers of the society, New Year Greetings for 1983!

— NEWSLETTER DEADLINE —

◉ JANUARY 22ND, 1983 ◉

All material and ads intended for inclusion in the next issue of the NEWSLETTER must be in the hands of the Editor by the above closing date.

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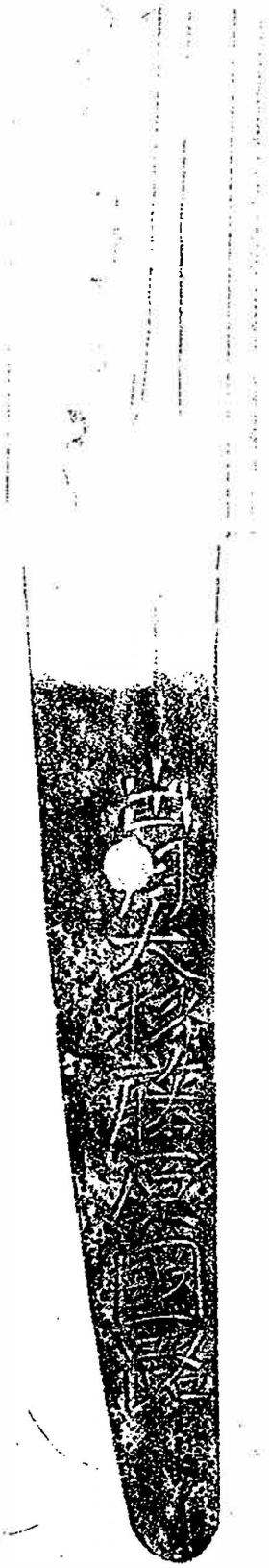

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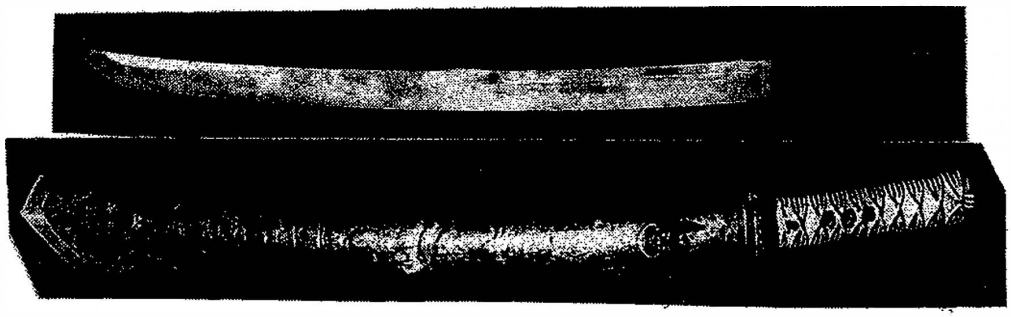

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