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ALBERT YAMANAKA'S NIHONTO NEWSLETTER

Albert Yamanaka's Nihonto Newsletter was published monthly from January, 1968 to July of 1973. It was a mimeographed newsletter consisting of articles written on all aspects of Japanese swords: swords, schools, smiths, exhibits, comments on collecting, etc.

Albert Yamanaka lived in Japan after the war and became a student of Honami Koson, the most prominent sword expert at the time and a descendant of the Honami appraisers and polishers.

Since this newsletter has been out of print since 1973, and there is a considerable amount of original and unique material presented in it, the Yamanaka family (which has the copyright to this material) supported this effort to make the Nihonto Newsletter available again in an online easily accessible version. We hope old and new collectors will enjoy reading it, and reading material that is often not available in English, even today.

Leon Kapp

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Dear Readers:

Cherry Blossom time is here again in Japan and we see a great number of visitors from abroad in and around Tokyo. Some, we hear are sword collectors, visiting polishers and sword shops. By the time this is at the printers, the cherry blossoms will have fallen and the rain will have come, which will be time for sword fanciers in Japan to be paying attention to their blades so that they will not begin to rust.

Our friends here and there keep us informed of some of the happenings in sword circles. One is that in certain places in the United States as well as in Europe, our Newsletter is being copied and distributed to people who are not subscribers as yet. We have wondered why there were so few subscribers from these areas, but at the same time we are most honored that there is that much interest in our writings, enough so that certain people will go to the trouble of having them copied and be distributed. To these people, let us say, thank you for the "free public relations", and to the readers of these copies, we hope you will subscribe to our Newsletter in the near future.

Also, may we inform these people that we have applied for copyright protection with the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.

We have been getting a few questions and suggestions. Some of these we will answer in our question and answer column.

Mr. Buttweiler of Minnesota was kind enough to suggest the following:

1. Cover smiths who are not as well known, but whose works are more often found among general collectors in the West:

We are taking up one swordsmith per issue and we intend to stay with this policy for the time being. As such, the smiths covered will start from the Kinai, which includes Yamashiro Province, Yamato, Kawachi, Settsu, and Izumi. Therefore, some of the lesser smiths will be covered in Yamashiro Province during the Momoyama Period, and also in Yamato Province as well.

2. Illustrations: We intend to take this up in a future issue, however, the present method by which we are having the Newsletter printed does not re-produce illustrations well enough, so please bear with us and we will try to have them in the very near future.

3. Question and Answer Column: We have invited questions from our readers from our very first issue, however, to date there have been no "takers".

4. Subscription by Air: To those who wish to have their copies sent by air, please remit an additional \$10.00 per year, as it costs about US \$ 0.75 per issue to air mail these.

Mr. Buttweiler also informed us that he is sponsoring another Show in Minneapolis on May 17, 18 and 19. We wish Mr. Buttweiler and his group a great success with this coming show, and sincerely hope that the turnout will be even larger than last year.

The Editor

HISTORY OF THE JAPANESE SWORD

THE LATE KAMAKURA PERIOD

Koan I (1278) to Genko 3 (1333)

Most of the shapes of the blades seen during the late Kamakura Period are based on that of the Ikubi Kissaki Tachi of the Mid-Kamakura Period. Many changes were made to the Ikubi Kissaki Tachi which resulted in the shape characteristic of the late Kamakura Period.

When the tip of a Mid-Kamakura Ikubi Kissaki tachi broke, it was impossible to put another kissaki on that blade, therefore, the kissaki of the blade was made longer, and in addition, the niku on the Hira was shaved off, giving the blade a feeling of being very blunt.

One story giving a reason for this change in this period, is that it was the result of the Mongol invasion. Specifically, the type of armor which the Mongols wore was foreign, and different from those the Japanese were used to, being made of hide and very pliable.

The Ikubi Kissaki Tachi having niku, would not cut through this type of armor, although it did the work it was intended for against the highly developed type of armor prevalent in Japan at that time.

Another problem was that hi were carved well up into the koshinogi during the mid-Kamakura period. The tips of the hi subsequently stopped lower and below the yokote line, so that if the tip were to be broken, then there was still room to polish a new kissaki in a lower position, saving the blade for use on another day.

Effectively, the Ikubi Kissaki Tachi was found to be not too practical in actual combat during the Late Kamakura Period. Although it served its purpose during the Mid-Kamakura Period, it was not too practical from the stand point of utility. However, the ikubi kissaki probably is the best, so far as the Japanese sword is concerned, from the standpoint of art or esthetics.

In the late Kamakura Period, we see the decline of the once very prominent Yamashiro group, Awataguchi, the emergence of the Soshu smiths, and the revival of the Yamato smiths.

The Yamashiro smiths, who had been active from the Heian Period until the mid-Kamakura Period, suddenly begin to fade as the result of changes in the political structure, which led to a shift of power from the capital of Kyoto to Kamakura in Soshu Province and the military dictatorship founded by Minamoto Yoritomo and maintained by the Hojo Clan regents.

The deterioration of emperor's power was also a factor. The establishment of the military dictatorship in Kamakura brought about the birth of the Soshu tradition which started with the Kamakura shogunate's military government calling three smiths and their students to Kamakura: Sukezane of the Ichimonji School in Bizen Province, commonly called Kamakura Ichimonji; Kunimune of Bizen Province, and Kunitsuna of the Awataguchi School of Yamashiro Province. These three smiths started the Soshu Tradition which some years later brought forth such smiths as Shintogo, Masamune, and Sadamune.

The emergence of Masamune and his great skill drew a flock of sword smiths to Kamakura from all parts of the country who, and came to be known as the Masamune Jittetsu. They are:

Rai Kunitsugu	of	Yamashiro Province
Hasebe Kunishige		Yamashiro Province

Go Yoshihiro	Etchu Province
Norishige	Etchu Province
Shizu Kaneuji	Mino Province
Kinju	Mino Province
Osafune Kanemitsu	Bizen Province
Osafune Chogi	Bizen Province
Naotsuna	Ishimi Province
Sa	Chikuzen Province

We would now like to describe the tachi style of the Late Kamakura period. As previously mentioned, the ikubi kissaki was found to be impractical for the type of warfare occurring at this time, and so changes were made. The kissaki was made about twice as long. The tip of the hi was lowered so it would end below the yokote line. The hamaguri-ba was shaved off and made almost flat, and the blade was made much wider.

These blades were about 3 shaku and longer, however, those that we encounter today have all been shortened to a more practical katana length of about 2 Shaku, 3 to 4 sun.

We would like to describe the characteristics of the early Soshu blades. The smiths who fall into this early Soshu category are Shintogo, Yukimitsu, Masamune and Sadamune, and the smiths who immediately followed the three founders.

Although there were two smiths from Bizen Province and one from Yamashiro Province among the founders, the characteristics of Shintogo, Yukimitsu, Masamune, and Sadamune emphasize the Yamashiro tradition more than the Bizen tradition. We have not been able to find out why this was so. Perhaps Kunitsuna had more influence than Sukezane and Kunimune.

Regardless of what the reasons may have been, the hamon is in the Yamashiro style, nie are found in the ji as well as in the hamon, and they have been improved when compared to Yamashiro, and there is much more life or "vigor".

There are two distinct styles of yakiba: narrow and wide. Those that have a narrow yakiba are the ones which follow the Yamashiro tradition. We see suguha with ko-choji midare or gunone mixed with an abundance of ko-nie throughout the length of the blade. The pattern of the boshi is a continuation of the hamon and ends as yakizume or in an omaru, komaru, or in nie-kuzure or in kaen, and all have a great deal of nie.

In those works which have a wide hamon, we see notare midare, o-gunome midare, and the nie generally become somewhat larger and rougher, but still retain the characteristic luster and vigor. The nie are especially plentiful at the edge of the hamon which form ashi, inazuma and kinsuji. The boshi is a continuation of the hamon in the lower part of the blade, and the nie in the boshi become even more vigorous, ending mostly in yakizume with a little kaeri, nie kuzure or in kaen.

In the work which has narrow hamon, as well as those that are made with a wide hamon, all are in a Yamashiro style with strong ji nie which results in yubashiri and chikei in places. The yubashiri are round with clusters of nie. This is known as early Soshu tradition yubashiri.

The revival of the Yamato Tradition

In the late Kamakura period, the country was divided into two factions, with one faction supporting the northern emperor, and the other supporting the southern emperor.

In Yamato, many shrines and temples had hired temple priest-soldiers, and this resulted in the revival of the Yamato smiths, and schools such as Taema, Shikkake, Tegai and Hosho. In one word, the Yamato tradition is a very practical form of the early Yamato blades. Speaking roughly, they retain some characteristics of the earlier works, that is the high shinogi, the narrow mune, and depending on the school, the sori becomes shallow.

The main characteristics are: with a narrow yakiba, the hamon is in nie and is rough, and we see chu-suguha hotsure, ko-choji midare, komidare or ko-gunome ko-midare.

The most important significant point to be noted is that the steel is forged with masame hada, and this masame hada is especially evident around the edge of the hamon and shows up as nijuba, uchinoke or hakikake.

The boshi also shows this tendency to have masame hada, and is yakizume, omaru, komaru, kaen, or in nie kuzure.

The jitetsu has ji nie which, in places, shows up as chikei and yubashiri. Some swords have itame or mokume hada, however somewhere along the steel, masame hada will be seen, and this is a clue to the identification of Yamato blades.

In the Kamakura Period we see a noticeable increase in the making of tanto. Tanto had been made during the Heian period, but in very limited numbers and confined to a very small number of smiths. Those that were made during the early and mid-Kamakura Period have a Yamashiro tradition influence. However, in the late Kamakura Period, with the birth of the Soshu tradition, an entirely new concept of the tanto was born.

Of the smiths who made tanto in the Yamashiro tradition during this period, there are smiths of the Awataguchi School in Yamashiro Province, and Kunitoshi of the Rai School, also of Yamashiro. In Soshu, we have Shintogo Kunimitsu; in Bizen Province, Kagemitsu; in Bungo Province, Yukihiro.

Characteristics of Yamashiro tradition tanto

They are hiratsukuri, in a josun length (a standard length of about 24-25 cm) and have a takenoko sori.

The width of the hamon is neither narrow or wide for the length, but the thickness is a little pronounced.

The mune is gyo (ihori) and a little high, and some have a shin no mune (mitsu mune). They have niku and will have a fukura.

Many different types of carvings are found, such as suken, bonji, gomebashi, and koshi-hi. The carvings are found at the center of the blade, and if a ken is carved, the tip of the Ken is slightly rounded. The depth of the carving is even throughout the carving, and this is popularly called kyobori or kyo carving.

The hamon is narrow and in nie and chu-suguha hotsure or suguha with ko-choji midare elements.

The edge of the hamon will have hotsure. Inside the hamon there is much to be seen because of the nie, and this is even more so in tanto than in tachi.

The boshi is either nie-kuzure, yakizume or kaen, and the nie will be slightly rougher than that found at the lower portion of the blade.

The jitetsu, compared to tachi, has much finer nie with yubashiri and chikei showing in places.

The nakago is a little long for the length of the blade.

Characteristics of Early Soshu Tradition Tanto

In comparison to Yamashiro tanto, the length is somewhat longer and they are wider. The shape is takenoko sori and also chukanzori which is wide and has a saki sori. However, in all cases, there is hiraniku and the fukura is lacking. The mune is shin no mune (mitsu mune) or gyo no mune (ihiori mune) and both are high. Katana hi are sometimes made near the mune, and inside of the hi there will be a ken, and in some cases, there will be a bonji above the hi.

There are two types of hamon, narrow and wide. The patterns are the same as those on the tachi, however the nie is much better than that found on a tachi. They become much livelier and brilliant, and will have a fine luster and depth.

The pattern of the hamon starts out at machi, and is very small. As it proceeds towards the tip, the pattern becomes larger, and around the fukura it is especially vigorous and lively.

The jitetsu will have an abundance of ji nie which results in yubashiri and chikei. Of the smiths who are prominent in the early Soshu tradition, there are

Soshu Province;	Yukimitsu, Masamune, and Sadamune
Yamashiro Province:	Rai Kuninitsu, Kunitsugu
Yamato Province:	Taema Kuniyuki
Etchu Province:	Norishige
Chikuzen Province:	Sa

SWORDSMITHS

Yamashiro Province

Gojo Kuninaga. Ca Tanki Era (1053 – 1058)
worked in the Yamashiro and Bizen traditions

Gojo Kanenaga had three students, Kuninaga, Kanetsugu, and Kaneyasu. Of these three, the subject of this installment, Kuninaga, is the best known, and as far as we have been able to find out, there are no known remaining works by Kanetsugu and Kaneyasu.

Many of the old texts tell us of Kuninaga and of the many famous blades he made. The “Honcho Kajiko” tells us that Kuninaga was the smith who made the blades called Ryutomaru and Kikumaru for Emperor Go-Shirakawa (1155-1158). He is also the maker of the famous blade, Tsurumaru which is in the Imperial Collection. This Tsurumaru by Kuninaga is the masterpiece we have from this smith, as well as when compared to all the smiths of this time.

This blade is listed in the Kyoho Meibutsucho, which states that the blade belonged to Hojo Sadatoki (1285-1301) and was handed down from generation to generation among the Hojo. It later came into the hands of Oda Nobunaga who gave it to one of his retainers, Mitsumaki Kanbei.

During the 1680s, through the mediation of Honami Koteki, it was given to the Date of Sendai (whether given or sold is not exactly clear) and it remained with the Date until the Meiji Era when the Emperor Meiji received it from the Date for the Imperial Collection.

This Kuninaga is one of the very few blades from the Heian Period which is ubu and in an exceptionally fine state of preservation, not even having been polished too much.

The blade's length is 2 shaku 5 sun 9 bu 3 ri, or about 31 inches, with a sori of 8 bu 8 ri, and the width at the machi is 9 bu 2 ri.

The precise description of the Tsurumaru is: shinogi tsukuri with an ihori mune and small kissaki. It has a koshizori with a large fumbari.

The hada in the steel is ko-itame and the entire blade is covered with ji nie. The hamon is ko-midare with ko-choji and kawazuko choji and tobiyaki are seen in places. There are ashi formed with abundant nioi with nie clustered around the nioi. There are kinsuji around the monouchi area on the ura side of the blade. The boshi is midarekomi with the omote side point a togari style and the ura side point a komaru with a very small kaeri.

The nakago is ubu and with a kijimono shape with a little sori; the tip is kurijiri and there are remains of katte sagari file marks. There is one mekugi ana and above the mekugi ana there is a two character signature Kuninaga near the mune.

We recall seeing this blade shortly after the termination of WWI at the Ueno Museum and recall that the blade was in an extremely well preserved condition giving an impression of a Shinto blade at first glance, but on close inspection far from it. This blade probably is one of the best preserved blades from the Heian Period, if not the best one.

There are very few blades remaining by Kuninaga and the same can be said for his father Kanenaga.

Most of the blades which we see attributed to this smith as well as to any other smiths of the Heian Period are dubious. If they are good, then in most cases the blade is yakinsoshi (re-tempered, i.e. with a new hamon), so that it is almost impossible to come across a blade from this period in its original state.

For the general description of Kuninaga, refer to the particulars given for Kanenaga in the April issue.

KYOHÔ MEIBUTSU CHO

Book 5

Owner: Gyobutsu

Meibutsu: Asakura Toshio

signed
length: 7 sun 9 bu
value: 100 Mai

This was formerly owned by Asakura Sakingo Yoshikage of Echizen Province. Later it was passed down until it came into the possession of Aoyama Okura at which time the value was 1,000 Kan.

On the 1st Year of Genna (1615), it came to us from Ii Hyobu and the value was set at 60 Mai. Inaba Mino no Kami purchased it and it came to us again, and the value was reset at 100 Mai.

Upon Inaba's retirement it was presented to the Shogunate. Echizen Province was under the control of Kiba, however a retainer named Kai conspired and overthrew Kiba and came into possession of the domain. During the time of Lord Yoshiteru, Kai was overthrown and later went to the capital at which time the Shogun gave him one character from his own name and Kai changed his name to Yoshikage, and at this time the blade was given to Sakigo.

Imamura Note: none.

Yamanaka Note:

As is evident from the very first word, Gyobutsu, this blade was in the Tokugawa Shogunate Collection and we have not been able to find out the present location or this blade's present owner.

Asakura Yoshikage was one of the retainers of Kiba. When Kai overthrew Kiba, Asakura went to Kyoto where he obtained this blade from Hosokawa Izu no Kami, and since then it came to be known as Asakura Toshiro.

Inaba Mino no Kami Masanori is the son of Kasuga no Tsubone, who was the wet-nurse of the 3rd Tokugawa Shogun Iemitsu.

Inaba had a fief of 80,000 Koku at Odawara in Soshu Province.

On the 3rd year of Meireki (1657) he became one of the ministers of the Shogunate and later, when he retired, he presented this blade to the Shogunate.

The text says, "on Genna I, it came to us from".

Genna I is 1615 and Inaba Mino no Kami had already retired and this was the year that his son, Tango no Kami Masamichi, became Chief Magistrate of Kyoto, so that the increase in value must have occurred sometime after the blade was given to the Shogunate.

Owner: Kyoto

Meibutsu: Shimizu Toshiro signed
length: 7 sun 5 bu.
value: 3,000 kan

The blade was 'found' in the house of the Shimizu of Aki Province.

There are carvings of gomabashi on both sides which are a little short. The thickness is a little over 3 bu.

It was once owned by Lord Terumoto who presented it to lord Hideyoshi. Later it was owned by Lord Ieyasu who gave it to the Owari. Then it was presented to Lord Hidetada, and then it was given to Hosokawa Sansai.

From about the Kanbun Era (1661-1672), it was in the possession of Tsuji Jurozaemon mon of Kyoto.

The blade is in a very unusual Sansai mounting with a large tsuba. It presently is in the Shimizu Mansion.

Imamura Note: states he 'saw it'.

Yamanaka Note:

The Hosokawa Tadaoki Jikki (record) states: "During the Battle of Sekigahara in Keicho 5 (1600), Hosokawa Tadaoki was proceeding from Nasu to Utsunomiya to meet Hidetada and there presented a sword to Hidetada for which he received the Shimizu Toshiro in return."

The Owari Tokugawa was founded in the 12th Year of Keicho (1607) by the 7th Son of Ieyasu, Yoshinao. Therefore, whether the blade went from Yoshinao to Hidetada is very doubtful. So, what the text refers to as Owari may mean someone else other than the Owari Tokugawa.

The reason why the blade left the Hosokawa is not clearly known, however it is true that Higo Province was drought ridden during the time of Sansai, and Sansei is said to have sold most of the treasures of the Hosokawa in Osaka and Kyoto and the proceeds were used to purchase rice to distribute among the people of Higo, and the blade Shimizu Toshiro is said to have left the Hosokawa Collection at that time. The man named Tsuji may have been the person who purchased the blade at that time from Hosokawa Sansai.

What is referred to as Shimizu, refers to one of the three nobles who supposedly presented the blade to the Shogunate, Shogun Yoshinobu, the last and the 15th Tokugawa Shogun (1866-1867). Sometime during his tenure as shogun, he gave this blade to his older brother Mimbu Taisuke Terutake, who later took over the Mito Tokugawa after his elder brother Yoshiatsu retired.

Since the Mito Tokugawa sold everything they owned after the Meiji Restoration, they no longer have this blade.

It presently is in the hands of a private collector.

Owner: Matsudairo Oi no Kami

Meibutsu: Mori Toshiro

signed

Length: 8 sun 7 bu

Value: not known

This was once owned by Lord Mori Terumoto, handed down in that household, and is still in the family.

There are gomabashi on the omote with soe-hi on the ura.

It was presented to Toshogu, and then Ikeda Saisho received it.

Imamura Note:

One version gives the length of this blade as 8 sun 6 bu.

Another version gives the length as 7 sun 4.5 bu with a value of 60 Mai.

Yamanaka Note:

Mori Terumoto (1553-1625) was one of the five elder ministers to Toyotomi Hideyoshi. During the Sekigahara Battle, he sided with the Toyotomi forces, and as a consequence, after the battle, the Tokugawa reduced his fief to the two provinces of Suo and Nagato.

Toshogu refers to Tokugawa Iyeyasu after his death. At times he is also referred to as Gongensama.

Ikeda Seisho refers to Ikeda Terumasa (1563-1613) of Bizen Province, Okayama with a fief of 520,000 Koku.

Matsudaira Oi no Kami at the beginning, refers to the same Ikeda clan. On November, Meiji 24 (1891), Marquis Ikeda, a descendent of the above mentioned Ikeda, presented this blade to the Emperor Meiji and it is still in the Imperial Collection, as far as we know.

FAMOUS SWORDS IN JAPANESE HISTORY

4th Installment

Tenka Goken: Juzumaru Tsunetsugu

The Juzumaru is the work of Aoe Tsunetsugu of Bitchu Province and once belonged to the founder of the Nichiren sect of Buddhism in Japan. For those who are not too familiar with the Nichiren sect, perhaps the name Soka Gakkai is familiar; Soka Gakkai is a branch of the Nichiren sect.

The Aoe School in Bitchu Province is said to have been founded by Yasutsugu who was active around the Hoan Era (1120-1124) and his successors were active until around the Oei Era (1394-1428).

The Aoe School is divided into three periods, and work which falls into the early period is called Ko-Aoe, from about 1120 to about 1238. The second period is called Chu-Aoe, and was from 1238 to about 1394.

The last period is the late Aoe or the Sue Aoe and these smiths worked from about the end of the Oei Era to about the end of the Koto Period.

The founder, Yasutsugu, was followed by Moritsugu who was active around the Ninpei Era (1151-1153) or thereabouts. Moritsugu is said to have had 13 students, and they are Sadatsugu, Tsunetsugu, Tsunezane, Tsuguie, Sanetsugu, Yasutsugu, Toshitsugu, Kanetsugu, Tametsugu, Naritsugu, Yukitsugu, Ietsugu and Nobutsugu.

Of these thirteen smiths, three, Sadatsugu, Tsunetsugu and Tsuguie became sword forging teachers to the Emperor Gotoba.

The maker of Juzumaru is the 2nd student of Moritsugu, Tsunetsugu, and had the title of Bitchu no Kami. There were not many smiths during this time who had titles, and so Tsunetsugu may have had exceptional abilities or else he may have been very influential to have acquired the title.

Tsunetsugu is listed in the group which served Emperor Gotoba during his retirement at the emperor's villa where there were two swordsmiths in attendance for each month of the year.

Tsunetsugu was active from around the Genryaku Era (1184-1185) to about the Shogen Era (1207-1211). The second generation Tsunetsugu is said to have been active around the Kenryaku Era (1211-1213), and the 3rd Tsunetsugu was active around the same time as the 2nd Tsunetsugu. Different historical texts give varying dates, however, those listed above seem to be the more accepted dates.

Juzumaru Tsunetsugu has been written about in the Kyoho Meibutsucho, which we are translating in another section, but to give a brief translation here, it states:

Owner: Kyuenji Temple of Mount Minobu
Meibutsu: Juzumaru Tsunetsugu

length: 2 shaku 7 sun 7 bu

The tachi is the treasure of the temple and no legends regarding it are known. It is by a later Tsunetsugu (meaning Dai-sagari).

Koho had the metal ornaments made for the blade in a lotus motif and in shibuichi.

Koho refers to Homami Koho, grandson of the famous Honami Koetsu. Koho was born in 1536 and died 1618.

The blade was a national treasure prior to WWII, however, it has not been re-nominated to the title since the end of the war, consequently it presently is a Juyo Bunkazai.

Nichiren Shonin was given this blade by one of his followers knowing there were many highwaymen in the mountains where Nichiren was about to visit. He accepted the sword and then hung his "Juzu" on the sword where ever he went. Hence, it received the meibutsu or name Juzumaru. Juzu is a rosary.

The Nichiren Sect held this blade to be a sacred item and it has been so since the death of Nichiren in Koan 6 (1283).

During the Tokugawa Period, from the Genna to Kanei Eras, 1615-1643, Tokugawa Yoshinobu of Kishu Province is said to have ordered his retainers to make a yearly pilgrimage to Mt Minobu and keep the blade from becoming rusted. Later, it is not known exactly when, the blade was removed from the temple by someone closely related to be temple and was in that person's family until 1919 when the blade fell into the hands of a sword collector named Sugihara Yozo. Sugihara thereupon presented the blade to Mokkoji Temple in Amagasaki near Osaka. Mokkoji Temple is one of the temples belonging to the Nichiren Sect. Sugihara, when he first came upon the blade, thought that the blade should be returned to its original and rightful place, Mt. Minobu, and contacted Mt. Minobu, but was told that the temple was not interested in its return, and no reason was given for this refusal.

Honami Kozan, 1633-1714, in his notation on seeing this blade for the first time wrote, "has a shimi on the mune. The shinogi is not low. Made in suguha with small saka midare mixed in. The boshi is round and the kaeri leans toward the mune. The steel is like that of Rai Kunitoshi and the blade, as a whole, looks like Unji. The hada is namazu hada and it resembles Niji Kunitoshi.

This seems a little different from the actual description of the blade presently given. The boshi has hakikake and not kaeri. The Jitetsu has blueish color.

Sugihara Yozo was quite famous among sword circles in Osaka and during his lifetime left a few writings on swords. He was active during the late Meiji Era.

Nichiren's life was nothing but a series of violent events, and though we are not students of religion and are not too familiar with the details of his life, we know that he was banished to the Island of Sado and returned from there on Bunei 1 (1274) when he was 53. He went to Kamakura and established the Myohonji Temple and then went to Kofu in Yamanashi and set out to Mt. Minobu when he acquired the Juzumaru.

Nichiren died on Koan 6 (1283) at the of age 61.

It is said that he constantly had the Juzumaru at his side when he was reading scriptures, and when he was among his followers preaching, he always carried this sword.

After Nichiren's death, the blade along with his Kesa (surplice) and Chukey (fan) became sacred items of the temple at Mt. Minobu and no one besides the

chief abbot was allowed to see it or touch it until the Tokugawa Period as mentioned above.

HISTORICAL FIGURES AND THEIR FAMOUS SWORDS

TOYOTOMI HIDEYOSHI

This man who came to power as a result of intrigue and strength of character, was born the son of a poor peasant. He left home at an early age and served various warlords of which Oda Nobunaga was the last, just before Oda became a dictator.

It is popularly known and believed that Akechi Mitsuhide assassinated Oda Nobunaga, but in a recent publication, Hideyoshi is given this credit, and it is said that he stopped at nothing to gain his goals.

A man in such a position naturally has the same ambition as any other warlord. Being born poor and of low standing, his taste for culture went far beyond the imagination of the people of the time, such as his castle at Yodo, Osaka Castle, and the Jurakudei in Kyoto all were lavishly constructed and used gold to such an extent that people of culture at the time thought it in 'bad taste'.

His ambition to rule the world is seen in his repeated attempts to conquer the Korean Peninsula.

It is true that he had dreams of sending expeditions to the Philippines and to Anan after he conquered Korea, and his ultimate dream was to conquer Ming China.

A man in such a position would naturally have many of the famous swords of his time. Hideyoshi is given the credit, with the aid of the Honami, of having dreamed up the Nihon Sansaku which is comprised of Masamune, Go Yoshihiro and Awataguchi Yoshimitsu.

The three swordsmiths covered in Book I of the Kyoho Meibutsu Cho include 16 blades by Yoshimitsu 12 blades by Go Yoshihiro, and 41 blades by Masamune. Of the many swords covered in the Meibutsu Cho, those blades that Hideyoshi owned covers about one third of the close to 280 blades, and this is only from what is covered in the text mentioning Hideyoshi by name. It is very possible that he had at one time or another, many more than this number.

Some of the better known blades are; Hirano Toshiro, Okayama Toshiro, Atsushi Toshiro, Shimizu Toshiro, Mori Masamune, Honjo Masamune, Tomita Go, Takanosu Munechika, Fudo Yukimitsu, Onimaru Kunitsuna, Ichigo Hitofuri to name only a few.

The majority of the blades covered in the "lost in fire " section which numbers 81 blades are from Osaka Castle and this was from the Hideyoshi collection. After the Osaka Battle, all of the swords in the Toyotomi Collection were being transported to Edo, however on the way, Priest Tenkai who was the advisor to Ieyasu told him that anything belonging to the Toyotomi should not be brought into Edo for it would be an ill-omen.

Ieyasu thereupon sent a courier to the caravan bringing the Osaka Castle treasures and ordered them be held at Owari, and since then, the great majority has been housed in the Owari Tokugawa Collection. Umetada Myoju is popularly known for his skill in carving as well as his skill in making tsuba, however the Umetada habaki are

not too well known. The majority of the swords that went from Osaka to the Owari Tokugawa had Umetada habaki.

The Umetada were primarily habaki makers and zogan metalsmiths and their skill in sword making and tsuba making was secondary.

Of the great many blades that belonged to Hideyoshi, the most famous and probably the best was the Ichigo Hitofuri, a tachi by Awataguchi Yoshimitsu, supposedly the only long sword that Yoshimitsu made during his lifetime.

The Kotoku Oshigata has this blade depicted in full original length, 2 shaku 8 sun 3 bu. Toyotomi Hideyoshi is supposed to have had it shortened to 2 shaku 2 sun 8 bu with the Yoshimitsu inscription preserved in a Gakumei.

The Kyoho Meibutsu Cho lists this blade in the "lost in fire" section. The blade, along with many other blades went through the fire in Osaka Castle. Later the blade was re-tempered by Echizen Yasutsugu.

We recall seeing this blade about two years ago at an exhibition and found that although it is yakinoshi (i.e. with a new hamon), it still is a very fine blade.

For a man of Yasutsugu's ability to have made such a hamon only shows what fine steel Yoshimitsu had made in the first place.

Although some of the finer qualities in the blade may have been lost in the fire, it still retained enough of its qualities to allow it to receive an excellent hamon in the yakinaoshi process. No one would believe that the hamon was made by Yasutsugu on the Ichigo Hitofuri if someone did not point this out. It is much better than Yasutsugu's ordinary work, thanks to Yoshimitsu's fine steel.

NAMES IN THE SWORD WORLD

THE HONAMI

Part II Geneologies

The Main House:

Myohon, 1st generation	Named Choshun. later took the name of Honami after retirement. Said to be the son of Gojo Takanaga, who was the younger son of Gojo Hidenaga and who was adopted by Gojo Nagatsune. Served Ashikaga Takauji, 1305-1358, the founder of the Ashikaga Shogunate. Died in Buna 2, March 3 (1353) and was supposedly 100 years old on his death.
Honnyo, 2nd generation	
Myodai, 3rd generation	
Myoshu, 4th generation	
Myoju, 5th generation	
Honko, 6th generation	Was named Matsuda Uenon Saburo Kiyonobu and

served Ashikaga Yoshinori, 1394-1441, the 6th Ashikaga shogun. Was adopted by the 5th generation Myoju.

Koshin, 7th generation
Kosatsu, 8th generation

Born Eisho 13 (1506), died Tensho 9 (1581).

Kotoku, 9th generation
Koshitsu, 10th generation

Born Temmon 23 (1533), died Genna 5 (1619).
Born Tensho 1 (1583), died Kanei 1 (1625).

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Koon, 11th generation

Born Keicho 8 (1604), died Kannon 7 (1667).

Kotatsu

Was in ill health throughout his lifetime and did not engage in the family trade, therefore did not take the 12th generation position.

Kojo, 12th generation
Kochu, 13th generation
Koyu, 14th generation
Kojun, 15th generation
Kokyu, 16th generation
Koichi, 17th generation

Named Tadasasu
Named Tadamune
Named Tadamitsu, later Tadanori.
Named Tadanobu
Named Tadaoki.
Named Tadaaki. Son of Kokei of a branch family, however, since the 16 generation, Kokyu did not have a son, Koichi took over the main house

Kokan, 18th generation

Named Tadateru. His elder brother was supposed to have become the head of the family, but died early and Kokan became the head of the family.

Saburobei, 19th generation

Named Tadaaki. Died March, Meiji 3 (1870).

Teisaburo, 20th generation

Named Tadamichi. Second son of Kashiwabara Shinjiro. The 19th Saburobei not having a son, Teisaburo married Saburobei's daughter to take over the household. Later he divorced himself from the Honami and took back his original family name.

Michitaro, 21st generation

The 20th generation, Teisaburo, was appointed as the person "In charge of the Imperial Sword Collection".

After the Meiji Restoration, however, with passage of the Haitorei edict outlawing the wearing of swords in public, he made his son Michitaro the head of the family, retired, dropped out of Honami affairs, and took back his birth name of Kashiwabara. At the time, Michitaro was said to have been only 6 years old. Consequently, the main house lost its family connection with the 20th generation Teisaburo.

Besides the main house, there were 12 other Honami houses during the Tokugawa Period. Of these, the house that became the head of the Honami was the house with the Koji Lineage.

The Koji Lineage

Koji	Adopted son of 7th Koshin of the head house. The 7th Koshin not having had a son, he adopted the 2nd son of Taga Bungo no Kami, Kataoka Jindaiyu, who married Koshin's daughter to take over the house. Later Koshin's wife did bear him a son, Kosatsu, therefore, Koji gave up his rights to the head house by turning it over to Kosatsu and started a branch house. He died at age 82 in Keicho 8 (1603).
Koetsu	Named Hatsujiro Saburo. Died February 14, Kanei 14 (1637).
Kosa	Grandson of Taga Bungo no Kami Takatada, and adopted by Koetsu. Actually, he was a cousin of Koetsu. Died October 5, Kanei 14 (1637).
Koho	Received the title of Hokyo and later Hogan. Died July 24, Tenna 4 (1684).
Koden	Received the title of Nagato no Jo and later Hokyo. Died May 18, Genroku 9 (1696).
Kotsu	8th son of Koho. Died Kyoho 5 (1720).
Jirozaemon	Named Koshun. Died Horeki 8 (1758).
Jiro Taro	Named Kiyotoshi and Kokei. Died Kansei 2 (1790).
Jirozaemon	Adopted. 2nd son of Juroemon. Died Kansei 9 (1797). Who was Juroemon?
Kamesaburo	Adopted. 2nd son of Koichi. Koichi is the 17th head of the main house. Kamesaburo later became the 18th head of the main house taking the name Kokan.
Koren	Adopted. Named Jiro Taro Seigo. Elder son of Kisaji Kojo, 4th in line in the Kozan Lineage. Died December 11 in Ansei 4 (1857) at the age of 61.
Toshizo.	3rd son of Koren. Also used the name Koren. Died August 11, Meiji 4 (1871).
Seiji	Nothing is known of this man.

The second Koetsu is very well known among art connoisseurs for his pottery, painting, lacquer ware, calligraphy, flower arrangement, and gardens, as well as in the family trade of appraising and polishing of swords.

The 4th Koho, though not as adept as Koetsu, nevertheless was skilled in painting.

Ringa Lineage

Koi. 3rd son of Koshin, 7th head of the main house.

Koyu

Kosaku

Komo

Kori

Koyu

Kurozaemon

Masanojo

Kichigoro

Koei

Eijiro

Heijuro Actually is the elder brother of Eijiro.

Naonojo Adopted, son of of Eijiro.

Heijuro Adopted. Narushige. Died July, Meiji 15 (1882).

Seizen Adopted. Also named Ringa and Naonojo.
Comes from a family of "pages" to the Tokugawa Shogunate and was adopted by Heijuro. Later he took the name of Ringa. Died September 23rd, Showa, 2 (1927).
On August of Taisho 13 (1924), one of his student's (Hirai Chiba) son Takeo was adopted to succeed him. Takeo is also known by the name of Nisshu. Nisshu was engaged in polishing and appraisal. He should be familiar to some in the San Francisco Bay Area since he visited there in 1966.
Among the many students Ringa had, the two most well known are Nisshu's father Hirai Chiba and Honami Koson.

Komi Lineage

Komi 2nd son of the 8th Kosatsu of the main house.

Kohaku

Koin

Kosatsu

Kohaku

Hichiroemon

Genzo

Hichiroemon

Genzo

Hichiroemon Named Mansaburo, later Tadamasa.

Chukei Named Mansaburo, later Mantaro.

Yansaburo Named Tenrai.

Sokei

Kashiwabara Ichizo or the 20th Teisaburo of the main house recalled that the "copper seal" along with a painting by Kano Tanyu with Koho's attribution was "loaned" to Honami Chukei. Since then (this was in the early Meiji period) the seal has been kept in Tenrai family and Sokei presently has it.

Koeki Lineage

Koeki 2nd son of the 9th head Kotoku of the main house.

Komu

Kotaku

Koritsu

Koga

Tarozaemon

Tozaburo

Ichirozaemon Adopted.

Ichirozaemon Named Naruyoshi. Adopted.

Tarozaemon Named Tadayoshi. Adopted.

Keisaburo

Tatsunosuke Adopted. Later he took back his original name.

Koteki Lineage

Koteki Second son of the 10th Koshitsu of the main house.

Koi

Kotei

Ichirobei

Ichisaburo

Ichizaemon

Ichijuro Adopted. Name was Sadaaki and later Koyu.

Ichijuro Changed name to Tamitada.

Matashiro Adopted. Name was Tadanao. Tadanao's son supposedly became a lumber dealer after the Meiji Restoration.

Koyu Lineage

Koyu 3rd son of Koshitsu. Koshitsu was 10th generation of the main house.

Kochi

Koan

Koju

Eitaro

Jurobei Adopted. Named Mankichi.

Jurobei Named Mankichi, later Tadanobu.

Kanejiro Adopted. Named Tadayoshi.

Keisaburo

Koshu Lineage

Koshu 4th son of Koshitsu. Koshitsu was 10th generation of the main house.

Korin

Kochiku

Tozaemon

Okuuemon Adopted.

Kyutaro

Toranosuke

Momojiro Adopted. Name was Chukei. Third son of Koei.
11th in Ringa line.

Momosaburo

Momojiro Adopted. Used name of Kohin. Second son of Kosa, who was 5th in Kozan Lineage. Had the title of Iyo Daijo. After retirement, he took back his original name of Kuwajima.

Ettaro Adopted, though he did not engage in sword polishing or appraisal.

Kozan Lineage

Kozan Name was Chikanori. 5th son of Koshitsu, 10th generation of the main House. Actually, he was the 5th son of Koho of the Koji Lineage, but was adopted by the main house, and then founded his own lineage. Had the title of Daigaku and later Hokyo. Died September 18, Shotoku 4 (1714) at age 81.

Koken Name was Chikakiyo, later Sanshiro and then later Juroemon. Died April 30, Meiwa I (1764) at age 82.

Koso	Adopted. Name was Chikatoshi, then Jidaiyu and then later Juroemon. Nephew of Koken. Died October 21, Kyowa 3 (1803) at age 61.
Kojo	Name was Chokon, and then Shimpei and also Tadazumi Rokuroemon Kisaji. Died October 10, Koka 2 (1845) at age 78.
Kosa	Name was Shosaburo and later Kisaji. Died July 19th, Bunkyu 2 (1862).
Choshiki	Name was Keizo, and later Kisaji and Masasuke.
Shinzen	Name was Yonosa and later Keizo. Lived in the Hongo district of Tokyo until the early 1930's. He did not practice.

Komi Lineage

Komin	2nd son of Koon, 11th head of the main house.
Koseki	
Shobei	
Gonsaburo	Adopted.
Yasunojo	
Todaiyu	Adopted.
Shobei	3rd son of Koso, 3rd head of the Kozan Lineage.
Hikozou	
Kozo	Name was Yoshitake. Was a very good polisher but did not have a son to take over the family.

Kojun Lineage

Kojun	Second son of Kotatsu. Kotatsu was son of the 11th Koon of the main house, but did not take on the family responsibilities due to ill health, and gave that position to his eldest son Kojo.
Koyu	
Rokusaburo	

Koho

Soen named Kichijuro and later Koken or Tadatsune.

Koen Adopted. Named Tadamasa and later Tadaaki, and also used Sohei.

Munenojo Adopted. Named was Tadataka.

Tokutaro Tokutaro is more popularly known by his other name of Takenaka Kokan. He served the Imperial Household in the capacity of "sword curator" for the Imperial Collection. Died May 23, 1927.

Tokutaro Did not have any knowledge of swords. Was a career navy man and reached the rank of commander in the Japanese Imperial Navy and died before his father. Did not have heirs to take on the family tradition.

Kotaku Lineage

Kotaku Second son of Kojo, the 11th head of the of the main house.

Kosei Shiro Saburo. Had the title Ise Daijo.

Shiro Saburo Name was Kojiro.

Shiro Saburo Name was Tadatomo and Kojiro

Shiro Saburo Adopted. Name was Tadachika. Second son of Kokan, 18th generation of the main house.

Keizo Adopted. Supposed to have become an actor.

Nihonto: Nomenclature and Definitions

Kogori Nie

Kogori nie is found on blades with hamon in nioi, and with the nie clustered within the nioi.

Kogori nie is not to be confused with Kazunoko nie which we will cover later. Kogori nie is nie clustered together, and the individual pebbles or grains of nie are separate and discrete, and there is a lot of 'life' in it.

It is found in the works such as o-choji midare by Sanjo Yoshiie, in Ko-Bizen, or in any of the early blades of the Heian Period which are primarily in nioi; in the work of Rai Kuniyuki of Yamashiro Province; Niji Kunitoshi; Awataguchi Kunitsuna of Soshu and Yamashiro; Kamakura Ichimonji Sukezane of Soshu; Bizen Kunimune of Bizen and Soshu Province; the Ukai smiths of Bizen Province; in the work of Osafune Mitsutada, Junkei Nagamitsu and Kagemitsu of Bizen Province; in the work of Hatakeda Moriie of Bizen Province; Ko-Aoe work in Bitchu Province; and Enju Kuniyasu of Higo Province. These smiths were all masters of making Kogori nie.

Mura Nie

Mura Nie is a type of Nie which is found only in certain areas and it is completely the opposite of the Kogori nie, that is the quality of the nie is very poor, there is no life in the nie and it is found only in the works of poor smiths such as the very late Soshu smiths and late Mino smiths. It is never found on blades of skillful smiths.

Kazunoko Nie

Kazunoko is fish roe, and the nie is found in a like pattern. The pebbles or grains are large and rough, the grains are found on top of one another and as with the previous Mura nie, found only in certain areas. It also is found only on blades of poor quality.

Kasu Nie

Kasu means dregs or grounds or something derogatory. It refers to the type of nie which has no life, no luster, or no sheen, and will look whitish and is never found on a good blade.

It is found in the works of such smiths such as the poorer Echizen smiths of the Shinto Period, the Shimada smiths of Suruga Province, the Shitahara smiths of Musashi Province, and the Uda smiths in Etchu Province.

Nie found on Yakinaoshi (retempered) blades

A blade having lost its hamon and having been retempered will have this particular type of nie. If the smith who did the retempering was skilled, then the nie will turn out well. However, should the nie on the blade be compared to the original nie that was formerly on that blade, then it will be inferior.

The Nie will not have as much "life", no sheen, and on the whole will seem as though 'something is lacking'. If one can come to understand this, then it will be a simple matter to see and recognize blades which have been retempered.

If the blade, originally had exceptionally fine steel and the smith who did the retempering was also skilled, then the retempered hamon will look quite good, and in cases, a little difficult to 'see through' or recognize, but there will be something that is not akin to the work of the original maker of the blade.

Niejimi

Jimi or Shimi: jimi is a nasalized form of shimi and means a stain. A hamon which has become tired from over-polishing will have some of the remnants of the original nie left and it will look as though the blade is stained.

Nie Sake

Nie sake is found on blades of smiths who followed the Soshu Tradition. The nie will be bright black nie, and present along the hamon, and make the habuchi look as though it has been torn apart. It could appear that the habuchi has split, and within this split there will be nie.

Nie and Nioi clustering together to form Ashi

This is found on the ashi of blades made in nioi in which the nie are clustered around the ashi. It is mostly confined to smiths from the early periods.

Nie: where to look for it and how it should appear

Generally, nie is found on all parts of the blade. The quality of the blade, whether good or bad, is directly associated condition of the nie and how it is made.

In blades by the Awataguchi smiths of Yamashiro Province, the nie on the lower part of the blade is small and fine. Then as one looks towards the tip of the blade, the nie become larger and rougher. This is a characteristic of this school.

The nie on blades by Rai Kunitsugu on the omote is very hanayaka or georgeous, flamboyant, and active. On the ura, the nie are rather drab and not as interesting as on the omote side. There is no 'work' or fine details or an appearance in the nie on the ura side, and in some work the nie appear like niejimi.

SWORD SMITH TITLES

A title of Sho or Jo is read with a "no", as in Mondo no Sho.

Of the various titles used by swordsmiths with the character "kami", We see:

Izumi no Kami	Inaba no Kari
Izumo no Kami	Iga no Kami
Iyo no Kami	Ise no Kami
Izu no Kami	Ishimi no Kami
Hoki no Kami	Harima no Kami
Totomi no Kami	Tosa no Kami
Chikugo no Kami	Chikuzen no Kami
Osumi no Kami	Omi no Kami
Wakasa no Kami	Kaga no Kami
Kai no Kami	Kawachi no Kami
Kazusa no Kami	Kozuke no Kami
Tamba no Kami	Tango no Kami
Tajima no Kami	Tsushima, no Kami
Nagato no Kami	Mutsu no Kami
Musashi no Kami	Noto no Kami
Yamashiro no Kami	Yamato no Kami
Buzen no Kami	Bungo no Kami
Echizen no Kami	Etchu no Kami
Echigo no Kami	Dewa no Kami
Awa no Kami	Awaji no Kami
Sagami no Kami	Sado no Kami
Sanuki no Kami	Satsuma no Kami
Mikawa no Kami	Mino no Kami
Shinano no Kami	Shimofusa no Kami
Shimozuke no Kami	Hitachi no Kami
Bizen no Kami	Bitchu no Kami
Bingo no Kami	Hizen no Kami
Higo no Kami	Hyuga no Kami
Hida no Kami	Settsu no Kami

Suruga no Kami

Practically all of the province names were used for titles with the exception of only a few.

Titles with Daijo are:

Izumi Daijo	Izumo Daijo
Iga Daijo	Iyo Daijo
Harima Daijo	Ishimi Daijo
Chikuzen Daijo	Hoki Daijo
Omi Daijo	Chikugo Daijo
Owari Daijo	Osumi Daijo
Ise Daijo	Wakasa Daijo
Kawachi Daijo	Kazusa Daijo
Kozuke Daijo	Tamba Daijo
Tango Daijo	Tajima Daijo
Mutsu Daijo	Musashi Daijo
Yamashiro Daijo	Yamato Daijo
Bungo Daijo	Echizen Daijo
Dewa Daijo	Sagami Daijo
Sado Daijo	Mikawa Daijo
Shinano Daijo	Shimofusa Daijo
Hitachi Daijo	Bitchu Daijo
Higo Daijo	Hyuga Daijo

Titles with Jo are:

Izumi no Jo	Iga no Jo
Iyo no Jo	Tosa no Jo
Osumi no Jo	Tsushima no Jo
Nagato no Jo	Etchu no Jo

Titles with Suke are:

Omi no Suke	Osumo Gon no Suke
Kaga no Suke	Kawachi no Suke
Kazusa no Suke	Kozuke no Suke
Nagato no Suke	Mutsu no Suke
Yamato no Suke	Mino no Suke
Shimofusa no Suke	Bizen no Suke

Titles with Shogen are:

Tosa Shogen
Sakon Shogen

Mutsu Shogen

Other titles not very often encountered are:

Daijo

Hogan

Shume no Suke

Daimoku

Mondo no Sho

Other than this, in the Koto period, there were other types of titles used which are not found during the Shinto Period. One is Jyo, a title used quite often by the late Bizen smiths, such as Yozozemon no Jyo Sukesada, Gen no Jyo Sukesada, etc. During the time of Emperor Gotoba, the smiths that went to the emperor's villa to attend him in sword making received titles. These smiths were

Fukuoka Ichimonji Norimune had the titles Bizen Daiyu and Kyobu no Suke;

Ichimonji Sukemune had the title Shuri no Kyo;

Awataguchi Norikuni had the title To Uma no Suke;

Kunitsuna had the title Sakon Shogen;

Kuniyasu had the title Yamashiro no Kami;

Hisakuni had the title Osumi Gon no Kami;

Kunitomo had the title Tozaemon no Jyo;

Bitchu Aoe Sadatsugu had the title Uemon no Suke;

Bungo Yukihiro had the title Ki Shin Daiyu.

These titles, other than having their respective positions in the sword world, also had some social standing as well in their own respective communities, for the sword smiths' position in the Samurai society was regarded as being rather high.

At a future date, if and when we come up with more information on the titles of sword smiths, we shall put them in this Newsletter, for we have seen much interest in these titles and to what extent they served the sword smiths.

There has always been a question in the back of our mind, concerning the order in which these titles were ranked, that is which title had the highest ranking. For example, did Yamashiro no Kami hold a higher position than Sagami no Kami, etc. Also, what was the relative rank of these titles, such as Kami, Daijo, Suke, Shoken, Sho and others.