

# **NIHONTO NEWSLETTER**

**JANUARY, 1970**

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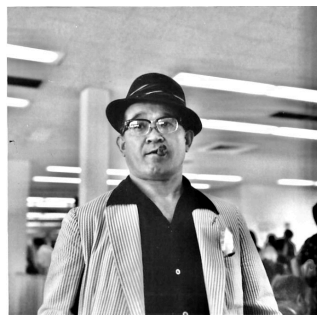
## **ALBERT YAMANAKA'S NIHONTO NEWSLETTER**

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, history, exhibits, appraisal, 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



**ALBERT YAMANAKA**

**1973**

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DEAR READERS,

WE VERY MUCH REGRET THE LATE ARRIVAL OF THIS ISSUE. DUE TO AN UNAVOIDABLE OCCURANCE (WE HAVE BEEN ILL FOR ABOUT A MONTH), AND AS MUCH AS WE REGRET THIS, THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING WE COULD DO IN ORDER TO BRING THIS ISSUE TO YOU MUCH EARLIER, SINCE AS YOU MAY KNOW, THIS IS A ONE-MAN OPERATION.

WE HAVE AGAIN, SOMEHOW, MANAGED TO KEEP THIS NEWSLETTER GOING FOR THE SECOND YEAR AND WE ARE NOW IN OUR THIRD YEAR.

THE LAST YEAR HAS NOT BEEN WHAT WE WOULD HAVE LIKED IT TO HAVE BEEN, IN SO FAR AS THE PUBLISHING OF THE NEWSLETTER GOES, AND WE HAVE BEEN SEARCHING FOR SOME METHOD TO MAKE IT A LITTLE MORE INTERESTING. DUE TO THE VERY LIMITED AMOUNT OF TIME WE CAN WORK ON IT (LIKE ANYONE ELSE, WE HAVE TO GO OUT AND EARN OUR BREAD AND BUTTER).

MR. JOHN HARDING OF LONDON AND TOKYO HAS CONSENTED TO CONTRIBUTE ARTICLES ON FITTINGS. WE HAVE FOUND MR. HARDING'S KNOWLEDGE IN THIS FIELD QUITE EXTENSIVE, AND HE HAS BEEN FLABBERGASTING THE LOCAL TOKYO COLLECTORS WITH HIS KNOWLEDGE. THEREFORE, WHAT HE CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THIS NEWSLETTER SHOULD PROVE TO BE INTERESTING READING. PLEASE LOOK FORWARD TO THIS.

IT WILL BE A LITTLE DIFFICULT TO CATCH UP, SO THAT WE CAN SEND THE NEWSLETTER TO YOU PRIOR TO THE MONTH OF ISSUE, BUT WE WILL ENDEAVOUR TO DO OUR BEST TOWARDS THIS END.

ALBERT YAMANAKA

TOKYO

FEBRUARY 1970

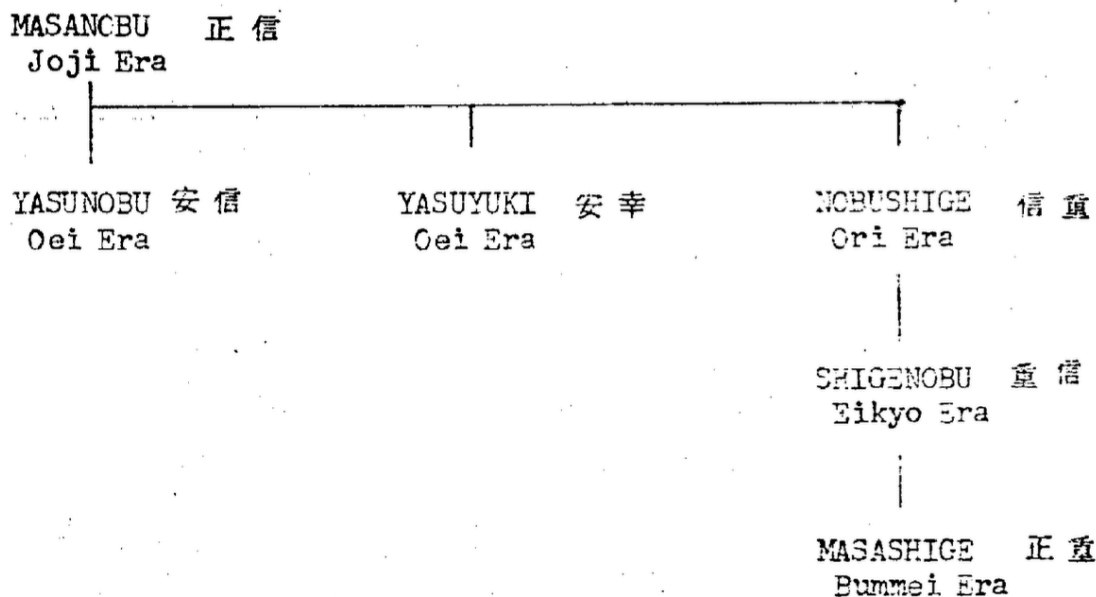
# SWORD SMITHS

## ECHIGO PROVINCE

### YAMAMURA SCHOOL 山村系

The founder Masanobu is said to have been a student of Nobukuni of Yamashiro Province. He was also a Samurai swordsmith and probably the earliest sword smith of this type.

Among the smiths of this school, Yasunobu has left the largest number of works to us, and the works of the other smiths are relatively few in number.



### YASUNOBU

Worked in the Bizen tradition and Soshu tradition, approximately during the Oei era.

### KATANA and WAKIZASHI

Shape and Construction:

There is a koshi sori with a pronounced sakisori. The width and thickness are koroai (just right). The kissaki is a little long.

The Mune is shin-no mune (mitsu mune) or so-no-mune (marumune).

Hi and Carvings:

Simple carvings are seen at times.

Hamon:

Formed in nioi with a uniform ko-gunome pattern. There are also hamon in a midare pattern like those made by the Osafune smiths of Bizen Province of about the same era. That is the midareba has wide valleys, and these will have mura nie and strong large sunagashi running along the edge of the hamon.

There are also works with chu-suguha hamon with hotsure and yakikuzure. Most of these works will have a visible hada inside of the hamon.

There will be muneyaki on some works.

Boshi:

Komaru with a togari influence and a long kaeri. Some works will have hakikake which form a kaen at the tip.

Jitetsu and Hada:

The hada is o-mokume mixed with masame hada, and the hada will stand out.

Nakago:

The nakago is stubby and large with a tranagobara style with the tip a shallow kengyo or a kurijiri. The file marks will be kiri.

Inscriptions are two characters.

TANTO

Tanto are hiratsukuri and about 1 shaku or thereabouts in length. They are wide and thick with little sori.

Very delicately made horimono are seen.

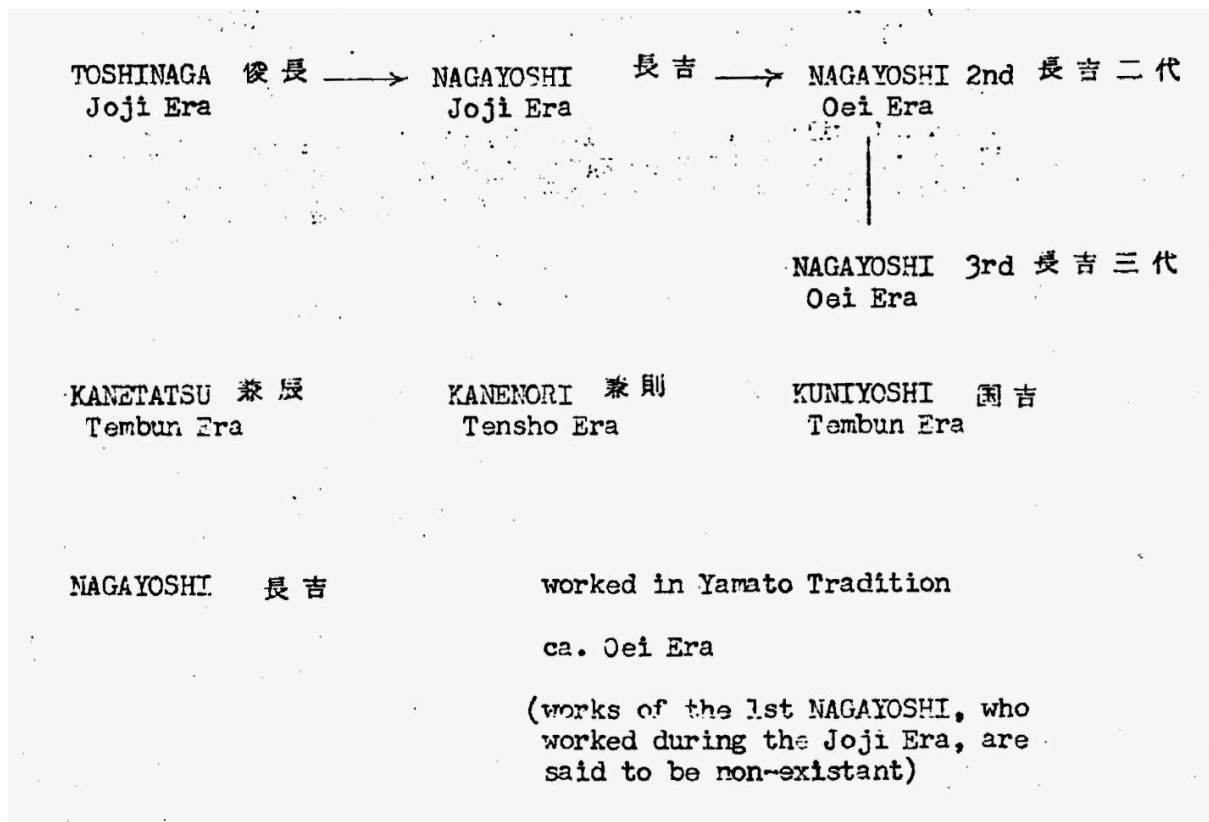
The hamon is in the Bizen style.

## MOMOKAWA SCHOOL

桃川系

The Momokawa School is said to have been founded by Kanro Toshinaga 甘露安 of Omi Province, after he established himself in Echigo Province.

Nagayoshi is the son of Toshinaga, and the school continued for three generations.



## KATANA

Shape and Construction:

Katana are a little shorter than the conventional length. They have a koshi sori which is a little shallow, and will have a slight saki sori feeling. The shinogi is high.

There are shobu tsukuri, unokubi tsukuri, as well as o-hira tsukuri blades.

Hi and Carvings:

There are bo hi, futatsuji hi, suken and bonji.

Hamon:

The hamon is chu-suguha mixed with ko-midare, and there will be some nie which form uchinoke and hakikake in places along the edge of the hamon.

Boshi:

Komaru with hakikake.

Jitetsu and Hada:

The steel is tough (hard or light colored) and the hada stands out very clearly, and is ko-mokume hada and masame hada. There will be ayasugi hada present in places.

Nakago:

The nakago will have sori and the tip is ha agari kurijiri. The file marks are kiri or katte sagari.

Inscriptions are Momokawa ju Nagayoshi 桃川住長吉.

## **SANINDO**

The Sanindo highway ran through the provinces of Tamba, Tajima, Tango, Inaba, Hoki, Izumo, Iwami and Iki.

Being close to the capital, this highway traces its history back to the earliest years of Japanese history.

The incident of Minamoto Raiko and his Shiten-o who subdued the bandits of Oei-yama is famous, and the blade which was used to behead the chief bandit, Shutendoshi, was one made by Yasutsuna of Hoki Province.

## **TAMBA PROVINCE**

Since the province of Tamba is on the other side of Yamashiro Province going towards the Japan Sea coast, one had to go through it to get to the Japan Sea,

consequently traffic was quite heavy and many historical events have been recorded by the various war lords that emerged from Tamba Province.

In the annals of sword making, there have been few smiths recorded during the Kamakura Period, such smiths as Kunisada and Yukitsugu are associated with the Awataguchi School. Also, also there is a Kunitoshi 国利 who worked there who was a student of Rai Kunitoshi 来国利 This Kunitoshi has been referred to as Tamba Rai although not many of this smith's works are seen.

Kunisada was active around the Bunei Era and was a student of Awataguchi Kuninobu. Although his works are very rare, we will give a brief description of his work as well as those of his students, and others from this same time. They are:

KUNISADA 国定	Bunei Era
MASATSUGU 正次	Shoo Era
MASAKUNI 正国	Enkei Era
YUKITSUGU 幸次	Kemmu Era
YUKISADA 幸定	Embun Era
YUKIZANE 幸真	Meitoku Era
MITSUGANE 光包	Oei Era
MITSUSUKE 光助	Eikyo Era
KUNITOSHI 国利	Geno Era
KUNISADA 国定	worked in the Yamashiro Tradition approximately during the Bunei Era.
YUKITSUGU 幸次	Worked in the Yamashiro Tradition approximately during the Kemmu Era.

#### Shape and Construction:

Worked in the tachi style of the mid-Kamakura Period, and there is a torii sori. The overall width of the blade is narrow, and there will not be much difference in the width at the machi and the tip.

Hiraniku will be lacking, the shinogi will be high, and the kissaki will be a little long for this type of shape.

Hamon:

Formed in nie, and the pattern will be chu-suguha with ko-gunome and ko-midare. There will be very little activity or hataraki to see within the hamon. The edge or border of the hamon will be very distinct.

Boshi:

Komaru with a slight kaeri. There will be mura nie (groups or clumps of nie) in the boshi, although it is not precisely mura nie, but is very close to it.

Jittesu and Hada:

The steel is very well forged which results in mokume hada mixed with masame hada, and the ji nie will have a whitish sheen. Again, there will be mura nie-like nie.

Nakago:

The nakago will have sori and a kurijiri tip. The file marks will be in kiri or suji chigai. Inscriptions will be in two characters.

KUNITOSHI 国後

Worked in the Yamashiro and Yamato traditions, approximately during the Geno Era.

TACHI

Shape and Construction:

There were two types made; one with the torii sori of the mid-Kamakura Period and the other with a koshi sori.

In both cases, the blades will be thin and there will be very little hiraniku, and the mune is a low gyo-no-mune (ihori mune). So-no-mune (maru mune or round mune) are sometimes seen.

Hamon:

Formed in nie. The pattern is chu-suguha with ko-gunome. There will be yaki kuzure as well as nijuba. There will be uchinoke and hakikake at the hamon edge, and mura nie will be present in places. There is little activity or hataraki to be seen within the hamon.

Boshi:

The boshi is a small pattern midarekomi with a small kaeri. Some blades are yakizume.

Jitetsu and Hada:

Although the steel has been well forged, the hada tends to stand out. The hada is o-mokume hada mixed with masame hada.

Nakago:

The nakago is short and the tip is kurijiri or ha agari kurijiri. The file marks are kiri or katte sagari. Inscriptions are made with two characters.

**TANTO**

Tanto are hiratsukuri josun (approximately 8.5 sun) takanoko sori, or wide and with a little saki sori.

There will be carvings such as suken or gomabashi.

The hamon will be formed in nie and the pattern will be chu-suguha mixed with komidare, and there will be nijuba and uchinoke in places.

In many works, the hamon becomes wide around the fukura area, and the boshi will be wide and end with a komaru with very little kaeri.

The hada is o-mokume hada mixed with masame hada, and the steel will have a whitish color.

**TAJIMA PROVINCE**

The only sword smiths who worked here during the Koto Period were the Hojoji school smiths. The school was founded by Kunimitsu.

Kunimitsu is famous as a student of Sadamune of Soshu Province, and he is counted as one of the Sadamune santetsu.

Kunimitsu is also the smith known for making a type hamon known as “chabana choji” 茶花丁学, a distinctively designed choji which is not exactly like the kawazuko choji of Mitsutada of Osafune, but very similar to those, although Kunimitsu’s choji are clustered together whereas those of Mitsutada are separated.

There have been some controversies about Kunimitsu having ever been a student of Sadamune, and this can be understood since the hamon of the two vary so much.

## KUNIMITSU国光

### TACHI:

Worked in the Soshu and Bizen traditions approximately during the Jowa era. No works of his are said to remain in their original length.

### Shape and Construction:

Tachi style of the Yoshino Period with a slightly shallow torii sori. There will not be much difference in the width going from the machi to the yokote.

The shinogi is high, the kissaki is long, and the fukura will lack roundness.

There are many nagamaki naoshi as well as naginata naoshi.

### Hi and Carvings:

There are bo hi or bo hi with soe hi, futatsuji hi, and wide and shallow naginata hi.

The tips of the hi will be notably low in the koshinogi area.

### Hamon:

The yakiba is wide and formed in nioi. There are blades that are often mistaken for Fukuoka Ichimonji works with o-choji midare. These will have little nie, and the nie will be clustered inside of the hamon. Nioi ashi will be seen in numbers, and large inazuma will be present as well as sunagashi.

The choji in the Hojoji hamon are distinct, and unlike the kawazuko choji of the early Osafune smiths of Bizen Province such as Mitsutada or Morie of Hatakeda in

Bizen Province. The difference is that the Hojoji choji have the peaks or heads of the choji with a round form, and two choji will form a single group.

An old poem tells us (with a very free translation) that Hojoji mada naginata and the hamon were midareba in chabana”.

Boshi:

The boshi are midarekomi, and although there was a kaeri, since many, or most, of the naginata and nagamaki have been reshaped, there will no longer be any kaeri visible since that part of the blade has been shaved off. Consequently, these reshaped blades will have a yakizume boshi.

Jitetsu and Hada:

The hada is o-mokume hada mixed with masame hada, and o-hada will be seen in places. In these o-hada areas there will be chikei. This was commonly referred to as aoji masso in the olden days, and it was one of the clues to identifying Hojoji blades.

These are two distinct trademarks seen in Hojoji work, the chabana choji and the aoji masso (chikei).

Nakago:

Practically all of the works of the smiths are o-suriage mumei.

WAKIZASHI and TANTO

Shape and Construction:

Many of the tanto have been reshaped, and they are hiratsukuri sunnobi (over 8.5 sun) and wide hiratsukuri sunnobi with a saki sori. The mune will be shin-no-mune (mitsumune) or so-no-mune (marumune).

Hi and Carvings:

Katana hi are carved near the mune, or there are are katana hi with soe hi, and suken, gomabashi, or bonji.

Hamon:

Gunome midare with nie, and there will be nie kuzure.

Nakago:

The nakago are short and the tips are kurijiri. The file marks are kiri or suji chigai.

Inscriptions are “Tanshu ju Kunimitsu saku”, 舟州住国光 作. The second Kunimitsu signed “Tanshu ju Hayato no suke Kunimitsu saku”

“Tanshu ju Hayato no suke Kunimitsu saku“, 丹州 生翁人国光 with dates.

## INABA PROVINCE

Like most of the provinces on the Sanindo, this province did not have many sword smiths either, and the one group of smiths was an off-shoot from the Awataguchi School of Yamashiro Province. These smiths were:

KAGENAGA	was a student of Awataguchi Yoshimasa and he is at times referred to as Inaba Kokaji, 因幡小鍛冶
KANENAGA	second generation 長二代, Kemmu Era
KAGENAGA	third generation, Oan Era
KAGEIE	Meio Era
NORIKIYO	Oei Era
YUKIKAGE	Choroku Era
YUKIKAGE	Choroku Era

The Kagenaga smiths 景長 worked in the Yamashiro tradition approximately during the Kagen era (first generation) and Kemmu era (second generation).

Since no long blades are known to exist of the first or second generations, we give descriptions of tanto which are encountered at times. Long blades by the later smiths are sometimes seen.

TANTO

### Shape and Construction:

Hiratsukuri josun (8.5 sun) takenoko sori tanto. They are narrow and thick. Shobu tsukuri tanto are seen sometimes.

### Hi and Carvings:

Suken, gomabashi, and bonji are seen, although rarely.

### Hamon:

Hamon are formed in nie and are hoso-suguha hotsure, or chu-suguha hotsure mixed with ko-midare.

Also, there are works with ko-gunome and ko-midare which have very little hataraki or details to see within the hamon.

### Boshi:

Komaru or omaru.

### Jitetsu and Hada:

The steel is very finely forged with ko-mokume hada mixed with masame hada in places.

### Nakago:

Short with a kurijiri tip. The file marks will be kiri or suji chigai. Inscriptions will be Inshu ju Kanenaga.

### KAGENAGA, 3rd generation 景長三代

Worked in the Yamashiro Tradition approximately during the Oei era.

### KATANA and WAKIZASHI (tanto are rare):

#### Shape and Construction:

Katana shape from the Muromachi Period with a koshi sori and slight saki sori. The blade is narrow and the length will be a little short.

In the case of wakizashi, these are also short with most in a shobu tsukuri style.

### Hi and Carvings

Bo hi or futatsuji hi are seen, but rarely.

### Hamon:

Formed in nie with a hosu suguha pattern in most cases, however there are chu-suguha and ko-gunome ko-midare hamon too.

### Boshi:

Komaru or komaru sagari (hanging down or sagging).

### Jitetsu and Hada:

Although the steel has been forged very well; there will be a 'feeling' of it being weak. The hada will be ko-mokume hada mixed with masame hada. Some works will have shirake utsuri.

### Nakago:

The nakago are short with ha agari kengyo tips. The file marks will be kiri.

Inscriptions will be the same as seen for the the 1st and the 2nd generations, however the way that the characters are written will be quite different in style between the first and second generations.

## **HOKI PROVINCE**

The area around Hoki Province on the Japan Sea coast has been written about in the early chronicles of Japanese History.

Hoki along with Izumo and Iwami Provinces has been known to produce quality 'iron-sand' from ancient times and this goes back to the early days of the dawn of Japanese history.

It has also been said that Hoki Province was one of the contact points with the Asian mainland (probably Korea) as culture developed early here.

Hoki Province is synonymous with Yasutsuna of Ohara or vice-versa, so far as swords are concerned. Yasutsuna, who was supposedly active during the Daido Era (808-809) or thereabouts, is one of the earliest swordsmiths in recorded sword annals and there are a few works by him remaining to this day, as well as some by his students, such as Sanemori, Ieyasu, Moritsuna, and a few others.

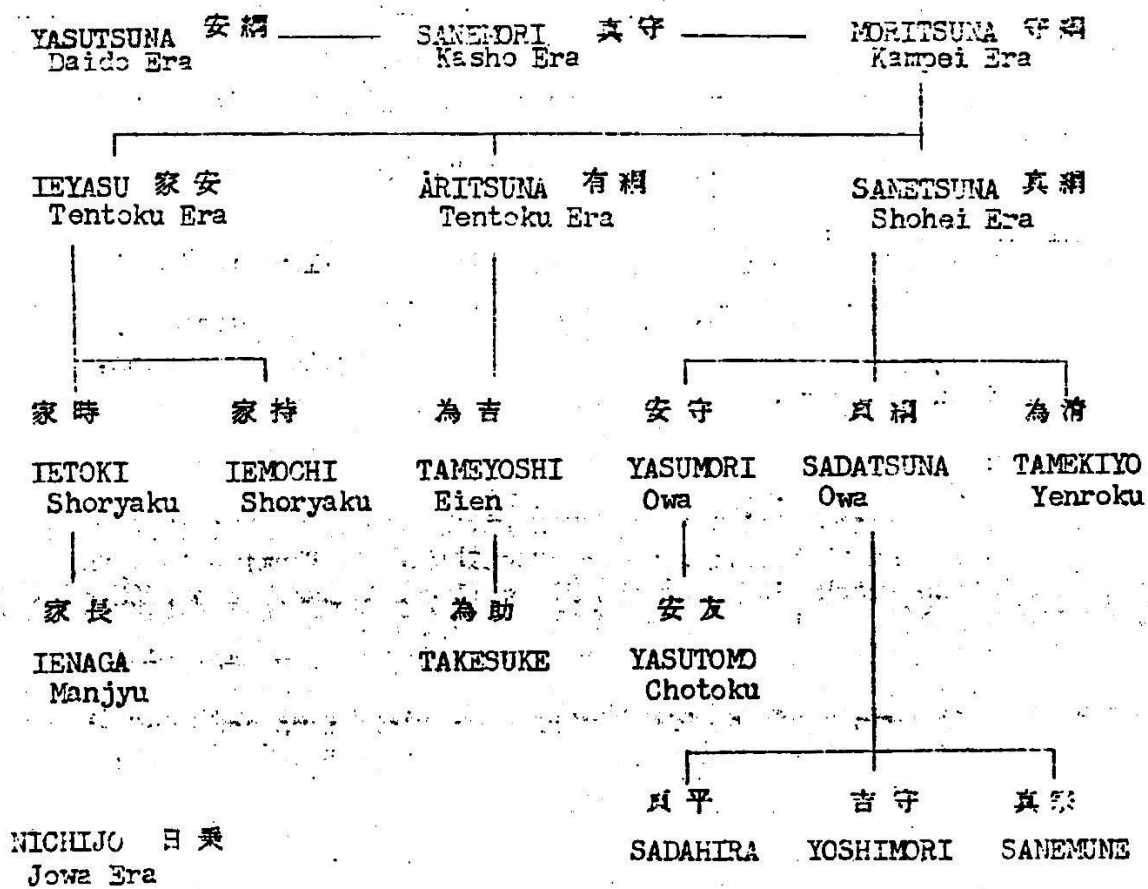
The Daido Era is early in the Heian Period, and it was during this time that Priest Kukai returned from China and founded the Shingon Sect of Buddhism. In the late years of the famous general Sakanoue Tamuramaro, it is said that after one of his many expeditions to the east, to subjugate the barbarians, he went to the Grand Shrine at Ise and presented a sword by Yasutsuna to that shrine.

However, probably the most famous blade by Yasutsuna is that which is called Dojikiri Yasutsuna with which Minamoto Raiko subdued the bandit called Shutendoji in the mountains of Deiyama in Tamba Province in the late Heian Period. This blade is currently owned by the state and is a Kokuho. It was during the time of Yasutsuna that the transition from the straight edged blade introduced from the mainland was changing into a sword with a sori which we know today as shinogi tsukuri, and possibly Yasutsuna may have made some contribution to this transition. Popularly credit for this is given to the legendary Amakuni of Yamato province.

In the early Heian Period, there were such swordsmiths as Amakuni and Amakura in Yamato Province, Shinsoku in Buzen Province in Northern Kyushu, Sanemori the father of Tomonari 友成 of Bizen Province (although a little later than the early Heian period), the Muso smiths of Mutsu Province, and the Yasutsuna School.

Yasutsuna is said to have been a resident of Ohara Village in Hoki Province, and was named Yokose Saburo Daiyu 横激三郎大夫 as well as Ohara Taro Daiyu 大原太郎大夫 and had the title Samanosuke.

The famous Dojikiri previously mentioned has been recorded in the Kyoho Meibutsu Cho (a translation of which will be given in another installment of the Newsletter) and it is counted as one of the blades called Tenka Go Ken (天下五剣), or the five best swords (this was covered early in 1968 in the Newsletter). The swords making up the Tenka Go Ken are: Dojikiri Yasutsuna, Onimaru Kunitsuna, Otenta, Mikazuki Munechika, and Juzumaru Tsunetsugu.



We have always wondered, and still do, just where did such sword smiths like Yasutsuna or Amakuni, or any other smith of these early times, learn their skill, and how to work at such a high level of sophistication. Since there is no recorded history, probably these questions will never be answered, although perhaps, some historians sometime in the future may come up with an answer.

### YASUTSUNA 安綱

No specific tradition is given for the work of Yasutsuna, however, if any, one tradition is to be attached to him, then it may be the Yamato Tradition, although there is quite a bit of difference between the true Yamato tradition and the works of Yasutsuna.

### TACHI

### Shape and Construction:

Mostly they have a torii sori, although there are some works with a koshi sori. There will be a very strong fumbari, However, the sori will be a little shallow for a blade from the Heian period. The blade will be wide. The shinogi will be high, and there will be very little hiraniku. The kissaki will be long and the fukura will lack roundness. The sword will be firm, but at the same time, be graceful.

There are kotachi, although they are very rare.

### Hi and Carvings:

Bo hi are seen and are very shallow. They will end in kakinagashi in the nakago.

The tip of the hi is carved well up into the ko-shinogi ji. Ken, bonji and other similar types of carvings are seen, although rarely.

### Hamon:

The hamon is formed in nie.

The pattern will be suguha with ko-choji ko-midare, and nioi will cluster around the nie forming ashi, and the activity or hataraki deriving from the nie will be found in great numbers all along the length of the blade.

It will be very "hade" (flashy) for a blade from the early Heian Period.

The width of the hamon will have variations, and the hada in the steel within the hamon will stand out distinctly.

The nie will be a little rough and there will be such workings (hataraki) such as inazuma and kinsuji as well as sunagashi.

Also, there will be nie sake within the hamon such as that commonly seen in the work of the Soshu smiths during the Yoshino Period.

Muneyaki is sometimes seen.

### Boshi:

The boshi will be midarekomi and yakizume or with a slight kaeri, and the nie will be especially rough in the boshi.

Sometimes, there will be nie kuzure, which can form a kaen boshi.

### Jitetsu and Hada:

The very finely forged steel will have mokume hada mixed with o-hada. Sometimes there will be o-itame hada such as that seen in work by the Soshu smiths during the Yoshino Period.

Ji-nie will be very strong which results in yubashiri and chikei.

Nakago:

The nakago is long and has sori and a kurijiri tip.

Some nakago will be kijimomo.

The file marks will be kiri or suji chigai (if any file marks remain).

Signatures or mei will have two characters.

SANEMORI

Worked approximately during the Kasha era.

TACHI

Shape and Construction:

About the same as Yasutsuna, however, everything about the blade is made in a slightly gentler form and the work is not as strong as Yasutsuna's work.

Hi and Carvings:

The same as Yasutsuna.

Hamon:

About the same as Yasutsuna, although everything is made on a slightly smaller scale.

There are some works in nioi and in suguha choji midare.

Everything else will be about the same as Yasutsuna.

NICHIJO

Worked approximately during the Jowa era

Tachi were made in the style of the Heian Period, with a torii sori and strong fumbari. There is much hiraniku, a high shinogi, and the kissaki is a little long.

The general appearance of the blade is very graceful.

The hamon will be in nie with a chu-suguha pattern mixed with ko-choji midare. There will be komidare in places. The nie will be rough and the hamon will be very hanayaka or active or exuberant. All other aspects remain about the same as seen in the work of Yasutsuna.

## IEYASU 家安

Worked approximately during the Tentoku era

A few years ago, we saw a blade by this sword smith and we were told that it was a kokuho, however, no matter how favorably we looked at it, we just could not overlook the fact that this blade was a "yakinaoshi" (re-tempered), therefore, with such being the case, we had no way of assuring ourselves of what the hamon or the condition of the jitetsu and hada was in its original state. However, the construction of the blade certainly was that of the Yasutsuna school.

## HIROYOSHI SCHOOL 広賀系

After the decline of the Yasutsuna school in the late Heian period, we do not see any sword making activities in Hoki Province, but then in the late Koto period, there emerges the Hiroyoshi school, more popularly called the Koga school.

In the interval between Yasutsuna and Hiroyoshi, there were some swords made in this province, but these were by sword smiths from other provinces who came here searching for a good source of iron sand, and it is recorded that such smiths as Bizen Kunimune, Arimasa, Motoshige, Chogi, Omiya Morokage, Osafune Munemitsu, and Awa Ujijoshi came here and made swords. Hiroyoshi or Koga was a student of Tsunahiro of Soshu Province, who settled here and was active around the late Koto period.

The smiths of this school were:

### HIROYOSHI I

Eisho to Temban Era

HIROYOSHI 広賀	Eisho to Tembun era.
HIROYOSHI 広賀	Koji Era. Also signed Mita Gorozaemon no Jo. 見田 五 郎 左 備 門 尉
HIROYOSHI 広賀	Tensho era. Also signed Mita Kurobei no Jo 見 田 九 郎 兵 衛 尉
MORIHIRO 盛広	Tensho Era. Signed Kurayoshi Junin Doso (Hichiroemon no Jo). 倉田 色人 遊祖尾七郎右衛門尉
HIROYOSHI 広賀	Worked in the Soshu tradition, approximately during the Tembun and Tensho eras.

## KATANA and WAKIZASHI

### Shape and Construction:

Made in the shape and the style of the Muromachi period and in the Sengoku period. There will be a tendency to show koshi sori and saki sori, and there will be fumbari.

There will be hiraniku and the blade will be thick. The kissaki will be a little long.

Also, there are blades with a high shinogi and an extremely thin mune.

O-hiratsukuri and unokubi tsukuri are sometimes seen.

Wakizashi are shobu tsukuri, unokubi tsukuri, and naginata naoshi tsukuri.

The mune will be gyo-no-mune (ihorimune) or so-no-mune (round).

### Hi and Carvings:

Bo hi and futatsuji hi are seen but they are rare.

Ken, short hi and short bo hi will sometimes be carved at the bottom of the blade.

### Hamon:

The yakiba will be wide and in nioi. There will be mura nie (groups or clusters of nie).

The pattern will be hiro suguha o-notare, or notare-midare, and there will be a sharp or well defined border pattern in the hamon. Muneyaki are seen.

Some wakizashi and shobu tsukuri wakizashi which are gently shaped will have a hosu suguha hamon.

Boshi:

The boshi are a wide midarekomi and some will be ichimai.

Jitetsu and Hada:

The steel will seem hard (light colored) and the hada will be mokume hada. In some swords, the steel will look whitish and these will have a prominent hada. On other blades, sometimes no hada will be visible.

Nakago:

The nakago are short and stubby in most cases, and they will have a tanagobara shape. The tip will be either kurijiri or kengyo. The file marks are kiri or suji chigai.

Inscriptions are long in most cases.

TANTO

Tanto are hiratsukuri sunnobi (over 8.5 sun) with sakisori and thick. Some are hiratsukuri sunnobi with sakisori and wide and thick.

There are also unokubi tsukuri, shobu tsukuri, and sunzumari (less than 8.5 sun) takenoko sori tanto. Other details are about the same as those described for katana and wakizashi.

In takenoko sori work, the hamon will be in nie and chu-suguha hotsure with a very fine jitetsu.

## **KYOHO MEIBUTSU CHO**

24TH INSTALLMENT

## OSAKA TAEMA

大阪当麻

Mumei

Length: 8 sun 8 bu

Value: 7,000 kan

Owner: Matsudaira Uemon no Suke

Unokubi tsukuri with naginata hi and soe hi. Owned by Nakagawa Hachiromon and was left to Sohan. It was purchased by Lord Toshitsune and then presented to Lord Hideyoshi, given to Lord Hideyori, and then to Ono Shuri.

It was lost during the Battle of Osaka, and then found by Kogyoku on the 6th of Genna (1620), at which time Lord Hidetada purchased it. As a legacy (of Hidetada), it was left to Matsudaira Kunai. As one of the Osaka Gyobutsu, it is one of the better of the Taema.

### **Yamanaka Note**

Matsudaira Uemon no suke refers to the Ikeda family of Okayama of Bizen Province.

Nakagawa Hachiroamon, otherwise known as Minamoto Masashige, served Oda Nobunaga and was given the name of Oda Echizen at that time (when he served Nobunaga). Sohan refers to his son.

It is recorded that Maeda Toshinaga bought this blade from Sohan for 100 kan and sometime during the Tensho Era, gave it to Hideyoshi. The text refers to Maeda Toshitsune as having bought the blade from Sohan.

Matsudaira Kunai refers to the 3rd son of Ikeda Terumasa, Ikeda Tadakatsu. On the 1st of Genna (1615) his elder brother Tadatsusu died without an heir, therefore the domain was given to Tadakatsu and he came to own and rule the province of Bitchu and Bizen with a fief of 310,000 Koku.

We have not been able to find out where this blade currently is.

## KANBE TAEMA

上部当麻

Owner: Gyobutsu and at one time, Kuwayama樂山.

Shumei

Length: 8 sun 3.5 bu

Value: 300 mai

There is a carving of a ken on the omote and shobu hi on the ura. Found at Otsu in Goshu (Omi Province).

Kuwayama Iga no Kami purchased and owned it. Later it was at the Kii, and when the Dogukae (\*) was made, it went to Owari.

On the 3rd of Keian (1650), the value was set at 5,000 Kan.

It has been famous from ancient times as a meibutsu and known as Kuwayama.

There is another meibutsu with by the name of Kambe, but how the name of Kambe came to be attached to it is not known.

On the third year of Shotoku (1713), it was appraised and in the same year it was presented (to the Shogunate) as a legacy of Tokugawa Gorota.

### **Yamanaka Note**

The name Kuwayama for this blade comes from the fact that the blade was owned by Kuwayama Iga no Kami Naoharu. He was the second son of Kuwayama Shigeharu. Their father came from the Kuwayama of Kato Gori in Owari Province, and for years served Toyotmi Hideyoshi. He later was given 30,000 Koku at Kuwayama Castle and took the name of Hoin in his later years.

During the battle between the Tokugawa and the Toyotomi, he sided with the Tokugawa forces and was given a fief in Yamato Province with 26,000 koku.

There is another meibutsu with the same name of Kambe Taema (covered below).

Tokugawa Gorota refers to the 5th generation of the Owari Tokugawa and the only son of the 4th Tokugawa Yoshimichi. He died on the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Shotoku as is stated in the text. The reason why this blade went to the Shogunate, is that Gorota did not have an heir, and therefore his uncle, the younger brother of his father, Tsugumoto, took over the Owari, and for this, Tsugumoto presented a tachi by Sadasane along with this blade, as a legacy from Gorota.

This blade has a shirasaya on which it is written; December 11, Shotoku 3, mudai (value unknown), Tokugawa Gorota Ibutsu (legacy), 8 Sun. 3 Bu

the blade was nominated to Juyo Bijutsu hin prior to WWII. The blade left the Shogunate collection some years ago presently is owned by a private collector.

(\*) DOGUKAE is something like an Inventory. Treasures stored in a kura or warehouse are examined, and those that are not wanted are sold, given away or traded.

KANBE TAEMA 上部 当麻

Owner: Kii

Mei: shumei

Length: 8 sun 7 bu

Value: 5,000 kan

Carvings of a ken on the omote and a shobi hi on the ura.

Owned by Ise Kambe Etchu Sadanaga.

At an antique shop in Fushimi, the price was agreed upon at 1 ryo.

The buyer went back to the inn to fetch the money, and placing the 1 ryo in his pocket he went back to the antique shop. When he was about to pay for it at the shop, he looked in his pocket, and found that he had dropped or lost the money on his way. Retracking his steps, and making inquiries, he found no one who had seen it, but he found it and then going back to the shop, purchased the wakizashi and returned to the inn.

In undressing, and removing his obi (waist sash), the gold dropped out, and so the gold given to the antique shop was found money and the sword was purchased for nothing.

The blade thereafter went from place to place and then came to be owned by the late Matsudaira Shimofusa no Kami The forgoing incident was described by Daikokuya Eishitsu who has had some associations with the Kambe blade.

On Shoho 2 (1645) the blade came from Shimofusa no Kami or Tsuruchiyo and was appraised at 3,000 kan.

On the note with the blade, the blade was noted as being at the residence of Kizuki no Kami, and Kozan was told that when Izumi was still an oribe, the blade was at Daijingu which is the grand shrine at Ise, and for some reason the value was set at 100 kan. Later, a messenger came and said that since the blade belonged to the Daijingu, the value was changed to 7 mai. Later, the blade came to be owned by the late Matsudaira Shimofusa no Kami.

The blade having gone through the hands of Kizuki Izumo no Kami, Oribe, and Hanzaemon during the Manji Era, it was then sold by Shimofusa no Kami and purchased by Dewa no Kami.

On the first year of Kambun (1661), the blade was sent to Koon who changed the mune to mitsu mune, and on the second year of Kambun, the value was raised to 200 mai. As a legacy of Dewa no Kami it was presented to Lord Ietsuna.

On the second year of Jokyo (1685), when Princess Tsuru wedded (to the Kii Tokugawa), the value was raised, the shumei was made, and it was and given to Kii Chunagon.

### **Yamanaka Note**

The explanation that the sword was bought at an antique shop, and that the gold was lost seems like a 'fish story'. However, in explaining more simply what the text is trying to say, we can suggest the following:

Kambe Etchu bought this blade at an antique shop in Fushimi, and later sold it to Matsudaira Shimofusa no Kami, who is Matsudaira Tadaaki of Shonibazu of Musashi province, who then sold it to Mito Tokugawa Yorifusa whose name was Tsuruchiyo in his early days. The Mito Tokugawa sent the blade to the Honami, and it was appraised for 3,000 kan.

The blade had an accompanying small note, on which it was written Kizuki Izumi no Kami, so therefore when Kizuki Hanzaemon was asked, he said that, and this was when when Izumi was still known by the name of Oribe,

The blade was still at the Grand Shrine of Ise, however it was to be disposed of, but the blade did not have any value set to it, and so it was suggested that the blade be purchased at 100 Kan. Then a messenger (3 of them) came from the shrine and said that the blade being from that shrine, it should be sold for no less than 7 mai.

The blade was purchased by Matsudaira Shimofusa, and it was then sent to Matsudaira Dewa. Then on the first year of Kambun, it was sent to Honami Koon for appraisal and polishing, and Koon reshaped the mune to gyo-no-mune (3 ridged) and added the shumai attribution, and the value was set at 200 mai.

The Tokugawa Jikki for Kambun 6 states that on the 13th of April, Matsudaira Shinano no Kami Tsunataka was allowed to take over the reign of the family, and for

this he presented a blade by Sanetada, a legacy from his father Dewa no Kami Naomasa. He also presented a wakizashi by Taema. Matsudaira Tsunataka and his father Naomasa, ruled at Matsue in Izumo Province with a fief of 186,000 koku.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of Jokyo, the daughter of Shogun Tsunayoshi, married Kii Tokugawa Tsunanori and the blade was given to Tsunanori by the Shogun.

The blade was handed down in the Kii Tokugawa family until 1928 when they sold practically all of their art treasures at an auction, and it was sold along with such other famous blades like the Hyuga Masamune, Kiriha Sadamune, and a Hisakuni tachi measuring 2 shaku 6 sun and signed.

We have been told that the shumei and the orikami that accompanies this blade is by Honami Kojo and not Koon.

The catalog of the Kii Tokugawa sale of April 1927 list includes:

Item 294:

Tanto

Meibutsu

length 8 sun 7 Bu

No sori

carvings:

Ken on the omote, shobu on the ura

Orikami: value of 5,000 Kan dated Jokyo 2 (1685)

Koshirae with menuki and kozuka: gold shishi by Goto Sojyo

Listed as: received from Shogun Tsunayoshi by Princess Tsuru on Jokyo 2

MURAKUMO TAEMA 村雲当麻

Owner: Muraku Owari

Length: 7 sun 8 bu

Value: 10 mai

Carvings of ken on both sides and there is a very thin hi on the omote.

It came from the Murakumo Gosho.

## Yamanaka Note

Murakumo Goshō refers to the estate of the Owari Tokugawa which is known also as Juiryū In.

When Toyotomi Hidetsugu was forced to commit suicide by his uncle Hideyoshi, Hidetsugu's mother and Hideyoshi's elder sister became nuns and entered a Buddhist monastery. Two swords had been with her as her treasures, this Murakumo Taema and a tachi called Murakumo Hisakuni, and she sent both of these blades back to Osaka and they then became Osaka Gyobutsu.

As a legacy from Hideyoshi, it was given to Hori saemon no suke Hideharu.

The Tokugawa Jikki states that on the 8th of April on the 2nd Year of Meireki (1656), the blade was presented to Shōgun Ietsuna by Owari Tokugawa Mitsutomo.

The majority of the Osaka Gyobutsu, that is the vast collection of art objects that was stored at the Osaka Castle by Toyotomi Hideyoshi came into the hands of Ieyasu after the defeat of the Toyotomi, and these treasures were being sent to Edo, however, Priest Tenshin, the chief advisor to Ieyasu told him that any objects belonging to the Toyotomi should not be brought to Edo, and so the caravan that was carrying these treasures stopped at Nagoya, and the Owari Tokugawa were ordered to store them at their castle in Nagoya.

It was noted during the early Taishō period (1910s) by Matsudaira Yorihiro, who conducted extensive research into the whereabouts of famous swords, that this sword has long been lost!

NATAGIRI TAEMA 記切当麻

Owner: Ii Kamon no suke

Mumei

Length: 1 shaku 3 sun 1 bu

Value: 1,500 kan

The history regarding this blade is not known. The blade has been at the Sano Shuri Daiyu for a number of years.

It is unokubi tsukuri and has a naginata hi with a soe hi. The blade has been shortened a little, and at the tip of the nakago, there is an inscription of Showa remaining.

It was appraised on the 4th of Keian (1650).

## Yamanaka Note

Absolutely nothing is known of this blade except for the fact that it went up in flames during the great Tokyo earthquake of 1924, and it was still in the Iii family at that time.

## FAMOUS SWORDS: KOKUHO

No. 66

KAGEMITSU 景光

Meibutsu Koryu Kagemitsu

Tachi

Length: 73.6 cm

Sori: 3.0 cm

Width: 3.0 cm

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Shape and Construction:

Shinogi tsukuri

Shin no mune (mitsumune)

Strong koshi sori with much fumbari

Chu kissaki

Hi and Carvings:

Bo hi on the omote, and within the hi and from about 2 inches above the machi, a ken maki ryu or shin no kurikara appears with the rest hidden in the nakago.

The same bo hi is carved on the ura, and at the very bottom of the hi which is hidden in the nakago, there is a carving of a bonji in ukibori (relief carving).

The carvings being hidden in the nakago results from the fact that the blade was shortened, and due to the fact that a very small part of the dragon shows above the habaki, it is called koryu which means a small dragon.

Hamon:

The hamon is a shallow notare with choji mixed with saka choji. Ashi and yo are seen in great numbers all along the length of the hamon. The edge is very well defined and very distinct and clear, and there are countless numbers of extremely fine nie grains.

Boshi:

There is a long komaru with a tip resembling a togari.

Jitetsu and Hada:

Very tightly forged ko-itame hada. Ji nie are seen everywhere. There are also midare utsuri.

Nakago:

Suriage with about the one third of the bottom half of the original nakago present. There is an inscription:

Omote: BIZEN NO KUNI OSAFUNE JU KAGEMITSU

Ura: GENKYO NI NEN GO GATSU HI

The file marks are katte sgari and there are three mekugi ana.

### **Yamanaka Note**

Kagemitsu is the son of Osafune Nagamitsu, and one of the early masters of the Osafune School. He had the title of Sahyoenojo, and is regarded as the founder or originator of the kata otoshi gunome or saka gunome hamon.

This Koryu Kagemitsu once, long ago, belonged to the famous imperial loyalist Kusunoki Masashige who died fighting for the emperor to help restore power to the emperor which had been taken by the Ashikaga shoguns. The blade was, for a long time, in the custody of the Yamada family of cutting test fame during the Tokugawa Period.

Koyama Munetsugu of Shin Shinto fame, who was well acquainted with the Yamada family, often copied this Kagemitsu and this is the reason why we see a number of Kagemitsu copies made by Munetsugu.

This blade was presented to Emperor Meiji, however, since the Imperial Household had to relinquish its right to it shortly after the termination of the last war. The blade is currently owned by the State and is in the keeping of the National Museum at Ueno Park. Probably, this is one of the best Kagemitsu blades made.

No. 67

KAGEMITSU景光

Tanto

Length: 28.4 cm

Sori: 2.6 cm

width: 0.7 cm

Shape and Construction:

Hiratsukuri with very little saki sori.

Hi and Carvings:

Omote: Chichibu Daibosatsu

Ura: bonji

Hamon:

Kataochi gunome with ko-midare. There are ashi and yo all along the hamon.

The edge of the hamon is well defined and distinct and there are clusters of very fine nie in places.

Boshi: midarekomi with a slight kaeri.

Jitetsu and Hada:

There is a very tightly knit ko-itame hada. Abundant ji nie are seen all along the ji, and there are straight line utsuri.

Nakago:

The nakago is ubu with a slight sori. The tip is kurijiri and the file marks are katte sagari. There are two mekugi ana. The inscription is

Omote: - Bishu Osafune Kagemitsu備州長船景光

Ura: Genkyo san nen gatsu hi 元享三年三月日

### **Yamanaka Note**

Kagemitsu, along such masters like Rai Kunitoshi, Samonji, Shintogo, Yoshimitsu, Masamune, Norishige, and Sadamune is considered to be a master at making tanto, however there are relatively few of these remaining, but the few that remain are all considered to be outstanding.

The carving of Chichibu Daibosatsu is said to tell us that this tanto was made for an order by Tanji Tokimoto of Chichibu in northern Musashi Province, and there is also a tachi with this same carving by Kagemitsu. Whether it was made to fill an order by Tanji is doubtful, however it is certain that it was made to an order from one of the warlords of the Chichibu area of Musashi province at that time in the late Kamakura Period.

This tanto was in the Uesugi family for a number of generations and it is reported that Uesugi Kenshin carried it with him to his many battles for control of the Kanto plains.

The koshirae of the blade is from the late Muromachi period and is made in a very shibui (quiet) style. The saya has black lacquer, the same on the tsuka is also lacquered black with leather tsuka ito. The metal components of the tsuka are shakudo nanako with chrysanthemums and broadbill (a type of bird) in taka bori. The menuki have a flower design and the kozuka is silver with chrysanthemums in taka bori.

No. 68

KAGEMITSU 景光

Tachi

Length: 82.7 cm

Sori: 2.6 cm

Width: 3.1 cm

Shape and Construction:

Shinogi tsukuri with a shin-no-mune (mitsumune). There is a shallow koshi sori and a chu-kissaki.

Hamon:

Chu suguha with some notare and ko-gunome ko-midare.

Ashi and yo are present in great numbers all along the hamon.

The edge of the hamon is clear and distinct, and there are ko-nie clusters.

Boshi:

The omote has a slight togari appearance and the ura is komaru.

Jitetsu and Hada:

There is a tightly forged ko-itame hada and midare utsuri shows up very clearly.

Nakago:

The nakago is almost ubu. It has been cut or shortened a little. The tip is kiri. The file marks are katte sagari. There is one mekugi ana.

The inscription is:

Omote: Kohozan ontsurugi ganshu Musashi no kuni Chichibu gori saemonjo tanji  
ason Tokimoto Ogawara

Ura: Harima no Kuni shishiawa gori miho no nishi nite kore tsukuri shinzu

Ura: Bizen no kuni Osafune ju sahyoe nojo Kagemitsu sakusha shinshi Saburo  
Kagemasa

Kareki 22 nen tsuchinoto mi 7 gatsu hi

## Yamanaka Note

As can be seen from the inscriptions on the nakago, the inscription is very long giving full detail as to who ordered the blade, etc. Kohosan refers to the Koho Shrine in Himeji.

Tanji Tokimoto ordered this blade made by Kagemitsu and Kagemasa and presented the blade to Himeiji shrine in Harima Province in 1329.

The blade left the shrine sometime thereafter.

On the 3rd year of Kambun (1663) when the 4th Shogun Ietsuna went to Nikko, he was met at Isunomiya by Okudaira Tadamasa, and it is reported that Ietsuna gave the blade to Okudaira. The blade then was handed down in the Okudaira family until very recently when the present owner purchased it from them.

Where the Shogunate got the blade is not recorded.

As the readers are aware from reading our translation of the Tokugawa Jikki, swords were exchanged all the time, and this was a daily occurrence. Therefore, in one of these exchanges, the blade was probably given to the Shogunate.

The blade, even though it has been slightly shortened at the tip, nevertheless, is a magnificent blade.

Commonly, blades by Kagemitsu are made on the very quiet side, but that is not so with this particular blade.

No. 69

CHIKAKAGE 近景

Tachi

Length: 80.6 cm

Sori: 3.0 cm

Width: 4.9 cm

Shape and Construction:

Shinogi tsukuri with a shin-no-mune (round mune). There is a strong fumbari with a strong koshi sori. There is a chu-kissaki.

Hamon:

Komidare mixed with ko-choji midare. Ashi are seen in numbers along the whole length of the hamon. In places, suguha with notare is present.

Boshi:

The boshi is notare on the omote with a sansaku tip.

The ura is yakizume.

Jitetsu and Hada:

There is a tightly forged ko-itame hada. On the lower part of the blade, on both sides of the blade, large o-hada appears and midare utsuri is very prominent.

Nakago:

The nakago is ubu with a kurijiri tip. The file marks are suji chigai. There are three mekugi ana.

The inscription is:

Omote: Bizen no kuni Osafune ju Chikakage

備前国州長船住近景

Ura: Kareki 2 nen (?) gatsu hi

嘉曆二二年 月日

## TOKUGAWA JIKKI

### PART V

GENNA 9 (1623)

February 13

Owari Yoshinao's estate is settled and Hidetada visits him and gives Yoshinao a tachi by Ohara Sanemori大原真守, a katana by Go Yoshihiro, and a wakizashi Meibutsu Naraya Sadamune 奈良屋貞宗. Yoshinao presents to Hidetada a tachi by Hisakuni久国 (of Awataguchi), a katana by Yoshimitsu吉光 (Awataguchi) and a wakizashi by Munechika宗近 (Sanjo).

February 18:

Dainagon Iemitsu visits Yoshinao at his new estate and gives Yoshinao a tachi by Kuniyuki (Rai), a katana by Nagamitsu (Osafune), and a wakizashi by Rai Kunitoshi.

Echizen Tadanao gives Yoshinao a tachi by Sanenaga (Osafune), a katana by Yasuyoshi (Sa) and a wakizashi by Rai Kunimitsu. Yoshinao presents to Iemitsu a tachi by Nagamitsu (Osafune), a katana by Sadamune, and a wakizashi by Kuniyoshi (Awataguchi).

Yoshinao gives Tadanao a tachi by Kagemitsu, a katana by Nagamitsu, and a wakizashi by Nobukuni.

From Yoshinao's retainer, Takegoshi Yamashiro no Kami Masanobu, a tachi is presented to Iemitsu.

April 26

An edict is issued to the effect that servants and slaves are not allowed to carry tachi, o-wakizashi, shuzaya (red lacquered saya), o-tsuba, or o-kaku tsuba.

May 11

On a visit of Hidetada and Iemitsu to the capital, an edict is issued to the pages, shoin-ban (library attendants), and yorai (attendants) that they should have their heads properly shaved, discard their tabi, and not carry katana and wakizashi.

May 28

Hidetada, on his way to the capital, stops off at Kakegawa Castle and gives a katana to Matsudaira Sadatsuna which is the usual custom.

A Day in May

Hidetada gives a Katana by Hasebe Kuninobu to Kyogoku Takahiro.

June 15

Various Daimyo in Kyoto, in commemoration of Hidetada's visit, present a tachi with an origami.

July 3

The second son of Yamanouchi Tadayoshi, Tadanao, presents a tachi to Hidetada.

July 11

Sadayori, son of Matsudaira Sadakatsu, Lord of Kuwana Castle, receives a tachi from Iemitsu.

July 16

Hidetada receives a tachi from the emperor, and the various Daimyo present a tachi with an orikami.

July 27

Iemitsu is appointed Sei Tai Shogun and the ceremony for the appointment is held at Fushimi Castle where the Imperial messengers are received.

To each of the nobles, a list of tachi is given (which are to be presented to the emperor later). Osawa Shōji Motosuke holds the tachi. and Kira Sahyoe no suke Yoshiya holds the katana that is to be presented to the emperor.

July 28

Various daimyo call on Hidetada at Fushimi Castle, and each presents a tachi.

August 6

The shogun, in audience with the emperor, is accompanied by Iemitsu. Sakai Tadamasa astride a horse carries a tachi. At the time of the audience, Kira Yoshiya holds the tachi and Osawa Shōji holds a katana.

In entering the inner hall of the imperial palace Sanio Nishi Dainagon Sanenori and Nino Dainagon Mituyoshi carry the tachi and the katana.

After the audience, the katana, tachi and the horse are presented to the emperor.

After the presentation of the three items, Owari Yoshinao, Kii Yorinobu and Mito Yorifusa each presents a tachi, horses and 1,000 pieces of silver to the emperor.

Returning to Nijo Castle, Hidetada has a talk with Iemitsu, and Iemitsu gives a katana by Nagamitsu to Hidetada. Hidetada gives a katana, Fudo Yukimitsu 不動行光 (Meibutsu) and a wakizashi Miyoshi Masamune (Meibutsu) to Hidetada.

August 9

Various daimyo call on the shogun at Fushimi Castle, and the shogun had just had an audience with the emperor. All of the daimyo with a province and fief of over 100,000 koku present a tachi and a horse to the shogun as well as gold and silver. Daimyo with fief of under 90,000 koku each present a tachi to the shogun.

August 15

Kinji-In Soden arrives at the capital with a reply from Siam and receives two tachi which are to be presented to the king of that country from Hidetada.

December 21

Hidetada visits Date Masamune at his home and gives him a tachi, and his son Tadamune a katana by Sadamune.

Masamune presents a tachi.

Mito Yorifusa (who accompanied the shogun) gives a tachi to Masamune.

Sometime during this year:

Ikan (a doctor in attendance at the palace) Ima Oji Hyobu Daisuke, having administered medicine to Lady Chikakiyo during her labor in order to relieve pain, is lauded by Hidetada who gives him a ken by Washu Sadamitsu (Yamato Hosho Sadamitsu).

February 10

Echizen Tadanaga is confined to his home.

May 6

Uesugi Kagekatsu dies at the age of 69.

August 4

Kuroda Kagamasa dies at the age of 56.

August 6

The third son of Goto Chojo, Enjo, dies at age 32.

Sometime during this year:

Sadenjiro Masahiro 正広切代, son of Hizen Yoshinobu, makes a tachi which he presents to lord of the province (Nabeshima) and receives a gift in return.

Sometime during this year:

Echizen Fujiwara Tadamichi 忠道 is born.

Musashi Shitahara Hiroshige 下原広重 is born.

Echizen Kunikiyo is born.

KANEI 1, 1624

January 1

Iemitsu receives various daimyo at the western castle who come to give a New Year's greeting. Also, in the meeting, he sees Yorinobu (Kii Tokugawa) and Yorifusa (Mito Tokugawa) and receives a list of tachi for presentation.

Next, Matsudaira Tadamasa and Matsudaira Tadasato also presents a list of tachi for presentation.

Daimyo with a fief of over 3,000 koku present tachi with an orikami.

January 2

Tozama Daimyo present tachi with their orikami. (\*)

On this same day, Matsudaira Tadamasa and Matsudaira Tadasato each present a tachi and an orikami to Hidetada.

(\*Tozama Daimyo refers to daimyo who fought on the side of the Toyotomi during the battle of Sekigahara).

January 5

Owari Yoshinao, being in his native province, sends a messenger and presents a tachi, horse and gold.

January 23

Hidetada visits the Kii (Tokugawa) mansion, and gives Yorinobu a Bizen Yoshihira tachi, a Matsumae Sadamune katana, and a Kyogoku Masamune wakizashi. Yorinobu presents him a Torigai Kunitsugu 鳥飼国次 wakizashi, a Go Yoshihiro katana, and a Rai Kunitsugu 来国次 katana.

January 27

Iemitsu visits Yorinobu at his mansion, and Yorinobu presents him a katana by Dai Samonji.

February 6

Hidetada visits Mito Yorifusa at his mansion and gives Yorifusa a tachi by Moriie and a katana by Go, and a wakizashi by Kozuke Kunitsugu 上野国次. Yorifusa presents Hidetada a tachi by the niji Kunitoshi 二字国利, a katana by Yukimitsu, 行光, and a wakizashi, Meibutsu Horio Masamune 堀尾正宗.

February 20

Iemitsu visits Date Masamune's mansion and presents Masamune's son Tadamune with a tachi by Ichimonji 一文字.

Masamune presents Iemitsu a tachi by Bungo Yukihiro, a katana by Mitsutada, and a wakizashi by Kunitsugu.

A Day in February

Itami Yasukatsu receives a wakizashi by Awataguchi Kunikiyo from Iemitsu.

April 14

Hidetada visits the Matsudaira Hidesato mansion and presents him with a tachi by Kunitoshi 國俊, a wakizashi by Shintogo 新藤五, and an Ichimonji katana 一文字 (an inheritance from Uesugi Kagekatsu).

Hidesato presents Hidetada a tachi by Yukimitsu 行光, a wakizashi by Sadamune 貞宗, and a katana meibutsu Natagiri Nagamitsu 鉞切長光.

July 13

Fukushima Masatoshi, as a legacy from his father Fukushima Masanori, presents Iemitsu with the O-Mitsutada katana 大光忠, and a wakizashi, Omori Yoshimitsu 大森装光. To Hidetada he presents a katana by Masamune, and a wakizashi by Aoe Kunitsugu 青江国次.

To Hidenaga he presents the meibutsu Kiriha Masamune katana 切刃正宗, and a wakizashi by Yoshimitsu 吉光 (a Meibutsu).

July 23

Matsudaira Mimasaka Tadamune is ordered to change his title to Echizen no Kami by Iemitsu since there are others who also use the title of Mimasaka. He is given a Katana.

September 26

Since Hidetada changed his residence to the west castle, Daimyo with over 10,000 Koku commemorate this event, and each presents him with a tachi and a horse.

November 5

Iemitsu moves into the main castle, and in commemoration of this, Daimyo with fiefs of over 3,000 Koku each present him with a tachi with an orikami.

Note: Hidetada officially retired from active life, and the position of shogun was assumed by his son, the 3rd Shogun Iemitsu.

November 11

On the occasion of a new empress joining the court, Iemitsu presents a tachi to the Court.

December 4

Hidetada gives Iemitsu a tachi by Niji Kunitoshi.

December 6

Iemitsu gives a katana by Shintogo 薪藤五 to Todo Takatora.

December 19

A messenger from the Korean court arrives and establishes a camp (on the outskirts of Edo ?).

Iemitsu receives the messenger in the grand hall and Kira Yoshiya acts as the tachi carrier. Arima Nobutaka acts as the katana carrier.

December 22

Hidetada gives a ken to the Korean messenger.

March 22

Matsudaira Sadakatsu dies at the age of 65.

April 29

Itakura Katsushige dies at the age of 83.

July 13

Fukushima Masanori dies at the age of 64.

February 18

Hizen Tadayoshi 肥前忠吉 receives the title of Musashi Daijo 武蔵大掾 and changes his name from Tadayoshi to Tadahiro and returns to Hizen Province.

August 21

Hankei 蔡 廣 presents two katana which he made to the Sanmi-In of Mt. Koya.

Note: These two blades were selected as Kokuho (National Treasures) on March of 1914. Presently they are Jujo Bunkazai.

Sometime during this year

Nara Toshiteru is employed by the Bakufu (Shogunate).

KANEI 2, 1625

January 2

Iemitsu gives a tachi to Hidetada.

February 2

Iemitsu gives 10 tachi and 10 o-koshi katana and 10 ko-koshi katana to Annan.

February 5

Hidetada gives to Echizen Tadanaga:

a Yukihiro tachi, a Go (Yoshihiro) katana, and a Yonezawa Yoshimitsu wakizashi 米沢吉光 (a meibutsu, but not in the Kyoho Meibutsu Cho).

Tadanaga presents to Hidetada: a Kiku Ichimonji tachi, a Kiku Ichimonji katana, and an Iizuka Yoshimitsu wakizashi (a meibutsu, but not in the Kyoho Meibutsu Cho).

Also, Owari Yoshinao gives Tadanaga a tachi by Sanenaga, an Ichimonji katana (Ichimonji Sukemune), and a Kunimitsu wakizashi.

Mito Yorifusa gives Tadanaga a Sadazane tachi, a Kunitoshi katana and a Kunimitsu 国光 wakizashi.

February 12

Iemitsu visits Tadanaga at his mansion and Tadanaga presents him with a

Sadamune tachi, a Go Yoshihiro katana, and a wakizashi by Iizuka Yoshimitsu.

February 26

Iemitsu visits Yoshinao at the Owari mansion, and he gives him a Kanetsugu tachi, a Samonji wakizashi, and a Yoshimitsu wakizashi.

Yoshinao presents to Iemitsu a Yukihiro tachi and an O-Samonji katana, and a Kanamori Masamune wakizashi (a meibutsu).

Also, retainers of Yoshinao present Iemitsu a katana by Yamashiro no Kami Masnobe with an orikami.

Buzen and four other retainers present a tachi with an orikami. Kurando and nine other retainers present a tachi with an origami.

March 8

Hidetada visits Yoshinao at his mansion. Yoshinao presents him a tachi by Masatsune, and a wakizashi by Shimizu Yoshimitsu (a meibutsu).

Hidetada presents him a tachi by Rai Kunimitsu and a katana by Masamune.

A day in March:

Naruse Masatora, as a legacy from his father Hayato no Sho presents a Sadamune katana to Iemitsu.

April 10

The Court (in Kyoto), in commemoration of Iemitsu succeeding to the Shogunate position, presents him a tachi.

April 24

Matsudaira Echizen no Kami Tadamune receives a katana, Hosho Goro (Sadamune), a wakizashi by Sadamune from Iemitsu, and a wakizashi by Sadamune from Hidetada.

May 28

Hidetada visits Todo Takatora at his mansion, and gives Daigaku no Suke, Takatora's son, a Katana by Unji 電次.

August 9

On Iemitsu's wedding, Hidetada gives Iemitsu a Kiku Ichimonji tachi, and a Masamune katana

Iemitsu in return gives Hidetada a Go katana.

October 2

Hosokawa Tadaoki Nyudo Sansai is about to return to his province and is received by Hidetada and personally hands him a Shimizu Toshiro wakizashi and says “I recall our visit with the Taiko (Hideyoshi) with you some years ago, and in the conversation at that time when you saw this wakizashi of Shimizu and the tea-caddy Shiributo of Rikyo, and you said that to perform tea with these items would be my dream” and so I give you this.

Tadaoki is very pleased and returns home.

October 18

On this day an edict is issued: the carrying of an o-wakizashi by the populace is forbidden as has been previously ordered. This edict must be observed.

Sometime during this year:

Iemitsu gives a katana, Aoki Go, to Matsudaira Tadaaki.

Kyogoku Takahiro receives the title of Tango no Kami and receives a katana by Bizen Kanemitsu.

April 27

Mori Terumoto dies at age 73.

July

Iemitsu takes a wife from the Takatsukasa (noble family of Kyoto).

November

Priest Tankai builds the Kan Ei Ji at Shinobazu gaoka (Ueno).

November 19

Hizen Masanaga 肥前正永 receives the name Masahiro from his lord (Nabeshima). This name (Masahiro), was not used prior to this date.

November 26

Honami Koshitsu passes away at an inn (Ishimachi in Edo) of paralysis. He was 43 years old.

His posthumous Buddhist name is Joken In Koshitsu Nichibei.

Koetsu comes to Edo to attend the funeral and receives an audience with the Shogun.

Sometime during this year:

Mishina Kanemichi receives the title of Tango no Kami 丹後守.

Active sword smiths at this time:

Musashi Daijo Tadahiro of Hizen

Nanki Shigekuni

Settsu Kuniyuki