

NIHONTO NEWSLETTER

February, 1972

Volume V, No. 2

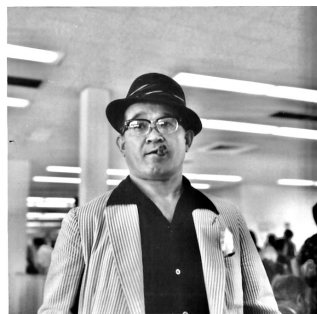
ALBERT YAMANAKA'S NIHONTO NEWSLETTER

Albert Yamanaka's Nihonto Newsletter was published monthly from January, 1968 to July, 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

COPYRIGHT 1972, Albert Yamanaka

All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part in any manner,
without written permission is prohibited.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
PAGESWORD SMITHS	
SEIKAIDO	
HIZEN PROVINCE: TADAYOSHI SCHOOL (CONT.)	3
SATSUMA PROVINCE: MARUTA UJIFUSA SCHOOL	7
NAMENOHIRA SCHOOL	14
OKU TADAKIYO SCHOOL	16
KYOHOU MEIBUTSU CHO	
FUDO KUNİYUKI	17
KO KUNİYUKI	19
AKITA KUNİYUKI	20
AOKI RAI KUNITSGUGU	20
SANSAI RAI KUNITSGUGU	21
TOGAWA RAI KUNITSGUGU	22
MASUDA RAI KUNITSGUGU	23
ZENKI KUNITSUNA	24
TOKUGAWA JIKKI	
GENROKU 9, 1696	24
GENROKU 10, 1697	28
THOUGHTS AT RANDOM	
NIHONTO NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION: air mail, \$30.00	
sea mail, \$20.00	

SWORD SMITHS

HIZEN PROVINCE (CONTINUED)

TADAHIRO, 2nd Generation

Worked in the Yamashiro tradition approximately during the Kanei Era

Had the title Omi Daijo.

KATANA AND WAKIZASHI

Shape and Construction:

Some of these swords have a very firm shape and style in the Shinto tradition, however, these are rare.

The majority of the swords have the slender shape of the Koto period. They will become narrow starting from about 2-3 sun above the habaki, and there will be very little hiraniku. The shinogi ji, thickness and kissaki are all koroai or just right.

Hamon:

Most are a chu-suguha hotsure with a narrow yakiba. The yakiba is formed in nie although the nie will be lacking when compared to the work of the first Tadayoshi. The work appears more gentle, although there will be hataraki. There are choji midare hamon and o-midare hamon, and in blades which have a strong shape, the width of the hamon is wide and a hiro-suguha with nie. There are exceptionally well made works among these.

Boshi:

The boshi are komaru and appear gentle.

Jitetsu and Hada:

Although overall the ji is very much like those of the first Tadayoshi, the appearance of the ko-mokume hada ji tends to be a little 'flat' or dull appearing.

Nakago:

The nakago in his early work are wide, however, on the whole they are narrow. The tips are kengyo and the file marks are kiri.

Inscriptions are:

HIZEN (no) KUNI JU FUJIWARA TADAHIRO 肥前國住藤原忠廣

and

HIZEN (NO) KUNI JU OMI DAIJO FUJIWARA TADAHIRO

肥前國住近江大掾藤原忠廣

TADAYOSHI 3rd generation三代

Worked in the Yamashiro tradition and in the Shinto tradition approximately during the Kambun Era. Had the title Mutsu no Kami.

KATANA AND WAKIZASHI

On the whole, these will greatly resemble those of the first Tadayoshi, and in some instances, there are those that are so made well that they will surpass the works of the first Tadayoshi.

Hiratsukuri ko-wakizashi and tanto are rare.

Shape and Construction:

The third generation worked in the style and shape of the Shinto period. There is a shallow sori, a high shinogi, the blade is thick, and there will be hiraniku. The kissaki is long.

Overall, the shape will greatly resemble those of the first Tadayoshi, however they are slightly stronger or more robust.

Hamon:

The nie are more hanayaka (active or showy) than those of the first generation. Chu-suguha are seen, although most are hiro suguha with many hataraki.

In rare cases, choji midare are seen and on these there will be very long ashi.

Boshi:

The boshi are a wide komaru. There will be abundant nie and the kaeri is long. Sometimes the kaeri will stop or terminate abruptly, but even in this case, they will not seem as bad as in other works such as the abruptly finished “tiger tail” in Mihara blades.

Jitetsu and Hada:

There is a ko-mokume hada and a visible hada. There will be chikei in places. Overall, the steel will seem a little strong (light colored).

Nakago:

Inscriptions are 5 characters, and therefore, are quite often mistaken for those of the first Tadayoshi.

The tips are kurijiri. The file marks are kiri. The nakago will very cleanly or clearly inscribed.

Inscriptions are:

HIZEN NO KUNI JU MUTSU NO KAMI TADAYOSHI

肥前國住陸奥守忠吉

and

HIZEN NO KUNI TADAYOSHI

肥前國忠吉

DAI SAGARI TADAYOSHI

Everything about the successor Tadayoshi smiths will be the same as those of the early Tadayoshi smiths, however the dai sagari smiths differed greatly in skill and in all of their characteristics. The shape of the blade becomes gentle, the hamon will lack nie and nie hataraki. The steel will have a very flat appearing but have a pretty ko-mokume hada.

Some of these dai sagari were:

TOSA NO KAMI TADAYOSHI 土佐 守 忠 吉

Very closely resembles the works of the first Tadayoshi, however there will be “something” missing.

MASAHIRO 正廣

YUKIHIRO 行廣

MUNETSUGU 宗 次

YOSHIHIRO 吉廣

HIRONORI 廣則

MASANAGA 正長

The works of these smiths will resemble those of the first Tadayoshi.

Chu-suguha are seen, although not often, and hamon are mostly o-midare, notare midare, or choji midare with nie and with long midare ashi.

There are gunome midare hamon like those of the first Tadayoshi which have a distinct well defined border.

There are two types of blade shapes, a strong shape and a gentle shape. Blades with the strong shape are better made in all respects.

The jitetsu is much poorer and rougher than those of the early Tadayoshi smiths.

TADAKUNI 忠 国

Worked approximately around the Jokyo Era. Had the title Harima Daijo 播 磨 大 掾 and then later a second title, Harima no Kami 播 磨 守.

The shape of the blade will be like those of the first Tadayoshi, but the hamon will be poorer and more awkwardly made. Hamon are o-midare or chu-suguha with tobiyaki that will look like hitatsura, and these will be found on the shinogi ji.

The hada will be mokume hada and the hada will stand out.

HIGO PROVINCE

There are no swordsmiths during the Shinto Period that are considered to be outstanding. Descendants of the Dotanuki, those from the Shimosaka of Echizen Province, and a few from the Hojoji of Edo came to Hizen Province and made swords, but these were all 3rd and 4th rate sword smiths.

For a province that was ruled by a Daimyo with a fief of over 500,000 koku and very important in standing, it is unusual that there were no outstanding sword smiths present. Probably the Hosokawa Clan did not hold the martial arts too highly, although in tsuba making and other associated crafts of sword furniture, there were some very outstanding men, such as the Hayashi and Nishigaki and a few others. These were lesser arts then, but not today, where it seems to be just the other way around according to some 'experts' in this field.

SATSUMA PROVINCE

The Shimazu Clan ruled here from the Kamakura Period and sword making was considered to be very important here. In the Koto period, there was the Naminohira School which continued on into the Shinto and Shinshinto periods.

In the Shinto period, there were many excellent swordsmiths from this province.

MARUTA UJIFUSA SCHOOL

UJIFUSA 氏房

Keicho Era

MARUTA BINGO NO KAMI NYUDO MICHIOKI 丸田備後守入道道與
originated from Mino Province

UJIFUSA 氏房

Kanei Era

MARUTA NYOEMON

丸田兵右衛門

MASAFUSA 正房

Kanei Era

IZU NO KAMI 伊豆守

UJIFUSA 氏房

Kambun Era

SOEMON

MASAFUSA 正房

Manji Era

MARUTA KOBEI

YASUSADA 安貞

Jokyo Era

ICHINOHIRA

YAMASHIRO NO KAMI 一平

山城守

UJIFUSA 氏房

Kambun Era

TAWARA UEMON

MASAFUSA

Tenna Era

YASUYO

Kyoho Era

TAMAKI KOICHIRO

SHUMENOSUKE

ICHINOHIRA

玉置小市郎

UJIFUSA 氏房

Tenna Era

主馬首

一平

MASAFUSA (*) 正房

Tenna Era

MARUTA SOZAEMON

(*) MASAFUSA 4th is the son of the
4th UJIFUSA

MASAKIYO 正 帝
Kyoho Era
MIYAHARA SEIZAEMON
KIYOMITSU
MONDO NO SHO 主 水 正

MASACHIKA 正 近
Gembun Era
MIYAHARA GENEMON

MASAYOSHI 正 良
Kyoho Era
UEHARA JUZAEMON

MASAYOSHI 正 良
Kan'en Era
UEHARA HEIZAEMON

MASAYOSHI 正 良
Anei Era
HOKI NO KAMI 伯 耆 守
also signed MASAYUKI 正 幸

There are a number of sword smiths that followed after the Mondo no Sho lineage.

Maruta Bingo no Kami Ujifusa was a student of Wakasa no Kami Ujifusa of Mino Province and went to Kagoshima in Satsuma Province sometime during the Keicho Era, and he became the founder of Satsuma Shinto. He added some details of the Soshu tradition to the Mino tradition that he had knowledge of, since the Satsuma warriors seem to have preferred Soshu tradition characteristics. Izu no Kami Masafusa is the second son of the 1st Ujifusa and he is regarded as having been a very skilled sword smith, although there are very few works of this smith remaining today.

Satsuma Masafusa, the son of the 4th Ujifusa Maruta Soemon (he first inscribed his works Masafuyu and Masaaki. He preferred the Soshu tradition more than the details and techniques that were handed down to him which were predominantly from the Mino tradition. He is sometimes referred to as Satsuma Masamune by his ardent supporters.

Mondo no Sho Masakiyo is probably the most famous sword smith among the Shinto Satsuma sword smiths. He was a student of Sozemon Masafusa, and his abilities were well known from his early stages of sword making. He signed with the name of Kiyomitsu and Yoshikage early in his sword making career.

On January of Kyoho 1, he was invited to the Hama Detached Palace of the Shogunate in Edo, and there along with Ichinohira Yasuyo (popularly called Ippei Yasuyo) made swords for the 8th Shogun Yoshimune. Since Masakiyo also preferred working in the Soshu tradition, some of his better made blades were turned into Masamune, Sadamune, or Shizu Kaneuji works.

Other smiths that have been covered in this lineage on the previous pages are all well known, but other than those mentioned above, there is Ichinohira Yasuyo who is outstanding along with Modo no Sho Masakiyo. In this lineage, Yasuyo comes from the branch of the 2nd Masafusa, and is the son of Ichinohira Yasusada.

He started out early by making swords with his father, and attained fame by the time he was in his late teens. And as mentioned above, he went to Edo with Mondo no Sho Masakiyo at the invitation of the 8th Shogun. Yasuyo, like Masakiyo was given permission by the Shogun to use the one leaf Aoe Mon on his works. He received the title of Shume no Suke.

He died before reaching 50, and this is said to be one of the reasons why there are so few works by this man. However, since he started out making swords in his early teens, this theory that there are not too many swords by Yasuyo is hard to believe. Probably, his work was so outstanding, that many have been 'coverted' to mumei osuriage koto works.

UJIFUSA SCHOOL 氏房系 in general

Worked in the Mino tradition and Soshu tradition and Shinto tradition.

KATANA AND WAKIZASHI

There are a great number of sword smiths that followed in this lineage, however we give a general description here since the details of most works are about the same.

Shape and Construction:

Worked in the shape and style of the Shinto period, however, they are made more vigorous or robust than those usually encountered.

There are some blades that will seem as though they were made in a suriage style to resemble blades from the earlier Yoshino Period which are wide, with a saki sori,

and which will be wide going towards the kissaki. There will be hiraniku in contrast to works from the Yoshino Period though.

There are also blades made which are long, thick, and have a shallow sori, with hiraniku and a long kissaki. Wakizashi are made with a strong shape, with saki sori, and are wide along their full length, and the kissaki is long. These blades will also have hiraniku and are thick. The mune will be shin no mune (mitsu mune) in all cases.

Hi and Carvings:

None.

Hamon:

Some hamon are made in the Soshu tradition of the Yoshino Period, formed in nie and which are very well done. The width at the yakidashi is narrow, and the hamon will slowly become wide going towards the kissaki. However, there will be variations in the width of the hamon and in the sizes of the midare waves, which makes the hamon very lively.

There are other hamon made in the Mino tradition with togariba, and the nie will cover all of the togari.

There are also chu-suguha and hiro-suguha. The nie will be distinctive, although rough. Nie will be found inside of the hamon as well as in the ji, and the nie inside of the hamon are a little smaller than those in the ji, however, they will slowly become large going towards the habuchi, and continue on into the ji where they then form ji-nie. This style of nie is called Satsuma nie.

There will also be a sunagashi like effect, quite large, which touches the hamon while descending from the ji in places, and it will be like a large kinsuji. This is called Satsuma's imozuru (popularly called a "potato vine").

Boshi:

As the hamon enters the boshi, it keeps the hamon pattern. At the Yokote the hamon becomes wide. Some boshi are a narrow midarekomi and the kaeri will be quite shallow in most cases.

Jitetsu and Hada:

The steel will appear very well forged and the hada is very fine. The color of the steel will seem a little flat and the hada is mokume hada. There will be ji nie, and there will be chikei in places. O-hada will be present in places and this o-hada will resemble ayasugi hada and be found mostly in the lower section of the blade. In some areas, the ayasugi hada is not quite clear, however in other areas, it will be quite clear and will touch the hamon. This is called "Satsuma hada". Ji-nie are all over the ji and will be very rough. However, near the shinogi, there are fewer nie, and nie are more likely to be seen near the hamon

Nakago:

The nakago are a little short and in a tanagobara style. The tip is a shallow kengyo. The file marks are kiri or katte sagari. Ichinohira Yasuyo made higaki file marks.

Inscriptions differ according to the individual smith.

Tanto are very rare.

The foregoing was a description of the work of smiths who followed Ujifusa, however to provide additional characteristics of the individual smiths, the following will hopefully be helpful.

UJIFUSA 氏房

Worked approximately during the Keicho Era.

The shape and style of his katana are a little strong or pronounced.

The hamon will be in the strict Mino tradition of o-midare with very little nie. The edge of the hamon is very clear or distinct.

The hada is mokume hada and the hada will stand out.

Works by this smith is rare.

MASAFUSA 正房

Worked approximately during the Tenna Era.

Considered to be the most skilled of this group. Most of his blades are long with a slight sori, and the blade will taper notably going towards the kissaki. The overall shape of the blades is firm or robust.

The hamon are o-midare and are very vigorous or active. The hada will stand out.

MASAKIYO 正清

Worked approximately during the Kyoho Era. Had the title Mondo no Sho 主水正.

The shape of his katana are very good. They are wide and the kissaki are long. Bo hi will be found on most works.

There will be variations in the width of the hamon, and the hamon will be quite lively. It will be o-midare, however within the o-midare pattern, there will be square shaped features such as midare, and togari like features, and these will be found in all sizes.

The nie will be made in all sizes, however, the mura nie, although they are quite mura nie, are of good quality.

Large kinsuji will be found, and the jitetsu will seem quite strong and the hada will stand out.

MASACHIKA 正近

Worked approximately during the Kyoho Era.

MASAYOSHI 正良

Worked approximately during the Genbun Era (1736-40).

The hamon edge will have nie which will form togariba. Everything will be about the same as for Masakiyo, however the work is inferior in all respects.

YASUYO 安代

Worked approximately during the Kyoho Era. Had the title of Shume no Suke主馬首.

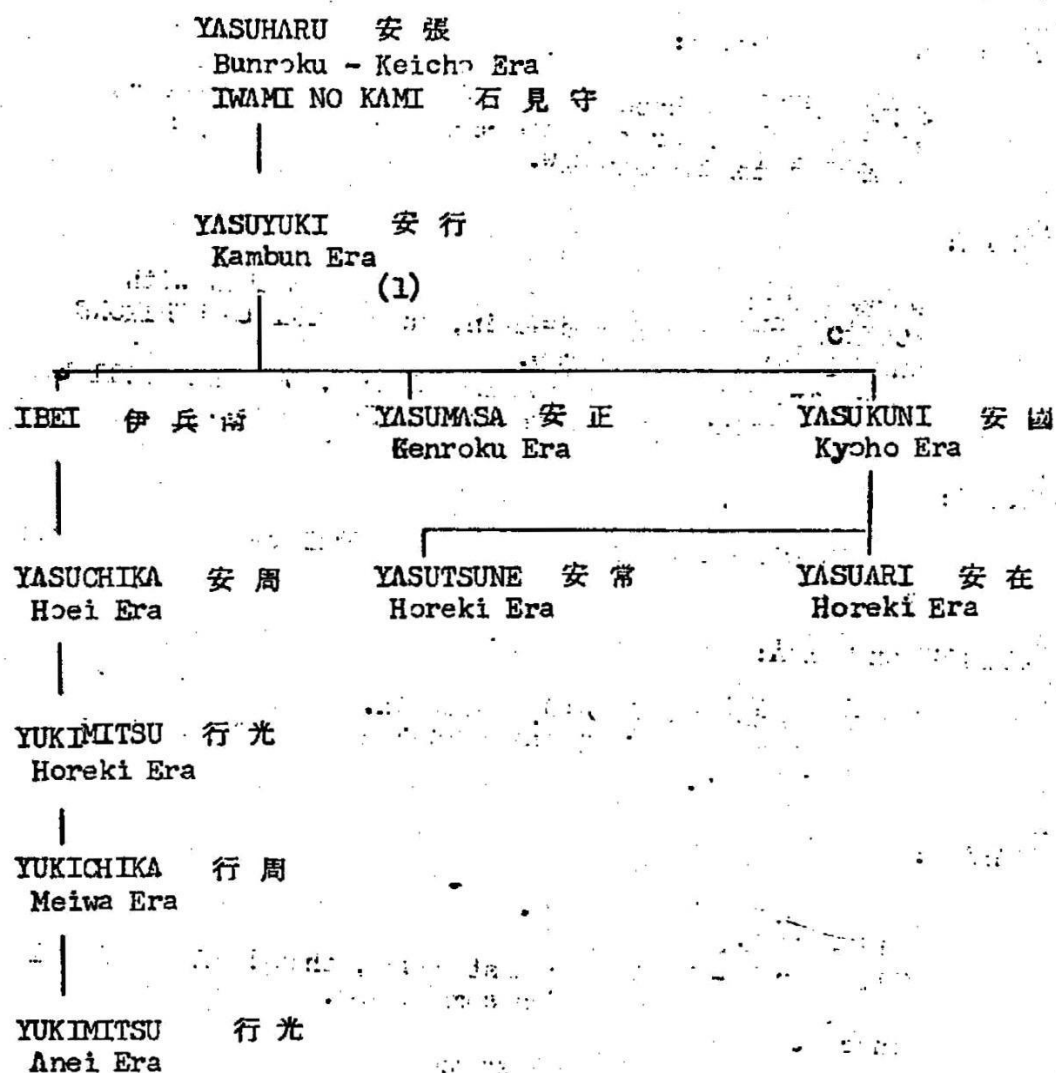
Most of his katana are long with a shallow sori and are thick. The shinogi is a little high and there will be hiraniku.

The hamon will have both nie and nioi, and the pattern will be chu-suguha or hiro-suguha in most cases. The nie from inside of the hamon will run towards the edge which will become kuichigaiba in places.

Some of these works will resemble those of Inoue Shinkai of Osaka.

The steel is very strong and will look as though it is a little rough or scaly, and at a glance, it will not seem like a Satsuma work (i.e. the steel).

NAMINOHIRA SCHOOL



This school is a direct descent of the early Naminohira of the late Heian and Kamakura periods. Yasuharu is said to have accompanied Shimazu Yoshihisa on the Korean Expedition of Toyotomi Hideyoshi and have made swords for the Shimazu troops while in Korea.

The Naminohira of the Shinto Period did not produce any sword smiths with notable skill, although swords by a few such as Yasuyuki, Yasuchika, and Yukichika are fairly well made.

NAMINOHIRA SCHOOL 波平系

Worked in the Yamato and Yamashiro traditions.

KATANA AND WAKIZASHI

Shape and Construction:

Style and the shape of the Shinto period, however the blades are slightly stronger or more robust than average for the time. The sori is a little shallow.

Hamon:

Formed in nie and chu-suguha mixed with ko-gunome and midare. There will be uchinoke and nijuba sometimes.

There are some blades with hiro suguha, but they will be a little narrower than the usual hiro suguha hamon.

Boshi:

The boshi are komaru with abundant nie, and hakikake are sometimes seen.

Jitetsu and hada:

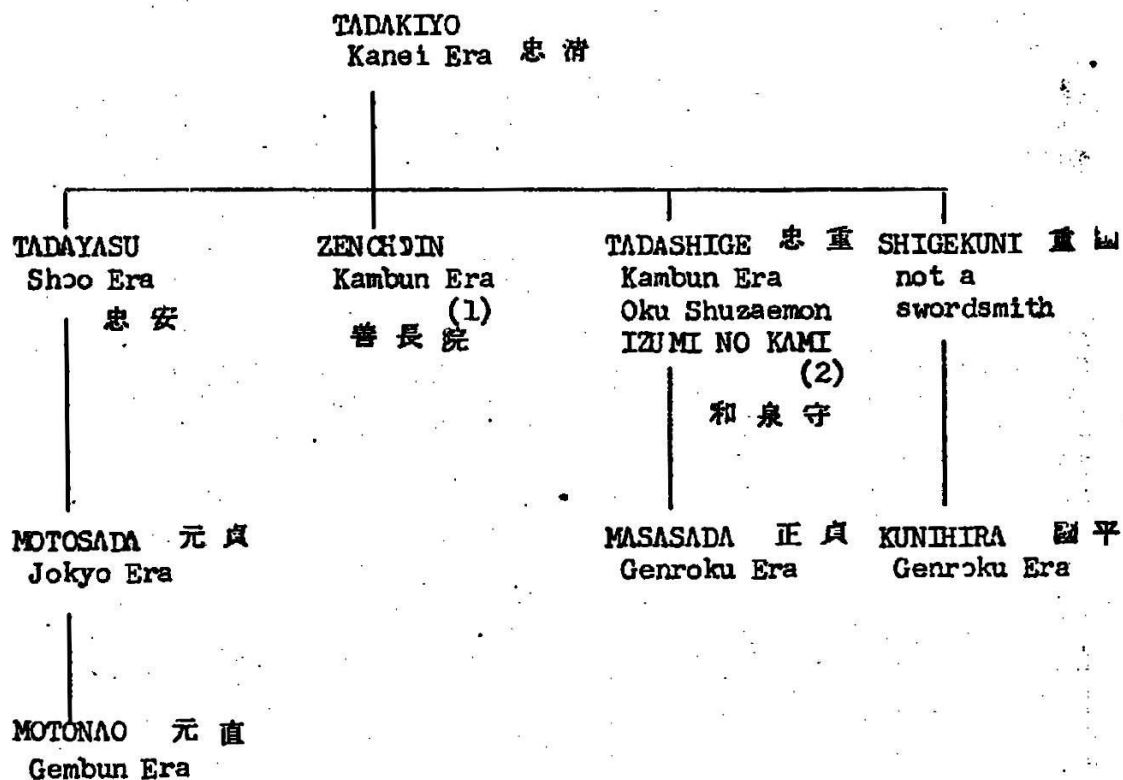
The hada is ko-mokume hada mixed with o-hada. On some blades, sometimes there will be small ayasugi hada present in the o-hada.

Nakago:

The nakago are long with niku, the tips are kengyo. The file marks are higaki in most cases, although katte sagari yasurime are sometimes seen.

Inscriptions are "Naminohira xx xxx".

OKU TADAKIYO SCHOOL 興忠清采



(1) Student of IZU NO KAMI MASAFUSA.

(2) Student of TSUDA SUKHIRO of Osaka and signed HIDEOKI originally.

Works of these smiths are very rare.

Oku Yamato no Kami Motohira is a member of this group, however, he will be covered in the Shinshinto section.

Tadashige probably would be the representative sword smith of this group. His works are suguha with abundant nie, and the blades are quite long.

Kunihira's works are quite similar to those of Mondo no Sho Masakiyo.

On the whole, the works of these smiths are similar to that of other Satsuma sword smiths.

THIS IS THE END OF THE SHINTO SECTION

KYOHŌ MEIBUTSU CHO

45th Installment

FUDO KUNIYUKI

不動国行国

Owner: Gyobutsu

Signed

Length: 1 shaku 9 sun 9 bu

There are katana hi with kage hi on the omote and ura.

On the omote, there is a carving of a kurikara within a hitsu. On the ura, there is a carving of Fudo under a waterfall carved within a hitsu.

It was a Gyobutsu of the Muromachi (Shogunate), and was later owned by Matsunaga Danjo, who gave it to Lord Nobunaga. It fell into the hands of Akechi Hyuga no Kami who gave it to his retainer Akechi Yaheiji.

During the seige of Sakamoto Castle in Goshu, the castle was about to be overpowered by Hideyoshi's forces, and though the majority of the Akechi heirlooms were destroyed, this blade was saved, and then went into the hands of Lord Hideyoshi who left it to Lord Hideyori.

After the Komaki Omote (battle) and during the reconciliation, Lord Ieyasu received it, and at that time Lord Ieyasu gave the Nishikata Go in return.

Yamanaka Note

The Muromachi that is mentioned in the text refers to the Ashikaga Shogunate, and this blade had been one of the important Ashikaga Heirlooms. On Eiroku 8, a few of the Ashikaga retainers led by the Miyoshi Clan's Matsunaga Danjo Shou, Matsunaga Uemon no Suke, Iwanari Chikara, and Matsunaga Shirensai conspired against the Shogunate and the conspirators encircled the Shogunate quarters and subsequently killed Shogun Yoshiteru. At this time, the Matsunaga took the Fudo Kuniyuki blade as well as the famous Yagen Toshio (Yoshimitsu) tanto as war trophies.

The Oda Nobunaga Chronicle states that:

“On January 10 in Genki 4, Matsunaga Uemon no Suke Hisamichi, Lord of the Castle at Tamon in Yamato Province had been sending Sakuma Uemon no Suke Nobunari as a mediator to Nobunaga from the previous year, to seek forgiveness for Matsunaga for his previous deeds, and Nobunaga eventually gave in and forgave Matsunaga. However, Nobunaga confiscated Tamon Castle and placed Yamaoka as his representative with the Matsunaga. Hisamichi, along with his father Dan o Shou, on January 10 of the following year went to Gifu in Mino Province to see Nobunaga, and at this meeting, Matsunaga is said to have taken mountains of gifts, among which was this Fudo Kuniyuki and the Yagen Toshio, which Matsunaga had gotten from the Muromachi Shogunate previously.

On February in Tensho 5, Nobunaga returned to Kyoto from Azuchi Castle, then on the 12th of the same month, Nobunaga went to visit Kira in Mikawa Province for hawking. In leaving, Nobunaga left the control of the castle to Sugaya Kuroemon no Jo, and left word with Sugaya that Hashiba Chiken no Kami (Toyotomi Hideyoshi's name during the Nobunaga days) had subjugated the opposition forces in the provinces of Harima and Tajima, and that the Fudo Kuniyuki sword and the famous tea kettle called the Oto Gozen was to be given to Hideyoshi upon his return to the castle as a reward for his deeds in the campaign.”

Therefore, what the Meibutsu Cho entry for this blade and what the Nobunaga Chronicle states differ somewhat in that the blade went to Akechi from Nobunaga.

The Nobunaga Chronicle states that it was given to Hideyoshi. In the Taikoki, that is the Hideyoshi Chronicles, it states that after the blade went into the hands of Akechi Mitsunaga, the Akechi forces killed Nobunaga while he was in Kyoto, and then Hideyoshi went after the Akechi, and after surrounding the Akechi forces in Sakamoto Castle. However, in order to save the vast number of treasures and war trophies which Akechi took, they were surrendered to Hideyoshi's forces before they themselves were defeated, and it is told that at that time, the Akechi forces

surrendered about 60 important items among which were this Fudo Kuniyuki, the Yagen Toshio, and a tachi by the Niji Kunitoshi.

Thus, there are two conflicting versions regarding this blade as to how the blade went into the hands of Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

After Hideyoshi, the blade went to Hideyori, and this seems to be another point which is not quite clear, and there is another version of the history that says the blade was given to Tokugawa Ieyasu by Hideyoshi.

The blade went up in flames during the famous Meireki Fire and afterwards Echizen Yasutsugu retempered the blade or performed yakinaoshi. It had been handed down in the Shogunate until after WWII when it then left the Shogunate's collection, and presently is owned by a private collector

It was nominated for Juyo Bijutsu, sometime prior to WWII.

Readers may recall that we covered this blade in the Tokugawa Jikki. On the 6th of August in Genna 9, the 2nd Shogun Hidetada gave Lord Iemitsu (the 3rd Shogun) the Fudo Kuniyuki and the Miyoshi Masamune wakizashi.

Imamura Choga, having seen this blade in the Shogunate Collection early in the Meiji Era, noted that this blade's inscription was a "Gi-me" meaning a fake inscription.

The blade was nominated for Juyo Bijutsu prior to 1940, as previously stated, therefore, whether the blade actually is a fake as Imamura noted, or otherwise as evidenced by it being nominated to Juyo Bijutsu, we are not able to state, as we have never seen this blade, or held it in our hands, although we have seen it through glass in show cases a number of times.

KO KUNIYUKI

小国行

Owner: Gyobutsu

Length: 2 shaku 5 sun

Details of its history are not known.

Yamanaka Note

As the name of the blade indicates, it is a small one, as compared to the O-Kuniyuki, or so one would think, and so the length of the blade or the name has been confused in the text. Ko Kuniyuki should refer to a tanto.

AKITA KUNIYUKI

秋田國行

Owner: Gyobutsu

Length: 1 shaku

Value: 3,000 Kan

Details concerning the history of the blade are unknown. There are hi with kage hi on the omote and ura.

Yamanaka Note

Absolutely nothing is known about this blade.

AOKI RAI KUNITSUGU

青木来國次

Owner: Gyobutsu

Length: 9 sun 4.5 bu

Value: 7,000 kan

Owed by Aoki Kii no Kami. This was during the Bunroku Era. Previous to this, it was owned by Ajito Mangoro and it was given to Fukushima Saemon by Aoki's son.

Yamanaka Note

During the time of the Toyotomi-Tokugawa struggle for power, the Aoki at first were under the Tokugawa, but then switched sides to the Toyotomi, and under Hideyoshi, they were given Kita no Sho in Echizen Province.

During the Sekigahara Battle, Aoki sided with Ishida Mitsunari and consequently after the battle, his fief was confiscated by Ieyasu.

Ajito Mangoro Tomochika, son of Ajito Awaji no Kami Nagayuki served Asai Nagamasa in Omi Province. When Akechi Mitsuhide conspired against Oda Nobunaga and killed him at Honnoji Temple in Kyoto, the father and son sided with the Akechi forces and in the battle which followed, when Hideyoshi avenged Nobunaga, Mangoro died in battle at Yamazaki.

Fukushima Saemon no Jo Masanori supposedly purchased this blade from Aoki, and after the death of Masanori, the blade was given to the 2nd Tokugawa Shogun Hidetada as a legacy of Masanori.

SANSAI RAI KUNITSUGU

三斎来國次

Owner: Gyobutsu

Length: 9 sun 1.5 bu

The blade came from Nanto and was purchased by Lord Hosokawa Sansai, and then presented to the Shogunate.

Yamanaka Note

Nanto refers to the old capital of Yamato in Nara. Hosokawa Sansai refers to Hosokawa Etchu no Kami Tadaoki who took the name of Sansai when he retired from active life and gave control of the Hosokawa Clan to his son.

This blade, supposedly came from one of the temples in Nara and this fact is noted in the Umetada Jusai Hon.

After Tadaoki purchased the blade, he gave it to Tokugawa Ieyasu.

TOGAWA RAI KUNITSUGU

戸川来國次

Owner: Gyobutsu

Length: 9 sun 7 bu

Value: 200 mai

Owned by Togawa Higo no Kami who presented it to the Shogunate.

Yamanaka Note

Togawa Higo no Kami Michiyasu was one of the retainers under Ukita Hideie and demonstrated valor in the wars under the Ukita forces in their many battles. In his later years, he had conflicting views with other elders of the Ukita and consequently he parted from the Ukita's service. He was then went served Tokugawa Ieyasu. During the Sekigahara Battle, he fought alongside Fukushima Masanori and Ikeda Terumasa for the Tokugawa forces. This is another blade whose whereabouts are unknown.

MASUDA RAI KUNITSUGU

増田来國次

Owner: Gyobutsu

Length: 9 sun 7 bu

Value: 200 mai

Owned by Zenshoji.

During the Bunroku Era, it was appraised at 8 mai of gold and then presented, to Lord Hideyoshi by Kiya. Masuda Uemon no Jo received it as the legacy of Hideyoshi. Masuda then presented it to Lord Ieyasu, and it then went to Lord Owari. There are katana hi.

Yamanaka Note

Zenshoji refers to Kampaku Hidetsugu, Hideyoshi's nephew. Masuda Uemon no Jo Nagamori served Toyotomi Hideyoshi and received a 200,000 koku fief at Koriyama in Yamato Province. During the Sekigahara Battle, he sided with the Toyotomi forces. However, when the defeat of the Toyotomi side was very much in evidence, he went to Ieyasu and asked for forgiveness, and his pleas were not heeded (that seems only natural), and therefore his fief was confiscated and he went into retirement at the Mt. Koya Monastery. However shortly afterwards, he was banished to Hitachi Province. Nagamori's son, Moritsugu, sided with the Toyotomi forces during the Osaka Battle and died in that battle.

Kiya is the famous sword polishing family (*).

Imamura Choga also noted that this blade is a 'fake'.

(*) This writer owns the major segment of the famous "Kiya Oshigata" which was given to us by Koson Sensei. It was "loaned" to Homma Junji, as he was writing a short paper on the Kiya Oshigata. This was about 13 or 14 years ago, and to date it has not been returned to us. We have repeatedly asked for the return of this very important oshigata series, but have always been given the 'run-around'. It consists of about 10 rolls of full length oshigata of the majority of the famous blades from the time in which the Kiya kept records, that is from pre-Tokugawa days into the early Tokugawa Period. Each roll is about 10 yards long.

ZENKI KUNITSUNA

蓉 発國紹

Owner: Gyobutsu

Length: 2 shaku 2 sun 5 bu

Zenki is said to have carried this blade when accompanying Seigo-In when he entered the monastery.

Yamanaka Note

Zenki is said to have been a wandering Buddhist monk, and when Seigo-In became the abbot of a temple, Zenki was one of the retainers guarding Seigo-In. The blade is said to have been in the temple from ancient times. It is not clear who exactly Seigo-In was and which temple this is.

This Kunitsuna is probably the Awataguchi Kunitsuna, who was one of the sword smiths who accompanied the cloistered emperor Gotoba to his banishment on the island of Iki.

Kunitsuna is also known for his other famous blade, the Onimaru Kunitsuna covered earlier.

TOKUGAWA JIKKI

PART XXVIII

GENROKU 9, 1696

January 10

The Shogun offers a tachi and cash for a horse to the Sanno Gongen Shrine.

January 28

Matsudaira Mutsu no Kami Tsunamura's adopted son Tojiro, meets the Shogun and presents a tachi by Nobukuni信国.

March 9

On the occasion of the completion of the new temple, the chief of construction, Toda Yamashiro no Kami Tamamasa receives a katana by Sa Hiroyasu from the Shogun.

Matsudaira Aki no Kami, second in command of the construction project, receives a katana by Enju Kunisuke.

March 12

The chief abbot of Koshoji Temple, Joroku, meets the Shogun for the first time and presents a tachi, cash for a horse and 10 suits of clothing.

March 29

Yagyu Bizen no Kami Toshikata is forgiven (?) and is told to carry on the family trade of teaching fencing techniques and to further improve them.

May 11

Princes and nobles meet the Shogun, and each offers a tachi with its catalog.

June 28

Uemura Shinrokuro Ieyoshi, as a legacy from his father Dewa no Kami Ieyoshi, presents a katana by Bizen Motoshige備前元重.

July 28

Tachibana Nyudo Eizan Kanetora, in appreciation for his new post, presents a katana by Masamune.

Matsudaira Yahichiro Tadataka, as a legacy from his father Totomi no Kami Tadatomo, presents a katana by Etchu Norishige越中則重.

Hojo Sakyo Ujitomo, as a legacy from his father Mino no Kami Ujiharu, presents a katana by Bizen Motoshige備前元重.

August 14

Mitsueda Settsu no Kami Moritoshi, commander in charge of Sumpu Castle, presents a katana by Yamato Aritoshi 大和有俊 in appreciation for his post.

November 26

Matsudaira Mutsu no Kami Tsunamura is included in the ranks by receiving the title of Ju Yon I Shita and a character from the Shogun's name at his coming-of-age ceremony, takes the title of Bizen no Kami Yoshimura, and presents a tachi by Nobufusa信房 and then receives a katana by Samonji.

Matsudaira Hizen no Kami Tsunamasa's son Sakyo has his coming-of-age ceremony, receives a character from the Shogun's name and the title of Ju Yon I Shita and changes his name to Tadakore, and also receives the title of Osumi no Kami. He then presents a tachi by Toshitada 俊忠 and receives a katana by Norishige則重.

December 11

Matsudaira Hizen no Kami Masakata, in appreciation for having received a family title, presents a tachi by Yoshikage義景 and gold for a horse.

(Note: this refers to the Hosokawa of Kumamoto in Higo Province having been allowed to use the Tokugawa surname of Matsudaira, meaning that the Hosokawa son took a bride who was the Shogun's daughter.)

December 28

Naito Kinichiro Masamori, as the legacy of his father Tamba no Kami Masachika, presents a katana by Katayama (Ichimonji).

Earlier this year,

May 18

Honami Koden, son of Honami Koho dies at the age of 67.

Sometime during this year

Hizen Tadayoshi (the 5th generation Omi no Kami) is born 肥前近江守忠吉.

Hamano Masanori is born.

GENROKU 10, 1697

January 10

The Shogun offers a tachi and cash for a horse to the Sanno Gongen Shrine.

January 18

Yanagisawa Dewa no Kami Yasuaki, in honor of his having reached the age 40, the Shogun holds a banquet for him. During the exchange of the cups, the Shogun gives him a wakizashi by Ichimonji

February 9

The daughter of the Shogun is to be wed into the Court, and in honor of the event, the Shogun presents a tachi by Tomomitsu to the Court, to the Cloistered Emperor, a tachi, to Prince Arisukawa no Miya Hyobu Yukihiro, a tachi, and to Prince Konoe Kampaku Motahiro, also a tachi.

February 10

The Court gives a tachi by Aoe Sadatsugu as a legacy of Meisho-in

February 28

Matsudaira Iwajiro Naomoto, as a legacy from his father Bitchu no Kami Naotaka, presents a katana by Masahiro.

March 7

The Shogun meets the imperial messenger as well as other princes and nobles, and each gives a tachi with its catalog for the new year.

March 11

The Shogun visits Yanagisawa Dewa no Kami at his estate to celebrate the completion of Yanagisawa Hyobu Yasusada's new quarters, and gives Yasusada a katana by Sadamune, and gives Yasuaki a katana by Norishige. He gives a katana by Kiku Ichimonji to Yokote Iori Tsunetaka. He gives a katana by Sukezane to Samon Tokimitsu.

The Shogun gives a wakizashi by Mitsutada to Matsudaira Ukyo Daiu Terusada.

The Shogun gives a wakizashi by Kanemitsu to Kuroda Buzen no Kami Naokuni.

Yasusada presents a Tachi by Nobukuni and a katana by Yukimitsu.

Yasuaki presents a tachi and a katana by the Niji Kunitoshi 二字國俊.

Tsunataka presents a Katana by Aoe Sadatsugu.

Tokimitsu presents a katana by Shikkake.

Terusada presents a mumei katana supposedly by Ryokai.

Naokuni presents a katana by Naotsuna.

Each sword is accompanied by Kashi (teacake).

The retainers all present a tachi with its catalog.

April 11

The Shogun visits Lord Kii Dainagon Mitsusada at his estate, and during the banquet, the Shogun gives each and all of the retainers a cup himself.

During the exchange of presents, Aso receives a tachi by Aoe Shigetsugu, a katana by Yoshihiro, and a wakizashi by Rai Kunimitsu.

The elder minister of Kii receives a tachi by Bizen Norimitsu 備前則光 and a katana by Sadamune.

Ukyo Daiyu receives a katana by Bizen Kunimune 備前國宗.

Kuranosuke Yoritoki receives a katana by Ichimonji 一文字.

Chikara Tanomo receives a Katana by Bizen Masatsune 備前正恒.

Bungo no Kami Yorimichi receives a wakizashi by Soshu Yukimitsu 祖州行光.

Each gift is accompanied by 10 suits of clothing.

Lord Mitsusada presents a tachi by Bizen Nagamitsu備前長光, the Shimazu Masamune katana 島津正宗 (Meibutsu), and a wakizashi by Mitsukane.

Lord Tsunanori presents a tachi by Bizen Sanemori備前眞守 and the Kireba Sadamune 眞宗(Meibutsu).

April 30

Mito Shoji Yoshitane Ason, through his retainer Nakayama Bitchu no Kami Nobunari, attends Princess Yae's betrothal ceremony and presents a tachi to the court.

Later, Ason with his father visits the palace and sees the Shogun, and Ason receives a katana by Masamune正宗 and a wakizashi by Rai Kunitsugu. His father receives a wakzashi by Sadamune.

To the messenger Bizen no Kami Nobunari, the father presents a katana by a Katana by Bizen Naotsugu備前直次.

May 15

Matsudaira Aji no Kami Tsunemochi, the magistrate of Kyoto, takes leave to go to his post and receives a katana by Bizen Kagehide 備前景秀 from the Shogun himself.

Matsudaira Echigo no Kami Mitsunaga presents a katana by Rai Kunimitsu来國光 in appreciation for his new post.

May 28

Hori Gemba Chikayoshi, as a legacy from his father Mimasaka no Kami Chikatsune, presents a katana by Enju.

July 10

Akimoto Tajima no Kami Takamoto, one of the younger ministers of the Shogunate, having supervised in the reconstruction of Goji-In Temple and Gokokuji Temple, receives a katana by Katayama Ichimonji.

July 28

Kuki Naiki Takamasa, as a legacy from his father Nagato no Kami Fukutaka, presents a katana by Bizen Kagemitsu.

The metal smith, Goto Renjo 後感康菜 presents a pair of menuki by Goto Yujo 後藤祐乗.

August 13

Matsumoto Uneme Yorimichi, as a legacy from his father Oi no Kami Yorikatsu, presents a katana by Aoe Masatsune.

Mogami Kyobu Yoshimasa, as a legacy from his father Suruga no Kami Yoshitomo, presents a katana by Katayama 片山.

Hikosaka Kubei Shigeyoshi, as a legacy from his father Iki no Kami Shigeaki, presents a wakizashi by Tanshu Hojoji 但州法城寺.

August 28

Osawa Jirosuke Mototaka, as the legacy of his father Ukyo Daiu Mototsune, presents a Katana by Aoe Naotsugu 青江直次.

October 15

Todo Susho Takataka, as a legacy from his elder brother Sado no Kami Takamichi, presents a katana by Bizen Koresuke 備前是次.

November 12

The Shogun visits Kofu Chunagon Tsunatoyo at his estate. Lord Komon Tsunatoyo receives a tachi by Rai Kunitoshi 来國俊. Komon presents a tachi by Awataguchi Kuniyoshi 栗田口國吉.

During the exchange of cups at the banquet, Komon receives the Kanse Masamune 観世正宗 (Meibutsu) katana and a wakizashi by Mitsukane. Komon presents a katana by Yoshihiro 義弘 and a wakizashi by Sadamune.

November 15

Mizuno Matsunojo Katsuyoshi, as a legacy from his father Mimasaka no Kami Katsutane, presents a katana by Bizen Nagamitsu 備前長光.

November 16

The Shogun offers a tachi to the main shrine of Ryosangu in Sanshu.

During this year.....

February 20

The tsuba smith in Choshu, Kawaji Bombei Tomokichi Rokuroemon the first河 治 權
兵 衛 友 道 大 部 右 衛 門 dies .

October:

Kunisada, the second generation of Aizu dies.

THOUGHTS AT RANDOM

Recently, a theft was reported in Osaka from one of the shrines there of two Juyo Bunkazai.

A few days later a man bought two blades to a pawn shop and tried to borrow 300,000 Yen, about US \$1,000. The pawn shop proprietor had heard about the theft and immediately recognized the blades, whereupon he called the authorities and the man was taken into custody. In the interrogation that followed, it was learned that the man had bought the two swords from another for 75,000 yen or about \$230.00 from the thief who had removed the blades from the shrine. A Juyo Bunkazai of this caliber should bring about 40,000,000 Yen in the sword market.

A small chuckle is heard here and there amongst the sword collectors. Quite recently on a TV program, a sword collector was interviewed and he commented that the Tokubetsu Kicho Token (green paper) and the Kicho Token (white paper) were worthless, or words to that effect.

Then in the March 4th Issue of the Yomiuri Weekly, there appeared an article in connection with this TV interview and few comments regarding what goes on in the sword circles and with NBTHK, and the personalities there. This helped to bring out even more "chuckles".

In connection with this, quite recently, a man bought a blade inscribed Inoue Shinkai for something like 6 million yen which is about US \$20,000. The blade was accompanied by a green paper and had a sayagaki by one of the "experts".

The man soon found out that the blade was a "fakeroo", so he went to the NBTHK to ask "what the score was" and the answer he got was that they, the NBTHK, were not responsible for any such transaction, although the dealer that sold the blade had sold it on the merits of the green paper and the sayagaki.

I guess this is what happens to a person who has not studied swords and buys "on the merits" of accompanying papers, sayagaki, orikami and other such things to give them added assurance.

The Token Kenkyu Kai of Dallas, Texas, USA which is preparing to hold the first large scale Nihonto Exhibit in the US, is slowly laying the ground work for this event. Mike Quigley of Dallas representing the Token Kai was in Tokyo for a very brief visit to confirm the visits of Dr Homma and Dr Sato to attend the event as well as to hold a Kicho Token Shinsa (for green & white papers). Therefore, it is possible that swords from all sections of the Western world could be flocking to Dallas, and we sincerely hope that this event will be a real bang-up success.

Kozan,

February, 1972