Japanese Sword Society of the United States, Inc.

NEWSLETTER

Volume 16 No. 3 May-June • 1984

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

First, thank you for honoring me with the chairmanship of this excellent Society. My predecessors, who have led the Society from a small group of sword collectors in California to what it is today, have done well, and we must all be grateful to them. My immediate predecessor, Peter Bleed, will continue to help us as a Director, as will former Chairman Dean Hartley, now Chairman of the Board.

From those early days to now we have become an international organization. Now our members collect and study swords and fittings from their homes in Japan, Australia, South America, and Europe as well as in our home base of North America. With the geographical expansion of our Society there has come an expansion in outlook as well. The new organization of the Society, with standing committees in place to handle regular and ongoing tasks, recognizes this wider outlook.

So, with all this behind us, here is what I hope to see for the immediate future; some are distant hopes, some possibly soon:

1. There might be a regular column in the Newsletter answering questions sent in on mei and other details of swords and kodogu.
2. Translations of helpful books and articles.
3. Publication of a schedule of regional shinsa.
4. Encouragement of regional JSS/US groups.
5. JSS/US organized sword tours of Japan.

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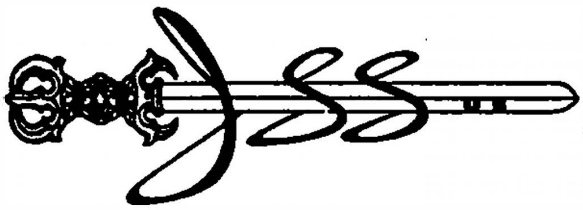

The Japanese Sword Society of the United States is registered with the State of California as a non-profit organization for the appreciation and advanced study of the Japanese art sword and related fields of interest.

OFFICERS
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Mel Oka, Vice Chairman
Gary D. Murtha, Secretary
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Andrew Quirt,
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George Yang,

REWARD - $1,000 will be paid by the Society for information leading to the apprehension and conviction of anyone stealing sword or fittings from a JSS/US member, and the recovery of the lost items. Payment will be subject to Officers and Directors approval. **ADVERTISING POLICY** - Paid advertisements will be accepted for publication in the Society Newsletter. Ad contents must be restricted to services and items for sale. High pressure type ads and ads not benefitting the format of the Newsletter will not be accepted. **Descriptions and Attributions of items advertised are the sole responsibility of the advertiser.**

ARTICLE POLICY - Articles of a research nature are of course always welcomed for publication in the Society journals. The Society will pay a $25 Honorarium to the author of original research or reporting articles when of sufficient stature. Brief articles and news items will not be awarded this Honorarium but are nevertheless solicited. **Contents of published articles and authenticity of illustrated items in the society journals and publications are the sole responsibility of the authors of said articles.**

Several of these items have already been in place and helpful to us all. We can expect even more, with the participation of members in our committees and other activities.

You can expect your Society to serve you--just ask. When you have knowledge and energy that can help your fellow members, expect to be asked to share it.

Here's to an ever-better JSS/US.

A. Z. Freeman

IN APPRECIATION -

On behalf of the Society, our thanks go to retiring Chairman Peter Bleed for his leadership during his term of office.

Peter took office in January of 1981 and immediately began an effort to make the JSS/US a more workable organization by giving more recognition and responsibility to the other officers and directors of the Society. The project of updating our constitution and bylaws was initiated, resulting in the streamlined and modernized documents which are in effect today. Membership almost doubled during Peter's chairmanship, growing from around 410 members in 1981 to our present membership in excess of 700; an impressive 83% plus increase in members. The third printing of Nihontō Newsletter was our most energetic fund spending venture, a $14,000 project which proved highly successful.

The headaches and frustrations associated with the office were hopefully rewarded with great satisfaction in seeing the JSS/US continue to grow into the premiere sword study group outside of Japan. Our sincere thanks and appreciation go to you Peter for your concern and dedication.

Ron Hartmann

NEW CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD -

The Board of Directors of the JSS/US voted and elected Dean Hartley to serve as their Chairman of the Board during his term of office.

Dean has been around since the year one (or so it seems) and is truly one of the Founding Fathers of sword study in the United States. He has served the Society well in the past and it is felt he will head our present board in his usual excellent manner. Congratulations Dean! Your leadership and direction is both needed and appreciated.

IMPORTANT SUPPLIES NOTICE -

★ TANTŌ (JAPANESE DAGGERS) ENGLISH TRANSLATION ★

AVAILABLE NOW!

The second printing of the English translation of the Japanese book Tantō has finally been finished. The translation is a typed copy, 8½" x 11" size, heavy paper cover, GBC (spiral) bound, 83 pages.

Price: $6.00 U.S./all countries
$10.00 Foreign AIR MAIL

For those members familiar with the first printing of this book, this is the same copy but "lightened up" and much more clear than the first printed copy. We had hoped to have this retyped, but things did not work out. This printing is very satisfactory and much clearer than before.

For those newer members unaware of what this is all about, this translation was a project of the Society back in 1973. The Japanese text, which is also available from the Society for $18.00 pp, is a very well illustrated book of plates showing photographs of tantō. The book is arranged chronologically and covers tantō from Kamakura up through modern times. It is a well presented text and contains much good study information. It is something every sword library should have.

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COPENHAGEN BOOK

The Copenhagen kodogu collection as reviewed several issues ago is still available from the Society. Two or three copies are on hand and will be sold on a first come, first served basis.

Price: $387.50 U.S. only
$412.50 Canada/all other countries.

When these remaining copies are sold, the publisher will be contacted for more copies but realizing the limited edition no promises can be made. (Review, see NL Vol.16 No.1)

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JAPANESE SWORDSMITH REVISED - Hawley 1981

This seven pound book contains some 30,000 names of swordsmiths, the most complete listing of its kind. The book is the single most useful book for any non-Japanese reading collector. It provides the basic "first step" in researching a signature. Although the JSS/US can not handle this title, it is readily available through John Grimmitt, Correspondence and Publications Secretary for the Southern California Sword Club. Orders will be filled promply without delay. Price: $78pp (subject to John's verification). Send orders to:

ORIENTAL AND ANCIENT ARTS

HONORARY MEMBERSHIP PRESENTED TO MR. YOSHIKAWA-

Sword and kodogu study outside Japan is a difficult and bewildering undertaking to say the least. Books help in this study, but it takes exposure to fine examples and the guiding hand of a sensei to gain a true understanding of the art. Mr. Yoshikawa Kentaro, chairman of the Nihon Token Hozon Kai, has made great personal commitments towards helping the non-Japanese sword students around the world advance their understanding. These efforts were most evident by the magnitude and quality of Token Taikai '84. It was the efforts of Mr. Yoshikawa and his friends that brought no less than ten artists together in Chicago to demonstrate--and teach--their crafts. The Meibutsu Room included an array of the finest and most classical kodogu for study, selected and brought from Japan by Mr. Yoshikawa. The goal of Token Taikai '84 was to teach, and that it did well, thanks to the leadership of Mr. Yoshikawa Kentaro.

In appreciation for all he has done towards promoting sword and kodogu study, the Japanese Sword Society of the United States presented Mr. Yoshikawa with an Honorary Membership in the society. We are proud to have Mr. Yoshikawa accept this honor and wish him much success in his continued efforts towards promoting international appreciation of the Japanese art sword.

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NEW MEMBERS -

The JSS/US welcomes the following new members:

Keith Tower,
Steven Wheaton,
Helge Eicken,
Louis McAlister, Jr.
Joe Bass,
David H. Brown,
Ward H. Cook,
Frank Copeland,
Catherine Geever, AZ
George Hamano, CA
Ralph Fujimoto,
Timmie W. Howell,
Jim Kelso,
Werner Lenze,
Kenneth J. Mack,
Daniel O'Connor,
Lynn F. Reafsnyder,
Stephen K. Scher,
Thomas H. Shaller,
Robert Simko,

NEW MEMBERS cont'd.

Bill Stobie,
John E. Sullivan, Jr.,
Gary R. Tolsma,
F. Michael Sims,
Robert Pulliam,
Charles T. Hodges, VA
Ralph McLeod,
James I. Rodriguez,
H. Vann Craig,
Eric Ross,
Glenn B. Zinck,
Joseph M. Pankowski
J. P. Shumate, Jr.
K. R. Wilkins,
Ronald B. Wooten,
David Zincavage,
Rod Feakes,
John Gustin,
Carl Sackis,
Mike Clark,
Raye Cantrell,
Kentaro Yoshikawa,
Aram H. Sevagian,

TED WYSOCKY IN HOSPITAL -

Word has just reached the NL that Ted Wysocky has had a heart attack and at this writing is in the hospital. Apparently the problem was not too severe and he may actually be back home by the time this issue reaches the membership. Your prayers and well wishes for Ted would be appreciated.

TOKEN TAIKAI '84

Token Taikai '84 is over and a relative calm has settled over the lives of those involved in the presentation of this sword extravaganza. This calm is temporary since much accounting work is to be completed. Certainly, Token Taikai '84 is an event to be remembered. Programs and activities took place with a minimum of problems. Once the shinsa was put into motion it proceeded right along without any great delays. People seemed to make an effort to have patience until things got rolling, and it helped. What a pleasure it was to feast over the treasures exhibited in the Meibutsu Room, and then be able to sit and watch the great talents at work making habaki, wrapping a sword handle, lacquering a saya, or polishing a blade. The event was called the most significant sword meeting and exhibit ever held outside of Japan--truly, it was.

DEMONSTRATIONS - To have the opportunity to actually see the many artist-craftsmen needed to complete a sword at work is rare even in Japan. At Token Takikai '84 ten such demonstrators worked their hearts out to please their onwatchers. Language was no problem--the international language of smiles, nods, friendship, prevailed.

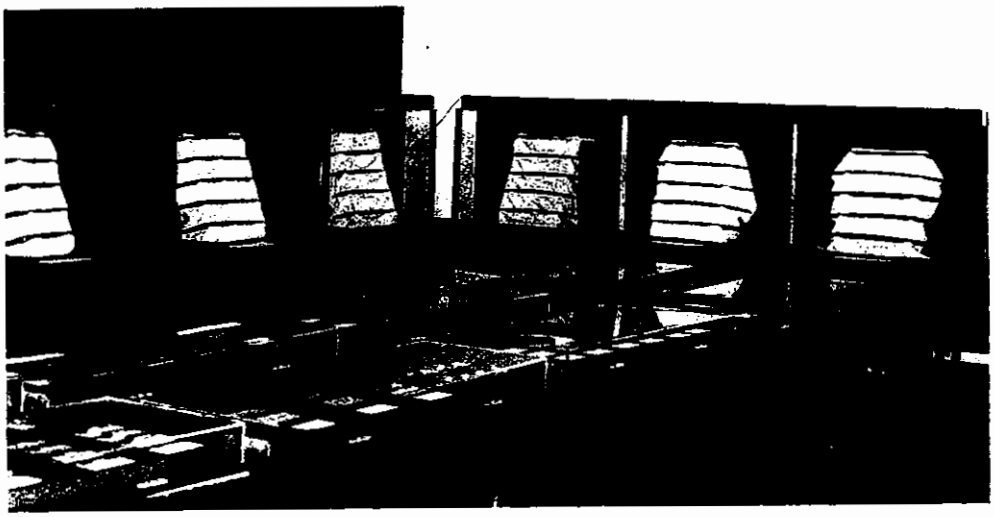
Mr. Takahiro Ichinose teaching handle wrapping

The demonstrators were: Messrs. Ozawa Masatoshi (swordsmith), Goda Seiken (horimono), Hirato Koichi (shirazaya), Ichinose Takao and Ichinose Takahiro (tsukamaki), Miyajima Ichiro and Miyajima Shinjiro (habaki), Kawanobe Akira and Kawanobe Tomoaki (nuri lacquering), Yoshikawa Kentaro and Yoshikawa Eiichi (polishing).

MEIBUTSU EXHIBITION ROOM - The primary function of the JSS/US during this event was to present the Meibutsu exhibit. Bob Coleman handled this project--and did so admirably. Thinking back to preopening time, when display cases needed cleaning and setting up and display items needed unpacking, cleaning, and arranging, the task of completing the exhibit for opening seemed impossible. Somehow it all happened and the "Treasure Room" opened in all its glory. The first case to greet the visitor contained a beautiful Itomaki tachi koshirae once owned by Tokugawa Hidetada which dated from the Momoyama period, today the personal property of Mr. Yoshikawa. This was followed by cases containing sixty-five treasure-swords starting with Hoki Yasutsuna (circa 806), ko-Bizen Sukehira, all through kotō era and shintō and into the gendaitō period of the Yasukuni smiths.

Itomaki tachi of Tokugawa Hidetada

A specially selected exhibit of kodogu, brought from Japan by Mr. Yoshikawa and his friends, was centrally located in the room. The absolute finest and most beautiful menuki, kodzuka, kogai, fuchi-gashira, products of the finest Goto masters and other school masters, was overpowering. The tsuba exhibited were of the most classical nature and textbook in their beauty. On one side of the area five cases of koshirae representing twenty-five different types of mountings from all periods was of great interest. Other displays included styles of handle wrappings, lacquerwork, a fine display of armor and kabuto, and no doubt a few treasures missed in this writing.



Meibutsu Room exhibits

SHINSA - The shinsa operation went very well thanks to the volunteer workers who kept things rolling (even through the trama of a faulty copy machine). As with all shinsa, people were happy with good results and unhappy with disappointing results. The shinsa was tough and the overall quality of the items submitted perhaps a bit lower than in past shinsa. An estimated 500 blades went through shinsa with approximately eight receiving 78 points and the majority falling in the 70 point range. One item scored an 82 and one an 80. The lowest rating was 60 and anything below that was rejected.

Seasoned collectors, veterans of past shinsa, do know not to panic with bad results. They may not always listen to their experience, but they have the advantage over novice collectors. Perhaps the best advice for the novice is to remain calm, do not panic-sell, learn from what the shinsa has told you and do not be afraid to question the results. Questioning is learning. The shinsa was conducted in the most upright manner and the team was certainly qualified, but still one must sit back and try to understand why the team said what they did say about one's item. Again, it is a learning experience. A shinsa is still--an opinion.

LECTURES AND FILMS - Each day was filled with lectures on the sword, kodogu, sword forging, and those attending TTK '84 had their hands full trying to take it all in.

One of the most popular lectures--actually a teaching class--was the tsukamaki (handle wrapping) class as taught by Mr. Ichinose. The thrill expressed by those having actually wrapped their first tsuka was a pleasure to see. It was heard that Mr. Ichinose was surprised to find such interest and such good results from this class.

Tsukamaki class by Mr. Ichinose

TTK '84 cont'd.

BUY/SELL ROOM - The action area was not unlike most sword shows. It was well filled and apparently saw the usual amount of buying-selling-trading-and some hussling (obviously the "other guy" was the hussler). No "tameshigiri" were performed so it is assumed everyone enjoyed the experience.

An enjoyable aspect of the room was the auction review by Haynes Ltd. The array of items being offered was almost over-powering for us used to normally buying casually from catalogue. Of course Bob Haynes was on hand to answer questions on kodogu, a definite "benefit" of the show.

BANQUET - A very special Japanese-style banquet was held on Saturday evening. All went well (considering a seating problem thanks to the restaurant owner). During the evening, honors were given a number of people. Honorary membership was given to Mr. Yoshikawa by the JSS/US and the Token Study Group in appreciation for all he has done for the American collector. John Yumoto also received an Honorary Membership from the Token Study Group for his dedication and contributions. Honorariums of appreciation were also given to Ted Wysocky and Kiyoharu Omino for their great contributions to TTK '84 and in the past. There were many other recognitions and speeches with many bows and smiles and good feeling. It was an emotional evening and one which was most fitting for Token Taikai '84. Ted Wysocky brought to mind a quote which went something like--"You are American, I am Japanese. Through the friendship of the sword there is no difference".

The unique gift of something American--an American indian arrowhead--was presented to the entire group from Japan.

POST SHOW PARTY - Sunday evening, after TTK '84 closed down, displays packed away and the crowds gone, Bob and Chizuko Coleman hosted a lawn party for the honored Japanese guests and others who worked hard on making the event a success. The party was lovely, the food was good, and the drinks refreshing! A wonderful way to wrap up a wonderful week.

Messrs. Omino, Wakayama and Yumoto with glasses raised high!

RANDOM PICTURES FROM TTK '84 -

Mr. Yoshikawa Kentaro and his son Yoshikawa Eiichi demonstrating techniques of polishing.

The art of lacquering.

Detail of a saya decoration.

Mr. Ozawa Masatoshi - Swordsmith
An article about this fine gentleman appeared in the 1981-82 JSS/US Bulletin.

Mr. Eguchi - Shinsa recordkeeper studying a sword.

Habaki making by
Mr. Miyajima.

Master shirazaya maker, Mr. Koichi Hirato.

The international attendance at Token Taikai '84 was most impressive. Collectors gathered from all points across America, from Canada, Japan, five or six from Switzerland, one from Australia, and our recently joined member, Niko Othonos, came all the way from South Africa.

The attending JSS/US officers and directors managed to spend a good number of hours in meetings. The primary subject was to set up the various small committees. Much of this was accomplished. The final vote was in for selecting a Chairman of the Board and Dean Hartley was so elected to this position. One other order of business discussed was to begin having a regular open membership annual meeting during one of the regular sword shows. Everyone was in agreement on this and every effort will be made to do this on a regular, scheduled basis.

Messrs. Yoshikawa, Yumoto, Coleman and Wysocky with a few parting words of thanks at the closing of the Meibutsu Room exhibit and the demonstrations.

CLOSING HONORS - Many people deserve our thanks for all they have done to make this event a memorable success. The many workers, the club officers, those who attended. But special thanks need to be directed to a few who caught the brunt of the headaches. Saul Ploplys and Bob Coleman literally worked their "buns" off putting this event together. Without their efforts none of this would had taken place. Ted Wysocky (who tried to retire from all this recently) is another fellow to remember. John Yumoto--who never seems to run out of energy--must be commended for his continued help as translator. Thank you Sensei. Mr. Kiyoharu Omino, serving as Public Relations man for TSG, was the key person working so very hard, commuting between Tokyo and Chicago for the past several months and making arrangements for Token Taikai '84. His many thousands of miles of travel and hours of unpaid work deserve our particular thanks and appreciation. To all who made it possible--your efforts were truly appreciated. It was a good happening!

DALLAS/FORT WORTH EXHIBITS AND SHOW HELD IN APRIL -

The Dallas sword show was held the weekend of April 6th at the Fairmont Hotel in Dallas. The event was well attended and it was a good show.

Prior to attending the show, an early morning visit was planned for visiting the R. B. Caldwell Exhibition at the Kimbell Museum in Fort Worth. The Kimbell Art Museum is a lovely building with lots of space and uncluttered exhibits. The Caldwell Exhibit, although expected to be good, proved to be truly outstanding. Blades were arranged chronologically in centrally located island display cases. Kodogu were in wall cases around the area with a fine array of woodblock prints intermingled with these cases. The first case to view contained a stunning tanto by Rai Kunitoshi, made around 1280. This treasure was in the company of a beautiful mumei Junji Nagamitsu, circa 1300, and a Bishu Osafune Kagemitsu daito, the only Tokubetsu Juyo rated blade outside of Japan! This went on and on through Ichimonji, Yasumitsu, Kunihiro, Shinkai and on to Masahide. The fittings were equally impressive including some gold Goto menuki made to dazzle a Shogun. A number of outstanding koshirae and lacquerware was also to be enjoyed along with the many outstanding Kuniyoshi and Yoshitoshi prints, to name a few. The exhibit was super quality and was worth the drive from St.Louis by itself. Compliments go to R. B. for such a fine presentation.

The Dallas show was scheduled to coincide with the Shogun Exhibit which was going on two blocks from the Fairmont. Although I did not personally visit the exhibit (the Caldwell Exhibit spoiled me), most of the people did make a visit. The general impression seemed to be that although nice to see, it did not really come up to expectations. Two blades were on exhibit, a blade by Emperor Gotoba and one by Masamune. It is surprising that most collectors were not all that impressed by these treasures. Apparently lighting has something to do with this.

On the front lawn of the museum a forge and work area was set up for the Yoshihara brothers and their team. Aside from forging, a shirazaya maker, habaki maker and polisher worked and answered questions for the public. This was a grand thing to see and proved most interesting to the collector and the general non-collecting public. Louis Mills, American swordsmith, and some others, assisted Mr. Yoshihara.

Other activities at the show included a well done martial arts demonstration, movies, and lectures. The whole weekend was well organized and enjoyable. Mike Quigley is to complimented on his efforts. The Fairmont was a bit costly (most people soon found other places to eat) but a number of comments were heard complimenting the quality of the accommodations. Perhaps this is a future "regular" event?

A VISIT TO THE NBTHK SWORD MUSEUM

by Maclyn P. Burg

When Ron Hartmann heard that my wife, Pat, and I planned a first visit to Japan, and that the Sword Museum of NBTHK was on our itinerary, he urged me to write an article for the JSS/US Newsletter. It is a pleasure to report our experiences to JSS/US colleagues.

First, let me address some anxieties which may concern people who are considering a trip to Japan. What about the cost? There is no getting away from the fact that the trip is less costly for us West Coast types, but you might look into the possibilities of travelling in the period December-March. This is an off-season time in Japan so you may find that airlines are offering some low-cost fares in those months. Other costs, particularly hotel, meal, and transportation costs can be tailored to your budget. A recent copy of Fodor's Japan is a good place in which to start estimating the costs of your trip. What about a language barrier? If you take the time to learn a bare handful of courteous phrases the Japanese will be very pleased and your path with be smoother but, if the truth be known, you don't have to speak a word of Japanese at all. Although it sounds impossible, it can be done because the Japanese have provided signs in English--or recordings in English--just where and when you need them; or, because the Japanese have arranged things so efficiently that you are led precisely to the proper place by a combination of signs, symbols, and painted lines. And if all else fails, just stand still and look befuddled for a few moments. An English-speaking Japanese will promptly appear and courteously ask if help is needed. I cannot emphasize too strongly that my wife and I toured happily from Tokyo to Kyoto to Osaka and back to Tokyo--by cab, train, plane, and on foot--with no more than twenty Japanese words between us. Remember, you speak their second language!

Are you concerned that your sword knowledge will not stand the close scrutiny of the Museum staff?? If the NBTHK required an admissions test before we were allowed into the Museum, many of us would be in trouble, but they don't, so relax. You will find that the man most likely to serve as your host and guide, Tanobe Michiro, is deft, cheerful, kind, knowledgeable, and a master at adjusting his presentation to the level of understanding of his guest. There is no grilling of the hapless foreign visitor. Instead, questions are answered and information is exchanged, colleague to colleague.

If you only have time to drop in for a quick tour of the exhibition room, you need not write in advance of your visit, but if time permits and you wish a more enjoyable, productive experience, I suggest you write to Tanobe-san in advance of your trip. Tell him when you expect to be in Tokyo and ask for an appointment. If specific swords interest you, or if you wish to see the works of a particular smith, school, province, or time period give Mr. Tanobe an opportunity to bring these blades out of storage for you. In my own case, when I arrived in Tokyo, I found a message and an appointment waiting for me at my hotel.

While I am a member both of JSS/US and NBTHK, I know that our members will be warmly welcomed at the Sword Museum even if they do not belong to NBTHK. It is quite natural that Nippon Token Bijutsu Hozon Kyokai wishes your support as a dues-paying member but I got a strong impression that they are happy to show visitors the fine swords from their collections, irrespective of the visitor's place of origin or of the membership card he carries. You sense this atmosphere almost as soon as you arrive, for a bronze bust of Dr. Homma Junji stands outside in the forecourt, while inside the lobby a bronze bust of the late Colonel Cadwell, U. S. Army, is prominently featured. These two men reflect the dual nature of NBTHK's task, for it must serve two diverse constituencies. On the one hand, the society serves the Japanese, the natural inheritors of this ancient, revered art form; but they also must support and educate us, the Westerners into whose unskilled hands a number of these national symbols have found their way. I think that NBTHK's service is rendered with infinite patience and kindness, but come into the Museum with me and see for yourself.

Leaving the busy, crowded offices on the first floor of this modern, four-story building, one climbs to the exhibition hall on the second floor. Storage space and curatorial offices fill the third floor, and the conference room, typically used for kantei sessions, is located on the fourth floor. Just outside the exhibition hall there is a table piled high with a variety of slip-cased editions of NBTHK books on swords and kodogu. This area is under the supervision of a commissionaire, a man who kept my wife supplied with fresh cups of frothy green tea whenever she sat down in one of the comfortable chairs to gain relief from incessant sword talk. He also brought sword books for her to look at, searching out those which contained some English text. In every way he exemplified the friendly hospitality and thoughtfulness we encountered everywhere in Japan. My wife still remembers this man's warm concern for an American "sword widow."

In the exhibition hall itself, under the watchful eye of an elderly commissionaire, numerous glass cases were ranked around the room, and in these cases 30 splendid blades were housed, each resting upon the snowy white silk draped over their stands. To stand in this room, looking at this array of blades, was to look upon a council of warriors: some of them experienced, cool and restrained; some filled with a youthful, irrepressible exuberance; some chunky and powerful, others slim and elegant. Kunitomo, Yoshimitsu, Rai Kunitoshi, Rai Kunimitsu, Masatsune, Nagamitsu, Kunikane, Tadayoshi, Masakiyo; all of these, and more, were to be seen in this hall, Each blade was carefully positioned so as to catch the full play of the lights overhead, revealing the beauty of hamon and jihada. By changing my position, I could move that light from habaki to kissaki, drawing forth the glories of each blade. Each sword was accompanied by two placards in Japanese; one provided the nakago inscription while the other focused upon information concerning the individual smith and school. In addition to these placards, each visitor is given a folded, detailed information sheet on the exhibit, but this too was in Japanese and the less skilled among us would benefit from an English translation of this latter sheet, especially since it provides the current ranking of each blade, specifies the nakago inscription, and gives the dimension of the blade. As we would expect, the exhibition is set up with Koto blades shown first, followed by Shinto pieces, and within this arrangement the swords are further divided in accordance with the familiar "Roads" system of organization commonly found in our sword texts. Four fully-mounted blades were displayed in the center of the hall and other low cases contained an array of beautiful, interesting tsuba and other fittings. Later, I came back to savor this exhibition hall but Tanobe-san had put some questions to me as we looked at blades and, as a result, we now moved back downstairs and into a room fitted out with the illumination one needs for the best viewing of fine blades.

Tanobe's questions had concentrated on what sorts of blades interested me most and I had confessed that I was very much drawn to Koto blades but that I appreciated fine work from all periods and, in response to my remarks, there on the viewing table rested approximately fifteen blades from the Museum collection. One by one these were handed to me by Tanobe-san who gave the rank of the sword and the name and titles of the smith as he handed the blade to me. My notes remind me that I saw seven swords from this group:

Tegai Kanenaga; Nio Kanenaga; Tamba no Kami Yoshimichi; an Oei Bizen blade by Bishu Osafune Yasumitsu; Bishu Osafune Morimitsu; and Bizen no Kuni Tomonari. The seventh blade, a tachi by Rai Kunitoshi, was especially exciting to see, and I was both touched and amused when Mr. Tanobe passed it to me. He knew that my first sword was signed "Rai Kunitoshi" — gimei, of course — and he grinned as he put this authentic blade into my hands. But at this point my viewing was brought to a halt by an unexpected and very pleasant interruption. Homma-sensei himself entered the room to examine three blades which Mr. Tanobe brought to him.

Only an hour before Pat had taken a photograph of me standing by Dr. Homma's portrait bust, and now I quickly summoned up the appropriate Japanese phrases to greet him and introduce myself, and bowed the most respectful and polite bow I could manage. When Elizabeth II visited the University of Washington a year ago, I was one of the five people who met her as she arrived for the convocation. Dr. Homma-sensei received a deeper bow from me than the Queen received; no one can say I don't have my priorities straight! As pictures in recent issues of NBTHK's English-language journal, Token Bijutsu, reveal, Dr. Homma is physically frail now, but I noticed that his grip was rock-steady as he examined the three blades. One of these, a Sukehiro with a breathtaking toran hamon, was passed to me by Mr. Tanobe at Dr. Homma's request, and as I was admiring the sword, I realized that Homma-sensei had asked Tanobe to put a question to my wife. I saw that Dr. Homma's eyes were sparkling and I had to hide my smile when I heard his question. "Ask Mrs. Burg", he had said to Tanobe, "if she also loves Japanese swords?" My wife's bow was a model of decorum and I was delighted with her response. "Please tell Dr. Homma that I do not love Japanese swords, but I love someone who does." He burst into laughter when this was translated for him, clapping his hands together in amusement. In one phrase Pat had explained the patient, good-humored support so many of us receive from our wives.

Back upstairs at the book display, with Tanobe-san's help, I chose ten books and arranged for NBTHK to ship them to Seattle. I had made a deliberate decision to buy books on this trip, leaving blades and fittings to a later trip. If there had been more time, I might have made the rounds of the used bookstores in Tokyo's Kanda district, but such an expedition is time-consuming without a guide who can speak the language. From NBTHK, I ordered: Hizento Taikan, Showa Daimeto Zufu, Kotetsu Taikan, Shoshuden Meisakushu, Koto Shinto Meihinshu, Shinko Meito Zufu, Kurihara Nobuhide-no-Kenkyu, Isejingu no Hoto, Zusetsu Kotoshi, and Hiejinjya no Token. These and more are available at the Sword Museum; write to them for their list of books and prices.

In this short article, I have tried to keep the focus on the sort of experience a JSS/US member can expect on a visit to the Museum, although the opportunity to meet Dr. Homma was an unexpected pleasure that may or may not come to you on your visit. Let me remind you again that you can travel anywhere in Japan, easily, without a word of Japanese. And let me assure you that no one in the Sword Museum will question the state of your preparation and knowledge; very likely the Museum staff would be the first to admit that they constantly question their own state of knowledge. No, what seems to count most is that all of us, Japanese and Westerners, NBTHK or JSS/US, share a common purpose. We all have set our feet upon a difficult path, a lifetime journey, even for those whose background and language abilities especially fit them for the task. An afternoon in the Sword Museum will convince you that our Japanese colleagues have extended their hands in friendship to all who wish to join them on this journey.

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VIDEO TAPES GIVEN TO JSS/US LIBRARY -

Bill Shapland has been kind enough to present the JSS/US video library with gifts of several new VHS video tapes.

The first tape is a 30 minute tape showing Living National Treasure, Takae Yoshimitsu, making a sukashi tsuba in Higo zogan fashion. This film was shown during TTK'84, but late in the weekend and therefore missed by many. Those that did view it reported that it was excellent and very interesting to watch.

The second gift is a set of six VHS tapes of the television epic, Tokugawa Iyeyasu, which was produced by Noppon TV. The series ran for a full year. Each Saturday night one segment was aired. Only about six segments were missed and, although edited of commercials, a few did sneak in. (It is assumed that this series would need to be loaned out one tape at a time considering the length of it).

Our sincere thanks to Bill for thinking of the membership in this way. The tapes are being forwarded on to our Video Librarian and will be available for loan soon.

While on the subject of video tapes--the Northern California Sword Club (John Yumoto's group) has purchased a video camera with the idea in mind to video tape their regular lectures and other sword events. These tapes will also be made available to our club if all goes well. More on this as the NCSC program is put into action.

One last mention--anyone wondering about a delay in getting video tapes from the library, many of the tapes were loaned to TTK'84 for viewing. As soon as they are returned, the library will be back on schedule.

My SHINKAI Story

Tsuguyasu Wada

I enjoyed reading the article of "Shinkai: Osaka Masamune" in the March-April issue of the Newsletter. As many JSS/US members do, I love Shinkai. I do not have a Shinkai blade, although I own a gimei Shinkai Kunisada, again many members might do the same. I have owned this gimei Shinkai for more than 20 years, or more exactly, this blade has been with my family for unknown period and I took it out of the closet in 1962 and polished. I was then a young teacher at a university in Sendai, Japan, and I paid an amount nearly equivalent to a half of my monthly salary for polishing this and the other blade. I was a poor scholar, I mean economically, and my wife was even a graduate student with a minimal income. I should say, however, it was good'n old days. Even today polishing two blades will cost a half of my salary or even more.

Looking at the new polished Shinkai, my teacher of the Japanese sword, Mr. Fukumatsu Matsushima, then the president of the Sendai Branch of NBTHK, said,

"Hmmm, this is well made."

Don't be too excited if an old Japanese gentleman mentioned this way. It usually means "This is a well made forgery".

"This could pass a local Shinsa," he said. This is another expression often used until three years ago, and it means "This will never pass the Shinsa at the NBTHK Headquarters." The local Shinsa no longer exists.

My Shinkai did not make even the local Shinsa, but I could not throw this wakizashi that is full of memories of past days. I brought this to the US together with several other blades when I moved in here in 1969.

If you find a Shinkai in a gun show or whatever and wonder if it is a real one, there is a hint: In the real signature of Shinkai, the two vertical lines in the first character "i" begin straight at the top as shown in (a) below. The horizontal lines, on the other hand, start with soft but distinct first touches. If the vertical lines have strong first touches like (b), the signature is most likely a gimei. I don't say this is a way free from exception, but is simple, quick, and reasonably reliable.

(a) Real Signature

(b) Gimei

THOUGHTS ON COLLECTING KODOGU

By Paul Goodman

Until recently, western collectors have neglected the study and collecting of sword fittings. Each year we send hundreds of fine blades to Japan for shinza, but relative few fittings are sent. You can usually find papered blades for sale at shows but few papered fittings.

I am concerned about unrealistic estimates in sale catalogues and unrealistic prices asked at shows for undocumented, unpapered fittings. At a recent show I found two attractive kozuka at $800.00 each. The owner explained that although he did not read signatures, "so and so" had read them and said they were by important makers. The quality of the pieces indicated a retail value of around $300.00. The seller would not guarantee anything. He would not let the NBTHK look at them. No amount of logic or reason could overcome his greed and ignorance. At the same show there was a collector who had a couple of very nice kozuka with Koshu papers. His prices were no higher than the other kozuka, but his had been proven to be of high quality and to have genuine signatures. The attitude that the buyer should beware and that "everything is fair in love and sword collecting" might be condoned if the asking price is equal to the quality of the piece, but selling pieces with fake signatures at unrealistic prices hurts every collector.

My research has suggested that a signed iron fitting has a 77% chance of being genuine and that a signed kinko fitting has only a 64% chance of being genuine. If the signature is a big name maker, the

chance of its being genuine drops to 1% or less. In other words, if you find 100 fittings signed Yasuchika, Joi, or Toshinaga, you would be very lucky if one of them were to get NBTHK papers. This one genuine piece might be worth two thousand dollars, but the 99 rejection slips would have cost a fortune.

Collectors and buyers must learn to judge quality. We must forget the glitter, gold, and sparkle and examine the total piece. If you don't know quality, then do not gamble. If a piece has an important signature, assume it is a fake and don't risk more than $25.00 extra for the slim chance that it might be real. Don't let the guy with the $800.00 kozuka drag you in with the pot of gold signature at the end of the rainbow. If you don't understand quality, then I recommend that you buy fittings with papers and that you study all papered fittings you can find. Submit your own fittings for shinza and learn from the failures as well as the successes.

Average Shinza Results

I helped a little at one of the shinzas and had a chance to study the results of some of the sword fittings submitted for judging. I saw one group of several dozen fittings put through by one collector. His results were very discouraging. About 15% of his group got green papers, 35% got white papers, and 50% were rejected due to poor quality. Another collector at the same shinza submitted about the same number of pieces. His results were radically different. About 65% of his fittings got green papers, 25% were rejected because of bad signatures, while only 10% were rejected due to low quality. What caused this big difference in the number of green papers issued? Part

of the difference lies in the fact that one collector had a very high percentage of unsigned pieces, and fewer mume pieces get green papers. Another difference is pre-selection. One collector studied and chose only his best pieces for shinza, while the other collector picked up anything and everything to submit. The last and most important difference is the amount of time each collector had spent studying quality. One collector had searched for papered fittings in other collections. He studied them and had more success.

I have talked to several collectors and dealers about their shinza results. Together they have submitted hundreds of fittings. I have made some notes on their results which I am presenting in the form of a chart. The chart shows what results the average collector might have expected from the old shinzas that offered green papers.

100 Pieces of Each Type Fitting

	Tusba	F/K	Kozuka	Menuke	Kogai
Total of Iron Pieces	80	15	10	3	10
Number of good quality iron pieces	30	4	3	1	2
Number of average quality pieces	50	11	7	2	8
Total Signed Iron Pieces	30	5	3	0	1
Number of genuine signatures	25	3	2	0	0
Number of fake signatures	5	2	1	0	1
Total of Iron Pieces Getting Green Papers	40	5	3	0	1
Number of signed getting green papers	25	3	2	0	0
Number of mume green papers	15	2	1	0	1
Total of Kinko Pieces	20	85	90	97	90
Number of good quality kinko pieces	15	40	60	27	63
Number of average quality kinko pieces	5	45	30	70	27

100 Pieces of Each Type Fitting

	Tsuba	F/K	Kozuka	Menuke	Kogai
Total of Signed Kinko Pieces	15	40	60	3	39
Number of genuine signatures	9	25	35	1	30
Number of fake signatures	6	15	25	2	9
Total of Kinko Getting Green Papers	12	40	45	16	54
Number of signed green papers	9	25	35	11	30
Number of mume green papers	3	15	10	5	24

The chart covers 100 of each kind of fitting, 100 tsuba, 100 kozuka, and so forth. Each fitting is divided into the number of iron pieces and the number of kinko pieces. For example, out of 100 tsuba, 80 pieces were iron and 20 were kinko. Each major type of metal, iron or kinko is further divided by quality, signed pieces, and pieces getting green papers. There were only 20 kogai submitted, so the results were multiplied by five. About 15% of the kogai submitted were wari kogai. The chart is not hard fact, and it is not applicable to all collections or all shinzas, especially now that green papers have been replaced by Hozon papers. The figures included about 50 fittings with big name makers, of which only two got papers. On the other hand, pre-selections eliminated any burned, stamped, or mass-produced fittings.

The sampling of sets like disho tsuba, matching kozuka - kogai and swords fully mounted by one maker were too few to draw any conclusions. There was a fairly high rejection rate for these sets because they tended to have better art work and were signed with big makers' names.

BIZEN YOKOYAMA SUKEKANE

by Gary D. Murtha

I began to write this article on Bizen Osafune Yokoyama Sukekane with the hopes of being able to contribute some information along with the enclosed oshigata. We should all know that the shin-shinto Sukekane are in the lineage of the Sukesada group of swordsmiths. This alone made me very leary because of the size of this group and the past failures I have had trying to separate the different generations or just trying to pin a particular Sukesada to a particular blade. The Sukesada group is indeed a large and confusing one. As I researchedthe material an interesting story unfolded. It would be fair to assume that my imagination took hold of my research. Whatever the case, here is the cast of characters and the complicated story of the Sukekane and their lineage.

SUKEHIRA
祐平

SUKEMORI 祐盛	SUKENAGA I 祐永
SUKEKANE I 祐包	SUKENAGA II 祐永
SUKEKANE II 祐包	SUKEHARU 祐春
SUKEKANE III 祐包	SUKEMUNE 祐宗

Supporting cast: NAGAMORI, SUKENARI AND SUKEMITSU.
祐成 祐光

SUKEHIRA- (1754-1829). He originally signed Sukesada. Some of his works are signed the 55th generation Tomonari. He had two sons, Sukemori and Sukenaga of which Sukemori was the eldest.

SUKEMORI- (Died 1851). Eldest son of Sukehira. Because Shikanosuke Sukesada had no son, Sukemori was selected by the clan to take over as the 12th Sukesada. He signed some of his work the 56th generation of Tomonari. Sukemori's son, Nagamori, assumed the head of the Sukehira line, although this appears to have been in name only as no works have been found that bears his name.

SUKENAGA- I (1794-1851). Brother of Sukemori, He is said to have taken after the Sukehira line after his brother went to Sukesada. Some of his work is also signed the 56th generation of Tomonari.

SUKEKANE- I (Active 1840-1872). He is said to be the adopted son of Sukehira by one source and the son of Sukemori by another. He signed the 58th generation of Tomonari.

SUKENAGA- II (1818-1858). He was an adopted son of Sukenaga I. He made many swords for his step father and signed them the 56th generation of Tomonari and on some the 57th generation of Tomonari. No works of Sukenaga II are seen after the death of his step father in 1851.

SUKEKANE- II (1846-1891) lived in Tokyo and was employed by the Army, working at the arsenal. He signed the 59th generation of Tomonari.

SUKEKANE- III (1866-1916). Name was Kakutaro. Signed 60th generation of Tomonari.

SUKEHARU- (1818-1858). A student of Sukenaga I and later adopted by him. Known to have made most of Sukenaga I blades. He signed 56th generation of Tomonari.

Note: Many of the Shin-shinto smiths have inscribed their swords with the generation of Tomonari as they can trace their lineage all the way back to the first Bizen swordsmith, Ko Bizen Tomonari, who was active about the year 980.

THE SUPPOSED STORY

It appears that part of the problem of lineage is due to the Sukesada clan pulling from the ranks to ensure the survival of their lineage. When Sukemori was called on to fill the hole left by the childless Shikanosuke, he signed the 56th generation of Tomonari as would be proper. It is also possible that Sukenaga felt he too was pursuing the teachings of his father, Sukehira, and therefore signed the 56th. An apparent rift was growing in the family. It appears Sukekane I was well aware of the rift and took measures to side step it. Sukekane must have felt that Sukemori was indeed the 56th and that Sukenaga I should have been the 57th. He left room open for Sukenaga I to take the 57th position when he started using the 58th generation of Tomonari on his swords. Subsequent generations of Sukekane signed the 59th and 60th.

As stated earlier, Sukenaga II was adopted and started signing as the 56th (possibly for his step father) and the 57th (possibly for his own space in the structure). We do know that upon the death of Sukenaga I we find no more swords signed by Sukenaga II. Sukenaga must have strongly felt that he belonged in the structure but became discontent when he was shunned by the main clan. The first Sukekane tried adopting the second Sukenaga while raising disagreement with the rest of the clan. At this point it appears that Sukenaga II drifted away from Osafune. We later find works of a smith who was a student of Sukenaga I, named Fujita Nagahiro. The works of this smith greatly resembles that of the second Sukenaga and the signature and penmanship is identical to Sukenaga II. Maybe this was a resurfacing of the discontented Sukenaga II!

To show some of the confusion brought on by the Sukenaga I side, we can take a look at some of his students and see how they signed.

SUKEHARU- (1818-1858). Signed as the 56th generation.

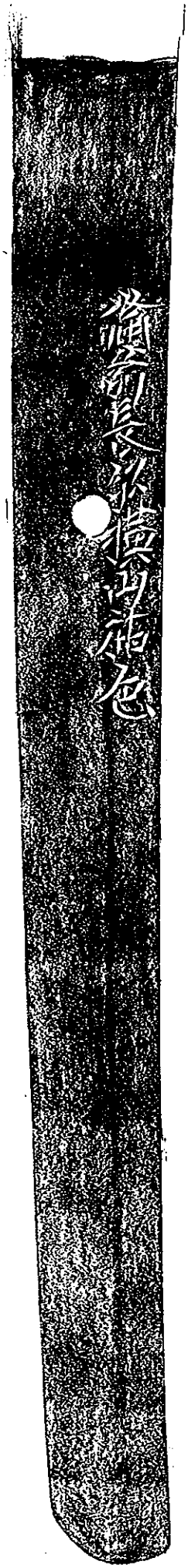
SUKEMUNE- (1822-1899). Student of Sukeharu. Signed 58th generation.

SUKENARI- Signed 56 and 57 generation.

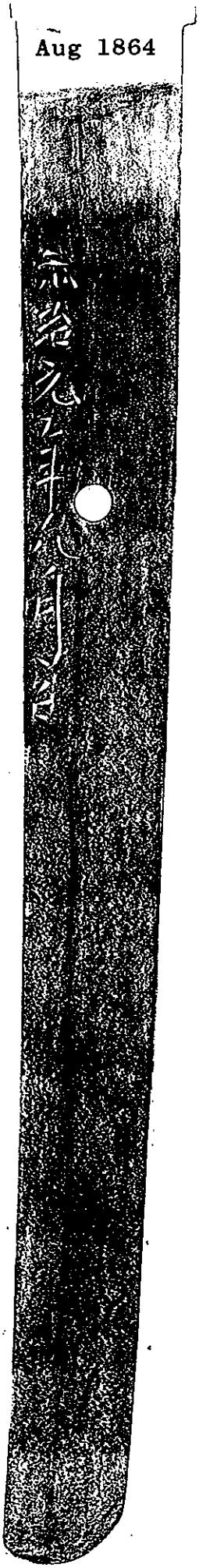
SUKEYOSHI- Signed 58th generation.

SUKEMITSU-(1845-1874). Signed 60th, 62nd and 63rd! Why he didn't try 61st is not known!

I decided to close the play with no ending. However, we can assume the following facts about Sukekane I. He was the son of Sukemori and a student of Sukenaga. He sometimes signed the 58th generation of Tomonari. His work is primarily shinogi tsukuri katana and wakizashi and hira tsukuri tanto. The hamon is done in nioi and mostly made up of gunome choji, the style of the Bizen den. The jitetsu is of the ko mokume and muji hada often seen in Shin Shinto Bizen work.



Bizen Osafune Yokoyama Sukekane



Aug 1864

Genji Ichi Nen Hachi Gatsu Hi

Bizen Osafune Ju Yokoyama Sukekane Saku

Feb 1862

Bunkyu Ni Nen Ni Gatsu Hi

Bishu Osafune Ju Yokoyama Sukekane

Meiji Ni Nen Ni Gatsu Hi

Feb 1869

REFERENCES: JAPANESE SWORDSMITHS by W.M. Hawley
NIHONTO NEWSLETTER by Albert Yamanaka
SHINTO-HEN by Fujishiro Yoshio
SHIN-SHINTO TAIKAN by Iimura Kasho

Signature from a Yari by Sukenaga.

Bizen Osafune Ju

Yokoyama Kaga-suke Fujiwara Sukenaga

TANTO PISTOLS

Arn Slettebak

The percussion or caplock ignition system for firearms was invented in the West about 1820, and probably introduced to Japan around the time of Perry's arrival in 1853. Many types of percussion guns appeared in Japan during that era, some of which were promptly replicated by skillful local craftsmen. A number of matchlocks were converted to the new system, and other caplock guns were apparently designed by Japanese gunsmiths. In the latter category are tanto pistols. These are pistols disguised as mounted tanto or aikuchi, at least until drawn from their scabbards. Two of these relatively rare curiosities among firearms have appeared in recent auction catalogs (Butterfield's, May, 1981, and Haynes, June, 1983). I recently had occasion to manufacture a trigger for a tanto pistol belonging to a friend, and in connection with that task I examined it closely and made some sketches of its mechanism and overall shape. These I include here as they may be of some interest to fellow members. The pistol is in aikuchi mounts. It appears to be similar in design to that sold at the Butterfield's auction. All parts of the mechanism are steel. None are decoratively embellished. The lacquerwork of the scabbard and tsuka are, however, very fine. The fuchi-kashira, koiguchi and kurikata are black-lacquerd horn. The tsuka is lacquered to resemble leather, and the scabbard has a variegated pattern. Tsuka and scabbard are maroon in color.

The gun is meant to fit into the scabbard at the half-cock or safety position (see drawing). The pistol is attached to the tsuka by means of a mekugi just above the mainspring. The quality of the metalwork ranges from fair to good. There are some irregularities which do not appear in my drawings. Percussion tanto pistols have boxlock mechanisms. This means that the hammer, trigger, and mainspring are centrally located in the box-like housing of the lock, rather than on one side of it.

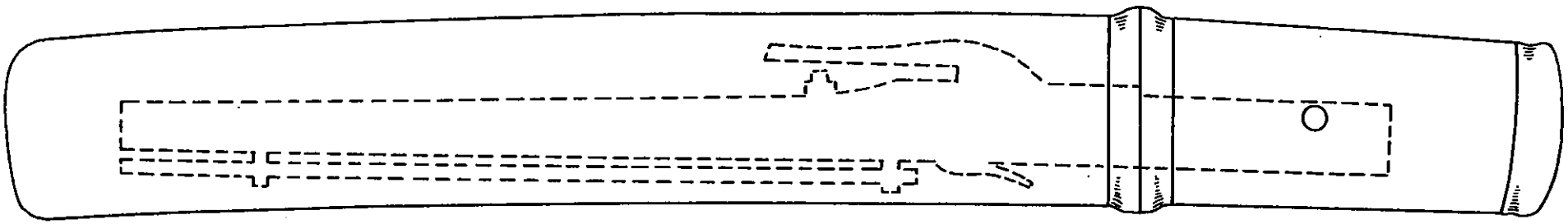
A percussion cap is a small, short section of copper tube with one end closed. Inside is a powder (typically mercury fulminate) which will

explode upon impact of the hammer. The cap fits over a steel tube or nipple on the barrel, which opens into the main powder charge. This system is extremely efficient.

There are other tanto pistols illustrated in Shin-ichi Yoshioka's Collection of Antique Guns (Tokyo, 1965). One is a caplock by Okuda Kiyuemon, shown disassembled. The mainspring has a sharp bend (i.e., V-shaped), unlike that of the pistol I have illustrated. Otherwise it is similar except that it has what seems to be a hinged lid over the muzzle, and is mounted with tsuba and seppa. Another tanto pistol in Yoshioka is stated to be a matchlock. It is, however, hard to imagine how a smoldering match could have been kept in a tanto scabbard, and equally difficult to imagine a potential attacker standing by while his intended victim paused to light it! Matchlock tanto pistols must therefore be extremely rare.

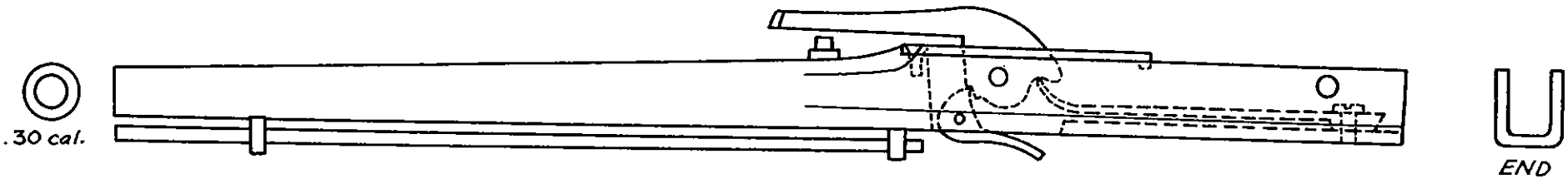
One might think that the concealed tanto pistol was a weapon of last resort, perhaps used mostly by the merchant class. However, the pistol sold in the Haynes auction was well documented as having been the property of not only a samurai but a daimyo. He had good reason to carry it, for he was eventually assassinated.

Since the wearing of swords (and what looked like a sword) was prohibited in 1876, we know that percussion tanto pistols were only in use for some twenty years. This is one good reason that they are so rare. In closing, I would again encourage any of you who have information on matchlocks and tanto pistols (types, styles, manufacture, or use) to please step forward, in the form of a letter or article for the Newsletter. I certainly wouldn't mind some feedback to me, either. This is a fertile field for future research.



TANTO PISTOL

Arn '84



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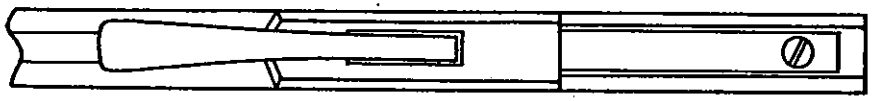

BOTTOM

BUY-SELL-TRADE SECTION

This section of the NEWSLETTER is offered as a FREE SERVICE to the membership. Please keep ads brief and direct. For larger ads announcing items for sale, it is advised that the members be asked to write for a complete listing of items. Business ads are not allowed. Paid advertising is offered at reasonable rates for professional ads. Direct all ad copy to the NEWSLETTER EDITOR. Please note deadline dates.

- FOR SALE - 16 plate (90 rivet) russett lacquer suji kabuto in o-yoroi form signed (Myochin) Muneyasu. Excellent condition shakuro real kozane, kabiki laced. $2,500 Photos available on request.
  CONTACT: Roger Dunn,

- FOR SALE - Wakizashi, dbl.signature study blade. Ubu, one bad kizu otherwise fair condition. NOSHU KUNI JU KANEHARU and SEKI SENSHO KANEYOSHI. $275; "Prison sword" as described NL 14/6. Katana naval mts, MASAHIRO, polisher Hatsuemon. $950.
  CONTACT: Dale Douberly,

- FOR SALE - (22) swords, most signed, all types and some mtd. Send S.A.S.E. for listing.
  CONTACT: Bill Kerwin,

- FOR SALE - Katana, 28" grooved, komidare , ubu, signed MINAMOTO YOSHICHIKA KORE SAKU (YO-678a), a Taisho smith 1910-1925, officer's gunto mtd., good polish, few nicks, $1,000.
  CONTACT: Vincent Spirito,

- FOR SALE - Katana, Shinto CHINZEI NYUDO BOKUDEN dated Empo 2, 74.2cm, ubu, excellent, shirazaya; Katana, Shinto, KITAMADO HARUKUNI TSUKURU dated Kwambun 3, 72.4cm, ubu, ex.cond., bukezukuri mtd.; Katana, Shinshinto, HEIANJO JU CHOSON dated Bunsei 2, 77.5cm, ubu, ex. cond., bukezukuri mtd.; Tanto, Shinto, HARIMA NO KAMI TERUHIRO dated Kwanei 1, 27.8cm, ubu, ex.cond., shirazaya.
  CONTACT: Fred Pochelle,

- FOR SALE - Tsuba boxes w/pillow, green $25, purple $30; tsuba daisho, purple $45; F/K boxes, purple pillow $30; Large white uchiko $9; vynyl w/zipper cleaning kits, $22.95; Limited stock just brought back from Japan.
  CONTACT: Bob Elder,

BUY-SELL-TRADE cont'd.

- WANTED - Satsuma blades from any period.
  CONTACT: Bill Miller,

- WANTED - Video tapes (VHS preferably) of Iaido, Iaijutsu, Kendo, Kenjutsu, or other armed martial art demos. CONTACT: Ralph B. Tacoma,

- WANTED - Katana by Gendai smith E-MURA. Must be top quality and condition only.
  CONTACT: Paul Kenny,

- WANTED - Collector searching for individual able to carve horn pieces for restoration of tsuka and saya parts. Also other quality restoration services sought.
  CONTACT: Bill Harling,

- WANTED - Copy of A. Yamanaka's NIHONTO NEWSLETTER.
  CONTACT: Jim Harrington,

- WANTED - Shakujo yari, nagamaki, yari fitted with hadome, Fukuro (socket yari). Fully mounted pieces only. Any yari saya.
  CONTACT: N. Willey,

- WANTED - Copy of Hawley's original JAPANESE SWORDSMITHS, Vol. 1 and 2 revised with insert.
  CONTACT: Charles Bowman,

- WANTED - Collector wishes to contact the owner of CHOUNSAI TSUNATOSHI blade, #76 in Meibutsu (TTK'79 publication). Owners of other blades by this smith are also sought.
  CONTACT: Steve Hopkins,

FOR SALE - Katana, SUKESADA, Muromachi, 28-3/8", ubu, broad midare, mtd., NTHK Kanshiesho, $1,800; Katana, mumei, 30¼" ubu, broad blade, active midare choji, Muromachi, Kanshiesho, $1,800; Fine presentation tachi, silver mtd., signed: KASHU JU KAGEHIRA, $2,500.
CONTACT: Louis Smith,

NIHONTO NEWSLETTER -

A number of members have been asking for copies of this set. For the information of our newer members, a third printing of this set was totally sold out over a year ago. No future re-printing is planned at this time. With our growing membership perhaps demand will again grow, justifying another reprinting. This will be up to the Publications Committee to investigate. Meanwhile--anyone with a copy of this set, who would be interested in selling/trading it--an ad in the NL would get instant response.

COMING SWORD EVENTS -

● ST.LOUIS, MISSOURI - Annual Japanese Festival to be held at the Missouri Botanical Gardens. June 16th through 24th, 1984. This is a very large festival centered around the largest Japanese garden in North America. Jack Landis and I will have a very good sword and kodogu exhibit set up as part of the event. Please, come visit us. You will be pleased.

● BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA - Semi-annual Southeast Tokenkai sword show will be held the Labor Day weekend, August 31st through September 2nd, 1984. The show will have the buy-sell-trade tables with any personal exhibits encouraged. Presentations and lectures will be available only if someone wishes to make such an effort. The show will be held at the Airport Ramada (walking distance from the airport terminal building). For table reservations and further information, contact: Paul Couch,

● SOLINGEN, WEST GERMANY - An International Symposium will open in Solingen, running from September 12th through 15th, 1984. It will be held at the Deutsches Klingen Museum in Solingen. Many workshops and lectures are planned on sword and fittings including a demonstration by a swordsmith and polisher. An exhibition will also be presented drawing items from Halberstatt-collection,

Baur collection, and others. An auction will also be planned. For further information, contact: Kunsthandel Klefisch,

● CHICAGO, ILLINOIS - The next annual Token Study Group show is planned for October 5th, 6th and 7th, 1984, at the Ramada O'Hare (same as TTK'84). This is always a fun event and t

NEW SWORD SHOP OPENED -

John Grimmitt of the Norther California group has opened up a new shop and wishes to invite a visit from members when in the area.

CLOSING COMMENT - This issue of the Newsletter is running late due to TTK/84 and personal time demands. The next issue may also

run late depending on vacation schedules....please understand this if your issue is running a little late at this summer season.

- NEWSLETTER DEADLINE -

JULY 21st

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

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TEIRYO YOJI

INFORMATION CONCERNING SWORD APPRAISAL

By
HONAMI KOSON

TRANSLATED AND EDITED BY
ALBERT YAMANAKA
AND
DAVID SCOTT

At long last a most definitive work of sword kante is available. This work completed by Honami Koson in 1932 and never before published was given by Honami sensei to his leading students. It embodies in essence the secrets of the Honami. Consisting of three volumes which were origianlly scrolls (one on Koto swords, one on Shinto and Shinshinto swords and one on Tanto) with over 800 illustrations, each meticulously hand drawn, with pertinent notes in Japanese with English translation added. Full English translation of text is also provided, along with an index and glossary in English.

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