

W. HAWLEY

THE TO-KEN SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN
for the Study and Preservation of Japanese Swords and Fittings

C. Bowman has died. July 1985



HON. PRESIDENT. B.W. ROBINSON, M.A., B.LITT.

SECRETARY. H. M. HUTCHINSON, 141 NORK WAY, BANSTEAD, SURREY.

PROGRAMME No. 78.

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 1974

NEXT MEETING

Monday 4th February, 7.30 p.m. at the Princess Louise, High Holborn. To get there: Underground to Holborn, turn west, cross Kingsway and the P.L. is 50 yards down on the left hand side.

FOLLOWING MEETING

Monday 3rd March at Princess Louise 7.30 p.m.

SUBJECTS:

February: LACQUER by FRED MAITLAND.
This is a must - one of the best informative lectures you will hear - bring along a selection of lacquer work. PLUS AUCTION.

March: Possibly a film to be decided by the Committee.

JAPANESE MEAL

This took place at the Tokio Restaurant just off Piccadilly on 17th December. 28 diners were present which included a smattering of wives. From the way the Sukiyaki disappeared it would be fair to say everyone enjoyed it - empty bowls for refills seemed to be constantly passed in front of me. Those who went had a great time - those who missed it, what a pity.

DECEMBER MEETING

After a period of intense activity the meeting started with the Auction at 7.30. Chris Allan acted as Auctioneer with Ted Newman as sales assistant. Members seem extremely hesitant

about bidding and as a result, notwithstanding the efforts of the Auctioneer, the sale was somewhat drawn out. Prices were low but in the main reflected the quality of sale goods. Although some bargains were evident, the faults in some blades were remarkable to say the least. Still it was a start and no doubt will improve as members enter more into the spirit of it.

The final sorting out - paying for lots purchased and finally settling down took until 9.10 p.m. which was much too late. The next sales must be over much quicker or there will be no time for anything else. Donations from the sale resulted in £21.50 to the Society's funds - 26 items being auctioned. This is a very good start and will make us solvent at least.

Forty members were present, which is a very good turn out for the time of year. Mr. Stripp was welcomed back into the fold. John Myrös from the Northern Branch was also welcomed.

Sidney Divers then introduced Dr. Curtis, who is one of our metallurgists who has recently returned from a visit to the States. Whilst there, he had the privilege of meeting Willis Hawley of the Southern Californian Club. All of the previous statements by Andy Ford were confirmed as well as the famous steps. Willis Hawley presented to the Society a tape recording "Hawley Collector Tells All". Part of this tape was played at the meeting to the enjoyment of all, but to hear it all would have meant packing up at midnight. So it has been written up and made into part of this programme. I trust with not too many mistakes. However, thank you Willis - it was very much appreciated. Also Dr. Curtis brought back about 200 prints (identical) showing the various signatures used by Kiyomaro during his rather short lifetime. These will form part of the programme. Again thanks.

Sid stated that there were now 25 definite bookings on the Token Japan trip and a very choice list of visits were arranged. It includes a trip to the Imperial Palace -- something most Japanese would give their eye teeth for. This alone has got to make it fantastic value - something you could talk about for the rest of your life.

There was considerable discussion and we rounded off with Willis Hawley's tape.

JANUARY MEETING

This time the Auction got off on a much better footing. Bidding was brisk and prices were better, some very low and some quite high. I believe £250 being the top bid and a bunch of 4 incredible blades going for £6. 25 items were auctioned and £22 received as donations by the Society. The general standard

was slightly higher than our last sale and a few were bargains. Where else could you pick up a Tanto for £6 or £7. Also members are beginning to get the feel of the prices to pay. Our next sale should be quite a good one. Everything was cleared up by 8.45 and the main meeting began.

Sidney Divers, our Chairman, opened the meeting by welcoming Bob Jackson as a new member and Stephen Farthing a guest.

The meeting was mainly a discussion covering future events - we didn't get any further as we were abruptly closed at 9.30 due to power restrictions.

It was decided that the committee should look into what films are to be shown - these are the ones the Japanese Embassy have kindly offered us. Mole Benn offered the use of his 16 mm sound projector as well as an epidiascope and copying facilities. We shall bear it in mind and definitely take him up for the film show. Thank you Mole.

Sidney Divers gave news of the proposed trip to Japan, that the visit to the Imperial Palace was official and set for 10 a.m. 25th March. Also the polishing and sword making visits were on.

Talk about trying to bring a polisher back so that we might get our swords polished a little quicker carried on for quite a time. Sid explained the initial costs that he would have to bear, although if all went well he would be reimbursed. Members were certain that sufficient swords would be available, in fact enough to keep him permanently occupied. The problems of standard - how good he would be - what would he accept for polishing - are all questions that cannot be answered until actual contact is made. This will have to be done in Japan and Sid has agreed to tackle this matter during the visit.

With regard to the Auctions, it was agreed to look into the problem of donations where the seller had not sold, and also to continue for February and then consider at that meeting their furtherance and regularity. They are enjoyable but are proving somewhat time consuming and if we are to be closed at 9.30 it does not give much time for other affairs.

Frederike was back again - this time from a trip round South East Asia including Japan. It would appear from some of the remarks, he has fallen in love with the East, but let's hope we shall still see something of him.

KENDO NEWS ITEMS

It is nice to see that Ric Schofield has rejoined the Society after a long absence. Though he has moved from London let us hope this will not preclude him from attending odd meetings. Ric is a well known Kendoka (3rd Dan) and is instructor at the Miken Dojo at Bletchley Leisure Centre.

The European Kendo championships are being held this year on Easter Sunday 14th April (11 a.m. - 7 p.m.) at the Bletchley Leisure Centre. This is being organised by the European Kendo Federation (led by Count Robert von Sandor) and the British Kendo Association. It promises to be an interesting day and will enable the organisers to "try out the ground" for the 1976 World Championships. Flags of the competing Nations, National Anthems, Displays, etc. are being laid on for this.

The Miken Dojo cordially invite all members of the Token Society to this important Kendo event. The offer of a small display exhibition of swords, armour, etc. still holds (similar to our annual effort at the Arms Fair) and if any of our stalwarts care to organise this, will they please contact Sidney Divers.

The Imperial Palace has sent an invitation to the Token Society trip to Japan group of 23 to visit the Palace on the 25th March.

The Imperial Guard Kendo dojo (Mr. Nakamura 8th Dan - chief instructor) has invited any Kendoka in Sid Divers group, who wish to do so, to have practise sessions at the Palace dojo. Kendoka will realise that this is quite an honour.

NEWS FROM THE NORTH

As mentioned in the last programme the affairs of the 'Hokusokudo' branch have taken a definite turn for the better since moving into the 'Manchester Club'. Not only are the premises more convenient and more comfortable, but with the oak panelling and stained glass, add an air of refinement to our discussions. Such gentility was however pushed to one side at the January meeting when Ian and John illustrated the art of Kendo. Beginning with a short historical introduction (reproduced below) Ian explained how modern Kendo had evolved from earlier styles of swordplay. The first demonstration was of Kata. Ian showed the weak points on an actual suit of armour, and then went through the Kata illustrating the defensive techniques.

This was followed by some modern kendo fencing - which unfortunately had to be restricted out of respect for the light fittings. Members were invited to 'have a go' at producing a downward cutting stroke with the shinai - not so easy as it looks!

Any member of the Token who is visiting Manchester, perhaps on business, on a day when we are meeting would be made most welcome. Activities planned for the remainder of the year include films on 'Bunraku' and Japanese Art, and a special lecture and demonstration of Kyudo (Archery) by an expert in the field. The final dates of these have yet to be settled, but they will be among the dates for forthcoming meetings: March 12, May 14th, July 9th, Sept. 10th, Nov. 12th.

The Manchester Club is in Spring Gardens, two minutes walk from Piccadilly Centre. The meetings start at 7.30 p.m.

On March 12th it is my turn to give a talk, on the subject of 'The Japanese Common Soldier'. Students of armour and swords tend to concentrate on the Samurai, ignoring the humbler 'ashigaru' and 'chugen'. This talk will be an attempt to assess the footsoldier's importance in Japanese warfare, as well as describing his costume and weapons. Members are asked to bring along any pieces of armour etc. appertaining to the footsoldier.

S.R. Turnbull.

TALK ON KENDO - by Ian Bottomley

Early history of sword techniques - kenjutsu is vague - however, in "Tales of the Heike" at the battle of Uji bridge the following is recorded:-

'Tsutsui-no-Jomyo Meishu springing barefoot onto the beams of the bridge strode across with his naginata he mows down 5 opponents but with the sixth the blade snaps asunder in the midst and flinging it away he draws his sword, wielding it in the zigzag style, the interlacing, cross, reversed dragonfly, waterwheel and eight sides at once styles of fencing'

From this it can be assumed that most of these would be wide swinging techniques, many of which still exist in kenjutsu. The earliest recorded school of fencing is the Nen-ryu founded by Sanashiro Yoshimoto in 1350 and what they taught was a series of routines which hopefully covered every contingency. Since real weapons were used, none of the blows

could be landed. The technique is still continued in the form of a series of kata.

During the Edo, fencing with wooden swords was introduced together with some form of defensive armour which eventually developed into kendo. However, because the fencing (Gekkan) is too free and lacking in caution that is necessary in real fighting - kata has been retained to complement the gekkan.

Modern Kendo differs appreciably from real sword play in that the permitted targets are restricted to those areas most fruitful in battle, namely the head, temples, wrists and side of the body. Only one thrust is permitted to the throat. Most of the large swinging cuts have been dropped as being too slow. The result is a fast series of almost vertical cuts which to be successful:

- 1) must be launched with sufficient backswing
- 2) must be accompanied by proper footwork
- 3) must be accompanied by a proper kiui
- 4) must land unhindered by the opponents shinai
- 5) must be followed by a slicing action that is normally given by the movement of the fencer.

IDENTIFICATION OF NIHONTO through SHAPE

The identification of the Japanese sword is made by identification of the various characteristics of the sword proper such as: the shape, the Kissaki, the Hamon, the Jitetsu, the Hada, the Nakago, the signature and numerous other detailed parts.

Among these, all individual characteristics are important in their respective sense, e.g. the shape will tell the period and the province in which that blade was made.

The size of the Kissaki will tell the period in which it was made. The Hamon, the Jitetsu and the Hada will tell the province and the school in which it was made. All these combined should tell the observer the swordsmith or his school.

Any of these is very important in itself and none should be carelessly looked at, for if any one detail is left out, then that small detail (it may be a very large one) will make the observation that much more difficult in helping the observer to come to the correct conclusion.

The shape of the sword is very important in giving the observer the correct 'start' in getting at the numerous hidden answers to the questions of each characteristic. The shape of the sword tells the observer the period and in some ways the province in which it was made. It would be a very much easier task if the swords had remained in their original shape, however, this is not the case in all the swords, for many of the swords from the early periods have been shortened and this will have changed the shape of the sword greatly. Depending on the owner or the user of the sword, a sword with a Koshi Zori may have changed into a Kyo Zori.

If a blade is an O Suriage, whereby none of the original Nakago is left, then the chances are that the shape of the sword may have changed greatly. If the sword is a Suriage with some of the inscription left, then there is a chance that some of the original shape of the blade has been retained. However, here again, depending on the person who made the Suriage, as mentioned previously, a Koshi Zori may have changed into a Kyo Zori or vice versa.

To the observer, it is very important to get a very good 'look' at the start when he removes the blade from the Saya or when he is first given the sword to look at. By getting a 'very good look' at a blade, this refers to - holding the blade held upright at arm's length with the Habaki at about eye level and looking at the sword and its shape. This will give the observer, or should tell the observer:-

1. what type of Sori it has, that is whether it is made in Koshi Zori or in Kyo Zori.
2. The shape of the blade should give the observer, the general period in which it was made.

a) A deep Sori with narrow width and a very small Kissaki, but with Fumbari at the Machi should tell one that that blade was made during the Heian Period.

b) A broad width with a very stubby Kissaki (Ikubi Kissaki) should tell one that that blade was made during the Mid-Kamakura Period by one of the better smiths of that period.

c) A very long Kissaki should tell one that that blade was made during the Yoshino Period.

d) A blade shape which is very poor should tell one that the blade was made during the Sengoku Period (Momoyama Period) by any of the lesser smiths of that period and especially by those of the Kazuuchi mono or Kuwana smiths.

e) A very sturdy and thick blade usually should tell that the blade is a Shinto.

f) A blade which has hardly any Sori at all should tell the observer that the blade is a late Shin Shinto.

The characteristics of the shape of the Katana throughout the periods are:-

Heian Period: Length of about 2 Shaku 7-8 Sun with a very deep Sori and with the centre of the Sori at the mid point of the blade and the curvature is made very gracefully. There will be much Fumbari at the Habaki and the blade will taper narrow and become a small Kissaki. There will be Hiraniku and in comparison to the width of the blade, the thickness of the blade will be a little emphasised. Also, the Shinogi will be a little high. The Mune will be in Gyo no Mune, though Shin no Mune may be seen at times. The whole and the general description or the appearance of the blade is that it is a very 'fine piece of art work'.

This is the general description of blades as a whole during the Heian Period, however, to break this down into various provinces.

During the Heian Period, swordsmiths were active in Yamashiro Province, Yamato Province, Bizen Province, Bitchu Province, Hoki Province and in Northern Kyushu. Practically all of these smiths made swords in the Yamashiro tradition which was the description given for the Heian period. The difference being that, depending on the swordsmith and his native province, that swordsmith had his own individual characteristics in addition to the ones already given.

They are:

Yamashiro Province

Sanjo MUNECHIKA - exactly that given in the Heian period description.

Sanjo YOSHIIE - the Sori becomes slightly shallow and the Kasane a little thicker giving the blade a slightly firmer appearance. Though there are blades made in the same graceful shape as Munechika.

Gojo KANENAGA - about the same as Yoshiie.

Gojo KUNINAGA - ditto --

Yamato Province

Ko Senjuin - of Yamato Province refers to smiths of this school such as:

SHIGEHIRO, SHIGENAGA, YUKIYOSHI, YUKIMASA, YOSHIYUKI, SHIGEMURA.

The descriptions of the blades by these smiths are about the same as that given for the Heian period. If the blade retains its original form, that is Ubu shape, then the Sori is made very gracefully and there will be much Fumbari. The Shinogi will be high and the Kasane will be thick. The one difference being that the Yamato smiths always have "Masame-Hada" in the grain of the steel.

Hoki Province

YASUTSUNA - The general description is about the same except for the fact that the Kissaki is made a little longer and the width becomes a little wider, though the whole appearance still retains the gracefulness of the Heian period.

SANEMORI - - ditto -

Bizen Province

TOMONARI - Same as that of the Heian period description.

MASATSUNE - Some are in the Heian period style, whereas there are others with no Fumbari and a very shallow Sori with the width of the blade not having any differences at the bottom (Machi) and towards the tip, in which case the Kasane is thick and the Mune high.

TSUNETSUGU, SANETSUNE, TSUNEMITSU, KANEHIRA, SUKEHIRA, TAKAHIRA

and there were about 50 other swordsmiths in Bizen Province during the Heian period all of whose works are very rare, though their names are given in old texts, and on very rare occasions, works of these swordsmiths are encountered. However, most of these blades are in such a poor state of preservation (overpolished) that they retain very little of their former elegance.

The so-called Ko Ichimonji, also are included in the Heian period and the descriptions of the blades by these smiths of the Ko Ichimonji are about the same as that of the other Bizen smiths during the Heian period.

In Bitchu Province, the Ko Aoe smiths flourished and from about the Hoan to about the Rekinin Era, that is from about the 1120 to about the 1238, for about a one hundred year period, there were about 30 swordsmiths of this school known

to have been active. Such swordsmiths like MORITSUGU, SADATSUGU, TSUNETSUGU, SUKETSUGU, TSUGUIE. The description of the blades by these smiths is that they have a strong Sori just above the Habaki which is called Aoe Sori, which term is not often used, for the simple reason that works of these smiths are very rare. There will be a strong Fumbari (if the blade is Ubu), there will be much Hiraniku and the Shinogi will be high and the Kasane will be thick.

SHINSOKU, CHOEN, SADAHIDE, MITSUYO, YUKIHIRA, and a few others of Kyushu also worked in Heian period. SHINSOKU, is dated as having been active around the Wado Era (708-715), and is said to have made Tachi in typical Heian period style though the Kissaki is said to be a little long.

CHOEN worked during the Eien Era (987-989) and CHOEN's work is typical of the Heian period style. Works by these two smiths can be regarded as non-existent and if there are works attributed to these two, they are, in almost all cases, very doubtful.

SADAHIDE was active around the Eireki Era (1160-1161), his work is also very rare, but are seen on very rare occasions and they are made in the typical Heian period style.

YUKIHIRA worked in a style or shape of blade which we today refer to as the early Kamakura period, though he was active around the Genryaku Era (1184-1185).

In Satsuma Province, there are a few swordsmiths listed during the Heian period, such as MASAKUNI and YUKIYASU who were said to have been active around the Eien Era (987-989). The shape of the Satsuma blades during the Heian period are no different from any other smith during that period, however, the Satsuma smiths trace their origin back to Yamato Province and as such their method of folding the steel is in Masame grain which is made into Ayasugi style.

It has been said that there were no blades of Naminohira smiths of Satsuma Province from the Heian period, however in a recent 'find' a blade by YUKIYASU did turn up and this blade is said to be in a very good state of preservation. The shape of the blade and everything about it suggesting that it is from the Heian period.

VISIT TO SOUTHERN CALIFORNIAN SWORD CLUB - by G. Curtis

The meeting I attended was on the 9th Nov. and the main topic of the evening was a talk by Yasukizu on Kiyomaro. This was a repeat of the talk published in the February 1969 issue of the Token Soc. Programme. Hawley had printed the text and gave members present copies together with a year chart showing 19 variants of Koyomaro's signature. To add a little life Hawley brought along a Kiyomaro with a superb and intricate Fudo (?) horimono. He also brought along a newly acquired daisho in superb mounts which he had been trying to buy for many years from a Chinese friend. To some extent there was considerable similarity to our own meetings. An obvious undercurrent of need to sell and buy exists. Their technique to equate with this is to set up tables at the side of the hall and have the things for sale laid out for people to see and buy before or after the meeting. A nice touch is the coffee and cookies intervale, with the purist of cookies provided by a very sweet and retiring Mrs. Hawley. I forgot to mention, although it ought to be indelibly printed upon my mind because I made six journeys up and six journeys down the side of the canyon garden steps with cases, that Mr. Hawley has a series of tables at the side of the hall displaying some of the books he has imported from Japan.

In two 12 hour days, with breaks for vegetarian delicacies and tit-bits which I am sure are the reason for Mr. Hawley's perennial youth, I only saw about 2/3rds of the Hawley collection! What a collection it is, a little mixed perhaps, but in the main there are some magnificent pieces. Hawley said I could quote and so I will:

- 1) Katana in shirasaya, graceful with narrow straight hamon, signed Rai Kunitoshi!!!
- 2) Tanto with Hamano School fittings, mixed mokume-itame hada, by Uda Kanefusa (1394)
- 3) Aikuchi in the most eyecatching ensuite mounts I have ever seen representing snake eye and feather mons in inlay. The usual same had been replaced by tiny feathers of just the right colours to match the metal and lacquer. Even the sageo was custom made with a snake eye design. (If anyone has a copy of Hawley's Intro. to Japanese Swords the piece is shown on Page 2.) The blade is by Kanekage c1650.
- 4) Katana of mammoth proportions in polished same scabbard. The blade was made by Masakiyo c1721 and when Menrushiki had finished cutting it down in 1811 the blade was 36"

long. It appeared to need a steel reinforcing tube in the tsuka and a cover plate was provided to protect the signature on the fuchi!

- 5) Daisho with both blades by Tsunanobu (Tsl69, 1848).
- 6) Katana in my favourite scabbard lacquer, a mixture of crushed straw and mijingai by Yasumitsu.

It would be wrong I suppose to end without mentioning the Hawley Masa-O tanto which because of the photograph in Vol.1 No.4 of the Society Journal, I always link with Yasu-Kizu. It will be remembered that on one side it has a kanji horimono which translates: "do not go to your enemy, let your enemy come to you". I did not know until my visit that on the other side of the blade is a sosho horimono which translates: "he who sacrifices himself attains the highest degree of courage". Remembering the deep empathy which Captain Johns had for the samurai spirit I cannot help feeling it would have been nice if he had been fortunate enough to own it.

I shall not forget the Southern Californian hospitality for quite a while. It is not often that I am taken out to a Japanese restaurant by one of the great names and the President of one of the great societies in western sword collecting. For that matter it is not very often that I eat fish tempera across the table from a slim black sword bag which in the seclusion of my hotel room, is found to contain the President's prize possession, a superb slim chisa katana with a complex hitatsura hamon, which you could look at for hours. One of the exceptions to John Harding's generalisations about the badness of all over temper is that it is authenticated as the work of Tsunahiro (Tsl32, first signing Masahira), Soshuden cl504.

REPEAT ITEM

We have received the following from the Japanese Sword Club of Southern California, a synopsis of a talk by Yazu Kizu given at their September meeting last year. Many thanks to the Southern Californian for this, I hope we may be able to exchange more information in the future. I only regret we haven't the facilities to use Kanji as our American friends are able to do.

MINAMOTO NO KIYOMARO by Yasu Kizu

The name Minamoto Kiyomaro is placed first in the list of all Shin-shinto swordsmiths. He was born in 1813 as the

younger of two sons of Yamaura Masatomo, the headman of Akaiwa town located by the Chikuma river in Shinano Province. His ancestor was Hitachinosuke Nobumune, a general under Lord Takeda of Kai province.

Kiyomaro had two names, Tamaki was his first name and Kuranosuke his common name.

His elder brother, Maso-ō (may be read Sane-ō SA 568) had a desire to make a trustworthy blade for himself and it impressed Kiyomaro so much that the two brothers became students of Kawamura Toshitake (TO 530) a swordsmith employed by Lord Matsudaira of Uyeda Castle in Shinano Province. They studied blade making in the Bizen school method. Kiyomaro was then 16 years old and his brother was 25.

Young Kiyomaro's skill advanced so quickly that he made his first good blade only two years after becoming a student of Toshitake and proudly signed it with his craft name Ikkansai Masayuki dating it 1830.

He soon realised that the only way to make a good sword comparable to the quality of koto blades was to use the best possible iron materials which are smelted from sand iron ores, and the brothers often times went up the mountains and down the rivers in search of the proper ore.

In 1831 the brothers left Uyeda city - the elder for Edo and Kiyomaro for Matsushiro city in Shiano, to further their study of blade making. In 1835 Kiyomaro went to Edo with the intention of learning kendo fencing under Kubota Sugane, an instructor in the Kobusho Kendo school of the Tokugawa Shogunate.

The instructor Sugane, finding that Kiyomaro was a swordsmith, advised him to keep up with his profession and helped him every way possible for his start in Edo and in 1839 Sugane even solicited 100 samurai, including his students to place orders at 3 ryō a blade. A year later, after making only a few of the 100 blades ordered, Kiyomaro ran away from Edo with most of the money. It was learned much later that he had gone to Hagi city in Nagato Province, the western most in Honshu, where he stayed five years.

He came back to Edo in 1845 and visited Sugane, the Kendo instructor to whom he had become much obligated in previous years. Sugane, instead of accusing him, helped him again to establish his blade making profession in the Yotsuya district in Edo, whereupon he changed his craft name from Masayuki to Kiyomaro and soon after became so famous that people began calling him "Yotsuya Masamune" in praise of his skill in blade making.

YEAR CHART OF KIYOMARO

Minamoto Kiyomaro KI 114, Yamaura Tamaki, Masayuki, MA 744, Hidetoshi (1834)

1831	源正行
1832	山浦正行
1834	貫宗秀吉
1834	助源正行
1837	山浦環
1840	浦環正行
1841	正行
1842	城山浦正行造之
1843	山浦正行製
1844	源正行
1845	源正行
1846	源正行
1847	源清麻呂
1848	源清麻呂
1849	源清麻呂
1851	源清麻呂
1852	源清麻呂
1853	源清麻呂
1854	源清麻呂

The characteristics of his blades are as follows:

1) He made katana mostly, some wakizashi, tanto of various shapes like shobu iris leaf, unokubi cormorant head, and osoraku extra large point, besides the flat body type, also naginata and yari.

2) Katana are 2 shaku 3-4 sun or more in length, wide flat body, medium thick back, shallow curvature, and medium to large kissaki point of which the cutting edge is fukura kareru or less arc. Two shapes of flat body tanto, one 7 sun or less in length having takenokozori or bamboo sprout shape, while others are 9 sun to over a shaku of rather narrow body slightly curved.

3) Finely forged itame wood grain that tends towards masame straight grain. Exceptionally strong shin steel for the Shinshinto period with dense surface nie and some chikei lines shining bright and clear.

4) Temper lines are of various types as follows:-

- a) Nioi based choji patterns on his early blades as he studied blade making in the Bizen method under Kawamura Toshitaka.
- b) Then he changed to gonome in which there are choji patterns here and there, nioi formed ashi notches, sand floating marks, and thick kinsuji golden lines.
- c) On his late blades, large gonome, gonome mixed with notare wavy, somewhat longer ashi notches, and long thick kinsuji golden lines along the temper line.

5) Boshi line is irregular, small round tip with short or long turn-back.

6) Horimono carvings or single or double grooves are rare.

7) Shapely nakago tang with kurijiri chestnut end. File marks are slanting with decorative marks on early blades, without them on later ones. Many different signatures are recorded -

Ikkansai Masayuki (MA 749)

Yamaura Kuranosuke Minamoto Masayuki

Yamaura Kuranosuke Minamoto Hidetoshi (HI 104,105)

Minamoto Hidetoshi

Yamaura Tamaki (TA 320b)

Yamaura Tamaki Masayuki

Minamoto Masayuki

Yamaura Masayuki

Masayuki

Kiyomaro (KI 114)

Minamoto Kiyomaro

The above mentioned blade characteristics tell us that he began blade making in the Bizen method, then as his skill

advanced he gradually changed to the Soshu style especially noted for the characteristics of the Sa blades, on the way to establishing his own Yamaura characteristics which were outstanding in the Shinshinto period.

Kiyomaro and a comparatively small number of students, among whom Kurihara Nobuhide (NO 82), Suzkui Masao (MA 410) and Saito Kiyondo (may be read Kiyohito KI 98) are well known.

It is understandable that he did not make many blades in his lifetime for the following reasons:-

- 1) He was very particular in selecting his iron materials.
- 2) He used the most difficult honsanmai or shihōzume (4 or 5 piece construction) forging methods.
- 3) He did not allow his students to make or sign his blades for him.
- 4) He was a heavy drinker which interfered with his work somewhat.
- 5) He ended his life in 1854, rather young at the age of 42 by committing suicide after being the victim of a stroke and realizing that he would never be able to make good blades again.

WILLIS HAWLEY TELLS ALL

I have been asked to make this talk because a number of members have thought that the experiences of an old time collector in the early days would be interesting. So here goes.....

To start at the beginning - one thing leads to another, you don't just drop out of a clear sky into something like sword collecting. When I came out to California in 1917 my girl friend asked me to have some chop suey; I didn't know what it tasted like, for back in Pittsburg we had neither chop suey parlours, oriental art shops or anything else, in fact I can't even remember seeing a Chinese character around or anything, so it was all new to me. So I went down to Chinatown to eat chop suey and you couldn't help prowling the art shops and I saw all kinds of things I'd never seen before. I was 21 at the time and intensely interested in just about everything that went on. I found I didn't have any money to

spend but I did a lot of looking and later when I got married, we bought a set of Japanese dishes that my wife liked too. So we prowled the Japanese and Chinese shops and saw a lot of things that we found interesting. Among other things I found - Chinese characters used for decoration and I wanted to know what they meant, so I'd ask the proprietor and he would say - that's long levity, that's prosperity and so forth. Well, I wasn't satisfied with this so I sported \$2 on a dictionary and started studying the characters which was really fascinating. Anyhow, this started me prowling the oriental shops and one day I bought a book at a bookstore on Japanese art.

This was a special museum catalogue of the collection at the Louvre, Paris, and it showed a lot of sword guards and I fell in love with sword guards at first sight because these were beautiful openwork Sukashi type and others, also a few swords were shown and the decorations on the scabbards and so forth were something I'd never seen before. So in my prowling around the antique shops I started asking for them and found some. About that time I was manufacturing some lamp shades which were rather colourful and I needed some plain solid colour bases for lamps to display them on, so this gave me a new impetus and I was prowling the Chinese and Japanese shops from San Diego to San Francisco buying up bases for lamps. So I got around and just about everywhere I asked in Japanese shops they had some sword guards and things. I bought one sword for 3 dollars and a half - it turned out to be a junker - which is pretty much par for the course for starting collecting swords. I think I kept it, I don't know how many years, I think I sold it about 5 or 6 years ago to some fellow who was buying any kind of sword I had for 10 dollars a piece - he wanted to practise polishing - so I got rid of that one.

The very first swords I got, I guess, I got from my Japanese shop over in Pasadena, the proprietor has a brother who had a lot of stuff down in the basement. I remember he had trunks full of Japanese prints - and I mean trunks full - big trunks just stacked up; they were all over the place. He had them on display and you could buy almost anything he had for a dollar and a lot, if you bought a quantity for 50 cents. He had a pile of junk at 10-15 cents. Along with swords and tsubas, I picked up quite a few battle scenes at 50 cents - a dollar for a triptic. Today, I guess, I must have 50 of the triptics at least - battlescenes. So this is a sort of a side-line, the battle scenes of course showed weapons in action and are quite interesting. Tsubas 50 cents, 75 cents, a dollar and a half got a real beautiful one. So it was a real cheap hobby, you could spend a few bucks here and there and come up with something you were really proud of. Swords were harder to come

by. At auctions that I attended I found mostly Philippine and that type of thing. I got a few of those. However, there were a couple of Malay or maybe they were Philippino Kris with ivory handles for 5-7½ dollars apiece at the auctions and Persian swords with an inscription from the Koran inlaid in gold on it. They are not scarce even today - I picked them up.

The first jackpot I hit was in an auction, in a private house in Los Angeles. There I ran across the biggest sword I had ever laid eyes on, it was a Japanese Katana, the blade was 3 ft one inch, snakes skin covered saya, an enormous tsuba on it, solid iron with a pierced bug was the only decoration; a couple of holes and a handle with gold inlay on iron on the fuchi kashira which was signed - a three piece job - quite an elaborate thing and the handle has a steel lining. It started out at about 2 dollars and went up to 7 and at that everyone else dropped out but myself and another fellow who knew what it was. Much to the amazement of the crowd we went back and forward all the way up to 42 dollars, when he dropped out as he didn't have any more money. After the sale was over he came up and said that if I would sell it he would give me 75 dollars, but I said 'No, I'd keep it'. I scraped up an acquaintance with him and he brought me a number of nice things later. One was a great big ornamental arrow point I got for 5 dollars a couple of years later. But, anyhow, I took this sword over to a Mr. Kijima who ran a dojo teaching Kendo down in Little Tokio at the time. He looked it all over and wanted to know how much I'd paid for it. I told him and that I'd been offered 75 dollars by this fellow who called himself Victor Hugo. He said "I'll give you 75 dollars for it - this fellow's grandfather was great but this fellow wasn't much, but it's such a big sword I'd like to hang it on the wall of the dojo." Well, it turns out to be Mondo (No) Sho Masakiyo who is twelfth in the list of Shinto swordsmiths and rates close to a million yen now, so I avoided being wangled out of it at the time.

Later another Japanese collector offered me 500 dollars any time I wanted to sell it - that was back in '27 or '28. Anyhow that was my pride and joy for some time. It wasn't polished, you couldn't see the temper line or hada or anything, it was stained so black. It had a nick in it, the shape of the back of a sword, so it must have gotten it in a fight some time. Some of it was left when it was polished, Vincent polished it for me and it's a real beauty.

That was my first real hit as far as swords were concerned. Everybody wants to know, where do you look for

swords? Well, in those days auctions were a good source. Nowadays the auctions have only got to say Japanese swords - and they go for crazy prices. But in those days hardly anyone was collecting Japanese swords except as an interesting item along with other kinds. So I got a few at auctions at 5, 7½ or 10 dollars - you got a beauty for 17.50. Then there were the antique shops, curio shops like John Clays down on Sunset Boulevard. John could always be depended on for unusual items. He believed in turning over his stock - not like some people where you can see the same stuff year after year - don't know how they exist. I can always do trading with John. John had a rather high price cash-wise on things, but you start trading and think in terms of what things cost and he would tell you. 'Oh, I got 50 dollars in that but I'll let you have it for forty. Which of course was nonsense until you remembered he got most of his stuff in trade, so if he gave 50 dollars in trade on it, he still had in his mind what the object he traded cost. It's a psychological point here, when you're buying you might remember when somebody tells you that he's got 50 dollars in it and can't go any lower. Say, well did you buy it for cash or did you trade for it - sometimes they will admit they traded for it and from there on you might be able to bargain.

I was invited to some of the exhibitions in Little Tokio and there was an all Token Kai society down there then. A fellow named Fukiyawa, I guess was President. He ran a little hardware store and when I got a sword I'd take it down for him to look at. He was honest and would tell me exactly what I had. They always invited me to their exhibits. I have a picture of one of these and it shows an elaborate shrine set up by Shinto priests with all the paraphernalia of the Shinto religion and beside it was a rack with some very famous swords. These swords belonged to Mr. Kojima who made his money in the vegetable business; he was a wholesaler. On this rack all were genuine, I know, for he had origamis from Tokio on all of them. The first was an Ichimonji Sukimitsu, next Norishige, Taema Kuniyuki, Takada Morishige, Kanemoto and a genuine Kunimiro, so you know these were something. At that time I was told these swords ranged from 3,000 to 10,000 dollars; well that was a lot of money back in those days and I think you all know what they would rate now.

About this time I started buying books. I bought a book - the little Kawaguchi handbook - that was the bible in those days. Of course it was in Japanese and difficult for me to find out anything about it but I could always take it to a Japanese friend to get something read. Even today it has been reprinted and slightly revised, but it's one of the best little handbooks - I think it's Nihon To Konta Tebiki or something

like that (Nihon Kantai Tebiki?) by Kawaguchi, and then there was the Kokon Kagi Biko which was a reprint of an early work - this listed all the smiths, maybe there is 10,000 listed - how they signed and dates - but that was about all he gave. So I didn't get too much out of that, but it was a nice reference. I was studying Chinese at the time. I bought a book that was written by a Professor in Hokkaido University and this had some technical explanations of forgeing and so forth. I took it to my friend Dr. Suski who was quite a learned gentleman and author of several dictionaries, but he ran across all sorts of sword terms that he didn't know and he tried looking them up in regular Japanese dictionaries and they just weren't there - so we had problems and I would take some of these terms down to Fukiyawa to get his translation of them. I learned a little bit, but nothing like what I learned since I joined the Southern California Club. There were other books, I bought the Naughton Collection and the Hawkshaw Collection and catalogues from Kegan & Paul in London. At that time you got these books for £2.10.6, they were still in print after 20 years, apparently they weren't selling very well and they were printed in short editions too. I couldn't understand it but you could still buy them new from the publisher in London at the published price - now they cost 100 - 150 dollars. I have even seen Kegan Paul advertising one at £100 - 240 dollars, so that was a good investment. 'Sword & Same' eluded me for a long time. After the war - Kegan & Paul apparently resurrected a box full of them down in their bombed out basement and they were watersoaked. They put them on sale and I paid 10 dollars for a first edition. I didn't expect it to be a first edition, I just ordered it and thought I would get a second hand one - but when it came it was uncut in the original wrapper and stuff - so I was lucky again. It's been reprinted again and is available from me or anyone at 15 bucks. Then I was buying sale catalogues - there were quite a few sales in the early days. The old French, Menet-Garet and well, there was a lot of them that have accumulated a lot of Tsuba and these sale catalogues were available at 50 cents and so forth. Now they get 10 - 15 bucks for them.

I also had some series of issues of the Franco Japanese Society of Paris in which Trisan, Joly & Menet and several others had written articles. So I got all the back issues of those right from the publisher and my sister who was fluent in French translated them for me, so I have translations of Joly's book - a forerunner of a book he intended to publish but never got round to it on Tsubas and also quite a long article on the origin of Tsubas by Tresan and some others.

Along with other books that I described here and there, I started to accumulate a library of sword books. When I got involved with this club in about 1960 - the way this got started, there was a club up north called "The Japanese Sword Society of United States" - some fellow told me about it and I joined. Then I got in touch with various members who lived down here, I think there were 7 or 8, invited them all up to the house together and we had a real enjoyable time. We then decided to meet once a month, so the next month we had about 15 here and these included Bob Haynes and quite a few of the fellows who are old timers in our group. Everyone knew someone else who was collecting, so the thing snowballed and we held the next meeting out at Bob Haynes house. This time 30 people showed up so we organised the club as a branch of the Northern California Society. Almost at once we started the idea of publishing something to be useful - I dreamed up the idea of nomenclature lists and started out in our first publication.

We had a peculiar character for President - he was the fellow who came up to my house and told me about the thing and had ideas of grandeur - wanted to be dictator, so when it came to re-election we all agreed that the Presidency should pass around and no one should be president for more than one year at a time. He insisted that he should be President. It ended up in a real free for all fight in which 9 of us pulled out of the Club and didn't got back until one year later when he died of a heart attack. At this time we had got so involved with the people up North, I think through some of the imaginations of this first President. So we decided we couldn't get along so we pulled out and organised. When the Japanese were evacuated from Southern California and had to turn in their swords to the police dept. and after they came back they were given back to everyone who claimed them. But there were quite a lot left over that were unclaimed. I don't know what happened to all these swords because it was a couple of years afterwards that a lot of these were advertised in an Auction down town - they had already been sold to some auctioneer. I looked them over and there was nothing that was really good - that is all the fancy scabbards and everything and there must have been some that were not claimed - people died and what not. So these seemed to be the dregs of the thousands that were turned in and there were several hundred in the sale. They were put up for auction in a warehouse in Little Tokio. At this sale I bought a Naginata blade which was rusty, very unprepossessing, but very long and nicely made and signed. I bought it for 2 dollars, it was strapped on a board with another junk sword. It was some years before I got it polished, but it turned out to be a pretty good Smith, so I was quite happy at 2 bucks. Then there was a bundle of bare blades that went up and this I bought for a dollar and half - there were 6 blades in it. Amongst them was one that apparently

two kids had used to test the blades to see if they could chop each others blade off - you should see it - it looks like a saw blade all chewed to pieces - an interesting item.

Later, there were quite a few auctions and sales at which I found something, but mostly I picked them up at antique shops and occasionally at pawn shops. About the time of the war I published a wall chart on Japanese swords and this brought a lot of things my way. The G.I's came back and found my chart somewhere and came up to find out what their swords were all about. I did have some pretty good contacts at that time - even at times I had people sent me by the Japanese Consulate; bookstalls and people who had heard about me; even a Japanese newspaper.

The club put on its first exhibition down in Long Beach and we wangled a little deal down in the Long Beach museum there and put on a rather nice exhibition which attracted a lot of attention. Although Longbeach is rather out of the way for things like this, anyhow, it put us on the map.

About a year later we had a chance to exhibit at Parnsville Park which had its own exhibition room mostly for fine arts, paintings etc. We took a year to prepare, but when we finally did get the exhibit going in 1964 we really had a terrific exhibit. The exhibition hall is over a hundred feet long and we had about 200 bare blades, maybe 50 Koshirae that is blades and scabbards, plus about 2,000 sword guards and other fittings, a big Haniwa and 20 suits of armour and a suit of horse armour. Incidentally this was a funny deal - we tried everywhere to find a horse to put this armour on - some kind of imitation horse like they have in livery stables to show harness samples. Finally we dug up one, a firm let us rent a plastic horse for 50 dollars. Two of the boys, Fred Martin and somebody else went down and brought this plastic horse back on the top of a Volkswagon which must have been quite a sight.

Anyhow the exhibition stirred up a lot of interest, we had a lot of publicity - the City was paying for it and had the prestige. Practically everyone on the committee got on television three or four times and radio and in the newspapers. We had the second largest attendance that they had ever had at that exhibit hall - over 14,500 attendance in the one month display. The only thing that topped us was a very famous artist.

Incidentally the other day I talked to the manager in charge of this place and he wants us to put on another exhibit,

but this is too much - it took us a year last time and we borrowed a Masamune from Sir Francis Festing in England and some early swords from the Victoria & Albert Museum, but practically everything else was out of our own members' collections. I was the only one who had the leisure to take care of the job, so I was in charge of installation and decoration. When it really got showing I decided someone should be there all the time in order to talk to people who were interested in swords because the people in charge of the gallery didn't know which end was the sharp one. So I spent most afternoons there, Saturdays and weekends we had some help. One day a Colonel from Fort MacArthur in San Pedro came and said he had heard the broadcasts and brought up some swords to show. I looked at them and he had the most fabulous Daisho I have ever laid eyes on, absolutely out of this world. Matched blades by a famous man and matched fittings by Goto artists - boy - I helped him take the oil off with Uchiko and showed him how to clean them and said be sure to take care of them. I gave him my card and about three months later he called up and reminded me who he was and that he had been transferred to Florida and after seeing the exhibit and talking to me he knew swords should be taken care of. He had about a dozen he wanted to sell and was I interested? Naturally I was. He came up with a Sergeant to drive him and it took the three of us to carry 15 swords up the hill - he brought the Daisho and one other sword he wanted to keep which was a silver scabbard - I've never seen the likes of it. You have perhaps seen the crayfish design scabbard on a Tanto - well this was enormous, the scabbard solid silver and I would estimate a weight of 5 lbs including the blade. No one could ever have used it or worn it - one of those freaks. His wife liked it, they kept it on the sideboard with their sterling silver outfit I guess.

The 12 swords he wanted to sell were filthy and all been coated with cosmoline which was all to the good, but the cosmoline in 20 years had accumulated so much dirt you couldn't see any hada at all - you could hardly see the temper line and the scabbards were scratched and dirty - a real mess - so I had to buy what I saw. I took off a few handles and saw some big names - but how can you tell just off hand with 90% of the big names fakes - I had to assume these were fakes. I just bought what I saw, I went through them one by one and made a mental note - like 50 dollars for this, 60 that, 15 a childs Katana and so one and came up with 360 dollars. He hesitated a little bit and said well it's going to cost 500 dollars to send his family to Florida and he had hoped to get that much. So I said let's go through them one by one. The swords in cheap storage cabinets - shira saya to you - he didn't think much of so he didn't argue with my offers on those, plus the fact I

think he was surprised at what I did offer. I think he thought they were junk - I didn't enlighten him. Anyway it came to 360 dollars for the 12, when I went through them one by one he only argued over one. That one had some fancy fittings on it - the blade was rusty and nicked and I had offered 60 dollars because of the fittings. He said someone had offered him 75 dollars for it, so I said O.K. you want 75 for that one, we will do it. So we settled for 375 dollars the lot. He never mentioned how he got them, so when he was about to leave I asked him if he minded telling me where he got them. "Oh no", said he, "I was on MacArthur's staff and took the surrender of 5 Japanese generals including Togo. We disarmed the household and gathered up the guns and swords and took them to Headquarters. There was a pile of swords and MacArthur asked me to pick him out a nice pair, which I did, then I picked out a pair for myself." I said "Don't tell me, you got the best of it". "Oh yes" he said, "there was a Japanese assistant on the staff who knew something about swords and he pointed out which ones for me to take. The other members of the staff picked one or two swords - some didn't take any, so there was a whole bunch of swords left - I just gathered them up and here they are."

You can bet it didn't take me long after he had left to get them down to the shop and get the lacquer thinner to work taking off the cosmoline and cleaning them up. The more I worked with them the better they looked - I sandpapered and glued scabbards and got things in shape and got more and more excited as I really explored the signatures on them and I felt surely that all the big names were fakes. Anyhow they looked pretty good. I called up Kisu San and he came up that evening and looked them over and never said a word till he was all through. Then he took a deep breath and said "Well never in your lifetime again will you get 12 swords of this quality all in one bunch. Even to get them together whether you can buy them or not."

I had a Rai Kunitoshi - the little child's sword in shira saya that I had spent 15 dollars on, turned out to be a Yasumitsu the great O' Yasumitsu - in the latest books these run 3 million yen. You take a third for a tanto or child's sword and you have still got 2,800 dollars. I did alright, six of the swords had horimono on them which is why I paid as much as I did considering the condition they were in. That was the second jackpot I hit on swords.

Then there was a fellow who had acquired some, a shoe box half full of tsubas. They were all rusty - he had

scrounged them from resort place up in Camp Baldy. Apparently the shoebox was sitting open underneath the cabin and snow had blown in through the lattice each winter. I don't know how long they had been there but there were well rusted. The Rappa Shimbon the local Japanese newspaper who had written me up a few months before, sent him out to me. He wanted to know what they were and enquired around; nobody knew. I asked him if he wanted to sell - he liked them. So I gave him a big song and dance of how to clean the rust off and wax them properly and how to take care of them. He listened very patiently with his wife, finally he said "I don't know what I'll do with them, probably take them home and throw them in a draw somewhere". So I said how about a trade, maybe you would like something else better you could display. About 3 feet from me on a shelf was a modern Japanese bronze vase about 10" high that I had acquired in trade for an African dagger. I'd paid 2 dollars for it somewhere - so I held it up and he lit up like a Christmas tree. "That's wonderful - you got a deal". So I shut up real quick and they went away happy as larks with the vase. I had 68 tsubas - maybe half a dozen cast iron junkers and about two others just plain. All the rest would rate nowadays from 10 to 50 dollars a piece after they were cleaned up. It was quite a job cleaning them up and repatinating them but most of them are now in good shape. The rust was red raw and new and came off quickly in boiling okite. That made the third jackpot!

The last real jackpot was three swords, two were tachi in the most fabulous set of fittings I have ever seen. You see pictures of these in books of National Treasures. The lacquer on one was simply out of this world, it was the top quality that you find on Inro for 300 - 400 dollars and the other had almost as good lacquer work on it. These were ceremonial tachi made in the old style but probably designed for modern ceremonial occasions at court or what not. They were made, I presume, about 1860-70. At the beginning of Meiji, there was a fad then of making real elaborate things. One sword was signed and had a rating of 50 in my books - and in perfect condition - didn't need polishing neither of them. The other was a contemporary blade but very very nice, in perfect condition. That was Kanesada dated 1583. The three were in a lot I got just by hunting. I dropped into an antique shop near my home and asked if he had any Japanese swords and he said No. "Wait a minute", he said, "there was a fellow in the other day and tried to sell me some" - and he gave me the name of this Japanese fellow. So I went to see him and it turned out he had run a shop, an oriental antique shop in New York City up to about 3 or 4 years before. This was all within the last year. He came out here to California hoping to open

a shop and didn't find a location. He needed some money and was trying to unload some material left over from his shop. So I asked him what he wanted for the three swords - he said he had been offered 150 dollars a piece for them in New York but he didn't expect to get that much for them out here. I said "Well, how much do you expect?" We ended up with 300 dollars and he was quite pleased to get that much. Everybody that's looked at them say the scabbards alone would fetch 1000 to 2000 dollars a piece in Tokio. That was the last Jackpot!

Now let's see - I brought along tonight my scrapbook which has accumulations of all sorts of oddments from way back. Pictures of armour and castles and pictures of that sword ceremony back in '27. After this exhibit in the afternoon they put on a demonstration of testing - Tameshigiri - they had a kind of 12" square post 18" high with a couple of pegs sticking out each side, they lashed down a sort of dummy body that was made of 2" pieces of bamboo with wet goza mats wrapped around it and tied together in a bundle. This was tied to the post and was the equivalent of a human body and they tried to chop through it. Quite a number of fellows wanted to test their swords. I think only one fellow in the whole afternoon - a couple of hours of testing - actually cut all the way through in one stroke. One fellow's sword broke and since he was facing the crowd - who were four deep facing a partition - the point of the sword about 6" long hit the floor, bounded up over the heads of the crowd and through the partition at the back of them. You never saw such a bunch of pale Japanese in your life. So, anyhow, those were the good old days.

I'll wind up with some experiences collecting Japanese sword books. When I really got involved in publishing my book and some other things, I decided to get as many of the old sword books that I could and a friend in Tokio volunteered to scrounge the Kanda bookshops for me - which he did and succeeded in getting me quite a lot of the early books, published 1600-1700. All in all I have 75 ft. of shelf space of just sword books, including of course tsuba and armour. I think this is the largest library outside of Japan on the subject. I buy one at least of everything that comes out and I usually get along with them some scarce items that are quoted out of second hand book stores in Tokio. This of course makes for a wonderful research library and I'm gradually cross-indexing all the people whose swords have been shown - or at least the oshigata and where to find it. When people send me oshigata to read, I can check against original oshigata - either photographs or examples in the Juyo and whatnot. So I don't have too much trouble if they have been recorded anywhere in books -

I can usually find them.

It's all a very very interesting hobby and if I had it to do all over again, of course I know better how to spend my money in the early days. But I'd certainly do it again.

WANTS LIST

Any information on sword polishing -
Tony Chapman,
71, Ingaway, Basildon. (Basildon 42127)

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BOOKS

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The Naunton Collection of Japanese Sword Fittings by H.L. Joly has now been reprinted. It contains 246 pp plus 88 plates showing 1300 items, size 10 x 12. Limited edition of 500. Price £16.75, postage 37p. Foreign 70 p.

All available from Alan Bale, 46 West Close,
Woodthorpe Road, Ashford, Middx.

OSHIGATA

A reminder to new members who may have difficulties in reading tang inscriptions due to inadequate references; if they care to send a rubbing (oshigata) of the tang, addressed to Tony Chapman, 71 Ingaway, Basildon, Essex, he will check it for them and send them all available information he has on the swordsmith or inscription. Please remember to make a careful rubbing of the whole tang, both sides, not just the inscription.