

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



HON. PRESIDENT, KAZUTARO TORIGOYE, Dr. Litt.
SECRETARY, JEFFREY RODFORD.

PROGRAMME

Next Meeting Wednesday, 2nd March, 1966, 7.30 p.m. Fulham
Conservative Club, 4 Shorrolds Road, S.W.6.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Society will in future operate from a new Headquarters in the centre of London, although Meetings will continue to be held in the usual premises. Correspondence should be addressed to:

The Assistant Secretary,
c/o 17, Piccadilly Arcade,
London, W.1. (Telephone: HYDe Park
6496)

Last Meeting At the last meeting, we showed the film - The Impostor. It was good rousing stuff and only slightly marred by the quality of the film which, as is so often the case, with these old films, had suffered slightly from long usage. We had a good gathering and it was a great pleasure to the members to be able to welcome so many guests. It is to be hoped that they enjoyed themselves as much as we enjoyed having them.

Auction

It was found to be impracticable to hold the Auction at the last meeting and so we will be having it at our next gathering. Mr. Michael Webb of Sothebys, has kindly consented to be the auctioneer and it is requested that all members give him every assistance. We hope to make the sale as professional as possible and every effort will be made to retain the anonymity of the vendors.

Members who wish to submit items for sale are asked to fill in and return the enclosed form to arrive not later than first post on 28th February. The lots will then be grouped and, it is hoped, some form of catalogue produced for the use of members. Although entries will be taken on the night it is requested that all members try and submit these forms beforehand.

We will be open to receive entries from 6.30 p.m. These will be given lot numbers according to the catalogue and put out for viewing. It is proposed to make a charge of 5% to both the vendor and the

purchaser thus hitting neither too hard. With reference to reserves, we would prefer members to bid up to their own reserves as this will make the auctioneer's job much easier but he will undertake to bid up to a reserve on your behalf if you particularly request it.

It will largely depend on the results of this first sale whether we make it a regular thing or not, so please try and produce something.

Programmes

Since the production of the Journal, the monthly programme bulletins have been much briefer than they were originally as it was found essential to conserve such articles as we had for the Journal. The Committee have for some time been aware that this was perhaps not fair to our corresponding members, and this has been brought home more forcibly by a recent letter from one of them. In view of this the Committee has decided to enlarge the Programme bulletin giving fuller reports, news of recent sales to keep the overseas members in contact with current prices, a glossary of sword and armour terms (see below) and such other information that may arise from time to time.

We would like to thank the member who wrote to us for his trouble and hope that other members, corresponding or otherwise, will also keep us informed of their feelings with any suggestions they may have. Let us also add here that the Society exists for the diffusion of knowledge. If corresponding members have any questions on problems please write to us. We have members who can well claim to be experts in the fields of swords, sword furniture and armour and their knowledge is at your disposal. Conversely if you have an article for publication in the Journal or one suitable to be given as a lecture to the Society, please let us have it. In this way, the spread of information can be a two way traffic.

New Members

The membership of the Society continues to grow and we would like to welcome these new members:

Mr. Lars Rosen,
Oskehmsgatan
36¹¹ Stockholm/Bandhagen,
Sweden.

Mr. George H. Slade,
83 Crescent Road,
Ramsgate, Kent.

Mr. Noboru Masuoka
1082 Baker Court
Sunnyvale,
California 94087
U.S.A.

Prof. Robert G. MacFarlane,
Downhill Farm,
Witney,
Oxon.

Mr. Denys E. Bower,
Chiddingstone Castle,
Chiddingstone,
Nr. Edenbridge. Kent.

Mr. Alan L. Harviy
3317 Paty Drive
Honolulu,
Hawaii 96822

Glossary

It is intended to publish sometime in the future a translation of some volumes of the famous work on swords JUYO TOKEN NADO ZUFU. This work has in fact been translated and is at present in process of being edited by our Chairman, Bon Dale. In view of the number of technical terms used in this work some of which are a little obscure, it would be an advantage to readers to have some knowledge of them. This being so, Bon Dale proposes to produce a glossary of terms which may be of use to readers. To this John Anderson will add a glossary of terms relating to armour which he hopes will be of use to those interested in this subject. Together we intend to produce an alphabetical list monthly, taking two months for a letter if the number of examples warrants it. Many of the terms will be already known to collectors, but we will try to make it the most comprehensive so far published, and hope that at least some of the terms will be new to you.

TO KEN IN
THE SALEROOM

The 25th January was one of the first to be held in which there were swords and sword fittings in any quantity since the Glen's sale of early May 1965, and that sale had only two or three swords. This first sale of '66 started with another added advantage, that some of the items were unknown and had not been the rounds. This always makes a sale more interesting and brings in most of the dealers and collectors. Let us start from the beginning of the sale with Lot 154, two medium priced swords for £30 (Fairclough) the first being the only piece of any great interest, the blade fair and signed Seki no ju Kane Mi Saku, Mino province 'smith mid 16th century. Lot 155 a good quality Aikuchi blade signed Hizen Tadayoshi, but here the interest proved to be the mounts, good taste and all en suite (Sternberger - Germany) £58 - a good price. Lot 159 (Fairclough) £70. Presentation Wakizashi by Shin-kai, a good price for this Shin kai, although with its pedigree I would have thought it could have gone a little more, the blade was in fair state and signed Inouye Shin kai and dated 9th Year of Empo (1681). Lot 160 (Fairclough) £78, went well and this I would say being for the excellent mounting all en suite in Shakudo nanako Goto school (Genroku period 17th/18th century). The same buyer bought very reasonably Lot 161 at £20, also fine mounts of the well known Omori school wave pattern, deep work. Lot 165 (Scott) £55 was another smartly mounted Aikuchi, these mounts were of the Ishiguro school and of rich silver, decorated with poems, butterflies, streams and ominabeshi flowers; Kogai and Kozuka

signed To gaku shi; scabbard also had applied ornament of two solid silver Hares. Lot 167 (Sir Frank Bowden) was a Katana also richly mounted £42. Lot 170 went also to Sir Frank Bowden at £55; this was also a good blade of some merit, a good buy. Lot 175 (A. Bale) £50; a gold signature Umetada, a blade of interest. Lot 177 (Fairclough) £82, another well furnished Katana, Ichi riu Tomonaga mounts, shakudo kojiro decorated gold border and dragon on high relief and signed on a gold label, the Fuchi and Kashira with Tiger, leaves and water design; tsuka with elephant hair binding, menuki of dragons in gold and shakudo, the tsuba of fine polished shakudo with gold eagle in fine gold takazogan, storm lines in katakiri. Lot 183 (A. Bale) £90, a Daisho well mounted in Goto Shakudo Nanako fittings with normal dragon and cloud subject, a good price for this Daisho.

The highest priced sword in the sale did not come until the end of the sale; this was in the Ivory carving section, Lot 259 (Wright) £180. This was one of the rarer types of ceremonial or presentation Tachi blades in large carved scabbards. This example had a fair blade of possibly 18th century workmanship. The interest here was the ivory carving, in this instance very fine and also the subjects portrayed were warrior scenes and battles. These swords usually have figure subjects relating to peasantry and ladies of high fashion with children at hand or Immortals, as such was the following Lot 260 (Fairclough) £155. This was all the sale had to offer for To Ken members.

May I peep into the future before closing; there are some very interesting Lots of Sword Fittings to come up for sale very soon at Sotheby's and also at Glendinnings. The latter a small section in a general sale and the former a large sale in March from the Bushell Collection. The Catalogue of this I have just received and there does seem to be some fine items, perhaps not many for the purists among us, but certainly plenty for the collector of fine Kinko work. The catalogue is as usual well illustrated, and there should be plenty for all. On a quick run through I would think from the descriptions, the following Lots bear some looking at.

Lot 167, Tsuba by Ari-chika; this artist is fairly rare and would seem very interesting.

Lot 169, description would make anyone interested, and I would feel this is a must for those Joi enthusiasts.

170 Shummei Hogen, usually are good sellers and subject seems quite good.

Lot 176 most certainly will wet the appetite of most collectors. The illustration helps us to judge this

and I would feel that this piece should be a good buy, for historical dating and placing of artists in period a very acceptable piece.

Lot 178, although signed Hirata is rather late looking from the illustration. Elaborate for this school especially in the case of the rim, the enamel looks typical of the latter period of this school. Others to look for are examples by Natsuo, Tsu Jimpo, Yasuchika I and Nagatsune.

This looks a sale well worth the trouble to view even if prices are high; a view will certainly be worth the trip.

TO KEN SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

SWORD GLOSSARY

- ARA-NIYE Large and distinct niye, often scattered on the jigane. Usually associated with blades of the Sōshū School, but seen on many other swords including in particular the Shinto Schools of Midzuta, Teruhiro and Satsuma.
- ASHI Various short notches or "legs" extending from the nioi line into the hamon. Often seen in early Suguha style yakiba, where they may be Ko-ashi (small ashi) for example in the work of Rai Kunitoshi.
- AYASUGI-HADA A regular wavy damask, or jihada, seen on works of the Gwassan School. Used by other swordsmiths at later dates, including Gwassan Sadakazu b.1836; d.1918.
- ASAKI-NOTARE-HA A shallow undulating hamon, sometimes seen on blades of the Shinto Horikawa and Aoi Shimosaka Schools, and on blades by Owari Masatune.
- AMEZAYAMAKI An ancient name for the ordinary style of Tachi mounting, distinguishing it from the Sayamaki and Itomaki-no-Tachi styles.
- AIZUCHI Hammermen, assistants to the swordsmith.
- ASHIGATAI Method of folding the steel in forging a sword blade, involving the use of a chisel.
- AIKUCHI Style of mounting a short blade, without tsuba, the fuchi fitting directly into, or against, the usually similar shaped mouth of the scabbard, koiguchi.
- ASSASHI SORI Shallow curvature, to a blade.
- ASHI Ichi no ashi and ni no ashi, the two metal fittings encircling a Tachi scabbard, from which the weapon is slung.
- ASHIKAWA Strings holding the obitori to the ashi and bound around the scabbard in Iromaki-no-Tachi.
- ATOBORI Grooves or horimono cut on a blade at a later date. Sometimes to enhance the value by a decorative engraving. The practice of such atabori became prevalent in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Atabori were also put on blades to hide defects. A blade with suspected atabori is usually decreased in value.
- AGEMI A term applied to a sword in which the shoulder has been advanced up the blade and in so doing has increased the length of the tang.

TO KEN SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

GLOSSARY OF ARMOUR TERMS

- ABUMI-ZURI The rectangular areas of leather on the inner side of the shinguards which rub against the stirrups (ABUMI)
- AGE-DAMA A multi-stage TEHEN KANAMONO (metal decoration for the hole in the top of a helmet).
- AGEMAKI A bow worn on the back of the cuirass and helmet also called TOMBO MUSUBI (dragonfly knot) after the insect its shape suggests. The large bow on the back of the cuirass is used to attach the rear cords of the shoulder guards and on early O-YOROI to stop the SAKA-ITA lifting. (See AGEMAKI-TSUKÉ-NO-ITA).
- AGEMAKI-NO-KWAN Large ring on the back of a cuirass for the attachment of the AGEMAKI.
- AGEMAKI-TSUKÉ-NO-ITA Alternative name for the SAKA ITA (reverse plate) so called because the second plate on the back of ancient cuirasses was overlapped in reverse of the others. Its function facilitated the putting on of armour when the upper plate and shoulder straps were in one piece as it allowed the upper part of the cuirass to be bent back.
- AIBIKI-NO-O The cords fastening the shoulder straps to the front of the cuirass. Until the 16th century, these were called TAKAHIMO but this name was transferred to the cords used for fastening the opening at the side of the cuirass.
- AIDA KANAMONO Metal mounts holding the strip of wood or leather covered in printed leather which often covers the scale heads on the upper plate of shoulder guards and breast plate.
- AKODA NARI A name given to an early form of helmet bowl first developed in the late 14th century. It is a plain ridged bowl without projecting rivets and is slightly higher at the back than in front. The name likens its shape to the AKODA incense burner.
- ARAME-ODOSHI Another name for SUGAKE-ODOSHI. The laces are in pairs spaced over the plates. Widely used in the MOMOYAMA period its main advantage lay in the fewer holes needed in the plates and the consequent increase in strength.
- ASHINAGARI (Lit. Legs drifting). A term used to describe a fault in helmet manufacture where instead of the plates being vertical or slightly inclined to the front, the lower ends tend to curve towards the rear.
- ASA-NAGASHI-NO-ANA (Lit. Sweat running hole). A small hole pierced under the chin of face masks to allow perspiration and condensation to run out. It is often fitted with a short tube.
- AOI-NO-ANA A heart shaped piercing often found on armour. The name refers to the shape of the leaf of the hollyhock. (AOI).