

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



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

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PROGRAMME NO.67

MARCH - APRIL, 1972

NEXT MEETING - Monday, March 6th, 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 on the left hand side.

FOLLOWING MEETING - Monday 10th April. Note the date to avoid the Bank Holiday. At the Princess Louise.

Subjects - March

Soshu den evening. Please bring along any examples of Soshu den blades.

- April

Our Chairman will reminisce on his experiences in the Yoshiwara. Those in full armour prove particularly amusing. We will also have a much requested event - a Club Auction. Please bring along any items from old tsuka to National Treasures. It should be fun and we might get some interesting buys.

Note: Members, corresponding or otherwise, who live out of town and wish to drop in to our meetings occasionally, are very welcome.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - John Anderson.

At the last meeting, David Butler made a strong appeal for understanding between the Kyudo/Kendo fraternity and we of the To Ken Society who are for the most part, collectors. The general trend of his argument seemed to be that collectors looked down on students of the martial arts as people who wanted to "play" with swords and bows rather than appreciate them for their artistic merit. I was sorry to hear that this view existed as I, for one, can honestly say that I have never heard it expressed before. I myself have never studied either of these arts but have a high regard for those who take their study seriously. For my part it is probably my predilection for the sedentary life that prevents me. However, let me say here and now that although we study the military side of Japanese culture from the products of craftsmen, we have no less respect for those who pursue this culture through active participation.

The event which sparked off David's comments was the arrival in England of Onuma Sensei, a noted Kyudo master who gave a ceremonial exhibition of archery to mark the anniversary of the death a year ago of Anzawa Sensei Iodan, Kyudo Master who many of us had the honour of seeing shoot on his last visit to England. His death was a great loss to Kyudo and the ceremony was a fitting tribute to his memory. The Dai Ei Kyudo Renmai invited the chairman and members of this Society to go to watch the exhibition, and those of us who managed to get time off on a Friday afternoon and braved the rain, were treated to a display of archery the like of which is rarely seen in England. A number of archers from France and other parts of the continent joined the Sensei in the shoot which was a delight to watch. The group met again in the evening at the Japanese Steak House for a meal.

Somewhat incidental to the foregoing, but in some ways because of it, the thought struck me that whatever else the Society does it gives one the opportunity of meeting people with similar interests who perhaps could never have crossed paths (or swords). I have just spent a week in the company of two French friends and To Ken members and their wives, swapping ideas, discussing collection and cracking bottles. I can only hope that other members have made similar friends and contacts and that the Society will continue to bring people of similar interests together for their mutual good.

RECENT MEETINGS

January - John Anderson was in the chair. The subject of new members cropped up. Apparently two erstwhile members left to join the Arms and Armour Society. They apparently didn't like our meetings. Concern was expressed by members that this should happen. We do try to make people welcome, although in this case this was not the problem. How to get people presumably not too interested in Nippon-to to enjoy our meetings is a somewhat difficult proposition. Anyway, it is meat for the Committee to think on.

Dave Parker had received a letter from Mr. Sayama saying that a selection of useful goodies - sword bags, cleaning kits, Sage-O, etc. was on its way over. Also the date of the next N.B.T.H.K. Shinsa was fixed for mid-February, so those with swords at the polishers will be getting all excited. Dave had brought along a nice Magari Yari signed Kunisuke of Settsu. This man was working circa 1681 and was the third generation smith known as Kobayashi Rokunojo. Dave has acquired some very nice spears now. Apparently, polishers do not like working on such as Magari Yari, since they frequently cut themselves - so apart from finding someone to do the job, the cost is fearful. At least us

sword buffs can get blades polished even if we crib about the quality.

Bill Baxter had brought along two good swords. What was interesting here was the fact that the blades were by Terushige, a wakizashi by the 1st or 2nd generation, and a katana by the 5th generation smith. Bill very selflessly pointed out that both blades had munegiri - tenrion cracks across the back edge of the blade. He thought it remarkable that the family technique was static in so much that the faults were passed from one generation to the next, and not eliminated. These Terushige smiths were members of the Shitahara school of Musashi which flourished in the Sengoku period. They were noted for their pole arms and worked in either Soshu or Minoden. The blades in this case were in Soshu den showing a wide heavy curve, itame grain and Tanago-bara tangs. The hamon was midare with tobiyaki. The mounts of the wakizashi were of Kagesu and Takatsuna at the Uji River. The tsuba showed the apparently unlucky motif of a dragon portrayed in total on the viewing side. There, you do learn something new from time to time. The katana which was very well and soberly mounted with some very nice knotwork on the tsuka, evoked particularly pleasant memories for Bill as he had it knocked down as a 'relic' at some country auction!

Andy Ford had brought along his Hideaki wakizashi - remember Roy Clarke's tanto at the last meeting. This example was in very tight itame with Aya sugi with narrow sugu ha. This Aya sugi worries me. I can never dispel the idea that it looks like tempering. It certainly looks attractive either way, and in better light most probably is what Andy tells us.

Vic Harris brought along a sword which was a favourite of his and which he thought we would not have seen the like before. This stout blade had enormously pronounced running itame hada which changed to large itame at the edge and mune. Where this sword was different was that it was a Bokuto in Japanese White Oak and used in Kendo Kata. Quite remarkable!

Len Holtaway had a fine 15th century Mino blade in very fine katana mounts with a leather covered scabbard and hilt cover. A piece of fur skin was tied around the hilt. The mon of the Oyama family was on the furniture. The blade has a stylised horimono and was signed Kanemune. Len says that there was a General Oyama who was in the Russo-Japanese War and Len firmly believes it to be his personal sword. Len also had a wakizashi blade which he had broken clean in half when trying to cut wood with it. The construction was very clear - 5 pieces of long strips welded together. Why it should have failed so completely raises very interesting questions as to how you tell a good fighting blade.

Richard Clarke, one of our newer members had a fuchi of a dragon in clouds on a nanako background. He also had an interesting kozuka in iron, 17th century. There was the side of the Roshomon gate with an arm laying nearby in low relief. Obviously that of the demon Watanabe no Tsune. Rather nice.

Don Bayney with great honesty, admitted that the Tadatsuna blade with a large groove, strong curve, and tobiyaki with choji midare, he had brought along was all wrong. This sword had a very attractive shingen type guard. Talking of guards, Alan Bale had a beautiful piece signed Tetsugendo, circa 1780. The style was similar to the Soten school, gold inlay everywhere of 7 figures in a landscape and on the reverse a different subject of two warriors and two travellers by a waterfall with lots of foliage and flowers. There was great admiration from members for the marvellous detail work and fine expressions on the faces.

Tony Chapman had a curious sword with rope binding all along the saya and the tsuka. The blade got derisory comments; it did seem to be too short at the point. There was a beautiful helmet at the meeting, needless to say it was John Anderson's. Absolutely mint with a magnificent black lacquer finish. Wow!

February - Mock Shinsa.

Syd Divers took the chair in the absence of John Anderson. Amongst our guests were two Kendoka and two prospective members. Syd announced that some of Tomihiko's tsuba books had been sent to the Northern To Ken. Alan Bale had been offered one and the remaining five would be drawn for by lots during the course of the evening. Those interested were asked to write their names on one of the pieces of paper provided.

On February 18th, 19th and 20th there was to be a demonstration of Kudo. There were 4 Sensai from Japan including a 9th Dan. David Butler later reminded those who attended the Kudo demonstration given by Anzawa Sensei, 10th Dan, that he had passed on and that this demonstration was a memorial shoot. The 9th Dan priest who would lead this shoot, was the late Sensei's assistant at the last demonstration. The meeting was to be held at the Walford Sports Centre, Bengarth Road, Northolt, Midd. at 3.0 p.m. Friday 18th February. The following two days would be normal Kudo practise for those interested.

Syd, and Sam Someya, have spent some time recently advising the B.B.C. on Samurai and sword lore. The programme will be coming out during 1973 so get your licence paid up!

Neil Davey from Sotheby's wanted to say a few words on the criticism of Sotheby's cataloguing which had arisen in our recent Sales report. He mentioned that swords were a very small part of the overworked and understaffed Japanese section of that institution. Mistakes were bound to occur but they were making a conscious effort to acquire expertise. A real problem, as most of us appreciate, is who they can use as authorities over here or Japan for that matter. Your Programme Secretary personally enjoys sales where there is a possibility of discovering a gem which has been overlooked. When the day comes that swords are catalogued exactly, some of the fun will have disappeared from the auctions.

The draw was announced for the books. The lucky winners were: Mr. Brannon, Don Bayney, Ted Newman, Takenori Kunihara and yes, unbelievably, yours truly Fred Stride.

Brian Turner had brought along some good blades for our Shinsa and Don Bayney also offered the pick of some of his pieces. The blades had the signatures covered up where necessary and number tags affixed. Members were asked to give the period, school and/or maker. When scored later, points would be awarded - 1 point for within 50 years of date of manufacture; 1 point for maker and $\frac{1}{2}$ point for the school. If you guess the maker, you do not get points for the school.

Sword 1 was a good Bizen Muromachi blade, signed Bishu Osafune Harumitsu Saku and dated 1484. Sword 2 was a Tensho period piece again Bizen. Bizen Osafune Sukesada circa 1570-1580. Sword 3 was the trick blade. Typical Soshu Den but Shin Shinto. This blade was made in 1830-50 and signed Naotane and made in the style of Sadamune. Sword 4 was Echizen Shimosaka and dated 1650. The full signature read Kazusa no kami Fujiwara Munemichi. Sword 5 was an O-suriage Mino-Seki-den dating approx. 1660. Sword 6 was a real mouth-waterer. A late Heian or Early Kamakura Yamashiro den possibly of the Kyoto Sanjo school. Tragically, the paint had been badly broken a short while before it reached Brian. When the time came for totting up the points, no one had a full score of 12 points. In fact, our highest scorer was redoubtable Mole Benn with 5 points. Without cheating too, he observed, even if he had to argue a bit though! Don Bayney came out with 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ and Tony Chapman with 4.

David Butler who apparently was heavily involved in organising the forthcoming Kudo contest, gave us a run down on Kudo and the interest that the martial arts should have for us, who collect swords and follow the ways of the Samurai.

Amongst swords present, Neil Davey had a very fine wakizashi with a red ribbed lacquer saya. There were very rich mounts of shakudo with very refined and restrained peonies in Boars eye surrounds. The hilt binding was orange, very eye-catching. The tsuba was covered in small formal Wisteria(?) blossom design. The blade was a tanto which, although fine seemed too small for the proportions of the mounts. Neil also had a newly polished blade in a shirasaya, again rather nice but it did not cause me any covetous desires. I think Neil was quite worried by our lax, and at times, potentially destructive mishandling of his swords. In Japan, we would be regarded as savages for it. Make certain our friends are not affronted in future, please!

Fred Stride, who seemed to have a wonderful evening on swopping, was showing the chiisa katana he had recently acquired. This had a home bound hilt of which he was very proud at its near professional standard, although he became very secretive as to the finer points of acquiring the hard feel to the finished tsuka binding. Lastly, Mr. Pitts, a visitor, walked through the door with a real eye-stopper, the like of which we just dream about finding. Whether such richness is good taste or no, is another matter. This wakizashi was sumptuously silver mounted with a gorgeous omori type silver kojiri extending three-quarters along the scabbard. The lacquer was vivid aogai and the rest of the mounts were in lavish silver. The blade was mint and ascribed to the 8th generation Tadayoshi, but this seemed contentious. What such a piece would fetch at auction would make the mind boggle! Prayer: "Maybe my turn to find one will soon come along"!

NEWS FROM THE NORTH

January Meeting - The January meeting of the Branch was held on Tuesday, 18th January 1972 at The Seven Oaks Hotel, Manchester. Nineteen members attended. Ian Bottomley took the Chair and began by announcing that he had acquired three copies of Onami's book on tsuba. It was agreed to let Messrs. Hymas and Kilner have a copy each, and to retain the third as a Society copy. Ian then distributed the goods received from Japan.

The main event of the evening was a talk by Stephen Turnbull on "The Japanese Warrior Monks". After describing their rise to power, and their eventual destruction by Nobunaga, Stephen illustrated the talk with slides of the main temples that used mercenaries, and tape recordings of Buddhist chants at the Enryakuji. At the end, Ian Bottomley commented on the ease with which the monks combined their two professions.

Stephen Turnbull thanked members who had brought along objects with monastic connections, including a wicked looking naginata, and mentioned his debt to Laurie Allen, whose very

useful suggestions had led to many last minute additions to his talk.

Next Meeting - Tuesday March 21st at 8.0 p.m. "Polearms" by Ian Bottomley. Usual meeting place.

Ing.CALIARI G.B.

The news of the death of one of our Italian members has reached us. Dr.Caliari was an enthusiastic collector who even learnt to polish swords during a long stay in Japan. He was a Director of Pirelli-Lastex. The To Ken Society would wish to express sympathy to his wife, Signora Dorretti Caliari at her loss.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Bill Baxter has submitted his annual report, the balance sheet is reproduced at the end of the Programme.

Increased membership has raised Society income by £55 but this has been nullified by postal costs which have more than doubled (an additional £34) together with the extra expense incurred by changing our meeting place from the cramped Mason's Arms to the more spacious Princess Louise.

Although Programme printing costs have risen by 12% this is to some extent the result of their expanded content, it having been decided in Committee that they formed a more convenient method of presentation than the occasional issue of a Journal which was always a doubtful starter. In this connection it is good to report that proceeds from Journal No.4 have now very nearly covered the cost of production.

We were most fortunate to receive the generous donation from Mr.Terumine as this completely offset our Shinsa expenses which might otherwise have been something of an embarrassment.

Finally, it is pleasant to advise that the Society ends the year's activities showing a net credit of £9 receipts over expenditure which, although being as it should be, in a non-profit making concern, is at the same time rather exceptional in this present period of inflation and escalating costs.

Mr.SAYAMA

The Club would like to thank Mr.Sayama for all his efforts and help on our behalf. Without his continued interest, we would be the poorer for many objects and items of news. His organising of the polishing and submitting blades for shinsa requires efforts which few dealers are willing to give. Many thanks.

B.B.C. TELEVISIONForthcoming B.B.C. Television Film on Japanese Swords -
S.V. Divers

A series of 13 films is being made by the B.B.C. Television Unit. This is similar to the Sir Kenneth Clark series on art. It will be titled "The Ascent of Man" and the commentary is by Dr. Jan Bronowski. Part of the filming has taken place in other countries. No. 4 in this series is concerned with the Japanese Sword and has been shot in Japan. This shows the making of the blade, warriors in armour on horseback and so on. The part they were unable to shoot in Japan was the testing of the blade (tamishigire) and this we shot at the B.B.C. Ealing Film Studios last month.

After two week-ends in my garden of trials using specially made bundles of damp straw (cutting resistance equals body resistance) we were satisfied in telling the B.B.C. that we were ready to go ahead.

One of our To Ken members, Sam Someya (Iai and Kendo expert) did the testing and the day's filming went perfectly. A total of 16 bales were cut that day.

Mr. Michael Jackson the Producer of "The Ascent of Man" who came as my guest to one of our To Ken meetings, has since written to say that the film has come out extremely well.

To me, one of the most impressive cuts made by Someya san was Nuikido (the cut made on the draw). This is always difficult as the sword is drawn with one hand only cutting through the bale as it is drawn, instead of the easier cut using two hands with the sword at the starting O-Jodan position. This cut on the draw is used to take the opponent from his right hip up to his left shoulder instead of the easier cut of his left shoulder down to his right hip.

The whole series of the "Ascent of Man" will be shown on B.B.C. in 1973 and I understand it will also be shown in many countries including the U.S.A. and Japan.

I have arranged with Michael Jackson that a preview of the film (No. 4) will be shown to To Ken members when it is complete this May, June or July. As the film cannot come out of the studio until it is officially televised the B.B.C. have kindly invited us to their Shepherd's Bush Studio Cinema to see it when it is ready.

I am endeavouring to get the B.B.C. to give amongst the captions on this film "Technical Advice: To Ken Society of Great

Britain", but whether this is possible or not we do not yet know.

I will keep members informed of dates and times.

LETTER FROM GENE MATHERS

Members will remember Andy Ford's differentially corroded blade. Gene has risen to the occasion:

"I qualify, I think, as a metallurgical member of the Society and I can advance what I consider to be reasonable explanations for the rusting of the ji-hada mentioned by Bon Dale when talking about Andy Ford's sword. Without more information it is difficult to advance irrefutable theories but here goes - (perhaps Andy Ford would like to hacksaw a section out of the sword and post it to me so I have a better chance of solving the problem!)

I think there will be three possible explanations:

- a) a difference in chemical composition between ji-hada and yakiba.
- b) a galvanic cell being formed between the yakiba and the ji-hada.
- c) the ji-hada being more easily corroded because of it being a duplex structure.

Of these three possibilities the latter is the most likely but perhaps some explanation is required. The yakiba consists of a phase, a crystallographic structure, known as martensite, which is single phase and extremely hard. The ji-hada, on the other hand, is duplex and consists of two phases, known as ferrite and pearlite. Pearlite itself is duplex and consists of alternate plates of ferrite and cementite. Ferrite is soft and a crystallographic phase whereas cementite is extremely hard and is a compound of iron and carbon.

Now to baffle you with facts about corrosion. Steels are subject to galvanic corrosion - a phenomenon which depends upon different "electrode potentials" i.e. the ease with which electrons are moved from metal to metal, the lower the electrode potential the more 'noble' or less easily corroded. If two dissimilar metals are joined together then electrons from the more noble metal flow to the less noble and hence the rate of corrosion is accelerated in this less noble metal. Most corrosion is hence caused by the setting up of these galvanic cells and the accompanying electrical currents, but two dissimilar electrodes are required which may be provided by differences in composition. These differences in composition are ideally provided by the duplex structure of ferrite and pearlite mentioned earlier, but the single phase structure of the yakiba is less favourable for corrosion. Hence the ji hada will rust at a rate appreciably faster than the yakiba. Presumably such differences will also exist in the hamon, where there will be a different corrosion rate. These different corrosion rates will result in different rusted appearances in the yakiba, hamon and

ji hada.

I hope you can follow my reasoning but it is somewhat difficult to explain simply what is a complex metallurgical/chemical process, particularly when the explanation has to be couched in terms which can be understood by the layman. If you wish, perhaps it would be a good idea for me to drop you a lengthy letter, explaining the metallurgical aspects of Japanese swords with some notes on simple metallurgy? I feel that some amplification of terms like duplex and single phase structures, martensite, ferrite and pearlite, etc. would help in our studies of the art of the swordsmith. A good introductory text, if you wish to pursue metallurgy and corrosion further is a book by L.H. Van Vlack, called "Elements of Materials Science" published by Addison Wealey Pub.Co. This is a reasonably inexpensive book and gives a good introduction to metallurgy in easily understandable terms. I hope this rather long-winded letter has been of some help."

Your smug Programme Secretary has a copy of Vlack - very interesting too!

LETTER FROM HAN BING SIONG

In No.65 of the Programme you wrote about the visit of Mr. Ogawa Morihiro who wished to see the best of the English sword collections. In case it has not yet been brought to your notice, in the current issue of the Journal of Swords of the NBTHK there is a report by Mr.Ogawa of his findings.

It is very remarkable that in his description of the Lloyd Collection in the British Museum there is no mentioning at all of koto! In as much as I haven't misread the text, Mr.Ogawa writes that the collection consists of second and third rate shinto and shin-shinto, immediately adding to this that the Norinaga appears to be the best. Of all the swords in the Lloyd Collection he apparently considers only one worthwhile to publish an oshigata of the signed tang with full details of the blade. It is the katana signed: Nanki ni oite Monju Shigekuni kore wo tsukuru.

Length: 70.5 cm. shinogi tsukuri, ihori mune, high shinogi, shallow sori, chu kisasi.

Itame-mokume hada, ji nie.

Hamon sugu ha, shallow notare, ko ashi, ko nie, clear nioi guchi.

Boshi sugu ha, ko maru kaeri, a little hakikake.

Nakago: ubu with one mekugi ana.

A description with an oshigata of the tang and a drawing of the hamon is also given of the katana in the Tower of London that has a gold inlay attribution to Masamitsu.

Length: 69.2 cm. shinogi tsukuri, ihori mune, wide mihaba, thick kasane, chu kisaki.

Itame-mokume hada, ji nie, faint midare utsuri.

Hamon ko notare gunome, ko ashi, nie, sunagashi.

Boshi notare komi.

Bohi kaki nagasu on both sides.

O-suriage nakago with one mekugi ana.

Regarding the swords in the Victoria and Albert Museum, full details are only published of a tachi signed Bishu Osafune Morimitsu and a tachi signed Bitchu no kuni ju Iye tsugu saku, dated (Gen)toku period. Only of the first mentioned sword an oshigata and a drawing of the hamon are also given. That blade, Mr.Ogawa considers to be of splendid workmanship.

Morimitsu:

Length: 75.1 cm, shinogi tsukuri, ihori mune, suriage with deep sori, chu kisaki.

Itame-mokume hada, midare utsuri.

Hamon of nioi, gunome choji, togari ha, ashi, yō, clear nioi guchi.

Boshi, on omote: shallow notare, on ura: midare, togari kaeri.

bohi no tsure hi maru dome on both sides.

Nakago suriage with 3 mekugi ana.

Iyetsugu.

Length: 64.5 cm, shinogi tsukuri, ihori mune, deep koshi sori, chu kisaki.

Itame-mokume hada, chirimen hada (?)

Hamon sugu ko midare gunome choji, nie, nioi guchi,

Boshi midare komi ko maru kaeri.

Nakago: ubu with 4 mekugi ana.

Without commenting on or giving any details of the sword with kinzogan mei Masamune in the Victoria and Albert Museum, Mr.Ogawa tells that soon photographs will be sent to him of the gold inlay attribution on it.

Mr.Ogawa has also been in the National Museum in Copenhagen where he has seen an excellent Taema sword. The remainder of the 60 swords are third rate shinto and shin-shinto.

As in one of the meetings the question has been raised whether any of our fellow members has a Juyo Token, may I lastly refer to the July issue of the Journal of Swords. According to the list of swords that have passed the Juyo examination this year, two swords of fellow member Mr.R.M.Lewart have become Juyo Token. One is a mumei katana attributed to Hoso, the other is a nagamaki naoshi katana signed Bishu no ju Suyetsugu, dated Eiwa 4. In 1970, a mumei nagamaki naoshi katana by Motoshige of fellow member Mr.Sayama and a katana signed Bizen no kuni Osafune Yosasaemon no jo Sukesada of fellow member, Mr.R.B. Caldwell were also rated Juyo.

CHRISTMAS QUIZ

Here are the answers to our Armour Quiz. The Sword Quiz answers haven't arrived yet. Next Programme with luck! You members didn't seem too pleased with this quiz judging by the lack of response. Ideas please!

Quiz Answers-Armour

1. Kabuto Mempo Dō Kote Sode Haidate Suneate.
2. To tie the cords from the rear of Ō-sode to prevent them moving forward.
3. Sashimono
4. Miōchin, Saotome, Haruta, Iwai, Hinemo.
5. Ō-Yoroi, Dō-Maru, Tachi Dō, Haramaki, Nuinobe, Okegawa, Yukinoshita Sendai, Niwa Dō Hatomune.
6. Momokama period
7. Front (Mayedate); side (Wakidate); Back (Ushirodate); Top (Kashiradate).
8. Cl650. Miōchin Kunimichi
9. Koshozan (high victory mountain). Koseizan (rear power mountain). Daiyenzan (great round mountain). Tenkokuzan (heavenly rally mountain).
10. Tehen Kanamono Hachimanza.

A RECENT COURT CASE

Deneys Bower got into the headlines during a court case to get possession of swords alleged to have been stolen from him. What seems remarkable was that one of those being sued had swords which were involved in two robberies from Mr. Bower. It is claimed that both were bought from the Bermondsey Market. Mr. Bower did not accept this story. What the outcome was I do not know, but will try to get a resume for the next programme.

THE JAPANESE WARRIOR MONKS

An outline history by Stephen Turnbull read before a meeting of the Northern Branch on January 18th 1972.

(Editors Note: I received an excellent discourse on the Yamaboshi with very fine photographs submitted by Laurie Allen of Australia, early last year, for inclusion in our Journal. This is with the Journal Editor, but will doubtless now be published at a later date in this Programme. Apologies to you Laurie for the delay.

The word which is usually translated as "Warrior Priest" or "Soldier Monk" is "sohei". The sohei constituted the lower of the two classes of monks. The upper class, or "gakusho" (scholars) were children of nobility who had entered the priesthood as a career. When any dispute arose the gakusho determined the policy, and the sohei-shudan did the fighting.

The sohei are often confused with the wandering itinerant "yamabushi". This is probably because the sohei had their beginnings in the temple of Enryakuji on Mount Hiei. The name by which these sohei were known is a homophone of the above. They were called "yamabushi", mountain warriors, and are distinct from the yamabushi, mountain sleepers.

Consequently when the term "yamabushi" is used in this paper it refers to the Hiei monks. In later accounts the monks of Nara were loosely called yamabushi, but as the monks of Hiei caused the most trouble it is probable that any marauding band of monks were dubbed "yamabushi".

The monastery of Enryakuji began as a small shrine built by the monk Saicho (767-862) who bore the posthumous title of Dengyo Daishi. He founded the temple in 788, six years before the capital was moved from Nara to Kyoto. In Nara the great monasteries had grown to exert an enormous political influence on the Court, and it was partly to escape this pressure that the move to a new capital was made. This is not to say that Buddhism was left behind, for it was rapidly becoming a state religion, and the Court was very involved in religious rituals.

Thus in some way Saicho anticipated the feeling that was to come over the Court. He was revolted by the degradation of the Nara monasteries, and sought spiritual peace on a mountain. So when the capital was finally moved the Courtiers found Saicho waiting for them. The Hiei shrine immediately assumed a great importance, for according to Chinese geomancy evil could attack a city from the North-Eastern quarter, the "Demon Gate".

Mount Hiei not only lay to the North-East of Kyoto, but also housed the shrine of an important Shinto deity, Sanno, the King of the Mountain. To the superstitious courtiers Enryakuji became the guardian temple of the new capital. In 804 Emperor Kammu sent Saicho to study in China, whence he returned the following year bringing with him the gospel of Tendai Buddhism. The new foundation grew, until at its height Enryakuji comprised some 3,000 buildings on the slopes of the mountain. An Abbot of Enryakuji later founded a daughter temple called Onjoji or Miidera at the foot of the mountain near Lake Biwa.

Although Nara was no longer the capital its monasteries continued to grow. The most important were the Horyuji, the Todaiji, with its huge bronze Buddha, 50 feet high, and the

Kofukuji, founded in 669, whose compound now covered ten acres.

But size and wealth alone do not explain why the monasteries should begin to train their monks as soldiers. To understand this we must look at the form of government at the time.

Authority was nominally in the hands of the Emperor, but real power was possessed by Regents, particularly the Fujiwara family. Later we find "Insei", rule by "Cloistered Emperors" whereby an Emperor would abdicate in favour of an infant relative, and continue to rule from behind the scenes. Underneath the Regency was a complicated Court bureaucracy, who lived lives of idle luxury. They cared little for the realities of government, and left the collection of taxes and the suppression of rebels to volunteer soldiers whom they made rich with gifts of land.

The main problem facing the government was finance. Money was raised by taxes in the form of rice, raw silk etc. However, a farmer could avoid taxes by making "kishin" of his land. By kishin, a farmer would nominally hand it over to a powerful noble, or an organisation such as a temple, exempt from the national taxes. Theoretically the land still belonged to the original owner, who continued to farm it. But the body to whom the farm had been donated usually expected some contribution from the donor. It was in fact a form of protection racket, and often resulted in the landowner merely paying his taxes to someone else, at the same time strengthening his protector at the government's expense.

As the years went by, this form of finance became increasingly important to the monasteries. But by the end of the tenth century, kishin had become so widespread that the central authorities were finding it difficult to find any productive farmlands that had not been donated. As a result they turned to direct confiscation of land. As the powerful Barons were to be avoided, the government started to confiscate temple lands.

The monasteries faced another threat from the local chieftains. They had grown rich from rewards bestowed upon them for suppressing rebels, and the wealth of the monasteries was an inviting lure. Against this background, the monasteries began to arm themselves.

The earliest record of sohei is at the Kofukuji in 968. The first important demonstration in the capital happened in 981, when the yamabushi marched through the streets to place their demands before a terrified court. For the next two hundred years their incursions alarmed the superstitious courtiers, and frightened the ordinary citizens of Kyoto.

Carl Spohr maintains that the sohei constituted the most formidable standing army in the Kinai provinces during the early twelfth century. It is questionable, however, whether those who suffered these demonstrations were more frightened by the monks themselves, or by the spiritual power they represented.

In any case the monks must have been an intimidating sight. The sohei represented in scroll paintings always look very rough characters. Their shaven heads bear a few days growth of bristles. Some have the long white cowl covering their heads and shoulders, while others have a headband round their foreheads. Sometimes a suit of armour is worn, usually a simple "do-maru" under the monastic robe or an occasional "yoroi". Weapons include the usual sword and dirk, and invariably the monk's traditional weapon, the naginata, a form of halberd. The blade was similar to a sword blade and fixed in a handle between three and seven feet long. At this time a special form of naginata was used called a shobuzukuri-naginata, with a blade length of up to four feet. Slashing strokes were the usual way of fighting, and could produce very nasty wounds.

The other weapon the monks carried was the fear of the Gods they represented. Every monk carried a rosary and would readily pronounce a curse upon any offender. The Courtiers were particularly vulnerable to such treatment, as their lives were conducted according to the strict rules of augury and astrology, and Mount Hiei was their sacred guardian.

Often the monks would reinforce their presence by carrying down the mikoshi, or sacred palanquins, of the shrines. The mikoshi were portable shrines, reminiscent of the Ark of the Covenant, carried on long poles by about twenty monks. The spirit of the deity was supposed to dwell within these shrines, and any offence to the mikoshi was regarded as a direct assault on the deity itself. The "Heike Monogatari" (the chronicle of the fortunes of the Taira family) describes many such incidents, including one that resulted from the murder of a Mount Hiei monk by a courtier. The great mikoshi of Hiei, the shrine of the Mountain King, was taken down into Kyoto, and the monks chanted the six hundred volumes of the Dai Hannyakyo as a curse.

Sometimes the mikoshi would be left in the streets while the monks returned to the mountain. Here it would remain, to the dread of all the townspeople, until the monks' demands were satisfied. This subtle form of blackmail was first used by the Kumano monastery in 1082.

It did not take the monks long to realise that the sohei could also be useful in disputes between various temples. It is important to realise that these inter-temple squabbles were not religious quarrels as we know them. Doctrinal differences mattered little, and the arguments were usually over land or prestige, motivated by greed. The issue was frequently settled by burning down the opposing temple. Alliances were regularly formed, and easily broken. Enryakuji and Miidera maintained a deep jealousy of each other, and were always ready to fight.

We hear of them united against the Kofukuji in 1081, when Kofukuji burned Miidera and carried off much loot. Later in the same year Enryakuji burned Miidera over a succession dispute. In 1113 Enryakuji burned Kiyomizu during a dispute over the appointment of an Abbot. However, the "Mountain" would always rally round if one of its branch temples was attacked. Such an incident is described in the "Heike Monogatari".

In 1177 the Governor of Kaga Province was a certain Fujiwara Morotaka, whose brother Morotsune acted as his deputy or "mokudai". According to the chronicles the Mokudai came across a group of monks bathing. He drove them away and bathed in their stead, washing his horse as well. The monks were angry at this, and started a fight with the Mokudai's retainers. As a punishment the Mokudai burned down their temple, a branch of the Enryakuji. The mother temple rallied to the cause of her wronged infant, and three thousand monks descended on the capital to demand the banishment or imprisonment of the two brothers. The frightened courtiers speedily agreed to banish the incendiary deputy, and the "Heike Monogatari" quote the words of the Ex-Emperor Go-Shirakawa-In, which have passed into history:

"There are three things which are beyond my control, the rapids on the Kamo River, the dice at gambling, and the monks of the Mountain".

But the defiant yamabushi were not satisfied, and demanded banishment for both. They returned with the mikoshi and....

"..,as they entered Ichijo from the Western side, people wondered if the sun and moon had not fallen from heaven".

They marched through the city to the Imperial Palace, where they found an armed guard of samurai and foot-soldiers barring their way. The monks attacked, and in the confusion several arrows struck the mikoshi. It was the first time that the shrine had been fired on, and enraged at this act of sacrilege, the monks fled, lamenting to the Mountain.

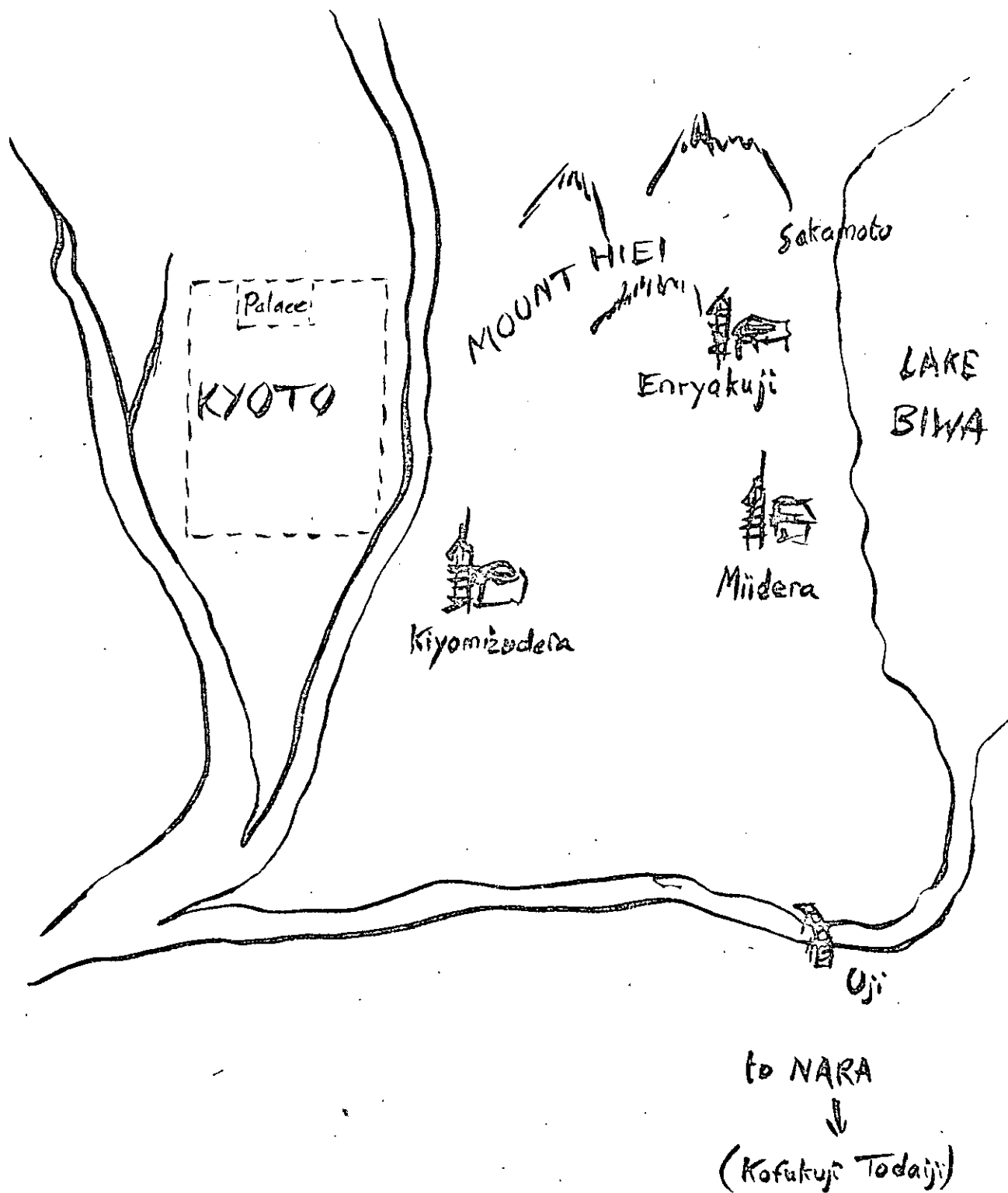
The mikoshi was only removed after some further conflicts, and the complete fulfilment of the monks' wishes. The samurai action was unusual, for until then a show of force had been all that was necessary to restore order.

Part 2 will follow in next Programme.

JAPANESE SWORDS by Ogasawara

Alan Bale has this book in stock. It is a 4" x 6" paperback with plastic cover. 128pp comprising 31pp text and 96pp plates of which half are in colour. Full English text. Price £1.05. Postage 6p inland, 8p foreign. Send to Alan Bale Esq., 498d Chiswick High Road, London W.4.

Map of Kyoto and Environs, showing temples
and places mentioned in the text



NIHON TO NEWSLETTER

New members will like to know and others be reminded of a venture started in Japan in January 1968 by Albert Yamanaka and Associates. The Nihon To Newsletter is a bi-monthly publication in English 30 plus pages on Japanese swords and its related fields. Packed with information from authoritative Japanese sources, there is no other publication in English which can offer such a wealth of knowledge to the serious student of the sword. Members wishing to subscribe to this non-profit making publication should write to:

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OSHIGATA

A reminder to new members who may have difficulties in reading tang inscriptions due to inadequate references, that if they care to send a rubbing (oshigata) of the tang, addressed to Fred Stride, Preston Cottage, North Road, Preston Park, Brighton, Sussex, 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.

NEW MEMBERS

We have much pleasure in welcoming the following members to the To Ken Society:

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Michigan 60438. USA.

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Parke-Bernet Galleries Inc.
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R.Corella Esq,
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Warley,Worcs.

Richard Murphy Esq,
26 Romney,
Belgravia,
Tamworth,Staffs.

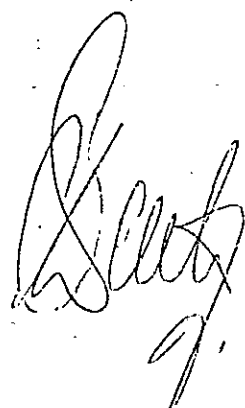
CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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Kent.

STATEMENT OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE

YEAR ENDING 30TH SEPTEMBER, 1971.

	<u>RECEIPTS.</u>	<u>PAYMENTS.</u>
Balance on Hand P ^d /fwd. Cash.	19.86	
Bank.	445.61	
Subscriptions.	410.09	
Programme Expenses.		244.06
Postage.		614.56
Stationery.		21.45
Meetings (Room Hire, etc.)		50.30
Sword Repolishing Service.	956.32	1,005.83
" Accessories.	2.55	
Nihon-To News Letter Service.	56.98	59.36
Journal & Back Programmes.	27.75	
Arms Fair. (Autumn, 1970)		9.00
" " (Spring & Autumn, 1971)		48.50
Bank charges.		-21
Typewriter repairs.		14.10
W. M. Hawley ~ Film Import charges.		28.16
Shinza ~ Translation Service.	15.50	30.00
" " Donation (Mr. I. TERUMINE)	30.00	
Balance on Hand C ^d /fwd. Cash.		92.12
Bank.		307.01
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