

*YAMASHIRO KYOTO - **GOTOBA** - The Emperor-smith & his ICHIMONJI*

What a twelve year old signed away, the adult would take back ...with an Excalibur

KIKU GYO-SAKU SHO-GEN 1207 - GOTOBA JOKO Emperor in Retirement & the creation of the ICHIMONJI

Interest and evocation of the KAMI brought Emperor GOTOBA to start the ICHIMONJI SHO-GEN GOBAN KAJI by summoning 13 leading masters to KYOTO for his personal instruction and the research and development for perfection to the Japanese Sword. Smiths were titled to the SAKON-E Imperial Guard as SHOGEN officers for legal admittance to service. Commissioners were named as sponsors, and each smith was assigned an alternate month of the year. GOTOBA had associated with BIZEN NORIMUNE, the organizer and therefore smith founder of the ICHIMONJI.

Note: *If this were hobby, it would have stayed a dalliance with NORIMUNE. A serious endeavor, only the Emperor could tell smiths to show up and share family secrets. The ICHIMONJI were selected to create a superior sword to aid in the restoration to power of the Imperial house*

Over time there were three ICHIMONJI groups that convened for the Emperor:

- The SHO-GEN GOBAN KAJI*
- The Twenty-four GOBAN KAJI*
- Exile group, the OKI GOBAN KAJI*

GOTOBA-TENNO made swords, but is known to have specialized in the YAKI-IRI hardening process of swords produced at the Palace, and to have signed these pieces. His KIKU-MON of 16 petals and 24 petals are rare finds.

ICHIMONJI SHO-GEN GOBAN KAJI

1st month: BIZEN FUKUOKA NORIMUNE

7th month: BIZEN FUKUOKA MUNEYOSHI

2nd month: BITCHU KO-AOE SADATSUGU

8th month: BITCHU KO-AOE TSUGUIYE

3rd month: BIZEN FUKUOKA NOBUFUSA

9th month: BIZEN FUKUOKA SUKEMUNE

4th month: YAMASHIRO AWATAGUCHI KUNIYASU

10th month: BIZEN FUKUOKA YUKIKUNI

5th month: BITCHU KO-AOE TSUNETSUGU

11th month: BIZEN FUKUOKA SUKENARI

6th month: YAMASHIRO AWATAGUCHI KUNITOMO

12th month: BIZEN FUKUOKA SUKENOBU

URUZUKI Intercalary month: YAMASHIRO AWATAGUCHI HISAKUNI - The intercalary month began on May 17, 1208.

The SHO-GEN GOBAN were the FUKUOKA artists and 3 of BITCHU MORITSUGUS' sons and 3 of AWATAGUCHI KUNIIYES' sons.

The Twenty-four GOBAN KAJI was far more diverse, bringing stylists from different areas. The commissioners for the this group were AWATAGUCHI HISAKUNI and FUKUOKA NOBUFUSA of the SHO-GEN GOBAN. Two experienced smiths rather than the twelve aristocrats of the first group show that here the commissioners were essentially directors for enacting a carefully considered program. The greater number of smiths allowed not only an expansion of the knowledge base but also development of the engineering aspects of production. This was a well-laid plan.

The Twenty-four GOBAN KAJI

*1st month: AWATAGUCHI KUNITOMO
FUKUOKA KANEMICHI (SUIICHI)*

*2nd month: FUKUOKA NAGASUKE
OSAFUNE MOROZANE*

*3rd month: SENJUIN SHIGEHIRO
FUKUOKA YUKIKUNI*

*4th month: OSAFUNE CHIKAFUSA
BUNGO YUKIHIRA*

*5th month: FUKUOKA KANECHIKA
FUKUOKA SANEFUSA*

*6th month: FUKUOKA YOSHIFUSA
OSAFUNE NORITSUGU*

*7th month: FUKUOKA TOMOSUKE
OHARA MUNETAKA*

*8th month: FUKUOKA AKIZANE
OSAFUNE SANETSUNE*

*9th month: FUKUOKA KANESUYE
FUKUOKA NOBUFUSA*

*10th month: MIMASAKA TOMOTADA
MIMASAKA SANETSUNE (brothers)*

*11th month: FUKUOKA KANESUKE
FUKUOKA NORIMUNE*

*12th month: FUKUOKA KORESUKE
KO-AOE TACHIBANA NORIZANE*

Following the defeat of SHOKYU RAN "War of 1221" his secret MEI, SUKEHIDE with a 17 petal KIKU was employed in exile with his OKI GOBAN KAJI Group.

OKI GOBAN KAJI

1st and 2nd months: AWATAGUCHI NORIKUNI

3rd and 4th months: AWATAGUCHI KAGEKUNI

5th and 6th months: AWATAGUCHI KUNITSUNA

7th and 8th months: FUKUOKA MUNEYOSHI

9th and 10th months: FUKUOKA NOBUMASA

11th and 12th months: FUKUOKA SUKENORI

YAMASHIRO KYOTO - GOTOKU-TENNO

...his reproachful ancestors would conspire.
The KAMI would be conjured - without asking

Through Earth - Fire - Water
and the disparate knowledges of men...

See
Appraisal Series,
- this issue



GOTOKU-JOKO Emperor in Retirement

KIKU GYO-SAKU SHO-GEN 1207 - GOTOKU JOKO "Emperor in Retirement"

SHO-GEN GOBAN swords are SHINOBI-TSUKURI, IHORI-MUNE, KOSHIZORI TACHI with strong FUMBARI. Standing KO-ITAME with a thin veiled JI-NIE. KO-MIDARE BA and KO-CHOJI of very fine KO-NIE and deep NIOI-FUKASHI. YAKIBA may be NIJUBA and KINSUJI is expected. Some YAKIOTOSHI.

Note: KO-ICHIMONJI, or early ICHIMONJI, resembles AWATAGUCHI work.

See following pages for a brief history of GOTOKU and how his life shaped the path of power

and the KAMI didn't disappoint. But fate, it seems, can defeat
even the Gods ...at times

Note: The "ICHIMONJI" are the SHO-GEN GOBAN KAJI ICHIMONJI masters of 1208 or the participants of the later ICHIMONJI groups and their descendants that adopted the title. These have mostly been the pre-guild, sword making block at FUKUOKA. See Appraisal Series, **sho-shin**, issue #3 and in this issue for the political aspects that influenced the progress of KAMAKURA sword style.

YAMASHIRO - GOTOBA and GEN-RYAKU KYOTO

This is the story of a struggle against the political greed of competing interests. Family blood wrestled the throne in a five way match for the future.

Until this time the strategy for power, as modeled by the FUJIWARA, was the production of heirs with Imperial blood. TAIRA KIYOMORI challenged this system by staking TAIRA women to the game. The MINAMOTO replaced the TAIRA, but MASAKO played them all like garden carp.

The Imperial players:

GOTOBA *TAKAHIRA-SHINNO, 4th son of TAKAKURA-TENNO*
Mother: SHICHIJO-no-IN - FUJIWARA-no-SHOKUSHI

Though not the eldest, GO-SHIRAKAWA chose GOTOBA to succeed TAIRA blood ANTOKU, KIYOMORI's grandchild, taken with the Imperial Regalia on the imprudent MUNEMORI's 1182 TAIRA retreat from KYOTO. After dragging their flag through a trail of slaughter, the bitter last words of TAIRA matriarch, NII-no-AMA disowned MUNEMORI, labeling him the secretly exchanged son of a parasol merchant.

The pinned garments of a TAIRA wife held the YATA-no-KAGAMI The Sacred Mirror from loss but the dark waters of DAN-no-URA drank forever the MURAKUMO-no-TSURUGI and its little Emperor, ANTOKU. - See MURAKUMO Sword in YAMATO and TOKIWA GOZEN in RYUMON

At twelve, GOTOBA, ANTOKU's little brother, made MINAMOTO YORITOMO, "SEI-I-TAI-SHOGUN"

TSUCHIMIKADO *GOTOBA's eldest son*
Mother: JOMEIMON-IN - MINAMOTO-no-ARIKO

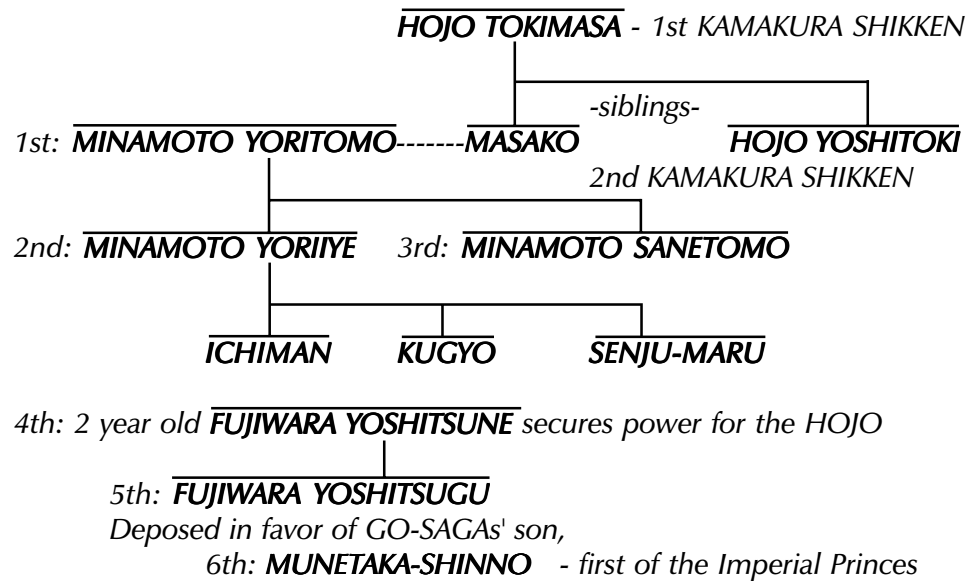
Ascended the throne at 3 years in 1199. Until the TAIRA were vanquished, Imperial blood knew FUJIWARA women. It is said GOTOBA preferred TSUCHIMIKADO's brother, FUJIWARA blood, JUNTOKU. A man of good character, MINAMOTO son, TSUCHIMIKADO, reigned 12 years and abdicated in JUNTOKU's favor letting GOTOBA and pater's joy join company. He knew, regardless of all other considerations, GOTOBA could never retrieve rule as long as SAMURAI blood (with its accompanying relations) sat on the throne.

JUNTOKU *MORINARI-SHINNO - 6th son of GOTOBA*
Mother: SHUMEIMON-IN - FUJIWARA-no-SHIGEKO

Elevated in 1211. FUJIWARA blood. GOTOBA's kindred heart and partner in the 1221 SHOKYU War.

CHUKYO *KANENARI-SHINNO became the "Emperor of 70 Days"*
3 year old son of JUNTOKU

SHOGUNs



- Start of KAMAKURA -

When MINAMOTO SANETOMO was assassinated in SHO-KYU 1219 by his jealous young nephew, KUGYO, son of the repugnant and mutually ostracized 2nd SHOGUN, YORIYE, the bright yet brief, MINAMOTO star blanked out. His ruthless mother, the AMA SHOGUN, MASAKO and her younger brother, HOJO YOSHITOKI stepped over the throne with a 2 year old puppet SHOGUN of new MINAMOTO blood - a son eagerly provided by FUJIWARA MICHIIYE (whose wife was the granddaughter of YORITOMO's sister). The new SHOGUN, FUJIWARA YOSHITSUNE was actually installed at 8 years in 1226. He will pass this mantle to his son in 1244.

GOTABA's test had arrived. From 1185 the reins of power, abandoned of the lost TAIRA, had been teased from the fingers of grandfather, GO SHIRAKAWA by the victorious MINAMOTO YORITOMO. And now, with the 1219 death of the third MINAMOTO SHOGUN, the throne was again being pushed aside.

For the HOJO, the growing Imperial household presented the worrisome portent of capturing large numbers of adherents. On the ascension of little CHUKYO, there were three retired Emperors:

ICHI-IN - GOTABA
CHU-IN - TSUCHIMIKADO
SHIN-IN - JUNTOKU

GOTABA's burden had always weighed. At the death of GO-SHIRAKAWA, it had been his own young hand that placed power to the MINAMOTO, who turned out wearing the face of MASAKO, bride of the too soon-dead, YORITOMO, and relentless engine of HOJO designs.

MASAKO, and brother, had carefully remained free to orchestrate both SHOGUNATE and throne from the comfortable insulation of KAMAKURA with its guise of treasonless power. Legally, their forces could be employed without the tangled potential that ropes a SHOGUN to his Emperor.

The HOJO's game was to arrange the perfect balance between established military governance and manipulated Imperial ties. It required constant cultivation by talented leaders - the eventual flaw.

GOTOBA and JUNTOKU sought to throw the yoke of military rule and return forever, the harmony of Divine Will.

It was fate. Known with every month of the ICHIMONJI from 1208, it was the impetus to formulate the mass-production techniques developed by his Twenty-four GOBAN KAJI - to supply and arm Imperial forces with the magical gifts of the Gods, the sword of the ICHIMONJI.

Imperial Restoration had been an imperative ever since YORITOMO's new institutions left the offices of GO-SHIRAKAWA impotent. Now, with the MINAMOTO gone and the HOJO propping a 2 year old - now must be the time.

For his part, the KAMI had warned clear-minded TSUCHIMIKADO that fate would be impropitious, and ungiving. Studios wisdom teaches Heavenly power can be harmoniously exercised only when the people are in jeopardy. As government is in the earthly realm, Imperial force must only be used to free the social body from destructive harm or tyranny.

Otherwise, Heaven becomes supplicated to the low. The HOJO were not posing destructive jeopardy to the people and therefore, reasonably, Imperial restoration would fail. This too was fate, TEN-no-MEI "The Will of Heaven." - So TSUCHIMIKADO withdrew from preparations, willing to suffer with them, their inevitable exile.

Needing a war is one thing. However, one has to start a war. - So one needs an excuse...

It seems our Divinity wished to give the estates of KURAHASHI-no-SHO and NAGAI to two dancing girls, an extravagance the conservative YOSHITOKI refused. Enough was enough! GOTOBA announced his call against the HOJO.

HOJO YOSHITOKI and MASAKO counseled and sent HOJO sons, YASUTOKI and TOMOTOKI, with brother HOJO TOKIFUSA against KYOTO. Three lost battles left the Imperial army successfully routed.

- **CHUKYO** "Emperor of 70 days" - deposed and retained at MICHIIYE's mansion in KUJO district
- **JUNTOKU** Father of CHUKYO - exiled to SADO
- **TSUCHIMIKADO** - Though inculpable, exiled to SHIKOKU
- **GOTOBA** - exiled to OKI

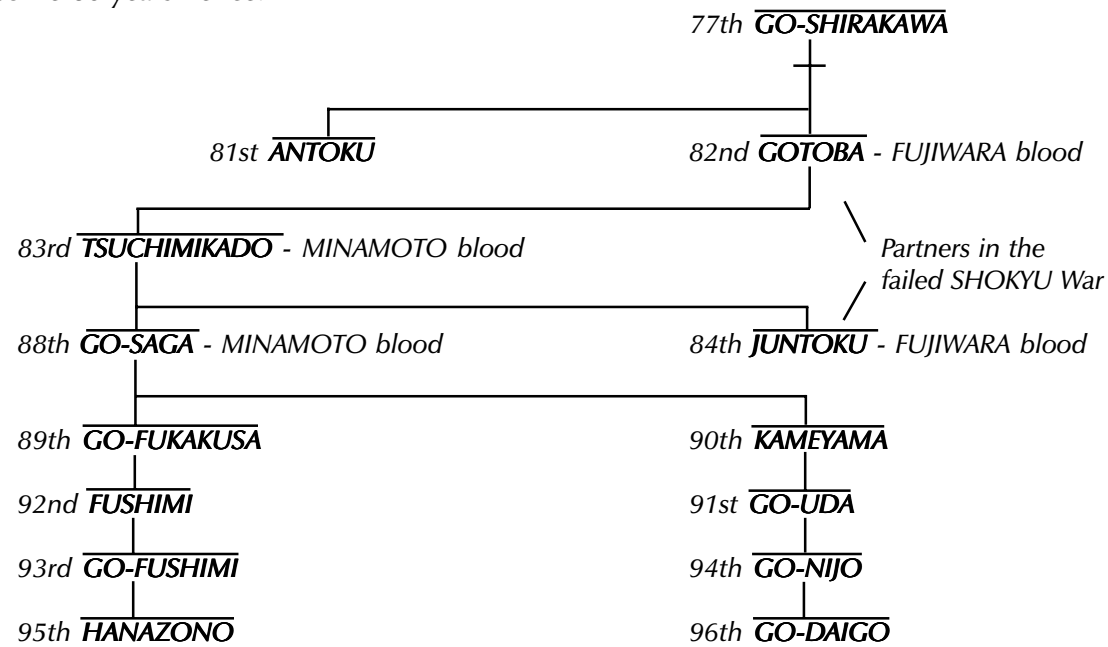
From this point the HOJO took direct command of KYOTO and ran the country with two administrations from two capitals, the governorship of KYOTO leashed by the KAMAKURA HOJO SHIKKEN in SAGAMI.

The HOJO elevated 10 year old, GO-HORIKAWA to replace CHUKYO. After a reign of 11 years, he abdicated for his 2 year old son and MICHIIYE grandson, SHIJO. When 12 year old, SHIJO-TENNO died in 1242, MICHIIYE stepped in with another grandson, TADANARI, JUNTOKU's son, vying a FUJIWARA as he had with his own son to the SHOGUNATE following the 1219 death of MINAMOTO SANETOMO. But HOJO YASUTOKI checked him, citing JUNTOKU's part in the SHOKYU War, and elected TSUCHIMIKADO's MINAMOTO son, GO-SAGA. This seemingly subtle card play was a major crossroads in history as it pushed MICHIIYE into the background and also retained the HOJO/KAMAKURA power umbrella for the next hundred years.

MICHIIYE had become SESSHO for the minority of what came to be CHUKYO's short reign. The offering of Imperial candidates by MICHIIYE against YASUTOKI shows the difference between diplomatic and military power, as both knew clearly, the stakes.

YASUTOKI died that same year (1242), but when the fifth HOJO SHIKKEN, TOKIYORI pulled the FUJIWARA from the SHOGUNATE in 1252 and GO-SAGA's 3rd son, MUNETAKA-SHINNO was chosen, YASUTOKI's clever hand was played out - both KYOTO and KAMAKURA danced harmoniously under HOJO strings.

With one son holding the inheritable SHOGUNATE, the last will of Emperor GO-SAGA in 1272 decreed the prideful blunder of a shared inheritance which divided the throne between the descendants of his two eligible sons, GO-FUKAKUSA and KAMEYAMA. HOJO SADATOKI enforced this mistake which shackled the future with too many options for too many hands and left open the ripe ticket for ASHIKAGA TAKAUJI's power grab that split the Imperial house some 60 years hence.



ASHIKAGA TAKAUJI
installs KOMYO for the North

- Start of NAMBOKUCHO -

GO-DAIGO retreats
to the South