

# KENDO forum

by Musashi of the  
Shinto Ryu

**The Early Styles of Kenjutsu.** The first of the styles, listed in September, was the *Nen-ryu*, and this was founded in 1350; authorities differ on the identity of the inventor. Some say it was Kamisaka Hanzaemon Yasuhisa a former priest of the Rinzaï Sect. However, in the records of the Higuchi family in which the *Nen-ryu* descended, it is said that the founder was Somashiro Yoshimoto, a samurai from Soma, Mutsu province. He was a priest with the Buddhist name of Jion. This style was noted for its high quality at the end of the 16th century, and in 1635 a fencing match was held in front of the Shogun, Tokugawa Iemitsu in which Higuchi Jurobei fought and defeated a swordsman, Chujo Gorobei from Kai province.

A school that has exerted great influence on many leading styles of swordsmanship throughout the feudal period was the *Chujo-ryu*. The Chujo family held high positions under the Hojo Regents in the 13th and early 14th centuries but their kenjutsu was developed and established by Chujo Hyogonosuke Nagahide in the third quarter of the 14th century. Authorities believe that Nagahide received instruction from Jion (see above) but this is not certain.

The next style is the *Oda-ryu* founded by the Lord of Oda in Wakasa province, Oda Sanuki-nokami Takatomo. It is known that he was related in some way with the powerful Chujo family. Takatomo founded his style after training and praying at the Ashio Sannichi Shrine in the late 14th

century. He died in 1416, and the school continued in Sagami Province. The last successor of the school was named Ujiharu; he committed *seppuku* at Tsuchiura Castle in Hitachi province during a war against Satake Yoshinobu. (around 1500 A.D.).

**Kendo Kyoshi visits Shinto-Ryu Dojo.** During his recent visit to London, Mr. Narita Sankichiro, 7th dan Kyoshi, of the Oita-ken Kendo Renmei, Kyushu, spent much of his time at the Shinto-Ryu Kendo Dojo teaching the *montei* (students). Mr. Narita is the leader of a party from the Nippon Kensei-Kai, (Young Men's Association for Japanese Reconstruction), who are touring many countries to meet youth groups.

In our dojo he paid particular attention to *suburi* and hard *kiri-kaeshi*, explaining several points of detail in the clearest manner. His critique of two mistakes made in the Nihon Kendo Kata were particularly interesting to Mr. Feltham, 2nd Dan, and Mr. Mathie, 2nd Dan.

Kendoka in this country will be interested to know that Narita Sensei is a close friend of Mr. Oura Yoshihiko, 7th Dan Kyoshi, who visited this country last July (1963).

**Shinto-Ryu Kendo Dojo.** Mr. Nakajima Yasuji, 3rd Dan, has now settled down to life in this country and is taking a major part

in the activities of the Shinto-Ryu dojo where his presence is greatly appreciated. He is at present arranging for a series of visits by Kendoka officers of various Japanese shipping lines.

Miss Horie Etsuko, 2nd Dan, has now returned to Japan after her stay of one year, we regret to announce.

### Change of Postal Address of the British Kendo Association

Please note that the address of the British Kendo Association is now 34 Deronda Road, Tulse Hill, London, S.E.24. Telephone: TUL 4046.

The correct address of the Shinto-Ryu Kendo Dojo is St. Peter's Hall, St. Oswald's Place, London, S.E.11.

**Kendo Publication in English.** The first book devoted to Kendo in this language is to be published by Judo Limited. This will be Mr. R. A. Lidstone's *AN INTRODUCTION TO KENDO* due out this Autumn.

The author deals with his subject in broad terms to make the book of value not only to Kendoka but to everyone interested in the Martial Arts. The text deals in turn with the place that *kenshi* have taken in Japanese history and with many aspects of modern Kendo including the *Kendo-no-kata*. Appended to the book are descriptions of swords, armour, and some interesting notes on Tameshigiri (Sword-Testing) and *Seppuku* (*Hara-kiri*). Of the utmost value will be the glossary of Kendo terms. The whole book is very fully illustrated with both photographs and line-drawings.

Note: Dr. Gordon Warner, 6th dan, has finished his book *THIS IS KENDO* and it is due to be published by Tuttle & Co. in this coming winter. It is not expected that either of these books will conflict, but will give the English speaking reader a clearer picture of this ancient art.

A street fight in the 16th century. A scene from the film "River of Ruthlessness."

