



ITEM# UJDI002

A MATSUBA MOTOYUKI DAISHO

SIGNED, MID-EDO, BUNGO PROVINCE (KYOHO ERA: 1716-1736)

KATANA (DAI)

Swordsmith: *Kawachi no Kami MOTOYUKI*

Period: Middle Edo Period, Kyoho era (~1721)

Measurements: **Length:** 69.8cm (ubu nakago) **Curvature:** 1.8cm

Certificate: **NBTHK Tokubetsu Kicho** (*a sword designated as Especially Precious by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword*)

WAKIZASHI (SHO)

Swordsmith: *Ki Shindaibu Sue Takada Kawachi no Kami MOTOYUKI*

Measurements: **Length:** 49.8cm (ubu nakago) **Curvature:** 1.2cm

Certificate: **NBTHK Tokubetsu Kicho** (*a sword designated as Especially Precious by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword*)

Certificate #3: **NTHK-NPO Yushuto** (*a daisho designated as Highly Excellent by the Non-Profit Japanese Sword Appraisal Association*)

Certificate #4,5: **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (*a katana koshirae and wakizashi koshirae designated as Important by the Non-Profit Japanese Sword Appraisal Association*)

SOLD

[Information sourced from Markus Sesko's *Nihon Shinto-shi*.]

Swordsmith **Motoyuki** (本行) was born in 1642 in Takada, Bungo province in Kyushu. He was the son of Shodai (first generation) **Naoyuki**. Motoyuki claims to be the successor of the famous Koto-period Bungo smith **Yukihira** (行平).

In the 5th year of Enpo (1677) he moved to Karatsu in Hizen province.

Motoyuki received the title **Kawachi no Daijo** in June 1677 and signed at that time **Yukiharu**. Shortly thereafter he changed his name to **Yukihira** and in later years he also signed with the honorary title **Kawachi no Kami** (河内守), which both these swords carry.

In the seventh year of the Genroku era (1694), he went to Kyoto where the **Hon'ami family** bestowed upon him the character for **Hon** (本, Japanese reading 'Moto'). He began to sign with the name **Motoyuki**.

Motoyuki studied **Soshu** techniques from **Tsunahiro** (綱広) and returned to his home province where he took the name **Bungo Taro** [**Ki-Shindaibu**] (豊後太郎).

In his later years he signed the the character for **Moto** in such a way that looked like pine needles (**matsuba**) earning him yet another nickname, **Matsuba-Motoyuki**.

Both swords in this daisho are signed in this unique fashion.

While a pure daisho may comprise of swords by the same swordsmith with exactly matching saya, tsuba, fuchi kashira, and menuki, the reality was different for the majority of Samurai.

This particular daisho started with one of the swords, likely the wakizashi, already stored in beautiful koshirae.

Then, years later, the same Samurai acquired another sword by Motoyuki and built a complimenting koshirae for the second sword 'to match' as best he could to form his very own unique **Motoyuki Daisho**.



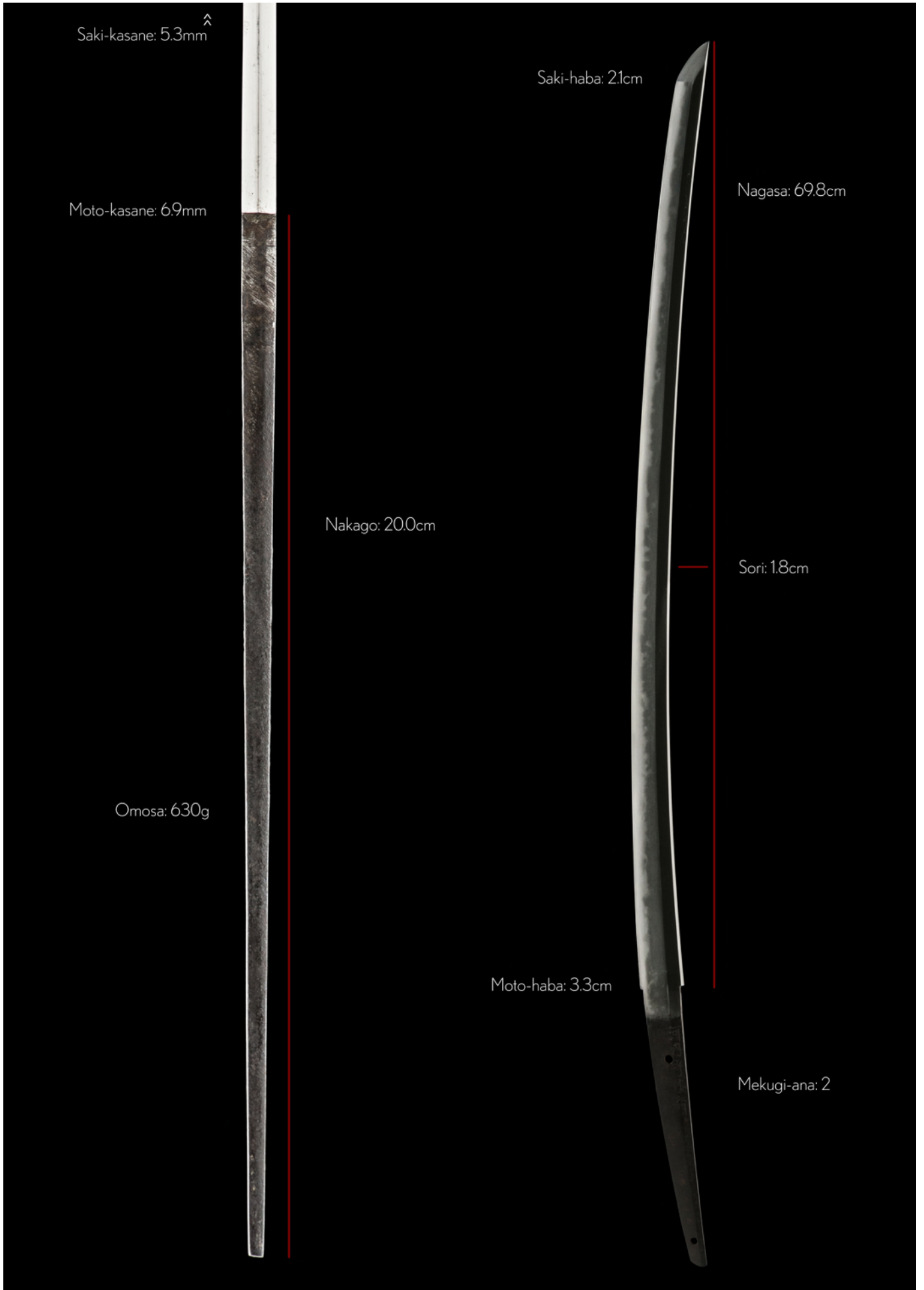
A Samurai with his Daisho

It is a most splendid **daisho** by a remarkably free-spirited man who spent a lifetime of adventure in constant pursuit of knowledge and personal betterment.

Now, it's up to the next family to safeguard this exceptional piece of Japanese history for the many years ahead.

The following pages contain images and background information of the Matsuba Motoyuki daisho and the many stories and hidden messages contained within the fittings themselves.

There is much to treasure and enjoy.





Katana

Swordsmith: *Motoyuki*
Title: *Kawachi no Kami*
(Lord of Kawachi province)

Kawa

chi (no)

Kami

Moto

yuki

Motte

Masa

mune

Zou

kei

Crafted in tribute of the
14th century swordsmith
Masamune of Kamakura



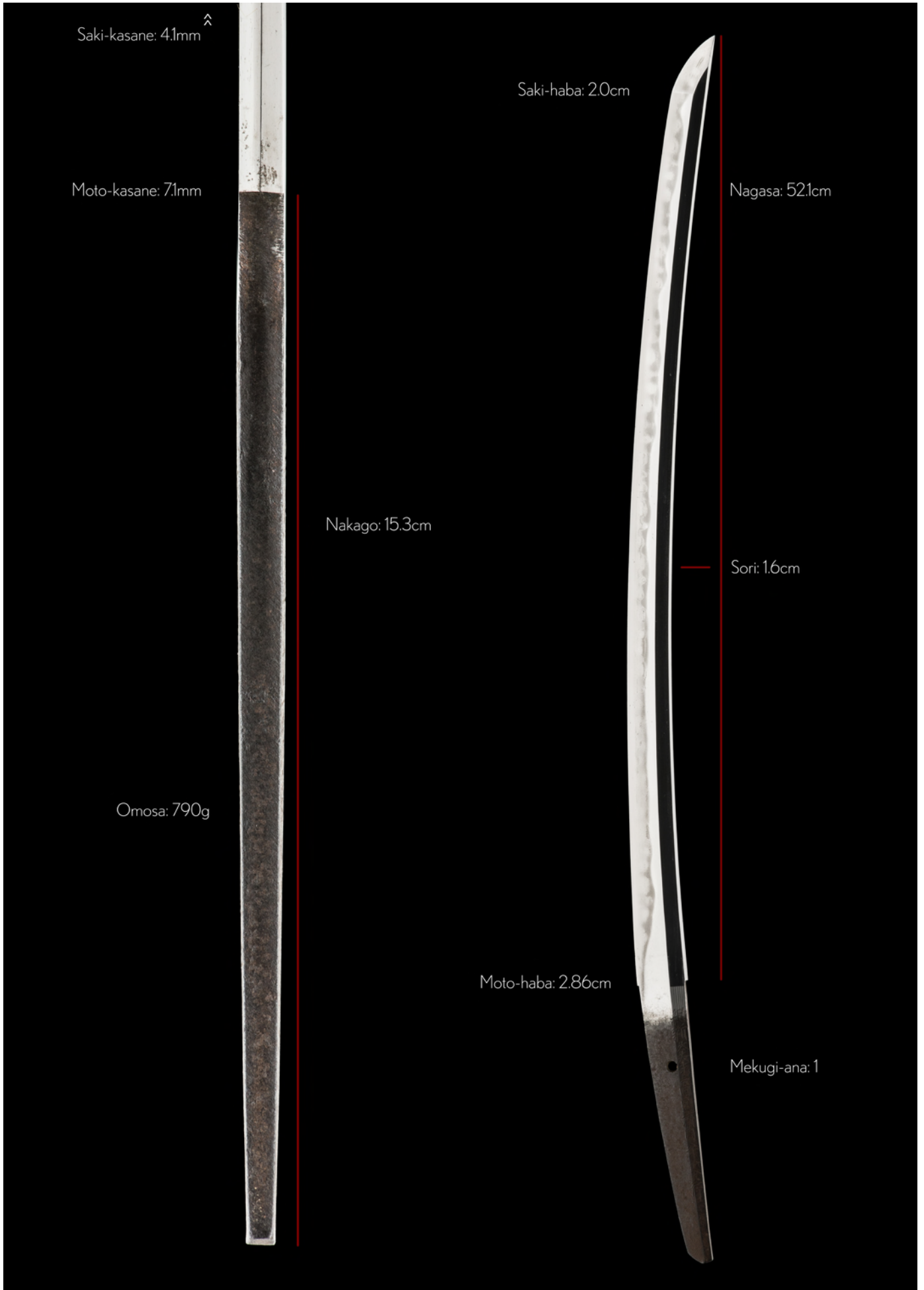


In his later years Motoyuki signed the character for *Moto* in a way that resembles pine needles (*matsuba*, 松葉).

For this reason he is affectionately called '*Matsuba Motoyuki*'



Utagawa Hiroshige
One Hundred Famous Views of Edo:
Five Pines on Konagi River
1797-1858







Ki
Shindaibu
Sue
Takada
Kawachi
no Kami
Moto
yuki

Kyoho
6-nen
11-gatsu
hi

Swordsmith Motoyuki
Lord of Kawachi province
of the late Takada School
dated this wakizashi
on a day in the 11th month of
the 6th year of the Kyoho era
(November 1721)

Hamon (on katana)

A bubbling brew of crystals form a sublime *hitatsura* (full temper) *hamon* that delights the eye.

Motoyuki learned *Soshu tradition* techniques from *Tsunahiro* and applied his knowledge in full force on this katana.

Hamon (on wakizashi)

An electric *gunome choji midare hamon*

Irregular temper line with semi-circles and depictions of clove blossoms. Note the beautiful visible nie crystals.





Yujo-habaki
(gold on copper base)



Botan-like habaki
(silver on copper base)

*"The cosmos is within us.
We are made of star-stuff.
We are a way for the universe
to know itself."*
- Carl Sagan



Aoi-gai
(crushed mother-of-pearl)

— Wakizashi

Katana —

Both *saya* (scabbards) are beautifully decorated with crushed limpet and mother-of-pearl. The *sayas* were produced at different times in the Edo period, hence the finish is non-identical, yet complimentary.

It takes several weeks and a huge number of layers of lacquer to complete such a project.

The cost to re-produce a scabbard today with such level of detail would be significant.

Daisho Tsuba



"Nature holds the key to our aesthetic, intellectual, cognitive, and even spiritual satisfaction."

- E.O. Wilson



Fuchi (on katana)



Yoro Falls: The Magical Waterfall

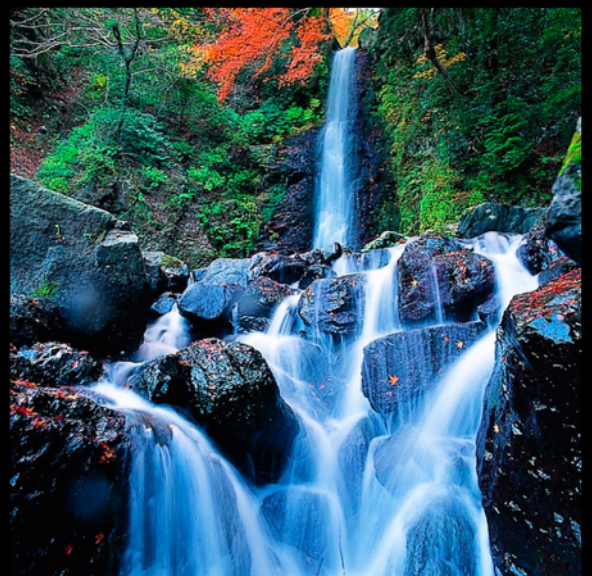
Legend has it that during the 8th century, a poor woodcutter who had a sick father went to the forest to find firewood and in his search he stumbled upon the falls.

Suddenly the woodcutter discovered that the spring's water turned into *sake* (rice wine).

He immediately filled his *hyotan* (gourd) with the magical sake and brought it home to his sick father who without delay drank the sake and miraculously got well.

It is believed that the water transformation was a reward for the man's piousness and dedication to his father.

Story and image:
<http://jpninfo.com/17180>



Yoro falls in Yoro, Gifu prefecture

Kashira (on katana)



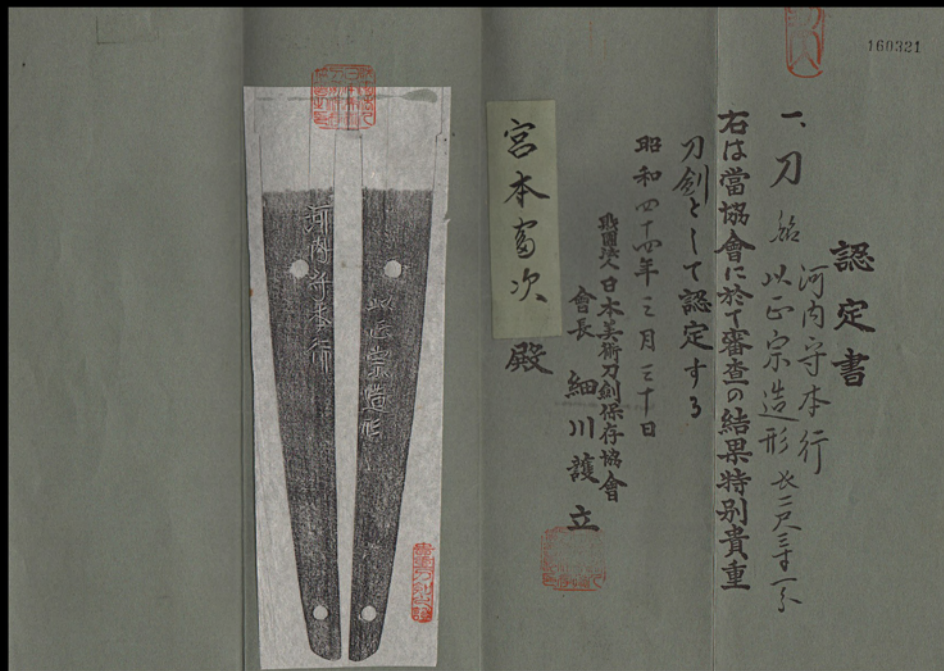
Liu Bei

Liu Bei (161-223) was a warlord in the late Eastern Han dynasty who founded the state of Shu Han in the Three Kingdoms period and became its first ruler.

Romance of the Three Kingdoms is a 14th-century historical novel based on the events that occurred before and during the Three Kingdoms era.

Written by Luo Guanzhong more than a millennium after the said period, the novel incorporated many popular folklore and opera scripts into the character of *Liu Bei*, portraying him as a *compassionate* and *righteous leader*, endowed with charismatic potency.





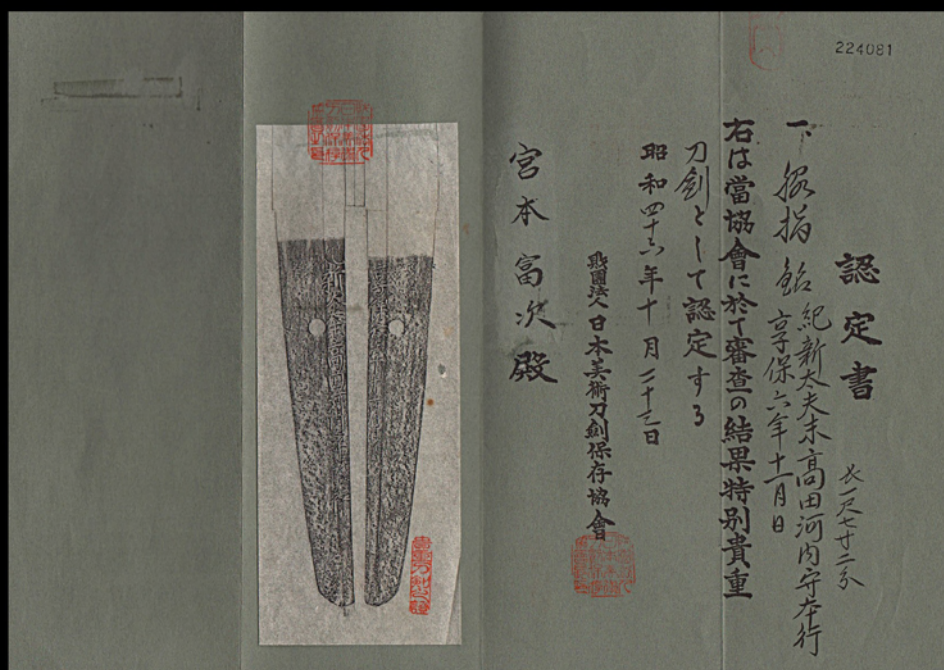
NBTHK Tokubetsu Kicho Certificates of Designation

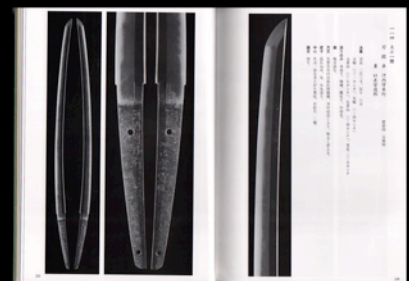
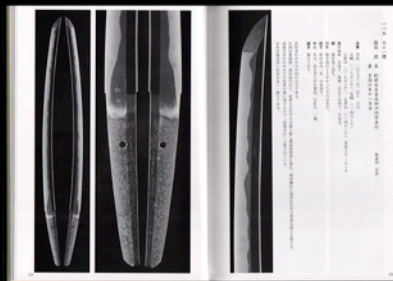
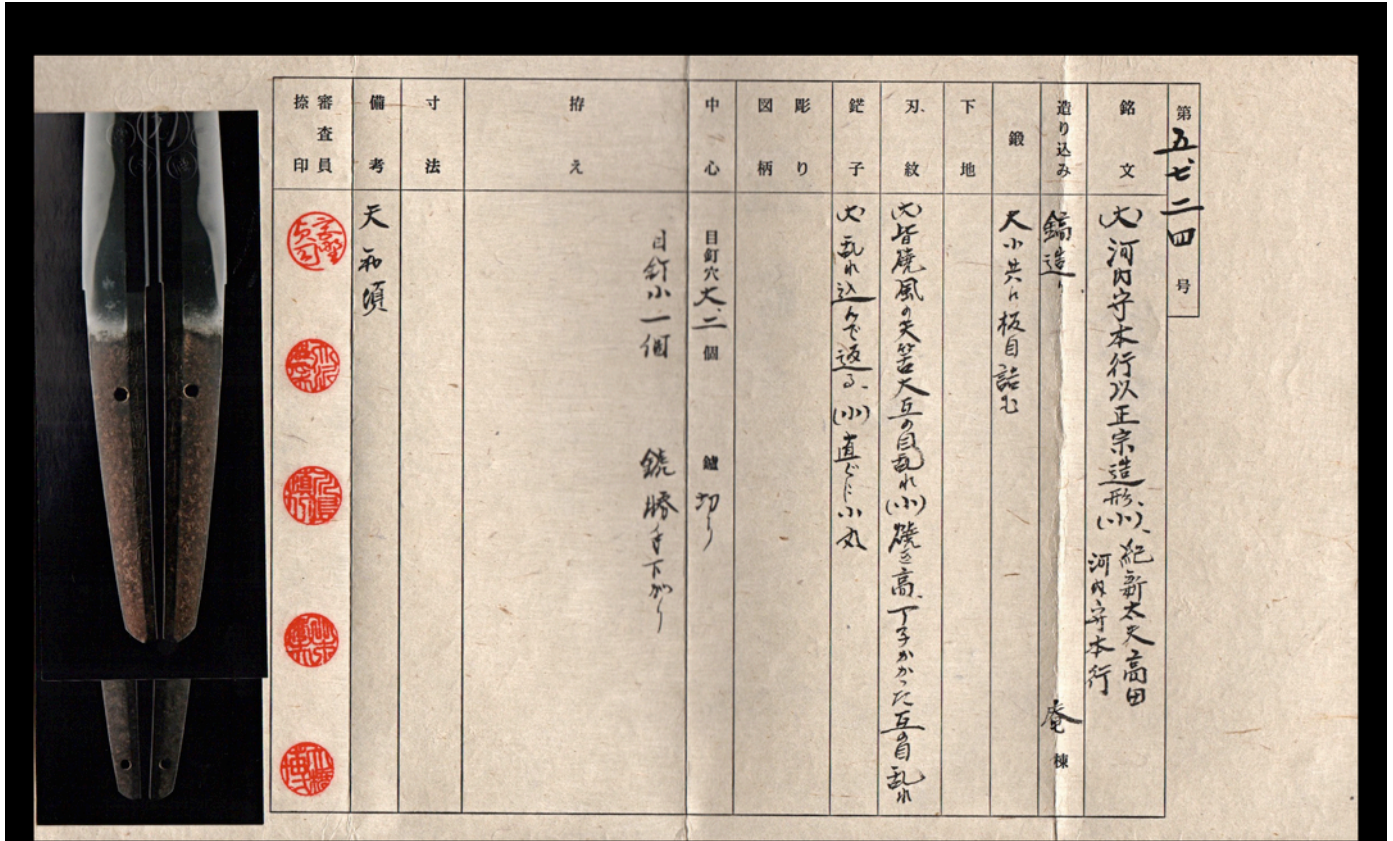
Both swords have been designated as *Epecially Precious* by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 44th and 46th year of Showa (1969 & 1971)

These vintage certificates are highly prized as *Juyo Token* was the only rank above at the time

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai (NBTHK)





NTHK-NPO Yushusaku Certification

This daisho was designated as *Yushusaku* (Highly Excellent) by the Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Sword.

It has been published in a catalogue issued by the NTHK-NPO with other *Yushusaku* awarded swords. Book included with sword.

Kawachi no Kami Motoyuki

Issued in 26th year of Heisei (2014), July 23rd

Nihon Token Hozon Kai
(NTHK-NPO)