

*Jūyō-tōken* at the 48th *jūyō shinsa* held on October 11, 2002

*katana, mumei: Yoshikage (義景)*

*kinzōgan-meい: Boshin no eki no senkō ni yotte - Daisōtoku no Miya-denka shozō Kawata Sakuma Minamoto Kagetomo (戊辰之役依戰功・大總督宮殿下所贈 河田左久間源景與) - "Kawata Sakuma Minamoto Kagetomo received this sword from the Prince in command of the Imperial Army as a reward for merits achieved in the Boshin War"*

## Measurements

*nagasa* 70.2 cm, *sori* 2.4 cm, *motohaba* 2.95 cm, *sakihaba* 2.35 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 4.1 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 19.0 cm, *nakago-sori* 0.1 cm

## Description

*Keijō: shinogi-zukuri, iori-mune, wide mihaba, no noticeable taper, thick kasane, deep sori, elongated chū-kissaki*

*Kitae: standing-out itame that is mixed with mokume and that features ji-nie, fine chikei, and a prominent midare-utsuri*

*Hamon: ko-nie-laden ko-gunome that is mixed with various different elements like angular sections, kataochi-gunome, ko-chōji, ashi, yō, kinsugi, and sunagashi, the elements of the ha are overall rather small dimensioned and tend to slant in places*

*Bōshi: midare-komi with a smallish and pointed kaeri*

*Horimono: on both sides a bōhi that runs as kaki-tōshi through, and a tsurebi that runs as kaki-nagashi into the tang*

*Nakago: ō-suriage, kurijiri that tends to ha-agari, katte-sagari yasurime, two mekugi-ana, mumei, the sashi-ura side bears on the hira-ji and in two rows a kinzōgan-meい*

## Explanation

Since olden times, there exist several theories on the affiliation of Osafune Yoshikage (義景), some of which stating that he studied with Kanemitsu (兼光) whilst others state that he was a student of Chōgi (長義). His workmanship and the use of *gyaku-tagane* in the *mei* (partially opposite stroke order than written with a brush) however, has lead in recent years to the theory that he may have rather been an Osafune side line smith like for example Chikakage (近景) and Morikage (盛景), a theory which since has become more and more accepted.

This blade is with its wide *mihaba* and elongated *chū-kissaki* of a large *sugata*. The *kitae* is a standing out *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and that features *ji-nie*, fine *chikei*, and a prominent *midare-utsuri*. The *hamon* is a *ko-nie-laden ko-gunome* that is mixed with angular elements, *kataochi-gunome*, *ko-chōji*, partially slanting sections, *ashi*, *yō*, *kinsuji*, and *sunagashi*. Compared to Nanboku-chō-period Osafune main line works, the *ha* is more complex and is composed of various different elements, which are overall rather small dimensioned. This and the abundance of *ko-nie*, *hataraki* within the *ha* like *kinsuji* and *sunagashi*, and the pointed *kaeri* reflect the characteristic features of Yoshikage whereupon we are in agreement with the period attribution to this smith. Both *ji* and *ha* are in a very healthy condition and the blade is of a particularly excellent *deki* among all works attributed to this smith.

The *kinzōgan-meい* states that this blade was once presented to Kawata Kagetomo (河田景與, 1828-1897) (first name Sakuma, 左久間) who was a *samurai* of the Tottori fief (鳥取藩) in Inaba province and later a meritorious official of the Meiji Restoration. During the Boshin War of 1868-69, Kagetomo was fighting in several battles, e.g. as part of the Tōsandō vanguard army under the command of Iwakura Tomosada) and also for the commander of the Imperial Army, Prince Arisugawa Taruhito (有栖川宮熾仁親王, 1835-1895). For his merits in battle, he received on the second day of the sixth month of Meiji two (1869) a reward stipend in the amount of 450 *koku*. This blade too states in its gold inlaid inscription that it was presented to Kagetomo by the prince and as a reward for his merits achieved in that war and is therefore a historically very important piece.