

former members of the council of elders. The Tokugawa Art Museum collection contains four swords that were received on the occasions of the retirements of the eighth shogun, Yoshimune, the ninth shogun, Ieshige, and the eleventh shogun, Ienari, by the heads and heirs of the Owari family of the time or their heirs.

SECTION 5 THE BIRTH OF AN HEIR

On the occasion of the birth of a legitimate son to one of the three main or the three secondary branch families of the Tokugawa shogunal family, a *wakizashi* side sword was gifted to the family by the shogun as a protective blade in commemoration of the Seventh Night Celebration (*Oshichiya*). In addition, a *katana* sword was bestowed upon the family on the occasion of shrine visits made within the first year of life. Furthermore, a sword was also received when a daughter of the shogunal family gave birth to a boy.

In the case of the Owari family, Chiyohime, the eldest daughter of the third shogun, Iemitsu, was married to the second Lord of Owari, Mitsutomo, and gave birth to his heir, Tsunanari. The swords that were received on the occasions of his Seventh Night Celebration and his first shrine visit have both been passed down together in the family. After that, however, the Owari clan was unlucky in producing an heir and, aside from the fifth-generation Gorōta, who died prematurely at age three, no direct son became the head of the family. As a result, the family has few swords that were received on the occasion of the birth of a son. The tenth Lord of Owari, Naritomo, eleventh Lord Nariharu, and twelfth Lord Naritaka, who were all adopted into the Owari family to become head of the family, brought with them the swords that their birth families had received when they came into the Owari family.

SECTION 6 COMING OF AGE BEFORE THE SHOGUN AND RECEIVING A KANJI CHARACTER FROM HIS NAME

Legitimate sons of noted families, such as the three main and three secondary branch families of the Tokugawa and the great *daimyō* families, were privileged to hold their coming of age ceremonies in the presence of the shogun and at the same time received one character of the shogun's name. Samurai class coming of age ceremonies were ordinarily held at age fifteen, but in the case of *daimyō* families, since there was a need to position a child as successor to the head of family, coming of age ceremonies were often held without particular concern for age. In the cases when an heir died before inheriting the family headship, a younger brother would become heir or another son would be adopted from another family. This boy would then be officially recognized as the legitimate heir through an audience with the shogun, where he too would be granted a character from the shogun's name and a *katana* sword as proof of inheritance to a noted family.

The ceremony of shaving the forehead to take the hairstyle of an adult samurai was also held around the time of the coming of age ceremony, and, in the case of the three main branches of the Tokugawa family, a sword was received from the shogun at this time as well.

SECTION 7 SUCCESSION TO THE FAMILY HEADSHIP

Since the *daimyō* family's control over a particular domain was premised on the approval of the Tokugawa shogun, it was necessary to receive recognition from the shogun in advance that an heir was qualified to succeed to the headship of the family. When receiving this recognition, the *daimyō* families had to demonstrate the

highest level of gratitude to the shogun and at the time of succession of headship all *daimyō* households were required to present swords and other gift items to the shogun. The three main branch families were no exception. When succession resulted from the death of the head of the family, swords that belonged to the deceased were also presented to the shogun.

In the case of the Owari family, when the tenth generation, Naritomo, eleventh generation Nariharu, twelfth generation Naritaka, and thirteenth generation Yoshitsugu, who were adopted from the shogunal and three secondary branch families, succeeded to the headship of the Owari family, swords were bestowed by the shogun. No formal record of the gifts remains for any of these cases, and it is believed that they constituted unofficial congratulatory gifts to those who had a close blood relationship with the shogun.

SECTION 8 MARRIAGE

In the case of the marriage of a head of a family, such as one of the three main branches or three secondary branches of the Tokugawa family, or one of their heirs, swords were presented as congratulatory gifts from the shogunal family. Also, when daughters of the shogunal family were married into another family, swords were gifted to the family into which they were marrying. In the case of the Owari family, when Chiyohime, the eldest daughter of the third shogun, Iemitsu, was married to the second Lord of Owari, Mitsutomo, the family received congratulatory swords for the occasion as well as swords that Chiyohime brought along with her as part of her wedding dowry.

Traditional Japanese wedding ceremonies are preceded by an engagement ceremony that confirms the official ties between the two families and swords were granted on the occasion of the engagement as well as for the wedding. Originally, the swords exchanged at the time of the wedding ceremony reflected the status of the family, but eventually, swords by swordsmiths with auspicious names, such as the Enju (literally, "longevity") School of Higo came to be prized most highly for this purpose.

SECTION 9 POSTING AND ARRIVAL IN THE HOME DOMAIN

After *daimyō* of the three main branch families or other major domains succeeded to the headship of the family, they received swords from the shogun the first time they arrived in their home domains as *daimyō*, or the first time they returned to their domain under the leadership of a new shogun. Inasmuch as the governance of a particular feudal domain was the duty of a *daimyō* as a delegate under the official authorization of the shogun, the official granting of swords signified recognition as the shogun's proxy.

Moreover, even when the lesser *daimyō* and shogunal vassals conducted special missions in the provinces or when they were carrying out official matters, they were granted swords in reward for their service. Originally, the three branch families had the privilege of exemption from the burden of service, but, due to the frequent reconstructions of Edo Castle resulting from fires, by the latter Edo period, funds were also levied from the three main branch families in place of service in labor. They received gifts of swords in thanks for this support as well.

Special Exhibition

Famed Swords Conferred by the Tokugawa Shoguns



The Tokugawa Art Museum Main Building Exhibition Rooms
From April 14 (Sun.) to June 2 (Sun.), 2019

The Owari Tokugawa collection retains 31 swords that once belonged to Tokugawa Ieyasu, including objects from the "Sunpu Owakemono" collection (Utensils Inherited from Sunpu Castle), as well as 78 swords granted to the family by the successive generations of shoguns that followed him, demonstrating the depth of the relationship between the Owari clan and the shogunal family. The specifics of their acquisition range widely, from being received as gifts celebrating the hereditary succession of headship of the clan to gifts received in honor of the new *daimyō*'s arrival in Owari, as well as celebrating the birth of children, celebrating retirement, or gifts received in memory of deceased persons. Their various stories convey a clear picture of the nature of warrior protocols and customs with respect to swords. This exhibition presents numerous famous swords that came to the Owari from the Shogunal family and through them explores the significance of the custom of gifting and transfer of swords among the *daimyō* families of the day.

SECTION 1 ONARI — OFFICIAL VISITS OF THE TOKUGAWA SHOGUNS

"Onari" is the honorific term for the official visits of a power-holder person to the residences of his retainers. On the receiving side, a form of ceremony demonstrating a stance of subservience by the one hosting the important guest was enacted through the offering and presentation of swords, which were symbols of military strength. The person in the position of power received the offering of swords and in return bestowed upon his subject a different sword, signifying his authorization of military force to the person he was visiting, acknowledging his vassalage and re-confirming the master-subject relationship.

From the Kamakura shogunate onward, the tradition of these official visits was passed down within the military government as an important convention of warrior society and, after the establishment of the Edo shogunate, the Tokugawa shogun conducted frequent *onari* visitations until the time of the fifth shogun. The second Tokugawa shogun Hidetada paid the first official visit to the Owari household at its Nezumiana mansion in Edo in 1623 (Genna 9). In this case too, the position of the Owari Tokugawa family as retainers of the shogunal family was confirmed by an exchange of swords. Thirteen swords that were received by the family on the occasions of various *onari* official visits survive in the Tokugawa Art Museum collection.

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The Genna-era *Onari*

On 2.13.1623 (Genna 9), the second Tokugawa shogun, Hidetada, paid an official *onari* visit to his blood relative, the first Lord of Owari, Yoshinao, impressing upon the public that the Owari clan were retainers of the shogun first and foremost, even more importantly than being members of the Tokugawa family. Yoshinao hosted Hidetada at the Nezumiana mansion in Edo and the luxuriousness of his reception attained a scale of such unprecedented formality and ceremony that it became the model for all *onari* that would follow. Five days later, on 2.18, Iemitsu, who would become the third shogun later that same year, also paid an official visit to the Owari.

Historical records document that Yoshinao received the *tachi* sword “Ôhara Sanemori,” the *katana* sword “Yoshihiro,” and the *wakizashi* side sword “Naraya Sadamune” from Hidetada and the *tachi* “Kuniyuki,” *katana* “Nagamitsu,” and *wakizashi* “Rai Kunitoshi” from Iemitsu. In return, he presented the *tachi* “Ongamaru Hisakuni,” the *katana* “Yoshimitsu,” and the *wakizashi* “Munechika” to Hidetada and the *tachi* “Nagamitsu,” the *katana* “Sadamune,” and the *wakizashi* “Kuniyoshi” to Iemitsu. Of these, the *wakizashi* “Naraya Sadamune” is still preserved in the Tokugawa Art Museum collection.

Onari of the Second Shogun Hidetada and Third Shogun Iemitsu

Hidetada paid official visits to the Owari household five times (once as shogun and four times after retirement) and Iemitsu visited seven times (once before becoming shogun and six times as shogun). In addition, Hidetada and Iemitsu made an official *onari* visit to Nagoya Castle together in 1623 (Genna 9) on their way back to Edo from Kyoto after receiving the imperial proclamation of Iemitsu as the new shogun.

The official *onari* visits that took place in Edo were all conducted in the same manner as the Genna-era *onari*, exhausting all limits of extravagance, but, given the significant financial burden of such visits, they gradually ceased as Japanese society became more stable.

During the course of his lifetime, Iemitsu conducted 440 *onari* visits, but the majority of these were personal calls that doubled as pleasure trips and did not involve the exchange of swords at his retainers’ residences. His final visit to the Owari household was in 1644 (Kan’ei 21).

The Tokugawa Art Museum preserves six swords from this period: two swords received during the visit to Nagoya Castle, and one sword from each of four *onari* visits that took place during the Kan’ei era.

Onari of the Fifth Shogun Tsunayoshi

A devotee of Confucianism, Tokugawa Tsunayoshi revived the custom of formal *onari* visitations under the pretext of offering lectures on Confucianism at his retainers’ residences. The majority of the 187 *onari* Tsunayoshi conducted in his lifetime were of a simplified format with the primary objective of lecturing on Confucianism, but his *onari* to visit four members of the shogunal council of elders (*Rôjû*) in 1694 (Genroku 7) and his visits to the Kii, Kôfu, Owari, and Mito Tokugawa branch families as well as the Maeda family of Kaga between 1697–1702 (Genroku 10–15), were large-scale *onari* in accordance with formal codes of etiquette.

The Owari household received Tsunayoshi at the Kôjimachi residence in Edo on 3.18.1698 (Genroku 11). The format of the *onari* was characteristic of Tsunayoshi’s visits, consisting of the formal *onari* customs with the addition of a Confucianism lecture, and swords were exchanged with the third-generation Lord of Owari, Tsunanari, his son Yoshimichi (later the fourth generation), and the retired Mitsutomo (second generation). All six swords received on this occasion are preserved in the Tokugawa Art Museum collection.

SECTION 2 SUNPU OWAKEMONO: “UTENSILS INHERITED FROM SUNPU CASTLE”

During the two years following Tokugawa Ieyasu’s death at Sunpu Castle on 4.17.1616 (Genna 2), his estate was divided among the Owari, Suruga (later Kii), and Mito households. His possessions were named the *Sunpu owakemono* (utensils inherited from Sunpu) after the place where he died. The Owari family received an 11-volume ledger *Sunpu owakemono odôgu-chô* (Record of the Utensils Inherited from Sunpu) that documents the massive quantity of swords and sword fittings owned by Ieyasu. The first volume, *Onkoshimono no chô* (Register of Swords), contains records of 406 swords and the second volume, *Menuki kôgai chô* (Record of Handle Ornaments) contains records of 256 sword fittings.

Currently, the Tokugawa Art Museum owns a total of twenty-six items that have been identified from these registers or other documentary records to have come from the *Sunpu owakemono* estate of Ieyasu: seven *tachi* swords, nine *katana* swords, one *wakizashi* side sword, and nine *tantô* short sword. In addition to those pieces that were distributed posthumously from his estate, the collection also contains five other swords originally owned by Ieyasu that he conferred upon the first Lord of Owari, Tokugawa Yoshinao: one *tachi*, one *katana*, one *wakizashi*, and two *tantô*.

Classifications in the *Sunpu Owakemono*

The 406 swords listed in the first volume of the register, the *Onkoshimono no chô*, are sorted by classification, recording the name of the swordsmith, the shape, and form, and the rank of the sword. High-ranking items also included details of who they had been presented by, their estimated value, whether or not they were accompanied by sword mountings, and the materials and design of the fittings. The swords were ranked by type into three classes (top, middle, and bottom) along with seventeen that had no class rating. The divisions by type included *tachi* and *katana* long swords, *wakizashi* short swords, small blades, and other categories.

The second volume, *Menuki kôgai chô*, divides 256 sword fittings into the categories of *menuki* hilts (54), *kôgai* pins (45), *kozuka* sheath knives (88), *tsuba* sword guards (3), *mekuginuki* rivet remover (1), and *same* rayskin covers (65).

SECTION 3 RELICS FROM THE SHOGUNAL FAMILY

Upon the death of the shogun, the implements he owned were gifted to his familial relations, members of the nobility, powerful *daimyô* families, his close retainers, and others. Until the death of the seventh shogun, Ietsugu, the only families permitted to receive swords as keepsakes of the deceased shogun were related branch families (such as the Owari, Kii, Mito, Kôfu, and Tatebayashi clans), the Maeda clan of Kaga, and incumbent ministers of the shogunal council of elders. Upon the death of the eighth shogun, Yoshimune, the Matsudaira clan of Fukui, the Shimadzu clan of Satsuma, and the Date clan of Sendai joined the three main branch Tokugawa families (Owari, Mito, and Kii Tokugawa families), the three secondary branch Tokugawa families (Tayasu, Hitotsubashi and Shimizu Tokugawa families), and the Maeda clan of Kaga as recipients of swords. From that time forward, the number of families receiving swords slowly increased, but nonetheless, receiving such relics of the deceased shogun remained a privilege that was limited to the most noted households of the day.

In addition to swords received posthumously from six shoguns and a shogunal heir—the fifth shogun Tsunayoshi, eighth shogun Yoshimune, tenth shogun Ieharu, heir to the tenth shogun Iemoto, and eleventh shogun Ienari—the Tokugawa Art Museum also preserves the sword rack that belonged to the twelfth shogun Ieyoshi and a sword mounting of the fourteenth shogun Iemochi, although the blade of the sword itself has been lost.

Receiving and Presenting of Swords

The *daimyô* of the three main Tokugawa branch families as well as other top-ranking *daimyô* received swords from the shogun not only on the occasions of his official *onari* visits, or upon the death or retirement of a shogun, but also on such special occasions as the birth of an heir or his coming of age ceremony, when receiving a character from the shogun’s name, on marriages, successions to the family headship and other warrior family rites of passage, as well as when a *daimyô* returned to his home domain for the first time after succeeding to the position and other special occasions. The lower the status of the family, the fewer opportunities individuals had to receive swords and the average *daimyô* had virtually no chance of receiving them aside from by performing some exceptional service. In contrast, there were many opportunities for the *daimyô* to present offerings of swords to the shogun, including the occasion of the imperial proclamation of a new shogun, a *daimyô*’s succession to family headship, and his retirement.

In the Owari Tokugawa family, a “Register of sword receipts and payment” survives, documenting a total of 771 swords, 542 of which were purchased swords. In the Owari family, ancestral swords were not used in gift exchanges and it is conjectured that they intended to use purchased swords for presentation purposes.

Classification of Presented and Received Swords

In the beginning, old swords of the Momoyama period and earlier were used when giving and receiving swords for ceremonial purposes and the rank of the sword was considered an important element. Particularly highly prized were swords by four master swordsmiths—Sadamune along with the “Three Greats” of Yoshimitsu, Masamune, and Gô no Yoshihiro.

The eighth shogun, Yoshimune, appointed the Hon’ami family to examine the famous swords belonging to the shogunal and various *daimyô* families and had them compile the *Kyôhō meibutsu chô* (Record of famed objects of the Kyôhō era), which listed 168 ancient swords that were considered masterpieces along with the names of their owners. While Yoshimune had his appraisers define a grading system for these swords, he also promoted the production of new swords in the Edo period and ordered that the presentation of items by the various *daimyô* be streamlined. The effect of these changes was that the presentation of swords to the shogun was restricted to the three branch families and the major *daimyô* and the presentation of expensive swords was no longer allowed. Instead, the exchange of swords by all but the highest-ranking *daimyô* was reduced to a mere formality and the swords that they used for presentation were imitation pieces that consisted only of mountings with no actual blade.

SECTION 4 SHOGUNAL RETIREMENT

When the shogun retired, he also granted swords to his retainers, however, with the exception of the fifteenth shogun, Yoshinobu, who was stripped of his office and rank and effectively forced to retire, there were only five retired shoguns—the first, Ieyasu, the second, Hidetada, the eighth, Yoshimune, the ninth, Ieshige, and the eleventh, Ienari. Also, since no record survives of the swords exchanged on the occasion of the retirement of Ieyasu and Hidetada, it is believed that when the eighth shogun, Yoshimune, retired in 1745 (Enkyô 2), the exchange made at that time became the precedent for the shogunal retirements that followed.

When Yoshimune retired, swords were not only bestowed upon the heads of and heirs to the three main branch families and the three secondary families of the Tokugawa clan, as well as the noted Maeda clan of Kaga, the Shimadzu of Satsuma, and the Date of Sendai, they were also granted to the incumbent members of the shogunal council of elders and their attendant officials, as well as all the still living