

#### Kikigaki 4 (400 to 481) Sayings and deeds of Lord Katsushige and his family

##### 400) Lord Katsushige makes an important decision by consulting his father in Heaven.

One day Lord Katsushige said, "Whenever I am at a loss what to do, I keep my eyes closed for some time, and I think how my father would have dealt with it. Then a good idea always comes to me."

##### 401) Retainers indispensable to a *daimyo*

When Lord Katsushige retired, he recommended his three attendants to serve Mitsu-shige, his grandson and the new lord. They were Hyakutake Iori, Ikuno Oribe, and Iwamura Shin-uemon. Katsushige said, "Iori is a man of logical argument. Oribe is hard working and conscientious. Shin-uemon is very organized and steady. All of them are indispensable for a *daimyo*."

##### 402) Kogen-in marries Nabeshima Katsushige in Kyoto.

At the age of 18 Kogen-in came over to the Saga residence from Fushimi Castle to marry Prince Katsushige. Suko Shimo-usa, Nabeshima Mondo, and Hisano Ichi-uemon were dispatched to meet her at the castle.

\* In May 1605, she entered the Saga residence in Kyoto. Katsushige was 26 years old.

##### 403) Hisano Ichi-uemon gets his salary raised several times.

I think Hisano Ichi-uemon had land of 700 *koku*. Thanks to Nabeshima Mondo, probably he was granted another 300 *koku* when Lord Katsushige married Kogen-in. After several years he was granted another 500 *koku* because the priest Gakko agreed to that suggestion of Honda Kozuke.

\* Hisano Ichi-uemon died in 1610.

\* Gakko, a well-known priest from Saga, was highly trusted by Tokugawa Ieyasu.

After the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600 he made great efforts to reconcile Lord Katsushige with Tokugawa Ieyasu, the leader of the Eastern corps. Katsushige

had joined the Western corps. Since that side lost the war, he was in danger of forfeiture of his domain, but thanks to Gakko's endeavors, Saga Clan was saved from that. He passed away in 1612 aged 65.

- \* Honda Kozuke was an administrative official of the Shogunate government. He served Tokugawa Ieyasu and Hidetada, his son, and died in 1637.

#### **404) Lord Katsushige is told to confine himself to his residence.**

Returning from the Battle of Arima in 1638, Lord Katsushige was winding up his affairs, when he was summoned by Matsudaira Izu-no-kami to come up to Kokura. On April 29 he went to Kokura Castle, accompanied by Hosokawa Ecchu-no-kami. After concluding his business, he came back to Saga and dealt with matters which had arisen regarding his domain.

On June 6, he left for Edo after telling his family and retainers what they should do. Soon after he arrived at the Edo residence, he was told to confine himself there till the end of that year. However, he proposed to remain at the residence for another year. In the beginning of 1640 he returned to Saga and saw the old year out at Saga Castle.

- \* Lord Katsushige arrived at the enemy fort sooner than anyone else in the battle, but was ordered to confine himself to his residence for violating the military command.
- \* Matsudaira Izu-no-kami was an administrative official of the Shogunate.
- \* Hosokawa Ecchu-no-kami was a well-known retainer in the service of the Tokugawa family.

#### **405) "One castle for one clan" is proclaimed by the Shogunate.**

On June 13, 1615, Lord Katsushige received a document from the Shogunate. According to it, each clan was allowed to own only one castle. All the other castles had to be pulled down.

#### **406) Lord Katsushige asks for current information.**

In the reign of Lord Katsushige various pieces of news were brought to him. Here are some examples:

"It is allowed to cut down trees of a certain mountain but if it went on too long, the mountain would become bare and cause landslides."

“When I passed by a street, I heard people gossiping about this and that.”

“The present governance might corner the farmers in the end, because ...”

These pieces of information were written on a sheet of paper and passed to the superintendent’s office, which were then transmitted to the lord, according to the elders. It was not certain if the lord himself told his attendants to collect current information or everyone was allowed to do so. He was such a wise lord to listen to public opinion, though it might happen that pieces of information would hit a sore spot with the lord. We must be thankful to him for his attitude.

#### 407) “We do not possess cowardice.”

When he was young, Lord Katsushige was sitting at a meeting with other *daimyo* and important retainers. Someone said, “I was told the people of Kyushu lack something.”

“Really? What do they lack?” said another without noticing his presence.

Then Lord Katsushige stepped forward and said in a loud voice, “Yes, you are quite right. I am from Kyushu. We lack one characteristic. I would like you to remember it.”

“Oh, you are from Kyushu, are you not?” said one of them sneeringly. “You told us to remember it, but what is it?”

“We lack cowardice,” he said decisively.

#### 408) Lord Katsushige’s judgment of a fire in Edo

On January 18, 1657, Lord Katsushige was sick in bed in his Edo residence. When a big fire occurred that day, his attendant whispered in his ear a rumor about the fire. A notorious *ronin* named Yui Shosetsu had his servants burn the big city by the order of Lord Ki-i. “Absurd!” said Lord Katsushige and kept quiet.

However, the fire grew violent and was spreading to Edo Castle. “Probably they must have risen in revolt against the Shogun!” said others, so Lord Katsushige said, “Then we must make sure of it.” He went up to the third floor and was watching it for some time. He came down and said to his attendants, “Do not worry. It is not the fire of war.”

- \* Yui Shosetsu was a scholar and instructor of military science who severely criticized the Shogunate government.
- \* Ki-i is present-day Wakayama Prefecture.

#### **409) A unique article in the regulations for Saga inspectors**

According to an article in the regulations for inspectors, they were required to go downtown without a hood. They could not wear *hakama*, either. They had to go round with a bamboo stick, with the hem of their *kimono* hitched up.

\* Hakama are long, loose, pleated trousers worn over a *kimono*.

#### **410) A farmer lays in a supply of barley.**

In the reign of Lord Katsushige there was a farmer in the village of Shiro-ishi named Seki-uemon. Since he was honest and diligent, he was awarded with a silver coin 21 times in his life. He was afraid that his descendants might make bad use of the money, so he exchanged it for barley grain. He told his family to hang bags of the grain from beams. Some of them are still preserved at his house.

He was very faithful and would visit the temple on the lord's anniversary after he passed away in 1657. At the 50th anniversary of the lord's death he was again presented with silver coins.

\* Shiro-ishi Village lies about 20 km southwest of Saga.

#### **411) Strong points make up for your faults.**

"Is that falconer helpful?" asked Lord Katsushige. The head of the falconers said, "He is second to none in falconry, though his behavior is no good." The falconer was awarded with a present by the lord.

Some other day the lord asked the same question about another falconer. "He is also very good at falconry," said the head. "But he is no good for his behavior." The man was dismissed from his post.

#### **412) What a new lord is required to do**

Lord Katsushige said, "When a new lord succeeds to the last lord, he has to do his best so that all his people will feel attached to him."

#### 413) Give a person the benefit of the doubt.

When Prince Tadanao was 15 years old, a man serving at the kitchen of the castle was struck by a foot soldier, to whom he had been rude. The man got angry and killed him in retaliation.

The senior councilors said to the prince, "The man has committed a very serious crime, neglecting the difference in status. We should put him to death."

"Which is to blame," said the prince. "To go against the seniority system or to disobey a code of *samurai*?" To this remark, the senior counselor had no answer.

"I remember reading a book in which was written 'Give a person the benefit of the doubt.' Put the kitchen servant in prison for a while," said the prince.

- \* Tadanao, the eldest son of Lord Katsushige, married in 1631 at 19 of age and died in January, 1635. Mitsushige, his son, became the second lord.

#### 414) Prince Tadanao spares the life of a serious criminal on account of his mother.

One of the direct attendants of Prince Tadano committed a sin, for which he was sentenced to death. Kogen-in, his mother, begged for his life. Hearing of this, the prince said to his mother, "We should put him to death as a warning to others. Please refrain from interfering like that." However, Kogen-in would not yield to his request but sent her messenger two more times.

"Now that my mother has begged for his life for three times, I will spare the man in spite of his serious crime," said Prince Tadanao and also he did. However, he made it clear to his mother that the man's crime was too serious to be forgiven.

#### 415) Prince Tadanao declines to accept a sword offered by a well-known *daimyo*.

When he was young, Prince Tadanao received an invitation from Date Masamune. After entertaining him with a feast the *daimyo* showed him a sword. When the prince praised it, Date Masamune said, "Do you like it? Let me make you a present of it. It has been handed down in my family, and is really sharp."

"How sharp is it?" said the prince.

"You could sever the torso easily with it," said the lord.

"I see," said Tadanao. "Thank you very much for your kindness but I cannot accept it. It is such an important treasure for your family. I would like you to keep it. We also

have lots of swords handed down from our ancestors.”

- \* Date Masamune (1567-1636) was a lord from northern Japan, known for his bravery.

#### **416) Prince Tadanao gives candies to his attendant.**

When he was a boy not yet of age, Prince Tadanao went to watch a Noh play and enjoyed it even after the sun had set. Soon candies and sweets were brought to him, which he wrapped in a piece of paper, before standing up. Calling Ayabe Yazaemon, his attendant, he said, “You must be hungry,” and handed them to him.

- \* Ayabe Yazaemon followed the prince to his grave by *seppuku* when he died in 1635.

#### **417) Lord Katsushige’s habit before retiring to bed**

Before he went to bed, Lord Katsushige would drink a cup of wine and enjoy talking with his attendants. He made it a rule to sober up before going to sleep. He would always tighten his belt, pull out his sword, look at it closely, and sheathe it before he went to bed. He kept it as long as he lived.

#### **418) Kuroda Tadayuki, the lord of Fukuoka, holds a grudge against Lord Katsushige.**

When Lord Katsushige was young, his father was in very good terms with Kuroda Josui, the lord of Fukuoka, the neighboring clan. So his father asked the lord of Fukuoka to teach his son important lessons in life. The lords were in the habit of visiting each other’s castle, and their good relationship continued till the reign of Kuroda Nagamasa, Josui’s son.

In the reign of Kuroda Chikuzen-no-kami, Josui’s grandson, he built the rock wall of his Edo residence too high. He also dug out moats round his own castle in Fukuoka, and built a big ship as well.

The Shogunate was offended with these actions of Fukuoka Clan, and summoned Chikuzen-no-kami to Edo. It was rumored that Fukuoka Clan might be disbanded. All the clan was in utter confusion. The lord started out with anxiety but said, “If any serious situation happens, Lord Katsushige of Saga will tell us, because he is in Edo now. We do not have to worry until his messenger comes round.”

He waited for news from Lord Katsushige at every inn he stayed in on his way, but no messenger came till they were close to Edo. He got angry with the messenger who arrived too late and said, "What an ingrate your lord is! He was friendly in fortune but deserts us in need." After this incident, their relationship deteriorated.

According to others, when a disturbance occurred near Hiroshima, Lord Katsushige and Chikuzen-no-kami went there together. They were supposed to stay at the same inn but our lord avoided it. That triggered their discord. Another rumor says their trouble was caused by a quarrel in Osaka.

\* Saga is south of Fukuoka on the other side of the Sefuri Mountains.

#### **419) Shima-uchi Shin-zaemon guards Lord Katsushige by walking round the castle.**

On the morning of New Year's Day Lord Katsushige would go and worship at Yoka Shrine. Since he went there very early in the morning, Shima-uchi Shin-zaemon would always go to the shrine himself after the New Year's Eve rites ended. He walked round the moat all night to guard his master. When the lord left to return to the castle, he would also go there.

\* Shima-uchi Shin-zaemon was a foot soldier of Lord Katsushige.

#### **420) "A *samurai* must grit his teeth to carry out his role."**

Lord Katsushige always said, "A *samurai* cannot fulfill his purpose unless he endures pain by gritting all his 28 teeth."

#### **421) Lord Katsushige trains his men in his own way.**

When he went out, Lord Katsushige would make his 10 foot soldiers wear a one-meter long sword and suddenly tell them to draw it. By and by they learned to draw it the moment he ordered. Then he made them carry slightly longer sword and trained them in the same way. When they got used to drawing them at his shout, he had them wear the old sword again.

#### **422) Lord Katsushige awards a passport to each monk from Saga.**

On June 29, 1638, Lord Katsushige was sentenced by the Shogunate to confinement at his residence. Nearly 100 priests and monks came over to Edo, ready to rise up for him if the occasion arose. Several billets were offered to them, with 3 to 5 men staying at each house. They were entertained with all sorts of delicious food.

After he was allowed out, Katsushige called the priests and said, "All of you will return to your old temples. I really appreciate your service to me so far. I would like you to come back every 20 years, because I want to talk with you again." Then he handed each of them a passport issued by him.

After this the period for which a priest could go to other clans was decided. First it was set as 5 years, but thanks to the priest Ryoju of Kodon-ji Temple, it was increased to 10 years.

\* Ryoju is another name of Tan-nen, the 11th head priest.

#### **423) Lady Motoshige is determined to die**

Lord Katsushige arrived at his residence in Edo before he was sentenced to confinement. The wife of Motoshige, his eldest son, welcomed him and said, "If you are sentenced to be exiled to some island, we will set fire to all our six residences and kill ourselves. Please do not worry about us. I would like you to go to the palace and make clear to the Shogun what you have in mind." In fact, all the weapons and other utensils were already piled up in the next room.

\* Motoshige, the eldest son of Lord Katsushige, was born in 1602 as an illegitimate child. As a result he could not succeed to his father but was adopted by Naoshige, his grandfather. At 13 years of age he went up to the Shogunate as a hostage. In 1617 he became the first lord of the Ogi branch clan. He died in 1650 aged 53.

#### **424) Lord Katsushige worships at the shrines on the morning of New Year's Day.**

On the morning of New Year's Day Lord Katsushige would always visit Yoka Shrine, Honjo Shrine, and Hachiman Shrine. At each shrine he made the following prayers:

- a) Please help us produce faithful attendants.
- b) Please guide us not to dismiss my attendants.
- c) Please see to it that no attendant will catch a disease.

On the next New Year's Eve he would visit them again to express his thanks for



divine protection. The last oath he offered is kept at one of the shrines, according to Ishida Ittei.

#### **425) Two priests drown themselves to death for faith.**

During the era of Tensho (1573 - 1591), there was a priest named Shomo, who belonged to the Shingon sect. He was from Izu, modern Shizuoka. After going round 66 chapels, he came over to Empuku-ji Temple in Kanzaki, 10 km to the east of Saga. Then he moved to Chofuku-ji Temple in Terai, in the south of Saga, to stay there for 5 years.

Lord Naoshige often entertained him at his residence and had Ishi-i Roku-zaemon take care of him. "I owe so much to Lord Naoshige, so I will not forget his kindness as long as I live," said Shomo. "I am thinking of repaying it by drowning myself and being reincarnated in Saga to help him govern his domain."

Hearing of his resolution, Lord Naoshige tried to persuade him from giving up his intention through Ishi-i Roku-zaemon, but he would not listen. Shomo changed his name to A-un and got on board a small boat at the port of Terai. Another priest named Yuyo joined him. He was living in the northern mountains of Saga, though coming from Mino, modern Gifu. He said to Shomo or A-un, "Let us drown ourselves together." Before they sailed out in the boat, A-un said, "If I am reborn, one sandal will remain attached to my body, and the other one will be lost. And I will light the sea with fire every night." Both of them plunged into the water as they chanted the name of Lord Buddha. All the spectators on the shore were moved to tears.

When the villagers searched for their bodies later, they could not find the missing sandal of A-un. The bodies of the two priests were buried at the eastern end of Chofuku-ji Temple and two pine trees were planted in memory of them. It was called Sho-mo's mound, as well as Shonin's Mound.

In the northern mountains there is a mountain named Sho-nin-dake. As time went by, people in the area began to call Lord Katsushige a second Shomo because his name could be pronounced the same as that of the late priest, though the priest drowned himself after Katsushige was born. There were similar cases. For instance, Prince Shotoku was said to be a second Nangaku, a prominent Chinese priest, though the priest died after the prince was born.

When Lord Katsushige suffered from toothache, he said, "Let me pray to Chofuku-ji Temple for relief." It worked, so he donated a votive picture tablet to the temple, which is still kept there.

- \* Shomo or A-un is said to have drowned himself in 1586.
- \* Prince Shotoku ( 574 – 622 ) served as regent in 593, a zealous Buddhist.

#### **426) The Nabeshima family tree**

When Lord Katsushige was about to leave the room after meeting Shogun, Hayashi Do-shun approached him and said, “I wonder who your ancestor is?” The lord thought a while and said, “Probably it is Sho-ni.” “Such a prominent family, is it not?” he said. “We are now checking the family roots of all the *daimyo* in Japan. Soon O-ta Bicchu-no-kami will ask you some questions about your ancestors.”

Returning to his residence, he summoned Hirabaru Zen-zaemon, because he had a family root book of the Sho-ni. The lord took it from him and substituted it for his own family tree after making some corrections, and submitted it to the Shogunate.

According to some sources, the lord’s ancestors were the Sasaki family. A sword they used in the Battle of Ujigawa in 1184 is still kept at the residence.

- \* The Shoni family had been administrative officials of Kyushu.
- \* Hayashi Do-shun was a prominent scholar employed by the early Shogunate.
- \* Ota Bicchu-no-kami was an important Shogunate official.
- \* Hirabaru Zen-zaemon was a *samurai* with a prominent ancestor.

#### **427) Three administrative senior counselors for Lord Katsushige**

The administrative senior counselors in the reign of Lord Katsushige were Nabeshima Aki, Nabeshima Gempa, and Nakano Kazuma.

#### **428) Two senior advisers for Lord Katsushige**

The senior advisers in the reign of Lord Katsushige were Katsuya Kan-uemon and Seki Sho-gen.

#### **429) Lord Katsushige and Matsudaira Tosa-no-kami**

Lord Katsushige and Matsudaira Tosa-no-kami were very close friends and their families have always been on good terms with each other.

\* Matsudaira Tosa-no-kami, the lord of Mikawa or present-day eastern Aichi, was five years younger than Lord Katsushige.

#### **430) Two senior advisers for Prince Tadanao**

The senior advisers for Prince Tadanao were Naridomi Gorobey and Nabeshima Ukon.

#### **431) Lord Katsushige pretends not to have heard of the misconduct of a supervisor.**

Lord Katsushige had appointed Noda Shichi-uemon as the official to supervise the mountains in the western district of Saga. One day, however, an official came to report that Shichi-uemon had sold off some wood without permission.

When he was summoned to the castle, Lord Katsushige said, "I was told of your conduct but you cannot have done it, is that not so? I think they have invented a plausible story against you, so I ignored it. Be careful, and dedicate yourself to your duty."

#### **432) Nakano Moku-no-suke makes up his mind to follow Lord Katsushige to the grave.**

When Nakano Moku-no-suke began to serve the clan, he made a certain mistake. His misconduct was reported to the lord by the superintendent and he was summoned to the castle. "I have been told of your conduct," said the lord. "Be careful from now on." Then Moku-no-suke made up his mind to take his own life at the lord's death, in order to follow him to the grave.

\* Nakano Moku-no-suke followed Lord Katsushige to his grave by *seppuku* when he died in 1657.

#### **433) Naridomi Hyogo assures Lord Katsushige of the situation in Higo.**

In 1632 it was decided by the Shogunate that Lord Kato Kiyomasa of Higo, modern Kumamoto, should be confiscated. It was rumored that his retainers would defend their castle to the last. Since it was not very far from Saga, our lord was told to send some troops. Naridomi Hyogo was summoned to the castle, though he was old and sick by then.

“I do not think their castle will hold out long, though it is known for its brave retainers,” he said. “Almost all the soldiers have been killed and they have run short of provisions. I sent some of my attendants there to spy on their movements, and discovered how prodigal they are in spite of their lack of provisions. No castle can hold out without provisions for three years.”

Some also say that the Shogunate told the merchants of Osaka to buy up the rice produced in Kumamoto.

#### **434) A custom on New Year's Day**

On New Year's Day Lord Katsushige would decorate the storeroom by placing his helmet and a big rice cake at the front of it.

#### **435) Lord Katsushige admonishes his son for being late in arriving at the castle.**

On the morning of New Year's Day Lord Katsushige always visited Yoka Shrine, Honjo Shrine, and Shirayama Hachiman Shrine. On one such morning, Naozumi, his 5th son and the lord of the Hasu-ike branch clan, was late for the meeting at the castle.

“What on earth made you come late on the first day of the New Year?” he said.

“I arrived late because I went round the three shrines as you usually do,” he said.

“You do not have to do so,” said the lord. “I do that because I have no parents alive any longer and have no chance to see the Shogun here in Saga. Nor do I have any superiors to visit on New Year's Day. All you have to do is to greet me here on New Year's Day.”

Mitsushige, his grandson who became the second lord, worshipped the shrines at the Koyo-ken residence.

\* The Koyo-ken was built by Lord Mitsushige in 1662.

#### **436) Three prayers to the god of Hikosan Shrine**

In the reign of Lord Katsushige he sent the priest of Tokuzen-in Temple to Hikosan Shrine with his prayers to offer. The priest stayed in a hut overnight and prayed for the following.

a) Please guide us so that our relationship with the Shogunate will go peacefully.

- b) Please lead us so that our clan will prosper and survive long.
- c) Please see to it that we will have many good retainers.

\* Hikosan Shrine, located in Oita about 100 km east of Saga, was venerated by every lord of Saga Clan for its miraculous efficacy.

#### **437) An episode of a sword owned by Lord Katsushige**

The founder of the Chiba family was found as an infant on the roadside with a sword and a scroll of the Buddha image. When the infant grew up, he became the lord of a domain. One day he was struck by lightning, because the god of thunder wanted his sword. Then a boy appeared from nowhere and retrieved it from the god of thunder. As a result the sword retains a mark on its blade. The sword had been kept by Chiba Taneyori, but after his family declined, it was passed to the Kumashiro family together with the picture of Buddha.

Hearing of this history, Lord Katsushige wished to own it. It was offered to him by Kumashiro Ieyoshi, the head of the Kumashiro family. It belongs to the Nabeshima family now. It is said that the Kumashiro family still keeps the document exchanged at that time.

#### **438) Lord Naozumi is scolded by Lord Katsushige, his father.**

When Lord Katsushige went to hunt in a forest, he found a sign board which made him very angry, because it said that the area beyond belonged to Naozumi, his fifth son and the lord of the Hasuike branch clan. The sign was removed instantly and leant against the entrance pillar of Saga Castle.

When Lord Naozumi came to the castle, he noticed it and felt very embarrassed. He met his father and expressed his apology, when he was told to present two hawks as a punishment, which he did.

#### **439) Lord Katsushige makes his two sons pick water chestnuts from the moat.**

Nabeshima Naozumi, the fifth son, made known through his elder brother his wish to collect water chestnuts from the Jikken-bori moat. "Yes, you can," said Lord Katsushige, their father. "Let me know when you do it, because I want to see how many chestnuts you get."

On that day Lord Katsushige was watching them on the bridge. Naozumi and his brother were giving directions to their attendants. Then their father said, "Why do you not collect the chestnuts by yourselves in the moat?" The two brothers went into the water. It turned out that Lord Katsushige himself came out to give this direction to them.

#### **440) Lord Katsushige is struck on the leg by a farmer's wife.**

One winter day Lord Katsushige enjoyed hunting in Shiroishi Village. It was very cold, so he dropped in at a farmhouse to warm himself. He was welcomed by an old woman of the house. "Please come in. It is so cold this morning," she said. "Please warm up by the kitchen range." She put more straw in it. Soon he felt warm enough and went out expressing his gratitude.

When the lord stepped over a straw mat with rice spread out on it, the old woman got furious and said, "How rude you are! This rice is to offer to the lord of the castle!" And she struck him on the leg with her broom. "Oh, I am very sorry," said the lord.

He was so pleased with the woman he decided to enroll her family among the 10 honorable farmers of Shiroishi Village.

\* All the ten farmers were allowed to wear a sword. The woman's descendants have kept a liquor shop generation after generation.

#### **441) Lord Katsushige pretends not to have observed a scene of confusion.**

When Lord Katsushige went hunting in Shiroishi Village, a big wild boar was shot. "What a big one this is!" said everyone, looking at the animal. All of a sudden it rose up and began to run away, much to the fear of the lookers-on. Then Nabeshima Matabey killed it with his sword. Lord Katsushige covered his face with the sleeve of his clothes, so as not to look at the people in confusion.

\* Nabeshima Matabey died in 1691 aged 85.

#### **442) Suzuki Kyusai is employed as a servant.**

Lord Katsushige always visited Edo Castle accompanied by Naridomi Ju-uemon and Hisano Ichi-uemon. One day when they arrived at the entrance of the castle, Naridomi

Ju-uemon said to the gatekeeper, "I am sorry to say that my companion is feeling sick. Please give him a cup of lukewarm water." Soon the gatekeeper brought a tray with a cup and water on it. Pouring lukewarm water in the cup, he gave it to Ichi-uemon.

The following day Naridomi Ju-uemon visited the gatekeeper with his attendants and presented him with a scroll and some other items. Later Ichi-ueon also visited and gave him some money. In that way they became familiar with each other. It was not long before the gatekeeper was carrying out minor routines for Lord Katsushige at the castle. It was the beginning of the so-called castle boy system. Since he was helpful in many ways, other *daimyo* also came to employ such servants. The first castle boy of ours was named Suzuki Kyusai.

#### **443) Inoue Chikugo-no-kami comprehends the maritime regions of Saga.**

Inoue Chikugo-no-kami, the superintendent of the Shogunate, said to Lord Katsushige, "We have grasped the topography of your domain's seas, rivers, and canals. We even know their dimensions."

\* Inoue Chikugo-no-kami was dispatched as a Shogunate envoy to many domains.

#### **444) Lord Katsushige uses a stuffed belt.**

Lord Katsushige used a rope-like padded belt all his life. In those days most people used a wide woven *kimono* belt.

#### **445) Naoshige, the former lord, warns Katsushige, his son, against using a hilt.**

When former Lord Naoshige came to the castle, he happened to see an attendant loading a shortened hilt with his sword. "What is that for?" asked ex-Lord. "Tomorrow a man is to be executed," he said. "Lord Katsushige has to try out this sword for the convict."

"He uses such a hilt when he tests a sword, does he not?" said the former lord. "I have never used such one." It was reported to Lord Katsushige. "My father is right," he said. "I was careless." Instantly it was replaced with an ordinary hilt.

On the following day the man was brought to the ground at Mizugae and had his rope untied. "You can save yourself if you can flee quickly enough," said an official. The moment he started off, he was cut down by Lord Katsushige.

“Our lord showed a splendid technique,” said the attendant to the former lord.

“It was probably because I mentioned the hilt,” said Naoshige smiling.

\* Mizugae is very close to the castle.

#### **446) Prince Katsushige saves a young criminal’s life.**

When Lord Katsushige was young, his father said, “Why do you not cut down a criminal to make progress in using your sword?” One day 10 criminals were made to sit on the ground. He killed one after the other till he found a healthy young man, the tenth. “I am tired of killing,” he said to the official. “Spare his life.” The boy was released, thanks to Prince Katsushige.

#### **447) A broken engagement causes discord between two families.**

When Lord Katsushige was staying at the Edo residence, there were many offers of marriage to Naoyoshi, his grandson. One of them was about to be accepted, and the good news was transmitted to Motoshige, his father, by way of a senior counselor for the Shogunate.

Motoshige said, “Naozumi, Lord Katsushige’s fifth son and my cousin, was engaged to a daughter of Matsudaira Izu-no-kami, but he married a daughter of Shimousa-no-kami, and the breaking-off worsened their relationship. So I think it better for my son to be married to a girl from Saga. If he marries a woman from another clan, our family customs might turn foreign and vex us all in the future. I remember my grandfather telling us at his last that we should only be interested in our own family without asking for anything from outside. I am sure he said so because he was anxious about our family’s future.” So all the offers of marriage to Naoyoshi were put aside, and he did not accept the senior counselor’s offer, either.

In the meantime, Nabeshima Heihachi raised a daughter of Taku Mimasaka at his house. Since she was Lord Katsushige’s grandchild, he adopted her and brought her up in the main enclosure of Saga Castle. The lord married her to Naoyoshi, though she had received many offers of marriage.

When she went over to the western enclosure from the main enclosure, Lord Katsushige, Tokuju-in, and Choju-in saw her off in front of the kitchen. The palanquin was taken over to Nabeshima Shikibu, and the people of the Ogi branch clan came to meet her.



Lady Shigesada, Ryuzoji Masa-ie's daughter, was sorry for this, so Lord Katsushige married her daughter to Izumi-no-kami, the lord of the Kashima branch clan.

Whenever Lady Shigesada came to the castle, Lord Katsushige bowed to her, dressed in *kamishimo* in the next room. Later she stopped coming over to the castle.

- \* Nabeshima Heihachi was a descendant of Lord Naoshige's big brother.
- \* Tokuju-in and Choju-in were daughters of Lord Naoshoige.
- \* *Kamishimo* is the formal attire of *samurai*, consisting of a stiff, sleeveless jacket and a long pleated skirt.

#### **448) Lord Katsushige makes a crane carried to Koden-ji Temple.**

Whenever he caught a crane in the forest of western Saga, Lord Katsushige had it carried to Koden-ji Temple. The head priest accepted it and offered it to the mortuary tablet of Lord Naoshige, his father.

#### **449) Four types of human character**

Lord Katsushige would often say, "There are four types of attendants. The best understands what he is told and behaves well right away. Fukuchi Kichi-zaemon could be put into this category. The second best does not understand well what he is told, but he can deal with it splendidly. Nakano Kazuma might well be in this group. The third group will fully understand what he is told but he will take much time to set to work. There are many people who belong to this group. The last is slow both in understanding his order well and in setting to work.

- \* Fukuchi Kichi-zaemon was a brave retainer, who died in 1672.

#### **450) A dance is performed by the Saga *samurai* in the company of the Shogun.**

Matsudaira Shimousa-no-kami said to Lord Katsushige, "Shogun Iemitsu is interested in dance, so could you take a troop of Suko dancers to Edo Castle?" As a result, several persons were selected from among the boy attendants and other servants as dancers and instrumental players. They organized themselves into a temporary band. New words were also put to the song at the suggestion of the priest Juncho, who was invited from Ogi for this occasion.

- \* Matsudaira Shimousa-no-kami was the father of Lord Katsushige's son's wife.
- \* The Suko dance was a well-known dance played by Suko villagers.

#### **451) Lord Katsushige demands soup with bean curd.**

Whenever he visited Koden-ji Temple, Lord Katsushige would order a cup of soup with bean curd. One day the soup was different from usual one, so he said, "Give me the usual one. It is my favorite."

#### **452) Lord Katsushige speaks highly of two brave men.**

Talking about his experiences in the Korean Campaign, Lord Katsushige said, "When Lord Kato of Kumamoto obtained the surrender of a Korean ship, he jumped onto it with his armor pierced by numerous arrows. On February 27, 1594, at a big party under the cherry blossoms Taiko Hideyoshi praised him for his exploits, saying the cherry blossoms look less showy than his exploits."

Lord Katsushige also spoke of Ii Naomasa. "On September 25, 1600, I visited the Shogunate to express my gratitude for being ordered to attack Tachibana Castle. Ii Naomasa, the butler, was present at the meeting with his shoulder covered with white bandage. He looked really great, and I was fascinated by his posture and by how he spoke. His behavior was quite superb. We should train ourselves with him as a model."

#### **453) Ota Yo-uemon talks of the late Lord Katsushige.**

On the first anniversary of Lord Katsushige's death, Ota Yo-uemon was asked to make every preparation for it. He used to bring the lord's meals to him when he was alive. After the memorial service was over, he remitted a bill to the accounting section, in which was written that five barrels of rice wine had been consumed. The official asked in surprise, "Is that not a mistake?"

"No, it is not," said Yo-uemon. "It is no wonder you take it for a mistake, because you do not know anything about the late lord. I served him for years. He was really fond of rice wine, and took it three times a day with his meal. Since he drank three bowls of wine each time, that amounted to nine bowls of rice wine per day. All his 28 direct attendants were also fond of drinking, together with Moku-no-suke. I wanted all the

attendants to drink a cup of wine in memory of our late lord. I also asked the priests to help me serve the guests. However, they could not drink even half of what I expected, compared with the days when the lord was alive.” As he talked to them, he was in tears.

\* Ota Yo-uemon served the lords Katsushige and Mitsushige for as long as 70 years and died in 1691.

#### **454) “Love people if you want to have good retainers.”**

Soon before Lord Katsushige inherited the household of Saga Clan from his father, he was handed a scroll of paper on which was listed about 20 articles setting out things to remember as a lord. They were what his father had believed to be very important for him.

In the meantime ex-Lord Naoshige had fallen ill, and lay in bed. On May 26, 1618, he called Lord Katsushige to his bedside and said, “The most important thing for a lord is to have good attendants.”

“Can I have them by praying to the gods and Buddha?” said his son.

“When something seems impossible for a human to deal with, we depend on them,” said Naoshige. “But you can find good attendants for yourself.”

“How can I achieve that, Father?”

“You only have to love them,” said Naoshige. “If you come to like flowers, you can collect them even though you have not been interested in them in the past. The same principle applies to recruiting attendants. Love them, and you will soon be surrounded by good retainers.”

Lord Naoshige also said, “To be sincere is the key to success. Without sincerity you cannot expect to realize your dream.”

\* Lord Naoshige died on June 3, aged 81.

#### **455) Lord Katsushige stabs a spy to death.**

When Lord Katsushige was staying at his villa in Shiroishi Village, he happened to be watching the garden as he lay in bed one night. He noticed someone standing in the shade of the moonlight at the side of the porch.

Rising up silently, he walked to this side of the porch and struck at it with his sword.

The man was killed on the spot but nobody knew who he was. Someone said he must have been a member of the Hide Han-uemon's gang. He was a Christian.

The sword Katsushige killed him with was inscribed with the name of Kaga Kiyomitsu. Lord Mitsushige, a grandson of Katsushige, wore it when he was young, and passed it on to Tsunashige, his son and the third lord of Saga Clan. Mitsushige said to him, "This one is old. Try to cut someone down with it some day." Nakamizo Hambey, his attendant, was told to cut a criminal's body in three parts with it.

#### **456) Lord Katsushige builds Shurin-ji Temple.**

When Lord Katsushige was staying in Shiro-ishi Village for hunting, he built Shurin-ji Temple to worship his ancestors on their anniversaries.

#### **457) Lady Kogen-in prays for the health of all her family members.**

Lady Kogen-in prayed for the health and security of her husband and children. This is the copy of her prayers she offered to Zen-o-an Temple. She wished for her husband's health as well as the driving out of evil spirits in his unlucky year.

Shinano-no-kami, my husband, is 50 years old, born on October 28, 1580.

Hizen-no-kami, Tadanao, my son, is 17 years old, born on June 2, 1613.

Kii-no-kami, Motoshige, is 28 years old, born on October 11, 1602.

Kaga-no-kami, Naozumi, my son, is 15 years old, born on November 12, 1615.

Danjo is 23 years old, born on September 2, 1607.

Otsuru is 22 years old, born on October 11, 1608.

Okame is 13 years old, born on April 6, 1617.

Ocho is 7 years old, born on February 2, 1623.

Myself, Kogen-in, am 42 years old, born on July 16, 1588.

We have some other children whom we gave out for adoption. I also wish for their good health and happiness with my chanting of the name of Lord Buddha.

#### **458) Lord Katsushige orders the renovated garden to be pulled down.**

Lord Katsushige thought of renovating the garden of his Edo residence before inviting the senior counselors of the Shogunate. He told the gardener to make it resemble a

famous Chinese garden. When it was finished, he showed the new garden to Tadanao, his son.

“I am sure the senior counselors will be impressed with this,” he said, but Prince Tadanao looked completely uninterested in it.

“What do you think of this, my son?” he said.

“Looks nice,” said the prince and no more.

After he returned, the lord told the gardener to break it up immediately.

#### **459) Prince Tadanao does not criticize his attendant’s mistake, but teaches him again.**

One day an attendant of Prince Tadanao was sent to Lord Katsushige, his father, but he could not transmit the prince’s message to the point. The senior advisors told Tadanao to scold him severely.

The prince summoned him again and told him the same message repeatedly till he learned it by heart. Having taught the boy how to recite it, Tadanao made him to visit the lord again. This time he could perform his mission satisfactorily.

He called the senior advisors again and said, “He made a mistake in listening to what I said. I should have taught him more clearly. This time he could do it all right. I was wrong. He is not to blame at all.”

#### **460) Some men remain as “boy” attendants for a long time.**

In the reign of Lord Katsushige every boy was made to serve him at the age of 12 regardless of his father’s status. After being trained in many ways, some of them were employed as his attendants. There were nearly 70 attendants in all in those days.

Soejima Hachi-uemon served as one till 42 years old, and Nabeshima Kambey did so till 40 without removing their forelock. Since they were quite familiar with the lord’s character, they knew how to entertain the officials of other clans as well as recognizing all the *daimyo*. Since they learned how to behave through serving Lord Katsushige, they had acquired culture as *samurai* and could be helpful in many ways right after removing their forelock. And in those days it was not allowed for a young boy to inherit the household when his father died, so every boy worked very hard.

When Lord Katsushige was on his way to Edo for his bi-annual duty, he stayed at Odawara. They had to send a rapid messenger to report to the senior counselors of the Shogunate, but no one suitable was found among the attendants to transmit the mes-

sage. Then Saito Saku-dayu, the lord's "boy" attendant, was dispatched, after removing his forelock.

- \* There were two types of direct attendant for the lord. Some retained their forelock, and others cut it. Those who wore the forelock were usually younger.
- \* Odawara is a station about 40 km east of Edo, present-day Tokyo.

#### **461) Lord Katsushige prepares a troop of 10,000 for the Korean campaign.**

Lord Katsushige used to say about the Korean expedition, "It is necessary to be prepared for 10,000 men to stay in Korea for up to seven years. We should not disgrace ourselves when war breaks out against any foreign country again." Also, to meet any unexpected situation, he told the officials in the accounting section that they should make every effort to save. A copy of the budget for the last Korean expedition is kept in that section, according to Kanamaru.

#### **462) Nabeshima Motoshige visits Edo Castle on behalf of his father.**

When Lord Katsushige was summoned by the Shogunate to appear at the supreme court, he left his residence with Motoshige, his son, late in the evening. The lord went out with a lantern in his hand, accompanied by his son, both carrying swords.

"What shall we do with our swords, my son?" said Lord Katsushige.

"I will remove mine," said Motoshige. "Please go in with your shorter sword on." Motoshige placed his two swords at the entrance and followed his father to the inner room. Lord Katsushige greeted the official and said, "I am an old man and afraid I cannot make my statement to the point. Please allow me to have my son attend the supreme court on my behalf." When his name was called, Motoshige knelt and bowed his head to the floor at the threshold.

"Raise your head and come in," said the official a couple of times, and finally he slid up to them on his knees. Then he said to the tea master, "Will you serve me a cup of tea? I should drink it first and calm down. This is a very serious case. Thank you."

Motoshige took out two documents and explained clearly about the matter in detail. However, in the record of the proceedings, the name of Motoshige is not mentioned.

- \* Lord Katsushige was summoned to Edo Castle for examination on June 26 and 28, 1638. On the second day Motoshige attended on behalf of his father.

#### **463) Four servants keep vigil for Lord Katsushige.**

When Lord Katsushige went to bed, four men would sit at the four corners of his bedroom. Putting their swords close by, they kept an all-night watch on him. The custom is still maintained at the castle because he put it in the clan law.

#### **464) “Do not forget your past hardships.”**

One day Lord Katsushige said, “Those who rose from obscurity to high rank must not forget their hard experiences in the past. Always remember your past. It is very important.”

#### **465) “Always wish that the criminals can be saved from death penalty.”**

“My father would always tell me we should listen to each appeal at court, with the desire to save the criminal from being sentenced to death,” said Lord Katsushige to his senior advisors. “That is what I remember, and I too am of the same mind. He also said we should avoid drinking alcohol at a serious discussion. On the whole it is not good for us.”

#### **466) Lord Katsushige admonishes his servants over a document.**

After reading a record of a meeting Lord Katsushige said, “It seems nothing was discussed except matters of finance. You did not discuss the government of the clan at all. It is utter negligence.” Then the lord wrote down some topics for discussion and showed them to the retainers himself.

#### **467) Lord Katsushige builds Tokuzen-bo Temple.**

In building Tokuzen-bo Temple, Lord Katsushige was in a very pious mood. “Do your best to use only purified materials,” he said to Yamamoto Jin-uemon, Jocho’s father. “You have to spend clean money and offer fresh rice to the altar.” Then the lord handed him a building permit he wrote by himself.

#### **468) Locations of the graves of the Nabeshima family members**

After Kamohara Yasaburo asked Lord Naoyuki, the second lord of the Hasuike branch clan, it was found out where the following people died.

Taisei-in, Lord Katsushige, died at the Azabu residence, Edo.

Kogen-in, his wife, died at the Azabu residence, Edo.

Keisho-in, Prince Tadanao's wife, died at the Azabu residence, Edo.

Kokoku-in, Prince Tadanao, died at the Mishima residence, Edo.

Giho, first lord of the Hasuike branch clan, died at the Azabu residence, Edo.

#### **469) Lord Katsushige will not stay at that inn again.**

In January, 1635, Lord Katsushige was staying at an inn on his way back to Saga, when an express messenger arrived with news of the death of Prince Tadanao, his son. "I will never stay at this inn again," he said and kept his promise as long as he lived. It was the same with his attendants. That inn has had no more customers from our clan.

According to Nakano Zesui, this is not true, because Lord Katsushige was in Edo at the time. Let me check it some day.

#### **470) Prince Tadanao is presented with a spear by Nabeshima Aki-no-kami.**

When Prince Tadanao donned his new suit of armor in 1625, Nabeshima Aki presented him with a spear. It had a blade about 20 cm long and was inscribed with the maker's name Hidari Monji.

Lord Mitsushige passed it to Sanai, his fifth son, but since he died young, the lord donated it to a temple. Some say that it was used in the Battle of Yanagawa in 1600.

In fact, the spear used at Yanagawa was presented to Lord Katsushige and was hung in the living room of the castle.

#### **471) Hayashi Gyo-zaemon kills himself to follow Prince Tadanao to the grave.**

Hayashi Gyo-zaemon was appointed attendant to Tadanao, because there was no one else available at that time. He was told of Tadanao's death while preparing to go up to the Edo residence. Though he could not serve him for even a single day, he felt very honored at being selected from among several hundred men. He was strongly discouraged by Prince Tadanao's brother, but killed himself to follow his master to the



grave.

When Lord Katsushige said to Prince Tadanao that he could ask for anyone as his attendant, he said, "The only person I know is Hayashi Gyo-zaemon. Actually he came up to Edo last year as an attendant, so I know him to some extent. I do not know anybody else." So he was recommended as the prince's attendant.

It is reported that Hayashi Eikyu, his father, said to his son on his deathbed, "I have been determined to kill myself at the death of Lord Katsushige. I am very sorry to leave the world before my master." "Please do not feel sorry," said his son. "Let me do that on your behalf." Eikyu was relieved to hear this, and breathed his last with joy. Gyo-zaemon was anxious about his poor health and was afraid that he might not be able to keep his promise to his father. When he heard of Prince Tadanao's death, he determined to follow him right away.

\* Hayashi Gyo-zaemon was a son of Hayashi Eikyu, a doctor taken from Korea.

#### **472) Lord Katsushige follows his father's teaching to govern his domain.**

On the 25th anniversary of the late Lord Naoshige's death, Lord Katsushige said, "I am afraid I cannot live up to see the 33rd anniversary of my father's death, so this will be the last chance for me to commemorate him." When the ritual was over, he entertained the priests with rice wine. Then he said to all the family members and senior advisors present, "My father told me before he died to govern the clan till I celebrated his 13th anniversary. I have been engaged in governing our clan with his will in mind exerting myself day and night, though it has indeed been a burden. The first 13 years passed in hardships, and today we can celebrate the 25th anniversary together. What a blessing it is for us!" He talked to them in a tearful voice.

According to a book about him, Lord Katsushige devoted himself to government because he wished earnestly to be able to sustain the clan, and to be blessed with good retainers. Influenced by his enthusiasm, all his family members and attendants were united, and so were the commoners in the domain, producing faithful retainers and a great many remarkable results. Thanks to the efforts of those people, our clan became rich and stable.

The late Lord Naoshige's will and the rumor of the clan's abolition worked very strongly in uniting all the people of our clan. Thanks to their endeavors, our clan has been preserved in a state incomparable in Japan. Young people are expected to rouse themselves with such predecessors as an example.

\* It was rumored that Saga Clan will be abolished, when Lord Katsushige was summoned to the supreme court for his violation in the Shimabara Battle in 1637.

#### **473) “Worship Lord Buddha even if you forget to visit the temple on my anniversary.”**

One day Lord Katsushige was told that an attendant of Ishi-i Jusuke, the head superintendent, had killed his opponent in a quarrel at Koden-ji Temple. They were engaged in building a chapel there. “Do not impose any sentence on the attendant in consideration of the place where it happened,” he said.

According to Miyazaki Rihey, Lord Katsushige would always say, “You should go and worship Lord Buddha at Koden-ji Temple, even if you forget to visit the temple on the anniversary of my death.” And Rihey said, “So I discussed with the priests of the temple and placed a set of rice and flowers before his funeral tablet whenever they opened the door of the vault.”

\* The chapel was built in 1655.

\* Miyazaki Rihey died in 1707 aged 71.

#### **474) Taku Mimasaka declines to accompany Lord Katsushige to Edo.**

In 1656 Taku Mimasaka was allowed to accompany Lord Katsushige on his way to Edo for alternate attendance. The following year the lord retired, and Prince Mitsushige inherited the household. So Katsushige told Taku Mimasaka to go up to Edo to convey his gratitude to the Shogun for Mitsushige’s inheritance, but he did not accede to Katsushige’s request. As a result the former lord had to send someone else.

In fact, when Prince Tadanao died in 1635 Lord Katsushige intended to let Naozumi, Prince Tadanao’s brother, inherit the household, but all the members of the clan objected to the lord’s idea. On behalf of all the retainers Taku Mimasaka had gone up to Edo and appealed to the Shogunate about the legitimacy of young Mitsushige’s claim.

In 1656 Lord Katsushige retired and made Mitsushige inherit the family. Taku Mimasaka requested Katsushige and was allowed to go up to Edo and could make sure that Mitsushige, Tadanao’s son, inherited his father’s household. Then he was asked by the lord to go up to Edo again to convey his gratitude to the Shogunate the following year.

“If I go up to see the Shogun again in 1657, I would be thought for coming over in order to remind the Shogunate to consider the matter once again,” said Taku Mimasaka to the lord and did not accede to Katsushige’s request on this occasion. He told the lord that he had nothing to do with the Shogunate any more.

**475) Shiwa Kizaemon proposes to kill himself so that Lord Katsushige might live on.**

When ex-Lord Katsushige was in a serious condition, Shiwa Kizaemon said to Lord Mitsushige, “I once proposed to follow my master at his death. It does not seem that he will recover from his present condition, so let me kill myself now. I have already offered my life to him, so I might as well do so now. Please allow me to go to the next world in advance. Perhaps he will recover due to my sacrifice.”

Lord Mitsushige dispatched an attendant to Zojo-ji Temple and he asked, “Have you ever heard of a man giving up his life for another?” “No, I have not,” said the priest. “You should prevent such a faithful attendant from ending his life.”

As a result, Lord Mitsushige forbade him from giving up his life for the dying master. Moved by his attitude, Lord Mitsushige wrote in a sheet of paper about the importance of considering his children, and handed it to him. The handwritten paper is still kept by his descendants.

\* The faithful servant killed himself on the day when Katsushige died in 1657.

**476) Nakano Moku-no-suke is allowed to see Lord Katsushige.**

In 1656, on his way to Edo, Nakano Moku-no-suke was slandered with a false charge. As a result, he was prohibited from any further meeting with the lord. But now the lord was in a critical condition.

Nabeshima Uneme said to a direct attendant of Lord Katsushige, “Shiwa Kizaemon, Moku-no-suke and myself agreed with one another that we would follow the lord to his grave together when he died. There are more retainers with the same intention, but I do not know who they are. I would like you to arrange for the lord to see Moku-no-suke while he is alive.” Very soon Moku-no-suke was summoned to the castle to see the lord on his deathbed.

Uneme was a direct attendant and Kizaemon was in charge of sealing documents.

**477) “Do not weep at your father’s deathbed just because you are a woman.”**

Nabeshima Katsushige, the first lord, was on his deathbed. Kogen-in, his wife, visited him with her daughter and said in a loud voice, "You are approaching the splendid goal of your life. You have not made any critical mistakes so far, and have accomplished many exploits on the battlefield. You have been a wonderful lord respected by all your men, and we have been blessed with many children. We have already transferred the headship of our house to our grandson. You have lived as long as eighty years in this time of turbulence. Where could we find a man more fortunate than you? Now let me bid you a last farewell."

As she listened to her mother, Princess O-cho sobbed tearfully. Her mother gave her an angry look and said, "Stop weeping. How can you shed tears at your father's deathbed? Remember that you are a daughter of the lord of this clan. You ought to know better." Then she stepped back to her room with the princess.

- \* Lord Katsushige died in his Edo residence on March 24, 1657 aged 78.
- \* O-cho, the fifth daughter, was 35 years old.

#### **478) Taku Mimasaka is impressed with the martyrs.**

When Lord Katsushige breathed his last, Nabeshima Uneme broke his medicine box to pieces, and Shiwa Kizaemon broke his seal in the presence of Mitsushige, the new lord. Before the lord passed away, Uneme would carry his medicine, and Kizaemon was in charge of sealing documents. The lord's body was washed and put into the coffin by those two attendants. Both carried out the task in tears.

"The lord has gone ahead alone," they said. "We must overtake him without delay." They went out, still dressed in *yukata* only to find Taku Mimasaka and other important retainers sitting in line in the hall. As they bowed to them, they said, "We have much that we would like to discourse, but we must say goodbye now." As they left, everyone saw them off, unable to hold back their tears. All Taku Mimasaka, known for his bravery, could do was say, "Ah, are they not the incarnation of loyalty!"

Nakano Moku-no-suke kept angrily complaining about his slanderer till he left the place. Nabeshima Uneme returned to his house, where he bathed and took a nap. When he awoke, he said to his wife, "Spread the red carpet presented to me by Edayoshi Rizaemon." She spread it on the floor, and on it Uneme took his own life, assisted by Mitani Sen-zaemon. It is said that Nakano Moku-no-suke always carried a fan with him, on which a poem was written. "*If those around you lament over your death, you*

*will have died gracefully.”*

\* Nabeshima Uneme was 36 years old.

#### **479) Taku Mimasaka tells Edayoshi Rizaemon to hold the lord’s funeral at night.**

On March 24, 1657, Lord Katsushige died, and his funeral ceremony had to be held during that very night, because it would interfere with the Shogunate schedule. Taku Mimasaka tried to find someone to take charge of the ceremony but everyone was too busy to accept it. At last he asked Edayoshi Rizaemon to manage it. To his relief, he accepted the duty willingly and managed it splendidly.

Taku Mimasaka had been in a habit of drinking rice wine day and night since Lord Katsushige fell ill, but he stopped it after the lord died. He continued to give the necessary instructions, till the ceremony was over. He also cut his hair and took the name “Gukei” as if he were a man about to renounce the world.

#### **480) The teachings of the “Book of Roshi”**

According to the “Book of Roshi,” Lord Kaatsushige experienced lots of hardships after he inherited the household of the Nabeshima family. He fought against enemies on the battlefield and was sometimes present himself at *seppuku*. He racked his brains for government of the clan, supervised building of the fortresses, and paid attention to financial affairs as long as he lived.

He would often say, “Our clan has been maintained till now, thanks to the late lord’s efforts and protection. Therefore we must do our best to sustain it and hand it down to our posterity.

“The world is at peace now and everything is becoming ostentatious. Forgetting their past hardships people are living in luxury, and falling into error. Some of them get into great difficulty for spending beyond their income. It is regrettable they do not mention the code of *samurai*. If such an attitude continues, they will be put to shame in a crisis. Their families will also undoubtedly go bankrupt.

“Old people will leave the world before long. On the other hand, young men long for only fashionable ways. It must be impossible for them to remember what we preach. I would therefore like to write down what is most important and hand it over to my descendants.”

He confined himself in his room surrounded by his many books and continued to write

his teachings, out of his anxiety for the future.

When a new lord of our clan succeeded as head of his household, he was transmitted in the traditional precepts called “Kachi-kuchi” by word of mouth, no details of which were ever revealed to anyone else. It was customary for the old lord to hand the new lord a box containing two hereditary books. Another book entitled “Torinoko-cho” included all the important regulations for dealing with the clan as well as the Shogunate. This was also handed to the new lord.

Thanks to their good work and backbreaking efforts, our clan has been kept safe till now. What a regrettable situation it must be if our posterity come to know nothing about the hard experiences of the lords, and discard their legacy as old-fashioned! It may sometimes look out of fashion but cannot be far wrong, because they were produced by our great forefathers. So it is proper for us to respect and maintain the old customs, though they may sometimes look absurd. However, it is true that old customs do get taken over by new ones, so it may be not wise abruptly to return to the old customs. We should try to revive our old customs gradually.

Our clan has been preserved so long due to the merits of our ancestors, like Ryuzoji Iekane’s earnest prayers, Ryuzoji Takanobu’s bravery, Nabeshima Kiyohisa’s warm heart, Lord Naoshige’s exploits, and Lord Katsushige’s desperate efforts. Is it not a matter of course for us to worship these ancestors in gratitude every morning?

Fortunately enough, we have not had any foolish lords so far. By our good fortune our clan has had wise lords generation after generation. The fact that they have been so is also a blessing. What a special clan this is!

In our clan no one was driven out to other domains, even though they were relegated to *ronin*. Few people have been head-hunted from other clans, either. Those who were dismissed and whose family members were sentenced to death by *seppuku* were allowed to live in the domain. In this way all the people of our clan have lived in Saga generation after generation, regardless of their social status. All of us have been deeply in debt to the lords for their compassion. Our gratitude is beyond description. In other clans it was common for a person who was made a *ronin* to be exiled outside the domain by having their relationship cut off from their lords. What a pitiful situation that is! In our clan even if a man is dismissed for some reason or even if a member of his family commits murder, he will be summoned back to his old post after some time. Thus all of us can become part of the soil of Saga, our homeland, even after we die.

What a merciful clan this is! We ought to appreciate that we were born into such a special clan, and it seems next to impossible for us to repay our graceful lords' kindness, which we have enjoyed since our forefathers' time.

As a *samurai* of the glorious family of Nabeshima, each of us should make up our mind to serve our lords in gratitude for their past kindness. Let us think of that kindness and resolve to serve the present lord now. Then, even if the lord demands us too much or commands us to end our lives, we will bear no grudge against him. Rather we should accept it as part of our service to our lord, because we have decided to live up to our code as *samurai* of the Nabeshima family as long as we live. Cleverness, prudence, and artistic talent should be secondary to our decision to serve the lord. Let us be united as members of our clan to serve our lord by exerting ourselves to the utmost.

**481) The late Lord Katsushige is promoted to higher ranks.**

On February 14, 1561, Lord Katsushige was orally ranked as Ju-goi-ge by the envoy of the Emperor.

On August 19, 1626, Lord Katsushige was orally raised to Jiju Ju-goi-ge by the envoy of the Emperor.

\* Lord Katsushige was raised to the highest rank for a non-nobleman.