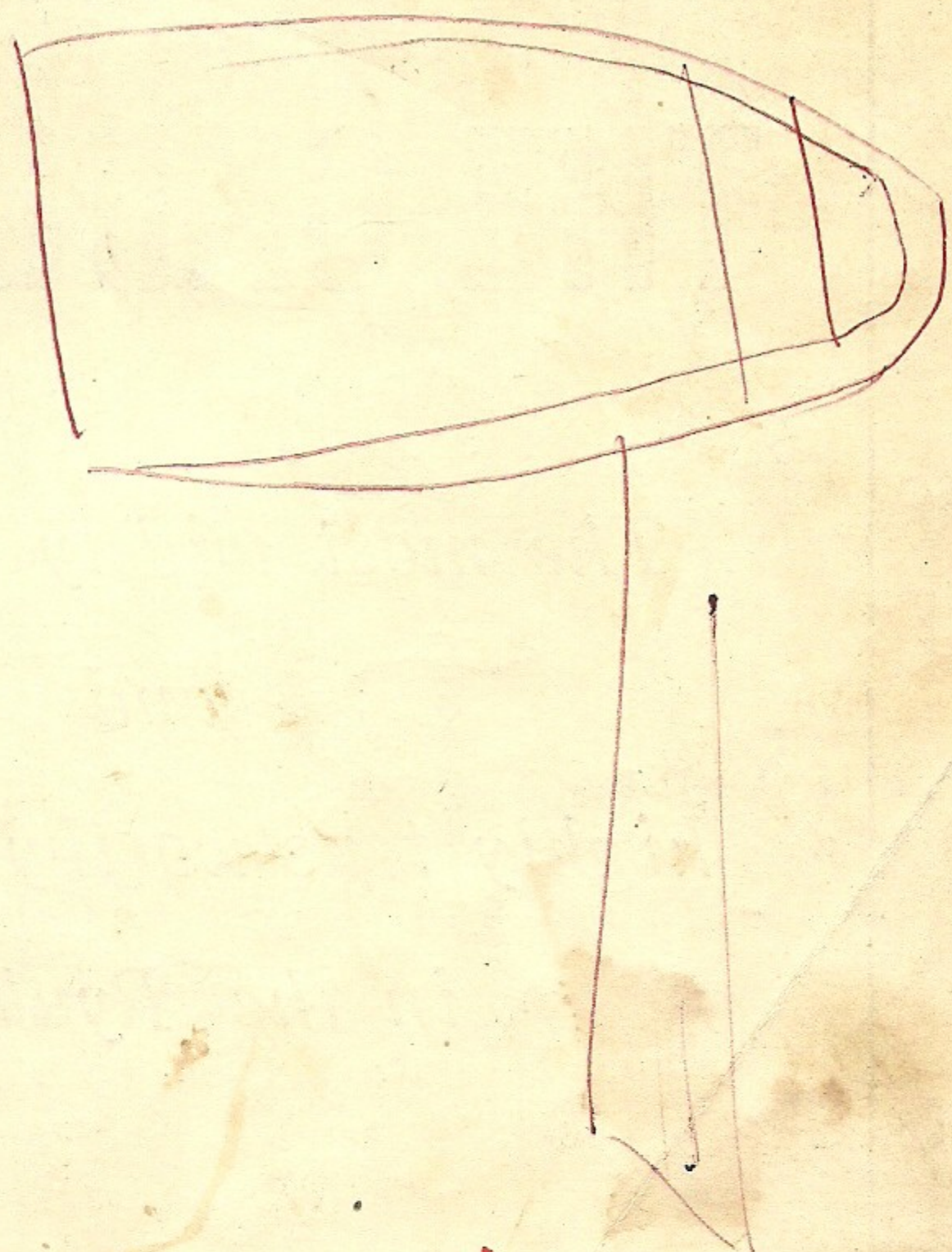


Hank S. Butler

ABRIEF GLIMPSE INTO OKINAWA'S PAST



by
Shiko Sakumoto

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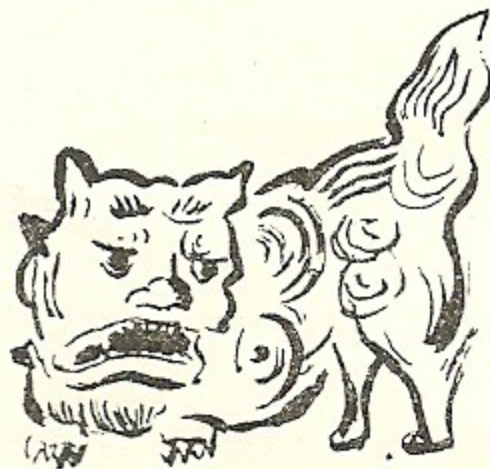
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ABRIEF GLIMPSE
INTO
OKINAWA'S PAST



By

Shiko Sakumoto

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FOREWORD

Long before the Cold War, the Ryukyu Islands were truly the "Keystone of the Pacific". Yet Ryukyuan history has been scandalously neglected, both by Ryukyuans and foreigners. Only in recent years has the subject received separate recognition and systematic treatment in the Islands themselves. Even now, apart from scholarly monographs, the western reader has virtually nothing to which he may refer for essential facts. It is gratifying, therefore, that Mr. Shiko Sakumoto is producing another edition of "A Brief Glimpse into Okinawa's Past". This booklet, now being re-published Seven years after the first edition, remains one of the most readable short accounts of Ryukyuan history. May it enjoy an ever-widening audience in the years ahead.



Carl F. Bartz, Jr.
Director
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PREFACE

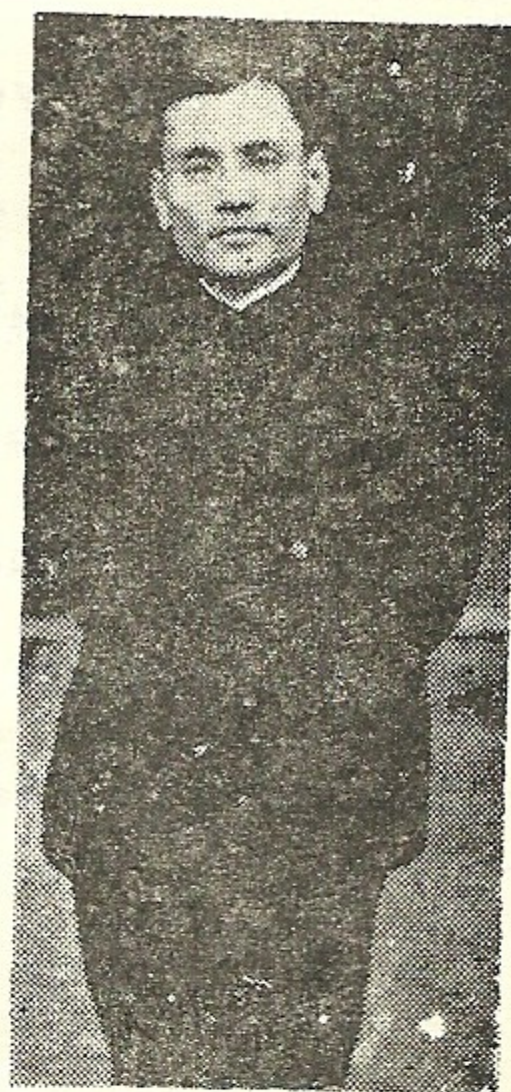
Okinawa—our dear and beautiful home. Her physical appearance has changed immensely since the deadly bombs of war left their ugly scars. However, we are happier now, for postwar reconstruction has been vigorously pursued under the benevolent leadership of the American occupation force. Today—six years optimism blooms in the hearts of the people. Okinawa is thoroughly rejuvenated in spirit.

For many years Okinawa has been known as “Shurei-no-Kuni”—the Country of Courtesy. Although a small country, she has had a glorious past. In fact, nations nearby have had deep admiration for her development in commerce, industry, and the arts. Many had come to know her as the Great Ryukyus.

Most of the country's rulers won deep affection from the populace because of their outstanding virtues. This can be gathered from the fact that in 773 years of being ruled under the monarchical system, there had been only 36 rulers' representing five different dynasties.

Such tranquility could have resulted only from the rulers' deference to public opinion, which often was their gauge in the formulation of court policy. More so was their intense devotion toward the development of the various productive arts, which explains the attraction of the Ryukyuan civilization of years past.

To the present generation, the magnificence of the past must ever be a reminder that today's standards can be upraised. An old aphorism, “History repeats itself,” is one way of saying “Studying the old is the way to understanding the new.” That is the dope of this book.



THE AUTHOR
SHIKO SAKUMOTO
SEPT. 1950

CHAPTER I

In the beginning was Teda-Ko, the Sun God, and chaos, Teda-Ko stirred chaos; then the tide inddated and the earth trembled.

Shortly thereafter appeared two demi-gods, Sinireku, the man, and the woman, Amamiko, To them was born Tenteishi, the son of God. Their activities were confined to the only land then existing, the minute island of Kudaka Shima, several miles off south-eastern Okinawa.

Tenteishi gave birth to three sons and two daughters. The first son was Tensonshi, the grandson of God and from whom began a Kingdom. The second son originated the line of Anji peerage, and the youngest, the origin of the common people.

Tenteishi's daughters were sources of other beginnings. The elder cradled Kimigimi, the priesthood peeress, and the younger instituted Noro, the priest of each village.

Originally the Amamikyo race, earliest known ancestors of the Okinawans, lived on the southwest coast of Kyushu, southernmost Japanese island. They migrated to Okinawa via Amami Oshima, landing first at Kudaka Island, and later settling in Tamagusuku.

Crops grew in abundance, especially wheat, millet, and corn at Kudaka, and rice at Chinen and Tamagusuku. On the southwestern end of Hyakuna where lay the ruins of Tamagusuku Castle, wcre rich fields of rice.

According to the Omoro, Okinawa's Book of Genesis, the creator formed heaven and earth at Nakandakari near Tamagnsuku village. It was also the earliest source of vegetation.

A historian, after studying the folk songs, customs, language, and anthropological traits, concluded that the Okinawans have characteristics distinctive of the Namis, the Malayan aboriginal group in northern Malaya.

Other Historians like Koshoken contend that the early Okinawans descended from Japan. He pointed out that in Nanjaiwa, Ogido, of Nakagusuku, potteries and stone axes have been recovered that resemble those found exclusively in Japan. A Mr. Chamberlain intimated similarly, when he discovered some Ainu names carved into stones on Yonaguni Island. This fact about Ainus once occupying in Okinawa is reported in an early tome, "A Thousand Years' History of Okinawa."

It is not exclusive knowledge that since the dawn of history, foreigners from nearby countries—Japanese, Chinese, and Koreans—have been naturalized as Ryukyuan citizens.

CHAPTER II

The arrival of Minamoto Tametomo at Unten port in northern Okinawa spelled the beginning of trouble for the tyrant Riyu, a court official who usurped the throne from his master Tensonshi.

Tametomo married the sister of Osato Anji, and in 1166 they became parents of Shunten, who in his formative years showed definite qualities of leadership. At fifteen, he became the protege of Urasoe Anji, the powerful lord of Urasoe. The latter taught young Shunten the principles of good government.

Reaching manhood Shunten decided it was time to overthrow Riyu. This was accomplished in short order, with Riyu put to death, and the conquerer ascending the throne as Shunten, the first King to unite all of Okinawa. This occurred in 1187.

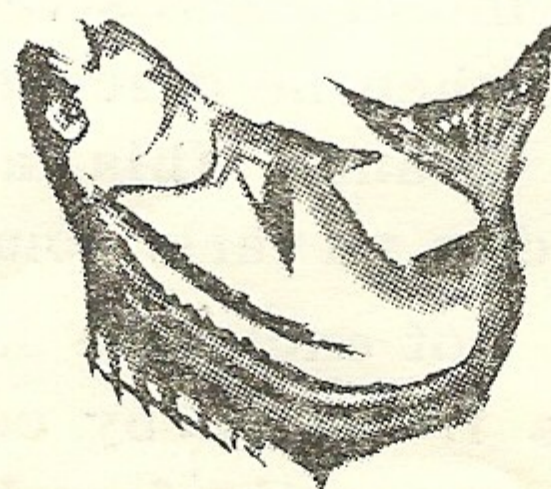
Shunten's reign was marked by rapid development of the various arts. To the national language was added 47 Japanese characters. Literacy rose sharply. The Okinawan calendar, formerly starting on June 1, was altered to start according to the lunar calendar observed by the Chinese.

Expansion of Shuri Castle, home of a long and distinguished line of Ryukyuan monarchs, began under Shunten. It was he who instituted the custom of men binding their hair on the right of the neck. This was called Katakashira, presumably to hide an unsightly men. But historians say it stood for the symbol of a King deposed by popular demand.

Hama's Fishing Gear

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CHAPTER III

The year was 1249. It probably was the most tragic. Nature acted as if in anger. If it wasn't a dry spell, then typhoons engulfed the country. Harvests could hardly be expected. Worst, various diseases struck, and one half of the population did not survive at the year's end.

King Shunten's dynasty came to an abrupt end about this time when the last descendant, King Gihon, elevated Yeiso, the first son of Yezoyono-Nushi, to the land's highest office. The Shunten dynasty had lasted 74 years under the rule of three men.

Yeiso was a throw-back to the Tenshonshi line. He originated the tombs which were called Gokuraku-Zan in 1261. He ordered a Buddhist temple—Zen Kan—to be built on the west side of Urasoe Castle. It was called Gokuraku-Zi.

Trade with other Asian countries slowly gained impetus. Medicinal herbs were first imported from China. By 1263 Yeisho had sent a lord to govern the island of Amami Oshima, which three years later started to pay tribute to the King of Okinawa.

The tax system was instituted in 1261, with the form of payment usually being rice, millet, or some other grain.

A political schism arose shortly after the crowning of King Tamagushiku. Not too anxious to foster good government, he spent increasingly more time to lavish, entertaining at closed parties. The neglect of government affairs led to a decline in prestige that inevitably was to result in the loss of unification. Three powers divided the country: In the north, Nakijin Anji; central, the King Tamagushiku; and in the south, Ozato Anji.

With such a division of loyalties, tribute from outlying islands ceased to flow into the national treasury.

However, the political conflict did not hamper the progress made in the literary arts. Omoro-Soshi, an official publication of the court, from which much of the data concerning Okinawa's past has been drawn, was then the only gazette of the day.

Aggravating the already delicate political situation was the flouting of official authority by Tamagushiku's mother.

CHAPTER IV

Friendly relations with nearby nations took rapid strides. Initial contact was with China, whose prime contribution then was the education code, the school system and types of instruction. Arrangements for the setting up of an Okinawan embassy in Peiping were concluded in 1350, and the Ryukyus' first minister to China was received shortly after.

A major change in the government picture was the approval of Satto, the son of Okuma - Oya of Jana village, Urasoe section, to be King of Chuzan, the Middle (central) power. This was around 1350. Satto among the three rulers of Okinawa was easily the most popular. This became visibly evident when tributes from the southern islands of Miyako and Yaeyama went directly to the Chuzan in 1390, the first time tributes were exacted since the schism of more than a century ago.

Education took another step forward when thirty-six Chinese families arrived to settle. Quickly their teachings were absorbed into the local system. Students under their tutelage were sent to Kokushinkan, a noted university in China, for advanced studies.

The Chinese emperor (of the King dynasty) presented as a show of genuine friendship a crown and royal belt to the King of Okinawa, presumed to be the one located in Chuzan.

Shipbuilding progressed at a pace so that Okinawan ships were soon picking up cargo in far-off ports as Siam, Sumatra, China, and other trading nations.

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CHAPTER V

The second Okinawan dynasty reached its expiration in 1396. That was the year King Bunei, whose weaknesses were women and wine, fell an easy victim to Sho-Hashi, who led what historians described as a "righteous army." Thus the reign of the Satto lineage came to an abrupt conclusion after 56 years.

About this time foreign trade offices were not infrequent projects in the growth of the Naha City commercial district. One of these was the Tenshi-Kan, which housed the Chinese commercial representatives. Others in the budding trade mart located in Naha were men from Korea, Siam, and Java.

Oyamise, a public hall for foreign traders, and Omonogusuku, warehouses for imported wares, were constructed. Through such endeavors a promising foreign trade was developed.

Precipitating a later move to unify the country was the establishment of a specially elected three-man board called the Sanshikan, a sort of policy-making body or cabinet.

Meanwhile a daring and smart young prince from the Chuzan (central) district had whipped the Northern group. With the help of the lords of Urasoe, Goeku, Yontan, Nago, Haneji, and Kunigami, courageous Prince Hashi had unified most of the country by the time he mounted the throne in 1406. The three-man cabinet, its importance growing steadily, continued to function under Hashi.

In 1420 a diplomatic mission was sent to Siam and Java. Inter-trade flowed at a prosperous clip. Continual contacts made possible the sending of many students to schools in China and Japan, countries happy to receive them. The first steps were taken to initiate an exchange program. A mission from Japan arrived to study floriculture. Plants from Japan were imported.

A few years later Okinawa achieved unity and China honored King Hashi giving him the title "Sho" for bringing his people together for the first time in over a hundred years. Further honors from the Chinese Empire were heaped on the hard-working Okinawan monarch. A tablet with the word "Chuzan" was presented to him in 1426.

The well-known Samisen, an oblong stringed instrument, and nanbangame, a tiny jar for serving sake, were brought to the island in 1437. Sent off to Japan to learn about lacquerware were a host of tradesmen who later returned and established one of Okinawa's thriving industries.

CHAPTER VI

Serenity was the general impression one obtained in looking over the decade or so beyond the first half of the fifteenth century. There was, however, one discordant note. A lord of Katsuren named Amawari ruffled the feelings of Gosamaru, who gained notoriety chiefly for his building of Nakagusuku Castle. Sho Taikyu, who at the time (1459) was king, was incensed enough to send his military chieftain Oni Ogusuku after the head of Amawari. The condemned lord was promptly put to the sword.

Sho Taikyu, an admirer of the tenets of Buddhism, had the Zokyo, a Buddhist scripture, sent to him from Korea. He also directed the building of the Tonkaiji Buddhist temple in Shuri. In fact, his zeal accounted for the vast number of Buddhist temple bells found throughout the country.

Trade with neighboring countries moved briskly.

Sho Taikyu also showed a flair for poetry. He composed "Ryukyu the beautiful country of the Southern Ocean.....", words which gained inscription on a huge bell that was hung in the foyer of Shuri Castle.

A few small islands lying offshore evidently preferred to stay aloof in relations with the main island. To such obstinants, an example and a warning to others was made in the successful invasion of Kikai island when a corps of Okinawan fighters was dispatched for the conquest. Tomari Jito, one of the king's trusted men, was deputized to administer the tiny island's affairs.

Turbulence again resounded in the corridors of the castle. This time it was to drum the knell of the third dynasty. The cruelty of the descendant of King Sho Shinsho provoked a general uprising of the masses, and which promptly led to his extermination. Thus after seven successive reigns spanning 65 years, the Sho Shinsho dynasty expired ignominiously.

Off to a pleasant start was the Sho Shoku line of monarchs beginning with Sho Yen of Shumi Izena island. Raised to the throne in 1470, he, like many of his predecessors, was conscious of preserving cultural relics, particularly those which paid homage to the dead. Hence family tombs became special projects of his and were built at Tomari-mura. He also ordered the Sogenji temple to be placed nearby. Other noted temples erected during his reign were those of Tennoji and Ryufuku-ji.

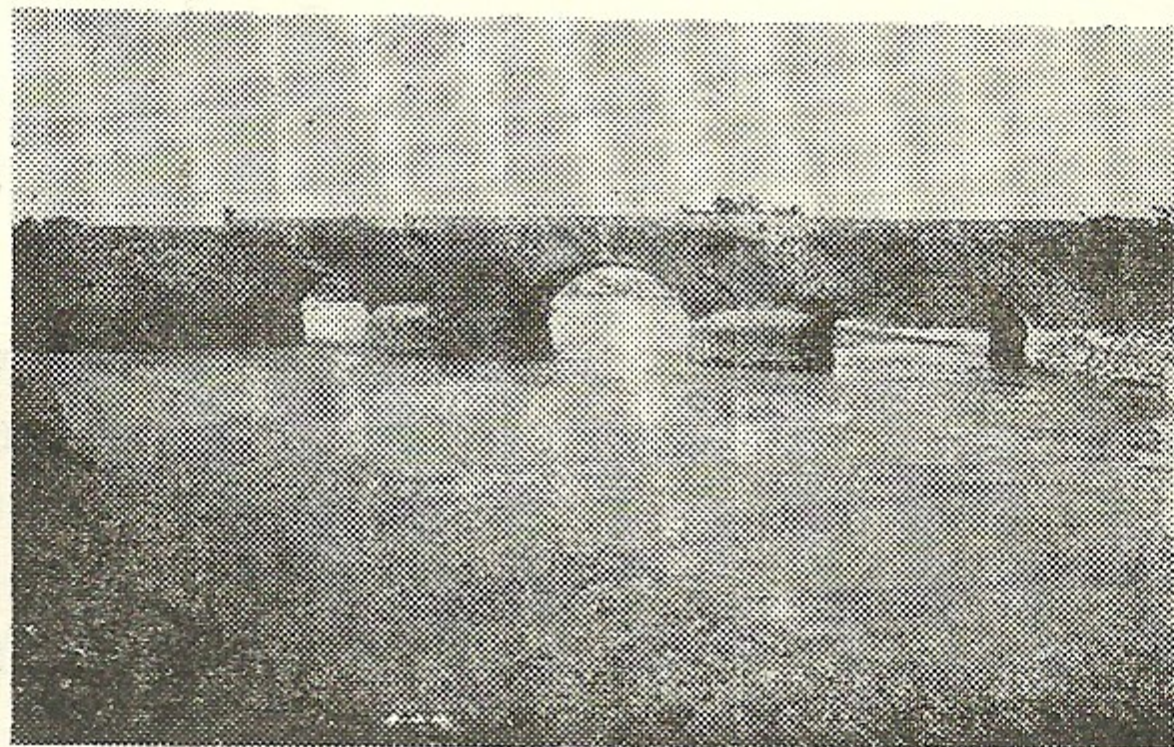
Sho Yen's administration was easily one of the calmest in Ryukyuan history. His people enjoyed material and spiritual prosperity, commerce grew and the arts flourished.

Manufacture of farm tools created another opportunity to build up an export product. Shipbuilding by Okinawans extended even to the port of Fukken, China.

In 1445 the tomb of King Sho-Shitasu was built at Uchitaba Kinasaku-Yama. The King's uncle gained the throne five years later, and shortly after, the shrine of Amaterasu Omi-kami, the Sun Goddess who in Japanese history created the Empiro, was built at Wakasa-machi in Naha.

The main road from Asato to Wakasa-machi in Naha called Chokotei, and the highway from Shuri to Naha were constructed in 1452. The latter road, according to government officials, will be repaved next year to mark its centennial.

For the first time a Prime Minister (Yoshimasa) of Japan was paid tribute that year. Coinages called Taisei-Tsuho and Chuzan-Tsuho were established. Several other shrines were built. These were the Hachiman shrine of the Shinto faith at Asato, Mawashi-Mura, and the Kumano-Gongen shrine at Sueyoshi, near Shuri, both completed in 1454.



MADAN-BASHI BRIDGE

CHAPTER VII

After a brief but glorious reign of five years, Sho Yen decided to retire from public life and spend his remaining days at the luxurious family estate in Goeku, near Koza. The home was built by Waku-gawa, an early ancestor of the King.

Shortly after Sho Yen stepped down, Okinawa was to enjoy a long spell of what historians labeled the Golden Age. Beginning in 1477, the population witnessed a transformation of governmental affairs that invited how confidence in the masses. For the first time the administrative system became centralized. Development of the arts and other institutions drew enthusiastic support. Huge government appropriations went to projects like bridge construction and irrigation.

The gift of a Sappo, a document containing written instructions and salutations to the King of Okinawa from the Chinese emperor served as a propitious sign that Okinawan-Sine relations were never more binding.

Appointed governors and subordinate officials were sent to administer the southern islands of Miyako and Yaeyama in 1500. The next year, new tombs for the royal family were built at Kanagushiku, Shuri. An out-standing shrine put up then was that of Bejaiten, which was distinguished by having alongside it a stons bridge, believed the first of its kind in the country. It was at this shrine that all of the scriptures of Buddhism were preserved.

It was only a matter of when that fine Cathayan silks were soon found among Okinawan merchandise. This gave Done Hiya of Kumejima a burning desire to establish sericulture as an industry here. In 1503 he brought back from China the required equipment to set up an experimental laboratory. Long before Columbus' discovery of the New World, China had already contruries of experience with the rich silk industry, one which lured wealth seekers from all ever the world to its glistening shores.

Sericulture was definitely a been to the Okinawan economy and was to strengthen its cultural and commercial ties once the new industry steed firmly on its feet. It could be said that the introduction of this soft good material was a turning point in the country s history. Her seamen found it desirable then to explore other nearby continents for similar wealth-producing commedities.

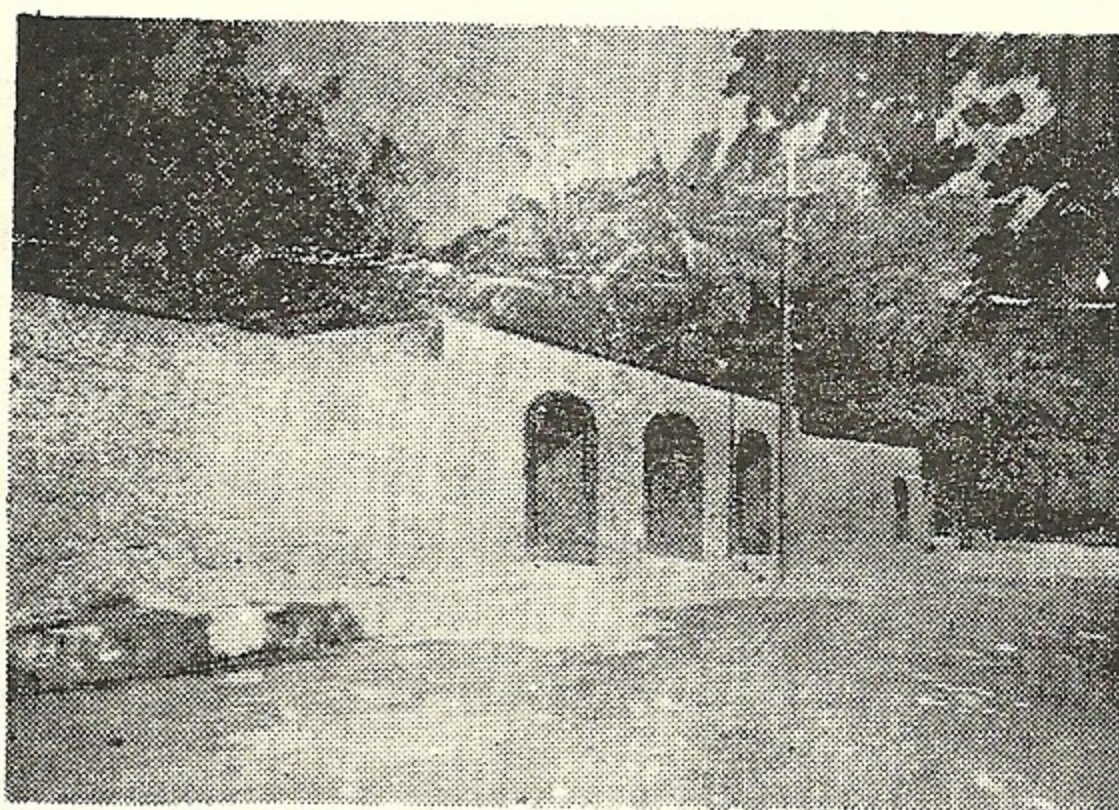
Caught in the tide of construction were the sacred shrines. Two of the better known ones were the Bongadake and Sonohiyan, in which were stored the bones of Tensonshi and Shunten, respectively.

King Sho Shin, then ruler, was another fervent Buddhist. His regime was highlighted by the lessening of the tax burden and complete

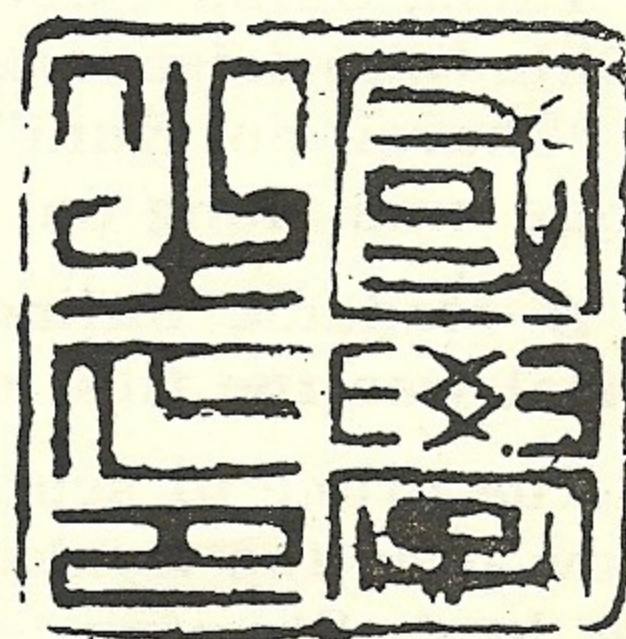
disarmament, Peace was not morely preached, his actions proved, A bit of glamer entered into court life. Sho Shin required courts the world around.

It was customary for loyal subjects at the time to commit hara-kiri when their lord died. After Sho Shin philosephized about the senselessness of such a practice, his subjects thereafter resolved to esteem God-given life.

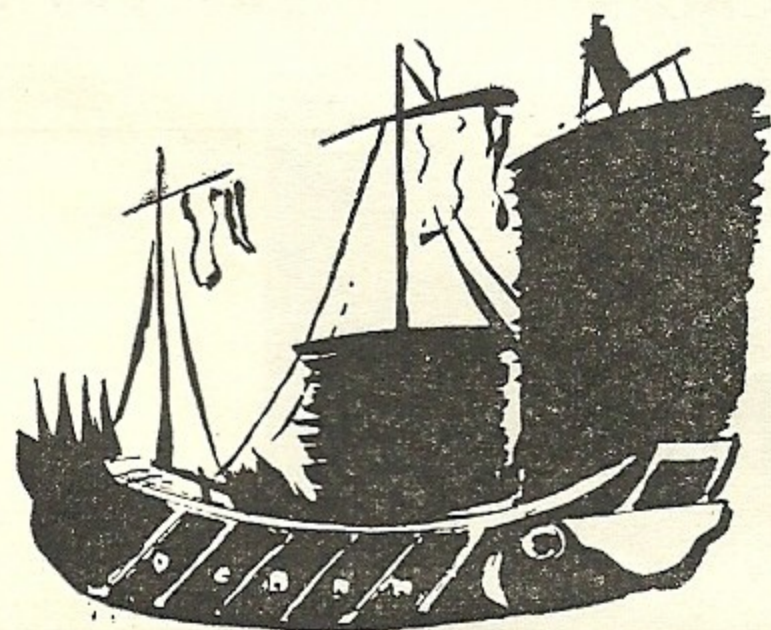
All the lords on the island were commanded to move their homes into the area of Shuri City as part of the king's plan to discourage foudal tondoncies. The system of Zitodai, that is, keeping a representative of the lord in the territory assigned to him, was instituted. But this representative answered only to the central authorities, not to his immediate master.



SOGENJI TEMPLE



A SEELE THE KOKUGAKU
(University in Old Time)



A SHIP ON THE CHINA LINE IN OLD TIME

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CHAPTER VIII

The next few decades plodded along rather peacefully. In 1539 a Buddhist high priest named Nisshu constructed the Zizodo shrine at Wakuta, Naha. Some remodeling was begun at Shuri Castle. Its east and west stone walls were erected, and a tablet with the words "Kei Sei"—"This dynasty forever"—was hung on the castle gate. Omi Palace was built in 1553, and in the same year, the Yaraza Fortress was constructed, the latter an ominous sign foretelling the waning of the Golden Age. In fact, ten years before, five cannons were brought to Okinawa. Lates two additional forts were located at Naha harbor.

Sho Sei, who succeeded his father to the throne, signed a friendship pact with the Chinese emperor. The northern island of Amami Oshima, for many decades politically apart from Okinawa, finally submitted, only after an army was sent there. In 1517 sprung up the Goshodo shrine of Yenkakuji temple at Shuri.

The next king, Sho Gen, was deaf and dumb. Compelled then to act through trusted friends, he appointed Oaragusuku the Great and two lieutenants to help him govern the tiny empire. Wako, a Japanese sea-raider, attempted a landing but was repulsed, the first known foreign attack in several centuries.

Taiso, China's Emperor recognized the growing independence of his Okinawan friends and he later conferred a tablet with the inscription "Shurei no Kuni"—the country of courtesy—to Sho Gen. This placque was hung on the Goken Gate of Shuri Castle for all to see.

A Madame Shimoji presented a fine silk weave the King. The material was the first of the well-known Miyako Johu silk.

The drone of scuffle on the Japanese continent cast a portentous shadow over the Ryukyus. After Sho Gen had congratulated a militaristic lord, Shimazu, for his conquest of three Japanese states, the nation's ruler, Hideyoshi, demanded that the Ryukyus pay Japan an annual tribute.

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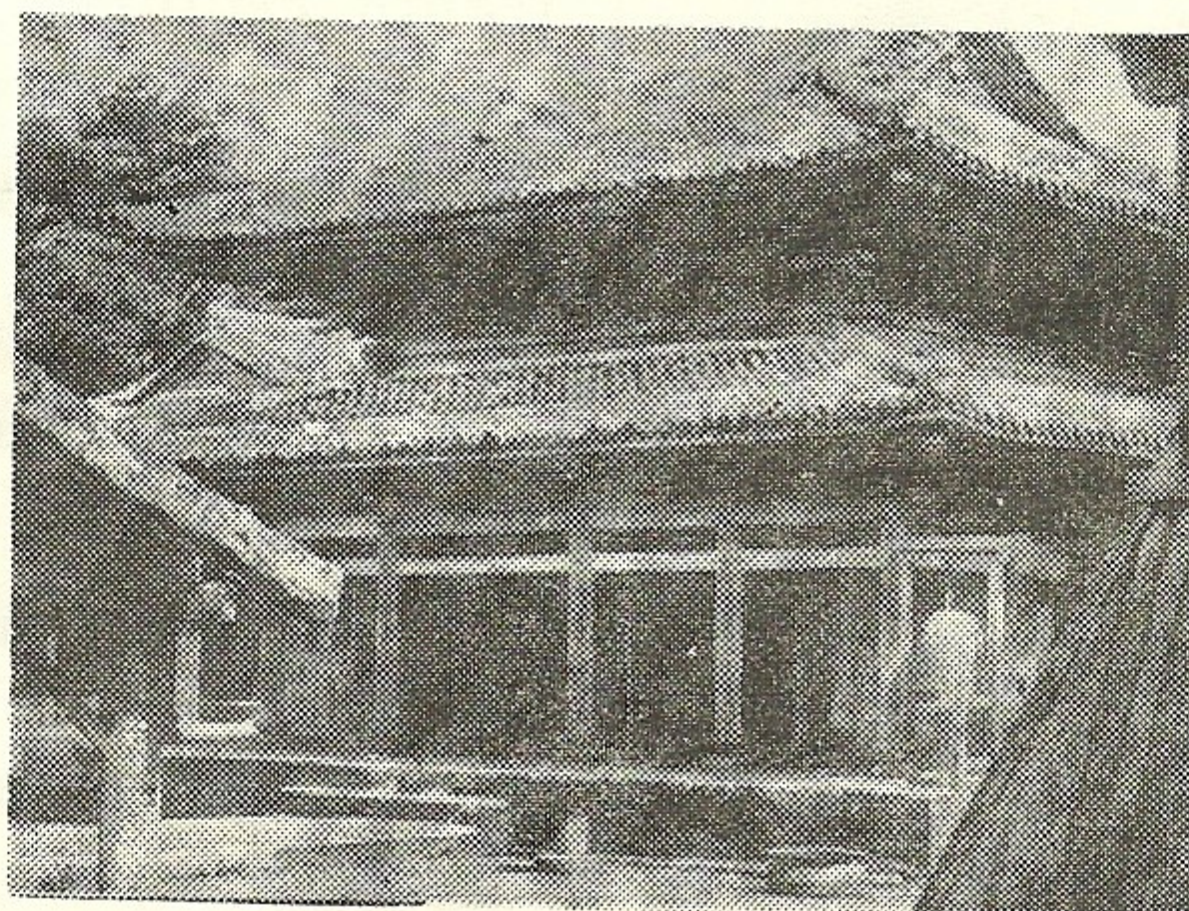
CHAPTER IX

Okinawan lacquerware has a world-wide reputation. Its entrance into foreign markets dates back to 1990. The secret of getting the exotic crimson finish is still jealously guarded by local manufacturers. And no other country has managed to duplicate this delicate piece of handicraft. The Ryukyus, lacking sufficient exports for a balanced trade, has relied upon these lacquerware to furnish the country exchange credits.

A conspiracy to undermine the highly respected Jana clan' a leading Okinawan family, was exposed. Historians tabbed this affair a "political intrigue" because the king was involved. The latter, it was claimed, inspired a character named Ikegushiku Oyakata to execute the diabolical scheme under the alias "Mo Ho Gi."

In the Taira district in Shuri, the Taihei stone bridge was finished in 1595, a good 140 years after the completion of the Shuri-Naha road. Progress, it seems, if not rapid, at least was forthcoming. The bridge since has been sorsaken while the road as it is today has long required resurfacing.

Shortly after the turn of the seventeenth century the Jodo Shu sect of the Buddhistic faith made its appearance,



ENKAKUJI TEMPLE

CHAPTER X

For their military campaign in Korea in 1609, Japan's militarists banked upon the logistical support of Okinawa. Continual thrusts into the Okinawan economy left the island vulnerable to an attack by the Japanese state of Satsuma. The ruler was held captive in Satsuma.

The year 1613 trumpeted the birth of two of Okinawa's foremost painter-sculptors—Ziryo and Koshoken.

The Satsuma invasion had one compensation. It brought to Okinawa some of the world's best pottery makers. From Satsuma, a pottery center, came Ikkan, Sankan, and Cho Kan Ko. Only the latter remained in Okinawa, eventually to be naturalized. Cho Ken Ko is heralded as the founder of the pottery industry here.

After the invaders destroyed the Bezaiten Shrine, the Jodo Shu sect, the more recent Buddhist arrival, replaced it with the Kannon-do.

This period also saw the introduction of the sweet potato from China. Periodical typhoons left little of the staple crops and famines were not infrequent. Although there had been no major crop failure since 1606, the population welcomed the news about a villager in

Kadena who had successfully raised the sub-surface vegetable. The people's fears were alleviated considerably.

Sugar production got its start here in the early seventeenth century. Garment manufacturers especially were delighted when a special kind of cloth fashionable for that period was introduced. The natives called it "Kumejima tsumugi"—"a kind of cloth."

By this time government had advanced to the stage where departments of financial affairs and of forestry were set up. Yaeyama became a busy port handling traffic from countries in the south Pacific.



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CHAPTER XI

Two years after the Mayflower made its historic 1620 landing at Plymouth Rock, Okinawa's shores were touched for the first time by Christian missionaries. The early hardships they confronted were obvious. Today, after more than three centuries of spade work, it can safely be said that the various missions have still much ground to sow before permanently establishing themselves. A rough estimate of the total native Christian population is somewhere near five thousand, with the majority pledged to the Church of Christ. The chief feature of the latter is its non-denominational emphasis. Catholicism is making gradual headway. All the missions realize their primary work is in education. The cornerstone laid, they believe then their folds will multiply naturally.

In 1630 the Southern palace was reconstructed, and 150-year-old Nakagusuku Castle underwent repair. Ambitious Prince Gushichan decided to pursue medical studies at Kyoto, Japan. He was able to influence a youth named Yozii (in Japanese, Kyui) to follow suit. Yozii later became known as the "protagonist of modern medicine" in the Ryukyus.

Additional changes took place in the realm of government. The governing system was altered to give fifteen selected officials final authority. They made up the so-called Omote Jugonin. Officials of the day discussed about the wisdom of popular government, meaning, of course, the granting of the ballot to qualified adults. The removal of any opportunity to establish autocracy was a topic thoroughly digested. All of these talks resulted in the establishment of the Mono Bugyo and the Sanshikan, both filling the spirit of the proposals.

Sugar, a thriving industry, won official recognition when the Sato Bugyo, the department of sugar manufacture, was created.

The deaths of two widely known natives, the artist Ziryo, and Gima Shinjo, were mourned by the nation in 1644.

The present Toma family of Naha can boast of their early ancestors who minted the first Okinawan coins in 1655. Four years later the King's palace burned, necessitating the annual Chinainspired Sappo ceremony to be transferred to Omi Palace.

Yomochi Bridge, built in 1660, was located near the temple of Jionji during the reign of the First House of Sho (there were two Sho dynasties) and was later removed to its present location at Ryutan Pond, below the Ryukyu University Campus.

CHAPTER XII

The military as early as 1699 showed it was practical. About April or thereabout the Okinawan GIs of that period would shed their winter garb for something cooler. This practice was called Koromogae. The switch to warm woollens occurred sometime in October.

A Confucian shrine, built at Kume Mura in Naha in 1672, denoted the still powerful influence of their Chinese neighbors. Taoism also gained some followers. To many at the time the precepts of both appeared identical. This led to a synthesis of the teachings of the two ancient Chinese philosophers. A Ryukyuan who would say he followed Confucius would more than not quote from Lao-Tse, the father of Taoism.

Townships, still called muras, were established. The early ones included Ogimi, Kushi, Oroku, and Onna, all in the northern half of Okinawa. The famed pleasure resorts of Tsuji and Nakajima which annually attracted Japanese royalty, were constructed. Japanese Shintoism inspired the erection of the Bejaiten shrine.

Among top personalities of the period was Saion, an expert on forest conservation. He managed the national forests and in 1736 helped open new forests. Saion was designated to write laws governing forestry. The well known Saion Nursery is in memory of the Ryukyus' father of forestry.

Another prominent contemporary was Takamine Oyakata, who studied medicine at Foochow in China in 1688 and contributed greatly to the progress of medicine here. In Shiroma, Urasoe Higa, wife of a farmer, became the nation's first known mid-wife.

One shakes in disbelief when told about the late introduction of original poetry in the Ryukyus. More so when it is realized that the various arts of China had stimulated Okinawans to develop similar interests. The islands' best known poets of the early period were Nakajima Yoshiya and Onna Nabe.

Bo ko Toku Higa, from Shuri, found a method of refining lacquerware. He named this process suikin-nuri. Along with this discovery was the polished work of pottery maker Nakandakari Chigen, noted even outside the Ryukyus. Okinawan earthenware quickly found buyers from all over the world.

By this time Ryukyuan realized the need for a historical society. Such a society was instituted and was called the Keizuza Historical Society. Entertainment for the masses became a reality when Tamagusuku Chokun in 1718 opened the doors of the Okinawan Theater. Painting got a boost. The works of Gen Ryo were much discussed in art circles of the Far East.

Highlighting this period were the dredging of Naha Harbor, the beginning of paper manufacture, the establishment of the Shuri markets in 1715, and the building of the Machinato stone bridge in 1744. The bridge can still be seen from Route 1 at the Machinato inlet.

The Madanbashi and Miye bridges were repaired and the wooden roof of Kokuden Palace was replaced by tile. In 1734 the stone walls of Shuri Castle were repaired to stand off potential invasions. Saion, the famed forester, was appointed to a high judicial post. Steps were taken to remove the congestion in the city area. The first savings bank was established.

Okinawa suffered an unprecedented number of typhoons. The wide-spread growing of sweet potatoes, however, nullified threats of famine.

Shimazu, the lord of Satsuma, who up to this time had been exacting tribute from Okinawa, changed his attitude and instead, began friendly relations by presenting 100 kwan of silver to the Okinawan king.

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CHAPTER XIII

Years of trade expansion preceded the tumultuous American Revolution. A department of forestry was set up, and shortly, a department of agriculture. Sparkling early developments was the first to harvest two crops of sweet potatoes within a year. It was a much-needed shot in the arm for an economy based chiefly on crop production.

Saion who dedicated his life toward beautifying Okinawa died in 1716,

A few miles north of Nago, at the tip of the Motobu peninsula, is a bridge nearly 200 years old. Its precise location is near the boatyard at Motobu Toguchi, where ships find it an ideal typhoon shelter. The famous waterclock, Rokoku, was then also built. It shows traces of Chinese influence.

Onna Nabe had the distinction of being the first Ryukyuan woman to gain the King's salutation for her widely acclaimed poems. She was asked to recite all her poems to him at a special audience. She was hailed as Okinawa's "poet laureate." Book publishing became a rising trade. Popular literature included the novels "Kyuyo Kaiki" and "Iro Setsuden." Painting as both a vocation and hobby among the population found its widest expression about this time.

As early as 1785 a set of criminal laws was codified. Even regulations governing various types of awards were promulgated. The education system was broadened in 1798 when three institutions were dedicated. These were the Mura School for the upper classes, the Hira School for others, and Kokugaku University built at the capital city of Shuri. A famous sculptor named Dana Shokei was born in the same year.

The Seimei Festival was originated in the 1760. Adding another notable contribution to Okinawa industrial life in 1777 were the skilled artisans from Satsuma, Japan. This time they introduced porcelain making. Given new expression by native ingenuity, porcelain easily found eager markets everywhere.

At the front gate of the first Ryukyuan university was etched this hope: "To cultivate many talented persons in this sea-girt country."

Further discoveries in horticulture started in 1830 with the cultivation of a staple plant which partially solved the problem of famine. This plant was the leafy "sotetsu" which bears a nut resemblance. When cooked, it tastes like sweet potato.

In 1837 a Confucian shrine was built near the university grounds.



Seven years later a French ship docked at Naha harbor. Part of its crew settled here to engage in commerce. The opium War in China during the 1830s forced the exodus of many top-flight Chinese tradesmen and artists to Okinawa. Chinese envoys who later came here were astonished to find works of art, such as the wood-sculptured Taibaika-dana Sokei, bearing Cathayan impressions.

To the Western world, the year 1853 was the most auspicious in Okinawan annals. It was the beginning of a long friendship between country in search of new markets. Admiral Perry was America's first "Ambassador" to the Ryukyus, and the famed seaman endorsed an American-Okinawan friendship treaty in 1854, which paved the way for similar pacts signed with England, France, and the Netherlands. Internationalism was the new force that permeated throughout this tiny nation and it was welcomed enthusiastically.

Perry was on his way to Japan, then a country shut off from the rest of the world. The American admiral was to change that. Some of his courageous men who died here still rest in a well-kept International Cemetery, located along the waterfront in the area of the present Fourth TT Motor Pool. A French priest, who also was enroute Japan but died aboard a ship docked here, is also buried there. For nearly a century no new graves were added until the American Occupation after World War II was begun. Today the American flag waves in the breeze over the many mounds of foreign-born who lay at rest in the soil of the "Country of Courtesy."

The last civil conflict in Okinawa was the one referred to historically as the Black and White War. This arose from a cleavage in politics. The government in Shuri was opposed by an angry faction led by Makishi and Onga. The rebellion failed, and the two leaders died ingloriously. Onga died in prison in 1860 and Makishi leaped into the Pacific while being taken to Satsuma in 1862. This minor disturbance hastened the abolition of the clans and led to the establishment of prefectures.

CHAPTER XIV

Another Sappo to the King from China's emperor in 1866 cited the many years of excellent relations between the two countries. The King's palace was enlarged by the addition of a two-story building. It contained a living room and study.

During the 1870 after Commodore Perry had opened her ports, Japan began in the next 20 years to enlarge her influence and possessions in the Pacific. In her final attempt to shut out unwanted foreign trade, Japan demanded that Okinawa, now strongly under her influence, cease trading with China and other countries. The country roared out a deafening protest, explaining that its prosperity depended upon foreign trade.

Once more the Chinese and Japanese envoys kept to their own quarters on opposite sides of the King's palace, each pretending its unawareness of the other's presence. Finally, however, the Kumamoto garrison of Japan sent a detachment to Okinawa to tighten its control. About then newspapers were being widely published in Japan. Editors were sending correspondents to cover events in Okinawa, and this led to the establishment of a few lively newspapers, most embracing the Japanese line.

By 1880 Japan was prepared to absorb the Ryukyus, reducing it to the status of a Japanese prefecture and which ended the historical Okinawa kingdom. King Sho Tai, who was then 38 years old, was made the Marquis Sho of Japan and was given a residence in Tokyo, where he remained up to his death in 1901.

Since then and until the climax of World War II, the Ryukyus was part of the vast Japanese Empire. Treated as "lowly cousins", the peoples of the Ryukyus were constantly galled. This challenged their ambitions, nurtured during the period of domination, of recovering their political independence and resuming development of their culture, which had suffered retardation. Now freed and encouraged by the generosity of the United States, the Ryukyans are working feverishly toward the day when they can proudly re-claim their own birthright and stand proudly with the free and independent nations of the world.

A descendant of King Sho Tai now living in Okinawa, is active in welfare work and he believes the new period of Okinawan history, under democratic leadership, will be its brightest chapter.

Ryukyu's Song

TANCHA ME BUSHI

1. TANCHA ME NU HAMA NI
SURURUGWA NU YOTTEN DO HE
SURURUGWA NU YOTTEN DO HE
NANCHA MUSHA MUSHA
RI ANGWA SOI SOI
2. SURUGWAYA ARAN YAMATO MIJIN DU YANTINDO HE
YAMATU MIJIN DU YANTINDO HE
NANCHA MUSHA MUSHA
RI ANGWA SOI SOI

Sailor Dance

This piece in which a sailor boy and a girl, dressed in clothes of banana fiber, oar on shoulder, bamboo basket in hand respectively, dance nimbly to the accompaniment of the a samisen (a stringed musical instrument is so amusing that you will never forget once you have seen it.)

(Gist)

The rumor has it that a big school of samii fish has come along the shore of Tancha.

But it has proved to be a better kind of hish, and the lad and the lass feel and dance so much the happier.

TUBITACHURU HABERU MAJIYU MATI CHIRIRA
WANU YA HANA NU MUTU
SHIRANU AMUNU

Fair butterfly, take me with you.
Fair butterfly, are you flying away?
Just wait and take me with yoy,
For I know not where the flowers and love are.

JASHICHI BUSHI

JASHICHI ITABISE NI
UCHIYAI HIKUNAMI NU
JASHICHI MIYARABI NU
MIWARE HAGUCHI

Girls of White Teeth

Surfs that dash and break
on the table reef of Jashichi,
remind me of the girls of Jashichi
with so pretty white teeth.

CHINDARA BUSHI

1. SA NUSHI WA NO NAKA NO
IBARA NO HANAYO SAYUI YUI
KURETE KAEREBBA YARE HON NI
HIKITOMERU
MATA HARINU CHINDARA KANUSHAMAYO
2. SA URESHI HAZUKASHI
UKINA WO TATETE SAYUI YUI
NUSHI WA SHIRAYURI YARE HON NI
MAMA NARANU
MATA HARINU CHINDARA KANUSHAMAYO

A POPULAR LOVE SONG

1. You are a wild rose in the field:
you just hold me by the hand,
as I go home the evening,
and will not let me go.
2. I feel both glad and bashful
to be talked about in love with you
for I know not where
the flowers and love are.

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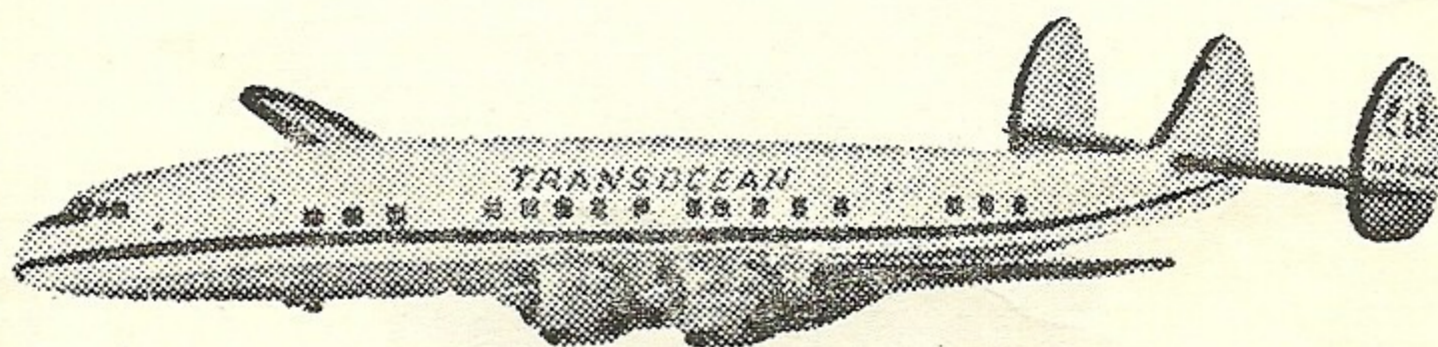
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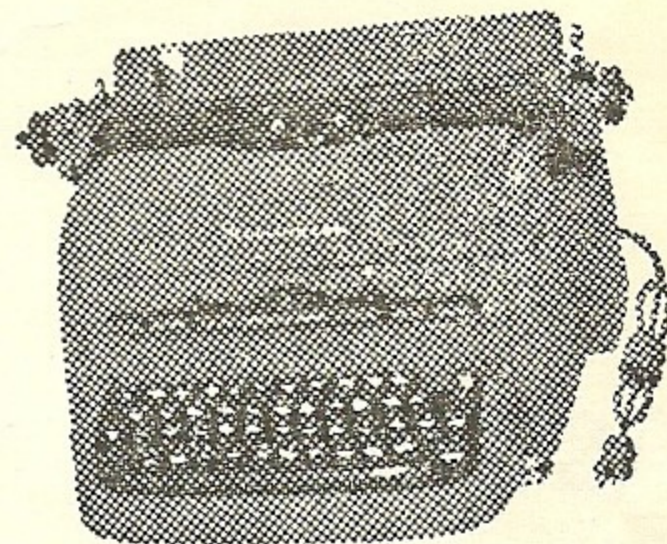
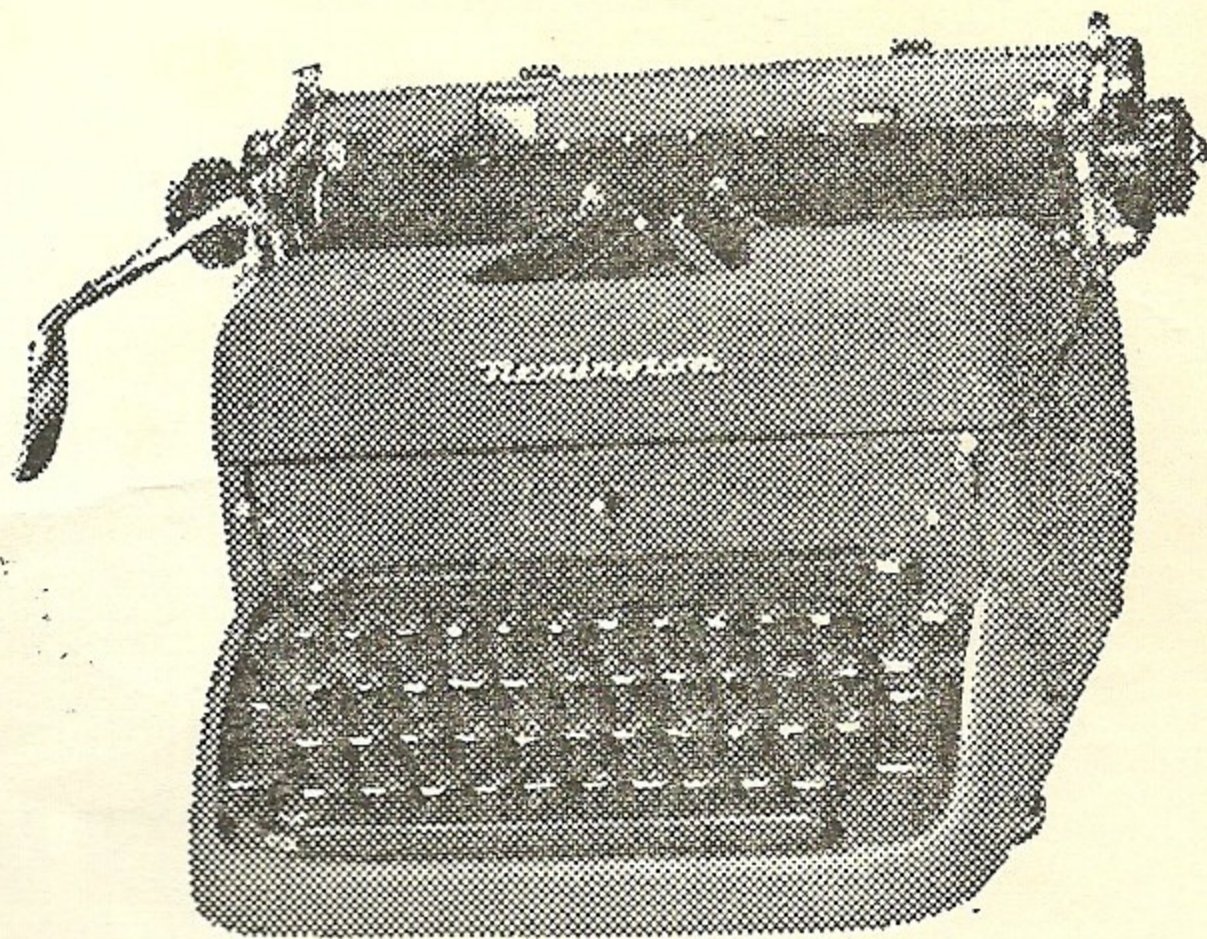
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