



Forgotten Lives

More history uncovered in *Britain & Japan: Biographical Portraits Volume VIII*

ANJIN at Sadler's Wells

Our reviewers track down the Shogun in North London

The ties between the Japanese and British archipelagoes form the heart of this issue's reviews, with articles on new performances and retrospectives linking the history of the two island nations.

The Japan Society is pleased to mark the publication of the eighth volume in the *Britain and Japan: Biographical Portrait Series*. This series covers the biographies of hundreds of British and Japanese personalities, whose lives and achievements are worthy of record. From great collectors to poets, journalists, scholars and diplomats, the series contains a great depth of research and some wonderful insights missing from general histories of Anglo-Japanese dealings. Sean Curtin considers the diversity of this latest addition and its value for future scholarship and research.

Following this, two of our regular reviewers give critical appraisals of *Anjin: The Shogun and The English Samurai*, a

production that's arrival in London coincides with the 400th Anniversary of the start of relations between Britain and Japan in 1613.

After our theatre reviews, Hugh Cortazzi delves into two biographies; that of internationalist Matsumoto Shigeharu and naval commander, Yamamoto Isoroku. Authors Kaimai Jun and Mark Stille both offer new perspectives on these famous figures in Japanese 20th century history.

Finally, we round off this issue with a trip down memory lane, again in the company of Hugh Cortazzi, reviewing a book by a contemporary of his in occupied Japan, Bernard T. Smith. Smith offers an arresting snapshot of the realities of post-war Japan and an important reminder of the country's changing fortunes.

Jack Cooke, February 2013

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New reviews

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Britain and Japan: Biographical Portraits, Volume VIII

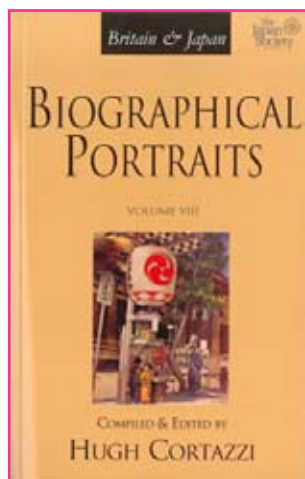
Compiled & Edited by Sir
Hugh Cortazzi

Global Oriental in association
with the Japan Society, 2013

768 pages

ISBN: 978-90-04-24602-7

Review by Sean Curtin



Britain and Japan: Biographical Portraits – Volume VIII marks a significant milestone in the acclaimed Biographical Portraits project which now strides towards its second decade of publication with the first volume coming out in 1994. The well respected series primarily profiles people who have enhanced and contributed to various aspects of Anglo-Japanese relations from the time of the Meiji Restoration (1868) to the present day. This new volume along with the previous Biographical Portraits books and associated Japan Society publications brings the number of individuals chronicled to well over 400, an impressive achievement which makes this series such a significant reference source.

This latest work is brimming with energy and represents the largest volume in the series to date. As in the previous editions, the individuals profiled cover a broad spectrum of professions, in this particular volume ranging from the art world (Part three) to toponymy (John Mathews James – pp. 649-662 by Sebastian Dobson). The featured personalities range from the well known (Benjamin Britten – pp. 419-431 by Jason James, Virginia Woolf – pp. 383-393 by Noriko Kubota and Beatrix Potter pp. 394-402 by George Wallace) to the lesser known (Tsurunosuke Matsubayashi – pp. 312-323 by Shinya Maezaki, Charles Alfred Fisher – pp. 544-558 by Gordon Daniels and George Gorman pp. 507-524 by Deborah McFarlane). As the very first editor of the series, Ian Nish, observed in Volume I, 'there is no prototype' for those documented in the series.

As with previous volumes, writing a comprehensive review of a work containing such a plethora of diverse essays is an impossible task. One can only illuminate a tiny fraction of what this impressive work has to offer. Keeping this important caveat in mind, the following observations merely reflect my own personal interests and the essays I found particularly fascinating. In reality, I barely scratch the surface of this superb work.

While many prominent figures are covered, the profiles of the lesser known personalities are perhaps the most appealing aspect of this work and certainly make for gripping reading. They demonstrate that from Japan's global re-emergence in the late 1860s ordinary people from both countries have worked extremely hard and dedicated themselves to building lasting cultural bonds.

Some of my favorite examples of the life stories of relatively obscure characters are Hansen's disease (leprosy) activist Mary Helena Cornwall Legh (pp. 609-622 by Shigeru Nakamura), wartime RAF pilot Ron Duckenfield (pp. 636-643 by Koji Hoashi) and the Japanese garden designer Taki Handa (pp. 332-350 by Jill Raggett, Yuka Kajihara-Nolan & Jason Nolan). Thanks to the efforts of these almost forgot people, and many others like them, the ties between the two countries have blossomed. Their lives illuminate the intricate centuries-long weave that has created the fine tapestry of today's Anglo-Japanese relationship.

While the book covers a diverse range of professions and institutions, there are some unifying features and themes which emerge from the work as a whole. The Japan Society is one such unifying force cropping up in a host of essays spanning over a century. This fact reminds us that since its founding in 1891, the Japan Society has been at the forefront of Anglo-Japanese relations. For example, in this publication we can effortlessly cross a century by reading about a lecture given by Douglas Sladen in 1912 (p. 367) to the Society and introduced by its chairman Sir Joseph Dimsdale and then enjoy the recollections of current Society CEO Heidi Potter in 2012 about Charles Dunn (pp. 526-528).

As a long-standing member of the Society, who has worked with four chairmen, I was especially fascinated by Anthony Best's analysis of Major-General F.S.G. Piggott (pp. 102-116) who led the Society from 1958 to 1961, succeeding Ambassador Robert Craigie who headed the reconvened Society from 1949. Piggott was fluent in Japanese, having lived in Tokyo for four years as a child when his father, Francis Taylor Piggott, was stationed there. Upon returning to the UK Piggott senior was a central figure in the founding of the Japan Society in 1891. Piggott himself served twice as military attaché in Tokyo but according to Ambassador Sir Robert Clive (1934-37), 'in regard to Anglo-Japanese relations his feelings have outrun his sense of realities and that his judgement is warped (p.105).' Best is also highly critical, describing his major fault as 'undiscriminating love of Japan (p.113).' This essay illustrates the need to temper one's enthusiasm with a strong dose of objectivity. Piggott remained dedicated to improving bilateral relations his entire life. His son, Major General Francis James Claude Piggott, carried on the family Japan connection from a different perspective, fighting against Japan during the war and in 1946 was posted to Japan as an intelligence officer on the staff of the Supreme Allied Commander, General Douglas MacArthur.

Another fact which emerges from the various articles is that while many of the Japanese featured in this volume spent some time in London, the majority lived in various parts of West London. Thus the artist Busho Hara (pp. 235-246 by Hugh Cortazzi) spent time in Willesden Green (which hopefully had some green in his time), Chuji Kurihara (pp. 247-256 by Libby Horner) seems to have enjoyed life in Shepherds Bush along with several other

Japanese artists who also loved nearby Hammersmith, while Kenkichi Tomimoto (pp. 303-311 by Hugh Cortazzi) stayed in the more upmarket South Kensington with a small community of fellow designers and artists. It might be possible to produce a historic map of Japanese lodging, which from this book would appear to centre on West London.

Having been in Japan during the early nineties, I especially enjoyed Arthur Stockwin's essay on Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa which succinctly summed up his long political life and philosophy. In many respects the 2013 Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) leadership, as represented by PM Shinzo Abe, Shigeru Ishiba and Taro Aso, are the antithesis to the Miyazawa outlook (p. 48). Yet Stockwin reminds us that Miyazawa, who was a strong supporter of the war-renouncing constitution, was actually responsible for passing legislation which allowed Japanese troops to participate in UN peacekeeping missions.

Ian Nish, Editor of the first two volumes of the Biographical Portrait series, produces a fascinating essay on Edward Grey (pp. 73-84), the long serving Liberal Foreign Secretary (1905-1916) and his stance towards Japan. Grey holds the record for the longest continuous tenure of any person in the office of Foreign Secretary, so his approach towards Japan shaped policy for decades. I got the impression that the capable Grey, Eton and Oxford educated, could fit perfectly into the current cabinet especially as the majority of ministers have an identical educational background.

David Burleigh provides a stimulating look at the work of the travel writer James Kirkup and poet (pp. 370-382) while Dr. James Hoare, a former editor of the Biographical Portrait series, produces an insightful piece on Britain's consular service in the Japanese Empire (pp. 130-146).

The current editor and compiler, Sir Hugh Cortazzi, has divided this new work into eight thematic sections which cover: (1) Politicians and Officials; (2) Lawyers; (3) Artists, Art Collectors and Art Dealers; (4) Potters and Garden Designers; (5) Writers; (6) Music, Sport, Film and Media; (7) Scholars; (8) Other Notable Individuals plus two impressive appendices (*The Times* and Japan in the Nineteenth Century by Sir Hugh Cortazzi and a bibliography by Ian Ruxton of Publications from the Satow Papers in Chronological Order). Additionally, there are two select bibliographies, one in English and one in Japanese, which cast light on British people who lived in Japan and Japanese who lived in the UK.

This new publication also has a very handy up-to-date index at the front of the volume that lists all those people so far covered in the entire Biographical Portraits and related series, where to find each one as well as a list of the authors of the respective essays.

Long term it is hoped that the entire series will be available to access on the internet, which will make it an incredibly useful global scholarly resource. Certainly, as I add volume VIII to my bookcase to sit alongside the preceding seven, equally weighty, volumes the merits of online access are

even more apparent as are the structural limitations of the book shelf.

Anyone familiar with Japan is certain to find several essays of special interest within this generally fascinating volume which boasts over forty distinguished English speaking and Japanese contributors furnishing fifty-two unique portraits of known and lesser known personalities. This volume is particularly noteworthy because of the large number of Japanese contributors, demonstrating how this series has truly become a vibrant bilateral venture.

Anjin: The Shogun and The English Samurai

by Mike Poulton with Sho Kawai (Part 1)

Sadler's Wells Theatre, 31 January 2013 – 9 February 2013

Review by Susan Meehan

Anjin The Shogun and the English Samurai premiered in Japan in 2009. Following two successful seasons there, its finale



is now being held at Sadler's Wells. This special production in London is a launch event for Japan400, which is celebrating the 400th anniversary of Japan-British relations that began with the arrival of the English ship the *Clove* in 1613. Various events are being held throughout the UK in 2013 to celebrate this landmark.

This production opened on 31 January, the date of Ieyasu Tokugawa's birthday, marking 420 years since his birth. It is a completely bilingual production combining the talent of Japanese and British actors and relying, for the translation, on surtitles. The play was written by a British and Japanese author, Mike Poulton and Shoichiro Kawai.

Anjin The Shogun and the English Samurai covers a remarkable period of Japanese history, set at a time of an emerging new world witnessing the establishment of new networks of trade and plunder and a new understanding of the universe which challenged the old certainty of the earth being at the centre.

Will Adams (1564-1620), the future 'Anjin' was a native of Gillingham, Kent and believed to be the first Englishman to reach Japan on the *Liefde* in 1600. He was also one of Britain's most picturesque and daring maritime traders. This is an epic tale of rare adventures and his rise to become confidant and advisor to the Shogun.

Gregory Doran, the director of *Anjin*, is Artistic Director of the Royal Shakespeare Company. In a brief conversation before the start of the play, he told me he had approached the play as one would a Shakespeare History. The themes in Shakespeare's Histories tend to focus on kingship, love, good and evil, destiny and fate and all these are certainly explored in *Anjin*.

Though the play covers a span of 16 years, from the wrecking of the *Liefde* to the death of Ieyasu Tokugawa in 1616, it seems ten times longer, purely due to the detailed amount of history it rams in. With all the politicking between the Tokugawa and the Toyotomi and other clans within Japan, the history can, at times, seem a little impenetrable.

Nevertheless, anyone who has watched the 1980s TV mini-series with Richard Chamberlain or read the blockbuster it was based on, *Shogun*, by James Clavell, should be able to keep up. In 2 hours and 40 minutes, the characters aren't, of course, developed to the same extent.

The sumptuous staging of this production is unveiled to the beautifully haunting shakuhachi (Japanese bamboo flute) music played by the accomplished Dozan Fujiwara.

Yuichiro Kanai, the set designer, whose award-winning staging of the 2006 Shochiku Grand Kabuki's production of *Twelfth Night* after William Shakespeare directed by Yukio Ninagawa, outdid himself once more, ingeniously recreating battle scenes, Japanese castle interiors and lavish screens.

Anjin's first scene, set in April 1600, is extraordinarily atmospheric. A few crosses on the set bear crucified men and draw the audience in. Screened onto the background, a ship is being tossed around on the waves. The *Liefde*, with a crew of about 20 sick and dying out of an original crew of 100 or so, is shipwrecked close to Usuki, Oita Prefecture at a time of political turmoil in Japan.

As the survivors, including Will Adams, the ship's pilot, emerge onto stage they are met by locals as well as Spanish Jesuit priests. The priests, afraid that these newly-arrived anti-Papists will challenge their influence, claim that the sailors are pirates and clamour for their crucifixion.

Domenico, a young and seemingly naïve Japanese Jesuit novice, winningly played by Yuki Furukawa, clocks his superiors' dishonest and cynical behaviour.

'Adams increasingly finds the English contingent boorish. He is told that one of the crew has burnt down a brothel and that another has been accused of rape.'

Lord Ieyasu Tokugawa, regent of Japan since the death of Hideyoshi Toyotomi, the first lord of Japan, sends word to spare the crew of the *Liefde*. It would be unforgivable he feels to treat the visitors so barbarously. Adams visits Ieyasu Tokugawa in Ozaka. The young Domenico is entrusted with keeping an eye on the likeable Adams, played by Stephen Boxer with a convincing and light touch, and acts as his interpreter. He teaches Adams the necessary protocol for his audience with Ieyasu.

Fortunately for Adams, Ieyasu is an enlightened, welcoming and intellectually curious man and they hit it off. Ieyasu is dazzled by Adams' knowledge of seafaring vessels and the 19 cannon, muskets and cannonballs in the *Liefde's* load and takes him into his favour, much to the dismay of the Jesuits.

Not long after, in October 1600, Ieyasu Tokugawa, aided by

the cannon brought over by the *Liefde*, is victorious over the Toyotomi clan at the Battle of Sekigahara. This gives him virtual control over all Japan.

Meanwhile, Domenico, thrilled by the excitement of battle, realises that he has made a wrong career choice and decides to revert to being a samurai.

Ieyasu Tokugawa's victory is duly recognised by the emperor who makes him Shogun in 1603. A grateful Ieyasu, meanwhile, gives Adams the name *Anjin*, meaning pilot, and promotes him to *hatamoto* ('bannerman'), a prestigious position as direct retainer in the Shogun's court.

Adams wants to refuse these honours and return to England. In a humorous exchange, Domenico is revealed to be startled and deeply worried at the fact that anyone could reject a Shogun's wishes. Adams is effectively barred from leaving Japan. This is a touching scene and at this point the man who had been sleeping next to me, not even waking up during the raging scene of the Battle of Sekigahara and the firing of the cannon, briefly woke up. I was pleased that he was able to enjoy this touching and affecting moment.

It is Adams' destiny to remain in Japan with his new wife Oyuki and his son, Joseph, and daughter, Susanna. As the play evolves, Adams continues a divided man much as Domenico is, but in his case it is between being divided between England and Japan and land and water.

In 1613 an English ship, the *Clove*, sails into Hirado, Nagasaki Prefecture. This is an exciting point in the play, which packs in a few too many battle scenes. Captain John Saris has arrived intent on establishing a trading post for the British East India Company. The crew meet Adams and suspiciously observe that his Japanese heart has turned him Dutch or Spanish or Portuguese – in any case, they can't quite trust him and find him conceited. Adams is extremely helpful however in orchestrating Saris' audience with Tokugawa Ieyasu.

Saris has brought letters from the East India Company and from Adams' wife Mary, and a likeness of his daughter. All this goes to making Adams rather homesick.

A tiring and weary Ieyasu confides in Adams. He has outlived six of his sons; and his friends and enemies are dying. He fears that the imminent battle in Ozaka will finish him off and suggests that Adams, who'll be left without a patron, may want to return to England.

Adams prepares to return to England much to the grief of Oyuki who, for the first time, hears about Adams' family in England from Saris and is heartbroken.

Adams increasingly finds the English contingent boorish. He is told that one of the crew has burnt down a brothel and that another has been accused of rape. Combined with his antipathy towards the coarse Saris, despite being deeply divided, he decides to remain where he is for the present and becomes involved with the Hirado trading factory from 1613.

Not long after, Lady Yododono, a veritable Lady Macbeth played wonderfully by Yoshiko Tokoshima, advances against

the Tokugawa once more with her son, Hideyori Toyotomi, and the rest of the Toyotomi family and supporters. The staging again is marvellously atmospheric depicting Ozaka engulfed in a ball of fire. The Tokugawa decisively beat the Toyotomi.

Ieyasu dies the following year, having left a legacy of peace as he had wished. Adams managed to have a last chat with Ieyasu, who had been a mentor and friend. They are obviously fond and respectful of each other. Adams gives Ieyasu a globe which he has made himself. Ieyasu is very happy. It represents the world, which he had desperately wanted to explore for himself.

Adams will continue as a *hatamoto* under Ieyasu's son Hidetada's rule, on the condition that he doesn't consort with the Christians. In a scene with Hidetada, his son Iemitsu and Adams, they look into space and see a comet, a signifier of change. Adams foresees a worsening of the conflict between Protestants and Catholics in his western world and counsels caution in dealing with the West.

Maybe the comet is Ieyasu, the trio marvel.

In any case, the speeding comet represents the brief period of a British trading post in Hirado, closed after ten years in 1623, and the end of Ieyasu's enlightened and welcoming attitude to the outside world.

Britain wouldn't engage in meaningful links with Japan again for over 200 years.

The play didn't leave me with any particular new insights or particularly memorable quotes. It seemed a bit too similar to the 1980s mini-series, *Shogun*, featuring Richard Chamberlain and based on James Clavell's blockbuster of the same name. I had hoped it would take a new perspective on the story. Given the fact that so much was going on and there was little opportunity to fully develop the characters, I failed to fully warm to them, though recognise the wonderful performances given by Stephen Boxer, the legendary Masachika Ichimura as Ieyasu, Yuki Furukawa as Domenico, Yoshiko Tokushima as Lady Yododono and the rest of the Japanese cast.

The irony it left me with is that Will Adams, so welcomed by Ieyasu, may have influenced the closing of Japan having warned him against Catholic and Spanish approaches. The Jesuits were expelled in 1614, and the isolationist policy of *sakoku* was enforced in 1639 by Ieyasu's grandson, Tokugawa Iemitsu.

An enjoyable evening, I'd give the play 3.5 out of 5.



Anjin: The Shogun and The English Samurai

by Mike Poulton with Sho Kawai (Part 2)

Sadler's Wells Theatre, 31 January 2013 – 9 February 2013

Review by Michael Sullivan

Born in Kent in 1564 William Adams (Muiru Anjin 三浦按針) was an English navigator who was employed by the Dutch on an expedition to South America, however should their trading plan fail, they had a backup plan to try for Japan. After a disastrous journey in April 1600 only Adams' ship out of a fleet of five arrived at Bungo (present day Usuki, Oita Prefecture) with Adams and just a few others able to do much more than stand. Over the next twenty years he would become an important advisor to the shogun, he would be instrumental in helping establish an English trading post and eventually despite having the option to return to Britain he would choose to stay in Japan. In 1620 Adams died in Hirado near Nagasaki where even until today his grave can be seen.

This inspiring play brings his story to life in a production written by Mike Poulton and Shoichiro Kawai, and directed by Gregory Doran (Royal Shakespeare Company's Artistic Director). It stars veteran actor Masachika Ichimura (市村正親) as the shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu (徳川家康) and Stephen Boxer as Adams. An international supporting cast includes a superb performance by up and coming actor Yuki Furukawa (古川雄輝) as a Japanese Catholic priest who at first is Adams' translator but becomes his friend despite their differences over religion. The play uses both Japanese and English with subtitles, and this adds to the truly fascinating moments between Adams and the Shogun as they face their differences and similarities. It should also be noted that this is an appropriate time for this play as Britain and Japan mark the 400th anniversary of relations being established between our two countries. In 1613 Adams helped Captain John Saris in his meeting with the shogun and in establishing the English factory in Hirado. The shogun then sent with Captain Saris to Britain two suits of armour as gifts for King James I. These 400 year old suits of Japanese armour can still be seen in the Tower of London today.

As the play opens it is possible to vaguely see a crucified man and a well-covered and bent over figure in Japanese dress, this mysterious scene is left unexplained as they disappear off stage and Catholic Jesuits stride onto the stage. The Portuguese had been present in Japan for some time at this point and this is demonstrated by their use of Japanese and the presence of Yuki Furukawa, training to join the Jesuit order and fluent in European languages. The sighting of a ship in distress prompts the priests to call for rescue, presuming the ship to be from Portugal or



Spain. To their consternation the sailors dragged on stage turn out to be Dutch, and one Englishman. As the ship is ransacked the priests tell everyone that these half dead sailors are pirates.

In fear of death at any moment, and at a disadvantage due to his inability to speak Japanese, Adams is selected to represent the crew and to travel to speak to the shogun himself. A troubled Yuki Furukawa perfectly portrays innocence and confusion as he continuously tries to translate honestly Adams' words while being berated by his Catholic superior and pushed into actions which he finds to be against the teachings of the bible that he so faithfully follows. Meanwhile Stephen Boxer presents us with an Adams who is perhaps a little too full of himself, but who quickly appreciates the beauty of the land he has found himself in.

Although Tokugawa is suspicious of Adams, in particular as his ship had many cannon and because of the words of the Portuguese priest, he finds some merit in what Adams has to say and as we will find out later he has possibly already spotted an advantage in keeping Adams around. The meeting is quickly interrupted by news of a rebellion around the son of the last ruler of Japan, it is perhaps here that the play has one of its weakest points as all of the lords in rebellion are introduced, too many to keep track of, and as the battle commences it becomes virtually impossible to follow who is doing what. However, immediately before and also towards the end of the battle it becomes clear one of the uses Tokugawa saw for Adams as he commands him to build a western ship and as Adams supervises the use of cannon which help turn the tide of the war.

The second half of the play sees the years go by and Adams becoming Japanized, he serves as an advisor and translator to Tokugawa, he marries and has children, and finally with the arrival of an English ship he is forced to face the reality of his situation. The English not only bring reminders of how his native people behave but also bring letters from an almost forgotten wife and the miniature portrait of a much loved daughter. Faced with the ability to finally go home he becomes a torn man, his Japanese family's happiness is threatened, and appalled by Adams' unchristian decision to abandon his family and return to London, his Jesuit friend loses faith and leaves. Events come to a head as Catholics help form a new rebellion again around the son of the last ruler while an aging Tokugawa attempts to advise his son, the new shogun, who is disinclined to listen.

The focus of the play is the relationship between Adams and Tokugawa, and despite being from such different worlds they strike up an amazingly close and strong friendship. However, in the background the differences between the West and the East seem to be laden with obstacles as Japanese people are eventually forced to give up their Catholic faith and deceitful Portuguese priests run in fear as they are targeted in the wake of the

rebellion. Stephen Boxer finds his moment in the second half as he represents a man at peace in Japan but torn when given the opportunity to return home, he decides to stay, but Japan, and the world, are no longer the same place.

Matsumoto Shigeharu: Bearing Witness

by Kaimai Jun, English
adaptation by Waku Miller

LTCB International Library Trust and
International House of Japan, 2012

219 pages

ISBN: 978-4-924971-33-2

Review by Sir Hugh Cortazzi



Shigeharu Matsumoto [松本重治] was a well-known internationalist with many friends outside Japan including politicians, journalists and diplomats. He is particularly remembered as the founder and developer of the International House of Japan in Roppongi in Tokyo which with its seminar rooms, library and accommodation for scholars has contributed so much to exchanges between Japanese and foreign scholars. But he was much more than a major participant in international exchanges. He was an influential journalist who was able to view from his post as correspondent of Rengo [新聞聯合社] and later of Domei [同盟通信社] the course of Japan's war in China with its tragic consequences. He was an active participant in the internationalization of Japan in the latter part of the twentieth century. As Jun Kaimai declares in his introduction, Japan as it grapples with globalization and 'diversity' has much to learn from Shigeharu Matsumoto.

The translator in his preface explains that Matsumoto referred to himself as the 'old liberalist' whose worldview was one of 'a broad-minded receptivity tinged by a sometimes touching, sometimes troubling naïveté. Matsumoto came to prominence in 1936 as the journalist who broke the news of Chiang Kai-shek's detention in the Xi'an incident. And he subsequently played a central role in initiatives aimed at ending the conflict that had broken out between China and Japan.'

Shigeharu Matsumoto (1899-1989) was brought up in Osaka. He studied law and English at Tokyo University before going in 1923 to the USA to study economics and history at Yale. He went on to Europe in 1925, where he interpreted for Japanese delegates at an ILO conference in 1926. His ambition of becoming a professional journalist was fulfilled when he was appointed as the head of the Shanghai bureau of the Rengo (later Domei) news agency, In 1936 his reporting of the Xi'an incident was a news scoop which marked him out as a well-connected and influential journalist and brought him into contact with Japanese leaders including Fumimaro Konoe

[近衛 文麿] whom he warned 'Japan mustn't humiliate the Chinese by taking Nanjing.' Unfortunately his warning fell on deaf ears and his efforts to find an accommodation between Japan and China failed.

Matsumoto was in a position to know what Japanese troops did in Nanjing when they occupied the city. He was aware that 'Japanese soldiers had undeniably run amok, raping, looting, and murdering with abandon. He bore a profound shame about what his countrymen had perpetrated in Nanjing (page 94).'

Matsumoto contracted typhoid fever and his health deteriorated. He retired temporarily to Karuizawa, but when Yukichi Iwanaga [岩永 裕吉], President of Domei, died in 1939, Matsumoto agreed to become editor in chief of Domei, a post which he held until 1943 when illness forced him to relinquish this post. As he had served for some years in Japan's official news agency it was perhaps inevitable that he should be purged by the occupation authorities. But he was fairly soon rehabilitated and began to play an influential role in developing overseas exchanges especially with the US. His friendships with leading Americans did not inhibit him as a 'liberalist' from criticizing mistaken American policies e.g. in Vietnam.

Shigeharu Matsumoto deserves to be remembered as a liberal minded internationalist. He would have been depressed by the illiberal inward-looking tendencies today of some Japanese, old, middle-aged and young.

Note

The subtitle of this book is: 'Through the eyes of a self-styled 'liberalist' . . . Events that led to Japan's war in China, Efforts to avoid the worst, Postwar reflection and renewed global exchange.'

Yamamoto Isoroku: Leadership, Strategy, Conflict

by Mark Stille,
illustrated by Adam
Hook

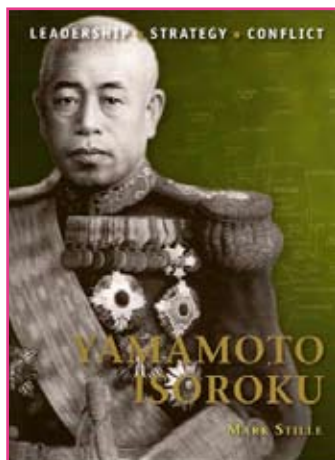
Osprey Publishing, Oxford,
2012

64 pages

ISBN: 9781849087315

Review by Sir Hugh Cortazzi

Mark Stille was a Commander in the US Navy and has worked in intelligence for over 30 years. He has written widely about naval history in the Pacific. This slim volume provides an introduction to the life and strategy of one of the leading Japanese naval commanders in the Pacific War. Isoroku Yamamoto [山本 五十六] is supposed by many to



have opposed war with the United States. Yet he 'personally advocated the attack [on Pearl Harbor] and went to great extremes to execute it, in spite of almost universal opposition within the Imperial Japanese Navy.' Stille points out that Yamamoto was not opposed to war with the United States as such but only to a drawn out conflict which Yamamoto recognized Japan could not win. The surprise attack which Yamamoto devised was ultimately disastrous for Japan as it galvanized the Americans 'with a thirst for revenge and an unwillingness to negotiate anything short of total victory, thus removing any hope of a peace favourable to Japan.'

Stille explains that initial Japanese naval victories in the Pacific war were more due to ineffective and limited Allied resistance than to the skill of Yamamoto. In his view Yamamoto's 'faulty planning and poor execution resulted in a seminal defeat' at the battle of Midway which was the only occasion on which Yamamoto took a fleet to sea under his direct command.

Yamamoto, who graduated from the naval academy at Etajima in 1904, was badly wounded while serving on board a Japanese cruiser at the Japanese victory at the battle of Tsushima in May 1905. He recovered and was duly promoted after staff college and service at sea to Lieutenant Commander. In 1919 he began one of his first tours of duty in the United States where he studied English intensively. In 1923, because of his knowledge of English, he accompanied the Navy Vice Minister on a tour of the USA and Europe. He served again in the US as an attaché from 1926-28 and in 1930 he was appointed assistant to the Japanese delegation to the London naval Conference. Yamamoto had therefore plenty of international experience. He was also well informed about naval aviation as in 1924 he had been assigned to the Kasumigaura Aviation Corps where he worked hard to master aviation technology.

In the years leading up to the Pacific war Yamamoto and other senior naval officers worked hard 'to curb the influence of the Army and stop the march to war.' Following the conclusion of the German non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union in August 1939 Yamamoto who had become Naval Vice-Minister was forced to resign from this post but was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Combined Fleet despite the fact that he 'had had little command experience.'

Stille gives a clear account of the way in which Yamamoto forced through 'his vision' of an attack on Pearl Harbor which he hoped would break American morale. In fact its effects were the opposite of that intended. If Japan had limited itself to attacking the British and the Dutch in South East Asia it would have been difficult for Roosevelt to declare war on Japan and American isolationism could have revived.

Stille gives an interesting analysis of the battles of the Coral Sea and Midway and discusses Yamamoto's role in the Guadalcanal campaign. He also describes how Yamamoto came to his death when the aircraft in which he was flying was ambushed by American fighters.

Japanese intelligence was frequently poor. In the naval battles in the Pacific in which Yamamoto was involved he 'possessed almost no credible intelligence and filled in the gaps with a series of incorrect assumptions.'

Stille's assessment of Yamamoto is that while he possessed charisma and was far-sighted he was not a military genius. He hated pomposity, but could be sentimental. He could also be hard if not brutal, but was an inspirational leader. He was 'a womanizer who largely ignored his family.' He was a gambler in his personal life and 'This trait carried over into his professional life.'

Stille's assessment may not accord with Japanese views of their naval hero, but anyone interested in the history of the Pacific War will find this brief study thought provoking.

Memoires of Japan, 1946 (A People Bowed But Not Broken)

by Bernard T. Smith

Trafford Publishing, North America
& international, 2012

199 pages

ISBN: 978-1-4669-6309-2

Review by Sir Hugh Cortazzi



Bernard Smith describes in this memoir his life as an RAF officer on the staff of the British Commonwealth Air Force (BCAIR) Headquarters at Iwakuni in 1946. BCAIR was part of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force (BCOF), which had been allocated by General MacArthur, the Supreme Commander Allied Powers (SCAP) responsibility for the allied occupation of prefectures in western Honshu and the island of Shikoku. But military government remained in the hands of the Americans and BCOF's role was a limited one.

Smith quotes in this context a parody of the Lord's prayer written 'by one our own troops.' This began: 'Our General who art in Tokyo. Douglas MacArthur be thy name, ... Give us this day our daily directive, And forgive us for trespassing in the US zone, ... And lead us not into insanity, But deliver us from Iwakuni ...'

His job at BCAIR headquarters was a frustrating and difficult one. He had to cope with a plethora of problems from arranging accommodation for the AOC (Air Vice Marshal Bouchier) to ensuring that the multifarious needs of the headquarters were met. One of the most trying was dealing with local procurement at a time of great scarcity. It is difficult for those who did not get to Japan until after the economic 'miracle' to realise not only the destruction of Japanese infrastructure and cities which resulted from the bombing raids, but also the very real poverty not to say hunger which Japanese faced in 1946. That these were the result of the failure of Japan's leaders in 1945 to face the fact of Japan's defeat does not mean that we should overlook the suffering. Smith was conscious of these facts from his arrival in Kure, from his passage through Hiroshima and

from the devastation even in the small city of Iwakuni.

Smith who had learnt some Japanese at the School of Oriental and African Studies before he went out to India and Burma soon established friendly relations with local families and tried to develop cultural exchanges. He was frustrated by the anti-fraternisation rules which BCOF tried to enforce. These stemmed not only from anti-Japanese sentiments in British Commonwealth countries, but were 'justified' by the mistaken belief that they would reduce black-market activity by allied personnel and reduce the risk of men contracting sexual diseases. Anti-fraternisation rules which were much more stringently applied in areas occupied by British Commonwealth forces than in areas under American control were silly and mistaken. Fortunately the more intelligent officers, including Bernard Smith, and some other ranks in BCAIR found ways of getting round the rules.

Bernard Smith arrived in Iwakuni in February 1946. I arrived in late June of that year and spent six months working with the RAF Provost Unit on security duties before going on to Miho and Yonago in Tottori prefecture for eight months. Bernard Smith says that our paths did not cross (although surely we must have met at least in the officers mess?). At any rate we shared many local friends not least the Namiwakis, especially Shizue who acted as an interpreter first at headquarters and later at the RAF police unit in Iwakuni town where I worked.

Reading Bernard's account of his time in Iwakuni brought back many nostalgic memories of my own time there which was briefly touched on in my memoir, *Japan and Back and Places Elsewhere*, Global Oriental, 1998.

Members of the Japan Society may have seen the mock-up of Iwakuni's famous Kintai bridge which was exhibited at the Japanese Embassy in London last year. They will also no doubt have seen copies of the colour prints of the bridge by Hiroshige. This book will give them another picture of this city in Yamaguchi prefecture in western Japan which remains a Naval air base and was once the castle town of the Kikkawa family.

We must be grateful to Bernard for keeping such detailed notes which have enabled him to give us this snapshot of a brief episode in his service in the RAF 67 years ago.

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