

GUIDE-BOOK EXCURSION C-9

會協學地京東

(Nov. 7th, 1926)

No.

THE HUNDRED CAVES AT YOSHIMI



PAN-PACIFIC SCIENCE CONGRESS, 1926

JAPAN

THE HYAKUANA (HUNDRED CAVES) AT YOSHIMI

BY YOSHIKIYO KOGANEI, AKIRA MATSUMURA AND
NENOZO UTSUSHIKAWA

THE HYAKUANA (HUNDRED CAVES) AT YOSHIMI

Location. These caves are found at Yoshimi, in the village of Nishiyoshimi, Hiki County, Musashi Province, about 47 kilometres northwest of Tokyo and can be reached in less than two hours from Uyeno Railway Station, Tokyo. The journey by train takes one and a half hours to Kōnosu, whence the caves are reached in twenty-three minutes by automobile. They can also be reached in about two hours by train to the town of Matsuyama in Musashi Province, from which these caves are only two kilometres distant.

Topography. Out into the great plain of Kwanto stretches a range of low hills, a spur of the Chichibu mountains. Rounding the southern end of this low range and walking thirty or forty metres in a northwest direction we come to a point where a sharp slope of the hill facing south is honeycombed with caves. In this vicinity, the Ichino-kawa, a small stream that skirts its foot, joins another called the Nameri-kawa. Farther on meanders still another stream called the Tsukinoki.

History. The caves were discovered in 1877, but although known as the Hyakuana (hundred caves) there were then only twenty of them exposed. In August and September of 1886, the late Professor S. Tsuboi made scientific excavations on two occasions and uncovered 195 more caves. Still others were discovered as time went on until we now know as many as 230 or even more. As to the use of these as well as of caves of similar nature found elsewhere in Japan, there was then no accepted theory. Some held that they had been used as dwellings, while others regarded them as burial caves and still others as storehouses. Professor Tsuboi observed the four following points: (1) The use of a door at the entrance, (2) Some arrangement to drain off water from within the cave, (3) The fact that the general

construction of all the caves is practically the same, (4) That beds are found in each cave. Basing his theory upon these points, he held at first that these caves were used as dwellings (*Journal of the Anthropological Society of Tokyo*, Vol. II, No. 9, 1887). But finding in his second excavation a pile of stones or slabs apparently used to cover the mouth of the caves, fragments of human remains, several ancient swords large and small, many iron arrow heads, "Magatama" (curved jewels) and "Kudatama" (tube jewels), earthen pots, fragments of "Haniwa" (terra cotta figures and terra cotta cylinders), armlets two of them being of silver, several plated pieces, etc., just such things as one might expect to find in Japanese burial mounds, he came to regard some of these as burial caves. In 1891 he delivered a lecture upon this subject before the ninth meeting of the Congrès International des Orientalistes and later published it in the *Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review and the Oriental and Colonial Record*, 2nd Series, Vol. III, No. 6, 1892, under the title, "Notes on the Discovery of more than Two Hundred Artificial Caves near Tokyo." But most of those who have made a study of these caves have come more and more to hold the burial theory.

Description. The soft sandstone of the hillside is pitted with more than 200 artificial caves, most of which face either towards the east or the south, and resemble one another in construction. As a rule, each cave consists of one small chamber with a square floor both its width and length measuring from 1.80 m. to 2.10 m.; its walls curving as they go upward form a dome of about 1.50 m. above the floor. The one entrance is rectangular in shape, 90 to 120 cm. high and 90 to 120 cm. wide, with a short passage-way about 60 to 90 cm. in length.

As has already been mentioned, the chamber is provided with beds, one, two, or even three, constructed along the wall generally on either side as one enters; the third, when present, being along the wall directly opposite the entrance. These beds are not only raised slightly above the surface of the floor, but are also marked with raised borders. Another thing to be noted is the arrangement in the cave floor for draining off the water. There seem to have been two ways of doing this, one by making the surface of the floor so inclined that the water would naturally run out by itself and the other by cutting a shallow groove through the chamber or passage-way.

Age. Since the caves here show evidence of having been cut

out with metal implements, there is no room for doubt that they were constructed in the period in which metal was in full use. To be more exact, since most of the artificial caves in Japan date after the zenith of the so-called Mound Period, the caves at Yoshimi may seem to point even to a much later period, when the paucity of objects buried with the dead such as the "Magatama," "Kudatama," etc., is taken into consideration. If we should indicate the period in figures, it would probably be 1,200-1,300 years ago.

From this manner of burial, it may be noted that in those days the dead, although thought to be dead in one sense, were in another sense regarded as still living, and were treated in much the same way as a living person in that they were placed in caves fashioned after their own dwellings with precious, religious, and protective objects beside them.

At present, these caves are under the care and control of the Government.

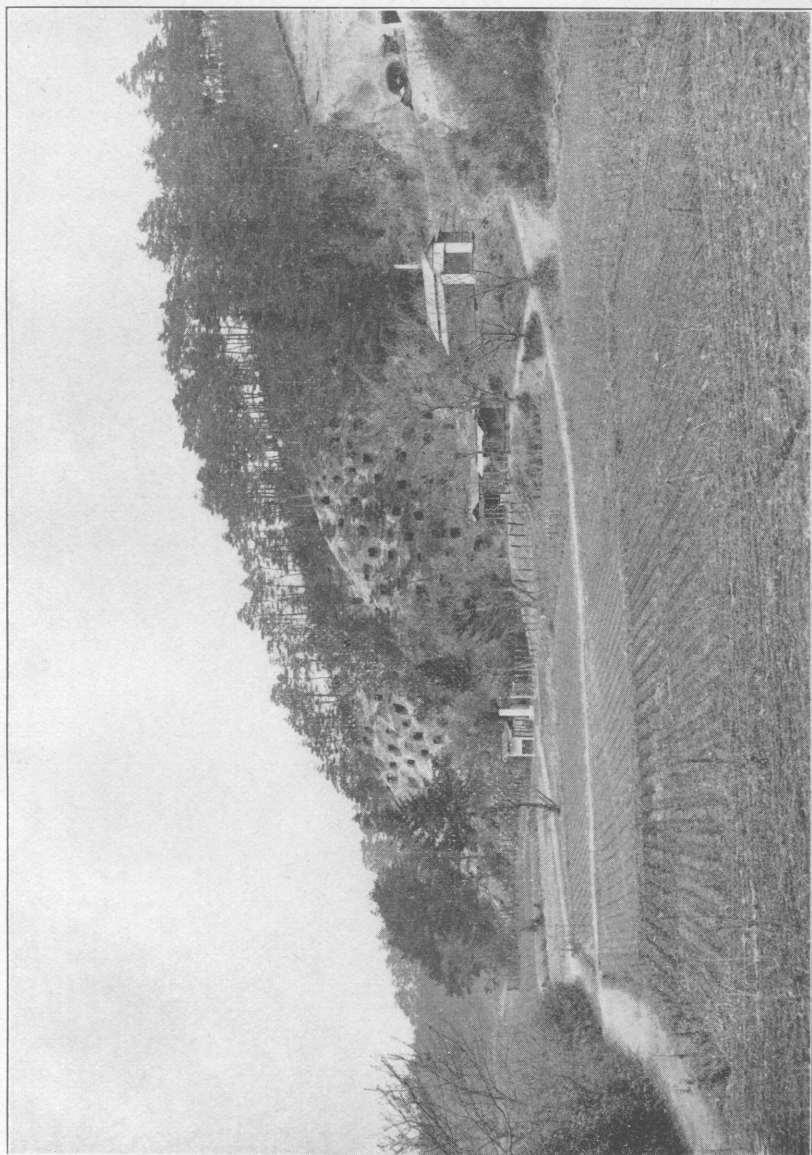


Fig. 1. View of Hyaku-ana at Yoshimi.

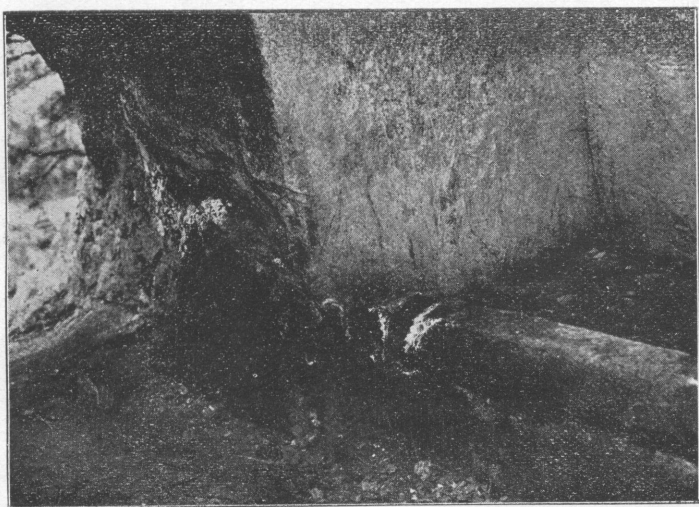


Fig. 2. Interior of a Cave.

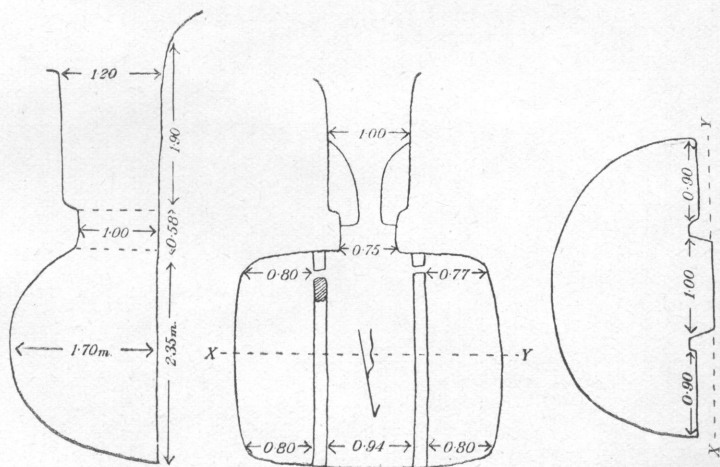


Fig. 3. Plan and Section of a Cave.

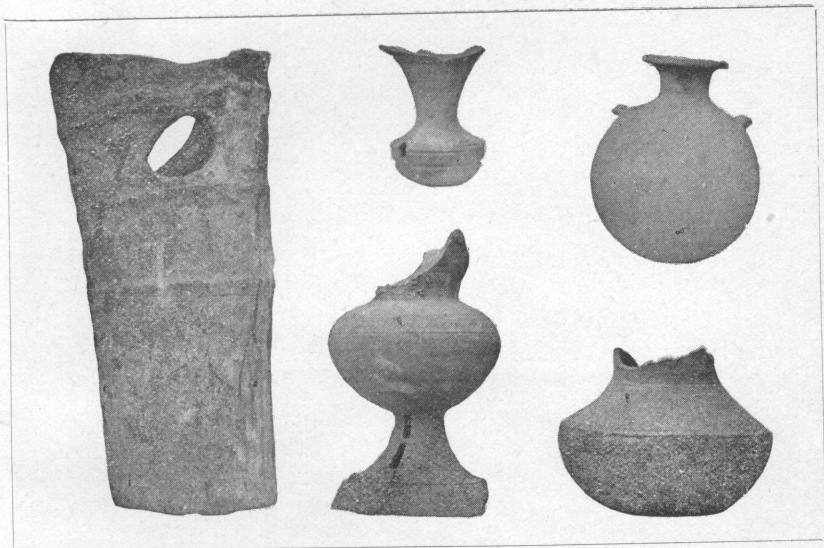


Fig. 4. "Haniwa" Cylinder and "Iwaibe" Pottery.

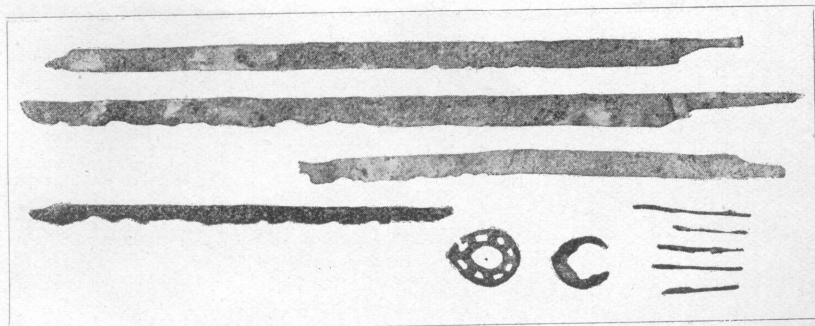


Fig. 5. Swords, Sword-guard and Arrow-heads.

大正十五年十二月二十日印行
大正十五年十二月二十五日發行

第三回汎太平洋學術會議

印刷者 木 下 憲
東京市日本橋區兜町二番地
印刷所 東京印刷株式會社
東京市日本橋區兜町二番地
發賣所 東京地學協會
東京市京橋區木挽町九丁目二十九番地

Executive Office : Rooms of the National Research Council,
Department of Education, Tokyo

CABLE ADDRESS :—KENKYU, TOKYO.

