

## ***Zōhyō Monogatari: A How-To Guide for Foot Soldiers***

*Zōhyō monogatari* (Foot Soldiers' Tales) is a primer for the pikemen, archers, gunners, grooms, and porters who made up the bulk of seventeenth-century armies. The book consists of 30 first-person accounts and guidance from infantrymen (*ashigaru*) and support troops. Written in a lively, colloquial style, *Zōhyō monogatari* was intended as a manual for new recruits.

Foot soldiers were poorly paid, equipped, and fed, and they needed more than combat skills to survive a campaign. *Zōhyō monogatari* instructs soldiers how to smear crushed hot peppers on their legs to keep warm, start fires with horse manure, make soup from rope or tree bark, and bury plundered food and clothing in enemy territory.

Gunnery is covered extensively. The manual's advice includes the ideal range for a shot (about 100 meters), how to deal with a mounted target (shoot the horse first, then the rider), and how to use your sword when the enemy closes in (swing at exposed feet or hands, because an *ashigaru*'s cheap sword would "bend like a pot handle" against heavy armor).

*Zōhyō monogatari* was compiled between 1657 and 1683, a time when soldiers with real battlefield experience were becoming scarce. The most recent large-scale military conflict had been the Shimabara Rebellion (1637–1638), and the Tokugawa shogunate (1603–1868) had created social stability that would ultimately last for over two centuries. As a result, samurai needed new ways of passing on their expertise.

*Zōhyō monogatari* is sometimes attributed to Matsudaira Nobuoki (1630–1691), a daimyo lord and advisor to the shogun, but its author is not definitively known.

## ***Buki Nihyaku-Zu: An Illustrated Guide to Weapons***

*Buki nihyaku-zu* (Illustrations of 200 Weapons) is a pictorial collection of weapons, armor, and other military equipment published in 1848. The book was intended as a study aid: its pages include cut-out lines so that the illustrated panels can be removed and used like flashcards.

The book includes all manner of military gear: swords, daggers, bows, and pikes; flags, banners, and other signaling equipment; as well as warships, fortifications, and siege weapons. Seventeen entries cover firearms and their accessories: cannons, muskets, bombs, ammunition, match cords, ramrods, and carriages. The color illustrations include the name of each weapon written in both kanji and easy-to-read phonetic characters.

## **The Akahane Document Collection**

Akahane Michishige and his wife, Kayoko, were avid gun collectors, and their collection of matchlock muskets and other firearms formed the basis for the Matsumoto Castle Gun Museum. They also kept a wide collection of books and other documents related to firearms. Among these documents are texts and manuals from Japan as well as from Western countries. The Akahanes' entrusted their library to the city of Matsumoto along with their collection of matchlock muskets and other firearms.