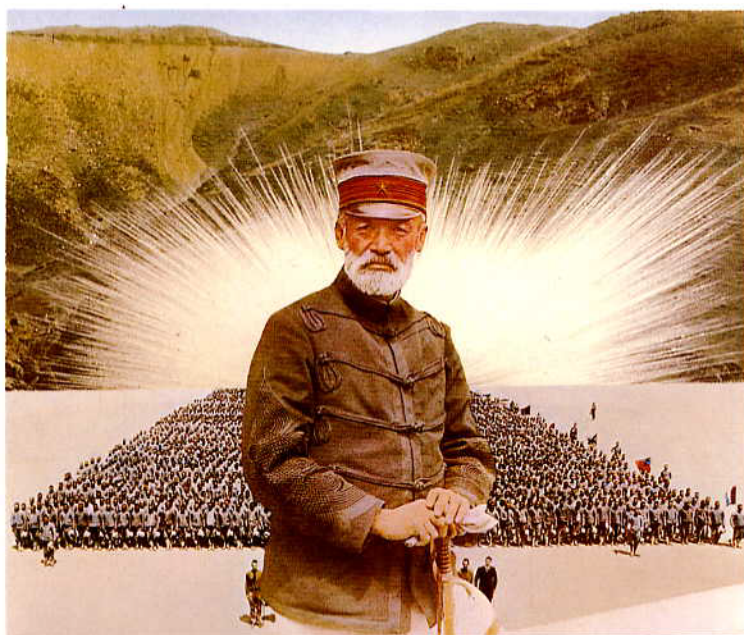


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PHILATELIC BACKGROUND.

I am a member of the International Society for Japanese Philately (Director), The British Society for Japanese Philately (Editor and Publisher of Kiku Shimbun), a Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society, and until 2000 a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society London, this I had to resign as I became a part time dealer.

I started to collect the postal history of Japan during the mid 1970's, collecting the incoming and outgoing mail of the Foreign Post Offices of Japan. A significant collection was built up of the British, French and United States post offices in Japan and this was exhibited internationally and winning Large Gold medals by the mid 1980's. During 1983 and onwards a series of my articles were published in 'Postal History' the bulletin of the Postal History Society discussing Japanese postal history.

My current collecting interests are in the Military Mail of Japan, this covers all periods from the Sino-Japanese War, Boxer Rebellion, Russo-Japanese War, World War I, Siberian Expedition, Shanghai Expedition, Manchurian Incident, China and World War II. I am preparing collections for exhibit at international level in the subjects Russo-Japanese War and Japan in World War II.

As editor of 'Kiku Shimbun' I have published many articles dealing with many different aspects of Japanese philately and postal history.

On my retirement in the year 2000 I set up a small part time business in the field of Japanese philately, my company name being Japan Philatelic Group Limited, being an exclusive importer from Japan of albums, books and catalogues.

GENERAL BARON MARESUKU NOGI.

Ken Clark.

This article is written following the acquisition of a postcard bearing the signature of General Baron Maresuke Nogi after his famous victory at Port Arthur in the Russo-Japanese War, this is the third postally used correspondence from General Baron Nogi that I have knowledge about.

The first item that I have read about, was in a cutting from an unknown American newspaper written in 1905, copied to me by our member Mr. Fumihiko Yano, this reads as follows:

'CHICAGO BOY RECEIVES A LETTER DIRECT FROM HERO OF PORT ARTHUR -

Alvin R. Cahn Writes Gen. Nogi Note of Sympathy in Bereavement and Japanese Leader Replies',

Fresh from the conquest of Port Arthur, with his victorious legions pressing towards Mukden to share in the great battle, which has overthrown Russian power in Manchuria, General Nogi took time to write a reply to a letter from a little unknown boy in Chicago.

Alvin Robert Cahn, 4125 Drexel Boulevard, Chicago, U.S.A., is a little fellow in knickerbockers, but he has followed the operations of the war in the East with a boy's enthusiastic interest. His sympathies have warmed to the Japanese, and his particular hero has been General Nogi. When after General Nogi's two sons had fallen in the terrible fighting before Port Arthur he read that the grim old warrior had said he was ready to give his other son and himself for the glory of Nippon, the little boys sorrow for his hero's loss was a personal sorrow and his admiration for the great general's Roman fortitude knew no bounds. He sat down and wrote a letter to General Nogi in which he expressed his sympathy with him in his bereavement and his hope that no harm would befall him or his other sons, and that the cause of Japan would triumph. He showed this childish scrawl to his mother and she laughed.

Sends Letter of Sympathy.

'General Nogi is too busy with his battles to pay any attention to what a little boy in Chicago may write, she said. 'I am going to send it to him though' said the boy and he did.

This was several months ago. General Nogi was in the critical stage of the siege. Through fire and smoke his columns were going to death and victory day after day against the fortified heights back of Port Arthur and his guns were pouring a rain of shells into the doomed town. At last the citadel fell and Nogi was hailed as a hero by the world and Japan was at his feet. It was his first breathing space for nine long months.

General Nogi Writes Reply.

In the midst of the universal adulation and just as he began hurrying his army northward towards Mukden, the Japanese general thought of the debt of gratitude he owed his little friend in Chicago. So at Liao-yang he wrote a reply in his own handwriting in Japanese characters and sent it straight from his headquarters. It has just arrived, and Robert Cahn is today the happiest little boy in Chicago. General Nogi's letter translated reads: 'Dear Sir, I thank you for your kindness, February 15th Liao-yang', Alvin R. Cahn, Chicago, U.S.A. The letter is signed in English script showing that the general spells his name Noghi.' A copy of this letter is shown in Figure 1, what has become of this letter and the envelope in which it was sent?

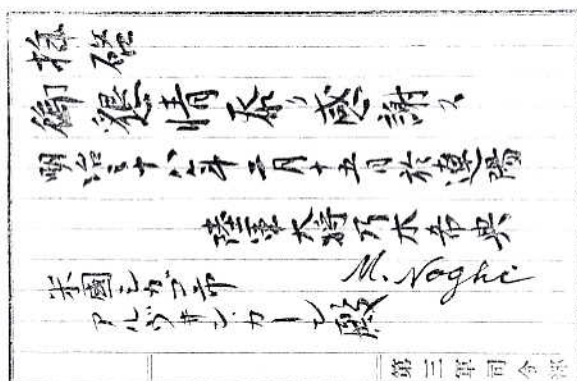


FIGURE 1, February 1905 letter from General Nogi, Liao-yang, Manchuria to A.R. Cahn, Chicago.

cont.

拝啓

御懇情忝リ感謝ス

明治三十八年二月十五日於遼陽

陸軍大將乃木希典

米國シカゴ市

M. Nagai

アルダサレ、カーニ殿

In the December 2000 issue of the ISJP journal 'JAPANESE PHILATELY' Vol. 55, No. 5, page 218-9 is a report of another correspondence from General Maresuke Nogii; the relevant text reads as follows: 'After the surrender of the Russian commander at Port Arthur to General Nogi on the 3rd January 1905, Eduard Narcus of Berlin apparently wrote a congratulatory message to Nogi on a German postcard with a prepaid, preaddressed, reply section. George Pagonis reports the reply half of the card, the Japanese postmark over the imprinted German stamp is not very clear but looks like '38 - 2 - 19 / Dai 11 yasen kyoku' (19th February 1905 / Field Post Office No. 11). The Yokohama roman-letter and ideographic cancels are both dated 26th February 1905. The Berlin arrival marking date is 3rd April 1905. Handwritten along the left edge are endorsements in Japanese reading 'Amerika keiyu Doitsu-koku yuki' (via America to Germany) and in German reading 'via Amerika', see Figure 2A.

The message side of the card see Figure "B, reads 'Gokoi o sha su. Meiji 38 nen 2 gatsu 19 nichi. Nogi Maresuke. M. NOGHI', (I thank you for your kindness, 19th February 1905, Nogi Maresuke. M. NOGHI)', with also a German translation of the first sentence 'Ich danke ihnen fur ihre freundlichkeit'. The roman-lettered signature NOGHI is non-standard for NOGI, which speakers of French or English (but not German) might mispronounce as No-jee, but the G is hard as in 'go'.

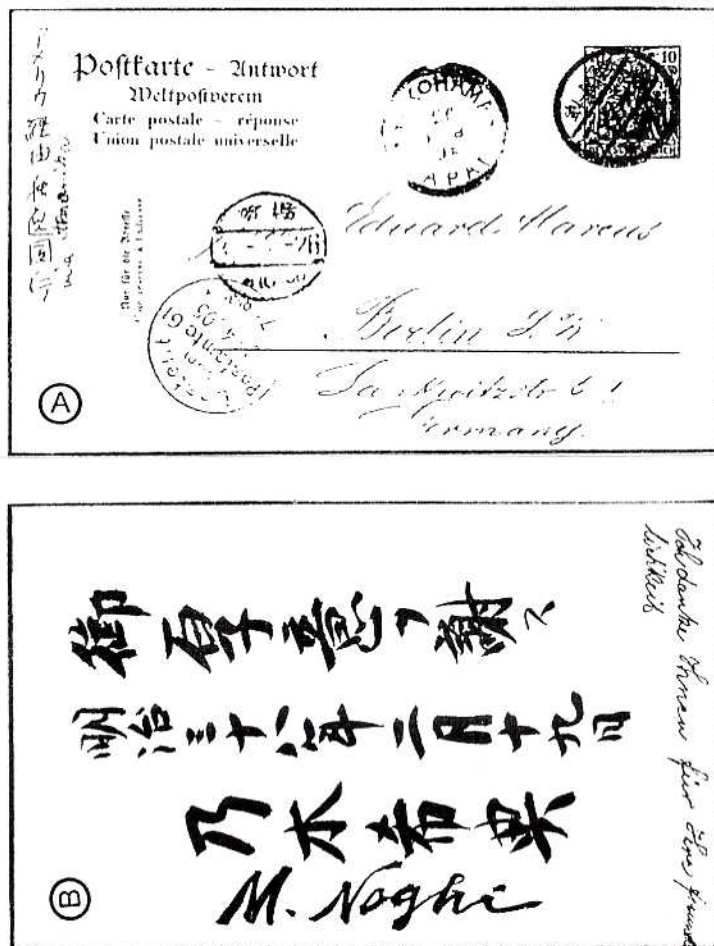


FIGURE 2, A) Reply section preaddressed to Germany, B) Message from General Maresuke Nogi.

cont.

The third correspondence is now in my own collection, this is a card sent from the British collector of autographs Mr. Reginald Bray, who wrote to several of the leading figures in the Russo-Japanese war and had cards returned, or letters, with messages and signatures, this will be the subject of another article in a future issue 'KIKU SHIMBUN'.

The address side of the card, see Figure 3a, is properly franked at 4sen, the card being addressed to Mr. R. Bray, of Forest Hill, England, but is endorsed in Japanese 'To England via America' and hand written 'From Gen. Baron M. Nogi', it is interesting to note that Nogi is spelt without an 'h'. Is this the same handwriting as the German script in Figure 2A? It is a great pity that we have no copy of the addressed envelope sent to Chicago. The postmark is quite clear '3rd Army / 38 - 3 - 31 / Field Post Office No. 4' (31st March 1905) at that time Field Post Office No. 4 was located at Liu-wang-tun.

The message side of the card, see Figure 3b, is written in Japanese by General Baron Maresuke Nogi and reads 'Gokoi o sha su. Meiji 38 nen 3 gatsu 28 nichi'. Nogi Maresuke. Meaning 'I thank you for your kindness [courtesy], 28th March 1905, Maresuke Nogi'. You will note that General Baron Maresuke Nogi has not written his name in roman-letters as in the previous messages. The picture on this card shows General Baron Maresuke Nogi and General Anatoli M. Stoessel at Shui-shih-ying, photographed on the 5th January 1905 with the handwritten note 1st January 1905, is that really when the meeting took place?

Maresuke Nogi, Japanese army general, (1849 - 1912) was initially an infantry commander during the Sino-Japanese War (1894 - 1895) becoming a Lieutenant General during 1895. He became Governor-General of Taiwan from 14th October 1896 until 26th February 1898. Following this he travelled to Prussia for Military intelligence development. Nogi led the Japanese 3rd Army during the successful siege of Port Arthur in the Russo-Japanese War (1904 - 1905) but lost nearly 60,000 men under his command in this action. In grief over the death of his two sons' during the battle for Port Arthur, he was considered a hero by all of Japan for the capture of Port Arthur in the Russo-Japanese War. Following the war he became principal of the Peers' School where the son of Yoshihito (Taisho Emperor), Hirohito (Showa Emperor) was taught and received his early training under General Baron Nogi.

On the death of the Meiji Emperor in 1912, General Baron Maresuke Nogi and his wife were honoured as a model of loyalty when they committed seppuku, the ritual suicide of the samurai warrior, to follow the Meiji Emperor into death.

The Russo-Japanese War began in February 1904, when General Nogi was placed in charge of the Japanese 3rd Army for the assault on Lu-shun (Port Arthur) the naval base of the Russian East Asian Fleet. Marching on to Lu-shun via Korea, and in one of the early battles for Lu-shun, General Nogi's eldest son, Shoten, was killed.

Belatedly the Japanese found it necessary, if they were to capture Lu-shun, to take the hill overlooking the bay known as 203 Metre Hill, the hill had been initially unprotected by the Russians and the opportunity was missed. With the Russian occupation and fortification of 203 Metre Hill the problem to take this hill became immense, General Nogi recognised that the fighting would be a bitter one to the death. A special force of Japanese soldiers were chosen to carry out this desperate duty, General Nogi then placed his second eldest son, Hoten, in command, with his son being killed in the attack that followed. The Japanese finally took the hill 203 Metres on the 5th December 1904.

Following the Battle for 203 Metre Hill, General Baron Maresuke Nogi wrote the following poem;

The Two - Zero - Three Hill, steep though it may be,
surely is not unclimbable,
Men are aware, that perils need be overcome
if glory is to be won,
Iron and Blood cover over the hill,
and the hill shape itself no longer the same,
Ni rei san, upon which a myriad people gaze
all with equal sensation.

cont.

JAPANESE ARMY MAIL – GENERAL NOGI.

Postcard signed by General Baron Maresuke NOGI, Commander of the Japanese 3rd Army, which successfully captured Port Arthur after the Russian surrender of 1st January 1905, indicated on the card. Japanese script reads from left to right: 'THANK YOU FOR YOUR COURTESY, Meiji 38, Month 3, Day 28, NOGI Maresuke. An exceptional item of Postal History.



Postcard from General Baron Maresuke NOGI, Commander of the Japanese 3rd Army, sent from FPO No. 4, located at Liu-wang-tun, Manchuria, and sent to England, to a British supporter of the Japanese in the Russo-Japanese War. One of three recorded correspondences signed by General Baron NOGI.

1905 Postcard, franked with 1sen and 3sen Japanese adhesives at the 4sen rate to Europe, from General Baron Maresuke, Liu-wang-tun, Manchuria.

Postmarks reading '3rd Army, Field Post Office No. 4, 38-3-31', (31st March 1905).

Hand endorsed 'From General Baron M. Nogi' and in Japanese 'To England via America'.

Transit cancel of 'Yokohama, Japan, 9 APR 05', (9th April 1905).

Sent to Reginald Bray, 135 Devonshire Road, Forest Hill, Kent, England.

FIGURE 3, a) Message of card from General Nogi, b) Address side of card sent to England.

