



This silk flag was an interesting gift, presented to U.S. Naval Lt. Thomas Halligan. According to the veteran: "...He was initially stationed aboard the U.S.S. Iowa, and was later given the assignment as Port Director for the Island of Truk. Following hostilities there, Japanese service personnel were told to put their guns, sabers, etc. on a surrender pile." Tom had some questions with regard to the Port and sought out a Japanese officer for specific answers. Tom "...gave the officer a bottle of bourbon and the officer gave Tom this flag. The officer had not wanted to surrender the flag on the pile." This beautiful Good Luck flag is nearly square, measuring 28.0"x28.0" (69.0cm by 69.0cm.) The corner tabs are made from paper.

There are two nice seals on this flag. The large, square shrine seal measures 2.0" square and is from the Keyakigawa Shinto shrine. The seal above it is an adaptation from the *kikusui no mon* emblem (half chrysanthemum, and flowing river.) The *kikusui* emblem comes from the family crest of the samurai warrior Masashige Kusunoki (1294-1336.)

The story of Masashige Kusunoki's loyalty to the Emperor Go-Daigo carried great symbolism among Japan's military class. His forceful and cunning defense of Chihaya Castle in approximately 1333, eventually helped lead to the Kemmu Restoration of the Go-Daigo. Masashige's later suicide in battle at the Minato River while facing overwhelming odds, cemented the story of his courage in battle and of his loyalty to the Emperor.

Following the Meiji Restoration, militarists recognized the usefulness in connecting the samurai lore of the past with the modern present. The story of a warrior who fought to the death for his Emperor was an important tool used to inspire not just the *bushi* of *kamikaze* fame, but Japanese military personnel throughout the ranks.