

# The Personal Chops of Professor Henry Seishiro Okazaki

By: Bob McKean

During the late 1930s and 1940s, Professor Henry Seishiro Okazaki used several chops to stamp his official Danzan Ryu mokuroku and kaidensho certificates as well as official correspondence. These included Professor Okazaki's signature stamp in English, his name chop and Kodenkan chop in Japanese kanji.

As a student of Danzan Ryu, have you ever wondered whatever happened to these chops after Professor Okazaki's death in 1951? I'm sure many of you just assumed they were kept by Professor Okazaki's family.

Professor Gene Edwards invited me to be a guest instructor at the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Christian Jujitsu Association Summer Camp. His annual camp was held in the beautiful mountains just outside of Kalispell, Montana, July 4-8, 2016. One afternoon I was sitting at a table outside of the main house, admiring the view with Professor Dan Butler, when Professor Edwards came out to join us. He brought with him a small box. Inside the box were several old chops written in kanji. Professor Edwards informed us that these were the personal chops of Danzan Ryu founder, Professor Henry Seishiro Okazaki.

*Two of the five chops belonging to Professor Okazaki being cared for by Professor Edwards*



Professor Edwards shared with us the story of how he became the caretaker of Professor Okazaki's personal chops.

*A glass chop owned and used by Professor Okazaki*



In 1978, while still a member of the American Judo & Jujitsu Federation Board of Professors, Professor Edwards proposed that a team of Danzan Ryu students undertake a project to write a biography of Seishiro Okazaki and the significance of his life. After securing permission from his sensei, Professor Bud Estes, Professor Edwards put together his team. Extensive preparations were made for many interviews, arrangements with the Bishop Museum, Polk Directory, etc. The original members of the “Okazaki Biographical Research Team” were, Professor Gene Edwards, Tom King, Lora Prevetie and Kris King.

During this fact finding project Professor Edwards and his team spent many hours interviewing and socializing with Hachiro Okazaki, son of Professor Henry Seishiro Okazaki. During one of their meeting, Hachiro brought out his father’s personal chops. Hachiro presented them to Professor Edwards and asked him to be the caretaker of his father’s chops. At first Professor Edwards politely refused to accept them but Hachiro insisted that he take personal possession of them. Hachiro said he wanted Professor Edwards to be the caretaker of his father’s chops because he felt Professor Edwards respected their importance and that he would properly take care of them and would protect and preserve them in his father’s name and for the history of Danzan Ryu. Hachiro told Professor Edwards that he believed his own son, Keith Okazaki, had no appreciation for his grandfathers Danzan Ryu chops and he was concerned that these historical items may eventually be lost or discarded. Professor Edwards accepted the responsibility of becoming the caretaker of the chops and has safely stored and protected them since 1978.

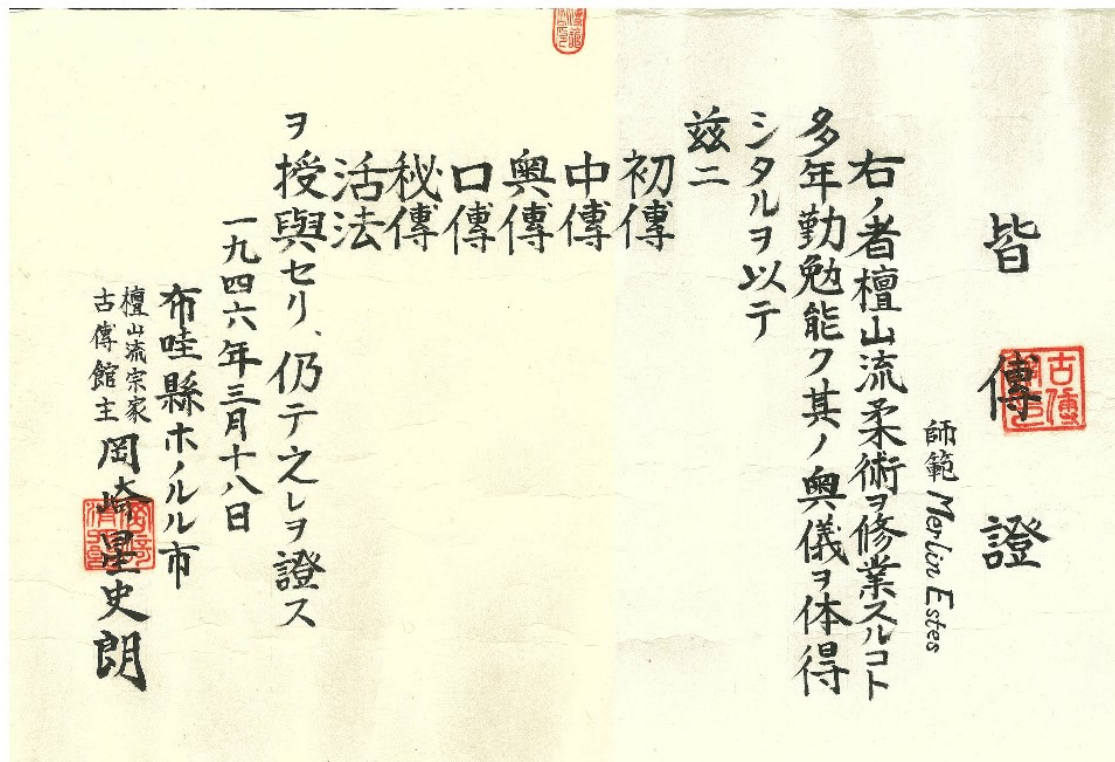
Not only was I able to observe Professor Okazaki’s personal chops but I was also able to hold and examine them close up. Being able to hold Professor Okazaki’s personal

chops was quite a moving experience for me. I was very humbled and honored to be allowed to hold the personal chops used by the founder of Danzan Ryu Jujitsu to stamp official DZR documents such as his kaidensho certificates.

I was then reminded by Professor Edwards that the last time those chops were used to stamp a kaidensho certificate, it was not by Professor Okazaki. In 1990 AJJF Professor Tom Ball had asked to borrow the chops from Professor Edwards to place them on what Professor Ball referred to as a “mockup or replica” of a DZR kaidensho certificate to see what it would look like. Professor Edwards was misled as to how the chops were actually going to be used by Professor Ball. Professor Tom Ball had designed and produced a fraudulent kaidensho certificate using his sensei, Professor Bud Estes, as the recipient of an official Professor Okazaki/Danzan Ryu document. Professor Okazaki’s chops were misused in order to make it appear that the document was legitimate. The document was then used in an attempt to falsely booster Professor Ball’s and the AJJF’s legitimacy and status in the Danzan Ryu community. I find it not only sad but also very disturbing to know that the last time Professor Okazaki’s personal chops were used to stamp a kaidensho certificate they were intentionally misused to stamp a fraudulent kaidensho certificate by a Senior Danzan Ryu Professor.

Professor Edwards told me he regrets ever allowing Professor Ball the use of Professor Okazaki’s chops. He went on to say that Professor Ball, and several other members of the AJJF Board of Professors, wanted him to surrender Professor Okazaki’s chops to the Board of Professors so the American Judo & Jujitsu Federation could take possession of them. Their reasoning was that since Professor Edwards was representing the AJJF Board of Professors during his team’s research project, anything they collected belonged to the AJJF Board of Professors.

*Copy of the fraudulent kaidensho certificate designed and stamped by Sr. Professor Tom Ball*





Professor Edwards refused to give the AJJF Board of Professors custody of Professor Okazaki's chops. He was very outspoken about the fraudulent Prof. Estes kaidensho certificate and the unauthorized alteration of the Soke Proclamation.

Professor Edwards stated, "I resigned from the AJJF Board of Professors in the early 90's because I was moving to Montana and would be unable to actively participate on the BOP. I still have a copy of the memo I sent to Professor Laumar Fisher. But instead of accepting my resignation from the BOP, the senior AJJF Professors regularly announced my resignation at conventions and other events that I had quit the AJJF and that I was no longer active in jujitsu. My Black Belts who attended some of these functions informed me of the lies. As a Professor in the AJJF you are a member for life. But my *Kiai Echo* (newsletter) was discontinued, probably more out of spite than anything else."

Professor Edwards said, "The abuse Professor Okazaki's chops and the Proclamation (referring to the Soke Proclamation of 1991) made me ashamed to have been a member of the American Judo & Jujitsu Federation. My intentions were good in both cases. The chops were lent to a friend to make a mock up or replica of a kaidensho. The proclamation was a good will effort on the part of Hachiro to attempt to promote his dad's DZR. It was hoped that all DZR organizations would unite in Ohana, with the AJJF opening its arms and doors wide bringing all Professors into the AJJF Board of Professors while still allowing separate organizations to express their uniqueness. Instead selfish, power hungry individuals on the Board of Professors have thwarted this effort. The AJJF Board of Professors has failed to commit itself to the highest standards of honesty, integrity, and service on behalf of Danzan Ryu Jujitsu. They have failed to take responsibility for their actions and to set the record straight in a timely manner."

Professor Edwards is an example of what a dedicated servant to Danzan Ryu Jujitsu accepts upon receiving the honored title of Danzan Ryu Professor. He actively protects, defends and perpetuates the teachings of Professor Okazaki to the best of his ability and lives by example, the Esoteric Principles of Judo. In addition to being the caretaker of Professor Okazaki's chops, he was also given custody of, by Hachiro Okazaki, a number of other personal and historical items belonging to Professor Okazaki.

Professor Edwards has made arrangements to make sure the items belonging to Professor Okazaki will be passed on to a caring and responsible member of the Danzan Ryu community so Professor Okazaki's chops, and other historical items, will never be misused, disappear or simply be discarded.

I sincerely thank Professor Gene Edwards for allowing me the rare opportunity to see and hold Professor Okazaki's chops and other personal and historical items. I know they are being well cared for and are in the safe hands.

Detailed investigative articles on *The Fraudulent Estes Kaidensho Certificate* and *The Untold Story of the Soke Proclamation* are posted on the Pacific Jujitsu Alliance website, [www.pacificjujitsualliance.com](http://www.pacificjujitsualliance.com). Click on Articles About DZR.