


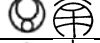

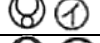
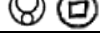


Type 14 Nambu Yearly Production and Major Variations Totals

By Dan Larkin

When general Japanese militaria collectors find a Type 14 Nambu, one of the first things they wonder is, “What have I got.” The general information provided below should enable anyone to easily identify any standard production Type 14 by its arsenal of manufacture, to find out how many of that particular date code were produced, and to determine the example’s “scarcity” as compared to other Type 14s.

Five named arsenals produced the Type 14 between mid-1926 and the end of World War II. As three different arsenal markings were used by the five arsenals, and, as an additional symbol was added for any subsequent numbered production series by two of the arsenals, identifying the total of seven separate arsenal production sequences is best done by using a chart.

Arsenal	Symbol	Dates of Production	Known Serial Number Range	Approximate Total Number Produced	Percent of Total Production
Chigusa		15.8 – 7.11	6 -- 7824	7,830	2.8%
Tokyo		3.5 – 9.12	1 -- 30681	30,700	11.1%
Kokura (“A” = 小)		10.1 – 11.6	30735 -- 35415	4,700	1.7%
Kokubunji		8.12 – 16.10	7835 -- 99941	90,170*	32.5%
Kokubunji First		16.10 – 19.8	19 -- 20291	20,300	7.3%
Toriiimatsu First		16.10 – 18.11	50001 -- 99996	50,000	18.1%
Toriiimatsu Second		18.11 – 20.8	39 -- 73291	73,300	26.5%
				277,000*	100.0%

(* Total includes a deduction of 2,000 as explained below)

Total numbered Type 14 Nambu standard production in the various arsenals totals to around 279,000 pistols. However, a block of 2,000 numbers is missing from Kokubunji production (see totals above and below with asterisks) – no 13.4- or 13.5-dated pistols in the 48,xxx or 49,xxx serial ranges have been observed (high 13.4 = 47,994; low 13.5 = 50,002). So, the total number of standard production pistols used for these calculations is 277,000*. No prototype or anomaly-numbered examples are included in these production totals.

The Chigusa Arsenal produced around 7,830 pistols. The Chigusa numbering sequence was continued by the Kokubunji Arsenal to produce the balance of the initial 100,000 series (around 90,170* pistols). Production was continued into the Kokubunji “First” series, starting with #1,

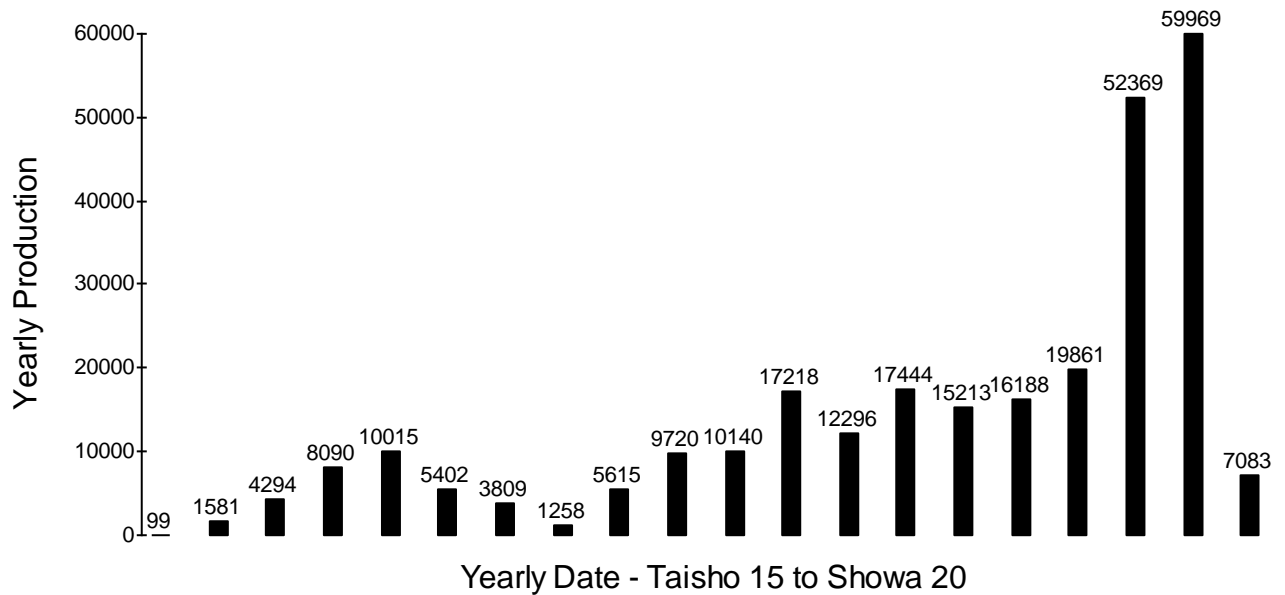
which then stopped at around 20,300. The Kokubunji Arsenal produced a total of around 110,470* pistols in the two series. The Tokyo Arsenal produced around 30,700 pistols. In 1935, all Tokyo production was officially transferred to the Kokura Arsenal. The only way to tell the difference between the two arsenals by external markings is the final inspection mark in the gun's "A" position (right rear frame flat near the date code). All Kokura-marked guns use the "KO" mark (小) in the "A" position. Kokura continued the Tokyo numbering sequence and produced around 4,700 pistols. The Toriimatsu Arsenal produced around 123,300 pistols in two series. The Toriimatsu "First" series totaled 50,000 pistols, and the Toriimatsu "Second" series totaled around 73,300 pistols.

The Type 14 Nambu was produced in 20 calendar years (1926 through 1945). The following chart illustrates the various arsenal production periods, observed totals, possible totals, percentages of total production, and "rarity" ranking with #1 being the fewest produced. All of the data was accumulated through collector observations.

Year Date Code	Calendar Year	Chigusa	Tokyo	Kokura	Kokubunji	Kokubunji First	Toriimatsu First	Toriimatsu Second	Known Total	Possible Total	Rank by Year	Percent by Year
15	1926	99							99	115	1	0.04
2	1927	1581							1581	1603	3	0.6
3	1928	2141	2153						4294	4353	5	1.5
4	1929	1213	6877						8090	8312	9	2.9
5	1930	1296	8719						10015	10049	11	3.6
6	1931	614	4788						5402	5519	6	1.9
7	1932	740	3069						3809	3960	4	1.4
8	1933		1075		183				1258	1383	2	0.5
9	1934		3762		1853				5615	5793	7	2.0
10	1935			4072	5648				9720	9916	10	3.5
11	1936			587	9553				10140	10363	12	3.6
12	1937				17218				17218	17497	16	6.2
13	1938				10296*				10296*	12505	13	4.4
14	1939				17444				17444	17554	17	6.3
15	1940				15213				15213	15278	14	5.5
16	1941				12139	3969	80		16188	16369	15	5.8
17	1942					8511	11350		19861	20022	18	7.1
18	1943					5899	38508	7962	52369	52507	19	18.8
19	1944					1789		58180	59969	60000	20	21.5
20	1945							7083	7083	7108	8	2.5

The actual number of guns produced in any year by any one arsenal will actually be somewhere between the Known Total and the Possible Total. The following graph better illustrates the various increases and decreases in yearly production over time.

KNOWN TYPE 14 PRODUCTION All Arsenals Combined



With all the various arsenal production periods over the full 20 years, a total of 35 combinations of the year of manufacture, the arsenal, and the arsenal series markings are possible. These 35 primary “variations” are the basis by which advanced Type 14 collectors classify examples. In addition to production time period and quantity information, the 35 variations allow for easy comparisons to be made between the different arsenals and production periods to identify the many additional variations created by changes in production. By comparing a specific Type 14 to the listing of the 35 primary arsenal production variations, a general Japanese militaria collector can quickly determine the relative scarcity of that example – they can immediately determine if the example is common production or if it is worthy of more interest.

It should be noted that, of the 35 possible arsenal/year/series combinations, 14 account for less than 1% of total production. Several of those low-production year totals are at less than 1/10 of 1% of total production which makes it extremely difficult to find and acquire an example. Only two Type 14 collectors are reported to have accomplished the feat of finding an example from each of the 35 arsenal/year/series combinations.

The following chart illustrates the 35 primary arsenal/year/series production specifics. Two production periods are shown – known production and largest possible production. As on a previous chart, the actual production total will be somewhere between the two listed totals.

Scarcity Ranking	Arsenal and Series	Date Code	Known Quantity Produced	Percent of Total Production	Possible Quantity Produced	Percent of Total Production
1	Toriiimatsu First	16	80	0.03%	81	0.03%
2	Chigusa (TAISHO)	15	99	0.04%	115	0.04%
3	Kokubunji	8	183	0.07%	208	0.07%
4	Kokura	11	587	0.21%	609	0.22%
5	Chigusa	6	614	0.22%	674	0.24%
6	Chigusa	7	740	0.27%	781	0.28%
7	Tokyo	8	1075	0.39%	1175	0.42%
8	Chigusa	4	1213	0.43%	1266	0.45%
9	Chigusa	5	1296	0.46%	1354	0.49%
10	Chigusa	2	1581	0.57%	1603	0.57%
11	Kokubunji First	19	1789	0.64%	1792	0.64%
12	Kokubunji	9	1853	0.66%	1938	0.69%
13	Chigusa	3	2141	0.77%	2176	0.78%
14	Tokyo	3	2153	0.77%	2177	0.78%
15	Tokyo	7	3069	1.10%	3179	1.14%
16	Tokyo	9	3762	1.35%	3855	1.38%
17	Kokubunji First	16	3969	1.42%	4056	1.45%
18	Kokura	10	4072	1.46%	4147	1.49%
19	Tokyo	6	4788	1.72%	4845	1.74%
20	Kokubunji	10	5648	2.02%	5769	2.07%
21	Kokubunji First	18	5899	2.11%	5936	2.13%
22	Tokyo	4	6877	2.46%	6958	2.49%
23	Toriiimatsu Second	20	7083	2.54%	7108	2.55%
24	Toriiimatsu Second	18	7962	2.85%	8003	2.87%
25	Kokubunji First	17	8511	3.05%	8614	3.09%
26	Tokyo	5	8719	3.13%	8783	3.15%
27	Kokubunji	11	9553	3.42%	9754	3.50%
28	Toriiimatsu First	17	11350	4.07%	11408	4.09%
29	Kokubunji	16	12139	4.35%	12232	4.38%
30	Kokubunji	13	10296*	3.69%*	12505	4.48%
31	Kokubunji	15	15213	5.45%	15278	5.48%
32	Kokubunji	12	17218	6.17%	17497	6.27%
33	Kokubunji	14	17444	6.25%	17554	6.29%
34	Toriiimatsu First	18	38508	13.80%	38568	13.82%
35	Toriiimatsu Second	19	58180	20.85%	58208	20.86%

Some interesting facts can be deduced from the three above charts. Here are some examples:

- approximately 40% of all Type 14 production is dated either 18 (1943) or 19 (1944)
- Chigusa dates 15 through 7 account for less than 3% of total production
- Kokubunji dates 11 through 16 account for over 31% of total production
- more Tokyo 5-dates were produced than the total of the Chigusa Arsenal
- the Toriimatsu Arsenal accounts for over 44% of all Type 14 production
- the 8-date (1933) is the second rarest date code after the Taisho 15

There is a lot more production data you can glean from these charts simply by using addition. With them, you can determine the yearly production placement of any Type 14 you find.

Collectors have identified numerous additional “variations” in the many changes which took place over the 20 years of Type 14 production. The three most visible exterior production changes were the small-to-large trigger guard, the grooved-to-solid cocking knob, and the serrated-to-slab grip. The following chart illustrates these three changes showing when they took place, how many are in each category, and their percentage of total production.

Production Feature	Date Code Range of Production	Approximate Total Number Produced	Percent of Total Production
Small Trigger Guard	Taisho 15.8 – 14.9	100,100	36.1%
Large Trigger Guard	14.9 – 20.8	176,900	63.9%
Grooved Cocking Knob	Taisho 15.8 – 18.12	212,000	76.5%
Solid Cocking Knob	18.12 – 20.8	65,000	23.5%
Serrated Grips	Taisho 15.8 – 19.11	267,000	96.4%
Slab Grips	19.11 – 20.8	9,900	3.6%

Many more minor marking changes occurred including the addition of the SHOWA symbol [昭] preceding the date code, number/character die sizes/styles in different periods, and the use of many different inspection marks in various locations. Many various minor production features changes also occurred. Some of them are easily visible such as the cocking knob knurling size, the number of grip grooves, the rear sight picture, bright-to-blue and straw-to-blue parts finish, the magazine grip spring addition, and the firing pin and guide size/style changes. There are also eight magazine styles used by the various arsenals.

Individual collections are built on the acquisition of various differences in production. Those acquisitions will vary all the way from a single example of a particular major feature (example: a small trigger guard and a large trigger guard) to extensive examples showing arsenals, series, and years of production with additional “bracketing” of major and minor production and

marking changes. Many of the possible variations are very difficult to find and obtain, and a few of those very rare variations are easily recognizable and extremely valuable.

The well-known “Big Three” in extreme rarities for Type 14 Nambu collecting are the “Taisho”, the “Vertical Arsenal”, and the “Double Zero.” As very few of these three major variations were produced, acquiring just one of these rare and valuable examples is a noteworthy accomplishment for a Type 14 collector. The Vertical Arsenal and the Double Zero were each produced over two different calendar years which increases the difficulty for a collector to acquire all possible sub-variations. The chart below shows the Big Three production range, number of known examples, possible production, and a scale illustrating “rarity” for these examples.

“Big Three” Variation	Arsenal/Date	Known Serial Number Range	Known Example	Approximate Possible Production	Percent of Total Production	“X” Out of 10,000 Examples
Taisho	Chigusa 15	6 – 104	15	100	0.04	4
Vertical	Kokubunji 8	7910 – 8017	3	125	0.05	5
Vertical	Kokubunji 9	8035 – 8479	16	500	0.18	18
OO	Toriimastu 16	50001 – 50080	18	80	0.03	3
OO	Toriimastu 17	50082 – 50185	14	105	0.04	4

There are several other rare variations in addition to the Big Three. I’ll mention three, but, arguments could be made for others (for example, there is no mention in this article of the various very rare prototypes and various anomaly-numbered examples produced at the end of the war). The “Nagoya Only”-marked Kokubuji 8-date is probably the “rarest-of-the-rare” in that only three have been reported; around 75 could have been produced. The “Original Production Features” variation consists of those early Chigusa and Tokyo examples which were not returned for modifications in the massive recall of Type 14s beginning in 1932 and which retain their original-style parts. While more of these examples probably just await discovery, less than 20 have been reported by collectors. “Last Ditch” production includes those serialized and dated Type 14s assembled with left-over, mismatched parts near the end of the war. Virtually all 20.7-dated Type 14s fall into this Last Ditch category – as around 800 were produced, they can be found. The rarest Last Ditch example is the 20.8-date, as only four have been reported by collectors; several hundred could have been produced.

I am hopeful that this article and its charts will assist general Japanese militaria collectors in identifying their Type 14 acquisitions. If there are any questions or comments on identifying your Type 14 Nambu, please contact me at danlarkin@suddenlink.net. Thank you and good hunting.