

## **Movie Mt. Tsurugi-Point Record**

Directed by Mr. Daisaku Kimura

Produced by Toei Movie Company, June 2009

**Mt. Tsurugi or Tsurugidake** means by Mountain Sward which is the steepest mountain in Japan which had been prohibited climbing mainly because of religious reason and believed as the devil mountain. The height is 2999m above the sea level. The movie was produced at the site not using any alternative places and also computer graphic techniques.

**Point Record** in direct translation from Japanese to English means by the record of triangular point for topographic mapping survey which used to be established mainly on peak of mountain.

The story of the movie was reconstructed from the novel of the same title written by **Mr. Jiro Nitta**. The story was the record of a surveyor named **Mr. Yoshitaro Shibasaki** who succeeded to set up a triangular point on the peak of Mt. Tsurugi after very difficult trials supported by a guide named **Chojiro**. It was believed that no one had succeeded to climb Mt. Tsurugi but he discovered a rust sward and tin made stick head on the peak which were placed about 1000 years before by maybe an acetic. Mr. Usui Kojima, a chairman of Alpine Club also intended to climb Mt. Tsurugi at the same time, which made a severe competition between Surveyor Shibasaki and Climber Kojima. Shibasaki tried to set up the third class triangular point but failed because the surveyor team could not bring up 60kg weight stone as the geodetic station. But Shibasaki won the competition though the Army Survey Department did not appreciate his achievement because it was not the first climb to Mt. Tsurugi and also he did not succeed to make the third class triangular point.

1. Opening title
2. Mr. Shibasaki was ordered by a Commander, Army Survey Department to climb Mt. Tsurugi to set up a triangular point which was only one point remained un-succeeded. In order to complete 1:50,000 scale national topographic maps, the climbing was indispensable. He was ordered to win the completion against Alpine Club team who tried to climb Mt. Tsurugi for the first time too.
3. Shibasaki was well understood his difficulty by his wife; Hatsuyo. He visited his senior, a retired surveyor to get suggestions how to succeed to climb Mt. Tsurugi. The senior recommended Shibasaki to employ a good guide named Chojiro for his success.
4. In autumn 1906, Shibasaki left Tokyo for Toyama City by train where he met Chojiro who waited for him for two days without knowing the arrival time. Chojiro took Shibasaki to his house and showed several drawings of various mountains including Mt. Tsurugi, which were drawn by Chojiro.
5. The area around Mt. Tsurugi used to be a religious holly place, particularly Mt. Tateyama, 3015m high was a holly mountain respected by many believers. There was a picture story at Ashikura temple, the base of the religious mountain with which a priest explained how awful hell Mt. Tsurugi was though Mt. Tateyama should be a heaven. After Mr. Shibasaki and Chojiro made greetings to the head of the village and the forest bureau, they moved to Murodo from where they tried to find a route to Mt. Tsurugi. At the beginning of the pre-investigation, they met the son of Chojiro who was against climbing Mt. Tsurugi because he worried some punishment to be given to his father by god. Chojiro guided Shibasaki to a cave where mountain god was located.
6. They stayed at a tent and discussed their strategy. The setting sun over clouds was so beautiful.
7. An ascetic was making practices on mountains who knew those mountains very well. They tried to find various alternatives for climbing Mt. Tsurugi.
8. They continued to try many routes including glacier valleys and very steep rocky cliffs. Chojiro guided the upmost point from where anyone could not go further.

9. They met Mr. Usui Kojima, the leader of Alpine Club. They met each other at Army Survey Department without greetings. Kojima introduced Shibasaki modern tools and equipments of mountain climbing which were developed by Europe.
10. When they tried to get down, strong blizzard came. Chojiro tried to visit the ascetic and decided to help him bring down to the foot of mountain. Otherwise the ascetic would not be possible to survive. When they came back to home, the ascetic asked why they rescued him. Shibasaki went back to Tokyo after the pre-investigation.
11. He was again ordered by Army to be sure to climb Mt. Tsurugi. A newspaper agitated the competition saying who could climb Mt. Tsurugi for the first time. Shibasaki again met his senior for further suggestion.
12. He went back to his house and met his wife; Hatsuyo who tried to support him wishing his success by putting a religious symbol into his bag secretly. At the Survey Department Shibasaki made a team of surveyors including Mr. Nobu Ikuta, a young surveyor and others. In spring 1907, they went to Toyama and met several key persons for greetings. A newspaper man tried to make interview but Shibasaki neglected.
13. The team employed porters and explained the jobs. When the team departed for surveying, the son of Chojiro wanted to stop his father to climb Mt. Tsurugi, but Chojiro beat his son and decided to go for supporting the national mapping project.
14. On the first day of surveying, the climate was terrible with blizzard and snow. Shibasaki started survey for surrounding mountains. He selected triangular points not including Mt. Tsurugi. Though Nobu Ikuta suggested to challenge Mt. Tsurugi but Shibasaki refused his suggestion as he should finish many other mountains in advance.
15. For selecting triangular points they had to climb snow covered mountains. Shibasaki was always thinking how to challenge Mt. Tsurugi.
16. The survey team met accidentally snow falls. Very fortunately everybody was rescued.
17. They continued difficult climbing and surveying. Shibasaki finished the selection of triangular points one by one. Alpine Club team

- started their challenge to climb Mt. Tsurugi.
18. Shibasaki divided the team into two; one was to attack mountains for the selection of points and another to prepare construction materials for triangular towers at Tateyama Onsen, or hot spa. The three met too strong blizzard to stay in tent. They decided to go down in blizzard but lost the way back. Chojiro found a way by a mountain bird's voice which used to stay at fixed territory.
  19. They finally succeeded to go back in heavy shower to Tateyama Onsen where another team stayed. Fortunately those surveying instruments and maps were saved. Nobu was hardly damaged.
  20. Alpine Club team tried to find a route to Mt. Tsurugi but it was not easy. They met two hunters who did not believe their success. Shibasaki finished the selection of triangular points and had to survey of angles from those points except Mt. Tsurugi.
  21. The survey team prepared construction of triangular towers using long wooden bars. Shibasaki sent a letter to his wife though he received many letters from his wife. The team constructed the third ordered triangular point at Okudainichi Mountain for the first time, but there were many other points to go. Alpine Club team found the survey team and sent flag messages to them, saying it was dangerous from this point and go down the mountain.
  22. Shibasaki and his team tried to climb rocky cliffs for finding a route to Mt. Tsurugi. Though Chojiro stopped the challenge, Nobu, a young surveyor tried to climb the rocky cliff but he dropped from the rock and injured.
  23. They went down to Tateyama Onsen where they could not get good rooms. Shibasaki reported the accident to the Survey Department, who confirmed Shibasaki to continue. Alpine Club gave up continuing their climbing as the condition was so bad. Nobu recovered who met the son of Chojiro and received a letter addressed to his father.
  24. Nobu returned to his team and handed the letter to Chojiro. Nobu reported to get his first baby. They continued observing angle measurements at various mountains. Mr. Kojima met Shibasaki and said good luck. Shibasaki thought that climbing mountains should not be for fun like Alpine Club but it should be more important for what one tried to climb. Chojiro read the letter of his son who allowed his

father to climb Mt. Tsurugi because he understood the will of Chojiro to help the national mapping project.

25. Chojiro suggested to challenge a glacier valley as the ascetic taught that one could succeed to climb Mt. Tsurugi if one climbs the mountain looking back snow and get down the mountain looking back snow. Chojiro realized to follow his words by climbing the glacier Sannosawa valley which was so steep. The survey team of five persons started to climb the glacier valley. Finally they climbed the top end of the glacier valley after where rocky steep cliffs were ahead toward the summit of Mt. Tsurugi..
26. Chojiro led the team by climbing the rocky cliffs. Chojiro wanted to push Shibasaki to climb Mt. Tsurugi as the first climber as a moral of the guide but Shibasaki refused to go first as they were a team of friends. Finally they reached the summit from where 360 degree panorama was looked around including Mt Fuji. They constructed the fourth class triangular point on July 13 1907(actually according to the official record it was the 28<sup>th</sup> August 1907). They discovered a rust steel sword and a tin made stick head which might be placed 1000 years ago by an ascetic for religious purpose. According to the report by Shibasaki, Army Survey Department was disappointed with the fact that the climbing by Shibasaki was not the first climbing.
27. But Shibasaki was honored with his team who achieved the climbing. The newspaper reported the secondary climbing by Shibasaki.
28. Shibasaki made observation from Bessan from where he targeted Mt. Tsurugi. In binocular he found Alpine Club team who was standing at the peak of Mt. Tsurugi and sending flag signals, saying "Congratulation for the success of the climbing by the survey team and the climbing record should be kept forever." Nobu sent back their messages to Alpine Club team saying, "Congratulation for your success too. You are our good competitors and friends."
29. Ending with the list of actors and collaborators with background scenes of surrounding mountains.

**Translated by Shunji Murai, President, Japan Association of Surveyors; 21 December 2009**