

Network Utilization, Formative Transmission, and the Silence Gap: Canonization and the Institutional Emergence of the Usui Reiki Ryōhō Gakkai

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ABSTRACT

This article develops further implications of the three-phase reconstruction model of early Reiki (formation, mediation, canonization) (Jonker 2026), focusing specifically on the emergence and early institutionalization of the Usui Reiki Ryōhō Gakkai. The phased model has demonstrated that while Reiki functioned as a transmissible healing practice prior to 1922, the first secure public attribution of founder status and organizational identity appears only with the erection of the Usui Memorial Stone in 1927¹. This chronological pattern invites reconsideration of the relationship between Mikao Usui and the Gakkai.

Rather than treating the Gakkai as an institution founded by Usui in a single initiating act (as commonly assumed, in 1922), the present study examines the historically plausible possibility that the Gakkai emerged through the consolidation of an existing network that adopted, stabilized, and later canonized teachings associated with Usui. Particular attention is given to the Memorial Stone as a canonization-layer document, situating its founder attribution within the broader process of posthumous institutional stabilization characteristic of Phase–3 (canonization and memorial consolidation).

The findings suggest that the 1927 memorial inscription is best understood not as a *neutral record* of an earlier founding event, but as part of a *retrospective process* through which lineage, authority, and institutional continuity were formally articulated. Such canonization-layer documents typically do not merely preserve memory but also stabilize it, selectively standardizing biographical detail, emphasizing particular origin narratives, and integrating the founder into a coherent institutional framework suited to the needs of the emerging organization. This interpretation strengthens the explanatory coherence of the three-phase model and clarifies how Reiki could circulate as a coherent practice prior to its later stabilization within a named institutional framework.

¹ The date February 1927 is the date recorded on the memorial inscription. Given the monument’s size and the production process involved, the carving and physical placement may have occurred over a longer period. The date can therefore be understood as referring to the moment of inscription or dedication within the broader memorialization process.

1. INTRODUCTION

The three-phase reconstruction model of early Reiki (formation, mediation, canonization) has demonstrated that the earliest secure public attribution of founder status and organizational identity appears only with the erection of the Usui Memorial Stone in February 1927. Prior to that threshold, the documentary record contains public attestations of *reiki ryōhō* as a practice category, yet it does not name Mikao Usui as founder nor identify a formally constituted Usui Reiki Ryōhō Gakkai.

This chronological pattern raises a historiographical question: how should the relationship between Usui and the Gakkai be understood within a phased model of emergence? If Reiki functioned as a transmissible practice prior to its public canonization, then the institutional articulation visible in 1927 may represent not the beginning of the practice itself, but the stabilization of memory, authority, and lineage at a post-formative stage.

This present article therefore examines the early history of the Usui Reiki Ryōhō Gakkai as a case of canonization-layer consolidation. Rather than assuming a singular founding moment in 1922, it explores the possibility that the Gakkai crystallized through the adoption and stabilization of an already circulating moral-therapeutic discipline. In this reading, the Memorial Stone functions not as a neutral chronicle of origins, but as the first datable public articulation of institutional continuity.

2. FROM FOUNDER ATTRIBUTION TO CANONIZATION: REFRAMING THE GAKKAI-USUI RELATIONSHIP

The memorial inscription erected in 1927 constitutes the earliest secure public statement identifying Mikao Usui as founder of the Usui Reiki Ryōhō Gakkai. Its authorship, timing, and narrative structure provide an opportunity to examine how founder attribution was formally articulated and stabilized at the moment when the continuity of the organization required durable symbolic anchoring. The question addressed in this chapter is therefore not whether Usui played a central role in the emergence of Reiki, but how and under what circumstances his role came to be publicly defined in institutional terms.

The proposal that the Usui Reiki Ryōhō Gakkai did not originate as a formally founded institution but emerged through the gradual consolidation of an already existing informal network has direct implications for the three-phase model of early Reiki. Importantly, this reframing does not displace the formative teacher–student hypothesis involving Tokio Yokoi and Mikao Usui; rather, it clarifies the structural conditions under which such a formative transmission could occur without leaving immediate documentary traces.

This proposal develops an alternative already noted in my earlier dissertation (Jonker 2016, §6.4.5.), where the possibility of naval involvement in the Gakkai's formation was discussed as a secondary hypothesis. The present article does not introduce a new claim but expands that earlier observation into a processual, network-based explanatory model.

Methodologically, this distinction is reinforced by the fact that the same work (Jonker 2016, §6.4.9.) has shown that there is some *emic* literature that suggests that Usui had already a dojo and was already a teacher at the time naval officers crossed his path (Jonker 2016, pp246-247 referring to Beckett 2009, pp14-18). Beckett² stated that in 1925,

² Beckett's account belongs to *emic* Reiki literature based on retrospective testimony. While widely cited within practitioner circles, the specific historical details have not been independently corroborated in archival sources.

a group of high ranked naval officers arrived at Usui's dojo to learn Usui's system. Furthermore, in elaborating about the relationship between Usui and the Imperial Navy, I unfolded a picture (Jonker 2016, p248) of Usui as someone offering a technique that gets 'abused' by the Navy to help officers of the Imperial Navy reach a state of *anshin ritsume* where peace of mind had priority over peace in the world, while at the same time the same technique is used by the Navy to obtain physical healing.

This distinction is further reinforced by the fact that Okuna Shigejirō's 1928 book discusses Reiki practice and ethical cultivation but does not mention a formally founded Usui Reiki Ryōhō Gakkai, supporting the view that organizational naming belongs to a later canonization layer rather than to the formative or articulative phases.

And finally, Tomita Kaiji's 1933 account, while later edited with reference to the Usui Reiki Ryōhō Gakkai, treats Reiki primarily as a practiced and taught discipline without reference to a founding moment, thereby corroborating the silence gap resolution proposed by the three-phase model.

Within Phase 1 (c. 1919–1922), the emphasis lies on formative transmission rather than institutional visibility. If Usui acquired a coherent, ethically framed, and transmissible healing discipline during this period, the absence of public documentation is not atypical. Pedagogical relationships—especially those operating within elite, religious, or therapeutic circles—do not typically generate press traces, organizational charters, or named institutions. In this sense, the Yokoi–Usui hypothesis belongs squarely to Phase 1 and remains unaffected by later questions concerning organizational naming or leadership attribution.

The question of the Gakkai's origin becomes salient only in Phase 2 (c. 1922–1927), where practices begin to circulate more widely and require stabilization. A *network-first* model suggests that what later came to be called the “Usui Reiki Ryōhō Gakkai” functioned initially as an informal social and pedagogical network, plausibly overlapping with naval and elite circles already invested in moral cultivation, *seishin shūyō*³. In such a context, Usui need not be understood as the institutional founder, but as a practitioner whose methods were taken up, adapted, and transmitted within an existing milieu concerned with discipline, composure, and ethical formation—including what would later be framed as *kōgeki seishin* 攻撃精神. This explains why early Reiki appears functional and transmissible before it appears named or canonized.

This reframing directly addresses the silence gap: the near absence of contemporaneous newspaper references to Usui, the Gakkai, or a founding event prior to 1927. The early usage of the term “reiki” should not be retroactively equated with a fixed institutional system; earlier scholarship has demonstrated that the word functioned in multiple semantic registers in early twentieth-century Japan. If Reiki circulated during Phases 1 and 2 primarily through interpersonal transmission within closed or semi-closed networks, silence in the public archive is no longer a problem to be explained away but an expected outcome. Public visibility becomes historically anchored only in Phase 3 (from 1927 onward), when memorialization, naming, and founder attribution emerge together. The

³ *Seishin shūyō* (精神修養): Literally “spiritual cultivation” or “mental discipline”. In the late Meiji and Taishō periods, the term referred to a widespread movement of moral and psychological self-cultivation aimed at strengthening character, self-control, and civic virtue. It drew eclectically on Neo-Confucian ethics, Zen discipline, bushidō ideals, and emerging modern psychologies, and functioned as a key conceptual framework within the broader culture of inner or psycho-spiritual training (*seishin bunka* 精神文化) in early twentieth-century Japan.

1927 Memorial Stone thus marks not the beginning of Reiki, but the threshold of canonization.

This model also clarifies the role of Chujiro Hayashi. Hayashi's later systematization and organizational leadership are better understood as acts of consolidation within Phase 2–3 rather than as succession from a clearly documented founder. His background as a naval officer aligns structurally with a network-based transmission model and helps explain how Reiki moved from informal circulation to stabilized pedagogy without requiring a singular founding moment.

What this reframing adds, finally, is a methodological correction. It shifts analysis away from *founder-centric narratives* toward *processual formation*, distinguishing clearly between (1) formative transmission, (2) network utilization and stabilization, and (3) posthumous canonization. By doing so, it preserves the explanatory power of the three-phase theory, resolves the silence gap without special pleading, and leaves the Yokoi–Usui teacher hypothesis intact and, in fact, more structurally plausible.

The re-appearance of Reiki in Japan during the 1980s did not represent the uninterrupted continuation of its formative Taishō-period practice, but its re-introduction through the Hayashi–Takata lineage, already shaped by post-1926 articulation and post-war global transmission. This confirms that different modern forms of Reiki preserve different historical layers of the tradition, and that neither contemporary institutional practice nor Western lineage transmission can be assumed to represent without mediation the formative Yokoi–Usui phase. The continued existence of the Usui Reiki Ryōhō Gakkai within Japan likewise reflects institutional continuity belonging to the canonization and post-canonization layers, rather than providing direct documentary access to the formative phase itself.

All this raises the question why the Memorial Stone then depicts Usui as founder of the Gakkai.

3. WHY DOES THE MEMORIAL STONE MENTION USUI AS FOUNDER OF THE GAKKAI?

To answer this question within the framework of the three-phase reconstruction model, the Memorial Stone must be situated at the precise historical threshold between mediation and canonization. The chronological sequence is therefore critical. In March 1926, Usui died following a stroke, and his passing was not accompanied by public obituary notices, press reports, or formal institutional announcements—an absence consistent with the silence gap characteristic of the formative and mediative phases. In December 1926, the imperial transition from the Taishō to the Shōwa era marked a broader shift in Japan's political and moral environment. Only thereafter, in February 1927, does the first durable public act of institutional memorialization appear: the erection of the Usui Memorial Stone. Within the phased model, this sequence does not represent the beginning of Reiki or of the Gakkai, but the moment at which previously fluid teaching relationships and organizational structures were retrospectively stabilized through founder attribution, lineage articulation, and canonizing inscription.

3.1. THE YEAR 1927 – FROM TASHŌ TO SHŌWA-ERA JAPAN

From the perspective of the three-phase reconstruction model, the year 1927 represents a structurally intelligible moment for founder attribution and institutional canonization rather than an arbitrary commemorative act. Within the phased framework, the period c.

1919–1922 corresponds to formative transmission, characterized by interpersonal teaching and minimal institutional visibility, while the years c. 1922–1927 represent an extended mediative phase during which practices circulated but remained organizationally fluid. The transition from the Taishō era (大正時代) to the Shōwa era (昭和時代) on 25 December 1926, followed shortly after Usui’s death in March 1926, precisely created the conditions under which retrospective stabilization of authority and lineage became institutionally necessary.

It is therefore only in February 1927 that the first durable public act of memorialization appears in the historical record: the erection of the Usui Memorial Stone. Within the phased model, this moment marks the threshold of canonization, in which previously transmitted practices, ethical teachings, and pedagogical relationships were formally condensed into a stabilized founder narrative and institutional identity. The Memorial Stone thus coincides not with the emergence of Reiki as a practice, but with the point at which organizational continuity required retrospective consolidation. In this light, the inscription’s attribution of a 1922 founding date is best understood as part of this canonizing process, projecting institutional coherence backward onto an earlier formative period that had not yet produced fixed organizational structures or publicly documented founder claims.

3.2. THE 21-DAY RETREAT ON MT. KURAMA

The Memorial Stone’s reference to a 21-day retreat on Mt. Kurama must be situated within the canonization phase identified in the three-phase reconstruction model. The inscription constitutes the earliest known source to present this retreat as the decisive moment of Usui’s spiritual attainment and teaching authority. Notably, no reference to such a retreat appears in the surviving hand-written material attributed to Usui himself, nor in contemporaneous documentation from his lifetime currently available to researchers. This chronological asymmetry indicates that the Kurama narrative becomes publicly visible only at the point of memorial consolidation in 1927.

Recent research by Olaf Böhm (2025), which reproduces early Reiki-related *waka* booklets and examines multiple publication layers, further confirms that key narrative and curricular elements associated with Usui became textually stabilized only in sources appearing after his death in March 1926. Particularly relevant in this regard is Okuna Shigejirō’s *Tenrai no koe* (1928), which presents the Kurama retreat narrative within a historical context shaped by the transition of December 1926 from the relatively liberal Taishō period to the more authority-oriented early Shōwa era. Appearing shortly after both the erection of the February 1927 memorial inscription and this broader political and ideological consolidation, Okuna’s account is best understood as reflecting the canonization-phase stabilization of founder memory and institutional identity rather than constituting independent contemporaneous documentation of formative-phase events.

This interpretation builds upon earlier observations (Jonker 2016) that the retreat narrative derives primarily from *emic* tradition and memorial transmission rather than from contemporaneous documentation, and that its historiographical function is therefore better understood as explanatory of teaching authority than as direct evidence of formative acquisition.

Within the phased model, this pattern is historically intelligible. Canonization-layer documents commonly condense extended processes of training, transmission, and pedagogical formation into a single symbolic origin event capable of anchoring institutional identity and founder authority. In this context, the Kurama retreat functions not primarily as documentation of formative transmission itself, but as a retrospective

narrative stabilization that renders the founder's authority legible within a culturally recognizable framework.

Such retreat narratives were widely intelligible within the psycho-spiritual culture of late Meiji and Taishō Japan, where mountain withdrawal (山籠り, *yamagomori*) functioned as an established means of moral purification, spiritual discipline, and acquisition of religious authority across Buddhist, Shugendō, and independent spiritual training contexts. Its inclusion on the Memorial Stone therefore aligns structurally with the transition from formative transmission to institutional canonization, providing a coherent and culturally authoritative origin narrative at the moment when organizational continuity required durable symbolic anchoring.

The absence of the retreat narrative in currently extant lifetime documentation does not invalidate the memorial inscription, but it does clarify its historical function: it belongs to the canonization layer through which earlier formative transmission was retrospectively stabilized and condensed into institutional founder memory.

3.3. THE AUTHOR OF THE MEMORIAL STONE

A further critical element for understanding the canonization process concerns the authorship of the Memorial Stone itself. The inscription identifies Admiral Ushida Juzaburō (牛田従三郎), who succeeded Usui as president of the Usui Reiki Ryōhō Gakkai, as the author of the text. This detail is historiographically significant, because it locates the formal articulation of the founder narrative within the leadership of the post-Usui institutional environment rather than within Usui's own lifetime.

Within the three-phase reconstruction model, this authorship aligns structurally with the transition into the canonization phase. Following the death of a central transmitting figure, successor leadership commonly assumes responsibility for preserving continuity, stabilizing lineage, and articulating institutional identity. The memorial inscription can therefore be understood not merely as a commemorative text, but as a formal act of organizational self-definition, in which previously transmitted practices and teaching relationships were retrospectively consolidated into a coherent founder narrative capable of supporting institutional continuity.

This interpretation does not require the assumption that the inscription preserves a complete or neutral historical record. Rather, it reflects a historically recognizable process in which successor leadership articulates founder memory in ways that preserve continuity, clarify lineage, and stabilize institutional identity. Such processes may involve the selective preservation, emphasis, or framing of particular biographical elements, while other aspects of earlier transmission remain unrecorded or recede from institutional memory. The attribution of founding agency to Usui in the memorial inscription thus becomes intelligible as part of the canonization threshold identified in 1927: a moment at which the preservation of continuity required durable symbolic anchoring in the person of a single designated founder, through whom the emerging organization articulated its lineage and public identity.

This process of retrospective stabilization corresponds to broader patterns observed in the development of modern Japanese spiritual movements. As shown in earlier research, Reiki emerged during a period in which numerous new spiritual groups appeared in Japan and subsequently developed structures that enabled their continuation beyond the lifetime of their founder. Comparable processes of posthumous institutional consolidation can be observed, for example, in movements such as Tenrikyō and Ōmoto, where successor leadership formalized founder identity and lineage through organizational narratives and commemorative practices in order to stabilize continuity beyond the founder's lifetime.

Organizational narratives likewise played an important role in translating previously fluid teaching relationships into durable institutional continuity, allowing transmitted practice to become anchored in stabilized lineage and institutional memory (Jonker 2016).

In this light, the authorship of the Usui Memorial Stone by Ushida reflects the transition from lived transmission to institutional memory. The inscription represents the moment at which founder attribution, lineage continuity, and organizational identity became formally articulated within a durable commemorative framework. It therefore functions simultaneously as memorial, lineage affirmation, and canonization document, marking the point at which Reiki's earlier formative transmission became stabilized within the emerging institutional structure of the Usui Reiki Ryōhō Gakkai.

CONCLUSIONS

Summary of Findings

The present study set out to examine how the attribution of founding agency to Mikao Usui and the reported establishment of the Usui Reiki Ryōhō Gakkai in 1922, as recorded on the 1927 Memorial Stone, can be understood in light of the broader documentary silence and the known historical development of Reiki practice. Rather than treating the memorial inscription as a neutral record of an earlier founding event, the analysis approached it as part of a historically situated process of institutional stabilization and memory consolidation.

The findings demonstrate that Reiki practice could circulate prior to formal institutional canonization through informal networks of social, professional, and pedagogical exchange. As shown in Chapter 3, such networks provided an environment in which therapeutic practice, ethical instruction, and experiential training could be transmitted without generating the forms of public documentation typically associated with formal organizational founding. This mediative mode of transmission clarifies the otherwise striking absence of contemporaneous press coverage, institutional announcements, or founder attribution during the early 1920s.

Chapter 4 further established that the Memorial Stone inscription of February 1927 represents the earliest durable public articulation linking Usui, Reiki, and a specific founding date. Its timing, authorship by successor leadership, and integration of symbolic origin elements—most notably the Kurama retreat narrative—indicate that the inscription belongs to a canonization layer in which founder identity, lineage continuity, and institutional legitimacy were retrospectively formalized. Within this context, the attribution of founding agency to Usui functions not as contemporaneous documentation of initial formation, but as a memorial stabilization of teaching authority and organizational continuity.

Taken together, these findings clarify how Reiki could emerge, circulate, and acquire coherence as a transmissible practice prior to its later formalization within a named institutional framework. They show that the apparent discontinuity between early practice visibility and later founder attribution does not represent a contradiction in the historical record but reflects the transition from formative transmission and mediative circulation to retrospective canonization and institutional consolidation.

Implications for the Three-Phase reconstruction model

The findings of the present study provide independent structural support for the three-phase reconstruction model of early Reiki history (Jonker 2026). That model proposes that Reiki did not emerge as a fully formed institutional system at a single founding moment, but developed through a sequence of formative transmission, extended mediative

articulation, and later canonization. The evidence examined here—including the post-1926 textual stabilization documented in early Reiki publication layers—aligns closely with each of these phases and clarifies the mechanisms through which the transition from formative practice to institutional memory occurred.

The analysis of network utilization presented in Chapter 3 demonstrates how Reiki could circulate as a coherent therapeutic and pedagogical discipline prior to formal institutional stabilization. The absence of contemporaneous press coverage, public founding announcements, or explicit founder attribution during the early 1920s is consistent with a mediative phase in which transmission occurred primarily through interpersonal instruction, informal associations, and socially embedded practice environments. Rather than indicating nonexistence, the silence gap reflects the structural conditions under which formative transmission took place.

Chapter 4 further confirms that the Memorial Stone inscription of 1927 represents a canonization-layer document, marking the point at which founder attribution, lineage continuity, and institutional identity were formally stabilized. The timing of the inscription, its authorship by successor leadership, and its integration of symbolic origin elements demonstrate that this moment corresponds to the canonization threshold identified in the three-phase model. The attribution of founding agency to Usui in 1922 therefore becomes historically intelligible not as the beginning of Reiki practice itself, but as part of the later retrospective stabilization of an already circulating discipline.

These findings reinforce the central methodological implication of the phased reconstruction: institutional founder narratives often emerge at the point of memorial consolidation rather than at the moment of initial formation. The three-phase model thus provides a coherent explanatory framework capable of integrating formative transmission, mediative circulation, and later canonization into a single historically consistent account. In doing so, it resolves the apparent tension between early practice visibility and later founder attribution by recognizing them as belonging to different phases of the same developmental process.

Final Conclusions

The reconstruction presented in this study demonstrates that the early history of Reiki is most coherently understood as a process of *gradual formation, mediated transmission, and later institutional canonization* rather than as the product of a single identifiable founding moment. The 1927 Memorial Stone inscription represents the first durable public articulation of founder attribution and organizational identity, marking the point at which previously transmitted practice was retrospectively stabilized within a formal lineage framework. This moment of memorial consolidation did not initiate Reiki as a practice but provided it with a structured institutional memory capable of supporting continuity beyond the lifetime of its principal transmitter.

Recognizing the Memorial Stone as a canonization-layer document allows the apparent discontinuities in the historical record to be resolved without requiring either the rejection of founder attribution or the assumption of *ex nihilo* invention. Instead, founder narratives stabilize institutional continuity during memorial consolidation. In this light, the early development of Reiki reflects a historically recognizable pattern in which formative practice precedes institutional definition, and institutional definition in turn stabilizes and preserves that practice through retrospective narrative consolidation. This perspective does not diminish the historical significance of Mikao Usui's role in the articulation and transmission of Reiki. Rather, it situates that role within the dynamic process through which practice, memory, and institution became aligned. By distinguishing between formative emergence and later canonization, the present study contributes to a more historically precise understanding of Reiki's early development and

provides a methodological framework for interpreting the relationship between lived practice and institutional founder memory in the study of modern spiritual traditions.

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APPENDIX: TRANSLATION MEMORIAL STONE

*Editorial Note on the Memorial Stone Translation*⁴

The memorial inscription translated below should be read within its historical function as a commemorative and institutional text composed in February 1927 by Admiral Ushida Juzaburō, Usui’s successor as president of the Usui Reiki Ryōhō Gakkai. Its opening emphasis on Usui’s moral character and spiritual cultivation reflects the conventions of memorial literature, which seek to honor and stabilize the authority of the deceased rather than to provide a neutral administrative record. Particular narrative elements—most notably the account of the 21-day retreat on Mt. Kurama and the attribution of a specific founding period for his teaching—appear here (to the best of my knowledge) for the first time in the extant public record and are not documented in surviving materials attributable to Usui himself during his lifetime. Their inclusion aligns with a broader process of

⁴ https://www.aetw.org/reiki_usui_memorial.html

retrospective consolidation, in which extended processes of training, teaching, and transmission were condensed into a coherent origin narrative capable of anchoring lineage and institutional continuity. The inscription's emphasis on Usui's role as teacher of numerous students further reinforces this function by establishing a direct line of transmission between the founder and successor generations. The authorship of the text by Ushida confirms that this founder narrative was formally articulated by successor leadership after Usui's death, situating the monument within the canonization phase of Reiki's early institutional history. In this sense, the Memorial Stone represents the earliest durable public act stabilizing founder attribution, lineage continuity, and organizational identity, and is therefore best understood not simply as a record of earlier events but as a document of memorial consolidation produced at a decisive moment in the formation of the Usui Reiki Ryōhō Gakkai's institutional self-understanding.

Reiho Choso Usui Sensei Kudoku No Hi

Memorial of the Benevolence of Usui Sensei,
founder of Reiho (Spiritual Method)
English Version, Copyright © 2003 James Deacon
Translation (especially for AETW.org) by Jiro Kozuki

That which one attains within, as a result of disciplined study and training, is called Virtue, and that which can be offered to others by teaching, and methods of salvation is called Distinguished Service. Only the person of high merit and great virtue can be called a great founding teacher. Sages, philosophers, and brilliant men of old and the founders of new teachings and new religions were all like that. Usui Sensei can be counted among them. Usui Sensei developed the method that would improve mind and body by using the universal power. Having heard of his reputation, countless people from all over gathered and asked him to teach them the great way of the Spiritual Method, and to heal them.

His common name was Mikao and his other name was Gyoho (Kyoho). He was born in the village of Taniai in the Yamagata district of Gifu prefecture. His ancestor's name is Tsunetane Chiba. His father's name was Taneuji, and was commonly called Uzaemon. His mother's family name was Kawai.

Sensei was born in the first year of the Keio period, called Keio Gunnen (1865), on August 15th. He was a talented and hard working student; his ability was far superior to his fellows. When he had grown up, he travelled to Europe, America and China to study. He wanted to be successful in life, but couldn't achieve it. He worked hard but often he was unlucky and in need. However he didn't give up and he disciplined himself to study more and more.

One day he went to Kurama Yama to undergo rigorous spiritual discipline. On the beginning of the 21st day, suddenly he felt a large Reiki over his head. He attained an enlightenment and at that moment he comprehended the Spiritual Method. When he first used it on himself, it produced beneficial results immediately. After that, he tried it on his family. Since it was effective, he decided it was much better to share it with the public than to keep this knowledge solely for his own family. He opened a training centre in Harajuku, Aoyama, Tokyo to teach and practice the Spiritual Method in April of the 11th year of the Taisho period (1922).

Many people came from far and wide and asked for the guidance and therapy, and even lined up outside of the building.

In September of the twelfth year of the Taisho period (1923), there was a devastating earthquake. Everywhere there were groans of pain from the injured. Usui Sensei felt pity for the people, and took the Spiritual Method into the devastated city and used its healing powers on the survivors, curing and saving innumerable people. This is just a broad outline of his relief activities during such an emergency.

Later on, his training centre became too small. In February of the 14th year of Taisho (1925 A.D.) he moved to a new training centre in Nakano, outside Tokyo. Due to his increased fame he was often invited to many places. Sensei, accepting the invitations, went to Kure and then to Hiroshima and Saga, and reached Fukuyama. It was during his stay in Fukuyama that unexpectedly he became ill and died, aged 62*. It was March 9 of the 15th year of Taisho (1926 A.D.)

[*NOTE: According to the dates given, Usui Sensei would have actually been 60 at the time of his death. However, apparently there is an ancient Japanese tradition that a child is considered to be 'one' at birth, and is seen as being a year older at each new year, rather than the birthday that falls in that year?? An alternative explanation for the discrepancy could have something to do with the fact that, at the time of Usui-sensei's birth, Japan used a different calendrical system. The change over to the 'western' system in 1873 may have led to mistakes in the recording of exact dates of events in the immediately preceding years??]

His wife was named Sadako, from the Suzuki family. A boy and a girl were born. The boy's name was Fuji who carried on the Usui family after his father's death. Sensei was mild, gentle and modest by nature and he never behaved ostentatiously. He was physically big and strong. He always had a contented smile. However, in the face of adversity, he sought a solution with determination and patience. He had many talents and liked to read, and his knowledge of history, medicine, psychology, divination, incantation, physiognomy and Buddhist scriptures was great.

On reflection, the Spiritual Method not only cures diseases, but also balances the spirit and makes the body healthy using innate healing abilities, and so, helps achieve happiness.

So, when it comes to teaching, first let the student understand the Meiji Emperor's admonitions; and let them chant the Five Precepts mornings and evenings, and keep them in mind:

Firstly: Don't get angry today, Secondly: Don't worry today, Thirdly: Be grateful today, Fourthly: Work diligently today, Fifthly: Be kind to others today.

These are truly great teachings for cultivation and discipline in keeping with those great teachings of the ancient sages and the wisemen. Sensei named these teachings 'the Secret Method of Inviting Blessings' and 'the Spiritual Medicine to cure many diseases'. Notice the outstanding features of the teachings. Furthermore, when it comes to teaching, it should be as simple as possible and not difficult to understand. It is important to start from a place close to you. Another noted feature is that while sitting in silent meditation with your hands held in prayer and reciting the Five Precepts, a pure and healthy mind will be cultivated. Its true value is in daily practice. This is the reason why the Spiritual Method became so popular.

Recently the state of the world has altered and peoples' thoughts have changed a great deal. Hopefully, the spread of this Spiritual Method will be of great help to people who have a confused mind or who do not have morality. Surely it is not only of benefit in curing chronic diseases and lingering complaints?

The number of students of Sensei's teaching is already over 2,000. Among them, senior students who remained in Tokyo are maintaining Sensei's training centre, and others in different provinces also are trying to spread the Spiritual Method as much as possible. Although Sensei died, the Spiritual Method will continue to spread far and wide. Ah, what a great thing Sensei has done, to have shared this Spiritual Method with the people out there after having been enlightened within!

Lately, many students came together and decided to erect this memorial in the graveyard at Saihoji Temple in the Toyotama district to honour his benevolence, and to spread the Spiritual Method to the people in the future. I was asked to write these words. As I deeply appreciate his work and am pleased with the very friendly teacher-disciple relationships among fellow students, I could not refuse the request, and I wrote this summary in the hope that people will be reminded to look up to him with reverence.

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