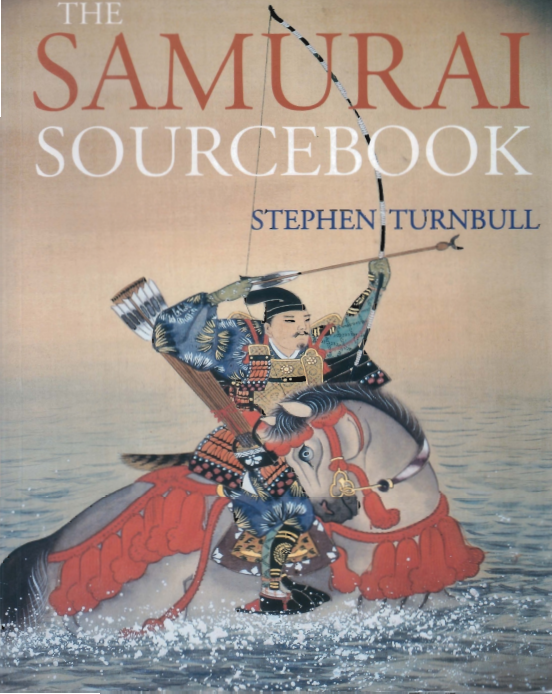


THE  
SAMURAI  
SOURCEBOOK

STEPHEN TURNBULL



郎左門  
光隣

丹州福地山の城  
戦竟ふ敵方の勝利と  
久吉言実槍とせんしす  
死にける両陣の尸墨々じて丘  
陣の辺なる死骸と先取捨へんと  
傍、引退く中に怪べし森者ありて  
短刀と刃ト久吉と目をけ飛り  
捨作且元主君の大事と馳塞鎧と  
光隣に苛て持くる短刀投捨つ  
音上登喜十郎左門光隣此所ふ  
り首と渡せと呼張て勢猛く  
田切一世の勇と震ひ人文もせば  
睡と衣人屏風と三て見物ふれ  
や極りも人加田切大喝して突  
深く串れ漂ひちがうも手  
下ケ鎧と片手をかり小切拵一ヶ  
出られ竟ふ加田切が為小陣没  
しき豪傑とをのひつる

史 柳下亭種員記

英  
勇  
傳

一  
三  
國  
女  
力  
帝  
再  
高





# THE SAMURAI SOURCEBOOK

STEPHEN TURNBULL

CASELL&CO

**DEDICATED TO MY FAMILY:  
JO, ALEX, RICHARD AND KATE**

**Cassell & Co**  
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**Frontispiece and jacket illustrations:**

The frontispiece is a print by Kuniyoshi depicting the samurai Akechi Mitsuhide. Mitsuhide was related to Akechi Mitsuhide, and fought beside him at the battle of Yamazaki in 1582, where they were defeated by Toyotomi Hideyoshi. It is said that during Hideyoshi's inspection of the battlefield the following day Mitsuhide rose up from under a mound of corpses to try and kill him, but Mitsuhide was intercepted by one of Hideyoshi's retainers and was himself killed. The image of the dying Mitsuhide, blood-stained and with sword in hand, staggering beneath the weight of his sashimono

flag drooped across his shoulders, is a very dark and powerful one.

It also contrasts starkly with the colourful yet controlled image of the samurai warrior depicted on the front cover, which is of the hero Nasu Yoichi loosing an arrow at the start of the battle of Yashima in 1184. This is from a hanging scroll in the Watanabe Museum, Torii, and shows the moment when this accomplished archer shot a fan from off the mast of one of the Taira ships, a feat of consummate skill.

The samurai swordsman on the back cover is almost a compromise between the above two extremes. Taken together, these three visual depictions encompass the whole spectrum of the world of the Japanese samurai warrior which is the theme of this book.

The background pictures to the chapter headings show a march past by the army of Komishi Yukinaga in 1592 and are taken from the *Éhon Tshiki*.

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# PREFACE

As I have always had a great respect for Cassell's Source Book series, I was delighted when the publishers invited me to add a Samurai Source-book to the collection.

The word 'samurai' evokes many images. The most common is surely that of the brave, invincible and individual warrior fighting sword in hand against overwhelming odds. 'Samurai', however, frequently appears as a collective noun, signifying a whole class of warrior types, or as an adjective, e.g. 'samurai warfare'. All these usages are correct at various times in Japanese history, and all will be explored in this book.

It is my intention that this book should be seen as the standard reference work on the samurai in the English language. Achieving this has been no mean feat. In size alone, the volume is equivalent to almost four of my other works on the samurai published by Cassell, and this was a considerable challenge. While wishing to be comprehensive, I had no desire unnecessarily to duplicate material otherwise available, and I have been exceptionally fortunate in the sources available to me for the largest section of the book: the comprehensive catalogue of biographies, holdings and heraldry of the samurai class.

The material for this has come from many directions, and almost all of it is new. It covers the great and the glorious, the brave and the ignominious. The reader will therefore find reference to Tokugawa Ieyasu, who scaled the pinnacle of samurai achievement with the establishment of the Tokugawa Shogunate. Yet as well as the great heroes of samurai history, the reader will also find the bit-players in the great drama that was Medieval Japan. There is Miura Yoshimoto, famous for little except for the legend that he is supposed to have cut off his own head, and there is also Keyamura Rokusuke, who died the most ignominious death in samurai history by being pulled over a cliff edge by a Korean courtesan.

Almost as large as the catalogue of samurai is the catalogue of battles and sieges, which I have tried to make as comprehensive as possible. Some minor skirmishes have only a few lines, while the more important struggles receive a fuller treatment. Arms and armour, too, are dealt with in great detail, and the sections on strategy and tactics contain a great deal of new material, most of it never before translated into English. This includes the very important *Zōhyō Monogatari*, with its minutely detailed descriptions of how to use foot soldiers successfully, written by a veteran of the Tokugawa army.

For the case studies I have selected different examples from those I used in *Samurai Warfare*. These include much new material from Korean sources, which give a totally different outlook on the Japanese invasions when compared to previous treatments of the subject which were based exclusively on Japanese accounts. I conclude the work with essays on such important related matters as Japanese religion and bushidō.

I have also tried to be as thorough as possible over the selection of illustrative material. There is no colour, but this has enabled me to use many more black and white pictures. Much of the new material for this book was obtained during my study tour to Japan and Korea in 1997. I wish to thank the many individuals and organisations who assisted me in putting the trip together, particularly my son Alex, who accompanied me on the Japanese leg of the journey, and was able to see for the first time the strange world in which his father feels so much at home. Above all, I want to thank my dear wife Jo, who packed our rucksacks and sent us off, then put up with the long business of writing.

A monthly update of my latest research and publications may be found on the Internet at:

<http://freespace.virgin.net/stephen.turnbull/publications.htm>

Stephen Turnbull

# AN OUTLINE OF SAMURAI HISTORY

## The first samurai

Although 'samurai' is often used loosely to mean any Japanese warrior, it is worth remembering that the word originally denoted a particular class of fighting man who was a member of a considerable élite. During these times, from about the tenth century AD onward, the status of samurai was rigidly defined and difficult to acquire. The analogy between the samurai and the European knight is a useful one, particularly when it is recognised that the samurai were supported in war by a

large number of common foot soldiers whose exploits rarely appear in the epic chronicles which are our main sources for the period. Promotion to the samurai class was in fact available, and attained, but the rank of samurai also had significant connotations of kinship. The rank could indeed be conferred, but illustrious pedigrees that went back centuries could not be so easily acquired, in spite of attempts made by using marriage and adoption.

Samurai status implied service, which was rendered to the emperor, a noble or a great warlord. The first recorded military use of men bearing the title of samurai is as guards to the imperial palace in Kyôto in the tenth century AD. The Japanese government found these samurai clans useful for putting down rebels, and rewarded them well. Increasingly, however, the samurai's allegiance shifted from the central government and state army to that of the local land-owner. These men were usually geographically remote from the capital, and faced threats from rival land-owners, aborigines and bandits. Many of these early samurai families were of humble origin, but the clans who were to prove successful in attracting allies often boasted an aristocratic lineage, drawn usually from some minor imperial ancestor sent out to the wilds of Japan to seek his fortune. The most important of these displaced aristocrats were those who founded the rival clans of Taira and Minamoto.

The convenient arrangement whereby samurai aided the central government in return for reward lasted until the twelfth century, when the samurai themselves realised the military power they possessed. Beginning with the Taira, who achieved dominance at the imperial court by marrying daughters to imperial heirs, the samurai began to interfere more and more in Japanese politics. The first example of violence erupting around a matter of national concern was the Hôgen Incident of

## WEIGHTS, MEASURES AND NOMENCLATURE

The following weights and measures were used in Japan at the time of the samurai, and appear in historical quotations throughout the text which follows:

	Weight	
1 monme		3.75 gm
1 kanme = 1000 monme		3.75 kg
	Length	
1 shaku		30.3 cm
1 ken = 6 shaku		1.8 m (see text for variations)
1 jô = 10 shaku		3.03 m
1 chô = 60 ken		109 m
1 ri		3927.27 m
	Area	
1 chô		.992 ha.
	Capacity	
1 gô		.18 l
1 shô		1.8 l
1 koku		180 l



1156. Samurai from both the Minamoto and Taira were involved, but the division was not entirely along clan lines. The first direct Taira-Minamoto clash was the Heiji Incident of 1160. The Taira were victorious, and began a series of executions that were intended to wipe out the Minamoto rivalry once and for all.

Enough of the Minamoto leadership was left, however, to launch the series of conflicts that became known as the Gempei Wars, from the Chinese reading of the names Minamoto (gen) and Taira (hei). Minamoto Yorimasa, helped by the sōhei, or warrior monks from the temples of Kyōto and Nara, supported one imperial claimant against



**Left:** Minamoto Yoritomo, the first shogun, is shown here in his effigy at Nikko. He is depicted wearing court dress typical of the Heian Period. He wears a stiff eboshi (court cap) and has a quiver of arrows slung behind him.

**Right:** The dominant events of the fourteenth century in Japan were the Nanbokuchō Wars, fought between two rival dynasties of emperors. Although the conflict officially finished in 1392 the southern line continued to proclaim its legitimacy. This peaceful temple, the Ryūsenji in Kotochi, which was the southern headquarters deep within the wooded mountains of Nara Prefecture, saw the final act to the rivalry when the last of the line of southern emperors, Prince Kitayama, was murdered here in 1457. Local warriors pursued the assailants and managed to recover the prince's head because it had been buried in the snow and blood had seeped out. Prince Kitayama is buried just to the left of the main temple building.

the Taira nominee at the battle of Uji in 1180. Once again the Taira were victorious, as they were to be when they defeated Minamoto Yoritomo at the battle of Ishibashiyama. The tide began to turn in the person of Minamoto Yoshinaka, who defeated a Taira army at the battle of Kurikara and entered the capital in triumph in 1183. The following year, his cousin, Minamoto Yoshitsune, one of the most celebrated figures in Japanese history, won a series of brilliant victories against the Taira at Ichinotani, Yashima and Dan no Ura, the last being a sea battle where the water ran red with the blood of the slain and the dye from the Taira's red flags.

The Taira had ruled from Kyōto, making their own family the dominant line of government, but the victorious Minamoto needed no political chicanery. It was military force that had put them in a position of power, so it was by military force that they would rule. The emperor was condemned to the status of a shadowy living god. Real power lay with the possessor of the title of shogun which

the Minamoto leader Yoritomo was granted by the powerless emperor. 'Shogun' means 'commander-in-chief for the suppression of barbarians'. Minamoto Yoritomo chose to base himself at Kamakura, in the heart of the Kantō plain, near to the site of modern Tokyo. It was far from Kyōto and remote from any traditional court influence.

Even the mighty Minamoto, however, were not to last forever, and they were in turn supplanted by the Hōjō family, who presided over several decades of comparative peace until Japan was subjected to two invasion attempts by Kublai Khan, the Mongol emperor of China. Both landings, in 1274 and 1281, were driven back by the brave and determined samurai in one of the most glorious episodes in Japanese history. The second invasion was delivered the coup de grâce by a typhoon, which was dubbed the kami-kaze, the 'wind of the gods'.

Following the Mongol invasions, the Hōjō power declined, and they were unable to withstand an attempt at imperial restoration led in the name of Emperor Go-Daigo. Kusunoki Masashige, the epitome of loyalty, led a spirited guerrilla war from the mountain fortresses of Akasaka and





Chihaya. The Hōjō capital, Kamakura, fell in 1333, but instead of ensuring an imperial restoration, Japan found that it had merely exchanged one shogunate for another. The Nanbokuchō Wars - 'The Wars Between the Courts' - thus began between two rival emperors, with the Kusunoki supporting the rightful emperor, and the Ashikaga Shoguns acting in the name of their nominee. Kusunoki Masashige was killed at the battle of Minatogawa in 1336, and although the wars dragged on for decades, the Ashikaga were eventually the victors.

In 1333, the old imperial capital became the capital of the shoguns when the founder of the new Ashikaga dynasty moved his seat of government back to Kyōto; and as the fifteenth century began, the Ashikaga were at the height of their powers. Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (1358-1408) built a pavilion coated with gold, and entertained princes and ambassadors. His successors seemed destined to raise the dynasty to even greater heights. Then one by one, the blows came. In 1441, the sixth Ashikaga Shogun, Yoshinori, was murdered. He was followed by an eight-year-old son, who died two years later, to be succeeded by his younger brother Yoshimasa. Yoshimasa reigned as shogun for 30 years, and witnessed the gradual seeping away of all shogunal authority. Power passed into the hands of other samurai families, who still retained a nostalgia for an ordered world controlled from the centre. So they clung to Kyōto,

to their mansions and their gardens, until their own authority in the provinces began to slip away.

### The Sengoku Period

In 1467, in an act of reckless disregard for political reality, the old samurai families gathered in Kyōto to fight a war. The Ōnin War, which had Kyōto as its first battlefield, dragged on for ten years, during which the fighting spread to the provinces and the old established families fought one another to extinction. Others rushed to fill the gaps caused by their departure, men who knew nothing of the shogun's commissions and poetry parties in Kyōto. These samurai leaders might be peasant farmers, oil sellers or blacksmiths - men who realised that only military force was now needed. They would assemble a handful of like-minded souls who were good fighters, and build a secure stockade on a hill from where they could defend their rice fields. No tax collector would be coming from Kyōto. No message would arrive from the shogun requesting them to chastise rebels on his behalf. Now was the time for a samurai leader literally to make a reputation for himself, adopting the title of daimyō - 'big name' - and build his own kingdom.

In many cases, daimyō were created by usurpation. Some existing lords were murdered by their subjects. Brothers, fathers even, were deposed. Daughters were traded like horses to secure marriage alliances, as the territories grew from one

hill-top fortress to two, then three, surrounding a fertile valley. Some old families did survive and became daimyō themselves, but they tended to be remote from Kyōto.

Japan was therefore gradually splitting into what were effectively a number of petty kingdoms held by warlords who controlled private armies. It is no wonder that the period from 1467 to 1615 is

### THE THREE RIVALS: HŌJŌ UJIYASU, TAKEDA SHINGEN AND UESUGI KENSHIN

The history of the various conflicts and alliances between Hōjō Ujiyasu, Takeda Shingen and Uesugi provides a picture of daimyō power in microcosm. The first Hōjō, Hōjō Sōun, died in Nirayama at the age of 87, a man sprung from nowhere who had gone on to become daimyō of two provinces. He had in fact retired from the position of daimyō the previous year to allow his son Ujitsuna (1487-1541), the second Hōjō daimyō, to begin his rule while he still had his father to help him. The succession of a series of eldest sons was one of the Hōjō dynasty's great strengths, which stands in marked contrast to the unhappy experience of its rivals. The vital factor in the continuity of the operation was the loyalty of the family retainers. Soon after his father's death, Ujitsuna founded the temple of Sōun-ji in Sōun's memory, which impressed the old retainers considerably, and they showed their faith in Sōun's heir by fighting valiantly for him when he expanded the Hōjō domain further into the Kantō by defeating the Uesugi at their castle of Edo in 1524. This village at the mouth of the Sumida river, which is now the city of Tokyo, was the key to Musashi province. Ujitsuna sealed his victory by defeating the combined forces of Satomi Yoshitaka and Ashikaga Yoshiaki at the battle of Kōnodai in 1538.

Like his father before him, Ujitsuna groomed his son Ujiyasu (1515-70) for his eventual succession. Also, like Sōun, Ujitsuna left behind a set of house laws to guide future generations. In one section he warns:

"After winning a great victory, a haughty heart, disdain for the enemy, and incautious actions often follow. Avoid this. There have been

labelled the Sengoku Period - the 'Age of the Country at War'. Apart from the Gemppei Wars, when much of samurai tradition was established, the Sengoku Period marks the most important time in samurai history. During this century samurai warfare developed to its peak; and from it a peaceful and united Japan was eventually to emerge.

many families in the past destroyed in this manner."

Ujitsuna died in 1541. Hōjō Ujiyasu continued the conquests of his predecessors until the Hōjō controlled most of the Kantō region. To defend the Kantō from the north, Ujitsuna had established a series of forts along the Sumidagawa, and in defending one of these, Kawagoe, Ujiyasu won his most celebrated victory in 1545. The battle of Kawagoe has a special place in samurai history in that it was fought at night, which alone pays tribute to Ujiyasu's skills in handling troops. In 1564 Ujiyasu again demonstrated his talents as a general in a remarkable 're-run' of his father's battle at Kōnodai in 1538. In the second battle of Kōnodai, Hōjō Ujiyasu, son of the former victor, defeated Satomi Yoshihiro, son of the daimyō formerly vanquished.

At this point a new dimension entered into the Hōjō's plans. The smaller daimyō of the Kantō had been squeezed into extinction, or had submitted as vassals of the Hōjō. Ujiyasu now had to face the threat from other successful families whose own territories bordered the Kantō, and who had built their own multi-provincial domains in much the same way as the Hōjō. The history of the next two decades became one of a series of fights, alliances and treaties between the three power-blocs of Hōjō Ujiyasu, Takeda Shingen and Uesugi Kenshin.

Unlike the ordered succession within the Hōjō family, Takeda Shingen, who was then called Harunobu, revolted against his father Nobutora when he heard of the latter's plans to disinherit him. In 1540 Harunobu took total control of Kai, and it was from then onward that the newly expansionist Takeda began to increase their influence into neighbouring territories. There were several conflicts with the Hōjō, but their

Although the traditions of the samurai, passed down from the time of the Gempei Wars, laid great emphasis on the prowess of the samurai as an individual warrior, from the late fifteenth century onward the samurai leaders needed endless supplies of fighting men; and for a landless peasant who was handy with a sword and dissatisfied with his lot, the lawlessness of the times

offered a sellers' market. It is from this time that we begin to encounter the expression 'ashigaru' (foot soldiers, literally 'light feet'), indicating their lack of armour, footwear or even weaponry until all three could be looted from a defeated enemy. Daimyō armies, therefore, varied enormously both in size and composition, and relied heavily on virtual mercenaries paid only in loot. Eventually

most important sorties were to the north, where Takeda Shingen fought Uesugi Kenshin five times at Kawanakajima.

In 1547 Shingen invaded Shinano. Some daimyō, such as the Sanada, submitted to the Takeda and became vassals. Others resisted them to the last. The most important among the latter group was Murakami Yoshikiyo (1501-73), who defeated Shingen in a bitter battle at Uedahara in 1548. He had fought against Shingen's father, but realised that he could not stand alone forever against the new power of Shingen himself; so he requested help from his powerful neighbour to the north, Uesugi Kenshin. The resulting alliance between Murakami Yoshikiyo and Uesugi Kenshin thus brought these two powerful clans into direct opposition.

In contrast to the long pedigree of the Takeda and the family cohesion of the Hōjō, Uesugi Kenshin's social position, and indeed his name, owed everything to clever opportunism. There was indeed an ancient family of Uesugi who were descended from the Fujiwara. But the most illustrious samurai to bear the name, Uesugi Terutora (like Shingen, 'Kenshin' was a Buddhist name adopted later in adult life), had no hereditary connection with the Uesugi line. His original name was Nagao Kagetora. The family of Nagao were retainers of the Yamanouchi branch of the Uesugi, and of some military reputation. But in 1545 the Uesugi were defeated by the Hōjō. Uesugi Norimasa (1522-79) went from bad to worse in his campaigns until in 1551, defeated once again by Hōjō Ujijyasu, he was forced to seek refuge with his vassal Nagao Kagetora.

Kagetora had grown rich in the service of the Uesugi, and had become de facto ruler of Echigo province, protected from the belligerent Hōjō and Takeda by the 'Japan Alps'. When Uesugi

came to him on bended knee, he accepted his erstwhile overlord on his own, very strict terms. Norimasa was to adopt him as his heir, give him the name of Uesugi and the titles of Echigo-no-kami (lord of Echigo) and Kantō Kanrei (shogun's deputy for the Kantō area). Norimasa agreed to all these demands, and Nagao Kagetora became Uesugi Terutora. He took the name of Kenshin in the following year, 1552.

The next quarter-century saw a bewildering succession of alliances and battles between the three rivals. In 1560 Kenshin attacked Kōzuke province and assaulted a castle defended by allies of the Hōjō. The Uesugi attacked the Hōjō's base of Odawara in 1561. Also in 1561 Kenshin saved his ally Ōta Sukemasa, whose castle of Matsuyama was under attack from an alliance of Hōjō Ujijyasu and Takeda Shingen. In November 1569 Takeda Shingen attacked Odawara castle and Ujijyasu requested help from Kenshin!

The respect which Kenshin and Shingen had for each other is shown in the 'salt incident'. Takeda Shingen, being landlocked, depended upon the goodwill of the Hōjō for his provision of salt. When the Hōjō once cut the supply off, Kenshin sent him some from his own seacoast, saying, 'I do not fight with salt, but with the sword.'

Hōjō Ujijyasu passed on an ordered domain to his son Ujimasa, but both his rivals suffered violent deaths, if the legend about Uesugi Kenshin dying at the hands of a ninja is to be believed. Shingen certainly fell to a shot from a sniper at Noda castle in 1573. Kenshin's death was followed by a destructive succession dispute, and Shingen was succeeded by his less talented son Katsuyori, defeated at Nagashino in 1575.

smaller war bands became absorbed into larger factions under successful daimyō, many of whom boasted long military traditions. As time passed, the more astute daimyō came to several realisations concerning the ashigaru in their service. While some continued to accept into their armies a loose and uncertain rabble, others dressed them in uniform armour, gave them promotion and tried to keep them in their service.

The names of these successful daimyō, and indeed many unsuccessful ones, are recorded elsewhere in this work. The Uesugi, from the Japan Sea coastal area, fought the Takeda of the central highlands. The Hōjō rose from nowhere to dominate the Kantō plain, as the Date did in the far north. In the southern Japanese island of Kyūshū, the Sengoku Period saw constant conflict between the families of Shimazu, Ōtomo, Itō, Arima and Ryūzōji. Around the Inland Sea the Mōri rose to power when the Ōuchi were overthrown by one of their own vassals.

Many daimyō dreamed of uniting Japan under their own swords. The first to take on the mantle of unifier was Oda Nobunaga, whose brilliant victory at Okehazama in 1560 established him as a consummate samurai general. Nobunaga benefited from his encouragement of European trade, which enabled him to acquire the newly introduced Portuguese arquebuses. These weapons first appeared in 1543, and many daimyō used them. Few, however, properly appreciated that the successful employment of firearms depended only partly on technical skills concerned with accuracy of fire and speed of loading. Just as was the case in contemporary Europe, a skilled archer could launch many more arrows, and with considerably more accuracy, in the time it took to fire a succession of arquebus balls. But to use a bow properly required an élite archer corps. The arquebus could be mastered in a comparatively short space of time, making it the ideal weapon for the lower-ranking ashigaru.

The secret to the successful use of firearms, therefore, depended on army organisation and a profound change in social attitudes. First came the need to recognise that the ashigaru were anything other than a casually recruited rabble. It took a further leap of the imagination to give them pride of place in a samurai army, because the vanguard

of an army had traditionally consisted of the most experienced and trusted swordsmen and mounted samurai. Yet for firearms to be truly effective, the ashigaru had to be placed in the front ranks in large numbers.

It was Nobunaga who showed how guns could best be employed with his dramatic victory at Nagashino in 1575, when his controlled volley firing broke the Takeda cavalry charge. Yet seven years later Nobunaga was murdered in a night raid when even his arquebuses could not save him. Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who was one of his most loyal followers, avenged his death and took control. He defeated his rivals in a rapid and brilliant series of campaigns from Yamazaki in 1582 to Shizugatake in 1583. Hideyoshi also followed Nobunaga's example of building huge strategic castles, and with these as a base conquered Shikoku island in 1585 and Kyūshū in 1587. The Hōjō submitted to him in 1590, followed shortly by the northern clans, making Hideyoshi, the 'Napoleon of Japan', ruler of the whole nation.

Samurai armies were now virtually professional soldiers. Within each army fought high-ranking



**Right:** This bronze statue of Tokugawa Ieyasu is at Okazaki. Ieyasu refounded the shogunate and set his family in a position of power which they maintained for two and a half centuries. He is depicted here wearing a nanban dô style armour beneath a jinbaori. His sword hangs from his belt and he carries a war-fan in his right hand.

**Opposite page:** Katô Kiyomasa was one of the most celebrated samurai of the Sengoku Period. He is shown here in a woodblock print depicting his contribution to the battle of Shizugatake in 1583. The print is an excellent illustration of a mounted samurai spearman in action, as he wields his weapon to the side of his horse rather than couching it like a European lance. In the background his followers display the severed heads of his victims on branches of green bamboo. Kiyomasa is shown wearing a sashimono bearing the motto 'Namu Myôho Renge Kyô' of the Nichiren sect of Buddhism. His helmet has a built-up crown in the style of a courtier's cap.





*The classic image of the samurai warrior is well illustrated in this woodblock print. A samurai identified as a retainer of the Satomi family has been attacked by three assailants, one of whom has a spear. The samurai has drawn his katana and is wielding it one-handed while his shorter wakizashi stays thrust through his belt. He was ready for action before the attack started, because his jacket sleeves are already tied back using his tasuki (sash).*

mounted samurai spearmen who, according to their means, also supplied a handful of personal retainers. Other samurai retainers fought on foot with spears, supported by ashigaru. Specialised corps of highly trained ashigaru wielded bows, spears or arquebuses, and all were under the command of officers. A sizeable support unit was included in each army, of which flag bearers were the most important, possessing their own guard.

There would also be a large headquarters unit which included the lord's bodyguard.

### **The triumph of the Tokugawa**

Hideyoshi finally outreached himself with the ill-fated invasions of Korea in 1592 and 1597, and died in 1598, leaving an infant son, Hideyori, to inherit. Immediately Japan split once again into rival camps. The conflict was settled in dramatic style with the huge battle of Sekigahara in 1600, as a result of which Tokugawa Ieyasu was proclaimed shogun in 1603, a title his descendants were to retain for two and a half centuries. The most serious rival to the Tokugawa, Toyotomi Hideyori, was vanquished after the long and bitter siege of Osaka castle in 1615. In 1638 a mainly Christian rebellion occurred in Shimabara in Kyūshū. It was only put down after a long and unexpectedly difficult struggle, but was to prove the only real challenge to Tokugawa supremacy.

Following the Shimabara rebellion, the shogunate, fearful of outside influence, particularly Spain and Portugal, restricted trade and effectively severed all relations with Catholic Europe. Samurai now comprised the standing army of the shogunate, but had no enemies to fight. Over the next century their power declined in comparison with that of the rising merchant class, until they were jolted out of their complacency by the appearance of European and American ships in Japanese waters in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The Tokugawa shoguns aimed to develop trade, whereas clans such as the Shimazu of distant Satsuma wished to repel all attempts at intercourse with the foreigner. A civil war ensued, during which the Tokugawa shogunate was overthrown and the emperor restored to a position his line had not enjoyed for centuries. But instead of repelling the barbarians, the founding fathers of modern Japan realised that they had to cooperate with the foreigners if the nation was to survive. Old practices, such as the existence of a privileged samurai class, were abolished. One samurai in particular, Saigō Takamori, found this too much to bear, and in 1877 led the Satsuma rebellion against the national army of conscripts. This brave but anachronistic attempt ended in failure. Saigō was defeated and committed suicide, making him to all intents and purposes the last of the samurai.



**I**  
**PERSONALITIES AND**  
**HERALDRY**

## PERSONALITIES AND HERALDRY

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## SAMURAI HERALDRY

Throughout Japanese history samurai armies used increasingly complex means of battlefield identification. Although there are differences from similar systems in use in contemporary Europe, the principles of recognition through design and an accepted hereditary basis of transference make the term 'heraldry' an appropriate one to use.

Early Japanese heraldry would appear to be based upon the use of differently coloured flags to indicate family allegiance. The type of flag used at this time was not the stiffened banner (*nobori*) of later years, but a flag called a *hata-jirushi* - a streamer attached by a short horizontal cross-piece to a shaft. The other means of identification were the *mon* (family crests), which were stencilled on to banners and *maku* (field curtains), and painted on to the front of the large wooden shields used to provide defence lines on a battlefield. However, pictorial sources for this early use of *mon* have to be examined with care, because many are of a later date than the events they represent. Illustrations of the campaigns of Minamoto Yoshiie from 1086-9 in the *Gosannen Kassen Emaki* show the use of stencilled designs on the *maku*. The design is of geese, presumably an allusion to the incident whereby Yoshiie was warned of an enemy ambush by birds flying from a location. This association leads one to question its authenticity.

Little is known for certain regarding the heraldry adopted by the Taira and the Minamoto during the Gemppei Wars of 1180-5 except for the Taira use of red flags and the Minamoto use of white flags. Use of these flags is well established, and there are several references to the two colours in the *Heike Monogatari*. Later illustrations of the Gemppei Wars frequently show the Minamoto using on the white banner a *mon* of a floral design: three flowers of *rindô* (gentian) above five leaves of *sasa* (bamboo). The Taira are attributed the use of various designs of a butterfly. Unfortunately there are no textual references that give descriptions of such insignia during the Gemppei Wars. An actual banner from the Gemppei Wars is preserved in the museum of the shrine built on the site of the battle of Yashima. The flag is a white banner that was used by the Minamoto at the battle. It is plain and bears no design.

A careful reading of the *Heike Monogatari* text, however, confirms the use on certain occasions of more than just plain flags. The second battle of Uji in 1184 was fought across the Ujigawa between Minamoto Yoshinaka and his cousin Minamoto Yoshitsune, and both sides had previously used white banners when fighting their separate campaigns against the Taira. How were they now to be distinguished? In the account of the battle, a certain man sees an army coming towards him:

"Yoshitsune himself, leaving the conduct of the battle to his subordinates, rode off with five or six retainers to the Palace of the Ho-o in Rokujô, to guard it against any further perils. Here Daizen no Taiyû Naritada had mounted up to the eastern wall and was surveying the turmoil outside, his whole body shaking in the extremity of his terror, when he saw the small band approaching with their helmets hanging loose from the fight, their bow-hand sleeves flying loose in the wind, and the white colours of the Genji displayed. 'Alas, how terrible!' he shrieked. 'It is Kiso who has come again!'"

Very soon the terrified man is reassured, and:

"the voice of Naritada was heard again, 'It may be the warriors of the East who are just entering the town, for the insignia they wear is different.'"

The insignia could well have been the Minamoto *mon*. That some form of family crests were used is also indicated in a later passage in *Heike Monogatari* concerning Yoshinaka's attack on the Hojûjiden.

"According to Yoshinaka's usual strategy they were divided into seven companies... As a sign of recognition they all wore a badge of pine leaves."

This account further implies that Kiso Yoshinaka chose a different *mon* from his cousin Yoshitsune (of the main line of the family) to be distinguishable on the battlefield. A further example of a *mon* being added to the white banner is the occasion of the death of a member of the Kodama family, allies of the Minamoto, distinguished by having a black fan design on the flag.

As well as *mon* and other figurative designs, many illustrations also show white banners with black bands of different sizes at the top. It was quite common in later history for flags to be differentiated in such a way to indicate various

divisions of an army, so this, too, may well have been found during the Gempel Wars. The size of divisional organisations is difficult to estimate. According to the *Heike Monogatari*, Kiso Yoshinaka regularly split his army up into seven units, each varying in number according to the men available. The number of banners must have given some indication of the number of men, because the carrying of extra banners was used by Yoshinaka at the battle of Kurikara to trick the Taira into thinking that there were more troops present than there actually were.

The most detailed description of a flag in the *Heike Monogatari* is for neither Taira nor Minamoto but for a contingent of warriors from the Kumano shrine who fought at Dan no Ura. Their white flag bore a representation of Kongodōji, the guardian of the three shrines of Kumano.

Contemporary illustrations of the use of the large wooden shields on battlefields often show black bands painted on them, and also mon. The accompanying picture is of a sixteenth-century battle by a monk army and shows examples of

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### JAPANESE FAMILY NAMES

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Abe	阿部	Arima	有馬	Fukushima	福島	Hineno	日根野
Akashi	明石	Asai	浅井	Furuta	古田	Hiraga	平賀
Akechi	明智	Asakura	朝倉	Fuwa	不和	Hiraiwa	平岩
Akita	秋田	Asano	浅野	Gamō	蒲生	Hisamatsu	久松
Akiyama	秋山	Ashikaga	足利	Gotō	後藤	Hitotsuyanagi	一柳
Akizuki	秋月	Ashina	芦名	Hachisuka	蜂須賀	Hōjō	北条
Amakazu	甘糟	Aso	阿蘇	Hajikano	初鹿野	Honda	本多
Amako	尼子	Ayukawa	鮎川	Hara	原	Honjō	本条
Amakusa	天草	Baba	馬場	Hasegawa	長谷川	Hori	堀
Amari	甘利	Ban	塙	Hasekura	支倉	Horio	堀尾
Anayama	穴山	Bessho	別所	Hashiba	羽柴	Hoshina	保科
Andō	安藤	Chōsokabe	長曾我	Hatakeyama	畠山	Hosokawa	細川
Ankokuji	安国寺	Daidōji	大道寺	Hatano	波多野	Hotta	堀田
Aoki	青木	Date	伊達	Hattori	服部	Ichibashi	一橋
Aoyama	青山	Doi	土井	Hayashi	林	Ichibu	一部
Araki	荒木	Endō	遠藤	Hijikata	土方	Ichijō	一条

Ii	伊井	Itakura	板倉	Kinoshita	木下	Kuwayama	桑山
Iida	飯田	Itami	伊丹	Kitabatake	北畠	Kyōgoku	京極
Ijūin	伊集院	Itō	伊東	Kobayakawa	小早川	Maeba	前場
Ikeda	池田	Iwaki	岩城	Kobori	小堀	Maeda	前田
Ikoma	生駒	Kakizaki	柿崎	Koide	小出	Makara	真柄
Imagawa	今川	Kamei	亀井	Konishi	小西	Makino	牧野
Imaizumi	今泉	Kamiizumi	上泉	Kōno	河野	Masuda	増田
Ina	伊奈	Kamiya	神谷	Koriki	高力	Matsudaira	松平
Inaba	稲葉	Kanamori	金森	Kōsaka	高坂	Matsukura	松倉
Inagaki	稲垣	Katagiri	片桐	Koteda	籠手田	Matsumae	松前
Inoue	井上	Katakura	片倉	Kuchiki	朽木	Matsumoto	松本
Iriki-in	入来院	Katō	加藤	Kuki	九鬼	Matsunaga	松永
Irobe	色部	Kawajiri	川尻	Kumazawa	熊澤	Matsuno	松野
Ishida	石田	Keyamura	毛谷村	Kuroda	黒田	Matsushita	松下
Ishikawa	石川	Kikkawa	吉川	Kurosaka	黒坂	Matsuura	松浦
Itagaki	板垣	Kimura	木村	Kurushima	来島	Menju	毛受

mon, black bands, and the use of prayer inscriptions written in bonji (sanskrit characters).

During the following century the adoption of mon becomes more systematised. In the Iriki-in family records we read for Iriki-in Jōshin that he 'made the mistletoe his family crest upon banners and tents' in 1248. A few years later the *Moko Shūrai Ekotoba* (Mongol Invasion Scroll) shows the use of various mon on hata-jirushi-type flags. The accompanying inscription reads: 'The vanguard of 100 warriors led by Shiraishi Rokurō. The hata-jirushi carries the badge of the unit.'

Moving forward to the fourteenth century and the Nanbokuchō Wars, the Kusunoki family, who supported emperor Go Daigo in his rebellion against the Hōjō regency, used the device of an imperial chrysanthemum floating on the water. The use of the chrysanthemum (*kiku*) as the imperial insignia was first associated with emperor Go-Toba (1185-98), from which time it became the imperial prerogative, and it was the Kusunoki family's outstanding loyalty that allowed them to adopt a variation of it. Their enemies the Hōjō are distinguished by their use of the mon of three fish

Minagawa	皆川	Nagao	長尾	Obu	飯富	Rokkaku	六角
Miura	三浦	Nagatsuka	長塚	Ochiai	落合	Rokugō	六郷
Miyabe	宮部	Naitō	内藤	Oda	織田	Ryūmonji	龍門子
Miyoshi	三好	Nakagawa	中川	Odai	小田井	Ryūzōji	龍造寺
Mizoguchi	溝口	Nakajō	中条	Ogasawara	小笠原	Sagara	相良
Mizuno	水野	Nakamura	中村	Okabe	岡部	Saigō	西郷
Mizunoya	水谷	Nakayama	中山	Okubo	小久保	Saigusa	三枝
Mogami	最上	Nanbu	南部	Okudaira	奥平	Saitō	斉藤
Mori	森	Naoc	直江	Ōmura	大村	Sakai	坂井
Mōri	毛利	Naruse	成瀬	Ōno	大野	Sakakibara	榊原
Morozumi	諸泉	Nasu	那須	Ōno	小野木	Sakuma	佐久間
Mukai	向井	Natsume	夏目	Ōta	太田	Sakurai	桜井
Munakata	棟方	Nishina	仁科	Ōtani	大谷	Sanada	真田
Murakami	村上	Nishio	西尾	Ōtomo	大友	Sasa	佐々
Nabeshima	鍋島	Niwa	丹羽	Ōuchi	大内	Satake	佐竹
Nagai	永井	Obata	小幡	Oyamada	小山田	Satommi	里見

Sengoku	仙石	Suibara	水原	Tōdō	藤堂	Watanabe	渡辺
Shiba	斯波	Susukida	薄田	Togawa	戸川	Yagyū	柳生
Shibata	柴田	Suwa	諏訪	Tokugawa	徳川	Yamagata	山奥
Shidara	設楽	Suzuki	鈴木	Tomita	富田	Yamamoto	山本
Shima	島	Tachibana	立花	Torii	鳥居	Yamana	山名
Shimazu	島津	Takahashi	高橋	Toyotomi	豊臣	Yamanaka	山中
Shimizu	清水	Takanashi	高梨	Tozawa	戸澤	Yamauchi	山内
Shimonōjō	下条	Takayama	高山	Tsuchiya	土屋	Yamayoshi	山吉
Shimura	志村	Takeda	武田	Tsugaru	津軽	Yamazaki	山崎
Shinjō	新条	Takemata	竹俣	Tsutsui	筒井	Yasuda	安田
Shōni	小貳	Takenaka	竹中	Uesugi	上杉	Yokota	横田
Sō	宗	Takenokoshi	竹腰	Ukita	宇喜多		
Suda	須田	Takigawa	滝川	Uozumi	魚住	The ancient families:	
Sue	陶	Tanaka	田中	Usami	宇佐美	Kusunoki	楠
Suganuma	菅沼	Terazawa	寺沢	Utsunomiya	宇都宮	Minamoto	源
Sugihara	杉原	Toda	戸田	Wakizaka	脇坂	Taira	平



*Mon and other heraldic designs:*

1. The *rindō mon* attributed to the Minamoto family.
2. The butterfly *mon* attributed to the Taira, and later used by the Ikeda.
3. The imperial chrysanthemum floating on the water, used by the great loyalist Kusunoki Masashige.
4. A detail from *Ehon Taikōki* showing a monk army's use of wooden shields with *mon* and *bonji* (Sanskrit characters) painted on.
5. The *kiri mon* (paulownia) associated with the Ashikaga family, and later used by Toyotomi Hideyoshi.
6. The bizarre flag of Matsuno Hirochika, who killed a young enemy in 1615, and had the flag painted as earnest of his attempts to pray for the soul of his victim. The man's severed head is shown.
7. The *hata-jirushi* standard of Ashikaga Yoshiaki.
8. The *sashimono* flag of Hachisuka Iemasa, bearing a swastika, a very ancient Buddhist symbol.
9. The flag of the *Jōdō* sect of Buddhism used by Tokugawa Ieyasu. It bears the slogan, 'Renounce this filthy world and attain the Pure Land'.
10. The *mon* of aoi (hollyhock) leaves in a circle, used by the Tokugawa family.
11. Akechi Mitsuhide is shown here accompanied by foot soldiers, one of whom is carrying his standard, which is a large stiffened flag bearing the *kikyō mon*. This design also appears on the back of Mitsuhide's surcoat.
12. The triple *tomoe* design, used by several families including Kobayakawa.

scales, the device later to be associated with the Hōjō of Odawara.

The Ashikaga family, who were the victors in the Nanbokuchō Wars, are the first family in Japanese history to be associated with the mon of the kiri (paulownia). It was originally an imperial crest, conferred by the emperor on the Ashikaga shogun, who in turn conferred it on warriors of merit. The flag used by Ashikaga Shigeuji (1434–97) the first Kōga-kubō, shows a kiri mon beneath a red rising sun on white.

The use of such mon becomes well established by the Sengoku Period. The Tokugawa family used the aoi (hollyhock) in an attractive design of three hollyhock leaves pointing inwards within a circle. Toyotomi Hideyoshi used the kiri mon, while several families used variations on the ancient device of the tomoe (comma-shape) associated with yin and yang. The triple tomoe, for example, formed the mon of Kobayakawa Takakage (1532–96). Such mon appeared on the clothes of guards at the daimyō's residences and on hanging curtains, but their use on the battlefield was by no means so straightforward. A popular use was on the sails of the daimyō's ships.

Mon were certainly used on the sashimono flags worn on the back of the armour by samurai and ashigaru, with various field colours indicating separate military units. However, many other devices were used, and it is well recorded (for example in the li material included elsewhere) that certain samurai had their names emblazoned on their sashimono rather than a mon. Mon would also appear on the larger flags described below. Some mon designs were used by more than one family, and in the majority of cases the depiction of mon as a white design on black or a black design on white is purely an artistic convention, the design being more important than the colour. When displayed on flags, the practice would appear to be to display white mon on any colour except white, where a black mon is used.

To understand the display of mon on the battlefield it is necessary to appreciate the range of flags which were available to carry them. The hata-jirushi streamer was still used, as shown in the accompanying illustration of the flag of Ashikaga Yoshiaki (1537–97), the fifteenth and last Ashikaga shogun.

The flag is referred to as the Ashikaga uma jirushi, which literally means 'horse insignia', and was the device personally associated with the individual daimyō. I have translated this by the familiar European expression 'standard'. In most cases two are identified: the ō-uma jirushi, or great standard, and the ko-uma jirushi, or lesser standard. Daimyō in the lower income bracket tended to have just one, an arrangement that was formalised in the 1645 schedules of the Tokugawa shogunate, with daimyō above 1,300 koku having a ko-uma jirushi, and those above 6,000 koku having an ō-uma jirushi as well. Some standards are these long hata jirushi flags attached to the shaft only by a cross-pole at the top. Others are large rectangular flags with a bold design. A striking example is Matsuno Hirochika, a retainer of the Date family. His unusual banner bore the design of the severed head of a young warrior. It was drawn in black ink on white cloth to represent the pale face of death, with blood dripping from the neck. It was said to have been derived from an actual incident in 1615 when Matsuno decapitated a young enemy in battle. The head was interred, and as an earnest of his intentions to pray for the entry of the dead man into paradise, Matsuno had the flag made.

Akechi Mitsuhide (1526–82), once the loyal general of Oda Nobunaga, and later his murderer, used as his mon the kikyō, a five-petalled flower. In the accompanying section from *Ehon Taikōki* it appears on his flag and also on the back of his own jinbaori (surcoat). Mogami Yoshiaki (1546–1614) had a simple geometric mon, but used on his standard the design of a sobota, a Buddhist device.

Many families used a very large cylindrical streamer on a circular frame, familiar from their use today on a smaller scale in the Boys' Festival. These were called fukinuki. But the use of any sort of flag was outnumbered by the huge assembly of weird and wonderful constructions made from wood, basket work, lacquered papier-mâché and feathers. These brilliant devices, often finished in gold or silver, provided a striking rallying point for a daimyō's army. For example, we may note the use of a gold-lacquered gohei used by Shibata Katsue. A gohei is a ceremonial wand used by a Shintō priest. Katsue's standard was carried by his retainer Menju Ietora, who earned great glory



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by rescuing his master's standard from the midst of an enemy army. A smaller gohei also appears on Katsue's sashimono, along with his mon of a bird design.

As well as the uma jirushi, the Japanese battlefield displayed many nobori, which I translate as 'banner'. The banner was essentially the flag of the clan, and many would appear on the battlefield, identifying separate units of the clan army. They appear as long vertical flags, fastened through loops to a pole, and kept rigid by a cross-piece at the top, a popular form of flag found often in Japan today. In many cases the overall design of a nobori is simply that of a long flag with the mon stencilled near the top. Two nobori appeared on the heraldry of Katō Kiyomasa when he was fighting in Korea. One bore his mon of a circle under a three-dimensional device, the other was black and white, bearing the motto of the Nichiren sect, 'Namu Myōho Renge Kyō'.

Even more numerous than the banners were the sashimono. This was an identifying device, usually a flag, that was worn on the back of armour by individual samurai from about 1530 onwards. The sashimono was flown from a short pole, and secured by two cords that passed under the samurai's armpits to tie on to two rings on the front of the armour. The sashimono is often a smaller version of the banner. Even smaller flags, sometimes grouped in pairs or threes, would often be worn by the ashigaru, the foot-soldiers who formed the backbone of the army. In other cases the only identification used by the ashigaru was

the mon lacquered on to the front (and sometimes the back) of the armour.

Finally, there are the identifying devices worn by the tsukai-ban, the messengers of the army. These key, élite individual samurai, who are the equivalent of aides-de-camp, often wore the balloon-like basket work horō, topped by a flag, making them instantly identifiable to friend and foe alike. Their battlefield heraldry was usually quite spectacular. The other heraldic device noted on some illustrations is the lord's helmet, which would be carried on a pole-arm until he was ready to wear it. It thus functioned as a heraldic device.

An example of all these devices may be found in the illustration of two members of the Hachisuka family. Hachisuka Iemasa (1558-1638) wears a personal sashimono of white with a black swastika, a very ancient Buddhist symbol. His son Yoshishige's (1581-1615) heraldry encompasses an ō uma jirushi consisting of two very large balls of feathers on a basket-work frame, a nobori in black and white using the swastika mon, two small black flags as the sashimono for the samurai, and a black and white horō for the messengers. Ukita Naoye (1530-82) shows an interesting use of his mon (the character ji) in his three-dimensional gold uma jirushi, and his black and white nobori.

During the Edo Period the use of mon became systematised, and several books were published laying out in minute detail the precise design, colour and number of a daimyo's display, which would only have been seen on his progress to and from Edo, the remnant of a war-like tradition.

Several mon and other heraldic designs are illustrated in this chapter and elsewhere in this work, and may be located using the index.

A major source of heraldic information is a book entitled *O Uma Jirushi* ('Honourable horse banners'), the work of a monk known only as Kyūan, who completed the project in 1650. *O Uma Jirushi* is a comprehensive illustrated survey of the heraldry of all the surviving samurai families at that time. Most of the named individuals fought in the last battles of the great civil wars. Others are the sons or grandsons of men who served, whose appearance on the battlefield may thus be envisaged. Extant specimens of arms, armour and flags preserved in museums and painted sources enable

**Opposite Page:** *Mon and other heraldic designs:*

1. The mon of Ukita Naoye.
2. A detail from Ehon Taikōki showing the use made by Ukita Naoye of his mon on banner and standard.
3. The two standards of Takeda Katsuyori.
4. The golden gohei standard of Shibata Katsue, carried by his standard bearer the hero Menju Ietora.
5. The sotoba design on the banner of Mogami Yoshiaki.
6. The banner of Sasa Narimasa.
7. The mon of Ōuchi Yoshitaka, adopted after his death by Sue Harukata who supplanted him.
8. The variation on the Takeda mon used by Takeda Katsuyori.
9. Shoki the queller of demons appeared on the standards of Honda Tadakatsu and Maeda Toshiie.



*Apart from the well-known use of mon (badges) on the sashimono flags of samurai it was quite common for notable samurai to have their names emblazoned on their flags instead. The Ii family records quoted elsewhere in this work note this as an option for their retainers. (Detail from the Ehon Toyotomi Kunkōki)*

the material in *O Uma Jirushi* to be checked for accuracy, which, allowing for a certain artistic licence in depicting three-dimensional objects, is very high. It is thus an invaluable and unique guide to the samurai on the battlefields of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and contains a vast amount of data unavailable elsewhere.

Considerations of space make it impossible to include the detailed illustrations in *O Uma Jirushi* which accompany its text, but many may be inferred from the accompanying descriptions and pictures of certain key motifs. To avoid duplication I have not included illustrations of the flags of families depicted in my other books. These include the Hōjō, the Takeda 'Twenty-Four Generals', or

the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals', whose heraldry appears in detail in my book *Samurai: The Warrior Tradition*. In addition, most of the families who fought at the battle of Anegawa in 1570 appear on the painted screen illustrated in *Samurai Warfare*, along with various notable individuals and a detailed account of the heraldry of the Matsuura.

The other main information included in the present chapter are the fiefs held by the samurai. These are expressed in koku, which enables one to estimate the number of troops any individual family would be able to put on to the battlefield, as discussed elsewhere in this work. Brief biographies and lists of achievements complete this unique compendium.



## CATALOGUE OF THE SAMURAI AND THEIR HERALDRY 940-1638

**Abe Masakatsu (1541-1600)**

Abe Masakatsu served Tokugawa Ieyasu, and in 1590 received the fief of Ichihara (Izu - 5000 koku).

For heraldry see below.

**Abe Masatsugu (1569-1647)**

Son of the above, Masatsugu became a daimyō after Sekigahara.

banner: fourteen stripes of black and red  
great standard: red disc on black

**Akashi Morishige (+1618)**

Akashi Morishige was the vassal of Ukita Hideie, the daimyō of Okayama. Morishige fought for the Western Army at Sekigahara, where he surrendered to Kuroda Nagamasa. He fought for the Toyotomi at Ōsaka, but escaped at the fall of the castle and died in great poverty. He had been baptised in 1596.

His banner was white with two black flowery crosses.

**Akechi Mitsuhide (1526-82)**

Akechi Mitsuhide began his service to Oda Nobunaga in 1566. In 1571 he received the fief of Sakamoto (Ōmi - 100,000 koku). In 1579 he captured the castle of Yakami by taking the mother of Hatano Hideharu as hostage. Oda Nobunaga, however, had her crucified, whereupon the surviving retainers of the Hatano killed Mitsuhide's mother. Akechi Mitsuhide hit back at Oda Nobunaga in 1582 when the latter was in Kyōto by leading a coup at the Honnōji temple. With Nobunaga dead, Mitsuhide assumed the reins of government for thirteen days, but was soon defeated at the battle of Yamazaki.

mon: see separate illustration.

standard: a double white flag with slashed edges.

**Akechi (Mitsuharu) Mitsutoshi (+1582)**

Akechi Mitsutoshi, also known as Mitsuharu, accompanied his cousin Mitsuhide in his revolt against Nobunaga, but was too late to help at the battle of Yamazaki. He was defeated by Horii Hidemasa at Uchide-hama, near Ōtsu, and crossed the narrow neck of Lake Biwa on his famous horse Okage to escape, a scene often depicted in Japanese art. Mitsutoshi then performed the unprecedented act of

committing hara-kiri and writing a poem on the door with the blood from his abdomen, using a brush.

**Akita Sanesue (+1659)**

Akita Sanesue served the Tokugawa, and in 1602 he received the fief of Shusido (Hitachi - 50,000 koku).

**Akita Toshisue (dates?)**

Son of the above, Toshisue also served the Tokugawa, and in 1645 he received the fief of Miharu (Mutsu - 50,000 koku).

great standard: black three-dimensional cone with feathers  
messengers' sashimono: five black flags

**Akiyama Nobutomo (d. 1575)**

Nobutomo was one of the Takeda 'Twenty-Four Generals'. He played a distinguished part in the invasion of Shinano province.

banners: a black flower design on blue

**Akizuki Tanezane (+1588)**

Having been defeated by the Ōtomo, Akizuki Tanezane sided with the Shimazu and joined them against Toyotomi Hideyoshi when he invaded Kyūshū. After peace was restored, he was transferred to the fief of Takanabe (Hyūga - 20,000 koku).

His flags used a stylised character 'aki'.

**Akizuki Tanenaga (+1614)**

Tanenaga served in the Korean Invasion under Kuroda Nagamasa. He supported Ishida at the time of Sekigahara, but managed to retain his fief afterwards.

**Amakazu Kagemochi (dates?)**

Amakazu Kagemochi was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals'. He fought in support at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561 and guarded the ford of Amenomiya.

His banner was a black band on white.

**Amako Tsunehisa (1458-1541)**

The Amako family spent many years in arms against the Mōri, but Mōri Motonari was originally



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*Mon and other heraldic designs:*

1. The stylized character 'aki' on the banner of Akizuki Tanezane. 2. The mon of the Amako family. The same pattern of squares was used also by the Kyōgoku. 3. The lantern standard of Ankokuji Ekei. 4. The standard of Asano Yukinaga as used in Korea. 5. The mon of the Chōsokabe family. 6. The love-birds design of Date Masamune, also used by Uesugi Kenshin. 7. The water wheel design of Doi Toshikatsu. 8. The banner of Fukushima Masanori. 9. The hat motif of Gamō Katahide and his descendants, appearing as a standard and on his flags. 10. The mon of Hitotsuyanagi Naomori. 11. The banner with the character 'hon' of Honda Tadamasu and Honda Tadakatsu. 12. Horio Yoshiharu wearing a sashimono with his mon. 13. The mon of Hineno Yoshitomo, used on his flags.

a retainer of the Amako. In 1518 Amako Tsunehisa made war against Ōuchi Yoshioki, but peace was negotiated through the offices of the shogun. In 1521 Mōri Motonari besieged Kagamiyama on behalf of the Amako, while Amako Tsunehisa failed in his attempt to take Kanayama.

#### **Amako Kunihiisa (+1554)**

Kunihiisa was the son of Tsunehisa, and died at the hands of his nephew Haruhisa, with whom he quarrelled.

#### **Amako Haruhisa (1514-62)**

Amako Haruhisa made war against Ōuchi Yoshitaka and Mōri Motonari, but with so little success that many of his retainers passed over into the service of the Ōuchi. His biggest failure was his inability to capture Koriyama castle from the Mōri. When Sue Harukata murdered Ōuchi Yoshitaka, Haruhisa retrieved his losses, captured Mimasaka and seventeen castles in Harima.

#### **Amako Katsuhisa (+1578)**

With Katsuhisa the rivalry between the Mōri and the Amako reached its peak. In 1570 he was defeated at Nunobeyama, where his celebrated general Yamanaka Shikanosuke distinguished himself. In 1571 he was defeated by Mōri Terumoto and fled to the island of Oki. On his return he recaptured Tajima and Inaba provinces. In 1578 he defended Kozuki castle against the Mōri on behalf of Toyotomi Hideyoshi, but was forced to commit suicide when attacked by Kobayakawa Takakage and Kikkawa Motoharu.

#### **Amako Yoshihisa (+1610)**

The son of Katsuhisa, Yoshihisa continued the struggle against the Mōri, who besieged him in his castle of Toda. Suspecting his leading retainer, Moriyama Hisakane, of aiding the enemy, he had the unfortunate fellow executed, at which most of his other retainers abandoned him. Yoshihisa fled, had his head shaved, and lived in religious obscurity until 1610.

#### **Amakusa (Masuda) Shirō (Tokisada) (+1638)**

This young samurai is one of the most enigmatic figures in Japanese history. At a comparatively young age he led the insurgents in the Shimabara

rebellion, and conducted the defence of the castle of Hara. He was killed when the castle fell.

The heraldry used by the Shimabara rebels was largely that of the Christian cross, although an elaborate banner showing angels adoring the Blessed Sacrament has survived.

#### **Amari Torayasu (d. 1548)**

Amari Torayasu served two generations of the Takeda family as one of the 'Twenty-Four Generals'. He was killed at the battle of Uedahara in 1548.

banner: red and white stripes

#### **Anayama (Baisetsu) Nobukimi (d. 1582)**

Anayama Nobukimi was a nephew of Takeda Shingen and became one of his 'Twenty Four Generals'. He fought at Mikata ga Hara and Nagashino, but later made an alliance with Tokugawa Ieyasu and helped him in his defeat of Takeda Katsuyori. As a reward he obtained a fief in Kai province, but was assassinated by one of the old Takeda retainers.

For heraldry, as Anayama was related to the Takeda family, the sashimono worn by mounted and foot samurai bore the Takeda mon on blue. The nobori banner and uma jirushi, which was a large flag, were blue with a different device.

#### **Andō Shigenobu (1558-1622)**

Andō Shigenobu served in Ieyasu's wars and became a daimyō in 1612, when he received the fief of Takatsuki (Kōzuke).

For flags see Shigenaga.

#### **Andō Shigenaga (1600-57)**

The son of Shigenobu, Shigenaga served Tokugawa Hidetada and Tokugawa Iemitsu.

great standard: red and white striped fukinuki messengers' sashimono: a horō of alternate bands of red and white  
sashimono: white disc on red  
ashigaru: small red flag

#### **Ankokuji Ekei (d. 1600)**

Ankokuji Ekei was originally a Buddhist priest. He served in Korea, then fought for the Western Army at Sekigahara and was afterwards beheaded. As he had no descendants his heraldry is unknown

except for his standard, which was a three-dimensional Chinese lantern in gold, and his mon, four pierced squares in a pattern.

#### **Aoki Shigekane (dates?)**

Aoki Shigekane served Tokugawa Ieyasu, and was created a daimyō in 1600 when he received the fief of Asada (Settsu - 10,000 koku).

banner: Mount Fuji in white on black  
sashimono: same design  
standard: white two-dimensional Fuji above a gohei

#### **Aoyama Tadanari (1551-1613)**

Aoyama Tadanari was created a daimyō in 1601.

#### **Aoyama Yukinari (dates?)**

The son of Tadanari, Yukinari became a daimyō in 1615.

#### **Araki Murashige (dates?)**

Araki Murashige served Oda Nobunaga and fought against Mōri Terumoto. He was accused of treason by Akechi Mitsuhide and fortified himself in his castle of Itami. After a year-long siege the castle fell, but Araki escaped to live in obscurity.

#### **Arima Toyouji (1570-1642)**

At the time of Sekigahara, Toyouji fought for the Tokugawa at Akasaka (Mino) against Oda Hide-nobu. Afterwards he received the fief of Fukuchiyama (Tamba - 80,000 koku). At the siege of Ōsaka he took 57 heads. In 1620 he received the fief of Kurume (Chikugo - 210,000 koku). He also participated in the Shimabara campaign.

standard: black open square on white

#### **Arima Tadayori (dates?)**

The son of the above, Tadayori fought beside his father at Shimabara under the same great standard, but to distinguish his troops used a lesser standard of two bundles of black feathers. His ashigaru also used one back flag, rather than two.

#### **Arima Harunobu (+1612)**

This family of Arima had no connection with the Arima family described above, but were based in the southern island of Kyūshū. Harunobu fought beside the Shimazu in their victory at Okita

Nawate in 1584 over the Ryūzōji. He supported the Western Army at Sekigahara. Harunobu was baptised in 1579, but was disgraced and executed in 1612.

#### **Arima Naozumi (dates ?)**

The son of Harunobu, Naozumi became a persecutor of Christianity. In early 1615 he received the fief of Nobeoka (Hyūga - 53,000 koku).

#### **Asai Sukemasa (1495-1546)**

Sukemasa established Odani castle in 1516, and held out against the Sasaki.

#### **Asai Hisamasa (1524-73)**

The son of Sukemasa, Hisamasa was defeated by the Sasaki, and retired in favour of his son Nagamasa.

#### **Asai Nagamasa (1545-73)**

Nagamasa defeated Rokkaku Yoshitaka and Saito Tatsuoki, but then came into conflict with Oda Nobunaga, whose sister he married. However, Asai then joined the Asakura and the monks of Mount Hiei in an alliance against Oda Nobunaga, and was defeated at the battle of Anegawa in 1570. A truce was concluded, but hostilities broke out again in 1573 when Nobunaga besieged him in Odani. Seeing that all was lost, Nagamasa entrusted his family to Nobunaga and committed suicide.

His three daughters, saved from Odani, were themselves to earn places in history. The eldest, Yodo-gimi, married Toyotomi Hideyoshi. The second married Kyōgoku Takatsugu, while the third married Tokugawa Hidetada and was the mother of the third Tokugawa shōgun, Iemitsu. The departure of the three daughters from the burning Odani is a sentimental scene found in Japanese art.

#### **Asakura Norikage (1474-1552)**

Asakura Norikage fought incessantly against the armies of the Ikkō-ikki in Echizen, Kaga and Noto provinces, including the battle of Kuzuryūgawa in 1506.

#### **Asakura Yoshikage (1533-73)**

Asakura Yoshikage sided with Asai Nagamasa and saw his army defeated beside the Asai at the battle

of Anegawa in 1570. In 1573 Yoshikage killed himself when under siege in Ichijō ga dani.

#### **Asakura Kagetake (dates?)**

Kagetake was Asakura Yoshikage's commander in chief at the battle of Anegawa in 1570.

#### **Asano Nagamasa (1546-1610)**

Nagamasa was the brother-in-law of Toyotomi Hideyoshi, whom he accompanied on his campaign against the Mōri. He took part in the campaign against the Hōjō in 1590, and captured Iwatsuki and Edo castles. He also fought in Korea.

#### **Asano Yukinaga (also called Yoshinaga) (1576-1613)**

The son of Nagamasa, his first campaign was against the Hōjō at the age of fifteen. He served in Korea under Katō Kiyomasa and was part of the garrison defending Ulsan. In 1598 he received the fief of Fuchu (now Kōfu, Kai - 200,000 koku).

standard used in Korea: gold three-dimensional basketwork object

#### **Asano Nagaakira (1586-1632)**

Nagaakira succeeded his brother Yukinaga, who died childless. He fought for the Tokugawa at Ōsaka and took 42 heads. In 1619 he received the fief of Hiroshima (Aki - 426,000 koku).

banner: two black stripes at top of long white flag  
 great standard: gold three-dimensional fly trap  
 lesser standard: gold three-dimensional sunburst  
 messengers' sashimono: black horō with gold discs  
 sashimono: ten small white flags  
 ashigaru: six small gold flags

#### **Asano Nagashige (dates?)**

Nagashige was the son of Nagaakira.  
 banner: five white discs on long black flag  
 great standard: white fukinuki  
 sashimono: white disc on black  
 messengers' sashimono: a white horō

#### **Ashikaga Takauji (1305-58)**

Takauji was the first Ashikaga shogun.

#### **Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (1358-1408)**

Yoshimitsu brought the Nanbokuchō Wars to an end, and built the Kinkakuji (Golden Pavilion).

#### **Ashikaga Yoshimasa (1435-90)**

Yoshimasa, builder of the Ginkakuji (Silver Pavilion) in Kyōto, was the shogun whose reign saw the Ōnin War.

#### **Ashikaga Yoshitane (1465-1522)**

Yoshitane was the tenth Ashikaga shogun. He was defeated in battle at Shōgakuji (Kawachi) in 1491 and forced to flee. His enemies replaced him as shogun with Yoshizumi, but with the help of Ōuchi Yoshioki Yoshitane regained his place. This state of affairs did not last, and Yoshitane eventually died in exile.

#### **Ashikaga Yoshizumi (1478-1511)**

The eleventh Ashikaga shogun, Yoshizumi replaced Yoshitane at the age of sixteen, but was then replaced on Yoshitane's return.

#### **Ashikaga Yoshiharu (1510-50)**

The twelfth Ashikaga shogun, Yoshiharu was a mere puppet in the hands of the daimyō. Hounded from office and forced to flee, he died in exile.

#### **Ashikaga Yoshiteru (1535-65)**

Yoshiteru, the thirteenth Ashikaga shogun, joined forces with Hosokawa Harumoto to oppose the dominance exercised by Miyoshi Chōkei and Matsunaga Hisahide, but his opponents compelled him to banish Hosokawa instead. The conspirators attacked the Shogunal palace, where Ashikaga Yoshiteru, who was an accomplished swordsman and the pupil of the famous Tsukahara Bokuden, held them at bay until he was forced to commit hara-kiri.

#### **Ashikaga Yoshihide (1564-8)**

Yoshihide was chosen by Yoshiteru's enemies to be the fourteenth Ashikaga Shogun when he was only two years old, but as Oda Nobunaga supported the late Yoshiteru's brother Yoshiaki he was forced to flee and died soon afterwards.

#### **Ashikaga Yoshiaki (1537-97)**

Yoshiaki was the fifteenth and last Ashikaga

shogun. Oda Nobunaga entered Kyōto with his protégé in 1568, but in 1573, when Yoshiaki asked Takeda Shingen to help him to be rid of Nobunaga's control, he was deposed. Yoshiaki lived on as a monk until 1597.

standard: white hata jirushi with red sun and gold lettering

banner: hata jirushi black 'Hachiman Dai Bosatsu' and bands on white

#### **Ashikaga Shigeuji (1434-97)**

The Ashikaga family represented by Shigeuji, who was the first to use the title Koga-kubō, by which his descendants were known, was a branch based in the Kantō.

#### **Ashikaga Masauji (+1531)**

Masauji was the son of Shigeuji.

#### **Ashikaga Yoshiaki (+1538)**

Ashikaga Yoshiaki joined forces with Satomi Yoshitaka against Hōjō Ujitsuna, and was defeated and killed at the battle of Kōnodai in 1538.

#### **Ashikaga Haruuji (+1560)**

Although married to the daughter of Hōjō Ujitsuna, he joined the Uesugi in opposing the Hōjō and was defeated along with them at the battle of Kawagoe, fought at night in 1545.

#### **Ashikaga Yoshiuji (dates?)**

Yoshiuji was the last of the Koga-kubō. He was established in Kitsuregawa (Shimotsuke) in 1590.

#### **Ashina Morikyo (1490-1553)**

The Ashina were an important family in Mutsu province during the sixteenth century. In 1547 Morikyo joined forces with Date Harumune in an unsuccessful attempt to seize the territory of the Soma family.

#### **Ashina Moriuji (1521-80)**

For much of his life Ashina Moriuji fought against the Satake and the Hōjō.

#### **Ashina Moritaka (1560-83)**

Moritaka waged war against Date Masamune and Tamura Kiyozumi, but was assassinated by one of his own followers.

#### **Ashina Morishige (1571- ?)**

Morishige was the son of Satake Yoshishige, but was chosen to succeed Ashina Moritaka, who had died childless. He was then only twelve years old. Many retainers of the Satake clan followed him, which caused great dissent among the remaining Ashina retainers, many of whom passed in turn to the service of Date Masamune. The latter took advantage of the opportunity and laid siege to the Ashina castle of Kurokawa in 1589. Morishige escaped, but lived the rest of his life in seclusion.

#### **Aso Koretoyo (+1584)**

Aso Koretoyo possessed the castle of Yabe, in Chikugo province on Kyūshū.

#### **Aso Koremitsu (1581-93)**

Koremitsu was a child when his father died, and in 1588, when Higo province was divided between Konishi Yukinaga and Katō Kiyomasa following the completion of the Kyūshū campaign, Koremitsu sought sanctuary with the latter. However, Toyotomi Hideyoshi ordered him to be killed when he was thirteen years old.

#### **Ayukawa Kiyonaga (dates?)**

Ayukawa Kiyonaga was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals'. He fought in the Headquarters Division of the Uesugi army at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561.

His banner was a complex black design on white.

#### **Baba Nobuharu (+1575)**

Baba Nobuharu was one of the 'Twenty-Four Generals' of Takeda Shingen. He fought at Mikata ga Hara and was killed at the battle of Nagashino in 1575, where he commanded the vanguard of the right wing of Katsuyori's army.

His flags bore a design of a 'mountain path' (wavy lines) either black on white or white on black.

#### **Ban Dan'emon (d. 1615)**

Ban Dan'emon attacked Hachisuka's division at the Honmachi bridge during the winter campaign of Ōsaka, and became known as the 'brave general of the night attack'. He was killed at the battle of Kashi.

**Bessho Nagaharu (1558-80)**

Bessho Nagaharu opposed Hashiba (Toyotomi) Hideyoshi during the latter's advance along the coast of the Inland Sea on behalf of Oda Nobunaga. Hideyoshi besieged him in his castle of Miki and wished to spare his life, but Bessho Nagaharu preferred to commit suicide.

**Bessho Toyoharu (1578-7)**

Toyoharu was only two years old when his father committed suicide. Later he received from Hideyoshi the castle of Ayabe and a revenue of 20,000 koku. He was dispossessed in 1628 on account of his bad conduct.

**Chōsokabe Kunichika (1503-56)**

The Chōsokabe family grew to dominate the island of Shikoku. Kunichika built the castle of Toyooka in Tosa province.

**Chōsokabe Motochika (1539-99)**

On the death of his father, Chōsokabe Motochika transferred his residence to Nagahama, and in a series of military campaigns took over the entire Tosa province from Ichijō Kanesada by 1573. He then continued the conquest of the whole of Shikoku on behalf of Oda Nobunaga, but following Nobunaga's death he decided to keep the island for himself. In 1585 Toyotomi Hideyoshi invaded Shikoku. After some resistance Motochika submitted and was confined to Tosa once again. He took part in the Kyūshū and Korean campaigns, then transferred his domains to his son and retired.

**Chōsokabe Morichika (+1615)**

Morichika sided against the Tokugawa at the time of Sekigahara and was dispossessed. In 1615 he fought at Ōsaka, but at the fall of the castle he fled. On being captured he was beheaded.

The mon of the Chōsokabe was a floral design within a circle.

**Daidōji Shigeoki (dates?)**

Daidōji Shigeoki was a prominent retainer of the Hōjō and held the castle of Matsuyama.

**Date Terumune (+1584)**

Date Terumune was murdered in 1584 by Hatakeyama Yoshitsugu. The revenge campaign

launched by his son Masamune established the Date as the most important family in northern Japan.

**Date Masamune (1566-1636)**

Date Masamune was one of the greatest of the daimyō, who ruled much of northern Japan. He succeeded his father at the age of eighteen, and made war against Hatakeyama Yoshitsugu, whom he defeated at the battle of Hitotoribashi in 1585. In 1589 he took over Kurokawa castle from the Ashina. In 1590, following the defeat of the Hōjō by Hideyoshi, Date Masamune reached an accommodation with the victor. In 1600 he supported the Tokugawa cause in the north by making war against Uesugi Kagekatsu, and, assisted by Mogami Yoshiaki, he defeated Naō Kanetsugu. As a reward he received the fief of the Uesugi, and established himself at Iwatezawa, the name of which he changed to Sendai. He fought at Ōsaka. Masamune was interested in Christianity, and sent an embassy to Europe headed by Hasekura Tsunenaga. He died at the age of 70, renowned as a warrior, diplomat and patron of the arts.

Masamune wore a personal sashimono flag of a rising sun on white. He used a white banner with lovebirds in bamboo design, plus blue banners with a gold disc. He outfitted his entire army in the high quality yukinoshita dō armours, and at the time of the Korean expedition kitted out his personal foot-soldiers in elaborate gold helmets.

banner: large white flag with large red sun's disc, plus blue banners with gold disc  
 great standard: gold feather plume above two black umbrellas  
 lesser standard: plain black square banner with black plume  
 sashimono: black lovebirds on white

**Date Tadamune (+1658)**

Tadamune was the elder son of Masamune.

**Date Hidemune (dates?)**

Hidemune was the second son of Date Masamune. He received the fief of Uwajima (Iyo, on Shikoku island) in 1614 - 100,000 koku.

banner: black and white stripes

great standard: black 'fly trap' with gold spear head  
 lesser standard: gold two-dimensional crescent moon

#### **Doi Toshikatsu (1573-1644)**

Doi Toshikatsu was the son of Mizuno Nobumoto, and was adopted by Doi Toshimasa. As one of the three counsellors of Tokugawa Iemitsu he was a pillar of the Tokugawa house. His troops were known as the 'yellow regiment' (ki sonae), the predominant colour of the flags.

banner: black water wheel design on yellow sashimono: plain yellow flag with white flag hanging horizontally  
 great standard: a large flag with the black water wheel design  
 lesser standard: a three-dimensional device of seven black cocks' feather plumes  
 ashigaru: probably a small yellow flag like the sashimono

#### **Endō Yoshinobu (Suminobu?) (dates?)**

The family were originally called To, but changed their name to Endō on being made daimyō in 1600. There is therefore no connection with the Endō killed at the battle of the Anegawa in 1570.

banner: red disc on a black and white ground  
 standard: two-dimensional gold fan  
 sashimono: two gold flags

#### **Fukushima Masanori (1561-1624)**

Fukushima Masanori was one of the 'Seven Spears' at the battle of Shizugatake in 1583, as a result of which he received the fief of Kiyosu (Owari) and 200,000 koku. In 1600 Masanori captured Gifu castle for the Tokugawa and fought at Sekigahara, where he opposed the troops of Ukita Hidee.

standard: silver leaf in three dimensions  
 banner: white waves on black

#### **Fukushima Masayori (dates?)**

Masayori was Masanori's younger brother, daimyō of Nagashima (Ise - 12,000 koku).

#### **Furuta Kichiza'emonnojō (+1580)**

This samurai served Hideyoshi and was a member of his 'yellow horō-shū'. He was killed in the attack on Miki castle in 1580.

#### **Furuta Shigekatsu (1561-1600)**

Shigekatsu served Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who granted him the castle of Matsuzaka (Ise - 37,000 koku). After Sekigahara his fief was raised to 60,000 koku.

banner: three white motifs on black sashimono: single white motif on black standard: white three-dimensional hat messengers' sashimono: a black horō with two motifs in white

#### **Furuta Shigenari (1545-1615)**

Shigenari was a noted tea master. He received 10,000 koku in 1600 but was dispossessed after communicating with the besieged in Ōsaka. It was during this siege that he astounded his comrades by cutting an aesthetically pleasing piece of bamboo from the palisades while under fire!

#### **Fuwa Katsumitsu (dates?)**

Katsumitsu fought at the battle of Shizugatake in 1583.

banner: black and white with a small red flag  
 standard: white with a blue stripe and a black plume

#### **Gamō Katahide (1534-84)**

Katahide was keeper of the castle of Hino (Ōmi) for the Sasaki, then entered the service of Oda Nobunaga.

#### **Gamō Ujisato (1557-96)**

The son of Katahide, Ujisato distinguished himself by taking the castle of Okochi (Ise) at the age of thirteen! He subsequently married Nobunaga's daughter. He received the fief of Matsuzaka (Ise - 120,000 koku). After the siege of Odawara he received Aizu (Mutsu) and 420,000 koku. In 1591 he defeated Kunoe Masazane at his castle of the same name and received 1,000,000 koku. His brilliant career came to an end at the age of 40, when Hideyoshi is believed to have had him poisoned.

standard: black feathers

#### **Gamō Hideyuki (1583-1612)**

Hideyuki succeeded his father Ujisato at thirteen, and was deprived of his immense domains.



Instead he received Utsunomiya (Shimotsuke - 180,000 koku).

standard: three hats on a pole

#### **Gotō Matabei Mototsugu (+1615)**

Gotō Mototsugu had a long and distinguished samurai career, serving Kuroda Yoshitaka and then Toyotomi Hideyoshi. He fought in Korea and at Sekigahara. He afterwards sided with Hideyori and was killed at the battle of Dōmyōji, during the summer campaign of Ōsaka.

standard: black three dimensional crescent moon

banner: plain white

mon: hanging wisteria

#### **Gotō Ujifusa (1570-1615)**

Ujifusa was the son of Mototsugu, and also died during the siege of Ōsaka in 1615.

#### **Hachisuka Masakatsu (1525-85)**

Masakatsu served Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi. He received the fief of 10,000 koku from the latter.

#### **Hachisuka Iemasa (1558-1638)**

Son of Masakatsu, he served Hideyoshi against Shikoku island and received Tokushima (Awa) in 1585. He also served in Korea.

Descriptions of his heraldry sided with his son below, except that the sashimono was a white flag with a black swastika, or with colours reversed.

#### **Hachisuka Yoshishige (1581-1615)**

Yoshishige sided with Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1600, and after the battle of Sekigahara he received a fief of 186,000 koku in Awa. After Ōsaka he also acquired Awaji, his revenues rising to 258,000 koku.

banner: black and white with a black swastika, plus a small white flag with the swastika

standard: two three-dimensional balls of black feathers

sashimono: two black flags

messengers' sashimono: black and white horō

#### **Hajikano Masatsugu (dates?)**

Hajikano Masatsugu was an ashigaru-taishō under Takeda Shingen. At the time of Shingen's advance

on Odawara in 1569 he bravely tested the depth of the swollen Sasaogawa until only the sashimono on his armour was visible. His sashimono bore the design of the 'spear' playing piece for the game of shogi, which can only move forward and not retreat, the reason he gave to Shingen for his courage in advancing.

#### **Hara Masatane (d. 1575)**

Hara Masatane was one of the Takeda 'Twenty-Four Generals'. He was killed at the battle of Nagashino.

His banners bore a black device on white.

#### **Hara Toratane (d. 1564)**

Hara Toratane was one of the Takeda 'Twenty-Four Generals'. It was said that he could use ten ashigaru with the effectiveness of a hundred samurai.

His banners bore a white design on blue.

#### **Hasegawa Ujikazu (dates?)**

In 1600 he tried to join Ishida Mitsunari and entered Sawayama castle.

sashimono: two-dimensional gold crescent moon

#### **Hasekura Tsunenaga (1561-1622)**

Tsunenaga was sent by Date Masamune on a historic embassy to Europe, during which he was received by Pope Paul V. On his return he found that Masamune's disposition had changed towards Christianity, but Tsunenaga remained steadfast.

#### **Hasekura Tsuneyori (dates?)**

The son of Tsunenaga, Tsuneyori was put to death for his Christian beliefs by Date Tadamune, son of Masamune.

#### **Hashiba Hideyoshi, see Toyotomi Hideyoshi**

#### **Hashiba Hidenaga (1540-91)**

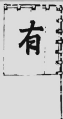
Hidenaga was the half-brother of Hideyoshi, and accompanied him in all his campaigns, particularly the Shikoku and Kyūshū expeditions. In 1582 he received Koriyama (Yamato).

#### **Hashiba Hidekatsu (1567-93)**

Hidekatsu was the fourth son of Oda Nobunaga. See Oda.



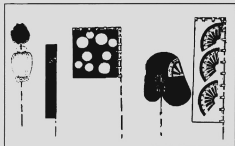
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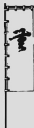
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14

**Opposite page: Mon and other heraldic designs:**

**1.** A mon used by several families and individuals including Ashikaga Yoshiteru and Hosokawa Katsumoto. **2.** Device used by Hosokawa Tadaoki. **3.** The circular butterfly mon of Ikeda Terumasa. Other Ikeda members used a sideways butterfly like the Taira mon. **4.** The complete heraldic display of Ikoma Kazumasa, for details see text. **5.** The comb design of Imagawa Yoshimoto. **6.** The banner of Katakura Kagetsuna. **7.** A mon used by several families, including Furuta, Sakuma and Kikkawa. **8.** The crossed sickles mon of Kobayakawa Hideaki. **9.** The 'wisteria as a tomoie' mon of the Kuroda. **10.** The young Maeda Toshie, showing the Maeda mon. **11.** The ashigaru back flags used by Matsudaira (Katahara) Yasunobu. **12.** The mon of Miyoshi Chōkei. **13.** The crane mon of Mori Nagayoshi and also Nanbu Toshinao. **14.** The mon of the Mōri, also used by Nagai Naomasa.

**Hatakeyama Takamasa (+1576)**

Takamasa was defeated by Miyoshi Chōkei in 1559, but later acquired from the Miyoshi the castle of Takaya, which had formerly been his own. In 1578 he lost it again to one of his own retainers Yuza Nobunori, who killed Takamasa's son.

**Hatakeyama Yoshitsugu (dates?)**

No relation to the above, Yoshitsugu murdered the father of Date Masamune, then was defeated by him at the battle of Hitotoribashi in 1585.

**Hatano Hideharu (d. 1575)**

Besieged in his castle of Yakami by Akechi Mitsuhide, Hatano only surrendered when Mitsuhide took his mother as hostage.

**Hatano Muneharu (dates?)**

Son of Hideharu, his personal sashimono was a small fukinuki.

**Hattori Hanzō (1541-96)**

Hanzō was a retainer of Tokugawa Ieyasu, and the legendary leader of the ninja of Iga. His men became the guards of Edo castle, and the Hanzō gate still bears his name.

**Hayashi Tamba no kami (dates?)**

Nothing is known of this samurai except for his use of a white standard bearing the Nichiren slogan 'Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō'.

**Hijikata Katsuji (dates?)**

Little is known of this samurai. He served the Tokugawa family and received the fief of Komono (Ise - 11,000 koku) in 1600. He served under Tokugawa Hidetada at Ōsaka. His mon was a triple tomoie.

banner: black motifs on white  
great standard: five white flags  
lesser standard: blue hanging flag  
sashimono: small black flag  
messengers' sashimono: small version of banner

**Hineno Takayoshi (+1600)**

Takayoshi served against the Hōjō at Odawara and thus received the fief of Takashima (Shinano - 28,000 koku).

**Hineno Yoshitomo (1588-1658)**

The son of Hineno Takayoshi, Yoshitomo was transferred in 1601 to Minu (Shimotsuke).

banner: black motif on white mon  
sashimono: gold two-dimensional sunburst  
ashigaru: small version of banner

**Hiraga Genshin (+1536)**

Hiraga Genshin, a retainer of the Takeda, was killed in 1536 at the battle of Un no Kuchi, the first battle in which Takeda Shingen took part.

**Hiraiwa Chikayoshi (1542-1611)**

Chikayoshi was the trusted confidant of Tokugawa Ieyasu. In 1590 he received the castle of Umayabashi (Kōzuke - 30,000 koku).

**Hisamatsu Sadakatsu (1560-1624)**

Sadakatsu was successively daimyō of Kakegawa (Tōtōmi), Kuwana (Ise) and Nagashima (Ise).

**Hitotsuyanagi Naomori (1565-1636)**

Hitotsuyanagi Naomori served Tokugawa Ieyasu after Sekigahara, and was present at Ōsaka.

**Hōjō Yasutoki (1183-1242)**

Yasutoki was the third of the Regents to be

supplied by the Kamakura Hōjō family. It was Yasutoki who overcame emperor Go-Toba at the third battle of Uji in 1221.

#### **Hōjō Tokimune (1251-84)**

Tokimune was Regent when the Mongol attempts at invasion occurred, but died soon after his triumph.

#### **Hōjō Takatoki (1303-33)**

Ninth and last of the Hōjō Regents, Takatoki opposed the attempts by Go Daigo to reassert the imperial power, but was defeated by Nitta Yoshisada at the siege of Kamakura in 1333.

#### **Hōjō Sōun (1432-1519)**

A full account of this illustrious samurai family, known as the later Hōjō or the Odawara Hōjō, appears elsewhere in this work. Hōjō Sōun was the first to adopt the family name. He captured Odawara, which was to become the Hōjō base.

Sōun adopted the fish-scale design as his mon. standard: red hata jirushi with mon in gold

#### **Hōjō Ujitsuna (1487-1541)**

Ujitsuna was the heir of Sōun, and the victor of the first battle of Kōnodai in 1538.

#### **Hōjō Ujiyasu (1515-70)**

Ujiyasu continued the family tradition, and had a long struggle with Takeda Shingen and Uesugi Kenshin. He won the battles of Kawagoe (1545) and the second Kōnodai (1564).

standard: a banner coloured yellow, blue, red, white, black from top

banner: a large white flag wider than it was deep with the Hōjō mon

#### **Hōjō Ujimasa (1538-90)**

Ujimasa consolidated the Hōjō position, and committed suicide at the time of the fall of Odawara in 1590.

Hōjō Ujimasa used a long white nobori with a slogan on it. See *Samurai: The Warrior Tradition*

#### **Hōjō Ujinao (1562-91)**

Ujinao was the fifth and last of the Odawara Hōjō daimyō.

Ujinao used as his uma-jirushi a white flag with the character 'mu' in black.

For descendants of the Hōjō family *O Uma Jirushi* gives the following, which matches earlier descriptions:

#### **Hōjō Ujishige (dates?)**

banner: black and white, with the Hōjō mon  
standard: gold three-dimensional device with feather plume  
sashimono: as banner

Other prominent Hōjō family members were:

#### **Hōjō Tsunanari**

Tsunanari was the adopted brother of Ujiyasu, and was the defender of Kawagoe castle in the battle of 1545. He led the 'yellow regiment'

Tsunanari's uma-jirushi was a yellow flag with the characters 'Hachiman' in black.

#### **Hōjō Tsunataka**

Tsunataka commanded the 'red regiment' from Tamanawa castle.

#### **Hōjō Ujiteru**

Ujiteru was the second son of Ujiyasu, who commanded Hachōji castle.

#### **Hōjō Ujikuni**

Ujikuni was third son of Ujiyasu, and the keeper of the strategic Hachigata castle.

#### **Hōjō Ujimitsu**

Ujimitsu was the fourth son of Ujiyasu. He commanded the Miura company.

#### **Hōjō Ujihide**

Ujihide was the fifth son of Ujiyasu. He commanded the Kotsukue company.

#### **Honda Tadakatsu (1548-1610)**

Honda Tadakatsu was the companion of Tokugawa Ieyasu in all his campaigns. He commanded in the front rank at the battle of Nagashino in 1575, and appears on the Nagashino screen in his famous helmet ornamented with wooden antlers, and with a large Buddhist rosary over his shoulder. He was created daimyō of Ōtaki (Kazusa - 100,000 koku) in 1590, and after Sekigahara received Kuwana (Ise - 150,000 koku).



*Hōjō Ujiyasu (1515-70) was the grandson of Hōjō Sōun, and brought the Odawara Hōjō to the height of their powers. He faced severe challenges from other daimyō, notably Takeda, Uesugi and Imagawa.*

For heraldry see below, but note also that on the Anegawa screen Tadakatsu is shown with a standard of Shoki, identical to that otherwise associated with Maeda Toshiie.

#### **Honda Tadamasu (1575-1638)**

Tadamasu was the son of Honda Tadakatsu, and continued to serve the Tokugawa. In 1617 he received the fief of Himeji (Harima - 250,000 koku).

- banner: black and white, with the character 'hon'
- standard: two three-dimensional balls of black feathers
- ashigaru: small red flag
- lord's helmet: gold catfish tail with gold badge

#### **Honda Tadatsugu (1549-1613)**

Tadatsugu owned the castle of Ina in Mikawa province.

#### **Honda Yasutoshi (dates?)**

Yasutoshi was the son of Tadatsugu, and was the keeper of Okazaki castle. He was created a daimyō in 1601, and received the fief of Nishio (Mikawa), and in 1607 Zeze (Ōmi - 30,000 koku). He served during the winter campaign of Ōsaka.

- banner: black band on red, with a small red flag bearing the Honda mon in black on a white disc
- great standard: fukinuki with black band on red
- ashigaru: black flag with serrated edge
- lesser standard: red horizontal flag beneath a gold three-dimensional seashell

#### **Honda Toshinaga (dates?)**

This Honda served Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and received the fief of Takatori (Yamato) in 1600.

- banner: black stripes and mon on red
- lesser standard: white fukinuki
- sashimono: gold three-dimensional deer antler
- great standard: black mon on white

#### **Honda Shimōsa no kami (dates?)**

Little is known of this family, whose name is written using different ideographs from the famous Honda of Mikawa. They originated from Satsuma province.

- banner: white with the three-leaf mon in a circle in black
- sashimono: plain black flag
- messengers' sashimono: black horō
- great standard: gold flag
- lesser standard: gold fan above a black horse hair plume
- lord's helmet: black with gold badge

#### **Honjō Shigenaga (dates?)**

Honjō Shigenaga was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals'.

His banner bore the character 'jō' in black on white.

#### **Hori Hidemasa (1553-90)**

A celebrated samurai who served Oda Nobunaga and then Toyotomi Hideyoshi. In 1581 he received the castle of Obama (Wakasa). He fought at the battle of Yamazaki in 1582, and received

Sakamoto castle as a reward. He died during the siege of Odawara in 1590.

#### Hori Hideharu (1575–1606)

The son of Hidemasa, he received the fief of Kasuga-yama (Echigo), and in 1598 Takata (Echigo - 350,000 koku).

**Hori Tadatoshi**, son of the above, was dispossessed in 1610, along with his uncle Chikayoshi.

#### Hori Chikayoshi (1580–1637)

Second son of Hidemasa, dispossessed in 1610,

was forgiven and in 1612 received the fief of Zōō (now Nagaoka - Echigo - 40,000 koku).

#### Hori Naomasa (d. 1608)

On entering the service of Hori, Hidemasa Naomasa, formerly called Okuda, changed his name to Hori. He served Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and he received the fief of Sanjō (Echigo - 50,000 koku).

For heraldry see below.

#### Hori Naoyori (1577-1639)

The son of Hori Naomasa, Naoyori fought at both

### THE 1559 HŌJŌ REGISTER

The Hōjō family records provide an excellent opportunity to compare the layout of the Hōjō retainer band with its actual physical expression on the battlefield. The Hōjō register, the *Odawara-shū shoryō yakuchū*, listed the military obligation of the retainers of the Hōjō in 1559, under the third daimyō Hōjō Ujiyasu. There would also be a sizeable contribution to the army from the daimyō's own lands, which were not registered. Each of the retainers counted below would have had to supply men in accordance with the current compilation, which roughly gives a number of 10,000 men in all. The names refer to companies (shū). As noted in Chapter III, the Hōjō companies were largely identified by the name of the castle to which they were attached. This was sometimes expressed under the name of the province in which the castle was located.

Gokamon 17

Gokamon means relatives, and included Ujiyasu's heir Ujimasa, his second son Ujiteru, and his third son Ujikuni. Hōjō Ujikuni commanded the Hachigata company from the strategic Hachigata castle in northern Musashi. Hōjō Ujiteru led the contingent from Hachijōji castle.

Go-umawari-shū 94

The Go-umawari-shū were the élite bodyguard of Hōjō Ujiyasu. The next companies are identified by their geographical location.

Tamanawa-shū 18  
 Miura-shū 49  
 Ujitaka-shū 4  
 Kotsukue-shū 29  
 Tsukui-shū 59  
 Izu-shū 29  
 Matsuyama-shū 15  
 Edo-shū 103  
 Odawara-shū 33  
 Kawagoe-shū 12

The Kotsukue company was led by Ujiyasu's fifth son Ujihide, who was adopted by the Uesugi family in 1563. The Miura company was commanded by

Ujiyasu's fourth son Hōjō Ujimitsu. Other units registered for supplying troops are as follows:

Ashigaru-shū	17
Jiryō (temple land)	28
Sharyō (shrine land)	13
Shokunin-shū	
(craftsmen)	26
Takoku-shū (allies, including Oyamada)	28
Total	574

When Hōjō Ujiyasu's army was on the battlefield, it would consist of several separate sections. The figures in this source do not quite match up with the muster roll above. Twenty-eight commanders, known as the 28 rōshō, formed the first three ranks, as follows: The first rank, facing on to the enemy, were the 20 shōshō, 'generals' companies' with their followers.

Behind them were the five karō (senior retainers) whose units were distinguished by the use of different coloured sashimono flags, and therefore called the go-shiki sonae, or 'five colour regiments':

Ōsaka campaigns for the Tokugawa.

banner: three white lozenges on black  
messengers' sashimono: black horō  
great standard: white lozenge on black  
lesser standard: inverted three-dimensional  
gold umbrella  
sashimono: white open square on black  
lord's helmet: silver catfish tail

### Horio Yoshiharu (1543-1611)

Yoshiharu first came to the attention of Toyotomi Hideyoshi when the latter saw him hunting a giant boar. He took a significant part in the siege of

Inabayama (Gifu) castle, and fought for Hideyoshi at the battle of Yamazaki in 1582. In 1590 he received the fief of Hamamatsu (Tōtōmi - 60,000 koku). After Sekigahara he received the fief of Matsue (Izumo - 235,000 koku).

### Horio Tadauji (1575-1604)

Son of Yoshiharu, he fought at Sekigahara and predeceased his father.

### Horio Tadaharu (1599-1633)

Tadaharu became the heir of his grandfather Yoshiharu.

Hōjō Tsunanari (Kawagoe castle)	yellow
Hōjō Tsunataka (Tamanawa castle)	red
Tominaga Uemon (Kurihashi castle)	blue
Kasawara Noto no kami (Shimoda castle)	white
Tame Suo no kami (Hirai castle)	black

Each of these coloured flags would, in addition, bear the Hōjō mon of the fish-scale design, which can be seen depicted on a red sashimono preserved in the Kanagawa Prefectural Art Museum in Yokohama. There is also a reference to black sashimono ('sashimono should be black and new') in a military ordinance issued by Hōjō Ujikuni in 1574.

In the third rank were the three karō, Matsuda Yasusada (Yamanaka castle), Toyama Naokage (Edo castle) and Daidōji Shigeoki (Matsuyama castle), but their forces were not distinguished by using coloured flags.

The most fascinating use of heraldry in the Hōjō army is found in the core of the army,

the go-hatamoto 48 banshō. The 48 banshō captains, were under Ujiiyasu's direct command, and were divided into six companies of seven and one of six. Each commanded 20 men, and every unit was distinguished by a single kana on his sashimono. The interesting point about this arrangement is that the seven units were grouped alphabetically in accordance with the traditional i-ro-ha syllabary, so that the order was:

- i, ro, ha, ni, ho, he, to  
- chi, ri, nu, ru, o, wa, ka,  
- yo, ta, re, so, tsu, ne, na  
- ra, mu, u, i, no, o, ku,  
- ya, ma, ke, fu, ko, e, te  
- a, sa, ki, yu, me, kyo  
(instead of n),  
- mi, shi, e, hi, mo, se, su

Seven of the leaders bore the rank of general, and had their kana, which were mi, shi, fu, hi, mo and su, in red on their flags. Each captain commanded twenty warriors, making a total of 1008 horsemen.

Behind this rank were the go umawari-shū, the personal

bodyguard to Hōjō Ujiiyasu, who numbered 120 men. Each had one personal spear-carrier.

There were also four units directly accountable to the daimyō. First was the ashigaru company, showing the marked difference from later years when a daimyō would put his ashigaru in the front ranks. Second were the takoku-shū (allies), which consisted of troops from territories taken over by the Hōjō, or genuine alliances. The gokamon-shū (literally the company with the family badge) were family members, plus followers, and the personal attendants of the general on the day of battle, such as pages. The final contingent, the tōji ukiyaku yoriai-shū, translates roughly as the 'transient forces at that time', or 'odds and ends'! These would include rōnin.

banner: white design as above on black  
 messengers' sashimono: long white flag  
 sashimono: five small black flags  
 ashigaru: small white flag

#### **Hoshina Masanao (1542-1610)**

Masanao was originally the keeper of the castle of Takatō (Shinano) for the Takeda. In 1590 he received the fief of Tako (Shimōsa) from Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

#### **Hoshina Masamitsu (1561-1631)**

Masamitsu was the son of Masanao. After Sekigahara he received the fief of Takatō (Shinano - 30,000 koku). He fought during the summer campaign of Ōsaka and adopted the fourth son of the Shogun Tokugawa Hidetada as his own son.

#### **Hosokawa Katsumoto (1430-73)**

Katsumoto was one of the protagonists in the Ōnin War, the conflict with which the Sengoku Period began.

#### **Hosokawa Masamoto (1466-1507)**

The son of Katsumoto, Masamoto was assassinated after a life of warfare and intrigue.

#### **Hosokawa Sumimoto (1496-1520)**

Sumimoto was an accomplished general who was highly involved in shogunal politics.

#### **Hosokawa Harumoto (1519-63)**

Harumoto was the supporter of the shogun Ashikaga Yoshiharu and was an early exponent of the use of guns.

#### **Hosokawa Fujitaka [Yūsai] (1534-1610)**

Hosokawa Nagaoka fought for Oda Nobunaga against the Ishiyama Honganji. He later fought for Toyotomi Hideyoshi in Kyūshū and against the Hōjō of Odawara. He was a noted scholar.

#### **Hosokawa Tadaoki (1564-1645)**

Tadaoki married Gracia, the daughter of Akechi Mitsuhide, known for her steadfast Christian faith. Tadaoki fought in the Odawara campaign, besieging Nirayama castle (Izu). Before Sekigahara, Ishida Mitsunari attempted to take Gracia hostage along with the families of other daimyō, but Gracia

allowed herself to be put to death in accordance with her husband's wishes, rather than submit. Tadaoki fought at Sekigahara, and received the fief of Kokura (Buzen - 370,000 koku). He also fought at Ōsaka.

banner: black stars on white  
 sashimono: three small flags with white stars on black  
 great standard: black ideograph on white  
 lesser standard: small red flag

#### **Hosokawa Tadatōshi (1586-1641)**

Tadatōshi was the son of Tadaoki. He banished all Christians from his lands, and took part in the campaign against the Shimabara rebels. He received the fief of Kumamoto (Higo - 540,000 koku) in 1632.

#### **Hotta Masamori (1606-51)**

Hotta Masamori was an important figure during the reign of the third Tokugawa shogun Iemitsu.

#### **Ichibashi Nagakatsu (1558-1621)**

A minor daimyō who in 1616 received the fief of Sanjō (Echigo - 40,000 koku).

#### **Ichibu Kageyu (dates?)**

Ichibu Kageyu was a retainer of the Matsuura daimyō and was of the Koteda family before being adopted into the Ichibu family. He was baptised in 1557 as Juan. He fought at the battle of Aiko no Ura in 1563, and used firearms to good effect.

#### **Ichijō Fusaie (1445-1511)**

Fusaie became lord of Tosa on Shikoku island in 1469.

#### **Ichijō Kanesada (1543-81)**

The great-grandson of Fusaie, Kanesada lost Tosa to his former retainer Chōsokabe Motochika. He was a Christian, and was assassinated.

#### **Ichijō Uchimasa (1560-80)**

The son of Kanesada, Uchimasa married the daughter of Chōsokabe Motochika. In 1580 he revolted against the Chōsokabe, but was defeated and fled. It is believed that Motochika had him poisoned.



**Ichijō Nobutatsu (dates?)**

Ichijō Nobutatsu was a younger brother of Takeda Shingen. He was one of the Takeda 'Twenty-Four Generals' and fought at the battle of Nagashino in 1575.

His banners were white over red, but as a family member all sashimono would bear the Takeda mon.

**Ii Naomasa (1561-1602)**

One of the shi-tennō of Tokugawa Ieyasu, Naomasa received the fief of Minowa (Kōzuke - 12,000 koku) in 1590. He was the first to climb up the walls of Gifu castle during the preliminary campaign to Sekigahara. After Sekigahara, where he was wounded, he received Sawayama (Ōmi - 180,000 koku).

For heraldry see the separate article.

**Ii Naotaka (1590-1659)**

Naotaka was the second son of Naomasa. In 1610 he received 10,000 koku, but when his elder brother refused to serve at Ōsaka Naotaka went in his stead. He took a prominent part in the battle of Wakae. At the end of the campaign he was granted his brother's fief. Naotaka finished the castle of Hikone and took possession of it in 1623.

The Ii army was well-known for its use of red as colour of flags and armour. The Ii 'red regiment' first saw action during the Komaki campaign of 1584. *O Uma Jirushi* has only a brief record of their heraldry, but see the separate feature elsewhere in this book.

banner: plain red with small red flag  
great standard: gold fly trap with red tassels  
sashimono: plain red, to which samurai added their names in gold

**Iida Kazube'e (dates?)**

Kazube'e was a retainer of Katō Kiyomasa and fought at the second siege of Chinju, where he was responsible for the use of protective wagons for attacking the walls.

**Ijūin Hisanori (dates?)**

Hisanori was a distinguished general of the Shimazu, who fought at the battle of Hetsugigawa in 1586, among others.

**Ikeda Tsuneoki (+1584)**

Tsuneoki fought at the battle of Nagakute in 1584.  
banner: white with sword of Fudō amid red flames

**Ikeda Nobuteru (1536-84)**

Nobuteru served Oda Nobunaga, and in 1579 he received the fief of Amagasaki (Settsu). He was killed at the battle of Nagakute in 1584.

**Ikeda Terumasa (1564-1613)**

The son of Nobuteru, Terumasa also fought at Nagakute. After Sekigahara he received the fief of Harima (520,000 koku), and took the name of Matsudaira.

His mon appears as a butterfly in a circular shape.

**Ikeda Toshitaka (1584-1616)**

The son of Terumasa, Toshitaka took part in the siege of Gifu (1600) and the campaigns of Ōsaka. In 1613 he inherited the castle of Himeji.

banner: black and white with a butterfly mon  
great standard: two-dimensional gold horns  
lesser standard: gold three-dimensional umbrella  
messengers' sashimono: black horō  
sashimono: five sets of three white flags with serrated edges  
ashigaru: small black and white flag with butterfly mon

**Ikeda Nagayoshi (1570-1614)**

The third son of Nobuteru, Nagayoshi was adopted by Toyotomi Hideyoshi in 1581. He took part in the siege of Gifu, and received the fief of Tottori (Inaba - 90,000 koku).

**Ikeda Nagayuki (1587-1632)**

The son of Nagayoshi, Nagayuki took part in the summer campaign of Ōsaka. In 1617 he received the fief of Matsuyama (Bitchū - 65,000 koku).

**Ikoma Chikamasa (d. 1598)**

Ikoma Chikamasa served Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and took part in the battles of Shizugatake (1583) and Komaki (1584). He then received the fief of Takashima (Ōmi - 20,000 koku). In 1587 he

### THE II 'RED DEVILS'

The troops of Ii Naomasa and his son Naotaka, the most loyal of the Tokugawa hereditary vassals (*fudai*), formed an important part of the Tokugawa army at Sekigahara and at Ōsaka, and provide the most striking illustration of a contingent adopting its own distinctive colours. The *like Gumpō*, quoted by Takahashi, gives the full regulations for the appearance of this army, to a degree of detail that is quite unique. Takahashi gives no date for the document, but it probably dates from the early seventeenth century. The following is a full translation.

"Item, the standard is a 5 shaku length of four widths of silk. On a red ground, the mon which is the character 'I' in gold in the centre. The pole is lacquered black.

"Item, the personal large banner is two widths of silk, 1 jō long. The mon is on red ground. By invitation on a 7 shaku length, on a red ground, the characters 'Hachiman Dai Bosatsu' in white. The pole is lacquered black.

"Item, the lesser standard is a gold fly-catcher, with a black-lacquered pole.

"Item, the messengers wear a light blue hozuki (?) horō,

with on it as one pleases in gold, excepting that, as from the beginning of Keichō (1596), everyone's surname was in black on gold.

"Item, yumi (bow) and teppō (arquebus) kashira, each a madder-red haori.

"Item, monogashira (otherwise known as *ko gashira*), a red sashimono as one pleases.

"Item, the mounted samurai, on a 5 shaku length of two widths of silk, on a red ground the surname written in gold.

"Item, retainers' personal flags the same, excepting that by invitation the family badge (*kamon*) in white on a red ground.

"Item, retainers (*baishin*) of other retainers, if mounted immediate samurai the same, excepting that with immediate samurai the surname in gold, the *baishin* have the surname in white, the others the mon of the family of birth.

"Item, the helmet front crest (*maedate*) on armour, a 3 shaku *tentsuki*, in the case of immediate samurai gold, retainers silver. (Note: the *tentsuki* is a pair of straight sided horns.)

"Item, the *ashigaru's* back flags (*koshi-zashi*), three, each of one width of silk, 5 shaku long, direct/immediate *ashigaru* a red field with no mon,

retainers the mon of the family of birth in white.

"Item, all armour, harness, saddle and stirrups to be red, with the exception that retainers may display in gold the mon of their family of birth (Takahashi 1965:30)."

Note how much the heraldry adopted depends on the nature of the relationship to the *daimyō*, such as being a retainer, or a warrior directly commanded by the lord.

The regulations fit almost exactly with the figures depicted on the painted screen depicting the Ii army at Ōsaka, which is on display in the museum at the foot of the hill on which the Ii's Hikone castle stands. Using a rule of thumb of two mounted and twenty foot per 1000 *koku*, the Ii contingent at Ōsaka would have consisted of about 20 and 200 men respectively, plus their own followers. On the screen appear the 19 mounted samurai, of whom 9 wear red horō. There are 123 samurai on foot, mostly armed with long spears. Nearly all have inscriptions in gold which are the surnames referred to above, although one or two have mon. There are 50 *ashigaru*, of whom 19 have arquebuses.

received the fief of Takamatsu (Sanuki - 60,000 *koku*). He fought at Odawara (1590) and joined the invasion of Korea in 1592.

For heraldry see below.

### Ikoma Kazumasa (+1610)

Son of the above, Kazumasa served Ieyasu, and after Sekigahara received 170,000 *koku*.

banner: three black fans on white messengers' sashimono: white fan on a black horō

great standard: white stars on black sashimono: narrow black flag with white fan  
lesser standard: white three-dimensional device with black feather plume

**Imagawa Yoshimoto (1519-60)**

Yoshimoto was defeated by Oda Nobuhide at Azukizaka in 1542, but still managed to bring Mikawa, Tōtōmi and Suruga under his control. In 1560 he moved into Owari, where he was met by the small force of Oda Nobunaga at the decisive battle of Okehazama. Here Yoshimoto was killed.

mon: as Hosokawa Katsumoto  
 standard: gold comb design on blue flag  
 banner: two black bands and paulownia mon on white

**Imagawa Ujizane (1538-1614)**

Following the death of his father, Ujizane lost much of his influence and support. In 1568 he was defeated by Takeda Shingen, then defeated again by him in 1570, after which he retired.

**Imaizumi Naiki (d. 1575)**

Naiki was a 22-year-old samurai-taishō (commander of a samurai unit) at the siege of Nagashino in 1575. He stuck his head out of an arrow port to judge the progress of the siege and was seriously wounded by a sniper. He later died.

**Ina Tadatsugu (1551-1607)**

Ina Tadatsugu served Tokugawa Ieyasu, who bestowed upon him the fief of Konosu (Musashi - 13,000 koku). He fought at Sekigahara.

**Ina Tadamasu (dates?)**

The son of Tadatsugu, Tadamasu was dispossessed for his part in a conspiracy.

**Inaba Sadamichi (1551-1606)**

Of the senior branch of the family, Sadamichi received the fief of Hachiman (Mino - 40,000 koku) in 1585. In 1600 he received the fief of Usuki (Bungo - 56,000 koku).

**Inaba Norimichi (dates?)**

Norimichi was the son of Sadamichi, and took part in the winter campaign of Ōsaka.

**Inaba Ittetsu Masanari (d. 1628)**

The junior branch of the Inaba family, represented by Ittetsu Masanari, fought at the battle of Anegawa in 1570. In 1592 he served in Korea, and then served the Tokugawa. In 1619 he received the

fief of Itoigawa (Echigo - 25,000 koku).

banner: white disc on black  
 sashimono: five black feather plumes  
 messengers' sashimono: three black feather plumes on a tall pole

**Inaba Awaji no kami Norimichi (dates?)**

This Inaba served Tokugawa Ieyasu. His given name is written using different ideographs from the Norimichi above.

messengers' sashimono: black horō  
 great standard: gold fukinuki surrounded by black 'garland'

**Inagaki Shigetsuma (dates?)**

Little is known of this Mikawa-based family loyal to the Tokugawa, whose fiefs were, successively Isezaki (Kōzuke - 10,000 koku) in 1601 and Fujii (Echigo - 20,000 koku) in 1615.

**Inoue Kiyomasa (dates?)**

Inoue Kiyomasa was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals'. He fought in the headquarters unit at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561.

His banner was a black design of birds in a ring on white.

**Inoue Masanari (dates?)**

The Inoue were a family from Mikawa who served the Tokugawa.

banner: plain black, topped with a small flag with a white 'well-curb' motif as on the li flag  
 great standard: black flag with the white motif  
 sashimono: plain black flag  
 lesser standard: large red gohei  
 messengers' sashimono: red horō

**Iriki-in Shigetoki**

The Iriki-in were prominent and loyal retainers of the Shimazu. The exploits of Shigetoki and his kinsmen are recorded in this book in the essays. An early mon is recorded as 'mistletoe', but in the events described here they would probably have fought under the Shimazu badge.

**Irobe Katsunaga (dates?)**

Irobe Katsunaga was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals' and held the rank of gun

bugyō. He fought in the headquarters unit at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561.

His banner was a red rising sun on white.

#### **Ise Nagauji, see Hōjō Sōun**

#### **Ishida Mitsunari (d. 1600)**

Ishida Mitsunari was one of Toyotomi Hideyoshi's ablest generals who first attracted the attention of his master through his skills at the tea ceremony. He owned the castle of Sawayama, and is now known to history for being the loser at the battle of Sekigahara in 1600.

Unsurprisingly, Mitsunari's heraldry is not recorded in *O Uma Jirushi*. However, the painted screen of the battle of Sekigahara in the Tokugawa Museum in Nagoya shows his mon of a grouping of ideographs combined in various patterns, which is likely to have been used throughout his force. The characters read 'o ichi o man o kitsu' ('great one, great myriad, great luck').

His banner featured the mon on a white flag.

#### **Ishikawa Ienari (Kazumasa) (1534-1609)**

A loyal general of Tokugawa Ieyasu, Ienari accompanied him throughout his campaigns.

#### **Ishikawa Yasumichi (1554-1607)**

Son of Ienari, he received the fief of Naruto (Kōzuke - 20,000 koku) in 1590. After Sekigahara he received the fief of Ōgaki (Mino - 50,000 koku).

#### **Ishikawa Tadafusa (1572-1650)**

The son of Ōkubo Tadachika, he was adopted as heir by Ishikawa Yasumichi. After the Ōsaka campaigns he received Hida (Bungo - 60,000 koku).

banner: three white roundels on green  
messengers' sashimono: long flag, the upper section being a gold roundel on green, then alternate panels of white, green, white, green  
sashimono: a flag with a gold roundel encircling a gold centre spot on green

#### **Itagaki Nobutaka (+1548)**

Itagaki Nobutaka was one of Takeda Shingen's 'Twenty-Four Generals'. He distinguished himself at the Battle of Uedahara in 1548, during which he was killed fighting. His troops used a flag of a yellow crescent moon on black.

#### **Itakura Katsushige (1542-1624)**

After spending the first forty years of his life as a Buddhist priest, Katsushige entered the service of Tokugawa Ieyasu. Following the battle of Sekigahara he received the fief of Iga, with 40,000 koku.

#### **Itakura Shigemune (1587-1656)**

The elder son of Katsushige, Shigemune continued to serve the Tokugawa.

banner: red upper part, with three black tomoé on the lower, white part.

standard: red three-dimensional device with black horsehair plume

#### **Itakura Shigemasa (1588-1638)**

The younger brother of Shigemune, Shigemasa was commissioned to put down the Shimabara rebellion in 1638. He personally led an attack on Hara castle and was killed by an arrow.

standard: red gourd

great standard: two feather balls

sashimono: white horō

lesser standard: tall black 'feather duster'(!)

messengers' sashimono: black horō

#### **Itami Yasukatsu (1571-1649)**

A daimyō who served Tokugawa Ieyasu, Yasukatsu commanded Kōfu castle (Kai) from 1632, with a revenue of 12,000 koku.

#### **Itō Suketaka (1541-1600)**

When his father was defeated in Kyūshū by the Shimazu, Itō Suketaka joined him in a move to Kyōto. He took part in the invasion of Kyūshū under Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who rewarded him with the castle of Obi (Hyūga - 50,000 koku). He then served in Korea.

#### **Itō Sukeyoshi (1588-1636)**

The son of Suketaka, Sukeyoshi fought at Sekigahara at the age of twelve! He then returned to Kyūshū and joined Katō Kiyomasa's campaigns against the Shimazu.

banner: white stars on black

#### **Iwaki Tsunetaka (1566-90)**

Defeated by Date Masamune in 1585, and by Satake Yoshishige in 1587, Iwaki Tsunetaka submitted to Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

**Iwaki Sadataka (1584-1621)**

A son of Satake Yoshishige, Sadataka was adopted by the above. He chose to oppose Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1600 and lost his fief as a result.

The Iwaki mon was a circle between two stripes.

**Kakizaki Kageie (dates?)**

Kakizaki Kageie was an important retainer of the Uesugi, and was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals'. He led the vanguard during the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561.

His uma-jirushi was a gold grasshopper on a dark blue flag, while his troops used a sashimono with the design of a giant radish in white on red.

**Kamei Korenori (1567-1612)**

Kamei Korenori was originally in the service of the Amako, but following their downfall he submitted to Oda Nobunaga. Toyotomi Hideyoshi granted him the fief of Shikano (Inaba - 13,000 koku). He took part in the Kyūshū campaign and the Korean invasion of 1592. Following the sea battle at Tangpo, a golden fan, presented to Kamei Korenori by Hideyoshi, was captured by the Koreans. He later served Tokugawa Ieyasu, who raised his revenues to 43,000 koku.

**Kamei Masanori (dates?)**

The son of Korenori, he received the fief of Tsubano (Iwami - 43,000 koku) in 1619.

banner: nine white discs on black

sashimono: long white flag with serrated edges

great standard: two white fukinuki, one above

the other

messengers' sashimono: black horō

**Kamiizumi Nobutsuna (dates?)**

Kamiizumi Hidetsuna (his original name) was born about 1520 as the son of Kamiizumi Hidetsugu, keeper of Ogo castle in Kōzuke. He fought for the Uesugi against the Takeda, and distinguished himself in particular at the siege of Minowa in 1563. Takeda Shingen admired this brave opponent and allowed Hidetsuna to change his name to Nobutsuna, 'Nobu' being one of the characters in Shingen's own given name Harunobu. However, he declined the offer of service to Shingen. Nobutsuna later went on a celebrated warrior pilgrimage.

**Kamiizumi Yasutsuna (d. 1600)**

This descendant of the famous swordsman fought at the siege of Hasedo in 1600.

**Kamiya Sōdan (1551-1635)**

Sōdan was a samurai from Hakata who travelled in China and the Philippines. He took charge of the construction of the castle at Nagoya which Hideyoshi used as his base for launching the Korean invasion of 1592. He later built the castle of Fukuoka.

**Kanamori Nagachika (1524-1607)**

Nagachika served Nobunaga and defeated Anenokoji Koretsuna in 1585 to take the province of Hida and the castle of Takayama.

**Kanamori Yoshishige (1559-1616)**

Yoshishige was adopted by Nagachika, and served Tokugawa Ieyasu. He distinguished himself at the siege of Ōsaka, where he defended the castle of Kishiwada in Izumi province and personally took 208 heads. He was also a noted tea-master.

standard: a gold fan above a white fukinuki

messengers' sashimono: a silver gourd(?) shape

sashimono: a gold sunburst behind a black

bunch of horsehair

lord's helmet: a silver court cap design

**Katagiri Katsumoto (dates?)**

Katsumoto was one of the 'Seven Spears' of Shizugatake (1583).

**Katagiri Takatoshi (dates?)**

The son of Katsumoto, Takatoshi served Tokugawa Ieyasu.

sashimono: gold three-dimensional shape

great standard: black 'tree' with many small

gold flags on the branches

**Katakura Shigetsuna (dates?)**

Katakura Shigetsuna was an important retainer of Date Masamune, and fought beside him at the siege of Ōsaka. His uma-jirushi was a flag with a design of a temple bell.

**Katakura Kagetsuna (dates?)**

Kagetsuna also served the Date.

banner: 'dead leaf' colour with stylised character

### Katō Kiyomasa (1562–1611)

Katō Kiyomasa was one of the most famous warriors in Japanese history. He was the boyhood friend of Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and served the latter for his long life. He was one of the 'Seven

Spears' of Shizugatake (1583). In 1585 he received the fief of half of Higo province (250,000 koku) and the castle of Kumamoto. He jointly led the Korean expedition in 1592, and returned loyally in 1597. His defence of Ulsan castle during a long siege was particularly noteworthy. After Sekigahara, during which campaign he fought in Kyūshū against Tokugawa Ieyasu's



A print by Kuntiyoshi from the series *Taiheiki Eiyūden* showing Keyamura Rokusuke (also known as Hida Masatoshi) fighting in Korea. He wields a spear and is surrounded by discarded Chinese weapons. Rokusuke later died by being pulled off a cliff by a Korean courtesan.

rivals there, he received the other half of Higo province.

mon: a ring

banner: black and white, bearing the motto of the Nichiren sect 'Namu Myōho Renge Kyō', which also appears on a small white flag  
sashimono: one serrated edge white flag  
standard: seven serrated edge white flags

#### **Katō Tadahiro (1597-1653)**

The son of Kiyomasa, Tadahiro was suspected of a plot against Tokugawa Iemitsu and dispossessed.

#### **Katō Yoshiaki (1563-1631)**

No relation to Kiyomasa, Yoshiaki achieved a name for himself as glorious as the other Katō. He was one of the 'Seven Spears' of Shizugatake in 1583, and commanded the fleet in Korea. He fought for Tokugawa Ieyasu at Sekigahara, and saw his fief rise from 100,000 koku (Matsuzaki in Ise) to 200,000 koku (Matsuyama in Ise).

banner: black cross (or character 'jū') on white messengers' sashimono: black serrated edge flag  
sashimono: black serrated edge flag

#### **Katō Mitsuyasu (1537-95)**

Mitsuyasu was no relation to the above. He served Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi, from whom he received a fief worth 240,000 koku in Kai province after the Odawara campaign. He died in Korea.

#### **Katō Sadayasu (1581-1624)**

The son of Mitsuyasu, Sadayasu received the castle of Kurono (Mino - 40,000 koku).

#### **Kawajiri Hidetaka**

This samurai was a general of Oda Nobunaga. All we know of his heraldry is his standard, which was a gold hat-shape slung from a pole.

#### **Keyamura Rokusuke (+1593)**

Keyamura Rokusuke died perhaps the most ignominious death in samurai history. He was one of the victorious Japanese commanders during the second siege of Chinju in 1593. That night the Japanese high command celebrated in Chinju castle. Keyamura Rokusuke was lured out on to a

balcony by a Korean courtesan called Nonkae. Taking him in a passionate embrace, Nonkae allowed herself to topple backwards, taking Rokusuke with her to his death. A shrine to Nonkae stands on the site.

#### **Kikkawa Motoharu (1530-86)**

Kikkawa Motoharu was the second son of Mōri Motonari. He was adopted by Kikkawa Okitsune, and distinguished himself in all the wars of the Mōri.

#### **Kikkawa Motonaga (1547-87)**

Motonaga served with his father Motoharu, and died shortly after him.



*Kimura Shigenari, one of the heroes of the defence of Ōsaka castle between 1614 and 1615, is shown here as a statue on the site of his headquarters during the battle of Wakae where he was killed. His mon appears on the front of his dô. Shigenari is buried near by. The reproduction of his armour on the statue is somewhat crude, but reflects the comparatively simple 'battledress' that samurai would wear in action.*

**Kikkawa Tsuneie (+1581)**

Tsuneie was the defender of Tottori castle, committing suicide at the end to save his men's lives.

**Kikkawa Hiroie (1561-1625)**

Hiroie, the third son of Motoharu, succeeded his brother and ruled from Toda castle (Izumo - 200,000 koku). He served in Korea, but in 1600 he sided against Tokugawa Ieyasu and was dispossessed.

standard: thirteen red slashed edge flags on pole

**Kikkawa Hiromasa (dates?)**

The younger brother of Hiroie continued the family name at Iwakuni (Suo - 60,000 koku).

**Kimura Shigekore (dates?)**

Shigekore served Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and fought at the battle of Yamazaki (1582). He was dispossessed because of suspicion that he was involved in the plot of Hidetsugu, and committed suicide.

**Kimura Shigenari (1594-1615)**

Shigenari was the son of Shigekore. He was a leading general in the defence of Ōsaka castle against the Tokugawa, and was killed during the battle of Wakae in 1615. He is remembered as a great samurai leader, and it was noted that he burned incense inside his helmet before going to war so as to make his severed head a more attractive trophy.

**Kimura Hidetoshi (dates?)**

No relation to the above, Hidetoshi served Toyotomi Hideyoshi and received a fief of 300,000 koku at Toyoma in Mutsu after the Odawara campaign. However, the maladministration of him and his son Shigemasa caused them both to be dispossessed within a year.

**Kinoshita Iesada (1543-1603)**

Iesada served his brother-in-law Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and in 1585 received the fief of Himeji (Harima - 40,000 koku). In 1600 his fief was reduced to 25,000 koku at Ashimori (Bitchū).

**Kinoshita Katsutoshi (1568-1649)**

Son of Iesada, he received Tatsuo (Harima). He accompanied Toyotomi Hideyoshi at his headquarters in Nagoya (Kyūshū) during the Korean War, and in 1594 he received the fief of Obama (Wakasa - 80,000 koku). In 1600 he chose Ishida's side and was dispossessed by the Tokugawa.

**Kinoshita Toshifusa (1573-1637)**

The second son of Iesada, in 1594 he received the fief of Takahama (Wakasa - 30,000 koku). He was dispossessed in 1600, but in 1615 fought for the Tokugawa at Ōsaka, and received the fief of Ashimori (Bitchū - 25,000 koku).

**KIMURA SHIGENARI RESCUES A COMRADE IN BATTLE**

During the winter campaign of Ōsaka, Kimura Shigenari could not allow Oi Nani'emon, a brave general under his command, to die in front of his eyes. Note how the victim's sashimono aids his recognition on the battlefield:

"He bore a sashimono of a silver bottle gourd on top of a yellow horō tied by a high cord. A white saihaï was carried at his waist, and with a two ken shafted cross bladed spear carried by his horse's head, he pushed open the third gate. At the sight of a sole horseman rushing out neither Kimura nor the enemy recognised who it was. Kimura then came out, and all of a sudden the spectacle came to his eyes. As for Kimura, who was counting the numbers of dead bodies of those killed in battle, and not wishing for Oi Nani'emon to join the list, Kimura Nagata no kami came out to accompany him. He cried out with a loud voice. At that very moment Nani'emon almost died. He was hit in both legs by arquebus fire, but while he still had some energy left he heard Kimura's voice. He lifted up his sashimono so that he could see it when he waved it about. Kimura jumped from his horse with joy and took Nani'emon in his arms and tried to withdraw. The enemy soldiers saw this and fired arquebuses at them like rain." (Takahashi 1965: 290)



**Kindoshita Nobutoshi (1577-1642)**

The third son of Iesada, Nobutoshi chose to side with Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1600 and captured the castle of Fukuchiyama (Tamba province) from Onoki Shigetoshi. His reward was the fief of Hiji (Bungo - 25,000 koku).

**Kitabatake Tomonori (1528-76)**

A daimyō of Ise province, Tomonori was defeated by Oda Nobunaga, who forced Kitabatake to adopt his son Oda Nobuo as his heir. In 1576 Tomonori was assassinated by his own samurai.

**Kitabatake Nobuoki (dates?)**

Nobuoki refused to accept Oda Nobuo as heir, and war broke out. Nobuoki was taken and exiled.

**Kobayakawa Takakage (1532-96)**

The third son of Mōri Motonari, Takakage was adopted by the Kobayakawa, and served in all the Mōri wars, including Miyajima (1555). Toyotomi Hideyoshi gave him the province of Chikuzen, and Takakage served valiantly in the Korean invasion of 1592. He defeated a Chinese army at Byōkchekwan (1593), but was driven from Chollado province by guerrilla raids. He adopted Hideyoshi's nephew Hideaki as his heir.

banner: red with Mōri mon in white

His mon was a triple tomoe.

**Kobayakawa Hideaki (1577-1602)**

Hideaki was appointed commander-in-chief of the second Korean invasion at the age of only twenty, during which he quarrelled seriously with Ishida Mitsunari. This had important repercussions in 1600 when Kobayakawa Hideaki deserted Ishida's army at a crucial point in the battle of Sekigahara. It was his defection that gave the day to Tokugawa Ieyasu. His reward was a 520,000 koku fief in Bizen and Mimasaka.

His mon was crossed sickles.

**Kobori Masakazu (1579-1647)**

Masakazu served Tokugawa Ieyasu and received the fief of Komuro (Ōmi - 10,000 koku) in 1600. He was a great patron of the arts.

**Koide Masahide (1539-1604)**

Masahide married the sister of Toyotomi

Hideyoshi's wife, and as a result of this family connection he received the fief of Kishiwada (Izumi - 60,000 koku). During the Sekigahara campaign Masahide was ill, and sent his son Yoshimasa to fight for the Western Army.

**Koide Yoshimasa (1565-1613)**

Yoshimasa fought at Sekigahara for Ishida Mitsunari, and succeeded his father in 1604.

**Koide Yoshihide (1586-1668)**

The sons of Koide Yoshimasa, Yoshihide and Yoshichika, submitted to Tokugawa Ieyasu and fought at Ōsaka. Yoshihide owned the fief of Izushi (Tamba - 45,000 koku).

messengers' sashimono: three black feather plumes

sashimono: red disc on white

**Koide Yoshichika (dates?)**

Yoshichika was the younger son of Yoshimasa.

banner: black kanji character 'ko' inside a ring on white

sashimono: ten small gold flags on a pole

**Konishi Yukinaga (+1600)**

Konishi Yukinaga entered the service of Toyotomi Hideyoshi in 1577. After the Kyūshū



*Konishi Yukinaga leads a charge of Japanese samurai against a Korean army in 1592. Yukinaga's banner bears a Japanese character within a lozenge. (See also pages 17 and 93)*

expedition Yukinaga received half of Higo province in fief, with a revenue of 240,000 koku, and based himself at Udo castle. He commanded half of the vanguard army that landed in Korea in 1592, and distinguished himself at the siege of Tongnae. Yukinaga's division advanced as far as P'yong-yang, from where he was eventually repulsed by a Chinese army and forced back to Seoul. He took part in the peace negotiations, and returned to Korea with the second invasion of 1597. In 1600 he sided against Tokugawa Ieyasu and was beheaded after the battle of Sekigahara.

standard: red disc on white cone with white tassels

#### **Kōno Michinao (+1587)**

Kōno Michinao was a descendant of the famous Kōno Michiari who fought against the Mongol invaders in 1274. In 1568 he was attacked by Utsunomiya Toyotsuna and asked for help from Mōri Motonari, whose followers reinstated him in his domains. In 1580 he was again defeated, this time by Chōsokabe Motochika, and fled.

#### **Koriki Kiyonaga (1530-1608)**

Koriki was the companion in arms of Tokugawa Ieyasu. In 1590 he received the fief of Iwatsuki (Musashi - 20,000 koku).

#### **Koriki Tadafusa (1583-1655)**

The son of Kiyonaga, Tadafusa fought at Sekigahara and Ōsaka. In 1619 he received the fief of Hamamatsu (Tōtōmi) and in 1638 Shimabara (Hizen - 40,000 koku).

banner: black with a white disc, and a small red flag with a white disc.

lesser standard: six small black flags  
messengers' sashimono: black horō with a white disc

great standard: two curved black feather plumes

sashimono: white disc on a black flag

#### **Kōsaka Danjō Masanobu (d. 1578)**

Kōsaka Masanobu was one of the staunchest retainers of the Takeda, and is largely responsible for compiling the *Kōyō Gunkan*. He played a distinguished role in the fourth battle of Kawanakajima.

He was not present at the battle of Nagashino and was thus spared that humiliating defeat.

His heraldry was a black star arrangement on yellow.

#### **Koteda Yasumasa (Jeronimo) (+1551)**

The Koteda were retainers of the Matsuura family, and ruled much of the tiny island of Ikitsuki. Yasumasa took part in the siege of Iimori castle in 1542, and in 1550 became one of Japan's first Christian converts.

#### **Koteda Yasutsune (Antonio) (+1581)**

Christianity flourished on Ikitsuki under Koteda rule until the death of Koteda Yasutsune. In 1572 Yasutsune fought for the Matsuura against the Sō family.

#### **Koteda Sakae (Jeronimo) (+1614)**

The son of Don Antonio, Koteda Sakae accompanied Matsuura Shigenobu to Korea in 1592. In the attack on Tongnae Koteda Sakae personally took the head of the Korean commander Sōng Sang-hyōn. He returned to Korea in 1597 with the Matsuura. The family were exiled to Nagasaki in 1599 when they refused to attend the funeral of Matsuura Takanobu on the grounds that they were Christians. Sakae died in Nagasaki in 1614. The Koteda family would have fought under the Shimazu flag.

#### **Kuchiki Tanetsuna (+1550)**

Kuchiki Tanetsuna received the shogun Yoshiharu when the latter fled in 1528. He later died in battle.

#### **Kuchiki Mototsuna (1549-1632)**

The grandson of Tanetsuna, Mototsuna fought against the Asai in 1570, and later sided with Tokugawa Ieyasu at the time of Sekigahara. He fought at Ōsaka, and had a revenue of 12,000 koku.

#### **Kuki Yoshitaka (1542-1600)**

Kuki Yoshitaka fought for Nobunaga against the Ikkō-ikki, particularly in the role of admiral of the Oda fleet. It was Yoshitaka who commanded the so-called 'iron ships' in the battle of Kiso-gawaguchi in 1578. In 1592 he commanded the fleet that invaded Korea. In 1600 he sided with

Ishida Mitsunari, and when defeated he committed suicide.

standard: three balls gold, white, gold  
 banner: black with 'a ra ha' in gold hiragana characters

#### **Kuki Moritaka (dates?)**

Moritaka was the son of Yoshitaka, and joined Tokugawa Ieyasu when his father supported Ishida. As a result he was confirmed in his fief, which increased from 26,000 koku to 46,000 koku.

banner: seven white stars on red above black, with a little white flag

#### **Kumazawa Ryōkai Banzan (1619-91)**

Kumazawa Banzan was a samurai of the Ikeda, and became one of the leading exponents of the theories behind bushidō.

#### **Kuroda Jōsui Yoshitaka (1546-1604)**

In 1569 Yoshitaka defeated the troops of Akamatsu, who had come to besiege Himeji castle. He later led Toyotomi Hideyoshi's vanguard in the Chūgoku campaign. He also served in the Shikoku and Kyūshū conquests, and received the fief of six districts of Buzen province (120,000 koku). He attended the young Kobayakawa Hideaki in Korea. During the time of Sekigahara he fought in Kyūshū, helping to capture the castles of Usuki, Yanagawa and Kurume.

banner: black-white-black, with the white Kuroda mon on the upper third. The design is of wisteria flowers arranged in the shape of a triple 'tomoe'

standard: a ball of white feathers (?)  
 sashimono: a blue flag with two black stripes in the middle

#### **Kuroda Nagamasa (1568-1623)**

The son of Yoshitaka, Nagamasa served in Kyūshū and Korea, then fought for Tokugawa Ieyasu at Sekigahara. In reward he exchanged Nakatsu (Buzen - 120,000 koku) for Najima (Chikuzen - 520,000 koku), where he built a castle and named it Fukuoka. He also fought at Ōsaka.

#### **Kuroda Tadayuki (dates?)**

Tadayuki was the son and heir of Nagamasa. By this time, the Kuroda had acquired a great stan-

dard and a lesser standard. *O Uma Jirushi* shows his heraldry as slightly different from that of his grandfather.

banner: the Kuroda mon in black on green  
 lord's helmet: a black helmet  
 great standard: white fukinuki  
 lesser standard: fourteen gold flags

Other authorities show the Kuroda making use of the pun of their name for heraldry. Kuroda means 'black field', and an alternative mon is of a black disc on white. This was certainly used on the sails of their ships during the Korean invasion, and probably on the sashimono too.

#### **Kurosaka Kagenori (d. 1570)**

This retainer of the Asakura was killed at Ane-gawa.

standard: a red sun's disc on a large white nobori

#### **Kurushima Michifusa (1562-1597)**

A native of Shikoku, Kurushima fought the Chōsokabe, and submitted to Toyotomi Hideyoshi in 1585. He was then confirmed in his fief of Kurushima (Iyo - 14,000 koku). During the Korean invasion he was an admiral of the fleet. He was killed during the battle of Myongyang in 1597.

#### **Kurushima Michiyuki (+1592)**

Michiyuki, brother of Michifusa, was also an admiral during the Korean invasion of 1592, and was killed during the battle of Tangpo.

#### **Kurushima Michichika (1580-1611)**

The son of Michifusa, Michichika was transferred in 1601 to Mori (Bungo - 12,500 koku).

banner: black band on white  
 standard: black sausage shape with gold tassels

#### **Kusunoki Masashige (1294-1336)**

The paragon of loyalty to the emperor, Masashige conducted the defences of Akasaka and Chihaya, and was defeated at Minatogawa (1336).

#### **Kusunoki Masatsura (1326-48)**

Entrusted with the imperial cause from his father Masashige, Masatsura was killed at Shijō Nawate (1348).

**Kusunoki Masanori (+1390)**

Masanori continued to support the southern imperial cause after the death of his father Masashige and brother Masatsura.

**Kusunoki Masakatsu (dates?)**

Even after the settlement of the Nanbokuchō Wars in 1392, Masakatsu, son of Masanori, continued an armed struggle against the Ashikaga. He was finally defeated in 1399.

**Kusunoki Masamoto (+1402)**

Masamoto was the brother of Masakatsu and plotted to assassinate the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu, but was found out and executed in 1402.

**Kusunoki Mitsumasa (dates?)**

This descendant of Masanori attempted in 1429 to reopen the southern imperial claim by assassinating the shogun Ashikaga Yoshinori (1394-1441), but he was arrested and beheaded.

**Kusunoki Masahide (dates?)**

In the final attempt to restore the southern dynasty, Masahide stole the imperial regalia in 1443 and fled with the southern claimant to the Yoshino mountains, where they held out on the site of the Ryūsenji temple in Kotochi until 1457.

**Kuwayama Shigeharu (1524-1606)**

Kuwayama Shigeharu served Toyotomi Hideyoshi and in 1585 received the fief of Wakayama (Kii - 30,000 koku).

**Kuwayama Kazunao (dates?)**

Kazunao was the elder son of Shigeharu, and received the fief of Shinjō (Yamato - 16,000 koku) in 1600.

banner: three black discs on white  
standard: ten small black flags on a pole

**Kuwayama Motoharu (dates?)**

The younger son of Shigeharu, Motoharu received the fief of Gose (Yamato - 26,000 koku) in 1600.

banner: black and white  
standard: a silver two-dimensional cross of lacquered wood  
sashimono: two-dimensional gold antlers

**Kyōgoku Takatsugu (1560-1609)**

Kyōgoku Takatsugu was forced by Oda Nobunaga to marry his own niece, who was the sister of Toyotomi Hideyoshi's wife. This family connection later earned for him the fief of Ōtsu (Ōmi - 60,000 koku). In 1600, supporting the Tokugawa, he was besieged in his castle by Tachibana Muneshige and Tsukushi Hirokado. He negotiated a settlement, and fled to the monastery of Kōyasan. In spite of this capitulation, Tokugawa Ieyasu granted him the fief of Obama (Wakasa - 92,000 koku).

**Kyōgoku Tadataka (1593-1637)**

Tadataka was the son of Takatsugu, and married a daughter of the shogun Tokugawa Hidetada in 1607. At the siege of Ōsaka he took 300 heads of the enemy. In 1634 he received the fief of Matsue (Izumo - 260,000 koku).

banner: red with one Kyōgoku mon, being a set of four black open squares, in white  
standard: two white umbrella-like devices  
sashimono: white mon on red

**Kyōgoku Takakazu (dates?)**

Takakazu was appointed heir of his uncle Tadataka in 1637, and received the fief of Tatsuno (Harima - 50,000 koku).

banner: two Kyōgoku mon on red  
ashigaru: two small red flags with black mon  
lesser standard: two balls of white feathers (?)  
messengers' sashimono: red and black stripes  
great standard: red fukinuki with black mon  
sashimono: red flag with black mon

**Kyōgoku Takatomo (1571-1621)**

Takatomo was the younger brother of Takatsugu. He served Toyotomi Hideyoshi and in 1592 he received the fief of Iida (Shinano - 80,000 koku). At the time of Sekigahara he besieged the castle of Gifu on behalf of Tokugawa Ieyasu. He then received the fief of Tanabe (Tango - 125,000 koku), and served in both Ōsaka campaigns.

**Kyōgoku Takahiro (1599-1677)**

Takahiro was the adopted son of Takamoto and the cousin of Tadataka, of the junior branch of the family.

banner: a white open square on black

standard: two black balls of feathers  
sashimono (not illustrated): a white flag

#### **Maeba Shinhachirō (d. 1570)**

This general of the Asakura was killed at Anegawa along with his son Shintarō.

standard: a gold fukinuki with two black bands  
banner: 'dead leaf' colour with two lozenges in white, and a small red flag with two white discs

#### **Maeda Toshiie (1538-99)**

Maeda Toshiie served Oda Nobunaga. He fought at Anegawa (1570), and after the destruction of the Asakura received the fief of Fuchu (Echizen - 33,000 koku). In 1581 he obtained the province of Noto, and then Kaga in 1583. He fought against the Hōjō in 1590 for Toyotomi Hideyoshi. He carried out administrative duties at Nagoya during the Korean invasion.

standard: gold 'fu' character above red feather ball

banner: white with three Maeda mon in black

He is also associated with a standard of a white flag with a painting of Shoki, the queller of demons, although this may have been used by one of his retainers.

#### **Maeda Toshinaga (1562-1614)**

On Toshiie's death the fief was split up between his sons. The eldest son of Toshiie, Toshinaga fought Uesugi Kagekatsu during the Sekigahara campaign, and after Sekigahara he received the fief (Noto -215,000 koku) of his brother Toshimasa, who had sided with the Ishida cause. He also adopted another brother as his heir. This made Toshinaga the wealthiest daimyō at any time under the Tokugawa regime. He owned 1,250,000 koku, and built the castle of Kanazawa.

#### **Maeda Toshitsune (1593-1658)**

Toshitsune was adopted as heir by his brother Toshinaga, who died childless. He fought at Ōsaka against Ōno Harufusa.

banner: plain white with a small black and white flag

great standard: two white three-dimensional balls

lesser standard: black feather plume

sashimono: stiffened rectangular shape in gold

#### **Maeda Toshitaka (dates?)**

Toshitaka was the fifth son of Toshiie, and founded the junior branch of the family. He fought at Ōsaka and in 1616 he received the fief of Nanukaichi (Kōzuke - 10,000 koku).

banner: white Maeda mon on green, with a

small green flag and two white mon

sashimono: white open lozenge on green

standard: black umbrella with gold trimmings

lord's helmet: black catfish tail with gold badge

#### **Maeda Gen-I Munehisa (1539-1602)**

Maeda Gen-I was no relation to the Maeda of Kanazawa. He was originally a Buddhist priest on Mount Hiei, and served Oda Nobunaga. Toyotomi Hideyoshi gave him the fief of Takamai (Tamba - 50,000 koku).

#### **Makara Jurōzaemon (d. 1570)**

Makara was a hero of the battle of Anegawa.

banner: blue and white

personal sashimono: a cut-out design

representing a gong in blue on red

#### **Makino Yasunari (1555-1609)**

Yasunari served the Tokugawa.

#### **Makino Tadanari (dates?)**

Makino Tadanari was the son of Yasunari. He fought at Ōsaka.

banner: an unusual square design, with three

white leaves like a propeller on red, with a

small white flag, again with the leaf mon

great standard: a tall black feather plume

sashimono: a gold ladder on black

ashūgaru: a small flag with a gold ladder on

black

messengers' sashimono: a white ladder on red

#### **Makino Narisato (dates?)**

No relation of the above, Narisato fought at Shūmabara, where his standard was a lacquered silver board with 'I ro ha ...' (the Japanese equivalent of A,B,C) in black ink.

#### **Masuda Nagamori (1545-1615)**

Masuda Nagamori served Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and was chosen in 1594 to be one of the five bugyō with the fief of Koriyama (Yamato - 200,000 koku). He

supported Ishida Mitsunari at the time of Sekigahara and was banished to Kōyasan. At the time of Ōsaka he was invited to commit suicide, but escaped.

#### **Masuda Moritsugu (dates?)**

Moritsugu was the son of Nagamori and fought against the Tokugawa at Ōsaka.

#### **Matsudaira (Yūki) Hideyasu (1574-1607)**

Hideyasu was the second son of Tokugawa Ieyasu. He was brought up by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and fought during the Kyūshū campaign. In 1590 he was adopted by Yūki Harumoto. From then on he was known as Yūki Hideyasu and received the fief of Yūki (100,000 koku). He fought at Sekigahara, and received the fief of Kita-no-shō (Echizen - 670,000 koku). His sons formed the branch of the Matsudaira of Echizen.

#### **Matsudaira (Yūki) Tadanao (1595-1650)**

Tadanao was the eldest son of Matsudaira Hideyasu. On succeeding to his inheritance, he changed his name to Matsudaira and passed the name Yūki to his brother Naomoto. He was late in arriving for the siege of Ōsaka, which displeased his grandfather, but Tadanao redeemed himself by his fighting against Sanada Yukimura.

banner: white with a 'Y' shaped motif in black  
messengers' sashimono: plain gold flag  
sashimono: gold 'Y' design on black  
great standard: red sun's disc on white  
lesser standard: white shape, with white flag

#### **Matsudaira (Yūki) Tamamasa (1597-1645)**

Tamamasa was the second son of Hideyasu. He fought in the summer campaign of Ōsaka and took 57 heads. He received the fief of Kawanakajima (Shinano - 150,000 koku).

banner: black and white with a tomoe design  
standard: three gold umbrellas and a gohei  
sashimono: ten small black and white flags  
messengers' sashimono: black and white  
striped horō  
lord's helmet: silver court cap style with a tomoe frontlet

#### **Matsudaira (Yūki) Naomasa (1601-66)**

The third son of Hideyasu.

banner: white disc on black

lesser standard: black plume  
great standard: white disc on black  
sashimono: white disc on black

#### **Matsudaira Naomoto (1604-48)**

Naomoto was the fourth son of Matsudaira Hideyasu. In 1624 he received the fief of Katsuyama (Echizen - 30,000 koku).

banner: black and white  
great standard: white ring on a red flag  
lesser standard: gold three-dimensional double cone  
sashimono: black and white

#### **Matsudaira (Fujii) Nobukazu (1548-1632)**

Nobukazu fought at Anegawa. In 1601 he received the fief of Tsuchiura (Hitachi - 30,000 koku).

At Anegawa his standard was a white flag with red fans and a red band.

#### **Matsudaira [Fujii] Tadakuni (1597-1659)**

The son of Nobukazu, Tadakuni served during the summer campaign of Ōsaka.

standard: gold ring on black  
lesser standard: white nine stars mon on red

#### **Matsudaira (Hisamatsu) Sadakatsu (1560-1624)**

Sadakatsu was the uterine brother of Tokugawa Ieyasu, and resided successively at Kakegawa, Kuwana and Nagashima.

standard: white gourd  
sashimono: white nine stars mon on black

#### **Matsudaira (Hisamatsu) Sadatsuna (1592-1651)**

He was the son of Matsudaira Sadakatsu. He fought at Ōsaka and received the fief of Shimotsuna (Hitachi - 30,000 koku).

Heraldry as for his father.

#### **Matsudaira (Katahara) Ietada (1547-82)**

Ietada took part in all of Tokugawa Ieyasu's campaigns, including the battle of Anegawa (1570).

#### **Matsudaira (Katahara) Ienobu (1569-1638)**

Ienobu was the son of Ietada.

#### **Matsudaira (Katahara) Yasunobu (1600-82)**

Yasunobu was the son of Ienobu.

banner: black and white, with ideograph in black, and a similar little flag. (See illustration)  
 great standard: black and white fukinuki  
 messengers' sashimono: three small red flags  
 sashimono: ideograph in black on a white disc on red  
 ashigaru: two flags, each the ideograph in black on a white disc on red, between black bands

#### **Matsudaira (Fukamizu) Koretada (1537-75)**

Koretada fought at Anegawa. He used the Tokugawa mon in his heraldry in a modified form.

#### **Matsudaira (Ochi) Kiyotake**

Kiyotake was the brother of the shogun Ienobu (1662-1706).

banner: black disc on red  
 great standard: gold cylinder with fringes  
 sashimono: black disc on red  
 ashigaru: black disc on small red flag

#### **Matsudaira (Okochi) Masatsuna (1576-1648)**

The family name was Okochi until Masatsuna was adopted into the Matsudaira family. In 1604 he received the fief of Izu (20,000 koku).

#### **Matsudaira (Okochi) Nobutsuna (1596-1662)**

The son of Masatsuna, Nobutsuna received the fief of Oshi (Musashi - 60,000 koku) in 1633. In 1638 he succeeded Itakura Shigemasa in command of the forces besieging Hara castle during the Shimabara rebellion, and was responsible for the rebels' defeat.

banner: black ladder design on white

#### **Matsudaira (Nomi) Shigekatsu (1548-1620)**

Shigekatsu fought at Anegawa. In 1612 he received Sanjō (Echigo - 20,000 koku).

#### **Matsudaira (Okudaira) Tadaaki (1583-1644)**

Tadaaki was the fourth son of Okudaira Nobumasa, the hero of Nagashino (1575). He was adopted by his grandfather, Tokugawa Ieyasu, and received the name of Matsudaira. His fief was Kameyama (Ise - 50,000 koku) in 1610, and in 1615 he took over Ōsaka (Settsu - 100,000 koku). In 1619 he owned Koriyama (Yamato - 120,000 koku) and in 1639 Himeji (Harima - 180,000 koku).

banner: gold lozenge on dark blue  
 great standard: black feather balls and a plume

lesser standard: two white umbrellas  
 messengers' sashimono: gold lozenge on a black horō  
 sashimono: gold lozenge on black

#### **Matsudaira (Ogasawara) Shigenao (dates?)**

Shigenao was the son of Ogasawara Hidemasa, and fought during the Shimabara campaign.

banner: red, white, red bands  
 messengers' sashimono: plain black flag  
 standard: black 'wreath' with white plume above  
 sashimono: six white flags

#### **Matsudaira [Sakakibara] Tadatsugu (dates?)**

Tadatsugu was the grandson of Sakakibara Yasumasa, and on inheriting the fief in 1615 he took the name of Matsudaira.

banner: white nine stars mon on red  
 messengers' sashimono: horō of red and white bands  
 lesser standard: gold umbrella-shaped rain hat  
 sashimono: gold disc on red  
 great standard: white nine stars on red  
 ashigaru: three white discs on three red flags

#### **Matsudaira Iwami no kami (dates?)**

This retainer of Tokugawa Hidetada was permitted to use the Matsudaira name.

banner: white, black, white with a red sun's disc in the upper third  
 standard: gold device of a paulownia  
 ashigaru: two white flags with red disc

#### **Matsudaira Katsuharu (dates?)**

Matsudaira Katsuharu was the keeper of Takada castle in Echigo province.

standard: a white fukinuki  
 messengers' sashimono: black horō  
 great standard: seven white devices of paulownia  
 sashimono: gold diagonal stripe on red  
 messengers' sashimono: seven golden sunbursts on a pole

#### **Matsudaira Masatsuna (dates?)**

Masatsuna was a chief retainer of Tokugawa Ieyasu, and was allowed to use the name Matsudaira.

banner: red above white, divided diagonally

great standard: gold diamond on red  
 sashimono: red above white  
 ashigaru: two small versions of the sashimono

**Matsudaira (Tokugawa) Tadayoshi (1580-1607)**  
 The fourth son of Tokugawa Ieyasu, Tadayoshi was first adopted by Matsudaira Ietada. In 1592 he received the fief of the castle of Oshi (Musashi - 100,000 koku). He took part in the battle of Sekigahara where he opposed Shimazu Yoshihiro. After the campaign he transferred to Kiyosu (Owari - 240,000 koku).

banner: red design on white, of disc within a ring  
 great standard: red fukinuki  
 lesser standard: gold umbrella  
 messengers' sashimono: as banner  
 sashimono: as banner  
 ashigaru: white banner

**Matsudaira (Matsui) Yasuchika (1521-83)**  
 Matsui Yasuchika served in many campaigns for Tokugawa Ieyasu, who authorised him to use the name Matsudaira. He received a fief in Suruga (20,000 koku).

**Matsudaira (Matsui) Yasushige (1568-1640)**  
 Yasushige was the son of Yasuchika, with fiefs as follows: 1590, Yorii (Musashi - 20,000 koku); 1601, Kasama (Hitachi - 30,000 koku); 1608, Yamaki (Tamba - 50,000 koku).

banner: black and white, alternating twelve bands bottom to top  
 sashimono: black and white, as banner

**Matsudaira Mitsuyuki (dates?)**  
 This samurai fought at Shimabara (1638).

banner: black, white, black in thirds  
 lesser standard: gold horns  
 greater standard: white tasselled ring  
 sashimono: four white and one black flag  
 messengers' sashimono: small white horō-like object

**Matsukura Shigemasa (1574-1630)**  
 Having served Toyotomi Hideyoshi, Shigemasa received the fief of Gojō (Yamato - 25,000 koku) in 1600, and then that of Shimabara (Hizen - 60,000 koku).

banner: black bands on red (see illustration)  
 standard: two gold umbrellas

**Matsukura Shigeharu (d. 1638)**  
 The son of Shigemasa, Shigeharu inherited his father's fief, where his tyranny led to the Shimabara rebellion. Once the rebellion had been put down, Shigeharu was invited to commit hara-kiri.

For heraldry see above.

**Matsumae Yoshihiro (1550-1618)**  
 The Matsumae were the daimyō of Japan's northern island Hokkaidō. The family were descended from the Takeda. Yoshihiro was originally called Kakizaki Yoshihiro, and submitted to Toyotomi Hideyoshi in 1587.

**Matsumoto Kageshige (dates?)**  
 Matsumoto Kageshige was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals'. He fought in the third rank at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561.

His banner was a black and white flag with a geometrical design on the white section.

**Matsunaga Hisahide (1510-77)**  
 Matsunaga Hisahide allied himself with Miyoshi Chōkei and became governor of Kyōto in 1529. In 1563 he poisoned the son of Miyoshi Chōkei. The shogun Ashikaga Yoshiteru refused to grant him the favours he sought, so he invested the shogun's palace, during which the latter killed himself. Soon after he was at war with Miyoshi Yoshitsugu, the late Chōkei's heir, but in 1568 was required to submit to Oda Nobunaga. In 1577 he again revolted and Oda Nobunaga's son Nobutada and Tsutsui Junkei besieged him in his castle of Shikizan. The castle was burned and Hisahide committed suicide. Matsunaga Hisahide was a noted tea-master, and the scene of him smashing a priceless tea-bowl so that it would not fall into the hands of his enemies is a favourite subject found in Japanese prints.

**Matsunaga Kojirō (d. 1577)**  
 Kojirō was the son of Hisahide, and at the fall of Shikizan castle committed suicide by thrusting his sword through his throat and leaping off the wall with his father's severed head in his hand.





*This dramatic print shows the paradox in samurai culture of the delicate balance between the appreciation of the aesthetic and the bloody business of warfare. It depicts Matsunaga Hisahide smashing the priceless heirloom tea kettle called 'Hiragumo' prior to committing suicide after the fall of his castle of Shikizan to Oda Nobunaga in 1577. Utensils for the tea ceremony were greatly prized and as valued for gifts as any fine sword. Hisahide has prepared himself for hara-kiri. His abdomen is revealed, and the tantō (dagger) with which he will make the fatal incision lies before him wrapped in a symbolic white cloth.*

#### **Matsuno Hirochika (dates?)**

Matsuno Hirochika was a retainer of the Date family and followed Date Hidemune to Uwajima (Iyo province on Shikoku island). His unusual banner bore the design of the severed head of a young warrior. It was drawn in black ink on white cloth to represent the pale face of death, with blood dripping from the neck. It was said to have been derived from an actual incident in

1615 when Matsuno decapitated a young enemy in battle. The head was interred, and as an earnest of his intentions to pray for the entry of the dead man into paradise, Matsuno had the flag made.

#### **Matsushita Yoshitsuna (1537-98)**

Yoshitsuna was the son of Yukitsuna, who was Toyotomi Hideyoshi's first master. When Hideyoshi reached a position of pre-eminence, he extended to the family the favours he had received from Yukitsuna. Yoshitsuna received the fief of Kuno (Tōtōmi - 10,000 koku).

#### **Matsushita Shigetuna (1580-1628)**

Matsushita Shigetuna held the fief of Nihonmatsu (Mutsu - 30,000 koku).

banner: gold cross on dark blue, corners to corners diagonally  
sashimono: as banner  
standard: gold cylindrical shape with the cross on blue design at each end  
messengers' sashimono: white flag with 'ragged' edge

#### **Matsuura Takanobu (1529-99)**

The Matsuura were the daimyō of Hirado island. Takanobu fought several battles against rivals during the Sengoku Period, and retired in favour of his son Shigenobu in 1541.

#### **Matsuura Shigenobu (1549-1614)**

Shigenobu fought against the Shimazu in the Kyūshū campaign of Toyotomi Hideyoshi in 1587. He later served in both invasions of Korea in the division of Konishi Yukinaga, fighting at Pusan, Tongnae, P'yong-yang etc. He particularly distinguished himself when he led the attack in the siege of Namwŏn (1597).

For heraldry see *Samurai Warfare*

#### **Matsuura Hisanobu (1571-1602)**

Hisanobu fought in Korea with his father Shigenobu.

#### **Matsuura Takanobu II (1591-1637)**

Takanobu II inherited the Hirado fief from his father Hisanobu, who lived only one year as daimyō.

**Menju Ietora (dates?)**

Ietora was a retainer of Shibata Katsuei. When the latter's golden gohei standard was captured, he led a charge into the enemy lines to regain it, but was killed fighting.

**Minagawa Hiroteru (+1625)**

Hiroteru first fought for the Hōjō at Odawara, and on submitting to Toyotomi Hideyoshi, received a fief of 30,000 koku at Minagawa (Shimotsuke).

**Minagawa Takatsune (dates?)**

Takatsune was the son of Hiroteru.

**Minamoto Yorimitsu (944-1021)**

Yorimitsu is one of the first Minamoto to become famous for his military exploits. He is associated with the quelling of the bandits of Ōeyama.

**Minamoto Yoriyoshi (995-1082)**

Yoriyoshi fought against the Abe during the Early Nine Years' War.

**Minamoto Yoshiie (1041-1108)**

The oldest son of Yoriyoshi, Yoshiie fought with him in all his campaigns. Yoshiie, known as Hachimantarō, also conducted the Later Three Years' War.

**Minamoto Tameyoshi (1096-1156)**

Tameyoshi was the grandson of Yoshiie. He sided with the ex-emperor Sutoku during the Hōgen Incident and was put to death.

**Minamoto Yorimasa (1106-80)**

A noted poet, Yorimasa was defeated at the first battle of Uji (1180) and committed a celebrated act of *hara-kiri*.

**Minamoto Yoshitomo (1123-60)**

Yoshitomo was the son of Tameyoshi, and captured the ex-emperor Go-Shirakawa at the Sanjō Palace in 1160, but was defeated in the counter-attack and later murdered.

**Minamoto Tametomo (1139-70)**

This brother of Yoshitomo was of herculean strength and a skilled archer. He fought during the Hōgen Incident.

**Minamoto Yukiie (+1186)**

Yukiie was the brother of Yoshitomo, and fought several engagements alongside Kiso Yoshinaka.

**Minamoto Yoshihira (1140-60)**

The son of Yoshitomo who fought with him during the Heiji Incident.

**Minamoto Yoritomo (1147-99)**

The first Minamoto shogun, Yoritomo was the son of Yoshitomo. His military career began disastrously with his defeat at Ishibashiyama (1180), but his career prospered owing to the battlefield successes of his brothers and cousin.

**Minamoto Noriyori (1156-93)**

The brother of Yoritomo, Noriyori won the battle of Kojima (1184).

**Minamoto Yoshitsune (1159-89)**

One of the most famous samurai of all times, Yoshitsune, the brother of Yoritomo, won victories at Ichinotani, Yashima and Dan no Ura. He was then exiled by Yoritomo and hounded to his death at Koromogawa.

**Minamoto (Kiso) Yoshinaka (1154-84)**

Cousin of Yoritomo, Yoshinaka defeated the Taira at Kurikara (1183) and entered Kyōto, but behaved so outrageously that his cousins were obliged to defeat him at the second battle of Uji (1184). He was then killed at Awazu.

**Minamoto Yoriie (1182-1204)**

The second Minamoto shogun, Yoriie was assassinated.

**Minamoto Sanetomo (1192-1219)**

Third and last Minamoto shogun, Sanetomo was assassinated in Kamakura.

**Miura Dōsun Yoshiatsu (+1516)**

Miura Yoshiatsu committed suicide when he was besieged at Arai by Hōjō Sōun.

**Miura Yoshimoto**

Little is known of this samurai, the son of Yoshiatsu, who was the last of a long line to bear the name of Miura, except to note that he was

*The remarkable suicide of Miura Yoshimoto, who is supposed to have cut off his own head when his castle of Arai fell to the Hōjō in 1518. The text actually describes him doing it from horseback. Other details of weaponry noted in this picture include Yoshimoto's enormous studded wooden club, and two curved, bladed naginata. (From a woodblock printed edition of the Hōjō Godaiki)*



defeated by Hōjō Sōun at the battle of Arai in 1518, and committed suicide by cutting his own head off!

#### **Miyabe Tsugimasu (1528-99)**

Tsugimasu was originally a monk from Mount Hiei who served Asai Nagamasa. He later served Toyotomi Hideyoshi, including the Kyūshū campaign in his battle honours.

#### **Miyabe Nagafusa (dates?)**

Nagafusa chose the losing side at the time of Sekigahara and was dispossessed.

#### **Miyoshi Chōkei Norinaga (1523-64)**

Miyoshi Chōkei was at the centre of a long conflict between his family and his former overlord Hosokawa Harumoto, whom he besieged in his castle of Miyake in 1549, but held back from killing his old daimyō. He was instrumental in the deposing of the shogun Yoshiteru. In 1563 his son was poisoned by Matsunaga Hisahide. Chōkei eventually died in 1564.

#### **Miyoshi Jikkyō Yukitora (+1559)**

Yukitora was the brother of Miyoshi Chōkei. In 1552 he put Hosokawa Mochitaka to death and

seized his lands. Jikkyō was eventually killed in battle.

#### **Miyoshi Fuyuyasu (+1564)**

The brother of Chōkei, Fuyuyasu, a noted poet, was murdered by Matsunaga Hisahide.

#### **Miyoshi Yoshitsugu (+1573)**

Yoshitsugu was the nephew and adopted heir of Miyoshi Chōkei. In 1572 he sided with the shogun Ashikaga Yoshiaki against Oda Nobunaga, but Nobunaga besieged him in his castle at Wakae and Yoshitsugu killed himself.

#### **Mizoguchi Hidekatsu (dates?)**

Hidekatsu served Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and received the fief of Shibata (Echigo - 50,000 koku).

banner: eight bands of black and white, bottom to top

ashigaru: small black and white flag, as banner standard: black ball and feathers with gold tassels

messengers' sashimono: three black and white flags

sashimono: white ring on black

#### **Mizuno Tadamasu (+1543)**

Tadamasu's daughter married Tokugawa Hirotada and was the mother of Tokugawa Ieyasu, hence the prosperity of this distinguished family.

#### **Mizuno Nobumoto (+1576)**

The son of Tadamasu, Nobumoto was the uncle of Tokugawa Ieyasu, but when accused of treason before Oda Nobunaga, Ieyasu did not hesitate to have him executed.

#### **Mizuno Tadashige (1541-1600)**

Tadashige received the fief of Kariya (Mikawa - 40,000 koku) from Toyotomi Hideyoshi. He fought at Nagakute and was murdered in 1600.

#### **Mizuno Katsushige (1564-1651)**

The son of Tadashige, Katsushige took part in the Kyūshū campaign under the leadership of Sasa Narimasa, but performed badly during the Korean War. He sided with Tokugawa Ieyasu, his cousin, at the time of Sekigahara. In 1615, after his bravery at Ōsaka, he received the fief of Koriyama (Yamato

- 60,000 koku), and in 1619 Fukuyama (Bingo - 100,000 koku). In 1638 he helped to put down the Shimabara rebellion.

banner: white design of three Japanese coins on black

great standard: three white coin shapes on black

lesser standard: two black umbrellas and a black plume of feathers

sashimono: white coin shape on black

personal sashimono (presumably that of

Katsushige himself): gold coin shape on a pole lord's helmet: black with gold badge

#### **Mizunoya (or Mizutani) Ise no kami Katsutoshi (dates?)**

Little is known of this samurai who served Ieyasu. In 1590 he received the fief of Shimodate (Hitachi), and was transferred to Matsuyama (Bitchū - 50,000 koku) in 1639.

banner: three white triple tomoe designs on black lesser standard: black feather plume

sashimono: white character 'hachi' on black

messengers' sashimono: black flag with character design

#### **Mogami Yoshiaki (1546-1614)**

Yoshiaki was a daimyō in the far north of mainland Japan. He submitted to Toyotomi Hideyoshi. In 1600 he sided with Tokugawa Ieyasu and fought against Uesugi Kagekatsu, as a result of which his fief of Yamagata (Dewa) grew to 520,000 koku. He is shown on the Hasedo screen wearing a red horō.

standard: a black sotoba on a white flag

#### **Mogami Yoshiyasu (dates?)**

Yoshiyasu was the eldest son of Yoshiaki, and fought beside him at Hasedo in 1600.

#### **Mori Yoshinari (1523-70)**

Yoshinari first served Saitō Tōshimasa, then Oda Nobunaga. He was killed at the battle of Anegawa in 1570.

#### **Mori Nagayoshi (Nagakazu) (1558-84)**

Nagayoshi succeeded his father and took part in Oda Nobunaga's campaigns against the Ikko-ikki of Nagashima, and against Takeda Katsuyori. After

the destruction of the latter in 1582, he received the fief of Matsushiro (Shinano - 100,000 koku). He was killed at the battle of Nagakute.

standard: red Fudō sword above gold fukinuki

#### **Mori Katsunaga (dates?)**

Katsunaga fought at Ōsaka.

#### **Mori Tadamasa (1570-1634)**

Tadamasa was the younger brother of Nagayoshi, and succeeded him. In 1603 he received the fief of Tsuyama (Mimasaka - 185,000 koku).

banner: black character 'jū' on white

messengers' sashimono: ten small red flags on a pole

sashimono: white flag with slashed edge

standard: gold disc

#### **Mōri Motonari (1497-1571)**

Mōri Motonari was one of the most celebrated of all the Sengoku Period daimyō. His family dominated the Inland Sea area of Japan for half a century. He fought the Amako on behalf of his overlord Ōuchi Yoshitaka. When Ōuchi was overthrown by Sue Harukata, Mōri took up arms against him and defeated Sue at the dramatic battle of Miyajima in 1555. With his main rival out of the way, Mōri Motonari gradually acquired most of the former territories of the Ōuchi, and frequently collided with the Ōtomo of Kyūshū. The Amako continued to oppose him until he overcame their castle of Toda. He was succeeded by his grandson Mōri Terumoto.

#### **Mōri Terumoto (1553-1625)**

It was Mōri Terumoto who was to feel the brunt of the progress along the Inland Sea by the generals of Oda Nobunaga. He supported the ikkō-ikkō of the Ishiyama Hongan-ji. With the death of Nobunaga, Mōri Terumoto made peace with Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and served in the Kyūshū expedition. In 1591 he built the castle of Hiroshima. In 1600 he opposed the Tokugawa, and was forced to shave his head. For this reason his heraldry does not appear in *O Uma Jirushi*.

#### **Mōri Hidemoto (1579-1650)**

Hidemoto was another grandson of Mōri Motonari. He first fought against the Hōjō of Odawara, then

served in Korea, as a result of which he received the fief of Nagato, Suo and Aki (200,000 koku). After Sekigahara his domain was reduced to 50,000 koku.

banner: three white discs on red

great standard: flag with white disc on red

lesser standard: white plume above two black plumes

messengers' sashimono: black horō with a white disc

lord's helmet: black with gold crescent badge

ashigaru: five black flags with white disc on each

sashimono: ten black flags with three white discs on each

#### **Mōri Takamasa (1556-1628)**

Takamasa had no connection with the Mōri of Hiroshima area. He served Toyotomi Hideyoshi in Korea, and in 1594 he received the fief of Saeki (Bungo - 60,000 koku). In 1600 he sided against Tokugawa Ieyasu, who reduced his fief to 20,000 koku.

banner: white design of an arrow's feathers on black

standard: black wreath

sashimono: six white flags, in pairs on a pole

#### **Morozumi Masakiyo (d. 1561)**

Morozumi was an uncle of Takeda Shingen and was killed during the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561.

#### **Mukai Tadakatsu (dates?)**

Mukai Tadakatsu served Tokugawa Ieyasu in the capacity of admiral. He fought during the winter campaign of Ōsaka.

great standard: a huge three-dimensional gold bell with a white plume

messengers' sashimono: black and white horō with serrated edge gold flag

lord's personal sashimono: white hiragana character 'mu' on purple

alternative standard: three gold sword-blade shapes

lesser standard: black plume over five gold balls

sashimono: red sun on white

ashigaru: thin flag with five red suns on white

alternative standard: three-dimensional silver swastika with white plume

#### **Munakata Ujio (+1551)**

Ujio took the part of Ōuchi Yoshitaka when he was attacked by Sue Harukata. He was defeated and killed himself.

#### **Munakata Ujisada (+1568)**

Ujisada continued the family struggles until 1568. The Munakata heraldry is unknown.

#### **Murakami Yoshikiyo (1510-73)**

Murakami Yoshikiyo, daimyō of Kuzuo in Shinano province, fought a 30-year-long defensive campaign against Takeda Shingen. He was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals' in the head-quarters division at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561. The family mon was the character 'kami'.

Standard and banner are very similar: hata jirushi in white with black designs, but the standard has a slashed lower half.

#### **Murakami Yoshiakira (+1624)**

Murakami Yoshiakira received the fief of Honjō (Etchigo - 95,000 koku) from Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

#### **Nabeshima Naoshige (1537-1619)**

The Nabeshima were a prominent samurai family of Kyūshū. Naoshige helped the Ryūzōji in their war against the Ōtomo, a venture which ended with Ryūzōji Takanobu's death at the battle of Okita Nawate in 1584. In 1587 Nabeshima Naoshige aided Toyotomi Hideyoshi in his invasion of Kyūshū, and received the fief of Saga. He also took part in the Korean War. In 1600 he sent his son Katsushige to support Tokugawa Ieyasu in his campaign against Uesugi Kagekatsu. Katsushige, however, was induced to support the Ishida faction, and was hastily recalled by his father. As a result Naoshige's revenues were increased to 357,000 koku.

#### **Nabeshima Katsushige (1580-1657)**

After the disgrace of the recall noted above, Katsushige returned to the Tokugawa faction and fought against Tachibana Muneshige. During the Ōsaka campaign he remained in Saga to keep the

Shimazu in check. In 1637 he and his sons helped suppress the Shimabara rebellion.

banner: black and white, divided diagonally, with the Nabeshima mon on the upper, white half

great standard: black fukinuki

sashimono: two black flags with different mon in white

lesser standard: black plume above a white plume

messengers' sashimono: two designs are shown, a black horō and a red horō

#### **Nabeshima Motoshige (dates?)**

Motoshige was the son of Katsushige, and fought with his father at Shimabara.

banner: white with black open lozenge

standard: two three-dimensional varieties of the Nabeshima mon, the upper one in gold, the lower silver

sashimono: a silver flag with slashed edge

lord's helmet: black

#### **Nagai Naokatsu (1563-1626)**

Nagai Naokatsu served Tokugawa Ieyasu, from whom he received a fief of 12,000 koku in 1600. After Ōsaka he received the fief of Kasama (Hitachi - 35,000 koku), then in 1622 Koga (Shimōsa - 75,000 koku).

#### **Nagai Naomasa (1587-1668)**

The eldest son of Naokatsu, Naomasa was transferred to Yodo (Yamashiro - 100,000 koku) in 1634.

banner: white Mōri mon on red

great standard: black cock's feather plume

messengers' sashimono: plain red flag

sashimono: red with white Mōri mon

#### **Nagai Naokiyo (dates?)**

Naokiyo was the younger brother of Naomasa.

sashimono: black disc on a red ground

#### **Nagao Tamekage (dates?)**

Tamekage was a retainer of Uesugi Funayoshi. When he dared to criticize Funayoshi he was besieged in Nishihama (Etchū) in 1509, but Tamekage won and Uesugi was killed. After going from strength to strength Tamekage was killed

*Mon and other heraldic designs:*

1. The 'nine stars' design, used by Hosokawa, Tsutsui and others. Other varieties have five stars round the outside and one in the middle.

2. Four lozenge shapes as a mon. Several families' mon are single lozenges.

3. The mon of Matsunaga Hisahide.

4. The two varieties of the same mon used by Nabeshima Naoshige.

5. The banner of Matsukura Shigeharu, the tyrant of Shimabara.

6. The two mon used by Nakagawa Kiyohide.

7. The complete heraldic display of Niwa Nagashige, for details see text.

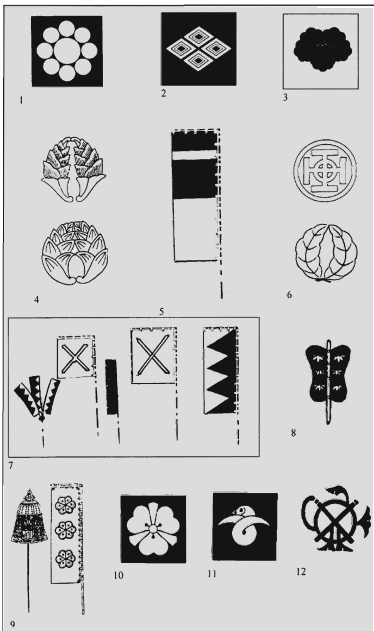
8. An uchiwa style fan, used on several flags.

9. The banner and standard of Omura Suminobu.

10. The 'wood sorrel with sword blades' mon of Sakai Tadayo.

11. The curious musube-karigane ('knotted wild goose') motif used by Shibata Katsuei and others.

12. The mon of Tachibana Muneshige, also associated with Konishi Yukinaga.



fighting the Ikkō-ikki, but his son went on to greater glory as the famous Uesugi Kenshin.

#### **Nagao Fujikage (date?)**

Nagao Fujikage was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals'. He fought on the left flank at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561.

His banner was a black triple tomoe design on white.

#### **Nagatsuka Masaie (+1600)**

Masaie is one of few samurai remembered for his services in the unglamorous task of konida bugyō (officer in charge of supplies). In this capacity he served successively Niwa Nagahide and Toyotomi Hideyoshi, for whom he organised the transport of 20,000 koku of rice for the siege of Odawara. Masaie received from Toyotomi Hideyoshi the fief of Minakuchi (Ōmi - 50,000 koku). He opposed Tokugawa Ieyasu, and with Chōsokabe Morichika besieged the castle of Anotsu in Ise. He was among the defeated at Sekigahara and then was besieged in Minakuchi castle by Ikeda Terumasa. He soon committed suicide.

#### **Naitō Masatoyo (d. 1575)**

Naitō Masatoyo was one of the Takeda 'Twenty-Four Generals'. He was killed at the battle of Nagashino in 1575.

His banners bore a red band on white.

#### **Naitō Ienaga (1546-1600)**

Naitō Ienaga served Tokugawa Ieyasu, and in 1590 he received the fief of Sanuki (Kazusa - 20,000 koku). He was killed at the defence of Fushimi castle.

#### **Naitō Masanaga (1568-1634)**

Masanaga was the son of Ienaga. As a result of his services at Ōsaka his revenues were raised to 50,000 koku.

banner: white, black, white, with a small red flag and a gold fan on top

lesser standard: a gold disc and three black plumes above a white hanging flag

great standard: two white open squares on black

messengers' sashimono: a gold slashed edge

flag on a black and red horō

sashimono: white squares on black, with a gold fan

#### **Naitō Nobunari (1545-1612)**

Nobunari was the son of Tokugawa Hirotada and stepbrother of Tokugawa Ieyasu. He was adopted by Naitō Kiyonaga, and thus became the adoptive brother of Ienaga. He served Tokugawa Ieyasu against the Hōjō in 1590, and received the fief of Nirayama (Izu - 10,000 koku). In 1601 he received the fief of Fuchu (Suruga - 30,000 koku). In 1606 he received the fief of Nagahama (Ōmi - 50,000 koku).

banner: white uchiwa fan design on red

sashimono: white uchiwa fan design on red

standard: gold three-dimensional uchiwa fan

#### **Naitō Genzaemon (dates?)**

This family were not related to the above Naitō. Genzaemon served Oda Nobunaga and received the fief of Kameyama (Tamba - 200,000 koku).

#### **Naitō Yukiyasu (Joan) (d. 1626)**

Yukiyasu was a celebrated Christian samurai, who fought in Korea and acted as ambassador to the court of Beijing. He was banished to Manila in 1614 on account of his Christian faith. His suit of armour is preserved in the Royal Armouries, Leeds.

#### **Nakagawa Kiyohide (1542-83)**

Kiyohide originally served Oda Nobunaga. In 1583 he was killed defending the fortress of Shizugatake on behalf of Toyotomi Hideyoshi, an action that led to the decisive battle of the same name. His heraldry is unknown except for his distinctive mon, which incorporated the Christian cross.

#### **Nakagawa Hidemasa (dates?)**

Hidemasa was the eldest son of Kiyohide and died during the Korean War.

#### **Nakagawa Hidenari (1570-1612)**

Hidenari succeeded his brother and received the fief of Takeda (Bungo - 70,000 koku).

banner: three white discs on red

standard: two white flags

sashimono: two small red flags with white discs



**Nakajō Fujikashi (dates?)**

Nakajō Fujikashi was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals'. He fought in the rear-guard at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561, and received a personal commendation from Uesugi Kenshin.

His banner was a white design on red, while the sashimono of his retainers was a white character 'yama' on black.

**Nakamura Kazuujī (+1600)**

Kazuujī served Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and died just before he was about to set out against Uesugi Kagekatsu on behalf of Tokugawa Ieyasu.

**Nakamura Tadakazu (1590-1609)**

Tadakazu was the son of Kazuujī.

**Nakayama Nobuyoshi (1576-1642)**

Nobuyoshi was tutor to Tokugawa Yorifusa.

**Nanbu Nobunao (1546-99)**

Nobunao defeated Kunoe Masazane in 1591 with assistance from Toyotomi Hideyoshi. He subsequently accompanied Hideyoshi to Nagoya for the launch of the Korean invasion.

**Nanbu Toshinao (+1632)**

Toshinao was the son of Nobunao, and built Morioka castle.

banner: two thin black bands on white, below a crane design

great standard: a gold cloth-covered basket with a black plume

sashimono: nine sunbursts in gold

messengers' sashimono: a black horō

lord's helmet: black with a gold butterfly crest

**Naō Sadatsuna (dates?)**

Naō Sadatsuna was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals'. He fought in the supply division at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561.

His banner was three black geometrical designs on white.

**Naō Kanetsugu (1570-1619)**

Naō Kanetsugu was a retainer of the Uesugi and supported Uesugi Kagekatsu in his struggle with

Tokugawa Ieyasu. He had a revenue of 60,000 koku.

banner: red with three stylised 'yama' characters

**Naruse Masakazu (1538-1620)**

Naruse Masakazu served Tokugawa Ieyasu, who gave him in 1607 the fief of Kurihara (Hitachi - 20,000 koku).

**Naruse Masanari (dates?)**

Son of Masakazu, Masanari was in charge of Inuyama castle (Owari - 35,000 koku), one of the best preserved of the old Japanese castles today.

**Nasu Sukeharu (1546-1609)**

A minor daimyō who received Fukuwara (20,000 koku) in 1590.

**Natsume Yoshinobu (+1572)**

Natsume Yoshinobu was the keeper of Hamamatsu castle at the time of the battle of Mikata ga Hara. When the battle was lost, he plunged into the Takeda ranks as substitute for Tokugawa Ieyasu, and was killed.

**Nishina Nobumori (+1582)**

Nobumori was the fourth son of Takeda Shingen. After the death of his brother Katsuyori, he fortified himself in his castle of Takatō (Shinano). Oda Nobunaga sent a Buddhist priest to him to negotiate a surrender, to which Nishina replied by cutting off the monk's nose and ears. In the subsequent attack Nishina was killed in action.

**Nishio Yoshitsugu (1530-1606)**

Nishio Yoshitsugu served successively Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu.

**Nitta Yoshisada (1301-38)**

Yoshisada supported Go-Daigo and captured Kamakura from the Hōjō in 1333.

**Niwa Nagahide (1535-85)**

Nagahide served Oda Nobunaga. He married Nobunaga's niece and received the fief of Sawayama (Ōmi - 50,000 koku). He constructed the castle of Azuchi for Nobunaga and as a reward

received the fief of Obama (Wakasa - 100,000 koku).

banner: white with red leaves within black design

#### **Niwa Ujitsugu (1550-1601)**

Ujitsugu was the keeper of Iwasaki castle for Oda Nobuo during the Komaki campaign of 1584. He later served Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

#### **Niwa Nagashige (1571-1637)**

Nagashige was the son of Nagahide. In 1598 he received the fief of Komatsu (Kaga - 100,000 koku). At the time of the Sekigahara campaign, Nagashige was under arms against his neighbour Maeda Toshinaga. As a result, Niwa Nagashige was closely watched for the rest of his life, but received the fief of Futto (Hitachi) - 10,000 koku in 1619.

banner: black and white design

great standard: a flag with a red cross on white

lesser standard: the same, but smaller

sashimono: a white flag, with slashed edges

ashigaru: three small flags, like the banner

#### **Obata Toramori (d. 1561)**

Toramori was one of the Takeda 'Twenty-Four Generals'. He is recorded as having been wounded 40 times in 30 encounters.

His banner was white with a leaf design.

#### **Obata Masamori (Nobusada) (d. 1582)**

The son of Toramori, Masamori (also called Nobusada) was also one of the Takeda 'Twenty-Four Generals'. He came originally from Kōzuke province, and led the largest contingent (500 horsemen in the centre company) at the battle of Nagashino in 1575. He died in 1582 from wounds sustained at Nagashino.

His banners bore a red open octagon on white. He is also credited with a mon of a bamboo design on an uchiwa fan shape, and a leaf-shaped mon appears on a suit of armour and a jinbaori he is known to have owned.

#### **Obu Toramasa (dates?)**

Toramasa was the younger brother of Yamagata

Masakage and, like him, one of the Takeda 'Twenty-Four Generals'. He dressed all his troops in red armour, a practice later copied by Ii Naomasa.

His banner was also red with a white crescent moon and star.

#### **Ochiai Michihisa (dates?)**

Ochiai Michihisa was a retainer of Takeda Katsuyori, serving the latter at the siege of Nagashino castle. Michihisa was greatly moved by the bravery shown by Torii Sune'emon, who escaped from the besieged castle to bring help, and was crucified by the Takeda. As a result, he had a banner made which showed Sune'emon on the cross.

#### **Oda Nobuhide (+1549)**

Oda Nobuhide, father of the famous Nobunaga, defeated the Imagawa at the first battle of Azukizaka in 1542.

#### **Oda Nobuhiro (+1574)**

Nobuhiro was the eldest son of Nobuhide, and was besieged and forced to flee from his castle of Anjō (Mikawa) by Imagawa Yoshimoto in 1549. He was killed fighting the Ikkō-ikki of Nagashima.

#### **Oda Nobunaga (1534-82)**

Oda Nobunaga is one of the pivotal figures in Japanese history. He was only fifteen when his father died, and at first showed little inclination towards the governance of his domains. His retainer Hirade Kiyohide committed hara-kiri as a way of startling the young man into his obligations. The protest had the desired effect. Oda Nobunaga rose to national prominence with his stunning victory of Okehazama in 1560 when he defeated the powerful Imagawa Yoshimoto. In 1564 he defeated the Saitō and made his capital at Gifu. Campaigns against the Asai and Asakura families followed, including the battle of Anegawa in 1570. In 1571 he destroyed the temples of Mount Hiei, ending for ever their military influence. Other religious rivals caused him more problems. His campaign against the Ikkō-ikki at Nagashima and Ishiyama Hongan-ji lasted a decade. In 1575 he fought the decisive battle of Nagashino, famous for the large scale and

controlled use of firearms. In 1576 he built Azuchi castle, and towards the end of his life conducted successful campaigns in Ise and Iga, while loyal generals subdued the provinces around the Inland Sea. In 1582 Nobunaga was murdered in a surprise attack on the Honnōji temple in Kyōto by his general Akechi Mitsuhide.

banner: three Japanese coins in black on gold  
great standard: a large red umbrella  
messengers' sashimono: red horō and black horō

#### **Oda Nobuyuki (+1557)**

The brother of Nobunaga, Nobuyuki held Suemori castle in Owari. In 1557 he conducted negotiations with the Hayashi which Nobunaga perceived as treasonable, and he sent Ikeda Nobuteru to besiege Suemori and kill Nobuyuki.

#### **Oda Nobukane (1548-1614)**

The brother of Nobunaga, Nobukane was adopted into the Nagao family in 1568. He shaved his head in 1594 and enjoyed retirement as a noted painter.

#### **Oda Nobuharu (1549-70)**

Nobunaga's brother Nobuharu was killed at Sakamoto in 1570 in war against the Asakura.

#### **Oda (Yurakusai-Joan) Nagamasu (1548-1622)**

This brother of Nobunaga, better known as Oda Yuraku, was a noted tea-master.

#### **Oda Nobutada (1557-82)**

Nobutada was the eldest son of Nobunaga and fought beside his father on many occasions. In 1577 he fought against Matsunaga Hisahide. He was in Kyōto when his father was murdered. Having failed to save him, Nobutada withdrew to Nijō castle, where he was besieged and forced to commit suicide by Akechi's troops.

banner: white rectangle on gold

Two standards have been identified - a curious gold box with tassels, and a red umbrella like his father's.

#### **Oda (Kitabatake) (Jōshin) Nobuo (1558-1630)**

The second son of Nobunaga, Nobuo was adopted by the Kitabatake family to ensure the Oda hegemony over Ise province. He played an active part in

the two Iga campaigns. Oda Nobuo then kept the interests of the Oda family alive following Toyotomi Hideyoshi's takeover. He fought at Nagakute (1584), and took an army against the Hōjō of Odawara in 1590. He died at the ripe old age of 73.

#### **Oda (Kambe) Nobutaka (1558-83)**

The third son of Oda Nobunaga, Nobutaka was adopted by the Kambe family and was involved in the campaigns of resistance of 1583 which followed Toyotomi Hideyoshi's takeover. He committed suicide when besieged in Gifu castle.

#### **Oda (Hashiba) Hidekatsu (1567-93)**

The fourth son of Oda Nobunaga, Hidekatsu was adopted by Toyotomi Hideyoshi. He fought in Kyūshū, at Odawara, and died in Korea.

#### **Oda Katsunaga (1568-82)**

The fifth son of Oda Nobunaga, Katsunaga was killed beside his father at the Honnōji. He had owned Inuyama castle (Owari).

#### **Oda Hidenobu (1581-1602)**

At the age of one year, this man, the grandson of Oda Nobunaga and son of Nobutaka and then called Samboshi, was proclaimed heir to his grandfather. In 1602 he joined the Ishida faction, and defended Gifu castle against the Tokugawa. He was forced to shave his head following Ishida's defeat. He retired to Kōyasan, and died at the early age of 21.

#### **Oda Hideo (Hidekatsu) (1573-1610)**

The eldest son of Oda Nobuo, he received the fief of Ōno (Echizen - 50,000 koku) in 1592. He was dispossessed after Sekigahara and retired.

#### **Oda Takanaga (+1659)**

Takanaga was the fourth son of Oda Nobuo.

#### **Oda Nobunori (dates?)**

The son of Oda Nobukane, and cousin of Oda Nobunaga, Nobunori appears in *O Uma Jirushi*.

banner: a red uchiwa fan on a white disc on red standard: gold fan above two three-dimensional black feather balls  
messengers' sashimono: ten black plumes

**Odaï Yorisada (dates?)**

Odaï Yorisada was a minor daimyō defeated by the Takeda, who committed suicide on the blazing bridge leading to his castle, an act of defiance which greatly impressed the Takeda.

**Ogasawara Nagatoki (1519-83)**

Ogasawara Nagatoki was constantly at war with Takeda Shingen. He failed to recapture his castle of Fukashi (now Matsumoto), and sought refuge with Uesugi Kenshin. He withdrew to Kyōto where he taught archery and horsemanship. He was assassinated in 1583.

banner: the white Ogasawara mon on black sashimono: eight black and white stripes from bottom to top  
great standard: the white mon on black ashigaru: two small black and white flags  
lesser standard: a gold three-dimensional umbrella over fringes  
messengers' sashimono: black horō with white dots

**Ogasawara Hidemasa (1569-1615)**

Hidemasa was the grandson of Nagatoki and served Tokugawa Ieyasu. In 1590 he received the fief of Koga (Shimōsa - 20,000 koku). In 1601 he was transferred to Iida (Shinano - 50,000 koku), and in 1613 he recovered the castle of his ancestors at Fukashi (80,000 koku).

banner: five white Ogasawara mon designs on red  
ashigaru: white mon on a small red flag  
great standard: large flag with same design  
sashimono: black and white stripes  
lesser standard: black plume above gold and white 'hair'  
messengers' sashimono: black horō with white dots

**Ogasawara Tadazane (dates?)**

Tadazane was the son of Ogasawara Hidemasa, and took part in the Shimabara campaign.

banner: black and white stripes with the Ogasawara mon on the second black stripe down  
great standard: the mon in white on black  
lesser standard: five three-dimensional paulownia leaf-like objects in gold

messengers' sashimono: plain white flag  
sashimono: as banner

**Ogasawara Tadamoto (dates?)**

Tadamoto was the son of Tadazane. He served the Tokugawa and took part in the Shimabara campaign. He kept the castle of Kokura.

banner: the mon in black on white  
standard: red three-dimensional 'barrel' with gold additions  
sashimono: red sun's disc on white

**Okabe Nagamori (1568-1632)**

Okabe Nagamori served Tokugawa Ieyasu. In 1590 he received the fief of Matsufuji (Shimōsa - 12,000 koku) and in 1600 Yamazaki (Harima - 20,000 koku).

banner: black and white, with a small red flag  
sashimono: red disc on white  
standard: a white half streamer

**Ōkubo Tadakazu (1510-82)**

Tadakazu served the Tokugawa, and helped in the final defeat of the Imagawa in 1555.

**Ōkubo Tadayo (1531-93)**

Tadayo was the eldest son of Tadakazu, and fought alongside Tokugawa Ieyasu in all his campaigns. In 1590 he received the fief of Odawara (Sagami - 45,000 koku).

standard: a large black flag with the Ōkubo mon in white  
His personal sashimono was a three-dimensional golden butterfly like the Ikeda mon.

**Ōkubo Tadachika (1553-1628)**

Tadachika succeeded his father with a fief of 70,000 koku, but in 1614 he was accused of conspiring against the shogun and was dispossessed.

His mon was the same as his father's.  
banner: black with two Ōkubo mon in white

**Ōkubo Tadatsune (1580-1611)**

Tadatsune was the son of Tadachika. He served Tokugawa Hidetada in the expedition against Ueda at the time of Sekigahara.

banner: white ring on black  
lesser standard: red three-dimensional cone



*Oda Nobunaga, one of the greatest names in samurai history, in a portrait from the Ehon Toyotomi Kunkōki. He is dressed in an armour of yoroi style to show his status.*

great standard: black plume over two black flags

#### **Ōkubo Higozaemon (dates?)**

Higozaemon is famous for having fought a single combat with Gotō Mototsugu during the summer campaign of Ōsaka.

#### **Okudaira Sadayoshi (dates?)**

Okudaira Sadayoshi was originally a retainer of the Takeda and held Tsukude castle, but left in 1573 for the Tokugawa.

#### **Okudaira Sadamasa (later Nobumasa)**

(1555-1615)

Okudaira Sadamasa is famous for his stubborn defence of the castle of Nagashino in 1575, which led to the famous battle of Nagashino. In 1590 he received the fief of Miyazaki (Kōzuke - 30,000 koku)

For heraldry see below.

#### **Okudaira Iemasa (1577-1614)**

In 1601 Iemasa, son of Nobumasa, received the fief of Utsunomiya (Shimotsuke).

banner: white, red, white

great standard: a red uchiwa fan on white

sashimono: a red stripe on a white flag

lesser standard: silver gourd and umbrella

messengers' sashimono: white horō with broad red band top to bottom

#### **Ōmura Sumitada (Bartolomeo) (1532-87)**

Sumitada was the son of Arima Sumiaki, and was chosen as heir by the Ōmura family. He was baptised in 1562, becoming the first Christian daimyō. In 1580 he ceded Nagasaki to the Jesuits.

For heraldry see below.

#### **Ōmura Yoshiaki (Sanche) (1568-1615)**

The son of Sumitada, Yoshiaki sided against the Tokugawa in 1600 and was dispossessed. He spent the rest of his life in profligate pleasures.

For heraldry see below.

#### **Ōmura Suminobu (or Sumiyori) (Bartolomeo) (dates?)**

Suminobu was baptised like his father and grandfather, but towards the end of his life he became a persecutor of Christians, and supported the crushing of the Shimabara rebellion.

banner: three open black designs on white

great standard: a three-dimensional gold bell

sashimono: a smaller version of the banner

#### **Ōno Harunaga (d. 1615)**

Ōno Harunaga is famous for being one of the defenders of Ōsaka castle during the siege of 1614-15. He fought the battle of Kashii in 1615 and took a prominent part in the final struggle at Tennōji. Harunaga was killed in action.

His banner was white with a black hat design similar to the Yagyū mon.

#### **Ōno Harufusa**

The son of Harunaga, who also fought at Ōsaka and was killed there.

His banner was white with three black hatchets.

#### **Onoki Shigekatsu**

After the ruin of the Hatano family in 1579 Shigekatsu received the fief of Fukuchiyama (Tamba - 18,000 koku). He served in the Kyūshū campaign. Later he sided against Tokugawa Ieyasu and committed suicide in 1600.

#### **Ōta Dōkan Sukenaga (1432-86)**

In 1456 Sukenaga built the first castle at Edo, now the site of the Imperial Palace in Tokyo. He shaved his head in 1458 and took the name of Dōkan by which he is known to history. He was assassinated

in 1486. Dōkan appears in Japanese art because of an incident where he sheltered from the rain at a poor man's house. Instead of bringing him a straw raincoat, the maid brought him a flower on a fan. The significance lies in a complex pun expressed through a poem.

His mon was a flower similar to the Akechi mon.

#### **Ōta Suketaka (dates?)**

Suketaka was the grandson of Dōkan and served Hōjō Ujitsuna, keeping the castle of Iwabuchi (Musashi).

#### **Ōta Yasusuke (dates?)**

Yasusuke served Hōjō Ujiasu, but revolted against him and was defeated at the first battle of Kōnodai in 1538.

For heraldry see below.

#### **Ōta Sukemasa (dates?)**

Sukemasa was defeated at the second battle of Kōnodai in 1564.

#### **Ōta Sukemune [Harukiyo] (dates)**

The grandson of Yasusuke, Sukemune served the Tokugawa family. Little is known of his exploits. In 1638 he received the fief of Nishio (Mikawa) and then in 1645 Hamamatsu (Tōtōmi - 35,000 koku).

great standard: black flag with a gold lozenge sashimono: white flag with cut edge  
 lesser standard: black flag with a gold lozenge messengers' sashimono: red flag  
 ashigaru: black flag with white disc  
 banner: black and white  
 alternative great standard: three white  
 three-dimensional hemispheres of feathers

#### **Ōtani Yoshitsugu (1559-1600)**

Ōtani Yoshitsugu was a leper who was carried to the battlefield of Sekigahara in a palanquin. He was stationed on the flank of Kobayakawa Hideaki, and when the latter turned traitor, Ōtani received the brunt of his attack. Realising defeat was inevitable, he asked a faithful retainer to put an end to him.

His mon was crossed feathers within a ring.  
 standard: red fukinuki  
 banner: dark blue with three white discs

#### **Ōtomo Sōrin Yoshishige (1530-87)**

Under Ōtomo Yoshishige the Ōtomo became one of the most powerful daimyō families in Kyūshū. In 1551 Yoshishige defeated Kikuchi Yoshimune; and in 1556 he vanquished the warrior monks of Ōsa. In 1557 he defeated Akizuki Kiyotane and took his lands in Chikuzen province. After shaving his head and taking the name of Sōrin, he attacked the Mōri. In 1569 he successfully defended Tachibana castle against the Mōri. In 1578 Sōrin was baptised as a Christian, and spent the rest of his life battling against the Shimazu. He was soundly beaten by them in 1578 at the battle of Mimigawa (see the case study).

His mon was a floral design of bamboo shoots, combined with the cross on his banner, which was a hanging hata jirushi.

#### **Ōtomo Yoshimune (1558-1605)**

The son of Yoshishige, Yoshimune defeated Ryūzōji Masaie, but saw his domains reduced after Hideyoshi's Kyūshū campaign which was ostensibly conducted on behalf of the Ōtomo. He then served in Korea. When Konishi Yukinaga was besieged in P'yong-yang by a Chinese army Ōtomo Yoshimune failed to go to his aid and instead retreated. For this he was banished. In 1600 he sided with Ishida Mitsunari, and was exiled.

#### **Ōuchi Yoshioki (1477-1528)**

In 1508 Yoshioki restored the shogun Ashikaga Yoshitane after a fifteen-year absence. He built the castle of Saijō.

#### **Ōuchi Yoshitaka (1507-51)**

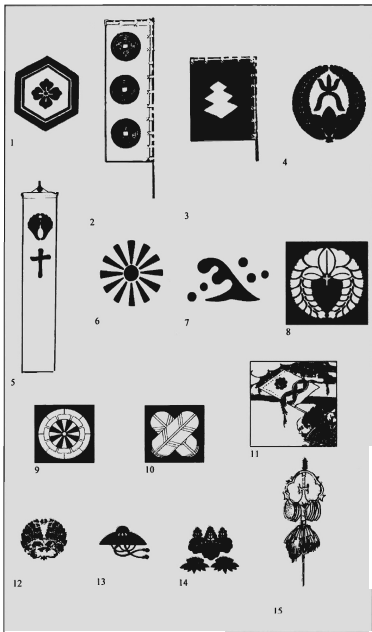
Yoshitaka first continued his father's military successes, but gradually slid into a life of pleasure. He was overthrown by Sue Harukata who pursued him and forced him to commit suicide.

His mon was an ornate lozenge-shaped design.  
 standard: white and blue hata jirushi with black mon and slogans  
 banner: white hata jirushi with black design

#### **Ōuchi Yoshinaga (+1557)**

The brother of Ōtomo Yoshishige, Yoshinaga was chosen to continue the family of Ōuchi. With the victory of Mōri Motonari at Miyajima, Yoshinaga's position became very uncertain. He was soon

1. The mon of Naoe Kanetsugu. 2. The three inscribed coins design used by Oda Nobunaga. Six plain coins with no inscription were used by the Sanada. 3. The mon of the Ogasawara as shown on one of their flags. 4. The mon of Ōkubo Tadayo. 5. The standard of hata-jirushi form of Ōtomo Sōrin. 6. The mon of Ryūzōji Takanobu. 7. The wave mon of Saitō Dōsan. 8. The wisteria mon of Gotō Mototsugu, used in a modified form (inside a ring) by Nagatsuka Masaie and Naitō Yukiyasu. 9. The wheel mon of Sakakibara Yasumasa. 10. Crossed feathers - a popular device that appears within a ring in the mon of Ōtani Yoshitsugu. 11. A drawing of Sakuma Nobumori wearing his sashimono. 12. The mon of Tsugaru Tamenobu. 13. The hat mon of the Yagyū. A very similar device was used by Ōno Harunaga. 14. The mon of Yamana Sōzen Mochitoyo. 15. The gigantic three dimensional shakujō standard of Tsugaru Nobuhira.



forced to commit suicide and the family became extinct.

#### **Oyamada Nobushige (dates?)**

Nobushige was one of the Takeda 'Twenty-Four Generals'. He fought at Kawanakajima, Mikata ga Hara and Nagashino. He held Iwadono castle, and eventually abandoned the cause of Takeda Katsuyori in 1582.

His banner was a white floral design on blue.

#### **Rokkaku Takayori (+1520)**

The Rokkaku family were a branch of the Sasaki, and the family members which follow are often called Sasaki. Takayori fought during the Ōnin War. In 1487 he was besieged in Kannonji castle by the shogun Ashikaga Yoshihisa. Yoshihisa died, but he was replaced by Yoshitane who defeated Rokkaku in 1492. On the death of the emperor Go-Tsuchimikado, Rokkaku Takayori paid for the funeral, and was allowed to use the imperial kiku-mon (chrysanthemum badge) as his own.

#### **Rokkaku Sadayori**

Sadayori, the son of Tadayori, fought beside Ōuchi Yoshioki at the battle of Funaokayama against Hosokawa Masakata (1511). In 1518 he besieged in vain Asai Sukemasa in Odani.

#### **Rokkaku Yoshikata (d. 1581)**

The son of Sadayori, Yoshikata helped Hosokawa Harumoto against Miyoshi Chōkei in 1549. In 1555 he besieged Chikusa castle, but Chikusa Tadaharu negotiated a peace. In 1558 he fought Matsunaga Hisahide at Nyoigamine (Yamashiro). He is best known for founding a martial arts school called the Sasaki-ryū.

#### **Rokkaku Yoshisuke (d. 1612)**

The son of Yoshikata, Yoshisuke was besieged in Namazue in 1572 by Shibata Katsuei acting on behalf of Oda Nobunaga. With his defeat the independent fortunes of the Rokkaku ended, and he later entered the service of Tokugawa Ieyasu.

#### **Rokugō Masanori (1567-1634)**

Rokugō Masanori was originally a retainer of the Onodera in Dewa province. In 1588 he was defeated along with Onodera Yoshimichi by Akita

Sansue. He later served Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu, the latter giving him the fief of Fuchu (Hitachi - 10,000 koku) in 1602.

#### **Ryūmonji Hyōgo no suke**

Ryūmonji was a warrior monk who fought for the Asakura at Anegawa.

standard: a large blue flag with inscriptions in red of 'Hachiman Dai Bosatsu', 'Amateratsu Kōtai Jingu'. 'Kasuga Daimyōjin'

#### **Ryūzōji Iekane (1454-1546)**

Iekane was originally the retainer of Shōni Masasuke, but when Masasuke was killed he raised fresh troops and defeated the Ōtomo in 1506.

#### **Ryūzōji Takanobu (1530-84)**

The grandson of Iekane, Takanobu established himself at Saga (Hizen). He fought against the Shimazu and the Arima and was defeated and killed at the battle of Okita Nawate in 1584.

#### **Ryūzōji Masaie (1556-1607)**

The son of Takanobu, Masaie served Toyotomi Hideyoshi in the Kyūshū campaign, and was therefore confirmed in his fief of Saga (350,000 koku).

#### **Sagara Nagatsune (dates?)**

Sagara Nagatsune served in the Korean invasion and supplied 800 men to Katō Kiyomasa's division in 1592. He was lord of Hitoyoshi in Higo province. He fought at the battle of Haejōngch'ang. In 1600 he sided against Tokugawa Ieyasu, and defended Ōgaki castle against the Eastern Army.

His mon was like the Maeda mon on a pentagon.

#### **Saigō Masakatsu (d. 1561)**

Masakatsu was originally a retainer of the Imagawa but joined Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1561. He died when under siege from Asahina Yasunaga.

#### **Saigō Iezane (+1597)**

Iezane served Tokugawa Ieyasu in all his campaigns, and received a small fief in Shimōsa.

#### **Saigō Masakazu (1593-1638)**

The son of Iezane, in 1615 he received the castle of Tōjō (Awa - 10,000 koku).



**Saigusa Moritomo (d. 1575)**

Saigusa Moritomo was one of the Takeda 'Twenty-Four Generals' and an ashigaru-taishō. He was killed at the battle of Nagashino in 1575.

His banners bore an abstract white pine tree on black.

**Saitō Dōsan Toshimasa (1494–1556)**

Former priest and oil merchant, Toshimasa took the name Nishimura Hidemoto, then murdered Nagai Nagahiro who had protected him. He made war against Oda Nobuhide and arranged the marriage of his daughter to Oda Nobunaga. When his adopted son challenged him, he went to war and was killed.

**Saitō Yoshitatsu (1527–61)**

Yoshitatsu was the son of Toki Yoshiyori and was adopted by Saitō Toshimasa. When his father planned to disinherit him, he went to war and defeated him. Yoshitatsu died of leprosy.

**Saitō Tatsuoki (dates?)**

The son of Yoshitatsu, Tatsuoki was defeated by Oda Nobunaga when he captured Inabayama from him in 1564, and his family disappeared from history. Inabayama became Nobunaga's stronghold of Gifu.

**Sakai Tadatsugu (1527–96)**

The Sakai family were divided into two main branches four generations before the names given here, making them both numerous and extensive. Sakai Tadatsugu, of the senior branch, was one of the most distinguished samurai to serve Tokugawa Ieyasu, fighting at Anegawa (1570) and Mikata ga Hara (1572). At Nagashino (1575) he commanded the Eastern Mikawa force. He held the strategic Yoshida castle (now Toyohashi), and defeated Ikeda Nobuteru at the battle of Nagakute in 1584.

For flags see below.

**Sakai Ietsugu (1564–1619)**

Ietsugu was the son of Sakai Tadatsugu, and succeeded his father in possession of Yoshida castle in 1578. In 1590 he received the fief of Usui (Kōzuke - 30,000 koku), in 1594 Takasaki (Kōzuke - 50,000 koku), and in 1616 Takata (Echigo - 100,000 koku).

banner: three red discs on white  
great standard: red disc on white  
sashimono: red disc on white  
messengers' sashimono: red disc on green  
lesser standard: black plume, gold fan and gold flag  
ashigaru: a smaller red and white flag

**Sakai Tadayo (dates?)**

With the grandsons of Sakai Ietsugu, the senior branch further subdivided into two. Sakai Tadayo used the flower mon of the Sakai as his main insignia, leaving the rising sun flags for the 'senior senior' branch.

banner: black wood sorrel mon on white  
lord's helmet: plain design  
great standard: white mon on dark blue  
lesser standard: a gold gohei surmounted by a black plume  
sashimono: gold mon on dark blue  
ashigaru: two white flags with black mon  
messengers' sashimono: black with a double gold wavy line

**Sakai Tadakatsu (1587–1622)**

Less is known of the junior branch of the Sakai than the senior. In 1634 Sakai Tadakatsu received the fief of Obama (Wakasa - 103,500 koku). The heraldry is very different.

banner: red  
great standard: black feathers  
ashigaru: two red flags  
sashimono: red with white design of the li well curb turned through 45 degrees.

**Sakai Yamashiro no kami (dates?)**

This name is included in *O Uma Jirushi*, but it is impossible to determine to which branch this character belonged. Presuming from the mon, he was a descendant of Tadayo.

great standard: black wood sorrel mon on white  
messengers' sashimono: three black flags with mon in white

**Sakakibara Yasumasa (1548–1606)**

Sakakibara Yasumasa was one of the most trusted retainers of the Tokugawa, fighting alongside Tokugawa Ieyasu at most major battles.

For heraldry see below, except for Yasumasa's personal standard, which was a black disc above a stylised character 'kin'.

#### **Sakakibara Yasukatsu (dates?)**

Yasukatsu was the son of Yasumasa. He fought at Ōsaka.

banner: white nine star design on blue  
 lesser standard: a gold rain hat  
 great standard: white star design on blue  
 sashimono: white disc on blue  
 ashigaru: three white stars on three blue flags

#### **Sakakibara Yorinao (dates?)**

Yorinao was Yasumasa's adopted son. *O Uma Jirushi* only records his standard, which was his father's black disc on white above a white plume.

#### **Sakuma Morishige (+1560)**

Morishige became the first Japanese general to be killed by gunfire when his castle of Marune fell to Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1560.

#### **Sakuma Nobumori (d. 1582)**

Sakuma Nobumori served Oda Nobunaga. In 1570 he defeated the Rokkaku. He served a long campaign against the Ikkō-ikki of the Ishiyama Hongan-ji, but because he failed to take it he retired to Kōyasan.

#### **Sakuma Morimasa (1554-83)**

Morimasa served Shibata Katsuei and was defeated by Toyotomi Hideyoshi at the battle of Shizugatake in 1583. He was later beheaded.

His banner bore three black mon on red.

#### **Sakurai Tadayori (dates?)**

Sakurai Tadayori served Tokugawa Ieyasu, and received the fief of Kanayama (Mino - 25,000 koku) in 1600.

#### **Sanada Yukitaka (+1574)**

Sanada Yukitaka was a daimyō in Shinano who submitted to Takeda Shingen after a long struggle and became one of the Takeda 'Twenty-Four Generals'. He died in 1574.

The rokusen mon, the six coins on the Sanada flag, represented the fee that has to be paid when one crosses the river of death to paradise. It was

symbolic of the Sanada family's determination to fight bravely without thinking of the cost. Yukitaka's banners bore this design in black on red of two rows of three coins.

#### **Sanada Nobutsuna (d. 1575)**

The son of Yukitaka, he was one of the Takeda 'Twenty-Four Generals', and was killed at Nagashino, where he and his brother lost 200 men to the gunfire.

Nobutsuna's banners bore the rokusen mon in black on green.

#### **Sanada Masateru (d. 1575)**

The younger brother of Yukitaka, he was killed beside him at Nagashino in 1575. He was not one of the Takeda 'Twenty-Four Generals'.

#### **Sanada Masayuki (1544-1608)**

Sanada Masayuki commanded Ueda castle. In 1600 he led a spirited defence of the castle which managed to prevent Tokugawa Hidetada from arriving at Sekigahara on time. This represented a considerable split in the family, because his son Nobuyuki had joined the Tokugawa faction.

His mon was a silver ladder.

#### **Sanada Nobuyuki (1566-1658)**

Nobuyuki was originally a hostage of the Tokugawa, but married Honda Tadakatsu's daughter, and in 1600 sided fully with the Tokugawa cause. In 1622 he received the fief of Matsushiro (Shinano - 100,000 koku).

banner: red band on white  
 great standard: black with six white coin designs  
 sashimono: red band on white  
 lesser standard: gold fan  
 messengers' sashimono: horō, white, red, white  
 ashigaru: two white flags with red band

#### **Sanada Yukimura (1570-1615)**

Yukimura, brother of Nobuyuki, is celebrated as the commander of the garrison during the siege of Ōsaka castle in 1614-15. He was killed during the battle of Tennōji, with which the siege concluded.

standard: red tassels above gold tassels  
 banner: a plain red flag with a small flag attached at the top.

**Sanada Daisuke (d. 1615)**

Daisuke was the illegitimate son of Sanada Yukimura and fought beside him at Ōsaka. Towards the end of the battle of Tennōji he withdrew to the castle to urge Toyotomi Hideyori to come out, but when Hideyori refused, Daisuke chose to remain with him and died fighting.

**Sasa Narimasa (dates?)**

Sasa Narimasa served Oda Nobunaga and received the fief of Fuchu (Etchū - 100,000 koku). He took the part of Oda Nobuo against Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and was defeated by Maeda Toshiie. He was ordered to commit suicide in 1588.

His standard was a two-dimensional gold circle with two sections cut out of the sides.

Other sources give his sashimono as a little black devil on white, below a blue band.

**Sasaki, see Rokkaku****Satake Yoshishige (1547-1612)**

Satake Yoshishige fought Ashina Moriujū in 1576, and then led several campaigns against the Hōjō and the Date, which established him as a force to be reckoned with in the north central area of Japan.

**Satake Yoshinobu (1570-1633)**

Yoshinobu inherited his father's vast domains. He fought for Toyotomi Hideyoshi against the Hōjō, and received the fief worth 800,000 koku. At the time of Sekigahara he was effectively neutral, but was transferred to Akita (Dewa - 205,000 koku). He fought for the Tokugawa at Ōsaka, and played a notable part in the battle of Imafuku, during the winter campaign.

banner: white with a red fan bearing a white disc

sashimono: white with the fan

ashigaru: plain black flag

messengers' sashimono: a gold hanging fan

**Satomi Yoshitaka (1512-74)**

Yoshitaka succeeded his father Sanetaka who had been assassinated by his nephew Satomi Yoshitoyo in 1533. He besieged Yoshitoyo in his castle of Inamura and had him put to death. In 1538 Yoshitaka was defeated at the first battle of Kōnodai by Hōjō Ujitsuna.

**Satomi Yoshihiro (d. 1578)**

Following in his father's footsteps, Yoshihiro was defeated at the second battle of Kōnodai in 1564 by Hōjō Ujiyasu.

**Satomi Yoshiyori (1555-86)**

Yoshiyori continued the war against the Hōjō.

**Satomi Yoshiyasu (1573-1603)**

Yoshiyasu fought for Toyotomi Hideyoshi in the siege of Odawara in 1590, but his lands were reduced to Awa province (92,000 koku).

**Satomi Tadayoshi (+1622)**

Tadayoshi was implicated in the conspiracy of Ōkubo against the Tokugawa and was dispossessed.

**Sengoku Hidehisa (1551-1614)**

Sengoku Hidehisa served Toyotomi Hideyoshi. He conquered the island of Awaji, but was defeated on Shikoku, and later in Kyūshū. In 1590 he received the fief of Komoro (Shinano - 50,000 koku).

banner: black and white, with a single coin design

great standard: the coin design on white

sashimono: red square on white

messengers' sashimono: eight black and white bands

lesser standard: white ring with white tassels

Other sources have Hidehisa's standard as a white flag with the character 'mu' (nothingness) on it.

**Sengoku Tadamasu (dates?)**

Tadamasu was the son of Hidehisa. In 1622 he was transferred to Ueda (Shinano - 60,000 koku).

**Shiba Yoshitoshi (1430-90)**

Yoshitoshi was adopted into the Shiba family and took a prominent part in the Ōnin War, but his family suffered in wars against the Oda.

**Shiba Yoshisato (+1521)**

Yoshisato was the grandson of Yoshikado, whose succession had been supplanted.

**Shiba Yoshimune (+1554)**

Shiba Yoshimune was defeated by Oda Nobutomo in 1554 and killed himself.

**Shiba Yoshikane (+1572)**

The son of Yoshimune, and another victim of the Oda.

**Shibata Hironaga (dates?)**

This Shibata may have been related to the better-known Shibata below, but the characters of the name Shibata are written differently. He was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals'. He fought in the vanguard at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561.

His banner was a black bird design on white.

**Shibata Naganori (dates?)**

Naganori's relationship to the above Shibata is unknown, but he is likely to be his father or his son. He was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals'. He fought on the right flank at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561.

His banner was a black bird design on white.

**Shibata Katsuie (1530-83)**

Shibata Katsuie was the loyal follower of Oda Nobunaga. In 1570 he was entrusted with the defence of the castle of Chōkōji. In a dramatic gesture he smashed the water storage vessels and led a charge against the besiegers, which resulted in a victory. He stayed loyal to the Oda family after the Toyotomi takeover, but his army under Sakuma was defeated at Shizugatake. Shibata withdrew to his castle of Kita no shō and killed himself.

His standard was a gold gohei, while his banners bore his mon of a bird design.

**Shibata Katsutoyo (d. 1583)**

Katsutoyo was the adopted son of Shibata Katsuie and kept the castle of Nagahama.

**Shibata Katsumasa (1557-83)**

The brother of Sakuma Morimasa, Katsumasa was adopted by Katsuie and died at the battle of Shizugatake in 1583.

**Shibata Katsuhisa (1568-83)**

Katsuhisa was the nephew of Katsuie and was

adopted by him. After Shizugatake he was killed in the pursuit.

**Shidara Shigetsugu (d. 1575)**

During the siege of Nagashino in 1575 there occurred the death from illness of the veteran warrior Shidara Uta no sake Shigetsugu, aged 79. He had served Tokugawa Ieyasu's father, and his experience of warfare had proved invaluable. He may have been the same person as Shidara Sadamichi, whose flag appears on the Anegawa screen.

**Shima Sakon (dates?)**

Sakon was a noted strategist who fought at Sekigahara.

**Shimazu Takahisa (1514-71)**

The Shimazu's territory was the far south of Kyūshū. In 1542 Takahisa's lands became the first to welcome Europeans. Takahisa has the distinction of being the first daimyō to use European firearms in warfare. This was in 1549, in his attack on the castle of Kajiki in Ōsumi province.

**Shimazu Yoshihisa (1533-1611)**

Yoshihisa was the eldest son of Takahisa, and his life covers the rise and decline of the Shimazu. In 1573 he defeated Itō Suketaka, and later fought the Ōtomo and the Ryūzōji, winning the battles of Mimigawa and Okita Nawate, and leading his family to dominance on Kyūshū. The family were finally defeated in the invasion of Kyūshū by Toyotomi Hideyoshi. They opposed Tokugawa Ieyasu at Sekigahara, but had submitted by the time of Ōsaka.

**Shimazu Yoshihiro (1535-1619)**

Second son of Takahisa, Yoshihiro helped his brothers in their campaigns. Following their submission to Hideyoshi, Yoshihiro served in Korea and distinguished himself at the battle of Sach'ōn, and then fought against Tokugawa Ieyasu at Sekigahara.

standard: red fukinuki with short streamers  
banner: black with 'ju' character in white

**Shimazu Iehisa (d. 1587)**

Third of the three Shimazu brothers, he tried to withstand Toyotomi Hideyoshi's invasion of their

territories, with some initial success, but on the day of his surrender he died from the effects of poison.

The Shimazu mon was a black cross within a ring, which appeared on all their flags and insignia.

#### **Shimazu (Matsudaira) Iehisa Tadatsune (1576-1638)**

This son of Yoshihiro changed his given name to that of his illustrious uncle in 1602, when he also became a Matsudaira. In 1609 he annexed the Ryūkyū islands, after which they had to pay an annual tribute to the Shimazu.

banner: black and white diagonally with the Shimazu mon in the top half  
sashimono: a gold fan  
great standard: black feather plume

#### **Shimazu Norihisa (dates?)**

This Shimazu was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals'. He fought in the front rank at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561.

His banner was the Shimazu mon in black on white.

#### **Shimizu Muneharu (d. 1582)**

Muneharu was the keeper of Takamatsu castle in 1582. His suicide was a condition of its surrender, so he committed hara-kiri on a boat on the artificial lake with which Hideyoshi had flooded the castle.

#### **Shimonojō Saneyori (dates?)**

Shimonojō Saneyori was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals'. He fought in the third rank at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561.

His banner was a white ring on red.

#### **Shimura Takaharu (dates?)**

This samurai fought for the Mogami at the battle of Hasedo in 1600, and was the keeper of Hasedo castle.

banner: two white birds like the Shibata device on red

#### **Shinjō Naoyori (1538-1612)**

At Sekigahara, Naoyori joined the Western Army and was dispossessed. When pardoned he received the fief of Aso (Hitachi - 10,000 koku).

banner: black with white diagonal stripes  
messengers' sashimono: horō with red and black sections  
great standard: three gold rain hats and a white plume  
ashigaru: two flags like the banner  
sashimono: two black flags with gold discs

#### **Shōni Sukemoto (1497-1532)**

This Kyūshū family fought the Ōuchi. Sukemoto contracted a marriage alliance with Ōtomo Masachika, and with his help defeated the Ōuchi.

#### **Shōni Tokinao (dates?)**

The son of Sukemoto, Tokinao was overthrown by his vassal Ryūzōji Takanobu in 1554. Defeated again in 1556, he committed suicide and the Shōni family came to an end.

#### **Sō Yoshitomo (1568-1615)**

The Sō were based on the strategic island of Tsushima, between Japan and Korea, and came into conflict with the Matsuura family. Sō Yoshitomo fought in Korea and attacked Pusan in the first engagement of the war. In 1600 he sided with Tokugawa Ieyasu, but at the time of Sekigahara he did not leave Tsushima.

banner: two thin white stripes at the top of a red flag  
standard: a gold ball with a plume  
messengers' sashimono: a gold fan above a white horō

#### **Suda Chikamitsu (dates?)**

Suda Chikamitsu was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals', who fought in the third rank at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561.

His banner bore a gold swastika on dark blue.

#### **Sue Harukata (d. 1555)**

Sue Harukata deposed his overlord Ōuchi Yoshitaka, and was then opposed by his former comrade in arms, Mōri Motonari, who defeated him at the battle of Miyajima in 1555.

#### **Suganuma Sadamitsu (1542-1604)**

Sadamitsu served the Imagawa and then the Tokugawa. In 1601 he received the fief of Nagashima (Ise - 20,000 koku).

**Suganuma Sadamichi (dates?)**

Sadamichi fought at Anegawa. He may have been the same person as the above.

**Sugihara Nagafusa (dates?)**

Nagafusa fought at Sekigahara for the Western Army. His family became extinct in 1653.

**Suibara Takaie (dates?)**

Suibara Takaie was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals'. He fought in the second rank at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561. His banner was a white crescent moon on red.

**Susukida Kanesuke (d. 1615)**

Susukida Kanesuke disgraced himself during the summer campaign of Ōsaka by being found drunk in a brothel, as a result of which his fortress fell to the Tokugawa. He later redeemed himself by his brave conduct at Dōmyōji, where he was killed.

**Suwa Yorishige (d. 1542)**

Suwa Yorishige fought against Takeda Shingen. After making peace, he went to the Takeda capital and was treacherously murdered.

**Suwa Yoritada (1536–1606)**

Yoritada served Tokugawa Ieyasu, who in 1592 gave him the fief of Sōsha (Kōzuke - 15,000 koku).

**Suzuki Shigehide (dates?)**

Shigehide served Hideyoshi as a gunnery expert, fighting at Komaki and Nagakute.

**Tachibana Muneshige (1567–1642)**

In 1587 Tachibana Muneshige defeated the Shimazu, and received the fief of Yanagawa (Chikugo - 120,000 koku). He fought in Korea, distinguishing himself particularly well at the siege of Ulsan. He sided against Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1600 and besieged Ōtsu castle. He was subsequently dispossessed, but returned to favour and in 1611 received the fief of Tanakura (Mutsu - 20,000 koku). He later helped in the Shimabara campaign.

standard: white tassels above red tassels  
 banner: black and white with the Tachibana mon  
 sashimono: six red flags

**Taira Masakado (+940)**

Taira Masakado led one of the earliest revolts of samurai history and was defeated and killed at Kojima (940)

**Taira Tadamori (1096–1153)**

Tadamori was one of the first Taira to enjoy high office. He is famous for having arrested an intruder to the palace, and was presented with a concubine who later gave birth to the famous Kiyomori.

**Taira Kiyomori (1118–81)**

Kiyomori was the most celebrated warrior and statesman of the Taira who opposed the rise of the Minamoto.

**Taira Norimori (1129–85)**

The brother of Kiyomori, Norimori defeated Minamoto Yukiie at Muroyama, and committed suicide at Dan no Ura.

**Taira Tadanori (1144–84)**

This brother of Kiyomori was killed at Ichinotani

**Taira Moritoshi (+1184)**

Moritoshi was another victim of Ichinotani.

**Taira Kagekiyo (dates?)**

Kagekiyo was adopted from the Fujiwara by the Taira and was captured at Dan no Ura.

**Taira Shigemori (1138–79)**

Eldest son of Kiyomori, Shigemori fought at the Hōgen and Heiji incidents.

**Taira Munemori (1147–85)**

The heir of Kiyomori, Munemori took part in all the major conflicts of the Gempei Wars. He was captured at Dan no Ura and executed.

**Taira Tomomori (1152–85)**

The victor of the first battle of Uji (1180), Tomomori, son of Kiyomori, fought on against the Minamoto, and committed a dramatic act of suicide at Dan no Ura by jumping into the sea tied to an anchor.

**Taira Shigehira (1158–85)**

Son of Kiyomori, Shigehira ordered the burning of

Nara. He was captured at Ichinotani in 1184 and beheaded.

#### **Taira Atsumori (1169-84)**

The death of the young Atsumori at Ichinotani in 1184 is one of the most celebrated acts of single combat in samurai history.

#### **Taira Noritsune (1160-85)**

Noritsune fought at Mizushima, Ichinotani and Dan no Ura, where he drowned himself holding a Minamoto soldier under each arm.

#### **Taira Koremori (dates?)**

Defeated at Fujigawa 'the battle that never was', Koremori fled from Yashima (1184) and became a monk.

#### **Takahashi Jōun Shigetane (1544-86)**

In 1586 Shigetane was besieged in his castle of Iwaya by Shimazu Yoshihisa, and committed suicide.

#### **Takahashi Mototane (dates?)**

The adopted son of Shigetane, he received Miyazaki (Hyūga - 50,000 koku) from Hideyoshi, and served in Korea. At the time of Sekigahara he occupied Ōgaki castle against Tokugawa Ieyasu.

#### **Takanashi Masayori (dates?)**

Takanashi Masayori was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals'.

His banner bore a chequerboard design within a circle.

#### **Takayama Hida no kami Darie (+1596)**

Darie (his baptismal name) was a fervent Christian who kept Takatsuki castle and became a vassal of Araki Muneshige.

#### **Takayama Ukon Nagafusa (1553-1615)**

The son of the above, Takayama Ukon was a celebrated Christian samurai. He fought at Yamazaki and Shizugatake for Hideyoshi, and also took part in the Shikoku and Kyūshū campaigns. He was exiled to Manila in 1615 on account of his Christian beliefs, and died there shortly after his arrival.

standard: gold fan

banner: eight white and red bands

#### **Takeda Nobutora (1493-1573)**

In 1536 Nobutora attacked Hiraga Genshin at Un no Kuchi, but had to retreat. His young son Harunobu, then aged fifteen, marched back and took the castle. In spite of this, Nobutora planned to disinherit Harunobu in favour of his younger brother, so Harunobu revolted and sent his father into exile.

#### **Takeda (Harunobu) Shingen (1521-73)**

The eldest son of Nobutora, Takeda Shingen grew to be the exemplar of the successful Sengoku daimyō, ruling his provinces well, and served loyally in war by his 'Twenty-Four Generals'. His great rival was Uesugi Kenshin, whom he fought on five occasions at Kawanakajima, the greatest contest being the fourth battle there in 1561. He is also remembered for his victory of Shiojiritoge, and his indecisive victory at Mikata ga Hara in 1572. He was killed by a sniper's bullet at Noda castle in 1573.

#### **Takeda Katsuyori (1546-82)**

Katsuyori inherited his father's domains and his fierce reputation. Unfortunately for Katsuyori, he was unable to sustain the Takeda dominance, failing to capture Nagashino castle in 1575, and then being heavily defeated at the battle of Nagashino. It is, however, to Katsuyori's credit that he managed to hold out against his enemies until 1582, when he was defeated and committed suicide at the battle of Temmokuzan.

His mon was similar to the straight-edged

Takeda mon.

His banners bore the character 'tai' (great) in black on white and in white on black.

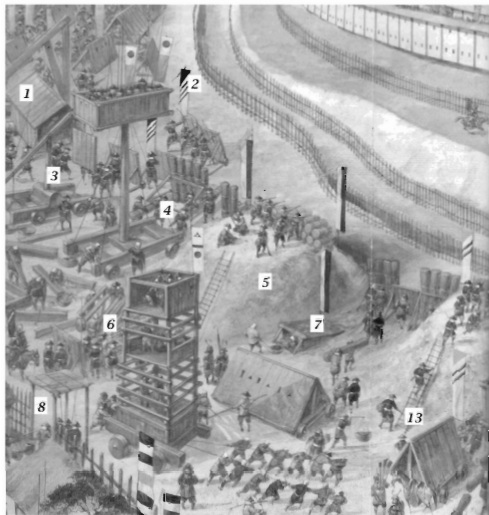
#### **Takeda Nobushige (d. 1561)**

Takeda Nobushige was the younger brother of Takeda Shingen and was one of the Takeda 'Twenty-Four Generals'. He was killed at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561 and is buried on the battlefield.

His banners bore a white disc on black.

#### **Takeda Nobukado**

Nobukado was another brother of Takeda Shingen and was one of the Takeda 'Twenty-Four Generals'. He was killed in 1575.



His flags bore the Takeda mon in white on blue.

#### **Takemata Hirotsumi (dates?)**

Takemata Hirotsumi was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals'. He fought in the vanguard at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561 and was one of the first Uesugi samurai to make contact with the Takeda. The force of the collision

knocked him clean off his horse.

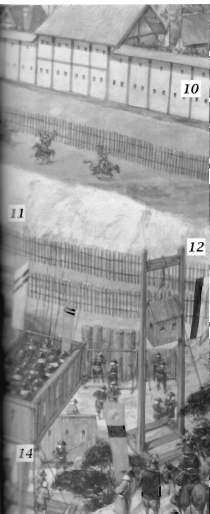
His banner was a black ring on white.

#### **Takenaka Shigetsumi (+1634)**

Shigetsumi was governor of Nagasaki, but was dispossessed owing to his excesses.

standard: white ball above gold fan above gold umbrella





A reconstruction by artist Richard Hook of Japanese siege weapons and techniques before the time when siege cannon were widely used. The picture is based on the author's current research work with the Royal Armouries, which has shown that many Japanese siege engines were based on well-documented Chinese originals. 1. A kikkōsha (tortoise wagon), which was used to provide cover from falling missiles as stones were prised out of walls. Tortoise wagons proved decisive at the second siege of Chinju. 2. Archers firing from behind small kuruma date, wooden shields fitted with wheels. 3. A komaku, a large wooden shield suspended from a moveable arm on a cart, so that the shield may be raised, lowered or turned to cover an area of activity, such as filling in a moat. 4. Bundles of green bamboo, which have high absorbency properties, fitted to a wheeled framework. 5. Arquebusiers fire from behind a defence of straw rice bales filled with soil or sand. Their mound is reached by bamboo ladders, which could also be used for scaling the ramparts. 6. A kuruma seirō, a siege tower on wheels, pulled along by ropes. There is a long Japanese tradition of using similar wagons in festivals, as seen today in Takayama and at the Gion Festival in Kyōto. 7. The entrance to a mine. Mining techniques included weakening towers, as at Nagashino, and providing surprise entry to castles, as at Itami. In front of the mine entrance sits a stronger version of the kuruma date, with protection to front and rear. 8. Foot soldiers pass through the gate of the siege lines and back to the mine with emptied soil carriers. 9. Scouts from within the garrison sally out to taunt the besiegers. 10. The simple wood and plaster walls of the castle, with an upper and lower platform for firing from. 11. A loose wooden palisade. 12. A bōsha seirō, a small siege tower on wheels, hauled up by ropes. This was primarily used for observation. 13. A smaller version of a tortoise wagon, known to the Chinese as a 'wooden donkey'. 14. A most unlikely looking version of a siege tower which appears in several illustrations. Its purpose was probably to provide an elevated firing platform, because any movement would tend to make it unstable. (Reproduced by courtesy of Military Illustrated).

#### **Takenotoshi Masanobu (dates?)**

Masanobu served Tokugawa Ieyasu, and in 1619 received the fief of Imao (Mino - 30,000 koku).

#### **Takigawa Kazumasu (dates?)**

Kazumasu served Oda Nobunaga with great loyalty. He fought at Anegawa, and was prominent in the campaigns against the Ikkō-ikki of

Nagashima. He besieged Araki Muneshige at Itami in 1579, and then fought against Takeda Katsuyori. When Nobunaga was murdered, he opposed Hideyoshi, and was defeated along with his allies.

His standard was three red balls, one above each other.

**Tanaka Yoshimasa (+1609)**

Yoshimasa served Nobunaga, Hideyoshi and Ieyasu, receiving from the last the fief of Kurume (Chikugo - 320,000 koku).

**Terazawa Hirotaka (Masanari) (1563-1633)**

Hirotaka served Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and after the Kyūshū campaign he received the fief of Karatsu (Hizen - 80,000 koku). He was governor of Nagasaki and took part in the Korean War. In 1600 he fought for the Tokugawa and received the fief of the Amakusa islands (120,000 koku).

- banner: white with three black discs
- lesser standard: double white flag with cut edges
- messengers' sashimono: red horō with black disc
- sashimono: two small flags, white and black

**Terazawa Katataka (1609-47)**

The son of Hirotaka, Katataka was a cruel daimyō who brought about the local manifestation of the Shimabara rebellion in his domains. He was dispossessed and went mad, committing suicide in 1638.

**Toda Tōgorō (dates?)**

Toda Tōgorō, who was under the command of Matsudaira Matashichirō during the siege of Nagashino in 1575, was devoted to the worship of Hachiman, the Shintō god of war. One morning he descended the path from the castle gate to the river, where he performed cold water ablutions and prayed to Hachiman for good fortune in war. He was spotted by an enemy general, who sent a samurai down to the river to dispatch him, but the Takeda warrior missed his footing and fell into the water. Taking this as a sign of the god's goodwill, Tōgorō tackled the man and cut off his head, which he took back as a trophy, and dedicated, appropriately enough, to Hachiman.

**Toda (Matsudaira) Yasunaga (1562-1632)**

The Toda were a multi-branched family who served the Tokugawa. Yasunaga's branch, the senior one, were allowed to use the name of Matsudaira.

**Toda Tadatsugu (1532-98)**

The junior branch, in the person of Tadatsugu,

received the fief of Shimoda (Izu 5,000 koku) in 1590.

**Toda Takatsugu (1565-1615)**

Takatsugu was the son of Tadatsugu. He owned Tawara (Mikawa - 10,000 koku).

**Toda Kazuaki (1542-1604)**

Kazuaki was a retainer of Tokugawa Ieyasu in a further branch of the Toda family. In 1601 he received the fief of Zeze (Ōmi - 30,000 koku).

For heraldry see below.

**Toda Ujikane (dates?)**

Ujikane was the son of Kazuaki.

- banner: white nine stars on red
- lesser standard: two white plumes above a black one
- great standard: white nine stars on red sashimono: plain red flag
- messengers' sashimono: silver crescent
- ashigaru: two flags, three white discs on red

**Tōdō Takatora (1556-1630)**

Tōdō Takatora served Oda Nobunaga, then Toyotomi Hideyoshi. He commanded part of the Japanese fleet during the invasion of Korea. In 1594 he received the fief of Osu (Iyo - 80,000 koku). After Sekigahara he was transferred to Uwajima (Iyo - 200,000 koku), then in 1608 to Tsu (Ise - 323,000 koku). He took a prominent part in the summer campaign of Ōsaka.

- banner: three white discs on black
- sashimono: an unusual three-dimensional gold gourd
- great standard: a red fukinuki with a black plume
- lord's helmet: black with gold horns and a red frontlet
- messengers' sashimono: an elaborate red and black horō with two black plumes
- lesser standard: a gold umbrella with a red fringe
- alternative messengers' sashimono: a red and black horō with gold sunburst

**Tōdō Takanori (d. 1615)**

The son of Takatora, Takanori was killed at the battle of Yao.

**Todō Ujikatsu (d. 1615)**

Another son of Takatora who was also killed at Yao.

**Togawa Hideyasu (+1598)**

Hideyasu was a retainer of Ukita Hideie, and had a revenue of 25,000 koku.

**Togawa Satoyasu (1569–1627)**

Satoyasu was the son of Hideyasu who subsequently served Tokugawa Ieyasu. In 1600 Satoyasu received the fief of Niwase (Bitchū – 30,000 koku).

banner: three white six star designs on black sashimono: black and white, eight bands  
bottom to top  
standard: black feather-covered rain hat (?)

**Tokugawa Nobutada (1489–1531)**

Tokugawa Nobutada held the castle of Anjō in Mikawa and was frequently at war with his neighbours.

**Tokugawa Kiyoyasu (1511–36)**

This son of Nobutada was murdered by one of his vassals, Abe Masatoyo.

**Tokugawa Hirotada (1526–49)**

The father of the famous Ieyasu, Hirotada was at war with Oda Nobuhide, and tried to make an alliance with Imagawa Yoshimoto by sending his son Ieyasu as a hostage, but he was intercepted by his enemies. Hirotada beat Nobuhide in battle, but died soon afterwards.

**Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542–1616)**

Along with Toyotomi Hideyoshi, Tokugawa Ieyasu is perhaps the most important and influential of all the names catalogued here. He had an unpromising childhood as hostage of the Imagawa, for whom he fought as a young man against Oda Nobunaga. His alliance with Oda Nobunaga held firm, and Ieyasu fought loyally at Azukizaka (1564), Ane-gawa (1570), Mikata ga Hara (1572) and Nagashino (1575). The death of Nobunaga placed him against Toyotomi Hideyoshi, but through adroit political skills Ieyasu avoided the fate of other rivals, and their major conflict at Nagakute (1584) ended in stalemate. Following the defeat of the Hōjō, Ieyasu

received their territories. He avoided service in Korea, leaving him in a strong position when Hideyoshi died. He challenged the Toyotomi family for the succession against a powerful alliance under Ishida Mitsunari, whom he defeated at the epic battle of Sekigahara (1600). He became shogun in 1603, and finally vanquished the Toyotomi with the long and bitter siege of Ōsaka castle in 1614–15. He died peacefully in bed in 1616, having established a dynasty that would last for two and a half centuries.

*O Uma Jirushi* gives his heraldry as follows:  
banner: plain white, with a small flag with the Tokugawa mon  
great standard: a large gold fan  
lesser standard: a silver crescent  
messengers' sashimono: the character 'go' (five) on various coloured backgrounds  
sashimono: a round gold fan with black stripes  
Ieyasu also used a flag bearing a motto of the Jōdo sect, 'Renounce this filthy world and attain the Pure Land'.

Other sources give his samurai's sashimono as a white flag bearing a gold disc. It is therefore likely that the gold fan sashimono mentioned above may have been for his personal bodyguard, which is how it appears on the Ōsaka screen.

**Tokugawa Nobuyasu (1559–79)**

The eldest son of Ieyasu, Nobuyasu was accused of treason and invited to commit suicide at the age of 21.

**Tokugawa Hideyasu (1574–1607)**

For Hideyasu, the second son of Ieyasu, see Matsudaira (Yūki).

**Tokugawa Hidetada (1579–1632)**

The third son of Tokugawa Ieyasu, and the second Tokugawa shogun, Hirotada laid siege to Ueda castle and missed Sekigahara, but redeemed himself at Ōsaka. His heraldry from the time when he fought beside his father was white flags with three mon.

**Tokugawa Tadayoshi (1580–1607)**

The fourth son of Ieyasu, Tadayoshi was adopted by Matsudaira Ietada and was first called Tadayasu. See Matsudaira (Tokugawa) for details of his heraldry.

**Tokugawa Nobuyoshi (1583–1603)**

Nobuyoshi was the fifth son of Ieyasu, and was chosen to represent the Takeda family which had become extinct. He received the fief of Sakura (Shimōsa - 40,000 koku) in 1594, but died young.

**Tokugawa Tadateru (1593–1683)**

Sixth son of Ieyasu, he was chosen as heir to Matsudaira (Nagasawa) Yasutada and received Sakura (Shinano - 180,000 koku). He was tardy in joining the Ōsaka forces, and was afterwards dispossessed.

**Tokugawa (Owari) Yoshinao (1600–50)**

Yoshinao was the seventh son of Ieyasu, and received his first taste of combat at Ōsaka. His fiefs were as follows: 1603, Fuchu (250,000 koku), 1607, Kiyosu (550,000), 1610, Nagoya castle (619,500).

banner: white, black upper quarter with the Tokugawa mon in white  
 lesser standard: gold umbrella with a sword blade  
 messengers' sashimono: plain gold flag  
 great standard: Tokugawa mon in white on red  
 sashimono: five gold sunburst rays  
 lord's helmet: gold disc above green peak

**Tokugawa (Kii) Yorinobu (1602–71)**

He was the eighth son of Ieyasu. His fiefs were: 1603, Mito (250,000 koku); 1606, Fuchu (250,000 koku); 1609, Wakayama (550,000).

banner: Tokugawa mon black and white  
 great standard: black with a white mon  
 lesser standard: gold gohei  
 sashimono: gold disc on black  
 messengers' sashimono: the same, also a horō with a gold disc

**Tokugawa Yorifusa (1603–61)**

The ninth son of Ieyasu, who owned in 1606 Shimotsuma (100,000 koku), and in 1609 Mito (350,000).

banner: gold open square on thirteen black and white stripes  
 great standard: white feather ball  
 messengers' sashimono: blue feathers above red horō  
 lord's helmet: plain

sashimono: gold open square on red  
 lesser standard: black rain hat  
 alternative messengers' sashimono: a silver crescent

**Tomita Nobuhiro (dates?)**

Nobuhiro served Hideyoshi and in 1586 received Anotsu (Ise - 100,000 koku).

**Tomita Tomonobu (dates?)**

The son of Nobuhiro, Tomonobu defended his castle against the Mōri family, and was rewarded by Tokugawa Ieyasu with the fief of Uwajima (Iyo - 120,000 koku) in 1608.

**Torii Sune'emon (d. 1575)**

The archetype of samurai bravery, Torii Sune'emon was a 34-year-old samurai of Mikawa province and a retainer of Okudaira Sadamasa who was among the garrison at the siege of Nagashino castle in 1575. His bravery was renowned, and he was also very familiar with the territory, so he volunteered for the suicidal task of escaping from the castle and making his way to Okazaki to request help from Tokugawa Ieyasu. On his return, Torii Sune'emon was caught and was brought before Takeda Katsuyori, who offered him service in the Takeda army. Torii Sune'emon apparently agreed, but the suspicious Katsuyori insisted that he demonstrate this change of allegiance by addressing the garrison and telling them that no force was on its way, so that surrender was the only course of action. Some accounts say he was tied to a cross, others that he merely stood on the cliff edge to bellow out his message, but it was by crucifixion that he met his end, because instead of urging the defenders to surrender, he shouted to them to stand fast, as help was indeed on its way. One account speaks of spears being thrust into his body as he uttered these words, others of his execution later. One retainer of the Takeda, Ochiai Michihisa, was so impressed that he had a flag painted on which was an image of Torii Sune'emon, tied to the cross.

**Torii Mototada (1539–1600)**

In 1590 this loyal servant of the Tokugawa received the fief of Yahagi (Shimosa - 40,000)

koku). He is celebrated for his spirited defence of the castle of Fushimi against Ishida Mitsunari. When it fell, Torii Mototada committed suicide.

For heraldry see below.

#### **Torii Tadamasa (1567–1628)**

In recognition of his family's bravery, Tadamasa received the fief of Iwakidaira (Mutsu - 100,000 koku) in 1606, and went to Yamagata (Dewa - 260,000 koku) in 1622.

banner: mon of a 'torii' gate in gold on dark blue  
 lord's helmet: black lacquer  
 great standard: gold torii on dark blue  
 sashimono: the same  
 lesser standard: a gold lantern  
 messengers' sashimono: a black torii on white

#### **Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536–98)**

Although born of humble origins, Toyotomi Hideyoshi rose to be the first of the daimyō to rule the whole of Japan. He first served Oda Nobunaga, fighting beside his master at all of Nobunaga's battles. The opportunity for Hideyoshi came with Nobunaga's death. He avenged the assassination by marching rapidly to Kyōto and defeating the army of Akechi Mitsuhide at the decisive battle of Yamazaki (1582). He soon fell out with the old Oda supporters, whom he defeated one by one, culminating in the battle of Shizugatake in 1583. Only Tokugawa Ieyasu now opposed him in central Japan. A battle between the two, at Nagakute (1584) was indecisive, and a truce was called. In turn, Toyotomi Hideyoshi pacified Shikoku and Kyūshū, and defeated the mighty Hōjō at Odawara in 1590. He over-reached himself only with the invasion of Korea in 1592, which ended in failure. He died in 1598.

His personal heraldry dates from 1573, following the defeat of the Asai family, when Hideyoshi achieved a certain degree of independence from Oda Nobunaga by being granted in fief the castle of Nagahama. The details of his troops and their heraldry are interesting in providing a 'snapshot' of the future Taikō on one stage of his rise to glory. Unfortunately there are no numbers or weaponry given.

His *uma-jirushi* was a single golden gourd. Takahashi Ken'ichi, in his book *Hata Sashimono*,

devotes several pages to a discussion of whether or not Hideyoshi ever really did adopt the famous 'thousand gourd standard', and notes that as late as 1575 only one gourd is to be seen. This is on the famous painted screen of the battle of Nagashino.

His *fudai-shū* included a seven-man contingent who formed Hideyoshi's personal bodyguard known as the 'yellow-horō-shū'. (Compare Nobunaga's use of black and red horō in his army.) Their numbers were later raised to 22. Hideyoshi's messengers, 29 in all, were distinguished by an identical gold-coloured flag.

standard: a golden gourd above a gold flag. He is supposed to have added a gourd for every victory, but in most illustrations, including *O Uma Jirushi*, there is only one gourd

messengers' sashimono: a gold horō  
 alternative messengers' sashimono: a small version of the banner  
 great standard: a red streamer with a gold fan  
 sashimono: a plain gold flag (sometimes shown with a gourd design on it)

#### **Toyotomi (Miyoshi) Hidetsugu (1568–95)**

Hidetsugu was Toyotomi Hideyoshi's nephew. He served his uncle so well at Nagakute (1584), Negoroji (1585) Shikoku (1585) and Odawara (1592) that Hideyoshi proclaimed him as his heir, but when Hidetsugu refused to serve in Korea, relations became strained, so that following the birth of Toyotomi Hideyori, Hideyoshi ordered the suicide of Hidetsugu.

banner: a white flag with an open work flower mon  
 lesser standard: a golden gohei  
 great standard: a white streamer  
 messengers' sashimono: a black horō

#### **Toyotomi Hideyori (1593–1615)**

Inheriting his father's empire while still in infancy, Hideyori witnessed the rise of the Tokugawa, whom he challenged in 1614 in the siege of Ōsaka. In 1615 he died as the castle fell.

Heraldry as for Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

#### **Tozawa Moriyasu (1566–90)**

Moriyasu was a retainer of the Nanbu family and castellan of Kakunotate (Dewa).

**Tozawa Masamori (1585-1648)**

Son of Moriyasu, Masamori sided with the Tokugawa in 1600 and received the fief of Matsuoka (40,000 koku). In 1622 he was transferred to Shinjō (Dewa - 68,000 koku).

banner: twelve black and white stripes  
 great standard: three white umbrellas  
 messengers' sashimono: a black horō with two white flags  
 ashigaru: red disc on blue  
 lesser standard: gold horns above a red disc on blue  
 sashimono: as for the ashigaru but with a plume

**Tsuchiya Masatsugu (d. 1575)**

Tsuchiya Masatsugu was one of the Takeda 'Twenty-Four Generals'. He fought at Mikata ga Hara and was killed at the battle of Nagashino in 1575. Faithful to the last, his three sons died with Takeda Katsuyori at the battle of Temmokuzan in 1582.

His banners bore a white torii gate on black.

**Tsuchiya Tadanao (1585-1612)**

Possibly related to the above, this Tsuchiya family served the Tokugawa.

banner: black and white, eight bands bottom to top  
 lesser standard: a gold gohei  
 sashimono: white torii on black  
 great standard: as for the sashimono  
 messengers' sashimono: two black and white flags as banner

**Tsugaru Tamenobu (d. 1608)**

A daimyō of northern Japan, Tsugaru Tamenobu was originally called Ōura Tamenobu. He fought Nanbu Nobunao. He submitted to Toyotomi Hideyoshi and fought against the Hōjō, at which time he took the name of Tsugaru. Tamenobu captured Namioka castle in 1590. In 1600 he supported the Tokugawa, and saw his revenues increase to 47,000 koku.

For heraldry see below.

**Tsugaru Nobuhira (1586-1631)**

The son of Tamenobu, Nobuhira built Hirosaki castle in 1610.

banner: two red swastikas on white  
 lesser standard: gold disc on white  
 sashimono: gold on red  
 great standard: a large three-dimensional shakujō in gold. (A shakujō is a metal 'rattle' used by Buddhists.)  
 messengers' sashimono: a red horō with a gold crescent moon  
 alternative messengers' sashimono: purple and white horō  
 ashigaru: two red flags

**Tsutsui Junkei (Fujimasa or Fujikatsu) (1549-1641)**

Junkei served Nobunaga against Matsunaga Hisahide, whom he defeated at Shigisan in 1577 and received Yamato province as a reward. He also fought in the Iga invasion. Following the death of Nobunaga, he arrived at Yamazaki, and sat waiting on a nearby hill until the outcome was in no doubt, whereupon he attacked the already defeated Akechi Mitsuhide. Hideyoshi was disinclined to reward such activities, and Junkei had his revenues reduced.

mon: six star design

**Tsutsui Sadatsugu (+1615)**

The adopted son of Junkei, his uncle, Sadatsugu fought in the attack on the Negoroji warrior monks in 1585, along with Hori Hidemasa. In 1600 he sided with Ieyasu against Uesugi Kagekatsu, but was dispossessed later following maladministration.

**Uesugi (Ogigayatsu branch)**

Two prominent branches of the extensive Uesugi family were active during the Sengoku Period. We will deal with the minor one first, the Ogigayatsu.

**Uesugi Tomoyoshi (+1518)**

Tomoyoshi opposed the rise of Hōjō Sōun, who was at first forced to acknowledge the Uesugi sovereignty.

**Uesugi Tomooki (1488-1537)**

The son of Tomoyoshi, Tomooki attempted to relieve the castle of Arai, under siege from the Hōjō in 1518, in one of many conflicts against the Hōjō.

**Uesugi Tomosada (+1544)**

Tomosada, son of Tomooki, lost his castle of Kawagoe to the Hôjô in 1537. On attempting to retake Kawagoe in 1545, he was killed. With him the Ogigayatsu branch came to an end.

**Uesugi (Yamanouchi branch)****Uesugi Norifusa (1466-1524)**

Norifusa was often in arms against the Hôjô, but eventually died of illness.

**Uesugi Norimasa (1522-79)**

After several encounters with the Hôjô, Norimasa lost his last possession, Hirai castle, to them in 1551. Norimasa fled to the protection of his vassal Nagao Kagetora, whom he adopted as his son.

**Uesugi Kenshin Terutora (Kagetora) (1530-78)**

Uesugi Kenshin is celebrated as one of the greatest samurai commanders in Japanese history. After rising to power within the Nagao family, he was adopted by Uesugi Norimasa, who was then in desperate straits. Kenshin was often at war with both the Takeda and the Hôjô, and on many occasions showed himself to be their equal. He fought Takeda Shingen five times at Kawanakajima. In 1558 he went to war against the Hôjô and took their castles of Numata and Umayabashi. In 1577 he won victories at Nanao and Tedorigawa. In 1578 he entered an alliance with Takeda Katsuyori against Ôda Nobunaga, but his sudden death in mysterious circumstances led many to suspect assassination.

standard: large dark blue fan with red sun's disc  
 banner: hata jirushi in dark blue with red sun's disc  
 sashimono: the design is believed to be the love-birds in bamboo motif, similar to that shown for the Date family.

**Uesugi Kagetora (1552-79)**

Kagetora was the seventh son of Hôjô Ujiyasu and was adopted by Uesugi Kenshin, but his inheritance was challenged by Uesugi Kagekatsu. Kagetora eventually killed himself.

**Uesugi Kagekatsu (1555-1623)**

Kagekatsu was the nephew of Uesugi Kenshin. On

the death of Kenshin, Kagekatsu challenged Kagetora's inheritance, and war ensued. Kagekatsu won, and received the fief of Aizu, valued at 1,200,000 koku. In 1600 Uesugi Kagekatsu declared against the Tokugawa and fought Mogami and Date, but hurriedly pledged allegiance after Sekigahara, and received the fief of Yonezawa (Dewa - 300,000 koku). He fought at Ôsaka for the Tokugawa.

great standard: gold disc on dark blue, and a large light blue fan  
 lesser standard: white, with the character 'bi' for Bishamonten  
 sashimono: red

**Ukita Naoie (1530-82)**

Naoie was at first a vassal of Urakami Munekage, who had his father put to death. Freeing himself of this obligation, he became master of Bitchû province. He then took on the Môri family.

**Ukita Hideie (+1662)**

As Hideie was still a child when his father Naoie died, he was brought up by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, whom he served loyally thereafter. When Korea was subjugated, Ukita Hideie was made commander in chief. Hideie took part in the attack on Fushimi castle in 1600, and being among the defeated at Sekigahara, he fled to Satsuma. On being discovered, he was exiled, and lived to the age of 90.

banner: blue with two Ukita mon in white

**Uozumi Kageyuki (+1570)**

Kageyuki was a retainer of the Asakura who was killed at the battle of Ane-gawa.

standard: a large red nobori with the character 'bi' in gold, and gold tassels

**Usami Sadakatsu (Sadayuki) (dates?)**

Usami Sadakatsu was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals'. He was in charge of the messengers at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561. In 1564 he was asked by Kenshin to dispose of Nagao Yoshikage, which Usami did by inviting the fellow to go boating with him and then drowning him.

The use of the character 'mu' has been identified.

**Utsunomiya Hirotsuma (1544-90)**

Hirotsuma was a minor daimyō who formed a series of alliances with the Uesugi, the Hōjō and finally Hideyoshi, whom he supported at Odawara.

**Wakizaka Yasuharu (1554-1626)**

Wakizaka Yasuharu served Akechi Mitsuhide, then Toyotomi Hideyoshi. In 1585 he received the fief of Awaji island (30,000 koku). During the invasion of Korea he commanded part of the Japanese fleet. In 1600 he followed Kobayakawa Hideaki in defecting to the side of the Tokugawa, thus contributing to the victory. He then stormed Ishida's castle of Sawayama.

banner: two white ring designs on a red field  
ashigaru: two small red flags with white designs

great standard: red flag with the white design  
sashimono: red flag with the white design

**Watanabe Hanzō Moritsuna (dates?)**

Watanabe Hanzō (nicknamed 'Devil Hanzō', to distinguish him from Hattori 'Spear Hanzō') served Tokugawa Ieyasu, fighting at the battle of Anegawa.

His banner was blue with the character 'myō' in gold. His personal sashimono was a three-dimensional red bucket.

**THE YAGYŪ - A SWORDSMAN FAMILY**

The Yagyū were a minor daimyō family with lands in the vicinity of Nara who succeeded in becoming tutors to the Tokugawa shoguns. Their first swordsman hero, Yagyū Muneyoshi (1527-1606), participated in his first battle at the age of sixteen, which was fought against Tsutsui Junshō, an ally of Miyoshi Chōkei, the man who was eventually to murder the shogun Ashikaga Yoshiteru. The Yagyū were defeated in the struggle and made to fight for the victor from then on, until Miyoshi's ally Matsunaga launched an attack on Tsutsui and the Yagyū joined Matsunaga's side. Matsunaga was victorious, so the Yagyū subsequently fought for him. Their battles included one against warrior-monks during which Yagyū Muneyoshi received an arrow through his hand, which does not seem to have affected his sword-fighting prowess.

In 1563 Muneyoshi's path crossed that of another great swordsman, Kamiizumi Nobutsuna. Nobutsuna and his companions had been given a letter of introduction to the monk Inei, chief priest and martial arts expert of the Hōzō-in temple of Nara. Inei was related to the Yagyū, and, knowing the reputation of both men, decided to bring them together in a contest at the Hōzō-in. Nobutsuna was then 55 years old, while Muneyoshi was twenty years younger. We may imagine Muneyoshi's disappointment when he learned that his opponent was not to be Nobutsuna himself, but his nephew Hikida Bungorō. A

further surprise awaited Muneyoshi when he arrived, because Bungorō was not carrying a bokutō, the usual wooden practice sword, but what appeared to be a bundle of bamboo sticks bound together - the first time anyone had seen a shinai, the lightweight sword used in modern kendō.

Muneyoshi faced his rival holding his bokutō. Each watched the other, waiting for an unguarded moment. Then suddenly Bungorō struck, and Muneyoshi had the unfamiliar experience of feeling a wooden sword blade actually strike him across the forehead. Being used to techniques whereby the blow was pulled rather than allowed to make contact, he continued the duel, only to receive the shinai again. At this point Muneyoshi realised that he had come across a superior style of sword fighting, and was about to acknowledge this when the master Kamiizumi Nobutsuna took the shinai from Hikida Bungorō and challenged Muneyoshi to a further duel. Muneyoshi took his guard, but the mere gesture of the challenge had beaten him. He threw his bokutō to the ground and knelt before Nobutsuna, begging to be taken on as his pupil. Kamiizumi accepted the offer. Two years later, after much hard training, Yagyū Muneyoshi was named as his successor, thus creating the Yagyū Shinkage-ryū, the greatest school of swordsmanship that Japan was ever to see.

In 1594 Tokugawa Ieyasu invited Yagyū Muneyoshi to his mansion in Kyōto. Muneyoshi was accompanied by his son Munenori, and they



**Watanabe Kanbe'e (dates?)**

A distinguished samurai who took six heads in battle at the age of seventeen. He served Tōdō Takatora at Ōsaka where he was credited with 30 heads.

**Yagyū Muneyoshi**, see the separate boxed entry

**Yamagata Masakage (d. 1575)**

Yamagata Masakage was one of the veterans among the Takeda 'Twenty-Four Generals'. He fought at Mikata ga Hara and Yoshida, and was eventually killed in action at Nagashino in 1575.

His banners bore a white flower on black.

**Yamamoto Kansuke (d. 1561)**

Yamamoto was one of the most trusted of the Takeda 'Twenty-Four Generals'. Renowned as a strategist, he was responsible for the daring plan that culminated in the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561. Thinking his scheme had failed, he took a spear and charged valiantly into the enemy to make amends by his death.

His banners bore a black device on white, or with colours reversed.

**Yamana Sōzen Mochitoyo (1404-73)**

Nicknamed the 'Red Monk', Sōzen was one of the protagonists in the Ōnin War.

gave such a display of swordsmanship that the enthusiastic Ieyasu took a wooden sword to try his skill against Muneyoshi. He brought the bokutō down against Muneyoshi's forehead, then before he knew what had happened, Muneyoshi had dodged, deflected the blow and grabbed the sword by the hilt in a move similar to modern aikidō. He held Ieyasu by the left hand and made a symbolic punch to his chest. The sword had gone spinning across the room. This was Muneyoshi's demonstration of the technique he called *mutō*, literally 'no sword'. Following this encounter, Ieyasu asked the Yagyū to become the Tokugawa's sword instructors. Muneyoshi excused himself on the grounds of his age, but suggested that his son Munenori (1571-1646) would make an excellent sensei (teacher), an offer that Ieyasu gladly accepted. Muneyoshi then retired from swordsmanship, and eventually died in 1606, by which time their pupil Tokugawa Ieyasu had become shogun.

Munenori continued to serve the Tokugawa to the third generation shogun Iemitsu, but on the death of Muneyoshi the Yagyū Shinkage-ryū split into two. His elder son, Munenori's brother, had been severely wounded in battle in 1571 and crippled so badly that he was unable to wield a sword, but as his was the senior line, Muneyoshi passed on to the elder brother's son Toshiyoshi the official inheritance of the Owari Yagyū Shinkage-ryū, which was to serve the junior branch of the Tokugawa based in Nagoya. The school of Munenori, based in Edo, became the

Edo Yagyū Shinkage-ryū, which he eventually passed on to his son Yagyū Jūbei Mitsuyoshi. There was much rivalry between the Edo and Owari schools over the years to come.

Yagyū Jūbei Mitsuyoshi is a mysterious character, and his adventures have spawned many historical novels and films. Most of the legends and inventions revolve around a 'lost' twelve years in his life, when he was abruptly dismissed by the shogun, and later reinstated. His sacking was supposedly for drunkenness, but the lack of evidence, and the complete mystery surrounding his subsequent movements, has led many story-writers to the conclusion that his dismissal was merely a front. Mitsuyoshi is then supposed to have continued to serve the Tokugawa as a ninja, obtaining information for them as he went from province to province on a *musha-shugyō*, trying to wipe out his disgrace by worthy challenges. The best-known story about his wanderings was a duel with dummy swords (later re-enacted in the film *Seven Samurai*), whereby Yagyū Jūbei had to kill his opponent to convince him that he had actually won the contest.

There are many memorials of the Yagyū family in the valley near Nara which bears their ancestral name. The family graveyard lies behind the Hotoku-in, but the strangest site of all is the Ittō-seki, a huge rock, probably split by lightning, which Yagyū Muneyoshi is supposed to have cut in half with his sword. Behind the rock is a small shrine, where stands a statue of the great swordsman.

**Yamana Koretoyo (dates?)**

This son of Sōzen abandoned his father's cause for that of his rival Hosokawa Katsumoto.

**Yamana Toyokuni (1548–1626)**

A descendant of the above, Toyokuni yielded to Hideyoshi in 1580 and retired from active life.

**Yamanaka Shikanosuke Yukimori (d. 1578)**

Yamanaka Shikanosuke was a retainer of the Amako family, and is famous for his loyalty to them when they were being destroyed by the Mōri. Yamanaka Shikanosuke was captured during the siege of Kozuki castle by the Mōri in 1578. He was then executed. His heraldry featured the crescent moon.

**Yama(no)uchi Kazutoyo (1546–1605)**

Yamauchi Kazutoyo served Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi. In 1590 he received the fief of Kakegawa (Tōtōmi - 50,000 koku). He supported Tokugawa Ieyasu and received the fief of Kochi (Tosa - 242,000 koku).

For heraldry see below.

**Yamauchi Tadayoshi (dates?)**

Tadayoshi was the son of Kazutoyo.

banner: black and white, with the mon in white

of a 'propeller' in a ring

great standard: a white rain hat

messengers' sashimono: a black and white horō



lesser standard: a tree of little white flags  
sashimono: a black wreath

**Yamayoshi Toyouji (dates?)**

Yamayoshi Toyouji was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals'. He fought on the right flank at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561.

His banner was a red sun's disc with a black inscription on white.

**Yamazaki Ieharu (dates?)**

Yamazaki Ieharu served Tokugawa Ieyasu.

banner: the character 'yama' (mountain) in white on black

sashimono: the same design

ashigaru: two small similar flags

standard: a black rain hat

messengers' sashimono: a black horō with the character in white

**Yasuda Nagahide (dates?)**

Yasuda Nagahide was one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals'. He fought on the left flank at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561.

His banner was a black geometrical design on white.

**Yokota Takatoshi (d. 1550)**

Yokota Takatoshi was one of the Takeda 'Twenty-Four Generals'. Takeda Shingen regarded him as setting the standard for the Takeda samurai. He was killed at Toishi castle in 1550, fighting against Murakami Yoshikiyo.

His banner bore a character 'hachi' in black on white

**Yūki Hideyasu, see Matsudaira (Yūki)**

*Yamanaka Shikanosuke Yukimori was the great example of loyalty to the Amako family in their struggles against the Mōri. This statue of him stands on the site of Toda castle, which the Mōri captured from the Amako. He is shown in the attitude of prayer to the crescent moon, when he vowed to continue the Amako struggle. His helmet has a maedate (crest) of a crescent moon, and deer antlers, taken from his name 'shika' (deer). He holds a mochi yari (short spear) typical of the period.*



## II ARMS AND ARMOUR

## ARMS AND ARMOUR

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## ARMOUR

### The Evolution of Samurai Armour

The fine details of the constituent parts of the typical suit of armour will be described in the section which follows, but here we shall simply outline the most important overall styles as they developed through samurai history.

After an early experimentation with solid plate armour, the Japanese adopted the common Asiatic lamellar styles, and by the twelfth century the samurai were wearing armour of a characteristic design. It was made from small scales tied together and lacquered, then combined into armour plates by binding them together with silk or leather cords. Each lamella was of iron or leather. A suit made entirely from iron was far too heavy to wear, so the iron scales were concentrated on the areas that needed most protection, and otherwise alternated with leather.

The separate parts formed the *yoroi*, the classic samurai armour of the Gempei Wars, which provided good body protection for a weight of about 30 kilograms. Its main disadvantage was its rigid and inflexible box-like structure, which restricted the samurai's movement when he was dismounted or using hand weapons from the saddle. The body of the armour, the *dō*, consisted of four sections. Two large shoulder plates, the *sode*, were worn, which were fastened at the rear of the armour by a large ornamental bow called the *agemaki*. The *agemaki* allowed the arms free movement while keeping the body always covered. Two guards were attached to the shoulder straps to prevent the tying cords from being cut, and a sheet of ornamented leather was fastened across the front like a breastplate to stop the bow string from catching on any projection.

The helmet bowl was commonly of eight to twelve plates, fastened together with large projecting conical rivets. A peak, the *mabisashi*, was riveted on to the front and covered with patterned leather. The neck was protected with a heavy five-piece neck guard called a *shikoro*, which hung from the bowl. The top four plates were folded back at the front to form the *fukigaeshi*, which stopped downward cuts aimed at the horizontal lacing of the *shikoro*. Normally the *eboshi* (cap) was worn under the helmet, but if the samurai's hair was very long, the *motodori* (pigtail)



*Details of a typical yoroi armour are shown in this print by Yoshitoshi, which depicts the hero Kagekado holding his helmet on the end of his naginata to fool a waiting assailant. His tachi (sword) and tantō (dagger) are securely fastened to his belt. His armour is laced in the kebiki (close-spaced) style, using contrasting colours to make an attractive pattern. The tsurubashiri (stencilled leather 'breastplate') is well illustrated. Having removed his helmet, his eboshi (cap) may be seen. He wears heavy iron suneate (leg armour) typical of the Gempei Wars.*

was allowed to pass through the *tehen*, the hole in the centre of the helmet's crown, where the plates met. Some illustrations show samurai wearing a primitive face mask called a *happuri*, which covered the brow and cheeks only. No armour was worn on the right arm, to leave the arm free for drawing the bow, but a simple bag-like sleeve with sewn-on plates was worn on the left arm.



*Arms and armour of the Gempei Wars are well illustrated in this detail from the Kasuga Gongen scroll. The mounted archers hold their bows at the ready with a full quiver of arrows at their belts. One character has used a white cloth to disguise his identity. In the foreground foot-soldiers may be seen. One wears a simple dô maru armour and carries a naginata. On the right a foot-soldier and a dismounted samurai shelter behind large wooden shields.*

Unlike the elite samurai, the foot-soldiers who supported them had to be content with a much simpler style of armour known as the dô maru (literally 'body-wrapper'). The dô (body armour) was similar to the yoroi in that the weight was taken on the shoulders, but instead of the rigid style of the yoroi the dô maru was more like a short armoured coat, pulled in at the waist by a belt. The dô maru fastened under the right armpit,

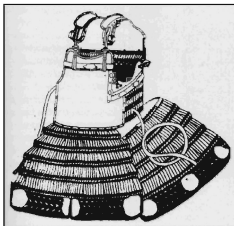
while a similar design, known as the haramaki, fastened at the back.

The dô maru and haramaki styles allowed more scope for development than the yoroi, and it is from the basic design of the dô maru that the later styles of tôsei gusoku (modern armour) developed. These styles are many, employing several different and sometimes confusing names. The classification, however, is largely arranged around the following considerations:

1. The nature of the lacing by which the parts are held together.
2. The number of sections making up the dô.
3. Certain major recognised styles.

The evolution from the foot-soldiers' dô maru to the samurai's tôsei gusoku began with a redistribution of the weight from the shoulders alone to a more even spread across the waist and hips, a trend that is visible from about the time of the Ônin War onward. The horizontal plates of the armour differed in shape or design according to where on the body they fell, producing a more 'tailor-made' effect. Some tapered towards the waist (munatori dô). The style of lacing still tended to be the kebiki odoshi (close spaced lacing), so that different styles of these armours were usually distinguished by the number of major sections of which they consisted. Thus we have the straightforward dô maru (sometimes written 'maru dô'), which simply wrapped round the body, the ni mai dô (two sections: front and back), and the go mai dô (five sections: front, back, left side and two parts for the right where the armour was fastened). Iroiro odoshi referred to multicoloured lacing of the kebiki odoshi, which could be arranged to make a pattern. Alternatively, the armour could produce a very sombre appearance by being covered all over with sheets of smoked leather (fusube kawa).

A further development was to replace the rows made from small individual lamellae laced together with sections made from smaller numbers of lamellae, or even from a single piece of iron. This would save time in manufacture, as would the other innovation of replacing the numerous strands of kebiki odoshi with the fewer and more widely spaced sugake odoshi. There are several categories for armours made by using these methods. The renzandô zane mono kebiki

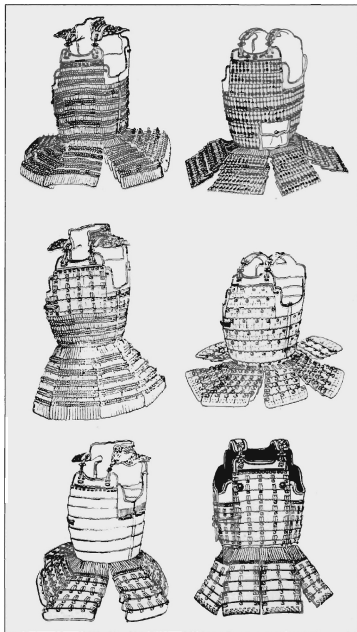


*Top left:* An illustration from the *Gunyōki* showing the *dō* of a *yoroi*-style armour. The picture shows clearly how the weight of the armour was taken on the shoulders. There would be a separate section for the right side.

*Above:* The back view of a *dō maru* style of armour is shown in this print by Yoshitoshi of a samurai playing a *biwa*. The prominent *agemaki* bow, which hangs from the back of the *dō* and acts as an anchor for the shoulder plates, is well depicted. The samurai's scabbard is covered with tiger skin and the spare bowstring reel hangs beside it. One of his leather *yugake* (archery gloves) lies at his side.

*Left:* An armour of *haramaki* style (opening at the back) laced in multi-coloured *kebiki odoshi* of leather. The helmet is a multiplate construction, typical of the early- to mid-sixteenth century. Shoulder plates and sleeve armour would complete the ensemble.

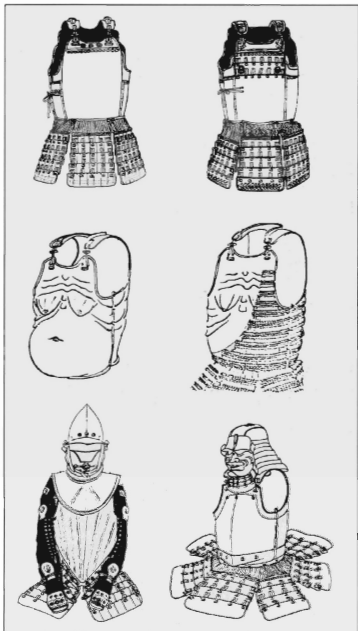




Styles of tōsei gusoku I:  
 From left to right and  
 top to bottom: (i) ni mai  
 dō (a dō maru made in  
 two sections, front and  
 back); (ii) iyozane dō  
 (made from large  
 lamellae); (iii) a form of  
 dangae dō (mixed lacing)  
 known as a kozane  
 kebiki odoshi koshi tori  
 gusoku; (iv) iyozane  
 hishitoji dō (plates laced  
 with cross-knots); (v)  
 yokohagi okegawa dō  
 (horizontal plates  
 lacquered over); (vi)  
 mogami dō (multiplate  
 dō with hinged sections).



Styles of tōsei gusoku II:  
 From left to right and  
 top to bottom: (i) hotoke  
 dō (smooth surface); (ii)  
 yukinoshita dō (largely  
 solid vertical plates); (iii)  
 gaki hara dō (the body  
 of a 'hungry ghost'); (iv)  
 katahada nugi dō  
 (human form incorpo-  
 rating a monk's robe); (v)  
 nanban dō (European  
 cuirass incorporated into  
 Japanese armour - this  
 is the example associated  
 with Tokugawa Ieyasu);  
 (vi) wasei nanban dō  
 (nanban style but of  
 Japanese manufacture,  
 in this case a hatomune  
 dō).



odoshi had the top edge of each horizontal plate shaped in a wavy line like a *renzandō* (path along a range of mountains). Other styles included the *iyozane dō*, made from scales fitted with almost no overlap, and the *dangae dō*, which was of *ni mai* (two-piece construction), and had a body section that was partly laced in *kebiki* and partly in *sugake odoshi*. A *dangae dō* with the upper part of *kebiki* was called a *kozane kebiki odoshi muna tori no gusoku*. If its lower part was *kebiki* it would be called a *kozane kebiki odoshi koshi tori no gusoku*. *Nuinobe dō* is another name for the overall style of armour made from *iyozane*.

A popular variation was the *mogami dō*. This was of multi-plate construction, laced in *sugake odoshi*, and recognisable by the flanges on top of each horizontal plate. The sections were hinged one to another.

A simpler style was the *okegawa dō*. Here the armourer would produce the body of the *dō*, using a certain number of solid plates, but with a bare minimum of lacing or no lacing at all to fasten them together. Simple *okegawa dō* were made in their thousands for wearing by the *ashigaru*. They would be lacquered and would have the *daimyō's mon* applied to the front in colour. These suits were known as *okashi gusoku* (honourable loan armour).

Samurai too favoured *okegawa dō*, though of more elaborate finish. The styles of *okegawa dō* depended first of all on whether the separate sections were fastened horizontally (*yokohagi dō*) or vertically (*tatehagi dō*). A *yokohagi dō* might have its plates riveted with the rivets left visible (*byōtoji yokohagi dō*) or lacquered over to give the appearance of a smooth surface (*hotoke 'Buddha' dō*). The plates might be fastened by horizontal lengths of stitching (*munametoji dō*) cross knots (*hishitoji* or *hishinui dō*).

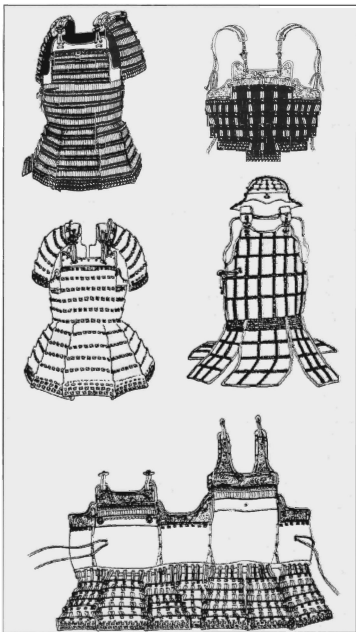
A *tatehagi dō* would tend to look more solid, because each of its vertical plates would probably be a single plate of iron. The best known *tatehagi* styles are those associated with *Myōchin Hisaie* (1573–1615) whose *yukinoshita dō*, named from his home town, provided the basis for several striking styles of armour. *Date Masamune* equipped his troops in a version of the *yukinoshita dō* called the *sendai dō*, after the *Date* capital. The *kōshū dō*, which took its name from the province of *Kai*, was

another style made from vertically arranged solid plates that is associated with the *Takeda* family.

With the arrival of Europeans in Japan, the styles, and often actual pieces of European armour, begin to be seen in Japanese suits. Called *nanban dō gusoku* ('southern barbarian armour'), they were of two-piece construction and made from solid plate with a pronounced medial line. Japanese armourers took up the challenge to produce their own *wasei nanban dō* (*nanban* of Japanese manufacture). The medial ridge gave rise to the description of such a finish as the *hatomune dō* (pigeon-breasted *dō*). Some armours produced by these methods were so heavy that they need extra suspenders inside the *dō*, and were then called *renjaku dō*.



**Right:** Varieties of armour: From left to right and top to bottom: (i) *dō maru* (the basic one-piece design in *kebiki odoshi*); (ii) *hara ate* (armour for breast, sides and groin only - as used by foot-soldiers); (iii) *fusube kawa tsuzumi haramaki* (a *haramaki* covered with smoked leather); (iv) *tatami gusoku* (folding armour of metal plates joined by mail on a cloth backing, with a collapsible helmet); (v) *go mai dō* (an exploded view of a five-section *dō*).



**Opposite page:** This armour mounted on a dummy at the Smithsonian Museum shows a straightforward *dō maru*, laced like the *sode* (shoulder plates) in *kebiki odoshi*. The adjustable cords inside the *kote* (sleeve armour) are well illustrated, as is the patterned leather of the *yugake* (gloves). The bracket at the front of the helmet for the *maedate* (crest) and the pole for the *sashimono* may be seen.

Reference was made earlier to the production of a smooth-surfaced hotoke dô from the basic okegawa dô design. Such a finish allowed the armour maker to indulge in a little whimsy. The most bizarre was the production of dô that resembled the naked human body in the form of the protruding ribs and sagging breasts of a mountain ascetic. The general term is rokkotsu dô ('ribs' dô) or niô dô, referring to the guardian figures found in temple gateways. A more extreme version with a stomach bloated for hunger was the gaki hara dô (dô of the hungry ghost) a reference to such spirits in Japanese mythology. The katabada nugi dô was a design that incorporated an off-the-shoulder monk's robe by using kebiki odoshi.

A samurai's hotoke dô could be further embellished by embossing the surface with a design (uchidashi dô), but such developments belong to the peaceful Edo Period, as embossing weakened the metal surface, a fact brought home by an extant specimen dating from 1681 which included the inscription:

"not of thin metal ... carefully forged using a divine method of forging against arrows and guns by which it is not pierced. Because of this it is a treasure for brave warriors from a military family."

Some suits of armour were sold that proudly displayed dents were they had been tested by having bullets fired at them. Another variety of okegawa dô was the roku mai dô, consisting of six plates arranged three each as front and back.

As well as the okegawa dô, a simpler armour to produce was the kusari gusoku, otherwise known as the tatami gusoku. Consisting of a series of metal plates linked by mail and on a cloth backing, it did away with the need to lace plates together. The hara ate, seen also on foot-soldiers, consisted of a breast and back plate with no skirts, or very small ones, or even just a breastplate.

A maebiki awase gusoku was an armour that fastened down the front. Although various styles exist, they were not popular because this was the most vulnerable part of the dô.

By comparison with earlier styles and their colourful kebiki odoshi, many tôsei gusoku styles were very restrained in their appearance, but a tradition developed of setting off a fairly plain suit of armour with an elaborate helmet. The 'court-cap' of Katô Kiyomasa, and the golden



*This suit of armour shows several important features associated with the Sengoku Period. The helmet is a plain zunari kabuto, which provided a solid deflecting surface for bullets and edged weapons, but is set off with a dramatic maedate (crest) of twin bamboo shoots. It has a simple face-mask, while the dô is a ni mai (two-section) iyozane dô style, laced in hishinui (cross-knots) with kusazuri (skirts) laced in sugake odoshi (spaced lacing). The sode are ornamented with plumes of white horsehair. The haizate (thigh guards) bear a lacquered design of a Japanese coin.*

## Glossary of terms for major styles of armour

byōtōji yokohagi dō	巻褌袴指振	kubiki odoshi	毛引振	renjaku dō	連尺胴
dangae dō	段裳胴	koshi tori gusoku	腰掛足	renzandō zane mono	連山道衣物毛引振
dō maru	胴丸	kōshū dō	甲州胴	kebiki odoshi	巻褌振
fusube kawa odoshi haramaki	覆手皮巻腰巻	kozane kebiki odoshi	小札毛引振	rokkotsu dō	肋骨胴
fusube kawa tsuzumi haramaki	覆手皮摺巻	kurokawa odoshi	黒川巻	rokumai dō	六帖胴
gaki hara dō	肌皮振	kusari gusoku	鎖具足	sendai dō	仙臺胴
gonnai dō	五枚胴	maebiki awase gusoku	前引合巻具足	sugake odoshi	巻掛巻
hara ate	腹当て	mogami dō	巻上巻	tatami gusoku	畳具足
haramaki	巻腰	mogami haramaki	巻上巻腰	tatami haramaki	畳巻腰
hatomune dō	鳩胸胴	munametsu dō	無名無振	tatebaji dō	立替振
hishinui dō	鱧掛振	munatori no gusoku	無刺の具足	tōsei gusoku	土世具足
hon kozane kebiki odoshi	本小札毛引振	nanban dō	南蛮胴	uchidashi dō	打ち出し
hotoke dō	火付振	nimai dō	二枚振	wasei nanban dō	和製南蛮胴
iroiro odoshi	色々巻	nao dō	直振	yokohagi dō	横掛振
stamono kebiki odoshi gusoku	振物毛引振具足	numobe dō	摺巻振	yūru	遊
iyozane dō	伊予腰丸振	okashi gusoku	おかし具足	yukimushira dō	襦ノ下胴
katahada nugi dō	片肌振	okégawa dō	おけがわ振		
		ōyori	大振		

'catfish tail' of Maeda Toshie are well-known examples. Other helmets sported huge wooden buffalo horns or antlers. The use of coloured lacquers such as red, gold or russet brown also made an armour stand out in combat.

The final evolution of samurai armour occurred during the peaceful days of the Edo Period when wars had ceased. Suits of armour became prestige gifts, carried, but rarely worn, during the long processions to and from Edo. Old styles were revived and modified, producing some spectacular suits of armour that would have been most impractical for fighting in. These trends produced despair among contemporary commentators who still believed that Japan had to be ready for war, and that her armour offered the best protection for a brave samurai.

### The construction and details of samurai armour

'When he goes forth to war the soldier is prepared for the assault of arrow and gunshot, ready to leap into fire or boiling water. His dauntless bearing may be due to his loyal spirit and his natural courage, but if his armour be not strong he can avail but little.'

Thus did the author Hayakawa Kyukei introduce one of the classic works describing samurai armour, summing up the vital necessity for quality. The styles and historical development of the various types of armour worn by samurai have been indicated in the previous section. As well as overall appearance, however, samurai armour consisted of a well-designed number of individual

parts, each of which fitted together to make the suit. These items are best described by examining the process whereby the samurai put on his defensive suit of armour, from the inside to the last piece of equipment.

The most detailed description of this process appears in a work entitled *Tanki Yoriaku* (literally, 'A Single Horseman'), which has as its subtitle the more useful phrase *Hi Ko Ben* ('The Art of Armour Wearing'). It was first published in 1735, long after wars had ceased, but the matters it deals with are very pertinent to the samurai of the Sengoku Period, because the book describes, in minute detail, all aspects of a samurai's armour from loin-cloth outwards. Some of its content may be quaint, but it has no rivals in its description of the appearance of Japan's samurai warriors on the battlefield.

The first section of *Tanki Yoriaku* deals with dressing a samurai, and includes all the ordinary equipment to be found. Then come a series of notes on special or unusual items, together with an explanation of various ways of tying on the helmet and face mask. Finally there is advice for 'The Compleat Samurai' as to his practical comfort and behaviour in the battle situation and other areas of military operation. For the convenience of the reader, I have altered the layout of some sections of the original, so that descriptions of parts of armour, or similar weapons, are grouped together. The original translation of *Tanki Yoriaku* which follows was done by Matt Garbutt in 1912, to which I have added my own notes and explanations.

**Fundoshi (loincloth).**

The best material for this is white linen or white cotton. Silk crepe may be used according to one's taste, but plain silk is not suitable. In winter it may be lined with similar material, but in other seasons it is always single. Both ends (or front and back) are hemmed to put cords through. One of the cords forms a loop to suspend the front end from the neck, and the other secures the back end by being tied in front. The length of the fundoshi is about 5 shaku.

**Shitagi (shirt)**

There are several different styles of shitagi, but do not get any fancy ones. The style recommended is just about the same as an ordinary kimono with very narrow sleeves, a little shorter in length and narrower in width, with a few buttons at the breast and a thick tape or cord around the waist. It should be put on as though it were a kimono, the left hand being first put into its sleeve, and then the right, the breast being then buttoned and the waist cord finally tied at the back.



*The order of arming, from the Tanki Yoriaku*  
*From left to right and top to bottom:*  
 1. Fundoshi (loincloth);  
 2. Shitagi (shirt);  
 3. Kobakama (breeches);  
 4. Kiahari (gaiters);  
 5. Waraji (sandals);  
 6. Sunate (shinguards).  
 For further details see the accompanying text.

The order of arming,  
from the Tanki Yoriaku  
From left to right and  
top to bottom:

1. Haidate (thigh-guards);
  2. Yugake (gloves);
  3. Kote (sleeves);
  4. Wakibiki (armpit protectors);
  5. Dô (body armour);
  6. Uwa obi (belt).
- For further details see  
the accompanying text.



#### Hadagi (another kind of shirt)

This is the same as the usual juban (shirt) about 2 shaku 4 sun long, and is generally made of linen, cotton cloth or silk crepe. As it is only to be worn in a cold climate, a lined one is better than a single one. The sleeves are very narrow, and sometimes are omitted altogether.

#### Obi (underbelt)

The obi is of white linen or white cotton. Silk is

not good. Ordinary cotton or linen will be folded into four folds, of which the width of these fabrics is about 16 sun, and will give a belt of about 4 sun. The length depends upon the size of the wearer, whether he is fat or thin, but generally it is either 6 shaku wound twice around the body, or 9 shaku wound three times around. It should be tied in front, although some tie it behind, but if it is tied at the back it is inconvenient to retie if it becomes loose.

**Kobakama (short trousers)**

There are a few different styles, generally a little narrower than ordinary hakama, and of such a length as will reach about 4 or 5 sun below the knees. In putting them on begin with the left leg, and then tie in succession the back cords and the front ones, tying both pairs in front.

**Tabi (socks)**

There are two chief kinds of socks, kawa-tabi or tanned skin socks, and momen-tabi, or cotton cloth socks. There are also momi-tabi (red silk socks). They are very soft, but they are only used by effeminate persons. The kawa-tabi, of tanned skin, are often printed in fancy patterns. These are not the best for mounted men. Quilted cotton tabi are generally used, and tabi without soles are recommended for ashigaru. These are worn like ordinary tabi, but you must put on the left one first, and all footwear, such as tabi, kiahn and waraji, must be put on when the wearer is seated.

**Kiahn (gaiters)**

Kiahn are of the same style as those worn by ordinary travellers. Linen is the best material, but cotton cloth may be used, lined or unlined according to season, but unlined ones are always preferable. The inner cords must be shorter than the outer ones, and it is advisable to tie the cords always on the inner side of the legs instead of on the front or outer part, otherwise there will be great discomfort when the stiff suneate (shinguards) are put on over the kiahn.

**Waraji (sandals)**

Waraji are of various materials, such as hemp, stalks of myōga (a kind of ginger, *Zingiber mioga*), palm fibres, cotton thread, rice straw, etc., and all the materials named last very well. There are also various ways of arranging the cords which tie the waraji to the feet. It is very important to use a nakagukuri or extra tie across the instep, as this will be a great help in marching on steep, snowy or muddy roads, and in crossing swamps or rivers, in any case you must not forget the nakagukuri when marching on hard roads. It is better to have 6 tabs on your sandals than 5, for then you will not catch pebbles between your sandals and feet when

crossing rivers or marching on rough roads. An extra pair of sandals must be carried at your waist; this is quite as important a thing as carrying provisions.

**Suneate (shinguards)**

One type, very popular in the Sengoku Period, consisted of vertical plates connected by either hinges or chain mail and often, though not always, lined with textile material. There is always a leather guard attached to the inner side of the plate that comes into contact with the stirrup when riding. The more ancient examples of suneate are plate, often with large knee guards attached, and were discarded in the Sengoku Period as interfering with free movement. As usual the left will be put on first, putting the part called abumi-zure towards the inner side of the leg and tying the cords fast.

**Haidate (thighguards)**

Haidate were not known in ancient times but became important in the Sengoku Period when the kusazuri attached to the dō (body armour) was reduced. It usually consists of an apron-like piece of cloth, having its lower part covered with small overlapping plates of metal or leather. Occasionally whalebone was used. Some had, in addition to the cord at the top edge, also cords to tie the lower edge closely against the leg. When you have finished putting on all your foot and leg gear, you will stand up, put the centre of the upper edge of the haidate at the front of your body, carry the cords round your waist, and tie them in front upon the middle part of the top edge of the haidate. When you wear haidate entirely under the dō you cannot quickly take them off when crossing a river or a swamp, and if you put them over the dō your rapid movement will be hindered. A very good way out of this difficulty is to wear them as usual under the dō, but to tie the cords outside it. You can then move freely and still take them off quickly.

**Yugake (gloves)**

Yugake are made of tanned skin, and unlined ones are recommended. Sometimes they have an inome (a small hole in the conventional form said to be that of the eye of a wild boar) on the



### THE LACING OF ARMOUR

Commenting upon armour, the great authority of the Edo Period, Sakakibara Kōzan, speaks adversely of suits of armour which have a large quantity of lacing (kebiki odoshi style). He says that when soaked with water they are very heavy and cannot be quickly dried, so that in summer the weight is oppressive and in winter the whole may freeze. Moreover, no amount of washing will completely free the lacing from any mud which may have penetrated it, so that on a long and distant campaign it becomes evil-smelling and overrun by ants and lice, with consequent ill effects upon the health of the wearer. Kōzan also condemns the heavily laced type as holding the point of a spear or arrow instead of letting it glide harmlessly off; and for the same reason he condemns the repoussé styles of do as mere toys, meant to tickle the fancy of art connoisseurs. The soldiers of fighting times, he says, would have none of them (Garbutt 1912: 143).

A further point to note with regard to the lacing of the armour is the choice of the dye. In the olden days lacing dyed a deep dark blue was very popular. It was called kuro ito, and is seen on many examples, but from the 1570s onward, in Hachiman in Kyōto, jet black dye was produced, and black-laced armour became fashionable and popular. However, the mineral matter in this dye was found to weaken the braid, and as an example we read:

"The kusazuri of the armour worn by Sasuke-dono for many days was fastened on with kuro-ito. All his equipment looked splendid in the black lacing. Everyone admired it, the lacquer work was exceptional, and the black dyed equipment was very good. However, because his braid broke he took leather and fastened the kusazuri on with this leather." (Sasama 1968: 369).

palm. In donning these the right should be put on first. This departure from the ordinary rule is because of the superior ability of the right hand and the difficulty of tying cords after covering the left.

### Kote (sleeves)

As for kote, of these there are many varieties. These sleeves are usually of textile material, often silk brocade, padded, laced with small cords upon the inside of the arm and covered with mail, small metal plates, or quilting having small plates of metal or hide sewn inside each quilt. Gauntlets, or covers of metal plates for the back of the hand, are attached to the kote. If you have aigote, in which the two sleeves are connected, put on the left first, and when both are on pull the twisted cords forward and tie them firmly on your breast. The small cords attached to the gauntlets should be left loose until all the other arrangements are completed, as your arms and hands will be a little stiffer when these cords are tied fast. Do not pull the laces of the kote too tightly or the movement of the arm will be hampered. Leave them rather loose and tie them at the wrist. Kote with hooks are very uncomfortable. The right kote must always be left until all other parts of your equipment are completed. Kigote is a general term for kote extended or completed by the addition of erisuwari (padded collar), kara-ate, shoulder pads and wakibiki (armpit protectors). There are several kinds. When shooting, take off your right kote.

### Wakibiki (armpit protectors)

This should not be confused with the wakidate, which is quite a different thing. I will explain how to put on tsunagi wakibiki. (Tsunagi means connected, the two sides are connected into one piece.) Put your arms through the shoulder loops and then fasten the other cords to the chest.

### Manju no wa

This piece consists of shoulder pads, collar and armpit guards (wakibiki) all in one piece. It must be put on before the dō. To put it on hold the sides in your hands, put it over your shoulders and tie the cords at the throat, then button the opening on your chest, pull both wakibiki towards the front and button them on the chest.

### Dō (body armour) and kusazuri (skirts)

As will be seen, this piece comprises not only the back and breast plates but also the laminated skirt piece called kusazuri. There are many kinds of dō. The renjaku-dō is attached with renjaku



The order of arming, from the Tanki Yoriaku. From left to right and top to bottom:

1. Sode (shoulder guards);
2. Katana (long sword) and tantō (dagger);
3. Nodowa (throat protector);
4. Hachimaki (head towel);
5. Hōate (facemask);
6. Kabuto (helmet). For further details see the accompanying text.

(suspenders) inside it. The tatami-dō (folding armour) has an opening on the right side. All kinds of dō which open in front must be worn with the right hikiawase (edge of the opening) over the left. Sewari-gusoku (which has an opening at the back) must be worn with the left over the right. This style of dō was only worn by rank and file. The

wakidate will be put on before the dō. This protects the wearer at the point where the opening of the dō occurs, so that it is different from the piece which we call wakidate at present. Seita no yoroi is another piece to be put behind the opening of the dō; sometimes it is called haramaki. Hato no ita and sendan ita are plates on the left and right

sides respectively of the upper part of the breastplate. Fittings of this sort are not put on common suits of armour.

The okegawa-dō is put on in six stages, as follows:

1. Sit in the position illustrated.
2. Take the dō towards you and open the hikiawase (the part where the dō is made to open at the side).
3. Take the hikiawase in your right hand and put the dō on your knee.
4. Put your left hand and arm into the dō and pull it until it entirely covers your body.
5. Fold the front part of the hikiawase on to the back part, and then tie the cords attached to the upper part firmly in the knot called hanamusubi (flower-shaped knot).
6. Fasten the cords on the left side of your waist, pulling one towards the back and the other towards the front, passing the back cord through the ring which is attached to the right side of the body, and tying the ends in front. These cords will be best made of twisted cotton cloth, cutting it into halves from ordinary width. Silk cords are made, but are not good for actual use."

#### **Uwa-obi (belt, sash)**

For this also linen and cotton cloths are recommended wound twice or three times around the body, the actual length depending upon the wearer. Fold the linen or cotton cloth into halves, then twist it and put a little piece of leather in the centre so that you can find the middle of it even when in a dark place. When putting it on, put the centre mark against the front of the dō, take the two ends around the waist and to the front again, and after shaking up the dō tie the obi in front very firmly in the hanamusubi knot before mentioned.

#### **Sode (shoulder plates)**

Fasten them to the watakami or suspenders of the dō by means of hooks, and fasten first the left one and then the right, in each case the back one before the front. Kosode and okisode (both small shoulder plates) are to defend the kotetsuke (the place left unprotected between the upper end of the kote and the watakami) so that they must be worn in any case. Osode and chūsode (large and medium sode respectively) are only worn by important officers.

#### **Tantō (dagger)**

The limits of the length for the dagger are 1 shaku 3 sun to 1 shaku 5 sun. This weapon is single edged and has a small wrought iron tsuba (guard), and a short tsuka (handle) having a length equal to about the width of the hand. It is put between the belt and the yurugi-itō (cords connecting the dō to the kusazuri) and tied there by twisting the sageo around the scabbard of the tantō. The sageo is always a silk cord.

#### **Tachi (long sword)**

The length of the tachi is about 2 shaku 2 sun to 2 shaku 3 sun. There are many ways of carrying it. An ordinary way is to tie the sword edge downwards upon the koshiate, put one end of the cord of the latter around the waist to the front and one towards the back and tie it at the right side. Sometimes people use a longer cord and carry it once more around the body and tie it on the left.

#### **Nodowa (throat ring, or throat protector)**

Some of the varieties of the throat armour are the nodowa, menguriwa, eriwa, and manjuwa. The first is fastened at the back of the neck with cords, the second with hooks, the third with a buckle. The last is fastened to the lower part of the chin of the mask and to the upper part of the breast of the corselet, but it is not a good pattern for use in actual fighting. There are so many shapes and styles that they are all called nodowa. To put on the eriwa hold an end in each hand, put it on your throat and fasten the ends behind your neck.

#### **Hachimaki (head cloth)**

This is to be put around the head so as to make a padding to receive the helmet. The best material is cotton cloth of either light blue or kaki (reddish yellow) colour, it is usually about 5 shaku in length. To put the hachimaki on comb your hair back and put the centre of the cloth behind your head, then wind it round the head and tuck the ends between the folds.

#### **Hōate (mask)**

The mask has varied greatly at different periods. The twelfth-century happuri covered the temples and the forehead, leaving the rest exposed. Later a complete mask was used and still later the

### THE USE OF THE NODOWA

The *Hōjō Godaiki* provides a vivid illustration of a single combat where the nodowa (throat protector) is shown to be quite efficient in carrying out its purpose:

"In 1564 on the seventh day of the first month, the second of two battles took place at Kōnodai, in Shimōsa, between Hōjō Ujiyasu and Satomi Yoshihiro, who was helped by Ōta Sukemasa Nyūdō Sanrakusai, in which the Hōjō forces were victorious. Ōta fought desperately and had received two wounds, when Shimizu Tarōzaemon, a man noted for his strength, threw down the now weary Ōta, but tried in vain to cut off his head. At this Ōta cried out, 'Are you confused? My neck is protected by a nodowa. Remove it and you can cut off my head.' Shimizu replied with a bow, 'That is most kind of you! You will die a noble death and have my admiration!'

"But, just as he was about to remove the nodowa, two of Ōta's young attendants rushed up, and throwing down Shimizu enabled their master to decapitate him." (Garbutt 1912: 146).

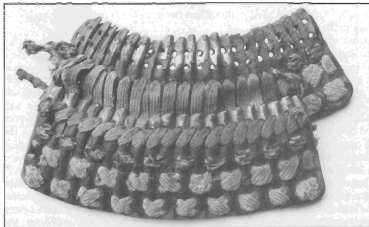
half-mask, stopping below the eyes and either with or without a nose-piece, was evolved. The mask with a nose-piece is called a menpo. There are about six different styles. They are all to cover the cheeks and chin. A movable nose-piece is best. Whiskers on the mask are not particularly necessary, but it is desirable to have moustaches. Before putting on the mask you must put on a fukusa (a kind of handkerchief) between the mask and chin, then fasten the ends of the cords on top of your head slightly towards the back.

#### Kabuto (helmet)

There are hundreds of different styles of helmets and several different styles of shikoro, the neck

guard hanging from the back and sides of the helmet. To put on the helmet:

1. Hold the cords under both fukigaeshi (the ears of the helmet) placing your thumbs inside the helmet and all your fingers outside. Lift the helmet above your head, put it on from behind and pull it forwards.
2. Pull the front loop of the helmet cord and put it under your chin.
3. Put both ends of the main cord through the metal rings inside the helmet to catch the cords and pull them upwards.
4. Pull them towards your ears and pass them through the other cords which are arranged inside the helmet.



*This damaged example of armour from a face mask shows how armour was made from separate lamellae laced together. This piece is laced in kebiki odoshi (close spaced lacing).*

5. Pull the cords downwards and tie them under your chin.

6. Twist the ends of the cords which are already tied and then tuck them between the cheeks of the mask."

#### Sashimono (little banner)

The back of the *dō* carried at the waist-line a socket, and at the level of the shoulder-blades a small hinged bridge-piece, having on it a ring. These were to support the sashimono. There are hundreds of different kinds of sashimono, generally made of silk, always having the corners stiffened with little pieces of leather. Sashimono are usually vertical oblongs, 3 shaku by 1 shaku. The shaft was passed through the ring on the upper part of the back plate of the *dō*, its lower end put into the socket behind the waist, and a cord attached to the shaft was tied around the body. When the sashimono carries the name of a family, or a crest, its front must always have the tabs on its edge through which the staff passes on its left side.

#### Yari (spear)

It is advantageous to use a spear to which you are accustomed, and which you like, and one with a straight blade is recommended by experienced persons. When on horseback carry it resting upon the *yari-hasami* (spear-rest), which is made of iron or copper. The best style of *yari-hasami* has a

hinge in its centre so as to let it move freely. It should be worn at the right side.

#### Kate-bukuro (provision bag)

For ordinary officers, the kind called *koshi-zuto* is recommended; it is made of twisted paper strings in the style of fine basketwork, and measures about 1 shaku by 9 sun. It is carried at the right side of the waist. Besides this it is advisable to carry another bag in which are 3 or 4 *gō* of raw rice. In cold weather baked rice is recommended because it gives warmth.

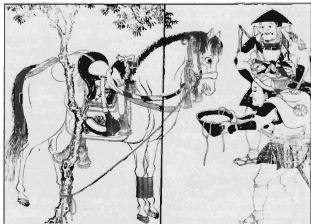
#### Gun sen (folding war-fan)

These fans have the outer sticks usually of iron, the inner ones often of yellow metal. A light one is recommended. You can carry it at your waist or hang it to the ring on the upper part of the breast-plate or fasten it to the cords of the *hiki-awase* (the opening joint of the body armour), but when in actual fighting do not hang it upon the chest as it is often very inconvenient in using the sword or bow and arrow.

#### Uchi-bukuro (money purse)

Some people say this should be carried at the waist or hanging from the neck, but I think these ways are very inconvenient. The best way of carrying money is to paste *ichi bu kin* (old Japanese coins) on a folded strip of thick paper and put it between the collars of the underwear.

*The details of a mounted samurai's horse equipment are shown clearly in this illustration from the Zōhyō Monogatari. A groom brings water in his own helmet to the tethered horse. It must be an unruly beast as its front legs are fastened with a band of cloth. The saddle, heavy iron stirrups and supply bags are depicted, along with the matchlock pistol in a holster. The twisted rope shows the means whereby the saddle girth could be tightened without dismounting. The lacquered wooden saddle was typical for the whole of samurai history.*



**Yo-bukuro (handkerchief bag)**

This is to be carried inside the sode or inside the kusazuri. You can put in it any small things beside your handkerchief. The uchi-bukuro and yo-bukuro can be joined together and hung to the neck by a long cord, in which case they will be put on before the dō.

**Inro and Kinchaku (medicine case and purse)**

You may carry these on the obi or fasten them to the kurikata of the sword scabbard, but it is not of much use to carry them at all.

**Tenugui (towel)**

This is made of white cotton cloth about 3 shaku long. It is carried attached to the ring provided on the dō (corselet) for this purpose.

**Udenuki (sword knot)**

It is put through two holes in the tsuba and round the wrist to prevent the sword from dropping to the ground if it slips from the hand. Sometimes this cord is fastened to the head of the sword hilt instead of to the tsuba.

**Koshinawa (rope)**

About 5 shaku long, the kind called kara-uchi no himo is the best for the purpose. Fasten a ring or loop to one of the ends, and carry it either fastened to the sword scabbard or on the right side of the waist tucked under the uwa-obi. This cord is useful in many ways, such as securing a saddle, tethering a horse or binding a prisoner. Sometimes it replaces the helmet cord should the latter be cut.

**Gaginawa (hooked rope)**

A thin rope of hemp is the best, about 1 jō long. A three-pointed grappling hook is attached to one end. This is used when climbing over a high wall, or to secure a boat, or for hanging up your armour when you are resting in camp, and other purposes. It is carried attached to the ring attached to the saddle.

**Naga tenugui (long towel)**

Of white cotton cloth about 5 shaku long, carried attached to the sword scabbard. It is used for such purposes as bandaging wounds, carrying provi-

sions, wrapping up a bow or musket, or as a head towel, a tasuki for girding up the sleeves, or in an emergency as a substitute for the sashimono.

**Kubi bukuro (head bag)**

A bag made of net to carry the severed head of an enemy. When walking, carry it hung from your waist. When mounted, fasten it from the saddle.

**Projectile ammunition**

When going out with an arquebus, fasten the priming flask and bamboo or wooden cleaning rod to a hook attached to the right side of the suspenders of the dō. The cartridges and bullets and powder will be carried at your waist. When going out with a bow, fasten your bowstring bag on the breastplate and put a spare ordinary bowstring and a kusune (a softer kind of string) into it. The shiko (quiver) will be carried at the right side of the waist, and the ebra (another kind of quiver) over the left shoulder.

**Jinbaori (surcoat worn over armour)**

The origin of the jinbaori is not known, but it is only a ceremonial garment for use in camp. It has the advantage of giving a more important appearance to the wearer. It is worn when beginning a march, retreating to rest, at inspections, when triumphantly returning, when calling upon anyone of higher rank than oneself, at the assembly of officers, when sent out as an ambassador, etc. Anyone holding an important position must wear it always.

**Sode-jirushi (badge worn in the sode) and Kasa-jirushi (worn on the helmet)**

These are used in place of the more cumbersome sashimono in night attacks, ambushes, sea fights and on stormy days. For ashigaru they are used as regimental badges. The length of the sode-jirushi is about 7 to 8 sun, and of the kasa jirushi from 1 shaku to 1 shaku 3 sun. The sode jirushi is worn on the right shoulder, and the kasa-jirushi attached to a ring at the back of the helmet. It is necessary to wear them to be easily recognised from a distance.

**Koshi-sashi (the badge of a horseman)**

It is made of leather or thick paper, and is about 3 sun square. It is attached by a short cord at one

corner to a short stick and carried stuck into the obi at the back of the waist.

#### **Maedate, wakidate, zudate, and ushirodate**

These are helmet badges, like the *kasa-jirushi*, and are all for the same purpose, but the names vary with their size and the part of the helmet on which they are worn. The little one is called *maedate* and is worn on the front, the large one is called *ushirodate* and is worn at the back. *Wakidate* are worn at both sides over the ears of the helmet and *zudate* on the top in the *tehen*.

#### **Agemaki (decorative tassels)**

These are only worn upon armour as decoration, and have no other function. They are usually in the shape of the character *jū* (+) but there are other recognised styles, the *hito* and *iri* shapes. The colour is generally red, but purple is used by people of higher class. The length when knotted is such as to reach to the waistline when the tops of the cords are fastened to the rings on the back of the shoulders.

#### **Dansen uchiwa (fan)**

This is an important article, carried by officers of high rank, and is used to ward off arrows and stones and also as a sunshade. It is of iron, sometimes solid, sometimes on a wooden core.

#### **Zai or saihai (baton of command)**

This is also a very important article for directing troops. Every *monogashira* (captain) and all officers of high rank carry it. To carry it fasten the cord to the ring of the right small piece on the upper part of

*In this detail from Tanki Yoriaku the samurai's tachi (sword) is slung by having its tying cords wound round the uwa-obi (belt). A spare bowstring reel is attached. The sword cords would be tied at the right side, or doubled back and tied at the left.*

the breastplate and put your left hand into the cord. When not in use put it at the back of your waist.

#### **Kegutsu (fur shoes)**

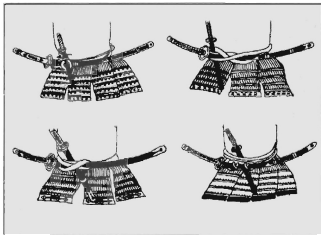
*Kegutsu* and *momo-tabi* are worn only for interviews with noblemen, as ordinary socks with sandals or bare feet are very vulgar.

#### **Nodachi (field sword)**

A very long and heavy sword was used from ancient times by very strong men. The limit of extra length of this kind of sword in comparison with the sword usually used by the same man is 25 per cent, i.e. so that if one's ordinary sword was 3 *shaku* long, the *nodachi* would be 3 *shaku* 9 *sun*. It is carried over the left shoulder with a narrow belt girdled from the left shoulder to the right side of the waist, so that the hilt will be over the left shoulder and the edge of the blade will be to the left.

#### **Koshiate (sword hangers)**

There are several varieties, especially *ryō goshiate* (double hangers). All kinds which are attached with cords will be worn in the same way, but there are two kinds which have no cords and are therefore worn differently, the *ita goshiate* (board loin pad) and *wanagoshiate* (loop loin pad). Swords may be carried without *koshiate* by putting them



between the folds of the obi. For use thus the obi must be wound thrice around the body so that the sword may be placed over the first and under the second and third turns, the last two being crossed. Another way is to put the tachi (long sword) edge downwards between the first and second turns of the obi, twist them across and then put in the tantō (dagger) a little forward in the same way. The long sword must always be put on first and the dagger afterwards.

#### **Shirizaya (scabbard cover)**

This is generally made from the fur of tiger, bear or deer. In olden times it was used by all classes but at present only by the higher grades of officers.

#### **Happuri (head and cheek cover)**

There are two types, of which one gives more protection to the cheeks than the other.

#### **Kusari-katabira (light under-armor made of small chain mail)**

This is worn exactly as an ordinary kimono. Kusari gote (chain kote) and kusari-kiahhan (chain leggings) are also worn like ordinary ones. Kusarui-zukin (chain cap) must be fastened under the chin by a cord; there is a hole at the top of this cap to allow the passage of the motodori (queue of hair). The hachimaki or turban containing an iron protection for the forehead is to be put on with the protected side in front and tied at the back of the head. Care is to be taken that it does not become loose.

#### **Haramaki (belly protector)**

This is generally made of silk, lined with the same material, and contains either chain mail or articulated iron plates. It is put on from the front and fastened behind the back with cords.

#### **Horō (arrow entangler)**

There are so many different kinds of horō made to suit the fancy of the wearers that it is impossible to describe all. The sizes vary from five haba (five pieces of ordinary width cotton cloth joined together) to seven haba. Each haba measures about 1 shaku and a five-haba horō is about 5 shaku square. The number of cords varies from

six to twelve. The oikago (basket or framework) also varies. In ancient times it was worn without the staff. It is said to have been invented by Hatakeyama Masanaga in the Ōnin Period (1467-8). It is recorded that in ancient times the upper and lower ends of the horō were bordered with brocade, and the centre strip of cloth was lined and had either bonji (sanskrit characters) or the owner's name written in a large scale on it.



*In this detail from a painted screen, a samurai wearing a white horō adjusts his saddle girth. Unlike a European saddle, the girth fastened on top of the horse's back. The horō was a form of stiffened cloak stretched over a bamboo framework. During the Sengoku Period it was frequently adopted by the tsukai (messengers) so that they were instantly recognisable on the battlefield. His bow is already strung for action, and he has draped it round his shoulders. He wears one armour sleeve only, on his left arm, leaving his right arm free for drawing the bow. The details of the saddle and horse furniture are typical of the Gempel Wars.*



The staffless horō was secured by seven fasteners, one attached to the eri (upper border) a cord at each corner, and a tab at the centre of each side. In putting it on the eri-fastener was secured to the horōtsuke (ring for the purpose on the back of the corselet), then the two upper cords were pulled forward over the shoulders, the tabs being brought under the arms to meet them and the upper cords being put through; the tabs were tied on the chest.

The horō is a very important overcloth of military men. It is very wise to carry it always because it drives away all sorts of calamity and misfortune, and when you are killed on the battlefield the enemy will understand, as they recognise the horō, that the dead man was not a common person, and so your corpse will be well treated. When fighting, the horō must be fastened to the ring which is called horotsuke no kan. When you have killed an enemy who wears the horō, wrap his head, which you cut off, in a piece of his horō.

When anyone is exhausted and decides to die in the field, he must fasten the cord of his helmet to the haigashira, then cut it off to show that it will never be put on again. Also, he must fasten that cord of the horō which is called hino-o (probably the centre fastening of the top border) to the horō-fastening ring on the helmet and fasten the cord called nami-tatazu no o to the hole in the stirrup. This also shows that he will fight no more. Further, one must cut off the ends of the obi and throw away the scabbard of the sword - this has the same significance.

### Putting on armour quickly

If anyone desires to put on armour quickly in camp, it is necessary to prepare in advance, and to make the following arrangements. The kote, sashimono and all other small adjuncts must be secured to the dō in advance, and the tatemono (horns or crest) and kasa-jirushi to the helmet and all hooks and fastenings must be prepared. All articles of minor importance such as suneate, haidate, etc must be omitted.

I will now show you one of the quick ways of dressing. Hang up your armour to the ceiling of the room by a thin hempen rope fastened to the watakami (shoulder straps). The armour must hang at the level at which it will be when you

stand erect in it. Now kneel down and rise up into it from below, putting your left hand first into its sleeve and then the right. Then tie the belt which has been fastened in advance to the kurijime no o (cords of the opening of the dō). Then put on your helmet and swords.

There is another way. Place your armour upon an armour box and arrange all the attachments in advance. Then kneel down, open the hikiawase, put the left arm into its sleeve and your body into the dō, then put your right arm into its sleeve, hook the suspenders on the front of the shoulders, tie your obi and put on your swords; then sit down on the armour case and put sandals on your feet. The helmet will be put on last.

There is one more way. When the armour is lying at your side, kneel down on your right knee, take up the armour and place it on your left knee, open the hikiawase and put your left arm in first, at the same time putting your body into the dō, then place your left kote on your head for a moment and hook the suspenders, then place your right hand in the right kote, and proceed as before.

### Miscellaneous notes

The technical terms used for parts of armour are frequently varied by different authorities. Most of them have been very long in use, some were taken from the names of inventors or makers of the several details, and others from names of remarkably brave men who used them, and it is very difficult to arrive at the origins of many. Almost all armour made recently is very heavy. This may be good for commanders who are mounted, but it is a great disadvantage for the lower ranks of infantrymen who do the actual fighting. It is advisable for these men not to wear too heavy armour, even if they are strong enough to carry it, nor should they wear armour of too unusual a kind.

Several medicines and remedies for wounds and sudden illness will be carried in a small packet fastened to the ring of the chigakushi or to the cord of the aibiki.

You must also carry a water bottle to contain about one or two gō of water. Put this into a net round the waist. Or you may carry some umeboshi (pickled plums), putting them in a small piece of cotton cloth hung to the end of the watakami (shoulder straps).

## WEARING ARMOUR IN UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Difficult fighting conditions required the samurai to be selective in his choice of armour, as the following account from the *Tanki Yoriaku* shows. It also includes some useful tips for comfort in armour:

"If you feel pain in your body after removing your armour, put small silk pads 2 or 3 sun square between the armour and the part where you feel pain. When tightening your belt, the best way is to stand upright and shake the *dō* by jumping up and down. If you wish to do it in a resting position, put both knees on the ground and shake the *dō* as before."

When anyone is wounded or not strong enough to wear armour he may go without. We then call him *suhada mono*, an unarmed one. In such a case the head will be covered with a headband, and the legs by *hakama* and *suneate*, and the body with the *kigomi-baori* (war coat). The badges such as *sode jirushi* and *kasa jirushi* must be always carried, so that it may not be said that merely from the absence of armour that one is not a fighting man.

"You must not wear *haidate* and *menpo* (mask) when fighting very hard and all unimportant items of equipment are then best omitted. For hard fighters with the sword, the sword handle should have attached to it a sword knot.

"When attacking an enemy who occupies higher ground than oneself *suneate* are less important than *hōate* (mask) but the reverse is the case if the enemy be upon lower ground in which latter case too such missile weapons as the arquebus and the bow and arrows have advantages over the sword, spear or *naginata*. The last-named weapons are superior to missile weapons in an attack upon an enemy occupying higher ground. Thus the choice of weapons depends upon distance and situation.

"When crossing rivers and swamps it is advisable to take off *haidate* and *suneate* and to lift up the *kusazuri* and fasten them up. As to the sandals, an extra tie should be put in the centre. For muddy swamps put extra bamboo bottoms and little hoops to your sandals so that you will never be caught by sticky mud.

"When climbing over a high wall take your mask off and place your sword vertically. Put your arm in the sword knot, making it as long as possible, and use the *tsuba* for a step.

"For fighting in a boat, put on only the *dō* and helmet and take off all other pieces, such as the *kote*, etc, and carry small *sode jirushi* (sleeve badges) instead of the *horō*, *sashimono*, *kamidate* and *wakidate*.

"When you fall down wearing armour, cross your legs to stand up again, or you may spring up from a kneeling position.

"When you feel tired, giddy or hot, lift up the *dō* of your armour a little and rest it on your under *obi* so as to reduce the weight on your shoulders, and have a rest for a while.

"When you are sweating heavily in very hot weather, untie the *takahimo*, unhook the *aibiki* and pull the breast-plate forward and wipe yourself slowly.

"If you want to drink water without taking off your mask you can drink by using an arrow for a tube.

"When you desire to march noiselessly in the case of a night attack, wrap your knee protectors with the lower part of the *hakama*, put a gag in the mouth of your horse and bind the bridle with a piece of cotton cloth.

"When putting socks and sandals on in camp, sit on an armour box, and if that is not available, upon some other object raised from the ground.

"In encampment it is always wise to carry a towel fastened to a ring on the *dō* and dip it in cold water to wet your mouth for refreshing yourself." (Garbutt 1912: 180).

Carry also some powders mixed with *kunroku* [a sort of perfume] beneath the underwear. It will keep off all sorts of insects, of which there are some quite poisonous ones.

When you take off your armour and weapons begin from the top and work downwards, and from the right to the left.

Armour boxes are best made of light wood. *Kiri* (paulownia) and *hinoki* (pine) are very good but *harinuki* (papier-mâché) is better than either. Make them up so that they can be attached to the two ends of a pole carried on the shoulders, but they can also be piled up and carried on the back by means of a cord instead of a pole.

Great care must be taken in selecting all armour and weapons, for the relative advantages and disadvantages of different kinds, and qualities and systems are great.

#### Ashigaru armour and general equipment

The ashigaru of the Sengoku Period wore armour that was similar to that of the samurai, but of much simpler design. In a letter sent on 5 May 1596 by Ankokuji Ekei to Mōri Terumoto, we read a reference to the existence of rules for ashigaru equipment:

"The teppō-shū (firearms company) have armour. This is in accordance with the regulations."

By the end of the Sengoku Period there were few families not sensible enough to supply armour to the ashigaru, but on the Ōsaka screen and the Shimabara screen, which are major contemporary sources, fighting men may be seen not wearing armour. For the arquebus corps, who were always in close proximity to an enemy attack, armour was a necessity. Most families armoured all their troops, as indicated by the *Zōhyō Monogatari* where Matsudaira Nobuoki's ashigaru used *okashi gusoku* (honourable loan armour) with the family's *mon* on front and rear. This *mon* was the main means of identification, or, as an alternative, they carried *sashimono* on the back. These were usually two or three flags, identical in design to the flags used by samurai, but much smaller, as in *Bukō Zakki*:

"Although the ashigaru were moving under cover through the thicket, the enemy could see those who were wearing *sashimono*."

Ashigaru would not normally wear either *sode* (shoulder guards) or *suneate* (leg guards), and instead of a helmet there was the simple *jingasa*. The *jingasa* could be of soft leather, but on the battlefield an iron hat was best because it could then be used as a cooking pot. In *Meiryō Kōhan* we read:

"A thin iron *jingasa* is good, at the same time one can cook one's meals in it."

The *teppō ko gashira* (arquebus lieutenant) was distinguished by carrying a red-lacquered bamboo stick inside which was a spare ramrod. The *yumi ko gashira* wore a quiver on his back, and the *yari ko gashira* carried a short spear, but their equip-



*This illustration from the Zōhyō Monogatari shows a member of an arquebus squad with his weapon. His spare ramrods, a vital necessity, are thrust through his belt wrapped in cloth. A long fuse is wrapped round his left forearm, and his two loan swords are thrust through his belt under his armour.*

ment was otherwise the same. The *jingasa* bore the family's *mon*, and hanging from it was a sunshade in the form of a cloth. The swords were worn under the armour, and there were close fitting trousers and *waraji* (sandals). A long strip of cloth was divided into twelve spherical sections for provisions, and slung round the body.

The archer ashigaru's spare bowstring hung on the left side, with the quiver hanging from the

right and the bow carried in the hand. The spear ashigaru had several types of scabbards, with spear lengths up to three ken. Besides these the flag-carrying ashigaru had a leather pouch on the right side, or a tube on the back. Flags in olden times were carried at the front, but from the Sengoku Period many were carried on the back. The larger *uma-jirushi* (standard) bearers were equipped similarly, with the carrying tube on the back. The bow carriers for the high-ranking samurai had a bow and replacement on a bow stand carried at the shoulder. Spear carriers, sandal bearers and grooms were similarly attired, and those employed as baggage carriers, drum carriers, conch blowers and so on had armour, but ashigaru below these ranks for the most part wore breeches and shirt, a haori and a short sword with a *jingasa*.

The process of arming an ashigaru was very similar to that of a samurai. Beneath the underwear was a *fundoshi*, then a shirt cut off at the knees (like tight-sleeved underwear) and trousers, tied at the knees and at the ankles by cords, and gaiters might also be worn. An *uwa-obi* was tied tightly around the waist. They would have a bag for personal use, while everyone had handkerchiefs under the armour. Next, a rolled-up long cord like a *tasuki* was tied up on the right side, and a pair of simple *kote* worn. *Waraji* (straw sandals) were worn on the feet, but on swampy or damp ground in the vicinity of water, footwear was not used. The large and small swords (in most cases just the large one) were put into the *uwa obi*. The smaller was adjusted to breast height, while the *katana* was put on the left side. Most swords were loan equipment.

The body armour was then put on. The high cords were brought together, and the cords that pull against each other were tied, the winding cotton cord was also tied and folded under the armour so that it would not come untied in battle. Next the provision bags were tied and the *jingasa* was put on. A head cloth or towel, useful on the battlefield, was wound round the head under the *jingasa*. Besides this the firearms group had leather pouches, the archers a quiver, and others various equipment. To protect from rain they might have a padded cloth haori, tied at the cuff with a cord. Sleeveless haori were also worn. In the

bags might be paper, medicine, *umeboshi*, pepper grains (as antidotes to poison) and small change, and there are also cases where writing brushes and small knives are put in, and also cord, etc. In the *Zōhyō Monogatari* red peppers and so on are recorded to ward off the cold.

In the *Shutsubi nimotsu kantei* (Regulations for baggage transport) of the Edo Period, there occurs the following list of ashigaru equipment to be taken along. Samurai would of course require much more transport for their more elaborate needs. The table below notes the weight (explained in the separate section in weights and measures), and the number of items:

kawa gusoku (leather armour)	1 kanme	2
kimono	320 monme	1
katabira (light kimono)	150 monme	1
haori	130 monme	1
kama (sickle)	75 monme	1 item
nata (hatchet)	80 monme	1
kokera kami (shingle paper)	400 monme	2
irotatsu mushiro (straw mat)	450 monme	2
hoshiki (thin cord)	400 monme	2 lengths
noko (saw)	70 monme	1
kappa (raincoat)	390 monme	1
hanagami (handkerchief paper)		2
hinawa (fuse cord)	50 monme	5
hiuchi (tinder)	8 monme	1
tsuigi (kindling wood)	10 monme	5 bundles
kushi dogu (comb tool)	25 monme	1
suito (water bottle)	130 monme	1
mizusu (water sucking tube)	3 monme	1
meshi zuto (food bag)	10 monme	1
tenugui (towel)	9 monme	1
3-shaku tenugui (3 feet long towel)	13 monme	1
kudakasa (roll-up sedge hat)	45 monme	1
koshi kohana (basket for the waist)	20 monme	1
kakuhan (gaiters)	25 monme	1

momohiki (close-fitting trousers)	65 monme	1
waraji (sandals)	16 monme	2 pairs
Total	4 kanme	226 monme
including	548 monme	
	carried by oneself	
	3 kanme	800
	monme by packhorse	

### SAMURAI COSTUME IN PEACETIME

The clothes a samurai would expect to wear when not in armour changed very little throughout history. The samurai of the Gempel Wars were men whose proficiency in riding horses was almost a badge of rank, and this is shown in the court costumes of the time, where the clothes have gathered trousers which would be suitable for wearing in the saddle. The sword, known as a tachi, was slung from a belt, and carried with the cutting edge downwards. To draw this weapon the samurai would have to hold the scabbard with his left hand. This would not be a particularly fast movement, and illustrates the primacy of the role of mounted archer above that of swordsman.

The major change noticeable during the Sengoku Period was that when the samurai was not in armour the sword was now worn with the cutting edge uppermost, allowing a devastating draw that could disable an opponent in one stroke. This long sword (katana) was also accompanied by a shorter weapon known as the wakizashi, and possession of this pair of swords (daishō) was to be the distinguishing mark of the samurai class until their abolition in modern times. The clothes worn with the daishō would depend upon the degree of formality of the occasion. The basic male dress was the kimono, a long, wide-sleeved garment like a dressing gown, reaching to well below the knee. It was sometimes worn over a similarly shaped undergarment that showed at the neck. It would be held in at the waist by a long sash-like belt which was wrapped two or three times round the body before being tied at the front. Into this belt the samurai would thrust his katana and wakizashi.



*This illustration shows a chūgen, where the word means a low-ranking carrier, not a fighting man. He has two poor-quality loan swords. His ration bags are tied round his body.*

The kimono would suffice if the samurai was off to enjoy himself on a summer's evening, and probably all that he would wear underneath it would be a fundoshi (loincloth). Otherwise he would wear in addition a pair of hakama, the characteristic samurai trousers. The hakama were rather like a divided skirt. They were stiffened and had a low crotch with large openings at the side, and were held in place by two sets of ties at the front and rear, which fastened around the waist. The hakama came to the ankle, and when these were worn, the swords would still be carried in the belt below. On his feet the samurai would wear the type of socks known as tabi, which had a separate compartment for the big toe. The tabi might be omitted in summer, but the samurai would never go barefoot out of doors. He would usually wear straw sandals called waraji or zori, or sometimes a pair of geta, the high wooden clogs made like a platform. Geta would never be worn if there was a chance of danger, because quick movement in

them was very difficult. As is indicated in many Japanese movies, the samurai had to be ready to fight at a moment's notice, and when danger threatened he would speedily prepare his loose clothing for the fray. The hakama would be hitched up inside the belt, thus allowing the legs free movement, while the sleeves would be tied back with the tasuki, a narrow sash that was passed in front of the arms and crossed on the back. An experienced swordsman could perform both tasks in a few seconds.

For more formal occasions such as guard duty in a castle, the samurai would augment the hakama with a jacket called the kataginu, thus making a combination costume called a kamishimo (upper and lower). The kataginu was a curious form of jacket with no sleeves, in which the shoulder and back were quilted and stiffened so that they stood out like wings. The kataginu would be of the same colour as the hakama, thus forming a distinctive uniform that contrasted with the hues of the kimono beneath. A decorative, yet very important feature of the kamishimo was the use of mon stencilled on to the front straps of the kataginu, the middle of the back of the kataginu, the sleeves of the kimono and the top rear of the hakama. Alternatively, a looser jacket called a haori could be worn instead of the kataginu. The haori would hang over the sword scabbard, giving the samurai a characteristic appearance as he walked along. The hakama were not very suitable for a mounted man, so he would change into kobakama, the tighter-fitting type of trousers. Contemporary illustrations also show kobakama being worn by men on foot on the sankin kōdai, the regular trips to Edo which the daimyō were required to make to pay their respects to the shogun.

On very formal occasions such as an actual presentation to the shogun, a daimyō would be expected to wear the nagabakama. These were extremely long trousers that trailed on the floor behind the wearer. It was considered a mark of good breeding simply to be able to move in them, a feat that required supreme co-ordination. It also ensured that a samurai wearing nagabakama would find it impossible to perform an assassination, or at the very least to run away afterwards.

One important aspect of the samurai's appearance was the dressing of the hair, a matter upon

which much care and attention was lavished. To even the lowliest samurai, having a single hair out of place was a disgrace. Woodblock prints often make this point by showing the desperate and defeated samurai in battle with his dishevelled hair streaming in the wind. It became customary during the early sixteenth century to shave off the hair from the front part of the head. This had originally been intended to provide comfort when wearing a helmet, but by the end of the century it had become a mere whim of fashion. The tonsured portion of the head was called the sakayaki, and what hair remained was drawn back into a motodori (queue or pigtail) on the back of the head.

There were two ways of making this queue. One was called chasen-gami, because of a fanciful resemblance to the bamboo tea whisk used in the



*In this detail from the Ehon Taikōki a samurai is shown wearing the kamishimo, the official dress of hakama (trousers) and kataginu (winged jacket), over a kimono. His hair is tied back and his two swords are at his side, although the katana is slung rather than thrust through the belt. Note the mon on his costume. His hair has been shaved from the front of his head, and the pigtail is gathered in a small chasen-gami (tea whisk) style.*

Japanese tea ceremony. It involved coiling a piece of string round and round the lower half of the *motodori* so as to make it stick out in a tuft like a shaving brush. The other style, which was more common, was to gather the oiled hair into a long, narrow, cylindrical queue at the back of the head, bend it forward and then back again and tie it in place. This style was called *mitsu-ori*, or threefold. A variation on this style was called *futatsu-ori*, where the queue was bent forward only over the *sakayaki*. The end of the queue, however it was made, would be neatly trimmed with a razor.

Young samurai, however, did not trim the forelock. This unshaven part was trimmed to make a triangular shape, and was regarded as a feature of great beauty among young boys. Some samurai did not shave the head at all, but had all their hair combed back. Tokugawa Ieyasu spoke against this practice because he reckoned it spoiled the look of a head when it was cut off.

## BOWS AND EDGED WEAPONS

### The Japanese bow

To the first samurai, prowess with the bow was rated as of far greater importance than skill with a sword, and the later mystique of the Japanese sword had yet to be created. In fact they referred to their calling as 'The Way of Horse and Bow'. Archery has a long history in Japan, and there are references to mounted archers as early as AD672, in the chronicle called the *Nihongi*. The design of the traditional Japanese bow which the samurai wielded was very similar to that used today in the martial art of *kyūdō*. To limit the stress on the bow when drawn, the weapon had to be long, usually six *shaku*, and wound round by one *shaku* of rattan, and because of its use from horseback it was loosed from one-third of the way up its length.

To obtain the power needed in a war bow while retaining a cross-section of reasonable proportions, it was necessary to adopt a laminated structure. The bows in the Gempei Wars were of deciduous wood backed with bamboo on the side furthest from the archer. Later on, the performance was enhanced by adding an additional facing of bamboo. The rattan binding reinforced

the poor adhesive qualities of the glue used to fasten the sections together, but as the glue could also be weakened by damp, the whole bow was lacquered to weatherproof it.

Bowstrings were of plant fibre, usually hemp or ramie, coated with wax to give a hard smooth surface, and in some cases the long bow needed more than one person to string it. Techniques of drawing the bow were based on those needed when the bow was fired from the back of a horse. In this traditional way the archer held the bow above his head to clear the horse, and then moved his hands apart as the bow was brought down, to end with the left arm straight and the right hand near the right ear. A high level of accuracy resulted from hours of practice on ranges where the arrows were discharged at small wooden

### ARCHERY IN THE SENGOKU PERIOD

Although spears and arquebuses may have dominated the battlefield during the Sengoku Period, skill with a bow and arrow was still prized, and could be very useful in the battle situation. The *Hosokawa-ki*, from which the following section is taken, illustrates several other points as well - a commander leading a charge, a skilled archer, and the hazards presented by armour:

Matsunaga Danjō Hisahide was encamped on Mount Shōgunjizo and on the 9th day of the 6th month of the first year of Eiroku (1558) launched an attack with an army of 5000 soldiers against Rokkaku Yoshikata of Ōmi. Both sides attacked each other and fought their hardest for many days, but finally the forces from Ōmi were vanquished and fifty-three men were killed. Seeing the chance of winning, Matsunaga led his troops in an attack on the retreating soldiers, shouting, 'I am Matsunaga Danjō Hisahide!' At that a famous archer named Chikurin among the Ōmi troops aimed at him and shot. Whether because of Matsunaga's luck or because the monk Chikurin's string caught his chest armour, the arrow missed its mark and hit Matsunaga's horse. The horse collapsed, but Matsunaga survived as he jumped down on the left side.

targets while the horse was galloping along. This became the traditional art of yabusame, still performed at festivals. The archer, dressed nowadays in traditional hunting gear, discharges the bow at right angles to his direction of movement.

The bow has an honourable place in the history of the samurai fighting arts. For example, take the *Azuma Kagami* account of the Shōkyū War of 1221:

"Thirty court warriors made a stand, raining arrows on the Easterners from behind their shields... As Hatano Gorō Yoshishige stepped out, he was hit in the right eye. His senses reeled, but he was able to shoot an answering arrow."

There are many other incidents of skill with the bow and arrow, notably the herculean Minamoto Tametomo, who is credited with using a bow and arrow to sink a ship belonging to the Taira by hitting it just below the waterline. At the battle of Yashima in 1184 the Taira hung a fan from the mast of one of their ships and invited the Minamoto to shoot it down, hoping thereby to persuade them to waste precious arrows. Nasu Yoichi hit the fan with his first arrow, even though he was on horseback in the water and the boat he was aiming at was rocking on the waves.

Nasu Yoichi's feat illustrates the fact that archery while wearing armour was a more difficult proposition than yabusame. The targets to be fired at in battle did not usually remain static, and the design of the armour also meant that the angle of fire was considerably restricted. Nevertheless, no account of early samurai warfare is complete without a description of an archery duel. In the twelfth century the bow would be used at the start of a set-piece battle, which would begin by the firing of signal arrows high into the air over the enemy lines. Each arrow had a large, bulb-like perforated wooden head which whistled as it flew through the air. The sound was a call to the kami (the Shintō gods) to draw their attention to the great deeds of bravery which were about to be performed by rival warriors. The samurai would then commence a fierce archery exchange, with varying degrees of success, and then one or more feats of individual combat by élite warriors until the battle became general.

The bows used later in history by the ashigaru were identical to the samurai version. By the Sengoku Period, the use of bows from horseback by

samurai was a comparatively rare event, but the bow still had the asymmetrical hand-grip, and was fired in a similar way. Alternatively, and more common with ashigaru on a heated battlefield, was a technique of firing a bow that began with the bow held horizontally and level with the waist. To release, the fingers supporting the thumb were relaxed, at which the bow, having discharged the arrow, rotated in the hand so that it ended with the string touching the outside of the bow arm. The arrows were of bamboo. The nock was cut just above a node for strength, and three fletchings fitted.

### The samurai sword

In the popular mind, the notion of the samurai and his sword are inseparable concepts. Tokugawa Ieyasu, after all, reminded his descendants that the sword was 'the soul of the samurai', and the possession of two swords, the long katana and the shorter wakizashi, was both the samurai's badge and his pride. Such pride was justified in two ways: the technological achievement of sword making, and the equally superb achievement of sword fighting.

Historians of swordsmanship have always been divided over the relative merits of swords that were designed as cutting weapons and swords that were used for thrusting. All, however, are agreed that among swords primarily intended as cutting weapons the Japanese sword stands supreme. This was partly due to the curvature of its blade, which allowed the very hard and very sharp cutting edge to slice into an opponent along a small area, which would then open up as the momentum of the swing continued, cutting through to the bone.

The other very important characteristic of the samurai sword is indicated by the fact that it is a two-handed weapon, held by a warrior facing squarely on to his opponent. The samurai never used shields. Instead the katana became both sword and shield, providing a unique example of a sword used defensively as well as offensively. Such techniques were not seen in Europe until the late sixteenth century, when rapier styles evolved to include blocking and parrying as well as thrusting, and the buckler was abandoned.

The defensive use of the samurai sword depended upon the immense strength and resilience of the sword's body and its broad back.



This enabled the samurai to deflect a blow aimed at him by knocking the attacking sword to one side with the flat of the blade and then following up with a stroke of his own. Contemporary swords from other cultures would have broken if such a practice had been tried - a superiority in Japanese design that was first illustrated during the Mongol invasions.

The subtle combination of the strength and suppleness required for the sword's defensive role and the hardness needed for its cutting power was a technical and metallurgical achievement that is quite astonishing, given the lack of knowledge on the part of the swordsmiths, of the underlying chemistry and physics of the process. Scientific knowledge, however, was hidden in the long years



*This print by Kuniyoshi from the series *Taiheiki Eiyūden* shows a samurai identified as Ishikawa Sadatomo fighting to the last at the battle of Shizugatake in 1583. He has lost his helmet, and lifts his sword in the classic two-handed grip above his bloodstained armour from which enemy arrows protrude. The edge of his blade is chipped from the activity to which he has subjected it.*

of experience and practical experimentation that produced the process outlined below.

The Japanese sword was of duplex construction, and consisted of a selectively hardened cutting edge embedded within a softer and springier body to give resilience. For these two parts the swordsmith required a small bar of wrought iron and a similar bar of tool steel. The early swordsmiths were probably iron smelters as well as swordsmiths, and would produce the materials required from iron ore, mixed with crushed charcoal and heated by the burning of charcoal. The smelting operation lasted for four days, at the end of which the furnaces were broken up and the metal extracted. The lump of crude iron so produced, called *tama hagane*, would be heated and flattened under a hammer, to produce a number of flattened platelets. A pile of these plates, coated with a flux made from clay and powdered whetstone in a thin slurry, would be forged out into a heavier piece of steel as a sword bar of about 12 cm by 14 cm and about 2 cm thick. The tool steel for the sword edge and outer zone was called *uagane*.

The *shingane* (soft iron core) was produced in a similar manner, except that it was exposed more often and longer to the air at a high temperature, so that it would lose almost all of its carbon. When a pile of platelets had been forged to a single solid plate, it was deeply grooved, folded over and again hot forged so that the surfaces welded tightly together. Such folding and re-forging was repeated, with the traces of the original pieces becoming thinner and thinner. Two bars, one of *uagane*, the other of *shingane*, were forged in this way. It is thought that at times the composite bar was re-folded sometimes longitudinally and sometimes crosswise, perhaps alternately. The great swordsmith Masamune used four bars of steel, each welded and doubled five times to make 2 to the power of twenty laminations, or 4,194,304 layers. The maximum ever recorded was 30 folds. The number of laminations resulting from this process would therefore be 10,736,461,824 layers, each one like a tiny sword blade!

With the two grades of steel at his disposal, the swordsmith was now in a position to combine the laminated steel for the core and the quench-hardening tool steel for the exterior. The simplest way

was to weld a piece of shingane material on to a plate of uagane, the former being slightly smaller to ensure that it was fully enclosed, and then to fold the two-layered material together with the soft steel inside. Another method was to insert a bar of soft tool steel into a forged U-shaped trough of tool steel, and then to close it and thereafter forge them. Some swordsmiths used more

complex combinations. This bar, elongated on the anvil and fairly well shaped towards the contour of the final blade, was then slowly cooled (for softness) and brought to nearly its final shape by a kind of hand scraper that was pushed along the blade rather than being pulled. When this process reached the stage where the only metal that needed to be removed would be what would come

#### TSUKAHARA BOKUDEN - THE WANDERING SWORDSMAN

One popular image of the samurai is that of the wandering swordsman, travelling from place to place, fighting duels, then wandering once more. There were many individual samurai during the Sengoku Period who held that status through no fault of their own. The rōnin, literally 'men of the waves', were samurai who had no master to serve owing to the destruction of their clan in battle, the disgrace of their master, or personal dismissal. Most rōnin did not wander for long, but found employment with ease as daimyō competed for good-quality men to defend and expand their territories.

Other 'wandering swordsmen' of history were kengō (master swordsmen) like Kamilizumi Nobutsuna or Miyamoto Musashi, who went on a musha shugyō, or 'warrior pilgrimage' to improve their skills. It was akin to the common Japanese practice of making long religious pilgrimages to distant parts, thereby obtaining spiritual enlightenment through endeavour and personal discomfort. Probably the earliest recorded musha shugyō was performed by a certain Haneo Unno who lived between 1509 and 1579; but perhaps the most famous name to become a wandering swordsman was the celebrated Tsukahara Bokuden (1490-1572). There are few written accounts of his life, but a lively oral tradition tells us that he was born in 1490 in Kashima, in Hitachi province. His father combined the professions of samurai and Shinto priest, the latter vocation being based at the Kashima shrine where was enshrined the spirit of a god of martial arts. It is therefore not surprising that the young Bokuden was trained from an early age in sword-fighting skills.

At the early age of 17, Bokuden's adoptive father gave him permission to set out on a musha-shugyō, and among those whom Bokuden defeated was a renowned swordsman called Ochiai. Bokuden spared his life, but it was such a disgrace to Ochiai to have been defeated by this young upstart that he lay in wait to murder him, and on their second encounter he was killed by a rapid stroke of Bokuden's sword. Following his initial musha-shugyō, Bokuden had to take his place in the armies of his daimyō. Bokuden fought in 39 separate engagements, and was involved in single combat 19 times. He was apparently very good at singling out enemy commanders and killing them.

By the age of 37, he had formed his own unique style of sword fighting, which he named the Shinto-ryū. On his second musha-shugyō he was invited to Kyōto to teach kenjutsu (sword fighting) to the Ashikaga shoguns, the greatest commission any kengō could receive. When he went on his third musha-shugyō he was attended by 80 followers. It is believed that his secrets were passed on to Kitabatake Tomonori, the daimyō of Ise province and his trusted pupil, who was charged with initiating Bokuden's son into them when the boy was old enough. Tomonori did in fact pass them on to Bokuden's heir, but when Bokuden died in 1571 at the ripe old age of 81, his successors became the victims of forces far beyond the control of an individual swordsman. The Kitabatake suffered from the expansion into Ise province of Oda Nobunaga, and Tomonori died defending his land. It is not clear whether he was killed on the battlefield or murdered by treacherous retainers, as accounts differ. Nor is anything known of the fate of Bokuden's son, apart from a few fascinating legends about him joining the ninja of Iga.

off when the finished blade was sharpened and polished, the most interesting process in the forging now took place. This was the heating and selective quench hardening. In other words, only part of the blade, the cutting edge, was hardened.

To do this, the smith coated the whole blade in a stiff paste of clay and water. The insulating clay was removed from the edge of the blade only, to a distance of a few millimetres. The remaining clay was dried and the whole blade brought to the uniform hardening temperature. This was a difficult process, particularly for a long sword. It was then quickly immersed in a trough of water 'having the temperature acquired during the first lunar month'. If the clay was well distributed and did not crack off, hardening was accomplished only within the desired zone, and in a pattern on the metal surface determined by the manner in which the clay was removed. Some smiths would choose a particular design of wavy lines as their hallmark.

The hardened blade was carefully examined, and if no cracks or faults were found, the long process of polishing would begin. The first removal of scale and metal was done by rubbing on a very coarse abrasive stone. At this point, the curvature of the blade could be adjusted by heating the back of the blade and pressing it against a copper block. Polishing continued with a succession of finer-grained stones until the final polishing was undertaken, a matter over which much secrecy was maintained. This would produce a brilliance in the characteristic wavy line known as the *yakiba*, where the hardened and unhardened steel areas met.

The hardened cutting edge could then be sharpened to produce a cutting surface that was without parallel anywhere in the world, and the whole blade was mounted in a handle to produce the weapon that is so familiar today. A *tsuba* (sword guard) protected the hands, while cord twisted round the handle gave a secure grip. When civilian dress was worn, both swords would be thrust through the belt, but as this was impractical when wearing armour, the *katana* was slung from a belt or a *koshiate* (sword carrier) in much the same way as the *tachi* (long sword) had been carried in civilian dress in the earlier period. The *wakizashi* was not worn with armour, but replaced by a *tantō* (dagger).



*The devastating cutting power of a Japanese sword, which in the right hands could cut through an iron helmet bowl, is vividly illustrated in this picture of the samurai Wakiya Yoshisuke, who was the brother of Nitta Yoshisada and died in 1340. His strong downwards cut, using the full power which could be given to a two-handed weapon, has allowed the blade to dig deeply into his opponent's head.*

Testing of swords was carried out to confirm that they had the correct balance and would cut effectively. The cutting test was sometimes carried out on live bodies in the form of condemned criminals, but far more common was to have the sword's power tested on corpses, or on bundles of rushes bound around a bamboo core. A corpse was sometimes hung up and cut through either sideways or downwards. Alternatively, corpses could be piled up on sand and cut through, and as many as seven are said to have been severed by one sword stroke from a superior blade. Although we may assume that outside the battlefield situation the samurai sword left its scabbard on mercifully fewer occasions than Japanese movies would have us believe, the weapon was deadly in the hands of a master. To

The use of swords and spears is illustrated here in two panels from a triptych print showing the fighting by moonlight during the Iga vendetta of 1634. In the foreground stands Araki Mata'emon, wielding his two swords, the katana and the wakizashi, at the same time. The samurai kimono or haori (jackets) have their sleeves tied back with a tasuki (sash), and their hakama (trousers) are pulled through their belts to leave their legs free for movement. The patterns on sleeves and body may indicate rudimentary armour beneath the clothes.



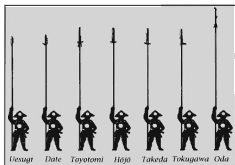
kill in one stroke from the samurai's belt was an ideal perfected by more than one expert in handling this most perfect of edged weapons.

#### Samurai and ashigaru polearms

At the time of the Gemppei Wars, the use of polearms was largely confined to the employment of naginata by foot-soldiers. These weapons, the Japanese glaive, were like an enormous sword blade on a long wooden shaft, and were particularly favoured by the sōhei. By the beginning of the Sengoku Period, however, the mounted samurai archer had been replaced by the spear-wielding samurai cavalryman, whose devastating charges were to be put to such good effect by the Takeda at Mikata ga Hara in 1572. Further details of their use on the battlefield may be found in Chapter III.

For much of the Sengoku Period, the most common ashigaru weapon was the long spear. The shaft was of composite construction, with a core of hardwood such as oak, surrounded by laminations of bamboo. The whole shaft was lacquered to weatherproof it. The early spears were the same length as the samurai ones that were used from the saddle, i.e. about 3 or 4 metres. However, there was a noticeable lengthening of the shaft of the ashigaru weapon as the century progressed and the successful daimyō realised the value of their use as a defensive weapon, thus producing the nagae-yari (long-shafted spear). The total length of nagae-yari differed from clan to clan according to the general's preference, the length of shaft being

usually about 3 ken. At the start of the Sengoku Period, one ken was equivalent to 1.6 metres (the dimensions changed later to 1.8 metres), so the length of the spear shaft would have been 4.8 metres. The Takeda used a nagae-yari shaft of 3 ken. Uesugi Kenshin used a shaft of 2.5 ken, while his successor Kagekatsu used 3 ken at about the time of Sekigahara, as did Toyotomi Hideyoshi. The Tokugawa also used a 3 ken shaft. Oda Nobunaga used the longest spears of all, with a giant 3.5 ken (5.6 metres) shaft. This would appear to be a development Nobunaga adopted quite early in his career, because there is a reference to them in his *Shinchōkoki* for April 1553.



A comparison of the preferred spear lengths for the ashigaru nagae-yari as used by various daimyō. For further details see the accompanying text.



*An illustration from Ehon Taikōki showing the firing of thunder crash bombs by Korean artillerymen into a Japanese fortified camp. The artist has shown them being fired from cannon with wide, reinforced breech sections rather than from mortars. The fact that these are exploding bombs rather than cannonballs is well illustrated.*

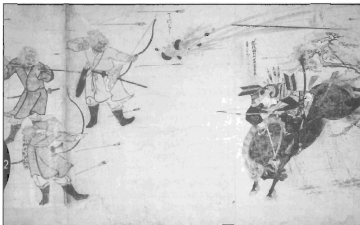
### GUNPOWDER WEAPONS

Throughout Japanese history, the practitioners of samurai warfare were acutely conscious of the presence across the seas of the vast land of China with its well-developed military tradition. Yet the study of Chinese influence on samurai warfare remains one of the most neglected aspects of Japanese military history, even though it has great bearing on one of the most important innovations in military technology of the Sengoku Period: the introduction of gunpowder weapons.

On two occasions within the period of time covered in this book, the nations of Japan and

China came to blows. These were the Mongol invasions of 1274 and 1281, and the Korean expeditions of 1592 and 1597, when samurai armies felt the impact of Chinese military technology, an experience that was particularly acute in the field of explosive weapons. There were, in addition, several instances of Chinese military science being brought to bear against the depredations of Japanese pirates, and certain noteworthy examples of peaceful transmission of military lore through international trade and diplomacy.

We will note in passing that the earliest example of the use of Chinese weaponry by peaceful transmission would appear to be the employment of the



*A thunder crash bomb (shin ten rai - in Chinese zhen tian lei) explodes in front of a mounted samurai during the Mongol invasion of 1274 in this well-known section from the Moko Shūrai Ekotoba. This important picture shows the first experience in Japan of Chinese gunpowder weapons. Note how the iron fragments of the casing burst and spread.*

ōyumi, or crossbow. The actual form of this weapon is not known, as no specimen has survived in archaeological sites, and there were several possible versions of the Chinese design which could have been adopted. There appear to have been two ōyumi between each 50-man company, suggesting that they were heavy weapons operated from the ground, rather than hand arms, and another source speaks of 'arrows falling like rain', which indicates that they were variants of the Chinese repeating style of crossbow. One account of its use says that 'even tens of thousands of barbarians cannot bear up to the arrows of one machine'. It was, however, a complex weapon to operate, and there is considerable evidence that skills in its use gradually declined. Repeated requests were made for skilled ōyumi operators to teach the conscripts. A certain Miyoshi Kyotsura lamented in 914 that 'those named do not yet even know of the existence of the weapon called the ōyumi, still less how to use the springs and bowstrings'. By the middle of the tenth century the ōyumi is found only as a siege weapon, and by the time the Gempei War began in 1180, it had fallen completely out of favour.

### The Japanese experience of Chinese explosive weapons

The impact of Chinese weapons involving gunpowder was far longer lasting, beginning with the first Mongol attempt at invasion in 1274, which introduced the samurai for the first time to Chinese gunpowder weapons. In addition to the unfamiliar pattern of attacks by phalanxes of troops and clouds of anonymous arrows, a unique feature of the Mongol attacks was the launching of explosive projectiles, thrown by some form of catapult, against the Japanese troops. The use of these bombs is one of the best-known aspects of the Mongol invasions, and may be found illustrated on a very prominent section of the *Moko Shūrai Ekotoba*, the 'Mongol Invasion Scroll', which a certain Takezaki Suenaga had painted shortly after the war as proof of his achievements. The bomb is exploding in front of a mounted samurai, sending its contents towards him. The *Taiheiki* describes how these mighty iron balls, known as *teppō*, were flung:

"They rolled down the hills like cartwheels, sounded like thunder, and looked like bolts of

lightning. Two or three thousand of them were thrown at a time, and many soldiers were burned to death."

Another Japanese account, from the *Hachiman Gudōkun*, reads:

"The commanding general kept his position on high ground, and directed the various detachments as need be with signals from hand drums. But whenever the Mongol soldiers took to flight, they sent iron bomb shells flying against us, which made our side dizzy and confused. Our soldiers were frightened out of their wits by the thundering explosions, their eyes were blinded, their ears deafened, so that they could hardly distinguish east from west."

The same weapons were used again during the more protracted attempt at invasion in 1281. Several possibilities exist as to what these exploding bombs actually were, but the most likely candidates are the weapons developed in China before the Mongol subjugation and called in Chinese *zhen tian lei* ('thunder crash bombs'). The characters literally read 'the thunder that shakes the heavens'. *Zhen tian lei* consisted of explosive packed into a hard iron casing, as distinct from the varieties possessing a weak casing discussed below. The first appearance of the name is found in the year 1231, when they were used by the Chinese against the Mongols. The Chinese general escaped with his men down the Yellow River:

"The Mongols pursued them along the northern bank with clamour and uproar of drums, while arrows and stones fell like rain. Now several li away a Mongolian fleet came out and intercepted them, so that they could not get through. But the Chinese ships had on board a supply of those fire bombs called thunder crash missiles, and they hurled these at the enemy. The flashes and flame could distinctly be seen."

Thunder crash bombs were used again the following year, in a major operation to defend the city of Kaifeng against the Mongols. The besieging army was under the command of Ogodai Khan's celebrated general Subotai, so the defenders needed all the ingenuity they could muster, including the delivery of thunder crash bombs by an unconventional means.

"Among the weapons of the defenders there was the 'heaven-shaking thunder crash bomb'. It

consisted of gunpowder put into an iron container; then when the fuse was lit and the projectile was shot off, there was a great explosion the noise whereof was like thunder, audible for more than a hundred li, and the vegetation was scorched and blasted by the heat over an area of more than half a mou. When hit, even iron armour was pierced through. Therefore the Mongol soldiers made cowhide sheets to cover their approach trenches and men beneath the walls, and dug, as it were, niches each large enough to contain a man, hoping that in this way the troops above would not be able to do anything about it. But someone suggested the technique of lowering the thunder crash bombs on iron chains. When these reached the trenches where the Mongols were making their dugouts, the bombs were set off, with the result that the cowhide and the attacking soldiers were all blown to bits, not even a trace being left behind."

The thunder crash bombs did not, however, save the city, which fell to the Mongols.

Between 1267 and 1273, the Mongols besieged Xiang-yang on the Han river. By this time both sides were using explosive bombs. The following year, 1274, saw the same weapons being used against the Japanese defenders of the beach at Hakata, and it is interesting to read a reference to thunder crash bombs dating from some three centuries later, although by now they appear to be regarded as museum pieces. Needham gives us an eye-witness account from 1522 of a visitor to Shansi who saw some old thunder crash bombs on the city wall:

"In the spring I was sent to Shansi and there at Sian on the city wall I saw some old cast-iron bombshells, of the kind that were known in former times as 'heaven shaking thunder crash bombs'. In shape they were like two bowls that could be joined together to make a ball, and at the top there was a small hole the size of a finger. These things are not used by the army now."

The impression given to the visitor that such weapons were redundant does not, however, appear to be borne out by subsequent events, because thunder crash bombs were employed by the Korean defenders of Haengju against the Japanese invaders in 1593, and were used again later that same year, when the first invasion was over and the Japanese role had become one of

garrisoning a series of fortified camps. A surprise attack was launched on the fortress of Kyōngju. An account appears in the *Chōhōroku*:

"A hi geki shin ten rai (flying attacking thunder crash bomb) fell into the courtyard of the lodgings of the castle. As to the insurgents, we could not work out who they were, and having gathered to argue about it and examine it we were knocked flat by what was packed into it as it suddenly exploded and broke into pieces of iron that flew like stars. More than thirty men were struck by them and died. The men who were not hit got up after a little while, but they could not fathom the device, all saying that it was a thing from the gods. Because of the insurgents, we abandoned the castle and withdrew to Sōsaengpo."

It is interesting to speculate whether any of the Japanese samurai in Korea, who took such pride in their illustrious pedigrees, were aware of any of their own ancestors who had experienced identical weapons three centuries earlier!

It may be noted that a separate account claims the shin ten rai as a Korean innovation, and credits it to a certain Yi Chang Son. There was certainly a major difference between these Korean thunder crash bombs and the earlier Chinese varieties in the means of propulsion. Those used in 1593 were not fired from a catapult but out of a mortar, of which

"the mouth was as large as a big earthenware rice bowl. If it were shot once the cannon ball went as far as 500 or 600 paces and after it fell to the ground, fire came out. This was the best thing by which to destroy the enemy fortifications."

An extant specimen of such a mortar (in Japanese *dai wanko*) in the Seoul Museum has a bore of 272 mm, a total length of 64.4 cm and a weight of 310 kg. A specimen of thunder crash bomb measures 210 mm in diameter and weighs 21.6 kg. It is noted that the bore could be up to 36 cm, and that there were several different sizes.

It may also be the case that the Japanese used thunder crash bombs themselves during the Korean invasions. There is a painted screen in Kagoshima which depicts the victory of Shimazu Yoshihiro at Sach'ōn in 1598 and shows a large explosion taking place within the Chinese and Korean ranks. However, the way the burst is shown, with an even spread, may indicate that this

was the other, weak-cased variety of explosive projectile invented by the Chinese, which is dealt with in the following section. There does not appear to be any evidence for the Japanese using mortars, and the above account indeed speaks to the contrary, because of the wonder caused by the nature of the unfamiliar weapon. Further evidence is provided by the request made to Dutch traders in 1638 to cast some mortars for the Japanese. This was immediately after the siege of Hara castle, with which the Shimabara rebellion ended, implying that the shogun's army can have had no mortars of its own.

We noted earlier a reference to thunder crash bombs being lowered into the Mongol trenches during the siege of 1232. In 1277 we read a similar account of a siege involving the use of a very large fire bomb against the Mongols, whereby 'the city wall was split in two, and the smoke and dust filled the heavens'. The implication of such weapons is that, being too large to be projected, they were effectively land-mines, another form of gunpowder technology developed in China and used in Japan. The mines were detonated either by a remote fuse, or were triggered by the enemy in a variety of ingenious ways. There is a clear reference, in Sadler's description in *The Maker of Modern Japan* of the summer campaign of Ōsaka, to the use of a land-mine. When the Ōsaka forces retreated, Mori Katsunaga's unit set off a land-mine as Tōdō Takatora's army pursued them, doing 'considerable damage'. One other piece of pictorial evidence, however, may be misleading. This is a print by Kuniyoshi of the death of Morozumi Masakiyo at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561. The print was once believed to show the explosion of a land-mine, but a blast from a thunder crash bomb would be more likely. The caption also refers to a 'rocket', a misunderstanding of how the bombs were delivered, but implying that they were fired rather than buried.

When we turn to the other form of Chinese catapult bomb, those with weak casings, there are clear and unambiguous records of their use in Japan. The Chinese term is pi li huo chui, or pi li pao, translated by Needham as 'thunderclap fireball', or 'thunderclap bomb', respectively. The main difference between thunderclap fireballs and



*A cutaway drawing of a soft-casing catapult bomb called hekireki kakyū (thunderclap fireball). The lacquered paper casing is filled with gunpowder and pieces of broken porcelain. The fuse is inserted through a bamboo tube. The weight of the object is indicated by the fitting of a wheel and a dragging handle.*

thunder crash bombs is that the latter had iron casings, while the explosive mixture of the former was packed within a casing of lacquered paper. Weak casing bombs are much older in origin than strong casing ones. Their effect would appear to have been more of creating alarm than actual damage, but developments whereby fragments of iron or porcelain were mixed in with the gunpowder gave it the ability to cause serious injury. We are offered a detailed description in a document from the eleventh century:

"The thunderclap fireball contains a length of two or three internodes of dry bamboo with a diameter of 1.5 in. There must be no cracks, and the septa are to be retained to avoid any leakage. Thirty pieces of broken porcelain the size of iron coins are mixed with 3 or 4 lb of gunpowder, and packed around the bamboo tube. The tube is wrapped within the ball, but with about an inch or so protruding at each end. A powder mixture is then applied all over the outer surface of the ball."

Although not noted here, the outer casing is of several layers of paper.

"If the enemy digs a tunnel to attack the city then a sap must be excavated so as to connect with it. A red-hot iron brand is used to set off the thunderclap bomb, which produces a noise indeed like thunder. Bamboo fans are used to drive the smoke and flame down the tunnel, so as to stifle and burn the enemy's sappers."

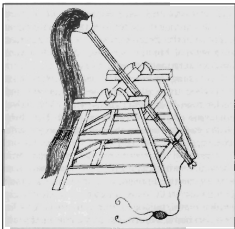
A note is added that 'the soldier setting off the bomb should suck some liquorice as a protection'.



A contemporary illustration shows the ends of the bamboo protruding from the fireball, to which wheels and a dragging handle have been fitted, indicating that they were quite heavy to move around.

As noted above, the bombs used during the Mongol invasions of Japan have been identified as the strong casing thunder crash bombs, rather than the older thunderclap fireballs, yet it is the weak-cased variety which we find being used by Japanese armies over a century later. Their introduction would appear to have been the direct result of the re-establishment of diplomatic and trading links with China that the Mongol invasions had severed, coupled with a renewed study of Chinese military writings, from about 1400 onward. A prominent family in this regard were the Hosokawa, whose descendants were to play such an important role in the Ōnin War, and it was in the second year of this bitter conflict (1468) that such weapons were used by the Japanese. The Hosokawa side fired thunderclap fireballs from their defences into the lines of the Yamana. The account is from the *Hekizan Nichiroku*:

"A craftsman from Yamato province came to the camp, and constructed hatsusekiboku. At the



*The form of Chinese catapult powered by men pulling on ropes rather than the Muslim counter-weighted system, which was used to shoot thunderclap fireballs during the Ōnin War in 1468.*

place where the stones hit their mark they broke completely into fragments. They were machines which fired stones and devices like Chinese plums, used as siege engines... The operators fired loads of stone or destroyed armies by spreading fire within their ranks. They were called *hekirekisha* (thunderclap wagons). Further, the strategy for these machines' operation was to use stones of 12 *kin* in weight. They went about 300 paces."

Hatsusekiboku is an archaic Japanese rendering of 'tōsekiki' (stone-firing catapults). The anonymous craftsman clearly used his catapults to fire both stones and thunderclap fireballs. Not only do the written characters match (the full Japanese title reads *hekireki kakyū*), but the description of them as being like 'Chinese plums' is a vivid likeness. The catapults used were operated entirely by manpower. Instead of the counter weighted trebuchet design familiar from descriptions of medieval European siege warfare, the *hatsusekiboku* were fired by 40 foot-soldiers simultaneously pulling on 12-metre-long ropes. The thunderclap fireballs, with time fuses burning, were hurled into the air and flew as far as 300 or 400 metres into the Yamana lines. There they exploded like real claps of thunder out of a clear blue sky, scattering black smoke and their injurious contents far and wide.

It is unfortunate that we do not have any record of the effect such operations had on the Yamana samurai. A Chinese account from 1207 may give clues as to the reaction:

"Simultaneously the thunderclap bombs and the fire arrows were sent into the enemy's camp. How many were killed and wounded in this attack could not be known, but men and horses were thrown into confusion and trampled one another."

Evidence for further use of thunderclap fireballs is sparse. As noted above, a thunderclap fireball is a possible explanation for the explosion at *Sach'ōn* on the Shimazu screen. Sadler's description of the preparations for the siege of Ōsaka in 1614 mentions that every hundred yards or so the defenders erected a 'fire-projecting mangonel'. This implies a catapult, firing either thunderclap fireballs or some other form of incendiary, but in the absence of the original source, the characters cannot be identified.

The best evidence for the Japanese use of fire-bombs occurs in the records of naval warfare. As

warships were made of wood, to set fire to an enemy's vessels was sound tactics, and the Mōri family, whose fleet controlled the Inland Sea for many years, and supported the Ikkō-ikki against Ōda Nobunaga, produced the model weapon in the form of a small version of the thunderclap bomb which was effectively a hand grenade. It was made from two hemispheres of unglazed earthenware, filled with gunpowder and perhaps lead shot or iron fragments, and with a fuse. To assist throwing, a short rope was attached, or the bombs could be hurled by a net attached to a pole.

The *Shinchōkoki* contains a reference to Sakuma Uemon, one of Nobunaga's naval commanders, being attacked and having his ship set on fire in this way. Sasama in *Buke Senjin Saho Shūsei* shows in addition a variety of small catapult, presumably to increase the range, which operated by means of a springy wooden arm rather than by men pulling on ropes. The grenades were called *hōrokubiya* (literally 'cooking pot fire arrows') to distinguish them from the *bō hiya* ('shafted fire arrows') shot from bows. Larger varieties of *bō hiya* were wooden rockets, fired from large bore arquebuses. The *Gizan Gokaku* tells of Kobayakawa Takakage, who was of the Mōri family and steeped in their traditions, ordering *bō hiya* to be fired, which 'fell like rain'.

### From fire-lances to firearms

In the field of exploding bombs, therefore, the Japanese adopted one military innovation from China while rejecting a different variety of the same weapon. The introduction of firearms to Japan is another complex issue in which China played a considerable, yet hitherto unacknowledged role. Returning to the Ōnin War and the account cited above, elsewhere in the *Hekizan Nichiroku* we read:

"Within the camp of Hosokawa Masayuki they were equipped with *hihō* and *hisō*."

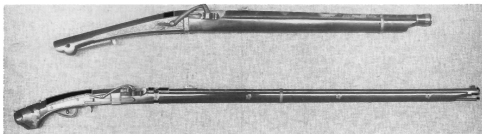
*Hihō* (literally 'flying bombs') refers to the thunderclap fireballs, but *hisō* ('fire-spears') indicates that Japanese armies of the mid-fifteenth century were making use of another Chinese innovation, the fire-spear or fire-lance. This device predated both the thunderclap fireball and the thunder crash bomb, and was, as Needham so convincingly points out, the ancestor of the gun

barrel. A fire-lance consisted basically of a five-minute flame-thrower on the end of a pole. The flames would be directed towards the enemy, causing burns, frightening horses, and setting fire to fortifications from a short distance. Their use during the first half of the fourteenth century against enemies that included Japanese pirates is shown by a reference in a memoir by a Yuan general who fought against coastal rebels and pirates during the 1340s and 1350s. Two sorts of fire-lances are noted. The first, literally a 'sky-filling smoke-spurting tube', fired bits of broken porcelain and produced smoke that had an effect similar to tear gas. The second, the 'heaven-flying spurting tube', produced balls of arsenic-based poison amongst its flames.

From devices that emitted projectiles out of a tube along with flames, it is but a short conjectural step towards arms that can properly be termed guns, where the emission of projectiles is the main intention. There is no space here to go into great detail about how the Chinese made that important progression, of which the introduction of a metal barrel for fire lances was a vital stage, but it is possible to identify certain key occasions of relevance to our theme of the military contact between China and Japan. Some difficulty has been caused in the past interpretation of key texts by the continued use of the term *huo pao*, an expression that first refers to trebuchets, and later to guns. For example, in 1287 we read of foot-soldiers carrying and using *huo pao*:

"Li Thing chose gun soldiers (*chong zu*) concealing those who bore the *huo pao* on their backs; then by night he crossed the river, moved upstream, and fired off (the weapons). This threw all the enemy's horses and men into great confusion..."

The use of the term *chong* (gun) and *huo pao* in the same account indicates that this detachment was a primitive Chinese firearms unit. Its simple handguns would have consisted of a muzzle-loaded barrel, bulbous around the touch-hole for extra strength, a touch-hole for a slow match, and a socket with a wooden handle. The oldest bronze guns known in China from archaeological investigation also date from around this time, which begs the intriguing question of whether such weapons were used against the Japanese during



*Two fine examples of the Japanese arquebus derived from Portuguese originals, showing the external brass spring on the lower one.*

the Mongol invasions. The evidence remains inconclusive. One account mentions fire barrels (thuo tong) for both invasions, but this could mean fire-lances, because a separate source speaks of General Fan Wen-Hu using 'poisoned arrows shot from barrels'. The famous thunder crash bombs, of course, have a contemporary illustration to aid their identification.

By the mid-fourteenth century, however, the references in Chinese literature are clearly to weapons identifiable as guns, and we do not have to look far before we hear of them being used against the Japanese. From 1356 onward, Korea was being harassed by Japanese pirates, and sent a special envoy to the Chinese court requesting firearms. The request was granted, and by 1377 handguns and bombards were being systematically manufactured in Korea following Chinese models. Some of these weapons fired wooden arrows fitted with metal heads and fins. Such guns were the prototypes of the artillery which served the Korean navy so well in Admiral Yi's campaigns against the invading Japanese in 1592.

For developments in hand-held weapons we need to look at about the year 1400, when the stock began to be shaped so as to fit the shoulder, and the serpentine was invented. The serpentine was a simple S-shaped lever which was pivoted and allowed the match to fall upon the touch-hole. The lowering of the serpentine by means of a trigger dates from about 1475. This takes us to within 40 years of a very important event, when a yamabushi (mountain ascetic) priest who lived in Odawara brought to the daimyō Hōjō Ujitsuna a matchlock gun that had recently been imported from China, and which he obtained in the town of Sakai, the significance of which we shall discuss later. This incident, which happened in 1510, is

recorded in the *Hōjō Godaiki*, and has long been regarded as providing the classic instance of the non-transmission of a military innovation, because nothing appears to have arisen from Ujitsuna's acquisition of the weapon. In 1543 we have the introduction of the Portuguese arquebus, and any Chinese guns seem to have been completely disregarded.

Dramatic confirmation, however, that Chinese guns were used in Japanese warfare comes in the *Kōyō Gunkan*. The battle in question was Uedahara, fought in 1548 between Takeda Shingen and Murakami Yoshikiyo, at which the Takeda were defeated and lost one of their best generals, Itagaki Nobukata. The *Kōyō Gunkan* makes no reference to firearms in its actual account of the battle, which no doubt explains why their use has not been picked up. Instead the reference occurs in the chapter that follows the battle narrative, where Murakami is found discussing the battle with Uesugi Kenshin. He explains how he prepared to deal with the devastating Takeda cavalry charge:

"As defence against the horsemen I chose two hundred skilled shooters out of the army and to one hundred and fifty soldiers I gave five well made arrows and a bow; and to the rest gave matchlocks imported in the seventh year of Eishō with three bullets. They were ordered to shoot when they were told and to throw them away later and fight with swords. And for the gun shooters, I ordered to shoot the guns after the arrows were shot, and placed an officer for each five shooters."

The inclusion of the date of introduction of these weapons, 1510, confirms that Murakami

Yoshikiyo was using Chinese matchlocks. One thing that is clear is that the guns do not seem to have been at all effective in the battle. Was this because of their design, their small numbers, or because of how they were used? Turning first to the design, it is more than likely that the guns were fairly primitive when compared to the Portuguese varieties. It is well established that Portuguese arquebuses came to China in 1548 via the Japanese pirates and were adopted as enthusiastically in China as they had been in Japan, which implies that they were perceived as superior.

The Chinese expression for the arquebus was *niao chong* ('bird-gun') or *niao zui chong* ('bird-beak gun'), the reference to birds being either from the action of the cock, like the pecking of a bird, or from their use as fowling pieces. Illustrations of such weapons date only from 1562. The stocks are short, like pistol grips, but otherwise they resemble the Portuguese models. The most likely design for the 1510 varieties would be a simple arquebus which the Portuguese models were to supersede, but unfortunately we do not appear to have any illustration of a weapon of about 1510. We do know that when the Japanese set themselves to copy the Portuguese weapons the major problem they faced was how to stop the end of the barrel after it had been forged into a tube from a flat sheet of iron. According to tradition, the secret was passed on to the putative gunsmith in exchange for his daughter! The implication of this story is that the earlier Chinese weapons may have differed in that their barrels were cast rather than folded, or made from two strips of iron welded together.

Whatever the design of these mysterious guns may have been, the instructions given to the gunners betray an ignorance of their potential although there is an apparent appreciation of their short range. The archers are ordered to shoot first, then the gunners (each of whom only has three bullets) are to follow. Without giving them time to reload they are then to discard the guns and fight with swords. The shortage of supply may have been inevitable, but it would not be long in Japanese history before the benefits of using guns in large-scale volleys became apparent.

Uedahara took place the year before the usually accepted date when guns were first used in battle

in Japan. This happened at the siege of Kajiki in Ōsumi province against an allied army led by Hijitsuki Kanenobu, and was a victory gained by guns for the Shimazu, in whose province the Portuguese had landed six years earlier. Six years further on, and far to the north, we come across Takeda Shingen once again. In 1555 he reinforced the garrison of Asahiya castle with 3000 men, among whom were 300 armed with matchlocks. When Uesugi Kenshin attacked at the beginning of the action that was to lead to the second battle of Kawanakajima, he was repulsed by the gunfire.

It is impossible to tell whether these guns were based on the earlier Chinese models or the later Portuguese ones. By this date Japan had several flourishing arsenals, so it is more than likely that the guns installed in Asahiya were now effectively 'Japanese matchlocks', whatever their ancestry may have been. It is clear that they are now being more effectively used, a matter that is of course independent of the guns' origins, and by this time, too, Portuguese arquebuses had been introduced into China by the Japanese. The wheel of innovation had now turned full circle.

### The dissemination and use of the Japanese arquebus

Although Shimazu Takahisa's victory at Kajiki is the first occasion on which the new Portuguese arquebuses were used in battle in Japan, they had already been used in action several times in the previous year by Japanese pirates; and it is a testimony to the professionalism of these feared warrior-adventurers that they should not only be the first to use them in anger, but became the means by which the new weapons were introduced to China.

Some dissemination had, however, already taken place in Japan by this date, through a complex web of social contacts and family connections. In the same year that the Portuguese arrived, a visitor to the Shimazu territories named Tsuda Katsunaga was given an arquebus as a gift. Katsunaga, who hailed from Kii province, happened to be the brother of the priest Sugino Myōsan of the Negoroji, one of the most formidable centres of warrior-monks. The gun, and information about its construction and use, was passed on to a local smith named Shibatsuji Kiyōemon, who soon began production of the



*This drawing shows the operation of a large-calibre arquebus. The gunner braces himself against a pile of rice straw sandbags to absorb the recoil. The caption notes that the gun had a range of 5 chō.*

weapons in large quantities for the Negoroji. In 1544 the Shimazu received a further visitor in the shape of Tachibana Yamatasaburō, a merchant from Sakai. It was from Sakai in 1510 that the first Chinese guns had been acquired and supplied to Hōjō Ujitsuna, and on Tachibana's return, the gunsmiths of Sakai, who were already producing the Chinese variety, switched production to the new models.

It was also in 1544 that gunmaking was introduced to the ironworking centre of Kunitomo, a town to the north-east of Lake Biwa. The commission came from no less a person than the shogun Ashikaga Yoshiharu through Hosokawa Harumoto, and by August of the same year the smiths had produced two weapons, each weighing 6 monme. It was, however, six years before either of those commissioning the weapons used them in battle.

The Kunitomo gunsmiths were soon to acquire their most prestigious customer, for among the martial accomplishments in which the young Oda

Nobunaga was being trained by his father Oda Nobuhide, we read in the *Shinchōkoki* of instruction in gunnery being provided by a certain Hashimoto Ippa. Oda Nobuhide was a far-sighted daimyō, and placed an order for 500 arquebuses from Kunitomo in 1549, their biggest order to date. Nobuhide died in 1551, and within two years of Nobunaga's accession there occurred his epic visit to his future father-in-law Saitō Dōsan. Nobunaga's marriage to Dōsan's daughter had been a condition of the peace accord between the two families, and Dōsan arranged the 1553 meeting as a way of intimidating his future son-in-law now that he was head of the clan. Oda Nobunaga arrived at the meeting accompanied by an impressive retinue of between 7 and 800 men, including 500 3½ ken-long spears, which were themselves innovative, and 500 ashigaru carrying guns, the sight of which stunned Dōsan.

The following year, 1554, Nobunaga demonstrated that he also knew how to use these new weapons when he attacked Imagawa Yoshimoto's Muraki castle on the Chūta peninsula. Nobunaga advanced to the edge of the moat, and organised relays of ashigaru with arquebuses to keep up a constant fire. This was a clear example of organised volley firing 25 years before Nagashino. Although he seems to have been the only practitioner of rotating volleys, Oda Nobunaga was not the only daimyō to appreciate that arquebuses needed to be used in large numbers. We noted above that in 1555, during the preliminary moves to the second battle of Kawanakajima, Takeda Shingen sent an army in which were 300 arquebuses to reinforce his ally Kurita Kazuju in Asahiya castle. Their presence helped save the castle from falling to a fierce attack from Uesugi Kenshin.

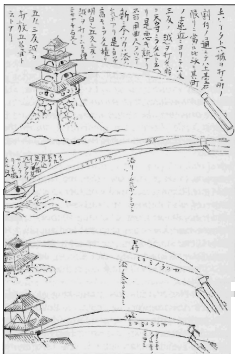
From 1550 onward, the records of guns being used in warfare become more numerous, although few seem to have shared Nobunaga's clear appreciation of how they might best be used. In 1550, arquebuses were employed in the defence of Nakanao castle in Yamashiro province by Ashikaga Yoshiharu. In that same year we read of an officer in the Miyoshi army falling victim to gunfire delivered by a firearms squad in the army of Hosokawa Harumoto when the Miyoshi advanced on Kyoto.

In 1560, a castle owned by Oda Nobunaga came under fire from a large number of guns. The castle was Marune, one of the Oda outposts attacked by Imagawa Yoshimoto's troops as they advanced into Nobunaga's territory. The leader of the attack on Marune was Matsudaira Motoyasu, the future Tokugawa Ieyasu, whose tactics are very revealing. He first made a sharp attack which was repulsed with some loss. Sensing victory, the castle commander Sakuma Morishige opened the gates and led his men out in a charge. Motoyasu was waiting for them with a concentrated fire of arquebuses and bows, and Morishige was shot dead, the first high-ranking general in Japanese history to be killed by a bullet. The castle then fell to an advance by Motoyasu.

By this time arquebuses were being used throughout Japan. The fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561 contains numerous references to firearms. In the far west of Kyūshū, in 1563, Juan Ichibu Kageyu, who was a vassal of the Matsuura family and had converted to Christianity, made good use of firearms at the battle of Aikō no Ura, and later used them against a gang of pirates who had come to raid his island of Ikitsuki. Two out of the three pirate ships were sunk, and when Juan Ichibu came to examine the corpses of the dead pirates, all had died from bullet wounds rather than from arrows. Kikkawa Motoharu, of the Mōri family, besieged a castle in Izumo province, and lost 33 men to gunfire. The following year, the Mōri are noted using arquebuses themselves in the attack on the Amako's castle of Toda. Also in 1564, the Ōtomo of Kyūshū are using guns against the Mōri. In 1565, the combined forces of Matsunaga Hisahide and Miyoshi Yoshitsugu used guns when they besieged the shogun Ashikaga Yoshiteru in his palace, and in 1566 arquebuses were used in the fighting between the Rokkaku and the Asai. In 1569, Oda Nobunaga's invasion of Ise province was met with arquebus fire from the Kitabatake, although it did not save Kitabatake Tomonori from defeat.

In 1570, Oda Nobunaga used 500 arquebuses at the battle of Ane-gawa, but later that year he was to find himself on the receiving end of large-scale arquebus fire. He had laid siege to the mighty Ishiyama Honganji, the headquarters of the

Ikkō-ikki. Within the castle were supporters from Saiga and Negoroji, Ikkō centres which had already established a reputation for themselves in using guns. Three thousand arquebus troops attacked Nobunaga's army at dead of night. The *Shinchōkoki* notes that 'the gunfire truly echoed through heaven and earth'. Subsequent accounts of the long siege of Ishiyama Honganji, which held out until 1580, contain numerous references to the use of guns. In one action, the battle of Mitsuji, in 1576, Oda Nobunaga was hit in the leg by a bullet. By 1571 Takeda Shingen was sufficiently impressed by the power of the arquebus that he could issue an order replacing spears by guns, and



*A drawing, probably based on information supplied by the Dutch, showing the considerations that lie behind the science of ballistics when applied to bombarding a castle tower from below, or boats from higher ground. The sights on the barrel are shown.*

both he and Tokugawa Ieyasu were to use them at their clash at Mikata ga Hara in 1572.

By the time of Nagashino, therefore, the use of large-scale arquebus fire by ashigaru was so well established that the presence of guns in a particular battle may almost be assumed. The *Shinchōkoki* account of Muraki is the only one where rotating volley fire is explicitly described, but it must not be ruled out for the Asahiyama, Marune and Ishiyama Honganji actions. Nobunaga's innovation at Nagashino was much more complex, because he applied these tactics to a particularly acute situation. Faced with the finest cavalry in Japan, he used a very large number of arquebuses firing rotating volleys protected by a loose palisade, a combination of known tactics strictly controlled by a rigid discipline. His victory was gained to the background of a careful division of labour between the ashigaru who broke the charge and the samurai swordsmen who completed the victory. The revolution that was the introduction of firearms to the Japanese battlefield may long have happened, but it was at Nagashino that it was to receive its most devastating expression.

### The technology of the Japanese arquebus

Section III will describe how these weapons were used on the battlefield by ashigaru, for whom the arquebus soon became the most important weapon. An arquebus was fired from the shoulder, with support needed only for the heavier-calibre versions developed later by the Japanese, which are usually known as 'wall guns' or 'hand cannon'. In a normal arquebus, an iron barrel fitted neatly into a wooden stock, to the right of which was a brass serpentine linked to a spring, which dropped the serpentine when the trigger was pulled. The serpentine contained the end of a glowing and smouldering match, the rest of which was wrapped around the stock of the gun, or wound around the gunner's arm. Arquebuses are therefore often called simply 'matchlocks'. To protect from premature explosions, the pan, into which the fine priming gunpowder had been carefully introduced, was closed by a brass sliding cover which was swung back at the last moment. The guns produced quite a recoil, and a lot of smoke. As skills developed, cartridges were introduced, thus speeding up the process of loading.

The best gunsmiths formed schools to pass on the tradition, such as those at Kunitomo and Sakai, and were never short of customers. Within the space of a few years, arquebuses were being produced to quality standards that exceeded those originally brought from Europe. One simple, yet fundamental, development, which occurred quite early on in Japanese arquebus production, was the standardisation of the bore. In Europe, where no form of standardisation was carried out, practically every gun needed its own bullet mould. In Japan, bores were standardised to a handful of sizes. Standard bores meant standard-sized bullets, which could be carried in bulk for an arquebus corps, a small but significant improvement.

The use of the arquebus on the battlefield has recently been examined by means of a series of practical experiments carried out in Japan. The first test was an assessment of the gun's range. Five bullets, each of 8 mm calibre, were fired at a target in the shape of an armoured samurai from distances of 30 metres and 50 metres respectively by an experienced matchlock user. At 30 metres each of the five bullets hit the target area of the chest, but only one out of the five struck the chest area over 50 metres. Even at 50 metres, however, a bullet that struck home on a man could do considerable damage, as shown by the results of the second experiment. Bullets of 9 mm calibre were fired against the following materials:

1. 24 mm wooden board
2. 48 mm wooden board
3. 1 mm iron plate
4. 2 mm iron plate.

At 30 metres each was pierced cleanly. At 50 metres '1' and '3' were again pierced through. The bullet entered the 48 mm board for three-quarters of its depth, and also entered the 2 mm iron plate, causing a dent on the inside, but not passing through. As the iron from which the scales of a typical *dō-maru* were made was of about 0.8 mm thickness, such armour could be holed by a bullet fired at 50 metres.

The third experiment tested the possible rate of fire. A single gunner took fifteen seconds to complete the process of load, prime, aim and fire, and in the experiment delivered six bullets in 100 seconds. (The time was measured from the

discharge of the first bullet.) In the case of the volley firing, working on the figure of fifteen seconds for reloading, the other two ranks were ordered to fire at five-second intervals, by which time the first gunner was again prepared. As a result, the three ranks delivered six bullets in thirty seconds, confirming the practicality of their use at Nagashino.

One disadvantage of the arquebus was its slow loading time compared to the bow, making it necessary for archers to provide cover for reloading. The chronicle *Meiryō Kohan* notes another problem, that of maintaining a constantly smouldering fuse:

"When firing an arquebus on the battlefield you will be in a hurry, so cut two or three 3-shaku lengths of fuse, and wind them round your right arm. These can be used as replacements as one naturally goes out."

Rain was of course an enormous problem, but it affected friend and foe alike in a field battle. The *Bumon Taihei Fuboki*, however, has a solution to the difficulty:

"In the matter of fuses for rainy weather, take 30 monme of gallnut, and 3 gō of tooth blackening powder, and put these two items into a pot. Boil three lengths of fuse in it. A variation is to use a mixture of 1 shō of strong tooth blackening powder and 1 gō of gallnut in a pot, and add ten lengths of fuse cord. Boil until the cord turns black. In rainy weather wrap the fuse in a towel and use as described above."

Even on occasions when the weather appeared fine, the gunner was advised to wrap the fuses once or twice in a cloth. As for the length of fuses, 4 hiro (one hiro is the length of the outstretched arms) is recommended. One feature associated with firearms on the battlefield was that they produced a great deal of noise and smoke. This could have the advantage of causing panic in an enemy, but it made arquebuses unsuitable for surprise attacks, where the smouldering matches would reveal one's position. Nonetheless, from the time of Nagashino onward, the arquebus had become the weapon par excellence of the lowly ashigaru.

#### ASHIGARU IN THE WAR CHRONICLES

It is surprising how many accounts from the Sengoku Period refer to the exploits of ashigaru. For example, one ashigaru of the Satake family was inspired by a dead samurai:

"There was a retainer of Satake Yoshinobu called Tadano Samon. He was expert in the ways of horse and bow, spear and sword, and furthermore became a samurai of great bravery and strength... At the time when this Samon went to the battlefield he wore a large sashimono. The sashimono was a flag of white cotton cloth on which was written in large characters, 'hitoashi-fu ko Tadano Samon' ('Tadano Samon who will not take one step backwards'). There was once a time when the Sasaki army were defeated in battle. One of their common soldiers had lost heart and retreated, but when he was about to drink water from a stream by the roadside, he saw the great sashimono where it had fallen into the water. He saw the characters on it, and regretted that he had retreated. This mere ashigaru hurried back and charged into the midst of the great army of the enemy. He fought with great desperation and took three helmeted heads... He ended his career with 200 koku."

During Oda Nobuo's invasion of Iga province in 1581, hundreds of ashigaru took part in a most unusual occurrence: the killing of an enemy general on the battlefield. Insult was added to injury because the killing was carried out not by a noble samurai in individual combat, but by a mob of lowly spearmen. The *Iran-ki* describes the scene as follows:

"The general Tsuge Saburōza'emon, who was not thought of as capable, was himself pursued and surrounded by spears. Several hundred soldiers flocked round him to take their vengeance, stabbing him together. They stabbed him many times until he died. It was then a misty moonlit night, and seeing the victory won at their hands the Iga samurai withdrew a step back from their violent and furious attack on him. As Tsuge Saburōza'emon was exhausted in body and in mind all need for defence had gone." (Momochi 1897 (2): 11)





**III  
STRATEGY AND  
TACTICS**

## STRATEGY AND TACTICS

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## SAMURAI ARMY ORGANISATION

### The development of the samurai army

During the Sengoku Period the nature of samurai warfare underwent a massive change. The pace was slow at first, but built up in momentum, until by the time of the battle of Sekigahara in 1600 a chronicler could note in wonder that he saw a samurai ride into battle carrying a bow. The major development was in the use of ashigaru, with an appreciation that men casually recruited could just as casually disappear to till the fields and swell the armies of an enemy. There was therefore a need for continuity, for development of skills, and, above all, for the inculcation of at least a little of that fanatical loyalty that was already expected from the samurai.

Both these trends developed as the Sengoku Period continued and battles, sieges and campaigns grew larger in scale. The final realisation was one that came later, and for some daimyō never came at all. This was a recognition that, although the ashigaru were different from samurai, their fighting skills could be complementary. In other words, the successful daimyō was one who took ashigaru seriously, and used them in a combination of arms, controlled, trained and drilled by samurai, but acknowl-

*The commander on a battlefield would sit on a camp-stool, as shown here in this figure from the Smithsonian, and direct troop movements using his saihai (tasselled fan). The dummy here wears old-fashioned fur boots associated with the Gempei Wars. His helmet is forged into a sharp ridge. The armour is a gold-lacquered ni mai iyozane dō laced in sugake odoshi, with the kusazuri (skirts) laced in kebiki odoshi.*

edged and valued for the contribution they could make to the achievement of victory.

One piece of evidence for this development lies in the numerous suits of armour made for ashigaru. Known simply as okashi gusoku (honourable loan armour), they are of plain construction, yet nearly all bear the daimyō's mon (badge), a simple heraldic device which transformed the ashigaru armour into what was effectively a military uniform. Some, notably the li clan from Hikone, dressed all their troops, including ashigaru, in uniformly coloured armour.

It was one thing, however, to dress the ashigaru in a uniform, but quite another to give him anything other than a subordinate place on the



battlefield. This tremendous change was directly linked to the choice of weaponry allocated to the ashigaru. During the heroic days of the Gempei Wars, the samurai weapon par excellence was the bow, and prowess at archery was the most prized samurai accomplishment. Yet by about 1530 we see ashigaru used regularly as missile troops, while the mounted samurai fight with spears rather than bows. From the 1550s onward, the ashigaru bows are augmented, and later almost replaced, by firearms, but for these to be effective they had to

be placed at the front of an army. However, the vanguard of a Japanese army was traditionally the position occupied by the most loyal and glorious samurai. There was also much honour attached to being the first into battle, a matter over which many samurai comrades almost came to blows. To place the lowest-ranking troops in such a position was a challenge to samurai pride, even allowing for a tactical consideration which envisaged the ashigaru's fire merely breaking down the enemy ranks ready for a spirited charge by samurai while

### THE ARMY OF TAKEDA SHINGEN

The *Kōyō Gunkan* is the great chronicle and gazetteer of the Takeda family. In one section the entire Takeda army of 1573 is set out. Following the importance of social ties in the samurai hierarchy, it consisted of three overall parts: jikishindan, sakikata-shū and kuni-shū.

The sakikata-shū were formerly defeated enemies, such as the Sanada family of Shinano, who had submitted to the Takeda and now provided loyal and valuable service. The kuni-shū (provincial corps) were levies from the villages, either poor, part-time samurai or ashigaru. Together with the jikishindan they made up the main samurai strength.

The name jikishidan (the 'close retainer' group) shows the importance attached to birth or hereditary vassalage. It was subdivided into four sections. The first two were:

1. goshinrui-shū (family members)
2. go fudai karō-shū (the hereditary vassals and chief retainers)

The great strength of the Takeda army was its cavalry, who operated as mounted units supported by personal attendants, and most of these élite troops came from the above two sections plus the sakikata-shū. The total for all the horsemen in the Takeda army in the *Kōyō Gunkan* list is 9121, and every horseman would have been accompanied by two followers on foot. The third section was:

3. ashigaru-taishō (generals of ashigaru)

There were 5489 ashigaru under the command of various leaders in the Takeda army, including the ashigaru-taishō's own personal command. The jikishindan was completed by:

4. hatamoto shoyakunin (personal attendants on the lord)

Takeda Shingen had a personal retinue of 884 ashigaru and servants, who made up the hatamoto-shoyakunin, to whom were added various notable samurai as bodyguard. The fine detail of the bodyguard, servants and other non-combatant roles makes interesting reading:

goryōnin shū (literally 'imperial property unit')	30
godobo shū (literally 'companions' from Echigo)	30
gosha odosama shū (samurai who were Buddhist priests)	5
	+30 followers
onzoku (sons of nobles)	1
mikosho (pages, often sons of retainers. Some have very famous surnames!)	24
gonando bugyū (storeroom commissioner)	2
godobo shū ('companions')	2
	+38 followers
nobori (banner bearer)	1
koji bugyō (government business commissioner)	3

the ashigaru politely held back. Yet by the 1590s such troop arrangements were commonplace, showing a profound difference in military attitude.

This trend was given a dramatic illustration in 1575 with Oda Nobunaga's victory at Nagashino. Oda Nobunaga, who was faced by the prospect of a devastating cavalry charge against him by the renowned samurai of the Takeda clan, lined up his arquebus squads into three ranks protected by a loose palisade. The ashigaru gunners fired controlled volleys into the horsemen, killing or

disorientating so many that they became easier prey for the samurai swords and spears. Nagashino thus showed that victories could be won by a combination of arms and ranks under firm leadership.

Recognition of the power of ashigaru units in armies was accompanied by a corresponding social change. One of the commanders on the winning side at Nagashino was Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who had begun his military career as an ashigaru. Hideyoshi's father, Ya'emon, had also

kanjo bugyō (finance commissioner)	3
gozosen shū (stores unit)	12
	+35 followers
nijūnin shū kashira (20 man unit leaders)	10
	+20 each
ochūgen kashira (chūgen leaders)	10
odaidokoro (kitchen staff)	12
chado bozu kashira (in charge of the tea ceremony and Buddhist priests)	2
	+10
go uhitsu shū (secretaries)	3
shokoku otsukai shū (messengers from all provinces)	4
mukade no sashimono shū (the élite messengers with the centipede on their flags)	16
ohata bugyō (the flag commissioner)	1
oyari bugyō (the spear commissioner)	3
otogi shū (personal attendants)	12
ohata tatenashi betto (flag and groom)	1
rōnin shū kashira (leader of rōnin)	3
saiku bugyō (the works commissioner)	1
uma i (horse doctor, i.e. vet)	1
sarugaku shū (sarugaku players, i.e. actors)	1
	+followers

Many of the Takeda Twenty-Four Generals began their military life as pages to their lord. Note also the three men who would have the difficult task of commanding the rōnin, men of the samurai class who had no master to fight for, and who had joined the Takeda effectively as mercenaries. The presence of a doctor for the horses is interesting, but it may well be that the personal attendants on Shingen had some medical skills. The sarugaku troupe sound like the Sengoku version of ENSA, but would have been for Shingen's personal enjoyment!

These figures would give a full Takeda army of 33,736, as follows:

Horsemen	9121
Two followers each	18,242
Ashigaru in the hatamoto-shoyakunin	884
Other ashigaru	5489
Total	33,736

(from the *Kōyō Gunkan in Sengoku Shiryō Sōshō*, vols 3-5)

been an ashigaru in the service of Oda Nobunaga's father, Oda Nobuhide. During one battle Ya'emon was shot in the leg and forced to withdraw from all combat duties. As a result, he lost the relationship he had with the Oda family and returned to the fields. His son, by contrast, rose through the ranks of Nobunaga's army, and the relationship developed with his promotion. Hideyoshi achieved samurai status, and after a series of brilliant campaigns went on to rule the whole of Japan.

Once Hideyoshi had achieved his goal, he began to pull up behind him the ladder of promotion that he had scaled so successfully. In 1587 he ordered a nationwide confiscation of all weapons from the peasantry, thus forcing all the daimyō in Japan to count on their own retainers to supply their armies. Some continued to rely on part-time soldiers and farmers, but those that prospered tended to make

a division between warriors and agricultural workers. Gradually the ashigaru, as fighting men, became separated from the soil, and turned into professional soldiers. This process was completed by Hideyoshi's successor, Tokugawa Ieyasu, who brought the Sengoku Period to its close. By now the ashigaru were firmly recognised as the 'other ranks' of a Japanese army, without whom victories could not be gained. With the establishment of the Tokugawa hegemony there came a rigid separation of the social classes of Japanese society. At the top were the samurai class, and the ashigaru were there among them, being from then on officially defined in social terms as the lowest ranks of the samurai, rather than the upper ranks of the peasantry.

With this acknowledgement of the ashigaru as samurai came further recognition in the form of a remarkable and unique book produced by a



leading samurai commander of the time. This work, entitled *Zōhyō Monogatari*, which translates literally as 'The Soldier's Tale', is a compilation written by a serving samurai who has had command of ashigaru and wishes to pass on to posterity his own tips on how to get the best out of these men. It was written by a certain Matsudaira Nobuoki. Nobuoki was the son of Matsudaira Nobutsuna, who commanded the shogun's forces during the Shimabara rebellion of 1638, the last action in which samurai armies were to be engaged.

As the Shimabara rebellion was conducted by renegade Christian samurai and disaffected farmers against the Tokugawa army, Matsudaira Nobuoki may have learned several lessons from observing the tenacity and fighting skills of his

*In this illustration from Zōhyō Monogatari two ashigaru spearmen are shown. They have short spears and cheap loan swords, but they appear to have used both to good effect as shown by the severed head carried as a trophy.*

opponents. *Zōhyō Monogatari* is a major source, but apart from its fascinating contents, its significance lies in the fact that it was written at all. The wars of the twelfth century produced a literature that concentrated almost exclusively on the individual prowess of named samurai. *Zōhyō Monogatari* is a handbook for the commanders of ashigaru, a class of fighting man whom the writer of the *Heike Monogatari*, for example, preferred to regard as non-existent.

### The command structure in samurai armies

Until the mid-sixteenth century most armies were disbanded at the end of a campaign. Some samurai, and virtually all the ashigaru, would return to their lands to be summoned again when the need arose. But once the daimyō began to realise that their samurai and ashigaru were a precious asset that they could not afford to lose at the end of a campaign, systems of organisation were introduced that paralleled the move towards uniformity of equipment and appearance. The organisation of a samurai army took two forms: a hierarchical command structure, invariably headed by samurai, and a considerable degree of specialisation in weapons and functions.

The samurai hierarchy depended on factors such as birth, hereditary vassalage, records of loyal service, and so on, and had a considerable social as well as military aspect. For the ashigaru, who made up the bulk of the army, the rank hierarchy was simpler, and stretched from ashigaru-taishō (general of ashigaru - a samurai rank) down to the unarmoured baggage carriers and casual labourers, while the fighting ashigaru role included three major weapon functions of arquebus, spear and bow, plus ashigaru who acted as samurai attendants, standard bearers, drummers and the like.

The overall command of ashigaru units was vested in the respected and reliable samurai called ashigaru-taishō. The Takeda family provides the best example. In the *Kōyō Gunkan*, the great chronicle of the Takeda compiled by one of Shingen's 'Twenty-Four Generals', several names appear under the list of ashigaru-taishō, for example:

"Yokota Jūrōbei 30 horsemen, 100 ashigaru  
Hara Koza'emon 10 horsemen, 50 ashigaru"

These figures probably indicate the men's

personal attendants only, as each would have responsibility for hundreds of ashigaru through a chain of command. Evidence that ashigaru-taishō were as highly regarded as were the commanders of purely samurai units is provided by the appearance of men bearing the rank of ashigaru-taishō within the élite of the Takeda family who were known as the 'Twenty-Four Generals'. As the closest associates of Takeda Shingen, these men formed the backbone of his command structure. Saigusa Moritomo, killed at the battle of Nagashino in 1575, was an ashigaru-taishō, as was Hara Toratane who, it was said, could make ten ashigaru fight like a hundred samurai.

A good example of the command exercised by an ashigaru-taishō is Ōtō Nagato no kami, who held Tawara castle for the Hōjō family at the time of Toyotomi Hideyoshi's expedition against them in 1590. He led more than ashigaru, as the note shows. We do not have a detailed breakdown of weaponry but the Ōtō army numbers off as follows:

Mounted samurai	75
Foot samurai	36
Ashigaru	115
Chūgen and komono (bearers)	26
Total	252

Turning to the rank below the ashigaru taishō, in the chronicle *Yoshihika Monogatari*, we read:

"To the blowing of conch shells the ashigaru-taishō of the fifty-man arquebus unit, Kumazawa Shūzei, Takahashi Shūkei, Shimura To'emon and the rest gradually sorted them out by pushing them into line."

The above quotation suggests a more 'hands-on' approach to generalship than might be expected from the rank of 'ashigaru general', and this impression is correct, because here the chronicler is using the term ashigaru-taishō to describe a rank otherwise known as ashigaru kashira (captain of ashigaru). The ashigaru kashira would have command of an ashigaru company, which was more than likely to be differentiated in terms of weapon function. Some units could be quite small in number:

"In this third year of Temmu (1617) Sakabe Sanjūrō Hirokatsu has become ashigaru kashira of 50 men."

The possession of surnames indicates the growing tendency towards samurai rank acquired



This illustration from the *Zōhyō Monogatari* shows a *teppō ko gashira*, who would be in charge of an arquebus squad. He carries a 'swagger stick' of bamboo, in which is kept a spare ramrod. His ration bags are tied around his body and he has a fuse reel round his left arm.

by ashigaru as the century progresses. In the *Kōyō Gunkan* we note:

"Lord Amari's ashigaru kashira, a person of merit in bow and arrow called Yonekura Tango-no-kami."

Beneath the ashigaru kashira were the leaders of the *buntai* (squads) called ashigaru ko gashira (lieutenants). In the *Kōyō Gunkan* one ashigaru kashira has five ashigaru ko gashira serving under him to command his company of 75 archers and

75 arquebusiers, so that every ko gashira has responsibility for 30 men. At this level we see a mixture of men with surnames and others without them. In the Satomi family records:

"In charge of 30 ashigaru are the 200 koku Ryūzaki Yaza'emon, the 200 koku Shojūrō..."

The ashigaru ko gashira was a vital element in the chain of command, because the ordinary ashigaru in their weapon squads served directly under him. The *Zōhyō Monogatari* notes how a ko gashira was selected:

"In the firearms squads they were chosen on the basis of marksmanship and speed of fire, the possession of a calm spirit, those who would not disengage when the enemy bullets began."

### The ashigaru weapon squads

Most ashigaru on a battlefield were assigned to the weapon squads who wielded the bows, spears and arquebuses described in the previous chapter. In 1592 the Shimazu army that went to Korea included 1500 archers, 1500 arquebuses and 300 spearmen, while in 1600 the Date family supplied the Tokugawa with 200 archers, 1200 arquebuses and 850 spearmen. One trend that can be readily identified is an overall increase in the number of firearms possessed, even if the proportion of them to other arms varies considerably. By the time arquebuses were introduced to Japan, missile weapons in the form of bows had already tended to become the province of the lower-class warrior, leaving the samurai free to engage at close quarters with a spear against a worthy opponent. It was therefore only natural that the new missile weapon, which had an even greater range, should be similarly regarded. However, some samurai chose to use arquebuses. Oda Nobunaga was trained in their use as a martial art, and we read in the *Jusen Kidan* (literally 'an account of gun fighting'):

"As a rule, on the battlefield, it is the job of the ashigaru to face on to the enemy and fire arquebuses in volleys into the midst of the enemy. As for the arquebuses owned by samurai, they are for shooting and bringing down an enemy of importance."

The arquebus men were under the direct command of a *teppō ko gashira* (lieutenant of the firearms squad). Judging by their representation on painted screens, a firearms unit would consist



of a series of groups of gunners, at least five per group, with each group accompanied by an archer. A number of these groups (between one and six) would be answerable to an individual *ko gashira*, but these numbers varied enormously from *daimyō* to *daimyō*. The *ko gashira* was recognisable by his possession of a length of red-lacquered bamboo reminiscent of a swagger stick, in which was kept a strong ramrod in case any gunner's own ramrod broke during action.

Some *ashigaru* archers were highly trained sharpshooters used as skirmishers, but their most important role was to share in the volley firing with the arquebuses. In the details given in the *Kōyō Gunkan* of the vanguard of the Takeda army a reference may be noted to '10 arquebuses and 5 bows'. The role of the archers in such units was to provide cover while the gunners reloaded. Even though they had a shorter range than the arquebus, and required a more practised operator, their rate of fire was far more rapid, and of course enemy arrows could be re-used. Their fire was supported by carriers who were at hand with large quiver boxes containing 100 arrows. The preferred range for shooting was from between 30 and 80 metres, and the bow had an extreme range of 380 metres.

As noted earlier, the spears used by the *ashigaru* were usually very long, and more akin to pikes. This is because a very different technique was expected for *ashigaru* spear fighting as distinct from samurai spear fighting. The samurai were regarded as individual spearmen who would engage in single combat with their weapons, while the *ashigaru* worked as a group. Oda Nobunaga, who was probably the first to introduce disciplined *ashigaru* spear units, possessed a contingent who made up 27 per cent of his fighting force,

*This character from Zōhyō Monogatari has the responsibility of carrying the daimyō's bow. It is supplied ready for action, being strung and mounted within a wooden frame, and with a quiver of arrows.*

compared to 13.5 per cent for matchlocks. In 1575 the Uesugi had ten spearmen for every matchlock man, and by about 1570 the breakdown of weaponry within the Hōjō armies included between one-third and one-half of all men (*samurai* and *ashigaru*) armed with spears. Within the Takeda clan the proportion was between one-half and two-thirds. Their actual use on the battlefield is described later.

#### The *daimyō's* personal attendants

In addition to the specialised weapon units, many of the men in a samurai army were employed as warriors' attendants and carriers. This does not necessarily imply a menial role, because the objects they carried were the personal possessions of high-ranking samurai, making the weapon carriers effectively the officers' bodyguards. Some titles may appear surprising. For example, what





*This flag-bearer in Zōhyō Monogatari uses a leather pouch tied to his belt to support the weight of the shaft of the hata jirushi which he is carrying. The hata jirushi was a design of flag slung from a horizontal cross-piece with no side supports. He has bare feet, and no armour for the legs. His trousers are tied in for comfort.*

are we to make of the role of the sandal-bearer (zori tori)? Was a samurai so pampered that he could afford a fighting man to carry his spare footwear around? The reality of the situation was that the actual carrying of straw sandals was but one part of the duties of the zori tori, who was in close attendance on the lord. The great Toyotomi

Hideyoshi began his career as Oda Nobunaga's sandal-bearer, and endeared himself to the latter by warming his master's sandals inside his shirt in cold weather. But apart from such duties, akin to those of an officer's 'batman', the zori tori made up one of that exclusive body of men who attended the lord directly. Some were ashigaru: some were senior retainers valued for their advice and experience, many of whom held the title of bugyō (commissioner). Others were the young sons of allies and retainers, who acted as pages and by their close proximity to the daimyō learned the art of the warrior. Great honour was attached to being the lord's mochiyari gumi (spear-bearer). This man carried the samurai's personal polearm, and was highly regarded.

One other elite group consisted of the samurai known as tsukai, or messengers, who acted as aides-de-camp and provided the communication system on a battlefield. Their sashimono were always striking and elaborate, and often set off with the horō, which made them visible to friends and snipers alike. The leading Takeda messengers, for example, wore a flag with the appropriate design of a centipede. The most dangerous position of all, however, fell to the carrier of the uma-jirushi (standard, but literally 'horse insignia'). This was the device, often a flag, but usually a three-dimensional object, which served as the daimyō's personal standard. It therefore denoted his position on the battlefield, and attracted the heaviest fire.

The leading daimyō also possessed an ō uma jirushi (great standard), which was the nucleus of the army on the battlefield. Some were carried in a leather bucket fastened to the ashigaru's belt, while very large ones were securely strapped into a carrying frame worn on the back. Ropes were provided for the ashigaru standard-bearer to steady it in a wind or on the run, and in the case of the very large examples two comrades would hold two separate ropes to keep it steady. Apart from these personal flags and standards, Japanese armies made much use of flags for the identification of divisions and locations of troops. Many ashigaru were therefore employed in one way or another in carrying flags.

While the ashigaru, although sometimes casually recruited, were soldiers when in the army,

there was another stratum of service beneath them. These were the lowly impressed or volunteer peasants whose role was that of carrying general equipment and supplies. Such men were called *chūgen* ('middle ones'), or *komono* ('lesser people'). They were issued with swords and *jingasa* during their service, but this was done with some reluctance according to the *Zōhyō Monogatari*, which notes that *chūgen* had an unfortunate tendency to be clumsy and would drop their swords when drawing them, often cutting their own legs! The samurai mentioned above called *Ōtō*, a retainer of the *Hōjō*, supplied a contingent of 252 men at the time of the *Odawara* campaign in 1590. The numbers included 26 who acted as baggage carriers. The expression *chūgen*, however, is also frequently found in many old chronicles to identify fighting *ashigaru*, where excellent service is recorded.

### RAISING AN ARMY

#### The feudal obligation

For most of the Sengoku Period, and among the majority of the samurai class, the notion of raising an army was a process that the samurai applied to others, not to himself. The individual samurai, unless he was a part-time farmer, was expected to keep himself in constant military readiness, with armour, weapons and a horse. In addition he was expected to provide other troops in the lord's service, their number and equipment depending upon the samurai's recorded wealth, which was expressed in terms of the assessed yield of the rice fields he possessed. Such assets were measured in *koku*, one *koku* being the amount of rice thought necessary to feed one man for one year. This is how the *ashigaru* entered the story. The samurai knew exactly how many men he was required to take with him on campaign. Some would be other samurai, who were more than likely to be related to him in some way. The *ashigaru* would not have the same relationship, but as the years went by and casual recruitment became less common, a tradition of service to a particular samurai family would develop. A samurai's *ashigaru* followers, therefore, together with bearers and labourers, would be drawn from the workers on the samurai's lands, thus completing the final tier of feudal obligation.

As noted in the previous chapter, the trend during the Sengoku Period was to move away from a poorly trained infantry arm towards a more professional organisation with continuity of service. However, the pressure of resources ensured that most *daimyō* before about 1580 had to use their *ashigaru* in the dual roles of soldiers and farmers, and it was only when campaigns began to be of longer duration that problems arose with such a system. It was then inevitable that the wealthier landowners, who could spare men for fighting without affecting agricultural production, could prosper both economically and militarily. Success also bred success, because a victorious general would attract followers for both purposes, thus making it even easier to arrange a division of labour.

For most of the *daimyō* in the mid-sixteenth century, therefore, recruitment consisted simply of a call-to-arms among their part-time soldiery. It was said of the followers of *Chōsokabe Motochika* that they were so ready for a fight that they tended the rice fields with their spears thrust into the earth of the pathways and their straw sandals attached to them. These enthusiastic soldiers served the *Chōsokabe* well, enabling *Motochika* to gain control of the whole of the island of *Shikoku*. In 1585, however, these brave part-timers were defeated by the overwhelming force of *Toyotomi Hideyoshi*, who invaded *Shikoku* with his highly trained and modern army. The professionalism shown by *Hideyoshi's* army, who did little, if any, agricultural work, and were based in the barracks of castle towns rather than in outlying villages, was a development that most contemporary *daimyō* could not afford.

When a general like *Chōsokabe* exercised a call to arms, he knew what to expect, and a successful response had its basis in the feudal structure of Japanese society. The *daimyō* who prospered knew in minute detail the extent of the territory they owned. It was first defined geographically, being strategically controlled by a series of *yamashiro* (mountain castles), which were usually complexes of wooden stockades on forested hills. Within his main *yamashiro* the *daimyō's* advisers would compile detailed registers of landholding possessed by retainers, who held them in a system of mutual obligation. These men, who were of the

samurai class, received lands from the daimyō, and in return were 'retained' in his service, hence the word 'retainer'. The most important aspect of this retained service was, of course, to serve in the daimyō's army, and to bring ashigaru and labourers along with him.

Further details of the requirements placed upon samurai to provide ashigaru may be found in the records of the Hōjō family. Like all daimyō, the Hōjō kept detailed records of their holdings, and when a call-to-arms was issued their samurai retainers knew exactly what was expected of them. For example, a certain Okamoto Hachirōzaemonnojō Masahide belonged to the Hōjō daimyō's go-umawari-shū (personal bodyguard), based at Odawara castle, and had to supply his own personal service with horse, plus four samurai (unmounted), six ashigaru spearmen, two ashigaru flag-bearers, and two others who would act as reserves.

As Okamoto belonged to an élite unit, the discharge of his obligation was almost certainly a longer term service than is implied by the phrase 'call-to-arms'. It is likely that both he and the ashigaru under his command were based almost permanently in Odawara castle, an impression strengthened by the fact that not only is the weaponry of his followers recorded, but also their names, indicating the continuity of service that was later to become universal. Incidentally, the names of his men show one fundamental difference between samurai and ashigaru, because the four samurai have surnames, while the ashigaru have none. During the time prior to Hideyoshi's Sword Hunt of 1587, when ashigaru could fight their way to samurai status, the first acquisition was likely to be a surname. This neat illustration of class distinction reminds us that even though the ashigaru service was definitely valued, the samurai clearly recognised them as inferior beings. Even as late as 1615, the chronicle *Bukō Zakkī* could note:

"At the time of honourable siege of Ōsaka, Hirasu Umanosuke, a retainer of Lord Tōdō, took along peasants from Iga as ashigaru."

The move towards the professionalisation of the ashigaru did not mean, however, that the levy of samurai from among the peasantry became a thing of the past. Okamoto's feudal obligations noted above are expressed only in terms of men providing military service. Other examples show



*The chain of noroshi, or signalling beacons, used by the Takeda provided a fast and efficient means of communication between their capital at Tsutsujigasaki (Kōfu) and outlying fortresses. This noroshi has been reconstructed at Sutama, a simple yamashiro (mountain castle) to the north of their territories where they abutted on to Uesugi lands. The brazier is lit and pulled up high on a pivot. (Photograph supplied by courtesy of the Sutama Board of Education, Yamanashi Prefecture)*

how farmers could be called upon to provide service as carriers, labourers and grooms. These were the chūgen and komono discussed in the previous chapter. For campaigns of long duration, such as sieges, further demands would be made from among the population, both in numbers required and in the range of services offered. For example, the Takeda family operated a number of

gold mines, and the miners were ideal people to use for tunnelling under an enemy castle's walls. A fascinating account of such non-combatant service is provided in the records of the Shimazu family of Satsuma in southern Kyūshū. In 1576 the Shimazu attacked the fortress of Takabaru, and in their call-to-arms listed the following requirements, which went far beyond purely combat duty:

"Those holding one chō of ricefield, one man per chō, meaning two men, master and follower, providing their own rice for food. Besides, one attendant labourer shall be provided by the shrines and temples, and three draught horses shall be assessed upon the shrines and temples. Next, the implements to be carried: 1 te-kabushi, height 3 shaku, width 2 shaku (probably a wooden shield); 1 stake, 6 shaku long (for building a palisade?); 1 hoe; 1 broad axe; 1 sickle; 1 saw; 1 chisel; 1 adze; 1 soil carrier; 1 coil of rope."

#### The mechanism of mobilisation

The records of the Hōjō family shed light on the actual mechanism of the call-to-arms. When it was necessary for the army to assemble, either for an actual campaign, or for review and training purposes, those who would normally live out in the villages, i.e. nearly all the ashigaru and some of the lower-ranking samurai, would be advised by a runner who would give as many days' notice of the muster as was practically possible. Over the next few days the ashigaru would assemble his armour and weapons and make whatever repairs were necessary to his equipment. He would have been told to listen for the sound of the horagai (conch shell trumpet), drum or bell that would indicate the hour to move off. Early one morning, therefore, such a sound would ring out, and the ashigaru would meet one another on the road as they made their way to the agreed place of assembly. This might involve a two- or three-hour walk. Here they would be drilled and inspected by the samurai whose responsibility it was to supply these men for the Hōjō war effort. Following the roll call, the samurai would lead the contingent in a march to the castle, where they would swell the numbers arriving. Once the entire army was assembled, a decision would be made about who and how many would stay behind to strengthen the garrison; then the Hōjō samurai and ashigaru army would set off to war.

Raising an army could proceed at an organised pace if the enemy were nowhere near. However, emergency situations such as an invasion of one's province did not allow the leisurely assembly described above. In such a situation the farmers needed to become ashigaru within hours rather than days, which implied considerable readiness and preparation on their part, and an efficient internal communications system to enable the call-to-arms to be transmitted rapidly. The most successful daimyō to tackle this problem was Takeda Shingen, who was engaged in almost constant conflict with Uesugi Kenshin and Hōjō Ujijasu. Each was constantly invading the others' territories, so there was a vital need for quick notification of a raid.

To assist his communications, Takeda Shingen established a series of fire beacons known as *noroshi* throughout his territories. The word '*noroshi*' literally means 'fox smoke'. Unlike the simple beacons which warned England of the approach of the Spanish Armada, Shingen's *noroshi* were elaborate affairs mounted on a three-storey wooden tower. The watcher stationed himself on the upper platform, while the beacon itself consisted of an iron bucket mounted at the end of a long tree trunk pivoted in its centre from a bracket fastened to the upper storey. On spotting the signal from the next beacon along, the watcher would hurry down the ladders and set fire to the combustible materials already prepared in the bucket. By pulling on ropes, the beacon bucket would be swung high into the air at a height of perhaps 25 metres above the ground. It is believed that Shingen used fire as a signal at night, and smoke during daylight hours. A *noroshi* tower has been reconstructed atutama, which lay at the edge of the Takeda territories where they bordered those of the Uesugi near to Kawanakajima. The system allowed observers on the edges of the Takeda territories to communicate directly with Tsutsujigasaki (now Kōfu), the Takeda capital, by a series of beacon chains. The system was so efficient that a message could be sent from Sutama to Kōfu in less than two hours over a distance of 160 kilometres.

By the burning of the beacons, supplemented by fast horses ridden by scouts who passed the call on to local runners, the population of the

**MILITARY OBLIGATION TO THE SHOGUN, 1649**

There are several examples in this work of schedules for the supply of retainers for a daimyō's service. The 1649 schedule of military obligation was the final one to be issued, and with minor modifications, served for the remainder of the Tokugawa Period. The following applies to a samurai of hatamoto rank, having a stipend of 5000 koku:

Horsemen	5
Foot samurai	9
Archers	3
Arquebusiers	5
Spearmen	15
Reserve spearmen	3
Armour bearers	4
Bow carriers	2
Nodachi (long sword) bearer	1
Uma-jirushi (standard) bearers	3
Lesser standard (ko-uma jirushi) bearers	2
Hata-sashimono bearers	6
Sandal bearer	1
Hasamibako (chest) bearers	4
Umbrella bearer	1
Fodder bearers	2
Ashigaru	4
Grooms	4
Wakato (servant)	5
Arrow-box carriers	2
Bullet box carriers	2
Baggage carriers	5
Food box carrier	1
Priest	1
Samurai's grooms	5
Nagamochi guards	4
Komono	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>

Takeda territories was transformed into a fighting machine, multiplying tenfold the small permanent garrisons of samurai and ashigaru, and the large, 3000-plus unit that made up Takeda Shingen's personal bodyguard. In later years, of course, practically an entire daimyō's army would be permanently 'under the colours', but in the mid-sixteenth

century the basis of ashigaru use was the call-to-arms from known followers, employing these crude, but usually effective methods.

**Setting off to war**

Once the troops had been assembled, the actual process of setting out for war was attended by much ceremony. This would be the case whether the muster was for a long campaign, or simply a farewell ritual immediately prior to the start of a battle. In ancient times, according to samurai legend, a battle would customarily begin with a blood-offering to the gods of war in the form of a human sacrifice. This would be either a captured prisoner or a condemned criminal, although there does not appear to be any written evidence for such practices continuing beyond the eighth century AD. During the time of the samurai, the blood-sacrifice was confined to the offering of severed heads after the battle rather than an actual sacrifice beforehand. Nevertheless, it is within the rituals of departure that we see the most striking expressions of religious belief among the samurai class.

Shintō prayers were offered to the kami (gods) of war, of whom the most important was Hachiman Dai Bosatsu, the deified spirit of the Emperor Ōjin (201-312) and tutelary deity of the Minamoto clan; and no daimyō would dream of going to war without a visit to the kami of the local shrine. The shrine itself would probably have strong family connections, and might well enshrine an important and illustrious ancestor. Takeda Katsuyori made a point of visiting the shrine of his father, the late Takeda Shingen, before setting off on the fateful campaign that ended in his defeat at the battle of Nagashino in 1575. But as well as Shintō rites, there were also many Buddhist elements and much ritual drawn from folk religious practices and religious Taoism. Like a modern student facing exams, a Sengoku daimyō sought reassurance about the luck that would await him on campaign, and Taoist beliefs about good fortune permeate much of the ritual surrounding the departure for war.

There was thus a certain ritualistic element involved in the interpretation of omens as being either lucky or unlucky. Accidents could happen as the daimyō was preparing to leave, but these minor incidents could as easily be interpreted as

promising good fortune rather than bad. For example, if the lord was thrown by his horse when preparing to go to war, it was only an unlucky omen if he fell off on the right-hand side. A fall to the left was considered lucky. Similarly, if the daimyō had the misfortune to break his bow, that was an unlucky omen only if the bow broke below the hand-grip. Other events for divination were a conclusion of ill-luck if the parade of departing warriors crossed to the lord's right, and good luck if it was to his left. One omen that the daimyō could do little to control was the behaviour of his horse. If it turned naturally towards the direction of the enemy, that was considered good luck, but it was bad luck if the horse turned towards the general's own troops.

Matters of serious bad omen were sufficiently feared as to be declared taboo actions prior to setting off to war. Many involved Shintō notions of ritual purity, the most polluting elements being contact with blood, birth or death. Sexual intercourse before going on campaign was absolutely forbidden, and the daimyō had to ensure that none of his clothes or equipment came into contact with a pregnant woman. In a similar vein, no samurai setting off to war should come into contact with a woman within 33 days of her having given birth, or with a woman having her menstrual period.

The formal system of onmyōdō (religious Taoism) provided a list of inauspicious dates to avoid for setting out to war. For the season of spring these were the 7th, 14th and 21st days of the lunar months. In summer it was the 8th, 16th and 24th. In autumn one should avoid the 9th, 18th and 27th, while for winter it was the 10th, 21st and 30th days. Taoist notions of lucky direction further forbade the daimyō from placing his suit of armour in a north-facing direction.

On a more practical level, the ceremony of departure was centred around the simple need for a review of troops. With his army drawn up ready to march off, the daimyō would sit, surrounded by his generals in a semi-circle against the backdrop of the maku, the large curtains used to screen the headquarters position from view. In the case of Uesugi Kenshin, whose departure ceremony details have been recorded, this would have been preceded by his praying for victory within the shrine of Bishamon-ten inside Kasugayama castle.

Only then would Kenshin go out into the courtyard to take his seat with his generals. There he would partake of the traditional farewell meal, served to him with great dignity. There were three dishes, kachi-guri (dried chestnuts - probably included for no reason other than the literal translation of the characters used is 'victory chestnuts'), kombu (kelp - a basic ingredient in Japanese cooking) and prepared awabi (abalone), all three of which were regarded as bringing good fortune. He would also drink sake (rice wine) served within three cups, one inside the other. The number three was regarded as bringing good luck from the divinatory onmyōdō, and the three cups also represented heaven, earth and man.

When the army was ready to move off, an attendant would tie the commander's sword round his waist, and then fasten on his quiver of arrows (although this was rarely encountered in the Sengoku Period). After this the daimyō would stand up, take his signalling fan and receive the shouts of his assembled troops. There were various ways of doing this, but there were two shouts in common - the first being 'Ei' (Glory!), to which was given the response 'O!' (Yes!). Each could be repeated up to three times. This shout was also given at the end of a successful battle. Finally, the standard of the army would be lowered in front of the general while the flag-bearer shouted, 'In all the world you alone are to be respected!'

Traditionally the general would then mount his horse, put on his helmet, and the flags would be raised. Just before the procession moved off, a Shintō priest would bless the army with chanting of prayers. Uesugi Kenshin would also re-dedicate to the war god Hachiman the 'bow of Hachiman' which was a treasure of the Uesugi. After this, Kenshin would mount his horse, surrounded by his three banners: one with the first character of the name of Bishamon-ten, a flag bearing a red rising sun on blue (a gift from an emperor), and the warring dragon flag, which always led a charge by the Uesugi samurai.

There was one final small, symbolic ceremony, however, when a daimyō left the castle or mansion. As he walked out of the gate he would step over a kitchen knife. This may have been a sign of his determination to face up to his fate, or a gesture that no enemy would enter the castle

### ETIQUETTE IN ARMOUR

The *Tanki Yoriaku* provides some helpful tips on how to behave while wearing armour. Some are clearly related to Taoist notions of lucky directions:

"When sitting down on the ground or floor do not put your left knee on the ground.

"When turning round do not turn to the right.

"When you take off your armour, do not place it facing the north. It must always be placed facing eastwards.

"Besides the above things, there are many other like customs.

"The following sequence must be adopted when you are allowed to examine another's armour. You must look first at the mune no ita (front plate) then at the kusazuri, then at the sode, and fourthly at the helmet, but do not look inside the helmet or the soshitsuke (plate between the shoulders). The proper words of admiration or praise differ with the varying colours of the odoshi-ito (silken cords holding the laminations together) although if you say that it looks very brave or some similar words, it will always be polite.

"When exposing an armour to fresh air after the rainy season is over, put it in the bright sunshine with a piece of cloth over it, or you may expose it in the house for many days if it is fine. But upon dark or gloomy days it must be kept in the armour case.

"When you are fully armoured and cannot sit down very easily, you must kneel down on your right leg. When your right leg is tired you can change to the left.

"When thanking or saluting another person put both knees down to the ground or floor and clasp your hands on your knees, or you may bow forwards or put your head down, according to the rank of the person whom you are saluting.

"You may sit down in another position, with the heels together and the knees apart, but this is not a very good style of sitting. To sit down for a short time while addressing persons of higher rank you must put both knees on the ground, the legs close together and touching the ground with the points of all your toes and place your hands upon your knees." (Garbutt 1912: 177)

during his absence. These elaborate rituals having been completed, the samurai army moved off on campaign.

### SAMURAI CAMPAIGN LIFE

#### On the march

Once the army was assembled and reviewed, it would set off to war, and there are several accounts of armies leaving on campaign in parade formation. The *Taikōki* describes the order of march of the army of Toyotomi Hideyoshi as it left Kyōto in 1578 to fight along the coast of the Inland Sea on behalf of Oda Nobunaga. So many of the populace wished to see the spectacle that stands were erected along the streets! The order of march was as follows:

1. Flag-bearers
2. Arquebuses
3. Bows
4. Long spears

5. Samurai on foot, armoured and with swords, in a double file
6. Mounted samurai
7. The war drum
8. The shell trumpet (horagai)
9. The gong
10. The commissioner of samurai (musha bugyō)
11. Honourable messengers (o-tsukai)
12. Hideyoshi's spare horse
13. Hideyoshi's armour
14. Substitute ashigaru
15. The multicoloured fukinuki (large streamer on a circular frame)
16. The middle guard foot samurai, in a double file
17. Toyotomi Hideyoshi
18. Hideyoshi's helmet
19. Hideyoshi's bodyguard
20. 100 samurai, variously armed
21. Small flags
22. Senior retainers



23. Messengers (tsukai)

24. Mounted samurai

25. Samurai on foot

The author estimated the host at about 12,500 men. At this time Hideyoshi was subordinate to Oda Nobunaga, but by 1589, when he commanded much of Japan himself, the army that Toyotomi Hideyoshi could command had grown considerably, and records for his advance eastwards to quell the Hôjô of Odawara simply give the number of troops in each contingent, each of which must have been an army in itself:

1st Company 30,000

2nd Company 22,000

3rd Company 11,460

4th Company 17,000

5th Company 7900

6th Company 9400

7th Company 10,470

8th Company 8200

9th Company 20,070

To which were added provincial contingents, probably picked up as he advanced:

"With the west of Hakone force in Suruga 3450 men, in Tôtômi 1720 men, in Mikawa 2500 men, in Owari 3000 men, in Mino 1600 men. Total: 154,970 men."

In addition, fifteen other daimyô mobilised 49,130 men, making a grand total of 204,100 men under Toyotomi Hideyoshi's command, to attack Odawara.

The fine detail of an army off on campaign is of course lost in these overall figures. However, Date Masamune's army for Korea left Kyôto in grand style in March 1592, and was noted as it marched in front of the Jûrakutei Palace where Toyotomi Hideyoshi reviewed the troops. There were 3000 men in all under Date's command, who formed the third division of the procession after Maeda Toshie and Tokugawa Ieyasu, and each tried to outdo the other in the magnificence of their retinues. Date Masamune's hatamoto (personal guard) were particularly splendid, and were recorded by Date Shigezane in the *Jofitsuki*, which I paraphrase as follows:

"1st Company: Flag-bearers The great banner of the Date, bearing the mon of lovebirds in bamboo, followed by 30 flag-bearers, each with a dark blue nobori banner bearing a gold sun's disc."



*The alternative use of an iron jingasa is shown in this illustration from the Zôhyô Monogatari where the ashigaru is cooking his meal in it while on campaign. He wears a long-sleeved kimono and has a cleaver thrust through his belt.*

"2nd Company: Ashigaru Each in black armour with a gold sun's disc mon on the breastplate and backplate and wearing a pair of swords. Each was further embellished by a helmet in the shape of a gold 'witch's hat'. 100 arquebuses 100 long spears 50 bows"

"3rd Company: 30 mounted samurai, including family members. Not to be outdone by the lowly ashigaru, each wore a black horô bearing a gold half-moon mon. Their horses were armoured, and they wore finely mounted gold swords with large scabbards. One retainer, Harada Munetoki, then aged 26, is recorded in a different account as wearing a huge 2 metre-long nodachi (long sword) slung across his back. The lord, Date Masamune himself, set off his suit of

armour with an extravagant crescent moon helmet crest."

Eight years later we may compare the composition of a reinforcement sent by Date Masamune to Tokugawa Ieyasu in October 1600. It consisted of 3000 men, of whom 420 were mounted, and of the others 1200 carried arquebuses, 850 spears, and 200 were armed with bows. The remaining 350 men were probably reserves and flag-bearers. It is more than likely the troops would be identified by sashimono bearing the Date mon. Masamune was also well known for equipping all his samurai in yukinoshita dō armours of a stout plate construction. The bas-relief on the plinth of Date Masamune's statue in Sendai also shows his samurai each with a small crescent helmet crest.

Once clear of the capital, the army's advance became more mundane. Discipline had to be

enforced, either by the divisional commanders, the lord of a particular clan army, or by the bugyō (commissioners) appointed by the daimyō. It is interesting to note that Tokugawa Ieyasu banned the carrying of the long ashigaru spears except when on the march, because in camp they would have been a considerable safety hazard. Tokugawa Ieyasu's senior commanders went a long way towards enforcing discipline. At Odawara in 1590 Gamō Ujisato noted a samurai in a very ostentatious helmet who was not keeping his place in the march and causing disruption. When the man persisted in this disorderly conduct, Ujisato drew his sword and took the man's head off with one stroke. He gave the helmet to another samurai, and discipline was much improved.

Horses, of course, could be as unruly as humans, but it was humans who had the responsi-

#### ARMY DISCIPLINE - 1590

When Tokugawa Ieyasu set up camp as part of the army investing Odawara castle in 1590, he issued the following regulations:

"If anyone advances or reconnoitres without orders he shall be punished.

"Anyone who presses on too far forward, even though to make a name for himself, is a transgressor against military law and will be punished with all his family.

"Anyone who is found trespassing in another company without proper reason shall be deprived of his horse and arms. And if his master objects he shall be held extremely culpable. And when anyone has to pass through on some duty way shall be made for him and he shall go straight through without loitering.

"When troops are on the march none shall go by-ways. This fashion must be strictly impressed upon them. If any move in a disorderly fashion their leader will be held culpable.

"Anyone who disobeys the order of the bugyō will be punished.

"When troops are on the march all flags, guns, bows and spears are to be carried according to fixed order, and they are to march at the command of the bugyō. Any disorder will be punished.

"Except when in the ranks it is forbidden to go about carrying long spears. One spear of this type may be carried before the commander when on horseback.

"Anyone letting a horse stray in the camp will be punished.

"As to the baggage train, strict orders are to be given that they are to be allotted a proper place so that they do not get mixed up with the troops. Any who do will be put to death on the spot.

"Without orders no one may seize any man or woman and take them. Should anyone take and conceal such a person his master shall correct the matter, and if any case shall come to light of his neglecting to do so that leader's fief shall be confiscated. And the vanguard shall not, without orders, set fire to any houses in enemy territory.

"Violence and intimidation of tradespeople is strictly forbidden. Offenders will be put to death on the spot.

"Anyone who strikes camp without orders will be punished.

"May all the gods of Japan both great and small pay attention!

"May they blast without pity any who transgress the above orders!" (Sadler 1937: 161)

bility for them. The *Zōhyō Monogatari* provides the following recommendations for grooms and others who have charge of horses:

"When setting out, while two men take the horse deal with its equipment. First take the horse, the nose twister, the bit, the bridle and the reins and pull them over its head. The belly band and the leather stirrup straps are fitted and then adjusted. At the shiode on the left front put the rice, on the right the small pistol (in a holster). On the rear shiode to the left and right a bag of soy beans, and on the maewa (pommel) the saddle bag while on the shizuwa (saddle rear) put a feed bag of dried boiled rice... Always tether the horse with a rope. Take the little leather strap near the nose, and pull against the bit. When feeding you can remove the bit."

(The shiode are the four metal rings at the four corners of the saddle, from which decorative tassels were suspended.)

Horses needed a lot of attention once the army began to come to grips with the enemy:

"When taking horses on a raid you must be particularly careful. Young horses may break free and will get excited. Because of this an army could be defeated, so this must be strictly forbidden. Keep them well tied up to avoid this."

Rivers provided one of the major obstacles to an army on the march, and much samurai ingenuity was brought to bear on the problem. One simple solution was an insistence that all samurai should be able to swim, a point made by Tokugawa Ieyasu in a communication to Tōdō Takatora to the effect that there were two things that even the Lord of the Empire should practise: riding and swimming. The young Ieyasu used to swim regularly at Okazaki with his retainers, and even in his seventies he is recorded as swimming in the moat of Edo castle. In later years 'schools' of swimming developed in much the same way as schools of other martial arts. One particular speciality of samurai swimming techniques was the ability to swim whilst wearing heavy armour. The aim was not merely to stay afloat in an emergency, or even to swim distances, but to use weapons, particularly bows and arrows, while treading water. Exercises included holding a fan between one's fingers or toes while treading water, swimming or floating.

The *Heike Monogatari* notes that Taira Munemori was a strong swimmer, and there are two well-known incidents from the Gemppei Wars where samurai swam their horses across rivers into the attack. Various forms of lifebelts were designed to help less strong swimmers to cross areas of water. One device was known as an uki-bukuro, which was a lifebelt consisting of a number of cork floats put side by side, the largest in the middle. The description states that 'one who can swim well wears it round his waist, one who cannot swim wears it round his chest'. The *Geijutsu Hiden Zue* shows ashigaru with two different types of buoyancy aid. One consists of two pieces of wood tied under the armpits and upon which the arms rested. In some cases these are supplemented by a bag-like float. Guns are carried well clear of the water. Large-calibre pieces are floated across the river on little wooden rafts pulled by the swimming ashigaru.

#### Supplies and the baggage train

The least glamorous command for a samurai was to be placed in charge of the packhorse battery. This was nevertheless a very important function. The samurai in charge was known as the konida bugyō (commissioner for packhorses), and he would have serving under him a number of samurai and ashigaru who would both guard and supervise the chūgen and komono who did the actual carrying and pulling. Even the great Tokugawa Ieyasu served his time as a samurai in charge of a pack unit, and in 1559 earned considerable glory by slipping into Odaka castle a detachment carrying much-needed supplies, while diverting the garrison's attentions. As well as packhorses, bales of rice were carried on men's backs, or on two-wheeled carts pushed and pulled by bearers. Larger carts, pulled by oxen, were also used, and were particularly handy for transporting heavy cannon. European cannon were usually supplied only as barrels, and without a carriage.

When going on campaign, food supplies for men and horses were of equal importance to the carrying of weapons and equipment, and the *Zōhyō Monogatari* has a lot to say on the matter:

"Normally take food for ten days but not more. If continuing on a road for ten days distance, use pack horses, and do not let them fall behind.

### COMMANDING THE BAGGAGE TRAIN - AN HONOURABLE POSITION

To be placed in command of the baggage train was probably the least attractive position for a samurai of renown, a feeling shared by Naitō Masatoyo in 1569, and recorded in the *Kōyō Gunkan*. When the Takeda army were returning towards Kōfu following their unsuccessful attempts at besieging no less than three Hōjō fortresses, they were ambushed in Mimasetoge (the pass of Mimase) by Hōjō Ujiteru and Hōjō Ujikuni:

"On this occasion Shingen made the baggage train go with the vanguard. The one ordered to take this post was Naitō Masatoyo. However, Naitō was very much a fighting samurai, and he humbly appealed to Shingen over his appointment to such a position as commanding the baggage train. In response to this Shingen said, 'Formerly (Uesugi) Kenshin willingly divested himself of his baggage train, and was defeated by Odawara (i.e. the Hōjō). This is a responsible position.'"

The reference to Uesugi Kenshin is in connection with Kenshin's own attempt to besiege Odawara, which happened in 1561. Kenshin allowed the baggage train to get cut off from the rest of the army. The following day the konida bugyō (baggage train commander) took command of the situation.

Nowadays 45 days allowance can be taken, but no more than three or four days should be forced on to a horse, but whether in enemy territory or that of allies there should be no unpreparedness. In such cases take food with you or you will have to seize food from allies, which would be foolish and also theft... As for the horse's food, store it safely in a bag when raiding enemy territory, do not abandon anything, and if suffering from hunger in a camp eat the vegetation. The horse can stick to dead leaves. It will also eat refined pine bark... As for firewood 80 monme is sufficient for one person for one day, and all can gather it together. If the place has no firewood take dried horse dung and use it as firewood. As for rice, for one person allow six gō, and 1 gō of salt for ten people, for

miso (fermented soy bean paste) allow for ten people two gō, but when there is a night battle and so on the amount of rice should be increased. The rice kept by the servants to be brewed into sake can be eaten..."

Stealing food from allies was disapproved of, but looting was sometimes necessary if a campaign proved to be of long duration and one was in enemy territory. There are some useful tips for successful looting in the *Zōhyō Monogatari*:

"Food and clothing may be buried inside houses, but if it is buried outside it may be concealed in a pot or kettle. (If you suspect) such things are buried in the ground, visit during an early morning frost, and at the places where things are buried the frost will disappear, and many things may be discovered."

However, the ashigaru foragers are warned to be careful of booby traps left by an enemy.

"Remember that a dead person's blood may have contaminated the water supply you drink. You should never drink the water from wells in enemy territory. It may be that faeces have been sunk to the bottom. Drink river water instead. When provinces are taken over take care with the water."

Several useful survival tips may be gleaned from the pages of *Bansen Shūkai* compiled in 1676 by a certain Fujibayashi Masatake. Although purporting to be 'secret ninja lore', some of its recommendations are very matter-of-fact, and probably derive more from the handed-down experience of rough campaigning life, like *Zōhyō Monogatari*, than from any particular esoteric ninja wisdom. There is a useful tip on how to cook rice if you are on campaign and have no cooking pot. Soak the rice and wrap it in leaves or in a cloth bag, then bury it in the ground and light a fire over it. One recalls Tokugawa Ieyasu's famous recommendation that his foot-soldiers should be issued with light iron helmets so that they would receive a degree of protection, and would also have a handy substitute cooking pot. Sea water, notes the *Bansen Shūkai*, can be purified by boiling it in an unglazed earthenware pot because the salt soaks into the sides. The *Zōhyō Monogatari* advice on water purification is even more esoteric than the supposed ninja wisdom:

"In camp it is a good idea to drink water which has been in a pot with apricot kernels in silk, or

The supply of food and ammunition to an army depended upon having an efficient packhorse battery. In this illustration from the *Zōhyō Monogatari* a komono leads a packhorse carrying two rice bales made of straw and an identifying flag.



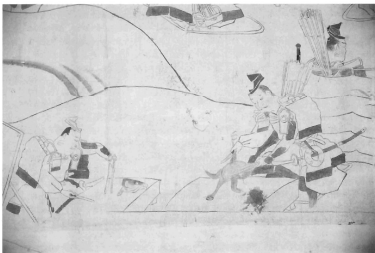
put into the pot some freshwater snails brought from your own province and dried in the shade, and that water supply will be good to drink."

The *Bansen Shūkai* has two recipes for emergency foodstuffs, one for pills to stave off thirst, and one for pills to reduce hunger:

"thirst pills, quantities in monme: 4 of the flesh of umeboshi (pickled plums) 1 of korizato (crystallised sugar or rock candy) 1 of winter wheat"

The mixture is crushed by a stone and made into pills. For the hunger pills the recipe is more complicated. Quantities are again in monme:

*Preparing food while on campaign, from a copy of the Gosannen War Scroll owned by the Watanabe Museum, Tottori. In each case the samurai uses chopsticks to hold the food while he cuts with a knife. On the left, sashimi (raw fish) is being prepared, while on the right the dish appears to be a wild duck.*





*Resting from the Gosannen War, the commander of the army, Minamoto Yoshiie, is served a meal sitting within his maku, the field curtains used on campaign. He is wearing full yoroi armour with an eboshi cap. Two attendants slice up sashimi (raw fish) and handle it with chopsticks. Their open-work quivers are clearly illustrated.*

40 of ginseng  
 80 of buckwheat flour  
 80 of wheat flour  
 80 of mountain potato  
 4 of chickweed  
 40 of 'yokui' (pine?) kernels  
 80 of glutinous rice

The above ingredients are mixed together and soaked in three shō of sake for three years. When the sake has all dried up, the resulting mixture is rolled into balls the size of a peach. Three should be sufficient for a day's campaigning.

### Medical care on campaign

The *Zōhyō Monogatari* even has a section on medical care. As well as being interesting in its own right, it is convincing proof that the wounded in a samurai army, including the ashigaru, were cared for, and not left to die. It is also a useful counter to the popular notion of a samurai being prepared to commit hara-kiri on the slightest pretext, although the paragraph concerning arrow wounds with which this section ends may have encouraged it in all but the toughest campaigner!

"If breathing is a problem, keep some umeboshi (pickled plums) in the bottom of your bag. This always works. Eaten alone they dry up the throat and preserve life. Umeboshi are of great importance as medicine for breathing."

It can also be very cold on campaign, and the padded haori jacket or straw raincoat were often not enough.

"Concerning pepper grains, in both summer or winter take one each in the mornings, this will ward off the cold and encourage warmth. This can be varied by taking umeboshi. If you apply squashed red peppers from the hips to the tips of the toes you will not freeze. It is also good to daub it on your arms too, but avoid the eyes and the eyeballs."

The *Bansen Shūkai* also recommends a medicine to resist frostbite in winter. It is so similar in style to the *Zōhyō Monogatari* account that one must assume a use beyond that of practising ninja. The ninja is supposed to rub shikimi (star anise) oil on to his torso.

The most dramatic advice in the *Zōhyō Monogatari* concerns the treatment for snake bite in a bivouac:

"When lying down in a camp in a field or on a mountain, if an adder bites don't get over excited, speedily apply one monme of gunpowder to the spot. Set fire to it and the virulence will quickly disappear, but if it is delayed it will not work."

There follows further advice on wound treatment on the battlefield:

"Mix horse dung in water and apply to the torso. Bleeding will be reduced and bruises will quickly heal. It is also said that even drinking horse's blood will make bleeding reduce. This is

Two samurai attempt to remove an arrow from a comrade's face using iron pincers, from a copy of the *Gosannen War Scroll* owned by the Watanabe Museum, Tottori. The process looks remarkably similar to the operation described in *Zōhyō Monogatari* five centuries later. Note the open basketwork quivers worn by the soldiers.



because the horse's blood will not pass through. But eating dung makes it worse..."

"If a bruise is aching urinate in a copper hat. Let it go cold and wash with it, and the place with the cut will become much better... If the blood is a persimmon colour then there is poison in the wound. In the case of a wound in the area round the eyeball a twisted paper string must be wound round the head. Apply hot water."

Traditional herbal remedies (noted in the *Bansen Shūkai* and elsewhere) could also be used. A sword wound was best treated with mashed narcissus root. Cuts from sharpened bamboo were treated with a wheat flour paste. Pulverised leeks were applied to gunshot wounds, and cuts from iron objects were held over the smoke from burning rags. Scalds were treated with a mixture of tannin and ink. The most gruesome account in the *Zōhyō Monogatari* concerns the methods for extracting arrowheads:

"Tie the hair up in a bag and use chopsticks to pull the arrow out. If it is not possible to pull the arrow shaft out using the hands, pincers may be employed. With these it should be possible."

It is interesting to see these techniques illustrated on the *Gosannen War Scroll*, painted several centuries earlier. For removing an arrow stuck through the cheek:

"The head must not move, so fasten it to a tree, and with the head tied to a tree like a crucifixion

the work can begin. The arrow can be pulled out gently, but while doing this the eye socket will be filled with blood."

Such were the realities of campaign life, horrors that would become much more acute once battle was joined. But before a battle could begin, the enemy had to be located and contacted, and this was the role of the scouts. Great bravery was expected from the samurai who acted as scouts for an army. Some would be the elite *tsukai* (messengers), but more usually the role would be played by samurai who were particularly good horsemen. Contact having been made, the army on campaign became an army prepared for battle. This will be discussed shortly, after a study of one very important battle situation: the defended castle.

## THE CASTLE IN SAMURAI WARFARE

### Control by castles

The acquisition, possession and loss of a castle were common events during the Sengoku Period, but once the trend towards larger armies developed, the castle became not only a barracks for the troops, but a symbol of the *daimyō's* authority. Of all the Sengoku *daimyō*, the *Hōjō* of the Kantō provinces were most firmly associated with castles, and with one castle in particular: Odawara, which for over a century acted as fortress, *daimyō's* resi-

dence and commercial centre. It withstood two early attempts at siege, and finally surrendered only to the overwhelming force provided by the huge army of Toyotomi Hideyoshi in 1590.

The first Odawara castle was built in 1416 by the Omori family, who held the fortress until it was taken from them by Hôjô Soun in 1495. After Soun's death his son Ujitsuna moved the Hôjô administrative capital to Odawara. It was well defended on all sides, with a 40 metre-high keep which was built at the north-west, the weakest point of its natural defences. The southern part of the fortifications ran along the beach of Sagami bay, and the large commercial centre, the castle town, spread out beyond the castle walls.

Although Odawara provided their 'battleship' for one hundred years, the Hôjô never relied on Odawara acting alone, because this mighty fortress was the main castle (honjô) of a network of satellite castles (shijô) across the Hôjô territories. To some extent the satellites operated independently of Odawara, and from the 1560s onward also provided a basis for administering captured lands. The Hôjô companies listed in the 1559 register were largely based around this satellite system, and known according to their castle, as in the table below:

Edo	Toyama
Nirayama	Hôjô Ujinori
Yamanaka	Matsuda
Hachigata	Hôjô Ujikuni

Hachiôji	Hôjô Ujiteru
Kawagoe	Tominaga/Daidôji
Matsuyama	Ueda/Daidôji
Tamanawa	Hôjô Ujitada
Oshi	Narita
Iwatsuki	Hôjô Ujifusa
Kotsukue	Hôjô Ujitaka

The most important satellites were controlled by Hôjô family members, such as Hôjô Ujikuni (1541-97), the third son of Hôjô Ujiyasu, who was adopted into the Fujita family and held the important Hachigata castle in northern Musashi province. In 1568 Ujikuni withstood an attack on Hachigata by Takeda Shingen, and by 1590 he commanded 5000 men at Hachigata, more than any other Hôjô castellan. Ujikuni's trusted independence is shown by the power he had to act as local lord. In 1589 he granted a certain Konoshita Genzaemon 45.8 kanmon in return for supplying to Hachigata his own service as mounted samurai, plus one spearman, one other ashigaru and a flag-bearer.

Hachigata was also the hub of its own set of 'sub-satellite' castles, where fire beacons could be lit, or conches and drums sounded when the weather was bad, to communicate with the parent garrison. Ujikuni's most powerful retainer, Inomata Kuninori, commanded Numata castle, one of two satellites of Hachigata. The same system was used by the Uesugi and Takeda, the former having no less than 97 in Echigo province alone. Few of the sub-satellites were formidable buildings like Odawara or even Hachi-

*The site of the Yamashiro (mountain castle) of Toda castle is typical of this early style of fortress. The castle buildings would have occupied the whole of the wooded area shown here. Toda was an Amako possession until captured by the Móri. On the bluff to the left two wooden buildings have been reconstructed.*





gata. Most would consist of a hilltop redoubt (yamashiro) with palisades, barracks, an armoury and a clearing to build fire beacons.

Inomata Kuninori also covered four minor outposts of Numata as sub-sub-satellites. These little castles were not intended to withstand a long siege, but were more like muster points and duty stations. They often depended upon part-time samurai, but were always well stocked in case of an emergency. In 1588 the sub-sub-satellite of Gongenyama had 252 men as its garrison, defended by a certain Yoshida Sadashige with 27 mounted and five foot samurai, 21 arquebusiers and 202 other ashigaru. Yoshida Sadashige was also required to supply from his own resources a 20-man arquebus troop, plus personal service of one mounted samurai (Sadashige himself) accompanied by one flag-bearer, one arquebusier and two spearmen, all for a 150 kan grant. The overall chain of command for this example was therefore:

Headquarters	Odawara castle	The current Hōjō daimyō
Satellite	Hachigata castle	Hōjō Ujikuni
Sub-satellite	Numata castle	Inomata Kuninori
Sub-sub-satellite	Gongenyama castle	Yoshida Sadashige

A detailed list of Gongenyama castle's artillery was also sent to Hōjō Ujikuni:

"1 large matchlock; 50 small matchlocks; 69 large shot; 1200 charges of powder; 1350

matchlock balls; 1500 arrows; 10 long spears."

In addition, Yoshida Sadashige personally provided the following items:

15 matchlocks; 1500 charges of powder; 1 chest of powder; 3200 matchlock balls; 200 long spears; 100 arrows; 3 bows; 20 large but damaged cannonballs; 10 bags of provisions.

A further example is found in the records for 1570. A certain Hasebe Hyōgonosuke headed the Ōmaeda company under Hōjō Ujikuni. Their troop of five mounted and six foot were exempt from castle repair duties, an onerous task described more fully below, and in 1570 they received a promotion. The foot samurai were ordered to obtain horses and to deliver 50 bags of barley to Hachigata as a token of their loyalty, thus incorporating them into his own vassal band.

### Castle building and maintenance

Sakasai, in a rural area to the north of Tokyo, was another of the castles of the Hōjō family. The whole area of Sakasai castle has recently been excavated, and a section has been rebuilt to show a typical wooden Sengoku fortress. On the inside of the walls we note the biggest difference from comparable fortresses in Europe. There were no parapets and walkways as such. Instead the timbers which were part of the walls' construction were left protruding inwards. When required, planks were laid across them to form the *ishi uchi tana* (stone throwing shelf), from which archers,

### FROM DEFENCE TO ATTACK

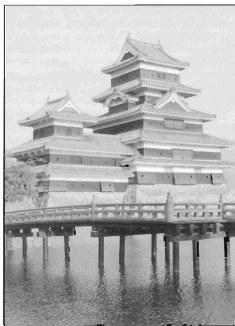
There are several examples in the war chronicles of samurai making sallies from within a defended castle so that they could come to grips with the enemy. The following example is from the *Ōū Eikei Gunki*, and relates to the defence of Hataya castle in 1600:

"From within the castle two horsemen, who gave their names as Watanabe Anza'emon and Yukū Genza'emon, were of great merit. Both, dressed in black laced armour and carrying *nodachi* (extra long swords), advanced against the great host of the enemy. They were forced to escape back inside the palisade, the gaps in their armour showing in red the many places where they had been pierced. 'Let's go and meet the enemy general!' they shouted, and splitting up they entered the great army. Keeping unwaveringly to their determined purpose they attacked furiously as far as Miyabe's body-guard. Watanabe mowed down Miyabe's page Sato Shūzen, killing him there and then. Yukū exchanged blows with Yasunaga, and was killed at that moment. Next the castle commander Gohei, who was wearing a persimmon-coloured *katabira* (thin morning kimono) and carrying a hand spear, with his two loyal sons and 60 other superb horsemen, charged out as one and smashed into the enemy lines ... fighting with the madness of death." (*Sengoku Shiryō Sāshō* 2<sup>nd</sup> series, Vols 3-4)

and later gunners, were able to discharge their weapons over the top of the walls or through specially cut slits and windows. The mound down to the ditch in the reconstruction of Sakasai is of grassed earth. Elsewhere on the site a wooden watch tower has been rebuilt. This is again of a simple open construction.

At places such as Hachigata, stone could be used for the bases of the castle towers and gates, as it was for the huge foundations of the multi-storey keeps of the major fortresses such as Odawara. The technique was to build a massive earth core, which was cut out of a hillock if such were available, and then to face it with large blocks of stone that sloped outwards quite markedly. The blocks were dug deeply into the surrounding earth, and thus provided a secure foundation to take the weight of the castle tower buildings. Matsunaga Hisahide was the first daimyō to raise a tower keep at his castle of Tamon in 1567, but few examples have survived from the sixteenth century. Maruoka castle keep was built in 1576. It collapsed during an earthquake in 1948 but was rebuilt using the original materials. Matsumoto was constructed in 1597, and has survived virtually intact. Inuyama dates from 1600, and it was long believed that the keep was moved from an original site at Kanayama, where it had been built in 1537, but recent repair work did not support this theory. Hikone's keep started life in Ōtsu in 1575, and was moved to its present site in 1606. Matsue, built in 1611, still retains its original location and appearance, while Himeji reflects its rebuilding between 1601 and 1612.

The foremost authorities on castle building were the Anou masons, who played a major role in building nearly two dozen large castles, including Tokugawa Ieyasu's castle of Edo. First appearing as castle builders in 1577, these masons from Ōmi province had long specialised in building the foundations of Buddhist temples, and by the end of the sixteenth century became renowned for their method of building steep 45-degree stone walls using the natural shape and texture of stones, according to an advanced form of trigonometry. Gatehouses, keeps and corner towers were also built with stone bases, and gradually the earlier openwork wooden towers seen at Sakasai gave way to stronger yet more graceful multi-storey build-



ings with curved and tiled roofs that are found in surviving examples of castle construction.

The stone-base design also had the advantage of providing the best resistance to earthquakes, which have always been a problem in Japan. The great disadvantage, of course, was that a wall that slopes outwards is ideal for attackers to climb, but once again Japanese ingenuity came to the fore, and trapdoors similar to European machicolations were built into the towers, which later were also made to slightly overhang the stone bases. Kumamoto castle in Kyūshū is the best example of this. Arrows could therefore be shot down on to the heads of attackers, in addition to allowing the dropping of rocks or the pouring of boiling water. Woodblock prints show the simple use of stones as projectiles, which would bounce off the curved walls and create havoc. Huge logs, held up by ropes until required, could also be employed in this fashion.

Big or small, all castles required maintenance, and many fascinating records have survived of this process. In 1587 Hōjō Ujikuni ordered the

**Opposite page:** The tower keep of Matsumoto castle, built in 1597 on the site of the Takeda fortress of Fukashi. Matsumoto is the oldest of the surviving original Japanese castles.

**Right:** The reconstructed corner tower and moat walls of the Hōjō castle of Sakasai. Note the wood and plaster walls and the minimal use of stone. Compared with the later tower keeps finished with tile and plaster, this wooden tower is more reminiscent of a Buddhist temple than a Japanese castle, but is correct for the early to mid-Sengoku Period. (Photograph by courtesy of Sakasai-chō Board of Education)

**Below:** Another view of the corner tower of the castle of Sakasai, showing also the bridge across the dry moat. (Photograph by courtesy of Sakasai-chō Board of Education)





*A section of wall and the openwork observation tower from the reconstructed castle of Sakasai. The grassy bank slopes steeply down to a wet moat. This tower would have been typical of castles of this size, and provided the distant outlook later to be supplied by the tower keep. (Photograph by courtesy of Sakasai-chō Board of Education)*

vants must come and make repairs. Your area must be policed once a month. The rope joints on the walls must be fixed and frayed knots repaired during the last four days of the month. When the work is completed, it must be reported to Ujikuni. If he is away from the castle, it must be reported to the appointed official. If a single person fails to perform his duty, a punishment will be imposed. Care must be taken regarding the materials used. The members of the company itself must take care that the labourers they bring with them use the right materials and are not negligent."

The villagers thus impressed worked from the drum of dawn to the bell of evening. An earlier note, from 1563, spells out in more detail the process of repair. Barring typhoons, the walls were to be repaired every five years, at four persons per ken per day. The villagers

had to bring with them five large posts, fifteen small posts, ten bamboo poles, ten bundles of bamboo, thirty coils of rope, and twenty bundles of reed. The instructions were as follows:

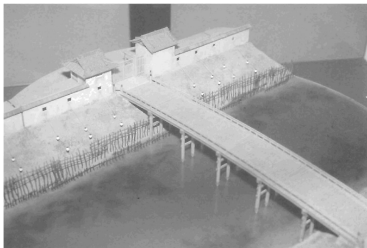
"At intervals of one ken on top of the earthworks drive in the large wooden posts. Place two bamboo poles sideways between them, and arrange four bundles of bamboo on top using the small posts, fastened by six coils of rope and then thatched with the reeds."

These walls were coated with a mixture of red clay and rock. Some castle walls were tiled above, rather than thatched, and the plaster finish could be given a top coat of white, lending the Japanese castle its characteristic graceful appearance.

commander of a company in Hachigata, Chichibu Magojirō, to maintain a 174-ken stretch of walls, plus one tower and three gates in that section. Most men under him had the responsibility for 2 ken each, so at four labourers per ken, the Chichibu contingent had to supply about 700 men to work on the walls of Hachigata. The written order for the work is in marked contrast to the usually accepted role of the samurai's wife:

"If there is damage to the gates, tower or embankments, you are to make the repairs first on the castle even if your own homes have been damaged. If there is damage due to typhoons, you must immediately make the repairs. If you are away on campaign, then your wives and maidser-

*The bridge across the moat to the Ōsaka castle that existed at the time of the siege of 1614–15 is shown here in a model in Ōsaka Castle Tower Museum. The comparatively crude design of the gateway is clearly shown. The lanterns slung out on ropes provided illumination and a warning in case of a night attack. A rough fence closed off the wet moat.*



#### **The castle garrison**

The defence of a castle, of course, relied on more than stout, well-maintained walls. The men of the garrison were vital. Depending upon the size of the castle, the garrison could be permanent, rotated, or kept as a skeleton force. For example, the Arakawa company, located a few kilometres from Hachigata castle, were ordered to run to the castle when they heard the conch sound an attack. An order from 1564 relating to Hachigata has been

preserved, which requires the leaders of 'company number three', consisting of thirteen horsemen and thirty-eight foot-soldiers to relieve 'company number two' and serve fifteen days' garrison duty.

Garrison life in a samurai castle was a matter of constant readiness, with its own, sometimes boring routine. The Hōjō had a strict system for the samurai of mighty Odawara. In 1575 they were required to muster at their designated wall prior to morning reveille. When the drum beat indicated



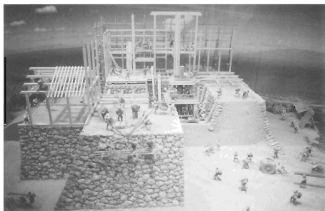
*This picture shows the only remaining gate of Tottori castle, site of the 200-day starvation siege of 1581. Tottori was a yamashiro (mountain castle) built using the natural defences of the hillside. The gate is therefore covered in defence from above. It has iron reinforcements and spiked nails protruding from it.*

the dawn, they would open the gates in their sector to the town outside. Guard duty lasted for six hours during the day, with a two-hour break. The gates would be closed at dusk when the evening bell tolled. Guards were mounted at night, and had strict instructions not to trample on the earthen-work walls. When off duty, their armour and weapons were stored at their duty stations. In 1581 the Hōjō orders for Hamaiba castle included some important considerations of hygiene and safety:

"Human excrement and horse manure must be taken out of the castle every day and deposited at least one arrow's flight from the castle. Troops may not leave the castle for unauthorised reasons. If someone does leave he will be executed and the person in charge will be severely punished. Guards must be posted in the towers day and night. The utmost care must be taken at night to prevent fires and to guard against night attack."

The *Ōu Eikei Gunki*, a chronicle which deals with wars in the north of Japan, describes the extra preparations a garrison had to make when threatened with a siege. The following descriptions occur in the section that describes the defence of Hataya castle in 1600 by Eguchi Gohei. Note how the castle is prepared for assault, which the attackers then convert into a siege when the attack is resisted:

"One of Yoshiaki's retainers called Eguchi Gohei kept the castle of Hataya, on the Yonezawa road. When he heard of the treacherous gathering at Aizu, he immediately replastered the wall and deepened the ditch, piled up palisades, arrows and rice, and waited for the attack... The vanguard were under the command of Kurogane Sonza'e-monnojō, with 200-300 horsemen. He sounded the conch and the bell to signal the assault. As those in Hataya were approached by the enemy they attacked them vigorously with bows and guns. Seventy of the enemy were killed in one go, and many were wounded. The deaths led to a change of plan, and the army who had tried to take the castle came to a halt..."



*Above: Important details of the process involved in building a tower keep for a castle of the late Sengoku Period are shown in this fascinating model in Nagahama Castle Museum. On the right, the earth core, carved out of a mountain, is cut away to show how the sloping outer stone surface is constructed. A large dressed stone is wheeled forward on a cart. The carpenters are busily putting together the wooden framework of the keep within a light scaffolding of wood. At front, a group of workmen, some supported on a cradle, lever blocks of dressed stone into place with poles. The first roof supports are in place on the left. Foremen with fans encourage their staff to greater efforts.*

*Opposite page, top: An unusual view of a Japanese keep from above is provided by this picture of the secondary tower of Fushimi Momoyama castle near Kyōto. Fushimi Momoyama is a modern reconstruction, but gives a very good idea of the layout of castle buildings from this angle, showing the courtyards and interlocking roofs.*

*Opposite page, bottom: The inner walls and moat of Ōsaka castle. The growth of trees is probably the only difference from the sight that would have met the eyes of the troops of the Tokugawa army as they advanced from the south to this area of the defences when the castle fell in 1615.*



Considerations concerning food supplies were a very crucial point when a location was about to come under siege, or when such a prospect was likely following a hostile move by an enemy into one's territory. In 1587 Hōjō Ujikuni ordered the village of Kitadani in Kōzuke province to collect and deposit all grain from the autumn harvest in his satellite castle of Mīnowa. The value placed on provisions is given dramatic illustration by another order from Ujikuni issued in 1568, the same year that Takeda Shingen invaded western Kantō, that no supplies were to be moved without a document bearing the seal of the Hōjō. Should anything be moved without the seal, then the offender would be crucified. The threat of starvation could determine a castle's fate. After a 200-day siege in 1581, the defenders of Tottori were almost reduced to cannibalism.

A reliable water supply was also very important during a siege. In the *Taiheiki*, concerning the siege of Akasaka in 1331, we read:

"Then the 282 warriors in the castle came out to surrender, because they knew they would die on the morrow, for they could not support their thirst for water."

During the siege of Chōkōji castle in 1570, a decisive moment was reached when the besiegers succeeded in cutting the aqueduct which supplied the garrison. The *Zōhyō Monogatari* notes:

"During sieges on a Yamashiro when there is no further water the throat becomes parched and

death can result. Water rationing must be carried out, to a measure of one shō per person per day."

The numbers of people within a castle swelled when an attack was imminent, and could stretch the garrison's resources and provisions to their limits. When Takeda Shingen invaded the Kantō in 1569, the local people flocked to Odawara, causing severe pressure on resources. During Hideyoshi's invasion a much larger movement of population took place, and the garrisons of nearly all the Hōjō satellite castles were left as skeleton staff while most troops were packed into Odawara. Hōjō Ujikuni's Hachigata castle was the sole exception, and came under attack itself. Hideyoshi's support forces under Uesugi Kagekatsu and Maeda Toshiie spread 35,000 troops round Hachigata, and after a month-long siege Ujikuni surrendered, thus providing a foretaste of what was to come at Odawara.

#### The siege

While the garrison of a castle were preparing for a siege, the attacker would be similarly organising his forces. Some considerations would be political ones, and could result in a bloodless victory, whereby a castle was surrendered through negotiation. This was far from uncommon, and a good example occurred during Toyotomi Hideyoshi's campaign against the Mōri family on behalf of Oda Nobunaga. The first castle Hideyoshi met was



*The interior of the keep of Matsumoto, built in 1597, gives a good impression of the inside of a late Sengoku castle. The construction is entirely of wood, with plastered walls across a narrow walkway from the central room. The windows are fitted with heavy wooden shutters and there are small defensive ports for arrows or guns.*



Himeji, then called Himeyama, and now celebrated as one of Japan's foremost tourist attractions. It lay where two key roads met. The castellan was Kuroda Yoshitaka, whose loyalties were somewhat unsure. Through mediation he surrendered Himeji without a shot being fired. With Himeji as a base, Hideyoshi could concentrate on capturing Miki castle, also in Harima province. It was held by Bessho Nagaharu, whom Hideyoshi wished to spare so that he might join the Toyotomi side as well. Hideyoshi wrote:

"I am dispatching Hiratsuka to you promptly, and order you to take stock of the situation and save the life of the lord of Miki. If you manage to isolate it completely, you can take Miki by cutting off supplies of food and water, for there have been many such occasions when the besieged have pleaded for their lives. After you have finished with Miki, please do not neglect to capture Gochaku and Shigata. You can take them either by starvation or by killing... Be assured that the hostage in Gochaku must be received from Itami (castle). As far as (the lord of) Itami (Araki Murashige) is concerned, it seems to me he will be defeated in three or five days because you have filled the moat in so quickly. My fear of the hostage in Gochaku dying in that castle has made me suggest to you that we get him back..."

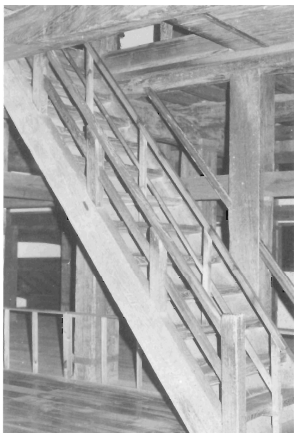
Not all the elements of Hideyoshi's carefully considered plans worked. He won Miki castle, but the castellan Bessho Nagaharu preferred to commit suicide rather than submit personally, and Araki Murashige, lord of Itami, managed to escape and rejoined the Mōri.

When the matter came to an assault, an attack on a defended castle provided a samurai with opportunities for individual glory every bit as

dramatic as a field battle. In the memoirs of Yamada Shōei we read of the bravery of a certain Shibuya Shigekado, who took part in the assault on the fortress of Mine, near the Sendai river in southern Kyūshū. The castle was held by the Shimazu family, and the Shibuya attacked it on 24 July 1372:

"Shigekado descended into the moat and, climbing upon the bank, attacked the fortress, when his helmet was broken by a stone missile, and he sank to the bottom of the moat and perished."

One of the skills most prized in an individual warrior was the ability to act as a shinobi, the men who practised spying and undercover warfare, later to be known as ninja. The following section is another scene from the *Ōū Eikei Gunki* account of



*The interior of the castle of Matsue (1611), showing the steep wooden staircase. Such keeps were built entirely on a wooden framework.*



*Left: The internal supports of the keep of the castle of Matsue (1611) are provided by these huge wooden pillars bound with iron.*

*Opposite page, top: The gate and defensive wall of Kakegawa castle. Kakegawa is a modern reconstruction, but unlike the numerous 'concrete castles' of Japan, has been rebuilt using original materials from the highly detailed plans which the original daimyō was fortunately required to keep by law. The plastered walls have apertures for bows and guns, while the simple gateway has a heavy cross-beam and a small postern built into the studded main gate. The projecting wooden supports are found at intervals along the walls and provided the foundation for ishi uchi tana (loose wooden platforms) in the time of siege, from which gunners could operate on a higher level.*

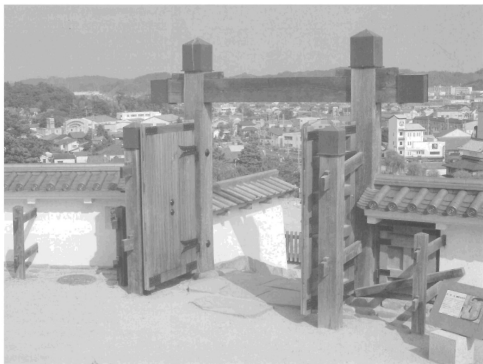
*Opposite page, bottom: The defence of a castle with cannon and arquebus fire is shown in this dramatic print. From the protection of loopholes, tower windows and the firmly closed gate, the defenders keep up a steady stream of fire against Toyotomi Hideyoshi's army across the moat. The golden gourd standard indicates the presence of Hideyoshi himself in the siege lines, and his paulownia mon may be recognised on the wooden shields. To the left, Katō Kiyomasa may be found. Here is also a massive war drum, horagai (conch shell trumpet) and a bell for signalling. The fiercest fire is directed in a sweep across the open bridge.*

the defence of the castle of Hataya, and shows the importance of psychological warfare:

"Now there was within Hataya Castle a person with renowned shinobi skills, and that night he entered secretly into the enemy camp, and took the sashimono from Naoe Kanetsugu's guard within Kurogane Sonza'emonnojō's camp, and planted it on a high point above the front gate of the castle. When dawn broke men from the

attacking force saw it and said, 'This is mortifying. Not only has this tiny castle not fallen, but we have been so negligent that a flag has been stolen!'"

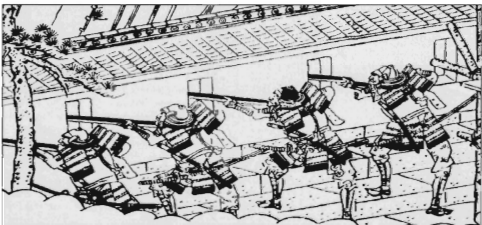
In 1582 Hōjō Ujikuni ordered Yoshida Shinzaemon, the commander of Kotsukue castle, to prepare for both a day and a night attack, because he had received reports that 'infiltrators' had entered his domains, and that they were particularly skilled in attacking castles by moonlight.





*Left: Fascinating details of garrison life are shown in this illustration from the *Hōjō Godōki*. Two samurai play go, while others enjoy backgammon. Swords are sharpened and polished and in the background suits of armour and weapons stand in readiness. Two warriors sharpen arrowheads on a stone, and check the arrow shafts for straightness. Note how the sharpening stones are kept on the outside wooden walkway rather than on the internal tatami mats. The suits of armour stand on armour boxes.*

*Below: The defence of a castle by means of arquebuses is shown here in a detail from the *Ehon Taikōki*. There is one gunner per aperture, to provide a constant fire. The arquebusiers stand on two stone steps leading up to the wall.*



## THE SAMURAI BATTLEFIELD

### Control on the battlefield

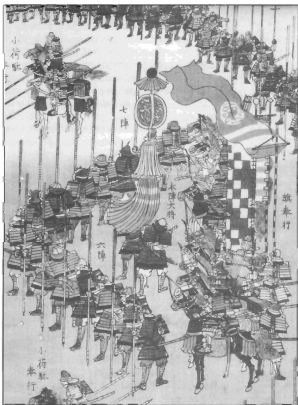
Once the samurai army drew near to the enemy castle, camp or field formation, the officers would begin the transformation of the army on the march into battle order. This was a process to which many hours of training would have been devoted. The commander, seated wherever possible in a position where he would have the best overall view of the battlefield, would give his orders to his subordinate generals, who would transmit them down through the chain of command. Traditionally, the commander-in-chief would sit in some state upon a folding camp stool within a semi-enclosed space provided by the maku, the large curtains bearing his mon which would be erected on site. The maku was

such a feature of samurai life that the shogunate established by Minamoto Yoritomo was known as the bakufu, the 'government from within the maku'. Tokugawa Ieyasu, however, is on record as having commented that battles were not won by sitting on a camp stool giving orders, baton in hand, and that no commander would ever conquer by gazing at men's backs. This may have been somewhat idealistic thinking on the part of this most successful of all samurai commanders, because he continued his comments by adding that the best thing in a battle was to charge with the greatest possible vigour. It may be noted, however, that this was not a course of action he personally operated at any time after his defeat at Mikata ga Hara.

One particular challenge that a general of the Sengoku Period faced was the fact that many

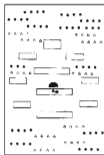
armies consisted of the troops of allies. Each army was further subdivided into weapon groups, and co-ordinated through its own band of messengers. Careful strategic planning and the co-operation between allied armies, facilitated by a skilled battlefield communication system, enabled the successful commander to control synchronised movement by units who were physically separated, so that each man knew what his role was in the current endeavour.

The transformation from an army on the march to an army in battle lines was facilitated by the existence of certain recommended battle formations, most of which were

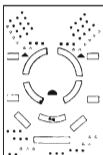


*A general's honjin or headquarters unit, as depicted in a print by Sadahide within the battle formation known as gyōrin. The general is identified by the presence of his ō uma jirushi (great standard) and by other flags. A bodyguard of spearmen attend him to the front. The print is a stylised example, and no particular daimyō or battle is indicated.*

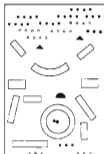
## Recommended Battle Formations



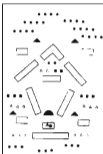
Gankō



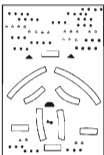
Hōen



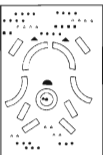
Kōyaku



Hōshi



Kakuyoku



Gyōrin

## Key:

Blocks - Samurai; Black discs - Arquebuses;  
Triangles - Archers; Squares - Spears;  
Large triangles - Flags; Semi circles - Drum,  
gong and conch.

based on old Chinese models. All had some features in common, such as the general positioned to the rear centre, surrounded by his body-guard; the cavalry units ready to charge; a vanguard of brave samurai and ashigaru missile troops protected by ashigaru spearmen; and a sizeable flank and rear contingent. The baggage train would be guarded to the rear. Different units would communicate with one another through the highly mobile mounted messengers. Other messengers, some of whom would be on foot, would operate between allied contingents at different positions on the field. Careful training allowed an army to adopt a new formation quickly when circumstances changed.

## The samurai on the battlefield

The previous discussion of army organisation may have tended to give the impression that on the battlefields of Sengoku Japan the samurai had now become redundant, having been replaced by large bodies of lower-class troops. This is far from being the case. The most important role of the samurai was to provide mounted troops, so that the cavalry of a Sengoku army would be exclusively samurai. But whereas the role as a cavalryman was an ancient one, the most important difference between the samurai of the Gempai Wars and the Sengoku samurai was apparent in the weaponry of

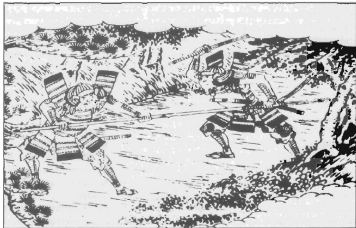
*Six recommended battle formations. Gankō: this is a flexible attack formation which by a few prearranged moves can be converted into the defensive onryō. In that formation (not illustrated here) the units of samurai are pulled in at an angle around the centre. Hōen: this keyhole shape was regarded as the best defence against the hōshi as it could absorb an attack. Kōyaku: this is a very flexible arrangement providing good defence, with a split vanguard capable of absorbing an enemy's initial attack long enough for the overall tactics to become apparent. Hōshi: one of the strongest attack formations of all, as the name 'arrowhead' implies. Kakuyoku: a strong yet flexible defensive arrangement that can quickly be converted into a hōshi. Gyōrin: an attack formation for an army that is outnumbered by the enemy. It is in effect a 'blunted arrowhead'.*

*The charge of the Ii and Tokugawa samurai during the battle of Sekigahara in 1600, as shown on a painted screen in the Watanabe Museum, Tottori.*



the samurai himself. The exclusive use of the bow by mounted samurai had laid the cavalryman open to attack from bands of foot-soldiers, so in time the bow was abandoned for the long, straight spear, which enabled the samurai to defend himself, and also take the fight to the enemy in a way that the bow had not allowed. The more wealthy samurai was still attended by a group of followers who could hand to him bow or spear as he chose, but chronicles of the time and contemporary illustrations clearly show that the spear had become the preferred weapon on the battlefield.

*This detail from the Ehon Toyotomi Kunkōki shows a spearman in action against a swordsman. The spearman has made the fatal error of allowing the swordsman to catch hold of his spear shaft. Even though the swordsman is now reduced to wielding his weapon with one hand, the spearman has lost the advantage of the extra length provided by his spear.*



Most samurai cavalrymen wore the rounded style of armour called the *dō-maru* instead of the older box-like *yoroi*, to which the addition of a solid breastplate was practically the only major change in design during the whole of the Sengoku Period. The type of spear the samurai carried was called a *mochi-yari* (held spear). The shaft lengths varied between 3.2 and 4 metres, and blade lengths varied considerably between about 10 cm and 1.5 m. Techniques were developed to enable the samurai to use this weapon in any situation: from a horse, in a charge on foot, or defending castle walls. Some



*Spear fighting by samurai along the main street of a village. The length of the spears and the sashimono confirm the warriors' samurai status. From a painted screen depicting the battle of Sekigahara in the Watanabe Museum, Tottori.*

illustrations suggest that the spears were used as lances from the saddle, others that they were more used for slashing strokes while standing up in the stirrups. The preferred option in attacking another mounted samurai with one's spear was to have the opponent on one's left. The spear would be held with the right hand across the body, while the left hand controlled the horse. There was also one very unorthodox way of wielding a spear from the saddle which was designed to overcome the length deficiency between the horseman's spear and the long pikes of the ashigaru. This was for the samurai to hold the spear towards the butt of the shaft and whirl it round his head! Another way of attacking foot soldiers was to press one's feet firmly in the heavy iron abumi (stirrups), then swing the leg out and hit the opponent in the face!

The alternative to fighting with a spear from the saddle was to use a sword, and in this case it would be to his advantage to have his enemy to his right, to allow greater freedom of movement with the sword arm. The use of the sword from the saddle meant, of course, that the normally two-handed katana had to be used in one hand. Any disadvantage in the strength of the swing of the blade, however, was overcome by the samurai's position above a foot soldier, and the momentum of his horse. The curved blade of the katana, with its super-hard and very sharp cutting edge, would cut into a small area of the opponent, which would naturally be opened up as the forward movement

of the horseman carried it along. By comparison with the samurai sword, a European knight's sword was dull and clumsy. A downward stroke from a crusader's blade might be expected to stun an oppo-

nent sufficiently to allow the knight to finish him off with a straight thrust. A samurai sword would do far more damage on the initial contact.

Much fighting was, of course, done on foot. Some samurai possessed horses but chose to fight on foot, or were directed along those lines by the general. Other samurai of more modest income simply did not possess the means to own a horse, but in most cases the decision to fight dismounted would be based on tactical considerations. Here again the principal weapon for the samurai was the spear. When facing an opponent armed with a sword, the major advantage possessed by the spearman was one of length, enabling him to thrust at the swordsman while the latter was still too far away to do any damage. From the swordsman's point of view, his key technique would be to knock the spear thrust to one side, giving himself the opportunity to move rapidly forward and deliver a cut. To counter this, a samurai spearman would practise techniques whereby the blade of his weapon would always remain close to his opponent. If the swordsman attempted to strike the spear shaft either to deflect it or cut through it, the spearman would very quickly pull the spear back so that all the swordsman would meet would be empty air. The spearman would then either thrust his blade forward, or withdraw his body slightly, leaving his sharp blade once again pointing towards the swordsman's throat, the positions being exactly as they had been before. The above



points are expressed in a slightly different way in the *Heihō Okugisho*, a valuable document written by a samurai with battle experience:

"Although there are many different weapons, the spear is one of the most effective and powerful. To be proficient in the use of the spear is to be able to understand and use the different spears effectively - such as knowing the spear's length, weight, and the different spear heads. When fighting an enemy with a different weapon, make sure that there is plenty of room to be able to use the weapon effectively. Be able to read the changing situation of a fight so that you can use the spear effectively. When your enemy uses a long sword or tachi to attack, bring your spear up blocking his attack, then lower your hand and stab him. When your enemy uses a long sword and attempts to knock your spear to one side, lower the tip of your spear and when he withdraws, stab him. When your enemy, using a spear, attempts to control your spear with the head of his spear, pull your spear back and stab him."

When two swordsmen met, the outcome was likely to be settled in favour of the one who had the greatest skills in kenjutsu, the techniques of sword-fighting. Hours of individual practice were given to the wielding of the bokutō, the heavy wooden practice sword, which mimicked the weight of a real weapon and left the practitioners bruised but uncut. The lighter bamboo shinai was introduced much later. The other necessary, and hazardous, sword practice method involved tsumeru techniques, whereby real blades were used, and the blow pulled before making contact. The famous Miyamoto Musashi was so proficient at tsumeru that he was said to be able to sever a rice grain placed on an opponent's forehead without the blade cutting the man's skin. The *Heihō Okugisho* has much to say about sword technique. For example, the following extract shows how the sword is used for defence as well as offence:

"From this position, if your enemy attacks, either hit his sword sideways and strike, or, bring your grip up and block and then strike, or step in with your right and cut your enemy. If your enemy attacks your lower body, step backwards and cut his hand. If your enemy goes to a chudangamae, hit his sword sideways, getting it out of your way, then attack him."

No daimyō was better skilled than Takeda Shingen at the traditional use of samurai on a battlefield, particularly in their role as mounted troops. His victory at Mikata ga Hara in 1572 owed a great deal to the mobile and hard-hitting power of the devastating Takeda cavalry charge. The experience of the battle of Nagashino in 1575 was to give a different impression, because here the Takeda cavalry were broken by the firepower of the lowly ashigaru. It is important, however, to realise that the ashigaru were only part of the story, because although the ashigaru broke the Takeda charge, it took other samurai to destroy them. After the initial volley firing had finished, there were still several hours of bitter fighting to go before the day was settled, and here samurai with their spears and swords were very fully involved in a way that illustrates the above points. Once the Takeda cavalry reached the Oda lines, the fight became one of hand-to-hand combat. The gaps left in the defensive fence allowed the Oda army to create a 'killing ground' where hand weapons, rather than missile weapons, were all-important.

Traditional samurai combat techniques on horseback or on foot were most clearly seen at Nagashino on the right wing of Nobunaga's army, which was not protected by a fence. Facing Tokugawa Ieyasu's general Ōkubo Tadayo was the veteran Yamagata Masakage, aged 60. Unhindered by fences, and with a wider ground over which to operate than their comrades along the line, the Yamagata vanguard, with Masakage at their head, took casualties from the bullets, and crashed into the Ōkubo body of troops. Here a fierce hand-to-hand fight developed in the first mêlée of the day, so we may envisage the Ōkubo ranks parting to allow the horsemen in. From this moment on, the matchlock fire would have been sporadic and individual, as this area of the battlefield became one huge hacking mass of men and horses. Yamagata Masakage was skilled in single combat, and had the assistance of three samurai who supported him. He must have kept on his horse, because we then read of him breaking free from the mêlée, and leading his men in a charge against the unit of Honda Tadakatsu. He was met with a hail of bullets and finally shot from off his horse's back. As he fell, an unknown samurai ran up and cut off his head, which was taken back in triumph.

The dominance of the samurai during this second phase of activity at Nagashino is further illustrated by contemporary records which show that in spite of the chaos wrought by the gunners, the samurai, with centuries of military tradition behind them, still tried to seek out a worthy opponent for single combat. They were not always successful in such identification. In one isolated incident Honda Shigetetsu of the Tokugawa force launched a single-handed attack on seven or eight enemy horsemen and killed two, in spite of being wounded in seven places himself. Elsewhere, a retainer of Torii Mototada called Nagata Hatsumi-no-suke took the head of an anonymous samurai whose sashimono flag bore the characters 'ni gatsu' (February). After the battle he discovered that he had taken the head of Mochizuki Nobumasa, Takeda Katsuyori's cousin, who commanded 60 horsemen.

Most individual combats at Nagashino took place during the pursuit, the time when mounted samurai spearmen would be at their most deadly. The attendants attempted to protect their lords, while the ashigaru spearmen and gunners lashed out at any they could see who were identified as enemy, and as the Takeda faltered the Oda and Tokugawa samurai mounted up and rode out from the palisade. The first prominent person to be caught was the commander of the vanguard of the centre squadron: the veteran Naitō Masatoyo, who was accompanied by the 100 men left alive out of his initial command of 1000. He was apprehended by Honda Tadakatsu, Ōsuga Yasutaka and Sakakibara Yasumasa, who had with them a number of ashigaru archers. They shot at Masatoyo, hitting him many times. He fell from his horse, and, seeing him trying to lift his spear, a samurai called Asahina Yasukatsu thrust a spear at him and took his head. He was 52 years old. The most heroic death during the withdrawal was suffered by the other great veteran Baba Nobuharu. He took it upon himself to ensure Takeda Katsuyori's safety by covering his retreat. When the Oda forces caught up with his rearguard unit, Baba Nobuharu announced his name in the manner of the samurai of old, stressing that only the greatest of samurai would take his head. The challenge was answered by two samurai, who attacked him simultaneously with their spears, and soon his head was off his body.

#### THE DEATH OF A VETERAN SAMURAI

There are many accounts of veteran warriors meeting their end in battle. One such was Iida Harima no kami, who was one of the commanders of the rearguard of the garrison who defended Hataya castle in 1600. The *Ōu Eikei Gunki* account tells us:

"Iida was an old warrior of more than sixty years old, and saying, 'Listen, I have dressed myself up today and I shall see the colour of the enemy's flags', he removed his helmet and gave it to a chūgen to hold. He stretched his legs in his stirrups and, shading his eyes with his hand, raised himself up, but from somewhere there came a bullet which struck him on the forehead. The bullet made him fall head-long from his horse. His followers were devastated and tried to hold him to make him stand, but he had already died and was now lifeless."  
(*Seiōgoku Shiryō Sōshō* 2<sup>nd</sup> series, Vols 3-4)

Thus even the most 'modern' of Japanese battles at the time, Nagashino, saw its full share of individual samurai heroics with edged weapons, any of which are comparable to the glorious pages of the *Heike Monogatari*. Yet all acknowledged the need for co-operation between arms, particularly from the lowly ashigaru, and it is to the battlefield role of these men that we now turn.

#### The arquebus on the battlefield

By the end of the sixteenth century tactical considerations meant that the age-old honour of firing the first shot was almost invariably won by a lowly, and probably anonymous, ashigaru. The accepted tactical practice was for the first exchange of fire to be between the arquebus troops, firing at a maximum range of about 100 metres. The firing would be controlled by the ashigaru kashira ordering the gunners through their ko gashira, under the overall direction of the ashigaru taishō. As he was probably in the most forward position of the samurai commanders, he would be able to judge when the firing had disorientated the enemy sufficiently for a charge to be ordered. At this point the ashigaru spearmen would advance, and the samurai would attack on

foot or from horseback. While this was going on, the ashigaru missile troops would reorganise themselves under the protection of other ashigaru spearmen.

The effects of the arquebus fire varied enormously. In some cases, like the battle of Tennōji in 1615, with which the siege of Ōsaka concluded, troops were forced into precipitate action by arquebus fire. In the case noted above, that of the Takeda at Nagashino, mounted samurai were almost broken by it, but Oda Nobunaga's use of three ranks of rapid volley firing at Nagashino does not seem to have been repeated very often. This may be because the concentration needed by his gunners was facilitated by the defence works. In most cases, two ranks of fire seems to have been the maximum possible. Any gap in the rhythm was made up by the archers, and several contemporary illustrations show a smaller number of archers standing beside the arquebusiers, while the spearmen stand ready to form a defensive hedge.

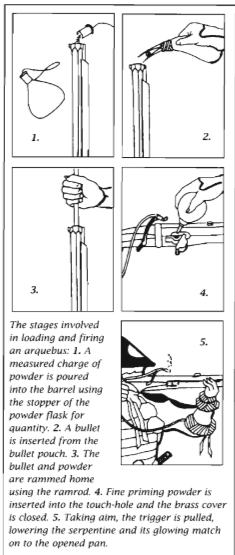
A major source for understanding the role of ashigaru on the battlefield is *Zōhyō Monogatari*, where valuable accounts of ashigaru warfare are largely arranged according to weapon group. Beginning with the arquebus, we see the great responsibility placed upon the shoulders of the *ko gashira*:

"While the enemy are still at a distance the *ko gashira* distributes the bullets, which are put into the bullet pouch worn at the side, so that when they come near the bullets may be quickly retrieved. Subsequently, when they begin to appear ahead, the fuse will be inserted. This order will be given when they are about 1 *chō* away. If the fuse is dropped in quickly or fitted badly the fire will not continue and it may go out. As there is always the possibility of them going out keep many spare fuses that may be exchanged for them. The full bullet pouch may be emptied in a flash, and the sooner they are replenished the better, or the firing would be broken off. This rule is to be kept. First, the leather bag in which the arquebus is carried is put to one side. Secondly two or even three ramrods are taken from the bag and thrust into the belt on the right side of the body."

The author continues with some useful 'Health and Safety' (!) advice for the gunners:

"When ramming do it up and down as far as the brim of the *jingasa*. If it is done out to one side

there is a danger to the eyes of one's comrades, because other people's ramrods may be jammed into eyes, so it is best to lift it straight up and down. It is good to carry the ramrods like arrows in a quiver."



There follows practical advice about bullets getting stuck, broken ramrods and troublesome gunpowder:

"When five or six arquebus bullets have been fired there will be scorching inside the barrel and there may be difficulty with bullets getting stuck or with loading. So make a note of the bullets' weight and keep them separate when you put them in the bullet box, and you can quickly identify the bullets made to a particular weight, which cannot be used if the barrel has become too narrow. Use a ramrod that is made from oak, but even these will sometimes break. Without a ramrod the gunpowder cannot be forced down, so in most cases one man will have two or three, but the *ko gashira* carries a case in which a particularly sturdy ramrod is kept, and when there is difficulty getting the bullets in one can use it. Small bullets must be bitten between the back teeth. In the place where the bullet pouch hangs from the side hang the *hayago* (powder flask). The gunpowder may solidify, so the powder flask must be struck on the bottom, or else the bullets may only fly less than 5 ken. You must shake the powder flask when putting gunpowder in to ram down."

The author then discusses the making of prepared cartridges, an innovation that speeded up the loading process:

"Place on a sheet of paper the powder from the flask, pack the powder in leaving a space. Then glue the paper leaving an opening and place the bullet in this paper garment. This paper may be fired when split in two or three places, so the bullets are thus in a tube up to two or three sun long. These may be kept in the pouch on the side. When loaded they can go up to 45 ken before falling to earth and will not be wasted."

A different authority, the *Bumon Taihei Fubōki*, makes the following interesting recommendation for the *ko gashira* to keep some cartridges back for emergency:

"Concerning *tetsu no gyoyaku* (the final cartridges), the meaning is that among the cartridges prepared by the gunners, two or three rounds should be kept back in reserve. As a consequence of this, when the enemy have surrounded you, if all the cartridges have been fired and discarded it can be a dangerous situation, as you will be carrying a useless arquebus, and will be

much inferior by comparison. Therefore it is a rule. At the time of the siege of *Kōrai*, *Ōtomo* of *Higo*, when the *ashigaru* attacked, in that time he did not realise that the gap was too large. One or two hundred arquebuses were fired and discarded. They immediately came within bowshot but did not run out of shots, because in that family was a person called *Harada Iyo*, and by means of the extra cartridges they held the enemy."

The *Zōhyō Monogatari* account continues with advice on target priorities:

"As for the enemy, after beginning with the horses it is good to attack the riders. On these occasions fire at those riding the horses so that they fall off and also at the horses. It will disturb many of the enemy."

The *Zōhyō Monogatari* recognises that once the enemy reach one's lines the arquebus is useless, so he includes advice on when and how to engage in hand-to-hand fighting under the protection of the spearmen:

"If the enemy come close, because you will be replaced by men with spears, divide up to right and left. Remove the ramrod, sheathe the arquebus in the arquebus bag, and cross swords with them. Aim at the helmet, but if the loan swords have dull blades and are likely to snap, aim at the enemy's hands and legs and you can cut at them. If the enemy are a distance away you can swab out the barrel, which is equivalent to cleaning it. At such time it is wise not to put powder and ball into the arquebus for about half a minute. Even though the enemy are out of sight don't carry the arquebus on your shoulder."

The *Zōhyō Monogatari* does not provide historical illustrations of its recommendations, but a vivid account of the effect of arquebus fire occurs in the *Kirin Gunkō*.

"There was a dreadful noise in the castle as over 100 shooters attacked, accompanied by about 60 horsemen. The arquebuses of the *ashigaru* were continually replaced and their firing produced 600 or 700 dead or wounded."

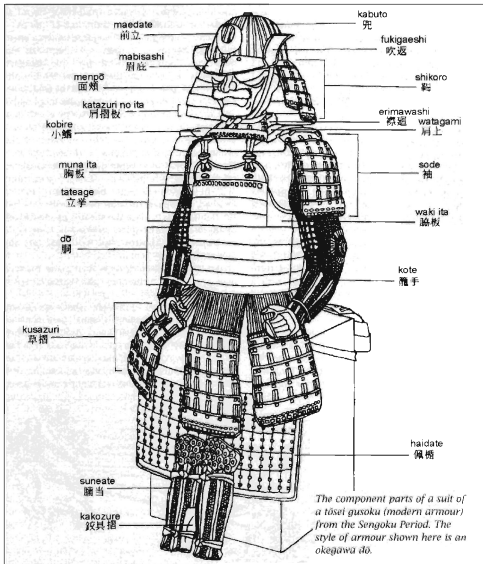
#### Archers and spearmen on the battlefield

*Ashigaru* archers were used for skirmishing and also in the firing line, where they filled in the gaps between arquebus firing. They were also used for highly skilled precision shooting. Just as in the

case of the arquebuses, the yumi ko gashira for archery takes charge:

"When the enemy are still a distance away it is important not to shoot arrows from the quiver.

The ko gashira who is in command will take charge of the matter, and will order the shooting of arrows when the enemy are closer. The decision about the effective shooting distance is a difficult



one to make. Usually the intention is to shoot once. Twice is only to be done with caution. One must not abandon shooting because of receiving enemy missiles. On the matter of the disposition of the archery corps, stand one archer in the space between two matchlock men, to cover the arquebuses reloading. An arrow can be loosed in between the two matchlockmen firing, thus covering the reloading interval. When the enemy advance in a dense mass divide up into right and left sections and shoot. In the case of a mounted enemy shoot at the horses."

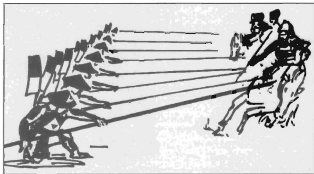
Like the arquebusiers, the archers have to be prepared for hand-to-hand fighting:

"When the arrows in the quiver are running low, do not use up the last arrow, but make a line to permit shooting to continue, and engage in hand-to-hand fighting. When forced to withdraw defend from a spear's length away, and then shoot into the space. This should be completely successful. If you are forced to shoot while looking up at their faces you cannot ward off an enemy. These are the secrets of bow fighting."

The *Zōhyō Monogatari* continues its account by noting the existence of a recently introduced weapon which improved the hand-to-hand techniques of archers. Yumi yari were bows with a spear blade fixed on them. They are not mentioned in the war chronicles, having originated in the early Edo Period:

"From the time when wars were futile bows have become spears as yumi yari, which can be thrust into the gaps in the facemask and the armour skirts. After this pull out the long and short swords and attack and cut at arms and legs.

*This rough sketch is an attempt by the author to show the use of a rank of spearmen against cavalry following the recommendations in Zōhyō Monogatari. The ashigaru spearmen are lined up with weapons at the ready and scabbards securely located. They brace themselves in a kneeling position and take the horses in the breast. They then try to keep hold for as long as possible, to follow up with pursuit when ordered.*



The bowstring must be foiled up so that it is not cut through when this is done."

The most numerous among the weapon groups were the spearmen ashigaru, who were well drilled. Their enormous nagae-yari pikes had the potential to cause as much trouble for friend as foe if not used correctly, and some of the most vivid lines in the *Zōhyō Monogatari* concern spear fighting. As noted earlier, the length of the nagae-yari, and the need for the ashigaru spearmen to keep the blades even, implies the existence of 'pike drill', even though the traditional samurai spirit clearly lies behind the more active and offensive nature of a Japanese spear unit than might be expected from comparisons with a European schiltron. Using the *Zōhyō Monogatari* and other accounts, it is possible to reconstruct what Japanese spear unit fighting may have consisted of. Beginning with the *Zōhyō Monogatari* account:

"The matchlock and bow rounds having finished, the spears are now under orders. Before the fighting starts place the sheaths inside the top of the armour breastplate (muna-ita). Long scabbard-like spear sheaths must be thrust into the belt at the side."

An interesting contrast is then made between ashigaru spear techniques and samurai spear fighting:

"Unlike samurai spearmen, where spears are thought of as only for single combat, here many are of one mind, with spear points moving together, keeping a rhythm. When one or two meet it is fine to fight individually, but when spears are used en masse there must be co-ordination and timing, with no exception. As for spear techniques, it is believed

to be a good thing to be able to knock down an enemy sashimono (literally a flag, but indicating the horseman himself). When the enemy are mounted a quick thrust at the horse's belly will make it buck and the man will fall off. Line up in one rank three shaku apart, not thrusting yet, but at the ready in a large row to hit the enemy. When facing an attack by horsemen line up in one rank kneeling, lie the spear down and wait. When contact is imminent lift up the spearhead into the area of the horse's breast. When the point pierces the skin hold on to it! Whether you are cutting at men and horses, it may be that you will feel you are being forced to pull out the spear, and it is a general rule to stand fast to the bitter end and not throw into disorder the collaborative actions. After you have driven the enemy back, to pursue for about 1 chō will be sufficient."

The section concludes with advice on how far to stick the spear into an enemy. The limit must be the depth of the shaft up to the mekugi, the pin that goes through the shaft to secure the tang of the blade:

"Usually thrust into a body up to the mekugi so that you can still withdraw it. The mekugi has a metal clasp around it. The successful employment of many spears requires skill and perseverance, and constant readiness."

The war chronicles of the Sengoku Period have several passages relating to spear fighting by ashigaru. In the *Yoshihika Monogatari*, dealing with the attack of Shirō Torijūrō, there is the implication that a certain individuality of action was allowed:

"Yoshihika-ko too, with his horsemen drew near. From within the thirty long-shafted spearmen was one man who had the strength of an animal. He took his long bodied spear..."

The best illustration of controlled spear work occurs in the *Ōu Eikei Gunki*, in the section on the attack on Yuzawa castle. Note how both a frontal and a flank attack are delivered simultaneously:

"Iyo Choza'emonnojō Sadahira and Ichikuri Heibu Shōrin with 300 men, plus the forces under Yoshida Magoichi and Nishino Shūri Ryōshun and Magosaburō of the same family with 500 men, arranged their spear blades in an even line and went to fight against the Yuzawa side. From the flank at the same time eighteen nagae-yari men acquired a name for themselves by advancing in one rank holding spears and naginata. They cut

into all sides of the dense crowd as they surrounded the unfortunates..."

It is therefore possible to summarise the sequence of ashigaru spear fighting as follows:

1. Form ranks one man (about 1 metre) apart.
2. Unsheathe your weapon, retaining the scabbard.
3. Kneel to await the cavalry, with the spear laid flat.
4. On the command, rise, taking hold of the spear.
5. Order ranks to produce even blades.
6. Guide with the left hand, thrust with the right.
7. Thrust to a limited depth, and maintain pressure.
8. Pursue as directed.

Historical accounts, however, prevent us from making too close an analogy with European pikemen. Japanese spear fighting was clearly in a class of its own, and even the long spears were wielded in battle with a freedom that discounts too rigid an idea of a hedge of pikes. One book illustration showing a mock battle with spears depicts the ashigaru taking spear work on the run. They were also trained to move from a guard position with the spear held nearly vertical to parry and block a spear thrust with their shafts, and then reply with thrusts of their own. The important point appears to be one of keeping the spear blades at an even distance, even if they are being wielded with a greater independence than a European hedge of pikes would ever have allowed.

The above accounts show how the successful general on the battlefield achieved loyalty and efficiency at all levels of those under his command. Every samurai and every ashigaru had his place, his function and his value. The *Zōhyō Monogatari* is eloquent testimony to this, but notes throughout that discipline is essential when dealing with lower-class warriors, and reserves its strongest language for ashigaru who are careless with equipment:

"It is the rule that on the battlefield no equipment must be abandoned. Small spear scabbards must be placed within the muna-ita of the armour. Long scabbards must be kept at one's side. Ramrods should be placed at the waist like a quiver and not

### THE STANDARD BEARER IN BATTLE

Some of the most exciting passages in the chronicles of the Sengoku Period are concerned with the bravery of the ashigaru whose job it was to carry flags or other insignia. As the following examples will show, loyal service in the particularly dangerous role of standard bearer was likely to ensure promotion to samurai. Only the bravest ashigaru were chosen for these roles, and many did not survive. In the *Banshō Sayo Gunki* we read:

"The swift current separated those who had the flags and the standard of Ukita ... then the flag carrier too was killed by a galloping horse as he walked along, the flag standard fell to the ground many times and finally had to be abandoned."

In the record of the Matsuura clan's involvement in the second invasion of Korea by the Japanese in 1597, the invading troops were faced with the well-defended fortress of Namwŏn. Note how the flag bearers of Matsuura Shigenobu are the first to enter the castle:

"It was the idea of the Flag Commissioner Nishi Kiyō'emon that he would order the standard bearer Urakawa Kon'emon and the *ko gashira* Doi Ya'emon to co-operate in trying to be the first to force their way across the walls against the castle garrison, carrying Shigenobu's banners with them to the enemy. They captured some enemy flags and held the castle garrison at bay. All the soldiers saw them do this and achieve Kiyō'emon's aim. It was Shigenobu who tried to be the first to enter the castle garrison, and both the vanguard and rearguard advanced. The soldiers followed blindly, and whereas Nishi

Kiyō'emon was the first to enter, Kiyomasa's vanguard of Iida Tobei, Morimoto Gidayu, Shobayashi Shunjin, and Tachibana's retainer Sandayu of the same name, carried on and entered while all the army advanced step by step. Immediately the castle fell."

As the *uma jirushi* (standard) indicated the whereabouts of the general, it always became a focus for the fiercest fighting. Much bitter combat is described in the *Momii Nikki*, particularly in the chapter on the battle of Awataguchi, where the prize is a standard:

"The general San'shichi was jammed tight and attacked. Over 700 of his followers were crowded together. While some recovered and went back others were killed. The flag commissioner Tobe Shirō was cornered by the *kashira* Eta Heiko and the retainer Yata Kotairo and was killed in the crowd, and Yata Genji also slew the standard-bearer. To a loud yell from those present he snatched away Nobuo's standard, which was in the form of a golden pestle..."

Yata Genji, therefore, earns his commendation by killing a standard-bearer, but strenuous efforts to keep a flag could also open the way to a successful career. In the *Komatsu Gunki*:

"A certain Deguchi, a retainer of Eguchi's, held Motokura Nagahide's *hata jirushi* (streamer-like flag), and while he had it performed feats against the rebels on many occasions... Eguchi recommended promotion for this and gave him a 200 *roku* fief..."

There are several other examples of promotion to samurai. In the *Kiyomasa-ki*, concerning the keeper of a castle in the Iki daimyō territory:

"As the defeated army flooded out and it was realised that they were scattering in all direc-

tion. It is also the rule that horses must not be allowed to wander freely. This is strictly forbidden."

Nevertheless, the whole tone of the *Zōhyō Monogatari* is a positive one, recognising, as it does, that daimyō ignored ashigaru at their peril, and needed to devote resources to their welfare, training and support. Their specialised units and general presence was by now appreciated, as the later definition of them as samurai was to show. The successful daimyō were the ones who realised

this fact while there were still battles to fight. Only with ashigaru support would samurai armies ever triumph.

### Naval warfare

Apart from castles, the other important area of military activity was seaborne fighting. Although the Japanese made themselves notorious as pirates along the coasts of Korea and China from the twelfth century onward, Japan never built ships



tions, the men accompanying Kiyomasa were Shobayashi Shunjin, Morimoto Gidayu, Kashiwara Tōgorō, Ikeda Jinshirō, Wada Takemaru, the bow-carrier Mizutani Yasunojō, the standard-bearer Yokichi, and the sandal-bearers Itsuho, Oyoshi, Hike and Ōe Jinshichi."

Thus a lower-ranking person who has no surname was responsible for holding Katō Kiyomasa's great standard. This was the one that bore the motto of the Nichiren sect of Buddhism to which Katō Kiyomasa belonged, 'Namu Myōho Renge Kyō' ('Hail to the Lotus of the Divine Law'). Because of his conduct at this battle, the standard-bearer Yokichi was promoted to the status of samurai, and in the *Zokusen Kiyomasa-ki* (the second series of the *Kiyomasa-ki*) we read:

"(at the time of the above battle) ... present with Kiyomasa. Kashiwara Tōgorō, Katō Hirazawa'emom were recorded, a certain Wada Takemaru was among them. Both were youths and were pages at that time... As for the standard-bearer Yokichi at the time he received from Shobayashi Yo'emom a fief of 300 koku."

Note also the honourable mention of the young pages who were in the thick of the fighting. The *Aizu Jin Monogatari* has another splendid account of how the bravery of a standard-bearer could inspire an army:

"A person called Okitsu Hikosaburō, a retainer of the Hamada family, carried the lord's standard and fixed it on to a willow tree at the gate. The allies following in his footsteps saw this and took the other Hamada banners into the castle. Some were shot dead but all tried to outdo each other as they attacked."

that were effective as war vessels. This is probably because their plans were to land on the foreign coasts and carry out inland raids on nearby towns either directly or along rivers. The Sengoku daimyō whose territories involved coastal waters or navigable rivers benefited from the provision of their own personal navies. The Takeda maintained a small fleet on the landlocked Lake Suwa, while the Hōjō patrolled the sea near Odawara. The most developed fleet was owned by the Mōri, who

controlled the Inland Sea under their admiral Murakami Yoshimichi, an ex-pirate. They were able to take advantage of the numerous bays, inlets and islands dotted through these waters. Kurushima Michifusa, who played an important role in the Japanese naval campaign during the Korean invasions, was also a native of the Inland Sea area. Konishi Yukinaga, Kuki Yoshitaka, Wakizaka Yasuharu and Katō Yoshiaki led Hideyoshi's fleet during the Kyūshū campaign of 1587, and Katō, Kuki and Wakizaka went on to handle the naval operations during the siege of Odawara in 1590.

The provinces of Ise and Shima, on the east coast of the Kii peninsula, provided the seagoing families of Mukai and Kuki, and Kii province itself had the Atake family. It is probably from the family name Atake that the expression to denote the most common type of warship, 'adake-bune', is derived. Kuki Yoshitaka was lord of the castle of Toba, where there was a plentiful supply of fine timber for shipbuilding from the dense forests of Kii, and good natural harbours. A commission from Oda Nobunaga is recorded thus:

"On the 20th day of the 6th month of 1572 Nobunaga went to Sawayama on Lake Biwa and ordered timber to be cut in the hills of Tagayama, and brought down the Serigawa to the foot of the hills at Sawayama. He then got together all the woodcutters, carpenters and smiths of the province, and appointed his chief carpenter Okabe Mata'emom to superintend the building of a ship."

Three types of ship were commonly used by such warlords in their navies. Largest were the adake-bune type. These were the flagships of the Sengoku navies, and in appearance were just a large box with a heavy prow. From bow to stern these ships resembled a floating yagura, or wooden castle, the whole surface, called the tate ita, being covered with planking 6-10 cm thick. Along the four sides, loopholes were cut for guns and bows, leaving no dead space that was not covered by defensive fire. Part of the tate ita was hinged, allowing it to be let down to form a bridge across which an enemy vessel could be boarded. These slow, but formidable, craft were manned by 80 oarsmen, and carried 60 samurai, with artillery consisting of three cannon and 30 arquebuses.

Second in size, and most numerous, were the seki-bune. They were recognisable by their long

pointed bows, and corresponded to the adake-bune on several points. Weight was saved by making them narrower, and replacing the heavy planking of the tate ita by bamboo. They were crewed by 40 oarsmen, and carried 30 samurai armed with one cannon and 20 arquebuses. The seki-bune formed the backbone of any feudal navy.

The smallest type of boat was the kobaya. There was no yagura-type superstructure, just open decking with a short tate ita called a hangaki, around which was built an open framework across which thick padded cloths could be hung as a protection against arrows. They had a crew of twenty oarsmen and carried ten samurai, of whom eight had arquebuses. They were mainly used for scouting, reconnaissance and communications.

A fleet of the Sengoku Period was usually arranged in five squadrons, with the commander's ship in the centre of the middle squadron. Two squadrons held the flanks in advance of the centre squadron, while the final squadron brought up the rear. The fastest and lightest ships were on the extremities of each squadron, and advanced or retired quickly as needed. Alternatively, a smaller fleet would have a core of, say, three adake-bune, surrounded by a screen of sekibune, with an outer screen of kobaya. Advance or retreat were signalled by drums, and dispersion or rally by flags. Each of the five divisions was indicated by a different coloured flag, green, yellow, white, red or black, and individual boats had a number or character painted on the flag. The flags were rigid nobori (vertical) flags. At night hanging lanterns would replace the flags for communication purposes.

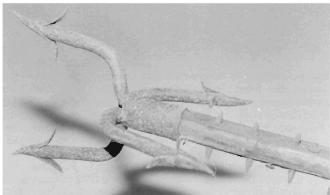
One authority recommends that for fighting in a boat, the samurai should wear only a dō and helmet, discarding facemask, sleeves, shinguards and thigh guards.

*A polearm fitted with multiple curved spikes was used during naval warfare and also by the yoriki, the police who patrolled the streets of Edo. (Courtesy of Tansu Japanese Antiques, Batley)*

The identifying sashimono would also be inconvenient, so this should be replaced with a small sode-jirushi (shoulder-flag). There was also access to numerous weird and wonderful grappling weapons fitted with hooks and barbed spikes. The kusari kagi, or grappling chain, consisted of four hooks joined together (somewhat like the traditional Japanese anchor) on the end of a chain 2 metres long. The chain was attached to a ropes about 15 metres long. The whole was swung around the head and flung on to the enemy ship's deck.

The main defence against the kusari kagi was the kama, which had a sickle-like blade attached to a polearm of 3 metres length. With the blade of the kama an ashigaru could hack at grappling ropes or chains from a distance. A variation on it consisted of a spear with a long blade and two cross-blades pointing down towards the shaft like two sickles. This combined the use of the yari with the kama. Another polearm had three straight spikes barbed like fish-hooks. The kumade, a polearm with a 'bear's paw' of spikes, and the kumode, a similar device but bristling with spikes, provided two useful varieties of grappling iron. Both were mounted on long shafts. Finally we may note the 'sleeve entangler', usually associated with the police of the Edo Period. A mass of spikes constituted the head, and about 20 cm of the upper shaft was also covered with spikes.

The *Zenryō funa ikusa no maki* adds several other fascinating details about ship's equipment and fighting techniques. Ships could carry folding



*Fighting at sea during the battle of Yashima in 1184 is shown in this superb screen in the Watanabe Museum, Tottori. The hero Minamoto Yoshitsune, wearing a splendid yoroi armour, leans over to rescue his dropped bow, supported by the monk Benkei with his naginata. Their opponents use swords, kama yari (sickle-bladed spears) and various rakes against them.*



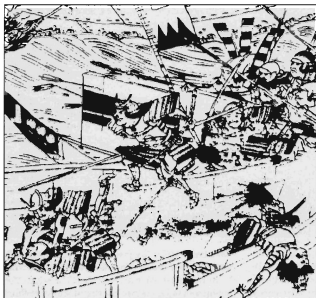
anchors, and a buoyancy aid for horses. Called an ukigutsu, it consisted of a thin hide bag filled with air. Offensive weapons included the hōrokubiya (hand grenades) described elsewhere, thrown by hand, catapult or flung by a net attached to a 1.5 m handle. Bō hiya (shafted fire arrows) would have the same purpose of setting fire to the enemy ships. The burning material on the fire arrows was made from rope that had been waterproofed by boiling it in a mixture of water, the ashes of burnt cedar leaves, and a certain iron substance. As an alternative to bows as a means of propulsion, the Japanese developed a wide-bore arquebus that fired rocket-like wooden fire arrows with leather wings.

The rivalry between the Hōjō, Takeda, Imagawa and Satomō families in eastern Japan resulted in sea battles on several occasions. For example, when the Satomō attacked Mizaki from the sea, Hōjō Ujiyasu responded in kind, and twenty leading Satomō samurai were killed in the fight. The most famous naval battles fought in sixteenth-century Japan involved Oda Nobunaga and the Mōri family. These were the battles of Kizugawaguchi in 1576 and 1578, fought between the fleets of Oda Nobunaga and Mōri Motonari, who supported Nobunaga's hated enemies, the Ikkō-ikki warriors of the Ishiyama Honganji in Ōsaka.

In 1578, Nobunaga used six very large ships as a 'one-off' in what might be termed a 'super'

adake-bune style. They were well equipped with cannon, and if one account is to be believed, were the world's first ironclad warships. The source for this astonishing claim is the usually reliable *Tamon-in nikki*, the diary of the abbot of the Tamon-in, one of the sub-temples of the Kōfukuji at Nara. The priest saw the ships as they put to sea, and describes these magnificent vessels as 'iron-ships so arranged that guns would not penetrate them (tetsu no fune nari, teppō toran yoi)'. This is not to imply that they were built of iron, but that the outer walls of the tate ita on the yagura superstructure were reinforced with iron plates as a protection against cannon and fire arrows.

These vessels were also seen by two Jesuit missionaries, Fathers Organtino and Luis Frois, the latter comparing them to the best of contemporary Portuguese shipping. Frois does not mention iron plates, which he would surely have done if they were real ironclads, but was very impressed by the firepower. At this second battle of Kizugawaguchi several Mōri vessels were burned or sunk, but a severe design fault was exposed in Nobunaga's iron ships. According to the account from the Mōri side, the Mōri boarded the ō adake-bune on the starboard side, so that there was a rush to that side to repel them. At this point the heavily laden vessel simply heeled over and sank. Nevertheless, the Mōri had been bettered, and lost again in another engagement in 1579.



*Left: The battle of Kizugawaguchi in 1578 between the Mōri and Oda Nobunaga, shown in a detail from the Ehon Taikōki. The two battles at Kizugawaguchi were notable for Nobunaga's use of massive wooden battleships.*

*Opposite page: A victorious samurai cuts the head off his victim using his tantō (dagger) in this detail from the Ehon Toyotomi Kunkōki.*

In spite of such experiences, however, most daimyō do not seem to have acquired a very firm grasp of naval warfare, as the Korean expeditions were to show. Samurai warfare was most successfully carried out on dry land. Even Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who made good use of naval transport techniques for his Shikoku and Kyūshū expeditions, was bettered by the Koreans when he had to send an army on a long overseas journey.

#### AFTER THE BATTLE

##### The rituals of victory

When the pursuit was complete, or the castle had fallen, the rituals of victory could begin. The most informal, but the most common, would occur as night fell. As the victorious samurai left the battlefield, their place was taken by scavengers from local villages, who invariably pillaged the bodies, dispatched wounded men, and stole any valuable weaponry or armour. Prizes other than equipment might also be gained. Following the battle of Yamazaki in 1582, the defeated Akechi Mitsuhide fled alone

from the battlefield, but was apprehended by local peasants and beaten to death in a bamboo grove.

Behind the privacy of the general's maku more dignified rituals were enacted, and even more ceremony surrounded the celebration of victory than attended the setting out to war. After a battle the victorious daimyō would wish to reward his loyal followers, and most of the ritual surrounding a victory celebration concerned the bizarre practice of head inspection, which is vital to understanding samurai warfare. As early as 1062 we read of Minamoto Yoshiie riding into Kyōto carrying the head of the rebel Abe Sadato as proof that he had fulfilled the government's commission. A few years later he was to throw into a ditch the heads of vanquished rebels when the government refused to reward a quelling of a rebellion undertaken without the correct requisition.

From being mere proof of a good job well done, the practice of head collection developed its own mystique, and every samurai who went out to fight appreciated that, to paraphrase the words of Tokugawa Ieyasu before the battle of Sekigahara in 1600, there were two alternatives: either to come



back with an enemy's bloody head in your hands, or to come back minus your own.

Prior to the daimyō's inspection, the heads would be washed, the hair combed, and the resulting trophy made presentable by cosmetics. They would then be mounted on a spiked wooden board with labels for identification. This routine was a task traditionally done by women, and in Tanizaki's short story *The Secret History of the Lord of Musashi* the process is described in great detail. The castle is under siege, and the women of the castle perform the same task every night within one of the castle's innermost turrets:

"When she received a freshly washed head from the woman on the left, she would first cut the cord that bound the topknot; then she would comb the hair carefully, caressingly. Sometimes she would apply a bit of oil, touch up the shaven area with a razor, or, taking an incense burner from the sutra stand at her side, hold the hair over the smoke. Next she would take up a new cord with her right hand, hold one end in her mouth as she gathered the hair together with her left hand, and tie up the topknot again - all exactly as a professional hairdresser might do."

If the ceremony was to be held with no time for this preparation, the heads could be presented on an opened war fan with a paper handkerchief or some leaves to soak up any dripping blood. The daimyō would sit in similar state to that he had enjoyed when he presided over the departure ceremony, and one by one the heads were brought before him for comment. Viewing heads in this alfresco manner was one of the absorbing tasks performed by Imagawa Yoshimoto as he rested at Okehazama in 1560. A few minutes later he was surprised and himself beheaded.

If a daimyō was otherwise engaged, the head ceremony could be delegated to a trusted subordinate, as noted in the *Hōjō Godaiki*, which also illustrates the practical considerations of assessment of warrior prowess that lay behind the ritual:

"It is Nakayama Shūrisuke that Hōjō Ujitsuna favours to raise the flags and sit on the camp-stool at Kōnodai. This is a person who is known for his traditional virtues of military lore and loyalty by which he has destroyed enemies, carrying out strategy in numerous battles, and at the same time he is a samurai official. This person will be bugyō for head inspection. He will record the relative importance of loyalties, and examine the details of contests when the heads were taken."

As illustrated by the Imagawa episode, the head-viewing ceremony was something to which the victorious general would give a great deal of attention. The prowess of both samurai and ashigaru was evaluated first on the basis of the number of heads they brought back. These would later be ranked according to the personal history and status of the enemy killed and the method by which the soldier had killed him. The highest honour was gained by taking a head following close single combat. Second was the use of a sword, spear or bow, and third was the employment of a firearm. Some consideration was also given to the time during the battle at which the enemy was killed. The *Kōyō Gunkan* provides an illustration in the person of the famous sword fighter Tsukahara Bokuden:

"Bokuden himself fought in battle with the spear nine times and claimed 21 heads. Among those, seven were classified as yarishita and kuzurekiwa... He earned the title of valiant warrior (buhēn)."

It is quite clear that the samurai took these matters very seriously. The category 'yariwaki no kōmyō' (assisting a comrade) would come in useful if there was a dispute over who had delivered the fatal blow. In one case during the siege of Ueda in 1600, the commander went to the unusual lengths of sending men in disguise into the enemy town to discover eye-witness accounts of a disputed combat. The categories involving 'firsts' were most valued, and there are many tales of rivalry over the opportunity to be the first into battle with sword or spear. The most famous is probably the competition between Kajiwara Kagesue and Sasaki Takatsuna at the second battle of Uji in 1184. To be first into this battle meant swimming one's horse across the river. Kajiwara was ahead when Sasaki told him that his saddle girth was loose. When Kajiwara paused to tighten it, Sasaki finished his crossing



When a head was brought for a commander's inspection, it was washed, groomed and presented on a spiked board, as shown in this illustration from the *Gunyōki*. The correct position of the right and left hands are clearly delineated. Note also the label attached to the pigtail which bore the names of the victim and the trophy taker.

in first place. When Fukushima Masanori and Ikeda Terumasa attacked Gifu castle in 1600, they had made an agreement that both should advance together, and nearly came to blows when Masanori perceived that Terumasa had moved ahead. A compromise was reached whereby one attacked the front gate, while the other assaulted the back.

When 33 heads had been taken by an individual it was usual for the samurai to perform a Buddhist 'head memorial service' (*kubi kuyō*) for his victims. Among the Takeda the custom was for these head services to be performed after 50 deaths. All these points are illustrated in the *Kōyō Gunkan*:

"Matsumoto fought in combat with the spear 23 times and claimed the heads of 25 samurai and 76 ashigaru. Twice he conducted services for those whose heads he claimed and this leaves one head remaining."

If a battle was very large, not all the hundreds of heads taken were saved. The *Gunyōki* quotes the following document:

"Tembun 2nd year (1533) 7th month, 6th day at the Hour of the Monkey. The list for Ōyama. These are the heads that were taken:

Item: one head (belonging to) Maekawa Zaemon taken by Kinichī Danjōshū and Shōshū Uemon.

Item: one head (belonging to) no given name known, taken by the chūgen Genroku.

Item: one head (belonging to) Arakami Jirōzaemon, taken by Nagao Gagaku Sukeshū and Masuda Danjōchū.

The number of heads taken and discarded is not known."

The chūgen called Genroku had conducted himself well!

One feature of the head inspection routine was that certain expressions on the faces of the deceased were supposed to be unlucky, and others lucky, viz:

Eyes closed and peaceful - lucky, 'a head of the Buddha'

Eyes looking towards heaven - unlucky (particularly among the Takeda)

Eyes looking towards the earth - lucky (particularly among the Takeda)

One eye closed, gnashing teeth, etc. -  
unlucky

Eyes looking towards the head's left - lucky in  
enemies

Eyes looking towards the right - lucky in  
allies

The above mention of the heads of allies refers to  
the practice of sending back to an enemy the  
heads of their noble dead.

The head of a warrior who had fought bravely  
was sure to excite some comment from the victo-  
rious general, and history provides several exam-  
ples. After the battle of Shinowara in 1183,  
Minamoto Yoshinaka thought he recognised the  
features of Saitō Sanemori, a veteran warrior

#### THE CLASSIFICATION OF SAMURAI EXPLOITS

Samurai exploits in battle were classified and  
recorded as follows:

Ichiban yari — The first warrior to use a spear  
in the attack on the enemy lines

Ichiban tachi uchi — The first warrior to use a  
sword in the attack on the enemy lines

Ichiban kubi — To have taken the first head  
once the battle has started

Ichiban nori — To be the first to enter an enemy  
castle or fort

Tachi uchi no kōmyō — To have killed an enemy  
with a sword

Kumi uchi no kōmyō — To have killed an enemy  
stronger than oneself in single combat using  
grappling techniques

Yarishita no kōmyō — To have killed an enemy  
and taken his head at the height of the battle

Tsukiyari no kōmyō — To have taken an enemy  
head during spear fighting when many of the  
enemy were thrusting at you

Yariwaki no kōmyō — To have assisted a  
comrade in arms in his exploits

Kuzurekiwa no kōmyō — To hold the line when  
the enemy forces your unit to retreat

Shigariyari no kōmyō — To perform a rearguard  
action when allies are in retreat

Teoi no mikata o tasukete hiku buko — To help a  
wounded ally when retiring (Ōmaru 1994: 83).



*The six varieties of expression on the face of a  
dead warrior (based on an illustration in Sasama  
1968). From left to right and top to bottom: eyes  
closed - lucky; eyes upwards - unlucky; eyes down  
- lucky; one eye closed and gnashing teeth -  
unlucky; eyes left - lucky in enemies; eyes right -  
lucky in allies.*

who had once saved his life, on a head brought  
to him for inspection. But the hair was jet black,  
not what one would expect in a old man. The  
head was washed, and black hair dye flowed out,  
revealing the true identity. Following the battle  
of Wakae during the summer campaign of Ōsaka  
in 1615, Tokugawa Ieyasu was presented with  
the head of Kimura Shigenari, and discovered  
that Kimura had burned incense inside his  
helmet before putting it on, so as to make it a  
more attractive trophy.

A special privilege was reserved for the head of  
a defeated enemy general or a daimyō. It would be  
brought before the daimyō by two men, not just  
one, and after the victorious army had given the  
shout of victory the general would ceremoniously  
eat the same three dishes of which he had  
partaken before setting out, but with a difference  
- the head of the defeated general was allowed to  
share the sake. In a grisly ritual some kombu  
(dried seaweed) was placed in the head's mouth,  
and sake poured on to it with much dignity from  
a long-handled cup. As may be imagined, the expres-  
sion on the face of a dead daimyō was very closely

examined, as the chronicle *O Monogatari* tells us of the occasion when Oda Nobunaga viewed the head of his bitter enemy Takeda Katsuyori in 1582:

"When Oda Nobunaga inspected the head of Takeda Katsuyori the right eye was closed and the left eye was enlivened with a scowl. Nobunaga was moved to sympathy at the sight of the dead head of the powerful general, and it is recorded that all concerned agreed that Nobunaga may have been victorious in battle, but had been defeated by Katsuyori's head."

#### Reward, recuperation and recording

For a retainer or an ally, alive and victorious, there were other welcome privileges and rewards after a battle, as we read in the chronicle *Yamamoto Toyohisa Shiki*, which refers to the Ōsaka campaign:

"That night twenty-three heads were taken. At dawn on the seventeenth day twenty-four men were summoned before Hideyori ... and received rewards of gold. One man called Kimura Kizaemon who had suffered a wound was given surgery."

This reference to surgery may mean little more than the drastic means of removing arrowheads quoted in the *Zōhyō Monogatari* and discussed earlier. It does, however, reinforce the point that wounded samurai were not just left to die. Good warriors were too precious to waste in this way. A daimyō would try to have two doctors with him on the battlefield, one a surgeon, the other specialising in internal medicine. When li Naomasa had his elbow shattered by an arquebus ball at the battle of Sekigahara, Tokugawa Ieyasu personally dressed his wound, and he was given 'black medi-

#### RECORDS OF SERVICE IN KOREA

The genealogy of the Iriki-in family of Kyūshū contains several fascinating records of the military exploits of its members. The following extracts refer to the service in Korea given by Iriki-in Shigetoki and his adopted son Iriki-in Tadatomu, who, as vassals of the Shimazu, followed Shimazu Yoshihiro's army:

"In the summer of 1592 the Taikō Lord Hideyoshi ordered generals to make war upon Korea. When (Shimazu) Yoshihiro, obeying the order, embarked upon the expedition, Shigetoki was indisposed and unable to serve in person; thereupon he bade his kinsman Iriki-in Shigeoku and his karō Tōgō Jinza'emōn Shigekeage to go to Korea. One hundred and fifty warriors were organised into two contingents... At that time Shigeoku led 75 warriors, and, crossing the sea, met Lord Yoshihiro at Yong-p'yung chong. Thereafter they served in war for a year, during which (Shigetoki) several times sent over men of his family and vassals, and was never negligent in war-like service. In the spring of 1596, Shigetoki, having recovered from his illness, crossed to Korea, and met (Shimazu) Tadatsune at the camp of Katuk island. At that time Mōri Yoshinari, Itō Suketake, Akizuki Tanenaga, Takahashi Mototane and Shimazu Tadatoyo were encamped at Ankol, about a ri from Katuk. When in the spring of

1597, Shigetoki, obeying Lord Tadatsune's command, went as envoy to the five lords at Ankol, and receiving their answers, hoisted sail on his return voyage, several guard ships of the enemy intercepted him. Shigetoki commanded and defended with guns, but was sorely pressed, when, seeing succouring ships issue from Katuk and Ankol, the enemy boats retreated. As Shigetoki defied the enemy of superior force and returned to Katuk, Lord Tadatsune greatly admired his conduct; the five lords at Ankol also sent messages of appreciation; and Shigetoki's fame spread on all sides. On the night of 27 August 1597, Lord Yoshihiro and Lord Tadatsune, consulting with the other lords, attacked and cut down the enemy's guard ships at Kōjedo. When Namwōn was reduced, on the night of 26 September, Shigetoki rendered military service. On 1 October 1598 an immense army of the Great Ming and Korea besieged the new fortress of Sach'ōn and attacked it fiercely. Lord Yoshihiro and Lord Tadatsune fought at the head of Namhae island, and killed several hundred of the enemy, capturing his vessels; in this battle Shigetoki did distinguished service, and many of his vassals, including Muraō Kogorō and others, died in war. Thereafter (Shigetoki) returned to Japan in Lord Yoshihiro's retinue, and being granted leave at Nagoya, reached the residence at Yuno-ō on 20 January 1599." (Asakawa 1929: 393).



cine' to stop the bleeding by his chief vassal Miura Motosada, who was from Iga province and is thus popularly credited with ninja skills.

Doctors, whether ninja or not, had the whole pharmacopoeia of traditional Chinese medicine at their disposal. Kanpō (traditional medicine) came to Japan from China during the sixth and seventh centuries, and consisted of careful diagnosis and treatment with a large number of mainly herbal based drugs. A very common treatment, which looks strange to our eyes, was that of applying moxa. It was so highly regarded that a samurai was advised to carry moxa with him when on campaign. Moxa is a combustible substance made of the fine hairs densely matted on the undersurface of the leaves of yomogi (mugwort, or *Artemis vulgaris* var. *indica*) It is yellow and has no smell. As moxa cones burn on the skin for two or more minutes, a sensation of intense but bearable heat is felt. The places thus to be stimulated are chosen for reasons akin to those of acupuncture, with about 360 therapeutic points distributed over the body. They are arranged in systems, each corresponding to a certain internal organ, and moxa is applied when an illness interrupts the flow of energy through these identifiable points.

For a daimyō and his most privileged coterie, the arrival of peace would allow them the opportunity to relax and let their wounds heal in a hot spring. Most daimyō appreciated the effects of hot-spring bathing for treating wounds and general recuperation after a battle. The actual location of these hot springs was kept secret, as a wounded daimyō would be at his most vulnerable to an assassin. Takeda Shingen had three secret springs, one of which, at Shimobe in the mountains of Yamanashi prefecture, celebrates Shingen's use of its healing waters in an annual festival. The care Shingen took of his wounded men is confirmed by the records of the Erinji. Four months before one of his five battles at Kawanakajima, he requested the monks to make preparations ready to provide rest and recuperation facilities for the wounded.

The final ritual of victory was the recording of the exploits. One popular tradition was to identify the seven most valiant warriors as the "Seven Spears" of the battle in particular. An example may be found in the *Iran-ki*:



*One of the most poignant stories of the samurai concerns Saitō Sanemori, who dyed his white hair black to appear younger when setting off for his final battle in 1183. His head was presented to Minamoto Yoshinaka, whose life Sanemori had saved when Yoshinaka was a baby. Yoshinaka thought he recognised the old man's features, but only realised that it was his former protector when the head was washed and the black dye ran off.*

"Today the reputation of our army binds us all in joy. When we consider the bravery of our soldiers and the quality of the military exploits, the conduct of Momoda Tōbei, Fukukita Shōgen, Mori Shirōza'emon, Machii Kiyobei, Nimi Hiōe, Yokoyama Jinsuke and Yamada Kanshirō have lifted them above the common herd. Due to their talents which are of the highest quality we name them the Seven Spears of Hijiyama."

Written certificates of deeds (*kubi chūmon*) were awarded to meritorious warriors. This could also take the form of a letter of commendation (*kanjō*). One, from Uesugi Kenshin and dated 1561, is addressed to Nakajō Echizen-no-kami Fujikashi, praising his behaviour at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561.

"We departed on the tenth day of the ninth month, and at the time when we gave battle to Takeda Harunobu at Kawanakajima in Shinano, he

was a person unparalleled in the earnestness of his efforts. It is a fact that relatives, retainers and even reserve troops, a large number of whom were killed in battle, were inspired to loyal military service. Even though the rebels sent a thousand horsemen into the attack we won a great victory, an event that will give us satisfaction for many years to come. Furthermore, there was also much glory gained. These loyal exploits will certainly never be forgotten by the descendants of Uesugi Kagetora. We admire his military exploits all the more set beside the great importance of his loyalty, which is not surpassed by anyone."

A general account of exploits by anonymous soldiery was also valuable, as in the following fragment from the *Kōyō Gunkan*, when ashigaru spearmen are 'mentioned in dispatches':

"Concerning the exploits of the samurai retainers of Takeda Shingen, in the first place the spearmen met, (earning) fame for their spears, and renowned when the same ones grappled with and pulled down horsemen. We also praise the second rank of spearmen..."

Many records of exploits appear in family histories and genealogies. The following extracts are from the genealogy of the Iriki-in:

"When on 1 August 1539 Lord (Shimazu) Takahisa led a campaign at Ichiku, (Iriki-in) Shigetomo followed his father Shigetoshi and hastened to the lord's camp; thereafter, according to his father's command, (Shigetomo) remained there. When on the 27th day of the month, (the lord's forces) attacked the main fortress, Shigetomo led many warriors up the Dainichi-ji way, and rendered service, (his followers) Hagi Uname and Mizuike Jōrō specially distinguishing themselves. Because of his war-like service in this campaign, (Shigetomo) received a strict order that he should conquer and take the region of Sendai.

On the night of 9 October 1539 (Shigetomo) assaulted and took the fortress of Momotsugi. This fortress he had, in pursuance of the permission of the former taishū Katsuhisa, attacked every year and now took possession. On 21 October he attacked and took Kumanojō and Tazaki."

Later in the genealogy we find reference to Iriki-in Shigetoki's exploits in helping defend Shimazu territory against Hideyoshi's invasion of Kyūshū in 1587:

"When His Excellency Lord Hideyoshi came on his punitive expedition he bade Konishi Yukinaga, Wakizaka Yasuharu, Kuki Yoshitaka and other generals, besiege the Hirasa fortress; when, on 3 June 1587 they attacked it fiercely, and Katsura Tadakira, custodian of the fortress, strongly defended it. (Shigetoki) sent as support his vassals Takagi Izumi, Seze Zenza'emon, and scores of other warriors. Takagi and Seze fought strenuously."

Longer accounts would appear in historical chronicles. The authors of such works, particularly if they were monks, would often draw a moral conclusion from the campaign or battle, as in the following panegyric from the *Iran-ki* which concludes the account of the defeat of Oda Nobuo in 1581:

"Thus did the samurai of the province of Iga make war on this occasion. They chased away in all directions generals who were from illustrious families, beginning with Lord Nobuo. It is not known how many were killed either here or at Zoninbara. I could run out of words and poetry in expressing the satisfaction of the people at the exploits of the village samurai in scouting operations, and in gaining victories! The great joy was unconfined.

It is because of this we build shrines and Buddhist temples on the approaches to the territory. Either that or I build a home and love dainty food and delicacies, appreciate good sake, seek only various luxuries and amusements, excess in debauched behaviour and wickedness. Brave conduct is then submerged by lust, and the Way of the Five Confucian Values is a thing that grows dim. Let the Way be our rule! Not to act correctly is the grave of destruction. On this occasion when the Iga warriors had to make a response they gained a victory. If we continue to avoid extravagance and spurn evil things in the years to come, then we will be sure of divine protection, and everyone will raise their eyebrows at us!"

The battle having been fought and won, the trophies taken and examined, the part-time samurai of the territory could now return to their fields, until by the end of the sixteenth century even this would stop, and the samurai would be warriors and nothing else, having no function in life other than to serve their daimyō with loyalty and devotion in peace and war.



**IV  
BATTLES AND SIEGES**

### **BATTLES AND SIEGES**

Tenth Century	197	Fourteenth Century	206
Eleventh Century	197	Fifteenth Century	208
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The following section lists the major battles and sieges in samurai history. They appear in chronological order, except for situations where geographical proximity, or continuation of an action, indicate that one entry should follow another for the reader's convenience. For further convenience, I use the conventional term 'siege' to describe any attack on a fortified position, regardless of whether the conflict was prolonged or not.

#### The battle of Kojima, 940

The battle of Kojima ended the rebellion of Taira Masakado. Accounts of the conflict note a fierce gale which blew down the wall of wooden shields that Masakado had erected. Masakado was defeated by Taira Sadamori and Fujiwara Hidesato, and killed by an arrow.

#### The battle of Kawasaki, 1057

The battle of Kawasaki was the first major conflict of the Early Nine Years' War (1051-63) waged by Minamoto Yoriyoshi and his son Minamoto Yoshiie against Abe Sadato. Sadato, with 4000 men, entrenched himself in a position at Kawasaki and was attacked by the Minamoto in a fierce blizzard. The Minamoto were driven off, and in the fighting retreat Yoshiie earned the title 'Hachimantarô' (First Born of Hachiman the War God).

#### The siege of Kuriyagawa, 1062

The Minamoto besieged and defeated Abe Sadato in his stockade fortress of Kuriyagawa. To give thanks for their victory, Minamoto Yoshiie established the Tsurugaoka Hachiman shrine in Kamakura.

#### The siege of Kanezawa, 1086-9

The siege of Kanezawa saw the bulk of the

*Minamoto Hachimantarô Yoshiie was one of the early samurai heroes. He is shown in this book illustration by Hokusai mounted on a horse and in full yoroi armour, though with the addition of haidate (thighguards) which are incorrect for the period.*

fighting of the Later Three Years' War conducted by Minamoto Yoshiie against Kiyowara Iehira. On his way to the fortress Yoshiie observed a flock of birds rising in a disordered fashion from a forest and concluded that an ambush had been laid. The siege was protracted, and finally settled by a fierce assault.

#### The siege of the Shirakawa-den, 1156

The attack on the palace known as the Shirakawa-den was the main action of the brief civil war known as the Hôgen Incident (Hôgen no Ran). The palace was defended by Minamoto Tameyoshi and his son, the famous archer Minamoto Tametomo. They were attacked by Minamoto Yoshitomo, Tameyoshi's heir, and Taira



Kiyomori. After arrow duels in the dark, the palace was set on fire and the defenders were defeated.

#### The siege of the Sanjō Palace, 1160

The attack on the Sanjō palace was the main event of the Heiji Incident (Heiji no Ran). The Minamoto, led by Yoshitomo, took the palace and captured the ex-emperor Go-Shirakawa. The Taira counter-attacked from their stronghold of Rokuhara. When the Minamoto met them in battle, they were defeated.

#### The first battle of Uji, 1180

The first battle of Uji is regarded as the opening conflict of the Gempei Wars between the Taira and the Minamoto. This battle is famous for the defence of the broken bridge of Uji by the warrior-monks of Nara, who were allied to the veteran warrior Minamoto Yorimasa. The pursuing Taira attacked from the north bank of the river, and drove their opponents back into the Byōdō-in, where Yorimasa committed hara-kiri in a way that was to set the standard for generations to come.

#### The siege of Nara, 1180

Following the battle of Uji, the victorious Taira troops burned Miidera temple, which had supplied

monk soldiers at Uji. They then moved on to attack the old capital of Nara. There was stubborn fighting until Taira Shigehira ordered his men to set fire to the monastic complexes of Kōfukuji and Tōdaiji.

#### The battle of Ishibashiyama, 1180

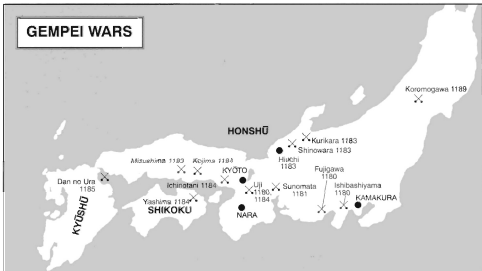
Ishibashiyama was the first attempt by Minamoto Yoritomo to challenge the Taira. Although assisted by the Miura, Yoritomo was caught by a rapid night attack led by Oba Kagechika and heavily defeated.

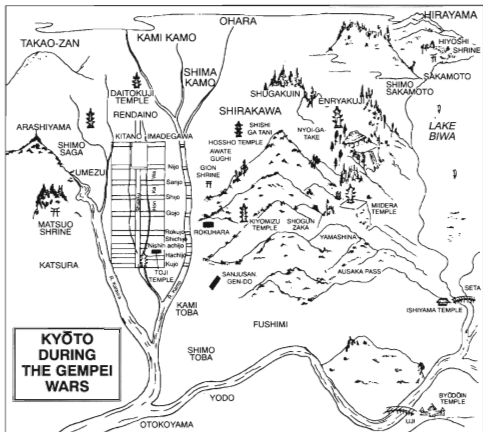
#### The battle of Fujigawa, 1180

Famous as the 'battle that never was', two armies of Taira and Minamoto faced each other beneath Mount Fuji. During the night a flock of waterfowl caused panic in the Taira ranks, because the noise of their wings made the soldiers think that there was a night attack. The Taira withdrew.

#### The battle of Sunomata, 1181

The Taira had more success in Owari province, where an army under Taira Tomomori fought Minamoto Yukiie. The armies were separated by a river, which the Minamoto crossed by night in the hope of making a surprise attack. The Taira allowed them to pass within their ranks and cut





them down, identifying friend from foe because the Minamoto were dripping wet. The surviving Minamoto were forced back across the river.

#### The battle of Yahagigawa, 1181

Retreating from Sunomata, Minamoto Yukiie attempted to make a stand by destroying the bridge over the Yahagigawa and putting up a defensive wall of shields. The Taira forced him to withdraw, but pulled back from a further pursuit when Taira Tomomori was taken ill.

#### The siege of Hiuchi, 1183

The Taira army were moving north to confront Minamoto Yoshinaka when they came upon

Hiuchi, a simple stockade fortress held by the Minamoto. It was built on rocky crags, and well defended. The Minamoto had built a dam to create a moat, which hindered the Taira assault until a traitor shot an arrow telling them how to breach the dam and run off the water. After this, the castle soon fell to the Taira.

#### The battle of Kurikara (Tonamiyama), 1183

Kurikara was the battle by which the tide of the Gempei War turned in favour of the Minamoto. The Taira army was divided into two. The larger part, under Taira Koremori, crossed the pass of Kurikara and fought the battle. The smaller contingent entered Etchū through Noto province farther



*The important victory of Minamoto Yoshinaka at the battle of Kurikara, 1183, is shown in this print. Yoshinaka is shown taking a Taira warrior off the cliff path following his surprise attack.*

to the north, and gained a minor victory which was totally nullified by the defeat at Kurikara. Yoshinaka's army advanced to Kurikara from the east, and observed that the Taira were approaching the summit of Tonamiyama up the pass of Kurikara. He erected 30 white banners on Kurosaka hill, about two kilometres away, to make the Taira think they would be faced with a vastly superior force when they descended. The Taira decided to rest on the safety of the mountain and water their horses.

Yoshinaka divided his forces. One detachment was sent on a wide sweep to approach the Taira from the rear. Three units were detached to conceal themselves at the foot of Kurikara valley, which lay beneath the pass. The rest he held centrally. This force engaged the Taira in a long

archery duel to cover their comrades' movements. As the sun set, Yoshinaka's encircling force arrived at the rear, well supplied with many more banners than would normally be carried by a small mobile force. When the Taira reacted to this surprise, they met a further shock in front. Yoshinaka's men had rounded up a herd of oxen and tied torches to their horns. The torches were fired, and the enraged oxen whipped off along the pass. Some Taira samurai were knocked clean off the path by the frantic herd. The Taira were driven down into the valley and heavily defeated in the confusion.

#### **The battle of Shinowara, 1183**

At Shinowara, Minamoto Kiso Yoshinaka defeated Taira Munemori, who had retreated following the battle of Kurikara. The battle began with an archery duel between ten champions from each side, after which the fight became general. Several celebrated single combats took place here, and among the dead was Yoshinaka's old retainer Saitō Sanemori, who had dyed his hair black to appear younger.

#### **The battle of Mizushima, 1183**

One of the most important bases for the Taira was Yashima on Shikoku island. Minamoto Yoshinaka sent an army under his general Yada Yoshiyasu to cross the Inland Sea from Mizushima in Bitchū province and attack Yashima. The Taira, under Taira Tomomori and Taira Noritsune, met them in a sea battle with their ships tied together and planking laid to make a platform for fighting. The Minamoto were defeated in the hand-to-hand fighting.

#### **The siege of Fukuryūji, 1183**

Fukuryūji was a stockade fortress built and defended by a Taira partisan, Seno Kaneyasu. It was attacked by Imai Kanehira, the companion of Minamoto Yoshinaka, who led his men in an assault across muddy ricefields under heavy archery fire. The Minamoto were victorious and Seno Kaneyasu died bravely in action.

#### **The battle of Muroyama, 1183**

The Taira army, under the command of Taira Tomomori, fought Minamoto Yukiie at Muroyama. The Taira divided their forces into five divisions. The four smaller units engaged Yukiie in turn.



### NAVAL WARFARE IN THE GEMPEI WARS

During the battle of Mizushima in 1183, the Taira fastened their warships together and laid planks to make a fighting surface:

"The Heike ships were made fast alongside each other by hawsers from the stem and stern, and between these hawsers other ropes were fastened, on which planks were stretched for walking, so that the whole fleet became like a level surface for the fighting men. As they were about to begin the onset, Noto no kami Noritsune cried out in a mighty voice, 'Ho! men of Shikoku! How can you bear the shame of being taken alive by these boors of the north! Upon them and grapple!' And so, shouting their war-cry, they began the fighting, drawing their bows and pouring in a hail of arrows until they came to close quarters, when they drew their swords and engaged each other hand to hand. Some also plied long rakes with which they pulled their opponents into the water, and some, locked in the death grip, stabbed each other and fell into the waves... Then Yada no Hangan Yoshikiyo, desperate at his fate, sprang into a small boat with six of his retainers and led a fierce attack in the very forefront of the battle, but all in vain, for his boat was capsized by the enemy and all in it were drowned. Now the Heike had brought their horses with them in the ships, and as they approached the shore they pushed them off into the water to swim to the beach. Since they were ready accoutred, as soon as they found a foothold the riders clambered into their saddles and rode them with a mighty splashing through the shallows to the shore, and 500 horsemen, led by Noto no kami Noritsune, precipitated themselves on the Genji, who, discomfited by the death of both their leaders, fled headlong in confused panic."

Yukiie, heavily outnumbered and worn down by repeated attacks, escaped and fled when surrounded.

#### The siege of the Hōjūjiden, 1184

The defeat of his ally Yukiie did not prevent Minamoto Yoshinaka from entering Kyōto in



*The defence of a stockade castle during the Gempei War is shown in this detail from a painted screen in the Watanabe Museum, Tottori. It is a Taira possession (probably Ichinotani) as shown by the red flags. Archers shoot down from the open top of the gateway, while another archer with a full quiver climbs up the ladder to join them. Three horsemen prepare to sally out.*

triumph, but the depredations wreaked there by his men were so great that he was challenged by an army of Taira sympathisers, court nobles and warrior-monks from Mount Hiei and Miidera. Yoshinaka attacked the Hōjūjiden Palace, which was set alight with fire arrows. There was much fighting in the streets before Yoshinaka won a victory.

#### The second battle of Uji, 1184

At the second battle of Uji, Minamoto Yoshinaka used the river as a defence, but in reverse from the situation in 1180. His cousin Minamoto Yoshit-

sune's army crossed the river on their horses to attack him. The incident of the rivalry between Kajiwara Kagesue and Sasaki Takatsuna, who both wanted to be the first into action, occurred at this battle. Yoshinaka was defeated and pursued.

#### **The battle of Awazu, 1184**

Minamoto Kiso Yoshinaka was finally defeated at Awazu by his cousins Yoshitsune and Noriyori. Driven from Kyōto, Kiso joined up with his companion Imai Kanehira near Seta. His wife Tomoe Gozen fought beside him, and took an enemy head in the battle. Kiso Yoshinaka was struck dead by an arrow when his horse became mired in a paddy field, and finally Imai Kanehira committed an honourable suicide by diving off his horse with his sword in his mouth.

#### **The battle of Ichinotani, 1184**

Ichinotani was a fortress owned by the Taira on the sea coast at Suma, to the west of present-day Kobe. Minamoto Yoshitsune sent his main army along the sea coast from the west, while he led a surprise attack from the rear. This was a particularly dangerous operation as to the rear of Ichinotani was a steep cliff, but Yoshitsune led his detachment down the cliff on horseback. They stormed the rear of Ichinotani, which was relatively unguarded, and the fortress was set on fire. Many celebrated acts of single combat took place on the beach as the Taira tried to escape to their boats. In one tragic incident Kumagai Naozane killed Taira Atsumori, a youth of the same age as the son he had lost. The majority of the Taira managed to escape by ship, and were pursued to Yashima.

#### **The battle of Kojima, 1184**

At Kojima, on the Inland Sea coast, Minamoto Noriyori defeated a Taira army. Sasaki Moritsuna led the attack by swimming his horse across the narrow strip of sea between Kojima and the mainland.

#### **The battle of Yashima, 1184**

Yashima is a volcanic plateau which in 1184 was separated from the mainland of Shikoku island by a narrow strait. The Taira lay anchored in the strait, and the Minamoto sailed across the Inland



*Tomoe Gozen, the wife of Minamoto Yoshinaka, was a warrior in her own right, and fought beside her husband at the battle of Awazu in 1184 where they both met their ends. She is shown fully armoured but without a helmet and is wielding a naginata.*

Sea by night. They attacked from the land, covering their movements by the smoke of burning buildings. At Yashima occurred the famous incident where Nasu Yoichi shot a fan from off the mast of a Taira ship. The Minamoto were victorious but again the Taira escaped by sea.

#### **The battle of Dan no Ura, 1185**

Dan no Ura, a sea battle, was the conflict which ended the Gempei Wars, and was one of the most decisive battles in Japanese history. The Minamoto ships went into battle with bows and sterns abreast while the Taira formed three squadrons. The battle started with a long range archery duel. The Taira

took the initiative in the early stages because the tide conditions were in their favour, and it appears that Taira Tomomori used his experience of the tidal conditions in the strait. At the start of the battle there was an ebb tide flowing slowly into the Inland Sea, so his ships attempted to surround the Minamoto fleet. By 11.00 a.m. the two fleets were closely engaged with sword and dagger fighting, but at about this time the tide changed, and began to flow westwards out of the strait. This gave the advantage to the Minamoto, who exploited it to the full. Gradually the battle turned in their favour, and victory was assured when one of the Taira commanders, Miura Yoshizumi, turned traitor and attacked the Taira from the rear. He was also able to inform the Minamoto that the largest ship in the fleet did not contain the emperor, so the Minamoto turned their forces on to the correct target. The Minamoto archers concentrated on the rowers and

the helmsmen, so that the Taira ships were soon out of control, and began to drift back with the tide. Realising that the battle was lost, many of the Taira committed suicide.

#### **The battle of Koromogawa, 1189**

Although the victories won by Minamoto Yoshitune gained the title of shogun for his brother Yoritomo, Yoritomo's jealousy led him to banish Yoshitune, who was pursued to the far north of Japan, where he was defeated in battle at Koromogawa along with his faithful companion, the monk Benkei.

#### **The third battle of Uji, 1221**

The third battle to be fought across the Uji river was the main fighting of the Shōkyū War, whereby the emperor Go-Toba attempted to overthrow the Hōjō regency. The Hōjō army under Hōjō Yasutoki

### **THE USE OF THE NAGINATA IN BATTLE**

The naginata was the traditional weapon of the sōhei (priest-soldiers). In the *Taiheiki* there is a vivid account of a single combat between a sōhei armed with a naginata and a mounted samurai:

"Just then a monk kicked over the shield in front of him and sprang forward, whirling his naginata like a water wheel. It was Kajitsu of Harima. Kaitō received him with his right arm, meaning to cut down into his helmet bowl, but the glancing sword struck down lightly from Kajitsu's shoulder-plate to the cross stitching at the bottom of his armour. Again Kaitō struck forcefully, but his left foot broke through its stirrup, and he was likely to fall from his horse. As he straightened his body, Kajitsu thrust up his naginata, and two or three times drove its point quickly into his helmet. Kaitō fell off his horse, pierced cleanly through the throat. Swiftly Kajitsu put down his foot on Kaitō's armour, seized his side hair, and cut off his head, that he might fix it to his naginata. Rejoicing, he mocked the enemy."

On the occasion of an incursion to Kyōto by the monks of Mount Hiei, the samurai defenders used their skills as mounted archers to harass the monks, most of whom were on foot and armed with naginata:

"The monks went out before the west gate of the temple, a mere thousand men, unsheathing their weapons and battling against the enemy drawing near. But these pulled back their horses and retreated nimbly when the monks attacked, and galloped round to the rear when the monks stood in their places, as it was planned from the beginning. Thus they galloped and harassed them six or seven times, until at length the bodies of the monks grew weary, by reason that they fought on foot and wore heavy armour. Seizing the advantage, the warriors sent forward archers to shoot them mercilessly."

As the samurai close in on them the naginata finally come into their own for a last-ditch struggle:

"So they spoke, whirling their great four shaku-long naginata like water wheels. Again and again they leaped and attacked with flying sparks of fire. Many were the warriors whose horses' legs were cut when they sought to smite these two. Many were those who fell to the ground and perished with smashed helmets!"

advanced on Kyōto, where Go-Toba's army had defended the Uji bridge. The Hōjō were victorious after a long day's fighting, and crossed the bridge to enter Kyōto in triumph.

#### **The first Mongol invasion, 1274**

The first invasion of Japan by Kublai Khan in 1274 took place in the vicinity of the present-day city of Fukuoka on Kyūshū island. Having ravaged Tsushima and Iki, the Mongols fought the defending samurai with clouds of arrows and fire-bombs flung by catapult. The invasion was called off after a day, suggesting that it was no more than a reconnaissance in force.

#### **The second Mongol invasion, 1281**

By the time the Mongol fleet returned, the Japanese had built a defensive wall round Hakata bay. Here they held the attacks and raided the Mongol fleet in small boats. When the full Mongol fleet arrived, the Japanese expected a huge attempt at landing, but a typhoon (called the *kami-kaze* or divine wind) blew up and smashed the Mongol ships.

#### **The siege of Kasagi, 1331**

The attack on the mountain fortress of Kasagi was one of the first actions of the rebellion led by emperor Go-Daigo against the forces of the Hōjō regency. Kasagi fell to a night raid led by two brave samurai named Suyama Yoshitaka and Komiyama Jirō, who climbed up the cliffs on which the castle was built and set fire to various buildings. Go-Daigo fled as the castle fell.

#### **The siege of Akasaka, 1331**

Akasaka was a mountain fortress held by Kusunoki Masashige in the name of the emperor Go-Daigo. The forces of the Hōjō regency tried to take it on several occasions. Masashige defended it with great ingenuity, but Akasaka eventually fell when its water supply was cut.

#### **The siege of Chihaya, 1333**

Kusunoki Masashige's defence of the mountain top fortress of Chihaya is one of the classic sieges in Japanese history, with both sides demonstrating great skills in siegecraft. Chihaya was much stronger than Akasaka, and held out to attacks,

using movable bridges and fire, its defenders replying with armies of dummy troops, surprise raids and much hand-to-hand fighting.

#### **The siege of Kamakura, 1333**

Kamakura was the capital of the Hōjō regency. Through the surrounding hills were seven passes, each guarded by checkpoints. Nitta Yoshisada divided his forces into three divisions to attack from the north, east and west. After hours of fierce fighting no real breakthrough had been achieved, particularly on the western flank where the Gokurakuji pass was completely shut off with rows of stout wooden shields. Nitta Yoshisada realised that there was a chance of by-passing Gokurakuji altogether if it were possible to round the cape where the promontory of Inamuragasaki projects into the sea. He threw his sword into the sea as an offering to the Sun Goddess, and the waters 'parted by miracle'. When the loyalists entered the city they began to get the upper hand, and the leaders of the Hōjō withdrew from their positions and retired to a temple called the Tōshōji. Here they committed suicide in the privacy of a cave behind the temple.

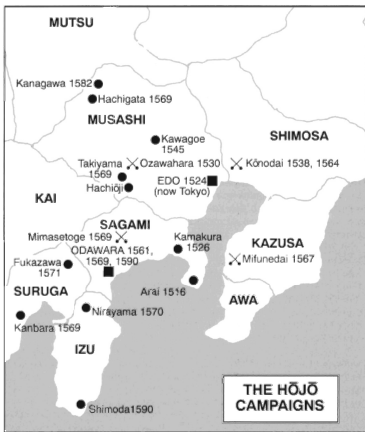
#### **The battle of Tatarahama, 1336**

Tatarahama was a beach in Chikuzen province north of present-day Hakata where the forces of Ashikaga Takauji defeated Kikuchi Taketoshi. With this victory Ashikaga Takauji reversed his position and gained sufficient support for him to return to the mainland of Honshū.

#### **The battle of Minatogawa, 1336**

The battle of Minatogawa, fought where the city of Kobe now stands, is famous for the loyalty displayed by Kusunoki Masashige. He was in favour of withdrawing to the mountains to fight a guerrilla war, but the emperor Go-Daigo wanted to make a stand against the Ashikaga. Kusunoki's sense of duty forced him to agree, although he knew the situation was hopeless. At Minatogawa, Kusunoki Masashige and Nitta Yoshisada defended a position against Ashikaga Takauji. Takauji advanced by sea, while Ashikaga Tadayoshi, whose vanguard was led by Shōni Yori-hisa, advanced by land. They were joined by a large seaborne reinforcement from Shikoku led by the

*Nitta Yoshisada at the siege of Kamakura, 1333, is the subject of this print. His army is fighting its way along the beach towards the city that was the Hōjō capital.*



Hosokawa, who tried to land but were driven off and forced to land further along the coast. Nitta was attacked by Shōni and forced back, leaving Kusunoki Masashige dangerously isolated. Masashige was soon totally surrounded, and committed suicide as his army collapsed.

#### **The battle of Fujishima, 1338**

At the battle of Fujishima in Echizen province, Nitta Yoshisada was defeated by an Ashikaga army and was killed by an arrow.

#### **The battle of Shijō Nawate, 1348**

At the battle of Shijō Nawate, Kusunoki Masatsura, son of the late Masashige, was killed while fighting against the Kō.

#### **The Ōnin War, 1467-77**

The Ōnin War, the conflict by which the Sengoku Period is usually reckoned as beginning, was largely fought within the city of Kyoto, in the area to the west of the Kamo river. The main rivals were Yamana Sōzen and Hosokawa Katsumoto. Trenches were dug and buildings demolished to build barricades during the first few months of the fighting. Much of the city was destroyed as the war dragged on among the ruins and spread to neighbouring provinces.

#### **The battle of Kuzuryūgawa, 1506**

The battle of Kuzuryūgawa was fought between Asakura Norikage and the Ikkō-ikki of Kaga

province, who provided a challenge to him for the whole of his samurai career.

#### **The siege of Gongenyama, 1510**

Uesugi Tomoyoshi's retainer, Ueda Masamori, rebelled against him and laid siege to his castle of Gongenyama, but was defeated.

#### **The siege of Arai, 1516**

On July 11 1516, Hōjō Sōun attacked Arai castle, which was owned by Miura Yoshiatsu. Seeing defeat as inevitable, Miura Yoshimoto, Yoshiatsu's son, committed suicide by cutting off his own head.

#### **The battle of Iidagawara, 1521**

At Iidagawara, Takeda Nobutora, father of the famous Shingen, defeated Imagawa Ujichika's general, Fukushima Hyōgo, on 16 October 1521.

#### **The siege of Edo, 1524**

The taking of Edo castle, otherwise known as the battle of Takanawahara, happened in January 1524. Edo was held by Ōta Suketaka, a vassal of the Ogigayatsu branch of the Uesugi family. On being defeated at Takanawahara by Hōjō Ujitsuna, the castle of Edo, built on the site of what is now the Imperial Palace in Tokyo, passed to the Hōjō.

#### **The battle of Nashinokidaira, 1526**

At Nashinokidaira, Hōjō Ujitsuna was defeated by Takeda Nobutora on 8 July 1526.

### **THE TREATMENT OF A CAPTURED NINJA**

As a separate extract reveals, traitors could expect no mercy, and anyone who infiltrated an enemy camp risked certain death if captured. When Masaki Tokishige attacked Maki castle, a treacherous conspiracy within his own ranks posed the threat of failure. As he could not immediately distinguish any who were traitors to the enemy side, he carried out a careful investigation, and discovered three ninja from within Maki castle who had infiltrated his army. The ninja were arrested, and this extract from *Kanhashū Kosenrokū* shows how one of the captured ninja was used to deliver a very sharp message to the defenders:

"Among them was one man, they ripped off his ears and nose and the hair off his head and his sidelocks, tied his hands behind his back, and gave him a small paper flag with the mon of a Chinese Bellflower design drawn on it. In addition, because from among the three ninja from Maki that were captured he was acting on direct orders from Maki Yoriharu Nyūdo, they wrote 'in this way he goes' on the flag, and delivered him to the front gate of Maki castle in the middle of the night. There they tied him to a post in the stockade, and left him." (Takahashi 1965: 291).

**The siege of Kamakura, 1526**

During his campaign against the Hōjō family, Satomi Sanetaka entered Kamakura in December 1526. Various retainers of Hōjō Ujitsuna, including Itō and Ogasawara, met him in battle, during which the famous Tsurugaoka Hachiman shrine was set on fire and destroyed.

**The battle of Ozawahara, 1530**

At Ozawahara, Hōjō Ujiyasu fought his first battle at the age of fifteen. It was conducted against Uesugi Tomooki, of the Ogigayatsu branch of the Uesugi.

**The battle of Shiohara no gawara, 1531**

On 12 March 1531 Takeda Nobutora fought Suwa Yorishige at this place.

**The battle of Idano, 1535**

On 5 December 1535, Matsudaira Kiyoyasu, whose grandson was to be the famous Tokugawa Ieyasu, was murdered by one of his vassals, Abe Masatoyo. Seven days later both sides met in battle at Idano in Mikawa province.

**The battle of Sendanno, 1536**

In December 1536 Nagao Tamekage set out from Kasugayama castle to fight the Ikkō-ikki of Kaga province. At the battle of Sendanno he was defeated and killed, along with many of his men. Tamekage's son Terutora became the famous Uesugi Kenshin.

**The battle of Un no kuchi, 1536**

Takeda Nobutora attacked Hiraga Genshin at Un no kuchi but was forced to retreat. His fifteen-year-old son, the future Takeda Shingen, volunteered to take the rear in the withdrawal. When they were well clear of the castle, the young hero turned round and marched through the snow to find the castle garrison completely unprepared. They surrendered to the Takeda without fighting.

**The first siege of Musashi-Matsuyama, 1537**

Matsuyama castle in Musashi province was owned by the Uesugi and besieged by the Hōjō. During the siege the Uesugi sent a message for help to their headquarters tied on to the collar of a dog. The request was unsuccessful and the castle fell into Hōjō hands but was recaptured in 1563.

**The first battle of Kōnodai, 1538**

At the first of two battles to be fought at Konodai (the other occurred in 1564) Hōjō Ujitsuna defeated the combined forces of Satomi Yoshitaka and Ashikaga Yoshiaki.

**The siege of Aki-Koriyama, 1540-1**

Amako Haruhisa, with 3000 men, laid siege to Mōri Motonari's castle of Koriyama in Aki province, defended by 8000 men. Mōri sent an army to its relief and Amako was driven off.

**The siege of Toda, 1542-3**

Ōuchi Yoshitaka personally led a siege against Toda castle in Izumo province, which was owned by Amako Haruhisa. Failing in his attempts, Yoshitaka withdrew to Yamaguchi, and indulged more and more in pleasures, until he was deposed by his retainer, Sue Harukata.

**The siege of Iimori, 1542**

The attack on Iimori castle was conducted by the Matsuura family as part of their move towards attaining supremacy in the islands off north-west Kyūshū.

**The first battle of Azukizaka, 1542**

At this battle of Azukizaka in Mikawa province, Oda Nobuhide fought and defeated Imagawa Yoshimoto.

**The battle of Sezawa, 1542**

In an attempt to stop Takeda Shingen's invasion of Shinano province, the combined forces of Ogasawara Nagatoki, Suwa Yorishige, Murakami Yoshikiyo and Kiso Yoshiyasu met him in battle at Sezawa on 9 March 1542, but were defeated.

**The siege of Uehara, 1542**

Takeda Shingen crossed the border between Kai and Shinano provinces, and captured Uehara castle from Suwa Yorishige.

**The siege of Kuwabara, 1542**

The following day, Takeda Shingen took Yorishige's Kuwabara castle. Suwa Yorishige was taken back to Kōfu on the pretext of safe conduct, but was then forced to commit suicide.



### The siege of Fukuyo, 1542

In October 1542 Takeda Shingen began his advance down the Ina valley when his vanguard under Komai Masatake attacked Tozawa Yorichika at Fukuyo. Yorichika, who was the ally of Takatō Yoritsugu, surrendered.

### The battle of Ankokuji, 1542

At the same time as the fall of Fukuyo, Takatō Yoritsugu was himself defeated by Shingen's

general, Itagaki Nobukata, at Ankokuji. Yoritsugu's younger brother Yorimune was killed.

### The siege of Nagakubo, 1543

Oi Sadataka, the keeper of Nagakubo castle, deserted Takeda Shingen for Murakami Yoshikiyo. As part of his drive into the Saku area, Shingen captured Nagakubo and sent Sadataka as a prisoner to Kōfu, where he was killed.



### FIGHTING AT NIGHT - THE BATTLE OF KAWAGOE

In one of the most celebrated night battles in Japanese history, Hōjō Ujijasu led a relieving force to assist Hōjō Tsunanari at Kawagoe castle, and defeated a huge army before daybreak. Ujijasu's orders for his men have been preserved in the following short extract from the *Hōjō Godaiki*, and show the extra considerations which

a general had to make when committing his forces to a battle under such difficult circumstances. Note in particular the prohibition against taking heads, which was a time-consuming operation at the best of times:

Do not wear heavy armour

Do not take heads

When cutting your way into the enemy, do it in all directions

Do not huddle together in one place

#### The siege of Kojinyama, 1544

Kojinyama was a further Tozawa possession in the Ina valley taken by Shingen.

#### The first siege of Takatō, 1545

Takeda Shingen captured Takatō castle in the Ina valley from Takatō Yoritsugu when the latter was unable to obtain help from his allies, Ogasawara Nagatoki and Tozawa Yorichika.

#### The siege of Ryūgasaki, 1545

Ryūgasaki was a satellite castle of Fukuyo. It fell to Takeda Shingen in 1545.

#### The battle of Kawagoe, 1545

In 1544 the two branches of the Uesugi family, the Oigayatsu under Uesugi Tomosada, and the Yamanouchi under Uesugi Norimasa, joined forces with Imagawa Ujichika and Ashikaga Haruuiji to attack the strategic Kawagoe castle, held for the Hōjō by Hōjō Tsunanari with a garrison of 3000 men. He was opposed by about 100,000 besiegers. Hōjō Ujijasu led a relieving force of 8000 in a daring night march. At the resulting battle of Kawagoe, which was entirely fought in darkness, Hōjō Ujijasu defeated the coalition and Uesugi Tomosada was killed in action.

#### The siege of Uchiyama, 1546

Uchiyama, in Saku, was held by Oi Sadakiyo, son of Sadataka, and was taken by Takeda Shingen in 1546 by starving the garrison.

#### The battle of Odaijara, 1546

At Odaijara, in Saku, Takeda Shingen, who was besieging Shika castle at the time, defeated Uesugi Norimasa.

#### The siege of Shika, 1547

To intimidate the garrison of Shika, Shingen had the 300 freshly severed heads from the battle of Odaijara displayed in front of the castle walls. Takeda Shingen captured Shika from Kasahara Kiyoshige in 1547.

#### The Battle of Kanoguchi, 1547

As part of a long rivalry, Saitō Dōsan fought Oda Nobuhide, father of the famous Oda Nobunaga, at Kanoguchi. Nobuhide was defeated with the loss of two close relatives.

#### The battle of Uedahara, 1548

The force that had captured Shika joined another Takeda army under Shingen, who led 7000 men from Kōfu to meet a threat from the north by Murakami Yoshikiyo. Yoshikiyo crossed the Chikumagawa and advanced on Shingen's army at Uedahara. The battle of Uedahara took place on 14 February. Shingen's vanguard were led by Itagaki Nobukata, who met the Murakami vanguard head-on. The Murakami absorbed the Takeda charge within their ranks, and Itagaki Nobukata was killed fighting. Two other prominent Takeda leaders, Amari Torayasu and Hajikano Den'emon, were also killed in action. Seven hundred Takeda soldiers died at Uedahara in the first defeat that Takeda Shingen had suffered in his life. In the midst of the fighting, Shingen was himself wounded by a spear thrust to his left side. Even though Uedahara was a defeat, the *Kōyō Gunkan* records it as a victory. Among Murakami's troops were 50 ashigaru armed with Chinese arquebuses, which makes Uedahara the first field battle in Japanese history at which guns were used.

**The battle of Shiojiritoge, 1548**

At Shiojiritoge, Takeda Shingen took his revenge for Uedahara when he defeated Ogasawara Naga-

toki in a surprise night attack. Using only a rapid mounted force, he approached the Ogasawara camp by night, and attacked at dawn while the Ogasawara samurai grabbed armour and weapons.

**THE HEROIC SUICIDE OF A SAMURAI'S WIFE**

One of the most interesting examples of military architecture in Japan is the recently excavated and partially restored site of Sakasai castle, a former Hōjō fortress. A section of the walls, a watchtower and other buildings have been rebuilt authentically, giving an excellent impression of the Sengoku fortress. Within the area of the dry moat lies a pond which acted as the castle's well, and in 1536 became the site of a dramatic act of suicide. The following account is taken from the castle guide book, which I have paraphrased:

"In 1536 the castle was still owned by the family of Sakasai, a minor daimyō typical of many during the early Sengoku Period, as Sakasai was typical of the wooden castle surrounded by ditches that provided their defence. The head of the family in 1536 was Sakasai Muneshige, who faced an attack by the expansive Hōjō family in the person of Daidōji Suruga no kami. On 3 March 1536 Muneshige was killed fighting in the fierce assault. His nineteen-year-old wife, who was called Tomohime or Tomogozen, decided to follow her husband in death as befitted the consort of a brave daimyō. She therefore took the bronze temple bell from the castle which had been handed down from generations of the family and slipped it over her shoulders. She then jumped into the pond, and the weight of the bell held her under until she drowned. Shortly after this the castle fell to the Hōjō, and stayed as their possession until Hideyoshi's victory in 1590.

"Efforts were made in succeeding years to recover the bell, which was never found, suggesting that this may have been a detail added to this noble act of suicide, but the pond is still known as the *kanehori ike* (literally 'the bell pulling-out pond') to this day. Muneshige's younger brother Sakasai Toshimitsu founded the nearby temple of Jōhanji in their memory."

**The siege of Kajiki, 1549**

Shimazu Takahisa captured Kajiki castle in 1549. The action is noteworthy as it saw the first use of Portuguese-derived firearms in a Japanese battle.

**The siege of Fukashi, 1550**

Fukashi castle was one of a number of minor fortresses captured from Ogasawara Nagatoki by Takeda Shingen during his advance into Shinano. Baba Nobuharu was placed in charge of Fukashi, which is now the site of the castle of Matsumoto.

**The sieges of Toishi, 1550-1**

Takeda Shingen continued his campaign against Murakami Yoshikiyo when Sanada Yukitaka took Toishi castle in 1551. The Murakami casualties reached 1000 men, but Shingen's general, Yokota Takatoshi, was killed.

**The siege of Takiyama 1552**

The Mōri captured this castle in Bingo province in spite of a bombardment from catapults which accounted for one sixth of their casualties, the rest being from arrows and spears.

**The first battle of Kawanakajima, 1553**

In June Takeda Shingen had penetrated north into the Kawanakajima plain as far as the present-day town of Yashiro. Here his vanguard encountered the Uesugi army near a shrine to Hachiman, but soon disengaged. They came into conflict again a few kilometres to the north at Fuse. Once again both sides avoided a decisive battle.

**The siege of Katsurao, 1553**

Heading north towards Ueda once again, Takeda Shingen took Katsurao castle from Murakami Yoshikiyo, followed four months later by taking Wada, Takashima and Fukuda.

**The siege of Kiso Fukushima, 1554**

In his advance down the Kiso valley, Takeda Shingen took Fukushima castle on the Kiso river from Kiso Yoshiyasu by starving out the garrison.

**The siege of Kannomine, 1554**

In another campaign down the Ina valley, Takeda Shingen captured Kannomine from Chiku Yorimoto.

**The siege of Matsuo, 1554**

Continuing down the Ina valley, Takeda Shingen captured Matsuo from Ogasawara Nobusada, and soon after, the nearby Yoshioka castle surrendered.

**The siege of Muraki, 1554**

At Muraki, which was a fortress owned by Imagawa Yoshimoto, Oda Nobunaga made early use of the method of rotating volley firing of arquebuses.

**The battle of Oshikibata, 1554**

The battle of Oshikibata was effectively a preliminary round to the battle of Miyajima. At Oshikibata, Mōri Motonari, with an army of 3000 men, defeated a retainer of Sue Harukata called Takagawa with an army of 7000 men.

**The battle of Miyajima, 1555**

Sue Harukata had fortified the holy island of Miyajima in the Inland Sea. Taking advantage of a blinding rainstorm, the Mōri launched a surprise attack. Mōri Motonari and his two sons, Mōri Takamoto and Kikkawa Motoharu, sailed round the northern tip of the island to land unseen on a beach to the rear of the Sue positions. At the same

time Mōri's other son, Kobayakawa Takakage, sailed up the strait in view of the Sue castle, but then doubled back when out of sight, and made a frontal assault at dawn, synchronised with his father's attack from the rear. By the victory of Miyajima the Mōri were raised to a pre-eminent position in this part of Japan.

**The second battle of Kawanakajima, 1555**

Otherwise known as the battle of Saigawa, this took place when Shingen returned to the contest for Kawanakajima and advanced across the plain as far as the Saigawa. He occupied a hill called Otsuka just to the south of the river and made camp on it. Kenshin's army was based on a hill called Shiroyama just east of the Zenkōji, a position which offered a commanding view of the Kawanakajima plain. But Kenshin did not completely control these northern hills, because a few miles to the west lay Asahiya, on which was a castle of the same name that was controlled by a family known as Kurita, who were sympathetic to the Takeda, and therefore menaced Kenshin's right flank. Shingen had reinforced Kurita Kakuju's garrison with an army of 3000 men, of whom 800 were archers and 300 arquebusiers. Kenshin attacked Asahiya with great ferocity, but was repulsed. Eventually Kenshin abandoned the attempt and led his army down to the Saigawa, where he arranged his samurai against Shingen on

*Uesugi Kenshin at the second battle of Kawanakajima, 1555, otherwise known as the battle of Saigawa. Kenshin is seated on a camp-stool surrounded by his army, looking across the Saigawa towards the Takeda positions.*



## SINGLE COMBAT IN THE SENGOKU PERIOD

The incident which follows occurred during the siege of Ueda castle in 1600, the action whereby the Sanada family managed to delay Tokugawa Hidetada for so long that he missed the battle of Sekigahara. It illustrates well the persistence of the samurai belief in the desirability of single combat. The central character, Mikogami Tenzen, later changed his name to Ōno Tadaaki, and was celebrated as a great teacher of sword fighting from the Ittō-ryū. The story is from the *Keichōki*:

"On the sixth day of the ninth month at the hour of the dragon in the early morning, through the main gate which Sanada's retainer Nezu Chōemon had responsibility for defending, two samurai, Yoda Hyōbu and Yamamoto Kiyomon, went out on observation duties. There was an artificial river bank about two chō from the castle gate, and here they concealed themselves. From behind them came an ashigaru called Saitō Sasuke, dressed like a yamabushi. He called out his name and began to recite his pedigree. As he was doing this he caught sight of Mikogami Tenzen and Tsuji Tarō no suke from Makino Yasunari's camp on the Tokugawa side rushing towards him, one behind the other. Saitō turned and ran for his life. Mikogami and Tsuji gave up trying to catch him and started running to where Yoda and Yamamoto were hiding. Yoda and Yamamoto jumped up on top of the river bank and crossed spears with Mikogami and Tsuji below. But the two men made their way on to the bank and a heated combat ensued. Just then, also from the Tokugawa side, five men came running: Asakura Tōjūrō, Toda Hampei, Nakayama Kageyu, Shizume Ichizaemon, and Ōta Zenda'yū. Ōta was an archer who accompanied the spearmen when they were in formation.

"As for the two soldiers from Sanada's side, Yamamoto fought so hard that the shaft of his spear actually broke, and he was wounded in four places. Realising that they were no match for them, he withdrew. Yoda was seriously wounded and collapsed in front of the castle's main gate. Mikogami drew his sword and cut deeply into

Yoda's forehead with a single stroke. Tsuji, too, came forward and delivered a single blow to Yoda's head. But then Yamamoto rushed forward wildly, swinging his blade, and drove the two swordsmen away, then carried Yoda's dead body in through the gate.

"Seeing this, Makino Yasunari shouted to his men, 'Don't let Tsuji and Mikogami be caught! Attack!' His men yelled their acknowledgement and no less than one hundred horsemen galloped forward.

"Judging that there was no time for all his men to get safely back within the castle, Nezu Chōemon took command and ordered the men to fire all of their arquebuses simultaneously on the advancing troops. Hearing this, the Tokugawa side thought that reinforcements had rushed out of the main gate, and started to pull back away from the castle. While they were retreating, Sanada's troops rushed back into the castle and the gates were safely closed!

"Tsuji, Mikogami and the others became known as the 'Seven Spears of Sanada', but it was impossible to tell whether it was Mikogami's or Tsuji's cut to the head that had killed Yoda. Mikogami said, 'Yoda was wearing a red-lacquered helmet and was not wearing a face mask.' Toda insisted that Yoda wore a red-lacquered face mask and that it was he who made the first strike. Hearing this, and being unable to determine who should be credited with the killing, Makino had several retainers disguise themselves as horse traders and sent them to Nagano to enquire about the details of the battle. The retainers were fortunate in that they ran into Yamamoto Kiyomon and asked him about what had happened during the battle. Yamamoto replied, 'Yoda was not wearing a face mask. I think you can conclude that the man who claimed that he did was the one who struck him after he was already dead. With the first slash, blood would have run down Yoda's face. In his haste to get in a blow for himself, it certainly is possible that he mistook the bloody face for a red-lacquered face mask.' When they reported back to Makino he was convinced and awarded the killing to Mikogami."

the northern bank. Both armies sat and waited until November for the other to make a move. But there was little fighting, and the contest became one of political manoeuvring. Kenshin was faced with the defection from his allies of a retainer called Kitajō Takahiro, who held a strategically important castle, and eventually both armies pulled back to deal with such domestic affairs.

#### **The battle of Daishoji-omote, 1555**

Daishoji-omote was a further engagement by Asakura Norikage in his long war with the Ikkō-ikki of Kaga province.

#### **The battle of Nagaragawa, 1556**

The battle of Nagaragawa was fought across the Nagara river between Saitō Dōsan Toshimasa and his adopted son, Saitō Yoshitatsu. The elder Saitō was killed, giving Oda Nobunaga, his son-in-law, an excellent pretext for destroying the victor.

#### **The third battle of Kawanakajima, 1557**

Takeda Shingen carried out his furthest penetration into Uesugi territory when he captured Katsurayama, overlooking Zenkōji from the north-west. He then attacked Iiyama castle, but Kenshin led an army out from Zenkōji, and Shingen withdrew.

#### **The sieges of Moji, 1557-61**

Moji castle changed hands several times between the Mōri and the Ōtomo. See the separate entry as a case study.

#### **The siege of Terabe, 1558**

Terabe was the first engagement in which Tokugawa Ieyasu took part. The keeper, Suzuki Shigeteru, had abandoned the Imagawa and passed to the service of Oda Nobunaga. Ieyasu assaulted Terabe, and when Nobunaga sent a relieving force, he drove him off.

#### **The siege of Odaka, 1559**

The provisioning of Odaka castle was an incident in the early career of Tokugawa Ieyasu when he was still a vassal of Imagawa Yoshimoto, and consequently in arms against Oda Nobunaga. Odaka, one of the Imagawa fortresses, was hard-pressed and in need of supplies. Tokugawa

Ieyasu launched a diversionary raid against a nearby fort, causing the Oda army to withdraw a sizeable proportion of their men from Odaka. Ieyasu thereupon led a pack horse unit into Odaka under the noses of the weakened besiegers.

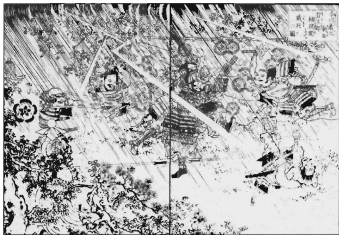
#### **The siege of Marune, 1560**

Marune was a frontier fortress owned by Oda Nobunaga. It was captured by Tokugawa Ieyasu as part of the Imagawa advance that led to the fateful battle of Okehazama. Ieyasu made good use of concentrated arquebus fire and the commander Sakuma Morishige was killed by a bullet.

#### **The battle of Okehazama, 1560**

In June 1560 Imagawa Yoshimoto assembled an army of possibly 25,000 men for an advance on Kyōto. Oda Nobunaga, whose territory he was first to invade, sent out scouts to get an up-to-date picture of the situation. They reported that his border fortresses of Washizu and Marune were destroyed and that the vast bulk of the Imagawa army, including the commander-in-chief himself, had chosen to rest at a place called Dengaku-hazama, a wooded gorge, where they were celebrating their victories in some style. It was territory Nobunaga knew well, and provided the perfect opportunity for a surprise attack.

Oda Nobunaga took up a position at Zenshōji, quite near to Imagawa's fort of Narumi, and directly in line with Dengaku-hazama. Here he rigged up a dummy army, and led 3000 men on a circular route through the wooded hills to drop down beside Dengaku-hazama from the north. It was a stifling hot day, and Yoshimoto's sentries were not alert. As Nobunaga's men drew silently near, a terrific thunderstorm began, which cloaked Nobunaga's final movements as Imagawa's men huddled under trees from the torrential rain. As the clouds blew away, the Oda troops poured into the gorge of Dengaku-hazama. The Imagawa troops were so unprepared for an attack that they fled in all directions, leaving Yoshimoto's curtained field headquarters quite unprotected. Imagawa Yoshimoto had so little knowledge of what was going on that he drew the conclusion that a drunken fight had broken out among his men, and seeing an angry-looking samurai running towards him, barked out an order for the man to return to his post. He only realised



*The defeat of Imagawa Yoshimoto at the battle of Okehazama in 1560 was one of the pivotal events of the Sengoku Period. He is shown here in an illustration from the Ehon Taikōki. Yoshimoto is seated on his camp-stool and gestulating with his saiha (baton of command). He wears a fine dô maru suit of armour.*

that it was one of Nobunaga's men when the samurai aimed a spear-thrust at him, but by then it was too late. He drew his sword and cut through the shaft of the spear, but before he could do any more a second samurai grabbed him and lopped off his head. All but two senior officers of the Imagawa were killed. With this dramatic victory, Oda Nobunaga was raised to the front rank of military commanders.

#### **The fourth battle of Kawanakajima, 1561**

The fourth battle of Kawanakajima was fought between Uesugi Kenshin and Takeda Shingen, and is their most celebrated struggle. See the separate entry as a case study.

#### **The first siege of Odawara, 1561**

In 1561 Odawara was besieged by Uesugi Kenshin. The siege lasted two months, and Kenshin withdrew when Takeda Shingen threatened his territories.

#### **The battle of Moribe, 1561**

At the battle of Moribe, in Mino province, Oda Nobunaga decisively defeated an army of the Saitō family, killing many prominent generals.

#### **The battle of Asakura, 1562**

The battle of Asakura in 1562 was a further engagement whereby Chōsokabe Motochika gained control of Shikoku island. In this battle he defeated Motoyama Shigetoki.

#### **The siege of Kaminojō, 1562**

With the help of ninja from Koga, Tokugawa Ieyasu captured Kaminojō from its keeper Udono Nagamochi, and obtained useful hostages to use against the Imagawa, who were holding his own family.

#### **The second siege of Musashi-Matsuyama, 1563**

Matsuyama castle in Musashi province was held by Uesugi Norikatsu. It was besieged by an allied army of Hōjō Ujiyasu and Takeda Shingen. The latter made good use of miners from Kai who burrowed into the hill on which the castle was built.

#### **The second battle of Kōnodai, 1564**

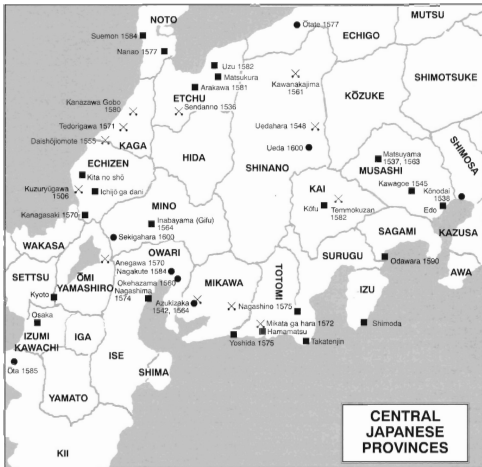
At the second battle of Kōnodai, Hōjō Ujiyasu, son of the victor of the first battle in 1538, defeated Satomi Yoshihiro, son of the former loser.

#### **The second battle of Azukizaka, 1564**

At this second battle to be fought at Azukizaka, Tokugawa Ieyasu fought the local ikkō-ikkō. He took a prominent part in close personal combat, and was hit by several bullets which were slowed by his armour and lodged in his undergarments.

#### **The siege of Inabayama, 1564**

In 1564 Toyotomi Hideyoshi captured Inabayama castle from the Saitō for Oda Nobunaga. As



Inabayama was built on top of a mountain, two attacks were launched, one that involved climbing, the other across the river. Horio Yoshiharu distinguished himself by opening the watergate to his attacking comrades. In 1565 Oda Nobunaga made Inabayama his headquarters and renamed it Gifu.

#### The fifth battle of Kawanakajima, 1564

Takeda Shingen advanced on to the plain of Kawanakajima and set up camp on a hill called Shiozaki. Kenshin drew up his army opposite,

across the Saigawa. There was some skirmishing, but after 60 days both withdrew.

#### The siege of Kuragano, 1565

Kuragano was a castle in Kōzuke province held by Kuragano Naoyuki. Hōving resisted an assault in 1561, in 1565 it fell to an attack by Takeda Shingen.

#### The siege of Minowa, 1566

Minowa castle was defended fiercely by a retainer of the Uesugi called Nagano Narimasa, but when

Narimasa died, fearful lest the Takeda should take advantage of this, the Nagano followers kept his death secret for as long as possible while his heir Narimori consolidated his position. The great swordsman Kamiizumi Hidetsuna took part in the defence of Minowa castle in 1566, with the young heir leading at the front. Attack after attack was repulsed, with the action almost totally confined to hand-to-hand combat. Finally Hidetsuna took the fight to the Takeda and sallied out of the castle in a bold surge. The Takeda became demoralised, but then fate took a hand, for in another sally by the defenders the young heir Narimori was cut down and killed, and this time there was no opportunity to keep a commander's death a secret. The Takeda seized upon this huge psychological weapon. There was no leader, and the shattered defenders were forced to sue for peace.

#### **The battle of Mifunedal, 1567**

This battle was fought in Kazusa province on 10 September 1567 between Ōta Ujisuke and Satomi Yoshihiro. Ujisuke was killed in action.

#### **The battle of Torisaka, 1568**

Torisaka was a battle fought in Iyo province on Shikoku island between the combined forces of Kōno Michinao and the Mōri, whose help he had requested against Utsunomiya Toyotsuna. The Mōri were under Kobayakawa Takakage and Kikkawa Motoharu, who won the battle and reinstated Kōno in his domains, but he was to be defeated in 1580 by Chōsokabe Motochika.

#### **The second battle of Tatarahama, 1568**

The second battle of Tatarahama, in the vicinity of present-day Hakata, was fought between Mōri Motonari's general, Kobayakawa Takakage, and Hetsugi Akitsura, general of Ōtomo Sōrin. The Mōri were victorious. The location is the same as the battle of 1336.

#### **The siege of Kakegawa, 1569**

Tokugawa Ieyasu besieged Imagawa Ujizane, son of the late Imagawa Yoshimoto, in Kakegawa castle. Negotiations began, and a deal was struck whereby Imagawa surrendered the castle in return for Ieyasu's support in regaining his former territory of Suruga.

### **NINJA – FACT OR FICTION?**

The ninja, otherwise shinobi no mono (men of secrecy) were the assassins, spies and secret agents of Japan at the time of the samurai. Legend has greatly embellished accounts of their activities, which, together with popular movies and comic books, has created a myth of the ninja as the invincible and deadly secret warrior. Pictorial representations, which date from the early nineteenth century, have reinforced a visual image of them as superior warriors who dressed from head to foot in black, although this is likely to be no more than an artistic convention as there are no contemporary references to such costumes, and accounts of surprise attacks often mention the assailants dressing in such a way as to blend in with their victims. Nonetheless, reports of assassinations carried out by men who climbed into castles or fortified camps reinforce the authenticity of the profession, even if the 'superman' image may be readily discarded. The chronicle of the Hōjō family also makes reference to such men being used to cause confusion in an enemy camp before an attack, and spies were certainly used during the siege of Hara castle in 1638.

#### **The siege of Tachibana, 1569**

Mōri Motonari besieged Tachibana castle in Chikuzen province, which was defended by Hetsugi Akitsura for the Ōtomo. Cannon were used in the engagement, at which the Mōri were victorious.

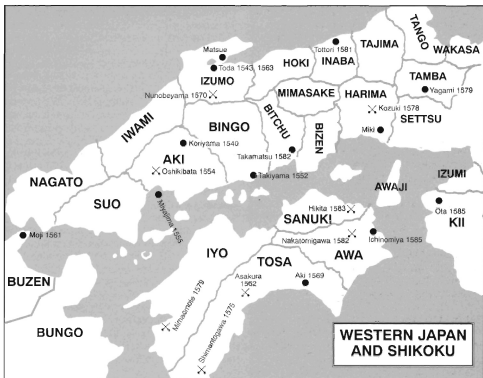
#### **The siege of Aki, 1569**

With the defeat of the Motoyama family, Chōsokabe continued his conquest of Shikoku island by attacking and taking the castle of Aki, which was held by Aki Kunitora. The Aki garrison numbered 5000 men, while the Chōsokabe army numbered 7200.

#### **The second siege of Odawara, 1569**

In 1569 Takeda Shingen moved against the Hōjō. He failed to capture Hachigata castle from Hōjō Ujikuni, and then failed to capture Takiyama from





Hōjō Ujiteru. He finally laid siege to Odawara castle. The siege only lasted three days, at the end of which Takeda Shingen burned the town of Odawara and withdrew.

#### The battle of Mimasetsu, 1529

Following his unsuccessful attempt at besieging Odawara, Takeda Shingen withdrew, but the brothers Hōjō Ujiteru and Hōjō Ujikuni laid wait for him and gave battle in the pass of Mimase (Mimasetsu). The Hōjō army numbered 20,000 against the Takeda's 10,000. After a day of fighting the Takeda broke through and escaped back to Kōfu. The Hōjō lost 3200 men in their vain attempt to stop the Takeda.

#### The siege of Kanbara, 1569

Kanbara castle was held for the Hōjō by Hōjō Tsunashige, a nephew of Hōjō Sōun, with a

garrison of 1000 men. In 1569 it was besieged by a Takeda army under Shingen's heir, Takeda Katsuyori. On 6 December the castle fell.

#### The siege of Hanazawa, 1570

As part of his drive into Suruga province to make a clean sweep of the remnants of the Imagawa family, Takeda Shingen attacked Hanazawa castle, which was under the command of Ōhara Suke-naga. Two senior Takeda retainers, Nagasaka Tsuruyasu and Hajikano Sa'emom, distinguished themselves during the attack. Ōhara defended bravely for four days, at the end of which the castle fell.

#### The siege of Fukazawa, 1571

In June 1570 Takeda Shingen invaded Suruga province for the sixth time and laid siege to Fukazawa castle, which was held for the Hōjō by

**SINGLE COMBAT SEEN IN CONTEXT**

The oft-repeated statement that to a samurai an act of heroic individual combat was prized above all other accomplishments is not fully borne out in the literature. In the following extract from the *Kōyō Gunkan*, the individual prowess of Takeda Katsuyori is noted, but his father Takeda Shingen then places it in the context of the overall aim of the current operation: the reduction of the castle of Takiyama during the Takeda's operation against the Hōjō in 1569.

"At Takiyama Katsuyori was the one who fought desperately. The castle commander, Hōjō Ujiteru cried, 'He is making us exert all our powers!' which he heard while in high spirits as he wielded a long-bladed kamayari and mercilessly ran the enemy through, and finally had a single combat with a warrior from the Hōjō side. At that time Katsuyori was 24 years old. However, Shingen did not allow himself to be over-impressed and said, 'Well, that's good, but it is a trifling matter in view of the great undertaking required. This castle will not fall through one single action. Tenkyō, Shirō and the others who took chances were either killed in action or had a hard time of it.'"

Hōjō Tsunanari. During the first month of the Lunar New Year the castle capitulated, and Hōjō Tsunanari withdrew to Odawara.

**The siege of Chōkōji, 1570**

Chōkōji was a castle in Ōmi province captured from the Rokkaku (Sasaki) by Oda Nobunaga. Nobunaga entrusted its defence to Shibata Katsuei, but Rokkaku Yoshisuke attacked it and cut off the water supply. Faced with death from thirst, Shibata made the dramatic gesture of smashing the water storage jars in the castle, and then leading a sally out against the besiegers. So desperate were the Shibata troops that they carried all before them, and the siege was lifted.

**The siege of Kanagasaki, 1570**

During Oda Nobunaga's advance into Echizen against the Asakura, Toyotomi Hideyoshi captured

the fortress of Kanagasaki, which is now the city of Tsuruga. Nobunaga's army then fought a celebrated fighting retreat from Echizen.

**The battle of Anegawa, 1570**

The battle of (the) Anegawa was fought between Oda Nobunaga and the allied armies of Asai Nagamasa and Asakura Yoshikage. Nobunaga's troops had advanced against the Asai castle of Odani, and faced the allied forces across the Anegawa, while some troops laid siege to Yokoyama castle. The battle was effectively a huge hand-to-hand mêlée in the middle of the shallow river, fought in blazing sun. At first it was almost as though there were two separate battles being fought: the Tokugawa against the Asakura, and the Oda upstream against the Asai. The Tokugawa made better progress, but a samurai of the Asai called Endō Kizaemon had resolved to take Nobunaga's head, and was only cut down, by a samurai called Takenaka Kyūsaku, when he was quite close to his target. Seeing Nobunaga's army in dire straits, the Tokugawa, who were by now relieved of the pressure from the Asakura, attacked Asai's right flank. Inaba Ittetsu, who up until then had been held in reserve, fell on to their left. Even the besiegers of Yokoyama castle left their lines to join in. The result was a victory for the Oda forces.

**The siege of Ishiyama Honganji, 1570**

Ishiyama Honganji was the 'fortified cathedral' of the Ikkō-ikki, established on the site of present-day Ōsaka castle. Oda Nobunaga's first move against the Ishiyama Honganji was launched in August 1570. He left Gifu castle at the head of 30,000 troops, and ordered the building of a series of forts around the perimeter. The Ikkō-ikki made the first move, and on 12 September two of Nobunaga's fortresses, at Kawaguchi and Takadono, were attacked. The Oda army were stunned both by the ferocity of the surprise attack, and also by the novel use of controlled volley firing from 3000 matchlock men.

**The battle of Nunobeyama, 1570**

Nunobeyama was a decisive action in the long-running conflict between the Mōri and the Amako. Kobayakawa Takakage and Kikkawa Motoharu led a Mōri army of 15,000 men against Amako

Katsuhisa with 6700 men under their great hero, Yamanaka Shikanosuke Yukimori. They met on 14 February 1570 at the foot of Nunobeyama, a mountain about 12 km south of Toda castle. The Amako were heavily defeated.

### The siege of Mount Hiei, 1571

The destruction of the monastic complex of Mount Hiei by Oda Nobunaga was such a one-sided affair that it hardly deserves to be called either a battle or a siege. The word 'massacre' is more appropriate. The assault began on 29 September 1571. Nobunaga first burned the town of Sakamoto at the foot of Mount Hiei, but most of the townspeople had taken refuge on the mountain. He took particular care to destroy the Hiyoshi shrine of the kami Sannō, the Mountain King, and then his 30,000 men were deployed in a vast ring around the mountain, and began to move steadily upwards, burning and shooting all that stood in their way, men, women and children. By nightfall the main temple of Enryakuji had gone up in flames, and many monks unable to resist had leapt into the fire. Next day Nobunaga sent his gunners out on a hunt for any who had escaped. The final casualty list probably topped 20,000, and was the end of the long history of the warrior-monks of the Tendai sect temples of Mount Hiei.

### The first siege of Nagashima, 1571

The reduction of the Ikkō-ikki's fortress of Nagashima took Oda Nobunaga three years of bitter campaigning. He appointed as commanders of the Nagashima force his trusted generals, Sakuma Nobumori and Shibata Katsue. Nobunaga's army made camp on 16 May 1571 at Tsushima, to the north-east of Nagashima, which was divided from the complex by a particularly shallow, yet broad, river. An attack was planned on the area immediately to the west of Tsushima against the series of wajū (island communities protected by dikes against flooding), from where an attack could be launched on the fortified Ganshōji monastery.

Nobunaga's mounted samurai began to ford towards the first wajū, only to find that the river bottom was a deep sea of mud. The horses' legs quickly mired, and as the animals struggled, many threw off their heavily armoured riders, who were

### THE USE OF IMPRESSED LABOUR IN A SIEGE

Local people could be forced to work in a menial capacity for a besieging army, as the following extract from *Muromachidono Monogatari* describes. This is impressed labour in a forceful manner, which includes destroying their own houses in preparation for the attack:

"Here from the inhabitants of Bingo province Yamada Hida no kami's force of 500 were paraded and set to work east and west, and among these 200 were left who filled sandbags and smashed up the farmhouses in preparation for filling in one section of the moat..." (Sasama 1968: 372).

met by a hail of arrows and bullets, causing severe casualties. As the survivors dragged themselves to the nearest dry land, they encountered ropes stretched between stakes, which further hindered their progress towards safety. As night fell, the dike was cut, rapidly flooding the low-lying land, catching the remaining samurai in an inrush of muddy water, and ending Nobunaga's first attack on Nagashima as an unqualified disaster. The general Shibata Katsue was severely wounded, and no impression was made on the defences. As the Oda army withdrew, they burned several villages on the outskirts.

### The battle of Tonegawa, 1571

In 1571 Uesugi Kenshin entered Kōzuke province and attacked Takeda Shingen's satellite castle of Ishikura. Shingen responded, and both armies faced each other in a stand-off across the Tonegawa river. The opponents eventually disengaged.

### The battle of Kizakihara, 1572

The battle of Kizakihara in Kyūshū came about when Itō Yoshisuke attacked an outpost of the Shimazu. Shimazu Yoshihiro responded in force, and inflicted a great defeat upon him.

### The siege of Iwamura, 1572

Takeda Shingen's 1572 campaign against the Oda and Tokugawa lands ended in the battle of Mikata ga Hara. Iwamura, one of Japan's great yamashiro

(mountain castles) was under the control of Tōyama Kagetō, but the castle's actual keeper was a child of seven called Gobōmaru. When Kagetō died of illness, the position of the castle became the object of the attentions of Akiyama Nobutomo, one of Takeda Shingen's 'Twenty-Four Generals', who led an advance into Mino coincident with Shingen's drive into Tōtōmi. Akiyama negotiated the bloodless surrender of Iwamura with Kagetō's widow, and the unfortunate Gobōmaru was taken off to Kai as a hostage to good conduct.

### The siege of Futamata, 1572

Futamata was a Tokugawa possession in Tōtōmi province. It was situated on a cliff above the Tenryūgawa and obtained its water supply by lowering buckets into the river from within the safety of a wooden tower known as the well-tower. When Takeda Katsuyori laid siege to it he lashed together large logs to make rafts, and floated these down the river as unmanned missiles. After a while the force of these rafts hitting the supports of the well-tower caused it to collapse. The garrison surrendered. Two months later the Takeda army pressed on past Futamata, heading for Hamamatsu.

### The battle of Mikata ga Hara, 1572

The important battle of Mikata ga Hara came about as a result of a major drive south by Takeda Shingen against Tokugawa Ieyasu's fortress of Hamamatsu. The Takeda army was drawn up on the high ground of Mikata ga Hara, to the north of Hamamatsu, where Ieyasu advanced to meet them in pitched battle. The *Kōyō Gunkan* gives Shingen's formation as *gyōrin*, the fish-scale formation, one of the classic battle formations that supposedly entices an enemy to attack. Ieyasu was heavily outnumbered by about three to one. The *Kōyō Gunkan* gives Ieyasu's total army as 11,000, of which 8000 were his own troops, and 3000 the reinforcements from Nobunaga. These he drew up in a line, with his own headquarters troops a little to the rear. On his left flank were three fine Mikawa generals: Matsudaira Ietada, Honda Tadakatsu and Ishikawa Kazumasa, plus Ōgasawara Nagayoshi. On his right flank, leading down to the Magomewaga, he placed the three contingents supplied by Oda Nobunaga, with the



*The reconstructed water tower of the castle of Futamata, from which the defenders lowered buckets into the river. It was destroyed by Takeda Katsuyori in 1572 by the clever ploy of floating heavy rafts down the river to smash the supports.*

trustworthy Mikawa general Sakai Tadatsugu on the extreme right.

The great strength of the Takeda army was its cavalry, who operated as mounted units supported by personal attendants. At about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, as the snow was beginning to fall, the front ranks of the Tokugawa opened fire on the Takeda samurai. The Takeda forward troops responded with great vigour. Naitō Masatoyo attacked Honda Tadakatsu. Honda and the other Mikawa men withstood the assault well, but Takigawa and Sakuma withdrew immediately. Hiraide Norihide stood firm until he was killed and his division was overrun, leaving Sakai Tadatsugu isolated on the wing. At this point Shingen calmly

withdrew his forward units to rest and sent in the fresh troops under Obata and Takeda Katsuyori. Saigusa Moritomo led 50 horsemen in a fierce cavalry assault. It was getting dark, and seeing the Tokugawa troops reeling, Shingen ordered a general assault by the main body. Very soon the Tokugawa army was in full retreat.

Tokugawa Ieyasu sent Ōkubo Tadayo back to Saigadake, where the ground began to drop away down to Hamamatsu, there to plant Ieyasu's personal golden fan standard as a rallying point for the troops. Ieyasu himself was all for charging back into the Takeda ranks to assist his comrade Mizuno Tadashige, who was surrounded, but Natsume Yoshinobu rode out from the fortress to persuade his lord to withdraw. He tugged on Ieyasu's bridle to bring his horse around, and struck it on the rump with his spear shaft, calling out to Ieyasu's attendants to ride with their lord for the castle. Yoshinobu turned back to the Takeda and plunged into the fight to be killed. His courageous attempt at substitution allowed Ieyasu to escape.

Naruse Masayoshi, Toyama Kosaku and Endō Ukon were three more samurai who sacrificed themselves for Ieyasu during the desperate retreat. Amano Yasukage, who survived the action, kicked the bow out of a Takeda soldier's hands as he took aim at Ieyasu, so the withdrawal must have been a closely fought action. Ieyasu himself put an arrow through one Takeda man who ran at him with a spear. The rapid arrival of Ieyasu at Hamamatsu, with apparently only five men left, made it appear that defeat was certain, but Ieyasu ordered the gates to be left open for their retreating comrades, and huge braziers to be lit to guide them home. To add to the confident air, Sakai Tadatsugu took a large war drum and beat it in the tower beside the gate. As Ieyasu had predicted, when Yamagata Masakage and Baba Nobuharu, who led the Takeda advance to the castle, saw the open gates and the light and heard the drum, they immediately suspected a trick. The Takeda army camped for the night on the battlefield near Saigadake. Ōkubo Tadayo and Amano Yasukage gathered a volunteer force of sixteen arquebusiers and 100 other foot-soldiers and attacked the Takeda encampment. Here the plain of Mikata ga Hara is split by a narrow canyon. Scores of Takeda

samurai and horses fell into this ravine, where the Tokugawa troops fired on them and cut them as they lay helpless. The Takeda withdrew the following morning, leaving Hamamatsu safe.

### The second siege of Nagashima, 1573

The campaign against the Nagashima Ikkō-ikki reopened in July 1573, and this time Oda Nobunaga took personal charge of the operations. The numbers of his army are not recorded, but we do know that he recruited heavily from Ise province. Covered by an advance from the west under Sakuma Nobumori and Hashiba (later Toyotomi) Hideyoshi, Nobunaga sent his gunners on ahead along the main roads into Nagashima,



*Sakai Tadatsugu bangs the drum to guide the defeated Tokugawa army to safety within Hamamatsu castle after the battle of Mikata ga Hara, 1572. Rather than close the gates after his army retreated, Tokugawa Ieyasu ordered for them to be left open and braziers lit to guide the troops to safety. The beating of the drum was a further detail in the successful psychological ploy.*

hoping that the volley fire would blast a way for him. Unfortunately for Nobunaga, as soon as his men were ready to fire, a fierce downpour occurred, and the rain soaked the matches and the pans, rendering nine out of every ten arquebuses temporarily disabled. The Ikkō-ikki launched an immediate counter-attack for which the forward matchlockmen were ill prepared. They began to fall back, taking the Ise troops with them, and as the Ikkō-ikki pressed forward, the rain stopped, enabling them to employ their own matchlocks. The defenders advanced perilously close to Nobunaga himself, who was in the thick of the fighting astride a horse. One bullet narrowly missed his ear, and another felled one of his retainers through the armpit. For the second time in two years, the Oda army withdrew. The western force had been more successful, with Takigawa Kazumasu taking Yata castle (the present-day Kuwana) which was the most southerly point of the Nagashima complex, but he, too, was forced to withdraw by a counter-attack.

#### **The siege of Noda, 1573**

The success of Mikata ga Hara against the Tokugawa encouraged Takeda Shingen to make a further advance into Mikawa province the following year. This time he laid siege to Noda castle (present day Shinshiro) on the Toyokawa river, commanded by Sukanuma Sadamichi. He had with him his kanabori-shū (miners' corps) who tunnelled into the castle moat and drained it, thus depriving the garrison of their drinking water along with their defence. While contemplating the imminent surrender of the castle, Shingen was taken by the sound of a flute being played by one of the garrison, and moved closer to hear it. A vigilant sniper on the castle walls saw him and shot him through the head. The siege was lifted and Takeda Shingen died soon afterwards, although his death was kept secret for two years.

#### **The siege of Hikida, 1573**

While going to the relief of Asai Nagamasa in Odani castle, Asakura Yoshikage was attacked by Oda Nobunaga, so entered Hikida castle for security. On 10 August the castle fell, and he retreated back to Echizen province.

#### **The siege of Odani, 1573**

With the successful siege of Odani castle in 1573, Oda Nobunaga completed his triumph over the Asai family. Seeing all was lost, Asai Nagamasa entrusted his family to Oda Nobunaga (who was his brother-in-law) and committed suicide.

#### **The siege of Ichijō ga dani, 1573**

Asakura Yoshikage suffered the same fate as his former comrade-in-arms Asai Nagamasa when Oda Nobunaga defeated him in his castle of Ichijō ga dani in 1573.

#### **The first siege of Itami, 1574**

In Settsu province in 1574 Oda Nobunaga captured Itami castle from the daimyō of the same name by digging a long tunnel from outside the walls to a spot near to the castle's keep.

#### **The first siege of Takatenjin, 1574**

Takatenjin, held for the Tokugawa by Ogasawara Nagatada, was besieged and captured by Takeda Katsuyori in 1574.

#### **The third siege of Nagashima, 1574**

Nobunaga attacked Nagashima for a third time in 1574, but he now had naval support from Kuki Yoshitaka, who took the fight by ship close to the Ikkō-ikki fortifications in a way that had never proved possible before. Kuki's fleet kept up a rolling bombardment of the Nagashima defences from close on shore, concentrating on the wooden watchtowers with cannonballs and fire arrows. The presence of the ships also served to cut off the garrison from supplies and from any possible relieving force, and, more crucially, allowed Nobunaga's land-based troops to take most of the Ikkō-ikki's outlying forts. Two in particular, Nakae and Yanagashima, enabled Nobunaga to control access from the western, Ise side, for the first time.

Supported by Kuki, a land-based army carried out a three-pronged attack from the north. Gradually the defenders were forced back, though with enormous resistance, and were squeezed down into the small area of the island on which stood the fortified Ganshōji and Nagashima castles with almost no hope of relief. By the end of August 1574 they were slowly starving to death. Instead of accepting surrender, Nobunaga commenced the

## THE PUNISHMENT OF REBELS

If a samurai rebelled against his lord he could expect no mercy. The documents of the Iriki family of Kyūshū record at least two instances where the daimyō, in each case Shimazu Yoshihiro, is quite ruthless in his determination to crush the rebellion quickly. The first occurs as the Shimazu contingent is about to leave for Korea in 1592:

"At that time, one Umekita Kunikane, starting after Lord Yoshihiro for Korea, moored ships at Hirado in Hizen, and perhaps fearing punishment for his tardiness, suddenly changed his mind and began a rebellion, falsely claiming that he pursued the Taishu's order. There were Tajiri Arabyōe and many other who joined in the plot. Unexpectedly Shigekage also followed Umekita's forces and invaded Higo. The Taishu (Shimazu) Yoshihisa, who was at Nagoya, hearing this event at once reported it; and receiving a strict command, went down to the province with Hosokawa Yūsai and punished the Umekita party. Kunikane was defeated and died at Sashiki in Higo province, and Shigekage and his 75 men were killed at several places. Shigetoki, obeying a strict order, killed Shigekage's father, Bizen Shigesada, and relatives of the former's followers." (Asakawa 1929: 393)

Note how Iriki-in Shigetoki is required to put to death certain of his relatives, all of whom were probably innocent of any crime, but tainted by association. In 1599, when the rest of Japan appeared to be at peace, Iriki-in Shigetoki was commissioned to quell another rebellion. The account is a vivid snapshot of siegework, followed by a long list (here abbreviated) of personal exploits, in which the ashigaru (referred to as chūgen) are not forgotten:

"In the spring of 1599 the Lord (Shimazu) Tadatsune punished with death the traitorous vassal Ijūin Tamamune Kōgan at the lord's residence at Fushimi. Kōgan's eldest son Tadazane, who was at the fortress of Shōnai, Hyōga, hearing that his father had been killed, erected twelve forts, and revealing his rebellious intentions, divided his warriors to defend them, wielding wicked power. When the lord therefore hastened back to the province to chastise him, he granted to Shigetoki, greatly to his honour, the office of jitō of Takezaki and Takabaru. When (the lord) attacked the Yamada fortress on 13 August 1599 Shigetoki was stationed at Kusumure; at the signalled hour he vied with other generals to lead the van, and came to the fortress at dawn. The enemy strongly defended the fortress, sending down arrows and stone missiles like showers and booming guns like peals of thunder. But they defied it all, and, scaling up to the fortress, cut down all the defenders till it was captured. Of Shigetoki's forces, Tōgō Jūrōza'emōn was wounded; Iriki-in Mototsuke, Ebihara Kichimōn, Nagae Kunai, Takagi Yaza'emōn, Kizaki Shinzaburō ...and Tōsuke the chūgen took enemy's heads... Maroku and Ichibyōe, these two being chūgen, fell fighting." (Asakawa 1929: 394)

erection of a very tall wooden palisade which was anchored on the forts of Nakae and Yanagashima, and which physically isolated the Ikkō-ikki from the gaze of the outside world. Approximately 20,000 people were now crammed into the inner outposts. Unseen by them, Nobunaga began to pile a mountain of dry brushwood against the palisade, and set light to the massive pyre. Burning brands jumped the small gaps of water, and soon the whole of the Nagashima complex was ablaze. All 20,000 inhabitants of the Ikkō-ikki fortress were burned to death before any could escape to be cut down.

**The siege of Yoshida, 1575**

In 1575 Takeda Katsuyori raided Mikawa province and laid siege to Yoshida castle (the site of which is now within Toyohashi city), which was under the command of Sakai Tadatsugu with 1000 men. Tokugawa Ieyasu, however, had anticipated Katsuyori's move and reinforced the garrison with an extra 5000 men. Fierce hand-to-hand spear fighting took place outside the walls of Yoshida, but as the Tokugawa looked unlikely to leave the walls for a pitched battle, the frustrated Takeda Katsuyori abandoned the siege and headed northwards, where he laid siege to Nagashino.



*A group of Ikkō-ikki warriors is shown here displaying a Buddhist banner. These were the men who defied Oda Nobunaga for eleven years from their fortresses of Nagashima and Ishiyama Honganji.*

### **The siege of Nagashino, 1575**

Nagashino was a castle in Mikawa province on a well-defended bluff at the confluence of the Takigawa and Onogawa rivers. It was commanded by Okudaira Sadamasa, who held out against the Takeda in a classic siege. The besiegers tried attacks by river, through mining, and with fierce hand-to-hand assaults. Eventually Torii Sune'emon brought word to Tokugawa Ieyasu that relief was needed, and an army moved to his assistance.

### **The battle of Nagashino, 1575**

The celebrated battle of Nagashino was fought between the army of Oda Nobunaga, who came to raise the siege of Nagashino castle, and the army of Takeda Katsuyori, son of the late Shingen, who was attacking it. The Takeda army that laid siege

to Nagashino castle consisted of 15,000 men, of whom 12,000 took part in the subsequent battle. They were therefore well outnumbered by the Oda/Tokugawa force of 38,000 who advanced to meet them, and whose positions looked across the plain of Shidarahara towards the castle. About 100 metres in front flowed the little Rengogawa, which acted as a forward defence for the positions Oda Nobunaga had chosen. Although sluggish and shallow, it had some steep banks, which would slow down the horsemen.

Oda Nobunaga also had the advantage of a unit of 3000 matchlockmen, but realised that they would need some form of physical protection, so his army built a palisade half-way between the forested edge of the hills and the river. It was a loose fence of stakes, staggered over three alternate layers, and with many gaps to allow a counter-attack. The forests of the left flank provided some protection from encirclement, and Nobunaga decided to risk his right wing rather than weaken the whole line by spreading his defences too thinly. The total front stretched for about 2100 metres. Nobunaga's plan was for the matchlockmen to fire rotating volleys as the Takeda cavalry approached.

The Takeda right wing was under Anayama Nobukimi with Baba Nobuharu as vanguard. The total number was 3036. The centre companies were under Takeda Nobukado (Commander) with Naitō Masatoyo (Vanguard), total 3459. On the left wing was Takeda Nobutoyo (Commander) with Yamagata Masakage (Vanguard), total 3726. A centre company, to the rear, was Takeda Katsuyori's headquarters unit, which totalled 1092.

For the majority of the Takeda troops, their first sight of the enemy came when they moved out of the woods to the east of Shidarahara. From this point it was 200 metres at its narrowest to the Oda/Tokugawa line, and at its broadest only 400 metres. There were three matchlockmen in the Oda lines for every four Takeda mounted samurai charging at them. Although he was aware of the number of guns that Oda Nobunaga possessed, two factors encouraged Takeda Katsuyori. The first was the heavy rain of the night before, which was likely to have rendered the matchlocks unusable. The second was the great speed of the



### THE ROLE OF THE SCOUTS

The *Hōjō Godaiki* describes scouts being used during Hōjō Ujinao's campaign against Satake Yoshinobu in 1575.

Ujinao selected five horsemen from among his hatamoto and made them scouts. They rode off towards the border where the enemy flags were flying. Among them were two horsemen, Yamakami San'emonnojō and Haga Hikojirō, who were familiar with the area. They rode hard to one chō from the boundary and rode up to a high place. Then they saw the enemy's advanced skirmishers who rose up like bees to surround the two mounted men and catch them like fish in a net. They made to take the horse of San'emonnojō, but in spite of being in enemy territory he turned his horse to the north and whipped it up to make a remarkable escape and rode hard for the flat plains, being chased across the grass, and while in flight he took one head. With many enemy in pursuit, being a strong horseman he rode up a large mountain, descended from its top, and rode on to friendly territory. Hikojirō was surrounded by many enemies, and was almost certain to fall, having ridden into the area of the enemy camp, but he took the road through the ramparts and from here rode to the south. As he spurred on his mount horsemen set out from within the enemy camp from front and rear and from left and right, to capture him or cut him down. It was likely that he would be killed, but he struck his whip on the stirrups two or three times, and although his voice could be heard, several times he almost disappeared from sight. Finally he rode into the large river and made his horse swim, and arrived at the far bank.

The account concludes with Hōjō Ujinao praising the two men, retelling their exploits, and suitably rewarding them. There is a nice touch in that the author also refers to the bravery of the samurai's horses as being in no way inferior to that of their riders.

Takeda charge. As they had only 200 metres to cover, it was probable that there would be some casualties from bullets, but not enough to break the momentum of the charge. The horsemen would then be upon the hopeless ashigaru as they tried to reload, to be followed within seconds by the Takeda foot-soldiers.

At 6.00 a.m. on 28 June 1575, Takeda Katsuyori ordered the advance. The three vanguards of the Takeda cavalry under Yamagata, Naitō and Baba swept down from the hills on to the narrow fields. Horses and men carefully negotiated the shallow river bed, to pick up speed again as they mounted the far bank. At this point, with the horsemen within 50 metres of the fence, the volley firing began. All along the line his horsemen in the vanguards, and the attendant foot-soldiers who had advanced with them, were falling in heaps. The ashigaru spearmen, with their massive 5.6-metre shafted spears, thrust their weapons up at any horseman who had been missed by the volley and approached the fence. The samurai, with their shorter spears, would have taken the fight to the Takeda, and there are enough accounts of single

combat in the chronicles to paint a picture of a battle that consisted of innumerable small group and individual actions. The battle lasted until mid-afternoon, when the Takeda began to retreat and were pursued. Takeda Katsuyori left behind him on the battlefield 10,000 dead, a casualty rate of 67 per cent. Out of 97 named samurai leaders of the Takeda at Nagashino, 54 were killed and two badly wounded. Eight of the veteran 'Twenty-Four Generals' of the Takeda were killed.

#### **The battle of Shimantogawa, 1575**

At this battle Chōsokabe Motochika increased his hold on Shikoku island by defeating the Ichijō family.

#### **The siege of Ishiyama Honganji, 1576**

By 1576 the main building of the Ikkō-ikkō headquarters of Ishiyama Honganji had grown into the centre of a complex ring of 51 outposts, well supported by organised firearms squads. In April Nobunaga made a land-based attack on the Ishiyama Honganji with a force of 3000 men under the command of Araki Muneshige and Akechi

Mitsuhide. This may have been more of an exercise in testing the defenders' mettle, because 15,000 were pitted against him, and Nobunaga was forced to withdraw.

#### **The battle of Mitsuji, 1576**

In May Oda Nobunaga carried out another attack on the Ishiyama Honganji known as the battle of Mitsuji. Nobunaga was personally involved in the hand-to-hand combat, and led a contingent of ashigaru in a sally that drove the Ikkō-ikki back to one of their inner gates. Nobunaga received a bullet wound in his leg before he withdrew.

#### **The first battle of Kizugawaguchi, 1576**

In April 1576 Nobunaga attempted to use his admiral Kuki Yoshitaka to blockade the sea route against Mōri, causing the first of two sea battles to be fought at the mouth of the Kizu. Mōri's superiority won the day, and the supplies got through, with Kuki's fleet being brushed off easily.

#### **The siege of Shikizan, 1577**

At Shikizan, Matsunaga Hisahide and his son Kojirō were defeated by Oda Nobutada and Tsutsui Junkei and committed suicide.

#### **The siege of Nanao, 1577**

Nanao castle in Noto province was a possession of Hatakeyama Yoshitaka. It was first attacked by Uesugi Kenshin in 1576. In 1577 Kenshin reduced the outlying fortresses that supported Nanao, and began a new siege. The castle held out until autumn, by which time a message requesting help had been sent to Oda Nobunaga. Before Nobunaga was able to respond, the castle fell, partly from disease among the garrison, which claimed the life of Hatakeyama Yoshitaka, but also through a traitor opening the gates to Kenshin.

#### **The battle of Tedorigawa, 1577**

Oda Nobunaga moved to the relief of Nanao castle by invading Kaga province. Uesugi Kenshin went into Kaga to meet him and based himself and 30,000 troops at the castle of Matsutō. Nobunaga had 18,000 men within a total army of about 50,000, including some of his most famous generals, Shibata Katsuei, Akechi Mitsuhide, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, Maeda Toshiie, Takigawa

Kazumasu, Niwa Nagahide and Sasa Narimasa. The armies met across the Tedorigawa. Kenshin anticipated that Nobunaga would try to move across the river by night for a dawn attack on Matsutō. He therefore detached a small decoy force in sight of Nobunaga and moved it up towards a small castle he had built at the head of the river. This gave Nobunaga the impression that Kenshin had split his forces, and encouraged Nobunaga to make a frontal assault straight across the river. The result was one of the classic night battles of Japan. Kenshin's force, in three forward units with a main body in reserve, absorbed Nobunaga's advance. The main body then moved in and defeated Nobunaga's army.

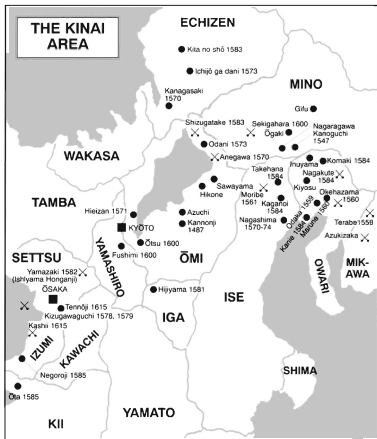
#### **The second battle of Kizugawaguchi, 1578**

At this second battle of Kizugawaguchi, the Mōri fleet was outclassed. Nobunaga's specially built extra-large battleships took the fight to them, and he had the satisfaction of seeing arrows and musket balls bouncing off them. The engagement developed into hand-to-hand fighting as the ships came alongside and boarding parties fought one another. Several Mōri vessels were burned or sunk, but one of Nobunaga's 'iron ships' was lost when it was boarded and simply capsized.

#### **The siege of the Ishiyama Honganji, 1576–80**

The ferocity of the defence of the Ishiyama Honganji forced Nobunaga to revise his tactics, and he changed his immediate aim to that of reducing the outposts of the Ishiyama Honganji, thus progressively isolating the centre. In a series of campaigns he neutralised the Ikkō-ikki outpost of Saiga in Kii province to the south, which had been able to support the fortress from the sea and had been present at Nagashima. For good measure he sent Toyotomi Hideyoshi against the other hornets' nest of warrior-monks at Negoroji in Kii province, now much weakened with the defeat of Nagashima. Negoroji was not defeated in this attack, but was sufficiently contained so as not to cause much of a threat to Nobunaga's immediate plans. With outside forces reduced to a minimum, Nobunaga began a four-year-long siege of the Ishiyama Honganji.

The battles of Kizugawaguchi had helped to isolate the Ishiyama Honganji, and it soon



became clear to the defenders that there were no other Ikkō sympathisers left to come and join them, so the fanatics of the Ishiyama Honganji prepared to face Nobunaga's final assault. The garrison were under the spirited command of a certain Shimotsuma Nakayuki, who was a priest of the Ikkō-ikki as well as a samurai general. It had now become clear that their support was coming only from within their own sectarian ranks. The Mōri clan were unwilling to engage in a full-scale struggle with their rival, so the Ishiyama Honganji became progressively weakened. The final straw for the Mōri was the loss of their strategic castle of Miki in 1580, thus

depriving them of a convenient base for supporting the Ishiyama Honganji.

Shimotsuma directed his operations as Nobunaga's armies whittled at the outer lines of his defences. Every day the attacks continued, using up the fortress's precious ammunition supply. Very soon Shimotsuma's food supplies also began to dry up, and Mōri and his fleet could not move from port to aid them. A confluence was held between the abbot Kōsa and his colleagues, and the fortress surrendered a few weeks later. The actual surrender terms, which were bloodless, were accepted by Kōsa's son, and eleven years of bitter fighting eventually came to an end in August 1580.

**The siege of Kozuki, 1578**

Toyotomi Hideyoshi captured Kozuki castle in Harima province in 1577, and entrusted it to Amako Katsuhisa. In 1578 it was attacked by the Amako's old rivals the Mōri, under Mōri Terumoto, by an army led by Kobayakawa Takakage and Kikkawa Motoharu. When the castle fell, Amako Katsuhisa committed *hara-kiri*. The hero Yamanaka Shikanosuke Yukimori was captured and executed.

**The siege of Ōtate, 1578**

Following the sudden death of Uesugi Kenshin, his adopted son Uesugi Kagetora, who was the seventh son of Hōjō Ujijyasu, and his nephew Uesugi Kagekatsu came to blows over their rights to Kenshin's inheritance, which Kenshin had decided to divide between the two of them. Kagekatsu occupied Kasugayama castle, while Kagetora was based on Ōtate castle. On 17 March 1578 Kagekatsu besieged Kagetora. The fall of the castle effectively ended Kagetora's claim, and the following year he committed suicide.

**The battle of Mimigawa, 1578**

This victory by the Shimazu, described elsewhere as a case study, effectively stifled the ambitions of the Ōtomo family.

**The siege of Miki, 1578-80**

Miki was an important fortress of the Mōri family. It was besieged and taken by Toyotomi Hideyoshi from Bessho Nagaharu.

**The second siege of Itami, 1579**

Itami had been held on Nobunaga's behalf by Araki Murashige since its capture in 1574. Being accused of sympathies towards the Mōri, Murashige shut himself up in his castle and withstood a siege of one year, during which Hideyoshi filled in Itami's moat. Murashige escaped to live a life of obscurity.

**The battle of Mimaomote, 1579**

In 1579 Chōsokabe Motochika's retainer Kumu Yorinobu led 7000 men into Iyo province on Shikoku island and attacked Doi Kiyonaga. Doi crossed the Mimaomote river to meet him in a fierce battle on 21 May 1579. Yorinobu was defeated and killed.

**The siege of Yagami (Yakami), 1579**

Charged with the pacification of Tamba province, Akechi Mitsuhide laid siege to Yagami castle in 1578. In early 1579, to increase the pressure on the garrison, Mitsuhide took hostage the mother of the castellan, Hatano Hideharu. Hideharu surrendered, and was taken to Oda Nobunaga, who had him put to death. The surviving vassals of the Hatano took their revenge on this treachery by capturing Mitsuhide's mother in turn and executing her.

**The siege of Maruyama, 1579**

Maruyama was a castle in Iga province, which Oda Nobunaga ordered to be renovated as part of his ongoing plan to conquer the province. The work was undertaken by Takigawa Kazumasu, but the castle was attacked by men of Iga before it was completed. Oda Nobuo invaded Iga in hasty revenge, but was driven off in disgrace.

**The battle of Omosu, 1580**

Omosu provides one of the few examples of a sea battle in samurai history. It was fought off the coast of the Izu peninsula between the navies of Hōjō Ujimasa and Takeda Katsuyori, while the land armies of both families advanced towards each other.

**The battle of Kanazawa Gobo, 1580**

In 1580 the army of Shibata Katsuiie, which included the general Sakuma Morimasa, advanced into Kaga province and fought the Kaga Ikkō-ikki at Kanazawa Gobo.

**The siege of Hijiyama, 1581**

Hijiyama, which lay on the site of present-day Iga-Ueno, was the pivot of the defence of Iga province during Oda Nobunaga's invasion of 1581. It was desperately defended until being burned to the ground. For more details see the separate essay.

**The battle of Arakawa, 1581**

The territories of Oda Nobunaga and Uesugi Kagekatsu met in Etchū province. On Kagekatsu's front line was Matsukura castle under Kawada Nagayori, while on Nobunaga's front line lay Toyama castle, held by Sasa Narimasa. In March

1581 Nagayori led an army of 2500 men into battle at Arakawa against Sasa Narimasa's 3000. Sasa Narimasa was victorious, and received Etchū as his fief.

#### The second siege of Takatenjin, 1581

Oda Nobunaga's long campaign to defeat Takeda Katsuyori was greatly helped by the fall of the Takeda outpost of Takatenjin in 1581, which was under the command of Okabe Naganori. The siege began in 1580 and lasted until 22 March 1581, when it finished with the deaths of 680 men.

#### The siege of Tottori, 1581

The siege of Tottori castle is an example of the successful completion of a siege by starvation. Tottori was defended against Toyotomi Hideyoshi by Kikkawa Tsuneie for 200 days, until he committed suicide to save his men, who were almost reduced to cannibalism.

#### The battle of Temmokuzan, 1582

Temmokuzan, otherwise known as the battle of Toriibata, was the last stand of Takeda Katsuyori as the combined forces of Oda Nobunaga and Tokugawa Ieyasu closed in on him. Takeda Katsuyori had burned his castle of Shinpujō and fled to the mountains, only to find the gates of Iwadono, held by his old retainer Oyamada Nobushige, closed in his face. While a handful of retainers held off the enemy, Takeda Katsuyori committed suicide.

*The tragic end to the 200-day siege of Tottori castle is shown here in this detail from the Ehon Toyotomi Kunkōki. Kikkawa Tsuneie's men are reduced to eating horseflesh and are contemplating cannibalism.*



#### The siege of Takatō, 1582

After the death of Takeda Katsuyori, Nishina Morinobu, the late Shingen's fifth son, fortified himself in the castle of Takatō. Oda Nobutada sent a priest to him to mediate, but Nishina cut off the unfortunate man's nose and ears and sent him back. When the attack was launched, Nishina was killed.

#### The siege of Uzu, 1582

The siege of Uzu arose from the conflict between Oda Nobunaga and Uesugi Kagekatsu mentioned above in connection with the battle of Arakawa (1581). The Oda possessions were under threat from the Etchū Ikkō-ikki. Using Toyama castle as a base, Shibata Katsuei and Sasa Narimasa advanced towards the north and, splitting their forces, laid siege to Matsukura castle and to Uzu. Uzu fell on 3 June 1582, just three days before the murder of Oda Nobunaga at the Honnōji.

#### The siege of the Honnōji, 1582

Although brief, Akechi Mitsuhide's night attack on the Honnōji temple in Kyōto was a decisive action in Japanese history, for it succeeded in bringing about the death of Oda Nobunaga. Nobunaga was accompanied only by his personal bodyguard, and committed suicide as the temple blazed around him.

#### The siege of Takamatsu, 1582

Takamatsu in Bitchū province was one of the key fortresses owned by the Mōri. Toyotomi Hideyoshi

### THE SIEGE OF HIJIYAMA, 1581

The siege of Hijiya in 1581 provides an excellent eye-witness account of an attack on a castle, followed by a counter-attack, and the final destruction of the fortress by fire. It is from the *Iran-ki*. Gamō Ujisato began the attack by burning the villages which are now the outlying suburbs of Ueno. Tsutsui Junkei, who had entered from the west, turned north and joined him to lay siege. As in many other castle attacks, the main gate was a focus for assault:

"The main gate of Hijiya, which lay on the middle road of the slope, had been repaired, and the beautiful railings polished ... there were two Kongorikishi (statues of heavenly guardians) on either side of the gate ... at this great gate the generals waited. The forces came from all the villages... Some defended the fort, others prepared an ambush half-way up the slope. One thousand men had gathered. At the Hour of the Snake on the 27th day of the 9th month, both sides gave their war-cry. On the enemy side, Gamō, Tsutsui, Wakizaka and Yamaoka were the generals. All the soldiers came in the pitch darkness, then suddenly pushed forward and climbed up. The samurai of the fortress skillfully obstructed them, regardless of death. They attacked up towards the castle, and the castle soldiers met them in defence. Then the troops in ambush attacked suddenly from half-way up the slope, as the strong army continued to push up the slope. The troops in ambush pushed into them and ran round killing... They shot and thrust, and threw great rocks and large trees

from the edge of the ditch. They attacked them with guns fired from loopholes from a distance. The enemy who managed to approach were greatly disconcerted, and many were exhausted. The majority were wounded, and many were lying on the ground. Under these circumstances the enemy who came up the mountain, were chased away and fell. The great army virtually collapsed. Those from within the castle ran around killing, and Gamō and Tsutsui, riding swift horses, hurried up the mountain, lest the rebellious fellows slaughtered everyone under their command. The soldiers were fighting on all the mountain paths, and the castle soldiers formed up in a line. More and more they were increasing their strength from up on the mountain, waiting for the enemy to advance to them, so they blew the conch and beat the big drum, while both sides gave their war-cry."

Following this tremendous effort, which drove back both besieging armies, the garrison held a council of war, at which it was decided to target the enemy general:

"Let us risk a night attack on Nagaokayama and take Junkei's head, which will be amazing to the eyes of the enemy and will add to the glory of the province. If we destroy the vanguard the remnants of the enemy must be defeated in battle..'. Eleven generals heard this, and expressed feelings of joy at the extent of this ingenuity. They discussed the division of labour, and decided on the number of men for the night attack and the order for front and rear. The army was divided into three directions of attack. On the First day of the Tenth month, at the Hour of the Rat, at a

laid siege to it, and diverted a river by dikes to flood the castle. It was during the siege that Hideyoshi learned of the death of Oda Nobunaga, so surrender terms were quickly arranged with the Mōri, and included the suicide of the castle commander, Shimizu Muneharu, who committed suicide in a boat on the artificial lake, in full view of both sides.

#### The battle of Yamazaki, 1582

With the battle of Yamazaki, Toyotomi Hideyoshi avenged Nobunaga and crushed the aspirations of

Akechi Mitsuhide. See the separate entry as a case study

#### The battle of Uchide-hama, 1582

Following their defeat at Yamazaki, the retreating Akechi army were pursued to Uchide-hama.

#### The battle of Kanagawa, 1582

When Oda Nobunaga was murdered, the Hōjō family took advantage of the situation and launched an attack on Nobunaga's follower Takigawa Kazumasu, who had received territories

signal, several pine torches were lit, and they ran forward with the wilfulness of snakes. They advanced from three directions, and their war-cry shook the heavens as they cut their way in. The Tsutsui army realised it was a night attack as arrows came from all directions, from up and down. They raised an uproar like a kettle coming to the boil, and as might be expected, in the army many otherwise experienced and brave soldiers had no time to put their armour on and tie it round their waists. They grabbed swords and spears, went down in haste and stood there to fight desperately, combating incessantly. For everyone it was like the month when the gods are away at Izumo shrine. They could not decide whether to surrender or not and they shed the occasional tear. Then the floating clouds suddenly lifted, and an intense mountain wind quickly extinguished many of the pine torches, so ally and enemy alike went astray on the dark paths. They could not distinguish between friend and foe in directing their arrows, so the samurai of the province made their way by using passwords, while the enemy furiously killed each other by mistake under these confusing circumstances. "

But samurai heroism could not keep the enemy at bay for long. Food was running low. The narrator of the *Iran-ki* describes how Nobuo's soldiers surrounded the mountain, and 30,000 troops raised their war-cry as they prepared for the final assault on Hijiyama.

"I myself thought of flight. As for the great army of the enemy, I knew it as if in a dream, the generals of the Tsuge route, Niwa and Takigawa were waiting for each other, and many tens of

thousands of soldiers were gathered to front and rear and to right and left... On top of the mountain there was silence. They did not give a war-cry. More and more their colour faded. The tide of war was moving to the enemy samurai. They took great rocks and large trees carefully, and prepared for an attack. They defended with every man... They patrolled every temple hall... Each man who remained had the appearance of a wooden Buddha."

But the final attack on Hijiyama was not to be decided by spear, gun and sword alone. The weather was dry, and a strong wind blowing across the completely surrounded mountain made conditions ideal for the most deadly weapon in the samurai's armoury:

"They set fire to all the temples over a wide area. This time there was no rain to be blown by the wind. The flames blazed and spread as a sign to the whole world. Some fires were extinguished, but it was many months before the black ashes died away. After this the Tsutsui army set fire to the precincts of the Hachiman shrine. It reached many ceremony halls, two-storeyed gates, offering halls, and additional shrines, torii, treasure houses and kagura places that had amassed honour over the years, every hall which had been polished ... thousands of eaves, shrine halls and temples, places of prayer, Shintō priests and people, all of a sudden were swept away in a cloud of fire ... although it was a very dark night it seemed to be daylight, as though night and day had exchanged places before the dawn" (Momochi 1897 (6): 7).

Thus fell the castle of Hijiyama.

nearby following the defeat of Takeda Katsuyori. They fought a battle at Kanagawa, on the border between Kōzuke and Musashi provinces. Takigawa commanded 18,000 men, while the Hōjō had 55,000. Takigawa was defeated and retired to Nagashima.

#### **The battle of Nakatomigawa, 1582**

This battle was fought on Shikoku island between Chōsokabe Motochika and Sogo Masayasu. Chōsokabe commanded 23,000 men against his rival's 5000. On 27 August 1582 they met across

the banks of the Nakatomigawa. At noon on the following day, the Chōsokabe launched 20,000 of their troops into the river, who engaged the Sogo in fierce hand-to-hand fighting. The Sogo were driven back, losing 800 dead, while the Chōsokabe suffered casualties of about 600 men.

#### **The battle of Hikita, 1583**

The battle of Hikita was fought between Sengoku Hidehisa and Chōsokabe Motochika, who defeated him. Hikita was a further stage in the Chōsokabe's rise to command all of Shikoku island.

### The battle of Shizugatake, 1583

Oda Nobunaga's former general Shibata Katsuei was one of the main opponents to a takeover of Nobunaga's territories by Toyotomi Hideyoshi following Nobunaga's murder. To guard against Shibata Katsuei's advance, Hideyoshi constructed a series of forts on the mountain peaks at Lake Biwa's northern tip. The farthest north of the chain was Iwasaki-yama, and next to it was Ōiwa, while a few kilometres south was Tagami. On one of the highest peaks Shizugatake was held for Toyotomi Hideyoshi by his general Nakagawa Kiyohide. Shibata Katsuei had sent his nephew Sakuma Morimasa on into Ōmi to capture these frontier forts. Iwasaki-yama fell, and its commander withdrew to Tagami. Sakuma then besieged Shizugatake, which held out in spite of the death of its commander Nakagawa Kiyohide. Hideyoshi acted quickly, and set off from Ōgaki with as large a mounted force as he could muster, to cross the 80 km to Shizugatake.

Morimasa knew that Hideyoshi had made camp at Ōgaki in order to take Gifu, and calculated, not unreasonably, that it would take at least three days to move his 20,000 men to Shizugatake, by which time the castle would have fallen. As a result he chose to disobey Shibata's orders to withdraw to Ōiwa. But Hideyoshi's army arrived in less than one day. His army linked up with the defenders of Tagami, while Sakuma Morimasa hurriedly changed his plans, and ordered his men to abandon their siege lines and take up a defensive position against Hideyoshi's attack.

Leading Hideyoshi's vanguard was Katō Kiyomasa, eager to take part in his first major encounter. He confronted one of Sakuma's most experienced generals. Another who distinguished himself at Shizugatake was Fukushima Masanori. Masanori attacked a prominent samurai called Haigo Gozaemon and ran him through with his spear, the spear point entering Haigo's armpit and penetrating through to his stomach. Five more samurai earned great honour for themselves at the battle of Shizugatake, and together with Katō Kiyomasa and Fukushima Masanori became known as the *shichi hon-yari*, or the 'Seven Spears' of Shizugatake. The others were Katō Yoshiaki, Wakizaka Yasuharu, Hirano Nagayasu, Katagiri Katsumoto and Kasuya Takenori. One other young



*Toyotomi Hideyoshi blows the conch shell to start the battle of Shizugatake in 1583. In the foreground stands the young Fukushima Masanori, who was to make a name for himself as one of the 'Seven Spears' of Shizugatake. Katō Yoshiaki, another of the seven, is at the right rear.*

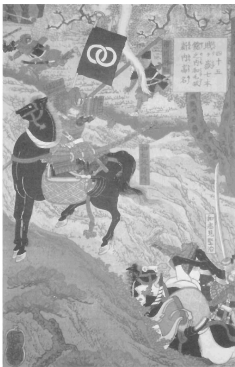
warrior, Ishikawa Heisuke, earned equal fame with the others, but was killed in action.

There followed a bloody pursuit, Sakuma's troops throwing weapons and armour to one side as they ran through the dense forests. They flooded back into Echizen, and it was an astonished and dismayed Shibata Katsuei that saw the forerunners of the defeated army stagger up to the gates of Kita no shō (Fukui) castle. Katsuei then committed *hara-kiri*.

### The battle of Okita Nawate, 1584

Okita Nawate was fought near to Shimabara castle on the Shimabara peninsula of Kyūshū island, and





*Wakizaka Yasuharu, with the conjoined circle mon, is shown here in action during the battle of Shizugatake, 1583. He became one of the 'Seven Spears'.*

is also referred to as the battle of Shimabara. The Shimazu, supported by the Arima, had entrenched themselves on high ground near Shimabara, where they met a fierce attack from Ryūzōji Takanobu. The Ryūzōji samurai attacked in three columns: by the road, over the hills and along the beach. The Arima harassed them by firing on them from large-calibre arquebuses mounted on boats. The Shimazu set in motion their set-piece of a false retreat, and when the Ryūzōji followed them a flying column of Shimazu samurai succeeded in taking the head of Ryūzōji Takanobu. By this tactic the Shimazu were victorious in spite of an imbalance of numbers of 3000 to 30,000.

### The battle of Komaki, 1584

The campaign which took in the battles of Komaki and Nagakute pitted Toyotomi Hideyoshi against Tokugawa Ieyasu in what was potentially the greatest trial of strength in samurai history. Following the capture of Inuyama castle by Ikeda Nobuteru, the ally of Toyotomi Hideyoshi, Mori Nagayoshi advanced from Inuyama to threaten Kiyosu. Tokugawa Ieyasu sent an army under Sakai Tadatsugu to intercept him. They met in battle at Komaki. The Tokugawa attack was held in spite of fierce arquebus fire, but Sakai Tadatsugu took Mori in the rear. Mori retreated with 300 casualties.

### The battle of Nagakute, 1584

The experience of Komaki encouraged Tokugawa Ieyasu to fortify Komakiyama, thus creating a series of forts and field defences which Hideyoshi copied. The result was stalemate, so Ikeda Nobuteru suggested a raid on Mikawa province. His army of 20,000 set off on a night march. The first prize to fall was the castle of Iwasaka, but Tokugawa Ieyasu had anticipated the strategy, and had led an army from his own lines to follow Hideyoshi's force, and at dawn Ieyasu's vanguard under Mizuno Tadashige attacked the rearguard. The noise of the fighting carried to the third division of Hideyoshi's army under Hori Hidemasa, who wheeled his troops round to help their comrades and took up position near the village of Nagakute. Here they held back an initial attack by the Tokugawa vanguard, but then prudently withdrew as the main body of the Tokugawa arrived. The Tokugawa army numbered 9000 in all. The battle of Nagakute then began with the exchange of arquebus fire. Ikeda attacked the li troops in Ieyasu's army, while Mori Nagayoshi waited for Ieyasu to move his division across to support them, thus exposing his flank to an attack. Instead the Tokugawa centre advanced forwards, and Mori Nagayoshi was shot off his horse. This reduced the morale of the Ikeda force, which collapsed shortly afterwards when a young samurai called Nagai Naokatsu took the head of Hideyoshi's commander, Ikeda Nobuteru. Hideyoshi had by now set off with reinforcements, but neither side was willing to risk any more in battle, and both armies withdrew to their positions.

**The siege of Kaganoi, 1584**

Oda Nobuo was the most prominent member of the Oda family to continue to oppose Hideyoshi. In a move against him, Toyotomi Hideyoshi attacked Kaganoi on the Kisogawa, and captured it following a heavy bombardment.

**The siege of Takehana, 1584**

Shortly after taking Kaganoi, Hideyoshi employed his former ruse of flooding to capture Takehana castle. The castle was inundated in less than a month after the waters of the Kisogawa were diverted by a dam.

**The siege of Kanie, 1584**

In a further move against Oda Nobuo, Toyotomi Hideyoshi threatened Kanie castle in Owari province, located between Kiyosu and Nagashima. It was held for the Oda by Maeda Tanetoshi, who happened to be the cousin of Takigawa Kazumasu, whom Hideyoshi had pardoned for his part in supporting Shibata Katsuei. Kazumasu successfully persuaded Maeda to change sides. With Kanie as a base, the new allies raided the nearby Ono castle, which was defended successfully by its keeper who had blazing torches flung into the attacking boats. Kanie was then attacked by forces under Sakakibara and Oda on behalf of the Tokugawa/Oda alliance. The attackers broke through the outer defences, and negotiated a surrender on condition that they were given the head of the traitor Maeda Tanetoshi. Tanetoshi tried to escape, but his cousin Takigawa Kazumasu was too quick for him, and supplied the required trophy by his own hand.

**The siege of Suemori, 1584**

At the time of the Komaki and Nagakute campaigns, Sasa Narimasa sided against Toyotomi Hideyoshi, while his former companion-in-arms, Maeda Toshiie, supported the Toyotomi faction. They came to blows at the siege of Suemori castle in Noto province. On 9 October 1584 Sasa Narimasa laid siege to Suemori castle with 15,000 men. It was held for Maeda Toshiie by Okamura Sukie'mon, who was ably assisted by his wife. The garrison were in desperate straits until Maeda Toshiie arrived in the middle of the night with a relieving force, and defeated Sasa Narimasa. By

this action Maeda Toshiie was established as the most powerful daimyō in this part of Japan.

**The siege of Toyama, 1585**

In August 1585 Toyotomi Hideyoshi led an army possibly 100,000 strong against Sasa Narimasa and besieged him in castle of Toyama. Maeda Toshiie took a prominent part in the attack. With Sasa's defeat the Toyotomi faction gained supremacy in Etchū province.

**The siege of Ōta castle, 1585**

Ōta castle, held by the Saiga Ikkō-ikki, was overcome by Toyotomi Hideyoshi by flooding. See the account as a separate case study.

**The invasion of Shikoku and the siege of Ichinomiya, 1585**

In 1585 Toyotomi Hideyoshi invaded Shikoku in a brief but very successful campaign. Ichinomiya was the final battle whereby Hideyoshi gained control of Shikoku from the Chōsokabe family. The invasion of Shikoku was carried out by three divisions:

1. Hashiba Hidenaga and Hashiba Hidetsugu, with 30,000 men each, who crossed via the island of Akashi and assaulted Awa and Tosa provinces.
2. Ukita Hideie, with 23,000 men, who attacked Sanuki province.
3. Mōri Terumoto, Kobayakawa Takakage and Kikkawa Motonaga, with 30,000 men, who advanced against Iyo province.

The armies were transported in 600 large ships and 103 smaller ones. Chōsokabe Motochika was for fighting against this overwhelming show of force, even though his closest confidants advised against it. When Hideyoshi's army laid siege to Ichinomiya castle, Chōsokabe made a half-hearted attempt to relieve it, but surrendered after a 26-day siege. Chōsokabe was allowed to keep Tosa province, while the rest of the island was divided among Hideyoshi's generals.

**The battle of Hitotoribashi, 1585**

Hitotoribashi was an important battle in the north of Japan. Date Masamune's father Terumune had been murdered by Hatakeyama Yoshitsugu, the keeper of Nihonmatsu castle. On succeeding to his inheritance, Date Masamune swore vengeance on

Hatakeyama, and engaged him in battle at Hitoribashi in October 1585. In spite of a huge imbalance in numbers (Date had 7000 men against the Hatakeyama and allies of 30,000), Masamune won a decisive victory.

#### The siege of Iwaya, 1586

In 1586 the Shimazu army moved north through Kyūshū. They advanced in three columns: 15,000 under the daimyō Shimazu Yoshihisa, and by a separate route a vanguard of 1300 under Shimazu Iehisa leading a main body of 67,000 under Shimazu Yoshihiro. Iwaya castle in Bungo province was defended by Takahashi Jōun against Yoshihisa's division. He fought bravely but killed himself as the castle fell.

#### The siege of Tachibana, 1586

The Shimazu army moved from Iwaya to besiege Tachibana, but when news reached them of Hideyoshi's planned intervention, they pulled back to Higo province while the other divisions fought in Bungo.

#### The siege of Toshimitsu, 1586

In Bungo province the Shimazu general Niiro Tadamoto besieged Toshimitsu castle and fought off a relieving force, then laid siege to the Ōtomo capital of Funai. This act of aggression by the Shimazu was the pretext Toyotomi Hideyoshi needed to take direct action on Kyūshū island. The Ōtomo were joined by reinforcements from Shikoku island under Chōsokabe Motochika, and an army under Sengoku Hidehisa. Their orders

were to act defensively, until further troops from Hideyoshi himself and the Mōri clan were able to join them in Kyūshū. By now half the invading Shimazu army had pulled back to safeguard their extended lines of communication from Satsuma province. Perhaps because of this reduction in enemy numbers (now reckoned at 15,000), the Ōtomo and their new allies (7000 in all) decided to disobey orders and try again to relieve Toshimitsu. The Shimazu besieging army noted their approach, and redoubled their efforts to take Toshimitsu, which subsequently fell to a rapid and ferocious attack.

#### The battle of Hetsugigawa, 1586

Following the fall of Toshimitsu, Chōsokabe Motochika proposed a retreat, but his companions insisted on doing battle. They were arranged in two main bodies, Sengoku and Ōtomo on the left, Chōsokabe on the right. The Shimazu set up a decoy force led by Ijūin Hisanori, who led an attack across the river, and then withdrew, which persuaded the allied left wing, whose vanguard was led by a certain Soko Nagayasu, to follow them. They were met by arquebus and arrow fire, and the main body of the Shimazu, under Niiro Tadamoto, Shimazu Yoshihiro and Shimazu Iehisa, then fell upon them. After fierce fighting, the Ōtomo/Sengoku force collapsed back across the river on to its right wing. Chōsokabe Motochika was obliged to signal a retreat, during which his son and heir Nobuchika was killed. Following the battle, Ōtomo fled from Bungo, and the province fell to the Shimazu.

### HAIDATE AND HARA-KIRI

Two extracts from *Meiryō Kōhan* make very different points about the wearing of haidate (thigh guards):

"It is fine to wear haidate when crossing rivers, but detrimental when advancing on mountains and forests."

There was also a very different occasion when haidate might be troublesome, but a samurai general was expected not to be concerned about such niceties:

"At the time of the siege of Ōsaka, concerning the armour of the innumerable corpses from seppuku the haidate had been taken off. After the fall of the castle some were captured alive within the castle, and explained that at the time of Sanada Daisuke's suicide, unlike those who took off their haidate he did not even untie his, as was the way of hara-kiri for a general. Sanada's (other) son also proceeded with suicide while wearing haidate." (Sasama 1968: 338).



*Opposite page: Date Masamune, one of the greatest of the daimyō, dominated northern Japan. He is shown here as an equestrian statue in Sendai, his capital. His helmet has a huge crescent moon maedate (crest) and he wears the sendai dō style of solid plate body armour with which he equipped all his troops.*

### The battle of Takajō (Takashiro), 1587

Hashiba Hidenaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi's half-brother, landed in Kyūshū to oppose the Shimazu, who had by now taken the old Ōtomo capital of Funai. His total command was 90,000 men. The Shimazu withdrew beyond Takajō castle in Hyūga province, which Hidenaga proceeded to besiege. Shimazu lehisu thereupon broke off their withdrawal, and began to march back to relieve Takajō. Hidenaga faced them with part of his army (probably about 15,000), from behind a rough stockade. The Shimazu attacked with 20,000. Three thousand were ordered to demolish the

barricades, and then to act as the decoy force. This they did successfully, and their withdrawal allowed a gap for the Shimazu cavalry. However, the Shimazu were then themselves fooled by a ruse on the part of the invading army, who had sent a small detachment of 1500 towards the Shimazu rear. This detachment rigged up a dummy army that appeared to cut off the retreat to Satsuma. They also attacked the Shimazu from the rear, giving the impression that there were far more of them than was actually the case. Under simultaneous pressure from the front, the Shimazu began a fighting withdrawal, covered by



the sharp blades of Ijūin, Shirakawa and Hirata, whose self-sacrificing role enabled the army to escape back to Satsuma.

#### **The siege of Ganjaku, 1587**

While his half-brother battled his way down the eastern side of Kyūshū, Toyotomi Hideyoshi followed a more westerly route. Ganjaku castle was held by a retainer of Akizuki Tanezane. Hideyoshi decided to leave a small force to reduce the castle while the rest of the army moved on, but none of his generals was willing to stay behind, so had to draw lots. Gamō Ujisato was the loser, and

decided to settle the matter quickly by a fierce and successful assault. The attack is noteworthy because Hideyoshi sat on a nearby hill where he rewarded the samurai who brought heads to him by giving them gold coins from a chest.

#### **The siege of Akizuki (Oguma), 1587**

Hideyoshi's next objective was Akizuki Tanezane's Oguma castle in Buzen province, but when it was besieged by Hideyoshi, Akizuki secretly evacuated the castle by night. Legend tells us that when Hideyoshi entered the castle to take possession he had white paper stuck on the walls to give the

impression to Akizuki that he had the resources to have an entire castle replastered in one night. Akizuki was informed of this by watchers from a nearby castle and immediately surrendered.

### The battle of Sendaigawa (Chidorigawa), 1587

Hideyoshi and Hidenaga then joined forces. The Sendaigawa (Chidorigawa) formed a natural moat to the north of Kagoshima, and here Nitro Tadamoto made a stand against the advancing troops of Toyotomi Hideyoshi. He commanded an army of 5000, who faced the 170,000 of Hideyoshi's combined army of invasion. Nothing daunted, Niito Tadamoto led his men in a wild charge against the overwhelming numbers of the Toyotomi force, and even engaged Katō Kiyomasa in single combat. As darkness fell, the remnants of the Satsuma army withdrew back to Kagoshima.

### The siege of Kagoshima, 1587

After the defeat at Sendaigawa, the Shimazu pulled back to Kagoshima. The Toyotomi army surrounded the Shimazu capital and made an amphibious landing with 60,000 troops from Akune. Meanwhile Hashiba Hidenaga advanced by the main road as columns under Katō Kiyomasa, Fukushima Masanori and Kuroda Yoshitaka made their way through the volcanic gulleys that provided Kagoshima's natural line of defence, guided by local monks. There was no final attack on Kagoshima because the outcome was settled by negotiation.

### The battle of Nakaniida, 1588

At the battle of Nakaniida, to the south of Iwate castle, Date Masamune defeated an army of the Ozaki family.



### The battle of Kubota, 1588

Date Masamune defeated an allied army which had laid siege to his castle of Kubota when he went to the aid of the garrison.

### The siege of Kurokawa, 1589

Long rivalry existed between the Date and Ashina families. When Ashina Moritaka was assassinated, Ashina Morishige, the son of Satake Yoshishige, was chosen to inherit, but many of the Ashina vassals passed over into the service of the Date. Sensing the moment, Date Masamune invaded the Ashina territories and captured the castle of Kurokawa.

**The battle of Suriagehara, 1589**

The battle of Suriagehara was fought in the aftermath of Kurokawa between Date Masamune with 23,000 men and Ashina Yoshihiro with 16,000. The Date were victorious.

**The siege of Hachigata, 1590**

The major operation of 1590 was Toyotomi Hideyoshi's siege of the Hōjō capital of Odawara. As a 'curtain-raiser' to the siege of Odawara, Maeda Toshiie and Uesugi Kagekatsu laid siege to Hachigata castle with 35,000 men. The garrison under Hōjō Ujikuni held out for one month.

**The third siege of Odawara, 1590**

The third and final siege of Odawara happened in 1590. The Hōjō had been strengthening Odawara's defences since 1582, but 1590 saw a flurry of activity as Hideyoshi's intentions became clear, the daimyō requiring ten days of labour from five villages in a nearby area, and stating that one day of work missed would be punished by requiring five extra days' work. Hoes and scythes were brought for work on the moats. When Hideyoshi turned his attentions against the Hōjō, the liveliness and gaiety of the besieging camp, which grew to the size of a small city, provided subtle psychological warfare as it contrasted their relaxed state with the desperation of the garrison within. Concubines, merchants, prostitutes, musicians, dancers, acrobats, jugglers, wrestlers, tightrope walkers and fire-eaters were among the noisy and often visible presence in the most unconventional siege lines in samurai history. 'We have surrounded Odawara with two or three rings,' wrote Hideyoshi to his wife, 'and have constructed a pair of moats and walls, and we do not intend to let a single enemy out.' During the long siege 50,000 men occupied Odawara, while over 200,000 troops surrounded them. The roads and walkways connecting the duty stations were crowded by the defending garrison. Soldiers slept with their armour as pillows, and stood so close together on the parapets with their arquebuses that attack was visibly discouraged. On the whole, the campaign was one of a total blockade, with patient siege-work, but there were several minor skirmishes around the castle. On one occasion, miners from Kai province tunnelled under one of Odawara's

walls. A sudden storm brought the wall down, causing a breach sufficient to allow entry by the troops of Ii Naomasa. After three months the castle fell, surrendered by the Hōjō daimyō who realised that they could not hold out against such enormous odds.

**The siege of Shimoda, 1590**

The siege of Shimoda provides the unusual example of a siege being conducted largely by a navy. Shimoda was a coastal fort owned by the Hōjō, and during the siege of Odawara it was besieged by Hideyoshi's fleet under Chōsokabe Motochika, Katō Yoshiaki, Kuki Yoshitaka and Ankokuji Ekei, who commanded 14,000 men. Shimoda was defended by only 600 men, but held out for four months before capitulating.

**The siege of Oshi, 1590**

Oshi was a Hōjō castle in Musashi Province. In 1590 Ishida Mitsunari completed the triumph of his master Toyotomi Hideyoshi by capturing Oshi. He used the technique that had succeeded so well for Hideyoshi, that of diverting a river to flood the castle area.

**The siege of Kunoe, 1591**

Kunoe castle, defended by 5,000 men under Kunoe Masazane, represented the last resistance against the unification of Japan under Toyotomi Hideyoshi. Kunoe fell to an attack by Gamō Ujisato.

**The invasions of Korea, 1592-8**

The land battles of the Korean invasion are described here. For the sea battles see the separate case study.

**The siege of Pusan, 1592**

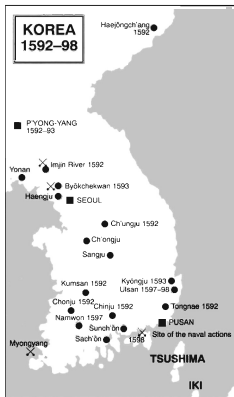
The taking of Pusan, the most important port on the southern coast of Korea, was the engagement by which the first invasion of Korea began. The attack was carried out on 13 April 1592. The first group to land were the advance party under Sō Yoshitomo. Sō was the daimyō of Tsuchima, the island of Japan that is closest to Korea, and was personally acquainted with the local area. In command of the garrison was a certain Chong Bal. Refusing to surrender, he ordered his men to fight

to the death, but was shot dead during the assault. Korean casualties numbered 8000, with 200 being taken prisoner.

While Sō Yoshitomo attacked the main fortress of Pusan, Konishi Yukinaga launched a simultaneous assault on a naval fort near the harbour, which was defended by 6000 Koreans. The governor stated that he would only take orders to surrender from the king of Korea. Yukinaga pretended to withdraw while the required orders were obtained, but instead launched a surprise attack at 4.00 a.m. the following morning. The moat was quickly filled in with rocks and earth, and the Japanese climbed over the walls. The fort surrendered after two hours.

### The siege of Tongnae, 1592

Tongnae was a fortress situated in a strong position on a hill a little to the north of Pusan. It was defended by Sōng Sang-hyōn with 20,000 men, many of whom were ill-equipped and poorly trained. Nevertheless Sōng refused to surrender and held out for twelve hours. During the course of the action the Japanese erected a message board which read, 'Fight if you want to, or let us pass', to which the brave young commander replied with the words, 'It is easy for me to die but impossible to let you pass.' On 15 April Konishi Yukinaga personally led the assault which took Tongnae, and attempts were made to capture the commander alive. Five thousand of the defenders were slaughtered.



*The heroism of Chong Bal, leader of the defence of Pusan against the Japanese landing in 1592. Chong Bal, in black armour, is shown on the right of this painting, reproduced by courtesy of the Ch'ungyōlsa Shrine in Pusan.*



### ACCOUNTS OF THE KOREAN INVASIONS

Contemporary accounts of the Korean invasions add greatly to our knowledge of warfare in these savage campaigns. First, a Korean account sums up the fiasco of the battle of Sangju:

"Before long, several figures appeared from the forest. They loitered about for a few minutes before they returned. The officers and men wondered if they might be a scouting party of the enemy. However, they did not dare say so because of their knowledge of the beheaded villager. Then they could observe smoke and fire arising from several points in the town. Suspicion aroused, Yi Il sent one of his officers to ascertain the truth. When the officer mounted his horse, two foot-soldiers took the bridle and went off very slowly. A Japanese soldier below a bridge then shot at the officer with a musket. When he fell off his horse, the soldier beheaded him and ran away. The friendly soldiers were all greatly shocked at the incident. All of a sudden the enemy approached in great numbers. They shot at the friendly soldiers with many muskets. All who were shot fell to the ground."

A Buddhist monk called Tenkei accompanied the Japanese army and wrote the following account of the battle of Ch'ungju which followed shortly after Sangju:

"26 April. Clear. We left Sangju at 6.00 a.m., passed Hamchang at 2.00 p.m. and reached Mungyong at 10.00 p.m. The castle at Mungyong had already been burned by its occupants.

"27 April. Clear. We left Mungyong at 6.00 a.m, passed Anpo at 10.00 a.m. and reached Ch'ungju at 2.00 p.m. A Korean general, who had come down from the capital, deployed his forces at Songsan. The loyal army (i.e. the Japanese) rushed on towards the enemy on horseback with their military flags. The enemy at Songsan was forced to retreat. The forces of Sō and Konishi made a hot pursuit of the retreating enemy, beheading more than 3000 and capturing several hundred. General Shin killed himself."

As the Japanese army moved up Korea, a Korean account relates how the city of Py'ong-yang was abandoned:

"Around dusk on 15 June, the citizens began to cross the Taedong river in multitude. The friendly troops defending the river did not dare to shoot arrows at them. Thereupon the refugees sped away. The enemy, who had already crossed the river, did not make any further advance, out of suspicion that there might be a trap within the walls. That night Yun Tu Su and Kim Myong won opened the gates of the castle in order to mobilise the citizens for the task of sinking the arms and guns into the pond near the Pungwollu pavilion. Yun Tu Su and his party escaped to Su-nan through the Botongnum Gate. No enemy pursued them. The following day the enemy reached the outskirts of the castle. When they climbed Muronbung Hill, the city was already deserted. Not a single man could be observed. Thereupon the enemy entered the castle. The warehouses in which more than 100,000 sok of grain had been stored also fell to the enemy."

#### The battle of Sangju, 1592

An attempt was made to stop the invading Japanese forces at Sangju on 24 April 1592. The Korean general Yi Il took charge of the operation, and recruited a makeshift army of 800-900 men from among the local peasantry, but when a villager came to inform the general that the Japanese army was very near, he had the man beheaded on the grounds that this report would lower morale. Believing he had plenty of time to arrange his troops, Yi Il deployed his army on a hill and took a forward position mounted on his horse.

When the Japanese attacked, general Yi Il ordered the Koreans to retaliate with arrows, but their shots fell short. Konishi Yukinaga then divided his force into two and began to encircle the Korean positions. Yi Il panicked, and turned his horse around to escape, at which all his army followed his example. Most were caught by the pursuing Japanese and beheaded.

#### The battle of Ch'ungju, 1592

Ch'ungju castle was the most important fortress on the road to Seoul. It lay to the north of the

narrow pass of Choryong, which was a potential death-trap for the invading Japanese army. Konishi Yukinaga was opposed by a Korean force of 16,000 men under the Korean general Shin Nip. The original plan of Shin Nip had indeed been to stop the Japanese at the pass, but his morale had been so shaken by the fall of Sangju that he withdrew to the north of Ch'ungju, thus abandoning a potentially excellent defensive position. Instead he drew up his forces at a place called T'angumdae (otherwise known as Songsan), with his back to two streams and flanked by rice paddies. Here he hoped the flatlands would give his cavalry the opportunity to sweep the Japanese away with their halberds and flails.

On 27 April 1592, Konishi Yukinaga covered Ch'ungju itself and advanced against the Korean army in three divisions with many flags flying so as to give the impression of a larger host. Matsuura Shigenobu led the right wing with 3000 men. Konishi Yukinaga moved forward in the centre with 7000 men, while Sō Yoshitomo took the left wing with 5000. The flank units kept to the easily defensible sides of the valley, from where they were able to fire their arquebuses down on to the Korean army. Three thousand seven hundred men under Arima, Ōmura and Gotō maintained a rearguard in front of Ch'ungju castle. General Shin Nip faced the attack personally, but when he found that he could not penetrate the Japanese line and was being slowly encircled, he turned his horse back, plunged into the stream and killed himself.

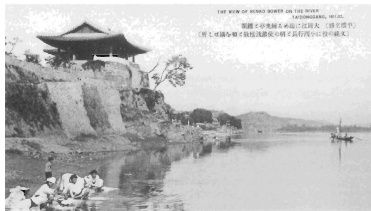
Many others did the same, and as the three Japanese units pressed forward, the rest of the Korean army ran away. Seeing their army defeated, the garrison of Ch'ungju surrendered, leaving Seoul open for occupation. Shortly afterwards Konishi Yukinaga entered the abandoned capital by the Eastern Gate, while Katō Kiyomasa entered by the Southern Gate.

#### The battle of the Imjin river, 1592

The Imjin river was a powerful natural barrier between Seoul and P'yong-yang. The Korean army made a stand on the north bank and covered the only crossing point with their archers. The Japanese army were forced to halt for ten days, then on 14 May put into operation a false retreat, at which many of the Korean army crossed the river in pursuit. The advancing Korean soldiers were surrounded and cut down in full view of their comrades on the northern bank. Seeing this, the Korean commander ordered a general retreat, and the Japanese crossed the undefended river.

#### The first siege of P'yong-yang, 1592

The Japanese took P'yong-yang in July 1592 when a night attack by the Korean army disclosed the location of the fords across the Taedong river. P'yong-yang thus became the most northerly of the string of fortified places which the Japanese held in Korea. Troops under Konishi Yukinaga, Kuroda Nagamasa and Sō Yoshitomo entered the deserted city on 16 June 1592.



*A very rare postcard from early this century showing the defensive walls of P'yong-yang above the Taedong River. It is referred to as 'Heijo', the name by which P'yong-yang was known under the Japanese occupation.*

### PROOF OF DUTY DONE

It is beyond question that the Japanese invasion of Korea was attended by much brutality and unnecessary cruelty to the population, but one of the most unsavoury aspects associated with the campaigns was to some extent a product of the logistical problems of campaigning overseas. The traditional Japanese method of proving duty done was to present the severed head of the enemy to one's general. In Korea the head was substituted by the nose. These grisly trophies were collected, preserved in salt, and forwarded to Hideyoshi's headquarters in Japan. Within the space of six weeks in 1597, Nabeshima Naoshige forwarded 5444 noses, while Kikkawa Hiroie's unit submitted 18,350 within one month. After the battle of Sach'ŏn Shimazu, Yoshihiro sent home no less than 33,700 noses, which were interred in a mound that is still a prominent landmark in Kyōto, although it is known incorrectly as the Mimizuka (ear mound).

An anecdote quoted by Takahashi from *Kazawa Hirazaemon Tōsho*, however, calls into question whether this practice was confined to Korea. If the reference is to Sanada Nobuyuki, then the battle, and the bizarre trophy-taking described, must have occurred on Japanese soil:

"Iba Mo'emom had just attained his seventeenth year but was not intimidated. He entered the north bailey, and while at the castle gate he slew all of fifty of the enemy. He opened the gate and went out and waited. Here he was attacked by seventeen of the enemy whom he cut down. Then he cut off their noses and wrapped them in an enemy flag, and announced this in the presence of Lord Nobuyuki." (Takahashi 1965: 290)

We must not, however, draw too hasty a comparison with modern ideals of war atrocities. A memorial to the Korean court presented by admiral Yi Sun-shin contains several references to identical practices being carried out under orders by the Koreans against the Japanese. For example:

"We burned 72 Japanese vessels and cut off 88 heads of the Japanese robbers, from which the left ears were ordered to be cut off, salted and packed in a box for shipment to the Court." (Lee 1981: 53)

#### The battle of Chonju, 1592

The battle of Chonju, fought on 10 July 1592, was one of the most important victories by the Koreans over the Japanese on land. The Korean Yi Kwang led an army which defeated Kobayakawa Takakage and drove his division back to Kumsan.

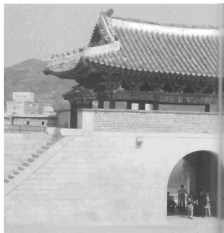
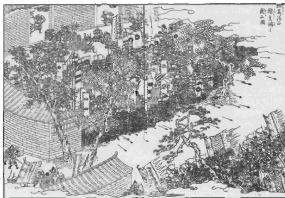
#### The battle of Haejŏngch'ang, 1592

The battle of Haejŏngch'ang on 19 July provided the most serious resistance to the advance of Katō Kiyomasa into the north-eastern part of Korea. Kiyomasa was accompanied by Nabeshima Naoshige and Sagara Nagatsune. Haejŏngch'ang was the location of a grain warehouse. The surrounding area, which was flat and allowed wide movement, was defended by Han Kuk-ham, who had assembled an army skilled at horsemanship and archery. Unfortunately for Han Kuk-ham, having forced the Japanese to retreat into the warehouse, he allowed his army to become an easy target for an entrenched enemy when he attacked the position in close formation. The Japanese used grain bags as barricades, and

fired arquebuses into the dense throng of Koreans. Han Kuk-ham was forced to withdraw to a nearby mountain, from which he planned to deliver a counter-attack the following morning. Instead it was the Japanese who attacked during the night. It was dark and foggy, and they encircled the Korean position as dawn broke. Katō Kiyomasa left a gap in his lines which led towards a swamp. Naturally enough, the encircled Koreans made for the gap, and were slaughtered in the swamp.

#### The first siege of Chinju, 1592

On 4 October 1592, an army of 20,000 men under the command of Hosokawa Tadaoki laid siege to Chinju castle. Inside the fortress were 3800 Korean soldiers and many civilian refugees. An assault on the walls began the following day, and continued into the night. The Japanese bombarded the walls with cannon and lit signal beacons outside the walls to intimidate the garrison. However, that same night a Korean guerrilla army approached the Japanese lines from the rear, which greatly encour-



*Above left: An illustration from Ehon Taikōki showing the battle of Haejōngch'ang, where Katō Kiyomasa's army defended a rice warehouse with straw bales and fought off a Korean Army.*

*Left: The battle of Byōkchekwan, the largest conflict of the Korean invasions. On the right Kobayakawa Takakage fights under the Mōri banner, while above him may be identified Tachibana Muneshige.*



aged the defenders. Meanwhile the Japanese built a high tower from which they could fire down into the castle. On 7 October the Japanese brought up 1000 bamboo scaling ladders and tried to rush the walls, to which the Korean soldiers and civilians responded with rocks and boiling water. That night 2000 guerrillas managed to enter the castle while creating a diversion elsewhere. The Japanese army temporarily suspended the attack, but being faced with more guerrillas at their rear, at dawn on 10 October the assault was called off permanently, and the Japanese army withdrew.

#### **The second siege of P'yong-yang, 1592**

The first attempt to retake P'yong-yang was launched by a Chinese army who crossed into

Korea from the north. The Japanese opened the gates of the city to them, leading them into a trap from where they were shot at or cut down in fierce street fighting.

#### **The third siege of P'yong-yang, 1593**

The first Chinese attack on P'yong-yang failed, but a much larger Chinese force laid siege to P'yong-yang in February 1593. The Japanese commander Konishi Yukinaga met the Chinese under Li Jo Sho in battle on high ground to the north of the city, but sheer weight of numbers forced the Japanese army to withdraw back within the walls. Faced with almost certain defeat, Konishi secretly evacuated P'yong-yang during the night and retreated south with his army towards Seoul.



*Above: The main gate of Chinju castle in Korea, which was the site of two fierce sieges during the first Japanese invasion. It is of typical construction, with much greater use being made of stone than in a comparable Japanese castle. The stone arch is very different from the wooden gateways of Japanese fortresses.*

#### **The battle of Byökchekwan, 1593**

The battle of Byökchekwan, or P'yok je yek, was the largest conflict of the Korean invasion. It began as a rearguard action by Kobayakawa Takakage to allow the Japanese army to regroup in Seoul, a short distance to the south. In addition to Kobayakawa's unit of 10,000 men, Katō Kiyomasa supplied 3000. The Japanese stationed themselves in two divisions on the hill of Byökchekwan with the main body behind. The Chinese attacked at dawn, and began to force the Japanese back through the mud and slush, then began a vigorous pursuit down the reverse slope. Seeing their opportunity as the Chinese army became further detached from their own rearguard and became mired in the soggy ground, the Japanese under Kobayakawa Takakage counter-



*Above: The women of Haengju assist in its defence by bringing rocks to the men in the lines by carrying them in their aprons. This is a bas-relief on the site of the castle.*

*Below: The Japanese are repulsed during the first siege of Chinju by the determination of the defenders wielding boiling water, arrows and rocks. This bas-relief is part of the memorial on the castle site.*



attacked, and the fighting developed into a huge mêlée. The Japanese were victorious largely owing to the superior quality of their swords.

#### **The battle of Haengju, 1593**

For the first ten days of February 1593, Kwon Yul (1539-99), who was perhaps the ablest of all the Korean generals, prepared to make a stand at Haengju to constrain the movements of the Japanese by threatening Seoul. Haengju castle stood 14 km downstream on the Han river to the west of Seoul on a low hill, with the river as its southern defence. On the other three sides the area of the fort was surrounded by a zone of swampy land. The whole army is said to have totalled 10,000 men in all, including 1000 priest-

soldiers under the command of the priest general Cho Yon. Kwon Yul moved up to Haengju castle 2300 men under his own command, repaired the castle walls, prepared palisades, and made ready for a siege. At dawn on 12 February, the Japanese army left Seoul and aimed straight for Haengju castle. There were 30,000 in total. At about 6.00 a.m. the battle began when Konishi Yukinaga's army advanced. He surrounded the castle walls, but resistance was fierce. Even women took part, and carried stones for throwing in their aprons tied round their waists. Although the fight ebbed and flowed, the Japanese were faced with the problem of a relieving army, so they retreated.

### The second siege of Chinju, 1593

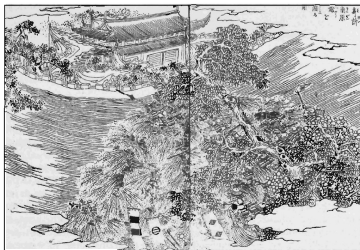
On 21 June 1593 a huge Japanese army advanced on Chinju castle, eager to succeed where Hosokawa Tadaoki had failed the previous year. The bulk of the army was made up of the troops of Konishi Yukinaga, Katō Kiyomasa and Ukita Hideie, with Kobayakawa Takakage's army held back as a reserve corps on a hill to the north. The Japanese attack began across the Chinyang river, the defenders being occupied by arquebus fire from a tall tower erected within range of the castle. The attack proper began on 22 June, and was a violent assault designed to take the castle at a stroke. Yet three times the Japanese assault was

driven off. Seeing the garrison so determined not to let them scale the walls, Katō Kiyomasa ordered the construction of some heavy wooden wagons, reinforced by fireproofed hides. These were pushed up to the walls, and as rocks bounced off the wagons' roofs, the Japanese prised at the stones of the castle walls with large crowbars. After several days of effort, a breach was made, and a section of the wall collapsed, and on 29 June the attackers managed to enter through this breach in the castle wall. Gotō Mototsugu had the honour of being the first samurai into Chinju castle. The fall of Chinju at this second attempt was regarded by the Koreans as the biggest loss to the Japanese since the war had begun.

The story of the siege has an interesting addition, because that night the victorious Japanese generals celebrated their triumph in the Ch'ok-songmu Pavilion in Chinju castle. One general, a certain Keyamura Rokusuke, was enticed on to a balcony by a Korean courtesan called Nonkae, who embraced Keyamura and then allowed herself to topple backwards over the edge of a parapet, taking the samurai with her to his death.

### The siege of Namwŏn, 1597

The second Japanese invasion of Korea was launched in 1597. The invading armies landed at Pusan and, splitting into two divisions, headed



*The taking of Namwŏn during the second invasion of Korea in 1597 is well illustrated in this picture from Ehon Taikōki. The Japanese have built up an enormous pile of green rice stalks and are clambering up it to cross the battlements.*

inland. Ukita Hideie was in overall command of a force of 56,800 men, who set off with the objective of the castle of Namwŏn in Chollado province. Shimazu Yoshihiro, Konishi Yukinaga, Sō Yoshitoshi, Itō Yūhei, Tōdō Takatora, Katō Yoshiaki and Hachisuka Iemasa joined the siege on 12 August 1597. The Chinese generals Chin Yuan and Li Shin Fuan commanded a garrison of 3000 men, together with a Korean army of 1000 troops under Yi Bokunem.

The attack began on 13 August, but Namwŏn held out against the enormous odds of the Japanese army for four days. At this point the Japanese put a clever stratagem into operation. After much fierce fighting, the invaders secured the moat, and one dark night began to pile up against a high, and thus lightly guarded, section of the wall a mass of bundles of green rice stalks, cut from the surrounding fields. By the time the garrison realised what was happening, the samurai were mounting scaling ladders and pouring into the castle. Matsuura Shigenobu's contingent led the action, and the castle fell.

#### **The siege of Ulsan, 1597-8**

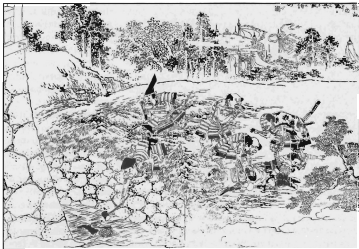
Ulsan was a fortified position 60 km north of Pusan, held by Katō Kiyomasa and Asano Yukinaga. The Chinese army of 40,000 men under Yang Ho began a siege in late 1597. There were several

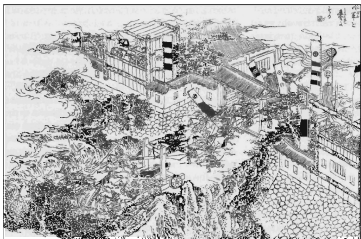
attacks on the garrison, which were beaten off. During one such assault, the Japanese sallied out to find themselves surrounded by a vast Chinese army that reinforcements had swollen to 80,000 men. By now the Japanese garrison was reduced to 5000 men, who began to suffer from hunger and thirst as all access to water was cut off. At night foragers were sent out for water but often found the ponds filled with corpses. Nevertheless, the garrison were so thirsty that they had to drink the water mixed with blood. Soon the provisions were exhausted, and the troops were reduced to eating paper and even boiling the earth taken off the walls for meals. All the cattle and the horses had long since been consumed. A few brave foragers ventured to go out during the night in search of rice or roasted beef which could be found around the waists of some dead soldiers among the attackers. The siege was eventually lifted by a Japanese army under Kuroda, Nabeshima and Hachisuka, while Konishi Yukinaga's fleet braved the Korean blockade to get supplies through.

#### **The battle of Sach'ŏn**

Shimazu Yoshihiro and his son Shimazu Tadatsune had participated in the capture of Namwŏn castle, and following this success they took up residence in the castle of Sach'ŏn. However, Yoshihiro noticed that 6 km to the south-west

*The desperation of the defenders of Ulsan in 1598 are shown in this illustration from Ehon Taikōki. Starving Japanese soldiers have left the castle under cover of darkness and are scouring the bodies of the dead Chinese for morsels of food.*





*The Shimazu army under Shimazu Yoshihiro sally out of the new castle of Sach'ōn to take on the Chinese army, the action which led to the battle of Sach'ōn.*

*Details of a Chinese battering ram, which incorporates a cannon, are well shown in this illustration from Ehon Taikōki.*

lay a small natural harbour, so he began construction of a new castle on this site, which was protected on three sides by the sea, enabling warships to pass under the castle walls. When the new castle of Sach'ōn was completed, 8000 troops were stationed there as a garrison, leaving Murakami Tadazane in charge of the old castle with 300 men.

Very soon a large Chinese army under Ton Yuan made preparations for a siege of Sach'ōn. By the middle of September 1598, Ton Yuan had assembled an army of 34,000 Chinese troops together with 2000 Koreans. On 1 October 1598, the allied army arrived at Sach'ōn, just too late to stop Murakami Tadazane breaking out of the old castle and joining Shimazu Yoshihiro in the new one. The old castle was taken, and the rival armies began a bitter struggle. Yoshihiro took the initiative, and led his army out of Sach'ōn to meet the Chinese and Koreans in a field battle. Three divisions attacked simultaneously from out of the three landward gates. The force of the attack broke the besieging army, who were driven back as far as the river with many casualties. The chronicle of the Shimazu family claims that 33,700 heads were taken, and that a huge hole 20 ken across was dug outside the castle to take the bodies. The heads, however, were not saved for inspection. Instead the noses were sliced off the corpses and sent back to Japan preserved in salt.

#### **The siege of Ōmori, 1599**

In the years following Hideyoshi's subjugation of the daimyō a land survey was carried out in northern Japan. This often provoked resentment, and a striking example was the resistance against the land survey enforcement daimyō Ōtani Yoshit-sugu, that was mounted as late as 1599 by the minor daimyō Onodera Yasumichi. Yasumichi fortified himself in his castle of Ōmori together with a large peasant army referred to in the texts as the 'Yamakita ikki'. Women fought alongside the men, and it was women who beat off a fierce assault by throwing stones from the walls, possibly by means of catapults. The siege was eventually abandoned with the onset of thick snow, but within a year the affair had been forgotten as both sides took up the ill-fated Ishida cause at Sekigahara.

#### **The siege of Ueda, 1600**

In 1600, in the campaign that ended with the battle of Sekigahara, an army commanded by Tokugawa Hidetada set out from Edo along the Nakasendō, the road that ran through the central mountains of Japan. The aim was for Hidetada to join up with his father Tokugawa Ieyasu. While on his way, however, Hidetada commenced a siege of the castle of Ueda, held by the father and son team of Sanada Masayuki and Sanada Yukimura. So desperately was their castle defended that Tokugawa Hidetada



abandoned the siege. By then he had been delayed for sufficiently long that he missed the battle of Sekigahara, an omission that could have had very serious consequences had the victory not already been secured by the treachery of Kobayakawa.

#### The siege of Fushimi, 1600

The defence of Fushimi castle by Torii Mototada on behalf of Tokugawa Ieyasu was one of the most celebrated acts of heroism and loyalty in samurai history. For details see the case study on Sekigahara and the section on bushidō.

#### The siege of Ōtsu, 1600

Ōtsu castle was held for the Tokugawa by Kyōgoku Takatsugu. He was besieged by Tachibana Muneshige and Tsukushi Hirokado, and surrendered after negotiation, but by this time the Tokugawa triumph had been assured by the victory at Sekigahara. It is recorded that the local inhabitants took picnic boxes to the hills around Mii-dera to watch the siege in action.

#### The siege of Shiroishi, 1600

The supporters of the Tokugawa in the north were led by Date Masamune and Mogami Yoshiaki. Uesugi Kagekatsu was the leader of the pro-Ishida faction, supported by Naoe Kanetsugu. The capture of Shiroishi castle after a fierce attack was Date Masamune's first contribution to the Tokugawa victory during the Sekigahara campaign. Shiroishi lay to the south of Sendai, and was held by a retainer of Uesugi Kagekatsu.

#### The siege of Hataya, 1600

Following the fall of Shiroishi castle to Date Masamune on the east, Naoe Kanetsugu took the initiative for Ishida Mitsunari's cause on the west. On the eighth day of the ninth lunar month, he led his main body of 20,000 troops from Yonezawa in a sweep to the west to advance in the general direction of the important Yamagata castle. Yamagata was the headquarters of Mogami Yoshiaki, who defended it with 10,000 men under Yoshiaki himself, plus Nanbu Toshinao, Akita Sanesue, Tozawa Masamori and others. The main body first attacked Hataya castle, which was bravely defended for a short time by Eguchi Gohei and a garrison of less than 300 men, in an action cele-

brated in the war chronicles. Naoe's army included Kamiizumi Yasutsuna (a descendant of the famous swordsman Nobutsuna), Suibara Chikanori, Irobe Mitsunaga and Kasuga Mototada.

#### The siege of Kaminoyama, 1600

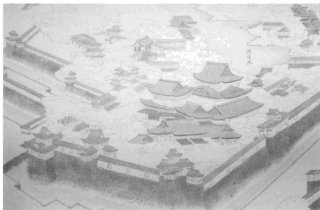
While Naoe's first division was continuing to move towards Yamagata, his second division (Honmura Chikamori and Yokota Munetoshi - 4000 men) attacked Kaminoyama, which was held for the Mogami by Satomi Minbu. The castle fell, but at the price of the death of Naoe's general Honmura.

#### The siege of Hasedo, 1600

While his third division (3000 men under Shida Yoshūhide and Shimo Yoshitada) made its way down from the north for an attack on Yamagata, Naoe Kanetsugu made camp to the north of Hasedo



*Naoe Kanetsugu, defeated at the battle of Hasedo, 1600, is shown in this print by Kuniyoshi. Kanetsugu was a hereditary retainer of the Uesugi and took a major part in the opposition to the Tokugawa allies in the north of Japan.*



*Left: A painting displayed in Fushimi Momoyama castle, Kyōto, showing the old Fushimi castle as it would have appeared during the epic siege of 1600 when Torii Mototada defended it for Tokugawa Ieyasu.*

castle, the last obstacle on his way to Yamagata, and received reinforcements of 100 horsemen and 200 arquebusiers. Two days later he laid siege to Hasedo, which was held by Shimura Takaharu. Fierce attacks continued for the next fourteen days. Date Masakage (Masamune's uncle) responded by marching an army across the mountain passes to relieve Yamagata, and made camp 2.5 km to the east. Naoe thereupon ordered an all-out attack on Hasedo, which was led by the vanguard under Kasuga Mototada. The besiegers reached the castle walls before they were driven off by heavy arquebus fire. As the Naoe force retreated, the castle garrison sallied out and caught them in the rear. Naoe withdrew, leaving a small holding force in front of Hasedo, during which Kamiizumi Yasutsuna was killed. However, by the 27th day news had reached Naoe Kanetsugu of the defeat of Ishida at Sekigahara, so he raised the siege of Hasedo and withdrew all his troops back to Yonezawa. A week later Date Masamune took advantage of the situation and attacked Fukushima castle.

#### **The siege of Tanabe, 1600**

In another 'sideshow' to Sekigahara, Hosokawa Yūsai Fujitaka was besieged in his castle of Tanabe. So reverent was this noted scholar that the attack on him was very half-hearted, some of the generals absent-mindedly forgetting to put any projectiles into their cannon before firing. This no doubt added to the length of the siege, which kept several Western army contingents away from Sekigahara.

#### **The battle of Sekigahara, 1600**

Following the preliminary moves described elsewhere, Ishida Mitsunari was faced with a night march to Sekigahara. Chōsokabe, and some other allies, were already in position on the hills around. Kobayakawa Hideaki was stationed on Matsuoyama, across the valley from the camp site Ishida selected for himself on Sasaoyama, which gave an excellent view of the valley. The plans were that the main body would hold the Tokugawa in the centre, then Kobayakawa would fall on them from the left, while others would attack them in the rear.

Early in the morning of 21 October 1600, the Western army was fully in position around Sekigahara. In the centre were the divisions under Ukita Hideie and Konishi Yukinaga. To the left of them was Ishida Mitsunari himself together with Shimazu Yoshihiro, Shima Sakon and Gamō, with Oda Nobutaka in support. On the right wing, straddling the Nakasendō, were various contingents including Ukita and Hiratsuka, Kinoshita and Toda, and further to their right were Ōgawa, Kuchiki, Wakizaka and others. On the extreme right wing, on Matsuoyama, was Kobayakawa Hideaki. Facing Kobayakawa's flank was Ōtani Yoshitsugu. Several divisions were left behind along the road from Ōgaki to provide the rear attack from the reverse side of Nanguyama.

By daybreak the Eastern army had advanced along the Nakasendo to meet them on as wide a front as the narrow valley would allow them. The

**Right:** The site of the battle of Sekigahara, looking across from Ishida Mitsunari's headquarters, where his banner now flies, to the hill occupied by Kobayakawa Hideaki, whose treason secured the battle for the Tokugawa.

**Below:** A mounted warrior is cornered during the battle of Sekigahara on the screen in the Watanabe Museum, Tottori. His *mon* identifies him as belonging to the Ikeda.



Eastern positions were as follows. Kuroda Nagamasa held the right wing. Hosokawa Tadaoki was situated next to him, along with Katō Yoshiaki and Tanaka Yoshimasa. On the left flank was Ii Naomasa. Forward of the above was Fukushima Masanori. Behind lay Kyōgoku Takatomo and Tōdō Takatora. Honda Tadakatsu lay behind this division, while Tokugawa Ieyasu held the rear centre,

with a final rearguard under Yamauchi Kazutoyo, Arima, Asano and Ikeda.

There was a thick fog which persisted until about 8.00 a.m., when the fighting started. The central divisions were the first to engage, the first shots of the battle probably being fired by Ukita's troops on to those of Ii Naomasa of the Eastern army. Ukita was successful in driving the East-

erners back, but they rallied and the fight swayed one way and then the other. The front ranks of the Eastern army pushed towards Ishida Mitsunari, while the second rank moved up to attack Konishi Yukinaga. Shima Sakon retired wounded after his division was caught in fierce arquebus fire.

All the main divisions were now engaged, and Ishida thought the moment opportune to light the signal fire that would bring Kobayakawa down from Matsuoyama. But Kobayakawa did not move a man, for one side or the other, and Ieyasu, becoming concerned that the reports he had heard that Kobayakawa would defect were incorrect, sent some men to fire on his division to see what the reaction would be. Kobayakawa responded positively by sending his army down Matsuoyama to assault the flank of Ōtani, whose contingent was the nearest of the Westerners. Ōtani had obviously been expecting something like this, for his men turned calmly and repulsed the treacherous attack, but with considerable loss. Ieyasu then ordered a general attack along the line, and further contingents of the Western army, Kuchiki and Wakizaka, showed their true colours. Soon the Ōtani were being attacked from three sides. Ōtani Yoshitsugu, who was a leper and crippled through the disease, leaned out of his palanquin in which he was forced to be carried, and asked a retainer to put an end to him.

In the meantime Konishi's division had gradually been driven back. Kobayakawa's men swept through the defeated Ōtani troops, rounded the rear of Ukita, and attacked Konishi from behind. The Western army began to break up. Only the army of the Shimazu clan was left intact, although most of its men had been killed. Putting himself at the head of 80 survivors, Shimazu Yoshihiro succeeded in cutting his way through the Eastern army and back down the road towards Ōgaki. Unfortunately this route took them south-west of Mount Nangu where Ishida's reserve troops were stationed. Some had already decided to join Ieyasu, others were wavering, unsure what to make of the noise they could hear and the garbled reports they were receiving. The battle was already lost, so the very contingents who might have been able to reverse Ishida's defeat turned and marched away from Sekigahara.

### **The siege of Minakuchi, 1600**

Minakuchi castle in Ōmi province was held by Nagatsuka Masaie. He was besieged and killed as the castle fell.

### **The siege of Udo, 1600**

During the Sekigahara campaign, Katō Kiyomasa assisted Ieyasu's cause in Kyūshū by taking the castle of Udo, which belonged to his old rival Konishi Yukinaga.

### **The siege of Yanagawa, 1600**

Having taken Udo, Katō Kiyomasa joined up with Kuroda Jōsui Yoshitaka to besiege Yanagawa castle, owned by Tachibana Muneshige. Jōsui had already taken several minor places on the island of Kyūshū. Muneshige surrendered following a suggestion that he should join the others in a move against the Shimazu, but when Ieyasu heard of the plan he forbade it.

### **The winter campaign of Ōsaka, 1614–15**

Toyotomi Hideyori, heir of the late Hideyoshi, shut himself up in Ōsaka castle with a garrison of 113,080 troops, many of whom were rōnin. A Tokugawa army of 194,400 men began a long and bitter siege. The first action of the winter campaign was a combined land and water operation at the mouth of the Kizu river, mounted at dawn on 19 November 1614. This vital supply route to the Ōsaka garrison was covered by a fort containing 800 men under the command of the Christian daimyō Akashi Morishige. Three thousand troops of the Eastern army, under Hachisuka Yoshishige, took part in the assault. Hachisuka crossed the river on 40 boats, beating off the defence from five guard boats, and attacked the castle as a land-based army of 300 came in from the rear. The castle was burned, and the site secured.

### **The battle of Imafuku, 1614**

On 26 November there took place a fierce skirmish to the north-east of the castle known as the battle of Imafuku. Imafuku was a village that commanded the approach to Ōsaka from that direction, and it was Ieyasu's intention to establish a fort there. To secure the area he dispatched Satake Yoshinobu at the head of 1500 men against

the Western forces, which consisted of 600 troops under two minor generals called Yado and Iida. The Satake army attacked in three ranks with a charge, and managed to drive the defenders out of Imafuku, killing Iida. Realising what was happening, two armies from the Ōsaka garrison crossed the river as reinforcements. These were commanded by two of Ōsaka's ablest generals, Kimura Shigenari and Gotō Mototsugu. When the moment was right, they made a sudden charge. The Satake men were forced to withdraw, and there were many casualties among Satake's vanguard. The main body of the Satake army only succeeded in holding on to Imafuku after receiving reinforcements from Uesugi Kagekatsu.

#### The battle of Shigeno, 1614

Uesugi Kagekatsu's army of 5000 had in fact already been engaged in battle with 2000 Ōsaka troops across the river at a place called Shigeno. Reinforcements arrived from Niwa Nagashige and Horio Tadatoki, who were well supported by arquebus troops. Ieyasu ordered Horio to take over from Uesugi to let him rest, which received the harsh retort that the Uesugi samurai had the tradition of never retiring once a fight had started.

#### The battle of Kizugawa, 1614

Three days later, on 29 November, two separate naval operations took place. Following a reconnaissance of the area to the west of the castle beside the Kizu river, Ieyasu ordered Ishikawa Tadafusa to capture the fort that controlled this section. Ishikawa mounted an elaborate amphibious operation, co-ordinating a crossing by his army of 2300 from the west, with an attack from the east and south by Hachisuka Yoshishige, each facilitated by crossing waterways on boats. The fort succumbed rapidly.

#### The battle of Toda-Fukushima, 1614

Meanwhile, at nearby Toda-Fukushima, the guard ships of the Tokugawa, under the overall command of Kuki Moritaka (son of the late admiral Yoshitaka), took advantage of a heavy rain storm to attack Ōno Harunaga. The Eastern ships had 1600 men on board against Ōno's 800, and their victory prevented any support being given to the other operation under Ishikawa.

#### A SAMURAI IS SAVED BY HIS ARMOUR

The Sengoku Period saw the introduction of European cuirasses as breastplates for Japanese armour. Known as nanban-dō ('body armour of the Southern Barbarians'), they had the great advantage of providing armour that was proof to the bullets fired from that other European innovation: the arquebus. There is an interesting confirmation of the efficacy of nanban-dō in *Naruse Keizu* (genealogy of the Naruse). Naruse Yoshimasa served as a messenger in the Maeda contingent for the Tokugawa side during the winter campaign of Ōsaka. In 1614 he took part in an attack on the Sanada-maru, the barbican which bore the name of the Ōsaka commander Sanada Yukimura. The account tells us:

"Yoshimasa spurred on his horse, and when he reached the edge of the moat a chōjū (bird gun) was fired from within the fort. It struck Yoshimasa on his left side, and he fell from his horse. His genin Musa Umanosuke, and others, came to pick him up as he was wounded. However, because he was wearing a nanban yoroi, it did not penetrate to his body."

The 'bird gun' was a large-calibre piece. We know this from the fact that the armour still exists and is a prized possession of the Naruse family. It has a European (nanban) iron breastplate, and on the left side bears a massive and most impressive dent. There is a photograph of it in *Rekishi Gunzō* Vol. 40 Ōsaka no Ran, (1994: 50).

#### The siege of the Sanada-maru, 1614

The final major action of the winter campaign was the attack on the Sanada-maru on 4 December. This was a fort and earthwork built out from the southern defences as a barbican, and named after its commander, Sanada Yukimura. The attack was led by the troops of Matsudaira Tadanao, grandson of Tokugawa Ieyasu. They were followed close behind by the Ii samurai, who assaulted the wall further along and managed to scale the ramparts until a counter-attack by Kimura Shigenari drove them back. In all, 10,000 Eastern troops



*Sanada Yukimura was the commander-in-chief of Ōsaka castle during its defence of 1614-15. This statue of him stands on the site of the Sanadamaru, the earthwork barbican which was built out of the southern defences of Ōsaka, and faced fierce attacks during the winter campaign. His helmet bears deer antlers, and he wears a jinboori (surcoat) and carries a saihaï (war-fan).*

#### **The summer campaign of Ōsaka, 1615**

The Tokugawa army reopened the siege of Ōsaka in May 1615. The castle defences were much reduced, but the garrison had actually increased. A number of battles took place around Ōsaka over the following month.

#### **The battle of Kashii, 1615**

The Ōsaka garrison first took the offensive, ambushing various contingents of the Tokugawa army while they were still on their way to the castle. These actions included one operation many miles from Ōsaka, when Ōno Harunaga, Hanawa Naoyuki and Okabe Noritsuna attempted to capture the castle of Wakayama in Kii province. The castle was owned by Asano Nagaakira, most of whose troops had already moved up to the Ōsaka siege lines. The Western force was of 3000 men. Realising that their enemies were perilously far from support, the castle garrison of 5000 men boldly moved out to meet them in battle at Kashii. Hanawa and Okabe were both killed in the vanguard, forcing Ōno to withdraw to the safety of the Ōsaka garrison.

#### **The battle of Dōmyōji, 1615**

On 6 June the battle of Dōmyōji began the last offensive of the Ōsaka campaign. It was fought to the south-east of the castle along the road to Nara. The objective of the Western army was to control this area ready for their major assault. They proved to be vastly outnumbered, as Gotō Mototsugu's 6400 men found themselves opposed by major troop concentrations of 23,000 under Date Masamune and others. Gotō quickly abandoned the operation and pulled back, rallying his men to the nearby high ground of Komatsuyama, although hindered by dense fog. Reinforcements sent to them by the Ōsaka garrison found it difficult to make contact in the fog, and Gotō Mototsugu, one of the ablest generals on the Ōsaka side, was killed

attacked the barbican, but were held off by Sanada's 7000. Other skirmishes took place when the defenders sallied out to surprise the Tokugawa army. One such night attack was launched out of the castle's eastern walls across the Honmachi bridge on 17 December, illuminated by lanterns. This was a minor victory for the Ōsaka army, as their force of 150 men under Ban Dane'emon and Hanawa Naoyuki defeated the Tokugawa troops in the siege lines. The winter campaign continued with a long bombardment of the castle by the Tokugawa, at the end of which a spurious peace treaty was drawn up, which greatly weakened the castle's defences.

in action. The Eastern army pressed on across the Yamato river, where they met a second wave from the castle numbering 12,000. Matsudaira Tadaaki and Mizuno Katsushige attacked Mori Katsunaga, while to the south Date Masamune's army engaged Sanada Yukimura. Eventually all armies disengaged after heavy casualties, with no victory recognised on either side.

#### **The battle of Yao, 1615**

That same day two further engagements took place about 8 km to the north of Dōmyōji at Yao and Wakae. This was a low-lying and damp area where the rivers Nagase and Tamagushi flowed. Here the Western army under Chōsokabe Morichika, with 5300 men, took on Tōdō Takatora, with 5000. The Tōdō army was victorious, but suffered the loss of Takatora's sons Takanori and Ujikatsu. The head-viewing ceremony was held in a local temple, and the bloodstained floor is now preserved as the temple's ceiling.

#### **The battle of Wakae, 1615**

A similar victory occurred at nearby Wakae. Here the Westerners had 4700 men under the enthusiastic Kimura Shigenari, who received a spirited charge from Ii Naotaka. This attack is depicted on a painted screen in Hikone castle. Both of Kimura's forward flank units collapsed under the cavalry assault. Kimura Shigenari was pursued and killed, and when his head was presented to Ieyasu it was noted that he had perfumed the inside of his helmet so as to make it a more attractive trophy. On this one day the Western army had lost two of its finest men.

#### **The battle of Tennōji, 1615**

With the battle of Tennōji the siege of Ōsaka ended, thus making this engagement effectively the last samurai field battle in Japanese history. The Toyotomi plan was that Sanada Yukimura and Ōno Harunaga would deliver a frontal assault on the Tokugawa main body, who would be held in combat while Akashi Morishige swept round to deliver an attack from the rear. When all the Tokugawa troops were engaged, Hideyori would lead the garrison out of the castle, bearing aloft the golden gourd standard of his late father.

The Tokugawa army had occupied positions some distance from the remaining walls, with

Honda Tadatomo in the vanguard, Date Masamune on the left flank, and Ii Naotaka and Maeda Toshitane on the right. The rearguard was Asano Nagaakira, whose troops touched the sea coast. The distance between the armies gave the Ōsaka contingent ample opportunity for careful grouping and timing to coincide with Akashi's sweep round. But controlled tactical manoeuvres were not to the liking of rōnin, and as soon as Mori Katsunaga's men came within sight of the Tokugawa vanguard, they opened up on them with their arquebuses. Fearing lest his careful plans would be ruined by this impetuosity, Sanada ordered them to cease firing, but they only redoubled their efforts. Mori consulted Sanada, who agreed that the best way of resolving the difficulty was for an immediate full-scale attack, so as Mori Katsunaga led his men forward in a charge which broke through into the Tokugawa main body, Sanada Yukimura assaulted the Tokugawa left flank, and sent a messenger back to the castle with a request for Toyotomi Hideyori to join the battle at once.

Here chance was on Hideyori's side, because even though his men under Akashi were far from being able to deliver the rear attack, certain of the Tokugawa army appeared to be doing it for them. That at any rate was the conclusion drawn by many of the Tokugawa main body who saw their rearguard under Asano wheel towards them. Cries of 'Treachery' went up from many throats, who feared that Asano had turned against them. In fact he had not, but Tokugawa Ieyasu himself was forced to join his men in the thick of the fighting to steady their nerves. Here, according to tradition, Sanada Yukimura engaged him in a very brief single combat, and wounded him with his spear blade in the kidneys.

It was Honda Tadatomo who saved the day for the Tokugawa. He led his troops in a charge against Sanada Yukimura. Sanada was driven back, and, physically exhausted, collapsed on to a camp stool. A certain samurai recognised him and made a challenge, but Sanada was too tired to reply, so the man sliced off his head. This spectacular trophy of the head of the commander was proclaimed throughout the Tokugawa army, and the tide of the battle began to turn their way. Yet still the Ōsaka army did not give up hope, and in a series of desperate actions almost succeeded in reversing the trend. Ōno Harunaga's troops were holding

their own against the Tokugawa main body, and if at that moment the rear attack from Akashi had materialised, and Hideyori had sallied out, the course of Japanese history might have been changed. But Akashi was intercepted, and by the time Hideyori ventured out, the Tokugawa troops were approaching the moats. Mizuno Katsushige planted his standard on the Sakura gate, and as civilians fled in terror, the Tokugawa swarmed into the castle area. Dragging their guns forward, the Tokugawa artillery opened up on the keep. The following morning flames were seen. Toyotomi Hideyori had committed suicide, and burned the grand edifice that had once been impregnable.

### The siege of Hara, 1637-8

The siege of Hara castle was the main event of the Shimabara rebellion, fought with great determination by the people of the Shimabara peninsula against their hated daimyō, Matsukura Shigeharu, who frequently punished his peasants by dressing them in straw raincoats and setting fire to the straw. The rebellion broke out on 17 December 1637, and was soon being led by the charismatic figure of Amakusa Shirō. The uprising took on a considerable religious dimension, as the majority of the population were Christian, and had suffered increased persecution for their beliefs. On Shimabara 23,000 out of a total population of 45,000 are said to have joined in the revolt. Nearby areas, such as the Amakusa islands, followed in the uprising. The rebels, however, failed to capture either Shimabara or Tomioka castle, a portent of their eventual failure. Instead they fortified themselves in the dilapidated old castle of Hara on the Shimabara peninsula.

The siege of Hara was initially led by Itakura Shigemasa, but his failure to take the fortress in spite of tunnelling, catapults and ninja led the shōgun to send Matsudaira Nobutsuna as a replacement. Appalled by this slight on his honour and ability, Itakura led an attack in person and was shot dead by an arrow. Matsudaira Nobutsuna fared little better, and even persuaded a Dutch ship from Nagasaki to bombard the castle. The cannonballs did considerable damage to the old castle, but the use of foreigners also harmed the Tokugawa army's reputation. By April 1638, however, the garrison's provisions were running very low, as was shown when

Amakusa Shirō sent a detachment out in a raid. The attackers were beaten off, and their corpses disclosed to the Tokugawa troops the desperate nature of their plight, because the bodies of the dead were examined, and it was found that they were now eating only barley and seaweed scraped off the rocks at low tide. They also appeared to be in the advanced stages of malnutrition. A huge assault soon took place along the walls, and the long and bitter siege was eventually concluded with the massacre of the garrison. Women and children fought beside their menfolk wielding pots and pans. With the fall of Hara, the last serious opposition to the Tokugawa regime was overcome.



*The siege of Hara castle, 1638, from a hanging scroll in the Watanabe Museum, Tottori. Note the Christian crosses on the banners, and the reproduction of the famous surviving flag from the Shimabara rebellion that shows angels adoring the Blessed Sacrament.*





V  
CASE STUDIES

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## PERSONAL COMBAT IN SAMURAI WARFARE 1160-85

The great tradition of personal combat, which persisted well into the Sengoku Period, is best illustrated in early chronicles like *Heike Monogatari*, where the norms of behaviour in such situations were being laid down.

The process usually began by proclaiming one's pedigree in a loud voice and having the challenge answered from within the enemy ranks by someone who was suitable to take on such an illustrious fighter. Brief examples may be found in the *Heike Monogatari* account of the battle of Ichinotani in 1184, when Minamoto samurai approach the Taira defence line and shout:

"Kumagai no Jirō Naozane of the province of Musashi, and his son Kojirō Naoie! First in the assault on Ichinotani!"

It was usual for the challenging warrior to add some detail about his former exploits. At Ichinotani again, Hirayama Sueshige proclaims his military record in the two rebellions that sparked the Gempei Wars:

"Hirayama no Mushadokoro Sueshige of Musashi, who has won great renown by his prowess in the fighting of Hōgen and Heiji!"

On rare occasions the opposing commanders of two armies would seek each other out. In the *Talheiki*, which deals with the "Wars Between the Courts" of the fourteenth century, the loyalist general Nitta Yoshisada appears to take the entire burden of the imperial cause on his shoulders as he challenges Ashikaga Takauji:

"The disorder in the land is ceaseless, and for all too long the people, who are blameless, have known no peace. This is called a struggle between two lines of the imperial family, but in fact it is a confrontation between two men: Yoshisada and Lord Takauji. Rather than cause the suffering of many to achieve great merit for myself alone, I propose to settle the fight by myself, and hence come to this gate of my fortress to challenge Lord Takauji to single combat."

The most elaborate challenges included a detailed personal curriculum vitae:

"I am not such a great man as men go, but I am an inhabitant of Iga province, a follower of the Lord of Aki, and 28 years old. My name is Yamada

Kosaburō Koreyuki. I am the grandson of Yamada no Shoji Yukisue, who was well known among the aristocracy for being the first to go into battle under the Lord of Bizen at the attack on Yoshihito, Lord of Tsushima. My grandfather also captured innumerable mountain robbers and highwaymen. I too have been many times in battle and made a name for myself."

A rich exchange of names occurs between Taira Motomori and Uno Chikaharu just before the Hōgen Incident, the brief but bloody skirmish with which the Gempei Wars began. Taira Motomori proclaims himself as:

"The police lieutenant of Aki province, Taira Motomori, descended in the twelfth generation from emperor Kanmu, a distant relative in the eighth generation of the Taira general Masakado, grandson of the minister of punishments Tadamori, and second son of the governor of Aki, Taira Kiyomori."

Uno Chikaharu, of the Minamoto side, counters with:

"I am a resident of Yamato province Uno no Shichirō Chikaharu, descended in the tenth generation from emperor Seiwa, a distant relative of the sixth grandson prince, five generations removed from the governor of Yamato, Yorichika, the younger brother of the governor of Settsu, Raikō, the grandson of the vice-minister of central affairs, Yoriharu, and eldest son of the governor of Shimotsuke, Chikahiro."

The classic individual combat of the Gempei Wars would invariably begin with the exchange of arrows, but would almost certainly finish with hand-to-hand fighting using the sword, or, more likely, the tantō (dagger) in a fierce grappling contest. While mounted and wearing a suit of armour built like a rigid box, the samurai was well defended, but when unable to wield his bow he was comparatively ungainly and unwieldy, and could only grapple in the most clumsy fashion from a horse. His defensive costume, while being not unduly heavy, was not designed to allow him to take the fight to the enemy, and was certainly not helpful in allowing a sword to be used from the saddle. However, if there was time to dismount successfully from a fallen horse, some excellent swordplay could be seen from samurai whose desire to survive overcame any disadvantages

posed by the weight or design of their armour. At the battle of Shinowara:

"Arikuni, having penetrated very deeply into the ranks of the foe, had his horse shot from under him, and then while he was fighting on foot, his helmet was struck from his head, so that he looked like a youth fighting with his long hair streaming in all directions. By this time his arrows were exhausted, so he drew his sword and laid about him mightily, until, pierced by seven or eight shafts, he met his death still on his feet and glaring at his enemies."

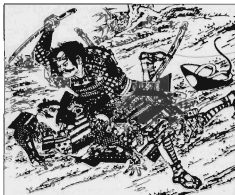
At the battle of Ichinotani, the single combat between Etchū Zenji Moritoshū and Inomata Norit-suna began with unarmed grappling techniques, and ended with a dagger:

"Inomata immediately leapt upon him, snatched his dagger from his side, and pulling up the skirt of his armour, stabbed him so deeply three times that the hilt and fist went in after the blade. Having thus dispatched him he cut off his head..."

Victory in single combat did not necessarily mean the end of the individual warrior's engagement in battle. He would usually continue fighting, as exemplified by a certain Kaneko letada, who fought during the Hōgen incident. letada's exploit sums up much of the preceding paragraphs. He had a fight with two brothers. The combat developed into a wrestling match with daggers, at which letada triumphed.

"Although both Takama brothers were noted for their strength, letada got on top and held Shirō, and was about to take his head. At this point Takama Saburō, in turn, dropped on top and, trying to keep his brother from being killed, pulled at Kaneko's helmet to face him up and tried to take his head. Hereupon Kaneko held down the left and right arms of the enemy beneath him with his knees, yanked up the left armour skirt of the enemy on top, and turning upon him, stabbed him three times as if both hilt and fist should sink into him. When he flinched back, Kaneko cut off the head of the enemy beneath him and raising it stuck on his sword point, shouted, 'In the presence of Minamoto Tametomo of Tsukushi, famed these days as superhuman, letada has killed Takama Shirō and his brother'."

Combat such as this is a far cry from the popular image of the noble warrior, but no one is



ashamed of the action, because Kaneko letada remounts his horse ready to fight again, proclaiming:

"I, Kaneko no Jūrō letada, a resident of Musashi province, have come forth before the renowned Minamoto Tametomo of Tsukushi, and with my own hands have taken the heads of two mounted warriors. Observe this, both enemy and allies! A feat rarely achieved either in ancient times or the present! ... I am the letada who wishes to bequeath his name to generations to come. If there are warriors among Tametomo's band who feel they are my match, let them come and grapple with me."

Kaneko letada is in fact singled out as an example of samurai honour and prowess by the author of *Hōgen Monogatari*:

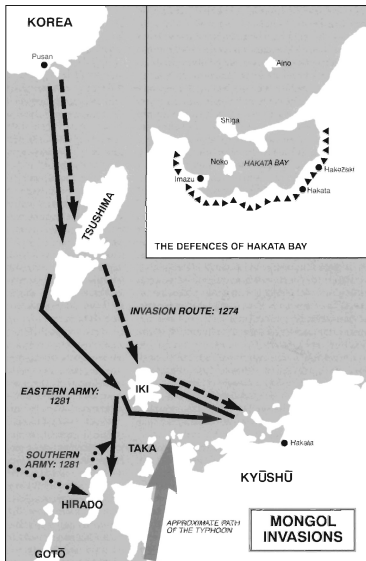
"With his martial prowess, he has established his fame in this life. His loyalty will live throughout the ages, his name imprinted on future generations and his achievements bequeathed to his descendants."

How many of his descendants, one wonders, shouted out these achievements of their illustrious ancestor Kaneko letada in the heat of a samurai battle?

#### FOREIGN ENEMIES - THE MONGOL INVASIONS

The Mongol invasions hold a unique place both in the history of samurai warfare and in the history of the development of Japanese identity. From a military point of view, the two attempts by Kublai

*Opposite page:*  
 Single combat using a tantō (dagger) is shown in this detail from the Ehon Toyotomi Kunkōki. It depicts the hero Katō Kiyomasa who has disguised himself as a foot soldier (hence the discarded jingasa) and has overpowered a high-ranking enemy.



Khan to conquer Japan provide the first of only two illustrations from the whole of samurai warfare when the samurai were pitted against foreign enemies rather than their own kind. It is also the first occasion in samurai history when the

samurai fought for Japan itself, instead of some narrow factional or clan interest.

The first Mongol invasion, carried out in 1274, was of such brief duration that were it not for the large numbers of troops involved, history might

well have recorded it as a raid rather than an invasion. In early 1274 Kublai Khan issued an order for the Koreans to build 900 ships, which were to transport an advance force of about 5000 Mongol troops, between 6000 and 8000 Koreans, and a main body of 15,000 Mongols, Chinese and Jurchens. The crews, almost half of whom were Korean, consisted of 15,000 men. The journey from Pusan took two weeks, during which the Mongol force ravaged the islands of Tsushima and Iki, and probably also raided the Japanese coast of Hizen province. Landfall was made in the sheltered Hakata bay, where the modern city of Fukuoka now stands. Mongol detachments came ashore at various sites around the bay, and were met by the Japanese samurai.

The century which had passed between the end of the Gempei Wars and the launch of the first Mongol invasion had seen little recognisable change in samurai warfare. The ideal was still that of the individual and elite mounted archer testing his skills against a worthy opponent, so the great difficulty that the Mongol invasions produced for the samurai was the impossibility of communicating challenges to an opponent who did not speak Japanese. As the *Hachiman Gudōkun* relates:

"According to our manner of fighting we must first call out by name someone from the enemy ranks, and then attack in single combat. But they took no notice at all of such conventions. They rushed forward all together in a mass, grappling with any individuals they could catch and killing them."

The quotation above confirms that the Mongol way of fighting was alien to the samurai ideal, and whereas we may dismiss any notion of the samurai standing speechless and inactive when the Mongols did not respond, the implication of including this statement in the *Hachiman Gudōkun* is surely that to the Japanese the Mongol way of warfare was not only regarded as different, but was also thought to be inferior. The Mongols' advance and withdrawal to the accompaniment of drums, bells and shouted war cries alarmed the Japanese horses. The samurai were also faced with a different archery technique, whereby arrows were shot in huge clouds, rather than being used in long-range individual combat. Dense showers of

arrows, some tipped with poison, were poured into the Japanese lines. Any individual combats that did take place were anonymous affairs, although there are several accounts of samurai attempting to seek out high-ranking Mongol warriors. In addition to these unusual ways of fighting, a unique feature of the Mongol attacks was the storm of explosive projectiles described elsewhere.

In spite of great bravery, by nightfall the Japanese had been driven back several kilometres inland to Dazaifu. The Mongols burned the Japanese dwellings, and also set fire to the great Hakozaki shrine. However, fortunately for the Japanese, the Mongols then chose not to spend the night on shore, but to return to their ships. Yet with this tactical withdrawal the first invasion concluded, because the armies never again left their ships for Japanese soil. Instead, during the night a fierce storm blew up which severely damaged the fleet lying at anchor. The Mongols immediately set sail back to Korea, taking one full month over the journey, having suffered the loss of 13,000 dead, about one-third of their total, including one high-ranking Korean general who was drowned.

This abrupt end to the first invasion has led several scholars to question some of the accepted details of the engagement. The destruction of the fleet by bad weather, which was to occur on a grand scale in the second invasion of 1281, has been doubted, one authority pointing out that late November, when the invasion occurred, is out of the typhoon season. Was the sudden conclusion to the first invasion no more than a planned ending to a reconnaissance in force (a common Mongol strategy), with the story of the storm grafted on from the account of the second invasion to make it look less humiliating from both the Japanese and Korean points of view? It is interesting to note that the *Hachiman Gudōkun* does not mention a storm at all, and instead notes simply that the following morning the local people were surprised to find the terrible invaders completely gone except for one ship that had run aground. Korean sources, however, speak of a natural disaster, and a Japanese court diary notes:

"I heard that just when the enemy ships, several tens of thousands in number, appeared on the sea, a sudden gale arose and sent them all

back, leaving some of them on land. It is also said that Ōtomo Yoriyasu had captured more than fifty enemy soldiers, all of whom were to be kept in captivity and forwarded to Kyōto later. As for the typhoon, is it not a manifestation of divine protection?"

Two Shintō shrines were later rewarded for their part in obtaining divine protection, presumably because their prayers were believed to have brought about the storm.

The first Mongol invasion, therefore, lasted only one day, and lost one in three of its invading force. It is impossible to know how many of these were killed by the samurai swords and arrows of the defenders, but if the storm theory is to be discounted, the proportion must have been very high indeed. By the bravery and martial skills of the samurai, this major raid, no matter how brief it may have been planned to be, was turned into a pyrrhic victory. Unsurprisingly, this is not how it appears in the sources from the Yuan (Mongol) dynasty of China. A biography of the general who was third in command of the invasion force speaks of him defeating a Japanese army of 100,000! Other sources note that the withdrawal was purely tactical because the Mongols had run out of arrows.

Kublai Khan never regarded the first invasion as a disaster. The next few years saw him preoccupied with the conquest of southern China. The Japanese, by contrast, were on a state of alert. Religious services increased, and the symbolic Hakozaiki shrine was rebuilt. Valiant warriors, some 120 in all, were rewarded, and a coastal guard was mounted. One measure, that was never actually carried out, was a planned raid by Japan on Korea to be led by the Kyūshū general Shōni Tsunesuke. That same year (1276) the construction began of a defensive wall around Hakata bay. The face of the wall looking out to sea was of stone and over two metres high, while on the other side it sloped down along an earthen embankment.

The Mongol preparations for the second invasion were carried out on a much larger scale than in 1274, and it is clear from the evidence that farming implements were included on board the ships that the Mongols intended a permanent occupation of Japanese land. Six hundred warships were ordered from southern China, in

addition to 900 from Korea. The invasion responsibilities were divided between an eastern route army of 40,000 (northern Chinese, Mongol and Korean) and a southern Chinese army of 100,000. The two armies were to join forces near Iki island.

The plan for the two armies to join up before they attacked did not materialise. Instead, the eastern route army attacked Tsushima and Iki and then attempted to land in Hakata bay. As before, the ferocity of the Japanese defence forced them back. The Mongols established themselves on two islands in the bay, one of which, Shiga, was connected to the mainland by a narrow spit of land. From these islands they launched attacks against the Japanese for about a week, while the Japanese responded with night raids against the Mongol ships. The Japanese boats, holding between ten and fifteen samurai, would close with a Mongol ship under cover of darkness, then lower their own masts to make a bridge for boarding. The samurai would then engage in hand-to-hand fighting with their swords. On one occasion 30 samurai swam out to a Mongol ship, decapitated the entire crew, and then swam back. A certain Kusano Jirō led a raid in broad daylight and set fire to a ship even though his left arm was cut off. Kōno Michiari also led a daytime raid with two boats. Thinking the Japanese were approaching to surrender, the Mongols allowed them to come close, at which they were boarded and a high-ranking general was captured. Attempts were also made to dislodge the Mongols from Shiga island.

The Mongol response to the raids was to stretch chains between their ships, and shoot stones by catapults to sink the Japanese vessels. But at the end of this phase of the invasion, the bravery of the samurai, unaided by meteorological intervention, led the Mongol fleet to withdraw to Iki island, there to await the arrival of the southern Chinese contingent. By the early part of the following month, this huge armada had begun arriving at various parts of the Japanese coast from the Gotō islands in the west to Hakata. They eventually made rendezvous to the south of Iki, near the island of Takashima, where the Japanese launched a bold raid which deserves the title of the battle of Takashima. The fighting lasted a full day and night, but the Japanese were eventually driven off by sheer weight of numbers. A massive attack



*During the second attempt to invade Japan by the Mongols, the Japanese samurai took the fight to the Mongol ships in a series of hit-and-run raids under the cover of darkness. This painting is in the Mongol Invasion Museum in Fukuoka, and is based upon a section of the Moko Shurai Ekotoba (Mongol Invasion Scroll).*

on Hakata bay now looked inevitable, but never happened, because within days of the Japanese attack at Takashima, a typhoon blew up. This was the famous kami-kaze, the wind of the gods. Unlike the first typhoon, this one is well documented, and was devastating in its effects. Korean casualties were 7592 out of 26,989, nearly 30 per cent, but the Mongol and Chinese figures were much higher, between 60 per cent and 90 per cent. Forced by the Japanese raids to stay in their ships, and unable to drop anchor in protected harbour waters, the Mongol fleet was obliterated. Tens of

thousands of men were left behind with the wreckage as the remains of the fleet headed home, and most of these were killed in Japanese attacks over the following few days.

The failure of the Mongol invasions illustrated a great weakness among this all-conquering dynasty of Khans: an inability to cross water to wage war. During the Mongol subjugation of Korea, the Korean capital was moved temporarily to a small offshore island, which the Mongols repeatedly failed to capture. For the Japanese invasion, therefore, they had to depend upon naval support from conquered peoples, who may well have been reluctant to give their all for their own conquerors.

To the Japanese, the bravery of the samurai during the 'little ship' raids quickly became subsumed, and almost forgotten, under the gratitude for the divine gift of the kamikaze, whereby, to quote from a religious account, a 'divine storm rose in mighty force and scattered the enemy ships'. In fact, no rewards were granted to samurai until 1286, and one samurai, Takezaki Suenaga, had the famous Mongol Invasion Scroll painted to illustrate his own exploits. Yet the threat from overseas continued for many years, and in 1301 it was believed that an invasion fleet had been seen off the coast of Satsuma province. The samurai of the Hakata area providing coastal defences were taken off alert only in 1312.

#### THE STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE - THE FIGHT FOR MOJI CASTLE

During the Sengoku Period, the long-term achievement of strategic aims was frequently accomplished by a series of comparatively minor tactical accomplishments. Accounts of grand strategy, when they are examined in detail, may still be expressed in the overall goal of the control of several provinces, but are often reduced in practice to the slow and methodical capture of small mountain-top fortresses. Thus the expansion of the Hōjō family out of the Izu peninsula with the capture of Odawara in 1494, to the taking of Edo castle in 1524, breaks down into a series of successful sieges and raids.

The castle of Moji, built on the northern tip of Kyūshū island, provides an even more dramatic



example of grand strategy being reduced to a series of small and mundane engagements. However, instead of the Hôjô's remorseless progress, this tiny fortress was to witness a movement one way and then another, as it changed hands no less than five times within a space of four years, and at one time witnessed an almost unique event in samurai warfare – the intervention of Europeans.

Moji's location provides the clue to its great strategic importance. It was built at the narrowest point where the straits of Shimonoseki divide Japan's two main islands of Honshû and Kyûshû. On the Honshû side, the Akamagu shrine marks the site of one of the most decisive conflicts in Japanese history: Dan no Ura. This was the epic sea battle fought in 1185 when the Taira were finally defeated by the Minamoto, and the sea was stained red with the blood of the slain and the dye from the red flags of the Taira. Nowadays there is a suspension bridge across the straits, while three tunnels, for rail, road and foot, lie beneath the sea. The promontory on which Moji was built juts out into the strait, and commands the passage in each direction as the Gibraltar of the Inland Sea. It is 175 metres above sea level at its highest point.

A castle was first built here by Ôuchi Yoshinaga, the brother of Ôtomo Sôrin Yoshishige. Yoshinaga was chosen to continue the Ôuchi line when the family were wiped out by the revolt of their vassal, Sue Harukata. Sue Harukata was in turn defeated by Môri Motonari at the famous battle of Miyajima in 1555. This left the Môri free to expand, and Ôuchi Yoshinaga, who had established Moji castle but was unable to take advantage of its protection, was forced to commit suicide as the Môri troops advanced upon him in 1557.

As the Ôtomo base was northern Kyûshû, Moji stood at the extreme edge of their territory and represented a challenge to any daimyô who wished to cross the straits and engage them. The challenge was accepted by Môri Motonari, and in June 1558 his troops stormed Moji castle and took it, thus giving them a foothold in northern Kyûshû. A certain Niho Uemondayu was given the honour of defending this valuable prize. Not surprisingly, the Ôtomo concentrated enormous resources on

winning back Moji, and Ôtomo Yoshishige led an assault in person in September 1559. Niho Uemondayu, isolated from the main Môri forces across the strait, was heavily defeated, and the Ôtomo once again held all of this northern Kyûshû territory.

The fall of Moji to the Ôtomo naturally prompted the Môri family to attempt its immediate recapture. Kobayakawa Takakage, the son of Môri Motonari, led the Môri navy in an amphibious operation that same year. The Môri troops, whose vanguard was commanded by Ura Munekatsu, landed west of Moji, half-way between the castle and the present-day city of Kokura. Ura led his men in a rapid march east, surprising the Ôtomo by their appearance from this unexpected direction. Many heads were taken, and the castle returned to the possession of the Môri. Within the space of three years Moji had passed from the Ôuchi to the Ôtomo, from the Ôtomo to the Môri, from the Môri back to the Ôtomo, and then from the Ôtomo back to the Môri again. This time the Môri were determined that Moji should be their permanent possession.



*Môri Motonari, the great daimyô of the Inland Sea, is shown in this hanging scroll in Ôsaka castle. His kimono bears numerous reproductions of the Môri mon.*

The great asset that the Mōri possessed was their fleet, so that when the Ōtomo launched the furious assault against Moji that all had been expecting, the garrison held out desperately while the Mōri navy sailed south down the eastern coast of Kyūshū and landed at Nakatsu. Here they managed to wrest control of the main road from Bungo province, the Ōtomo territory, along which all the supplies for the army were transported. With his lines of communication cut, Ōtomo Yoshishige abandoned the attack on Moji castle, and did not return to the fray until 1561.

When 1561 came, the task of recapturing Moji for the Ōtomo was entrusted to Yoshishige's brother Ōtomo Yoshihiro. The base for the operation was to be the castle of Kokura, 12 km west of Moji. Yoshihiro realised that the greatest challenge he faced was from the Mōri fleet, so he decided to take on the factor of naval support in a novel and dramatic way. At that time a number of Portuguese ships were anchored at the port of Funai in Bungo, having been welcomed there by Ōtomo Yoshishige. His contacts with the friendly Europeans had boosted their trade, and they were now to use that relationship in a way never seen before in Japanese history. Ōtomo Yoshishige invited the Portuguese to assist him by bombarding Moji castle from the sea. For the Portuguese to accept was a very risky step, which threatened to imperil the delicate relationship they had built up with the Japanese. To be seen to be so partisan towards a friendly daimyō that they would assist him in war against a neighbour was an act that could threaten the existence of other traders and missionaries elsewhere in Japan. It was particularly risky to be seen attacking the Mōri, as Yamaguchi, within what was now Mōri territory, was a well-established centre of Japanese Christianity. Yet the Portuguese agreed, and three ships sailed northwards into the straits of Shimonoseki and opened fire against the defenders of Moji.

Each ship was of between 500 and 600 tons, with 300 crew and 17 or 18 cannon. With their guns at as high an elevation as was possible, Moji was bombarded. The effect on the garrison was dramatic. Firearms had been known in Japan for less than twenty years, and never before had Japanese troops been subjected to the firepower of European ships. The cannonballs smashed the

wooden and bamboo fences and caused many casualties, but the effect on the castle morale was devastating. Moji would almost certainly have fallen immediately, had it not been for the fact that the Portuguese ships had not come to Japan expecting to be used in warfare, but were armed merely for self-defence. As a result, the Ōtomo's foreign allies very soon ran out of cannonballs. Once their ammunition was exhausted, they had no further role to play, and turned to sail back to Funai.

The Portuguese action had nonetheless served a very useful purpose in keeping the garrison occupied while the relatively undisturbed Ōtomo army surrounded the promontory on which Moji was built. Smaller numbers of Ōtomo troops had also been able to move round among the rocky cliffs that faced northwards towards Honshū. From across the straits at this point, the Mōri could only watch helplessly as the bombardment continued, but once the ships withdrew, the Mōri commanders, Kobayakawa Takakage and Mōri Takamoto, realised that their command of the area had not been permanently challenged. They decided to reinforce the garrison by sea, and in a dramatic move, Takakage and a certain Horitate Iki-no-kami led a crossing in small boats with naval support from Murakami Takeyoshi and the main Mōri fleet. The army rowed across in the manner of a suicide squad, and by fierce fighting the Mōri troops managed to land. They pierced the Ōtomo lines, which were weakest at this point, and entered Moji castle to reinforce and reinspect its garrison.

The rest of the Ōtomo siege lines were undisturbed, but realising the mettle of the Mōri, and regretting that the Portuguese ships were unlikely to return, Ōtomo Yoshishige ordered an all-out assault on Moji within the next few days. The attack was launched on 10 October 1561. The command of the Moji garrison had passed to the redoubtable Kobayakawa Takakage, who conducted several sallies in person out of the castle gates and into the Ōtomo lines. The Mōri force outside the castle were led from across the straits by Ura Munekatsu and Kodama Narikata, under the overall command of Mōri Takamoto. Ura and Kodama led the Mōri fleet across the sea along the coast from Moji, taking the besiegers in the flank with a bitterly contested landing.

This proved to be the decisive action. Ura Munekatsu conducted the assault in person, and attracted the attention of many Ōtomo troops, eager to gain his head. The most prestigious opponent to face him was the Ōtomo general Imi Danjō Saemon, who engaged his elite rival in single combat. At first Ura Munekatsu was struck in the face by Imi's spear, the blade cutting his cheek near his nose, but Ura hit back, and killed Imi with his spear. This was a tremendous boost to the morale of the Mōri force, whose spirits lifted, and they began to cut into the Ōtomo besiegers with renewed vigour. Realising that the fall of the castle was now an impossibility, Ōtomo Yoshishige ordered a general withdrawal, which was carried out at the dead of night. Moji was left to the Mōri family, and remained a long-term embarrassment to the Ōtomo, whose attentions were subsequently to be directed against new enemies to the south in the shape of the Shimazu family.

Ōtomo Yoshishige became a monk under the name of Sōrin the following year, but he never lost his friendship with the Portuguese and accepted baptism in 1578. Yet even this was insufficient to persuade the Europeans to repeat their risky strategy of translating their support for a daimyō into military intervention. It is true that Dutch ships bombarded Hara castle during the Shimabara rebellion of 1638, but by then Christianity in Japan had been outlawed, and the Tokugawa shogunate was not at all worried about offending anyone. The Mōri therefore remain unique as the only samurai clan to have suffered bombardment from Portuguese ships during the time of civil wars.

#### BATTLEFIELD CONTROL – THE FOURTH BATTLE OF KAWANAKAJIMA, 1561

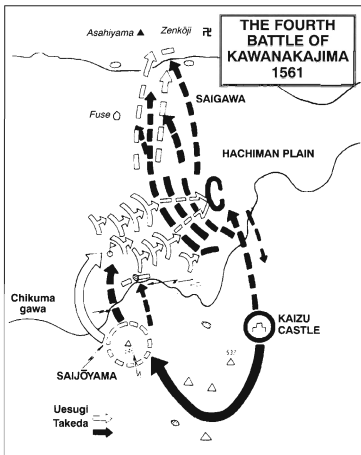
The fourth battle to be fought at Kawanakajima between the Takeda and the Uesugi produced the largest percentage casualty figures for both sides of any battle in the Sengoku Period. It is also worth studying for its complex tactical manoeuvring, much of which was carried out under cover of darkness.

The Kawanakajima plain is an area of flatland where the territories of Uesugi Kenshin and

Takeda Shingen met. It is triangular in shape and surrounded on all sides by mountains. To the north of the plain the Saigawa flows almost due east, and makes a natural northern boundary. The wider and stronger Chikumagawa flows from south-west to north-east, where it is joined by the Saigawa, skirting closely the southern mountain range, and thereby restricting an army's access to the plain from any southerly direction. Just to the south of the Chikumagawa, Takeda Shingen maintained a fortress, Kaizu castle, an old place which he had rebuilt after the invasion of Shinano. Kaizu was the Takeda forward position against the Uesugi. North of the Saigawa, on the edge of the northern mountains, is the great Buddhist temple of Zenkōji which was effectively a Uesugi possession, and is now surrounded by the modern city of Nagano. In all, five engagements were fought at Kawanakajima, of which the fourth, contested in 1561, was one of the bloodiest and most spectacular battles in Japanese history.

In September 1461 Uesugi Kenshin left his headquarters of Kasugayama castle at the head of 18,000 soldiers, determined to destroy Shingen once and for all. Kasugayama was about 70 km due north from Kawanakajima. His objective was Kaizu. Kenshin did not make his base at the Zenkōji, but decided to threaten Kaizu from nearer at hand, on high ground of his own choosing. So, leaving about a quarter of his troops in the Zenkōji, Kenshin crossed the Saigawa and the Chikumagawa, and took up a position on Saijōyama, a mountain to the west of the castle which forms a north-westerly-pointing spur of the southern chain. Here his army looked down on Kaizu. He strengthened Saijōyama with field fortifications, and began to wait patiently for any move from the Takeda.

The Kaizu garrison, which numbered no more than 150 mounted samurai and their followers, appear to have been taken completely by surprise by Kenshin's move. They were under the command of Kōsaka Danjō Masanobu, one of Shingen's 'Twenty-Four Generals'. Kaizu was 130 km from Tsutsujigasaka, Shingen's fortress in Kōfu, but the well-organised system of signal fires, described elsewhere, enabled Kōsaka Danjō to transmit to his lord in less than two hours the news that Uesugi Kenshin had advanced. Uesugi Kenshin made no



*Below: The Kuruma Gakari formation used by Uesugi Kenshin at Kawanakajima.*



attempt to prevent the message from getting through. His threat to Kaizu was merely the bait that would encourage Shingen to bring a large army to the foot of Saijōyama, where Kenshin could fall upon him.

The moment that Shingen received the signal, he gave orders for the Kai-based army to mobilise. The position was very serious. His main fear was that Kenshin would take Kaizu, which controlled communications north on to the plain of Kawanakajima, and from Kawanakajima south through the mountain passes. Shingen took personal command of a host of 16,000 men. They

marched in two sections, rejoining near Ueda, and continued north on the west bank of the Chikumagawa, which here flows in a northerly direction. No doubt divining Kenshin's intentions, he kept the Chikumagawa on his right flank, always between him and Saijōyama, until he reached the ford of Amenomiya, where he pitched camp with the river between him and Kenshin's position. It had taken them 24 days to reach Kawanakajima.

Neither army made a move. Both realised that for a battle to succeed against the other there had to be an element of surprise to throw the adversary off-balance. So Shingen struck camp, crossed

the Chikumagawa in front of Saijōyama, and marched his army straight into Kaizu. The numbers of his troops, swollen by reinforcements from Shinano, had by now grown to about 20,000, but this vast host was not to remain for long packed into the castle. Shingen, or rather his 70-year-old gun-bugyō (army commissioner), Yamamoto Kansuke, had plans. The chronicle *Kōyō Gunkan* makes the analogy with the woodpecker, which strikes its beak on the bark of a tree, and when the insects rush out through the hole in the bark, the bird gobbles them up. Kōsaka Danjō Masanobu, the keeper of Kaizu, was to play the part of the woodpecker. With a force of 8000 men, he was to climb Saijōyama from the rear by night, and attack the Uesugi positions. This would drive the Uesugi army down the north side of the mountain, across the Chikumagawa at the ford of Amenomiya and into the waiting muzzles and sharp blades of Shingen's main body. Shingen would have left Kaizu at midnight, crossed the river on the far side of Kaizu from Saijōyama, and taken up a prepared battle formation at Hachimanbara in the centre of the flatland of Kawanakajima, all under the cover of darkness and in total secrecy. Kenshin's array would therefore be caught between two samurai armies as dawn broke, and utterly destroyed.

The moves began at midnight of the day selected. Takeda Shingen led 8000 men out of Kaizu, and across the Chikumagawa to Hachimanbara, a march of about four kilometres. Here he drew up his army in the battle formation known as kakuyoku, or 'crane's wing'. The mere fact that the Takeda arrangement was carried out in almost total darkness suggests that hours must have been spent training the Takeda army to move quickly into pre-arranged positions.

Unknown to Shingen, however, Uesugi Kenshin had not been idle. His scouts on Saijōyama, or perhaps vigilant spies sent down to Kaizu, reported seeing signs that Shingen was making a move. Kenshin guessed what the plan might be, and planned a counter-move, also to be carried out at dead of night. In total secrecy Uesugi Kenshin descended from Saijōyama by its western flanks. Instead of fleeing before Kōsaka's dawn attack, the Uesugi army crept carefully down the mountain. To deaden the noise of movement, his horses'

hooves and bits were padded with cloth, and as Shingen moved to Hachimanbara Kenshin likewise crossed the Chikumagawa, in his case by the ford of Amenomiya, and entered Kawanakajima somewhat to the west of Shingen's position. As dawn broke, the Takeda army peered through the dispersing mist to find the Uesugi army not fleeing across their front, but bearing down upon them head-on in a fierce charge.

It was a carefully organised attack, which the Uesugi must have practised. As one unit became weary it was replaced by another, a method recorded in the *Kōyō Gunkan* as kuruma gakari, or 'winding wheel'. Leading the Uesugi vanguard was a certain Kakizaki Kageie, one of the Uesugi 'Twenty-Eight Generals'. His unit of mounted samurai crashed into the Takeda unit commanded by Takeda Nobushige, who died in the fierce hand-to-hand fighting which followed. As Kakizaki's unit withdrew to rest, they were replaced by fresh bands of mounted samurai who kept up the pressure. Takemata Hirotsumi led his followers against the veteran Takeda leaders Naitō Masatoyo and Morozumi Masakiyo, and was knocked clean off his horse, the force of the blow as he hit the ground dislodging his helmet. Once again the Uesugi tactic of rotating the front-line troops was put into operation, and Takemata Hirotsumi withdrew to be replaced by another.

Yamamoto Kansuke soon realised that his carefully made plans had failed. He accepted full responsibility for the apparent disaster and resolved to make amends by dying like a true samurai. Taking a long spear in his hands, he charged alone into the midst of the Uesugi samurai, where he fought fiercely until, overcome by bullet wounds, and wounded in 80 places on his body, he retired to a grassy knoll and committed hara-kiri.

Meanwhile Takeda Shingen, seated on his folding camp-stool, was trying desperately to control his harassed army from his command post. Discipline was good, and the kakuyoku was holding up well, even though it had not been designed as a defensive formation. But great danger was at hand. The enemy had by now reached the Takeda headquarters troops and Shingen's personal bodyguard. Shingen's son Takeda Yoshinobu was wounded, and at this point there occurred one of the most famous instances

of single combat in samurai history. According to the *Kōyō Gunkan*, Uesugi Kenshin himself came bursting into the curtained enclosure of Takeda Shingen's headquarters. He swung his sword at Shingen, who did not have time to draw his own sword, but rose from his camp-stool and parried the blows as best he could with his heavy war-fan, which he had been using for signalling. He received three cuts on his body armour, and took seven on the war-fan until one of his retainers, Hara Ōsumi-no-kami, came to his aid and attacked the horseman with his spear. The blade glanced off Kenshin's armour, making the spear shaft strike the horse's rump, which caused the beast to rear. By now others of Shingen's guard had rallied to their master's side, and Kenshin was driven off.

One by one the Takeda samurai fell. After Shingen's brother, and Yamamoto Kansuke, there followed Morozumi Masakiyo, who had suffered the first assault. Yet in spite of the fierce rotating attacks by the Uesugi army, the Takeda main body held firm. Obu Saburōhei fought back against Kakizaki's samurai. Anayama Nobukimi destroyed Shibata of Echigo, and actually succeeded in forcing the Uesugi army back towards the Chikumagawa; and of course, while this surprise attack was going on, the 'woodpecker' force under Kōsaka Danjō Masanobu had arrived at the summit of Saijōyama.

Their advance had been conducted in great stealth, and no doubt the silence that greeted them was put down to their skill in failing to attract the attention of Kenshin's sentries. They soon realised what had happened. The Uesugi position was deserted, and they could hear the noise of battle coming from the plain to the north. They immediately descended Saijōyama by the paths that led down to Chikumagawa at the ford of Amenomiya, the same route that they had planned should be the one that Kenshin would choose in panic.

Now the detached Takeda force flew down to the ford to hurry to the aid of Shingen's main body. Uesugi Kenshin had prudently left the ford of Amenomiya guarded by a detachment of 3000 men under one of his most reliable generals, Amakazu Kagemochi. Here took place possibly the most desperate fighting of the day, with victory going eventually to the Takeda force. When Kōsaka and his men forced their way across the ford, the stage

was set to put into reverse all the triumph that had so far been Kenshin's, but would they be in time? The Takeda detached force poured across the river against the rear of the Uesugi samurai, who were now caught between the arms of the pincers, just as the late Yamamoto Kansuke had planned.

Soon the Takeda re-established control. A group of soldiers managed to recover from the Uesugi trophy hunters the heads of Shingen's brother Nobushige and Morozumi Masakiyo, and by mid-day a defeat had been turned into a victory. The Takeda side counted 3117 enemy heads taken, and Shingen held a triumphant head-viewing ceremony. On the morning of the following day, a time of truce, Uesugi Kenshin sent three of his generals, Naoe, Amakazu and Usami, to burn what remained of their encampment on Saijōyama. It would appear that Takeda Shingen made no attempt to stop them, nor to interfere with Kenshin's subsequent withdrawal beyond the Saigawa to the Zenkōji, and, a few days later, back to Echigo province itself. Not that the Takeda army was in much better shape than its opponents. The Uesugi had suffered 72 per cent casualties, and the Takeda, the supposed victors, lost 62 per cent, including several of their most able leaders, in one of the largest encounters of sixteenth-century Japan.

#### THE CHRISTIAN DISASTER - THE BATTLE OF MIMIGAWA, 1578

The battle of Mimigawa was one of the largest encounters ever fought by the mighty Shimazu family of Satsuma province in southern Kyūshū, and their most complete victory. It was also the most serious defeat suffered by the Christian Ōtomo family, and effectively curtailed their power in Kyūshū. Mimigawa also provides an interesting case study in samurai warfare as it contains several elements noted elsewhere in this work: the belief in omens, a detailed muster roll, and a neat use of the Shimazu's well-rehearsed tactical decoy system.

By the year 1577, the Ōtomo and the Shimazu were the two most powerful families in Kyūshū. Ōtomo Sōrin had retired as daimyō in 1576, passing on his rule to his son Yoshimune. At the same time, the Shimazu had been steadily pressing

northwards out of their home province of Satsuma. Itô Yoshisuke finally capitulated in 1576, and his heir Yoshikata sought refuge with the Ōtomo.

In May 1578 the Ōtomo began to move south to challenge the Shimazu. They rapidly destroyed the Shimazu's ally Tsuchimochi Chikanari at his fortress of Matsuo, and Ōtomo Sōrin laid plans to move his capital south to this location. The Ōtomo supporters advised strongly for a cautious approach, but this was not to Sōrin's liking. He had received baptism into the Christian faith at the end of August, the most prominent Japanese ever to be converted by the Jesuits, and during the campaign into Hyūga he was to demonstrate his lordly Christian style in no uncertain fashion. As his army advanced, the newly Christian Ōtomo army destroyed all Buddhist temples and Shintō shrines along their way. We do not have an eye-witness account of these activities, but they probably differed little from the typical actions of another prominent Christian convert, the daimyō Ōmura Sumitada (baptised as Bartholomeo), who ceded Nagasaki to the Jesuits. The Jesuit Father Luis Frois wrote the following:

"As Dom Bartholomeo had gone off to the wars, it so happened that he passed on the way an idol, Marishiten by name, which is their god of battles. When they pass it, they bow and pay reverence to it, and the pagans who are on horseback dismount as a sign of their respect. Now the idol had above it a cockerel. As the tonō (daimyō) came there with his squadron he had his men stop and ordered them to take the idol and burn it together with the whole temple; and he took the cockerel and gave it a blow with the sword, saying to it, 'Oh, how many times have you betrayed me!' And after everything had been burnt down, he had a very beautiful cross erected on the same spot, and after he and his men had paid very deep reverence to it, they continued on their way to the wars."

Similar activities by the Ōtomo did little to endear them to the inhabitants of Hyūga, and caused grave disquiet among the unconverted allies who made up much of his own army. Unlike the Shimazu, whose bonds of loyalty and family relationship were tight, much of the Ōtomo alliance was a loose coalition. In fact, neither Ōtomo leader, the retired Sōrin or the heir

Yoshimune, were leading the army. That task had been left to Sōrin's brother-in-law Tawara Chikataka.

It was not long before the Ōtomo had advanced beyond the Mimigawa (literally 'ear river') into Shimazu territory, where they felt full of confidence, having received such little opposition to their move south. Twenty-five kilometres to the south of the Mimigawa was the castle of Takajō, situated on a rocky plateau between the rivers Takajōgawa (now the Omarugawa) and the Kiribaragawa. Its position made it a naturally strong fortress, and it was held for Shimazu Yoshihisa by his retainer Yamada Arinobu and a garrison of 500 men. On 20 October the Ōtomo set up camp on high ground to the east of the castle, across the Kiribaragawa. Here they set up a gun position, using a large cannon obtained from the Portuguese and nicknamed 'kunizuzuri' ('destroyer of provinces'), to bombard the castle. The Ōtomo troops commenced a siege, which they expected to be a brief one, but the word had got out to the Shimazu headquarters, and soon a large Shimazu army was on its way to Takajō to raise the siege.

The Shimazu garrison, hopelessly outnumbered, had been prepared to die at their posts, but were much encouraged by two events. The chronicle notes that the defenders were suffering from a shortage of drinking water. They had previously obtained it from a stream that ran outside the castle walls, but the besiegers had cut their means of access to it. One day, as if by a miracle, a spring appeared beneath the castle walls. The other miracle was the sudden arrival of Yoshihisa's younger brother Shimazu Iehisa, who entered the castle with reinforcements of 1000 men, and announced that the rest of the Shimazu army were on their way.

The Shimazu family records have a copy of the muster list for the army that advanced towards the Mimigawa.

#### "ASSESSMENT OF MILITARY SERVICE

- Holders of one chō: 2 men, master and follower; the master's service shall be personal.
- Holders of 2 chō: 3 men, master and followers
- Holders of 3 chō: 4 men, master and followers
- Holders of 4 chō: 5 men, master and followers

Holders of 5 chō: 6 men, master and followers  
 Holders of 6 chō: 7 men, master and followers  
 Holders of 7 chō: 8 men, master and followers  
 Holders of 8 chō: 9 men, master and followers  
 Holders of 9 chō: 10 men, master and followers  
 Holders of 10 chō: 11 men, master and followers

"The foregoing is the assessment based upon that for one chō of ricefield. The military service from 10 chō up to 100 chō and 1000 chō shall be performed on the same basis. It should be understood that armour is assessed at the rate of one suit for one chō."

Accounts vary of what happened during the approach. The chronicle *Seihan Yashi* tells us that Shimazu Yoshihisa was held up by a storm at Sadowara. Meanwhile Shimazu Tadahisa proceeded from northern Ōsumi province where he met a detachment of Ōtomo troops and ambushed them. Five hundred were killed, and the Shimazu followed the survivors back towards their headquarters of Matsuyama. Shimazu Yoshihisa sent on his general Ijūin to help Tadahisa to storm Matsuyama. Yoshihisa followed up, and established himself at Takikawara near to Takajō. The Shimazu then sent their vanguard on ahead while the rest of the army lay concealed from view. This was the classic Shimazu tactic, which they operated on eight occasions between 1527 and 1600. Having the advantage of a loyal and cohesive army, rather than a collection of loose allies, the Shimazu were able to operate a decoy system successfully. The decoy force would engage the enemy and then go into a false withdrawal. Other units of the Shimazu would be waiting concealed on the flanks, or could even mount a rear attack as the enemy were drawn into the trap.

An interesting addition to the story is that on the night before the battle, Shimazu Yoshihisa had a dream, as a result of which he composed a poem:

The enemy's defeated host  
 Is as the maple leaves of autumn,  
 Floating on the water  
 Of the Takuta stream.

This was naturally regarded as a good omen, and made known to the army.

The Shimazu drew up their battle lines. They had 30,000 men against the Ōtomo's 50,000. In the centre was the experienced Shimazu Yoshihiro as the decoy. Shimazu Tadahira and Shimazu Tadamune were prepared to attack from the sides. Shimazu Yoshihisa provided the reserve from his headquarters unit on a hill to the rear. In a classic application of the Shimazu tactic of a false withdrawal, the Shimazu allowed the Ōtomo troops under Tagita Shigekane and Saeki Korenori to attack their centre, which held the impact of the assault, and then moved into a controlled retreat. The Shimazu withdrew back across the Takajōgawa, leading the Ōtomo on. Then the troops concealed on the flank moved in, catching the Ōtomo on the same bank of the river. Shimazu Iehisa and Yamada Arinobu sallied down from Takajō castle to attack them in the rear. The result was a disaster for the Ōtomo. Their commander Tawara Chikataka ran away. The generals Tagita, Saeki and another called Tsunokuma were killed, along with thousands of samurai and ashigaru. The great cannon 'kunikuzushi' was never used in the battle, and was captured by the Shimazu.

Shimazu Yoshihisa's dream proved indeed to be a good omen for the victors, because near to the Mimigawa were two large ponds about 7 metres deep and 10 metres across. Many of the Ōtomo died in these ponds, and the flags floating in the water looked like maple leaves. The 25 km stretch northwards to the Mimigawa river from Takajō castle were strewn with the corpses of the slain as the army fled, pursued by the Shimazu.

In all, Mimigawa meant the end of the Ōtomo as a force in Kyūshū, and Fabian Fucan, the author of a polemic against Christianity, was later to use Mimigawa as an example of what happened to a daimyō when he forsakes the worship of the gods and Buddhas for a foreign religion:

"Look! Look at Ōtomo Sōrin of Bungo. In the days when Sōrin was still devoted to the Buddhas and the kami he brandished his power over all of Kyūshū and the glory of his name spread throughout the four seas. But after he entered the ranks of Deus the fortunes of war suddenly turned against him. With his eldest son Yoshimune he fell over Hyūga to fight the Shimazu, suffered a crushing defeat at Mimigawa, and had to flee home deserted by all and in desperate straits. After that



his house gradually fell to ruin, so prosperous, so flourishing for many generations, the family is practically extinct today."

#### RAPID RESPONSE - HIDEYOSHI AND THE BATTLE OF YAMAZAKI (1582)

The battle of Yamazaki provides several illustrations of good practice in samurai warfare. It was won because of Hideyoshi's ability to react to a serious situation with a determined forced march and good tactics on the day.

The background is as follows. When Oda Nobunaga was attacked and forced to commit *hara-kiri* as he rested in the Honnōji in Kyōto, all those who might have been likely to come to his aid were widely scattered and isolated. His brother was in Azuchi, Tokugawa Ieyasu was in Sakai, and Hashiba (Toyotomi) Hideyoshi was occupied with conducting the siege of Takamatsu castle, far along the coast of the Inland Sea. A river had been diverted from its course, and was gradually flooding the castle. The absence of these potential rivals was undoubtedly an important factor in Akechi Mitsuhide's consideration of when to strike. Following the death of Nobunaga, the Akechi force marched on Nijō castle, also in Kyōto, and murdered Nobunaga's son and heir Nobutada. They then sacked Azuchi castle, and had Akechi Mitsuhide appointed to a regency by the court.

When the news was brought to Hideyoshi, he immediately realised that only the swiftest of responses could prevent Mitsuhide from consolidating his position to the degree where the rebellion would have turned into a fait accompli, leading to a progressive increase in his support as time went by. Taking great pains to keep the reason for his departure secret from the enemy, Hideyoshi hastily patched up a negotiated settlement, which only required the dramatic suicide of the castle keeper and the acknowledgement of Hideyoshi's possession of three captured provinces. Once this was accomplished, he sent loyal generals on ahead as an advance guard, with orders to rouse all his supporters in the Ōsaka-Kyōto area and to monitor Akechi's movements.

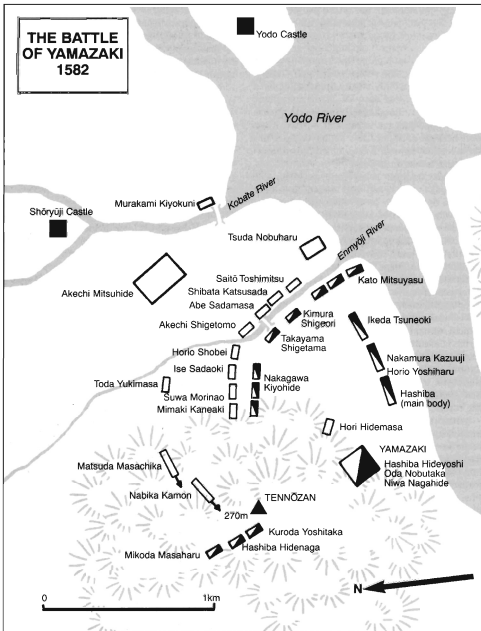
On the evening of the sixth day of the sixth lunar month, Hideyoshi led his army in a forced march of 12 km to Numa, where they stayed the night. Early on the seventh they began a 40 km march further on to Himeji, in which castle he rested during the eighth day. On the morning of the ninth he left Himeji, and with one more overnight stop reached Amagasaki, following the coast of the Inland Sea for a total of 80 km. The pace then slowed as they approached Kyōto, resting after 28 km at Tonda on the night of the 12th.

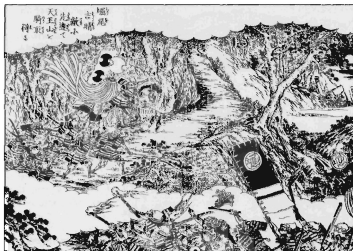
The news of Hideyoshi's approach reached Akechi Mitsuhide on the tenth day. He controlled two dilapidated castles (Shōryūji and Yodo), which covered the approaches to Kyōto from either side of the Yodogawa. As Hideyoshi's army was large, Mitsuhide had no desire to risk being caught inside either castle with his force divided, and resolved to meet his opponent in battle somewhere to the south, with the two castles covering his rear.

Hideyoshi's eye for strategy had led him to similar conclusions, and he also realised that a wooded hill called Tennōzan (270 m), which lay beside a village called Yamazaki, was the key to the control of the area. It completely dominated the road to Kyōto, which was squeezed between Tennōzan and the Yodogawa. Hideyoshi thereupon sent a detachment under Nakagawa Kiyohide to secure the heights, which established his presence in the area, and covered his own movements up to Yamazaki.

Akechi Mitsuhide stationed his army behind the small river called the Enmyōjigawa, which joined the Yodogawa to the north of Tennōzan, and provided an excellent defensive line. The positions of the rival forces are as shown in the accompanying map. On the night of the 12th, two of Hideyoshi's generals, Nakamura Kazuuji and Horio Yoshiharu, sent *shinobi* (ninja) into the Akechi camp, where they set fire to abandoned buildings and generally caused confusion. Nakagawa Mitsuhide was replaced on Tennōzan by other troops, and took up his own position on the Hashiba left flank.

On the morning of the 13th day, Hideyoshi's army moved forward to confront the Akechi force across the Enmyōjigawa. Meanwhile a fierce battle began for control of Tennōzan. Troops under Matsuda Masachika and Nabika Kamon attempted





*Left: Horio Yoshiharu and his troops rush to occupy Tennōzan before Akechi's side have a chance to occupy it. Horio's name appears on the standard in the foreground.*

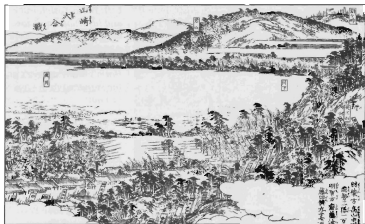
*Below: Hayashi Take-toshi shows his great strength by tackling two opponents in his last fight at Uchide-hama on the shore of Lake Biwa, following the pursuit thither from the battle of Yamazaki in 1582.*

to fight their way up the paths, but were driven back by arquebus fire, with many casualties. With the dominance of Tennōzan thus asserted, Hideyoshi sent his right wing under Katō and Ikeda across the Enmyōjigawa to perform an encircling movement. In spite of fierce resistance, they managed to penetrate the forward troops, and turned towards the Akechi main body. At this Hideyoshi committed his left wing from upstream, who were supported by a fierce surge down from the troops on Tennōzan. The impetus was too much for the Akechi army, which broke and ran, except for the brave Mimaki Kaneaki, who charged forward with only 200 soldiers, and was engulfed in the sea of Hideyoshi's army. As the army broke, the panic spread back even to Akechi Mitsuhide's own hatamoto. The garrison of Shōryūji castle collapsed as Hideyoshi's army continued a vigorous pursuit, and Mitsuhide fled for his life. He only made it to a village called Ogurusu, where he fell victim to a gang of bandits, the sort usually attracted to battlefields, who preyed upon wounded samurai. Their leader thrust a spear at him from within the protection of a bamboo grove, and he fell dead from his horse, thirteen days after arranging the death of Nobunaga.

Hideyoshi's dramatic and decisive victory over the 'thirteen-day shogun' depended upon several factors. The first was his bold decision to nego-



tiate an end to the siege of Takamatsu and force-march his entire army back to Kyōto. This gave him an overwhelming superiority in troop numbers, but he was also able to control the ground on which the battle would be fought by advancing rapidly and securing Tennōzan. The



*The beginning of the main fighting of the battle of Yamazaki is shown in the Ehon Toyotomi Kunkōki. Beside the Yodogawa the forward ranks of spearmen are about to clash. In the distant right hand corner we see the flags of Tsutsui Junkei. In the foreground the troops of Akechi Mitsuhide try to force their way up the slopes of Tennōzan.*



*The end of the battle of Yamazaki. Protected by a bamboo thicket, the bandit leader Nakamura lies in wait for the defeated Akechi Mitsuhide.*

battle was clearly well conducted, with good coordination between Hideyoshi's headquarters, the vantage point on Tennōzan, and the generals who only had part of the overall picture; so we can be sure that Hideyoshi's tsukai (messengers) would have kept themselves busy. Nor was there a shortage of opportunity for individual samurai glory, but at no time did this interfere with the primary aim of the engagement. Only one of Hideyoshi's supporters ended the day ignominiously. Tsutsui Junkei responded half-heartedly to Hideyoshi's call to arms, and sat on the pass of Hora ga toge until he was sure that Hideyoshi was winning, before committing his army. 'To sit on Hora ga toge' has entered the Japanese language as an expression for indecision.

The numbers of troops engaged are as follows:

Toyotomi (Hashiba) Hideyoshi	
Takayama Shigetomo	2,000
Nakagawa Kiyohide	2,500
Ikeida Tsuneoki/Katō Mitsuyasu	5,000
Niwa Nagahide	3,000
Oda Nobutaka	4,000
Hashiba Hideyoshi	20,000
Total	36,500

Akechi Mitsuhide	
Saitō Toshimitsu/Shibata Katsusada	2,000
Abe Sadamasa/Akechi Shigetomo	3,000
Matsuda Masachika/Nabika Kamon	2,000

Ise Sadaoki/Suwa Morinao/Mimaki	
Kaneaki	2,000
Tsuda Nobuharu	2,000
Akechi Mitsuhide	5,000
Total	16,000

#### FIRE AND WATER – HIDEYOSHI AND THE WARRIOR-MONKS (1585)

Many of the greatest generals of the Sengoku Period faced their most formidable tests when fighting against the armies fielded by the various religious contingents. Oda Nobunaga, for example, spent much of his career in a long campaign against the Ikkō-ikki of the Ishiyama Honganji. Nobunaga's successor, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, inherited the fruits of his master's success against this particular variety of priest-soldier, enabling him to concentrate on another coterie of warrior-monks, smaller in number, but no less formidable.

The military challenge Hideyoshi faced was from the priest-soldiers based in Kii province, the area that is now covered by the northern part of Wakayama prefecture. This part of Japan has for centuries maintained a very strong religious presence, centred around the temple complex on the mountain of Kōyasan. Although Kōyasan did for a short period of time maintain its own priest army, its influence was always predominantly a religious one. The first temple on its heights, Kongobuji, was built in 816 by Kūkai (774–835), the founder of the Shingon sect of Buddhism. Kūkai, known posthumously as Kōbō Daishi, is one of the holiest and most revered figures in Japanese religion. Kōyasan, which still receives thousands of visitors and pilgrims, performed two other important functions during the time of the samurai. The first was as a burial ground, and the tombs, if not the bodies, of many distinguished samurai leaders, line the path leading to Kōbō Daishi's mausoleum. The second was as a place of exile. To go to Kōyasan was a way of taking one's leave of the world following defeat or disgrace. A samurai would therefore shave his head and retire to the mountain as an honourable alternative to *hara-kiri*. Chōsokabe Morichika and Oda Hidenobu both trod this course after their defeat at the battle of Sekigahara in 1600.

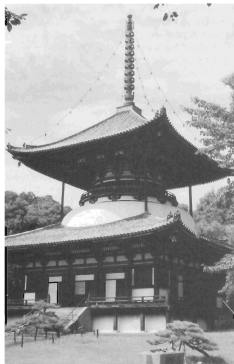
Two other temples near by also maintained priest armies. One was Kokawadera, of the Tendai sect, the same division of Buddhism as Kyōto's Mount Hiei, whose inhabitants were slaughtered in their thousands by Oda Nobunaga in 1571. The other was Negoroji, of the Shingi sect. Shingi, which literally signifies 'new meaning', was a branch of Shingon founded in the twelfth century by the monk Kakuhan (Kōkyō Daishi).

In addition to Negoroji and Kokawadera, across the Kii river lay Ōta castle, headquarters of the Saiga Ikki, which occupied the approximate location of today's Wakayama castle. This was the local manifestation of the populist Jōdo Shinshū armies of the Ikkō-ikki, the same fierce coterie that had defended Ishiyama Honganji and Nagashima against Oda Nobunaga.

It was during the years of Oda Nobunaga's rise to power that the priest-soldiers of Negoroji and Saiga achieved their own reputation for skill in the use of firearms. As noted elsewhere, the chief priest of Negoroji had obtained a Portuguese arquebus within months of the weapon's arrival in Japan. Both temples had gone on to supply contingents of gunners to Ishiyama Honganji. Negoroji was visited by the European Jesuit missionary, Father Caspar Vilela, who has left us a fascinating pen-picture of their warrior-monk army.

Vilela described the appearance of the Negoro warriors as akin to the Knights of Rhodes, but surmised that most of those he saw had taken no monastic vows, because they wore their hair long, and were devoted to the practice of arms, their monastic rule laying less emphasis on prayer than on military preparation. Each member was required to make five or seven arrows per day, and to practise competitively with bow and arquebus once a week. Their helmets, armour and spears were of astonishing strength, and, to quote Vilela, 'their sharp swords could slice through a man in armour as easily as a butcher carves a tender steak!' Their practice combat with one another was fierce, and the death of one of their number in training was accepted without emotion. Fearless on the battlefield, they enjoyed life off it with none of the restrictions normally associated with the ascetic life.

Oda Nobunaga first moved against Negoroji and Saiga in 1577. Taking advantage of the rivalry



*The pagoda of the Negoroji, the only building within the monastic complex to survive Hideyoshi's raid of 1585.*

that existed between the two sects, Nobunaga and Hideyoshi, while not actually destroying them, managed to inflict sufficient damage upon them to neutralise their threat until the destruction of the Ishiyama Honganji was completed in 1580. Following this defeat of the main branch of the Ikkō-ikki, the surviving warrior-monks of Ishiyama and the provinces north of Kyōto supported Toyotomi Hideyoshi during the Shizugatake campaign of 1583, when they harassed the rear of Shibata Katsule. In gratitude for this work, Hideyoshi made land available for rebuilding the Jōdo-Shinshū headquarters in Kyōto.

The monks of Negoroji and Saiga, however, did not side with Hideyoshi, nor did they petition him for support, but instead very unwisely backed his

rival Tokugawa Ieyasu during the Komaki campaign of 1584. This folly brought terrible retribution upon them the following year. On the tenth day of the third month of 1585, an army of 6000 men under the command of Toyotomi (Miyoshi) Hidetsugu, Hideyoshi's nephew, and Hashiba Hidenaga, Hideyoshi's half-brother, entered Kii province. They crushed four minor outposts, and on the 23rd day of the same month approached Negoroji from two separate directions. At that time the military strength of the Negoroji was believed to be between 30,000 and 50,000 men, and their skills with firearms were still considerable, but many had already crossed the river and sought shelter in the more formidable walls of the Saiga Ikki's Ōta castle. Hideyoshi's army therefore put into operation the crudest, but often most effective, tactic in samurai warfare for use when the enemy are occupying a large complex of wooden buildings. Beginning with the priests' residences, the investing army systematically set fire to the Negoroji complex, and cut down the warrior monks as they escaped from the flames.

Ōta castle was under the command of a certain Ōta Sakon Munemasa, whose garrison was now considerably increased at the expense of food supplies. The defences of Ōta made a fire attack impractical, so where fire had succeeded at Negoroji, Toyotomi Hideyoshi chose water to reduce Ōta castle. In a re-run of his successful campaign against the castle of Takamatsu in 1582, Hideyoshi ordered the building of a dike to divert the waters of the Kiigawa and flood the castle. Because of the local topography, building the dam along the north, west and south sides of the castle was a more difficult proposition than at Takamatsu, but a long palisade was begun at a distance of about 300 metres from the castle walls and packed with earth to make a dam. On the eastern side, which was the Kiigawa, the dike was left open to allow the waters in. By the tenth day of the lunar month, the waters of the Kiigawa were beginning to rise around the castle walls. Heavy rain helped the process along, isolating the garrison more completely from outside help.

Nevertheless, the Ōta defenders hung on, encouraged at one point by the partial collapse of a section of Hideyoshi's dike, which caused the



*The view from the castle of Wakayama, site of the former castle of Ōta, shows the estuary of the Kii-gawa, which Hideyoshi dammed to flood the castle.*

deaths of several besiegers as water poured out. Yet soon hunger began to take its toll, and on the 22nd day of the fourth month the garrison surrendered, led by 50 leading samurai who committed a defiant act of *hara-kiri*. The remaining soldiers, peasants and women and children who were found in the castle were disarmed of all swords and guns. Those found to be of samurai families were beheaded, while peasants were sent back to their masters' fields. This conclusion of the operation was effectively a forerunner of Hideyoshi's 'Sword Hunt' of 1587, whereby the non-samurai classes were disarmed, thus ensuring that phenomena like the Saiga ikki would be most unlikely to happen in the future.

#### **SAMURAI AND IRREGULAR TROOPS - GUERRILLA WARFARE IN KOREA**

The tremendous success enjoyed by the invading Japanese armies during the first few months of the Korean invasion in 1592 was eventually blunted by two developments. The first was the resistance by the Korean navy under admiral Yi Sun-shin, which is described elsewhere. Lesser known, but also of great importance, was the resistance on land from guerrilla bands of Korean fighters. The Korean guerrillas were known as the Ŭbyōng ('righteous armies' or 'loyal armies'). Most were led by Confu-

cian scholars who had been out of favour with the Korean government and denied the chance of royal appointment. One such man was Kwak Chae-u, who organised an army within one week of the Japanese landing at Pusan, a time when the Korean army was near to total collapse. Kwak Chae-u was from a wealthy family, and sold his possessions to buy arms for his troops, who swelled to about 1000 men within days. Kwak's target was the Japanese Fourth Army under Mōri Terumoto, whose advance up the Korean peninsula was made along the eastern coast. His men raided the Japanese camps and harassed sentries. They enticed bands of samurai into dead-end valleys and then slaughtered them, or pelted foragers with rocks and slit throats in the dark. Mōri Terumoto's reaction is recorded in a letter he sent home on 26 May 1592:

"The Koreans regard the Japanese soldiers in the same light as the pirates. For this reason they retreat to mountains from which they ambush and shoot arrows at the Japanese soldiers when the latter happen to pass by in small numbers. Fortunately we are not in want of provisions because we can commandeer them in abundance. What I can hardly bear to see is the fact that our soldiers often beat and kill the Korean peasants to force them to deliver their grain."

Reading the above account, it is hardly surprising that the resistance movement flourished. Similar developments happened elsewhere in Korea. The first siege of Chinju by the Japanese was called off largely because of pressure from Korean guerrillas. A guerrilla army approached the Japanese lines from the rear, which greatly encouraged the defenders, and soon afterwards 2000 guerrillas managed to enter the castle while creating a diversion elsewhere. The Japanese army temporarily suspended the attack, but being faced with more guerrillas at their rear, at dawn on 10 October the assault was called off permanently.

In Chollado province, Ko Kyong-myong succeeded in organising an army of 6000 by June 22nd, and it was in this area of Korea, to the west of the overall line of Japanese advance to the north, that the guerrillas scored their greatest success. Because of their resistance, the Japanese never succeeded in overcoming Chollado during the whole of the first invasion. The Japanese



*This painting in the Ch'ungyölsa Shrine in Pusan shows Korean guerrillas raiding a Japanese camp by night. Fires are started and the samurai are cut down.*

general who took the brunt of these attacks was Kobayakawa Takakage, commander of the Sixth Army. Takakage advanced as far as Chonju, and the subsequent battle, fought on 10 July 1592, was one of the most important victories by the Koreans over the Japanese on land. The Korean Yi Kwang led an army which defeated Takakage and drove his division back to Kumsan. Here he made a further stand, then on 18 August was defeated by an army of 700 Koreans, known as the 'Seven Hundred Brave Men', and forced to retreat to Kaenyong. The shrine of the 700 is one of the most important memorials in Korea. No Japanese troops entered Chollado after this until the attack on Namwön which opened the second invasion in 1597.

Another leader, Kim Chon-il, led his guerrilla troops in a successful defence of the town of Suwon, south of Seoul, against a numerically superior Japanese attack. On 1 August the Japanese garrison forces at Ch'ongju were beaten by a guerrilla army which consisted not only of Korean peasants, but Buddhist monks. These little-known warriors, the Korean equivalent of the Japanese *sōhei*, appear to have been every bit as formidable as their better-known counterparts. The victorious 'righteous army' at Ch'ongju was under the command of the guerrilla leader Cho Hon and the Buddhist monk Yongkyu. The most famous leader of the Korean monks was Hyujong (1520-1604), who took charge of the resistance by monastic forces as early as July 1592. Yujong (1552-1617),

who led another army of monks, later took part in peace negotiations with the Japanese.

Righteous armies also operated in the northern part of Korea. On 1 September an army under Yi Chong-am attacked Kuroda Nagamasa's garrison at Yonan, to the north-west of Seoul. Yonan was perilously isolated from the main theatre of Japanese operations, and when it fell to the Korean guerrillas, Kuroda Nagamasa retreated, and the invasion of Hwanghaedo province was put dramatically into reverse. At the other end of the peninsula, the town of Kyōngju was similarly recaptured. Katō Kiyomasa's Second Army, which took the longest route to the north-east through Hamgyondo province, suffered greatly during the Korean winter from guerrilla raids on his lines of communication. Reaction such as that demonstrated helped prevent the Japanese army from gaining a foothold in Manchuria during its brief excursion across the border, and contrasted sharply with the easy victories the Japanese gained against regular troops.

Ankokuji Ekei wrote a letter home expressing his annoyance at the Korean resistance. It is in a similar vein to the thoughts conveyed by Mōri Terumoto:

"Cattle and horses are also abundant. Now we have commandeered 24 or 25 horses, including riding horses, for our service. What is disgusting, however, is the fact that Korean rebels often shoot at us with their small bows, killing us Japanese. They set fire to Japanese ships and kill the crew,



*A feature of the Japanese invasion of Korea was the fierce resistance put up by the Korean warrior-monks. This memorial to them is in Seoul, and shows the followers of Yujong (1552-1617). The lightly armed troops are wielding composite bows.*



too. For this reason we have to scour the streets to punish the rebels."

Not all Koreans, however, were guerrillas fighting against the Japanese. Some formed bandit groups and collaborated with the invaders for their own ends. These men were as ruthless with the patriots as were the Japanese:

"Before long the refugees began to return to the marketplaces of Seoul where they earned a living by selling goods to the bandits. Meanwhile the bandits issued passes to co-operative citizens, who in turn were allowed passage through the gate of the city by Japanese guards. Therefore all the citizens came to request the issuing of passes. They were forced to contribute labour for the bandits and did not dare refuse. There were some traitors who spied on the patriotic activities of the brave, and informed the bandits of their findings. Consequently, the bandits resorted to ruthless measures, burning the patriots alive outside the South Gate. The corpses piled up below the gate."

Such was the harsh reality of divided loyalties in an occupied country.

#### **SEA POWER - THE NAVAL CAMPAIGNS IN THE INVASIONS OF KOREA (1592-8)**

When Toyotomi Hideyoshi launched the first Japanese invasion of Korea in 1592, his aim was for a swift conquest of that country, followed by an advance into China. The first part of the

strategy succeeded almost totally. That the second never happened was due to two major factors: the resistance by Korean guerrilla fighters, and the remarkable achievement of naval supremacy by the Koreans.

The naval campaign of the Korean invasions was initiated totally from the Korean side, and revealed a weakness in Japanese strategic planning. The campaigns of conquest which Hideyoshi had already carried out on the Japanese islands of Shikoku and Kyūshū had depended on making successful sea crossings with large armies. Whether it was the lack of resistance at sea encountered during both operations, or the comparatively short distances that had to be crossed, the Korean expedition was launched under the expectation that the naval aspect of the exercise was little more than that of simply transporting troops. Nor did the initial landings at Pusan do anything to shake that assumption. The seas around were guarded by a certain admiral Won Kyun, who, when faced with the sight of the Japanese invasion fleet, ran away. The initial advance northwards through Korea then proceeded unhindered.

Following this débâcle, Won Kyun summoned help from the Korean admiral who had charge of the sea areas further to the west along the southern coast. This man was admiral Yi Sun-shin, who was to become one of the most celebrated figures in Korean history. Almost as famous as the man himself were his *kōboksōn* ('turtle ships'),

which the Japanese nicknamed the *mekura bune* ('blind ships') because of their fearsome manner of attack like a blind samurai warrior. Compared with the clumsy Japanese transports, the turtle ship was strong, fast and manoeuvrable, but its best known features are better described in Yi's own words, as recorded in his diary:

"A dragon head is added to the bow of the ship. We can fire cannons through the mouth of the dragon while we have the deck covered in iron spikes. Although our crew can look at the enemy from the ship, the enemy cannot see into it from the outside. We can penetrate the enemy line with hundreds of ships and destroy them with our superior firepower."

More details come from Yi's nephew, Yi Bun, who accompanied him during the war:

"We have built a new battleship which is as large as a *panoksón* (the largest battleship in the Korean navy at the time). There is a narrow passage on the deck in the shape of a cross, while we have the rest covered with iron spikes to leave no room for the enemy to try boarding tactics. The bow is shaped like the head of a dragon and the stern the tail of a turtle. A gunport is installed at each end of the dragon head, and six more on each side of the ship. The name turtle ship is derived from the shape. In battle, we camouflage the deck

with straw mattresses before we send the ship to the head of the assaulting fleet. If the enemy attempted to board the ship they would be pierced to death by the spikes. If the enemy ships tried to encircle the ship they would be destroyed by the superior firepower of the guns. Indeed, the turtle ship could infiltrate among hundreds of enemy ships at its own will, and wherever it went, made easy prey of all."

The first encounter between the turtle ships and the invading Japanese happened at Okpo, just off one of the numerous islands along the southern coastline of Korea. Yi Sun-shin sailed from his base at Yosú at 2.00 a.m. on 4 May 1592. On 7 May he was joined by other sailors, including Won Kyun, and found the Japanese fleet anchored off Okpo beach, where most of the ships' occupants were busy looting. Yi attacked, and when the operation was over the Japanese had lost 26 ships. At 5.00 p.m. on the same day he received reports that five large Japanese ships had been sighted off Happpo (present-day Masan). Yi went off in pursuit and destroyed them later that same evening. In the early morning of 8 May he pursued a further thirteen Japanese ships and sank them at Chokjinpo. These three actions, usually referred to collectively as the battle of Okpo, demonstrated a clear deficit in Japanese military preparations.



In the meantime, the main force of the Japanese navy had arrived at Pusan. The army had landed and had begun its march northwards, while the Japanese navy proceeded to round the Korean peninsula to the west, the area of Chollado province. With a fleet of 23 warships, Yi set off to intercept the Japanese move westwards along the coast towards Sach'ôn. Here he found that most of the Japanese had disembarked with a view to heading inland, and had set up a maku (field curtain) on a hill overlooking the harbour, together with many flags. Twelve Japanese ships lay at anchor and presented an inviting target, but an ebbing tide, and the approach of night, made it impossible for Yi to attack them where they lay. Instead he sailed in, and then ordered a false withdrawal. The Japanese clambered back on to their ships and set off in hot pursuit. By then the tide had turned, enabling Yi to launch a bombardment on the Japanese as soon as they were lured into the open sea. The fighting was fierce, and Yi himself suffered a shoulder wound from an arquebus ball.

The next battle, at Tangpo on 1 June, was also prompted by the presence of a Japanese fleet looting the nearby port. It was under the command of Kurushima Michiyuki, who sat in some state in his ornate flagship. This became the main target of the Korean fire. Kurushima was hit by an arrow and fell into the sea, at which two Koreans dragged him out and beheaded him. An unusual trophy also fell into Korean hands at Tangpo in the form of a golden fan presented by Hideyoshi to one of his commanders, Kamei Korenori. So great was the confusion among the Japanese fleet that Yi planned to send a raiding party ashore, but one of his patrol boat captains reported that 20 Japanese ships were approaching. Yi left Tangpo, and after two days the enemy was sighted in the bay of Tanghangpo. Twenty-six Japanese vessels, including some very large vessels ornamented with cloth curtains, lay at anchor. Once again Yi attacked and set up a false retreat. The flagship and the other large vessels led the pursuit. Yi closed his formation to encircle them, and set fire to the curtains with firebombs. All the Japanese ships were destroyed.

The defeats at Okpo, Sach'ôn, Tangpo and Tanghangpo made it inevitable that the other

Japanese naval commanders, Katô Yoshiaki, Wakizaka Yasuharu and Kuki Yoshitaka, hankered to engage the Korean navy and defeat them. On 8 July Wakizaka's wishes were granted. The combined Korean fleet lay in the harbour of Tangpo when it was reported to Yi that 70 Japanese ships were anchored in the straits of Kyonnaeryang. When Yi reached the force, he found that it was the main Japanese fleet under the command of Wakizaka Yasuharu. The straits allowed little space for manoeuvre, so Yi resolved once again to draw the Japanese out to a wider expanse of sea, which in this case was the vicinity of Hansando (Hansan island). For the third time this manoeuvre was successful, and the resulting battle of Hansando became the most important naval defeat suffered by the Japanese during the first invasion. The Japanese followed the lead set by Yi's scouting vessels, and as they approached, Hansando found themselves sailing into the open arms of Yi's 'crane formation'. Yi's diary records the details of the epic struggle:

"Greatly encouraged by the initial victory, all the generals, officers and men stormed the enemy. They fired all the guns and arrows in their possession to burn the ships and kill all men of the hostile fleet. Annihilation was complete within a matter of hours."

A Japanese account notes:

"The enemy ships in hot pursuit after us shot fireballs at our ships, which were burned and destroyed all of a sudden. Many noble lieutenants of the Wakizaka family, such as Wakizaka Sabe'e and Watanabe Shichi'emon, committed suicide with their swords."

In all, 47 Japanese ships were destroyed and 12 captured. Four hundred survivors swam ashore to Hansan-do. Wakizaka Yasuharu was far luckier:

"However, Yasuharu was aboard a fast ship which had more oars than other ships. Because of the mobility of his ship, he could survive, but it was a narrow escape indeed. His armour was hit many times by enemy arrows."

The news of the defeat at Hansando was communicated to Katô Yoshiaki and Kuki Yoshitaka. They sailed from Pusan and stationed themselves half-way to Hansando near Angolpo (the present day Ungchon), where there was little room for the Koreans to manoeuvre. This time Yi's

tactics of a false retreat did not work, and the Japanese, who had learned of the fate of Wakizaka, stayed in the shallows. Instead, Yi changed his plans and began a number of small raids on the Japanese fleet. He was joined by admiral Yi Ok-ki, until most of the Japanese fleet had been sunk or burned, although with comparatively heavy casualties on the Korean side.

These initial victories by Yi had a pronounced effect on the conduct of the invasion. Faced with the additional pressure from guerrillas, Hideyoshi ordered a cessation to the advance into Chollado province, and ordered Wakizaka to fortify the island of Kôjedo against Korean naval attack.

By August Yi Sun-shin felt that his navy was now strong and experienced enough to make a direct attack on the Japanese base at Pusan, which had become their main gateway into Korea. Yi now commanded 166 ships, including 74 large vessels. At the end of August he was joined by Won Kyun's fleet, and received a report that 400 Japanese ships had been sighted off Pusan. Yi realised that he had been presented with the opportunity of destroying the Japanese reserve fleet that was ferrying the second wave of invaders to Korea. The ensuing battle in Pusan bay on 1 September destroyed a large number of Japanese ships, but failed in its overall objective either to destroy the entire fleet or to control the port, and on 2 September the Korean navy was forced to fall back. This state of affairs continued until the Japanese withdrawal in 1593.

By the time the second Japanese invasion was launched in 1597, admiral Yi Sun-shin had fallen foul of Korean politics and had been replaced by his old rival Won Kyun; so it was he who first opposed the Japanese landings. His intervention was a complete disaster for the Korean navy. On 8 July 1597 his entire fleet met a huge Japanese armada off Cholyongdo island near Pusan. Poor seamanship, coupled with the fatigue of his troops, and a gale that hampered movement, resulted in a humiliating defeat, at which Won Kyun withdrew. Elated by their success, the Japanese took the initiative, and attacked the retreating Won Kyun at Chilchonryang on 16 July. Large numbers of samurai were stationed on Kôjedo island to deal with the Korean survivors who struggled ashore to escape the Japanese boarding parties. Included in

the casualty list were Won Kyun himself, admiral Yo Ok-ki and many others, while over 200 ships of the Korean navy were lost.

The destruction of Won Kyun's fleet allowed the Japanese to advance into Chollado as they had never managed to do in 1592. The siege of Namwôn was carried out successfully, and they also conceived a plan to destroy what remained of the Korean navy and open up a sea route around the west coast of Korea to provide a supply line to the north. The Japanese navy was under the command of Tōdō Takatora, Katō Yoshiaki, Wakizaka Yasuharu and Kurushima Michifusa. However, they were met at Oranpo by a very small Korean fleet under the command of admiral Yi, newly reinstated after the disaster of Chilchonryang. Faced with fierce resistance, the Japanese fleet made a temporary withdrawal, while during the next few days Yi planned the strategy for what was to prove his most remarkable victory of the whole Korean campaign. At the battle of Myongyang, which the Koreans refer to as the 'miracle at Myongyang', Yi's fleet of only twelve ships defeated a Japanese force of 133 ships. Yi's great advantage lay with his intimate knowledge of the strange tidal conditions in the strait of Myongyang, which changed direction from north to west and then back again. His chosen base for meeting the Japanese fleet was at Byokpajin, at the extremity of the tidal flow. The historic battle took place on 16 September. As anticipated, the Japanese approached from Oranpo on a favourable tide. Admiral Yi led a general advance even though the tide was still then against him. The Japanese flagship was sunk, and the head of the Japanese admiral Kurushima Michifusa was taken and placed on a mast-head as an intimidating trophy. At this point the tide turned. Taking advantage of the favourable tide, the Korean ships turned on the Japanese, and destroyed many vessels.

The victory of Myongyang on 16 September 1597 ended the Japanese attempts to control the seas of Chollado as a passage to the north. With the winter of 1597-8 and the siege of Ulsan, the Japanese position became progressively untenable, and by September 1598, by which time Toyotomi Hideyoshi was already dead, Japanese possessions had shrunk to three fortresses,

*The death of Admiral Yi Sun-shin at the battle of Noryang in 1598. The great admiral lies dying from a bullet wound on the deck of his flagship as the victory is assured. This painting is in the Chesung-dang on Hansando island, site of Yi's greatest victory.*



Pusan, Sach'ŏn and Sunch'ŏn. On 20 September Yi sent his fleet against Sunch'ŏn to block the retreat of the Japanese forces while a task force landed on nearby Changdo. Within days the Korean invasion was effectively over, and the Japanese fleet was preparing to head home.

There was one further act to play. On 19 November 1598, admiral Yi intercepted the Japanese armada in the straits of Noryang, a narrow stretch of water which today is crossed by the long Namhae suspension bridge. His surprise attack was so perfect that within hours almost half the Japanese transports were sunk or on fire. Nevertheless, the leading Japanese general, Shimazu Yoshihiro, led a counter-attack. They concentrated on admiral Yi's flagship, and a bullet hit Yi under the left arm. He died on board ship, but his death was concealed from the Korean fleet until victory was assured. As the remnants of the Japanese fleet sailed away, the invasion came to an end, stunted on land, and almost destroyed at sea.

#### CONTROLLING CASTLES - THE SEKIGAHARA CAMPAIGN (1600)

On many occasions in Japanese history, an epic battle was preceded by a very complex series of moves on the part of the opposing generals. The classic example is the case study that follows, illustrating the attempt by the rivals in the battle of Sekigahara to control the two strategic high-ways of Japan by capturing the castles that controlled them. The roads in question were the Tōkaidō (the eastern sea road), which ran from Kyōto to Edo beside the Pacific Ocean, and the Nakasendō (the mid-mountain road), which also

linked the two cities, but passed through the central Japanese highlands instead of along the seacoast.

Tokugawa Ieyasu's home provinces centred on his castle at Edo, and among his fellow regents the one whose territory lay closest to him was Uesugi Kagekatsu, the heir of the famous Uesugi Kenshin. Following Hideyoshi's redistribution of fiefs in 1598, the Uesugi had moved to Aizu, north of Edo, with a huge revenue of 1,200,000 koku. Uesugi Kagekatsu had supported Ishida Mitsunari, Ieyasu's rival, against Ieyasu at the time of a complaint over a political dispute, and when in 1600 Kagekatsu was seen to be building a new castle, Ieyasu decided that his conduct was worth investigating. Not long afterwards he began to attack Ieyasu's territory, so the Tokugawa army made ready to oppose him.

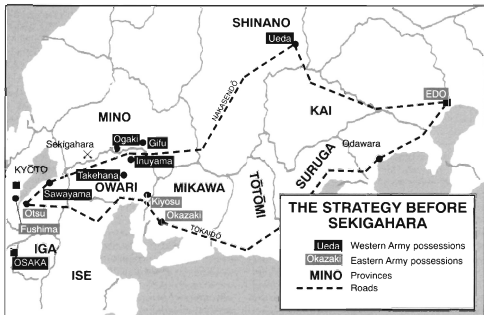
At the time, Tokugawa Ieyasu was in Ōsaka, at the furthest end of the Tōkaidō from Edo. He suspected a trap to draw him out of Ōsaka, and when he began to head east on 18 June 1600, Ishida Mitsunari and his allies must have thought that the trap had succeeded. But Ieyasu proceeded very leisurely towards Edo, taking fourteen days over the journey, and all the while keeping himself fully informed of the situation in the west. As he was preparing to attack Uesugi Kagekatsu, the

message came that Ishida Mitsunari had risen in opposition against him in Ōsaka, hoping that Uesugi would keep Ieyasu completely busy. But Ieyasu had anticipated this move, and delegated the fighting to his local allies, Date Masamune and Mogami Yoshiaki. Their campaigns are covered in the 'battles' section of this book (section IV).

For Ieyasu the issue now became the control of the roads: the mountainous Nakasendō and the coastal Tōkaidō; and once again the decisive area was the flatland around present-day Nagoya, where the two roads came quite close to each other. In those days the Tōkaidō and the Nakasendō, heading eastwards, divided at Kusatsu. East from Kusatsu the Nakasendō was entirely dominated by the 'Western army', as Ishida's allies were called. Sawayama castle, near to present-day Hikone, was Ishida's personal possession, and his family lived there throughout the conflict. Ōgaki castle, just off the Nakasendō to the south, was where he chose to make his campaign headquarters. Gifu castle loomed over the Nakasendō to the north from its rocky base, and Inuyama, which was on the southern shore of

the Kiso river, was also a Western possession. Near to Gifu, downstream, was a minor fortress called Takehana, of which no traces now remain. As Ishida was also acting officially on behalf of Toyotomi Hideyori, the infant heir whose regency was being disputed, the mighty Ōsaka castle was effectively in Western hands. Finally, half-way along the Nakasendō towards Edo, a road branched off to the north, where sat Ueda castle, whose owners, the Sanada family, were gravely to embarrass Ieyasu when he marched west.

For Ieyasu's 'Eastern army', the whole length of the Tōkaidō heading west from Edo was friendly territory as far as their most valuable possession of Oda Nobunaga's old fortress of Kiyosu. Kiyosu was vitally important to the Tokugawa interests. It lay just off the Tōkaidō to the north, on a road that led up to Gifu and the Nakasendō, and the river Kiso flowed between it and the Western fortresses like a long-distance moat. Ieyasu's other valuable bases were Fushimi castle, which was the last fortress Hideyoshi had built, and lay just south of Kyōto, and Ōtsu, on the shore of Lake Biwa, from which the bridges of Seta and Uji could be threatened.



*A detail from the painted screen depicting the battle of Sekigahara in the Watanabe Museum, Tottori. This view shows Tokugawa Ieyasu in command, seated on a tiger skin above his camp-stool and surrounded by his generals within the maku.*



Ishida Mitsunari's objective had been that Uesugi Kagekatsu should attack Ieyasu from the north while he advanced from the west to destroy him. Tokugawa Ieyasu's objective was to attack Ishida's castle of Sawayama, or if that place should be abandoned, to march on and assault Ōsaka itself. For the campaign to succeed between two armies initially so far apart, each had to secure its own fortresses, and attempt to capture those of the other, so the Sekigahara campaign opened with a number of assaults on these castles. Ieyasu's first move was to reinforce Kiyosu, for even if he failed to capture or mask the Nakasendō castles, it was essential that they retain this vital fortress. So, as soon as Ishida's plot was sprung, he sent two flying columns along the Tōkaidō. The first, an army of 16,000 was commanded by Fukushima Masanori, who owned Kiyosu as his fief and had left it in the care of Ōsaki Gemba, nicknamed 'Devil Gemba'. Ishida Mitsunari was at the time at Ōgaki, which was no more than 30 km away, and had been attempting to persuade Devil Gemba to surrender it to him. He refused, and sent a message east for help. Kiyosu was speedily reinforced by Fukushima, and a second army of 18,000 under Ikeda Terumasa.

With Kiyosu as a secure base, the Eastern army could begin an attempt to take the Nakasendō castles. A council of war was held and the decision was made first to attack Gifu and its satellite of

Takehana. Inuyama, being across the Kiso from the Nakasendō, was regarded as less of a threat. Gifu was being held on behalf of the Western army by Oda Hidenobu, who put up a stout resistance. Two Eastern armies crossed the Kiso river, Fukushima concentrating on Takehana, and Ikeda on Gifu itself. Takehana soon fell, and both armies combined, but apparently none too well, because it had been agreed that both armies should advance together, and Ikeda was already slightly ahead. The taking of Gifu provided an unexpected bonus, because when it was seen to have fallen, the isolated garrison of Inuyama surrendered.

The Eastern army had therefore successfully cut the Nakasendō, and apart from the distant Ueda, had safeguarded its communications westwards by both main roads as far as Gifu. Fukushima and Ikeda pushed on cautiously along the Nakasendō towards the area of Ōgaki, and stopped at Akasaka, one of the post-stations, on or about 30 September. Ishida Mitsunari had now been outflanked. Ōgaki lay to the south-east, on the way to Kiyosu, so that far from controlling both roads, the town now looked perilously isolated. Ishida now had to decide whether to abandon it for the security of Sawayama, which he feared, correctly, would be Ieyasu's main objective.

However, while the Eastern army had been occupied in taking Western castles, the Western army had similarly been tackling Eastern-held fortresses. Fushimi was its first objective. Ieyasu

had long realised that when war came, this castle would be a prime target, and before leaving for the east he had visited the keeper of Fushimi, Torii Mototada, to whom he expressed his fears that the castle would not be able to withstand the massive assault that would be brought against it. Torii Mototada replied that the castle would fall even if its strength were multiplied tenfold. He even suggested that Ieyasu reduce the garrison, so that the troops thus freed might be put to better use in his campaign in the east, rather than in attempting to hold on to a forlorn hope. For that was how Torii Mototada saw his role: to divert a large proportion of the Western army while Ieyasu headed east to capture the vital castles of the Nakasendō. Fushimi was expendable if Ishida could be crushed somewhere along the Nakasendō, and as a loyal vassal Torii was prepared to die in his master's service.

The attack on Fushimi began on 27 August, but no impression was made on it despite ten days of fierce fighting and the presence of Ishida Mitsunari himself to spur on the attackers. They managed to set fire to one of the towers using fire arrows, but a samurai managed to put it out, although he was burned to death in the process. Sadly, the fall of the castle came about through treachery. The wife and children of one of the defenders had been taken hostage by the Western army, and a message was sent by arrow to the effect that they would be crucified unless he assisted in betraying the castle. This he did on 8 September by setting fire to one of the towers, and under cover of the flames an assault broke through the walls. This gave the Western army access to the central keep, which they set on fire with fire-arrows. Torii Mototada led five counter-attacks until the defenders' numbers were reduced to ten, whereupon he and his family committed suicide.

The nearby castle of Ōtsu, which was held for the Eastern army by Kyōgoku Takatsugu, was attacked in October by Tachibana Muneshige and Tsukushi Hirokado. The attack seems to have provided a spectator sport for the people of Kyōto, who flocked to the neighbouring hills and the temple of Midera, carrying picnic boxes, to watch the course of the fighting. After two days, Kyōgoku Takatsugu negotiated a settlement,

which stands in marked contrast to the actions of Torii at Fushimi. The second day, however, coincided with the day on which the battle of Sekigahara was fought, so there was little point in fighting to the death against an already defeated enemy coalition. His resistance, too, had succeeded in keeping 15,000 men out of the main engagement.

The Western army's greatest success with the castle campaign occurred at Ueda, on the Nakasendō from Edo. Ueda castle was defended by the renowned Sanada family, and the vigour of their defence managed to prevent Tokugawa Hidetada, Ieyasu's son and heir, from taking part in the battle of Sekigahara. Had the defection by Kobayakawa Hideaki not happened, the omission of this sizeable Tokugawa army could well have been crucial.

In fact, thanks to his successes against these castles, including some minor ones near the Tōkaidō where it crossed Ise province, Ishida Mitsunari had neutralised all threats to his rear, yet in so doing reduced his capacity at the front. His luck changed on 20 October, when the news was brought to him that Tokugawa Ieyasu had arrived at the Eastern army's base at Akasaka. It appears to have come as a great surprise to the Western army commanders, for all their plans had been based on Uesugi Kagekatsu keeping Ieyasu fully occupied in the east. Here was the evidence that Ishida Mitsunari's strategy had failed. He had Fushimi, and Ōtsu was likely to fall, but Ieyasu's army was now on the Nakasendō. Ishida was in Ōgaki, a castle that could be completely sealed off by part of the Tokugawa army while the rest moved on to his headquarters at Sawayama. To hold Ōgaki rather than Sawayama, Ishida commented, would be like holding on to an arm but losing one's head. He decided, therefore, to leave a small force in Ōgaki, and to withdraw rapidly up the road to the north to prevent Ieyasu reaching Sawayama. The place where this road met the Nakasendō would in any case be a good defensive position to meet Ieyasu in battle. It was a narrow valley where the enemy's movements could be tightly controlled, before any other roads branched off to let them deploy. The place was called Sekigahara, and the rest, as they say, is history...





VI  
MISCELLANEA

## MISCELLANEA

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## RELIGION AND THE SAMURAI

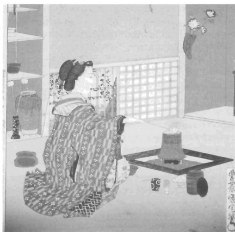
**Japanese religious tradition**

Whereas much of samurai behaviour was influenced by notions of samurai honour and virtue later to be enshrined in the formal martial code of bushidō, no samurai was immune from the all-pervasive world of Japanese religion. Japan's 'five formative traditions' (Shintō, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism and folk religion) have intermingled over the centuries to produce a system that can be understood as an entity. Hence the expression that the Japanese are 'born Shintō, and die Buddhist'. Even the founder of the esoteric Shingon sect of Buddhism in the ninth century AD put it under the protection of tutelary Shintō kami (Shintō deities).

The samurai of Japan recognised little difference between Shintō and Buddhism, each of which made its own contribution to the religious milieu along with the other traditions. For example, from Shintō came a stress on purification and the avoidance of pollution, which causes offence to the kami. Death in battle required Shintō ceremonies to purify the site, as at the battle of Miyajima in 1555, fought on an island that was itself regarded as a Shintō shrine. In a similar way, the adoption of Confucian ethics provided the model for the Tokugawa state without any apparent confusion of beliefs. Not only did the various religions mingle, but Japanese people have always participated in rituals from a number of different traditions, as may be seen at festivals today. The one exception to this rule was Christianity, introduced by St Francis Xavier in 1549, an attitude which was partly to blame for its persecution.

One very important characteristic of Japanese religious belief and practice is that it is by no means a monotheistic system. Instead, various shrines and temples appear to be dedicated to the inhabitants of a vast pantheon of gods. The numerous gods of Shintō are referred to as kami. Historically, the Japanese have been quite content to do without precise notions of what constitutes kami, its very vagueness expressing something of true kami nature, a concept totally contrary to Western thought.

The willingness to accept different traditions is also recognisable in the attitude that Japanese reli-



*A woodblock print of a tea ceremony being performed. An appreciation of the aesthetics of the ritual of the tea ceremony was a vitally important social accomplishment for a samurai with aspirations to high office. Ishida Mitsunari, for example, first attracted Hideyoshi's attentions because of his prowess at the tea ceremony rather than his skills on the battlefield. All the details of the tea room, including the low entrance for the host, the flower arrangement in the tokonoma (alcove) and the tea utensils are well illustrated here.*

gion is as much about doing as about believing. There has always been a strong ritual basis to Japanese religion, with ceremonies closely tied to everyday life. Thus there were rites for planting rice and rites for harvesting it, as well as a host of other activities. This close relationship between religion and daily life is still shown today by the presence in homes of the kamidana (Shintō god shelf) and the butsudan (Buddhist altar), both of which provide a focus for offerings and prayers in short and simple daily religious rituals.

The samurai would not attend weekly religious services in temples and shrines. Instead, like Japanese people nowadays, they would visit a shrine when they had a need for prayer, such as departure for war. When Oda Nobunaga set out on the march that led to his victory at Okehazama in 1560, he wrote a prayer for victory and deposited

it at the great Atsuta shrine near present-day Nagoya. Samurai would also be drawn to shrines on a number of special festival days. Many small Shintō shrines bear a dilapidated or unwanted look for much of the year, but are transformed on the days of their matsuri (festivals). Banners are hung at the torii (Shintō gateway), and the shrine's adherents celebrate, often carrying through the neighbourhood a portable shrine called an omikoshi. The scene can be raucous and colourful as the omikoshi is lugged or pulled along by scores of enthusiastic youths. However, in the years preceding the Gemppei Wars, the sight of an

omikoshi promised curses, not blessings, because the warrior-monks of Mount Hiei would bring their omikoshi down to Kyōto to reinforce their demands by the presence of the kami. Respect for the kami is still maintained in Japan, and even tiny wayside shrines, dedicated to kami whose identity has long been forgotten, will still receive offerings and visits, and are cleaned and maintained by local inhabitants.

#### Taoism and divination

Much Japanese religious belief was simple folk religion, with prayers for worldly benefits, such as

#### WHO WERE THE WARRIOR-MONKS?

The expression 'warrior-monk' is a term frequently encountered in Japanese history. The original word is sōhei (literally 'priest-soldiers', but popularly translated as 'warrior-monks'), who are particularly associated with the ancient Buddhist foundations of Enryakuji on Mount Hiei, near Kyōto, and its daughter temple Onjōji (Miidera), near Ōtsu, or the temples of Nara to the south: Kōfukuji and Tōdaiji. There are references to Buddhist temples arming themselves as early as the tenth century, and for the next 200 years armies of sōhei were to be used, either in disputes between temples, in disagreements between the temples and the imperial court, or in alliance with a particular samurai family or faction.

Contemporary illustrations tend to portray the sōhei as rough characters, implying that many were not ordained priests but warriors recruited by the temples. Their traditional weapon was the naginata, a form of glaive, but they were also proficient in archery and swordsmanship. When in arms against the imperial court, the sōhei would reinforce their presence by carrying into the capital Kyōto the sacred omikoshi (portable shrine) in which the kami (spirit) of the temple was believed to dwell.

The first major conflict involving sōhei and samurai took place at the first battle of Uji in 1180. The Minamoto family used the river Uji as a natural moat to hold back their rivals, the Taira, until such time as the sōhei allies from Nara

could reach them. During the action, two sōhei from Miidera fought celebrated single combats on the broken bridge across the river. Following the defeat of the Minamoto, the Taira attacked Nara and caused great destruction which effectively ended the Nara sōhei's involvement in the war, but sōhei from Mount Hiei assisted in defending Kyōto against Minamoto Yoshinaka. As the *Heike Monogatari* comments:

"Those whom he entrusted with his order to attack Kiso were not warriors of repute but the chiefs of Miidera and Hieizan, who accordingly assembled their bands of unruly monks..."

We may also note the presence of a religious contingent from Kumano, a Shinto shrine, at the battle of Dan no Ura in 1185.

Sōhei from Mount Hiei were involved in the fighting of the Shōkyū War in 1221, and provided military help during the attempt at imperial restoration by emperor Go-Daigo in 1333. For the following two centuries the sōhei were to be sporadically involved in war, culminating in support for the Asai and Asakura families in 1570 against Oda Nobunaga. Nobunaga's reaction to sōhei intervention was a massive raid on Mount Hiei during which the entire temple complex was set ablaze and possibly 20,000 people killed.

The second way in which 'warrior-monk' is often loosely employed refers to the mass-movement Buddhist sects which acquired considerable political power in certain provinces from the fifteenth century onward. These groups reached out to the lowest orders of society, and invariably

safe childbirth, and the role played in this by charms and talismans. These are behaviours which are linked to Taoist beliefs. The tradition of religious Taoism was introduced from China in the seventh century AD. It is a very wide system of belief and practices, incorporating divination and geomancy, and expressed through notions of lucky directions, lucky days and years, and a wide range of complex taboos. In Japanese history Taoism has never stood alone as a separate religious system, but has been thoroughly mixed with Buddhism and Shintō, and has therefore been for centuries an indirect but pervasive influence,

incorporating many elements otherwise identified as 'folk practice'.

There was also the more formal religious system of onmyōdō (the way of yin and yang). The Chinese term yin-yang refers to the two complementary forces of the universe which must balance each other to ensure harmony. Yin is the principle of darkness, cold and femininity. Yang is the principle of brightness, heat and masculinity, and their interaction produces the five elements of wood, fire, earth, metal and water. A government bureau of religious Taoism, the Onmyō-ryō, was established as early as AD675, and its greatest achieve-

acquired political power through military activity. The most important of such movements were the Ikkō-ikki. The second term in the name, 'ikki', strictly means a league, but it has also come to mean a riot, and it was as rioting mobs that the Ikkō-ikki first became known to their samurai betters. The word 'Ikkō' means 'single-minded' or 'devoted', and the monto (disciples or adherents of the sect) were completely single-minded in their devotion to Amida, the Supreme Buddha of the Jōdo (Pure Land) in the West, who will welcome all his followers into the paradise of the Pure Land on their death, where they will live in happiness forever. The Ikkō-ikki movement derived from an offshoot of the Jōdo sect, the Jōdo Shinshū, which welcomed all into its fold, and did not insist upon meditation or any intellectual path to salvation. As its clergy were also not required to be celibate or to withdraw from the world, they were able to evangelise among the peasantry much more freely, and its influence grew rapidly among the common people.

The head of the sect in the fifteenth century was Rennyō (1415-99), who had achieved such fame as a preacher that the rival monks of Mount Hiei had burned his house and forced him to flee north to Kaga province. Here he re-established his headquarters, and very soon his followers became enmeshed in the struggle for supremacy that was going on in Kaga province between various samurai clans. The Ikkō-ikki monto welcomed fighting, as their faith promised that paradise was the immediate reward for death in

battle, and nothing daunted them. In 1488 Rennyō's Ikkō-ikki revolted against the samurai as a whole, and control of the province of Kaga passed into their hands after a series of fierce skirmishes.

As the fifteenth century drew to its close, the sect spread out from Kaga, and established itself in a series of key locations not far from Kyōto. By 1570 there were two major power bases, the Ikkō-ikki fortress of Nagashima, built on a swampy river delta as confusing to strangers as it was powerful, and the greatest Ikkō-ikki centre of all, the huge 'fortified cathedral' of the Ishiyama Honganji. It was built where Ōsaka castle now stands, and thus threatened the capital from the opposite direction. These main bases, with scores of others, provided the overall organisation for a fanatical army that was to occupy the time and resources of all aspiring samurai generals until 1580. It was finally crushed by Oda Nobunaga after the longest and bloodiest campaign in the whole of samurai history.

The final aspect of the concept of a warrior-monk involves the individual samurai leaders who, at some stage in their careers, took monastic or priestly vows, such as the illustrious trio of Hōjō Sōun, Takeda Shingen and Uesugi Kenshin. These were, however, personal gestures, and the men they commanded were not warrior-monks but retained samurai warriors. Katō Kiyomasa was a priest of the Nichiren sect of Buddhism, and bore its motto (Hail to the Lotus of the Divine Law) on his banner.

ment was the introduction to Japan of the Chinese lunar calendar, which was based on Taoist principles. The use of the calendar was one means by which Taoist notions became disseminated among the common people, and mingled with indigenous Japanese beliefs. Its influence went far beyond the delineation of festival days to the identification of certain times as being intrinsically lucky or unlucky. So, for example, a journey should not be started on the 8th day of the month, and rice should not be planted on the day of the Sign of the Horse. Cloth for making clothes is best cut on the Day of the Rabbit, but no laundry should be done on the 15th or 28th days. Certain directions are equally inauspicious. Kitchens and privies should never be built in the north-eastern corner of the house, because this is the exit and entrance for demons. The choice of the site of Kyōto for a capital in AD894 was partly based on the presence to the north-east of Mount Hiei, whose monasteries protected against demons. We noted earlier that certain days were intrinsically unlucky for going to war.

### The samurai and the ancestors

A further characteristic of Japanese religion is the emphasis upon the *ie* (household) rather than the individual, as the basic human religious unit. There are Confucian elements here, with the emphasis upon *kō* (filial piety) as a basis of an ordered society. Nor does this end with the death of a family member, for the most important expression of the primacy of the family in Japanese religion is the central place occupied by ancestor worship, whereby the structure of social relationships within the family unit is extended to encompass the dead. Thus Japanese ancestor worship ensures that death does not extinguish a person's involvement and participation in the life of his family. Instead, by a complex series of rituals designed to keep the ancestors peaceful and content in the successive stages through which they will pass, this continuity is assured.

The samurai laid the greatest store on ancestor veneration. In early Japan the dead were treated with a mixture of fear and respect. The corpse was of course a major source of pollution, requiring Shintō rituals of purification, but the spirit of the dead person was also frightening, as it could linger

in the realm of the living. These spirits of the dead were venerated and, to some extent, manipulated, along the journey they had to take in order to become an ancestral kami. The process, which still exists, is carried out through the rituals of Buddhism, and is the best illustration of the blending of Buddhism with native Japanese beliefs. Its most striking feature is that when a person dies he 'becomes a Buddha', a concept contrary to orthodox Buddhist thought. The sequence may be summarised as follows. The *shirei* (spirit of the recently dead) becomes a *hotoke* (Buddha). After a period of years there is a transformation to *senzo* (ancestor) and finally to a kami, as part of the collective spirits of the locality.

For the first 49 days after death, the aim is to separate the spirit both from the corpse and from the world of the living. A temporary *ihai* (memorial tablet), of unacquered wood or paper, is taken away from the cemetery and placed on a low table in front of the *butsudan* in the home. This is replaced on the 49th day by the permanent *ihai* of black lacquered wood, on which the deceased's posthumous name is written in gold. These are very important objects, rescued at great personal risk from burning buildings as if the ancestors lived in the tablets.

The separation of the spirit from the body is only regarded as complete on the first *Bon* (the festival of the dead) following the death, the annual event when all the ancestral spirits are welcomed back into the household. For the next three or four decades the ancestors will be addressed through their *ihai*, and remembered through various forms of prayer and services. In Japanese tradition, memorial services for the ancestors continue to be held on the anniversary of death until either the 33rd or 50th anniversaries, depending upon the tradition, when a final service is held, and the spirit of the ancestor becomes a kami. These ancestral kami remain eternally in the land, and continue to work for its prosperity and that of the family. The impersonal nature of the ancestors does not, however, indicate that various ancestral spirits have become one. When they come back at *Bon*, they come back as the ancestors of the village, and each goes to his own family as its ancestors. This process is



**Top left:** The yashiki (mansion) of a retainer of the Yagyū in Yagyū village, Nara Prefecture, has a very fine outer gatehouse shown here. It is roofed over, and connects to a low plastered wall.

**Top right:** The exterior of the Buke Yashiki (warrior's mansion) in Matsue. It was built in 1730 and was the residence of the Shiomi family, who had a stipend of 1000 koku. It is set within a garden of white gravel and rocks.

**Above left:** The interior of the Buke Yashiki (warrior's mansion) in Matsue shows many

features of samurai domestic architecture. The floor of this, the guest room, is covered with tatami matting. Rooms are divided one from another by sliding screens. To the left rear is the tokonoma, an alcove where a flower arrangement or a hanging scroll may be displayed. The whole room opens out on to the garden from where the photograph was taken.

**Above right:** A model in Hyōgo Prefectural Museum showing a school in a daimyō's castle town. The sleeping quarters are upstairs, with the young samurai lying on futons. Downstairs they receive instruction as they kneel on tatami.

regarded as continuing as long as there is living memory within the family, otherwise it is lost, and the ancestral kami must be treated as a collectivity.

There is, however, a class of wandering spirits known as muenbotoke (Buddhas of no affiliation), who either have no descendants to worship them, or are victims of violent or untimely death, and

thus 'remain possessed by the worldly passion in which they died'. It is spirits such as these, often dead samurai slaughtered on battlefields, who provide the rich material for the numerous ghost stories and plays that make up many Noh and Kabuki dramas. Nor was this belief in unruly spirits confined to medieval times. The spirit of Taira Masakado, who was killed in AD940, is

enshrined in the Kanda Myōjin shrine in Tokyo. Masakado was a rebel against the emperor, and during the Meiji Period at the end of the nineteenth century, when the institution of the emperor was being strengthened against the memory of the overthrown shogun, it was decided to move Masakado's spirit from the main shrine to a subshrine. When this was done, local people refused to go to the main shrine, and boycotted its annual festival, the reason being, apparently, that it was wisest to keep an unruly spirit pacified, and that if Masakado's spirit were deprived of its proper shrine, it would start causing trouble again.

### BUSHIDŌ: THE SOUL OF THE SAMURAI

#### **Bushidō on the battlefield**

Bushidō, which literally means 'The Way of the Warrior', is a term almost as familiar as 'samurai' itself. Although its principles were present throughout the history of the samurai, the end of the Sengoku Period and the beginning of the Tokugawa regime saw an attempt to formalise bushidō as a universal samurai code. Some of the notions of bushidō derive from the collected precepts and house laws of the Sengoku daimyō. Many have survived, and much of what they contain are fairly mundane rules about hygiene in castles, or straightforward commands such as that of Katō Kiyomasa: 'A samurai who practises dancing ... should be ordered to commit hara-kiri.'

Writings specifically about bushidō may be divided into two varieties: manuals of swordsmanship, where the notion of bushidō is based on a practical art and skill, and more philosophical treatises, where the mental attitudes necessary for combat are given wider application. It is also possible to divide the development of bushidō thought chronologically into three stages. The first stage is the first 50 or so years of the Tokugawa rule, during which the structures erected by the shoguns were completed, but when there was no certainty that wars had actually ceased. The second stage is the latter half of the seventeenth century, when the lower classes, particularly the merchants, began to prosper at the expense of the samurai. The eighteenth century marked the third stage, when the

samurai class was seeking a new role for itself as the influences of the preceding century made themselves increasingly felt.

One of the earliest, and finest, expressions of bushidō comes from the words of Torii Mototada in 1600, who wrote a last letter to his son prior to the fall of Fushimi castle, which he had defended so valiantly for Tokugawa Ieyasu. It expresses better than any other document of the age the essential values of loyalty to one's lord which lay at the core of bushidō:

"For myself, I am resolved to make a stand inside the castle, and to die a quick death. It would not be difficult to break through the enemy and escape, no matter how many tens of thousands of horsemen approached for the attack or by how many columns we were surrounded. But that is not the true meaning of being a warrior, and it would be difficult to account as loyalty.

Instead I shall hold out against the strength of the whole country, without even one-hundredth part of the men who would be needed to do so, and I shall defend it and die a glorious death. By doing so I will show that to abandon a castle that should be defended, or to value one's life so much as to avoid danger and to show one's enemy one's weakness is not within the family traditions of my master Ieyasu.

Thus I will have taken an initiative that will strengthen the resolve of Ieyasu's other retainers, and in advancing righteousness to the warriors of the entire country. It is not bushidō to be shamed and avoid death even under circumstances that are not particularly important. It goes without saying that to sacrifice one's life for one's master is an unchanging principle."

Torii Mototada speaks of the Way of the Warrior (bushidō), but it is important to note that he sees his conduct as being in keeping with the tradition of service to the ideals of the Tokugawa family, rather than being driven by some abstract philosophical principle. He goes on to remind his son of their family and its relationship with the Tokugawa, referring to the 'benevolence' of their lord and the 'blessings' they had received at his hands; and he ends with a plea for his son to recognise that the foundation of a samurai's duty is makoto (sincerity). Makoto is an expression found elsewhere in writings on bushidō. It is often



**FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH:  
THE IRIKI-IN AT SEKIGAHARA**

The loyalty of Iriki-in Shigetoki found its final expression when he and his samurai followed the Shimazu in their ill-fated support for Ishida Mitsunari against Tokugawa Ieyasu. Their exploits began well with the victory over Torii Mototada at Fushimi:

"When Lord Yoshihiro together with other generals attacked the fortress of Fushimi on 8 September 1600, Shigetoki also wielded a spear and did distinguished service, his vassals Murao Zenbyōe, Katsuda Yajimōn, Onobuchi Gengorō and Ōsako Yashichirō taking heads."

The long military service of Iriki-in Shigetoki, which had begun at the age of fifteen opposing Hideyoshi's invasion of Kyūshū, was, however, soon to come to an end after taking part in one of the most famous battles in Japanese history. As the account notes, he was supported by valiant chūgen as well as samurai, and after his death lived on as a deified kami:

"At the battle of Sekigahara on 21 October Shigetoki was in Lord Yoshihiro's first division. At the height of the battle, (Kobayakawa) Hideaki suddenly turned about, and defeated the army of Ōtani Yoshitaka, whereupon the armies of Ishida Mitsunari and others were routed. At that time large forces of the enemy separated Lord Yoshihiro's personal following and his advance guard. After the defeat, Shigetoki and the more than thirty of his warriors who had survived, several times fought their way out of the pressing enemy and narrowly escaped death, until all but his followers Iriki-in Hikoemon, Tōgō Seita, Murao Zenbyōe, Ōsako Yashiro, Maeda Saburōjirō, and Yashirō the chūgen, perished. Then, on the way to the province, they met the enemy and the seven men, Shigetoki and the vassals, all died on 29 October. He was styled Jushōji Unan Jōgyō Kōji and deified as Hiyoshi Daïmyōjin, which title was later changed to Shigeki Myōjin." (Asakawa 1929: 395)

used as the ultimate justification for an otherwise apparently wasteful act of self-sacrifice by a defeated samurai who is surrounded by enormous odds, and goes willingly to his extinction because of his sincerity. The sincerity of his intentions mingles with the purity of his mission, which requires from him an unflinching devotion to a seemingly hopeless cause.

That Torii Mototada's master recognised his obligation in giving benevolence is shown by the so-called 'Legacy of Ieyasu', which the first Tokugawa shōgun left for the instruction of his followers. The following are a selection of passages which reflect several aspects of bushidō:

"The empire does not belong to the emperor, neither does it belong to one man. The thing to be studied most deeply is benevolence.

The right use of a sword is that it should subdue the barbarians while lying gleaming in its scabbard. If it leaves its sheath it cannot be said to be used rightly. Similarly the right use of military power is that it should conquer the enemy while concealed in the breast.

A warrior who does not understand the Way of the Warrior and the samurai who does not know the principles of the samurai can only be called a stupid or a petty general.

The sword is the soul of the samurai. If any forget or lose it he will not be excused."

In the relationship between Torii Mototada and Tokugawa Ieyasu we have an expression of bushidō which owes nothing to any sterile formulation dreamt up by a scholar. It is direct, it is uncomplicated, and comes from profound simplicity. In the expressions it uses, it also provides several clues for following the development of bushidō as the years of war give way to an uneasy peace.

Similar sentiments are echoed in the *Kōyō Gunkan*, which contains one of the earliest treatises on martial arts. This is the *Heihō Okugisho*, attributed to Yamamoto Kansuke, one of Takeda Shingen's 'Twenty-Four Generals', who was killed at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561. His thoughts on strategy were incorporated into the classic *Kōyō Gunkan*, begun by Kōsaka Danjō, and finished after his death by Obata Kagenori in 1616. It includes practical advice on how to wield sword, spear, bow and gun from the point of view of the

individual warrior, rather than a troop of ashigaru. Much of it is very matter-of-fact:

"When pursuing an enemy, if he is about ten paces away from you, rush upon him and cut him down. If your enemy is more than ten paces away, be careful when pursuing him, because you need to anticipate the chance that he may dodge and let you run by, or he may turn to cut you down. Sense your enemy. If he is about to cut at you, then block and cut at him. If you are going too fast, run past his right side, then come up behind him. If your enemy dodges, run past his side and go behind his back, block his attack, then cut him down."

"When attacking a castle, keep the wall of the castle on your right side because if you were in the middle of a crowd you would find it hard to move. There are four good reasons for leaving the wall on your right side. One, it is easier to move along the wall; two, it is easier to use your weapon; three, you are safer against arrows when you are not standing in the centre; four, you will find it easier to get into the castle and distinguish yourself."

As for philosophical matters in the *Kōyō Gunkan*, the warrior's code is best expressed in terms of the relationship between master and follower. Kōsaka Danjō derives his image of the ideal warlord from his beloved Shingen, and from the contrast seen in his heir Katsuyori, whose ways led to the clan's downfall. A good leader won battles, while a bad leader lost them. But the crucial point is that of the relationship formed between the lord and his followers, exemplified best by the willingness of Shingen's old retainers to serve his son Katsuyori both on and off the battlefield. It was the sincerity to their calling that led the old generals of the Takeda to charge the guns at Nagashino. Kōsaka also praises the notion of the individual warrior, because

**Right:** This dramatic scene from the *Ehon Taikōki* depicts dying samurai. One attempts to rise, using his sword as a crutch, while around them lie the *débris* and trophies of war.

the dependence that the samurai has on his lord's benevolence must never become one of over-reliance. The loyalty from a samurai to his lord was loyalty given by a unique individual:

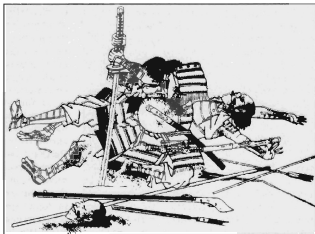
"He makes an effort when preparing himself for action, according to the limits of his capabilities, and in battle he adapts himself to every circumstance in building for himself a reputation for military prowess."

In this context it is instructive to compare a book written by one of Tokugawa Ieyasu's retainers, Ōkubo Tadataka. *Mikawa Monogatari* was written in 1622, and attributes Ieyasu's triumph to the close spiritual cohesion he achieved between lord and followers. The word 'benevolence', which Torii Mototada saw as the gift he had received from his lord, is used by Ōkubo in exactly the same context. The master gives benevolence, the followers respond by loyal and faithful service:

"The loyal warriors would fight in battle for their lord, having themselves completely prepared for death without having any concern for their wives and children left behind them."

Ōkubo Tadataka also clearly wishes to die 'with his boots on':

"As long as it is my duty towards my lord, I would like to die in battle in front of his eyes. If I die in my home, though death itself may be for the same reason, it will be death without the primary



objective of a warrior, martial prowess. Further, people may not find my true motive for it, and then there will be no significance attached to it."

*Mikawa Monogatari* was written during a time when the Ōkubo were somewhat out of favour with the shogun. He is frequently reminding his retainers of the long debt they owed to the Tokugawa, and recommends that they look far beyond their immediate difficulties:

"Bushi had to confront death constantly in their duty of faithful and brave devotion to their lord, even during sleeping or eating."

Both Kōsaka Danjō and Ōkubo Tadataka spoke out forcefully against ostentation in a warrior:

"Although the following conduct might be favourable in acquiring one's own domain, you must not consider, even in your dreams, behaving ostentatiously just to gain your own land to administer... Maintain this attitude even after death from hunger."

This is a strange foretaste of the chilling first sentence in the later bushidō classic *Hagakure*, which begins, 'The Way of the Samurai is found in death.' The famous Miyamoto Musashi, too, despised ostentation. In the *Gorinshō* he explains that the swordsman must have total commitment in his striving for excellence and perfection. If this is the warrior's attitude, then there will be no room for ostentation, and the only limit to achieving this perfection will be death, the ultimate proof of service. Yet all insisted that a warrior's life should not be wasted by being thrown away in a street brawl. Such an ignominious end was not in accordance with bushidō:

"When facing life or death, one should use all available tools because it is not our intention as bushi to die with an unused extra weapon."

The decades following *Kōyō Gunkan* saw two other classics of writing about bushidō and swordsmanship. The first was the *Fudochi Shinmyōroku* of the Zen priest Takuan, who taught Zen meditation to the great swordsman Yagyū Munenori. It is a very difficult text to understand, having as its essence the concept of fudochi (permanent wisdom). It means that the working mind, though always changing, is always attached to nothingness, and therefore to the eternal universe. The more down-to-earth and practical *Ittōsai Sensei Kemposhō* was written in 1653 by

#### THE MASSACRE AT SHIKANO CASTLE

Massacres could, and did, occur in samurai warfare, although few are recorded in any detail. The account which follows relates to the time of Hideyoshi's siege of Tottori castle in 1581. Morishita Michitomo and Nakamura Harutsugi were karō (chief retainers) of the Mōri family, and were sent from Tottori castle to investigate the situation at nearby Shikano castle. The horror of the scene, and the retainers' very human reaction, comes over very strongly in this extract from *Shinsho Taikōki*. Note also how they do their best to reduce the impact of the mutilation that has taken place by joining together the heads and bodies of the slain:

"Morishita and Nakamura entered the castle gate and as they looked around they saw crucified bodies without heads hanging in a line, and near to them were also the children of the eight rebels who had opposed the lord. 'This is what has happened to these people' was written in large brush strokes on a paper flag set up beside them. They could not endure the pain, and shed tears in sorrow as they contemplated each crime resulting from the actions of this detestable fellow. With feelings of great bitterness, they joined together the corpses and their respective heads, and returned to Tottori." (Takahashi 1965: 291)

Kofujita Toshisada, which is a record of his grandfather's talks on the swordsman Itō Ittōsai. The work is a practical discussion of combat techniques and the application of them to different situations and different opponents.

#### Confucianism and bushidō

In popular Western thought bushidō tends to be associated solely with Zen. Confucianism, however, was every bit as important an influence. A key figure of the early Tokugawa Period was the scholar Yamaga Sokō (1622-85). Sokō was the tutor and inspiration for Ōishi Kuranosuke, the leader of the Forty-Seven Loyal Retainers of Aki, whose dramatic revenge astounded contemporary Japan. While retaining a belief in the ideals of

Confucianism, Sokō concentrated on the military aspects of the samurai. He was an early advocate of the need to study Western warfare and equipment, a need that was only recognised at a national level two centuries later. He was also profoundly concerned with the inactivity of the samurai class, and a need to find a new role to replace the now unnecessary one of fighting battles. Yamaga Sokō believed that the samurai had to serve as a model for society, serving his lord with exemplary devotion, and with no thought of personal gain. He stressed the traditional samurai values of austerity, self-discipline and readiness to face death. Yet Sokō was wise enough to recognise the difficulty of applying these ideals to the days of peace.

Yamaga Sokō's views, though apparently dominated by military considerations, were very much in line with the current trends towards the social ideals of Confucianism, which valued an ordered society where everyone knew his place. Confucianism, along with Zen Buddhism, was one of the philosophical influences which were to enrich the notions of bushidō. In Confucian eyes, good government was based on virtue and example rather than on sheer military might. It laid great emphasis on the relationships between people involved in government, and we see Confucian ideals expressed in the use by Kōsaka and Ōkubo of benevolence and loyalty. The most important ethical demands made by Confucianism were *kō* (filial piety) and *chū* (loyalty), both of which were fundamental to the emerging ideals of bushidō.

In applying Confucianism to swordsmanship, the approach was to stress the ethical meaning of sword fighting (*kenjutsu*), linking prowess in swordsmanship with the warrior's need to serve his master. Here Confucianism met that other great philosophical influence on bushidō, the self-denying Buddhism of the Zen sect. Zen Buddhism related swordsmanship directly to the Buddhist goal of attaining enlightenment, and moving towards the achievement of selflessness. By the blending of self and weapon through action, the swordsman moved towards the goal of complete emptiness, which was the aim of all Zen practices. Much, perhaps too much, has been made of the links between Zen and swordsmanship. In fact, swordsmanship was the possession of no

single philosophical system, and to Confucianism and Zen can be added the influence of the ancient Chinese classics, all of which came together to give the 'Way of the Sword', and with it the 'Way of the Warrior'.

The need for a deeper meaning to bushidō, and with it a deeper meaning to the life of the peacetime samurai, was the most important challenge facing theorists of the eighteenth century, which produced several writers who were very critical of the developing notions of bushidō. Ogyū Sorai (1666-1728) complained about the bad behaviour of the samurai class, and linked this to what he saw as their superficial study of the stories of warfare and combative method. He even went further, and denounced bushidō as 'a bad tradition since the days of the Sengoku Period'. To Sorai the true and valuable warrior customs were to be found in the *Heike Monogatari* and other writings of the Gempei Wars:

"Samurai should ... maintain to some degree their skills in the martial arts in order to be courageous in action, and to refrain from any excess of personal covetousness. Above all they should be able to guide the warriors in their cultivation for governing the nation."

Similar notions were also expressed by another Confucian scholar Yuasa Jōzan (1708-81) who discussed bushidō in his work *Jōzan Kidan*, a book that contains many fascinating anecdotes about martial accomplishments, but by this time bushidō had left the battlefield and entered the study. Divorced from reality, it could only become a nostalgic ideal, until the arrival of foreigners in the early nineteenth century confronted Japan once again with the warlike face of its samurai past.

## HARA-KIRI - THE ULTIMATE LOYALTY

### The motivation for suicide

The whole of samurai history, from the twelfth century onward, lays great store on tradition and invoked precedent. One tradition vital to the understanding of samurai behaviour, although it can hardly be called a martial art, is that of ritual suicide.

'The Way of the Samurai is found in death,' wrote the author of *Hagakure*, the classic exposi-



tion of bushidō and its virtues. In times of war the achievement of such a death on the battlefield was prized as the ultimate proof of loyalty, and much genuine grief was shed over the loss of a loyal companion or vassal. Sometimes, however, death could actively be sought for its own sake, and there is a very fine dividing line between accepting the likelihood of death in battle and actively seeking it out, which was effectively to commit suicide at the hands of the enemy. An appreciation of the place of suicide in the concept of the loyal samurai warrior is therefore essential for understanding the many acts of seemingly wasteful self-destruction we read of in the old war chronicles. Suicide could occur off the battlefield as well as on it, so what motivated this apparent eagerness for extinction, and how could destroying oneself ever be seen as loyal behaviour?

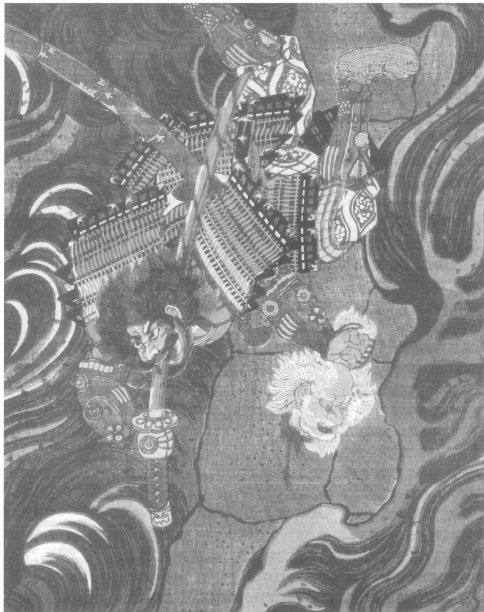
The first situation in which suicide was approved of was the occasion when suicide was performed as a result of personal failure. Here the samurai would commit sokotsu-shi, or 'expiatory suicide', the very act itself wiping the slate clean. Such a decision could be spontaneous and dramatic, like the action of the veteran warrior Yamamoto Kansuke at the fourth battle of Kawanakajima in 1561. As Takeda Shingen's army commissioner (gun-bugyō), he had devised the plan by which the Takeda were to surprise the

*Hōjō Ujimasa and his younger brother Hōjō Ujiteru commit hara-kiri after the fall of Odawara castle in 1590.*

Uesugi army. Realising his bold strategy had failed, Kansuke took his spear and plunged into the midst of the enemy army, committing suicide to make amends for his error.

He was not the only senior Takeda leader to die in such a manner that day. Minutes after Kansuke's suicide, he was joined in death by Morozumi Masakiyo, Shingen's 87-year-old great-uncle. To Morozumi a dramatic suicide was a way of dying honourably when faced with what he interpreted as certain defeat. In his case there was no sense of personal failure, merely the culmination of loyalty in joining Shingen in his coming death. The tragedy of both these deaths is that their interpretations of the certainty of the destruction of the Takeda very soon proved incorrect. Reinforcements arrived, the army rallied, and a defeat was turned into victory. Yet two experienced generals had been lost, both of whom would have served Shingen better by staying alive.

Committing suicide was not always a voluntary activity. It could be allowed as an honourable alternative to execution for a condemned criminal of the samurai class. Sasa Narimasa was 'invited' to



*Opposite page: Following the suicide of Matsunaga Hisahide after the fall of the castle of Shikizan his son Kojirō cut off his father's head and leapt to his death from the castle walls with his sword through his throat and Hisahide's head in his hands.*

commit suicide by Hideyoshi following his disastrous handling of the territory Hideyoshi had given him. Sometimes a daimyō was called upon to perform *hara-kiri* as the basis of peace negotiations, the idea being that the surrender of a castle could be accepted without further bloodshed provided the current daimyō committed suicide. This would so weaken the defeated clan that resistance would effectively cease. Toyotomi Hideyoshi used an enemy's suicide in this way on several occasions, of which the most dramatic, in that it ended a dynasty of daimyō forever, is what happened when the Hōjō were defeated at Odawara in 1590. Hideyoshi insisted on the suicide of the retired daimyō Hōjō Ujimasa, and the exile of his son Ujinao. With one sweep of a sword, the most powerful daimyō family in the east ceased to exist, and effectively disappeared from history.

Instead of the daimyō's death, the victor could be satisfied with the death of his enemy's retainer, which would be most effective if the subordinate was in charge of the castle the victor was besieging. There are several examples of this from Hideyoshi's earlier campaigns on behalf of Oda Nobunaga. The most theatrical occurred when Hideyoshi besieged Takamatsu castle in 1582. It was a long siege, and only looked like being successful when Hideyoshi diverted a river to make a lake, which gradually began to flood the castle. Unfortunately, it was during these operations that Hideyoshi received the dramatic news of the murder of Oda Nobunaga, and knew that he had to abandon Takamatsu rapidly before the Mōri clan took advantage of the situation. He hurriedly drew up peace terms with Mōri Terumoto, which included the clause that the valiant defender of Takamatsu, Shimizu Muneharu, should commit suicide. The latter was determined to go to his death as dramatically as he had lived, and took a boat out into the middle of the artificial lake. When he was satisfied that Hideyoshi's men

were taking careful note of what he was doing, he committed *hara-kiri*.

On occasions, such a suicide provided an honourable end only after extreme privations. Tottori castle in Inaba province held out for an incredible 200 days before it surrendered to Hideyoshi in 1581. Its commander, Kikkawa Tsuneie, inspired his men to this long resistance even though they were reduced to eating grass and dead horses, and may even have practised cannibalism. Tsuneie's suicide letter to his son survives to this day. It reads:

"We have endured for over two hundred days. We now have no provisions left. It is my belief that by giving up my life I will help my garrison. There is nothing greater than the honour of our family. I wish our soldiers to hear of the circumstances of my death."

His suicide, along with that of two others, was the condition of surrender.

Another reason for committing suicide was to make a protest. This is known as *kanshi*. Examples of this are rare, but it profoundly affected one of the greatest daimyō of the Sengoku Period. Oda Nobunaga inherited his father's domains at the age of fifteen, and although he was a brave warrior, showed little interest in the administration of his territory. One of his best retainers, Hirade Kiyohide, tried in vain to persuade him to mend his ways, and when the young Nobunaga showed no inclination to listen to him, Kiyohide put all his feelings into a letter to his lord, and committed *hara-kiri* in protest. Nobunaga was greatly moved, and changed his ways for the better, with, of course, considerable consequences for the history of Japan.

The one reason for committing suicide which did not meet with universal approval was the practice of *junshi*, or following in death. Shortly before Shimizu Muneharu's dramatic suicide on the lake of Takamatsu, one of his retainers performed *junshi* in anticipation. Muneharu was invited to the man's room in Takamatsu castle the evening before his own suicide was due to take place. There his loyal retainer explained that he wished to reassure his master about the ease with which *hara-kiri* could be performed. He explained that he had in fact already committed suicide, and, pulling aside his robe, showed Muneharu his cut open

## A PROUD WARRIOR MEETS HIS END

To a samurai, his martial reputation was all-important, and if he was unable to demonstrate it in battle the disgrace could be unbearable, making life itself not worth living. This attitude is vividly illustrated by this sad little story from the *Meiryō Kōhan*, which adds starving oneself to death to the long list of methods of warrior suicide: "At the time of the siege of Ōsaka there was a man called Yabe Toranosuke, a retainer of Lord (Tokugawa) Kii Yorinobu. He possessed great strength and had a two-ken-long sashimono, a three-shaku tachi, and for his helmet badge he had a large ihai (mortuary tablet) on which was written the poem:

"As there is no lack of flowers at blossom time

"So those in defeat will not escape Yabe Toranosuke.

"Many people saw his departure and all were amazed, but so many followed his horse as he advanced that it made him late, and in the end to his regret he was able to perform no meritorious deeds. Furthermore, his feelings were wounded by being insulted in the matter of his reputation by some within his family who were inexperienced in the martial arts, so he abstained from food for twenty days and thereby killed himself. This was extremely regrettable for a samurai." (Sasama 1968: 341)

abdomen. Muneharu was touched by the gesture, and acted as his retainer's second to bring the act to a speedy and less painful conclusion by cutting off the man's head.

However inspiring that example may have been to the lord, there was a fine distinction between junshi and merely continuing a desperate fight. In the confusion of a battlefield the circumstances of a retainer's death could never be clearly established. But when the death of a daimyō from natural causes during times of peace provoked the performance of junshi, such an act was almost universally condemned. In such cases a loyal retainer committed suicide to show that he could serve none other than his departed lord, an act

that most commentators regarded as utterly wasteful. During the Sengoku Period such an act may have been approved of, and indeed some retainers did have little left to live for, but in the later times of peace junshi was a deliberate, premeditated and unnecessary act, noble, perhaps, in its sentiments, but scarcely helpful in maintaining the stability of a dynasty.

In the early Edo Period, as many as twenty leading retainers of various daimyō were known to have committed junshi on the deaths of their lords. For this reason strong condemnation was made of junshi. A better way to serve one's departed lord, the bakufu argued, was to render equally loyal service to his heir. But junshi was firmly engrained in the Japanese mentality. It had been abolished originally by an imperial decree as early as the year AD3 (!), yet still the tradition persisted, and as noted above, reached its peak in the Sengoku Period. A strong condemnation of it is found in the so-called Legacy of Ieyasu, the house laws left by the first Tokugawa Shogun in 1616, but at the death of his grandson, the third Tokugawa Shogun Iemitsu in 1651, five of the leading retainers of the Tokugawa committed junshi, a remarkable gesture against the law they themselves had formulated. A further attempt to ban it was introduced by the shogunate in 1663, and included the statement:

"In the event that a lord has a presentiment that a certain vassal is liable to immolate himself, he should admonish him strongly against it during his lifetime. If he fails to do so, it shall be counted as his fault. His heir will not escape appropriate punishment."

Five years later, an instance of junshi occurred among the retainers of the recently deceased daimyō of the house of Okudaira, but little action was taken against the family because of the great service the Okudaira had rendered to the Tokugawa in previous years. (Their ancestor had been the defender of Nagashino castle at the time of the famous battle.) The family of the actual performer of junshi were not so fortunate. His two sons were ordered to commit hara-kiri, and his two sons-in-law, one of whom was of the Okudaira family, were exiled. Other daimyō finally took note, and from the mid-seventeenth century onward the practice of junshi effectively ceased until it came dramati-



One of the most remarkable memorials to samurai heroism is the 'bloody ceiling' of the Yōgen-In in Kyōto. When Torii Mototada committed suicide as the castle of Fushimi fell in 1600, his blood stained the floor. The floor was preserved and now forms part of the ceilings in three Kyōto temples. This section shows the most vivid blood-stain of all, which is Mototada's handprint from his death agonies. Other dark stains are smeared blood.



cally to the attention of modern Japan in 1912. On the eve of the funeral of emperor Meiji, general Nogi and his wife committed hara-kiri. Nogi had commanded troops in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-5, and led the battle to take Port Arthur in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5. It was an act that astounded his contemporaries because of the bizarre disloyalty to the emperor's wishes that the illegal act implied. It was also sobering evidence that the samurai spirit lived on in the Japan of the twentieth century.

### The act of hara-kiri

The motivation behind suicide is much less well appreciated than the means whereby it was carried out, which was usually the well-known act of cutting open the belly, the literal translation of the expression hara-kiri. If the two characters which make up the word hara-kiri are reversed it produces seppuku, a word unfamiliar to Western ears, but which is regarded as less vulgar by native Japanese speakers. Hara-kiri, which has been much described and much discussed, was a particularly painful act of suicide in that the samurai himself released his spirit from its seat in the abdomen by a swift and deep cut with his dagger. The rite was somewhat modified in later years to allow the presence of a second, who cut off the

victim's head at the moment of agony.

The earliest reference to hara-kiri as an established tradition may be found in the *Hōgen Monogatari*. Uno Chikaharu, whose calling of his pedigree we noted earlier, was captured by the enemy so quickly that they did not have time 'to draw their swords or cut their bellies'. This statement is so matter-of-fact that it clearly implies that hara-kiri was an established practice among samurai. The first named individual to commit hara-kiri in the war chronicles is the celebrated archer Minamoto Tametomo, who committed suicide in this way as boatloads of Taira samurai approached his island of exile.

The first recorded account of hara-kiri after defeat in battle is that of Minamoto Yorimasa following the first battle of Uji in 1180. His suicide was done with such finesse that it was to provide a model for noble and heroic hara-kiri for centuries to come. While his sons held off the enemy, Yorimasa retired to the seclusion of the beautiful Byōdō-In temple. He then wrote a poem on the back of his war-fan, which read:

Like a fossil tree  
From which we gather no flowers  
Sad has been my life  
Fated no fruit to produce.

He then thrust his dagger into his abdomen and cut himself open, thereby releasing his spirit in the most heroic and painful way that can be imagined. In Japanese religious beliefs, the centre of a man, and of his spiritual being, was his *hara*, or abdomen. In cutting open his centre and disembowelling himself, the warrior was exposing to the world the purity and sincerity of his whole intention. Yorimasa's act set the standard of excellent conduct which subsequent generations were expected to emulate.

The performance of *hara-kiri* by the defeated Hōjō in 1590, noted above, was a case in point, and would not have disgraced Minamoto Yorimasa. The retired *daimyō* Hōjō Ujimasa and his younger brother Hōjō Ujiteru were ordered to commit *hara-kiri* as a condition of the peace treaty. Each took a bath, dressed themselves correctly, and wrote their farewell poems. Ujimasa's ran as follows:

Autumn wind of eve  
Blow away the clouds that mass  
O'er the moon's pure light.  
And the mists that cloud our mind  
Do thou sweep away as well.

Now we disappear  
Well, what must we think of it?  
From the sky we came  
Now we may go back again  
That's at least one point of view.

As both thrust their daggers into their abdomens and withdrew them, Hōjō Ujinori, as their second, cut off their heads at a blow. He was about to commit *junshi* with the sword when Ii Naomasa grabbed his hand and prevented it.

*Hara-kiri* was not limited to warriors, or even to men. For example, two samurai and four wet nurses cut themselves open after the execution of Minamoto Yoshitomo's four infant brothers by the Taira. Nor was suicide confined to the act of *hara-kiri*. When Imai Kanehira committed suicide at the battle of Awazu in 1184, he did it by jumping head-first from his horse with his sword in his mouth. Some later examples are quite bizarre. Legend tells us that Tōgō Shigechika had

TAKEDA SHINGEN GRIEVES AT  
A DEATH AT MIMASETOGE, 1569

The loss of a valued comrade could be bitterly felt, as shown by this extract from the *Kōyō Gunkan* about the death of a warrior at the battle of Mimasetoge in 1569, when the Hōjō ambushed the Takeda army as they withdrew towards Kai province and safety.

"On this day it was said that 3,769 heads in total were taken by the Takeda army. On the other hand, there were also 900 casualties on the Takeda side. We were confronted and attacked from up on the mountain and in flank from an encircling force, although if we look at the war situation we acknowledge that the Hōjō side had many casualties.

"However, Asari Umanosuke, who as the vanguard of the Takeda army had engaged Hōjō Tsunanari was killed by gunfire. Shingen grieved over this, and it was said that he buried his body, constructed his grave and conducted the memorial service." (*Kōyō Gunkan*, from *Rekishi Gunzō* (2) 1989:29)

failed to capture a certain castle, so had himself buried alive, fully armoured and mounted on his horse, staring in the direction of his failure. Miura Yoshimoto is supposed to have taken leave of the world after the siege of Arai castle in 1516 by cutting his own head off. A cousin of Akechi Mitsuhide and fellow victim of Yamazaki, Akechi Mitsuotoshi performed the unprecedented act of committing *hara-kiri* and writing a poem on the door with the blood from his abdomen, using a brush.

The most bizarre proof of the value attached to the tradition of suicide may be found in three temples in Kyōto. When Torii Mototada committed *seppuku* in Fushimi castle in 1600, the bloodstained floor was taken and preserved. It was then cut into three sections and now forms the 'bloody ceilings' of the temple halls. When one's eyes become accustomed to the gloom, the huge bloodstains become apparent, including, in one corner of the ceiling, a distinct and chilling handprint.

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#### FOLLOWING IN DEATH

The practice of junshi, following one's departed lord through suicide, is honoured in this extract from the *Taikōki* because it occurred on the battlefield, not in peacetime, when such acts were regarded as wasteful. It refers to the siege of Ulsan in Korea in 1598.

"A retainer of Mōri Terumoto who was defending the third bailey, called Reizei Minbudaiyu Motomitsu ...had been ordered by Kobayakawa Takakage to defend the outer wall which was not yet completed...

"...the Ming army divided up and attacked Motomitsu, who was accompanied by soldiers under his command to right and left, they shouted and fought desperately. They fought hard for several hours but gradually grew weary from fighting and there were few of them that did not meet death in battle. The enemy joined in for a victory and attacked increasingly. Reizei Motomitsu wielded his naginata like a waterwheel, slaying 15 or 16 enemy nearby, and Asanuma Buzen no kami received death in battle. To their right and left over 20 men under his command fell fighting together.

"Because Shiromatsu Zen'emnonjō, Igazaki Matabeinojō and Yoshiyasu Tarōbei were by chance in another place, they regretted that they had not been together to be killed in battle, and when they took charge of Motomitsu's corpse they performed the act of cutting open their bellies in the shape of a cross on that very spot. Those who were warriors regarded it as a splendid thing to act so loyally like this. At the Take no Seirōji (temple) in Kungame in Izumo, which was Reizei Motomitsu's fief, the names are recorded of over 20 men who were killed in the battle, and there are also the three men who followed him through suicide, because their ihai (funerary tablets) were installed there and grants of land received.

"...Horio Yoshiharu received Izumo as a fief from Lord Ieyasu, and when he entered the province he heard the history of this temple. He was deeply impressed by this display of bushidō and made a grant of temple land." (Yoshida 1979 Vol 3:182)

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For the convenience of the reader technical terms in Japanese are followed by a translation. Battles and sieges have the date of the primary engagement in brackets. Castles and temples are also indicated, and all entries are fully cross referenced, including the maps with the locations of important battles.

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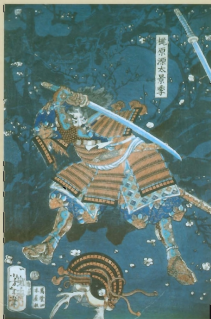
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