

English Guide

-

Shinsengumi associated sites in Kyōto: 1

英語の京都に新選組交の場所のガイドです

Mibu Walk: The Lair of the Miburō (Mibu
wolves 壬生狼), the Mibu Roshigumi
壬生浪士組

誠

Flag Symbol of Shinsengumi – Character: Makoto (lit. sincerity)

Introduction

In 1853 Commodore Perry's Black Ships arrived in Yokohama Bay triggering a series of momentous events that between 1853 and 1867 shook the very foundations of Japanese society, ending their enforced isolation under the Tokugawa Bakufu (徳川幕府) and culminating in 1868 in the Meiji Restoration, (Meiji Ishin 明治維新), the abdication of Tokugawa Yoshinobu (徳川慶喜), the fifteenth and last of the Tokugawa Shōguns (徳川将軍), both of which heralded the end of the Japanese feudal era and its associated societal structure and the beginning of the industrial modernisation of Japan.



The Meiji Emperor
明治天皇



Tokugawa Yoshinobu
徳川慶喜



Commodore Matthew
Perry, USN

Old enmities can sometimes fester for a long time and this is evident in the way that during this, the Bakumutsu period (幕末), the factions and coalitions aligned themselves, either with the Meiji Court (明治) or the Tokugawa Bakufu (徳川幕府). These alliances had been forged nearly 300 hundred years before in the triumphs and defeats of the crucible of the Battle of Sekigahara (関ヶ原, known as Shinjitai 関ヶ原の戦い). Fought on 21 October 1600 (Keichō 5, 15th day of the 9th month) it established the Tokugawa as the supreme rulers of Japan for the next 265 years, from 1603, when Tokugawa Ieyasu (徳川家康) was appointed Shōgun (将軍), until 1868 when the Meiji Restoration was declared.

Supporters of the Meiji Court, the National Patriots, Ishin Shishi (維新志士), were formed mainly from the Tozama Daimyo (外様大名), the Outside Lords, those who had submitted to the Tokugawa only *after* their defeat at the battle of Sekigahara (関ヶ原) and who were predominantly made up of Chōshū Mori (長州の毛利氏), Satsuma Shimazu (薩摩藩の島津氏), a minority of radical Tosa (土佐藩), other han leaders and revolutionary courtiers. Their slogan was 'Revere the Emperor, Expel the Barbarians', (Sonnō jōi 尊皇攘夷)

The Pro Shōgunate supporters were comprised mainly of Satsuma Aizu (薩摩藩の会津) and Ise Kuwana (桑名藩) hans and the Shinsengumi, (Newly Selected Corps 新選組), a militia group made up of rōnin (浪人) and peasants turned warriors



Satsuma samurai during Boshin War (戊辰戦争 Boshin Sensō) period (Hand-coloured albumen silver print by Felice Beato, 1860s)

Many people who may have otherwise remained unknown to history emerged from this period either as heroes or villains, depending on your perspective. Recently the subject of a major television series, the dramatisation of the activities of the Shinsengumi, and their lives and deaths, by NHK (日本放送協会, Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai, the Japan Broadcasting Corporation) has taken Japan by storm. This popular series has seen a resurgent interest in the Shinsengumi (新選組) not only amongst Japanese but also amongst non Japanese interested in the history and the lives of the warriors of Japan.

This guide is not an in depth historical narrative of the Shinsengumi (新選組). Rather, it is an attempt to bring to life, in the English language, the various characters and locations around Kyōto that are associated with the Shinsengumi.

A couple of areas have Shinsengumi (新選組) associated sites that are within walking distance of each other, around the district of Mibu (壬生) for instance, where the Shinsengumi (新選組) had their headquarters, around Kiyamachi Street (木屋町通, Kiyamachi Dōri) near Pontochō (先斗町) and Gion (祇園), and also in the Higashiyama district (東山区). However, one or two locations are fairly isolated but can be accessed using public transport.

Mibu (壬生)

When they first arrived in Kyōto (京都) Mibu (壬生) was the location chosen by the Roshigumi (浪士組), a large group of rōnin (浪人) and peasants turned warriors employed by the Tokugawa Bakufu (徳川幕府) to work with the 'Revere the Emperor, Expel the Barbarians' (Sonnō jōi 尊皇攘夷) faction and to protect Tokugawa Iemochi (徳川 家茂) on his visit to Kyōto (京都). When Kiyokawa Hachirō (清河八郎) revealed to the group and that they would be returning to Edo (江戸, modern day Tōkyō 東京) thirteen chose to stay behind and formed the Shinsengumi, (Newly Selected Corps 新選組) to counter the Sonnō jōi (尊皇攘夷) faction.

Starting point – Kyōto Station (京都駅 Kyōto-eki)

Walk towards Nishi Honganji (西本願寺). Aburanokoji-cho (油小路町) cuts across Shichijo (七条) from north to south parallel with and one street east of the nearest main road running north-south, Horikawa-Dōri (堀川通), which runs past the entrance to Nishi Honganji (西本願寺)

(1) Aburanokoji Jiken (油小路事件)



On the 18th November 1867 Itō Kashitarō (伊東甲子太郎武明), who earlier that year had left the Shinsengumi (新選組) to form Goryo Eji (御陵衛士), Guards of Emperor's Tomb, was invited to the house of Dayu Miyuki (深雪太夫), the mistress of Kondō Isami (近藤勇) supposedly to pick up the money Ito had requested from Kondo to fund a spying campaign against the Chōshū. Ito proceeded to get drunk and as he left and was walking south along Aburanokōji (油小路町) towards Shichijo (七条) he was ambushed by other Shinsengumi (新選組) members including Ōishi Kuwajiro (大石 欽次郎), Miyagawa Nobuyoshi (宮川信吉 aka Nobukichi のぶきち) and Saitō Hajime (斎藤, who is one of the two main characters in the award winning film, 'When the Last Sword is Drawn', 'Mibu Gishi Den 壬生義士伝'). He collapsed and died by the gate of Honkō-ji Temple (本光寺), further along Aburanokōji (油小路), south of Shichijo (七条). His body was dragged to the crossroads of Aburanokōji (油小路町) and Shichijo (七条). When others from Goryo Eji (御陵衛士) attempted to retrieve the body they were attacked by a group of between 30-40 Shinsengumi (新選組). Three of the Goryo Eji (御陵衛士), Hattori Takeo (服部武雄), Mōnai Kanmotsu (もーない かんもつ aka Mōnai Arinosuke もーない 有のすけ) and Tōdō Heisuke Yoshitora (藤堂平助宜虎), were killed. All four are buried in a small cemetery near Kaikoji Temple (戒光寺)



Saitō Hajime (斎藤)



Itô Kashitarô
伊東甲子太郎武明



Suzuki Mikisaburo
鈴木三木三郎



Kondō Isami
近藤勇

Ito Kashitaro's younger brother, Suzuki Mikisaburo 鈴木三木三郎, survived the Aburanokoji Incident (Aburanakoji Jiken (油小路事件))

(2) The memorial of the assassination of Itô Kashitarô (油小路事件) in front of Honkô-ji where Itô died 18th November 1867 Keiô 3 (門前の門派石 - 題目石塔)

From the north side of Shichijo (七条) cross to the south side and carry on walking south down Aburanokoji-cho (油小路町)

Honkô-ji Temple (本光寺) is a couple of hundred meters south of Shichijo on the left hand side



A stone monument by the gate of Honkô-ji Temple (本光寺) remembering that it was here that Itô Kashitarô (伊東甲子太郎武明) collapsed and died after being attacked by members of the Shinsengumi (新選組)

(3) Nishi Honganji (西本願寺)



In 1864 the Shinsengumi (新選組) moved their headquarters to Nishi Honganji (西本願寺). Yamanami Keisuke (山南敬助), buried in Kōenji (光縁寺) was the Vice Commander of the Shinsengumi (新選組). Early in 1865 He tried to leave the Shinsengumi (新選組) after the Ikedaya Incident (池田屋事件) having disagreed with the way the policies and ideology the Shinsengumi (新選組) were developing and apparently unhappy with the Shinsengumi (新選組) intimidating the priests of Nishi Honganji (西本願寺) into allowing them to move their headquarters there. He fled to Ōtsu (大津市) on the western shore of nearby Lake Biwa (琵琶湖 Biwa-ko). Kondō Isami (近藤勇) sent Okita Sōji (沖田 総司) to retrieve him. After Yamanami Keisuke (山南敬助) returned to Mibu (壬生), he was ordered to commit seppuku (切腹) which took place in the Maekawa Shōji house (旧前川邸); Okita Sōji (沖田 総司) served as his second



Okita Sōji (沖田 総司)

(4) Shimabara Gate (Shimabara Ōmon 嶋原の大門)



After leaving Nishi Honganji (西本願寺) by the front gate turn north along Horikawa-Dōri (堀川通) and then left at the corner of the temple compound onto Hanayacho Dōri (花屋町通). When you reach the next main road, Omiya Dōri (大宮通), running north to south at the rear of Nishi Honganji (西本願寺), cross over and take the road running west which is slightly south, a continuation of Hanayacho Dōri (花屋町通), and continue along this road till the Shimabara Gate (Shimabara Ōmon 嶋原の大門) is reached. This marks the entrance to the old Pleasure Quarter of Shimabara (嶋原). It is called the Shimabara Ōmon (嶋原の大門) because of its resemblance to the gate of Shimabara Castle (島原城 Shimabara-jō) in Bizen (備前国 Bizen no kuni). The Shimabara (嶋原) Pleasure Quarters used to be surrounded by a moat and a wall with this great gate serving as the eastern entrance

The nearness of the old Pleasure Quarter of Shimabara (嶋原) to the area where the Shinsengumi (新選組) were based, Mibu (壬生), just north of Shimabara (嶋原), meant that this was the area where the Shinsengumi (新選組) spent most of their leisure time. Historical records contain descriptions of their activities and visits to Wachigaya Tea House (輪違屋) and Sumiya Restaurant (角屋)

(5) The Sumiya Restaurant (角屋), now a museum, was established in 1641



Passing under the Shimabara Gate (嶋原の大門) continue west along Hanayacho Dōri (花屋町通). The entrance to Sumiya (角屋) is reached by turning left just before a north turning L junction

Sumiya

32 Banchi, Ageyacho, Shimogyoku

財団法人 角屋保存会 〒600-8828

京都市下京区西新屋敷揚屋町32

TEL.075-351-0024 / FAX.075-343-9102

<http://www16.ocn.ne.jp/~sumiyaho/page/english.html>

Tours, in Japanese only, run at 10:15, 13 : 15, 14 : 15 and 15 : 15 and take approximately 30 minutes. They are limited to 20 people. You will need to arrive 15 minutes before the tour is due to start

To visit Sumiya (角屋) you will need to phone ahead and make an appointment. The best way to do this if you do not speak Japanese is at the Kyōto Tourist Information office located on the 9th floor of the Isetan Department Store in JR Kyōto Station Building which is open from 10am until 6pm. You may need to arrange for a volunteer interpreter; though this service is free the expectation is for you to pay their expenses. This can be arranged via <http://Kyōtofreeguide.sakura.ne.jp/>

Sumiya Restaurant (角屋) is an ageya, an elegant restaurant where lavish banquets and dinner parties were held, and where guests were entertained by Geisha (芸者, called Geiko 芸子 in Kyōto 京都) and the highest ranking courtesans called Tayū (太夫)

Saigō Takamori Takanaga (西郷 隆盛 隆永) and Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本 龍馬) used to meet merchants here to raise funds for their cause



Saigō Takamori aka Takanaga
(西郷隆盛 aka 隆永)



Sakamoto Ryōma
(坂本龍馬)

In June 1863 one of the three leaders of the Shinsengumi (新選組), Serizawa Kamo (芹沢鴨) reputedly an extremely bad tempered man and a violent drunk, lost his temper here when he was refused service for not paying his bills and smashed the place up. His sword marks can still be seen on either side of the tokonoma (床の間) in the Fan Room, (扇の間 Ōgi no Ma), upstairs



Serizawa Kamo (芹沢鴨)

On September 18th 1863 Kondō Isami (近藤勇) and Hijikata Toshizō (土方歳三) held a party here for Serizawa Kamo (芹沢鴨), and Serizawa's supporters.



Hijikata Toshizō (土方歳三)

Vice Commander of the Shinsengumi

In the meantime a party of Shinsengumi (新選組) had gone to the house of Yagi Gennojō (八木源之丞応迅) where Serizawa was staying. Meanwhile Kondō Isami (近藤勇) and Hijikata Toshizō (土方歳三) tried to get Serizawa's group so drunk they would not be able to fight back when ambushed at the house of Yagi Gennojō (八木源之丞応迅). On his return there Serizawa Kamo (芹沢鴨) was assassinated with his mistress Oume (お梅) and Hirayama Goryo (平山五郎). Both Serizawa Kamo (芹沢鴨) and Hirayama Goryo (平山五郎) are buried at Mibudera Temple (壬生寺). A sword cut can still be seen in the room where Serizawa Kamo (芹沢鴨) was assassinated



Harada Sanosuke (原田 左之助), who took part in the assassination of Serizawa Kamo, along with Okita Sōji (沖田 総司), Hijikata Toshizō (土方歳三) and Yamanami Keisuke (山南敬助)

(6) The Wachigaya Tea House (輪違屋), established 1688 and still operating



The Wachigaya was frequented by the Shinsengumi (新選組). Itō Kashitarō (伊東甲子太郎武明 aka Suzuki Okura), Shinsengumi Staff Officer and eventually Goryo Eji (御陵衛士) Leader, had a mistress here; a Tayū (太夫). Though still operating after 320 years it is also open as a museum of Tayū (太夫) culture though as with other older established teahouses still in operation access is as a customer and by introduction only.

As a location subject it is featured in the Japanese TBS two part drama, 'Itosato of the Wachigaya – Women of the Shinsengumi', (Wachigaya Itosato - Onna-tachi no Shinsengumi 輪違屋糸里～女たちの新撰組), of 2007 based on the novel 'Wachigaya Itosato' (輪違屋糸里) by Jirō Asada (浅田次郎). It tells the story of Itosato, a young Tayū (太夫) who falls in love with Hijikata Toshizō (土方歳三), the deputy leader of the Shinsengumi (新選組). Jirō Asada (浅田次郎) also wrote, 'When the Last Sword is Drawn', (Mibu Gishi Den

壬生義士伝), a fictionalised account of the last days of the Shinsengumi (新撰組) which was made into an award winning film and a mini series about the lives of Shinsemgumi members Saito Hajime (斎藤一) and Yoshimura Kanichiro (吉村 貫一郎)

(7) Mibudera Temple (壬生寺)



From Wachigaya go back to the Shimabara Gate. As you pass back under it turn left and head north to the T junction at the end. Turn right and at the main road turn left passing around the corner of the

Century 21 apartment block and head north on Mibu Dōri (壬生通) crossing the east-west main road of Gojo Dōri (五条)

Keep walking north on Mibu Dōri (壬生通) till you reach Bukkoji Dōri (仏光寺通). If you reach the tram tracks which cross Mibu Dōri (壬生通) you have gone too far and need to retrace your steps for a couple of blocks south on Mibu Dōri (壬生通).



Keep going till you reach Bukkoji Dōri (仏光寺通) and turn left. Walk along Bukkoji Dōri (仏光寺通) for two blocks until you reach Bojo Dōri (坊城通). Turn right and walk north. The entrance to Mibudera Temple (壬生寺) is on the left.



Some of the Shinsengumi are buried here in the Mibu-tsuka cemetery (壬生浪士隊の隊長) the entrance to which is via what looks like a shop on the right after you pass through the main entrance gate. There is a small turnstile on the far side of the counter...

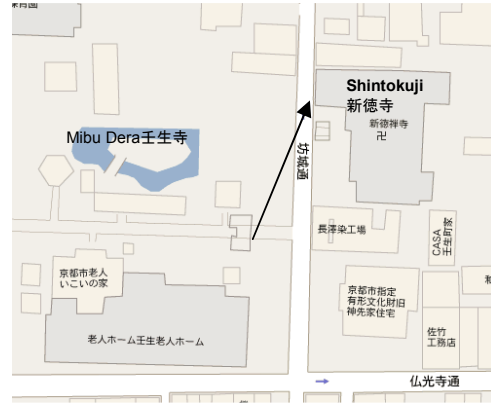


Plot 3 - Nîmi Nishiki (or Shinmi Nishiki 新見錦) was the right hand man of Serizawa Kamo (芹沢鴨). Nishiki was forced by the Shinsengumi (新選組) to commit seppuku (切腹) in a Gion (祇園) pleasure house for extorting protection money which he then spent on his activities in the pleasure quarters

Plot 8 - Kawai Kisaburō (河合耆三郎) was ordered to commit seppuku (切腹) for an apparent accounting fraud

Plot 6 - Serizawa Kamo (芹沢鴨) who is buried with his head pointing north and his feet pointing south, Hirayama Gorō (平山五郎). Serizawa Kamo 芹沢鴨 was assassinated at the house of Yagi Gennojō (八木源之丞応迅) along with his mistress Oume and Hirayama Gorō (平山五郎) on September 18th 1863. A sword cut can still be seen in the room at the Yagi Gennojō house (八木源之丞応迅) where Serizawa Kamo (芹沢鴨) was assassinated

(8) Shintokuji (新徳寺) - former Shinsengumi (新選組) headquarters



As you exit Mibu Dera (壬生寺) turn left on Bojo-Dōri (坊城通) and Shintokuji (新徳寺) is on the opposite side of the road at little further north. Entry is not permitted though they do run Zen meditation classes on the 8th of every month from 6.30-8pm. Call ahead on 075-811-6569. The best way to do this if you do not speak Japanese is at the Kyōto Tourist Information office located on the 9th floor of the Isetan Department Store in JR Kyōto Station Building which is open from 10am until 6pm.

After arriving in Kyōto (京都) on the 23 February 1863, (Bunkyū 文久 3), Serizawa Kamo (芹沢鴨) and his group set up residence in the house of Yagi Gennojō (八木源之丞応迅). Kondō Isami 近藤勇 and his group set up residence in Maekawa Shōji's house (旧前川邸) which also served as a dojo and where Yamanami Keisuke (山南敬助) committed seppuku (切腹), both of which are located in Mibu (壬生)

On February 24, a day after their arrival in Kyōto (京都), Kiyokawa Hachiro (清河八郎) summoned the Shinsengumi (新選組) to Shintokuji (新徳寺) to go over their aims and objectives. When Kiyokawa Hachirō (清河八郎) revealed to the group and that they would be returning to Edo (江戸, modern day Tōkyō 東京) after the visit of Tokugawa Iemochi (徳川 家茂) to Kyōto (京都) thirteen chose to stay behind and formed the Shinsengumi, (Newly Selected Corps 新選組) to counter the Sonnō jōi (尊皇攘夷) faction led by Kondō Isami (近藤勇), Nimi Nishiki (or Shinmi Nishiki 新見錦) and Serizawa Kamo (芹沢鴨)

(9) House of Yagi Gennojō (八木 源之丞 応迅)



From Shintokuji walk north along Bojo-Dōri (坊城通). The entrance to the house is on the right hand side of the road just before the next crossroads. There is a shop on the right as you enter. The ticket includes green tea after your visit. You can take photographs up to the entrance to the house grounds but not in the house. Once again you may need to arrange for a volunteer interpreter via <http://Kyōtofreeguide.sakura.ne.jp/> as tours here are in Japanese

(10) Maekawa Shōji house (旧前川邸)



Leaving the house of Yagi Gennojō (八木源之丞応迅) turn left and walk a little bit further north to the first cross roads. Turn right at the crossroads onto Ayanokouji Dōri (綾小路通) and the entrance to the Maekawa Shōji house (旧前川邸) is the first entrance on the right. The entrance is closed at weekends. There are no tours here but you will find an information plaque in Japanese. Walk into the courtyard and to the left of the group of well pruned trees is a door outside of which is some information, once again in Japanese, and here you can purchase postcards and a detailed diagram of the house and its functions. Occasional bakumatsu exhibitions are held here. This is now a family home so please respect the privacy of the family.

Pro Imperial Ishin-shishi (維新志士) rōnin (浪人) from Chōshū han (長州藩) were using the Ikedaya Inn (池田屋) as a meeting point. It was here they planned to set fire to Kyōto (京都). Before this could happen, on the 5 June 1864, Takeda Kanryūsai (武田観柳斎) of the Shinsengumi (新選組) captured one of them, Furutaka Shuntaro (古高俊太郎), who was taken to the Maekawa Shōji House and interrogated under torture by Hijikata Toshizō (土方歳三) who hung him upside down and drove five inch wooden spikes into his heels and dripped hot wax into the wounds. Furutaka Shuntaro (古高俊太郎) eventually revealed the plans and the meeting place, the Ikedaya Inn (池田屋), which led to the famous Ikedaya Incident Jiken (池田屋事件 Ikedaya Jiken) (Ikedaya Incident: see Walk Two – Around Kiyamachi Street)



Furutaka Shuntaro (古高俊太郎)

Yamanami Keisuke (山南敬助), who is buried in Kōenji (光縁寺) was the Vice Commander of the Shinsengumi (新選組). Early in 1865 He tried to leave the Shinsengumi (新選組) after the Ikedaya Incident (池田屋事件) having disagreed with the way the policies and ideology Shinsengumi (新選組) were developing and apparently unhappy with the priests of Nishi Honganji (西本願寺) having been intimidated into allowing the Shinsengumi (新選組) to move there headquarters into Nishi Honganji (西本願寺). He fled to Ōtsu (大津市). Kondō Isami (近藤勇) sent Okita Sōji (沖田総司) to retrieve him. After Yamanami Keisuke (山南敬助) returned to Mibu (壬生), he was ordered to commit seppuku (切腹) which took place in the Maekawa Shōji house (旧前川邸); Okita Sōji (沖田総司) served as his second

Towards the end of September Kondō Isami (近藤勇) uncovered a plot involving four Chōshū (長州藩) men who had infiltrated the Shinsengumi (新選組) and ordered them killed. Nagakura Shinpachi Noriyuki (永倉新八載之), accompanied by two colleagues, discovered two of them on the veranda of the Maekawa Shōji house (旧前川邸) and killed them on the spot. Okita Sōji (沖田総司) and Todo Heisuke Yoshitora (藤堂平助宜虎) discovered the other two, one of whom escaped. On top of the four already discovered by Nagakura Shinpachi Noriyuki (永倉新八載之), two more were discovered one of whom escaped, the other was captured and beheaded by Todo Heisuke Yoshitora (藤堂平助宜虎) when he refused to cooperate

(11) Kōenji (光縁寺) burial place of some of the Shinsengumi (新選組)



On leaving the Maekawa Shōji house (旧前川邸) turn right and continue walking along Ayanokouji-Dōri (綾小路通). Crossing back over Mibu Dōri (壬生通) keep going east along Ayanokouji-Dōri (綾小路通) for another two blocks on the left hand side of Ayanokouji-Dōri (綾小路通). The entrance to Kōenji (光縁寺) is at the beginning of the third block. Sometimes the gate is closed but you can enter via the door on the left. Pay a small fee at the priest's dormitory and head to the cemetery through the Hondo, the main hall. Records can be found in the Hondo, the main hall and the stables the Shinsengumi (新選組) used to use were situated in the south west corner of the temple

Graves:

Tani Sanjurō Tomokuni (谷三十郎供国). It is not known if he joined the Shinsengumi (新選組) but he was in the list of those paid for the Ikedaya Incident (池田屋事件). Found dead near the Yasaka Shrine (八坂神社, Yasaka-jinja) in Gion (祇園)

Matsubara Chūji aka Tadashi (松原 忠司). Attempted seppuku (切腹) after Hijikata Toshizō (土方歳三) accused him of having an affair with the wife of a man he had killed. He later died of his wounds

Yamanami Keisuke (山南敬助), buried in Kōenji (光縁寺) was the Vice Commander of the Shinsengumi (新選組). Early in 1865 He tried to leave the Shinsengumi 新選組 after the Ikedaya Incident (池田屋事件) having disagreed with the way the policies and ideology Shinsengumi (新選組) were developing and apparently unhappy with the priests of Nishi Honganji (西本願寺) having been intimidated into allowing the Shinsengumi (新選組) to move there headquarters into Nishi Honganji (西本願寺). He fled to Ōtsu (大津市). Kondō Isami (近藤勇) sent Okita Sōji (沖田 総司) to retrieve him. After Yamanami Keisuke (山南敬助) returned to Mibu (壬生), he was ordered to commit seppuku (切腹) which took place in the Maekawa Shōji house (旧前川邸); Okita Sōji (沖田総司) served as his second

(12) Kyōto Nijō-jō Karamon Gate (京都二条城唐門)

On leaving Kōenji (光縁寺) turn left and walk east along Ayanokouji Dōri (綾小路通) until you reach the main road of Horikawa Dōri (堀川通) which runs north-south. Turn left and walk north till you reach the corner of Oshi Koji Dōri (押小路通). The entrance to Nijō-jō (二条城) is just here



The power base of the Tokugawa (徳川) in Kyōto (京都). In January 1863 Tokugawa Iemochi (徳川家茂), the penultimate Tokugawa Shōgun (徳川将軍) had visited here to discuss support for the Kobugattai Movement (公武合体)

Union of Court and Shogunate, with Tokugawa Yoshinobu (徳川慶喜), who became the 15th and last Tokugawa Shōgun (徳川将軍), and the Daimyō (大名) Matsudaira Katamori (松平容保) of Aizu (会津), Matsudaira Shungaku (松平春嶽) of Fukui (福井県), Yamanouchi Toyoshige (山内豊信 aka Yōdō 容堂) of Tosa (土佐藩), Date Munenari (伊達宗城) of Uwajima (宇和島), and Prince Shimazu Hisamitsu (島津久光島津氏) of the Shimazu clan (島津氏) of Satsuma (薩摩国) but with no agreement was reached and the talks ended in March. The lack of a definitive plan to expel the foreigners gave Kondō Isami (近藤勇) second thoughts about continuing with the Shinsengumi (新選組)

Itakura Katsukiyo (板倉勝静), Prime Minister (Rōjū 老中) of the Tokugawa Bakufu (徳川幕府) ordered the Shinsengumi (新選組) to guard Nijō-jō (二条城). However, on the 13 December 1867 Tokugawa Yoshinobu (徳川慶喜) ordered the Mito Han (水戸藩) to guard Nijō-jō 二条城. Kondō Isami (近藤勇) confronted the Mito Han (水戸藩) and very nearly drew his sword on them after he had lost the argument with them about who should guard Nijō-jō (二条城)

(13) Kyōto Imperial Palace (Kyōto Goshō) East Gate and Shinmikurumayosen Carriage Entrance (京都御所新御車寄)



On leaving Nijō-jō (二条城) go to Horikawa Dōri (堀川通) and turn left. Walk north until the next major intersection and turn right onto Marutamachi Dōri (丸太町柳). Keep walking east until you reach the entrance to Kyōto Imperial Park. Enter the park and walk north to the Imperial Palace Enclosure (京都御苑 Kyōto Gyoen)

The Forbidden Gate Incident, Hamagurigomon no Hen (蛤御門の変)

On the 5th June 1864 (Genji 元治 1), Chōshū (長州藩) Sonnō Jōi (尊皇攘夷) Revere the Emperor, Expel the Barbarians radicals aka Sonjō Rōshi (尊攘浪士), were attacked at the Ikedaya Inn, known as the Ikedaya Incident

(Ikedaya Jiken 池田屋事件), forcing them to take action against the Aizu (会津) and Satsuma (薩摩藩)

On the 18th August Aizu (会津) and Satsuma (薩摩藩) troops seized the Nine Forbidden Gates of the palace from the Chōshū (長州藩). 1,400 armed Loyalists, including one thousand rōnin (浪人), took over the Sakaimachi Gate, which until then had been guarded by the Chōshū (長州藩)

On the morning of the 19th August 1864 Chōshū (長州藩) radicals, who had accused the Satsuma (薩摩藩) and Aizu (会津) of manipulating Emperor Kōmei (Kōmei-tennō 孝明天皇), attacked Kyōto Imperial Palace (Kyōto Gosho 京都御所)

The pro Shogunate force, commanded by Saigō Takamori aka Takanaga (西郷隆盛 aka 隆永), Commander of the Satsuma (薩摩藩) forces in Kyōto (京都), who had formed an alliance with the Aizu (会津) were guarding the Inui Gate and forced the Chōshū (長州藩) to retreat but the Chōshū (長州藩) broke through the Hamaguri Gate. They were rescued by reinforcements from Aizu (会津) and Satsuma and members of Shinsengumi (新選組); Matsubara Chūji (aka Tadashi 松原 忠司), a captain in the Shinsengumi (新選組) who is buried in Kōenji Temple (光縁寺) was nicknamed Benkei (西塔武蔵坊弁慶) because of the way he was dressed at the time. Because of the attack on the Palace the Chōshū (長州藩) were branded as Imperial enemies

Note: The sword of Matsubara Chūji (松原 忠司 aka Tadashi), called Fujishima Tomoshige (藤島友重), can be seen at www.tsuruginoya.com/mn1_3/f00032.html

Location photographs by the author
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