

English Guide

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Shinsengumi associated sites in Kyōto: 2

英語の京都に新選組交の場所のガイドです

Kiyamachi Dori Walk: Around Kiyamachi Street (木屋町通, Kiyamachi Dōri)

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 Perry

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. These alliances had been forged nearly 300 hundred years before in the triumphs and defeats of the crucible of the Battle of Sekigahara (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 Iyasu (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 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 composed 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

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 (the Japan Broadcasting Corporation) has taken Japan by storm.



Satsuma samurai during boshin war period (Hand-coloured albumen silver print by Felice Beato, 1860s)

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 (新選組)

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.

Kiyamachi Dōri (木屋町通)

The sites concentrated around Kiyamachi Dori (木屋町通) between Shijo (四条通) and Sanjō Dori (三条通) are predominantly the sites of former residences of the supporters of the Sonnō jōi (Revere the Emperor, Expel the Barbarians 尊皇攘夷) movement and proponents of the Kobugattai Movement (Union of Court and Shogunate, 公武合体). The area is associated with one of the pivotal actions in the history of the Shinsengumi (新選組), the Ikedaya Incident or Jiken (池田屋事件), when the Shinsengumi (新選組) clashed with, and defeated, a large contingent of Chōshū (長州藩) Sonnō jōi (尊皇攘夷) at the Ikedaya Inn, setting back the Sonnō jōi (尊皇攘夷) movement by at least a year. Story lines are sometimes repeated to save having to go back through the pages

Starting point - Hankyu Kawaramachi Station (Kawaramachi eki 河原町駅) north exit number 5 on the corner of Kiyamachi (木屋町通) and Shijo Dori (四条通). Each map follows sequentially from the previous one in a northerly direction



1) Site of the former residence of Furutaka Shuntaro (古高俊太郎 寓居之後)



Furutaka Shuntaro was a proponent of the Sonnō jōi (尊皇攘夷) movement, a country samurai from Ōmi province (近江国) and a vassal of the Bishamondo Temple (毘沙門堂) in the hills of south east Kyōto (京都). Taking the alias of Masuya Kiemon (枳屋喜右衛門) he set himself up in an old second hand furniture shop called Masuya.

His colleague Teizo Miyabe (宮部鼎藏) was captured by the Shinsengumi (新選組). After some initial torture Kondō Isami (近藤 勇) tied him to a tree. He escaped but was being observed. He led them to Furutaka Shuntaro (古高俊太郎) who with other 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), assassinate some of the courtiers, destroy the Shinsengumi (新選組) and kidnap the Meiji Emperor (Meiji-tennō 明治天皇). Before this could happen, on the 5 June 1864, Takeda Kanryūusai (武田観柳斎) of the Shinsengumi (新選組) captured Furutaka Shuntaro (古高俊太郎)



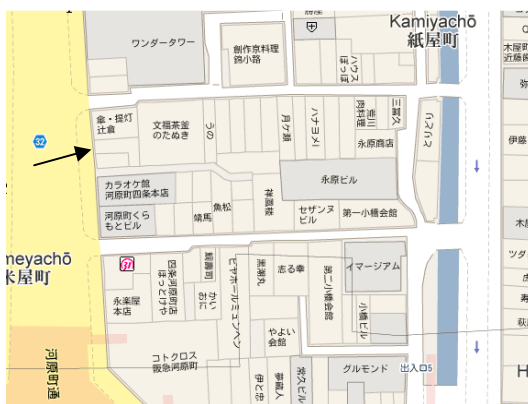
Furutaka Shuntaro
古高俊太郎



Hijikata Toshizō
土方歳三

He was taken to the Maekawa Shōji House (旧前川邸) 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, placed lit candle on the spikes which 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) and the plans of the Pro Imperial Ishin-shishi (維新志士) rōnin (浪人) which led to the Ikedaya Incident (Ikedaya Jiken 池田屋事件)

2) Site of the former residence of Nakaoka Shintaro (中岡慎太郎 寓居之地)



Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本龍馬) and Nakaoka Shintaro (中岡 新太郎) brokered an alliance between the Satsuma (薩摩藩), Chōshū (長州藩) and Tosa (土佐藩) Hans and on 9 November 1867, with the resignation of Tokugawa Yoshinobu (徳川 慶喜), the power of the Meiji Emperor (Meiji-tennō明治天皇) was restored (taisei hokan大政奉還) signalling the end of the Tokugawa (徳川)

On 15 November 1867 Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本 龍馬) and Nakaoka Shintaro (中岡 新太郎) were attacked at the Ōmiya Soy Sauce shop (近江屋) where they were hiding out. Nakaoka Shintaro (中岡 新太郎) died two days later from his wounds. Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本 龍馬) is buried here at the Gokoku Shrine (京都靈山護国神社) and Nakaoka Shintaro (中岡 新太郎) at his family gravesite along with his wife and parents (中岡家墓地 - 松林寺境内)



Nakaoka Shintaro
中岡 新太郎

Though the Shinsengumi (新選組) were suspected of the murders Iwakura Tomomi (岩倉具視) and Ōkubo Toshimichi (大久保利通) of the Satsuma (薩摩藩), who had wanted to inflict a military defeat on the Tokugawa (徳川) but whose plan had been thwarted by the successful peace brokered by Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本龍馬), were strongly suspected of orchestrating the murder

However, in February 1870, Imai Noburō (今井信郎), a former member of the Mimawarigumi (京都見廻組), confessed to a Military Judiciary Panel that he and other Mimawarigumi (京都見廻組), including Sasaki Tadasaburo (佐々木只三郎), had committed the murders. Given that Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本 龍馬) had shot a Tokugawa (徳川) samurai (侍) at the Teradaya Inn (寺田屋) in Fushimi (伏見区) the year before his murder Imai Noburo (今井信郎), Sasaki Tadasaburo (佐々木只三郎) and other Mimawarigumi (京都見廻組) were deemed to have been carrying out of the orders of the then Tokugawa Bakufu (徳川幕府) and therefore legal. They were released



Imai Noburō 今井信郎

There is still some controversy over who was responsible. For a more in depth article please see <http://p104.ezboard.com/Who-killed-Sakamoto-Ryoma/fshinsengumiseisatsufm8.showMessage?topicID=8.topic>

3) Site of the residence of Sukegoro Miyagawa (宮川助五郎寓居之跡)



Sukegoro Miyagawa (宮川助五郎 aka Miyagawa Nagaharu), was in July of Tenpō 15 (1844) near the Kōchi Castle (高知城 Kōchi-jō) town of Kōchi (高知市 Kōchi-shi) and was a high status retainer of the Tosa Han (土佐藩) supporters of the Imperial Court against the Tokugawa Bakufu (徳川幕府) in the period leading to the Meiji Restoration (大政奉還 taisei hokan) in which Miyagawa Sukegoro (宮川助五郎) was very much involved. He was a senior ranking samurai (侍) in group of men from Tosa Han (土佐藩) who had joined the movement of Sonnō jōi (尊皇攘夷 Revere the Emperor, Expel the Barbarians) in opposition to the Tokugawa Bakufu (徳川幕府) who volunteered as activists in the Kobugattai Movement (公武合体 Union of Court and Shogunate), and who were posted to Kyōto (京都) and whose headquarters was the Tosa Han House (土佐藩邸跡) in Kiyamachi (木屋町)



Miyagawa Sukegoro 宮川助五郎

A signboard seisatsu (制札) proclaiming the Chōshū Han (長州藩) were enemies of the Imperial Court, was placed near the Sanjō Bridge (三条大橋) but on the 28 August 1866 it was pulled down and vandalised by Sukegoro Miyagawa (宮川助五郎) but was replaced shortly after. He was later arrested by the Shinsengumi (新選組)

4) Site of the Tosa Domain House (土佐藩邸跡)



This is now a school. It was confiscated in 1871 by the new Government at the beginning of the Meiji period (明治時代 Meiji jidai) when the feudal system was abolished and estates and property confiscated. Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本龍馬) and his Tosa Han (土佐藩) played key roles in the Meiji Restoration (大政奉還 taisei hokan)

5) Site of the Ōmiya Soy Sauce shop (近江屋事件) where Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本 龍馬) and Nakaoka Shintaro (中岡 新太郎) were assassinated



Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本龍馬) and Nakaoka Shintaro (中岡 新太郎) brokered an alliance between the Satsuma (薩摩藩), Chōshū (長州藩) and Tosa (土佐藩) Hans and on 9 November 1867, with the resignation of Tokugawa Yoshinobu (徳川 慶喜), the power of the Meiji Emperor (明治天皇 Meiji-tennō) was restored (大政奉還 taisei hokan) signalling the end of the Tokugawa (徳川)

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they were hiding out. Nakaoka Shintaro (中岡 新太郎) died two days later from his wounds

Though the Shinsengumi (新選組) were suspected of the murders Iwakura Tomomi (岩倉具視) and Ōkubo Toshimichi (大久保利通) of the Satsuma (薩摩藩), who had wanted to inflict a military defeat on the Tokugawa (徳川) but whose plan had been thwarted by the successful peace brokered by Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本龍馬), were strong suspected of orchestrating the murder

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6) Site of the Hikone Domain House (彦根藩邸跡)



The Hikone Han (彦根藩) were supporters of the Tokugawa Bakufu (徳川幕府) during the Bakamutsu (幕末) period between the overthrow of the Tokugawa Bakufu (徳川幕府) and the Meiji Restoration (大政奉還 taisei hokan) and in an area where proponents of the Sonnō jōi (尊皇攘夷) movement and supporters of the Emperor were concentrated they must have felt fairly isolated. The property was about 3500 m² and the area of the buildings 2400 m² with one side abutting the Takasegawa Canal (Takasegawa 高瀬川) which in those days was larger and deeper than it is today and was used as a transportation link to the centre of Kyōto (京都)

7) Site of the residence of Shojiro Goto (後藤象二郎寓居之跡)



Shojiro Goto (後藤象二郎) was a supporter of the Kobugattai Movement (公武合体 Union of Court and Shogunate) but later, under the influence of Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本龍馬) became one of the leading senior Tosa (土佐藩) samurai (侍) involved of the Meiji Restoration (大政奉還 taisei hokan), the 1868 overthrow of the Tokugawa Bakufu (徳川幕府) feudal authority in Japan and a major advocate for establishing a Japanese democracy along Western parliamentary lines



Shojiro Goto 後藤象二郎

8) Site of the residence of Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本龍馬寓居之址)

Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本龍馬) lived above this, once a famous vinegar shop, with associations to the Kaientai Trading Company (海援隊) through which Sakamoto had links to the Nagasaki (Nagasaki-shi 長崎市) based trading company, Glover Trading Co. (Guraba-Shokai グラバー初回), owned by Thomas Blake Glover, a Scottish merchant, from whom Ryōma purchased arms. Glover is buried in Sakamoto International Cemetery (Sakamoto Kokusai Bochi 坂本国際墓地) in Nagasaki (Nagasaki-shi 長崎市)



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9) Sanjō Bridge Noticeboard Incident (Sanjō Seisatsu Jiken 三条制札事件)



A signboard seisatsu (制札) proclaiming the Chōshū Han (長州藩) were enemies of the Imperial Court, was placed near the Sanjō bridge (三条大橋) but on the 28 August 1866 it was pulled down and vandalised by Sukegoro Miyagawa (宮川助五郎), a supporter of the Sonnō jōi (尊皇攘夷) movement and the Emperor and opposed to the Tokugawa Bakufu (徳川幕府). A few days later, on the 2nd September, the seisatsu (制札) was replaced. 3 days later, on the 5 September, it had been removed. On the 10th September the seisatsu (制札) was once again replaced by the Tokugawa Bakufu (徳川幕府)



Sukegoro Miyagawa 宮川助五郎

The Shinsengumi (新選組) were ordered to keep watch and on the 12th September the Shinsengumi (新選組) sent 34 members in three groups from Unit 10 commanded by [redacted] and from Unit 12 commanded by Arai Tadao (新井忠雄) and Harada Sanosuke (原田左之助), who took part in the assassination of Serizawa Kamo (芹沢鴨)



Harada Sanosuke 原田 左之助
who also took part in the assassination of Serzawa Kamo

Hashimoto Kaisuke (橋本皆助) and Asano Fujitaro (浅野藤太郎) dressed as beggars loitered near Sanjō Bridge (三条大橋), a common gathering place for beggars

On the 12th September, at midnight, 8 samurai (侍) from Tosa han (土佐藩) showed up and pulled the seisatsu (制札) down. 3 were captured or killed by the units commanded by Arai Tadao (新井忠雄) and Harada Sanosuke (原田左之助), but 5 escaped.

Unit 10 commanded by Oishi Kuwajiro (大石 欒次郎) were late because Asano Fujitaro (浅野藤太郎), who was supposed to let them know if anyone showed up, was scared of the Chōshū (長州藩) samurai (侍) and took the long way round to the place where Oishi's unit was located to avoid them.

Arai Tadao (新井忠雄) and Harada Sanosuke (原田左之助) got drunk while waiting. Oishi Kuwajiro (大石 欒次郎), leading the other unit which arrived late, apparently stayed sober, but one of the watchmen, Asano Kaoru (浅野藤太郎 aka Asano Fujitaro), in trying to avoid bumping into the Tosa Han (土佐藩) men, of whom he was afraid, failed to let Oishi Kuwajiro (大石 欒次郎) know the vandals had arrive so his group missed the fight. To find out who to reward Kondō Isami (近藤勇) and Hijikata Toshizō (土方歳三) later asked who had distinguished themselves in the fight but Arai Tadao (新井忠雄) and Harada Sanosuke (原田左之助) claimed ignorance and requested an equitable distribution of the reward money amongst the men, though the group commanded by Oishi Kuwajiro (大石 欒次郎) got nothing and he was furiously and mercilessly taunted by Asano Kaoru (浅野藤太郎 aka Asano Fujitaro), for being a coward.

Later Asano Kaoru (浅野藤太郎 aka Asano Fujitaro) tried to leave the Shinsengumi (新選組) to join Ito Kashitaro Takeaki (伊東甲子太郎武明) but was unable to infiltrate Goryo Eji (御陵衛士) Guards of Emperor's Tomb, of Ito Kashitaro Takeaki (伊東甲子太郎武明) because of the close links between the two groups. He returned to the Shinsengumi (新選組) headquarters and was ordered to commit seppuku (切腹) for deserting, though according to another

story his body was found near the Katsura River (桂川 Katsuragawa) and may have been killed by Okita Sōji 沖田 総司 房良

10) Ikedaya Incident 池田屋事件



Ikedaya Incident (池田屋事件) - 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) and kidnap the Emperor and take him to Choshu (長州), as well as planning the destruction of the Shinsengumi (新選組). Before this could happen Takeda Kanryūsai (武田 観柳齋) 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 (旧前川邸) and interrogated under torture by Hijikata Toshizō (土方歳三) who hung him upside down and drove five inch 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). Kondō Isami (近藤 勇), the Shinsengumi (新選組) Commander, led a force of men to Ikedaya (池田屋) to confront and arrest the plotters. Backed up by the arrival of a second group of Shinsengumi (新選組) led by Hijikata Toshizō (土方歳三) the Shinsengumi (新選組) arrested 8 ronin and arrested 23 losing one of their own during the fight which lasted 2 hours. Okita Sōji (沖田 総司), an expert swordsman and captain of one of the Shinsengumi (新選組) units, collapsed, probably as a result of his tuberculosis. Nagakura Shinpachi Noriyuki (永倉新八載之) another Shinsengumi (新選組) unit captain was one of those injured during the fight. The Inn was destroyed as a result of the fight and until recently was a Pachinko (パチンコ) parlour which has been knocked down and the site is under reconstruction; though the memorial post and plaques can still be seen



Shimada Kai 島田魁 took part in the Ikedaya Affair. Nicknamed "Rikisan" (meaning "Sumo wrestler") because of his size

Location photos by the author
Acknowledgement – Maps by Google