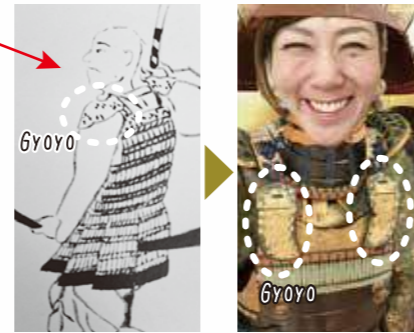


Hello! This is Takako Shimatani with full of energy. In this article, I am going to talk about 'Gyoyo', protectors for shoulders.

Since the Late Heian Period, the style of battle was changing from the battle on horses to the ground battles. \*Haraate, general armour which lower class warriors who fought on foot wore, had no sleeves. So, at first, Gyoyo was made for protecting shoulders. They were smaller than big sleeves and ordinal sleeves. But, in the Late Kamakura Period and Muromachi Period, even higher class warriors were going to get them. They seemed to come to wear these shoulder protectors as minimum defence gears. (\* It was a protector for the belly. A light protector covering only the both sides.)

**From the protector for shoulders**

After the Sengoku Period, spears and guns were mainly used. According to this change of battle, general armour also came to change to one which were easier to move and more protective. They came to be more practical. Therefore, Gyoyo was settled from the top of shoulders to breasts. The place to protect by Gyoyo had been changed.



	Kamakura Period	Muromachi Period	Edo Period
Shapes and the periods mainly used			
Features	The top was comb-type. The bottom was sharpened toward inside. The holes for straps connected with general armour were placed on both sides of edge.	The top was comb-type. The bottom was sharpened toward inside. The holes for straps connected with general armour were placed on both sides of edge.	The top was comb-type. The holes for straps connected with general armour were placed on the centre.
	The oldest Gyoyo Iron inlay Gyoyo inherited in Shimadu Family. Marginal variegation was made on an iron plate. And they were hinged with big heart marks on left and right sides	Period of the Northern and Southern Court	The period between the Middle and Late Edo Periods.
	The period between Sengoku Period and the Early Edo Period		

Due to the change of style in battle, Gyoyo had been changed from the protector for shoulders to what protected a heart. Since lower class warriors used Gyoyo as a protector for a belly, general armour had never been dedicated with Gyoyo. So, it is unclear from the size of Gyoyo and the way how Gyoyo was attached to general armour. But, when I made a research about Gyoyo, I found that the shapes of Gyoyo had been changed for easy usage as the times changed. I felt the wisdom of Japanese people at that time.

**Greetings**

I really appreciate your continued favour to 'the Daimyo Company Limited' in 2018 as well. Time flies and there is only a few remaining in 2018. How are your days in 2018? We pray for your healthy lives with smiles and greeting the year of 2019. I am really looking forward to your uninterrupted supports with 'We deliver 'YAMATODAMASHIII!' as well next year.

At the end of this year, I write a Haiku poem at the end of year, The below is famous for Shoin Yoshida's farewell poem;  
**Even if my body rots in the Musashino Plain,  
 I will forever have yamato-damashii.**

**Even if other magazines are thrown away, I wish the newsletters,  
 We deliver 'YAMATODAMASHIII!', were kept.**  
 (We produce the newsletters with enormous energy. I hope you do not throw them away to a bin.) By Hanaemon

How about this Yamatodamashii? We need your opinions and feedbacks more. We are waiting for them!

Please write as 'Sub: reply to the newsletter' and send it to us



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Hello! This is Akemi Nakabori.



**I went to a study trip to Himeji Castle in Hyogo prefecture which was registered as a National Treasure and World Heritage as well.**

Norimura Akamatsu originally built a structure like a fort at the top of small hill called as Himeyama Mountain in 1333. Afterwards, Sadanori Akamatsu, Norimura's son, completed it. That is said to be the beginning of Himeji Castle.



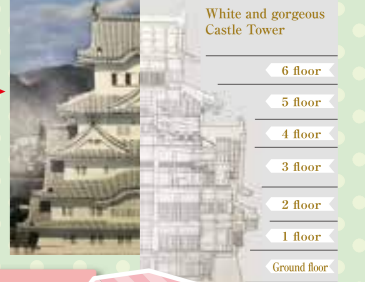
**Very Huge!**

I was so surprised at the scale of castle beyond my imagination!!

When Yoshitaka Kuroda (Kanbee) was the lord of castle, he gave this castle to Hideyoshi unexpectedly because Kanbee thought the castle would be very important for attacking Chugoku Region by the Army of Nobunaga. Hideyoshi rebuilt the castle and made it the three-tier castle. And, after Battle of Sekigahara in 1600, Terumasa Ikeda had the castle. He spent nine years and refurbished to the current five-tier seven-storey castle. When I entered the inside of castle, I thought 'How do soldiers make an attack to such a castle?' The structure has a lot of invention as I mentioned before.



Himeji Castle of three-tier (scale model)



**Many loopholes**



Round, triangle, square and rectangle. Soldiers are able to make an attack against the enemy with guns and arrows through these holes.

**The gate of (Ni)**



It is a profound gate made of iron. When the enemy passed the gate, soldiers allegedly removed the board of second floor (the ceiling of first floor) and charged the enemy from overhead at the two-storey gate.

The ceiling was so low that spears might be dropped from above and I might get an attack. What I imagined frightened me very much when I passed through this gate.

**The gate of (Ho)**



A large number of enemies failed to go through this gate at one time. In order to fulfil this demand, this gate was made small for stalling a time for guarding the castle when attacked by the enemy. Because only a few enemies were unable to pass the gate, a lot of soldiers were capable of sniping the enemy coming from the inside of gate. It is said that these other 21 gates were settled as well. Making many gates forced many enemy soldiers not to enter the castle. It also focused at confusing and intercepting the enemy. They are the features of this gate's structure.

**'Ishiotoshi'-the place on the balcony of Castle gate**



You can find many objects like balconies on the walls. Soldiers used to drop huge stones and/or hot water from the inside of castle against the enemy under the walls and/or climbing the walls. These objects were said to be attached for that purpose.

To the next page



**In the castle**

**The rack to store arms all over the wall**



**The steep stairs**

They are very difficult to ascend and descend. Only I had a muscle pain in the next day.



If I had been an enemy soldier, I probably would have been killed before entering the castle.

You can find much more booby traps. But, regrettably, I failed to introduce all for want of spaces. I strongly hope you will make it sure to head to this place.

The castle had a large number of other interesting points to see!!

**The cross-shaped gargyle**



Kanbee Kuroda was a Christian and he installed it on the roof of castle when he was a lord of castle. Some scholars insisted this theory.

**Ubagishi**



When Hideyoshi was going to build the castle, Hideyoshi was unable to get enough stones for that. Hideyoshi was so annoyed with it. Then, a certain old lady offered Hideyoshi a stone mill for making the castle. Hideyoshi liked it so much that he put it on an outstanding place of wall. This story was spread all over Japan and Hideyoshi was able to get a lot of stones from various places. Like this, Hideyoshi is said to be capable of proceeding to build the castle completely.

**The bottom stone wall of Kamiyamasato**



When Hideyoshi renovated the castle, he is said to order Kanbee to design and carry out the actual works. The stone wall was allegedly built at that time. 'Noradumi' is a method of construction to accumulate natural stones almost as they were. The method was a primitive way of masonry. In those days, the skills to pile up stones highly were too poor. So, like in this picture, the wall has dual-layer structure separated from the top and bottom stone walls. While, at a glance, the wall seemed to have been an old-fashioned method to construct stone walls, it was evaluated by lords of castles in the next generation because the dual-layer structure made the wall an excellent feature. And it also cut down expenses by utilizing natural stones. That might be the very reason to enable Himeji Castle to leave in the present day.



Noradumi  
As natural unprocessed stones were piled up as they were, this wall had a lot of spaces between stones. They look uneven.

I had heard a rumor, which was 'Himeji Castle is so beautiful, but nothing.' Thus, I did not expect too much honestly. But, when I saw it with my eyes actually, I was stunned by the powerful and huge Castle shining in a white colour! The castle is said to be called as Shirasagi-j (White Egret Castle) because it has a shape that a white egret is about to take off. The castle has a lot of traps that the ideas to win a battle were settled everywhere as well as excellent beauty. These points fascinated me as well. I felt sensitive strategy from the Castle. When I had a look at the stone walls which was related to Kanbee and had passed for about 400 years, I really felt as if I had travelled back in time. Have you ever been to Himeji Castle? If you have, I would like to know what you feel. And if you have not, please make it sure to head to the Castle!

On my way to home, I visited to **the Sosha in Harima Province, next to Himeji Castle.**

**The official name of this shrine is 'Itate Hyozu Shrine'. Since this shrine gets total 174 big and small Gods in Harima Province together, it is called as ' the Sosha in Harima Province'.**

Itate Daijin Shrine....it is worshiped as the God to guard the nation of Japan and the God to open roads for winning and happiness as well.

Hyozu Daijin Shrine.....it is well-known as the God of marriage and endeared as the God of wealth. This God created all of the industries from agriculture, manufacturing and commerce to medicines and brewing and enriched the lives of people. It is worshipped as the God to build the country. So, fishermen in Harima Province visited there. Kanbee also visited this place eventually and prayed for the winning at battle fields.



**I visited the Shrines and prayed for excellent relation with our clients.**

In the next page, Hanaemon, the president of our firm, makes you back in time about Kanbee Kuroda!! Please enjoy his column in succession!

Hanaemon's



**I am going to make you back in the times of man related to Himeji in this article!**

tactician, but not a tactician **Yoshitaka Kuroda**

his popular name:

**Kanbee Kuroda**



Kanbee Kuroda / wikipedia

I suppose many readers might ask if the title of NHK Taiga drama series aired four years ago had been 'A tactician, Kanbee' as well. However, there was no position of tactician in governmental posts and job positions of Japan in the first place. But I guess nobody argued that he was a right-hand man of Hideyoshi Toyotomi who had united a whole country.



**In the future, Nobunaga will make it sure to gain power!**

Nobunaga Oda dismissed Yoshiaki ASHIKAGA, the 15th shogun, when Kanbee was 29 years old. He convinced that Oda family would start to emerge after this accident and advised Masamoto Koderu, his lord. He worked under Nobunaga through Hideyoshi Hashiba, his later lord.



In spite of 29 years old, he had good foreseeability. He was a young man with a bright future ahead of him. After that, as he expected, Nobunaga nearly approached to unite a whole country.



Nobunaga

**There is no way except being a Buddhism priest and telling my will~.**

When Kanbee was 47 years old, Hideyoshi who had made Japan under control questioned trusted vassals.

Hideyoshi: 'Who would be a conqueror of the whole country after my death?'

A vassal: 'Sir. Tokugawa or Sir Maeda?'

Hideyoshi: 'No, Kanbee will make it. You do not know his power at all.'

After listening to the story, he thought, 'It is a source of great harm to my family. I have to shave my hair, become a Buddhism priest and show Hideyoshi that I have no intention to unite the whole country.'

Afterward, he shaved his hair and named Josui Kuroda.



Hideyoshi had already transferred the headship of the family to his son. But as Hideyoshi knew the ability of Kanbee very well, Hideyoshi might still be afraid of Kanbee's unknown potential.

**Who would be a conqueror of the whole country?'**



Sir Tokugawa?

Sir Maeda?

Me?

Kanbee had served three rulers-Nobunaga Oda, Hideyoshi Toyotomi and Ieyasu Tokugawa. He is said to have never been beaten over 50 battles. He had got a great success enough to be called a talented strategist. But, later in his life, Kanbee came to insult chief vassals who had been working with him. When Nagamasa, Kanbee's son, listened to Kanbee's humiliation to chief vassals somewhere, Nagamasa headed to Kanbee in order to advise him not to do. Then, Kanbee said, 'I am doing that for you. I do not go mad for myself'. Kanbee focused on making circumstances for Nagamasa to govern his territory easily by being disliked. Though it is far away, I have to make surrounding for a successor in business to be easy to operate a firm when I inherit my company to a successor, my son. I studied it from Kanbee's story.

