

## Shinagawa Post Station on the Tokaido Highway

### Founding of the Shinagawa Post Station

Tokugawa Ieyasu started the construction of a number of highways that connected Edo to the various regions of Japan, and established a number of post stations along these routes. In 1601, horses and porters were prepared at the post stations of the Tokaido Highway. Shinagawa Post Station was initially comprised of Kita-Shinagawa and the Minami-Shinagawa Stations, and in 1722 the additional Kachi-shinshuku Station\* was established on the north side of Kita-Shinagawa Post Station for a total of three stations.

\* Kachi-shinshuku Station: A post station that only served *ninsoku* porters. This duty was called *kachibuyaku*, which is the origin of the station's name.

### Chiefs of Shinagawa Station

The *nanushi* chief of a village was in charge of its overall politics, and the position was typically passed down through the generations in the family of a prominent landowner. At Shinagawa Station, the Kagata family served as the chief of the Minami-Shinagawa Station, the Udagawa family served as the chief of the Kita-Shinagawa Station, and the Oshima family served as the chief of the Shinagawa-Ryoshimachi Town. Kachi-shinshuku Station was managed by the Iida and the Namura families, but later the chief position was taken over solely by the Iida family.

### Roles of Post Stations

Each post station on the Tokaido Highway had the duty up to provide 100 porters and 100 horses a day. The *toyaba* station house which was responsible for managing these services employed the *toiya* station master, a *toshiyori* assistant, a *chozuke* record keeper, an *umasashi* stable master, and *ninsokusashi* porter master. The stable master divided loads among the horses, and the porter master would load the individual porters with baskets and divide their loads. The Shinagawa Station also featured a weigh-station that inspected the weight of loads passing through.

### *Sukego* Conscription

When a station required more horses or porters than the number it was designated to supply, it would conscript people and horses from the surrounding villages. This system eventually became codified in the *sukego* conscription. In 1725, 57 villages were designated as *sukego* conscription villages for Shinagawa Station. The processions of *Daimyo*\* lords often took

place during the planting season, making this duty a major burden for the villages.

\* *Daimyo* military lords: Samurai lords with domains over 10,000 *goku* (1 *oku* is the amount of land required to produce enough rice for one adult to eat for a year), who served as vassals to the shogunate government. *Daimyo* were required to travel to Edo at regular intervals, and also perform military service.

### People Travelling the Tokaido Highway

Various travelers used the Tokaido Highway, such as *Daimyo* lords visiting Edo, entourages from foreign countries, and merchant parties bearing tea leaves for the shogun. From the 18th century, the common people also used road as pilgrims to shrines, such as Ise-Jingu (Ise City, Mie Prefecture). Travelers would go along the highway on foot or carried in palanquins. With the danger of bandits, and the difficulties of passing through checkpoints, together with the flooding of rivers, travel was always a harrowing experience.

### Cost of Travelling

Travelling entailed a variety of expenses, such as lodging, food and drink, employing people, crossing river fees, footwear, monetary offerings, and haircut. When travelers ran out of small change while on the road, they would exchange money at a local market.

### *Hikyaku* Porters

*Hikyaku* porters, who served as the mailmen of the Edo Period, connected the various post stations through a series relays to carry various small packages such as documents and money. There were *hikyaku* porters who served the shogunate, the various *daimyo* lords, and also the common people. As commerce expanded in Japan, so too did the regions they connected for communications and money delivery.

### *Beni-e* Peddlers

*Beni-e* art was a form of *ukiyo-e*\* illustration in which crimson ink was tinted on *ukiyo-e* printed with sumi ink. This doll is a reproduction of a *beni-e* peddler based on an illustration made between 1716 and 1736.

The figure carries a box on their back, which is decorated with a model of the *daimon* gate at Yoshiwara (present-day Taito City, Tokyo), and in their hands carries *beni-e* illustrations hanged on several bamboo bars.

\* *Ukiyo-e* illustrations: A form of illustration that featured a wide range of subjects, such as actors, beautiful women, *rikishi* sumo wrestlers, birds, and flowers.



### Model of the *Honjin* officially appointed main inn, at Shinagawa Station

*Daimyo* lords, court nobles and other individuals of high stature stayed at the *Honjin* main inn at Shinagawa Post Station. The Shinagawa Station *Honjin* had two additional auxiliary inns in addition to the mail inn. The building was unique, such as having a gate which was not permitted at lodges for common people, installing a lower entry board that offered guests easy entry for palanquins, and a Japanese style room of the *shoinzukuri* architectural style.

This model is the *honjin* inn that was lost to fire in 1811 but rebuilt later. Currently, the Seiseki Park (Kitashinagawa 2-7-21, Shinagawa City, Tokyo) is located on the former grounds of the *honjin*.



1\_05\_01

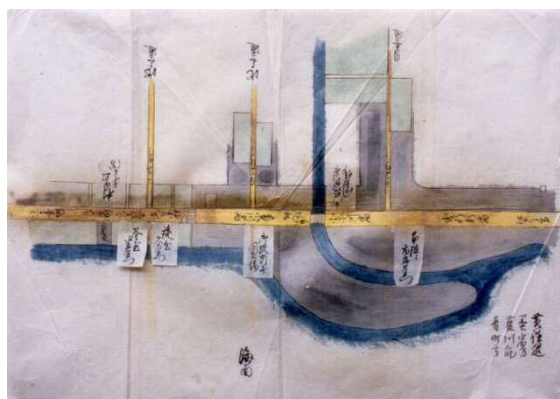


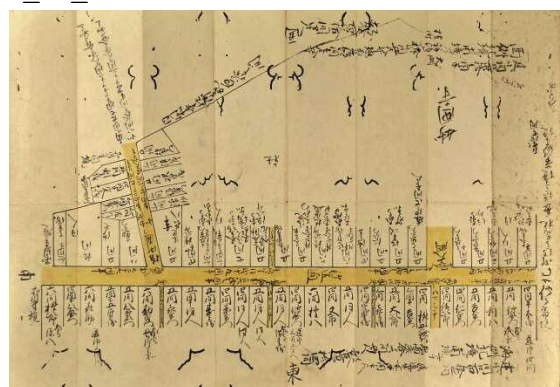
Illustration of Shinagawa Post Station(Reproduction)

The late Edo Period (the early to mid 19th century)

Original: Rissho University collection, housed at the Shinagawa Historical Museum

An illustration that belonged to the Kagata family, which served as the *nanushi* chief of Minami-Shinagawa Station for generations. It indicates the approximate locations of the *toyaba* station house and *honjin* main inn both at the Minami and Kita-Shinagawa Stations. The *toyaba* and weigh-station of the Kita-Shinagawa Station house were lost to fire in 1823 and not rebuilt.

1\_05\_02



Sketch of the Main Gate Area of Myokoku-ji Temple(Reproduction)

Produced in after December 1807

Original: Rissho University collection, housed at the Shinagawa Historical Museum

A sketch that belonged to the Kagata family, which served as the *nanushi* chief of Minami-Shinagawa Station for generations. In the Shinagawa Station area, two signposts named *bojikui* indicated the borders of the towns and villages. One was located at Yatsuyamashita and the other at the border of the main gate area at Myokoku-ji Temple.

1\_05\_03



### Map of Five Highways and Four Post Stations

This map featuring the “Four Post Stations of Edo” that served as the gateways to Edo: Senju Station (present-day Adachi City, Tokyo) on the Nikko-Oshu Highway\*, Itabashi Station (present-day Itabashi City, Tokyo) on the Nakasendo Highway\*, Naito-Shinjuku Station on the Koshu Highway\* (present-day Shinjuku City, Tokyo), and Shinagawa Station on the Tokaido Highway\*.

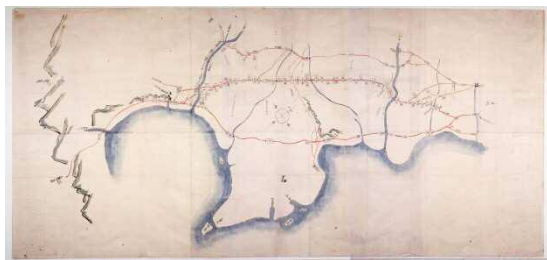
\* The Nikko-Oshu Highway: Edo to Nikko (Nikko City, Tochigi Prefecture) and Edo to Mutsushirakawa (present-day Shirakawa City, Fukushima Prefecture)

\* The Nakasendo Highway: Edo to Kusatsu (present-day Kusatsu City, Shiga Prefecture)

\* The Koshu Highway: Edo to Shimosuwa (present-day Shimosuwa Town, Suwa District, Nagano Prefecture)

\* The Tokaido Highway: Edo to Kyoto (present-day Kyoto City, Kyoto Prefecture)

1\_05\_04



Map of the Nakahara Highway (Reproduction)

Edo Period

Original: Ando family collection, housed at the Kawasaki City Historical Museum

This map shows the Nakahara Highway that connected the Toranogomon Gate of the Edo Castle (present-day Chiyoda City, Tokyo) to Hiratsuka Post Station, as well as the Tokaido Highway running on the ocean side and the Oyama Highway running on the mountain side.

1\_05\_05



Visual Reproduction of The Tokaido Highway

Production: Fuji Television Time Trip View Project (Shinagawa Historical Museum Collaboration)

A scene reproduced as part of the “Time Trip View” project by Fuji Television. The scene offers a glimpse of the bustling Tokaido Highway from the seaside.

1\_05\_06



Survey Drawing of the Tokaido Highway—the first volume of the 13 volumes (Reproduction)

1806

Original: Postal Museum Japan collection

A survey commissioned by the Edo shogunate government to ascertain the state of the five highways and their sub-highways.

The scale of the map is 1/1800, and includes the detailed information such as the location of the key facilities of station posts including the *toyaba* station office, the weigh-station, the *honjin* main inn, auxiliary inns, and *kosatsu* posts, as well as temples and shrines, sideroads, town names, drainage ditches, and stone bridges on the highway.

1\_05\_07



*Kosatsu* Wooden Notice Board (Speculative Reproduction)

There were also *kosatsu* boards inscribed with laws and forbidden acts, such as fixed fees for using the services of people and horses at the post station. *Kosatsu* were affixed on a *kosatsu* post. The Shinagawa *kosatsu* post was located on the northwest of the Sakai bridge over the Meguro River.

1\_05\_08



*Sekifuda* Gate Sign

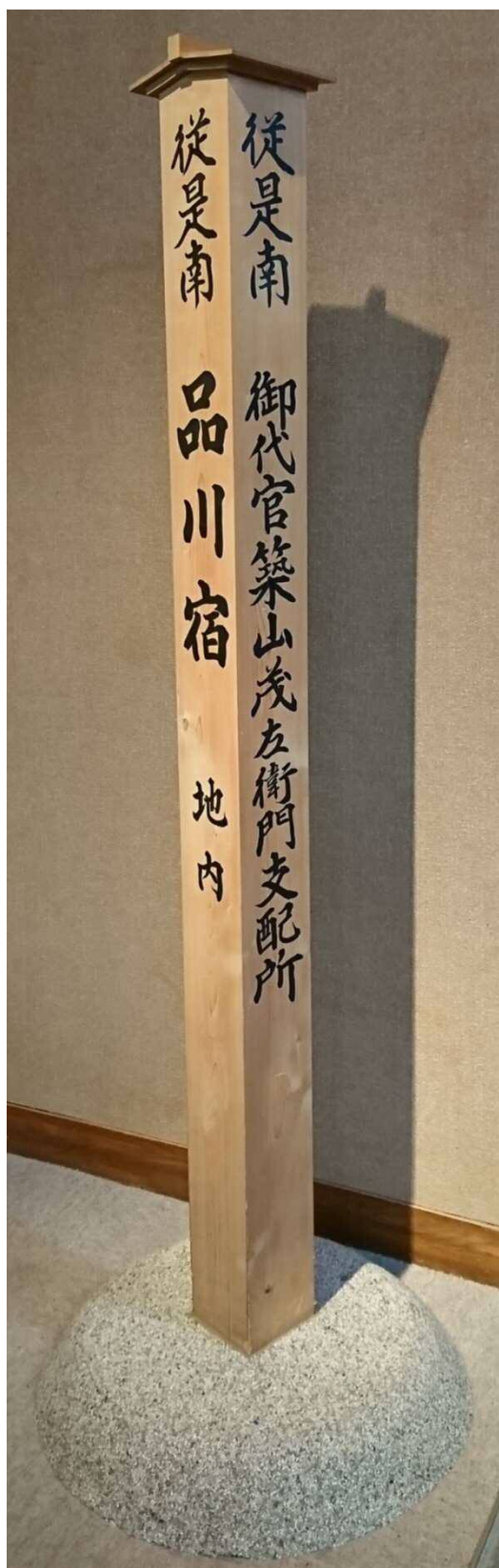
Edo Period

*Sekifuda* gate signs were posted at the main gate of the *honjin* main hall when a military lord (*daimyo*) or court noble (*kuge*) was staying for rest or lodging. This *sekifuda* gate sign is said have been used when Asano (Matsudaira), the lords of the Hiroshima Domain (*han*) in the Akinokuni Province (today, the Hiroshima City area of Hiroshima Prefecture), stayed at the *honjin* main hall.

Detailed information, however, such as the year and location of stay, is not recorded.



1\_05\_09



### *Bojikui* Signpost (Reproduction)

*Bojikui* signposts were used to indicate borders, such as those of post stations and villages. This signpost stood at the north entrance to Shinagawa Station in around 1845, the same year as the model of Shinagawa Station.

This sign can also be seen in Utagawa Hiroshige's *ukiyo-e*, produced in around 1833, "Fifty-three Stations of the Tokaido Highway: Sunrise in Shinagawa." According to the survey drawings of the Tokaido Highway completed in 1806, there were additional two *bojikui* signposts at the borders of Minami-Shinagawashuku 4-chome and the Myokoku-ji Temple town, and also the Kai'an-ji Temple town, and the Oi Village in the Shinagawa Station.

Front face: From here south is Shinagawa Station

Left: 1845

Right: From here south is the territory of Daikan\* Tsukiyama Mozaemon

\* Daikan: The title of a regional administrative official

1\_05\_10



### The Townscape of Shinagawa Post Station

The houses of Shinagawa Post Station ran north-south from the border of Takanawa Town (Minato City, Tokyo) to the border of the neighborhood in front of Myokoku-ji Temple. This model is based on an illustration of Shinagawa Post Station from 1845, reproducing approximately 500 meters of houses facing the Tokaido Highway centered around the Meguro River. The name of each shops is recorded along the base of the model.