

●Shinagawa Historical Museum Explanatory Sheet

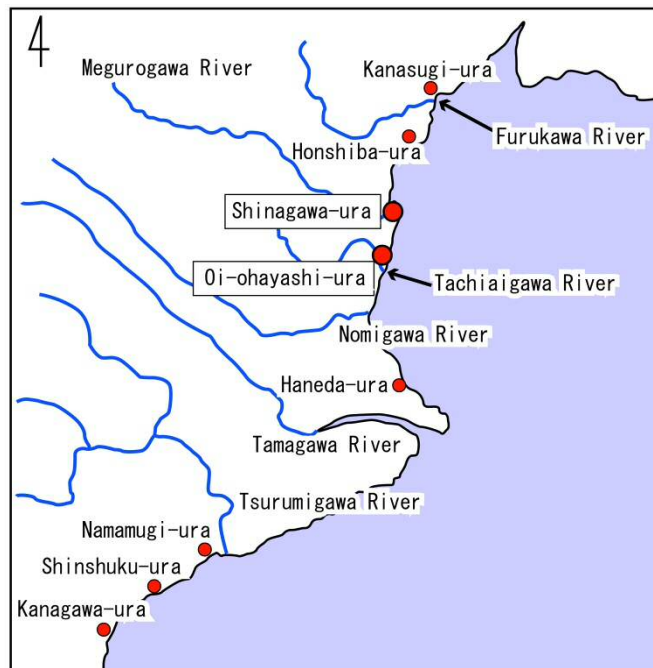
The Fishing Industry of Shinagawa

The Fishing Industry of Edo Bay

When the Edo shogunate government was founded, the fishing industry in Edo Bay was developed by fishermen migrating from the Osaka area and sharing their techniques. The shogunate government also accorded special rights to these migrating fishermen to foster the growth of the industry. These migrated fishermen and the original local fishermen eventually mingled, and many fishing villages were formed along the shores of Edo Bay.

Two fishing villages formed in the Shinagawa region, Minami-Shinagawa Ryoshimachi Town (Shinagawa-ura) and Oi village Ohayashi Ryoshimachi (Oi-ohayashi-ura), and these developed as part of the eight villages that presented fish to the shogunate.

Starting from the north, the eight villages were Kanasugi, Honshiba (both in what is today Minato City, Tokyo), Shinagawa, Oi-ohayashi (both in what is today Shinagawa City, Tokyo), Haneda (present-day Ota City,



Tokyo), Namamugi, Shinshuku, and Kanagawa (all three located in what is today Kanagawa Prefecture). Kanasugi, Honshiba and Shinagawa served as leaders among the eight fishing villages. All of the fishing villages were required to make an offering of fish to Edo Castle three times a month, and exceptional offerings were also sometimes required. From 1792, the practice of offering fish was replaced with making tributes of money, but it eventually settled into the custom of offering money and fish once every month.

Shinagawa-ura

While Shinagawa-ura belonged to the Minami-Shinagawa Post Station, the Oshima family served as the *nanushi* village chief, and it functioned as a village. The fishing village was located along the Meguro River on a headland that jut into Edo Bay. There was a shared spot for fishermen to dry their nets on this headland, as well as Yorikimyojin Shrine (present-day Yoriki Shrine), which enshrined the local deity. Today, a memorial stone can be found in the grounds of Yoriki Shrine to share the history of the shrine's origin and the prosperous Shinagawa-ura fishing village.

Ketabune fishing boats were used to fish at Shinagawa-ura. Fishing with a *ketabune* ship involved



▲Yoriki Shrine (From "Illustrations of Edo")

driving the ship laterally with the sails while trawling five to nine *ketaami* fishing nets low in the water.

The *ketabune* fishing of Shinagawa-ura initially thrived much more than other fishing villages. But construction began on the Shinagawa battery islands in the latter half of the 19th century declined the fishing catch. Fishing for Shiba shrimp using shrimp *ketaami* nets was considered as an alternative, but this led to conflict with other fishing villages over the use of the specialized nets for that form of fishing.

Oi-ohayashi-ura

Oi-ohayashi-ura belonged to Oi Village. Ohayashi-ura differed from Shinagawa-ura in that it had no *nanushi* chief, but there were still individuals who served as leaders of the fishermen in the village.

Records in November 1864 indicate the origins of the Oi-ohayashi-ura fishing village. It states that when the estate of the Tottori Domain (currently, the area around Tottori City, Tottori Prefecture) was built to the east of Shiba Kanasugi in 1659, six fishermen from that area were granted land in Ohayashi-machi in Oi Village as compensation for the land they gave up. The migration of these six fishermen led to the formation of Ohayashi Ryoshimachi Town, which thrived as a fishing village.

Oi-ohayashi-ura was located near Samezu (present day Higashi-oi, Shinagawa City, Tokyo), and the Ohayashi-hachiman Shrine (present-day Samezu

Hachiman Shrine) enshrined the local deity.

Fish Caught in Shinagawa

Records from 1843 provide an example of some of the fish caught in Shinagawa: Flathead, flounder, Shiba shrimp, whitebait, greenling, squid, Japanese whiting, moray, sea bream, striped mullet, halfbeak, flatfish, red stingray, Spanish mackerel, blood clam, and common orient clam.

The Decline of the Fishing Industry

The fishing industry was vital to Shinagawa since the Edo Period, but it began to decline with the advent of modernization. The landfill construction for the Shinagawa battery islands impacted on the environment of the bay. In December 1962, the fishing rights for the region were revoked, which marked the end of the fishing industry.

Ketabune Ship

