

Major Remains found in Chigasaki (Continued)

ちがさき ほっけん おも いせき 茅ヶ崎で発見された主な遺跡 (続)

This special issue of Chigasaki Breeze completes a two-part report summarizing a few of the 215 historic sites dating from the Japanese Paleolithic period (about 17,000 years ago) to the end of the Edo era (AD 1868) which have been found in the city, as shown on the map below.

9. The Kaminomachi Remains

Amongst the remains at Nishikubo, many pit dwellings built between the Tumulus and Heian periods have been found. The square-shaped pit dwellings were lined up in the same direction, the same direction in fact as that of rows of modern houses in the vicinity, showing that today's principles of arranging houses and establishing boundaries to separate two areas already existed in the Tumulus period.

10. The Hiromachi Remains

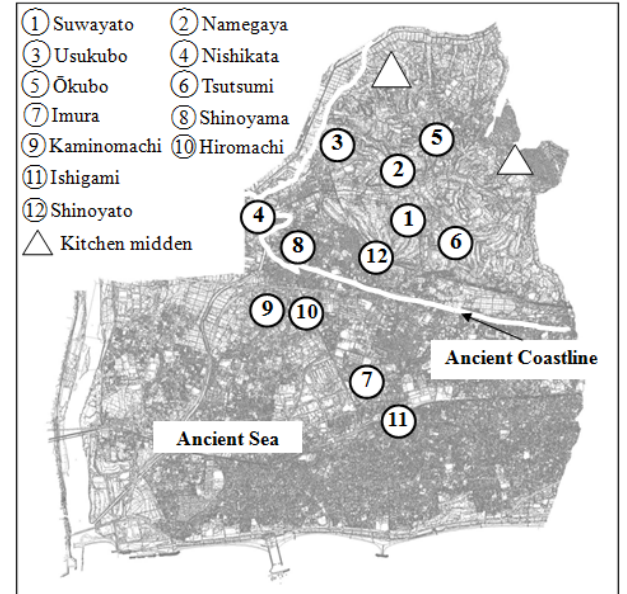
To the east of the Kaminomachi remains lie the Hiromachi remains of Nishikubo. At this site, the remains of pit dwellings, dug-standing pillar buildings, ditches, pits and other evidence of human occupation from the Late Tumulus and Heian periods through to the Kamakura, Warring States and Edo periods (between the 6th and 19th Centuries) have been found. Earthenware, including pots, jars and tiles, dating from the same periods has also been excavated. The inhabitants of the settlement changed from agricultural people in the Tumulus period to warriors in the Kamakura period. These remains, as well as those in Kaminomachi, were deposited on soil consisting of clay carried by the Sagami River. The district was located in the north-east of the area which was later called Futokoro-jima and became the territory of an influential family.

11. The Ishigami Ancient Tomb

This mounted tomb was discovered beneath the ground at the junction of the Tokaido and Sagami lines. The tomb may have been a keyhole-shaped tumulus of quite a big size, and is believed to have been constructed in the Late Tumulus period as the grave of an influential person of ancient Chigasaki. You can see a stone, believed to be part of a stone chamber, from the train on the Sagami Line.

12. Shinoyato Ancient Tombs

In the Late Tumulus period, caves dug into hills were used as tombs. It is believed that local important figures were buried in these chambers. From the Shinoyato caves, pots for alcoholic beverages or water, vessels, bottles, comma-shaped beads for necklaces, pyramid-shaped quartz beads, glass beads and gilded copper or bronze rings (ear rings) were excavated. Military gear such as straight swords, iron arrowheads and horse-back riding equipment were also unearthed. From these artifacts, we can imagine that leaders in this area fought on horseback in conflicts.



Shimoterao Kanga Remains

しもてら おかんが いせきぐん 下寺尾官衙遺跡群

The Shimoterao Kanga Remains are located on the westernmost tip of the City's northwest plateau. They are part of the Shimoterao-Nishikata Remains. The Koide River flows along the west side of the plateau, and the Komayose River along the south side. The remains are about 4km inland from the current coast. From the site of the remains, the officials of that time could have seen the Sagami estuary, Hiratsuka, Isehara and, in the distance, Mt. Fuji. The kanga remains consist of office buildings, lodging houses, warehouses and nearby temples as well as a landing place on the Koide River.

●Ancient Takakura-gun

Ancient Takakura-gun was one of the eight counties of ancient Sagami-no-kuni (Sagami province), located in what is today central and western Kanagawa prefecture. Other counties included Osumi, Miura and Kamakura. Takakura-gun, the province's second most powerful county, was a place of strategic importance with one of the ancient trunk highways, Tōkaidō, running through it, and was a prestigious place as the seat of Samukawa Shrine. Ancient Chigasaki was located in the southernmost area of the county. Photo 1 (right) shows a map of the counties and the Takakura Gunga site.

●Takakura Gunga (County Office Complex) Remains

In 2002, soilmarks of 36 pit dwellings, 19 dug-standing pillar buildings, four pits and three moats were found in the playground of Chigasaki Hokuryo High School in Shimoterao. It is believed that these buildings were constructed during the late Kofun and Heian periods. Fifteen out of the 19 buildings belonged to Takakura Gunga. The fifteen buildings were divided into three groups: the southern group of four buildings were thought to have been offices in which officials attended to government affairs; the middle group of six were lodging houses, which accommodated envoys and travelers, or housed the county chief; and the northern group of five were warehouses, where rice collected as tax was stored. The average floor space of the buildings was 57m². In contrast, similar buildings in the settlements of nearby cities had only about 20m². The east-west length of the southern group compound, or the office compound, was about 66m; so far 92m has been the longest of its kind across the nation, followed by 70m, and most are between 45 and 55m. Thus, the southern group compound was larger than most other gungas' office compounds. The pit dwellings may have been houses for construction workers. Photo 2 (bottom right) shows the excavation site.



Photo 1



Photo 3

It is assumed that there was a road which branched off from Tōkaidō and went through the provincial office of Musashi-no-kuni, on the east of Sagami, and merged with Tōsandō. It is highly probable that the junction was near the Takakura Gunga. Flourishing marine transportation through the Sagami River and Sagami Bay, as well as land transportation through Tōkaidō, made ancient Chigasaki an important distribution point, which was a major reason the county office complex was placed here. Takakura Gunga was in Shimoterao for about forty years, from the middle of the 7th Century to the start of the 8th Century, before moving to Ebina. It is assumed that several settlements in the lowlands, including settlements in Imura, had strong relations with the Gunga because wooden plates with kanji words on them were unearthed there. The plates were major information media in a nation governed on the principles of a *ritsuryo* legal code, so they strongly suggest administrative bodies were there. Photo 3 (left) shows a wooden plate found in the Imura remains. It is larger than any other plate excavated in the prefecture; 46cm long, 7.8cm wide and 0.8cm thick.



Photo 2

● Remains of a Shichido-Garan Temple Compound

Several moats and linear lines of large pits as well as many roofing tiles, candle dishes, greenish potteries and flawless unglazed potteries were found just south of the county office complex. Over 13 foundation stones were also found. The pits indicated that a dug-standing pillar building with eaves had an area of 22m by 10m, and the other building, a tile-roofed one built on foundation stones and platforms, was about 18m long and 15m wide. It is thought the former was a lecture hall and the latter the main hall, which was of medium size among the main halls across the nation. Moats indicated the temple compound covered about 80 meters square, the size comparable to that of Horyuji Temple in Nara, measuring 91m east to west and 63m south to north. Most artifacts were made in the Heian period. A huge number of artifacts suggested the possibility that there were more buildings, including a multiple-storied pagoda.

A so-called *shichidō-garan*-style temple typically consists of seven buildings or facilities, namely the main hall, a lecture hall, a tower with multiple layers, the bell tower, a storehouse of sutra (Buddhist scriptures), accommodation for Buddhist monks, and a dining hall, though the combination or construction of such temple compounds is said to vary according to the religious sect and era. The temple at this site existed from the end of the 7th Century until the early 11th Century. Some say the temple belonged to a powerful local family, and others say it was the county temple, because a temple and a gunga were normally built together in Kanagawa.

● Remains of a Loading and Unloading Site on the Koide River

Artificial waterways and several similar-sized dug-standing pillar buildings on the Koide riverbank were found where the river curves to the south, just below the gunga and temple compound. The embankment was reinforced with large round stones. It is believed that these facilities were used to load and unload goods toward and from the gunga, temple and neighboring settlements.

The picture above (Photo 4) is an illustration of the Shimoterao Kanga Remains; the county administration office building together with warehouses, lodging houses and other small buildings. At the bottom, located in between the Koide and Komayose rivers and surrounded by settlements, is the *shichidō-garan*-style temple compound, as well as a wharf on the Koide River and a facility for religious services. No other sites in Kanagawa prefecture have yielded such a variety of buildings and facilities altogether in the same place, which accounts for its unparalleled historical importance.

Note: The Kanagawa Board of Education has reportedly given up on constructing new school buildings at this site. There are voices hoping for the arrangement and opening of the Shimoterao Kanga Remains, as well-preserved and important remains date back to the Asuka, Nara and Heian periods.

Remains of the Middle Ages “Place of Mononofu”

ちゅうせい いせき もののみ さと
中世の遺跡 “武士の里”

During the last period of the 12th Century and the 200 years that followed, Chigasaki was ruled by senior vassals of the Kamakura shogunate. Some remains in the city are deeply connected with the samurai society.

● Futokorojima

The region in and around Nishikubo, Enzo, Yabata and Hamanogo (near sites ⑨ and ⑩ on the map on P1) was called Futokorojima, which was the territory of the regime’s senior vassal Kageyoshi Futokorojima. He was one of the 46 original members, who followed Yoritomo Minamoto when he took up arms against the ruling Taira family in 1180. Futokorojima was an important place, where tourists crossed the Sagami River on their way to Kyoto from Kamakura, and those from Kyoto entered just after they crossed the river. Remnants of bridge piles in Shimo-machiya, a national historic site and also a natural monument, are believed to be basic parts of a bridge over the river, constructed in the Kamakura period. It is said Yoritomo Minamoto, the supreme leader of the Kamakura regime, visited the bridge on the day completion of the work was celebrated.

● Tsurumine Hachimangu shrine

Tsurumine Hachimangu shrine (Photo 5 on the right), built late in the Heian period, is one of the City’s oldest shrines, and older than Kamakura Tsurugaoka Hachimangu shrine. The shrine worshiped the guardian of the Futokorojima family. A hundreds-year-old ginkgo tree in the precinct is a prefectural natural monument. In nearby construction remains, it was found tombstones were used in the moat which was constructed in the 16th Century, indicating that residents’ tombs were destroyed. The fact suggests a serious political incident happened at that time, resulting in the replacement of old residents with new ones.



Photo 5

Remains in the City (Summary)

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茅ヶ崎の遺跡 (まとめ)

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As many as 215 remains have been found in the City, and more will be found in the future. Those remains, dating to the Paleolithic era and thereafter, include shell mounds, moats, tumuli, settlements, county office facilities and temples. Artifacts such as stone tools, pottery, wooden plates inscribed with kanji and metal fittings have also been unearthed. Humans first inhabited the City’s northern plateau about 30,000 years ago, and throughout the Jōmon period they mostly lived there, but in the Yayoi era humans began to move toward the southern lowlands. Since the Kofun era more people have lived in the region.

There are several reasons why so many remains have been found in the City. Firstly, as the City is rich in geographical diversity, and was sparsely populated, the signs of habitation were left intact when humans moved southward. Secondly, archeological research started before the modern urban development and population increase had begun in earnest. The first excavation was carried out by archeologist Naotada Akaboshi in 1938, and in the years since, the research has been conducted by archaeologists, city officials and citizens. It was fortunate that the Koide district, in which a lot of traces of early human habitation would be found, was prevented from developing because the region was designated as an urbanization control area. The construction of Bunkyo University and Serizawa water reservoir, and the repair work of Satoyama Park and neighboring roads provided good opportunities to do the research, and various remains were found. Lastly, the City has fostered officials skilled in archaeology, and has been positively doing research on the local history. Some of these artifacts are exhibited at Chigasaki City Museum of Heritage at 2-18 Nakakaigan 2 chome. How about visiting the museum to get a glimpse of ancient Chigasaki?

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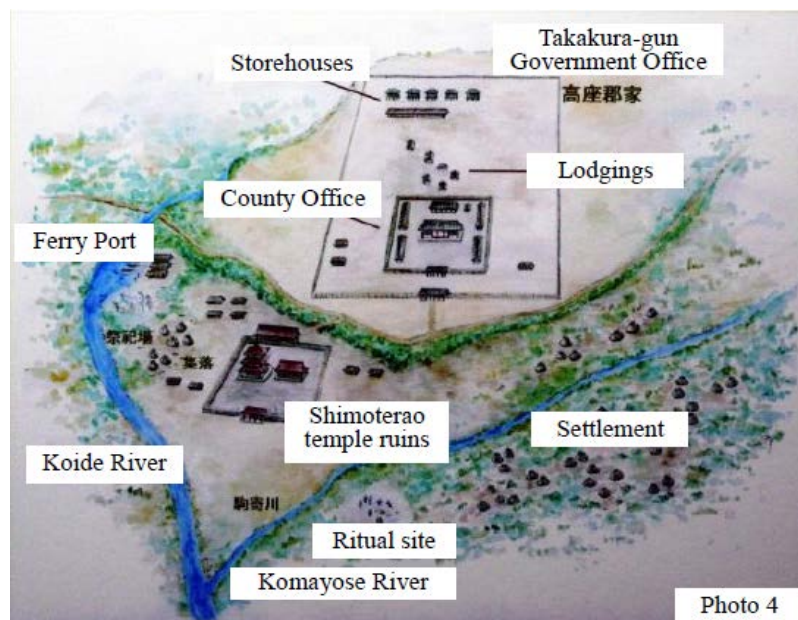


Photo 4

Illustration of ancient Takakura-gun government facilities.
(Producer: Masatoshi Tao, Illustrator: Ayano Shimoide)

References

- Koho Chigasaki ‘Ancient Chigasaki’ series
- Fujio Tominaga ‘Ancient society of Chigasaki in the Jōmon period’
- Kanagawa Archaeological Foundation report 157 ‘Shimoterao Nishikata A Remains’ 2003 (Photos 1 and 2)
- Chigasaki Culture and Sports Promotion Foundation report 36 (Photo 3)
- Chigasaki Board of Education (Photos 4 and 5)