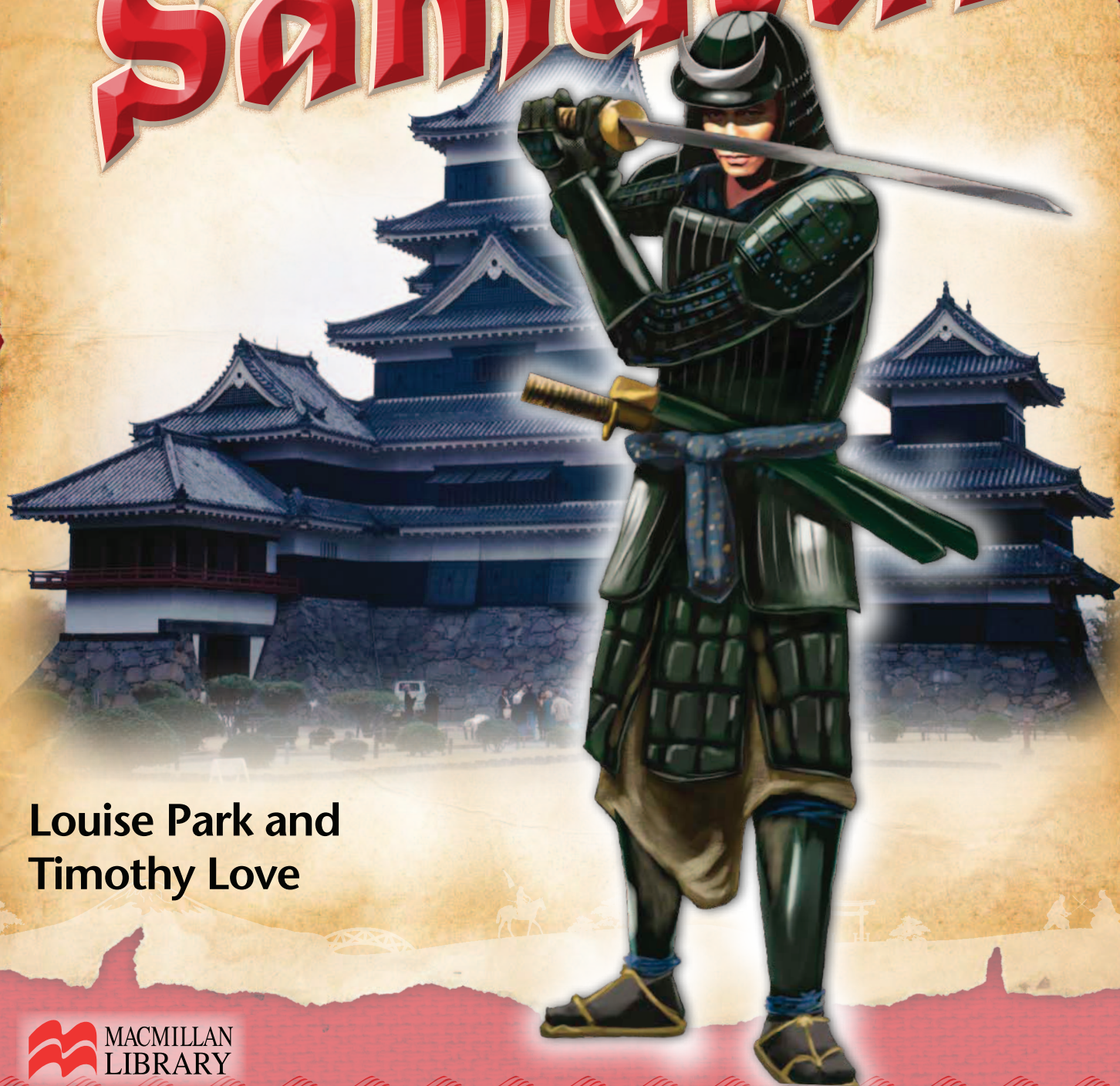


ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL PEOPLE

The Japanese Samurai



Louise Park and
Timothy Love

Contents

Who were the Japanese samurai?	4
The Japanese feudal system	6
Shogunates of the feudal period	8
In profile: Minamoto no Yoritomo	10
Samurai armour	12
Samurai weapons	16
In profile: Oda Nobunaga	20
Samurai ranks and privileges	22
Spotlight on Bushido	24
Fortifications and castles	26
In profile: Shibata Katsuie	28
The decline of the Japanese samurai	30
Glossary	31
Index	32

Glossary words

When a word is written
in **bold**, click on it to find
its meaning.



Who were the Japanese samurai?

The Japanese samurai were soldiers who served the **aristocracy** in Feudal Japan. They were **elite** professional warriors who were well trained, **armoured** and heavily armed.

Feudal Japan

Feudal Japan was a **monarchy** run by the **Emperor**. It had four different periods.

- ❖ The Kamakura period (1183–1335 CE) was named for the town of Kamakura, where it was based.
- ❖ The Muromachi period (1336–1576) was named for the Muromachi area in the city of Kyoto.
- ❖ The Sengoku period (1578–1600) was a period of civil war between samurai **clans** and **daimyo**.
- ❖ The Edo period (1603–1868) was named for the capital city of Edo, which today is known as Tokyo.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Samurai

The name *samurai* was given to those who served in the military **nobility**. It means 'to serve'.



Japanese samurai lived and fought in the group of islands known as Japan.

Quick facts

Who ruled the Japanese samurai?

The Japanese samurai were ruled by the Emperor and by a shogun.

- ❖ The Emperor was the ruler of Japan. During Japan's feudal period, the Emperor became a **figurehead**.
- ❖ The shogun was a Japanese military general who led the most powerful samurai clan. A shogun also held political power, and his clan became known as the shogunate.

The formation of the Japanese samurai

The Japanese samurai formed during the Heian period, which came before the feudal period. Between 794 and 1185, the Japanese government established an army of mounted horsemen by **recruiting** professional soldiers. These soldiers were members of the Japanese nobility and they were loyal to the Emperor. During the Heian period, shogunates began to take control of Japan. Each shogunate was led by a powerful shogun, or military general. Shoguns developed private samurai armies to **conquer** and protect land. Before long, professional soldiers found their way into these private armies and became samurai.

Japanese samurai timeline

1180

The first shogun, Minamoto no Yoritomo, defeats the Taira clan during the Gempei War

1336–1573

The Muromachi period

1603–1868

The Edo period

1868

The end of feudal Japan and the decline of the Japanese samurai

1185–1336

The Kamakura period

1573

The daimyo Oda Nobunaga overthrows the Ashikaga shogunate and expels its shogun from Kyoto

1578–1600

The Sengoku period, also known as the Azuchi-Momoyama period

The Japanese feudal system

Between the 1100s and 1800s, Japan was run according to a feudal system, which is a social system with a strong **hierarchy**. Under the feudal system, the samurai and shoguns held large amounts of power.

The rise of the samurai

The period just before the beginning of feudal Japan was known as the Heian period, and it gave rise to two powerful samurai clans. These clans were the Minamoto, or Genji, and the Taira, or Heiki. Conflicts between these two clans turned into **civil wars**. Eventually the Minamoto clan gained control of Japan. Their leader, Minamoto no Yoritomo, established Japan's first shogunate and became the first shogun. Throughout the feudal period, these clans continued to fight for land and power.

Samurai rode on horseback and fought on behalf of a clan.



The social classes of feudal Japan

Feudal Japan had eight social classes. The nobility made up around 10 per cent of Japan's population, and included the Emperor, the shogun, daimyo, samurai and ronin. The other 90 per cent of the population were peasants, artisans and merchants.



THE EMPEROR
Japan's **monarch** and head of the **imperial family**. He was a figurehead who was generally under the shogun's power.

THE SHOGUN
Japan's military leader and head of the samurai army. He also held political power, and his political office was the shogunate.

DAIMYO
Members of the warrior class who ran the shogun's lands and estates. They were the highest rank of samurai nobility.

SAMURAI
Professional warriors who were loyal to the shogun and daimyo.

RONIN
Paid professional soldiers who fought during wars. They were a lower class of samurai who did not pledge loyalty to daimyo or the shogun.

ARTISANS, MERCHANTS AND PEASANTS
Artisans made equipment, tools and weapons and merchants sold goods and produce. Peasants were farmers and fishers who gave most of their produce to daimyo and the shogun in exchange for the right to live on the land.

Under Japan's feudal system, most people were from the lower social classes.

Shogunates of the feudal period

The Kamakura shogunate, the Ashikaga shogunate and the Tokugawa shogunate each controlled feudal Japan during a different period. These shogunates aimed to conquer large amounts of land in order to **consolidate** their power.

The Kamakura shogunate

The Kamakura shogunate ruled Japan during the Kamakura period. It was established by Minamoto no Yoritomo in 1192, when he seized power during the Gempei War by defeating the Taira clan. During the Kamakura shogunate, a system of **inheritance** was established so that the title of shogun could be passed down through the family line. Daimyo were placed in charge of **provinces** and samurai began to report to the daimyo. The last family to rule this shogunate was the Hojo family. The Kamakura shogunate ended when the Hojo family was overthrown in 1336.

Minamoto no Yoritomo was the first shogun of Japan and all daimyo reported to him.

The Ashikaga shogunate

The Ashikaga shogunate ruled Japan during the Muromachi period. It was established by Ashikaga Takauji in 1336, when he sided with the Emperor against the Kamakura shogun. However, the Emperor took on extra duties following the fall of the Kamakura shogunate, which meant that Ashikaga had less power than the previous shogun. As a result, the Ashikaga shogunate was weaker than the Kamakura shogunate and had to rely heavily on the loyalty of its daimyo and samurai. The daimyo began fighting one another for power and, eventually, civil war broke out. The Ashikaga shogunate collapsed when the daimyo Oda Nobunaga drove the Ashikaga shogun out of the city of Kyoto in 1573.

The Tokugawa shogunate

The Tokugawa shogunate ruled Japan during the Edo period. It was established after the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600 and became the longest-lasting shogunate of the feudal period. When Tokugawa Ieyasu became shogun, he established a strict class hierarchy in which the shogun and his samurai held power over the peasants. In 1869, this shogunate was overthrown and the 15th Tokugawa shogun **resigned**. This marked the end of the feudal period.

The Tokugawa shogunate is named after Tokugawa Ieyasu, who seized power following the Battle of Sekigahara.



IN PROFILE: *Minamoto no Yoritomo*

In profile

NAME: Minamoto no Yoritomo
ALSO KNOWN AS: the first shogun
BORN: 1147
DIED: 1199



Minamoto no Yoritomo was born into the Minamoto clan and went on to become the first shogun of Japan. While he only ruled for seven years, the system of shogunates he founded lasted until 1868.

In 1158, Minamoto no Yoritomo was given his first court title, or recognition by the Emperor. It was awarded to him because he was related to the imperial family. However, in 1159 civil war broke out and many members of the Minamoto clan were executed. Minamoto no Yoritomo was exiled and did not return for nearly 20 years.

Notable moment

In 1185, Minamoto no Yoritomo defeated the Taira clan during the Gempei War. This was a major victory for the Minamoto clan. Following this battle, Minamoto no Yoritomo seized control of Japan and established the Kamakura shogunate.

Creating the shogunate system

Minamoto no Yoritomo created the shogunate system, in which power was handed down through a family. Under this new system, daimyo upheld law and order in the provinces and samurai conquered land on behalf of the shogun. Upon his death, Yoritomo was **succeeded** by his eldest son, Minamoto no Yori'ie, who became the second Kamakura shogun.



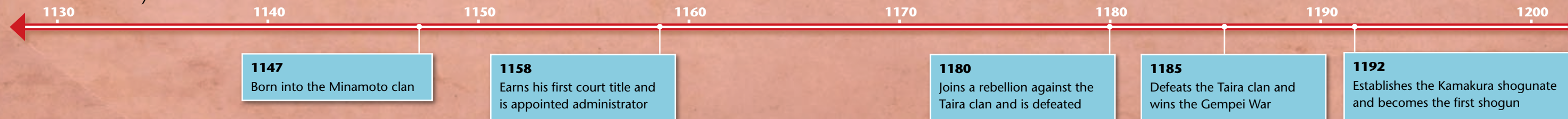
What you should know about...

Minamoto no Yoritomo

- ❖ Yoritomo was exiled in his youth after joining his father at a rebellion against the Taira clan. His father died at this rebellion.
- ❖ Yoritomo's eldest son Yori'ie was assassinated after he became shogun. Yoritomo's second son, Sanetomo, then became the third Kamakura shogun.

Minamoto no Yoritomo (pictured on horseback) became Japan's first shogun at a large ceremony in 1192.

Minamoto no Yoritomo timeline



Samurai armour

Samurai armour developed over hundreds of years, as battle strategies changed and new technologies developed. However, the **components** of samurai armour remained the same.

Components of samurai armour

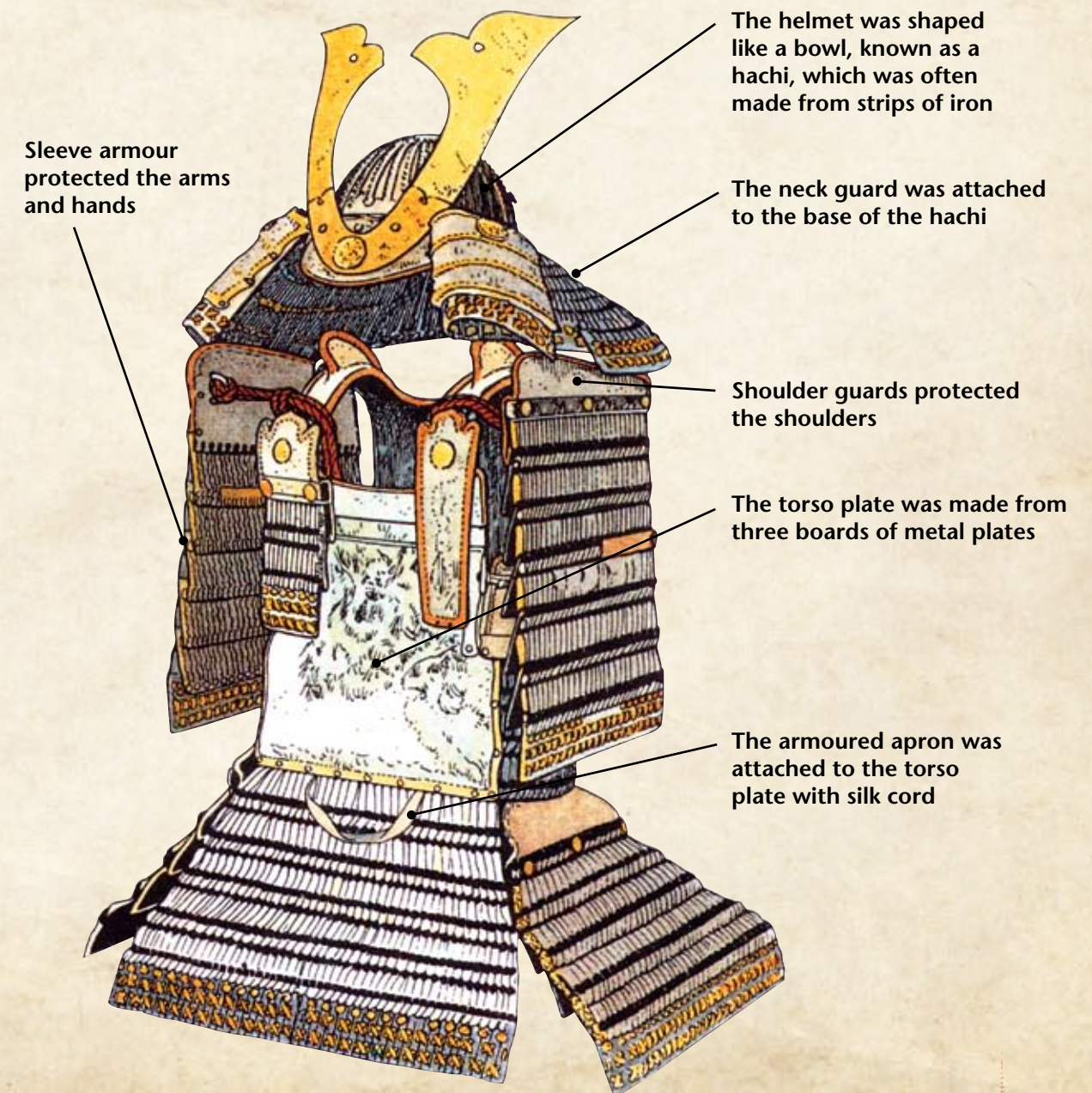
Samurai armour was made up of several components, including:

- ❖ a helmet, or kabuto
- ❖ a neck guard, or shikoro
- ❖ a torso plate, or cuirass
- ❖ shoulder guards, or sode
- ❖ sleeve armour, or koto
- ❖ an armoured apron that protected the thighs, or kusazuri
- ❖ shin guards, or suneateours.

These components were made from several metal plates, which were laced together with leather cord. Lacing armour together was a special art and craftsmen often used certain colours and patterns to indicate which clan a samurai belonged to. Tight, elaborate lacing was used for high-ranking samurai while wider lacing was used for those in lower ranks. The plates were then coated with lacquer, or protective coating, to prevent them from rusting. Finally, they were tied together horizontally with a silk cord called kebiki odoshi.

Oyoroi armour

Oyoroi armour had a box-like appearance and it was worn by mounted samurai. During the 1300s, battles began to be fought on foot, rather than on horses. Over time, oyoroi armour was replaced with other types of armour because it was so heavy and difficult to move around in. An oyoroi suit of armour could weigh up to 28 kilograms and it lacked the flexibility needed for hand-to-hand combat.



Oyoroi armour was so heavy and box-like that it was difficult to move in.



Samurai wore armour to protect their bodies during battle.

Do maru armour

Do maru armour wrapped around the body, and it was lighter and more flexible than oyoroi armour. It is believed that do maru armour existed before oyoroi armour but was only worn by ronin. When hand-to-hand combat began to take place, this type of armour was adopted by the samurai as well. It was worn well into the 1500s and was often made from a combination of leather and metal.

Do maru armour allowed samurai to move around more freely than oyoroi armour.

The neck guard was curved to allow the head and neck extra movement

The torso plate wrapped around the body and could be tied at the side

Leather plates protected the arms and legs, allowing for extra movement

Shin guards protected the shins

Haramaki armour

Haramaki armour wrapped around the body in a similar way to do maru armour, but it tied at the back rather than the side. It was used until the Edo period in the mid-1800s, although it never became the main form of samurai armour.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Do maru and haramaki

The term *do maru* means 'body wrap'. Some say that the word *haramaki* means 'belly warmer'.

An eye guard known as a fukigaeshi rolled up to give a samurai full vision

Leather plates protected the arms, allowing for extra movement

The torso plate tied at the back. It was often reinforced with a plate that extended from the back of the neck to the hip

Shin guards protected the shins

Haramaki armour was similar to do maru armour, but the torso plate tied at the back.



Samurai weapons

The samurai used many different weapons over the centuries. The most **enduring** weapons were the bow and arrow, the sword and the pole.

The bow and arrow

The bow and arrow was the weapon of choice for samurai warriors for centuries. Training with the bow and arrow on horseback was considered a noble art and it was restricted to high-ranking samurai. Samurai were skilled horsemen who rode using only their legs when shooting arrows from their bows. As he fired an arrow, a samurai could not sway in the saddle or he would fall from the running horse.

During the Heian period, samurai often practised their archery skills in competitions.

Quick facts

How important was archery during the Heian period?

Archery grew in importance during the Heian period as samurai were trained and archers were celebrated.

- ❖ Each samurai clan had archery ranges to train their archers. Training techniques were developed and competitions were held.
- ❖ Minamoto no Tametomo was a famous archer during this period. He is believed to have sunk a ship with a single arrow. Legend says that Tametomo's left arm was 15 centimetres longer than his right, which allowed him to release powerful shots.



Samurai often carried bows and arrows into battle.

The longbow

The longbow, or daikyu, was the preferred bow for most samurai because it could shoot metal arrows across long distances. A longbow was often over two metres long. It was made from wood and bamboo, and reinforced with palm stems called rattan. The shaft was lacquered to make it waterproof. The bowstring was made from tough plant fibres, such as hemp or ramie.

The shortbow

The shortbow, or hanyu, was used in battle. It varied between 15 centimetres to two metres long. The shortbow became popular in the Sengoku period, when foot soldiers needed smaller weapons that were easier to handle.

Arrows

Arrows were often made from reeds and varied in size according to their purpose. In battle, samurai often used steel arrows. These arrows were strong enough to **concuss** enemies if they hit their helmets.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Men of the bow

It is believed that samurai were once referred to as 'men of the bow', because they often fought with bows and arrows.

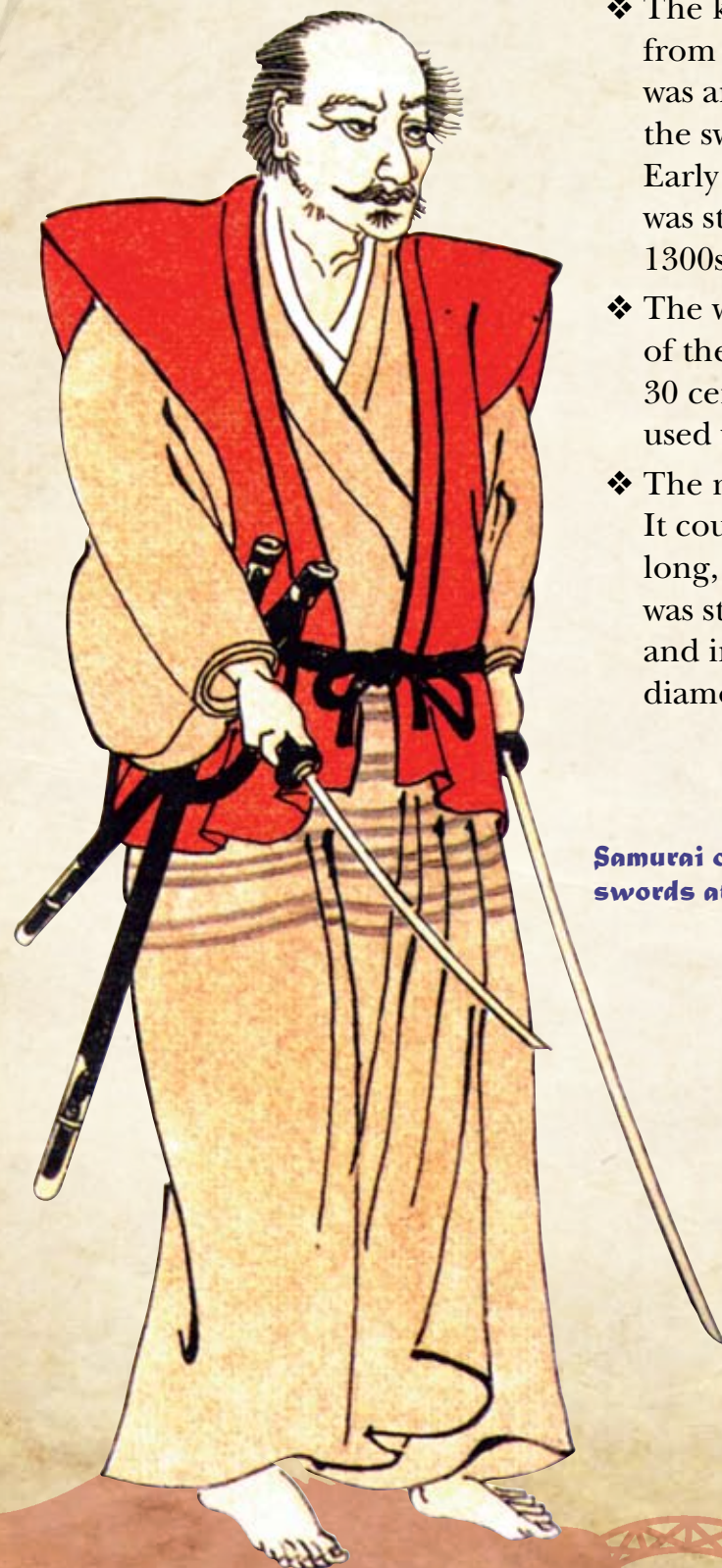


The samurai sword

The samurai sword was an important weapon because it was believed to represent a samurai's spirit. During the Tokugawa shogunate, swords became a display of rank as only samurai were allowed to carry them. In battle, samurai used three main types of swords.

- ❖ The katana was a long sword that hung from a samurai's belt. The curved blade was around 60 centimetres long, and the sword was used with two hands. Early in the feudal period, the katana was straight. Around the 1200s and 1300s it became curved.
- ❖ The wakizashi was a shorter version of the katana. The blade was about 30 centimetres long, and the sword was used with one hand.
- ❖ The nodachi was often used by ronin. It could be more than 70 centimetres long, and was usually black. The blade was steel, or a combination of steel and iron. The **scabbard** often had a diamond pattern on the grip.

Samurai often carried several swords at the same time.



The samurai pole

Samurai sometimes fought using long poles with blades attached to the ends. The length of the poles allowed samurai to keep their enemies at a distance. In battle, samurai used two main types of poles.

- ❖ The naginata was a long, wooden pole with a curved blade at the point. The pole was about three metres long and the blade was between 60 centimetres and 1.8 metres long. There was usually a sword guard, or a tsuba, attached between the blade and the pole. During the Edo period, the naginata was seen as a female's weapon.
- ❖ The nagamaki was similar to the naginata, but it had a long, thin blade at its tip. It was held with two hands. The **hilt** was covered in shark skin and wrapped in cord, which allowed samurai to grip it securely. The nagamaki was popular between the 1200s and the 1400s.

Daughters of samurai were expected to practise and even fight in battle with the naginata, a samurai pole.



IN PROFILE: *Oda Nobunaga*

In profile

NAME: Oda Nobunaga

ALSO KNOWN AS: Daimyo Nobunaga

BORN: 1534

DIED: 1582



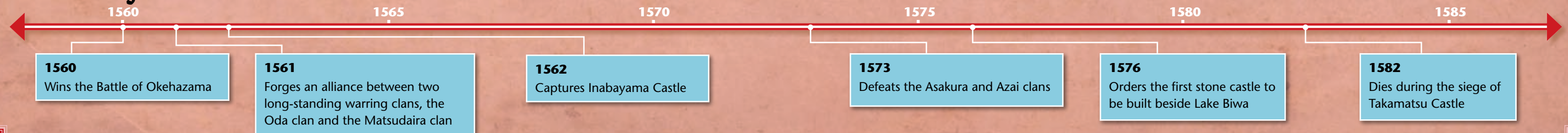
Oda Nobunaga was an important daimyo during the Sengoku period, a time when clans fought against one another. He overthrew the Ashikaga shogunate and **expelled** its shogun from Kyoto in 1573.

Oda Nobunaga was the first person to attempt to unify Japan. Although he did not achieve this before his death, he did manage to unite a large part of Japan. Nobunaga was also an **innovative** leader who implemented new strategies that helped Japan to increase its power. The unification of Japan was completed by the shoguns of the Tokugawa shogunate after his death.

Notable moment

In 1560, Nobunaga and his army of 3000 samurai took Minamoto no Yoritomo's army of 25000 samurai by surprise at the Battle of Okehazama. Nobunaga's army defeated Yoritomo's army.

Oda Nobunaga timeline



An innovative leader

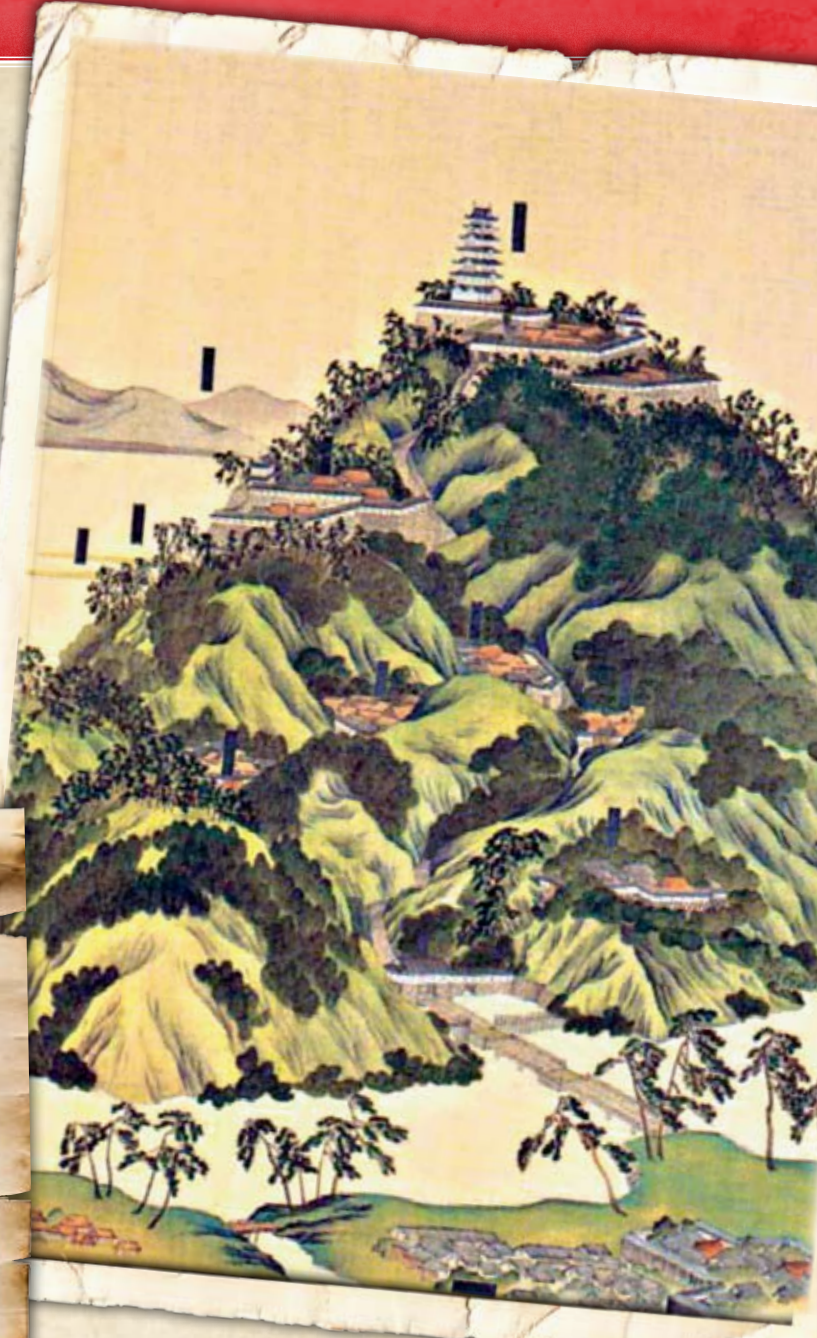
Oda Nobunaga is viewed as an innovative leader because he is believed to have:

- ❖ used his wealth to support the arts
- ❖ built iron-clad ships and stone castles that were difficult to destroy
- ❖ built roads to increase trade and move armies more quickly
- ❖ appointed people based on ability, not only on rank and family connections
- ❖ used firearms, called arquebuses, in battle for the first time.

What you should know about...

Oda Nobunaga

- ❖ In 1571, Nobunaga attacked Enryakuji temple and burnt it to the ground, killing anyone in his path.
- ❖ In 1576, Nobunaga ordered the building of Azuchi Castle. It is believed to be Japan's first stone castle.
- ❖ There are different reports about how Nobunaga died. Some sources claim that there was a **conspiracy** against Nobunaga and he was murdered by one of his generals. Others claim that he lost a battle at Takamatsu Castle and was forced to commit **seppuku**.



Oda Nobunaga was responsible for the building of Azuchi Castle, which still stands today.

Samurai ranks and privileges

During the 1400s, the **social status** of the samurai rose until they became one of the highest social classes in feudal Japan. Samurai privileges increased as their status grew.

Samurai ranks

Different ranks of samurai were given different privileges and it was almost impossible for a samurai to change his rank. By the 1100s, three clear ranks of samurai had been established.

- ❖ Mounted samurai were high-ranking samurai. They reported directly to the shogun, and fought on horseback.
- ❖ Foot soldiers were middle-ranking samurai. They fought with swords.
- ❖ House men, or kenin, were low-ranking samurai. They had administrative duties.

Mounted samurai were wealthy and cultured. Boys born into these families trained to become samurai from a young age. They were also educated in Japan's history, arts and culture. Ronin and kenin paid taxes and pledged their loyalty to the daimyo, who in turn rewarded them with land. They were only allowed to marry women from their own rank.

Mounted samurai had a higher social rank than ronin or kenin.

Privileges

Samurai had many privileges that those in lower social classes did not have. Samurai could carry a long sword and a short sword, whereas peasants, artisans and merchants were not allowed to carry weapons. Those in lower social classes were expected to show respect to the samurai, and over time samurai were awarded the privilege of **beheading** any peasant who offended them. Samurai could also have their own family crest and surname.

During the feudal period, ronin could carry swords such as this.



SPOTLIGHT ON

Bushido

Spotlight on

WHAT: Bushido

MEANING: 'Way of the Warrior'

BEGAN: Between the 800s and the 1100s

Quick facts

How did religion influence Bushido?

Bushido was based on many values taken from different religions.

- ❖ Buddhism teaches that people are reborn after death. Samurai learnt not to fear death.
- ❖ Confucianism teaches about relationships with others. Samurai valued relationships, such as those between masters and servants, fathers and sons, and husbands and wives.
- ❖ Zen teaches meditation and self-belief, and to set no limits. Samurai used these teachings to ward off fear.
- ❖ Shintoism teaches loyalty. Samurai pledged to be loyal to the Emperor, the shogun and other high-ranking samurai.

Bushido is the code of moral principles that Japanese samurai lived by. It was developed between the 800s and the 1100s, and it has roots in four schools of thought or religions:

- ❖ Buddhism
- ❖ Confucianism
- ❖ Zen
- ❖ Shintoism.

The Bushido code

The Bushido code has seven key virtues:

- ❖ **rectitude**, or *gi* (義)
- ❖ **courage**, or *yū* (勇)
- ❖ **benevolence**, or *jin* (仁)
- ❖ **respect**, or *rei* (礼)
- ❖ **honesty**, or *makoto* (誠) or *shin* (信)
- ❖ **honour and glory**, or *meiyo* (名誉)
- ❖ **loyalty**, or *chūgi* (忠義).

Seppuku was often performed using a tanto sword.



Outside of battle, hari-kiri was performed in a ceremony and samurai wore full ceremonial dress.

Seppuku

The importance of dying an honourable death was at the centre of the Bushido code. Seppuku is **ritual suicide** that defeated, wounded or disgraced samurai could perform to keep their honour intact. It was seen as an act of bravery.

Hari-kiri

The most common form of seppuku was hari-kiri, which means 'stomach cutting'. To perform this act, samurai sliced open their **abdomen**, which was believed to release their spirit. Hari-kiri was an extremely painful way to die, yet it had to be performed without showing any fear or pain. Sometimes a loyal assistant was allowed to cut the samurai's neck, in order to hasten his death. Hari-kiri was mostly performed on battlefields.

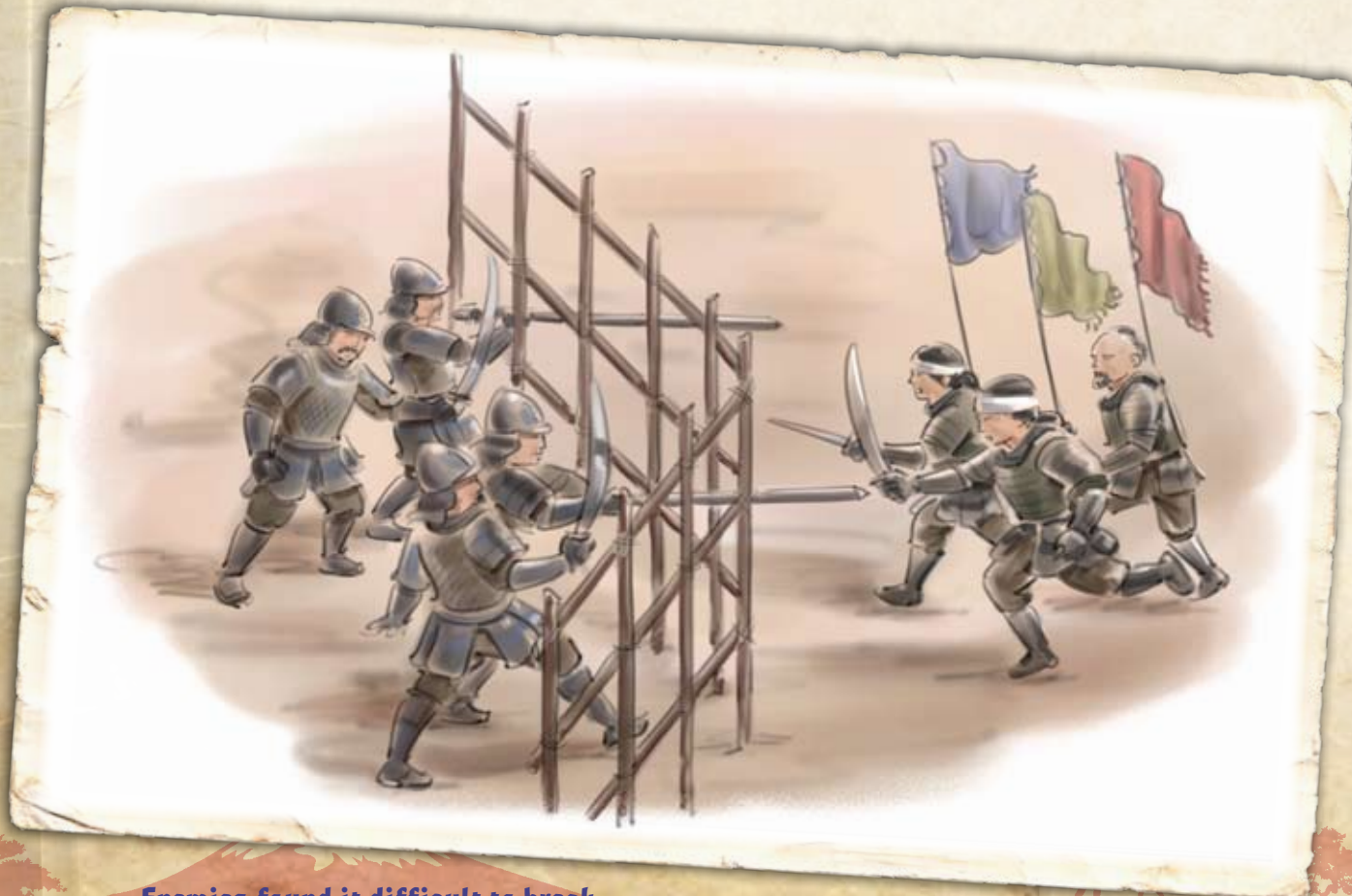


Fortifications and castles

Samurai relied on fortifications, or defensive structures, to protect their homes and land. Throughout the Heian period, wooden palisades and towers were the main fortifications. During the feudal period, stone walls and castles were built.

Wooden palisades and towers

Soldiers during the Heian period built wooden palisades and towers to stop enemy armies from entering their lands. Palisades are wooden walls made from tree trunks, sticks and branches. Samurai sharpened branches and logs at one end and then set them in a row, with the sharpened ends pointing towards the enemy. Wooden towers were built in order for samurai to see approaching enemies.



Enemies found it difficult to break through the sharp samurai palisades.

Stone walls

Stone walls were built to stop armies from landing and to protect castles during battle. The first stone walls were built around the 1100s and, by the 1300s, many daimyo had built stone walls to protect their castles. In 1276, the Kamakura shogunate ordered 24 kilometres of stone wall to be built at Hakata Bay, in order to stop the Mongol army from landing. The wall was around two metres high and about one metre wide at the top, and it still stands today.

Stone castles

Stone castles were built to protect families from enemies and to demonstrate a family's social status. Many castles were built on mountain tops so that samurai had clear views of approaching enemies. It has been estimated that up to 40 000 castles existed during the Sengoku period. Battles were fought and governments were run from these castles. Today, only about 50 of these castles remain intact.

Matsumoto Castle was built around the 1600s and still stands in its original form today.



IN PROFILE: *Shibata Katsuie*

In profile

NAME: Shibata Katsuie
ALSO KNOWN AS: Oni Shibata
BORN: 1530
DIED: 1583



Shibata Katsuie was born into a small branch of the Shiba clan and rose to the role of military commander during the Sengoku period. He served under Oda Nobunaga, an important daimyo of the Sengoku period.

Shibata Katsuie had many victories in battle, and he expanded the Shiba clan's **territories**. For his loyalty and success Katsuie was rewarded with Kitanosho Castle.

Notable moment

In 1573, Katsuie and 400 men were **besieged** by 4000 enemy soldiers at Chokoji Castle. He launched raids on **enemy lines** and forced them into retreat. Eventually, he won the battle with an all-out attack. This, combined with other victories, led him to become known as 'Oni Shibata'. The word 'oni' comes from Japanese folklore and is often used to indicate someone who is **invincible** or has super-human strength.

Committing seppuku

Once Katsuie lost the Battle of Shizugatake, he committed seppuku. Before he died, Katsuie set fire to his castle. He begged his wife to leave with their two daughters. His wife allowed the daughters to leave, but she decided to die with him.

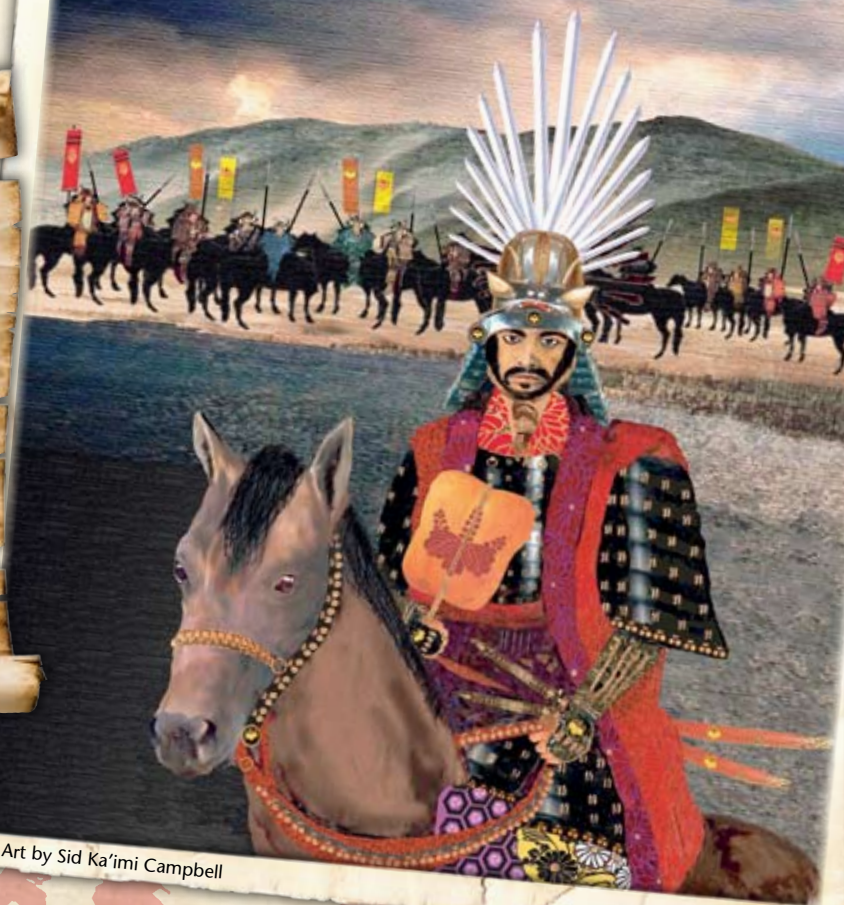
Like many samurai who committed seppuku, Katsuie wrote a death poem before committing hari-kiri. The poem is translated as 'Fleeting dream paths, in the autumn night! O bird of the mountain, carry my name beyond the clouds'.

What you should know about...

Shibata Katsuie

- ❖ In 1157, Katsuie plotted against Oda Nobunaga. Nobunaga discovered the plot but decided to spare him. As a result, Katsuie pledged undying loyalty to Nobunaga for the rest of his days.
- ❖ Katsuie committed seppuku at the end of a battle that he did not fight in.

Shibata Katsuie led samurai troops in the Battle of Shizugatake.



Art by Sid Ka'imi Campbell

Shibata Katsuie timeline

1565

1570

1575

1580

1585

1590

1567

Defeats enemy armies in the Settsu province

1573

Given Kitanosho Castle after gaining control of Echizenin

1581

Begins a **military campaign** at Etchu Province

1582

Suffers an attack that leaves him vulnerable and isolated, as his allies are defeated

1583

Commits seppuku after being defeated at the Battle of Shizugatake

The decline of the Japanese samurai

Throughout the feudal period, samurai remained the only armed force in Japan. However, during the Tokugawa shogunate, Japan lived in peace and the samurai were no longer as needed.

The collapse of feudal Japan

The end of the Tokugawa shogunate marked the end of feudal Japan. In 1867, the last shogun resigned and the Emperor regained power as the head of Japan. Japan's feudal system and the privileges of the samurai class were abolished.



The decline of the samurai

The samurai began to fall into decline towards the end of the feudal period. Between 1603 and 1867, the country lived in peace and the samurai had few opportunities for battle. In 1873, the Emperor ruled against the samurai, who had sought the right to be Japan's only warriors. An army of paid professional soldiers was established. These soldiers were trained in using guns and they had sophisticated battle tactics. They soon **usurped** the samurai.

The samurai were replaced by a new army of professional soldiers armed with guns.

Glossary

abdomen the area of the body that holds the stomach, intestines, liver, spleen and pancreas

aristocracy a social class holding titles that are passed down through families

armoured wrapped in a protective covering

beheading cutting off someone's head while they are still alive

benevolence a desire to perform good acts and acts of charity

besieged surrounded by enemies

civil wars wars between two groups in their own country

clans groups of Japanese families related by blood or marriage

components parts

concuss cause a temporary brain injury that may lead to confusion, memory loss or loss of consciousness

conquer defeat using force

consolidate strengthen

conspiracy a secret agreement to perform a wrongful act

daimyo the highest-ranked members of the samurai nobility, who ran the shogun's lands and estates

elite the best or most skilled

Emperor the ruler of feudal Japan, with similar power to a king

enduring lasting, or used over a long period of time

enemy lines the first lines of an enemy's soldiers

expelled thrown out

figurehead a leader with little or no real power

hierarchy a series of groupings of people within a social system

hilt the handle of a weapon or tool

imperial family those in the Emperor's extended family who performed official duties

inheritance passed down through a family

innovative forward-thinking and interested in new ideas

invincible cannot be beaten or conquered

monarch the ruler of a type of government known as a monarchy

monarchy a type of government ruled by a monarch, such as an emperor

nobility a rank given to many wealthy and important people in society

provinces parts of a country that have been divided up by the government

recruiting enrolling people in military service

rectitude having sound morals, being honourable and honest

resigned to have formally given up a political office

ritual suicide killing oneself to maintain honour

scabbard a sheath, or case, for a blade or sword

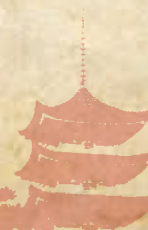
seppuku ritual suicide by taking out the organs, often by performing hari-kari

social status the position of a person in society

succeeded took on the same role afterward

territories areas of land

usurped took the place of



Index

A

artisans 7, 23
Ashikaga shogunate 5, 8,
9, 20

B

Battle of Okehazama 20
Battle of Sekigahara 9
Battle of Shizugatake 29
Buddhism 24
Bushido code 24–25

C

Confucianism 24

D

daimyo 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 20,
22, 28
do maru armour 14, 15

E

Edo period 4, 5, 15, 19
Emperor 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 24, 30

F

feudal Japan 4, 5, 6, 7, 8,
22, 30
feudal system 6–7, 30
fukigaeshi (armour) 15

G

Gempei War 4, 8, 10, 11

H

hachi 13
hanyu (armour) 17
haramaki armour 15
hari-kiri 25, 29
Heian period 5, 6, 16, 26

I

imperial family 7, 10

K

kabuto (armour) 12
Kamakura period 4, 8
Kamakura shogunate 8, 9,
10, 11, 27
kebiki odoshi 12
koto (armour) 12
kusazuri (armour) 12
Kyoto 4, 5, 9

L

longbow 17

M

merchants 7, 23
Minamoto clan 6, 10
Minamoto no
Tametomo (archer) 16
Minamoto no Yoritomo
(shogun) 4, 6, 8, 10–11,
20

Muromachi period 4, 9

N

nagamaki (weapon) 19
naginata (weapon) 19
nobility 4, 5, 7, 14
nodachi (weapon) 18

O

Oda Nobunaga (daimyo) 5,
9, 20–21, 28, 29
oyoroi armour 13, 14

P

palisades 26
peasants 7, 9, 23

R

ronin 7, 14, 18, 22, 23

S

samurai sword 18, 23
Sengoku period 4, 5, 17, 20,
27, 28
seppuku 21, 24, 25, 28, 29
Shibata Katsuie
(daimyo) 28–29
shikoro (armour) 12
Shintoism 24
shogun 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10,
11, 20, 22, 24, 30
shogunate 5, 6, 7, 8–9, 10,
11, 18, 20, 27, 30
shortbow 17
sode (armour) 12
stone castles 27
stone walls 27
suneateours (armour) 12

T

Taira clan 4, 6, 10, 11
tanto sword 24
Tokugawa shogunate 8, 9,
18, 20, 30
towers 26

W

weapons 7, 16–19, 23

Z

Zen 24