



Expository writing of Echizen Ono Castle



In the 3rd year of Tensho (1575), Nobunaga Oda is said to have had Nagachika Kanamori and Masashige Hara restore peace in Ono country which was troubled by rampant *Ikko-ikki and granted two thirds of Ono county to Nagachika Kanamori and one-third to Masashige Hara for their military exploits. Soon after this, Nagachika Kanamori started building a castle on the top of Mt. Kameyama with multiple ramparts and also castle town zoned in the elongated shape in the eastern foot of Mt. Kameyama which later made Ono City called “sho-Kyoto in Hokuriku region” , which means a quaint historic town in Hokuriku region with atmosphere of Kyoto.

In the 14th year of Tensho (1586), Nagachika Kanamori was transferred to Hida Takayama (now called Takayama City, Gifu Prefecture) to be the domain lord there. After that, the castellans changed frequently. At the beginning of the Edo Era, the Matsudaira clan was transferred to Ono to be the new domain lord. In the 2nd year of Tenwa (1682), the castellan was replaced by Toshifusa Doi who was transferred to Ono and since then the Doi clan succeeded the post of the castellan for generations until the ordinance by the Meiji government to abolish Han, the fiefs of feudal lord.

Ono Castle of those days is said to have had the main enclosure called Honmaru with the main castle keep called Daitenshu with a watchtower and the small castle keep called Shoutenshu in it also known as Tengu yagura. Both the main and the small castle keeps had two-tiered structure. The former was three stories high, while the other was two stories high. At the foot of Mt. Kameyama lay Ninomaru and San-nomaru, the areas constructed to defend Honmaru. Ninomaru was constructed closer to Honmaru than San-nomaru. Their function to defend the castle was reinforced by two moats dug outside of them which was connected to a river running by the castle. Unprocessed stones were used for the castle stone wall.

In the Edo Era, Ono Castle caught fire several times owing to big fires in the castle town and the castle keep was burned down in the 4th year of An-ei (1775). It was rebuilt in the 7th year of Kansei (1795). However, after Han system was abolished, the castle buildings were demolished and only the castle base covered with stone wall was left. The current castle keep was rebuilt in 1968 by the donation made by Mr. Tei Hagiwara, a descendent of local warrior class based on the estimated figure of the castle of those days. Personal effects of the Kanamori clan, the Doi clan and other warriors are exhibited inside the castle and it serves as the historical museum.

* Ikko-ikki

A series of revolt by monks of Jodo Shinshu, a sect of Buddhism, and local peasant farmers against samurai rule in the 15th and 16th century based on the religious beliefs of the Jodo Shinshu.