

Hamaguri Gomon Gate

The gate acquired its name Hamaguri Gomon (“Clam Gate”) after a great fire burnt down many of the buildings within the compound. As the fire raged, this gate is said to have opened up like a clam tossed on the flames, allowing residents to flee.

This gate is also famed as the site of the Kinmon Incident (Kinmon no Hen), also known as the Imperial Gate Incident. In 1864, near the end of the feudal Edo period (1603–1868), the Sonno Joi party, who aimed to restore the power of the emperor and expel those they saw as barbarian foreigners, rose in rebellion and attempted to storm the palace. It is still possible to see the bullet marks left in the weathered beams by the fighting that took place as the rebels were repulsed.