

## **The History of the Meguro clan**

It is believed that the Meguro clan were wealthy farmers who came from a long line of samurai. They had served the war lord of the Aizu-ashina clan.

After losing a battle with the Date clan, the Meguro clan returned to farming here, Hirosedani district in 1590.

From 1610 (beginning of Edo period), Mr. Zenuemon Meguro who was the 1<sup>st</sup> clan leader served as “KIMOIRIYAKU” (kind of leader of villages) for 15 villages in this area.

A silver mine was discovered upstream of the Tadami River in 1641. It caused disputes over the territory with the Echigo and Aizu provinces. Mr. Hikobei Meguro was the 2<sup>nd</sup> clan leader who went to Edo as a representative of the Echigo province to appeal to the government for an early solution of the issue in 1645.

In 1690's, the Meguro clan served as “CHUSHOYA” (kind of a headman of villages) for 25 villages in this area. Although this area suffered from famine and starvation frequently, the Meguro clan rescued people from distress at different times.

In 1755, Mr. Gorosuke Meguro was the 8<sup>th</sup> clan leader who was appointed as a “WARIMOTOSHOYA” (kind of a leader of headmen) by the government. Afterward, the Meguro clan served as WARIMOTOSHOYA from generation to generation.

According to the records of the Meguro clan, they owned 140-koku for rice farming (“koku” is the unit of productivity rate of land in a Japanese measuring system.), 200-koku for sake brewing industry, and employed 20 apprentices in 1770's.

Mr. Tokumatsu Meguro was the 15<sup>th</sup> clan leader who was elected as a prefectural assembly member in 1880, and was elected to the House of Representatives of the Imperial Diet in 1892. Also, Mr. Kohei Meguro was the 16<sup>th</sup> clan leader who was elected to the House of Representatives in 1912. He was active in the national political arena.

In 1920, the management scale of The Meguros governed a 2 counties and 6 villages, and they were owner of 165-chobu (“chobu is a unit of area. 1-chobu ≒ 1 hectare) land and employed 325 labor tenants.

The Meguro clan was dedicated to promote modernization in the local region. This included developing industry, education, and culture and also the improvement of roads, railways and the construction of a hydraulic plant.

## **The Meguro residence**

This house was constructed in 1797. It was the residence of the WARIMOTOSHOYA (headman of the villages in this area) for generations. The main characteristic of the house is the CHIDORIHAFU style in the front roof window which was used as a chimney and is a visually important part of the house.

Snowfall in this region is heavy, as such, the sharply inclined reed roof and thick pillars are necessary to prevent the weight of the snow from collapsing the house.