

Kuki Yoshitaka and Oda Nobunaga

Kuki Yoshitaka (1542–1600) was the head of one of 13 pirate families vying for control of the Ise-Shima region, until a rival's attack forced him to flee his ancestral home. He was then introduced to Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582), a powerful warlord campaigning to unify Japan. Around 1570, Yoshitaka joined Nobunaga's forces, was appointed naval commander, and participated in many critical battles in his campaign. Among Yoshitaka's notable achievements was the successful blockade of Nagashima, as well as a victory over an enemy fleet at the second Battle of Kizugawaguchi using iron-plated gunships of his own design.

For his numerous accomplishments, Yoshitaka was granted control of his ancestral home, Toba, and served Nobunaga until the lord's death in 1582.