

Inori Iwa and Komadate Iwa Rocks

Many key moments of the Battle of Yashima in 1185 have become legendary in Japanese history and are commemorated around Yashima. The town of Mure played an important role in this historic battle of the Genpei War (1180–1185) fought between the Taira and Minamoto clans, which ended in a decisive victory for the Minamoto. The Inori Iwa and Komadate Iwa rocks in Mure both relate to the story of Minamoto warrior Nasu no Yoichi (c.1169–c.1232).

During the battle, a court lady onboard a Taira ship attached a fan to the top of a pole and waved it at the Minamoto troops back on land to taunt them. According to legend, Yoichi responded to the challenge, first offering a quick prayer before readying his bow. The place where he stopped to pray is marked by the rock called Inori Iwa. Yoichi then rode his horse into the water, lifted his bow, and fired, improbably scoring a direct hit on the fan. The Komadate Iwa rock marks the spot from where he fired the arrow. According to some accounts, Yoichi stood up in his stirrups to shoot, and *komadate* can be translated as “standing on horseback.”