

Site of Obama Domain Rice Storehouses

The site where Matsunoki Jinja Shrine now stands was once occupied by twelve rice storehouses that were used for tax payments collected by Obama domain officials. In the Edo period (1603–1867), various taxes were paid with foodstuffs such as rice and soybeans rather than money. Historical records show that at a certain point, the Obama domain collected approximately 30,000 bales of rice from 61 villages and brought them to Kumagawa-juku post town. The rice was kept temporarily in the storehouses, which were administered by two magistrates stationed nearby.

Transporting Rice through Kumagawa-Juku to Kyoto

The rice from villages across the domain was sent to Kumagawa-juku via the Wakasa Kaido road and the Kita River. Once the boats arrived, the cargo was taken to the magistrate's office, tallied, and placed in the domain's storehouses. The rice was then transported by horse to Takashima in Omi Province (present-day Shiga Prefecture), where it was loaded on boats and shipped across Lake Biwa to Otsu. From there, the tax payments were delivered to the capital in Kyoto.

Storehouse Demolition and Founding of Matsunoki Shrine

When the Meiji government abolished the domain system and replaced it with the prefecture system in 1871, the Obama domain storehouses and magistrate's office were demolished. Some of the storehouses may have been moved and used as private homes, but none remain at the original location. Matsunoki Shrine was founded on the site in 1933 to honor the village leader Matsunoki Shozaemon (1625–1652). Matsunoki advocated on behalf of farmers who were being heavily taxed and was executed for breaking the law that forbade lower-class citizens from directly petitioning the government. Taxes were eventually decreased, reducing the burden on the villagers, and Matsunoki became a local hero because of his sacrifice.