

Takayama Ukon and the Maeda Family of the Kaga Domain



Takayama Ukon

Takayama Ukon was born around 1552 in Takayama, Settsu Province (modern-day Toyono Town, Osaka Prefecture), and followed in his father's footsteps by becoming the lord of Takatsuki Castle. As lord of Takatsuki Castle, Ukon served under Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi as both a military commander and a devotee of tea ceremony. His fondness for tea ceremony was such that he was considered one of Sen no Rikyu's seven leading disciples.

In 1587, Toyotomi Hideyoshi issued the Edict to Expel Christian Missionaries. However, Ukon refused to renounce his Christian faith. In 1588, Maeda Toshiie (the first lord of the Kaga Domain

of modern-day Ishikawa Prefecture) invited him to the Kaga Domain. It was around this time that Ukon adopted the name Minaminobo Tohaku.

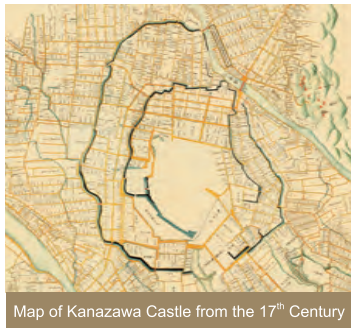
In addition to fighting as a commander in the sieges of Hachioji Castle and Daishoji Castle, Ukon also served the Maeda Family through his immense contributions to the revamping and improvement of Kanazawa Castle and the construction of the protective city walls around the castle town. He also assisted with village legal matters, and was involved in creating Kaga Domain political policy.

Ukon was highly regarded by the Kaga Domain, so much so that in the last instructions of Maeda Toshinaga (the second lord of the Kaga Domain), Ukon was listed as the fourth most important of his vassals. By the time of Maeda Toshitsune (the third lord of the Kaga Domain), Ukon's name could be found at the top of the list of the domain's chief vassals. Findings like these make it clear that even among their chief vassals, Ukon was held in high esteem by the Kaga Domain. In addition, Ukon's daughter, Lucia, married into the Yokoyama family, who were also chief vassals of the domain.

Ukon built a church in the castle town of Kanazawa, and the Maeda Family welcomed Christian military commanders such as Naito Joan to Kanazawa. Through Ukon's influence, Christianity spread throughout both Kaga and Noto (the northern part of modern-day Ishikawa Prefecture).

Ukon was a prominent figure in both military and cultural circles, but after the 1614 Edict Banning Christianity was issued he was forced to bid the Maeda Family farewell. Ukon left Kanazawa with his wife, children, and grandchildren, and they made their way to Nagasaki to board a ship to Manila in the Philippines. It was an arduous journey across the sea, and although they arrived in Manila in 1615, Ukon died of illness shortly thereafter.

During Ukon's time as lord of Takatsuki Castle, churches were built in the castle town, and foreign Christian missionaries came to visit. Through active internationalization such as this, European culture came to coexist with Japanese culture in the castle town. In addition to laying the groundwork for Christianity within the Kaga Domain, Ukon also had a significant cultural impact on the domain.



Map of Kanazawa Castle from the 17th Century

Portrait of Takayama Ukon (Courtesy of the Tamagawa Library Archives)
Map of Kanazawa Castle from the 17th Century (Courtesy of the Ishikawa Prefectural Library; also shown on cover)

The Life of Takayama Ukon

Takayama Ukon's Written Seal
(A written seal was used like a signature or stamped seal on letters and other correspondence, as proof of the sender. This example is from a letter belonging to the Ishikawa Prefectural Museum of Art.)



Kanazawa, Ishikawa is located near the center of Japan along the coast of the Sea of Japan. Even today, vestiges of the Edo era (1603–1868) castle town can be found in the central area of modern Kanazawa. Takayama Ukon spent much of his life here. After years of being known as a "Christian *daimyo* (feudal lord)", he also played an active role in Kanazawa as both a military commander and man of culture.

Having chosen Christianity over his position as a daimyo, Ukon is known even in Europe for his unwavering Christian faith. In 2016, he was beatified by the Catholic church. His baptismal name, Justo, means "a righteous, just person," reflecting Ukon's character.

From *Kirishitan Daimyo e no Shinshiten: Takayama Ukon* (Ed. Hiroki Nakanishi), with partial modifications.

Year (AD)	Age	Major Events
1552	1	Born in Takayama, Settsu Province (Toyono Town, Osaka Prefecture).
1564	13	Baptized, taking the baptismal name Justo, at Sawa Castle (in Uda City, Nara Prefecture).
1573	22	Became the lord of Takatsuki Castle (in Takatsuki City, Osaka Prefecture).
1576	25	Nanbanji Temple was built in Kyoto (Kyoto City, Kyoto Prefecture) through Ukon's efforts.
1580	29	Was granted residence in the castle town by Azuchi Castle (in Omihachiman City, Shiga Prefecture). A seminary (school to train priests) was built there.
1582	31	Oda Nobunaga died in the Honnoji Incident in Kyoto. Ukon fought Akechi Mitsuhide, as the vanguard of Hashiba Hideyoshi (later known as Toyotomi Hideyoshi).
1583	32	Lived in the castle town by Osaka Castle (in Osaka City, Osaka Prefecture), and worked to establish churches in Osaka.
1585	34	Was forced to relocate to Akashi, Harima Province (Akashi City, Hyogo Prefecture)
1586	35	Was present at Jesuit missionary Gaspar Coelho's audience with Toyotomi Hideyoshi.
1587	36	Served in Toyotomi Hideyoshi's Kyushu Campaign. Following the Edict to Expel Christian Missionaries, Ukon lost his position as a <i>daimyo</i> feudal lord.
1588	37	Received the protection of Maeda Toshiie (the first lord of the Kaga Domain), and moved to Kanazawa in the Kaga Domain.
1590	39	Served under Maeda Toshiie in Toyotomi Hideyoshi's Siege of Odawara (in Odawara City, Kanagawa Prefecture). Ukon also participated in the Siege of Hachioji Castle (in Hachioji City, Tokyo Prefecture).
1592	41	Toyotomi Hideyoshi's invasions of Korea began. Ukon met with Toyotomi Hideyoshi at Nagoya Castle in Iizen Province (Karatsu City, Saga Prefecture).
1599	48	Kanazawa Castle was revamped and improved, and the protective city walls around the castle town were built. The layout plans for these are said to have been designed by Ukon.
1600	49	Fought for Maeda Toshinaga (the second lord of the Kaga Domain) at the Battle of Sekigahara (in Sekigahara Town, Gifu Prefecture). Ukon also participated in attacks on Daishoji Castle (in Kaga City, Ishikawa Prefecture).
1609	58	Maeda Toshinaga began the construction of Takaoka Castle (in Takaoka City, Toyama Prefecture), the layout plans for which are said to have been designed by Ukon.
1614	63	Following the Edict Banning Christianity, Ukon and his family left Kanazawa. The shogunate government made his exile official; Ukon left Japan via Nagasaki, boarding a ship bound for Manila, in the Philippines.
1615	64	Takayama Ukon died in Manila.

Lived in Kanazawa (26 years)

Kanazawa, Ishikawa Prefecture



Cultural Affairs Section,
City of Kanazawa

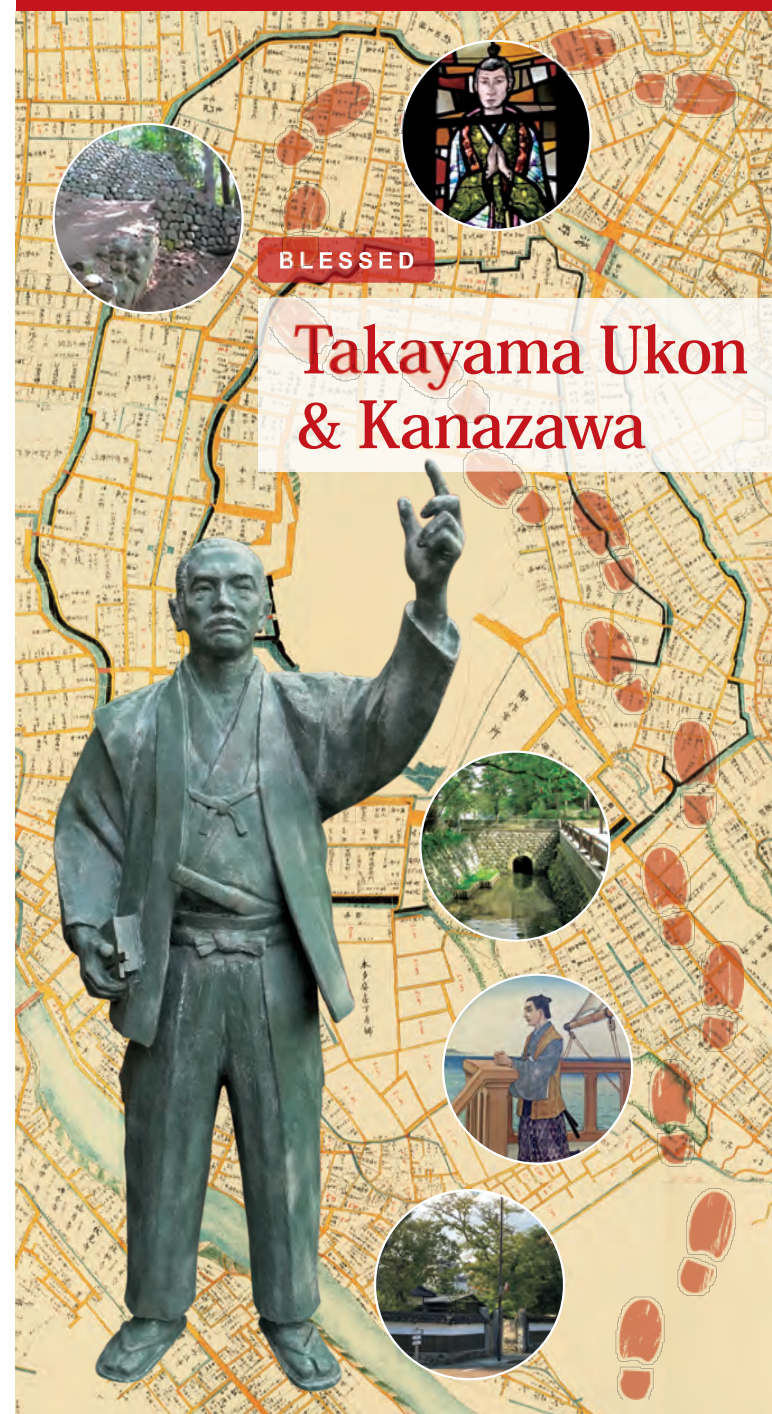
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Takayama Ukon & Kanazawa



City of Kanazawa / Kanazawa City Tourism Association

1 Site of Ukon's Residence

According to historic records at Daijōji Temple, the same site of Ukon's residence was later used as the residence of the Honda family. Today, this site is near the Ishikawa Prefectural Museum of Art.



Historical Signboard



Stone Walls at the Site of the Honda Family's Residence (City historic site)

2 Kirishitanji Temple

Also known as Nanbanji Temple. A map from the Edo era (1603–1868) mentions a “*kirishitan* residence,” indicating that there was once a temple called Kirishitanji Temple (“*kirishitan*” being the Japanese word for “Christian” at the time). The site adjoins Kon'ya-Zaka Slope, next to where Kenrokuen Garden is today.



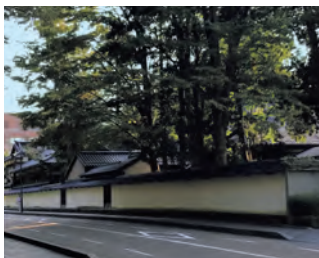
Historical Signboard



Map of the Greater Kanazawa Castle Area (Courtesy of the Tamagawa Library Archives; partial reproduction, partially modified)

3 Christian Missionary Residences at the Base of Jin'emon-Zaka Slope

Jin'emon-Zaka Slope connected the west side of Kanazawa Castle with the castle town. It is said that Christian missionaries' residences were clustered here at its base. Christian military commanders like Naito Joan, who came to Kanazawa through their reliance on Ukon, as well as other retainers of the Kaga Domain likely lived here.



Near the Base of Jin'emon-Zaka Slope



Historical Signboard

4 Site of Go-Hime's Residence (Greenery Area in Front of Kuromon Gate)

Go-Hime was the fourth daughter of Maeda Toshiie and Matsu, and the adopted child of Toyotomi Hideyoshi. She married Ukita Hideie, lord of Okayama Castle. After the Battle of Sekigahara, the defeated Hideie was exiled to Hachijō-Jima Island. However, GO-Hime became a Christian in Osaka and returned to Kanazawa, and is said to have lived in a residence located here. Her baptismal name was Maria.



The Greenery Area in Front of Kuromon Gate



Historical Signboard

5 Kanazawa Castle Ruins

Originally, this was the Kanazawa Mido fortress-temple that was overrun, occupied and fortified by Sakuma Morimasa. It was later improved and further fortified into a full-scale castle by the Maeda Family. Today, it is a national historic site. The Shinmaru city walls and Ote-Mon Gate are believed to have been designed by Ukon. Additionally, the designs of the structures on the grounds of Kanazawa Castle resemble an old picture of Nanbanji Temple in Kyoto, indicating a connection to Ukon.



The Remaining Stone Wall at Ote-Mon Gate

6 – 9 Sogamae-The Old City Walls of Kanazawa Castle

Kanazawa Castle and its town was enclosed by a double city wall system, in and out city wall or *sogamae*, was built around 1599. Today, it is a city historic site. While there are records which state that Ukon directed the construction of both the inner and outer city walls other, records indicate that only the inner city walls were the result of Ukon's work, and that the outer city walls were the work of the Shinohara family, a chief vassal of the Kaga Domain.

6 Masugata Remains

A partial reproduction of a *masugata*, or rectangular-shaped moat and earthwork. This location served as part of Kanazawa Castle's defenses.



Historical Signboard



Masugata Remains, Rebuilt as a Historic Site

7 Remains at the Kunai Bridge

Large zelkova trees can be seen here growing among the earthwork. The moat runs past the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa. This spot has a good view of the old moat where you can observe the true extent of its length.



Remains at the Kunai Bridge (Earthen fortifications to the left)

8 Remains at the Kareki Bridge

An authentic reproduction of the moat's changes over time. Most of the enclosure's moat was simply dug out without reinforcements. This section features a distinctive stone lining.



Remains at the Kareki Bridge (Earthen fortifications to the right)

9 Remains at Ryokusuien Garden

The point where the moat water flows into the Asanogawa river, featuring an earthwork alongside the moat. A good place to visit during a walk around the traditional townscape of the Kazuemachi Chaya District, which is a national preservation district containing many traditional buildings.



Remains at Ryokusuien Garden (Earthen embankment to the left)

10 Maeda Tosanokami-ke Shiryokan Museum

This museum features some 9,000 items from the collection of the Maeda Tosanokami family, who were one of the so-called Kaga-Hakka (the eight most powerful families of the Kaga Domain). On display is a reproduction of Maeda Toshiie's last will and testament, in which Ukon is mentioned.

📍 2-10-17 Kata-machi

☎ Tel: (076) 233-1561



Maeda Toshiie's Last Will and Testament (Reproduction) (A Prefecturally Designated Cultural Property)

11 Kanazawa Nakamura Memorial Museum

A museum dedicated to tea ceremony utensils and other craft items. The museum's collection includes a *chaire* tea storage jar that is an heirloom handed down by the Yokoyama Family (into which Ukon's daughter Lucia married), as well as one said to have belonged to Gamo Ujisato, who converted to Christianity due to Ukon's influence. The collection also includes a *chashaku* tea scoop made by Sen no Rikyu, who was Ukon's tea ceremony teacher.

📍 3-2-29 Honda-machi

☎ Tel: (076) 221-0751



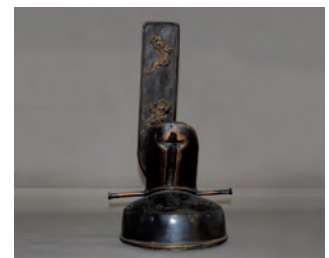
Rikyu-Kokatatsuki, a Chaire Tea Storage Jar Handed Down by the Yokoyama Family (A City-Designated Cultural Property)

12 Kanazawa Catholic Church

Features items such as a statue of Ukon (pictured on this pamphlet's cover). Inside the church, you'll find items such as stained glass window depicting Ukon, relics from Ukon himself (including an incense burner said to have belonged to Ukon, pictured to the right), and a Maria Kannon statue.

📍 1-1-54 Hirosaka

☎ Tel: (076) 264-2536



Bronze Incense Burner Shaped like Imperial Court Headwear, Once Owned by Takayama Ukon

13 Ryuzoji Temple

A Nichiren Buddhist temple in the Teramachidai area (a national preservation district for groups of traditional buildings). The grounds are home to a stone lantern (not shown to the public) used by Christians for prayer and is said to have been built by Ukon. The *hondo* main hall and *shuro* bell tower of the temple have been designated as cultural properties by the city of Kanazawa.

📍 4-1-2 Tera-machi



Christian Stone Lantern in the Temple Garden



金沢 KANAZAWA



0 100 200 300m

Legend

- Information
- Scenic View
- Art Gallery, Museum, etc.
- Shopping
- Temple
- Shrine
- Post Office
- Hall / Theater
- Garden
- Police
- School
- Hospital
- City Hall
- Bus Station
- Railway Station
- Evacuation Site
- Machi-Nori Bike Rental
- Historical Signboard
- 1 ~ 4 Historical Sites
- 5 ~ 9 Historic Monuments
- 10 ~ 13 Facilities

Kanazawa Sightseeing Buses

- Kanazawa Loop Bus (Right Loop)**
- Kanazawa Loop Bus (Left Loop)**
- Single Trip: Adults ¥200, Children ¥100
- One-Day Pass: Adults ¥500, Children ¥250
- Light-Up Bus**
- Runs on Saturdays
- Bus Stop
- Light-Up Spot
- Single Trip: Adults ¥300, Children ¥150
- One-Day Pass: Adults ¥500, Children ¥250

(As of November 2018)