



Chinzei Hachiro Minamoto Tametomo

Date

October 20, 1886

Primary Maker

Tsukioka Yoshitoshi

Medium

woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Description

Minamoto Tametomo (1139-70) was from a young age an extremely skilled archer and there are many legends about his exploits. Almost seven feet tall, and with his left arm four inches longer than his right, Tametomo used a seven and a half foot bow made of plain wood to make longer draws to speed his extra long arrows with enormous force. Tametomo had a very wild and unpredictable disposition. Only fifteen years old, and without the permission of the emperor, he conquered and took control of Kyushu Island. On the losing side in the Hogen War (1156), Tametomo was soon brought before his older brother Minamoto Yoshitomo and the emperor. They spared his life but ordered the tendons of his bow-arm cut. Tametomo was then sent into exile to the island of Oshima (Izu Province) where his arm healed and he gradually established himself as the local ruler. As illustrated, Tametomo also discovered a nearby island, Oni-ga-shima, by following the flight of herons in a boat. The strange inhabitants were believed to be demon-descendants, but Tametomo

subjugated them by impressing them with his strength. In 1170 the emperor sent the governor of Izu and his men to apprehend Tametomo. The hero sank the leading boat with a single arrow, but then decided to offer his bow to the Dragon King of the Sea and set his house on fire. By cutting his abdomen with his dagger he is said to have initiated the tradition of committing honorable seppuku (ritual suicide).

Dimensions

36.3 x 25.9 cm (sheet)