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Image of a damaged section of Tokyo, following an incendiary bombing mission (known as "Operation Meetinghouse") in 1945. Photo online, courtesy [National Archives of Japan](#). Click on the image for a closer view.

General Kuribayashi's concerns about his family home in Tokyo were justified: It was destroyed during the bombing of Tokyo.

His wife and children moved to [Kofu City](#), the capital of [Yamanashi Prefecture](#) (on [Honshu Island](#)), but that home was also destroyed in an air raid during August of 1945.

Forced to take shelter in a temple, Mrs. Kuribayashi endured further heartbreak when one of her daughters—Yohko—contracted [typhoid](#) and died as the war was ending.

After the war, Rene Gagnon brought a stone from Iwo Jima to Kuribayashi's widow. (See page 221 of [Uncommon Valor, Common Virtue](#) by Hal Buell, editor. To find a picture of that event, search "inside this book" with these terms: loose ends+widow.)

Because of Kuribayashi's dedication to duty, and his ingenious defense strategy, the Allied victory [at Iwo Jima](#) was extremely costly:

General Tadamichi Kuribayashi fought with great ingenuity and bravery. He made the Americans pay for every yard, as they landed under heavy fire and stormed their way up the volcanic peak of Suribachi . . . General Kuribayashi became the only Japanese commander to inflict upon the storm-landing Americans a higher number of casualties [including both wounded and killed in action] than the Japanese would suffer on defense. . . (Joseph H. Alexander, One of Freedom's Finest Hours, page 113.)

For the Japanese people, results of the war were so catastrophic that few today think it important to determine “why” it happened. Clint Eastwood reports that Japanese actors in Letters from Iwo Jima had no idea what had occurred on the island before they were selected for his film:

None of my Japanese actors knew anything about Iwo Jima. You lose 21,000 people! To just ignore them. What would happen if we did that?

The powerful trailer of Letters From Iwo Jima (which has now been dubbed into English, mostly by the actual Japanese-speaking actors) communicates intense emotion—even for one who does not understand the Japanese version.

Of Kuribayashi, Holland Smith (the Marine commander at Iwo Jima) said:

Of all of our adversaries in the Pacific, Kuribayashi was the most redoubtable.

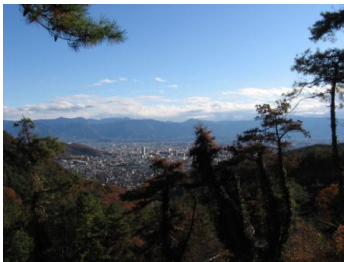
See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/RESULTS-of-WAR-Flags-Of-Our-Fathers>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

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Media Stream

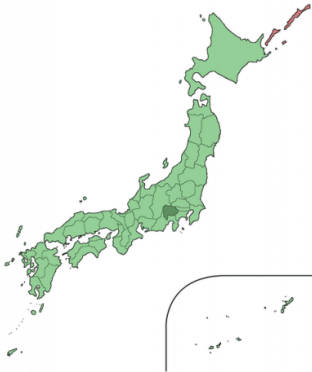


Kofu City - Home of General Kuribayashi

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Kofu City, Capital of Yamanshi Prefecture (Highlighted)

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Honshu Island

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Letters from Iwo Jima, a Clint Eastwood Film

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