**Monument to Okubo Nagayasu**

When the warlord Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616), now known as the founder of the Tokugawa shogunate that ruled Japan from 1603 to 1867, gained control over Iwami Ginzan in 1600, he appointed Okubo Nagayasu (1545–1613), one of his most trusted allies, to supervise the mine. Okubo was known as a skilled administrator and expert on mining matters. He developed several productive mine shafts, including the Okubo shaft that now bears his name, and is credited with laying the foundations for the mine’s greatest period of prosperity. Okubo impressed Ieyasu, who later promoted him to supervisor of many of the realm’s most plentiful sources of precious metals, including the gold mines of Sado Island (off the coast of present-day Niigata Prefecture) and Izu (Shizuoka Prefecture).

Upon his death at the age of 69, Okubo had already had several impressive tombs—monuments rather than actual repositories for remains—constructed for himself. But then something unexpected happened: Okubo was posthumously charged with embezzlement and treason. His seven sons and many other followers were forced to kill themselves, and his entire estate was seized. The accusations may have been politically motivated, but no matter: thereafter, monuments to him were either removed or ignored. Only in 1794 did the people of Iwami Ginzan feel comfortable enough to erect the new tombstone, which stands today.