

Site of Yogen'in Temple

A small temple known as the Yogen'in once stood here. It was constructed to commemorate Lord Ieyasu's concubine Orokunokata (1597–1625). A beautiful and very accomplished woman, she attracted the attention of Ieyasu while she was still in her teens. Deeply in love, Ieyasu took her with him wherever he went, even on military campaigns. Their relationship was short-lived, however, as Ieyasu, fifty-five years her senior, passed away just a few years later. After that she became a nun and took the name Yogen'in. Since she was still young and beautiful, she soon remarried. Yet this relationship too was short-lived, as she died suddenly shortly after Ieyasu's enshrinement at the Toshogu.

The famous *haiku* poet Matsuo Basho (1644–1694) once stayed here while awaiting permission to visit Ieyasu's shrine. He composed the following poem:

How precious they are

These green leaves, these young leaves in

The light of the sun

The phrase "light of the sun" refers to Nikko, which literally means "sunlight." It has also been suggested that "green leaves" is a reference to the Tokugawa family whose crest consists of three green hollyhock leaves.