

A Lord's Storehouse

This storehouse is one of the few buildings remaining of a large compound belonging to a feudal lord centuries ago. This storehouse was used for holding the grains paid as tax to his fief, such as barley and millet. The building is essentially a cross between a grain storehouse and a bank vault.

Rock-solid Construction

The building is made of basalt, which is found in almost all of the Tomie area. The rock was quarried somewhere nearby, probably moved in large slabs, then hewn, chiseled, and carefully shaped into blocks which were used to build the walls of the storehouse without using mortar. This style of precisely fitting stones was the most laborious and most expensive building technique at the time and was used for the storage of important grains.

An Artful Building

The construction method itself was an art form that involved matching precisely shaped blocks so that they fit together perfectly. In many of the walls there is not even enough room to insert a credit card between the blocks. No mortar was used to hold the blocks together, only gravity. And yet, despite many strong storms, the walls have stood for three and a half centuries.