

Red Lacquered Bow, Black Lacquered Arrows, Gold Lacquered Quivers

This set of a sandalwood bow, 30 feathered arrows, and two ornate quivers has close ties with the founding of the first Hachiman shrine in Kamakura in 1063 by Minamoto no Yoriyoshi (988–1075), a military commander serving the emperor in Kyoto. Yoriyoshi was dispatched to northeastern Japan in 1051 to subdue rebellious samurai. Before his departure from Kyoto, he prayed at Iwashimizu Hachimangu, a shrine dedicated to Hachiman, the guardian deity of the Minamoto clan and of the warrior class in general. There he received an archery set as a token of divine protection. The northeastern campaign was a success, and on his way back to Kyoto, Yoriyoshi stopped in Kamakura to establish a shrine to Hachiman, dedicating two bows (one was lost to fire in 1807), arrows, and quivers to the deity to express his gratitude. The set was inherited by Tsurugaoka Hachimangu after its founding by Minamoto no Yoritomo (1147–1199), Yoriyoshi's descendant, and has been cherished by the shrine ever since. It is designated a National Treasure and stored at the Kamakura Museum of National Treasures.