

Go'o Jinja Shrine

Go'o Jinja is a subsidiary shrine located on Mt. O'o to the east of [Usa Jingu Shrine](#). It enshrines the deified Wake no Kiyomaro (733–799), a courtier famous for his role in resolving an imperial succession dispute, when he served as a messenger to Usa Jingu and received an important oracle from the deity Hachiman.

Kiyomaro was born in the Okayama area to a respected family of court officials. Following in their footsteps, he became a high-ranking bureaucrat and served several emperors. During the reign of Empress Shotoku (718–770), the influential Buddhist monk Dokyo (700?–772), who was close to the empress, attempted to be named the next emperor. To validate Dokyo's ambition, his supporters announced that an oracle from Hachiman at Usa Jingu foretold a peaceful reign if Dokyo ascended the throne. A trusted lady-in-waiting of the empress named Wake no Hiromushi (730–799) was to be sent to Usa Jingu to investigate the claim. However, because of her delicate health her younger brother Kiyomaro was chosen for the long journey from Nara, then the capital of Japan.

According to legend, Kiyomaro received an oracle from Hachiman at [O'o Jinja Shrine](#) while conducting his investigation in Usa. The oracle pronounced that only a member of the imperial bloodline should ascend the throne. This helped prevent Dokyo from becoming emperor, but the monk exacted his revenge on Kiyomaro. The tendons of Kiyomaro's legs were cut and he was exiled to Kagoshima. There was reportedly even an assassination attempt during his journey south. However, Kiyomaro survived and eventually returned to court after Dokyo's downfall, becoming a trusted advisor to Emperor Kanmu (737–806).

Go'o Shrine was first built on an island in the [Hishigata Pond](#) sometime before the mid-nineteenth century, but was moved to the current location during the Great Showa Reconstruction of the Usa Jingu shrine grounds (1932–1941). Go'o Shrine was repaired in 2020 together with the nearby O'o Shrine. Wake no Kiyomaro is worshipped at Go'o Shrine as a deity who protects from misfortune, averts disasters, and heals leg injuries.