

Iwami Ginzan Emaki

The *Iwami Ginzan Emaki* (Iwami Ginzan Picture Scroll) is a nineteenth-century document that explains the workings of the Iwami Ginzan Silver Mine. It was intended to be read by visitors and people such as inspectors and administrators assigned to the mine by the ruling Tokugawa shogunate. The illustrated, manual-like document extends across two scrolls with a total length of 24 meters. It provides a detailed description of the many different types of work conducted by miners, details on mine tunnel engineering, and an overview of the mine's economics.

Administrative functions such as the supervision of mining tunnels and the tasks of various officials are explained in depth. For example, one illustration of a *yotsudome yakusho*, a kind of checkpoint under the direct control of the government that operated by the entrance to tunnels, includes details on stationed officials' duties. These responsibilities ranged from weighing the silver ore carried by returning miners to ensuring that only people authorized to work inside the mountain entered it. A related

drawing explains how women and children living within the mining area were put to work by the checkpoint sorting bits of ore deemed low-grade by miners, thereby training the next generation of miners to evaluate ore.

The document also describes engineering solutions employed in the mining tunnels to prevent them from overflowing with groundwater or collapsing. These include an illustration of a water removal system using a hand-powered pump, which pumped water from the mining shafts into a tunnel leading out toward the entrance. Another picture shows the struggles of carpenters and their assistants carrying logs and other construction materials for the periodic reinforcement of tunnel walls deep inside the mine.