

# THE OHMI SHRINE GUIDE

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## FEATURES OF THE OHMI SHRINE

### The Shrine

The main shrine, prayer hall, inner gate, and worship hall are beautifully arranged within the precinct of the shrine, which is located at the foot of Mt. Usa and overlooks Lake Biwa. The worship hall, divided into the inner and outer halls and linked by a corridor, is representative of the "Ohmi" style of construction and is said to embody a novel plan for shrine architecture as well as to be a quintessent example of Shinto art.

### The Sacred Garden

Most of the trees in the precincts were kindly donated by worshippers, and the dense woods they are in grows in sublimity year after year. The precinct commands a superb view particularly of the distant Suzuka Mountain Range and Mt. Ohmi-Fuji, with Lake Biwa in the foreground. The sacred garden, glowing in the morning sun and reminding us of scenery of mythological ages, seems to purify and refresh the spirits of those who visit the shrine.

### The Clock Museum

The clock museum, associated with the water clock made by Emperor Tenchi, the first ever built in Japan, houses not only excavated articles closely related to Otsu when it was the capital of Japan, but also has on exhibit a vast variety of materials which give a historical account of the development of clocks. In the outer garden of the museum there is a water clock contributed by Omega, Switzerland, a fire clock in the shape of a dragon donated by Rolex, a precision sundial, and other items of interest.

## 近江神宮の特色

### 社 殿

社殿は宇佐山の麓に本殿、祝詞殿、拜殿、楼門が美しく配列されて、眼下には琵琶湖を見おろす位置にあります。

また、拜殿は内拜殿、外拜殿を回廊で結んだ「近江造り」という様式を形成しており、これは神道芸術の神髄を表現した斬新な建築様式といわれています。

### 神 苑

神苑のほとんどの樹木は崇敬者によって献木されたもので年々の成長でうっそうとした杜になっています。

境内からは遠くに鈴鹿山脈、近江富士をながめ、眼前に琵琶湖が広がる景色はとりわけ素晴らしく、神苑から眺める朝日の輝きは神話の時代をほうふつさせ訪れる人の心を清々しくしてくれます。

### 時計博物館

天智天皇によって、我が国最初につくられた水時計に由来する時計博物館には時計発達史がわかる多くの貴重な資料が展示されています。

また、博物館外庭には、スイス・オメガ社寄贈の水時計、ロレックス社寄贈の龍の形をした火時計、また精密日時計など興味ある品が設置されています。

## THE OHMI SHRINE AND CLOCKS

The time system in Japan was initiated on April 25, 671 AD (actually June 10 by the solar calendar and the day presently commemorated in Japan as "Time Day"), when a water clock was constructed and installed in the Imperial Palace in Otsu. A time bell and drum sounded the hours in accordance with this water clock, enabling the people to know the accurate time. From then until a mechanical clock was introduced from abroad almost a thousand years later, the time system of Japan depended solely upon this one water clock.

According to an ordinance stipulated by the Taiho Stature (established in 706 AD), water clock specialists and twelve officers called "Shushincho" were responsible for day-and-night observation of the water clock, its maintenance and the broadcasting of the time.

Mechanical clocks came to Japan as presents from foreigners in the Azuchi-Momoyama Period (late 16th century). Japanese versions of the mechanical clock were based upon these foreign-made ones, and a Japanese designed mechanical clock was produced as early as in the beginning of the Edo period. In time Japanese clocks were developed with unique shapes and mechanisms of their own, leading to the creation of an astro-timepiece, the first of its kind in the world, and a perpetual clock, the product of ingenious technology and creativity. Japanese chronometry adapted a method of indefinite time-keeping in conformity with the solar and lunar calendars. Time was also measured in a unique way, which led to the development of a time system peculiar to Japan.

## 近江神宮と時計

日本の時刻制度は西暦671年4月25日（現在の暦の6月10日に当り我が国の時の記念日になっている）大津京で水時計を用い始められた。当時水時計による時刻は鐘や太鼓によって知らされ、人々は正確な時刻を知ることができた。

この水時計による時刻制度は、およそ1000年後に外国から機械式時計がもたらされるまで唯一のものであった。

大宝律令（706年制定）には「守辰丁」と呼ばれる12名の役人が定められ昼夜にわたって水時計の保守や報時を任務としていた。

機械式時計は安土桃山時代（16世紀）に外国人によってもたらされ、国産時計（和時計）はこれらの舶来時計が元になって江戸時代初期より作られるようになり、独特の形と機構を発達させ、その精巧な技術力で世界で類のない天文時計や万年時計を生み出した。

当時の時刻制度は太陰太陽暦に合うように不定時法がもちいられ、独特の時間測定方法を発達させた。



inner gate



linked by a corridor

This museum was opened in 1963 and is the only one in Japan which is exclusively devoted to clocks, exhibiting more than 3,500 materials, documents, and excavated articles focusing on historical Japanese clocks.

The Ohmi Shrine is dedicated to Emperor Tenchi(626-671 AD). ("Tenchi" means deep, heavenly, "Ten" is heaven, and "Chi" is wisdom so limitless wisdom). Tenchi was an illustrious lord who through his wisdom, courage and solidarity with the people, realized his great ideal of founding the nation. Until then Japan had been in a very unstable condition under the pressure of an inflow of foreign culture from the continent, while the ancient Japanese society was moving toward collapse. Over the 20-odd years of his hardship-filled reign, first as prince and then as emperor, Tenchi changed the social structure of the then subjected people, who lived on private land owned by clans, into that of public land and citizens. He established central and local administrative organizations, put into effect the distribution and receipt of farmland according to census registry, and solidified the national economy through the formulation of a tax system. Further, he reinforced the national defense against external invasion while building up diplomatic relations with other countries on an equal footing. In this way, Emperor Tenchi energetically implemented a series of both domestic and foreign policies.

Particularly striking among his achievements was the transfer of the capital, in 666 AD, six years after his enthronement, from Asuka, Yamato (now Nara) to what is currently Otsu City, the capital

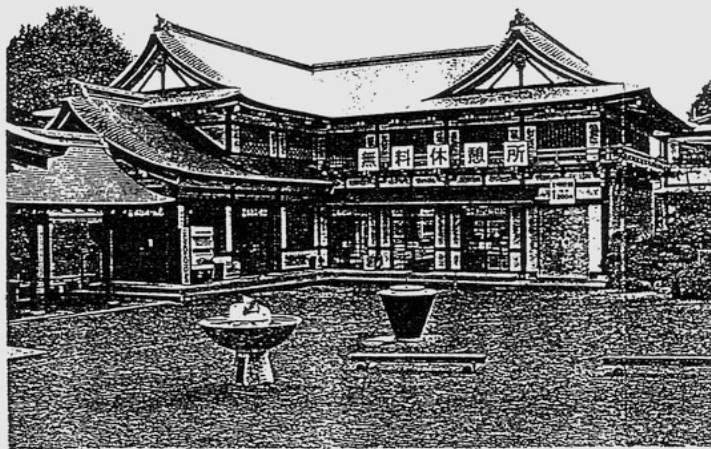
時計博物館は1963年日本唯一の時計博物館として開館され、和時計を中心に文献、時計など3500点以上を展示している。

近江神宮は天智天皇（AD 626～671）（天智とは天のように限らない知恵という意味を表す）を御祭神としている。

天智天皇は国民と連帯し、勇気と卓越した才能をもって国家の基を築いたすぐれた天皇であった。

それまでの日本は大陸からの外国文化流入の圧力で非常に不安定な状態であり国家崩壊の方へ動いていた。そして、皇太子時代の20年余は苦難の時代であった。また、天皇は公地公民とし、登録人口に応じて農地を分配し、税制を確立し国家経済を確立した。

外国からの侵略に対して国防を増強し外国と対等の外交関係を築きあげた。業績の中でとりわけ注目すべきは、AD 666年、即位後6年に大和の飛鳥（奈良県）から現在の滋賀県大津市に遷都した。これが近江大津の宮である。



The Clock Museum

of Shiga Prefecture, but was then known as Otsu-no-miya in Ohmi. In Otsu-no-miya he established the Ohmi Statute (in which the constitution of Japan has its origin) and opened the way to national education by founding a national university there and colleges in local cities. Emperor Tenchi designed the water clock as well to keep the people's daily life well regulated, and initiated the use of "burning soil" (coal) and "burning water" (oil).

Thus he brought about the essential political and economic reforms already called for in the Taika Era Reformation. But after only five years or so in Otsu-no-miya the Emperor passed away, and the capital was deserted during the Civil War of Jinshin which broke out in the following year. In respect of Tenchi's great achievements in determining the future of Japan according to the will of God, he was given the name of Amemikoto Hirakasuwake after his death.

Through enthusiastic efforts rendered by believers nationwide, the construction of the Ohmi Shrine was completed in 1940, here at the ancient site of the Otsu Capital which is so closely associated with Emperor Tenchi. At the same time, the Ohmi Shrine was ranked among the Grand Shrines of Kanpei, the group of greater shrines to which the Imperial House dedicated votive offerings in pre-war days, and is one of the Chokusai-Sha shrines to which an imperial envoy is sent at the present time.



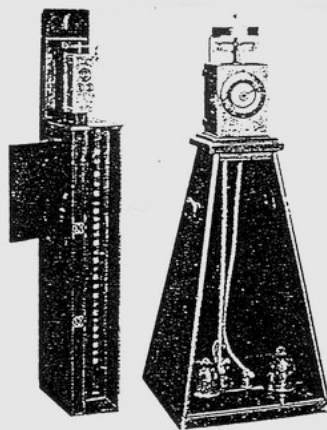
大津の宮においては近江令（我が国最初の憲法）を制定し、中央と地方に大学をつくり国民の教育を奨励し、更に水時計をつくり国民の生活に時の基準をつくり、燃える土（石炭）や燃える水（石油）の利用も行った。このようにして政治、経済改革を断行して大化の改新を完成させた。そして遷都5年後、大津の宮で崩御し、翌年壬申の乱が起り廃都となってしまった。

天智天皇の業績に敬意を示し後世に神の名として天命開別（あめみことひらかすわけ）をおくった。

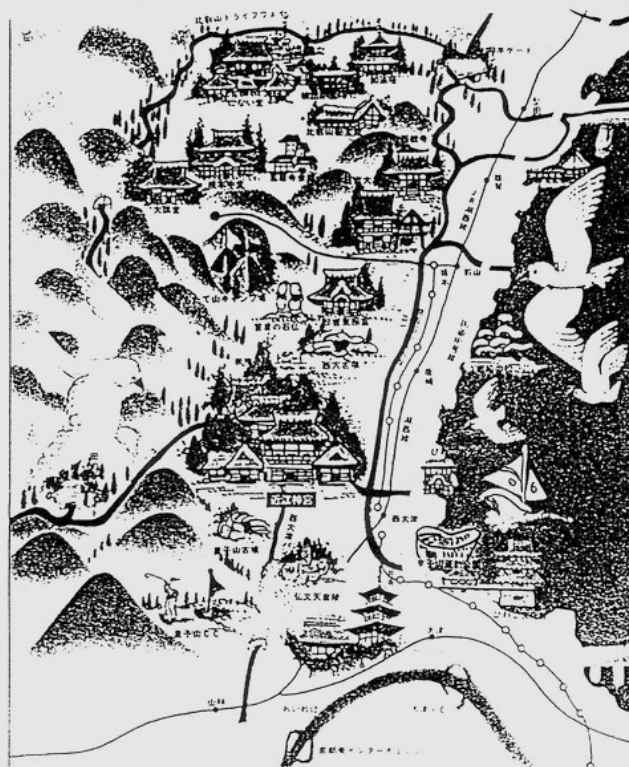
全国の天智天皇を信奉する人々の尽力によって、1940年に大津京近くに近江神宮が建立された。近江神宮は戦前の官幣大社（官幣大社は皇室から捧げ物があつた）であり、現在も勅祭社（皇室から使者が派遣される社）となっている。



fire clock



Japanese clocks



GUIDE MAP