



LANTERN PRESENTED BY THE FORMER EMPRESS TOKUGAWA
MASAKO TO NIKKŌ TŌSHŌSHA (NOW TŌSHŌGŪ) IN 1636 TO
COMMEMORATE THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
ENSHRINEMENT OF TOKUGAWA IEYASU AS THE BUDDHIST AVATAR
TŌSHŌ DAIGONGEN

This lantern was presented by the former empress Tokugawa Masako 徳川和子 (1607–1678), also known as Tōfukumon-in 東福門院, to her brother Tokugawa Iemitsu 徳川家光 (1604–1651), the ruling shogun at the time of the rebuilding of Nikkō Tōshōsha 日光東照社 shrine in 1636 and the grandson of Tokugawa Ieyasu 徳川家康 (1543–1616). Iemitsu ordered the renovation of the shrine complex in order to commemorate the enshrinement of Ieyasu as the Buddhist avatar Tōshō Daigongen 東照大権現 (Great Avatar of Radiance of the East). Iemitsu was so delighted that he placed his sister's lantern in the shrine's innermost compound, positioned so as to illumine the pathway leading to Ieyasu's grave.

Courtesy of Professor Timon Screech