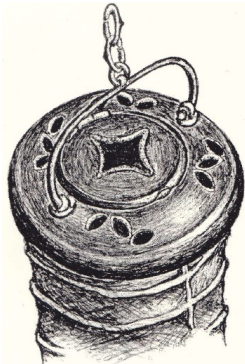


The Edo Mingu Times

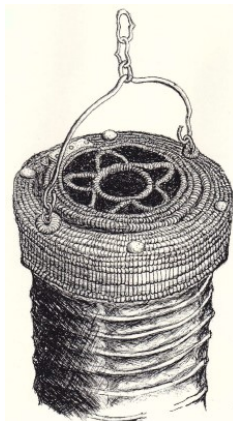
<http://edomingu.com>

The essay was originally written in Japanese with illustrations by Tatsuo Akisawa, the director of the antique museum "Edo Mingu Kaido", which was translated to English by his son, Masaru Akisawa

Odawara-chochin (Foldable Paper Lantern)- Part II



**Drawing 3: Odawara-chochin
made of copper**
Width 11.5cm, height 32cm
At the end of the Edo Period



**Drawing 4: Odawara-chochin
made with twisted paper threads**
Width 13cm, height 28cm
The late Edo Period



**Drawing 5: Oil pod lamp
(cross section)**
Width 4.3cm, height 3.7cm
The late Edo Period

Drawing 3 shows the top frame of one of Odawara-chochin made of dimly shining copper, which apparently fits the description "Futokoro-chochin" (a pocketable paper lantern). Drawing 4 shows another Odawara-chochin whose top frame is made of twisted Japanese paper strings woven and coated with Japanese lacquer, giving impression of a light weighted portable lantern. For its smooth finish and surface that does not look like being made of paper material, many people who saw them said they got an urge to touch and feel the material. These portable paper lanterns really fit for the name "Futokoro-chochin".

It was 1989 when my mother-in-law's parent house was to be dismantled due to expansion of public road and my wife's cousin told me that I could get anything in the warehouse inherited for generations, to which I joyously responded. It was the Ishizaki family in Fukumitsu-cho in Ishikawa Prefecture. In the old warehouse, there were seven old chests of drawers and oblong chests into which I threw anything that caught my eyes and brought them back with me in a truck. I made my trip twice. After my return, I opened them with excitement, just like a boy opening a treasure box.

There were hundreds of books printed with wood blocks dated 1804 to 1830, a clock 1.5m in height having a weight that came with a record showing it was to be re-investigated in 1825, colorful lamps, and along with a lantern used for horse riding, there was the Odawara-chochin whose top frame was made with twisted Japanese paper, inside of which was a miniature oil pod lamp as shown in Drawing 5.

The oil pod lamp was smaller than the standard size oil pod lamps, seemingly too small to grasp and not heavy enough to be placed on a table, which puzzled me and I contacted my wife's cousin if he knew anything about it. He remembered what his father said, "The lantern was very convenient to carry around and it hanged down stably as the oil pod lamp had a certain weight. Using the oil pod lamp was better than a Japanese candle as it saved time cutting off a burnt out part of a wick."

(*A wick of a Japanese candle did not burn out completely and a burnt out part of a wick had to be cut off periodically, otherwise fire got weaker resulting in the reduction in brightness. The most of us have impression that a candle was used for a light-stand but actually an oil saucer lamp or an oil pod lamp was popularly used by being placed on an iron ring on the top of a light-stand.)

(To be continued to Part III)