

## ヴォーリス記念館の

由来

ヴォーリス記念館は、アメリカ生まれの建築家、伝道師、実業家で、人生の大半をこの街で過ごし働いたウィリアム・メレル・ヴォーリスと妻（満喜子）が後半生を過ごした邸宅です。

木造2階建ての建物は、ヴォーリス自身が設計したもので、当初は妻（満喜子）が設立した幼稚園の教員寮として計画されました。しかし、建設中に家族の住居に改装され、1931年の完成からウィリアム・メレルが亡くなる1964年までヴォーリス夫妻の住居として使われました。

外観は全体的にシンプルですが、下見板張りの外観、切妻屋根、煙突、二重窓が特徴で、西洋風の外観をしています。内部は洋風にレイアウトされていますが、畳を敷いた和室の他、アメリカから持ち込んだピアノ、ヴォーリス自身の書などが展示されています。

玄関脇には靴を脱いだり履いたりするときに座れる快適なベンチが置かれるなど、ヴォーリスが住宅設計において、住人の利便性を高める実用的な工夫が随所に施されていたことが分かります。

## William Merrell Vories and Omihachiman

William Merrell Vories (1880–1964) was an American-born architect, businessman, and Christian missionary who lived and worked in Omihachiman for the greater part of his life. Vories left a rich legacy that remains conspicuous in the city today. He first came to Omihachiman to work as a missionary while teaching English at a local high school, and he later took up architecture, publishing, and medicine sales to finance his religious activities. His strong commitment to public service also led him to establish several schools and medical facilities.

More than 20 buildings designed by Vories remain standing in Omihachiman, and his contributions to local life are fondly remembered. A statue of Vories stands in front of the offices of the Omi Brotherhood, the company he founded to sell medicine, and his life and achievements are commemorated in Vories Memorial Hall, which is housed in his final place of residence.

## Vories Memorial Hall

Vories Memorial Hall is the former home of William Merrell Vories (1880–1964), an American-born architect, evangelist, and businessman who lived and worked in Omihachiman. The two-story wooden building was designed by Vories himself, who originally intended it as a dormitory for kindergarten teachers. During construction, however, he decided instead to make it a home. The structure was completed in 1931, after which Vories lived there with his wife Makiko until his passing in 1964. Simple in overall appearance, the building has a clapboard exterior, gabled roof, and chimney that give it a distinctively Western look. The interior is laid out in a Western style, but Vories also included Japanese-style rooms with tatami mats. The house is now a museum dedicated to Vories' s life, career, and legacy, with various photographs and personal belongings on display inside, and has been designated a Cultural Property of Shiga Prefecture. Visits

## Welcome to Omihachiman

Omihachiman is a small city on the southeastern shore of Lake Biwa, around 40 minutes by train from Kyoto. It was established as a castle town in the late sixteenth century and flourished as a commercial hub until the early twentieth century. The atmosphere of this prosperous period has been well preserved in the compact old town, where traditional merchants' residences and storehouses line the streets.

The historic district is located below Mt. Hachimanyama. The construction of a castle on the mountain' s summit in 1585 sparked the town' s development. The castle was abandoned within 10 years because of a dispute between its lord, Toyotomi Hidetsugu (1568–1595), and his uncle Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–1598), then the most powerful warlord in Japan. The town of Omihachiman, however, continued to prosper, benefiting from the free-trade policies initiated by Hidetsugu as well as its advantageous location on Lake Biwa and near a major road between Kyoto and Edo (now Tokyo). The Hachimanbori Moat, built by Hidetsugu between Mt. Hachimanyama and the castle town to protect his castle and to connect the town with Lake Biwa, became a busy trade artery along which local merchants ferried their wares via the lake to major cities. These traders built up a nationwide reputation for their diligence, honesty, and social contributions.

In the early twentieth century, American architect and missionary William Merrell Vories (1880–1964), settled in the city and embraced the spirit of Omihachiman' s merchants. He later designed several buildings now considered local landmarks. Vories is also fondly remembered for his public-spiritedness, having established a number of schools and medical care facilities in Omihachiman.

Historic Omihachiman stretches south from the foot of Mt. Hachimanyama, across the Hachimanbori Moat and into the merchant district along Nagaharacho and Shinmachi Streets. Just north of the moat is Himure Hachimangu Shrine, dedicated to Hachiman, the guardian deity of the warrior class and the origin of the town' s name. The entire area is easy to tour on foot and part of it can be taken in on a leisurely boat ride on the Hachimanbori Moat. The summit of Mt. Hachimanyama can be reached by cable car from the station next to Himure Hachimangu Shrine, and William Merrell Vories' s life and work can be explored in his former home, now known as Vories Memorial Hall.



ヴォーリス記念館へようこそ



近江八幡

一般社団法人  
近江八幡観光物産協会  
<https://www.omi8.com>