

## 八百屋お七

### YAOYA OSHICHI

Yaoya Oshichi (1667- March 29, 1683), literally "greengrocer Oshichi", was a daughter of the greengrocer Tarobei. She lived in the Hongo neighborhood of Edo at the beginning of the Edo period. She attempted to commit arson after falling in love with a boy. This story became the subject of oururi plays. The year of her birth is sometimes given as 1666.

#### STORY

In December 1682, she fell in love with Ikuta Shōnosuke (or Saemon), a temple page, during the great fire in the Tenna Era, at Shōsen-in, the family temple (danna-dera). The next year she attempted arson, thinking she could meet him again if another fire occurred. She was caught by the police and burnt at the stake in Suzugamori for her crimes.

She was sixteen years old, and the magistrate knew it, but he asked her, "You must be fifteen years old, aren't you?" at the judgment because boys and girls under fifteen years old were not subject to the death penalty. But she honestly stated her age, and was punished accordingly.

