

Save Mr.Sasaki !

-The Flood that Hit Yachiho





Mr.Sasaki

An old man living in Yachiho Village, Nagano Prefecture



Chiho

A female university student living in Sakuho Town, Nagano Prefecture (formerly Yachiho Village).

She studies architecture and knows a lot about Sakuho Town.

In the Edo period, 1732,
Mr. Sasaki, who lived in Yachiho Village, Nagano Prefecture, was finishing work and heading home.



Alright, time to head home.
...Huh!? Where am I? Where's my house?!

Suddenly, the surroundings became an unfamiliar landscape, and Mr. Sasaki was shocked! His house, fields, and the river — everything had changed.

A girl happened to pass by.



Sir, what are you doing here?



My house was supposed to be here, but now it's just a field...

That house was from a very, very long time ago.
Do you know what time it is now?



Isn't it the second year of Kanpō now?



Kanpo...? I'll look it up on my smartphone.
-In 1732!?
Sir, it's the year 20XX now, so you've somehow jumped
300 years into the future!?





What! My village has disappeared
in the world 300 years from now...

Listen carefully, Grandpa. In Kanpō 2, August 1732,
a big flood called the '**Inu no Mansui**' happened in Yachiho.
This area was the hardest hit.



What! That's very soon! Was the flood really that big?

In this area, 248 people lost their lives. A temple called
'Jifukuji' was built to honor those who died in the Inu no
Mansui flood. Many buildings were also washed away.



Is that so...? Was my house washed away too? My name is Sasaki,
and my house is a big one where everyone in the village gathers.
If my house is gone, everyone will be in trouble...

It seems Mr. Sasaki's house was okay.
I wonder why?



Why wasn't Mr. Sasaki's house washed away?

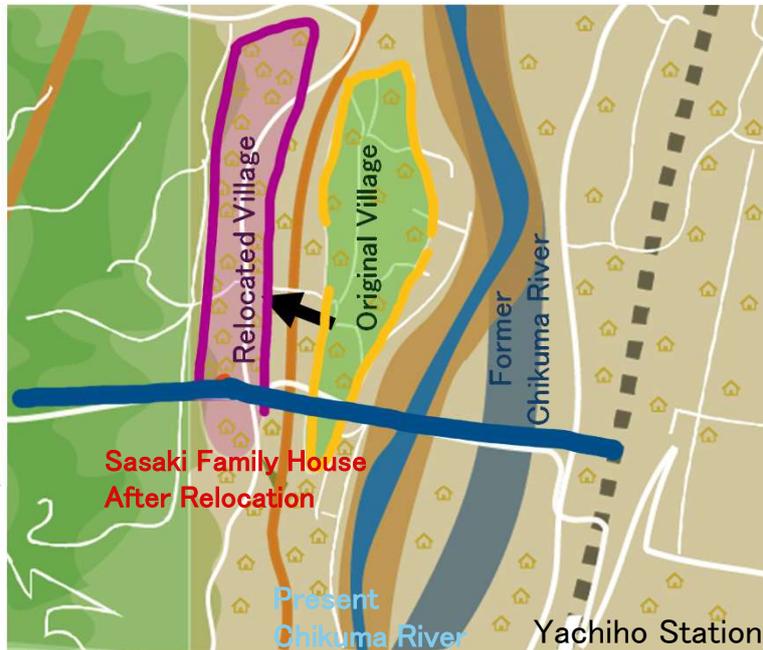
- ① Because it was a sturdy house.
- ② Because it was located on slightly higher ground.
- ③ Because everyone worked hard to hold it down.

Mr. Sasaki's house was located on slightly higher ground than the surrounding villages.

That's probably why it wasn't washed away by the flood!
Let's look at a map of Yachiho Village! Now, it's called Sakuho Town.

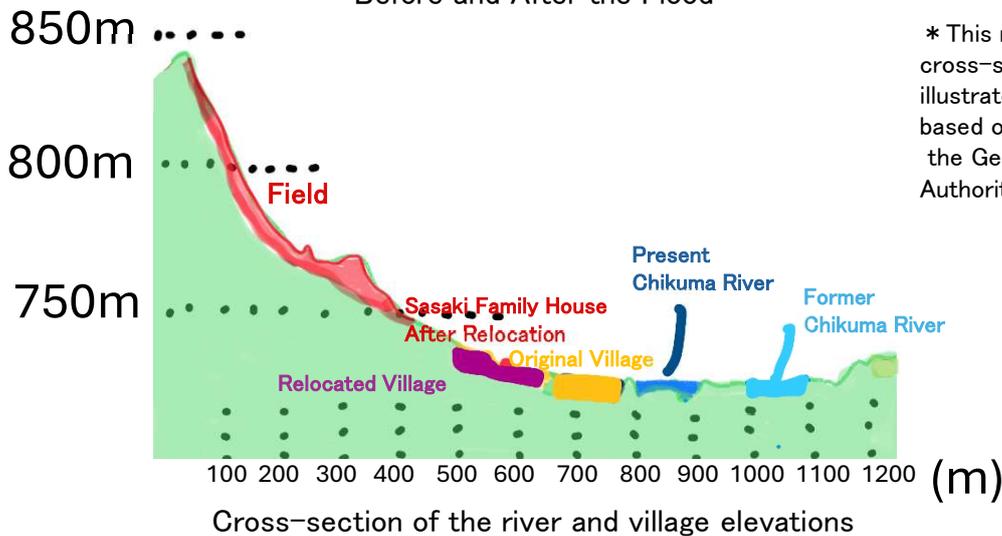


After the flood, the village was relocated about 200 meters toward the mountains. They moved to a place 10 to 20 meters higher in elevation.



The shape of the Chikuma River changed due to the flood.

Positions of the Chikuma River and the Village Before and After the Flood



* This map and cross-sectional diagram are illustrated summaries based on maps from the Geospatial Information Authority of Japan.

Cross-section of the river and village elevations

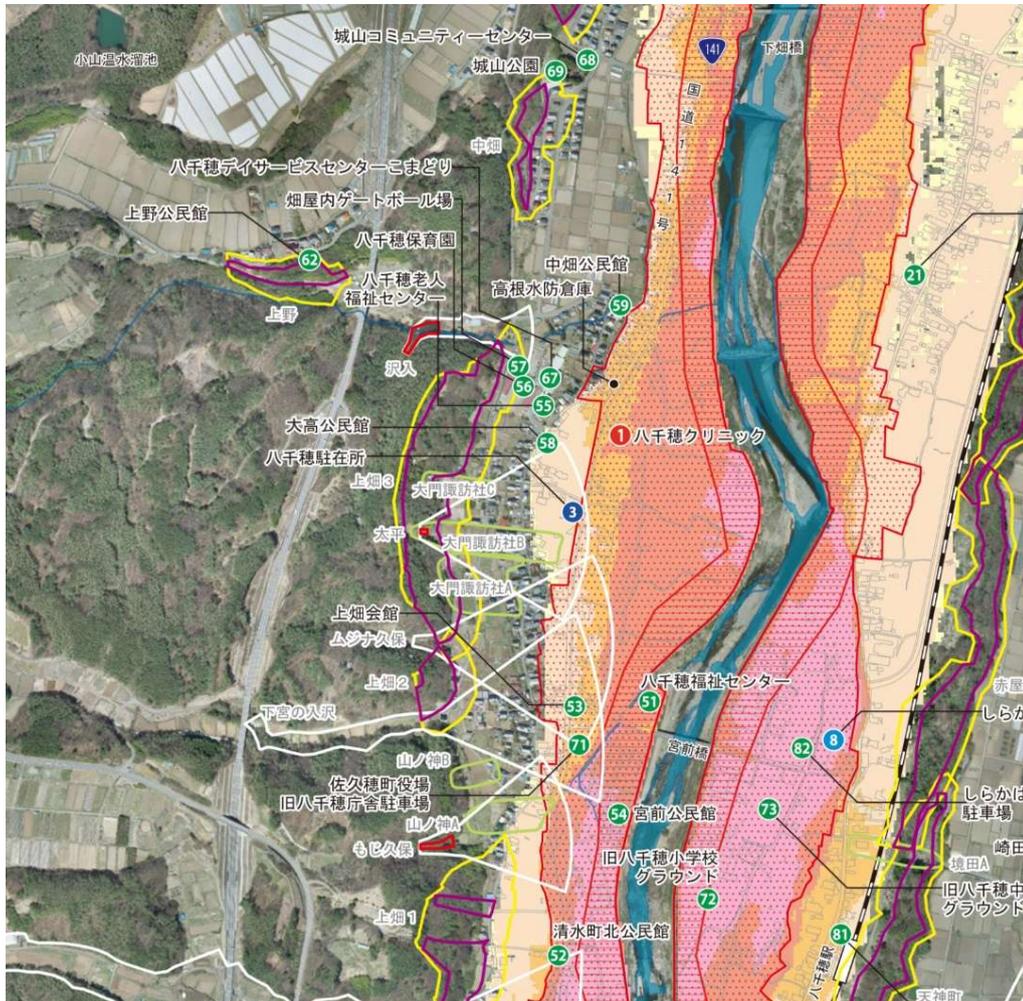


So the whole village was relocated to higher ground because of the flood!

"Jifukuji Temple was also built on elevated ground. Temples and shrines are often built in places that are less likely to be affected by natural disasters. They studied the terrain and chose safer locations. By the way, we have something like this nowadays!"



This is called a “**hazard map.**” It shows dangerous areas and evacuation sites in case of a disaster. The map below shows the area of Sakuho Town (formerly Yachiho Village) !



※This hazard map was created in the fiscal year 2023 assuming the maximum scale of rainfall.

Legend

- Medical Facilities
- Designated Evacuation Sites
- Designated Emergency Evacuation Sites
- Debris Flow Warning Area
- Debris Flow Special Warning Area

Approximate Flood Depth

- 10.0m
- 5.0m
(Second Floor Submerged)
- 3.0m
(Below Second Floor Level)
- 0.5m
(Adult’s Knee Height)

Sakuho Town Flood and Landslide Hazard Map ※Source: Sakuho Town Official Website

As expected, the area around the river where the village used to be is shaded darker. This means there’s a higher chance of deep flooding during a flood. On the other hand, near the mountains, there seems to be a risk of debris flows.



By looking at this, you can know where to evacuate during a disaster, so it’s reassuring!

These maps are created by various local governments. Everyone should check the hazard maps for their own area too!

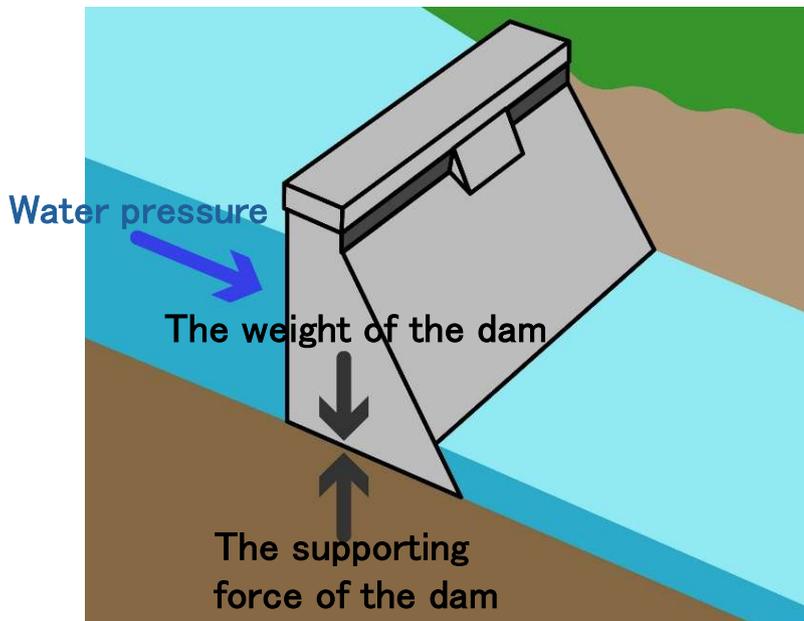


Also, “Erosion Control Dams” were built to help prevent floods!



Erosion Control Dams ?

Erosion Control Dams are mainly installed along rivers.
Here’s how they work!



* This illustration was created with reference to the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism website.

How a Erosion Control Dam Works

During a debris flow, it helps prevent a large amount of sediment from flowing all at once!
Although it doesn’t provide 100% protection.



Even so, this kind of device was unimaginable in the old days.
We really live in a convenient world now.
But why did such a flood happen in the first place?

The heavy rain caused landslides. But such a huge damage... maybe the people living here caused the problem somehow.
Mr. Sasaki, do you have any idea why?



Hmm, landslides are usually caused by the mountains, but if it’s people...
Now that I think about it, the population has increased recently.



Why did such a big landslide happen?

- ① Because too many trees on the mountain were cut down.
- ② The work of the mountain animals.
- ③ Because an earthquake happened at the same time as the heavy rain.

Did you maybe cut down a lot of trees recently?



That's right. As the population grew, we started building new houses... We needed a lot of wood.



That might be the cause! Forests have the ability to store rainwater in the soil. They help prevent sudden increases in the amount of water flowing into rivers, which can reduce the risk of flooding.



So that means it's important not just to use trees, but also to grow them.



Alright! If I can get back to my own time, I'll make sure to tell everyone to evacuate to higher ground and to take good care of the trees!



Mr. Sasaki! Your body is starting to fade!



Oh! Am I going back!?



Maybe! Mr. Sasaki, do your best to save everyone in Yachiho Village!



~The End~



Current Location of Sakuho Village



Kawasaki City Hazard Map
From Kawasaki City Official Website

Everyone, check the hazard map for your own town too!



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