

Kurume History Walks

No.28 Cultural Properties in Mizuma Town* 三潯町の文化財

*Mizuma Town, which had been be an independent municipality, merged with Kurume City in 2005

Mizuma Town is located in the southwest part of Kurume City. The place-name of Mizuma (三潯) was scribed as “水沼 (water and marsh)”, “三万 (three and ten thousand)” on the artifacts of the 8th century, and as “みぬま minuma”, “みつま mitsuma” in the old documents of about 13th century. From that, this area had seemingly been characterized by water and marsh. And many traces that people had lived since ancient times could be discovered in the town.

- 13000 BCE – 1000 BCE (the Jomon period): A pitfall for hunting was excavated, although any trace of a village has not been discovered.
- 300 BCE – 300 CE (the Yayoi period): At a shell mound (Gobyozuka Kaizuka) and a tomb (Eboshizuka), bronze swords, earthenware, etc. were discovered.
- 794 CE – 1185 CE (the Heian period): "Mizumago" was known at that time as one of eight areas in the Mizuma District, which we estimate to be equivalent to the present-day Mizuma Town. There used to be some villages called Takamizuma, Inuzuka, Kiyomatu, and Nishimuta that had been in charge of holding the rites and festivals in Daizenji Tamatare-gu Shrine.
- 1603 CE – 1868 CE (the Edo period): Within the area of today’s Mizuma Town, there used to be nineteen rural villages. Irrigation facilities, such as creek and reservoirs, were built on lowlands and hillsides, because of the difficulty in getting water to the fields. Since then, a moat named Sengenmizo, and a weir named Isumatazeki are still in use.
- 1868 CE – 1926 CE (the Meiji and Taisho period): The intake pump devices enabled to take water from the Chikugo River in Mizuma Town. Miidera Pump Station is one of those devices which still stands in the fields and which symbolizes the local development in modern times.



Former Miidera Pump Station and Electricity Substation

Former Miidera Pump Station and Electricity Substation

It was built on the left side of the Chikugo River in 1933. This red brick single-story building with tiled roof is composed of three houses different in height.

In the highest house (120.18 square meters), there were two pumps for sending water to the higher areas. The house of medium height (61.39 square meters) used to be the electricity substation which supplied the electric power for the pumps in the building. The smallest house (41.12 square meters) had a pump for sending water to lowlands.

A local builder took charge of the construction, using the roof tiles and the bricks which were produced in the adjacent areas. It stands in the middle of fields and has become a symbolic landscape of the town.

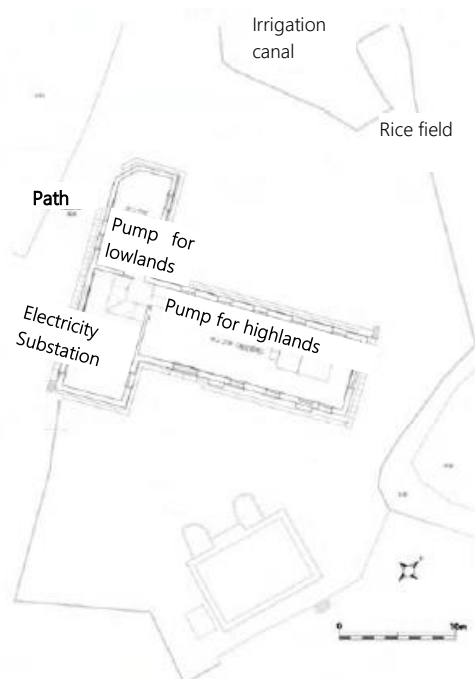
It was registered as a National Cultural Property in 2008.



Former Miidera Pump Station



Inside the station



Layout plan

Municipal Cultural Properties in Mizuma Town

- **Thin bronze sword**

The sword is 28.1 centimeters long, lacking the tip and the blade. A hole (in the lower part) is to fix a handle to the body of the blade.

It was excavated with another sword in the neighboring ground of the Eboshizuka tomb. The history of the discovery is not unknown.

- **Artifacts of the Yugashira-jinja Shrine**

The shrine has preserved a bronze sword, a stone pike, two stone knives, and seven ear-rings.

This another sword is 39.4 centimeters in length and 3.1 centimeters in width at most. Its tip is round and its shape differs from the above mentioned. The wooden case was written that a man from Takamizuma village excavated this sword in a field on November 26th 1749, and he dedicated it to the temple on December 5th. However, the detail of how it came to the shrine is unknown.

The stone pike is 13.2 centimeters in length. We presume it to be 2000 years old and to be designed after the model of an imported bronze pike.

Two stone knives, one perfectly formed (12.2 centimeters wide and 4.1 centimeters high), and the other lacking half.

Seven ear-rings were made of bronze coated with silver foil. The biggest is 3.2 centimeters across and 0.8 centimeters thick. The smallest is 2.4 centimeters across and 0.7 centimeters thick.

The history of the last three artifacts is unknown except the location of discovery, near Eboshizuka tomb.



Thin bronze swords
(Above) Private collection
(Right) Yugashira-jinja Shrine's collection



Stone pike



Stone knives



Ear-rings

Other Cultural Properties

Gobyozuka Kaizuka Mound is 4, 5 meters higher than a field in the north. Shells and fragments of Yayoi pottery are scattered around. Kazusada Yano, a historian of the 19th century and retainer of Kurume Domain, mentioned that a bronze pike (bronze sword?) had been excavated from this mound.



Gobyozuka Kaizuka Mound

The higher part of **Eboshizuka Mound** is surrounded by a fence today, but the rest was changed into residential land and fields. Many fragments of Yayoi pottery are still found in fields. As mentioned above, two bronze swords were discovered from the neighboring land.



Jurenji Kofun Mound

Jurenji Kofun Mound had been changed for modern land development, although it is said to have been a circular burial mound, thirty meters across, and constructed in the late 5th century.

Jars of a particular form are often found around the Takamizuma area. It became a type of pottery from the late Yayoi period in northern Kyushu. It is named **Takamizuka style pottery**.



Map of Mizuma Town

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