

Honjo Castle Town Explanation Board 7

Honjo Castle Town's General Guardian "Hachimanjinja"(Hachiman Shrine)

Honjo Hachiman Shrine was transferred from Akouzu Onohara (present Matsugasaki, Yurihonjo City) to its present location at the Kimon gate (demon gate) (north-east) of Honjo Castle in the 12th year of Keicho era (1607) when Mitsushige Honjo built the castle town. Even Rokugo clan, who entered the area in the 9th year of Genna era (1623), worshipped it as their guardian god and revered it as the general guardian of Honjo. The Oema (Large votive horse tablet) dedicated by the feudal lords shows that the shrine has been cherished as a revered shrine. The current annual festival that is held in September is the largest festival in the region. Many parishioners from old castle towns such as Ashigarumachi (foot soldiers town) and Choninmachi (merchant town) participate, floats and daimyo's processions parade through the area.

During the Edo period, the street running east-west in front of the shrine was called "Hachimanmachi". According to the illustration of the castle town, the precincts are surrounded by trees and depict the same landscape as today, with Sando (road approaching a shrine), two torii gates, and Dosha (large and small buildings, esp. shrines and temples) on both sides of Sando. Besides, Dosha such as "Hachiman temple" and "Goma hall" which are thought to be Bettouji in the precincts was also illustrated, showing how the shrines were during the syncretism of the Shinto and Buddhism period.

A guardian dog made of a Shakudani stone (designated as a tangible cultural property by the city) which was brought from Echizen Province (Fukui prefecture) in the 16th century by the Hokkoku Boat stands in front of the Kusushi Shrine in the shrine's precincts. Besides, at the entrance of the precincts, a stone marker post stands show the damage caused by a flood on the 25th of August during the 27th year of Meiji era (1894), which flooded the area by over 3m. The monument is notable for its natural disaster tradition.

This explanation board is was founded by the East Japan Railway Culture Foundation for local cultural activities.