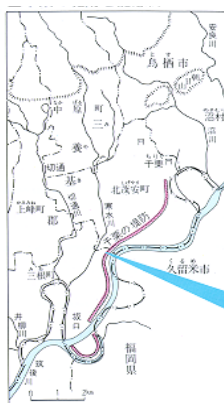


Traditional technique : Chirikutei (Chiriku Levee)

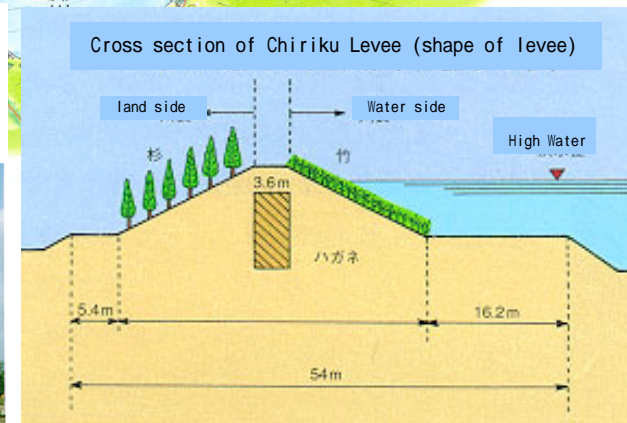
Category : Setback levee Sicle : 17th century

River : Chikugogawa (Chikugo River)

Site : Mine-cho, Kitashigeyasu-cho, etc. (Saga Pref.)



Chiriku Levee and its monument



Cross section of Chiriku Levee (with a compacted clay core called "hagane")

Source: Our Homeland: People Who Helped Develop the Land of Saga (in Japanese), March 1993, The Council for Enhancing the Image of Civil Engineering.

Description:

The Chikugogawa (Chikugo River) flowing between Saga and Fukuoka prefectures has long been known also as the "Millennium River" and "Chikushi Jiro" ("Jiro" meaning the second eldest son). Because the river from olden times had flooded and caused serious damage almost every year, a flood control expert, Naridomi-hyogo Shigeyasu, built a large levee to protect the villages and their residents from floods of the Chikugogawa (Chikugo River). This is what is called the "Chiriku Levee." This embankment extended from the present-day Chiriku area in Kita-shigeyasu-cho to the Sakaguchi area in Mine-cho. Bamboos were planted on the river side of the levee, and Japanese cedars were planted on the land (rice field) side. To prevent leakage, a compacted clay core called "hagane" was formed in the levee. The bamboos and cedar trees were designed to act as a flood barrier and were also used as materials necessary for war with other provinces. The planted bank was also called the "cedar bank." The levee construction took about 12 years, but it is said that the work was carried out slowly over a long period of time so as not to place an excessive burden on the local farmers who had to perform their own work besides participating in the levee construction. After completion of the Chiriku Levee, flooding became less frequent than in the past and the people's lives improved. After the levee protected the local people for about 300 years after completion, it was rebuilt and only a small part of the Chiriku Levee remains today.