Site of the Nakayama Residence

Nakayama Tadayasu (1809–1888) was a senior courtier whose daughter, Yoshiko (1836–1907), became concubine to the emperor and gave birth to Prince Sachi no Miya in 1852. The prince ascended to the imperial throne as Emperor Meiji (1852–1912). The house in which the future emperor was cared for during the first four years of his life still stands behind the gate. The well that serves the residence replaced an earlier well that dried up during a drought when the young prince was two. The new well, Sachi-no-i, was named after him.

The composition of Japanese *waka* poetry played a central role in the cultural life of the nobles who lived in and around the palace. The Emperor Meiji was a highly prolific poet, composing some 100,000 waka poems or *gyosei*. Many of these poems provide valuable lessons for life. One example reads:

Do not be swayed

by the raging storms

of every age. The human heart

must be steadfast,

a pine rooted deeply on a rock.

*(Arashi fuku / yo ni mo ugoku na / hito gokoro / iwao ni nezasu / matsu no gotokuni)*