

Matsuo Basho and *The Narrow Road to the Deep North*

The seventeenth-century haiku master Matsuo Basho (1644–1694), one of Japan’s most famous poets, visited Hiraizumi and mentioned it in his masterpiece, *The Narrow Road to the Deep North*.

Hiraizumi flourished in the twelfth century under the rule of the Oshu Fujiwara clan, who built several temples transforming Hiraizumi into a center of Buddhist culture. In 1689, five centuries after the golden age of Hiraizumi, Matsuo Basho visited Chusonji Temple while traveling on foot in Tohoku.

During the eighteenth century, a local haiku group donated this monument to Chusonji Temple to commemorate Basho’s visit. The stone bears Basho’s original haiku poem about the Konjikido, which reads:

*Untouched by*

*The rains of May*

*Shining Hall*