

### **【Map of Mitsumata】**

Mitsumata was once a prosperous post town accommodating daimyo, government officials, merchants, and other commoners as they traveled the Mikuni Road, which connected Edo (now Tokyo) to the Sea of Japan during the Edo period (1603–1868).

### **Arato Castle Ruins**

The mountain castle ruins date back to the Siege of Otate (1578–1579), when the adopted sons of the daimyo Uesugi Kenshin (1530–1578) feuded over who would succeed him as lord of Echigo.

### **Yagisawa Kannondō Temple**

This Buddhist temple dedicated to Kannon, the bodhisattva of compassion, survived a disastrous fire that swept through the hamlet of Yagisawa in 1809. The Kannon is believed to ensure safe childbirth and bring good fortune.

### **Avalanche Memorial**

On January 9, 1918, Mitsumata was hit by a massive avalanche that caused the deaths of 158 people and destroyed 28 households. A stone memorial was erected here in 1919.

### **Kōshin Monuments**

These stone monuments were erected by followers of Kōshin, a folk religion with Chinese Daoist origins. Kōshin refers to a day when followers do not sleep in order to prevent three worms from escaping their bodies and reporting on their sins to the Court of Destiny.

### **Ime Jinja Shrine**

This Shinto shrine is believed to have been established before the tenth century. Its main deity is Uke Mochi no Kami, the goddess of food. The Mitsumata Festival is held at the shrine every year on July 12 to pray for an abundant rice harvest.

### **Ikedaya**

This traditional inn was established in 1828 as a *wakihonjin*, or secondary lodging for daimyo as they traveled to and from the capital at Edo via the Mikuni Road. The building, which dates back to the 1680s, is the only surviving inn of this type among the route's 35

different post-towns.

### **Kiyotsu River**

The pristine Kiyotsu River flows through Mitsumata into the Shinano River and the Sea of Japan. The river's purity is evidenced by the char (*iawana*) and an aquatic flowering plant called *baikamo* (*Ranunculus aquatilis*) that flourish there.