Yamagata City Left Unharmed by War

After the Great Tokyo Air Raid of March 10, 1945, many evacuees fled to Yamagata City, causing severe food shortages. Amid these difficult conditions, B-29 bombers first appeared over the city on June 29. Then, on July 10, neighboring Sendai City in Miyagi Prefecture was subjected to a large-scale air raid by U.S. forces, intensifying fears that Yamagata would soon face bombing as well.

In response, Yamagata City hurried to construct air-raid shelters, organize evacuation measures, and relocate buildings. The Former Saiseikan Hospital Main Building, which was then the tallest structure in the prefecture, was considered a potential bombing target, and its upper floors were dismantled to reduce its height.

During the war, test flights of aircraft manufactured at city factories were conducted at the Nippon Aircraft airfield near present-day Urushiyama Station, then located in Kawakubo Village of Tateyama Village. As a result, the surrounding area was attacked in an air raid by U.S. forces on August 9.

It is said that doctors and nurses at Saiseikan Hospital learned of the end of the war while gathered in the hospital courtyard. Yamagata City was one of the few prefectural capitals in Japan to avoid large-scale indiscriminate bombing during the war. As a result, the former castle-town street grid, irregular road network, and many historic buildings and cultural features have survived to the present day.